

## HLG 3 – Asylum, Immigration and Citizenship

*We will continue to implement Government commitments in relation to asylum, immigration and citizenship matters in addition to updating, as necessary, the legislative base in this area, enhancing a ‘whole of Government’ approach.*

### 3.1 Asylum and Immigration Objective:

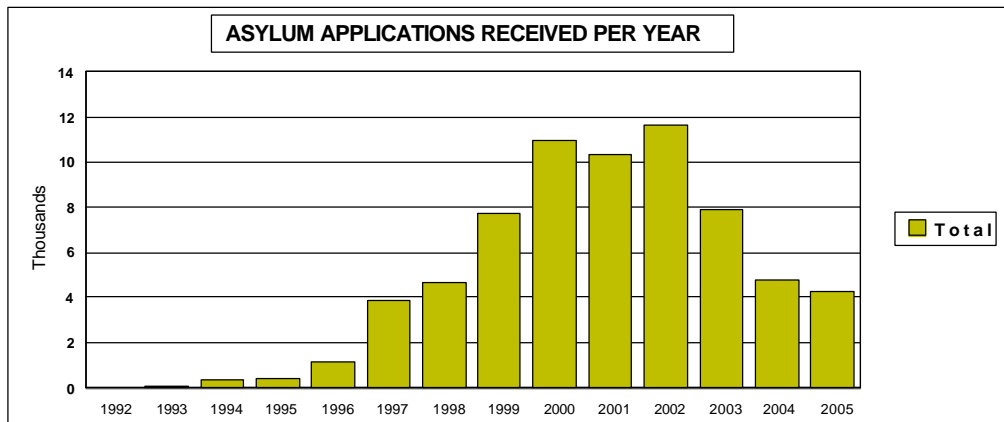
To ensure asylum and immigration services are delivered efficiently and effectively

#### 3.1 Asylum and Immigration Objective:

- The number of asylum applications received in 2005 was down 9% on 2004

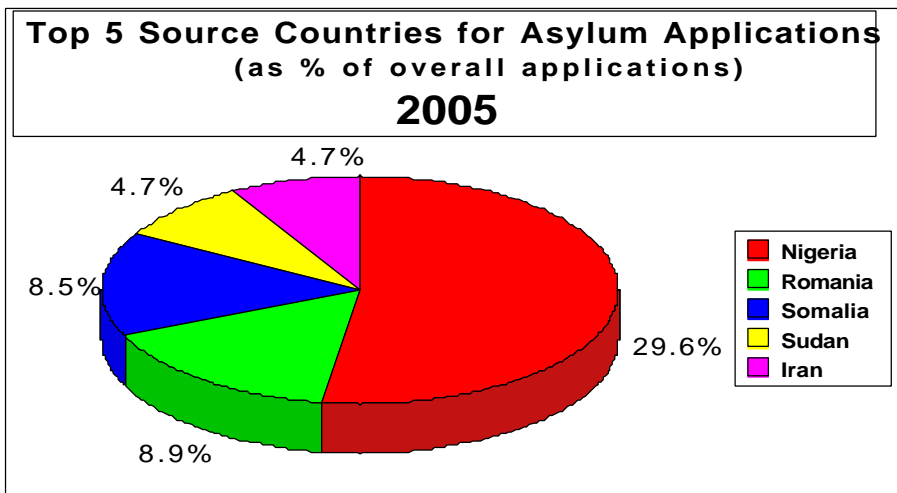
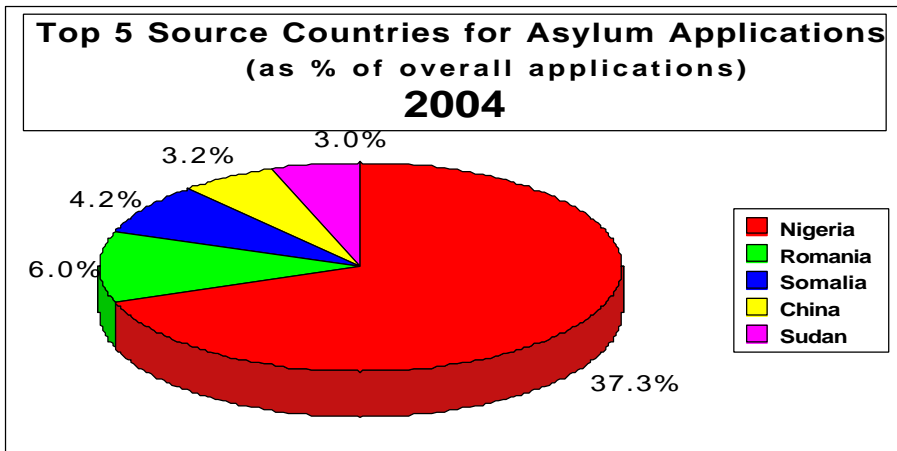
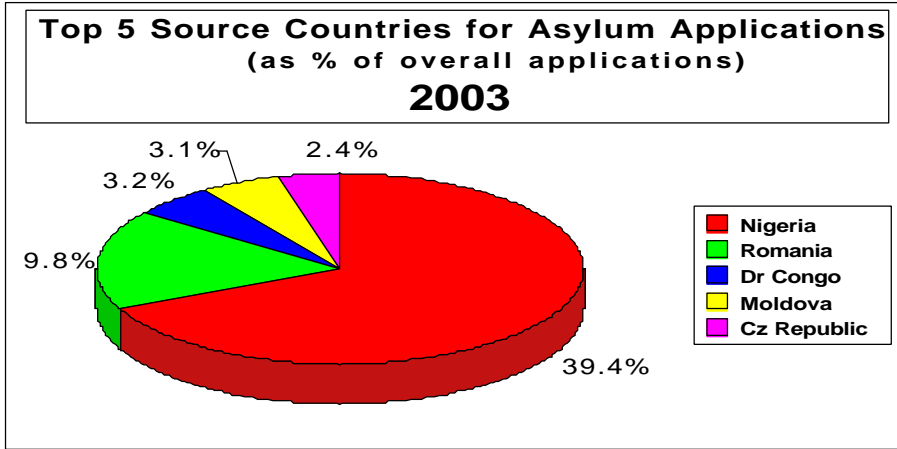
Table 1

