



Social Inclusion &  
Community Activation  
Programme

# Annual Plan Report: 2024

**Meath Community Rural and Social  
Development Partnership CLG**

**Meath County (11-1)**

**Meath**



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



Arna chomhchistiú ag  
an Aontas Eorpach  
Co-funded by the  
European Union



pobal

government supporting communities

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) is co-funded by the Irish Government, through the Department of Rural and Community Development, and the European Union through the European Social Fund Plus under the Employment, Inclusion, Skills, and Training (EIST) Programme 2021-2027.



## Annual Plan Report

<b>Annual Budget</b>	<b>€688,365.00</b>
<b>Subcontractor costs do not exceed 30% of annual budget</b>	Yes
<b>Total Grant costs do not exceed 7.5% of total action costs</b>	Yes

<b>Total Annual Plan Costs</b>	<b>€688,365.00</b>
<b>Total Administration Costs</b>	€150,533.00
<b>New Arrivals</b>	€193,837.20
<b>SICAP</b>	€366,003.40
<b>Total Action Costs</b>	€537,832.00
<b>New Arrivals</b>	€72,015.40
<b>SICAP</b>	€138,099.00

<b>Administration Costs</b>	<b>€150,533.00</b>
<b>Administration costs as a percentage of annual budget</b>	<b>21.87%</b>
<b>Total Indirect Salary</b>	<b>€52,194.87</b>
<b>SICAP</b>	€52,194.87
<b>Total Travel and Subsistence</b>	<b>€1,000.00</b>
<b>SICAP</b>	€1,000.00
<b>Total Office/Administration/Establishment</b>	<b>€49,404.13</b>
<b>SICAP</b>	€49,404.13
<b>Total Financial/Professional Fees/Staff Training/Other</b>	<b>€4,000.00</b>
<b>SICAP</b>	€4,000.00

<b>Goal 1 Action Costs</b>	<b>€280,380.39</b>
<b>Goal 1 Action costs as a percentage of action costs</b>	<b>52.13%</b>
<b>Goal 1 Non-salary costs</b>	<b>€59,581.40</b>
<b>New Arrivals</b>	€28,081.40
<b>SICAP</b>	€31,500.00

<b>Goal 1 Direct salary costs</b>	<b>€220,798.99</b>
New Arrivals	€85,814.00
SICAP	€134,984.99

<b>Goal 2 Action Costs</b>	<b>€257,451.61</b>
<b>Goal 2 Action costs as a percentage of action costs</b>	<b>47.87%</b>
<b>Goal 2 Non-salary costs</b>	<b>€68,943.00</b>
New Arrivals	€40,050.40
SICAP	€28,892.60
<b>Goal 2 Direct salary costs</b>	<b>€188,508.61</b>
New Arrivals	€64,089.20
SICAP	€124,419.41

<b>Annual KPI Targets</b>	
KPI 1: Total number of Local Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Networks supported	36
KPI 2: Total number of Individuals (aged 15 years and up) supported on a one-to-one basis	218

<b>Disadvantage Target</b>	
Percentage of individuals supported that fall into one or more local priority target group(s)	0.00%

<b>Local Priority Target Groups</b>	<b>2026 LP target (%)</b>	<b>2028 LP target (%)</b>
People impacted by educational disadvantage	%	%
People living in disadvantaged communities	%	%
People living in households that are jobless or are in low-paid and/or precarious employment	%	%

## Goal 1.1 Pobail Le Chéile

### Action Details

#### Targeted location within CAB/Lot

Mosney, Windtown and Oaklawns in Navan, and others in North Meath such as Oldcastle

#### Rationale

The Pobail Le Chéile action is intended to enhance capacity within local community groups, social enterprises, and networks by providing critical skills and resources necessary for effective operation and growth. This action focuses on supporting community development, cohesion, collaboration, advocacy, governance, compliance, strategic planning, and social impact assessment. Through the targeting of specific disadvantaged areas such as Mosney, Windtown and Oaklawns in Navan, and others in North Meath such as Oldcastle, this action seeks to build resilience, cohesiveness, integration, and empowerment within communities, particularly groups focused on supporting SICAP target groups and those active within the scope of thematic focus areas.

These efforts aim to address issues such as mental health, social anxiety, and low self-esteem by involving community members in educational activities and broader group and network engagements. This approach ensures that local community foundations are strong and that the necessary skills for transformation are developed, allowing for tailored support and progression plans for each group involved.

In general, Pobail Le Chéile aims to activate community participation, leveraging existing strengths to underpin sustainable development. This will include establishing outreach facilities, implementing the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Model, and focusing on areas such as education, empowerment, and community pride to achieve broad and impactful outcomes.

#### Objectives of this action

N/A

#### Description

Pobail Le Chéile will implement a range of activities throughout 2024 aimed at supporting and empowering LCG's, SE's and networks in Meath. These include:

1. Expansion of open community hub services in Oaklawns, Navan to take account of adjacent areas of disadvantage and to act as a resource hub for LCG's SEs and networks.
2. Establishing of additional 'drop-in' community hubs in areas of particularly high disadvantage.
3. Design and implement an online training needs analysis tool for LCGs, SEs and Networks to assess their training and development needs.
4. Delivery of tailored training programmes which will be co-designed with potential beneficiary groups. These will focus on topics such as governance, leadership, board renewal, grant writing, mediation training, enhancing impact and other similar capacity building workshops
5. Delivery of individual and collective mentoring for community organisations to enhance social inclusion and equality agendas and objectives.
6. Facilitation of networking opportunities for groups to collaborate on local issues and enact meaningful change.
7. Ongoing support for community-led projects through grants for events, initiatives, and small-scale purchases.
8. Delivery of community education programme in collaboration with LMETB
9. Development of a publication to highlight the successes of relevant LCG's SEs and networks, serving as inspiration and recognition of their impactful work and the benefits of SICAP supports.

Target Group/Area	
Target Group	People living in disadvantaged communities
Target Group	People who are long-term unemployed

KPI Targets	
KPI 1: Total number of Local Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Networks supported	15
KPI 2: Total number of Individuals (aged 15 years and up) supported on a one-to-one basis	0

Action Outcomes
Pobail Le Chéile/ActionOutcome/001
Pobail Le Chéile/ActionOutcome/002

Action Costs	€7,000.00
<b>Total Goal 1</b>	€7,000.00
SICAP	€7,000.00
<b>Total Goal 2</b>	
SICAP	

Collaborative Partners
<b>Partner</b>
Respond Housing Association

LECP Objectives
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.5 - To Increase Perceptions and Experience of Community Safety
3. Resilience - SCO 3.3 - To Address the Specific Needs of Particular Groups

## Goal 1.2 Teach Mná

### Action Details

#### Targeted location within CAB/Lot

Mosney Accommodation Centre, Oaklawns Navan outreach office, Athboy Convent Community Centre, and Oldcastle Showhall

#### Rationale

The rationale for continuing the Teach Mná women's groups across Co. Meath in 2024 is based on the identified needs and benefits observed during previous consultations across 2023. These groups have become crucial in addressing the challenges faced by women, particularly women over 65 who are experiencing social isolation, anxiety, and low self-esteem due to significant life changes such as retirement, health issues, and increased insecurity. These factors have been intensified by the pandemic, and the risks associated with social isolation are severe, including increased chances of developing dementia and premature death.

To combat these issues, the action will maintain its weekly interactive sessions in Athboy, Navan, and Trim, and pursue the rollout of an online Teach Mná network for broader countywide access. These meetings are designed as safe, supportive spaces where women can socialise, exchange knowledge and skills in activities like knitting and arts, and directly interact with external service providers for healthcare, budgeting, and state supports.

The action will be expanded by establishing new groups in Mosney Accommodation Centre and Oldcastle, with initial consultations in Mosney Village and several targeted locations in Oldcastle to be undertaken to adapt the services to the needs of local women. SICAP Community Development staff are equipped to empower participants, helping them transition from passive to proactive community members. This action will aim not only to provide a social outlet but also to support empowerment, advocacy, community building, and personal growth among the women involved.

