

Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme 2018-2023 (SICAP)

LDC Annual Progress Report 2023
LOT – Galway City (26-1)



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Arna chomhchistiú ag
an Aontas Eorpach

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pobal

government supporting communities

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

Purpose of the 2023 Annual Progress Report

The purpose of the 2023 Annual Progress Report is to capture the role that SICAP played in responding to the needs of SICAP target groups during the year. In doing so, this report will capture beneficiaries' needs in your Lot in 2023, the approaches used by the programme to respond to these needs, alongside challenges faced and lessons learned during the year. As this is the final year of SICAP 2018-2023, where appropriate, please include examples that illustrate the long-term, developmental approaches taken to support target groups as well as the cross-programme, integrated approach utilised.

There is a dedicated section within this year's Annual Progress Report where you can outline the details of the supports that you have provided to the Ukrainian arrivals and/or people seeking International Protection in your Lot.

There is a dedicated section to allow you to describe your work in responding to your chosen Lot priority groups within the National Programme Priorities.

Space is also provided for you to reflect on the supports provided by DRCD and/or Pobal in 2023.

Report size guide: 8-11 pages, excluding Annex 1. A page number guide is provided for each question. This can be adapted slightly to suit your reporting needs.

Two-three photographs can be included (optional), with the understanding that relevant permissions have been received and captions describing the photographs are provided. We would strongly encourage you to include photos and/or links to short videos if possible.

1. Please describe the needs of SICAP beneficiaries in 2023 and, where applicable, your responses to these needs. (3-5 pages)

Guidance: Please consider individuals, LCGs, SEs, children and families, non-caseload individuals, and complete the below table. **Please do not include details on Ukrainians/International Protection applicants in this section** as there is a dedicated Ukrainian section within this report. The following questions may be useful to reflect on:

- What types of supports did beneficiaries require during the year? What did these supports look like? Please consider **individuals, LCGs, SEs, children and families, and non-caseload individuals**, when providing your answer.
- Please bear in mind the programme’s horizontal principles (i.e., promoting an equality framework, applying community development approaches, and developing collaborative approaches) when providing your answer.

Beneficiary type	Identified needs in 2023	LDC Responses to needs
Individuals	<p>Almost 1 in 5 residents of Galway City are from outside the state, among this group are many asylum-seekers and refugees. There has been a fourfold increase in the number of Direct Provision Centres in the city, this has generated a significantly increased volume of calls for assistance with applications for asylum, residency, work permits, family reunification etc. Much of this work is, of course, conducted with people who have limited English and few individual resources.</p> <p>There has been an exponential increase in demand for English as a Second language (ESOL) tuition in Galway City. The acquisition of language proficiency is an imperative if social inclusion and integration is to be achieved for our new communities. In addition to formal tuition there is an identified need for supports around assistance with form-filling and access to services where such access is hampered by a lack of understanding of and fluency in English. We have identified a very significant weakness with literacy amongst recent arrivals to Direct Provision Centres, in particular many of these mostly young men lack such skills in their native language.</p>	<p>In response to the identified needs of Galway’s new communities the Partnership provides the Galway Migrant service which seeks to address many of the concerns presented by Asylum seekers and refugees. This extremely complex and sensitive work is delivered by a dedicated worker who collaborates widely with all other sections of the SICAP programme to maximise delivery of supports, these include Community Education, Labour Market and Employment Supports, English Language classes and Enterprise. As with all work across the SICAP programme there is a valuable multiplier effect achieved by this coordination and consolidation of service delivery. However, the greatly increased demand for these services has not been met with a commensurate increase in resources within the SICAP programme and across other migrant support programmes. This has inevitably led to increased waiting times for beneficiaries to access these services.</p> <p>In response to this identified need for ESOL provision Galway City Partnership provides English classes at all levels from pre-beginner to Advanced. There is currently 32 hours classroom tuition per week as well as one to one support for people with additional needs around literacy and numeracy as well as more complex intellectual difficulties which may have been previously unexamined.</p>