#### ASYLUM APPLICATIONS RECEIVED PER YEAR



- The top five source countries for asylum applications for 2003, 2004 and 2005 are shown in the pie charts below:

**Table 2**



- Accelerated asylum processing arrangements were put in place in the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC) and the Refugee Appeals Tribunal (RAT), a 3 week turnaround time for each agency respectively, for five prioritised countries of origin with timescales met and sometimes exceeded.

**Table 3**

**DETAILS OF ASYLUM APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AND CASES PROCESSED  
IN 2005 (FIRST INSTANCE) BY THE ORAC**

Number of applications received	4,323
Number of interviews scheduled	5,423
Number of interviews held	4,140
Number of no-shows	667
Number of cancellations	616
Number of applicants granted refugee status	455
Number of applicants refused refugee status of which:	4,787
- Recommendation to refuse applicant a declaration to be a refugee following interview – S13 of the Refugee Act, 1996	41
- Recommendation that an application is manifestly unfounded – S12 (1) of the Refugee Act, 1996	0
- Recommendation to refuse – S11(9) of the Refugee Act, 1996	0
- Recommendation to refuse – S13(4)(b)	2,369
- Recommendation to refuse – S13(5)	1,542
- Recommendation to refuse – S13(2) withdrawn	191
- Recommendation to refuse – S13(2) deemed withdrawn	644
Dublin Regulation Cases	439
Cases outstanding for more than six months approximately	175
Total cases finalised	5,682

**Table 4 - OUTCOME OF APPEALS IN 2005**

**Appeals granted/refused/withdrawn in 2005 (as at 31/12/2005)**

<b>2005</b>	<b>Granted/Set Aside</b>	<b>Refused/Affirmed</b>	<b>Withdrawn</b>	<b>Total Decisions</b>
<b>Substantive</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>268</b>
<b>Manifestly Unfounded</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Dublin Convention</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Substantive 15-Day</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>1844</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>2279</b>
<b>Accelerated</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>1384</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1476</b>
<b>Dublin II Regulation</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>225</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>3625</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>4263</b>

A comprehensive work programme was undertaken and a series of developments took place in the areas of asylum and immigration during 2005 including the following:

- Following Government approval, the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) was established in 2005 in order to provide a one stop shop for immigration related services.
- Asylum applications in 2005 amounted to 4,323 as compared to some 4,766 for 2004 a reduction of some 9%.
- Faster scheduling of interviews was introduced from November 2005 in ORAC with all applicants offered an interview within 20 days and within 9-12 days for prioritised cases.
- The number of cases over six months in the ORAC and RAT at the end of December 2005 was 433 as compared to some 6,500 such cases in September 2001.
- Tenders were received and were evaluated in respect of a new, fully electronic fingerprinting system for the asylum and immigration areas.
- The number of applications for asylum from unaccompanied minors continued to fall in 2005 with liaison with relevant agencies undertaken through regular meetings of the Unaccompanied Minors Working Group. The Department continued the operation of the Voluntary Returns Programme for unaccompanied minors undertaken in co-operation with International Organisation for Migration and new proposal agreed with IOM at end- 2005 for submission to European Refugee Fund for another programme.
- Ongoing review of the operation of the EU II Dublin Regulation resulted in the number of transfer orders effected rising from 65 in 2004 to 209 in 2005. Full participation in review of the Dublin II Regulation was undertaken by the European Commission in late 2005.
- A proposal was drafted and Government approval granted for the increase in the State's annual refugee resettlement quota from 40 persons to 200 persons.
- Visa processing times have substantially decreased. In December 2004 the processing time for a visa application was 4 to 6 weeks from the date of receipt in the Department's Dublin office. By December 2005 the turnaround time was less than a week. All backlogs were cleared by year-end.
- Proposals were prepared for the introduction of a new status of long-term resident and work on the revision of classification of residence status was commenced with Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB).
- A dedicated visa office was established in New Delhi and all staff were in situ by end 2005. This Office will deal with all visa applications from India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.
- Improvements to customer services in the visa area during the year included the establishment of a dedicated customer service unit, and investigations/international liaison unit, the publication of decisions, new student visa guidelines and enhanced liaison with schools and the publication of an information leaflet on Family Reunification in respect of persons recognised as refugees.