#### Objectives of this action

N/A

#### Description

The Teach Mná activities planned for 2024 are designed to boost the social and personal development of participants. These include:

1. Weekly outreach sessions will be held at four locations including Mosney Accommodation Centre, Oaklawns Navan outreach office, Athboy Convent Community Centre, and Oldcastle Show Hall. These sites were selected based on local needs and levels of deprivation. The activities are specifically tailored to promote women's voices and personal development.
2. Establish an online Teach Mná network, servicing Co. Meath.
3. Regular capacity building and organisational development training will be conducted to enhance the effectiveness and independence of the Teach Mná groups.
4. To promote teamwork and enhance community spirit, small grants will be provided for activities that build close friendships and collaborative skills.
5. Group meetings will offer direct access to external services including healthcare, budgeting advice, entitlements, and essential survival skills, empowering women with the knowledge and tools they need to support their own wellbeing.
6. Organised trips will provide educational and social opportunities, helping to reduce feelings of isolation by instilling a sense of community and shared history.
7. Activities will encourage intergenerational learning and skill sharing, such as knitting, arts, and crafts, enhancing participants' abilities and confidence.
8. Special events and workshops will focus on mental wellbeing, confidence building, and enhancing independence.

Target Group/Area	
Target Group	People living in disadvantaged communities
Target Group	Heads of One-parent Families

KPI Targets	
KPI 1: Total number of Local Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Networks supported	4
KPI 2: Total number of Individuals (aged 15 years and up) supported on a one-to-one basis	0

Action Outcomes
Teach Mná/ActionOutcome/001
Teach Mná/ActionOutcome/002

<b>Action Costs</b>	<b>€1,500.00</b>
<b>Total Goal 1</b>	€1,500.00
SICAP	€1,500.00
<b>Total Goal 2</b>	
SICAP	

Collaborative Partners
<b>Partner</b>
LMETB

LECP Objectives
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.1 - To reduce the levels of poverty being experienced
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.3 - To improve health outcomes
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.5 - To Increase Perceptions and Experience of Community Safety

## Goal 1.3 Legacy4Meath - BESC

### Action Details

#### Targeted location within CAB/Lot

North Meath, Navan and Mosney including areas with serviced accommodation centres and high density of refugee population (i.e. Bettystown Donore Laytown Stamullen)

#### Rationale

The Legacy4Meath – BESC (Biodiversity, Environment and Sustainable Communities) action is designed as a strategic response to several pressing issues faced by marginalised and economically disadvantaged communities in Co. Meath, including social isolation, environmental degradation, and socio-economic instability. This action will leverage a multifaceted approach to support social inclusion, enhance community cohesion, and improve individual wellbeing through a focus on environmental awareness and quality.

Disadvantaged communities in Co. Meath are grappling with levels of deprivation that not only limit economic opportunities but also contribute to a cycle of social isolation and poor mental health. Environmental neglect further exacerbates these conditions, posing additional health risks and diminishing the quality of life.

Addressing these issues is important not only for the immediate wellbeing of these communities but also for the long term sustainability of the local environment. The interconnection of social and environmental health requires a holistic approach that considers the broader impacts of neglect and underinvestment.

The Legacy4Meath - BESC action will aim to integrate biodiversity, sustainability, and climate action into existing community activities through educational sessions, practical engagements in community gardening, and environmental clean-up projects. These activities are designed to improve the local environment while also serving as therapeutic and community building exercises, enhancing mental wellbeing and social cohesion. The introduction of circular economy principles - repair, reuse, and recycle - will equip community members with valuable skills that can lead to job opportunities in green industries, promoting economic resilience.

Through empowering individuals to take an active role in shaping their community's future, the action aims to reduce feelings of isolation and helplessness while supporting a sense of ownership and pride in local improvements. This participatory methodology is expected to transform community members into proactive stakeholders who are not only beneficiaries but also custodians of their environment. The strategic integration of environmental and social goals is anticipated to build a more cohesive community, improve overall mental health, and create a sustainable model that can be replicated in other areas.

#### Objectives of this action

N/A

#### Description

Through a suite of activities, the Legacy4Meath - BESC action will aim to support local environmental stewardship, enhance community engagement, and empower individuals by integrating sustainable practices and biodiversity education into the heart of disadvantaged communities. These activities include:

1. Early Intervention Groups: This activity will focus on young individuals, providing them with wellness activities in outdoor recreational spaces and introducing them to biodiversity. Through spending time in nature, these groups will engage in hands-on learning experiences that boost motivation and teach important environmental principles.

2. Experiential Learning Activities: SICAP will facilitate experiential learning through practical experiences. Activities will include visits to Coillte's 'Leave No Trace' forests, engaging with social farming, and exploring the intersections of business and the environment through corporate social responsibility initiatives related to climate change. This will also include education on the circular economy for communities and local businesses, emphasising the reduce, reuse, recycle approach.



3. Supporting Community Gardens: These activities are fundamental to improving urban biodiversity and providing residents with green, healthy spaces for recreation and relaxation. Community gardens also offer a hands-on educational tool for teaching about food sources and sustainability.
4. Collaboration with LCGs: SICAP will work closely with LCGs to identify opportunities for enhancing green spaces within the community. This collaborative effort aims to improve local environments and increase the community's engagement with their natural surroundings.
5. Climate Action & Biodiversity Educational Workshops: SICAP will work closely with Meath Partnerships EU Projects & Education and Training Department to deliver targeted educational workshops. These sessions will empower LCGs and their communities with knowledge on climate action and biodiversity, enhancing community resilience to environmental challenges.
6. Healthy Food & Reducing Waste Workshops: Workshops on healthy eating and food waste reduction will also be provided. These sessions will teach participants how to prepare meals economically (under €5) and efficiently utilise leftovers, promoting sustainable food consumption practices.
7. Skill-building Sessions: Targeting marginalised communities, these sessions will be designed to provide practical skills related to sustainability. Skills such as gardening, recycling techniques, and sustainable resource management will be emphasised to enhance employability and personal development.
8. Establishing Wildlife Habitats: The creation of birdhouses, bug hotels, and other wildlife habitats will be promoted to enhance biodiversity and educate the community about the importance of wildlife in urban areas.
9. Organising Community Events: Events such as clean-up drives, planting days, and educational tours will be organised to actively engage the community in environmental stewardship and to support a culture of care for the local environment.

### Target Group/Area

Focus Area	Climate action and the just transition
Target Group	People living in disadvantaged communities

### KPI Targets

KPI 1: Total number of Local Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Networks supported	2
KPI 2: Total number of Individuals (aged 15 years and up) supported on a one-to-one basis	0

### Action Outcomes

Legacy4Meath - BESC/ActionOutcome/001
Legacy4Meath - BESC/ActionOutcome/002
Legacy4Meath - BESC/ActionOutcome/003
Legacy4Meath - BESC/ActionOutcome/004
Legacy4Meath - BESC/ActionOutcome/005

<b>Action Costs</b>	<b>€7,000.00</b>
<b>Total Goal 1</b>	€7,000.00
SICAP	€7,000.00
<b>Total Goal 2</b>	
SICAP	

## Collaborative Partners

### Partner

St. Mary's GAA Donore

## LECP Objectives

1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.3 - To improve health outcomes

3. Resilience - SCO 3.2 - To Enhance Environmental Protection, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation, and Action for a Low Carbon Future, and to Increase the Range of Transition Activities

3. Resilience - SCO 3.3 - To Address the Specific Needs of Particular Groups

4. Flourishing - SCO 4.2 - To Further Develop Community Cultural Action

## Goal 1.4 Connecting Cultures

### Action Details

#### Targeted location within CAB/Lot

Mosney (or servicing Mosney in Laytown/Julianstown areas), Navan, Trim and North Meath i.e; Kells, Oldcastle, Athboy

#### Rationale

The Connecting Cultures action aims to enhance social integration and cultural understanding in Co. Meath by leveraging the universal appeal of food, a powerful medium for bringing together diverse populations including refugees, migrants, and local residents. The initiative's core objective is to use this theme to encourage mutual understanding and bridge cultural divides, transforming Co. Meath into a community where diversity is not only celebrated but also actively contributes to societal enrichment.