<p>This requires extensive and sensitive tuition with greatly reduced class sizes and therefore further stretches service delivery.</p> <p>A need was identified for digital literacy and user supports, there was an expressed need for a course to assist individuals to maximise the use of their phone and other devices which are of increasing importance when conducting day to day activities such as on-line banking, purchases, bookings and accessing timely information.</p> <p>There is a continuing and increasing demand for accredited courses which will allow clients to build a portfolio of micro-credentials to upskill and improve their employment prospects, these courses are also extremely valuable for clients in removing barriers to a return to education and training. In particular access to SICAP funded courses removes the barrier experienced by individuals within the Direct Provision Centres who lack Stamp 4 certification and therefore ineligible for full time education courses.</p> <p>Nationally and locally there has been a decrease in the numbers of individuals on the Live Register. However, many of those accessing our service are in low paid and precarious employment. Such individuals are expressing a need and are highly motivated to upskill to seek more secure and better remunerated employment.</p> <p>Many people experiencing long-term unemployment or underemployment as well as people working outside their field of interest and expertise seek assistance in starting their own business</p>	<p>In response to this identified need a collaboration between GABES and SICAP Community Education devised a series of 'Phone App Courses' which were delivered in outreach community settings. These courses were open to all but primarily targeted of our community</p> <p>Galway City Partnership has in response to an identified need provided access to HAACP training, Special Needs Assistant Training, and in collaboration with the Galway Sports Partnership facilitated Child-Protection Safeguarding (1-3) Training. These SICAP supported courses offer access to participants who may otherwise be excluded from education and training opportunities. This works to build towards an equal and inclusive city, enhancing integration and inclusion. Learners on these courses are offered wrap-around supports from the Community Education Officer from course commencement through to graduation. This support ensures high completion rates for these courses. Those engaging with supports are often informed of and referred to other programmes from within the Partnership and the wider community of further education and training providers across the city.</p> <p>In response to the evolving labour-market situation across the city our Employment Supports Officer has identified specific areas of demand from employers and has sought to provide timely and appropriate labour-market training to maximise opportunities for jobseekers many of whom may have been for a variety of reasons absent from the labour force for some time. These include Safe Pass and Manual handling Training and Barista Training. Many clients are supported with CV preparation and provision, job searching advice and interview preparation. This wrap-around service is made available to a wide cohort of clients whose initial contact may have been through engagement with intra-Partnership services and supports.</p> <p>In response to this interest in self-employment and business development Galway City Partnership provides a bespoke service to assist individuals in starting their own business. Our Enterprise Officer provides a service which supports potential entrepreneurs at every stage of the process from</p>
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	<p>In 2023 the issue of homelessness and precarious housing has been of increasing and often urgent concern for many people seeking assistance from the Partnership.</p>	<p>the gestation of the initial idea through to the starting of the business and beyond.</p> <p>The SICAP team has been assisting, in whatever way possible, clients experiencing housing difficulties, this involves supports with applications for Housing assistance from the Local authority, referrals to agencies such as Threshold, COPE, Peter McVerry Trust, Simon, St Vincent de Paul.</p>
<p>Local Community Groups</p>	<p>One of the priorities for LCGs during 2023 was the need to recruit new volunteers. Some groups struggled to re-establish themselves following covid, with membership having fallen away and group members needed to step up and become part of the group committee structure. Committees voiced concerns about lack of recognition, difficulties in getting group members to step up and take on governance roles as well as weariness.</p> <p>In other communities many people demonstrated emerging or growing mental health concerns. Many people had become socially isolated as a result of covid and were struggling with loneliness, lack of motivation, low mood and increased anxiety.</p>	<p>The SICAP Team put a huge emphasis into recognising the commitment of volunteering among LCGs and supported and encouraged communities to nominate local groups for the Galway City Council Mayoral Awards. LCGs that had been directly supported by GCP won awards in the following categories;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts, Culture, Heritage & Cúrsaí Gaeilge Award • Neighbourhood/Community Champion Award • Community Service & Social Inclusion Award (Individual Award & Group Award) • Environmental Sustainability Award <p>Many other LCGs supported under SICAP were nominated for awards on the night also. These awards provide recognition of the work the LCGs carry out in disadvantaged communities and also serve to inspire the rest of the community, promote community spirit, awareness raising and supports retention of volunteers.</p> <p>The SICAP Team responded to these emerging needs as demonstrated with registration of 23% of all groups on IRIS being newly established LCGs for 2023. These groups reflect across the spectrum of LCG types of Health & Well Being, Community Focus, Cultural, Sport & Recreation and Target group focus, although one third of new groups were designated as being focused on health & wellbeing. Another huge support for communities has been the provision of community coffee mornings on a weekly basis. This has provided a weekly source of engagement, information sharing,</p>

Older People, had been identified as an emerging needs group within Galway city. Many voiced concerns about the cost of living increases which affects many older people significantly as they rely on small fixed incomes leaving them vulnerable to increases in heating, electricity and day to day bills. Inadequate income can lead to poverty and social exclusion for many.

learning and social interaction for many people in 2 of the most disadvantaged communities in the city.