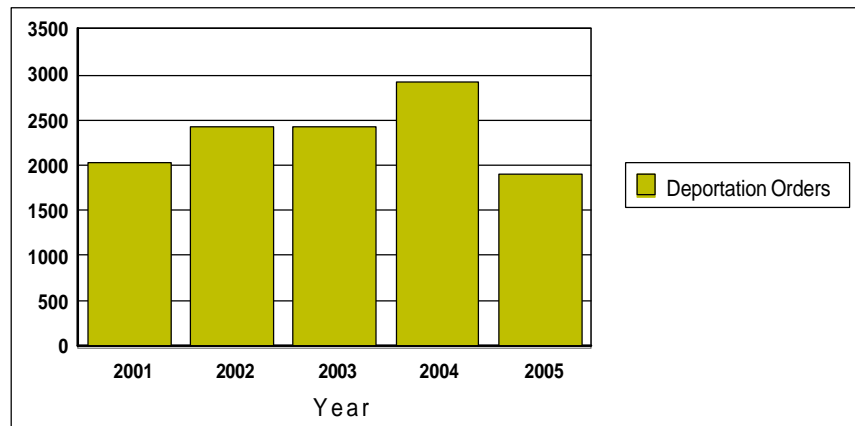
- Development of the GNIB Information Systems was underway to facilitate improved electronic data capture and support the charging of a fee for registration cards issued to non-nationals.

Activities pursuant to the provisions of the Immigration Act, 1999 (as amended)

- Below are details of the numbers of Deportation Orders signed (**Table 5**), and effected (**Table 6**) in 2005 as well as the number of persons granted temporary Leave to Remain in the State (**Table 7**) pursuant to the provisions of the Immigration Act, 1999 (as amended). Comparative figures are also included in each case for each year since 2001. **Tables 8, 9 and 10**, respectively, set out details of the numbers of Deportation Orders signed in 2005, the numbers of such Orders effected and the numbers of persons granted permission to remain in the State in 2005, by nationality. **Table 11** sets out the number of persons, by nationality, who were deemed to be evading their deportations as at 31 December 2005. It should be noted that this figure includes details of those persons evading deportation orders signed in all years and not just in 2005.

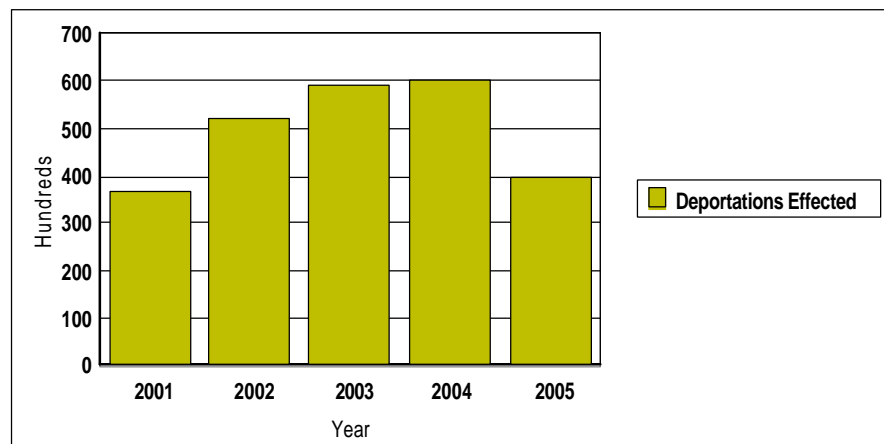
**Table 5**

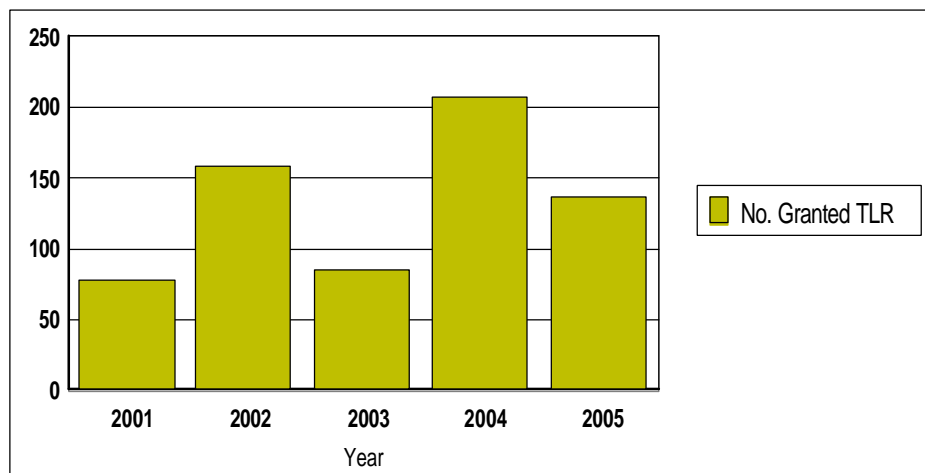
**Number of Deportation Orders signed 2001 - 2005**