Central to the action is the empowerment and leadership of migrant-led LCGs, which are pivotal in navigating and accessing state support systems. This empowerment facilitates their leadership in the integration process, promotes sustainable community development, and engenders a sense of ownership and belonging among participants. The action also aims to provide holistic support to individuals, particularly those in temporary accommodations or seeking international protection, with targeted services offered by trained wellness staff to address wellbeing and mental health concerns related to past traumas.

Connecting Cultures includes educational workshops that utilise Bennet's Scale of Cultural Sensitivity to support understanding and facilitate respectful intercultural interactions. These sessions will be important for building a respectful and inclusive community environment. Networking is another important element, connecting newcomers with local businesses, service providers, and community groups to enhance economic opportunities and strengthen social networks, creating a supportive environment that offers quicker and more effective integration.

The action also prioritises inclusive community engagement, involving not just new communities but also local stakeholders in shaping a positive narrative around the contributions of newcomers. Through focused community engagement efforts, Connecting Cultures will aim to deepen the involvement in local affairs and develop a more inclusive atmosphere.

#### Objectives of this action

N/A

#### Description

This initiative aims to support 6 LCGs, with a focus on empowering both migrants and local residents to actively participate and lead these groups. The primary activities planned are as follows:

1. Delivery of support for migrant-focused LCGs, 4 of these groups will be led by migrants, 1 by local residents, and 1 in a joint effort.
2. Each LCG will receive a customised support plan that addresses specific needs such as language assistance, legal advice, and cultural integration. These plans will help connect the groups with appropriate state programmes and agencies, ensuring access to necessary resources.
3. Recognising the importance of mental wellbeing, especially for those dealing with past traumas, the action will utilise trained wellness staff to provide support. This will include mental health workshops and trauma-informed practices aimed at promoting overall wellbeing within the LCGs.
4. The action will involve regular interactions with local decision-makers and community leaders to advocate for the needs and priorities of the LCGs. This includes participating in the PPN, community meetings, forums, and collaborative community initiatives.
5. Provision of training opportunities for community development to encourage independence and capacity building. This includes grant writing, board renewal, mediation training etc. which are specific to migrant group needs.
6. Guidance and support for migrant-led groups to help them address local social inclusion and equality issues, including assistance with forming structures and achieving charitable status.
7. Organising of events and training sessions designed to enhance cultural awareness among the broader community, facilitated in collaboration with the migrant-led organisations.

Target Group/Area	
Target Group	People living in disadvantaged communities
Target Group	Refugees

KPI Targets	
KPI 1: Total number of Local Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Networks supported	6
KPI 2: Total number of Individuals (aged 15 years and up) supported on a one-to-one basis	0

Action Outcomes	
Connecting Cultures/ActionOutcome/001	
Connecting Cultures/ActionOutcome/002	

<b>Action Costs</b>	<b>€8,000.00</b>
<b>Total Goal 1</b>	€8,000.00
SICAP	€8,000.00
<b>Total Goal 2</b>	
SICAP	

Collaborative Partners	
<b>Partner</b>	
Meath Volunteer Centre	

LECP Objectives	
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.1 - To reduce the levels of poverty being experienced	
3. Resilience - SCO 3.3 - To Address the Specific Needs of Particular Groups	
4. Flourishing - SCO 4.2 - To Further Develop Community Cultural Action	
4. Flourishing - SCO 4.4 - To Increase Participation in Sport, Recreation, and Physical Activity	
4. Flourishing - SCO 4.5 - To Increase IT Access for all Groups	

## Goal 1.5 Meath Befriending Network

### Action Details

#### Targeted location within CAB/Lot

Navan, Trim, East Meath & North Meath (Kells, Oldcastle & Kilmainhamwood)

#### Rationale

The Meath Befriending Network action aims to strengthen the social ties within Co. Meath by providing targeted support to individuals vulnerable to poverty, social isolation, or exclusion. The action will utilise a network of trained and supported volunteers who will make regular visits to such individuals, helping to alleviate their loneliness, enhance their social interactions, and boost their mental and emotional wellbeing.

MBN volunteers will be equipped to offer more than simple companionship and will provide multifaceted support that includes IT assistance, activity companionship, emotional guidance, and other practical assistance. This approach ensures that marginalised, older, and vulnerable community members feel secure, valued, and supported.

Recent studies, including a 2022 report by the European Commission and research by ALONE, highlight Ireland's high loneliness rates and the proven benefits of befriending services in mitigating health declines associated with isolation. These findings underscore the need for MBN services, particularly in the post-pandemic era, where many are still hesitant to fully re-engage with external social networks.

#### Objectives of this action

N/A

#### Description

The MBN annual action plan is designed to strengthen social connections and support among Co. Meath's older and more vulnerable populations. Planned activities include:

##### 1. Targeted Outreach and Engagement:

- Home Visits: Core to the plan, these personalised visits by trained Befriending Volunteers will offer companionship, emotional support, and practical assistance to individuals.
- Needs Assessment: Volunteers will conduct assessments during visits to identify specific challenges faced by each individual, guiding the provision of tailored support.

##### 2. Training and Support for Volunteers:

- Training Modules: Expand volunteer training to include IT support, emotional guidance, and practical aid, enhancing their capability to serve effectively.
- Community Resources: Volunteers will be informed about local resources and services that can assist vulnerable individuals, facilitating connections to external support services as needed.

##### 3. Collaboration and Networking:

- Social Inclusion Networks: Development of a forum for Meath Befriending Network to enhance social inclusion, focusing on peer-led sharing by volunteers and clients.
- Local Decision-Making Structures: Develop and implement support plans for the network that detail available and required resources and action steps, and improve linkages with local and regional decision-makers.

##### 4. Promoting Mental Well-Being:

- Holistic Approach: Activities such as reading, puzzles, and discussions will be used to stimulate mental engagement. Volunteers will also receive wellness workshops to manage aspects like compassion fatigue.
- Referral Pathways: Train volunteers to identify mental health issues and gently persuade individuals to seek professional help when necessary.

##### 5. Awareness Campaigns:

- Community Engagement: Organise events, workshops, and webinars to underscore the importance of social connections. Use social media to share success stories, volunteer profiles, and action updates.

6. Volunteer Management and Development:
- Capacity Building: Increase volunteer numbers through targeted recruitment and continuous professional development in collaboration with Meath Volunteer Centre.
  - Training: Ensure all volunteers undergo Befriending training, Protection & Safety training.

Target Group/Area	
Target Group	People living in disadvantaged communities
Target Group	Disabled People/People with Disabilities

KPI Targets	
KPI 1: Total number of Local Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Networks supported	3
KPI 2: Total number of Individuals (aged 15 years and up) supported on a one-to-one basis	0

Action Outcomes
Meath Befriending Network/ActionOutcome/001
Meath Befriending Network/ActionOutcome/002

Action Costs	€3,000.00
<b>Total Goal 1</b>	€3,000.00
SICAP	€3,000.00
<b>Total Goal 2</b>	
SICAP	

Collaborative Partners
<b>Partner</b>
Meath County Council Fire Service

LECP Objectives
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.1 - To reduce the levels of poverty being experienced
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.5 - To Increase Perceptions and Experience of Community Safety
3. Resilience - SCO 3.3 - To Address the Specific Needs of Particular Groups

## Goal 1.6 Resilient Roots

### Action Details

#### Targeted location within CAB/Lot

Oaklawns outreach facility Navan, The Unity Centre Windtown Navan and Eastcoast FRC in Laytown.

