

EXPLAINING RECENT TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION APPLICATIONS IN IRELAND

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Abbreviations and terms

CEAS	Common European Asylum System
Dublin III Regulation	an EU regulation that determines the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection. It regulates transfers between Member States, including where an applicant has left one state and applied for international protection in another.
ECRE	European Council on Refugees and Exiles
EEA	European Economic Area
EMN	European Migration Network
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
EU	European Union
EUAA	European Union Asylum Agency
Eurodac	EU system for the comparison of fingerprints of asylum applicants to facilitate the application of the Dublin III Regulation (EU) No 604/2013
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPAS	International Protection Accommodation Service
IPAT	International Protection Appeals Tribunal
IPO	International Protection Office
MEDP	Migration and Economic Development Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
ORAC	Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
TPD	Temporary Protection Directive (2001/55 EC)
UK	United Kingdom
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the first six months of 2022, 6,494 applications for international protection were lodged in Ireland. This marked a significant increase compared to recent years. While there was also an increase in applications across the EU, the increase in Ireland was proportionally larger. Ireland was among a small number of European countries that saw applications rise continuously throughout the first six months of 2022. The report examines the potential drivers behind the increase in Ireland between January and June 2022, which follows a particularly turbulent period globally. It does so through a review of international literature, an analysis of application flows over time and the national composition of the flows as well as through interviews with key stakeholders.

The report identifies seven potential explanations for the increase in applications in the first half of 2022 in Ireland:

1. COVID-19 after-effects and suppressed migration;
2. conditions in countries of origin and first asylum;
3. UK policy changes;
4. secondary movements from other EU Member States;
5. network effects;
6. conditions in and perceptions of Ireland;
7. intervening obstacles and routes to Ireland.

This report found that the main drivers are the after-effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict and conditions in countries of origin and countries where people first seek asylum (e.g., neighbouring countries) and the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Travel restrictions throughout the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted migration, including asylum migration, and there is likely now an element of catch-up migration following two years of suppressed numbers. At the same time, the pandemic had economic impacts in many countries of origin and countries of first asylum that may increase aspirations to migrate. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has caused significant displacement, and, while most of those displaced from Ukraine are covered under the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) and are therefore not counted in asylum statistics, the knock-on effects of the war on neighbouring countries and on socio-economic conditions in many other countries may be contributing to the increase. Both the lifting of travel restrictions and the Russian invasion of Ukraine occurred in the early months of 2022. The fact that international protection applications in Ireland in January were comparable to previous years but significant increases were seen from February onwards indicates that these may be important factors.

The conditions in countries of origin and first asylum, including protracted conflicts,

are another significant factor in explaining the recent increase in applications for international protection made in Ireland. The report identifies that for many of the top nationalities applying for international protection in Ireland, including Somali, Afghan, Ukrainian, Egyptian and Georgian, conditions and conflict in countries of origin are important drivers behind the recent increase in applications.

While these factors explain much of the large increase in numbers, they do not fully explain why Ireland has seen a greater proportional increase in applications than other countries such as the UK or the EU as a whole. The following factors may account for this, as they explore the distribution of international protection applications.

Another factor considered was the changes in policies in the UK and, in particular, the impact of the UK's Migration and Economic Development Plan (MEDP) with Rwanda which aimed to externalise the processing of asylum applications. The report details how both Ireland and the UK have seen significant increases in applications in 2022, and that the UK's policy of creating a hostile environment for 'illegal immigrants' does not appear to be having a deterrent effect in the UK. The increase in the UK is being driven by different nationalities to those in Ireland and by small boats, a type of migration not seen in Ireland. The announcement of the MEDP occurred in April 2022, whereas the increase in Ireland began in February 2022, suggesting that the deal with Rwanda was unlikely to be a significant cause of the increase in Ireland. Nonetheless, the impact of the UK's policies on migration to Ireland may be affecting applications from some nationalities for whom Ireland is in the same destination cluster as the UK. For some nationalities that typically apply for asylum in both Ireland and the UK (e.g., Zimbabwean and South African), the reduction in applications in the UK and the increase in applications in Ireland may reflect a deflection effect from the UK to Ireland. However, these figures are small, and the increase could be related to available travel routes. From the data available, the number of applicants recorded in Ireland as having been previously in the UK also decreased compared to previous years.

A further factor explored is the movement of applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection from other EU Member States to Ireland. The report finds that these movements may explain some of the increase in 2022. There has been a notable increase in beneficiaries of international protection travelling to Ireland from other Member States such as Germany and Greece in recent years. While the reasons for secondary movements of beneficiaries in the EU remain under-studied, family connections and conditions in the first Member State are among the reasons referenced. Data are only available on beneficiaries up to 2021, and, thus, it is difficult to discern the impact of this trend in 2022.

Other potentially influential factors identified were current labour-market shortages in Ireland and a lack of flexibility in the Irish system for issuing employment permits, increased long-term social-network effects due to increased immigration over the past 30 years and a generally positive perception of Ireland. Some of the applications seen in Ireland may also be due to categorical substitution

wherein persons are applying for international protection due to limitations in regular migration pathways. It was found to be unlikely that specific migration, integration or reception policies in Ireland were influencing decisions by asylum applicants.

Lastly, the routes available to travel to Ireland and the intervening obstacles (such as distance and visa requirements) affect application numbers. Ireland is geographically isolated compared to other EU Member States. Ireland's visa requirements differ from those in the Schengen Area and, albeit to a lesser extent, from the UK, and this may affect which nationalities are able to apply in Ireland. Smugglers and the availability of routes will affect where people apply for international protection, a factor which we could not examine with the data available. Routes and intervening obstacles intersect with the other factors examined in the report.

The findings of the report demonstrate that no individual factor fully explains the increase in the first six months of 2022. Instead, it is a result of the confluence of short-term and likely temporary drivers increasing absolute numbers with potentially longer-term drivers changing distribution patterns. Available figures for July to September 2022 indicate that international protection applications have begun to fall since a peak in June 2022.

Predicting trends in applications into the future is difficult, and trends are largely dependent on the actions and responses of various actors, including governments in countries of origin and first asylum, international actors, other countries in the region and the Irish government. Some drivers are likely to be temporary (e.g., the COVID effect, the initial displacement from Ukraine and the impact of labour-market shortages if proposed employment-permit reforms are adopted). Others may be longer-term (e.g., network effects, changing smuggler routes and potential deflection effects from the UK). The acknowledgement that factors driving international protection applications are largely outside the control of national governments means that flexible reception systems are key.

Further research needs to be conducted to better understand the reasons behind the recent increase in applications in Ireland, including interviews with asylum applicants. There is a lack of research specific to the Irish context on this subject, meaning that the literature review had to draw conclusions from other contexts. Further research should examine the experiences of asylum applicants travelling to Ireland and applying for asylum here, and should conduct a more in-depth examination of Ireland in the context of broader EU trends.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Between January and June 2022, just under 6,500 people applied for international protection in Ireland. This was a significant increase on previous years and was 191 per cent higher than the same period in 2019, the most recent year not affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Across the EU, international protection applications increased in the first six months of 2022 compared to the same period in 2019 – from just under 300,000 applications between January and June 2019 to 366,000 applications for January to June 2022. However, the rate of increase in the EU is lower than that seen in Ireland. There has been speculation in the media and by politicians about the potential reasons for Ireland’s increase, including the adoption of hostile immigration policies in the UK and the deal to externalise processing to Rwanda (McGee and Lally, 2021), as well as an increase in applications made by beneficiaries of international protection from other EU Member States (Department of the Taoiseach, 2022). However, there has thus far been no in-depth analysis of the causes behind the recent increase in Ireland. In seeking to better inform current discussions on international protection trends in Ireland, this report examines the period from January to June 2022 and asks, ‘What are the potential drivers behind the recent increase in international protection applications in Ireland?’¹

Migration, and, in particular, forced migration, is highly complex, and, therefore, understanding the factors that cause fluctuations in international protection applications is difficult. Extensive quantitative approaches (e.g., Diop-Christensen and Diop, 2022; Hatton, 2009, 2017, 2020; Neumayer, 2004; Nowak-Lehmann et al., 2022) and qualitative approaches (e.g., Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019; Kuschminder and Waidler, 2020; Müller-Funk, 2019) have been taken to try to answer the question of what causes increases in international protection applications and why they are often highly unevenly distributed.

This research points to an array of relevant factors, relating to conditions in countries of origin and first asylum, policies and characteristics of countries of destination, intervening obstacles, personal factors and the availability of information and smuggler networks. To answer the question posed, we reviewed this literature and applied it to Ireland before analysing the available data based on different factors that emerged from this review. We examined asylum data in Ireland from both historical and comparative perspectives, comparing it with the EU and the UK. To complement our desk research, we conducted qualitative interviews with relevant governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. This

¹ Figures for July, August and September 2022 are also included in this report, although the analysis remains focused on the first six months of 2022.

methodology provides the basis for an evidence-based discussion of the factors behind the current increase.

Historically, Ireland has had low levels of international protection applications compared with other European countries, although it has often followed similar trends (Arnold et al., 2018). Ireland was traditionally a country of emigration, experiencing a migration transition in the 1990s,² later than most European countries (de Haas et al., 2020). As a result, trends and factors behind migration to Ireland remain relatively under-studied.

Beyond its contribution to Irish academic literature, this analysis has current policy relevance in Ireland. In addition to the increase in international protection applications in 2022, by the end of September 2022, Ireland had received just under 55,000 people fleeing Ukraine (CSO, 2022). Although such people mainly fall under the TPD, a separate system to the international protection system, the number of refugees received vastly surpasses any previous number of refugees arriving in Ireland.

A White Paper on Ending Direct Provision, published by the DCEDIY in 2021, proposed a new reception system for international protection applicants, and was based on a figure of 3,500 new applicants per annum (DCEDIY, 2021). As of September 2022, the department is providing accommodation to approximately 50,500 persons, including beneficiaries of temporary protection (Houses of the Oireachtas, 2022). In this context, an improved understanding of the current trends is needed to inform medium- and long-term planning for the reception and processing systems.

The findings of this report demonstrate that no individual factor fully explains the increase between January and June 2022. Instead, it is a result of the confluence of short-term and likely temporary drivers increasing absolute numbers, with potentially longer-term drivers changing distribution patterns. Through an iterative process between data analysis, theory and stakeholder views, we identified seven possible factors as contributing to the recent increase. These are:

1. COVID-19 after-effects and suppressed migration;
2. conditions in countries of origin and first asylum;
3. UK policy changes;
4. secondary movements from other EU Member States;
5. network effects;
6. conditions in and perceptions of Ireland;
7. intervening obstacles and routes to Ireland.

The factors contributing most to the increase appear to be the after-effects of the

² There was a brief period of net immigration in the 1970s, but this reversed following labour-market contraction until the 1990s (Mac Éinrí and White 2008).

COVID-19 pandemic, conflict and conditions in countries of origin and first asylum, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The secondary movements of beneficiaries of international protection from other EU Member States and a deflection effect from the UK for some nationalities also appears to be contributing to the increase. On a smaller scale, longer-term social-network effects and conditions in Ireland may be having an effect on numbers. These six factors intersect with the seventh factor: routes and intervening factors, including smuggler routes and visa regimes.

1.1 METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

In conducting this research, we employed three methods to respond to the research question. First, we conducted a scoping literature review to assess the extent and nature of research evidence pertaining to drivers of asylum applications and asylum applicants' decision-making and destination choices. We then analysed the available data on international protection applications in Ireland, using as a guide the theories developed from the literature review. We then analysed asylum trends in Ireland and the UK for comparative purposes.

Ireland is one of the 27 EU Member States, and, as such, it was relevant to see whether the trends in Ireland are similar to elsewhere in the EU. The UK was examined due to its geographical proximity to Ireland, a shared language and cultural similarities. It was also important to examine the UK's trends given that one of the prevailing narratives was that the increase in Ireland was because of deflection from the UK.

The time frame examined is from 2015 to 2022, which accounts for the increase in applications in 2015 and 2016 across Europe, with a more in-depth focus on the period between 2017 and 2022.³ While the report concentrates on the first six months of 2022, the figures for July to September 2022 have been included as an update to the analysis.

Lastly, four Irish stakeholders (UNHCR Ireland, the Irish Refugee Council, the Department of Justice and IOM Ireland) were interviewed about the key characteristics of the trends in international protection applications over the past five years, the main factors influencing these trends, the quality of information applicants may have had prior to their arrival, and likely future trends in applications. We also received written comments from the International Protection Office (IPO), and we interviewed the European Union Asylum Agency (EUAA) about forecasting methods.

This report examines people who apply for asylum in Ireland. As people fleeing the war in Ukraine fall under the TPD, which is a separate system to the international protection system, they are not examined within the scope of this research, except

³ Focus-country selection was adapted during the research in light of emerging findings.

for where they apply for asylum.

A limitation of this report is that interviews were not conducted with international protection applicants or beneficiaries. This is principally due to the short time frame in which this research was conducted. We ensured that studies involving qualitative interviews with this group were well represented in the literature review, and recommend that future research endeavour to consult applicants and beneficiaries.

CHAPTER 2

Ireland in context

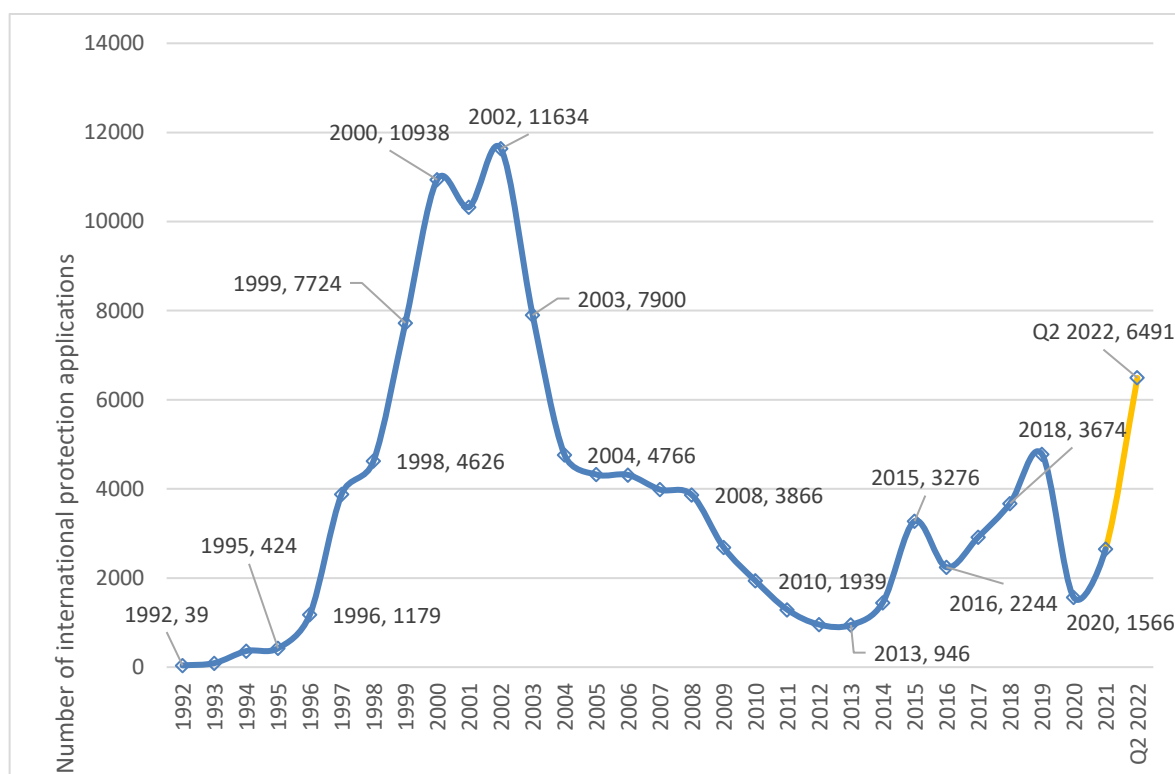
2.1 KEY TRENDS IN IRELAND

The number of applications for international protection lodged in Ireland in the first half of 2022 show a marked increase on previous years and are higher than the annual figures for applications since 2004.⁴ Nonetheless, the recent increase is not unprecedented. A similar increase was seen in the late 1990s and early 2000s (see Fig. 2.1).⁵ Application numbers subsequently dropped, but they began to increase again between 2014 and 2019, with a small peak in 2015. However, the numbers remained much lower than elsewhere in the EU in the same period (Arnold et al., 2018). In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and the related public-health measures impacted on application numbers, but since 2021 applications have been trending upwards.⁶

4 Correspondence with the International Protection Office (IPO), July 2022. The June 2022 figure is provisional.

5 Two of the top nationalities applying for asylum in those years were Nigerian and Romanian. For a discussion of trends in those years, see Quinn 2005.