**Table 6**

**Number of Deportation Orders effected 2001 - 2005**



**Table 7****Number of persons granted temporary Leave to Remain 2001 - 2005****Table 8****Nationalities of those in respect of who Deportation Orders were signed in 2005**

Nationality	Frequency	Nationality	Frequency	Nationality	Frequency
Afghanistan	1	Georgia	26	Nigeria	978
Albania	29	Ghana	14	Pakistan	5
Algeria	20	Guatemala	1	Romania	412
America	3	Guinea	2	Russia	15
Angola	17	India	4	Senegal	1
Armenia	3	Iran	2	Serbia	2
Azerbaijan	1	Israel	1	Sierra Leone	8
Bangladesh	1	Ivory Coast	4	South Africa	49
Belarus	2	Jamaica	4	St. Helena	1
Benin	1	Kenya	9	Stateless	1
Bosnia	2	Kosovo	14	Sudan	1
Brazil	17	Lithuania	2	Syria	2
Bulgaria	16	Malaysia	1	Thailand	1
Cameroon	6	Mali	1	Togo	2
China	119	Moldova	29	Turkey	3
Croatia	49	Mongolia	4	Ukraine	4
DR Congo	3	Morocco	1	Vietnam	1
Egypt	1	Namibia	1		
Ethiopia	1	Niger	1		
<b>Total Nationalities of those in respect of who Deportation Orders were signed = 1899</b>					

**Table 9****Countries to where Deportations were effected in 2005**

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Albania	3	India	1	Pakistan	1
Algeria	11	Israel	1	Romania	122
Bosnia	3	Ivory Coast	1	Russia	1
Brazil	13	Jamaica	1	Serbia	1
Bulgaria	6	Kosovo	10	South Africa	17
China	18	Lebanon	2	Turkey	1
Croatia	17	Macedonia	1	Ukraine	3
DR Congo	1	Moldova	15	Vietnam	1
Egypt	4	Mongolia	2		
Georgia	4	Nigeria	135		
<b>Total Number of Deportations Effected in 2005 = 396</b>					

**Table 10****Numbers and nationalities of persons granted temporary Leave to Remain in 2005**

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Afghanistan	1	Eritrea	1	Pakistan	3
Albania	5	Ghana	1	Romania	18
Algeria	5	Iraq	1	Russia	2
Angola	5	Kazakhstan	1	Sierra Leone	1
Armenia	2	Kosovo	8	Somalia	2
Bahrain	1	Latvia	1	South Africa	3
Belarus	2	Liberia	1	Stateless	1
Bulgaria	3	Libya	1	Ukraine	8
Cameroon	1	Malawi	1	Zaire	6
Croatia	6	Moldova	3		
DR Congo	6	Nigeria	37		
<b>Number of Temporary Leave to Remains Granted in 2005 = 137</b>					

**Table 11****Nationality of those deemed to be evading deportation as at 31/12/2005**

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Afghanistan	17	Hungary	4	Pakistan	70
Albania	103	India	26	Palestine	11
Algeria	207	Iran	10	Poland	193
America	2	Iraq	38	Romania	1747
Angola	48	Israel	1	Russia	171
Armenia	8	Ivory Coast	44	Rwanda	15
Azerbaijan	4	Jamaica	2	Serbia	4
Bangladesh	8	Jordan	1	Sierra Leone	104
Belarus	64	Kazakhstan	14	Slovakia	25
Benin	2	Kenya	54	Somalia	54
Bosnia	3	Kosovo	166	South Africa	92
Brazil	7	Kyrgyzstan	1	Sri Lanka	33
Bulgaria	78	Latvia	33	St. Helena	1
Burundi	6	Lebanon	16	Stateless	14
Cameroon	38	Liberia	12	Sudan	11
Canada	1	Libya	5	Syria	3
Chechnya	1	Lithuania	68	Tajikistan	4
China	291	Macedonia	16	Tanzania	1
Columbia	1	Madagascar	1	Thailand	1
Congo	21	Malawi	4	Togo	15
Croatia	19	Malaysia	3	Tunisia	2
Czech Rep.	84	Mali	2	Turkey	8
DR Congo	95	Mauritania	2	Turkmenistan	1
Egypt	3	Mauritius	1	Uganda	3
Eritrea	1	Mexico	1	Ukraine	129
Estonia	9	Moldova	233	United Kingdom	1
Ethiopia	2	Mongolia	5	Uzbekistan	8
Gabon	2	Montenegro	2	Vietnam	3
Gambia	23	Morocco	9	Yugoslavia	23
Georgia	86	Niger	4	Zaire	4
Ghana	77	Nigeria	1883	Zambia	1
Guinea	7	North Korea	1	Zimbabwe	12
<b>Total Number Deemed Evading Deportation Orders = 6744*</b>					

**\*It should be noted that these figures relate to persons who have evaded their deportations to date**



### Use of charter flights to effect deportations

- As is the case with most States, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform uses charter flights to effect deportations as this is the most efficient and cost effective means of undertaking returns. To this end, in early 2005, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, following an EU wide tender competition, agreed a contract with a UK based service provider to provide charter flight facilities as required.