#### Rationale

The Resilient Roots action is designed to tackle the complex and multifaceted issue of homelessness, recognising that effective support must go beyond temporary solutions. This action seeks to address not only the immediate needs of those experiencing homelessness but also the underlying issues that contribute to their vulnerability, such as mental health challenges and the instability of transient lifestyles.

Through the creation of three specialised LCGs, each focused on distinct aspects of the homelessness experience, from tenancy sustainment and coping strategies to resilience building among young adults and engagement for individuals with maladaptive behaviours, Resilient Roots aims to provide holistic and targeted interventions. These groups are designed to support stable, supportive relationships with service providers, enhance self-sufficiency, and build resilience among participants.

The rationale behind this structured approach is that by addressing the root causes and providing tailored support, the action can significantly improve the wellbeing and independence of vulnerable populations, ultimately leading to better, more sustainable outcomes in their lives.

#### Objectives of this action

N/A

#### Description

Resilient roots will focus on the creation three specialised local community support groups, namely:

1. Pathways for Independence and Tenancy Sustainment Group: This group will specialise in supporting homeless individuals, as well as families and children at risk of homelessness by combining therapeutic techniques and life skills training in group settings.
2. BOND (Begin Our New Day): Will provide opportunities to young people experiencing homelessness or those at risk of homelessness, with a particular focus on supporting young homeless individuals who have aged out of the care system in Ireland. The main aims for this group is to support their integration back into community life, improvement of communication skills, life management, interpersonal relations, and to provide guidance on building strong positive relationships.
3. BASE (Building Awareness to Support Engagement): Aimed at individuals grappling with maladaptive coping mechanisms, low motivation, and social isolation. This group will focus on assisting participants to identify behaviours that may be adversely affecting their lives, promoting self-awareness, and encouraging new coping strategies. Special emphasis will be placed on supporting individuals with disabilities who have relied on a parent as their primary caregiver, especially those who have lived in the community their entire lives and now face challenges due to the passing or aging of their caregivers. Through the BASE group, we aim to equip these individuals with independent living skills and coping mechanisms, empowering them to continue living in their community if they choose to do so. The focus will remain firmly on ensuring that the voices, needs, and desires of these individuals are prioritised and respected, as much as possible, throughout this process. This will be achieved through the facilitation and delivery of therapeutic group activities, personalised engagement, and the creation of Wellness Recovery Action Plans.

Each of these groups' activities will include:

- Resilience building and coping mechanisms
- Confidence enhancement through group interactions
- Affordable cooking classes
- Home decorating, garden maintenance, and basic DIY skills
- Tenancy sustainment sessions in collaboration with MCC, Threshold and the RTB

- Financial management and planning
- Wellness and self-care supports
- Classes to support wellbeing such as including Yoga, Dance, Art, and Crafts
- Techniques for building self-confidence
- Social inclusion supports
- Combating poverty initiatives, such as winter homeless supplies provision and the provision of food hampers
- Information and advocacy
- Onward referrals

SICAP will collaborate closely with LMETB's Community Education Programme, which offers 6-week blocks of activities which will be tailored to each groups' needs.

### Target Group/Area

Focus Area	Homelessness
Target Group	People living in disadvantaged communities

### KPI Targets

KPI 1: Total number of Local Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Networks supported	3
KPI 2: Total number of Individuals (aged 15 years and up) supported on a one-to-one basis	0

### Action Outcomes

Resilient Roots/ActionOutcome/001
Resilient Roots/ActionOutcome/002
Resilient Roots/ActionOutcome/003
Resilient Roots/ActionOutcome/004

<b>Action Costs</b>	<b>€5,000.00</b>
<b>Total Goal 1</b>	€5,000.00
SICAP	€5,000.00
<b>Total Goal 2</b>	
SICAP	

### Collaborative Partners

<b>Partner</b>
Athboy People Who Share Care

### LECP Objectives

1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.1 - To reduce the levels of poverty being experienced
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.3 - To improve health outcomes
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.4 - To Prevent and Reduce Homelessness
3. Resilience - SCO 3.3 - To Address the Specific Needs of Particular Groups



## Goal 1.7 IP Connect Groups

### Action Details

#### Targeted location within CAB/Lot

Kells, Navan, Mosney (or servicing Mosney in surrounding locations; Bettystown, Laytown, Julianstown), Donore, Oldcastle, Athboy

#### Rationale

As of February 2024, Ireland has welcomed over 100,000 Ukrainian individuals and families, with a significant proportion of these residing in County Meath. The county has experienced a 43% increase in active PPS numbers compared to the previous year, indicating a substantial influx of new arrivals. Through direct engagement with IPAs and refugees, SICAP has identified 38 accommodation centres within Meath, hosting a diverse population of individuals from various countries of origin.

Among these accommodation centres, several have been identified as mixed cultural centres accommodating both IPAs, migrants, and refugees. These centres, including Alverno House, Mosney Village, Dun a Ri House Hotel, San Giovanni House, Lerrigh House, Clongill House, and Collegelands Forge, collectively host approximately 1,249 individuals. Additionally, there are 32 Ukrainian accommodation centres hosting around 1,540 individuals, totalling 2,789 individuals in need of support and integration services.

The rapid influx of new arrivals, including 105 individuals since the beginning of 2024 alone, underscores the urgent need for continued efforts to address their multifaceted challenges. As such, the IP Connect Groups action plan for 2024 is crucial for supporting the integration and wellbeing of these communities. Through collaborative initiatives and targeted interventions, SICAP will aim to address language barriers, access to services, trauma support, employment opportunities, and other essential needs while promoting social cohesion and resilience.

Group work, and the support for the creation of these groups, within this action is particularly beneficial as it helps to develop a sense of community and mutual support among residents, crucial for those transitioning into a new society. Through collaborative working, individuals can share experiences, provide emotional support, and collectively navigate the complexities of integration. This collaborative environment not only enhances learning and adaptation to new cultural contexts but also builds resilience by creating networks of support. Group activities can also facilitate a more organised and focused delivery of services, making it easier to address specific needs such as language training, cultural orientation, and professional development in a structured manner.

It has been consistently stated that migrants and refugees face higher rates of mental health challenges compared to their host communities, with IPAs being particularly affected (Fearon, 2023). As IPA numbers continue to rise, so does the demand for comprehensive mental health and wellbeing services to aid these individuals during what is a profoundly difficult period. The WHO has emphasised migration as a critical factor influencing health and wellbeing, often occurring against the backdrop of war, conflict, and persecution, which introduces complex psychological support needs and underpin the necessity for the provision of holistic assistance and service delivery.

#### Objectives of this action

N/A

#### Description

In our interactions at the accommodation centres catering to IPAs and asylum seekers, we have noted the complex support needs among these groups. Many are grappling with PTSD, both diagnosed and undiagnosed, requiring therapeutic interventions and ongoing support. Research underscores the importance of social support in helping individuals cope with and recover from trauma, which significantly influences wellbeing and provides protection against stress and its adverse effects.

The SICAP integration team, in collaboration with local community leaders and LCGs, plans to establish three local area community groups. These groups will specifically address the unique needs of residents, with a particular focus on the Ukrainian community. We aim to create special groups for economically inactive, retired women who have recently arrived in Ireland. These women often bear significant responsibilities and have

interests such as sewing, cooking, music, and a desire to learn about Irish culture and history. Participating in these activities will support English language skills, cultural understanding, and integration, while allowing them to preserve and share their own heritage.

There are also many older men, retired and out of the labour market, resident in these centres. Some are with their families, while others are alone. These men have valuable skills, life experiences, and cultural insights that can enrich not only their peers but also the wider Irish community. SICAP will aim to support their involvement in local Men's Sheds and similar organisations, with transportation assistance to these community hubs being a key facilitator.

SICAP will work with various entities to support the establishment of after-school groups for children aged 6 to 13 living in the accommodation centres. These groups will aid working mothers and incorporate play sessions to enhance interaction with Irish families, creating a fun and engaging environment. Assistance with homework will enhance language development, while themed creative projects will bring a sense of normalcy to the lives of these children and their families, deepening their inclusion in local community life.