Dancing at the Christmas Lunch

Significant support was provided by the SICAP Team to both new and established groups focusing on Older People across the communities. Together with Galway City Council funding was secured through the Creative Ireland Fund to support a range of programmes in Westside, Ballinfoile & Ballybane. The Cupán Ceoil Project was one of these. This initiative supported older people to engage in a creative art, craft and dancing programme from September to December across the 3 communities. Cupán Ceoil culminated in an Intergenerational event hosting over 100 older people, 4 Primary Schools with 70 children and 3 Community Singing Groups performing together.

The SICAP Team supported the provision by TASC of Financial Resilience Training to groups in Westside, Ballinfoile & Ballybane. There was a huge uptake from across these communities and attendance each week was exceptionally high.

	<p>Travellers form 2% of the overall population in Galway City, significantly higher than national average, and their social inclusion needs remain high. Traveller women will likely experience triple discrimination: discrimination as women, discrimination as Travellers and discrimination as Traveller women.</p>	<p>The SICAP Team established 2 new Traveller Women’s LCGs during 2023 one in Westside; Shining Stars, and one in Ballybane; Pavee Beoirs. Continued support was given to the previously established group in Ballinfoile, Pavee Lacken and the other established LCG in Ballybane, The Ballybane Traveller & Settled Women’s Group. These groups were supported to engage in cultural, health & well being and educational activities throughout the year. The Pavee Packen Group from Ballinfoile were supported to progress into education in the GRETB Training Centre on the Tuam Road where they engaged in a variety of taster courses in the area of Special Needs Assistant work. The group showed huge commitment to the programme and are enrolled to progress to accredited learning in January 2024.</p>
<p>Social Enterprises</p>	<p>A key need identified by social enterprises is access to funding because they are in the pre-start up stage or are putting efforts into governance set-up and are slow to start trading. The barrier for them is that many grants require trading for at least a year. Another related issue is how the Department distributes funding. For example, the Small Capital Grants scheme required that the social enterprise spend the money and then request funding from the Department. This is not workable for social enterprises that are just starting to build cash reserves. It could be argued that they are the most in need of the funding.</p> <p>The GCP Social Enterprise Hub was used to capacity by two key anchor tenants during the year: Go Com Radio and Bounce Back. With additional meetings held for start-up and collaborative efforts with the Social Enterprise Development Officer (SEDO). As part of Galway City Council’s Urban Regeneration Project for the Sandy Road area unfortunately the Social Enterprise Hub had to close at the end of November 2023. Both tenants had to find new locations for their SE’s.</p>	<p>GCP supported a number of SE’s with small grants to support their development. Two examples of SEs supported are Venture Out and Westside Age Inclusion. Venture Out is a Social Enterprise, profit-for-purpose, CLG. They prescribe and deliver outdoor, nature based therapeutic programmes to people experiencing a range of diverse challenges in their lives. Westside Age Inclusion was established to deliver services to socially disadvantaged older people who live in the Westside area of Galway City.</p> <p>The SEDO provided information and guidance to SE’s on Rethink Ireland’s Entrepreneurship Impact Fund. Stand 1 of which aims to support mid-stage and mature social innovations to achieve higher levels of impact by scaling their innovations and reaching the next stage of growth. One of the key problems confronting social innovations is the difficulty of scaling their operations and social impact. This fund seeks to support this.</p>

Children and families

The long-term impact of school closures and other disruptions are still being reported in schools by Principals and Home School Liaison Teachers. As schools have returned to normality evidence-based programmes which support children's wellbeing and emotional literacy such as the Incredible Years Dina in the Classroom remain vital. Following consultation with HSCLs a need was identified for assistance with 'School Readiness' resources and materials including an informational video for parents. There continues to be a need for a focus on preparing young people and their parents for transfer to post primary. The 'Cost of Living Crisis' and the rise in Homelessness have been reported by schools as having a direct impact on school attendance and participation, in particular students from the most socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

In response to needs identified by schools SICAP has continued to work collaboratively with all DEIS (Delivering equality of Opportunity in School) schools, the Eastside and Westside School Completion Programmes and other agencies to support children/young people in Galway City. SICAP in collaboration with these partners continues to support the delivery the Incredible Years Programmes. The 'School Readiness' video was widely circulated and promoted in local media both print and on-line and materials to support its content were tailored to each school in order to ensure these targeted supports reached parents and children in the city.