6 For an overview of the international protection procedure in Ireland, see: EMN Ireland, 'Overview of new application process under International Protection Act 2015', www.emn.ie/legislation-flowchart

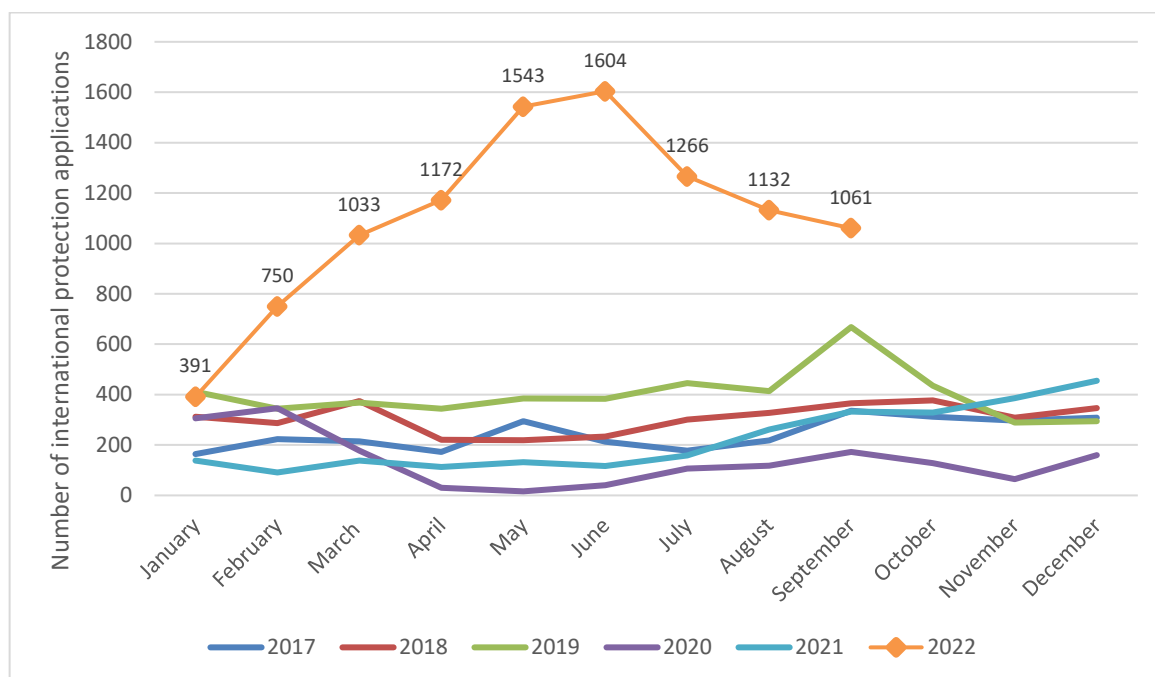
FIGURE 2.1 IRELAND: ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION APPLICATIONS (1992–Q2 2022)

Sources: Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner, 'Statistics', www.orac.ie/website/orac/oracwebsite.nsf/page/orac-stats-en; IPO, 'Statistics', www.ipo.gov.ie/en/ipo/pages/statistics. Correspondence with the IPO, July 2022.

Note: These figures include Ukrainian nationals who applied for asylum but excludes persons who fled from Ukraine following the Russian invasion on 24 February 2022 who fall under the TPD.

Monthly figures for international protection applications tell a similar story but show that the number lodged in June 2022 was the highest monthly number of applications across the whole period analysed (since January 2001). As shown in Figure 2.2, while January 2022 figures are comparable to January in previous years, from February 2022 onwards the number of applications increases significantly.

The profile of applicants has remained quite similar in recent years. Between 2017 and 2021, applicants have tended to be male (64 per cent on average), and 25 per cent of applicants were under the age of 18 for the same period. In 2022, the profile remained broadly similar, but there was a slight increase in male applicants (to 67 per cent) and a decrease in the number of applicants under 18 (to 18 per cent). The nationalities of applicants are discussed in Chapter 4.

FIGURE 2.2 IRELAND: MONTHLY INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION APPLICATIONS (JANUARY 2017–AUGUST 2022)

Source: IPO, 'Statistics', www.ipo.gov.ie/en/ipo/pages/statistics. Correspondence with the IPO, July and November 2022.

Applications increased by 90 per cent from January to February 2022 and by 38 per cent from February to March. The percentage increase was lower thereafter, and June 2022 saw the highest number of applications in 2022. In July, application numbers dropped to 1,266, and by September 2022 they had dropped to 1,061 (Fig. 2.2).⁷

2.2 KEY TRENDS IN THE EU AND THE UK

The trends across the EU and in the UK are different to those in Ireland. In the EU as a whole, the figures for international protection applications in the first six months of 2022 are higher than preceding years but not as high as for the same period in 2015 and 2016 (Fig. 2.3).⁸ However, in the UK and in particular in Ireland, the international protection applications lodged in the first six months in 2022 are higher than the same period in the preceding six years. The increase seen in Ireland in the first six months of 2022 was much greater than that experienced in the EU overall, as well as in the UK, when compared with the first six months of 2019. While Ireland saw a 191 per cent increase in applications between these periods, the UK (a historically more popular destination country) experienced a 61 per cent increase, and the EU only experienced an 18 per cent increase on average.

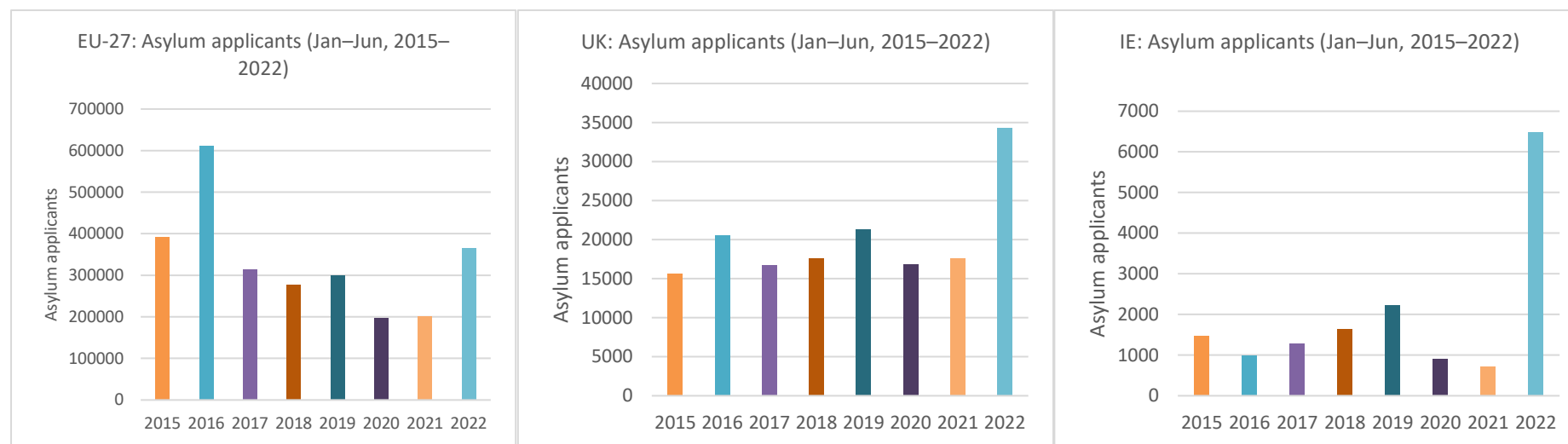
⁷ Correspondence with the IPO, November 2022.

⁸ The EU figures include Ireland. However, as Ireland has only made up less than 1 per cent of applications up to 2021 and just below 2 per cent in 2022, the general trend remains the same.

In the EU, monthly applications between January and June 2022 show a different pattern to Ireland, with more fluctuation at the EU level. While monthly figures increased across the whole of the EU between January and March (with the highest monthly figure since the beginning of 2017 seen in March 2022), applications fell substantially in April before increasing again in May through to June. In contrast, in Ireland, figures increased steadily throughout the first six months of 2022, as demonstrated when comparing Figures 2.2 and 2.4.

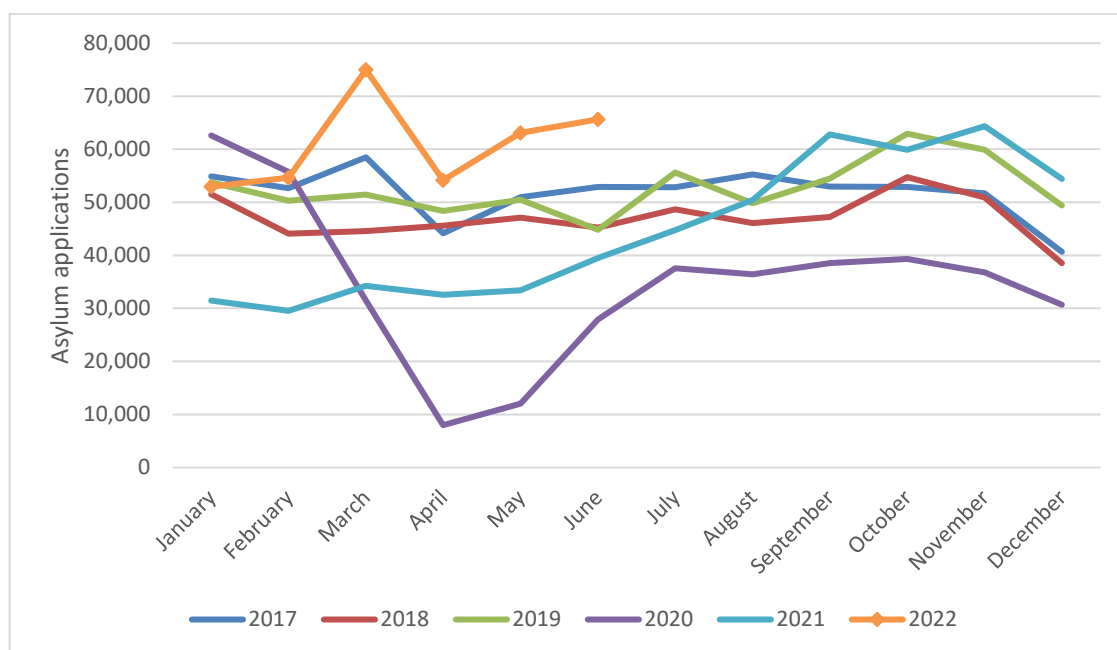
The number of applications in Ireland has historically accounted for a small percentage of the total number of applications lodged across all 27 Member States. Between 2017 and 2021, the applications in Ireland accounted for less than 1 per cent of first-time applications in the EU in each year (ranging from 0.37 per cent to 0.75 per cent). However, between January and June 2022, this proportion rose to 1.9 per cent, showing a marked change on previous years.

Some EU countries that typically see high numbers of asylum applications have not seen the same month-on-month rise in applications as in Ireland. For example, comparing June 2022 applications with January 2022, Germany saw applications drop by 22 per cent. Similarly, France has not seen a significant increase in applications, with only an 11 per cent increase when comparing the same period. Other typically high-receiving EU countries, such as Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Belgium, tend to track the average EU trend more closely.

FIGURE 2.3 ASYLUM APPLICANTS IN EU-27 MEMBER STATES, UK AND IRELAND FOR JANUARY TO JUNE, 2015–2022

Sources: Eurostat. *Asylum applicants by type of applicant, citizenship, age and sex – monthly data (rounded) [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZM]*. Data extracted 27 September 2022. Figures for first-time applicants used. Home Office, *Immigration Statistics, year ending June 2022*, www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-june-2022; IPO, 'Statistics', www.ipo.gov.ie/en/ipo/pages/statistics. Correspondence with the IPO, July 2022.

Note: UK figures include main applicant and dependants for purposes of comparability. The EU figures include Ireland. However, as Ireland has only made up less than 1 per cent of applications up to 2021 and just below 2 per cent in 2022, the general trend remains the same.

FIGURE 2.4 FIRST-TIME ASYLUM APPLICATIONS IN THE EU-27 (JANUARY 2017 TO JUNE 2022)

Source: Eurostat. *Asylum applicants by type of applicant, citizenship, age and sex – monthly data (rounded) [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZM]*. Data extracted 27 September 2022. Figures for first-time applicants used.

Ireland is among only a small number of European countries that saw a general month-on-month rise in asylum applications across the whole period (see Appendix I). The other countries experiencing similar month-on-month increases were Austria (with applications 185 per cent higher in June compared to January), Cyprus (up 74 per cent), Croatia (up 280 per cent), and Slovenia (up 41 per cent). However, the lack of geographic proximity of these countries or other patterns, including different nationalities applying for asylum, indicates that the increases may be caused by different drivers. The Baltic States also saw increases in asylum applications, and this appears to be driven by applications by Russian and Belarussian nationals.⁹

In the UK, the trends of asylum applications have historically been similar to those in the EU, including key developments such as the increase in 2015 and the drop in applications during the COVID-19 pandemic. In late 2021, the UK saw a pronounced increase in applications: up 36 per cent on 2019 figures. This was different to the trend seen in the EU as well as in Ireland for the same period. Nonetheless, like Ireland, the UK saw a significant increase through the first six months of 2022. Between January and June 2022, 34,386 applicants were registered in the UK, compared to 21,304 for the same period in 2019.¹⁰

⁹ Eurostat, *Asylum applicants by type of applicant, citizenship, age and sex – monthly data (rounded) [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZM]*. Data extracted 27 September 2022. Figures for first-time applicants used.