SICAP will also continue the conducting of ongoing needs analysis with residents to ensure the relevance and sustainability of the programmes integration efforts throughout the year.

Trauma-informed holistic services are crucial for IPA's, particularly refugees or asylum seekers, for several reasons:

- **Understanding Trauma:**

- Many IPA's have endured significant trauma prior to migration, stemming from civil war, climate change effects, violence, or poverty in their home countries. Throughout their migration journey, they may encounter further trauma, including unsafe travel conditions, abuse, family separation, and trafficking. Recognising and understanding this trauma is fundamental to providing effective support.

- **Health Outcomes:**

- Trauma and toxic stress have profound adverse effects on health, contributing to conditions such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, heart disease, metabolic syndrome, and premature mortality. Through the offering of trauma-informed services, SICAP can mitigate these negative health outcomes and support resilience among IPA's.

- **Resilience and Strength:**

- Immigrant and refugee youth often exhibit remarkable resilience and strength despite their traumatic experiences. Trauma-informed service provision acknowledges and reinforces this resilience while addressing the lingering impacts of trauma.

- **Racism and Discrimination:**

- Upon arrival in their host communities, IPA's may encounter racism and discrimination, compounding their trauma. Trauma-informed services play a vital role in creating safe and inclusive spaces, reducing the risk of re-traumatisation.

To respond to these crucial needs for trauma informed holistic services SICAP will organise therapeutic group sessions through trauma informed trained staff and specialised subcontractors throughout 2024.

### **Additional New Arrivals Funding July 2024:**

As part of the ongoing efforts of SICAP to support the integration and wellbeing of new arrivals, we have been allocated an additional €28,031 in funding in July 2024. €8,031.00 of this funding will be used to expand existing initiatives under Goal 1, particularly those focused on the social support needs of male new arrivals. Recent engagements with male individuals located in various accommodation centres across the county have highlighted an important need for the increased tailoring of social and educational activities to promote mental health and wellbeing.

The men we have worked with, particularly those from Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Georgia, Afghanistan, and Syria, have expressed that staying busy is crucial to their mental health. Many are currently unable to work due to pending work permits, and the rural nature of accommodation centres leaves them isolated, compounding their feelings of helplessness and anxiety about the situations in their home countries. In response to these insights, we propose to use part of the additional funds to implement a series of outdoor activities and cultural integration trips. These activities will not only provide a constructive outlet for these individuals but will also facilitate their integration into Irish society by helping them learn about local culture and history.

In addition to the above, we intend to continue the "Embracing Change" programme, which we piloted earlier this year. This six-week course was designed to empower new arrivals by equipping them with the tools and confidence needed to integrate independently into their new communities. The positive feedback from participants has encouraged us to expand this initiative. Through the expansion of this programme, we aim to support self-sufficiency among the attendees, easing their integration journey and reducing long-term dependency on local and state support services.

It is also important to note that the success of these initiatives is contingent on addressing the logistical challenges associated with transporting participants from rural accommodation centres to community spaces and activity sites. A significant portion of the additional funding will be allocated to covering these transport costs, ensuring that all new arrivals, regardless of their location, can benefit from the activities and programmes SICAP offers.

This funding will also support ongoing efforts to provide war trauma-specific counselling and group therapy, which have been previously approved and funded. Although many of the men have indicated a preference for activities over formal therapy sessions, we recognise the importance of having these therapeutic options available as part of a comprehensive support strategy.

The additional funding will be vital in expanding and enhancing SICAP efforts under Goal 1, allowing the programme to offer a broader range of activities and supports tailored to the needs of new arrivals. In focusing on social engagement, cultural integration, and mental wellbeing, SICAP will aim to help these individuals find a sense of belonging and stability in their new environment, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and cohesive community.

### Target Group/Area

Target Group	International Protection Applicants
Focus Area	Refugee and migrant rights and integration

### KPI Targets

KPI 1: Total number of Local Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Networks supported	3
KPI 2: Total number of Individuals (aged 15 years and up) supported on a one-to-one basis	0

### Action Outcomes

IP Connect Groups/ActionOutcome/001
IP Connect Groups/ActionOutcome/002
IP Connect Groups/ActionOutcome/003

<b>Action Costs</b>	<b>€28,081.40</b>
<b>Total Goal 1</b>	€28,081.40
New Arrivals	€28,081.40
<b>Total Goal 2</b>	
New Arrivals	

## Collaborative Partners

### Partner

REALT - LMETB

Meath Sports Partnership

## LECP Objectives

1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.1 - To reduce the levels of poverty being experienced

1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.3 - To improve health outcomes

1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.5 - To Increase Perceptions and Experience of Community Safety

3. Resilience - SCO 3.3 - To Address the Specific Needs of Particular Groups

4. Flourishing - SCO 4.2 - To Further Develop Community Cultural Action

4. Flourishing - SCO 4.4 - To Increase Participation in Sport, Recreation, and Physical Activity

## Goal 2.1 Youth Progression Initiative (YPI)

### Action Details

#### Targeted location within CAB/Lot

Disadvantaged communities in Co. Meath with a specific focus on Mosney, Navan and North Meath (Kells, Oldcastle, Drumconrath, Slane).

#### Rationale

The YPI action is designed to provide targeted, individualised support to young people who are at risk of disengaging from education and unemployment, particularly focusing on early school leavers, young Travellers, Roma, and people with disabilities between the ages of 15-24. This action will adopt a flexible, youth-centric approach, offering both one-on-one support and group-based personal development interventions, alongside training and educational opportunities tailored to each individual's needs.

The primary goals are twofold: first, to guide at-risk youth towards educational pathways that align with their specific needs and aspirations, and second, to enhance the capabilities, skills, and work readiness of these young individuals to overcome societal barriers and engage successfully in education, training, or employment.

To achieve these objectives, YPI will collaborate with a broad network of partners including educational institutions, social services, and mental health agencies, developing a robust support system around each participant. This framework is designed to reduce social inclusion barriers and enable these young people to either reintegrate into the educational system or enter the labour market directly.

The rationale behind this initiative is grounded in addressing the heightened risks associated with being 'Not in Education, Employment, or Training' (NEET), such as increased poverty, social exclusion, and poor health outcomes. For example, targeting the young Traveller community, which represents a significant portion of Ireland's Traveller population, this action aims to reduce their marginalisation and enhance their potential as active, contributing members of society, with a particular focus on improving their integration into the labour market.

#### Objectives of this action

N/A

#### Description

YPI action will be delivered through a phased approach as follows:

Phase 1: Personal Planning: The initial phase aims to provide SMART personal plans for each participant. Key activities in this phase will include:

- Individual Engagement: Meet with participants one-on-one to discuss their aspirations, educational goals, and career ambitions. Use Honey and Mumford learning styles model to help participants identify their preferred learning style.
- Personal Plan Development: Create a Personal Action Plan for each participant that specifies steps to take, including educational pathways, training needs, and appropriate programmes.
- Programme Alignment: Highlight and provide information about SICAP programmes that align with the participants' individual goals.

Phase 2: Skill Development: The second phase focuses on enhancing the skills and competencies of participants. Scheduled activities for 2024 will include:

- Training Courses: Offer basic employability skills training, such as Safe Pass, Manual Handling, and First Aid.
- Specialised Training: Conduct sector-specific training programmes such as Barista Training, Gel Nails, and Hospitality Skills etc.
- Career Tasters: Provide 'Taster' programmes to allow participants to explore different career paths, such as barbering or mechanics, helping them to determine the type of training they require.
- Local Collaborations: Partner with local training providers and educational institutions to enhance training options.

Phase 3: Long-Term Progress: The final phase is designed to ensure the sustainability and long-term success of participants' career paths. Planned activities for 2024 include:

- Guidance and Mentoring: Guide and mentor participants toward further education options such as college or vocational courses, as well as job opportunities including internships and apprenticeships. Explore potential for entrepreneurship where applicable.
- Ongoing Support: Continue to provide mentorship to participants to help maintain employment or to explore new business ventures.
- Employment Partnerships: Develop partnerships with social enterprises and local employers to create job opportunities that are tailored to the needs of target groups and promote inclusivity in the job market.