### Activities pursuant to the provisions of the Dublin II Regulation

- The Dublin II Regulation, Council Regulation (EC) No. 343/2003, is intended to prevent the phenomenon of 'asylum shopping' across Europe and sets out criteria for determining which Member State is responsible for examining an asylum application where such applications have been lodged in more than one jurisdiction. At the same time it guarantees applicants that one State will process their application, thereby preventing the creation of 'refugees in orbit', a situation which had pertained in Europe prior to the introduction in 1995 of its predecessor, the Dublin Convention. Under the Dublin II Regulation, the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner can, on the basis of the relevant criteria, request another State to accept responsibility for an asylum application and have it processed in that other State. Where such a determination is made, a Transfer Order is served on the person concerned, requiring him/her to be transferred to that other State on an appointed date.

**Table 12** sets out details of the number of Transfer Orders signed and effected in 2004 and 2005. **Table 13** details the Transfer Orders signed in 2005, by nationality of the persons who are the subject of such Orders. **Table 14** sets out details of the EU States to which persons were transferred in 2005. **Table 15** provides a breakdown of the numbers of persons transferred by air and by ferry in 2005.

#### **Table 12 a & b**

##### **12a Number of Dublin II Regulation Transfer Orders signed 2004 & 2005**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Dublin II Regulation</b>
2005	426
2004	238

##### **12b Numbers transferred under Dublin II Regulation**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Dublin II Regulation Transfers</b>
2005	209
2004	65

**Table 13 - Nationalities of those in respect of whom Dublin II Regulation Transfer Orders were signed in 2005**

Nationality	Frequency	Nationality	Frequency	Nationality	Frequency
Afghanistan	22	Ghana	5	Romania	11
Albania	5	Guinea	2	Russia	5
Algeria	8	Iran	39	Rwanda	3
Angola	19	Iraq	15	Sierra Leone	2
Armenia	4	Ivory Coast	1	Somalia	102
Azerbaijan	1	Kenya	3	Sri Lanka	1
Belarus	3	Kosovo	2	Sudan	44
Burundi	2	Kuwait	4	Syria	3
Cameroon	4	Lebanon	5	Togo	1
China	5	Liberia	7	Turkey	4
Congo	1	Moldova	3	Uganda	4
DR Congo	20	Morocco	3	Ukraine	2
Eritrea	15	Nigeria	25	Uzbekistan	2
Ethiopia	3	Pakistan	1	Yemen	1
Georgia	8	Palestine	5	Zimbabwe	1
<b>Total Number of Dublin II Regulation Orders Signed = 426</b>					

**Table 14 - Numbers transferred to each Member State under Dublin II Regulation in 2005**

Member State	Transferred	Member State	Transferred	Member State	Transferred
Austria	5	Italy	12	Spain	1
Belgium	9	Luxembourg	3	Sweden	6
Finland	1	Malta	8	United Kingdom	144
France	5	Netherlands	8		
Germany	5	Norway	2		
<b>Total Number transferred to all Member States = 209</b>					

**Table 15 - Numbers transferred on Commercial Flight and Numbers transferred by ferry under Dublin II Regulation in 2005**

<b>By Air</b>	195
<b>By Ferry</b>	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>209</b>

#### Voluntary Returns

- One of the options open to persons faced with the prospect of having a Deportation Order issued in respect of them is that they can seek to return voluntarily to their country of origin. The clear benefit of such an arrangement is that it enables such a person to return to the State at a future date if they establish a legal basis for doing so whereas a person who is the subject of a Deportation Order is legally obliged to leave the State and thereafter remain outside the State.

Persons who agree to return voluntarily to their countries of origin can obtain financial assistance towards doing so through the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) who normally pay the return airfare of such persons and can also assist the persons concerned re-integrate in their countries of origin by advising on training and employment opportunities etc. The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform also directly assists persons who wish to return voluntarily to their countries of origin by providing administrative and other supports to persons requesting such assistance.

**Table 16** sets out the numbers of persons who have been assisted to return voluntarily to their countries of origin each year since 2001, broken down by reference to those assisted through IOM and directly through the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. **Table 17** sets out details, by nationality, of the persons who returned voluntarily to their countries of origin in 2005.

**Table 16 - Total Number of Voluntary Returns 2001 – 2005**

Year	Dept. of Justice, Equality and Law Reform assisted	International Organisation for Migration assisted	Total
2005	125	210	335
2004	218	393	611
2003	361	401	762
2002	396	110	506
2001	353	3	356