¹⁰ Home Office, *Immigration Statistics, year ending June 2022*, www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-june-2022

2.3 CONCLUSION

The January–June 2022 increase in Ireland is a significant change from previous years but is not unprecedented when compared to the early 2000s. In the EU, only a few Member States experienced a similar trend to that seen in Ireland. The UK also saw a significant increase in applicants, albeit earlier than in Ireland, beginning in Q4 2021. This report now explores what might explain the increase seen in Ireland in the first half of 2022 through a literature review on the drivers of forced migration and destination selection and an exploration of seven potential explanations for the increase.

CHAPTER 3

PREVIOUS EVIDENCE ON DRIVERS OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION APPLICATIONS

Decisions about whether to migrate and where and how to do so are highly complex – a reality that is sometimes ignored in policy and in mainstream and even some academic conversations about migration. One example of this is a tendency to distinguish between forced and voluntary migration. However, migration should be conceived of as a spectrum rather than a strict dichotomy between legal categories such as refugees and labour migrants, with most individuals who fit into traditional definitions of ‘refugee’ moving for a variety of protection and non-protection related reasons (Crawley, 2010; McAuliffe and Jayasuriya, 2016; Müller-Funk, 2019). Another example is that while migration is often perceived as a movement from origin to destination, the reality is that, particularly for asylum applicants, migration is a process with multiple stages. Migration decision-making is dynamic and often changes along the way (Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019; Kuschminder, 2018a, 2018b; Kuschminder et al., 2015; Kuschminder and Waidler, 2020; Müller-Funk, 2019), with multiple decisions involved in the process. Migrants should therefore be perceived as continually assessing and reassessing migration options along their journeys.

Another important point is that asylum applicants and refugees are not a homogenous group although they are sometimes treated as such, in particular in quantitative research studies. Findings about reasons to migrate and migration journeys often vary by nationality (Brekke and Aarset, 2009; Crawley, 2010; Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019; Glorius and Nienaber, 2022; McAuliffe, 2017; Suzuki, 2020), and within nationalities. In acknowledgement of the complexity of migration, this literature review goes beyond simplistic push–pull models, which, while sometimes useful, give little insight into the real complexities of migration (de Haas, 2011; de Haas et al., 2019, 2020.¹¹ Instead, we use the aspirations–capabilities framework where relevant. We loosely follow Lee’s (1966) division of factors relating to country of origin, factors relating to destination country, intervening factors and personal factors.

3.1 COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

The main factors relating to countries of origin that determine asylum emigration

¹¹ Push–pull models identify various factors that ‘push’ people from origin countries and ‘pull’ them towards destination countries. Their explanatory power is limited because they fail to explain many aspects of migration, such as why most people who are subjected to the same factors do not migrate or why countries usually experience both emigration and immigration simultaneously. This is in part because they do not acknowledge structural forces that affect migration processes (such as available information, historical links, economic constraints), and both overestimate and underestimate the agency of individuals, seeing them as perfectly rational with full information and no resource or social constraints and as mechanically responding to external factors. For a full discussion, see de Haas (2011) and de Haas et al. (2020).

are conflict and economic factors. There is relative consensus within the literature that the factor with the greatest impact for displacement of refugee populations and increasing asylum claims is conflict and security threats (de Haas et al., 2019; Hatton, 2009, 2017, 2020; James and Mayblin, 2016; Kang, 2021; McAuliffe, 2017; Nowak-Lehmann et al., 2022). Some forms of repression seem to be more influential than others, for example terrorism (Brekke et al., 2017), internal conflict and ethnic tensions (Nowak-Lemann et al., 2022), although findings differ based on methodologies. It is important to note that while contextual factors may remain the same, the decision to move is usually made based on an individual trigger – often a specific security threat or incident against an individual or their family, the loss of someone close, or a threat to home or employment (Adhikari, 2013; McAuliffe, 2017; Müller-Funk, 2019).

This links with findings from both qualitative and quantitative research that, aside from what might be deemed ‘push’ factors, economic factors and the perception that a ‘good life’ is possible in the country are highly influential on migration aspirations (Brekke et al., 2017; Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019; Hatton, 2020; Müller-Funk, 2019; Nowak-Lehmann et al., 2022; Ruhe et al., 2021; Suzuki, 2020; cf. Pedersen et al., 2008). In general (not specific to asylum migration), it is relative poverty (i.e., income inequality) that has the biggest impact on migration aspirations (de Haas et al., 2019; Quinn, 2006; Stark et al., 2009; Stark and Taylor, 1989), in particular vertical inequality within ethnic groups (i.e., socio-economic inequality within an ethnic group as opposed to horizontal inequality between different ethnic groups) (Czaika and de Haas, 2013; de Haas et al., 2019). Also relevant from general migration research is the finding that economic shocks can lead to a ‘migration hump’, where an immediate increase in migration is observed that then returns to previous levels (de Haas et al., 2019). It should be noted that while negative economic trends in the origin country may increase aspirations, they may also decrease capabilities to migrate, indicating that they will have a non-linear effect on migration (de Haas et al., 2020).

3.2 COUNTRIES OF FIRST ASYLUM

The majority (83 per cent) of refugees are hosted in low- or middle-income (often neighbouring) countries, a percentage that has increased in recent decades (de Haas et al., 2019). Despite popular narratives, many refugees do not want to leave (Kuschminder, 2018a; Müller-Funk, 2019). We must therefore examine the determinants of decisions to leave countries of first asylum to understand drivers of asylum applications. The most prevalent factors identified by the literature review were conditions in the country of first asylum and the perception of opportunities elsewhere. Even where countries of first asylum were intended as destinations, poor conditions, the inability to make a living and a lack of safety can lead to onward migration aspirations (Crawley, 2010; Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019; Glorius and Nienaber, 2022; Kuschminder and Waidler, 2020; Müller-Funk, 2019; Zimmermann, 2010). On the other hand, integration and access to rights in

countries of first asylum, the perception of closer cultural affinities, the hope of return, the ability to remain close to family, employment and easier access to labour markets can increase aspirations to stay (Müller-Funk, 2019; Torfa et al., 2022).

As noted by de Haas (2011), aspirations are often a result of perceived differences in opportunities, meaning that the perception of other countries is also an important factor. Whether a country was the initial destination can be influential, indicating the subjective element of decision-making regardless of contextual factors (Kuschminder and Waidler, 2020). Negative perceptions of traditional 'destination' countries can also be influential (e.g., regarding professional opportunities, sociability, cultural differences and family relations) (Müller-Funk, 2019). Hatton (2020) found that movements beyond the country of first asylum were related to the locations of previous migrants, indicating the importance of networks to both aspirations and capabilities. The perception of more religious or ethnic tolerance can also be influential (Collyer, 2004).

3.3 COUNTRY OF DESTINATION/SECONDARY ASYLUM

Not all who migrate to apply for asylum do so with particular countries in mind (McAuliffe, 2017); the prevalence of this seems to differ based on origin countries (Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019). Multiple factors along the journey and prior to the journey therefore determine where individuals end up. Those identified through the literature are: social networks, economic factors, policies (in the ultimate destination and in neighbouring countries), historical and cultural links and perceptions and information sources.

Numerous studies point to the presence of others from the same country as the most significant factor in destination choice, attesting to the power of social networks (Andersson and Jutvik, 2022; Brekke and Aarset, 2009; Brekke et al., 2017; Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019; Dekker et al., 2018; Glorius and Nienaber, 2022; Hatton, 2017, 2020; Kuschminder, 2018a; Moore and Shellman, 2007; Neumayer, 2004; Pedersen et al., 2008; Robinson and Segrott, 2002; Tucker, 2018; cf. Collyer, 2004; Crawley, 2010; Keogh, 2013). Pedersen et al. (2008) found that these network effects were most important for asylum applicants coming from the poorest source countries. Crucially, acquaintances or weak social relationships also play a role in ultimate destinations, and Crawley and Hagen-Zanker (2019) found that chance encounters along the route, either with someone who gives information or with agents who provide opportunities to migrate to specific countries, can entirely change the destination (see also Kuschminder, 2018a; Glorius and Nienaber, 2022). While social networks can significantly impact aspirations as well as capabilities, the degree of influence this has in the final destination is heavily constrained by barriers to entry (Crawley, 2010).

A significant body of quantitative research has tried to estimate the impact of economic indicators in the country of destination on asylum applications, with often contradictory results. Most research indicates that higher GDP correlates

with higher numbers of asylum applications (Brekke et al. 2017; Kang, 2021; Keogh, 2013; Neumayer, 2004), although some find the opposite (Pedersen et al., 2008; Suzuki, 2020). Results about unemployment rates are similarly inconclusive (Hatton, 2004; Kang, 2021; Neumayer, 2004; Nowak-Lehmann et al., 2022; Pedersen et al., 2008; Suzuki, 2020). Neumayer (2004) also found that the level of total social-welfare expenditure in the destination country is not statistically significant.

Similarly, extensive research has tried to assess the impact of specific policies on asylum flows, in light of discourse that aims to deter asylum applicants through policies restricting access, welfare or processing (Hatton, 2020) and that reflects perceptions that asylum-seekers come to access generous welfare benefits. However, measuring the impact of policies is notoriously difficult because multiple policies are often adopted at once (Crawley, 2010; Zetter et al., 2003) and policy and asylum applications are often endogenous (Andersson and Jutvik, 2022; Suzuki, 2020).¹² In index-based research (which combine multiple policy indicators), Thielemann (2003) and Brekke et al. (2017) both found that policies were not a significant predictor of asylum applications.

The literature indicates that restrictive pre-entry policies have significant impacts on the ability to access the territory to apply for asylum (Crawley, 2010; Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019; Kuschminder, 2018a; Tucker, 2018; cf. Brekke et al., 2017). However, restrictive welfare policies for asylum applicants once they arrive seem to have no impact (Böcker and Havinga, 1998; Crawley, 2010; Diop-Christensen and Diop, 2022; Ferwerda et al., forthcoming; Hatton 2004, 2009, 2017, 2020; Pedersen et al., 2008; Zetter et al., 2003). Process-related policies and practices seem to be more important. Recognition rates, for example, seem to affect application numbers (Brekke et al., 2017; Crawley, 2010; Diop-Christensen and Diop, 2022; Keogh, 2013; Neumayer, 2004), although the potential endogeneity of this should be noted.¹³ Processing times, the inclusion of countries on safe-countries-of-origin lists and the type of permit granted also seem to impact asylum applications (Bertoli et al., 2022; Andersson and Jutvik, 2022). This has been interpreted to mean that what matters most to applicants is the prospect of gaining permanent settlement and security, regardless of the short-term hardships (Hatton, 2020; Ponce, 2019; Diop-Christensen and Diop, 2022). Others have found that the most important policies for interviewed asylum applicants were family-reunification policies (Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019; McAuliffe, 2017; Tucker, 2018; Diop-Christensen and Diop, 2022), which also indicates that the prospects of permanent settlement are important.

It should be noted that most of the quantitative research studies on this subject analyse the number of asylum applications as the outcome to be explained.

¹² Because more restrictive policies are often adopted in response to higher asylum applications.

¹³ Endogeneity as used here refers to instances where the outcome of process also influences factors used to predict it – in this context, endogeneity arises because recognition rates likely reflect the conflict context and could also be the result of bilateral relationships between the country or other policies.

However, these fail to account for substitution effects. For example, research has shown that restrictive policy practices can also significantly decrease return or cyclical migration (Czaika and de Haas, 2013), thereby increasing the overall population from an origin country, and also often increases the inflows of irregular migrants (Brekke et al., 2017; Czaika and Hobolth, 2016), indicating that many people find ways to enter the country anyway. Another side effect is intertemporal substitution, or ‘now or never’ migration whereby the anticipation of a restrictive policy increases migration in the short term, as people who otherwise might have waited want to migrate before the policy comes into effect (de Haas et al., 2019). The actual impacts of these policies are therefore difficult to predict by looking at official inflow statistics only. Another significant drawback of this methodology is that it assumes people’s final destinations were also their preferred destinations, which has been contradicted by a substantial body of qualitative literature (see below).

The policies of neighbouring countries also seem to affect numbers of asylum applications, with evidence that restrictive policies in one country can lead to increased applications in neighbouring countries, a phenomenon known as ‘deflection’ (Brekke and Aarset, 2009; Brekke et al., 2017; Diop-Christensen and Diop, 2022). However, similar to the findings about policies in general, some policies seem to matter more than others. Diop-Christensen and Diop (2022) found that recognition rates and family-reunification policies led to deflection effects but that permanent-residence policies and the amount of social assistance did not.¹⁴ One key caveat from this research is that these effects tend to only operate within destination clusters, meaning groups of receiving countries that historically had been selected by asylum applicants from a given origin (Brekke et al., 2017; Diop-Christensen and Diop, 2022). This caveat relates to another key factor in destination selection, which is that of historical and cultural links, in particular colonial ties (Crawley, 2010; de Haas et al., 2019; Hatton, 2020; Moore and Shellman, 2007; Neumayer, 2004; Pedersen et al., 2008; Thielemann, 2003; cf. Collyer, 2004; Kang, 2021). Some older studies found that this was the most significant influence (Böcker and Havinga, 1998), though there is some evidence that migration is increasingly moving out of these traditional patterns (Collyer, 2004; de Haas et al., 2019; Matsui and Raymer, 2020), possibly due to increasingly restrictive entry policies that limit the impact of preference (Crawley, 2010).

3.4 INTERVENING OBSTACLES, PERSONAL FACTORS AND LIMITS TO DECISION-MAKING

Intervening obstacles such as distance, border control, physical barriers or visa regimes impact significantly on migration decisions and the migration journey (Andersson and Jutvik, 2022; Hatton, 2020; Kang, 2021; Neumayer, 2004; Pedersen et al., 2008). These obstacles often constrain decision-making.

¹⁴ NB: family reunification policies’ deflection effect did not remain robust under some sensitivity analyses.

Personal characteristics also play a key role in determining if, how and where people move. Gender, socio-economic status, family status, nationality, languages spoken and many other intersecting traits influence both capabilities and aspirations (Crawley, 2010; Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019; Glorius and Nienaber, 2022; Kuschminder and Waidler, 2020; Müller-Funk, 2019). As Lee (1966) notes, the same context in an origin country and information about a destination country can be perceived as positive, negative or neutral by different people. Individuals' legal situations also impact decisions: McAuliffe and Jayasuriya (2016) found that those who were already displaced prioritised safety more than others, and Tucker (2018) found that stateless Palestinian refugees saw Sweden as a major destination because of relatively accessible citizenship (i.e., a naturalisation regime that made it easier to obtain citizenship than other countries), which mattered to them more than to those who were not stateless.