### Target Group/Area

Target Group	People impacted by educational disadvantage
Target Group	Travellers

### KPI Targets

KPI 1: Total number of Local Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Networks supported	0
KPI 2: Total number of Individuals (aged 15 years and up) supported on a one-to-one basis	35

### Action Outcomes

Youth Progression Initiative (YPI)/ActionOutcome/001
Youth Progression Initiative (YPI)/ActionOutcome/002
Youth Progression Initiative (YPI)/ActionOutcome/003
Youth Progression Initiative (YPI)/ActionOutcome/004
Youth Progression Initiative (YPI)/ActionOutcome/005
Youth Progression Initiative (YPI)/ActionOutcome/006
Youth Progression Initiative (YPI)/ActionOutcome/007

<b>Action Costs</b>	<b>€8,000.00</b>
<b>Total Goal 1</b>	
SICAP	
<b>Total Goal 2</b>	€8,000.00
SICAP	€8,000.00

### Collaborative Partners

<b>Partner</b>
Meath Travellers Workshop

### LECP Objectives

1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.1 - To reduce the levels of poverty being experienced
3. Resilience - SCO 3.3 - To Address the Specific Needs of Particular Groups
4. Flourishing - SCO 4.1 - To Reduce Educational Disadvantage

## Goal 2.2 Folláine

### Action Details

#### Targeted location within CAB/Lot

Kells, Beaufort, Navan, Drumconrath, Oldcastle, Trim & various strategic locations across Meath

#### Rationale

The Folláine action is designed to enhance personal and professional development for individuals in SICAP target groups by providing robust support to improve soft skills, employment potential, and capacity to overcome social exclusion. This action will equip individuals with the tools to tackle challenges, particularly mental health barriers, thereby promoting overall wellbeing. Through partnerships with local community organisations, educational bodies, the HSE, and other relevant stakeholders, Folláine aims to deliver a recovery-focused service that reduces the impact of mental health problems which may present barriers to sustainable education and employment opportunities.

The actions core objective is to create an accessible, community-integrated service offering timely support to individuals, families, and groups. This includes soft skills training, wellness workshops, personalised wellbeing consultations, and the development of individualised Wellness Recovery Action Plans. Folláine will address a wide range of issues, including LGBTQ+ concerns, eating disorders, substance abuse, and long-term unemployment, with a particular focus on vulnerable populations such as NEETs, low-income individuals, people with disabilities, and families in DEIS schools.

The rationale for this initiative is underscored by local and national data indicating high levels of suicide and mental health challenges within the community, particularly among marginalised groups. In employing a strengths-based, community-centric approach, Folláine aims to enhance resilience, self-esteem, and social connectivity, facilitating the integration of individuals into society and improving their overall quality of life. This approach is essential in addressing the complex factors associated with mental health issues and social exclusion, and is critical in bringing forward a healthier, more inclusive community.

#### Objectives of this action

N/A

#### Description

Throughout 2024, the Folláine action will implement a series of activities aimed at enhancing mental health support and enhancing personal and professional development within the community. These include:

1. Conducting a comprehensive assessment to identify specific mental health challenges, stressors, and service gaps within targeted communities.
2. Offering of one-on-one support sessions based on Community Development and WRAP principles:
  - Community Development Wellness Project Officer to work directly with clients on personalised goal-setting and action planning.
  - Implement customised interventions and training to enhance participants' life skills and professional capabilities.
3. Coping Strategies and Crisis Management:
  - Provide clients with tools to manage stress, anxiety, and depression.
  - Teach crisis planning and self-management techniques.
4. Wellness Workshops:
  - Conduct workshops on various topics including self-awareness, mental health understanding and de-stigmatisation, resilience building, and holistic wellness practices (nutrition, exercise, mindfulness).
5. Community and Professional Collaboration:
  - Work closely with local community organisations, schools, healthcare providers, and other stakeholders.
  - Establish partnerships with professionals throughout Co. Meath to refer eligible individuals to Folláine.
  - Utilise existing networks to promote action awareness.



6. Educational and Training Opportunities:

- Offer WRAP Level One Training and accredited wellness courses.
- Provide soft skills training on topics such as Personal Effectiveness, and Personal and Professional Development.

**Target Group/Area**

Target Group	People living in households that are jobless or are in low-paid and/or precarious employment
Target Group	Disabled People/People with Disabilities

**KPI Targets**

KPI 1: Total number of Local Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Networks supported	0
KPI 2: Total number of Individuals (aged 15 years and up) supported on a one-to-one basis	40

**Action Outcomes**

Folláine/ActionOutcome/001
Folláine/ActionOutcome/002
Folláine/ActionOutcome/003
Folláine/ActionOutcome/004

<b>Action Costs</b>	<b>€5,000.00</b>
<b>Total Goal 1</b>	
SICAP	
<b>Total Goal 2</b>	€5,000.00
SICAP	€5,000.00

**Collaborative Partners**

<b>Partner</b>
Athboy People Who Share Care
HSE

**LECP Objectives**

1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.1 - To reduce the levels of poverty being experienced
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.2 - Increased levels of employment and employability
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.3 - To improve health outcomes
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.4 - To Prevent and Reduce Homelessness
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.5 - To Increase Perceptions and Experience of Community Safety
4. Flourishing - SCO 4.1 - To Reduce Educational Disadvantage
4. Flourishing - SCO 4.4 - To Increase Participation in Sport, Recreation, and Physical Activity



## Goal 2.3 Cultivating Careers

### Action Details

#### Targeted location within CAB/Lot

Kells, Navan, Trim, North Meath & various outreach locations across Meath

#### Rationale

The Cultivating Careers action is designed to support unemployed individuals as they navigate the path toward employment and self-employment. Recognising the complexities of the job market, the action will collaborate with DSP's Intreo Team and leverage the BTWEA scheme. The action will also provide specialised monthly guidance sessions for job seekers interested in starting their own businesses.

To enhance accessibility and address transportation challenges across the county, the initiative will be community-based and will include tailored 'Start Your Own Business' courses, along with training on using social media platforms like Canva to promote and sustain new businesses.

The approach will emphasise personalised coaching and effective job search strategies that maintain engagement and commitment among participants. Additional supports will include networking events with employers, recruitment agencies, and inter-agency information sessions to enhance service visibility and navigation.

The rationale for "Cultivating Careers" is underpinned by the urgent need for activation measures that not only address immediate employment barriers but also encourage retraining, upskilling, and formal education as viable paths for career development, particularly for those distanced from the labour market due to various challenges including mental health issues, addiction, and homelessness. Through SICAP's holistic supports, the action will aim to comprehensively address the root causes of unemployment and facilitate sustainable career paths for those residing in disadvantaged communities.

#### Objectives of this action

N/A

#### Description

Activities provided under the Cultivating Careers action will include:

1. Individual Consultations - The purpose of individual consultations is to offer tailored guidance and support to jobseekers. This support includes:

- One-on-one sessions with jobseekers.
- Providing labour market insights.
- Building confidence.
- Assisting with CV development.
- Exploring job placement opportunities.
- For those interested in self-employment, share up-to-date information on entrepreneurial developments, BTWEA etc.

2. Group Workshops - The purpose of group workshops and activities is to enhance jobseekers' skills and knowledge. Group workshops will cover various topics such as:

- CV development
- Effective job-hunting techniques.
- Upskilling opportunities.
- Educational pathways.
- Interview readiness.
- Starting your own business

3. Targeted Skills Training - The purpose of targeted skills training is to address specific labour market demands. Activities will include the Provision of short, employment-centric skills training that is aligned with jobseekers' career goals.

4. Client Advocacy and Liaison - The purpose of providing client advocacy and liaison services is to bridge the gap between jobseekers and employers.