**Table 17 - Nationalities of all Voluntary Returns in 2005**

Nationality	Frequency	Nationality	Frequency	Nationality	Frequency
Albania	5	Georgia	5	Philippines	3
Algeria	11	India	5	Romania	45
America	3	Iran	2	Russia	4
Argentina	1	Iraq	4	Serbia	3
Armenia	1	Israel	11	South Africa	10
Bangladesh	1	Jordan	1	Sri Lanka	1
Belarus	2	Kosovo	1	Sudan	1
Brazil	17	Lithuania	1	Tanzania	1
Bulgaria	1	Malawi	2	Togo	1
Burundi	1	Malaysia	2	Turkey	1
Canada	1	Moldova	23	Ukraine	6
China	24	Mongolia	1	Venezuela	1
Croatia	79	Morocco	3	Zimbabwe	1
Cuba	1	Nigeria	40		
DR Congo	2	Pakistan	6		
<b>Total number of Voluntary Returns for 2005 = 335</b>					

#### Judicial Review

- Judicial Review (JR) is an examination by the High Court of the procedures followed in making a decision to ensure that the relevant authority acted correctly, fairly and in accordance with law. In most cases the decision that is being reviewed by the Court is the decision of the Minister to sign a deportation order.

### Volume of Cases

- The Minister commenced the making of deportation orders under the terms of the Immigration Act 1999 in November, 1999. Since then over a 1,000 deportation orders have been challenged in the High Court by way of judicial review. The caseload of 'live' judicial reviews has increased significantly - e.g. end 2004 to end 2005 shows an increase in cases outstanding from 309 to 356, an increase of 15.2%.
- “Article 40” cases involving failed asylum applicants who are in detention are also dealt with by the Department. This relates to enquiries by the High Court into a person’s detention under Article 40 of the Constitution. There have been a total of 139 such cases since November 1999, with 25 cases in 2005. At end 2005 there were a total of 15 such cases outstanding.

### Reception and Integration Agency

- In December, 2004 the Minister announced that this Department would consider applications for leave to remain in the State from non national parents of Irish Born Children (IBC), subject to them satisfying certain criteria. As a result a significant number of asylum seekers who had previously been accommodated by the RIA and had abandoned that accommodation subsequently sought to be re-accommodated in direct provision while they lodged their applications for leave to remain. The RIA had 6521 asylum seekers accommodated in its accommodation centres at the beginning of December, 2004 but this number rose to 8080 by the end of April, 2005. As a result of this major increase in numbers, which the RIA was obliged to accommodate, a number of new centres were opened (providing 875 bed spaces) to fulfil the short term emergency needs.
- As asylum seekers left centres having successfully obtained leave to remain, the RIA has been left with an excess of supply beyond requirement which is in the process of being reduced so as to balance supply with demand. However, other factors which must also be taken into account in this regard include the requirement for dispersal (which inter alia, ensures access to services); the need to ensure a proper mix of accommodation (e.g. family, single male, single female) and the requirement to balance the need for accommodation in Dublin (arising from accelerated processing arrangements and reception) against the availability of accommodation in Dublin and outside Dublin.
- In conjunction with the Department of Health and Children, the RIA has developed healthy infant feeding guidelines (which includes promotion of breastfeeding). The RIA has also developed a child protection policy for accommodation centres in line with the Children First National Guidelines. Three regional seminars were held in Galway, Cork and Dublin during October/November, 2005 where the guidelines were launched for implementation across all accommodation centres commencing in January, 2006. A key priority is the roll out and implementation in its centres of the above policies into 2006.
- A transition support team has been put in place for Separated Children Seeking Asylum (SCSA). This project is managed by an inter-agency committee chaired by the RIA.
- 16 Projects were selected for funding under European Refugee Fund (ERF) 2004 and grant agreements were drafted and signed between RIA (as the responsible authority) and the individual beneficiaries. All beneficiaries were issued with their initial allocations and upon receipt and analysis of interim reports, all were issued with their second allocations.

- RIA hosted an information exchange with the Polish ERF Authority in March 2005.
- RIA is responsible for the administration of the European Refugee Fund (ERF) in Ireland.
- The Annual ERF Programme for 2005 and the Multi-Annual Programme 2005-2007 were prepared and submitted to the European Commission.
- A discussion document “Immigration and Residence in Ireland – Outline policy proposals for an Immigration and Residence Bill” was published in April 2005. Over 130 submissions were received and presentations were made to interested bodies including ICTU, National Economic and Social Council (NESC) and NCCRI.
- Assisted by a multi-agency staff complement from Departments representing the education, health and environment areas, the RIA continues to coordinate the integration of refugees and those with leave to remain. The activities include:

#### **Information**

- Operation of a comprehensive website with information and advice
- Organisation of country-wide seminars and information events

#### **Education**

- Liaison with schools and school management to ensure appropriate educational integration measures for all RIA clients
- Effective engagement with education providers, NGOs and other voluntary groups
- Continued support and co-ordination of the various language training initiatives for adult refugees
- Cooperation with the Department of Education and Science (DES) in all education areas including liaison with a special DES internal forum focussed on newcomer issues.

#### **Research**

- Promotion and carrying out research in the area of integration and related issues
- Full study of refugee needs in Limerick funded by the Agency and results presented to the Limerick City Development Board in December 2005 to be used as an action plan to inform future strategies for service delivery in Limerick City.
- Similar study initiated for the Cork City Development Board.