An important qualifier, therefore, is that the most important factor for migration decision-making is not necessarily the objective situation but instead the perception among asylum applicants of the situation, many of whom get their information mainly from family and friends (Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019; Donini et al., 2016; Glorius and Nienaber, 2022; Kuschminder, 2018a, 2018b; McAuliffe, 2017). Qualitative research emphasised that asylum applicants often knew little or nothing about the asylum process or policies before arriving, even for their explicit preferred destination (Collyer, 2004; Crawley, 2010; Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019; Gilbert and Koser, 2006; Glorius and Nienaber, 2022; McAuliffe, 2017; Neumayer, 2004; Robinson and Segrott, 2002; c.f. Tucker, 2018). Malakooti (2013) found that the quality of information from social networks is particularly poor because there is a reluctance to share negative information about their life and the destination country with family and friends back home. A general perception of the country as welcoming appeared to be most influential, which often was not affected even when repressive policies are brought in (Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019; McAuliffe, 2017; McAuliffe and Jayasuriya, 2016; Kuschminder, 2018a; Torfa et al., 2022).

While many asylum applicants seem to have destinations in mind, research into the role of agents (i.e., smugglers) has shown that many asylum applicants had only limited say in their ultimate destination (Crawley, 2010; Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019; Koser and Pinkerton, 2002; McAuliffe, 2017; McAuliffe and Jayasuriya, 2016; Zimmermann, 2010; cf. Brekke and Aarset, 2009; Collyer, 2004; Glorius and Nienaber, 2022). For others, their families made the decision about their destination (Brekke and Aarset, 2009; McAuliffe, 2017; McAuliffe and Jayasuriya, 2016; Torfa et al., 2022; Zimmermann, 2010).

Torfa et al. (2022) found that the chief decision-maker can also change at different stages in migration journeys. Other research has found that even where asylum applicants have a choice of destination, information received from agents or smugglers about policies, conditions and routes often plays a key role in this choice (Crawley, 2010; McAuliffe, 2017; Zimmermann, 2010). For others, destinations may result from opportunities that arise on the journey (Crawley, 2010). Any

discussion of destination selection needs to be made with these limits in mind.

3.5 CONCLUSION

Overall, some key factors emerge from the literature on determinants of asylum flows and destination choices. However, certain caveats apply: findings are often contradictory depending on variables and methodologies used, countries of origin and where people are interviewed or surveyed. Additionally, none of the studies are based on Ireland. Nonetheless, it is evident that conflict in origin countries is the dominant driving factor of changes in asylum applications. It is also clear that economic conditions in origin countries impact migration decisions, although likely in non-linear ways. Similarly, in determining migration from first countries of asylum, economic conditions, rights, integration and subjectively good living conditions in those countries as well as the perception of opportunities elsewhere are dominant. Notably, many people do not want to move on from these countries and try to make a living in first countries of asylum. Conditions and treatment in these countries are therefore key factors in secondary movements.

Literature exploring conditions in destination countries also showed some clear factors, including social networks as well as historical and cultural factors. The literature on economic factors in countries of destination was inconclusive, with contradictory findings, differing from the literature on labour migration. In terms of migration/integration and welfare policies in the destination country, a key finding is that knowledge of policy is often limited among asylum applicants and the general perception of a country appears to matter more. Sources of information about policy also tend to be of poor quality, and asylum applicants usually depend on information from family and friends or from social media, which often do not reflect reality. However, research has shown that restrictive pre-entry policies have a clear impact on asylum applications because they prevent people from accessing the territory to apply for asylum. On the other hand, findings on processing trends such as recognition rates are less conclusive but indicate that the prospect of secure settlement is influential, and welfare policies once asylum applicants arrive do not appear to have any impact on applications. There is evidence of a deflection effect between countries within the same destination cluster. Intervening obstacles and personal factors also play significant roles in both aspirations and capabilities to migrate.

CHAPTER 4

Exploration of explanatory factors

From the literature review, stakeholder interviews, descriptive data analysis and desk research, we identified seven key explanatory factors that are likely to be influencing international protection application numbers in Ireland. As described above, these factors are: catch-up migration following COVID-19 travel restrictions, conflict and conditions in countries of origin and first asylum, including the Russian invasion of Ukraine and its knock-on effects, UK policy changes, secondary movements of international protection applicants and beneficiaries, social-network effects and conditions in Ireland. Intervening obstacles such as visa requirements and facilitators including smugglers intersect with all of these factors and are therefore analysed as a seventh factor.

4.1 COVID-19, TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS AND CATCH-UP MIGRATION

The COVID-19 pandemic, and the measures taken to combat it, led to significant decreases in all types of international migration (EMN Ireland, 2021; McAuliffe et al., 2021). Ireland, the UK and the EU all saw decreases in asylum application numbers in 2020 and into 2021. This is likely a result of ‘forced immobility’ (McAuliffe et al., 2021), whereby potential applicants were prevented from leaving their countries of origin and entering or leaving the intended countries of transit or destination (see also EMN, 2020a, 2020b). The increase in applications for international protection in Ireland, particularly from February 2022 onwards, may therefore be explained as a form of catch-up migration following almost two years of forced immobility.

The extent to which asylum-application figures decreased and increased during the COVID-19 pandemic varied between EU Member States. In general, in the EU, as well as in Ireland and in the UK, there was a drop in applications during the initial lockdowns implemented from March 2020, with particularly low numbers in April and May 2020. There was an increase from summer 2020 with the lifting of some restrictions and then a second drop in applications in late 2020 and early 2021. Thereafter, application numbers increased in the EU, the UK and Ireland. However, some EU Member States did not see their application numbers drop as sharply as others, including Ireland, during the initial lockdowns of March and April 2020. This includes Sweden, Germany and Austria. Other EU Member States saw sharp returns to pre-pandemic application figures in the summer of 2020, including Bulgaria, Croatia, the Netherlands, Spain, France, Italy, Romania and Slovenia; however, the figures fluctuated thereafter.¹⁵

¹⁵ Eurostat, Asylum applicants by type of applicant, citizenship, age and sex – monthly data (rounded) [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZM]. Data extracted 27 September 2022. Figures for first-time applicants used.

In Ireland, the initial lockdown, which began in March 2020, resulted in a drop in applications to 30 applications in April 2020 and 16 in May 2020, from a pre-pandemic figure of 340 applications in February 2020. The number of applications only returned to pre-pandemic levels in August 2021. Part of the COVID-19 restrictions implemented throughout the two years included the suspension of visa-processing for all but emergency visas until September 2021 and borders were intermittently closed and opened to different nationalities (Sheridan et al., 2022). From the end of January through to March 2022, many of the restrictions began to be lifted in Ireland,¹⁶ as well as in the EU¹⁷ and the UK.¹⁸

One explanation for the increase in applications in Ireland 2022 may therefore be that those who could not previously migrate for asylum due to travel restrictions were able to travel following the lifting of restrictions. In other words, two years of delayed demand is increasing the numbers. This is supported by the fact that the main nationalities of applicants in Ireland have not changed significantly in the past five years. Additionally, there is a strong correlation between commercial aviation and asylum applications in Ireland, and this correlation was particularly high during the COVID-19 pandemic and continued into 2022. Thus, the reduction in international travel would likely have a strong effect on the reduction in international protection applications.¹⁹ This is particularly relevant given that flights to Ireland constitute the main means of access to the territory. This also links to other explanations in this chapter on routes (see 4.7). The COVID-19 catch-up factor was pointed to in almost all stakeholder interviews and observations received.²⁰

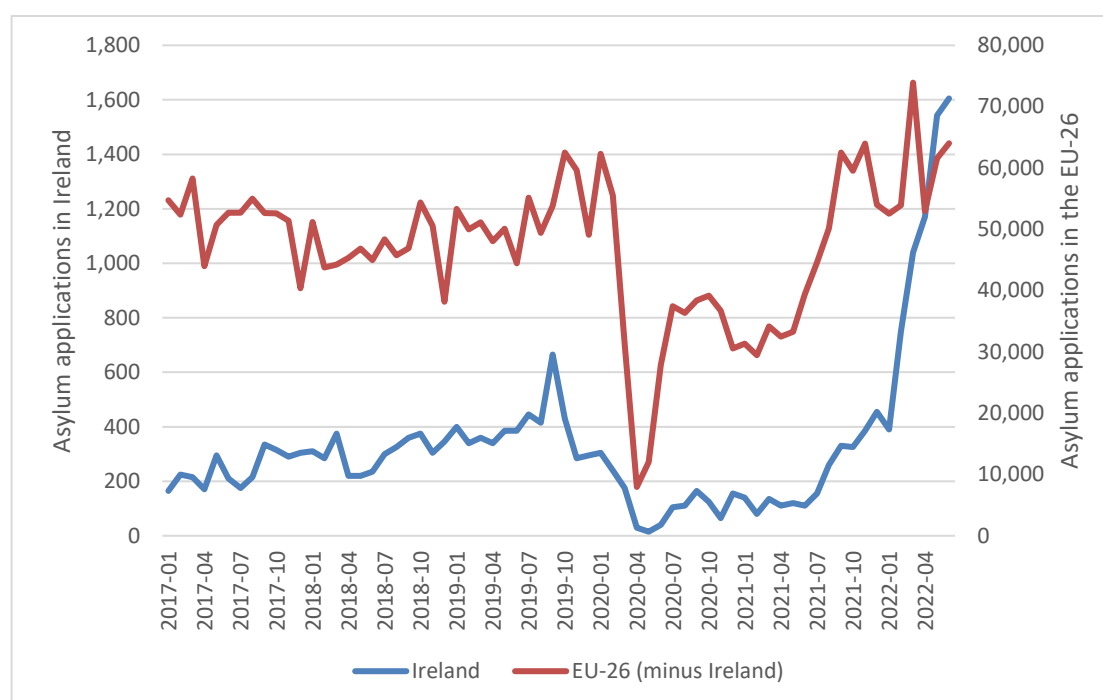
16 Government of Ireland (2022). 'Government announces that most of the public health measures currently in place can be removed', 21 January, www.gov.ie/en/press-release/0fc0d-government-announces-that-most-of-the-public-health-measures-currently-in-place-can-be-removed/?fbclid=IwAR2LBJnv2-2T1Rwt0xgMxmQX1kX1xX2CELq1dWX1ynFNq7kbGP-GPdsjy0g; M. Lehane (2022). 'Covid travel rules to change over Ukrainian refugees', RTÉ News, 5 March, www.rte.ie/news/coronavirus/2022/0305/1284595-covid-certs-locator-forms

17 From 1 March 2022, Member States were required to lift the temporary restriction on non-essential travel to the EU from third countries for vaccinated or recovered persons. www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/02/22/covid-19-council-updates-recommendation-on-non-essential-travel-from-third-countries

18 Department for Transport, Department of Health and Social Care, et al. (2022). 'All COVID-19 travel restrictions removed in the UK', 14 March, www.gov.uk/government/news

19 Between January 2019 and June 2022, the correlation coefficient for commercial flights and asylum applications in Ireland is 0.60 on average, indicating a positive association. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it was 0.89 on average (April 2020 to January 2022), indicating a stronger positive association. For February 2022 to June 2022, the correlation coefficient was 0.96, and this drops when July–September 2022 are added to 0.76. In the EU-26, the correlation coefficient is 0.74 for January 2019 to June 2022. However, like Ireland, it is particularly high during the COVID-19 pandemic (0.88). For February 2022 to June 2022, the correlation coefficient indicates a slightly negative relationship of –0.05. However, it should be borne in mind that there may be several applicants on a single flight and that certain routes/flights will be more likely to have applicants on them than others. Eurostat, Commercial flights by reporting country – monthly data (source: Eurocontrol) [AVIA_TF_CM__custom_3341443]. Data extracted 7 November 2022.

20 Stakeholder interviews, 19 July 2022, 20 July 2022; written observations received.

FIGURE 4.1 ASYLUM APPLICATIONS IN EU-26 AND IRELAND (JANUARY 2017 TO JUNE 2022)

Source: Eurostat, *Asylum applicants by type of applicant, citizenship, age and sex – monthly data (rounded)* [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZM]. Data extracted 27 September 2022. Figures for first-time applicants used.

The COVID-19 pandemic also had adverse socio-economic effects in countries of origin and countries of first asylum. General economic impacts, including on growth, industry and employment, were observed in many countries of origin (Calderon and Kubota, 2021; IOM, 2021; World Bank, 2021b, 2022). A lack of tourism also led to monetary problems in some countries, which had significant adverse economic effects (EUAA, 2022). Economic impacts in countries of first asylum were often worse for migrants due to a lack of social protection (IOM, 2021; McAuliffe et al., 2021; UNDP, 2020). As discussed in the literature review, economic factors in countries of origin and countries of first asylum play an important role in decisions to migrate. Literature on migration finds that economic shocks can lead to a temporary ‘migration hump’ (de Haas et al., 2019). While this literature has largely come from sudden liberalisation of economies, it may be relevant for other economic shocks.

Lastly, COVID-19 impacted supply chains and food prices, with record high prices even before Russia’s invasion of Ukraine (Zachmann and Weil, 2022; see also section 4.2; EUAA, 2022a, 2022b). This has implications for food security and economies in countries of origin or first asylum for many asylum applicants, which may impact perceptions of the future for potential migrants.

4.2 CONDITIONS IN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

Conflict is the single biggest predictor of forced displacement and asylum claims (see section 2.1.1). Among the top ten countries of origin for asylum applicants in Ireland in 2022, many have seen increased conflict in recent years. To understand

the explanatory power of changes in conditions in countries of origin, we analyse the nationality profile of applicants for international protection in Ireland. Table 4.1 shows the top ten nationalities of applicants in the first six months of 2022.

TABLE 4.1 IRELAND: NATIONALITIES OF APPLICANTS (JANUARY–JUNE 2022)

Country of nationality	Number of applications	Percentage of total applications in Jan–Jun 2022
Georgia	1,182	18%
Somalia	938	14%
Algeria	698	11%
Zimbabwe	572	9%
Nigeria	495	8%
Afghanistan	349	5%
Ukraine	300	5%
South Africa	234	4%
Botswana	184	3%
Egypt	140	2%

Source: Correspondence with the IPO, July and November 2022.

It is clear from Table 4.1 that no single country dominates the applications (as might be expected if a specific conflict was explaining the increase), and there is no immediately obvious unifying factor between these countries. To better understand what is driving the increase over time, we looked at the change in nationalities from the first six months of 2019 and the first six months of 2022. In light of the literature review’s findings that different nationalities often migrate for different reasons and through different routes, disaggregating the increase by nationality enables us to account for this and to acknowledge that they are likely influenced by different drivers.

Table 4.2 shows that many of the nationalities shown in the top ten in 2022 increased significantly between these two periods and that these increases are not necessarily reflected in the UK and the EU. This is unusual because Ireland is not historically an important destination country within the EU, while the UK is.

