



WHAT IS MASI?

We came together as MASI after the protests in the DP centres in 2014. We believe that speaking together in one voice, moving together in one direction, we are much stronger, our voices much louder and more difficult to ignore and dismiss. Part of the purpose of direct provision and dispersal is to keep us apart, divided, ghettoised, our power stolen. For us, MASI is a way to take back our power and demand freedom, justice and dignity for all asylum seekers.

- MASI is the collective **Movement of Asylum Seekers in Ireland**, a platform for asylum seekers to join together in unity and purpose

- MASI seeks justice, freedom and dignity for all asylum seekers.
- MASI demands the end of direct provision, the right to work and education, and opposes deportation.
- MASI is independent: it is not an NGO, it is not affiliated to any NGO or political party.
- MASI is not funded; we depend on our own resources and raise our own funds as we can.
- In MASI, all are equal to each other; all are of equal value and deserving of equal respect and dignity.
- MASI is democratic and collective. All decisions are made collectively, through discussion and agreement.
- MASI has no 'membership'. We are part of MASI through our commitment and contribution to the collective work of the movement.
- MASI has no organisational structures. Structures can become rigid and hierarchical. We decide on tasks according to the nature of each action, and according to who is able to commit the time and energy needed at that time.

MASI demands an end to direct provision, the right to work and education, residency for all in the system, and an end to the brutal deportation regime. Some might say these are not reasonable or realistic demands. We have found that being 'reasonable' achieves little for asylum seekers except more time locked up in DP, deportation orders, and forced removal.

The Working Group on Direct Provision and the Protection Process, set up to look into 'reforming' DP and the asylum process, has finished its work. Its report was published at the end of June 2015. We have opposed the Working Group from the start as a cosmetic exercise designed to make the government look concerned, while delivering

nothing of real worth for asylum seekers. None of the recommendations have since been implemented to date.

What is happening right now? From leaks to the media and from the Working Group, what lies ahead falls very far short of what we can call justice for asylum seekers. From these leaks, we know that:

- DP is here to stay, and no alternatives will be considered
- We will not be given the right to work
- People who have attended secondary school for 5 or more years in Ireland **might** be entitled to study at third level on the same footing as Irish citizens
- People who have been in the system five or more years **might** be given leave to remain as part of 'clearing the backlog'
- The Single Application Procedure (SAP) will be introduced as part of the Protection Bill. The SAP and Protection Bill aim to make the application process faster, which we would all welcome.
- However, this Bill will also increase the speed and number of deportations. This is already happening: more people are getting LTR, but more people are also getting deportation orders. Deportation flights have started again.

This is a critical time – it is not a time to be paralysed between hope and fear.

IT IS TIME FOR US TO RISE!

Back in October 2014 MASI petitioned politicians, Department of Justice, and each and every member of the Working Group individually demanding that asylum seeker representatives from all 34 centres, chosen by us, needed to be at the Working Group table. We protested in our centres of indefinite detention, at the Dáil and at the Department of Justice and we continued to name this process for what it is – a bogus exercise designed to quiet our voices with promises of 'reform', and mute ever-increasing public opposition to the institutional abuse of people seeking asylum.

In the meantime, 'representatives' who do not represent us have been appointed to give some appearance of legitimacy to this farce and our lives, reduced to statistics, have been haggled over by people who will never make the difficult decisions and journeys we have all made, who will never spend a day in the open prisons where we watch our lives and our futures, our hopes, our abilities and our potential dwindle with each passing day.

We are weary of empty promises and the crocodile tears of those who say they are on the side of justice, yet allow our suffering to continue.

It is time for us to rise up in unity and purpose. Asylum seekers have been quiet too long. The State will not give us freedom, justice and dignity as a gift for keeping quiet. It is time to fight together for our freedom and for the freedom of our brothers and sisters in the time to come. The struggle may be long, but we will prevail.

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