'A Merlin Woods Primary School, Music Generation Galway City, and the Galway City Partnership ensemble getting ready to raise the roof!'

The Music Generation Galway City continues to be supported at partner level to deliver Music education to children in disadvantaged communities, this has included Merlin Woods Primary, the Bailigi programme provided in local youth partner organisations and the Ballinfoile Parent and Toddler and Ballybane Afterschool programme.

The SICAP Education Officer participated in a Post Primary Transfer meeting of the three tiers of TESS and subsequently an informational video was promoted to support young people and their parent/guardians with the application process. Targeted study supports have been provided to exam students in Colaiste Muire Mathair and Colaiste Einde.

Non-caseload individuals	There continues to be an identified and imperative need for wellbeing supports for individuals from all part of the community. Many of these individuals have expressed this need when working with the current programme, in addition we have reached out to people who are not yet service users and the response has been very positive to supports in this area.	Following the delivery of the on-line Personal Development Course, participants attended a celebration of their graduation in the offices of Galway City Partnership. They met fellow participants and the course facilitator in person for the first time as well as having the opportunity to meet the SICAP team. They were shown informational videos and encouraged to engage with staff with a view to availing of future supports. The event was great success and already some participants have accessed further supports.
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2. Please provide an overview of SICAP supports provided to the Ukrainian arrivals/International Protection Applicants in your Lot. (1-2 pages)

In 2023, the Ukrainian Response Team set out to consider the response to the influx of Ukrainian refugees since Spring 2022 and to connect with the community to understand how the situation had developed and what the urgent needs were. To do this, we distributed a Needs Analysis Survey throughout different Telegram channels used by the community to share information, ran two focus groups, interviewed community and support workers, and considered research from UCAT, Ukraine Community Cluster, SICAP, DCEDIY, AsyluminEurope.org and others. Main findings:

- Healthcare was a big concern for people including accessing a GP card and filling out paperwork for medical. While HSE Social Inclusion team provide support for people in Temporary Accommodation, they do not provide support for people being housed elsewhere (OAH, Red Cross, privately accommodated)
- English language is still one of the main barriers people see to gaining employment and integrating into society. Many people are attending classes, but it was noted that many people find it hard to learn just from lessons and that also English classes are oversubscribed.
- Childcare and after-school is very challenging and expensive, especially for single parents, who find it very difficult to learn English and get a job on top of being the sole carer for their children.
- Temporary and Emergency Accommodation is a major barrier to integration for people. Ukrainians who live in hotels in small rooms experience anxiety and fatigue, family quarrels often arise, children suffer from a lack of personal space. Also, there are many complaints about not being able to prepare meals (especially for small children). People living in the OAH scheme were more settled than those in emergency accommodation. They had more access to the community and more understanding of Irish public services.
- It was noted often that there has been an increase in mental health issues, post-traumatic stress, and anti-social behaviour such as alcohol abuse, domestic abuse, and poor hygiene, especially in emergency accommodation.
- About 60% of people were working or engaged in the community (volunteering, SE activity, TUS/CE schemes). Everyone who is working feels that their skills do not match the jobs they are currently doing. One example of this is a woman who studied and worked in hotel management in Ukraine and who is now working as a cleaner in a hotel. Most people agree that this is due to language barriers, difficulties with getting qualifications and experience recognised, and a lack of opportunities to network with Irish people.

In seeking to address these challenges it has been of the upmost importance to engage SICAP and the wider supports provided by the Galway City Partnership in order to ensure that the Ukrainian community is made aware of all available supports, this wrap around service has a multiplier effect which allows us to provide supports greater than the sum of its parts.

Supports implemented under SICAP:

Supporting Community Groups: UA Mriya UHUG Harmony Ukrainian Choir Kalyna	Material supports for coffee mornings, workshops, and events (English lessons, children’s dance and drama, yoga, sound healing, arts and crafts, painting, doll-making, coder dojo, drumming) Transportation support Support in creating media and social media content Support to find spaces for rehearsals, events, lessons, wellbeing support, educational and youth supports. (Westside Library, Ballybane Community Centre, NUIG, ATU, Shantalla Centre) Support and links to participate in community events (Westside Arts Festival, Westside Welcomes All, Ukrainian Independence Day, Intercultural week at Castlegar NS., Westside Christmas Market)
National Choir Initiative	Support 5 singers from Harmony to participate in National Ukrainian Choir est. by Cavan LDC and Empower in collaboration with Phil Coulter. The singers have rerecorded and released a version of ‘Steal