TABLE 4.2 TOP NATIONALITIES IN IRELAND AS SEEN IN UK AND EU-26 (JANUARY–JUNE 2019 V. JANUARY–JUNE 2022)

Nationality	Ireland			UK			EU-26		
	Jan–Jun 2019	Jan–Jun 2022	% change	Jan–Jun 2019	Jan–Jun 2022	% change	Jan–Jun 2019	Jan–Jun 2022	% change
Total	2,235	6,494	191%	21,304	34,286	61%	296,950	358,946	21%
Georgia	303	1,182	290%	82	499	509%	11,217	10,609	–5%
Somalia	52	938	1,704%	173	339	96%	5,478	6,962	27%
Algeria	49	698	1,324%	132	136	3%	4,186	2,987	–29%
Zimbabwe	187	572	206%	142	35	–75%	113	43	–62%
Nigeria	147	495	237%	659	663	1%	12,213	6,882	–44%
Afghanistan	70	349	437%	912	3,310	263%	20,670	44,771	117%
Ukraine	3	300	9,900%	98	484	394%	4,665	19,090	309%
South Africa	155	235	49%	43	28	–35%	60	50	–17%
Botswana	10	184	1,740%	17	36	112%	0	6	600%
Egypt	27	140	419%	146	449	208%	2,295	6,370	178%

Source: IPO, July and November 2022; Home Office, Immigration Statistics, year ending June 2022, www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-june-2022; Eurostat, Asylum applicants by type of applicant, citizenship, age and sex – monthly data (rounded) [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZM]. Data extracted 27 September 2022. Figures for first-time applicants used.

Three categories of nationalities can be observed from the table:

Category 1: nationalities that increased across all three countries/regions: Somalia, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Botswana, Egypt;

Category 2: nationalities that increased in the UK and Ireland but decreased across the EU: Georgia;

Category 3: nationalities that increased in Ireland but decreased or stayed the same in the UK and decreased in the EU: Algeria, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, South Africa.

4.2.1 Categories 1 and 2

We deduce that nationalities in Category 1 are those most likely to be influenced by changes to conditions in their countries of origin, as they increased in Ireland, the UK and the EU-26. For most of the countries, there has also been a conflict or change in conditions that could explain the increase. The takeover by the Taliban in Afghanistan and the Russian invasion of Ukraine are the clearest examples. The timing of the increase indicates that the Russian invasion of Ukraine was in part responsible. As seen in Figure 2.2, applications in January were similar to 2019 levels but began to significantly increase from February onwards. This may imply that the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 and the subsequent conflict, as well as the knock-on effects, is an important factor in the increase in Ireland.

While Ukrainians have been granted protection under the TPD, some Ukrainians apply for asylum in Ireland, with 300 applications lodged in Ireland in the first six months of 2022. This may be due to people falling outside the scope of the TPD, which does not cover persons who were not resident in Ukraine prior to the Russian invasion on 24 February.²¹ The TPD also did not come into force in the EU until 4 March 2022, so some Ukrainians who arrived before this date may have applied for asylum (EMN Ireland, 2022). This, along with the possibility that some Ukrainians may choose to apply for asylum instead of temporary protection, explains a small amount of the increase in international protection applications in Ireland in 2022. The displacement of third-country nationals who were living in Ukraine may also potentially explain some of the increase, specifically where they do not fall within the scope of the TPD as implemented in Ireland.²²

Somalia is more complex, but drought and continued control by Al-Shabaab (EASO, 2021b), as well as insecurity linked to the elections and tensions with Kenya could be influential. Kenya's increasing hostility towards refugees and threats to close Dadaab and other camps hosting Somalis may also be significant (Horowitz and Michelitch, 2021). However, within this category, Somalia potentially needs further explanation because the increase in Ireland is so much greater than the increase in the UK and the EU.

In Afghanistan, the withdrawal of the US and the Taliban takeover have led to widespread instability, and combined with economic sanctions imposed by the US, health care and access to food are limited (EASO, 2022). Applications from Afghan nationals have increased in Ireland, the UK and across the EU in 2022.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has had knock-on effects internationally, including on food security and prices, natural resources and geopolitics. In Egypt, for example, there is a heavy reliance on Russian and Ukrainian oil and wheat, with prices soaring as a consequence. The economic crisis, which the prime minister called 'the worst in a century' (EUAA, 2022), has included a significant devaluation of the currency (Guergues, 2022; Tanchum, 2022). One interviewee highlighted the knock-on effects of the conflict in Ukraine as a potential driver, including those which have led to significant social and political disorder in Egypt.²³

We surmise that the increase for those in the second category (Georgia) may also be attributable to country-of-origin factors. The ramifications of the Russian invasion of Ukraine are particularly evident in Georgia, where it has had significant economic and socio-political impacts, as well as impacts on perceptions of future economic well-being, according to an EUAA report (EUAA, 2022b). Nonetheless, in

21 Article 2(1), Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 of 4 March 2022 establishing the existence of a mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine within the meaning of Article 5 of Directive 2001/55/EC, and having the effect of introducing temporary protection.

22 Third-country nationals or stateless persons who would have benefited from international protection or an equivalent national protection status in Ukraine and third-country nationals and stateless persons with permanent Ukrainian residence permits are included within the personal scope as implemented in Ireland. Around 0.7 per cent of Ukraine's population (285,000 people) were foreign nationals residing permanently in Ukraine, a figure that increases if work and student migration are included. See Migrants and Refugees Section (2020).

23 Stakeholder interview, 20 July 2022.

addition to country-of-origin factors, intervening factors may also be influential. Georgians are visa-required in Ireland and the UK but not in the Schengen Area. The increase in applications in Ireland and the UK that is not reflected in the EU may therefore be indicative of a general increase in immigration from Georgia but a categorical substitution in the UK and Ireland as those who want to travel to these countries may use the asylum system as a means of entry. As they are not visa-required in other countries, they do not need to apply for asylum to enter. This element may intersect in particular with flexibility in carrier sanctions (see section 4.7). Other factors, such as conditions in Ireland and network effects, may also be playing a role (see sections 4.5 and 4.6 below).

4.2.2 Category 3

The third category of nationalities (Algerian, Zimbabwean, Nigerian, South African) is more difficult to explain by country-of-origin indicators, and factors affecting distribution of applications across host countries rather than total volume of applications may be needed to understand their trends. In addition to the unusual distributional pattern, there was a lack of obvious change of context in these countries between January and June 2022 or just prior. For these countries, therefore, the rise in application numbers in Ireland may indicate a deflection effect as a result of UK policies, which will be explored in the next section, as well as the interaction of other factors such as the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, discussed above, as well as network effects (see section 4.5).

4.3 UK POLICY CHANGES

Over the past decade, the UK has pursued a policy of creating a ‘hostile environment for illegal immigrants’ (Hill, 2017), the most recent manifestation of which was the announcement of the MEDP with Rwanda in April 2022 to externalise the processing of asylum applications. The first flight to Rwanda was halted following the granting of an interim measure by the European Court of Human Rights in June 2022.²⁴ In Ireland, there have been suggestions that the announcement of this plan has contributed to the increase in people seeking asylum in Ireland (Hosford, 2022; RTÉ, 2022). The literature provides support for the idea that restrictive policies in one country can deflect applications to another country where those countries are in the same destination cluster for specific countries of origin (see section 3.3; Brekke et al., 2017; Diop-Christensen and Diop, 2022).

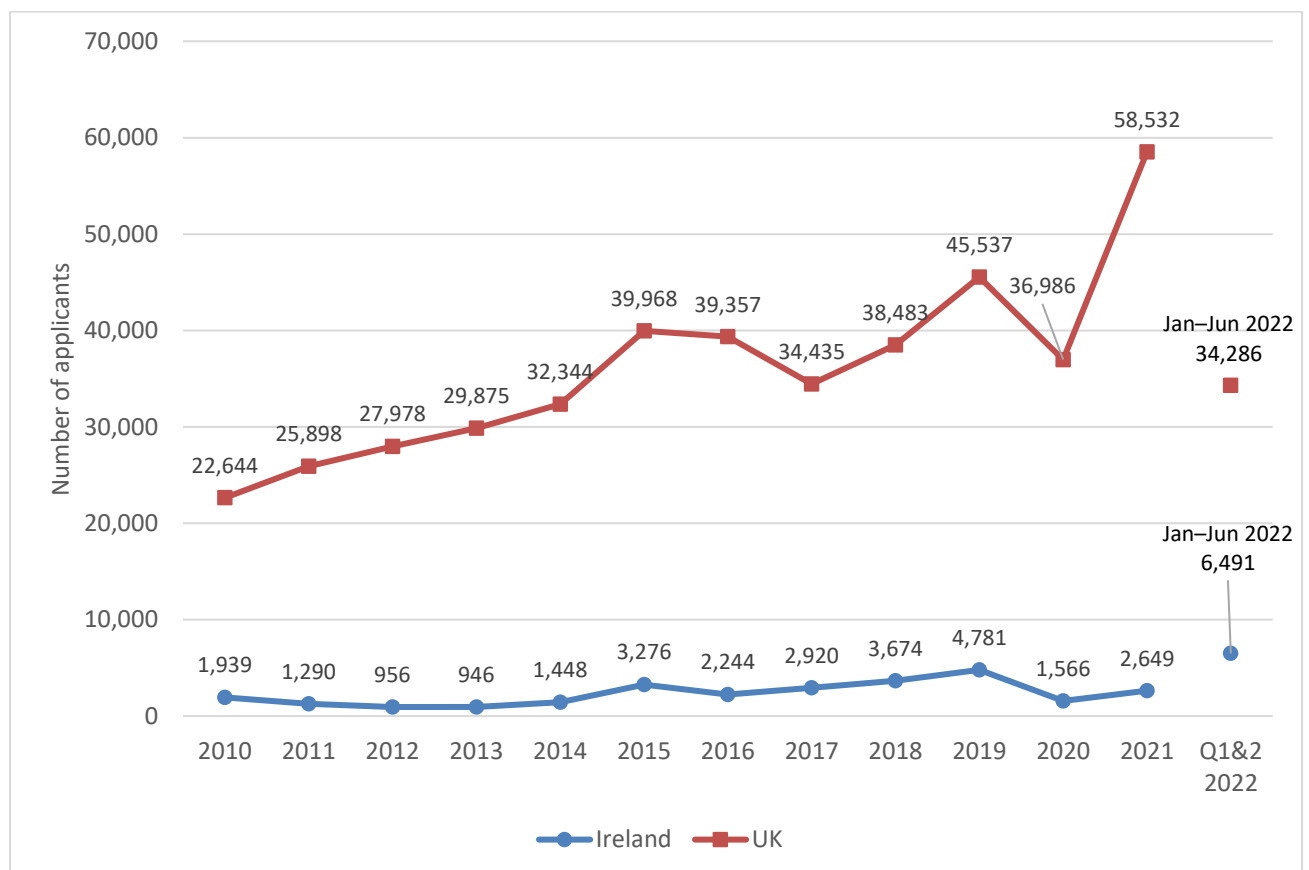
This section examines whether the UK policies are affecting trends in Ireland, through an analysis of trends in Ireland and the UK, an analysis of countries of origin, and data on secondary movements to ascertain whether people are leaving the UK to come to Ireland.

²⁴ European Court of Human Rights (14 June 2022), *N.S.K. v. the United Kingdom* (application no. 28774/22).

4.3.1 Asylum application numbers: Is the UK trend related to Ireland's trend?

In both Ireland and the UK, application numbers increased towards the end of 2021 and into 2022 and are significantly higher than previous years (see Fig. 2.3). The restrictive policies as part of the 'hostile environment' for illegal immigrants pursued in the UK, and the recent announcement of the MEDP with Rwanda in April 2022 do not appear to have reduced application numbers in the UK (Fig. 4.1). While the recent increase in the UK may also be post-COVID-19 catch-up, as discussed previously, it is also possible that there could be a 'now or never' migration into the UK, as has happened historically preceding repressive policies (de Haas et al., 2019).

FIGURE 4.1 ASYLUM APPLICANTS IN IRELAND AND THE UK (2010–JUNE 2022)



Source: Home Office, *Immigration Statistics, year ending June 2022*, www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-june-2022; Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner. 'Statistics'. Available at: www.orac.ie/website/orac/oracwebsite.nsf/page/orac-stats-en. IPO. 'Statistics'. Available at: www.ipo.gov.ie/en/ipo/pages/statistics. Correspondence with the IPO, July 2022.

Note: For the UK, the above figures include main applicants and dependants.

In terms of how UK policies and trends are impacting on trends in Ireland, there are mixed indicators. The MEDP was announced in April 2022, whereas the significant increase in Ireland begins in February 2022, indicating the announcement of the

deal was not a significant driver of the increase in Ireland. The UK has also seen a notable increase in arrivals via small boats crossing the English Channel in recent years (House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, 2022). While it is unclear if this shift is related to policy changes, the non-governmental organisation (NGO) Safe Passage has described how, after Brexit, the end of the UK's participation in the Dublin III Regulation which had provisions to allow children to reunite with family members (e.g., children in Calais to join family in the UK), has resulted in more children using small boats to access the UK.²⁵

Importantly, the main countries of origin driving the increase in UK, including Albania, Iran, Iraq and Syria (see Table 4.3) are different to the main nationalities driving the increase in Ireland and do not feature in the top ten nationalities in Ireland for 2022 (see Table 4.1). The only nationality in common between the top ten nationalities in each country is Afghan (see Tables 4.1 and 4.3).

TABLE 4.3 NATIONALITIES OF ASYLUM APPLICANTS IN THE UK (JANUARY–JUNE 2022)

	Country of nationality	Jan–Jun 2022	Percentage of total to June 2022
	Total	34,286	14%
1	Albania	4,729	10%
2	Afghanistan	3,310	9%
3	Iran	3,150	8%
4	Iraq	2,702	5%
5	Syria	1,832	5%
6	Eritrea	1,629	4%
7	Bangladesh	1,511	4%
8	India	1,288	4%
9	Sudan	1,273	4%
10	El Salvador	1,236	4%

Source: Home Office, *Immigration Statistics, year ending June 2022*, www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-june-2022.

Note: Figures include main applicant and dependants.

The increase seen in the UK from the end of 2021 and through 2022, despite showing a similar trend to Ireland, therefore appears to be driven by different factors, including different nationalities and the use of small boats. However, as set out in section 4.2 above, while some nationalities driving the increase in Ireland show a parallel increase in the UK (Categories 1 or 2), others show a decrease or no parallel increase in the UK, which is unusual.

25 M. Blackall (2022). 'Channel migrants: More children crossing to UK since Brexit as official routes "can't compete" with smugglers', iNews, 30 September, www.inews.co.uk/news/channel-migrants-children-crossing-uk-brexit-official-routes-smugglers-1871628

4.3.2 Ireland and the UK as part of the same destination cluster: Are there deflection effects for certain nationalities?

Ireland and the UK may be considered by some nationalities to be part of the same destination cluster. For some nationalities in the top ten nationalities in Ireland, there are indications that there may be a deflection effect in people applying in Ireland instead of the UK. For South African and Zimbabwean nationalities (Category 3 above), the UK is seeing a decrease. The fact that these nationalities have historically applied in both Ireland and the UK (i.e., they have commonly been in Ireland's top ten international protection applicants for the past ten years) indicates that, for these origin countries, Ireland and the UK are within the same destination cluster and deflection effects are possible (Brekke et al., 2017).