#### **Integration linked to NAPR**

- Continued contribution to the National Action Plan against Racism (NAPR)
- Senior member of Department staff appointed to NAPR Steering Group

#### **Liaison with service providers**

- Participation in meetings of service providers (local authorities, schools, health boards etc.) in communities in which refugees are being permanently settled. These meetings create awareness of client needs and assist in the coordination of the delivery of services.

#### **Completion of MORE Project**

- In April 2005 the MORE Project, a joint refugee resettlement initiative between the RIA and the Finnish Ministry of Labour was completed.

- The final outcome document “Shaping our Future – A practical Guide to the Selection, Reception and Integration of Resettled Refugees” was produced and continues to be a good source of information for those working in resettlement and integration.
- An information booklet called “The Beginners Guide to Ireland” was also produced and will be translated into other relevant languages.
- A version will also be provided to service providers for their information.

### **Resettlement Programme**

- In June 2005 the Government agreed to increase Ireland’s resettlement quota from 10 cases (40 persons) to 200 persons per year. The programme is coordinated by the RIA. The Government Decision also provided for the establishment of an Inter-Departmental Working Group on Refugee Resettlement and Integration to assist in the coordination of integration services. A total of 116 persons were accepted from eight different countries during 2005. Those admitted during 2005 were resettled in Roscommon, Carrick-on-Shannon and Dublin.
- Services for resettlement refugees include
  - support for up to 18 months after arrival
  - new arrivals linked directly to service providers and local NGO’s
  - orientation programmes organised for both new arrivals and receiving communities
- Models of good practice for resettlement refugee integration developed in collaboration with Roscommon County Partnership Company and Co. Leitrim Partnership Company.

### **Outreach Information Programme**

- Participation by RIA during 2005 in an information exchange outreach programme in partnership with the UNHCR to provide information to asylum seekers, refugees, service providers and members of the public on matters related to the rights and entitlements of asylum seekers and refugees.

### **Small Grants Scheme**

- The RIA continues to operate a Small Grants Scheme to fund projects which assist asylum seekers to settle into local areas and to promote intercultural activities between asylum seekers/refugees and the local community.
- Funding of up to €6,000 is provided for individual projects.

### **Commemorative ceremonies**

- As part of a policy of special integration events, RIA organised a commemoration ceremony in Waterford for persons who have been granted refugee status. The event followed on from similar events held in Cork and Limerick during 2004 and was greeted very positively by the refugees themselves, local service providers, local support groups and local media.

### **International dimension**

- The RIA continues to participate in international fora on integration policy issues in the European Union
- As part of a series of EU seminars on integration issues, the RIA organised an international conference in October, 2005 on ‘Mainstreaming – a critical tool for successful integration’. The findings of the seminar will be included in a handbook on integration which is being produced by the EU Commission.

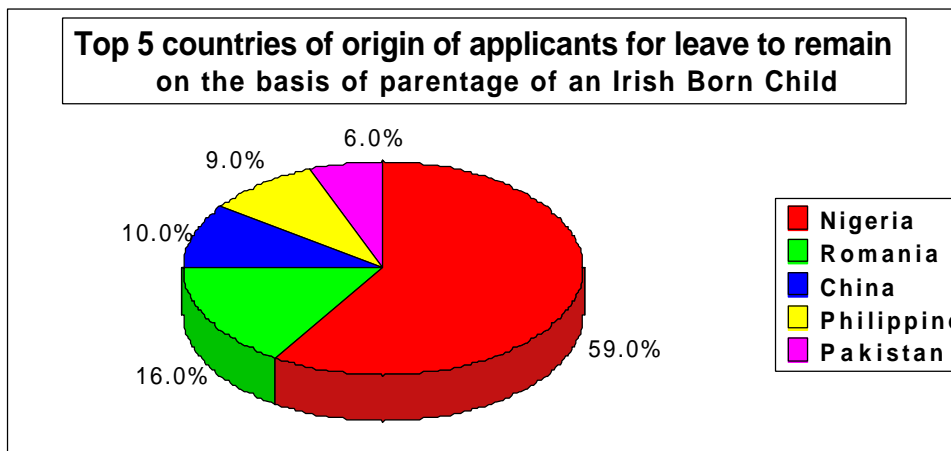
Irish Born Child Scheme:

- On 15 January 2005 the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform announced new procedures for the consideration of applications for leave to remain in the State from the non-national parents of Irish born children born in the State before 1 January 2005. The closing date for receipt of applications was 31 March 2005. A total of 17,917 applications were received in time and 16,693 applicants were given leave to remain for an initial period of two years.