Activities will include:

- Acting as intermediaries.
- Identifying job openings.
- Connecting jobseekers with potential employers.
- Facilitating training opportunities aligned with clients' profiles.

5. Financial Assistance: The purpose of providing SICAP financial assistance is to remove immediate barriers to employment or training. This will include the provision of targeted financial support, grants to cover the costs related to training or certification when possible and to assist with transportation or other essential expenses where appropriate and eligible

6. Employer Engagement: The purpose of employer engagement is to create job placement opportunities. Activities will include SICAP job coach and mentors actively engaging with local employers, scouting relevant job openings, promoting jobseeker profiles and facilitating job placements.

### Target Group/Area

Target Group	People living in households that are jobless or are in low-paid and/or precarious employment
Target Group	People who are long-term unemployed

### KPI Targets

KPI 1: Total number of Local Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Networks supported	0
KPI 2: Total number of Individuals (aged 15 years and up) supported on a one-to-one basis	83

### Action Outcomes

Cultivating Careers/ActionOutcome/001
Cultivating Careers/ActionOutcome/002
Cultivating Careers/ActionOutcome/003
Cultivating Careers/ActionOutcome/004
Cultivating Careers/ActionOutcome/005
Cultivating Careers/ActionOutcome/006

<b>Action Costs</b>	<b>€10,650.60</b>
<b>Total Goal 1</b>	
SICAP	
<b>Total Goal 2</b>	€10,650.60
SICAP	€10,650.60

### Collaborative Partners

<b>Partner</b>
National Learning Network (NLN)

### LECP Objectives

1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.1 - To reduce the levels of poverty being experienced
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.2 - Increased levels of employment and employability
3. Resilience - SCO 3.3 - To Address the Specific Needs of Particular Groups

## Goal 2.4 Cultural Crossroads

### Action Details

#### Targeted location within CAB/Lot

Mosney (or local surrounding areas that can service Mosney such as Laytown, Bettystown, Julianstown), Navan, Gormanstown, Kells, Oldcastle and Athboy

#### Rationale

The Cultural Crossroads action is designed to support refugees and new community members in overcoming significant challenges, beginning with the hurdle of language barriers. The SICAP team, trained by Fáilte Isteach, will provide foundational, conversational, and occupational English courses, supplemented by external translators when needed, to ensure effective communication.

To address broader needs, Personal Action Plans tailored to individual circumstances will be developed, which will focus on education, vocational training, and employment opportunities that align with each person's skills and goals. One-to-one coaching and mentoring will guide clients in making informed life decisions, reflected in their personalised action plans.

Further support includes collaborating with the Meath Volunteer Centre for short-term work experiences and engaging clients in EU-funded Erasmus+ projects for a more comprehensive educational experience. The Cultural Crossroads action will offer CV clinics and community integration workshops countywide. The action will also network with local employers to fill vacancies, supporting workplace diversity.

Recognising the importance of accessible transportation, particularly for those in remote areas, the action will coordinate with Flexibus and the Meath Volunteer Centre to provide flexible transport solutions, along with financial aid for obtaining learner's permits and driver training.

This initiative addresses critical needs identified through ongoing engagement with refugees, such as language acquisition, educational and social service access, certification of skills, reliable transportation, and meaningful employment. The action will also provide information on local resources and rights in Ireland, emphasising the need for grassroots involvement to positively integrate these communities into the broader social and economic fabric of Co. Meath.

In partnership with the Meath Louth Joint Integration Forum and the Community Response Forum, the action will work to enhance interagency and community responses to integration challenges faced by migrants and refugees.

#### Objectives of this action

N/A

#### Description

Throughout 2024, the Cultural Crossroads action will deliver the following activities:

- Host pre-development events to raise awareness about the Cultural Crossroads action, engaging with potential clients, community leaders, and stakeholders, using these events to showcase success stories and build enthusiasm.
- Conducting of initial needs assessments to identify potential clients within the community for the Cultural Crossroads action, collaborating with local community organisations, schools, and social services to pinpoint individuals who may be marginalised or facing social exclusion.
- Creation of Personal Action Plans for each client that evaluates their current circumstances and sets out tailored and personalised objectives, using the SMART methodologies to define their objectives.
- Offer comprehensive support services for jobseekers from within the target groups including individual consultations, group workshops, targeted skills training, client advocacy, financial assistance, and employer engagement to enhance employment opportunities and meet labour market demands.
- Organise regular group sessions and workshops that address common challenges faced by migrants and their families. Topics may include language classes, cultural orientation, financial literacy, and mental health awareness. These workshops will encourage peer support and networking among participants.
- Development of specialised training modules based on identified needs. Examples include vocational training, entrepreneurship skills, and intercultural communication. SICAP will collaborate with Meath Partnerships Training and Education Department and with external trainers to deliver this content.

- Collaboration with other organisations working on migrant integration and advocate for policies that promote inclusion, equal opportunities, and anti-discrimination.

### Target Group/Area

Target Group	International Protection Applicants
Focus Area	Refugee and migrant rights and integration

### KPI Targets

KPI 1: Total number of Local Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Networks supported	0
KPI 2: Total number of Individuals (aged 15 years and up) supported on a one-to-one basis	26

### Action Outcomes

- Cultural Crossroads/ActionOutcome/001
- Cultural Crossroads/ActionOutcome/002
- Cultural Crossroads/ActionOutcome/003
- Cultural Crossroads/ActionOutcome/004
- Cultural Crossroads/ActionOutcome/005
- Cultural Crossroads/ActionOutcome/006
- Cultural Crossroads/ActionOutcome/007

<b>Action Costs</b>	<b>€5,242.00</b>
<b>Total Goal 1</b>	
SICAP	
<b>Total Goal 2</b>	€5,242.00
SICAP	€5,242.00

### Collaborative Partners

#### Partner

Meath Volunteer Centre

### LECP Objectives

1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.2 - Increased levels of employment and employability
3. Resilience - SCO 3.3 - To Address the Specific Needs of Particular Groups
4. Flourishing - SCO 4.1 - To Reduce Educational Disadvantage
4. Flourishing - SCO 4.2 - To Further Develop Community Cultural Action

## Goal 2.5 IPA Response Initiative (IPA-RI)

### Action Details

#### Targeted location within CAB/Lot

Kells, Navan, Mosney (our servicing Mosney in surrounding locations; Bettystown, Laytown, Julianstown), Donore, Oldcastle, Athboy & across the county where accommodation centres are located

#### Rationale

As of February 2024, Ireland has welcomed over 100,000 Ukrainian individuals and families, with a significant proportion of these residing in County Meath. The county has experienced a 43% increase in active PPS numbers compared to the previous year, indicating a substantial influx of new arrivals. Through direct engagement with IPA) and refugees, SICAP has identified 38 accommodation centres within Meath, hosting a diverse population of individuals from various countries of origin.

Among these accommodation centres, several have been identified as mixed cultural centres accommodating both IPAs, migrants, and refugees. These centres, including Alverno House, Mosney Village, Dun a Ri House Hotel, San Giovanni House, Lerrigh House, Clongill House, and Collegelands Forge, collectively host approximately 1,249 individuals. Additionally, there are 32 Ukrainian accommodation centres hosting around 1,540 individuals, totalling 2,789 individuals in need of support and integration services.

The rapid influx of new arrivals, including 105 individuals since the beginning of 2024 alone, underscores the urgent need for continued efforts to address their multifaceted challenges. As such, the IP Connect Groups action plan for 2024 is crucial for supporting the integration and wellbeing of these communities. Through collaborative initiatives and targeted interventions, SICAP will aim to address language barriers, access to services, trauma support, employment opportunities, and other essential needs while promoting social cohesion and resilience.

Individual support work under the IPA Response Initiative is critically important. The personalised assistance offered via SICAP allows for tailored interventions that can significantly enhance the integration and wellbeing of new arrivals. Each individual or family comes with unique backgrounds and needs, which more generic supports may not fully address. Individual support work of this nature facilitates a deeper understanding of personal circumstances, enabling SICAP to provide more effective guidance in navigating local support systems, including healthcare, education, and legal services. Such personalised support also assists in identifying specific skills and qualifications of individuals, which can be matched with appropriate employment opportunities, accelerating economic integration.