Even so, as is clear in Table 4.2, the change in application numbers from these two nationalities, while proportionally significant, are in absolute terms small. Comparing January to June 2019 to the same period in 2022, the number of applications from South African applicants decreased from 43 to 28 in the UK, and the number of applications from Zimbabwean applicants decreased from 142 to 35. For Algerian and Nigerian nationalities, there is an increase in Ireland but a lack of a parallel increase in the UK. This may be related not only to deflection effects from the UK but also to deflection from other EU countries. Nonetheless, while in Ireland these four nationalities (South African, Zimbabwean, Algerian and Nigerian) account for approximately 32 per cent of the applicants for January to June 2022 (see Table 4.1), they are only a small fraction of those who apply in the UK. In other words, while they impact Irish numbers, the deflection effects have a minor impact on UK trends.

There may also be a direct link between the increase in Ireland and the increase in the UK, as anecdotal evidence from researchers and stakeholders indicates that at least some asylum applicants do not know that Ireland is not part of the UK. Others were told by smugglers that they were going to the UK when they ended up in Ireland.²⁶ For some nationalities, such as Georgians, there has been an increase in applications in both Ireland and in the UK, which may indicate that Ireland and the UK are in a destination cluster for Georgians.

4.3.3 Are people who are already in the UK leaving to come to Ireland?

Data available on people applying for international protection in Ireland who were previously in the UK may indicate whether people are now leaving the UK to come to Ireland. This section looks at data on asylum applicants and beneficiaries of international protection leaving the UK to travel to Ireland.

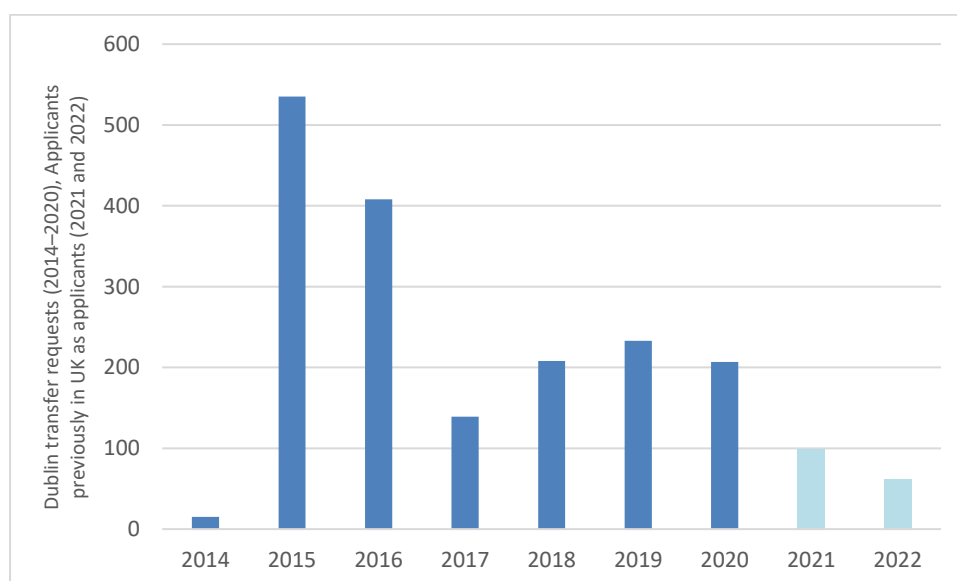
First, from the data available, figures of *asylum applicants* travelling from the UK

²⁶ While emphasising the anecdotal nature of the information, a stakeholder reported that some people who arrived in Ireland believed they were travelling to the UK. Stakeholder interview, 19 July 2022.

to Ireland do not indicate a significant increase in 2022. Up to 2020, the UK was one of the main countries to which Ireland issued Dublin transfer requests under the Dublin III Regulation.²⁷ A Dublin transfer request is issued when it is found that an international protection application is the responsibility of another EU Member State (often because the applicant has entered that state first). Since the UK, as of the end of 2020, no longer participates in the Dublin III Regulation, applicants who are found to have previously been in the UK now fall under different legislation.²⁸

Figure 4.2 shows Dublin transfer requests from Ireland to the UK between 2015 and 2020 and figures for applicants for international protection in Ireland who were applicants for international protection in the UK for 2021 and 2022. The number of applicants travelling from the UK to Ireland are lower in 2021 and 2022 than in previous years. Thus, from the data available, it appears that secondary movements of asylum applicants from the UK are not contributing to the recent increase seen in Ireland.

FIGURE 4.2 INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION APPLICANTS IN IRELAND WHO WERE PREVIOUSLY IN THE UK



Source: Eurostat, 2014–2020: Outgoing ‘Dublin’ requests by receiving country (PARTNER), type of request and legal provision [MIGR_DUBRO_custom_3062456]. Data extracted 20 July 2022. 2021 and 2022: Correspondence with the IPO, July 2022.

Note: From 2021, the UK no longer participates in the Dublin III Regulation 604/2013. The figures for 2021 and 2022 are for applicants for international protection in Ireland who were applicants for international protection in the UK.

The secondary movements of *beneficiaries* of international protection from the UK to Ireland also do not appear to be driving the increase in international protection

²⁷ Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person (recast).

²⁸ Section 51A, International Protection Act 2015, as amended.

applications in Ireland. Only two people who applied for international protection in Ireland in 2021 and 2022 respectively were already beneficiaries of international protection in the UK (see Table 4.4).²⁹

Taken together, the data available indicate that secondary movements from the UK are not driving the recent increase in applications in Ireland. However, it should be noted that there are gaps in the available statistics, particularly for people who were not in the asylum system or who were undocumented in the UK and who have applied for international protection in Ireland. Moreover, there may be a delay in recording applicants who were previously in the UK for 2022.

TABLE 4.4 APPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION FROM UK IN 2021 AND 2022

	Number of applicants for international protection in Ireland who were beneficiaries of international protection in UK	Number of applicants for international protection in Ireland who were applicants for international protection in the UK	Number of cases accepted to be readmitted to UK
2021	2	99	80
2022	2	62	2

Source: Correspondence with the IPO, July 2022.

Note: Figures for 2022 are based on replies the IPO have received from the UK thus far. Cases accepted to be readmitted to the UK follow a finding that a person has come to Ireland and applied for international protection from a safe third country. The UK is designated as a safe third country and a country is a safe country for a person to be returned if the person has sufficient connection with that country. Sufficient connection includes the period the person spent in that country, any relationships in the country, family members and any cultural connections that the person has with the country is to be considered when the IPO process the request to the UK. Correspondence with the IPO, July 2022.

Lastly, despite speculation that there has been an increase in applications made at the IPO versus ports of entry, as indicative of more people travelling from Northern Ireland to apply for asylum and therefore applying at the IPO, the figures for 2020 and 2021 for those applying at the IPO are higher than in 2022 (Table 4.5) (Horgan-Jones and Carswell, 2022). Indeed, while the number of applications lodged at the IPO in 2022 is higher than in previous years, the proportion of applications remains similar to pre-pandemic years. However, these figures must be treated with caution as people may pass through an airport and not apply for international protection or may be already in the State.³⁰

²⁹ Where a person was previously in the UK, their application would be considered inadmissible to the Irish international protection system as the UK is considered a safe third country. A return order would then be issued to transfer the individual back to the UK. Between January and June 2022, there were also only three inadmissibility recommendations based on a safe third country (UK). Additionally, as of 25 July 2022, no return orders have been issued to persons who were previously in the UK. Section 21 and section 51A, International Protection Act 2015, as amended. Correspondence with the Repatriation Unit, Department of Justice, July 2022.

³⁰ Interview with stakeholder, 19 July 2022.

TABLE 4.5 PLACE OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION APPLICATION IN IRELAND (2018–2021)

Place of application	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 (Jan–Jun)
IPO	2,108	2,211	2,275	1,240	2,105	4,110
Airports	724	1,339	2,386	284	511	2,354
Other ports of entry	88	124	120	42	33	30
Total	2,920	3,674	4,781	1,566	2,649	6,494
Per cent made at IPO	72.2%	60.1%	47.6%	79.1%	79.5%	63.3%

Source: Correspondence with the IPO, July and November 2022.

Note: For 2017, other ports of entry includes 'prisons' (68) and 'other' (8).

Overall, when examining whether UK policy changes are affecting Irish trends, the UK increase appears to be driven by different factors than those driving the increase in Ireland. Even so, there may be deflection effects for certain nationalities, including Zimbabwean and South African nationals, which appear in the top ten nationalities of international protection applicants in Ireland. On the other hand, the available figures for people who have already entered the UK and who are leaving to apply for asylum in Ireland do not indicate that this is a factor in Ireland's increase.

4.4 SECONDARY MOVEMENTS FROM THE EU

A fourth potential explanation for the increase in applications in Ireland is the secondary movements of applicants and beneficiaries of international protection from other EU Member States to Ireland. In July 2022, the Irish government announced the temporary suspension of Irish participation in the Council of Europe Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for Refugees, on the basis that there was a significant increase in applications from people who already held international protection in another EU Member State.³¹ This section examines the secondary movements of both applicants and beneficiaries from elsewhere in the EU and their impact on trends in Ireland.

4.4.1 Applicants for international protection

People who have previously lodged an application in another EU Member State account for a varying proportion of the applications for international protection in Ireland in the past five years (see Fig. 4.3).³² As described above, the Dublin III

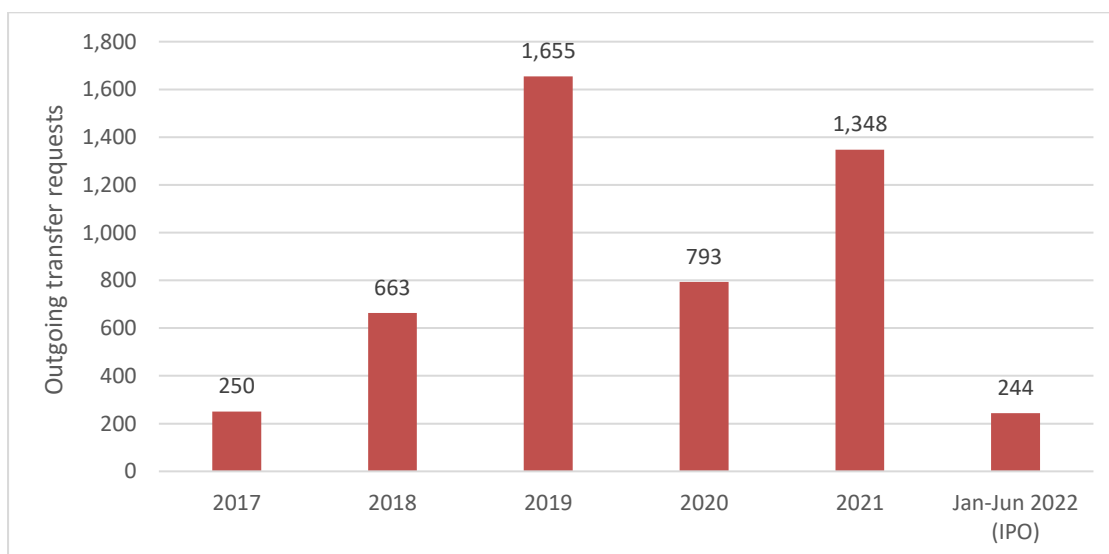
31 Department of the Taoiseach (2022). 'Government agrees to temporarily require refugees travelling to Ireland from safe European countries to hold visas', 18 July, www.gov.ie/en/press-release/f1289-government-agrees-to-temporarily-require-refugees-travelling-to-ireland-from-safe-european-countries-to-hold-visas

32 Note that the vast majority of Dublin transfer requests issued in Ireland are issued under Article 18(1)(b) of the Dublin III Regulation as take back requests. There are a limited number of take charge requests issued by Ireland.

Regulation regulates Member States' responsibility for asylum applications. Where an international protection applicant is found to have an application in another Member State, or another connection to that Member State in line with the regulation, a transfer decision is issued to return them to the first state.

Of the past five years, the number of outgoing transfer requests from Ireland to other EU Member States was highest in 2019 (see Fig. 4.3). While there was an absolute reduction in transfer requests during the COVID-19 pandemic, they made up approximately half of all applicants in each year 2020 and 2021.³³ This proportion is higher than that of previous years and may be due to the continued possibility of intra-EU travel but closure of travel routes from outside the EU during much of the COVID-19 pandemic. In January to June 2022, however, there was a low number (244) of transfer requests issued by Ireland. This is a reduction even on COVID-19 years. There are inbuilt time frames in issuing a Dublin transfer decision, with the statutory time frame of three months to issue a transfer request.³⁴ As a result, it may take time for the Dublin transfer request figures to reflect the general increase in applications in the first half of 2022.

FIGURE 4.3 OUTGOING TRANSFER REQUESTS FROM IRELAND TO EU-26, ICELAND, SWITZERLAND AND NORWAY (2017–2022)



Source: Eurostat, *Outgoing Dublin transfer requests by receiving country (PARTNER), type of request and legal provision [MIGR_DUBRO_custom_3062456]*. Data extracted 20 July 2022. Correspondence with the IPO, July 2022.

33 In 2020, there were 793 outgoing Dublin transfer requests and the total number of applications was 1,566 (50.6 per cent). In 2021, the proportion was 50.8 per cent number of transfer requests increased to 1,348, which similarly accounted for approximately half of all applications (50.8 per cent). Eurostat.

34 The Dublin Unit of a Member State has three months to contact the Dublin Unit of another EU Member State; the Dublin Unit of that Member State has two months to respond and accept or reject the request. A Dublin transfer request is then issued. The initiating Member State has six months to transfer the person.

Note: *Data for the UK has been removed. Since 2021, the UK no longer participates in the Dublin III Regulation 604/2013. Eurostat figures are rounded.*

The main countries to which transfer requests were sent from Ireland between 2017 and 2022 were Greece, Germany, Italy and France. In 2021 and 2022, requests were issued to similar countries, as in previous years, notably Greece and Germany, but there was also an increase in transfer requests to Sweden, Denmark and Austria. In contrast, the number of requests to Italy decreased.³⁵ In summary, during the COVID-19 pandemic, people subject to a Dublin transfer request were lower than in previous years but proportionally higher when compared to the total number of applicants. However, in 2022, the figures available thus far do not indicate that this trend has continued and that secondary movements of applicants account for the increase in applications in Ireland in 2022. However, there are delays in issuing Dublin III transfer requests, so it may be too early to detect this effect.