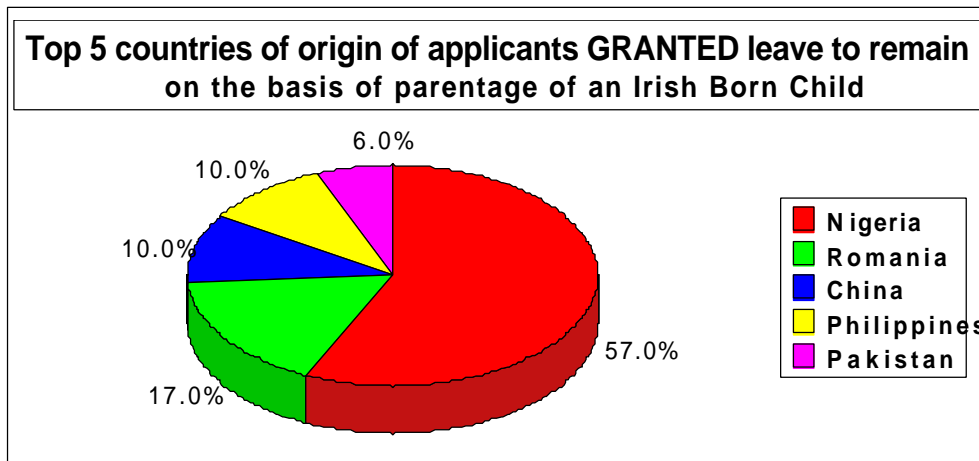
Applicants for the scheme had to apply on a prescribed application form and support this with evidence of their identity and nationality, evidence that their child had been born in the State before 1 January 2005 and that the parent or parents had been continuously resident in the State in the period since the birth of their Irish born child.

Unsuccessful applications were rejected for a variety of reasons, mainly because the required identity/nationality documentation (for example, a National Passport) had not been submitted, that continuous residency requirement had not been met or the persons in question had not met the ‘good character’ criteria.

**The country of origin of applicants (top 5) is as follows:-**



**The country of origin of those given leave to remain (top 5) is as follows:-**



The Irish Born Child Unit was established in the Department to carry out this work and closed down in early 2006. The Unit was staffed by people on two year assignments from their parent departments. The majority of staff in the Unit have now returned to their parent Departments but a small number have been retained within INIS.

#### International Organisation of Migration (IOM)

- Three programmes operated by the IO M for the Department in 2005 were:
  - Voluntary Return and Reintegration for nationals of Sub-Saharan Africa,
  - Voluntary Return for non-EEA nationals, and
  - Voluntary Return for Unaccompanied Minors.
- 209 individuals returned under these programmes in 2005. Since 2001 over 1,000 individuals have availed of IOM voluntary return options.
- Discussions held with IOM to develop new programmes for 2006 including:
  - A new Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme,
  - An Information project to promote Voluntary Return,
  - Voluntary Assisted Return Programme for Unaccompanied Minors, and
  - A Preparatory Action Programme under the EU Return Fund.

#### Immigration and Residence Bill

- A discussion document “***Immigration and Residence in Ireland – Outline policy proposals for an Immigration and Residence Bill***” was published in April 2005. Over 130 submissions were received. Presentations were made to interested bodies including ICTU, NESC and NCCRI. Work progressed in cooperation with Civil Law Reform Division to develop a scheme for the Bill.

#### Permission to Remain

- The Department dealt with an increased number of applications for permission to reside in the State. The following details reflect the very significant increases in the number of applications received in 2005
  - General Permission to Remain: up 700% since 2003
  - Family Reunification: up 500% since 2001
  - EU Treaty Rights: up 344% since 2001

#### Naturalisation

- 4,525 applications for naturalisation were received in 2005, up 11% on the 2004 figure
  - 1,451 certificates of naturalisation were issued, up 9% on the previous year
  - 1,867\* applications refused, up 150% on 2004
  - 1,301 applications deemed ineligible (procedure started on 1 April 2005)
- \*Backlog of refusals cleared during 2005.



### Post Nuptial Citizenship

- 4,080\*\* declarations of post-nuptial citizenship were received in 2005, up 44% on the 2004 figure.
- 2,622 declarations were finalised, up 7% on the 2004 figure

\*\* the increase can be largely attributed to the ending of the post-nuptial process on 29 November 2005. The figure of 4,080 is the actual number of declarations received in the Department. The Department of Foreign Affairs, who process declarations lodged by persons residing outside Ireland, estimate that there are about 6,000 declarations awaiting process in their Dublin office and in missions around the world.

### Working Group with UK on Immigration issues within the Common Travel Area (CTA)

- Meetings were held (September and November 2005) in London and Dublin at senior official level in relation to immigration matters generally within the Common Travel Area.

### Establishment of INIS

- In March 2005 the Minister announced that the Government had approved the establishment of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) as an executive office within the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.
- The INIS provides a “one-stop-shop” approach to migrants. In addition to providing a single access point and thus improving the service to customers, it enables the State's mechanisms to respond in a more efficient and timely manner to market demands.
- The INIS incorporates the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform's structures for dealing with asylum, immigration and citizenship. Arrangements were put in place for the transfer of the Visa Office of the Department of Foreign Affairs to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform from 1 January 2006 and the integration of this service with other visa functions. Responsibility for the provision of visa services at diplomatic and consular missions abroad remains with the Department of Foreign Affairs.
- The INIS is tasked with developing a cohesive system for the issuing of work permits and visas through a virtual link between the work permit system in the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the INIS. The overall effectiveness of these arrangements is to be reviewed within 2 years. The economic migration policy function remains with the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment.
- The INIS will also include a new Immigrant Integration Unit to promote and co-ordinate social and organisational measures across the whole spectrum of Government, for the acceptance of lawful immigrants into Irish economic and cultural life.