In our interactions with newly settled communities, we identified an urgent need for early interventions to support IPAs. Through SICAPs collaboration with the Meath Wellness Hub 'Closing the Loop on Social Inclusion' pilot project 2020 – 2023, SICAP IPA clients were supported with access to counselling services and trauma-informed practice interventions and activities. Unfortunately, the conclusion of funding for the Meath Wellness Hub pilot project in December 2023 means we no longer have access to internal counsellors and psychotherapists. As such, we see the need to facilitate the subcontracting of trauma-informed practitioners and psychotherapists, specifically to support IPAs and new arrivals and aim to respond to this need in 2024.

#### Objectives of this action

N/A

#### Description

The needs of new arrivals to Meath are diverse, ranging from language skills support to access to services, trauma and social support, gainful employment, and information on rights granted under temporary protection status in Ireland. Transport remains a pressing concern, particularly in remote accommodation centres lacking adequate public transport links. To address these challenges, SICAPs primary objectives are to provide English language learning opportunities, facilitate personal development planning, and enhance access to education, training, and employment opportunities.

SICAP will focus on filling gaps in English language learning opportunities by providing basic conversational and work-related English language classes. Collaboration with partners such as LMETB and Failte Isteach will be leveraged to expand access to language classes.

SICAP will offer direct coaching and mentoring services to assist individuals in navigating education, training, and employment options. Workshops, special events, and interaction opportunities, including Employment and Education Fair Days, will be organised to provide information on career guidance, wellbeing, and cultural integration. Networking with local employers will facilitate job placements for clients who have been in Ireland for over a year, with a focus on programmes like Tús, while job preparation services will be provided to new arrivals awaiting their status and right to work with their stamp 4 visa. Collaboration with the Meath Volunteer Centre will facilitate short-term work experience placements through volunteering opportunities.

SICAP will continue to deliver CV preparation clinics, integration workshops, and relevant training opportunities identified through local needs analysis. Community development and integration officers will offer holistic, client-centred services on a one to one basis, including job search assistance, CV preparation, and referrals for specific needs. Humanitarian assistance, such as accessing medical appointments and state aid, will also be provided.

In 2024, SICAP plan to facilitate the subcontracting of trauma-informed therapists, specifically to support IPAs and new arrivals. War trauma counselling plays a pivotal role in supporting IPA's for several compelling reasons:

- **Unique Trauma Experience:**
  - War trauma differs significantly from other forms of trauma due to its intensity, duration, and exposure to violence, loss, and displacement.
  - Individuals fleeing war zones often carry profound emotional scars, having witnessed or experienced atrocities, bombings, and the loss of loved ones.
- **Psychological Impact:**
  - PTSD is prevalent among war survivors, characterised by symptoms such as flashbacks, nightmares, anxiety, and hypervigilance. Counselling provides a crucial avenue for applicants to process traumatic memories, manage distress, and regain a sense of control over their lives.
- **Adjustment Challenges:**
  - Displacement to a new country brings about cultural, linguistic, and social challenges. Counselling supports applicants in adapting to their new environment, coping with stressors, and building resilience in the face of adversity.
- **Barriers to Accessing Support:**
  - Stigma surrounding mental health may deter applicants from seeking help due to fear of judgment or discrimination.
  - Language barriers require that counselling services be available in multiple languages to ensure accessibility.
  - IPA's face significant challenges in navigating the complexities of accessing mental health services in what is already an overburdened system.
- **Supporting Integration:**
  - Emotional wellbeing is foundational to successful integration efforts, and trauma counselling plays a crucial role in enhancing applicants' emotional resilience. Through addressing trauma, IPA's are empowered to focus on rebuilding their lives and making positive contributions to their host communities.

Given the sensitive nature of trauma-informed activities and counselling sessions, SICAP recognises the need to subcontract bilingual therapists and practitioners. Alternatively, we may also need to subcontract translators to ensure effective communication between participants and facilitators if language barriers exist.

#### **Additional New Arrivals Funding July 2024:**

SICAP was awarded an additional €28,031 in funding in July 2024. In response to these additional resources, SICAP has identified a pressing need to expand our training offerings under Goal 2 of the IPA Response Initiative, with €20,000 of the additional funding to be allocated towards addressing these needs.



This decision is informed by the high volume of requests and referrals for specific training courses that have emerged over the past year, as well as through direct feedback from the Local Authority Integration Team and the evaluations completed by our clients.

The primary focus of this expansion will be to provide Safe Pass training in various languages, PSA-licensed QQI security training, Start Your Own Business training, and vocational courses in gel nails and brow and lashes. These courses have been consistently highlighted by new arrivals as being key for their personal development and future employment prospects in Ireland. The significant demand for these courses reflects the aspirations of new arrivals to secure meaningful employment and achieve financial independence.

Safe Pass training is particularly important, as it is a mandatory requirement for individuals seeking to work on construction sites and in security roles in Ireland. However, the state examination associated with this training presents a language barrier for many new arrivals. To overcome this, we plan to offer Safe Pass training in multiple languages, with ITA-approved translators providing the necessary support during the training sessions. This approach will ensure that all participants have the opportunity to fully understand the course material and succeed in the exam.

In addition to Safe Pass, there has been a significant demand for PSA-licensed QQI security training. This training is essential for those seeking employment in the security industry, a sector that has shown resilience and growth even in challenging economic times. In offering this training, SICAP will aim to equip new arrivals with the credentials needed to access job opportunities in this sector, which has capacity to provide stable and secure employment.

The Start Your Own Business course is another key offering that will be expanded with the additional funding. Many new arrivals have expressed a strong desire to become entrepreneurs, leveraging skills and experiences from their home countries to establish businesses in Ireland. This course will provide them with the knowledge and support needed to navigate the Irish business landscape, from understanding legal requirements to developing effective business plans.

The vocational courses in gel nails and brow and lashes are also in high demand, particularly among women who wish to enter the beauty industry. These courses offer practical skills that can be immediately applied in the job market, providing a pathway to self-employment or work in established salons. The beauty industry remains a strong and accessible sector for new arrivals, and these courses will help participants to gain the skills necessary to succeed. These are also valuable courses to have for those wishing to find employment in care homes, so that they can provide these additional services to the service users.

To facilitate the delivery of these courses, a portion of the additional funding will be allocated to cover the associated costs. This includes trainers' fees, transport costs for participants to reach the training venues, and expenses related to venue hire and refreshments on training days.

### Target Group/Area

Target Group	International Protection Applicants
Focus Area	Refugee and migrant rights and integration

### KPI Targets

KPI 1: Total number of Local Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Networks supported	0
KPI 2: Total number of Individuals (aged 15 years and up) supported on a one-to-one basis	34

<b>Action Outcomes</b>
IPA Response Initiative (IPA-RI)/ActionOutcome/001
IPA Response Initiative (IPA-RI)/ActionOutcome/002
IPA Response Initiative (IPA-RI)/ActionOutcome/003
IPA Response Initiative (IPA-RI)/ActionOutcome/004

<b>Action Costs</b>	<b>€40,050.40</b>
<b>Total Goal 1</b>	
New Arrivals	
<b>Total Goal 2</b>	€40,050.40
New Arrivals	€40,050.40

<b>Collaborative Partners</b>
<b>Partner</b>
LMETB
Tús

<b>LECP Objectives</b>
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.1 - To reduce the levels of poverty being experienced
1. Wellbeing - SCO 1.2 - Increased levels of employment and employability
3. Resilience - SCO 3.3 - To Address the Specific Needs of Particular Groups
4. Flourishing - SCO 4.1 - To Reduce Educational Disadvantage
4. Flourishing - SCO 4.2 - To Further Develop Community Cultural Action
4. Flourishing - SCO 4.5 - To Increase IT Access for all Groups