4.4.2 Beneficiaries of international protection

The secondary movements of international protection applicants in the EU have been an area of policy focus in the EU (EMN Ireland, 2022b). In Ireland, between 2017 and 2021, there was a large increase in the number of beneficiaries of international protection applying for asylum in Ireland being detected through the EU-wide Eurodac system, which stores the fingerprints of asylum applicants, beneficiaries and detected irregular migrants (eu-LISA, 2018, 2019a, 2019b, 2020a, 2020b, 2021, 2022). In 2017, there were nine Eurodac matches (also known as ‘hits’) for beneficiaries of international protection in other EU Member States applying for asylum in Ireland, which increased to 1,418 Eurodac matches in 2021 (see Fig. 4.4). These figures must be treated with caution given that not all Eurodac matches translate into applicants; there can be duplicates in the system; and the fingerprints of persons under 14 are not stored. The figures for 2022 are not available at the time of writing, and it is therefore difficult to assess whether the secondary movements of beneficiaries are contributing to the recent increase in applications in Ireland. Nonetheless, given the increase in Eurodac matches to 2021, it seems possible that beneficiaries travelling to Ireland and applying for international protection may be part of the picture. This was also cited by the Irish government as a reason for visa policy changes for beneficiaries of international protection in certain states in July 2022.³⁶

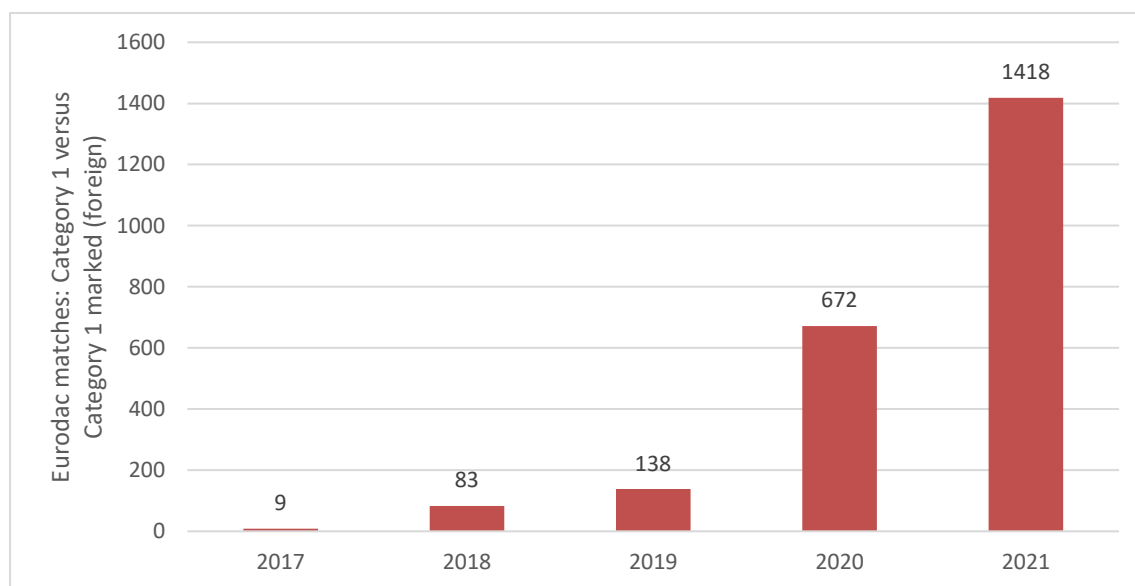
With regard to the countries in which these people already have protection, in 2021, the main countries were Greece and Germany, with smaller, but increasing, numbers for Austria, Bulgaria, Italy, Romania and Sweden, among others (eu-LISA, 2021, 2022). The countries were similar for 2020, with Greece and Germany again

35 Eurostat, Outgoing ‘Dublin’ requests by receiving country (PARTNER), type of request and legal provision [MIGR_DUBRO__custom_3062456]. Data extracted 20 July 2022. Correspondence with the IPO, July 2022.

36 Department of the Taoiseach (2022). ‘Government agrees to temporarily require refugees travelling to Ireland from safe European countries to hold visas’, 18 July, www.gov.ie/en/press-release/f1289-government-agrees-to-temporarily-require-refugees-travelling-to-ireland-from-safe-european-countries-to-hold-visas

accounting for the majority of beneficiaries (eu-LISA, 2021).

FIGURE 4.4 EURODAC MATCHES FOR BENEFICIARIES OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IN IRELAND



Sources: eu-LISA, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022.

Applications from beneficiaries of international protection in other EU Member States are examined for their admissibility to the Irish protection system.³⁷ If found admissible, the application is admitted to the main international protection system and the individual is considered an ‘applicant’.³⁸ Figures are only available for inadmissibility recommendations and not for the total number of people who entered Ireland from other EU Member States as beneficiaries (with most considered ‘admissible’ to the system). In 2018, there were 40 inadmissible recommendations. This decreased to 15 by 2020, and in 2021 there were two inadmissible recommendations on applications. Between January and June 2022, there were six inadmissible recommendations.³⁹ According to the IPO, many of the cases initially considered inadmissible are subsequently admitted as applications to the protection system. This is due to changes in case law at EU level.⁴⁰

Other EU Member States also saw increases in beneficiaries of international protection in Eurodac, but, in 2021, Ireland had the fourth-highest number of Eurodac matches for beneficiaries in the EU, after Germany, France and Belgium

37 Beneficiaries of international protection in other EU Member States would be considered inadmissible under section 21 of the International Protection Act; sections 13(2) and 21, International Protection Act 2015.

38 From September 2021, the IPO allowed people who were under inadmissible consideration to complete an application under section 15 of the International Protection Act, and, therefore, their applications were counted as total applications the IPO received since September 2021. See Murphy and Sheridan (forthcoming).

39 Correspondence with the IPO, July 2022.

40 Correspondence with the IPO, July 2022. Following recent Court of Justice of the European Union rulings, Article 4 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU is considered in each case in determining if a person can be returned to another EU Member State. Court of Justice of the European Union (13 November 2019), *Hamed & Omar v. Germany*, ECLI:EU:C:2019:964.

(eu-LISA, 2022). In the UK, there was a similar increase in the number of beneficiaries of international protection detected in Eurodac in the years available (2017–2020) (eu-LISA, 2018, 2019b, 2020b, 2021). However, since figures are not available for the UK for 2021 and 2022, it is difficult to know if this trend continued.

Data and analysis on secondary movements, and, in particular, the reasons behind them, is limited.⁴¹ Network effects, including family connections, and differences in the quality of reception and asylum systems have been pointed to as being among the reasons why people move within Europe (Thym, 2022; Wagner et al., 2022). Beneficiaries of international protection can travel within the Schengen Area without a visa for up to 90 days but cannot move for longer periods, including to work (EMN Ireland, 2022b).⁴² As a result, some of these movements may be a type of categorical substitution, which, as mentioned previously, occurs when there is no available regular migration route for work and, thus, the asylum system may be used instead (Czaika and de Haas, 2013).

Two of the main countries from which beneficiaries travel to Ireland are Greece and Germany. While it is difficult to determine the reasons why these people are travelling to Ireland in higher numbers, a recent report by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) described significant gaps in inclusion opportunities for beneficiaries in a number of European countries (ECRE, 2022). In Greece, a country from which the highest number of beneficiaries applying in Ireland have status, there have been recent changes in the housing provided to recognised refugees, with a new requirement for them to leave centres within 30 days of being granted international protection (Karagiannopoulou et al., 2021). NGOs have also described difficulties in access to documents and socio-economic rights for beneficiaries in Greece (Refugee Support Aegean and Stiftung PRO ASYL, 2022).

In recent years, Ireland has seen an increase in beneficiaries and applicants arriving from Sweden, and a recent report in the *Irish Times* described how Somali refugees in Sweden are leaving due to the systemic racism they faced there (Hayden, 2022). Greece and Germany, as well as Sweden, were also countries that received a high number of international protection applicants in previous years, and many of these applicants now hold an international protection status. This indicates that the increase could simply be the result of larger absolute numbers of beneficiaries of international protection.

Overall, the secondary movements of applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection have long been part of the applications lodged in Ireland. It is difficult to ascertain whether these secondary movements are contributing to the 2022 increase given gaps in the available data. Even so, there does appear to be a general increase in the number of beneficiaries travelling to Ireland in recent

41 In Eurodac, there can be double or multiple country of people registered in one or more countries, and the fingerprints of minors under 14 are not collected and stored. See Thym 2022.

42 Travel to Ireland by beneficiaries of international protection was permitted for status holders in countries party to the Council of Europe Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for Refugees. Ireland temporarily suspended participation for a one-year period from July 2022. Refugees in other states are required to apply for a visa.

years. However, the number of applicants for international protection travelling to Ireland and applying again does not appear at the time of writing to be contributing to the increase seen in 2022.

4.5 NETWORK EFFECTS

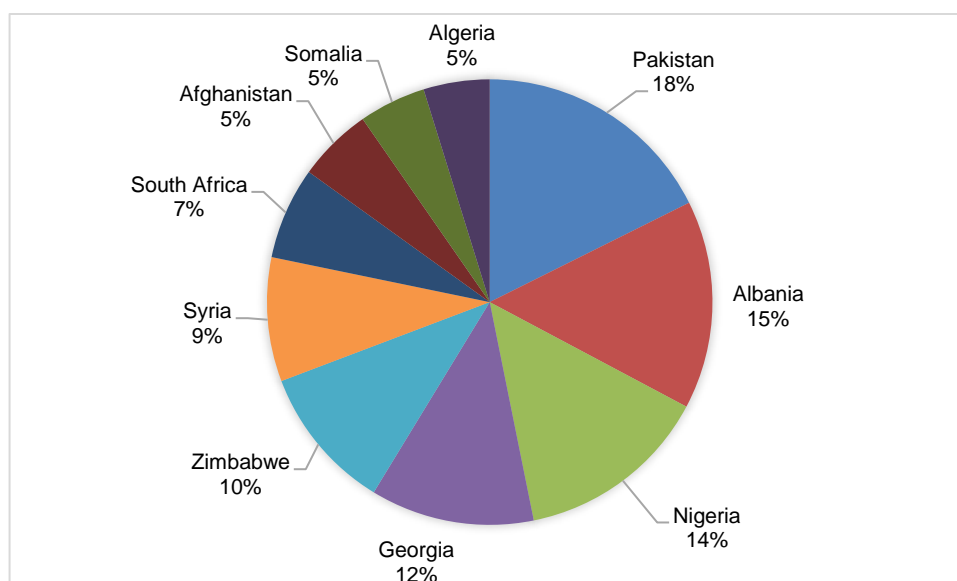
Social networks have consistently been found to have the greatest impact on the destination selection of asylum applicants (see section 3.3). While Ireland was not traditionally a country of immigration, it has seen increasing immigration (including asylum) since the 1990s (see Fig. 2.1), and 17.6 per cent of the Irish population was born outside Ireland.⁴³ Ireland is therefore now home to communities of people from the main countries of origin of current asylum applicants.⁴⁴ The power of networks is therefore likely playing an increasingly important role in destination selection to Ireland. The distance and relative geographic isolation of Ireland would also indicate that social networks may play a more significant role than for other EU countries (see section 4.7), although barriers to entry may also reduce the impact of social networks (Crawley, 2010).

The trend analysis in Ireland provides potential evidence for this factor. The difference between nationality profiles in Ireland and the rest of the EU – with Zimbabwean and Nigerian applications increasing in Ireland while decreasing in the rest of the EU, for example – could be partly explained by network effects. Countries like Nigeria, Georgia and Zimbabwe have been consistently among Ireland’s top source countries of asylum applicants (see Fig. 4.5) and there are increasing populations of many of the top source countries seen in 2022.⁴⁵ Ireland also has a long history with Nigeria, which could also explain increases in Nigerian applicants even where this is not the case in the rest of the EU or UK (Komolafe, 2008; White et al., 2019). In turn, as set out in section 3, Zimbabwean applicants appear to apply primarily in Ireland, with few applications lodged in other EU Member States. In addition, the fact that applications have been steadily increasing in Ireland from 2017 to 2019 while remaining stable in the EU also indicates that a longer-term network effect could be an important factor.

43 Eurostat, Population on 1 January by age group, sex and country of birth (migr_pop3ctb). Accessed 25 July 2022.

44 Stakeholder interview, 19 July 2022.

45 Eurostat, Population on 1 January by age group, sex and country of birth (migr_pop3ctb). Accessed 25 July 2022.

FIGURE 4.5 TOP TEN NATIONALITIES OF ASYLUM APPLICANTS IN IRELAND, 2012–2021

Source: Eurostat, 'Asylum applicants by type of applicant, citizenship, age and sex – annual aggregated data (rounded)', extracted 12 October 2022.

Network effects may therefore provide a plausible reason for the increases in Category 3 nationalities described in section 3.2. While network effects are unlikely to explain the overall increase in applications, they may help to explain the distribution of these applicants.

4.6 CONDITIONS IN AND PERCEPTIONS OF IRELAND

4.6.1 Labour-market shortages in Ireland

As described in Chapter 3, economic factors can influence asylum applications, in particular from countries where immediate security risks are less prevalent and the decision to migrate is therefore more related to economic factors. The literature shows that where legal means of migrating for labour are restricted, asylum migration or irregular migration often increases (de Haas et al., 2019; Hatton, 2020). In Ireland, labour migration policy is closely managed through the employment-permits system to prioritise workers from Ireland and the European Economic Area (EEA), with lists of shortages and ineligible occupations reviewed every six months.

The Irish permit system can be inflexible in the face of fast-changing needs, as was acknowledged in a recent government proposal for significant reform (Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, 2022). According to the Migrant Integration Policy Index, the labour-market mobility indicators for Ireland are particularly low, with Ireland scoring lower than any other EU Member State. At present, Ireland is experiencing significant labour-market shortages across a range of sectors (*Irish Times*, 2022; Mulligan, 2021), and the lowest unemployment rate since 2001.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Central Statistics Office, Monthly unemployment, www.cso.ie/en/statistics/labourmarket/monthlyunemployment

While the literature was inconclusive about unemployment's impact on asylum applications, this data is often not disaggregated by nationality, meaning that it might impact applications from some nationalities but not others. In the context of a tightly managed labour migration system, asylum could be used as an alternative path to gain access to the opportunities available in the current labour market.⁴⁷ One interviewee noted that the construction sector was an area of work for some groups of international protection applicants in Ireland.⁴⁸ However, in light of findings from the literature review, this is likely only to affect migration aspirations where migrants have access to this information and is therefore strongly related to social networks, which are often a key source of information for migrants (see section 3.4).

4.6.2 Perception of Ireland

While not the only explanation for the increased applications in 2022, of those applicants who choose their destination and can act upon this preference, positive perceptions of Ireland likely form part of the decision to travel to Ireland. It should again be noted that, across the literature, factors such as policies and conditions were significantly less influential than social networks and conflict factors. It should also be emphasised that what matters for destination preference is the information available and the perception of the situation in the destination country, even where this is based on incorrect information, and that even large changes in conditions and policies may not change perceptions (McAuliffe, 2017).

In interviews, stakeholders suggested that Ireland is often viewed as a welcoming and safe environment by international protection applicants.⁴⁹ One interviewee commented that it is in fact surprising that application rates have historically been so low.⁵⁰ The literature showed that the overall perception of how welcoming and accepting a country is towards refugees was a significant factor in destination preference and mattered more than any specific policy. Interviews with international protection applicants have found that factors such as the perception that countries respect human rights, have rule of law and that there is security and justice are impactful, as well as perceived access to education and opportunities for children (Crawley, 2010; Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019; Müller-Funk, 2019; Glorius and Nienaber, 2022).

On the other hand, the literature review showed that welfare and reception conditions upon arrival do not significantly impact asylum applications. This indicates that, while Ireland's reception system has received significant criticism (UN Human Rights Council, 2021), it is unlikely to act as a deterrent.⁵¹ The planned reform of the reception system (DCEDIY, 2021) is therefore also unlikely to explain the increase in applications in 2022, both because applicants are unlikely to have

47 Stakeholder interview, 19 July 2022.

48 Stakeholder interview, 19 July 2022.

49 Stakeholder interviews, 19 July 2022, 20 July 2022.

50 Stakeholder interview, 19 July 2022.

51 Also confirmed by interviewees. Stakeholder interviews, 19 July 2022.

accurate information about the reform and because reception conditions do not seem to impact applications. Literature and stakeholder interviews indicate that policy knowledge among asylum applicants is limited, although this differs between groups.⁵²

International-protection applicants in Ireland were granted labour-market access in mid 2018.⁵³ In 2021, access was further liberalised by a shorter wait time after applying for asylum and longer validity for each permit.⁵⁴ This factor may be influential for those who want to come to Ireland for work, but the literature indicates that it is unlikely a prominent factor for many nationalities. In this context, long processing times in the international protection system may constitute an advantage.⁵⁵ Stakeholders also mentioned that applicants can access International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS) accommodation, even following negative decisions where appeals are made (Citizens Information Board, 2022).⁵⁶ This, combined with the non-implementation of the contribution policy for asylum applicants in IPAS accommodation who are working, could constitute a financial incentive for this use of the asylum system.⁵⁷ It should be noted that *A White Paper to End Direct Provision* (DCEDIY, 2021) foresees the implementation of this contribution policy.

In Ireland, removal rates of unsuccessful applicants are low. In 2019, 2,017 deportation orders were issued. In the same year, 298 deportations and 255 voluntary returns took place.⁵⁸ A number of stakeholders mentioned as a relevant factor the low removal rate for those who receive a negative decision.⁵⁹ This factor may have become more salient during the COVID-19 pandemic, when there was a pause in deportations.⁶⁰ It may also contribute to a perception of security of residence that the literature review found to be influential.

The perceived likelihood of receiving international protection was a factor that emerged as potentially important for destination preference from the literature review (see section 2.3.3). In Ireland's case, the impact may be dampened by long processing times in the Irish system (see Andersson and Jutvik, 2022). While there were artificially high recognition rates during the pandemic due to a pause in issuing negative decisions (as they would lead to a deportation process which was not feasible with travel restrictions), the literature indicates that the likelihood of this being known and reflected in decision-making is low (see section 2.3.5).⁶¹

52 Stakeholder interviews, 19 July 2022; 20 July 2022; see also section 2.

53 European Communities (Reception Conditions) Regulations 2018, S.I. No. 230/2018.

54 See European Communities (Reception Conditions) (Amendment) Regulations 2021, S.I. No. 52/2021.

55 Stakeholder interview, 19 July 2022.

56 Stakeholder interview, 19 July 2022.

57 Under section 5(1) European Communities (Reception Conditions) Regulations 2018 S.I. No. 230 of 2018, an applicant who is working may be required to make a contribution towards the cost of their reception conditions.

58 Eurostat, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/MIGR_EIRT_VOL__custom_3014499/default/table?lang=en. Note that data on deportation orders issued and returns relate to different individual cases.

59 Stakeholder interviews, 19 July 2022, 20 July 2022.

60 Stakeholder interviews, 19 July 2022; 'Deportation orders: Dáil Éireann debate, Tuesday – 23 November 2021', available at oireachtas.ie.

61 See 'Committee on Public Petitions debate – Thursday, 25 November 2021', available at www.oireachtas.ie.

There is also limited available information that compares reception systems and refusal rates in the EU.

These factors will only affect applications where information is available to prospective migrants and therefore likely interacts strongly with network factors, as discussed above. However, in light of the fact that similar nationalities regularly apply for international protection in Ireland, these factors may be influential in decision-making, and migrants may have accurate information about the conditions in the country. However, it should be noted that changing any one of these policies or conditions may not have a significant influence on application figures as the general perception of the country appears to be the most influential factor in terms of conditions in countries of destination (McAuliffe, 2017). In interviews, stakeholders indicated that Ireland is generally well perceived by migrants living here.⁶²

4.7 INTERVENING OBSTACLES AND ROUTES TO IRELAND

The final factor examined is intervening obstacles and routes available to travel to Ireland. One of the distinguishing features of Ireland is its geographically isolated location as compared to other EU Member States, which increases the intervening obstacles that people must overcome to access the territory to claim asylum. The availability of travel routes and changes to intervening obstacles (e.g., pre-entry policies), as well as the behaviour of smugglers are therefore of particular importance. One stakeholder highlighted as relevant flexibility in carrier sanctions, such as that adopted to facilitate the arrival of Ukrainian refugees.⁶³ This could mean that it is easier for individuals (Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian) to board planes due to a more flexible approach to the required identity documents. Smugglers are likely to also be aware of increased flexibility.

While it is difficult to draw conclusions about changes to smuggler routes without further research, the literature on the importance of smugglers on ultimate destinations indicates that this could be a factor in changing trends. Stakeholders also pointed towards this as an important factor in destinations.⁶⁴ Other factors, such as the availability of flights to Ireland, are potentially impactful for applications.⁶⁵

Due to the difficulty of accessing Ireland through irregular means, visa regimes are particularly influential on trends in applicants coming to Ireland. Ireland is not part of the Schengen Area but is part of the Common Travel Area with the UK. As a result, the visa requirements for Ireland can differ from those in Schengen states. While Georgian nationals are not visa-required to enter the Schengen Area for short stays, they are visa-required for Ireland, which may result in categorical

62 Stakeholder interview, 19 July 2022.

63 Stakeholder interview, 19 July 2022. See also Department of Foreign Affairs, 2022.

64 Stakeholder interview, 19 July 2022.

65 Stakeholder interview, 19 July 2022.

substitution, as discussed in section 4.2.⁶⁶ In contrast, South African nationals are not visa-required for Ireland for short stays but are visa-required for the Schengen Area.⁶⁷ This may contribute to the higher number of applicants in Ireland from South Africa, as well as from the neighbouring countries of Zimbabwe and Botswana. One interviewee noted that the use of fraudulent South African passports was a common route to travel to Ireland for persons from countries neighbouring South Africa.⁶⁸

In summary, while intervening obstacles and routes are likely of particular importance to Ireland given its geographic location, it is difficult to assess the impact that this has had on international protection application numbers given limited data. Changing smuggler routes may be relevant but are difficult to assess due to their clandestine nature. However, flexibility in enforcing carrier sanctions to facilitate the movement of Ukrainian refugees may be a contributing factor, in tandem with other factors discussed.

4.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter examined seven possible explanations for the increase in international protection applications in Ireland in 2022. These explanations intersect and impact on application numbers to differing extents. Post-COVID-19 catch-up migration, conditions in countries of origin and first asylum and the Russian invasion of Ukraine appear to be having a sizeable impact on asylum application numbers in Ireland. Other likely factors that are also relevant are secondary movements of applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection, UK policy changes (for certain nationalities), social-network effects, labour-market shortages, perceptions of Ireland and intervening obstacles. The Irish reception system and reception policies are unlikely to be contributing to the increase, and the UK deflection effect does not seem to be large. However, further data is necessary and further research needs to be conducted, particularly with applicants themselves, in order to fully understand the recent increase.

66 Schengen Visa info, 'Who needs and who doesn't need a Schengen visa to travel to the EU?', www.schengenvisa.info/who-needs-schengen-visa; Immigration Service Delivery, 'Visa and non-visa required countries', Department of Justice, www.irishimmigration.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Immigration-Service-Delivery-Visa-and-Non-Visa-Required-Countries.pdf.

67 Immigration Service Delivery, 'Visa and non-visa required countries', Department of Justice, www.irishimmigration.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Immigration-Service-Delivery-Visa-and-Non-Visa-Required-Countries.pdf; Schengen Visa info, 'Who needs and who doesn't need a Schengen visa to travel to the EU?', www.schengenvisa.info/who-needs-schengen-visa/.

68 Stakeholder interview, 19 July 2022.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

The key finding from the literature, data analysis and interviews conducted is that there is likely no single explanation for the increased number of international protection applications in Ireland in the first six months of 2022. Instead, it is a period that has followed a particularly turbulent two years globally, affecting a range of drivers that are likely impacting asylum migration to Ireland and interacting with longer-term trends in Ireland.

Certain factors are likely responsible for a significant amount of the increase. We identified the knock-on effects of COVID-19, including reduced migration over two years due to travel restrictions and economic impacts in countries of origin and countries of first asylum as likely drivers of a temporary increase in applications. We also identified the Russian invasion of Ukraine as an important factor, affecting applications both directly (e.g., through Ukrainians or third-country nationals who were living in Ukraine applying for asylum) and indirectly (e.g., through impacts on food security globally, flexibility in carrier sanctions and effects on neighbouring countries). Other factors considered likely to have contributed to the increase were the closely managed non-EEA labour migration system combined with labour-market shortages, as well as longer-term migration trends strengthening migrant social networks in Ireland. A generally positive perception of Ireland and Irish policy may also contribute in a minor way to the selection of Ireland by asylum applicants, where this is a choice. While smuggler routes and strategies may be a contributing factor to the increase, it is impossible to draw conclusions on this with the available data. There was a rise in the number of cases of secondary movement detected by Eurodac; however, the exact proportion of these that become applications is not clear at the time of writing. Further research is needed to better understand the drivers behind these secondary movements, although conditions in other EU countries may be partially responsible.

On the other hand, the report finds that specific Irish policies, such as the proposed reforms to direct provision were unlikely to be responsible for any significant part of the increase. However, low return rates of unsuccessful applicants for international protection compared to other countries, non-enforcement of the contribution policy for those in IPAS accommodation and slow processing times may be viewed as advantages by some applicants. Nonetheless, the literature indicates that knowledge about these policies is likely to be low. The report also finds that changes to UK policy are unlikely to account for a large part of the increase in applications to Ireland, although they may explain increases in some nationalities and some of the unusual pattern of applications to Ireland.

The likelihood of the continuation of current trends into the coming years is difficult to predict. While some of these drivers will continue in the long term (e.g., network effects), others are likely to create only a temporary increase (e.g., the

impact of COVID-19). Others are less certain and will depend largely on external factors, such as the war in Ukraine and conflict elsewhere. Others still could be largely dependent on national policy responses (such as policy responses to labour-market shortages) or policy decisions in other countries (such as the hostile environment and possible deflection effect from the UK). Therefore, it is likely that the current high numbers of applications will plateau and reduce but that they are likely to stabilise at a higher average rate than Ireland has experienced previously.

Forecasting future asylum trends is complex, and this assessment could also be informed by tools and methodologies specifically designed for forecasting. These include early warning systems (for example, IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix and the EUAA's Early Warning and Preparedness System), survey-based forecasts (for example, Acostamadiedo et al., 2020), model-based forecasts (Carammia et al., 2022), and foresight (see, for example, the Danish Refugee Council's Mixed Migration foresight platform).

Given the nature of forced migration, asylum trends show significant variance and will continue to do so in the future, as figures in Ireland and the EU over the past 25 years show. The outbreak of war and global pandemics are almost impossible to predict. These observations are in line with findings that asylum migration is largely dependent on factors that are outside of the control of national governments (Neumayer, 2004; Thielemann, 2003) and should be planned for accordingly. Well-planned, flexible reception systems and services are therefore crucial to respond to this kind of migration. These systems should not only be able to accommodate the upper limits of trends rather than averages but also be planned so that they can be deployed flexibly for other uses when applications numbers are low. It should be noted that the current increase is from a historically very low base compared with other EU countries, and that Irish numbers remain small in the European context. It should also be emphasised that any policy responses should consider potential substitution effects that tend to undermine the goals of policies and have potential negative implications for vulnerable populations.

Further research is needed to supplement this analysis of the trends in international protection applications in Ireland, in particular research with applicants that could give insight into how they came to Ireland and how the decision was made, including how much control they had over choice of destination. This will benefit not only Irish policymaking but would also represent a significant academic contribution, as most research on the topic is conducted in countries that are often seen as significant destinations by migrants (e.g., the UK and Sweden). Similar research in countries that are not often seen as destinations could give important insights into destination preference. Further research also needs to be conducted on comparing trends in Ireland with other EU Member States over time, including research on secondary movements and the reasons behind them. Almost all reviewed research focused on understanding why people applied for asylum for the first time in a specific state, but the data presented in this paper shows clearly that there is a current increase in people coming to Ireland

who are already beneficiaries of international protection. Further research to understand what motivates beneficiaries rather than applicants is therefore also needed, as the motivations may be different.

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APPENDIX I

Asylum applications across the EU-27 Member States

EU MS	2022-01	2022-02	2022-03	2022-04	2022-05	2022-06	Total Jan-Jun 2022	Trendline 2022	% change comparing January 2022 and June 2022
Austria	3,175	3,105	4,295	4,690	5,645	9,060	29,970		185%
Belgium	2,210	1,885	2,920	1,935	2,185	2,515	13,650		14%
Bulgaria	1,005	915	2,520	1,575	1,830	905	8,750		-10%
Croatia	200	260	550	490	655	760	2,915		280%
Cyprus	1,385	1,805	1,875	2,030	2,560	2,405	12,060		74%
Czechia	70	130	195	85	80	100	660		43%
Denmark	130	185	2,375	160	155	165	3,170		27%
Estonia	5	10	75	125	170	155	540		3000%
EU	52,940	54,655	74,950	54,145	63,105	65,645	365,440		24%
Finland	130	225	1,825	255	165	195	2,795		50%
France	9,985	9,085	10,240	9,540	9,800	11,095	59,745		11%
Germany	15,845	14,950	15,135	12,465	13,855	12,315	84,565		-22%
Greece	1,630	1,330	1,695	1,505	2,045	2,220	10,425		36%
Hungary	0	5	5	5	5	5	25		500%
Ireland	390	750	1,040	1,170	1,540	1,605	6,495		312%
Italy	4,460	5,230	6,130	4,700	6,450	5,690	32,660		28%
Latvia	10	20	65	50	30	65	240		550%
Lithuania	35	45	170	145	115	55	565		57%
Luxembourg	145	155	190	165	215	155	1,025		7%
Malta	110	115	90	75	55	55	500		-50%
Netherlands	1,955	1,600	2,920	2,230	2,340	2,470	13,515		26%
Poland	395	570	1,525	595	445	460	3,990		16%
Portugal	215	275	135	90	175	130	1,020		-40%
Romania	395	1,070	4,270	600	450	590	7,375		49%
Slovakia	20	110	70	20	15	25	260		25%
Slovenia	515	380	610	700	725	715	3,645		39%
Spain	7,675	9,295	11,130	7,695	10,200	10,595	56,590		38%
Sweden	850	1,145	2,900	1,050	1,210	1,135	8,290		34%

Source: Eurostat, Asylum applicants by type of applicant, citizenship, age and sex – monthly data (rounded) [MIGR_ASYAPPCTZM]. Data extracted 27 September 2022. Figures for first-time applicants used.

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