	Away' with Phil, they will perform with him at Bord Gais Theatre and there is also a documentary about the experience in the making.
Information Workshops and Wellbeing Supports	Cairde wellbeing workshops, Getting used to life in Ireland Paying bills and bureaucracy in Ireland for OAH residents AA community group Music Therapy with Ronan De Burca in ARD Resource Centre Information YWI and Foroige Supports Sexual Health West Information sessions with HSE
Lego Workshops	6 weeks of Lego workshops for 23 children (between 6-12 years) living in TP and DP in the Salthill area
Community Interpreter Training	Training for individuals working in the community as interpreters including SICAP support workers
Employability Supports	Safe Pass Course (20 people) 3 Manual Handling Courses (39 people) Barista Training Course (with HACCP) (13 people) CV Workshops and one-to-one support, Links to Recruitment Agencies, Interview Skills, Referrals to Tus programme Links to Employment Supports in GCP
English Language Supports	98 adults receiving tuition at GCP (pre-beginner to advanced) Students also participate in extra-curricular activities such as guided visits to the Museum, the University, the Druid theatre, conversation classes and the 'Walk and Talk' group with Healthy Ireland.
School Supports/Supports for Ukrainian Children	Primary and Post Primary DEIS schools were supported to deliver emergent Play and Art Therapies in-school for Ukrainian children/young people. Additional 'Wellbeing and Integration supports' such as Programmes with Music Generation, Drama, Drumming, Yoga and Dance across 8 schools. 15 children attending Judo classes from September to December 2023 (Judo 4 Peace)
Summer Provision	Summer camp places for 65 children to attend Power Soccer, GAA, Star Camp and Let's Go during the summer. We also collaborated with the Volunteer Centre and the City Museum to run two weeks of Irish cultural camps for 40 children. 154 children from 5 DEIS schools and 142 adults attended a Summer School at the University of Galway, workshops included Lego Technic STEM and building, Dance and Drumming. In addition, GCP funded DEIS schools to support targeted Ukrainian children identified by HSCLs with Summer provision July to August 2023.
Transport	Taxis for schoolchildren with issues with school buses – intermittent solution whilst long-term was sorted by REALT Officer. Taxis to bring individuals to events/workshops/medical appointments with no access to public transport.

As evidenced above we have wherever and whenever possible collaborated with other agencies and stakeholders to maximise delivery of supports across the city.

3. Please provide a brief update on your progress with your Lot Priority groups which you selected in 2021 as part of the mid-programme review. (1 page)

The agreed priority groups selected in 2021 are Travellers, the Long-term Unemployed and Mental Health & Wellbeing. In response to an identified need for well-being and mental health supports arising from the experience of clients during the recent Public Health Emergency an online Personal Development Course was delivered. The course proved popular with a wide cohort of people across the city, and because of the sensitivity of its delivery and the back up support offered by SICAP staff allowed us to reach clients who were previously hard to reach such as carers, retired citizens, individuals living in Direct Provision Centres and members of the Ukrainian community. Participants were invited to attend a celebration of their graduation in the offices of Galway City Partnership. This facilitated a transfer from the on-line experience to in-person group meeting with the tutor and the SICAP staff team.

In addition to the delivery of this support the SICAP team conscientiously focussed on providing personal skills, wellbeing and capabilities supports to participants across the programme on a one-to-one basis both in person and by phone.

Further collaboration was developed between the Irish Amateur Boxing Association, Galway Sports Partnership, Galway City Partnership SICAP and the volunteer led primarily by and for the Travelling Community, Galway Boxing Club. Assistance was provided for local and national funding applications, Child Protection and Safeguarding courses and in development of publicity and promotion of the club equality framework. This work has contributed significantly to the group and sustainability of the boxing club which is a vital contributor to the health and wellbeing of its community.

In addition, the Travelling Community was prioritised with places for Manual Handling, Safe Pass and Barista Courses. This targeted approach led to significant engagement with and from the community allowing us to work with more than three times the national caseload average of individual beneficiaries from this identified target group.

Almost one quarter of all LCGs supported during 2023 identified their Group Type as focusing on Health & Wellbeing, demonstrating the significant support provided by the SICAP Team with this Lot Priority Group. Four new LCGs were established in 2023 with this group type, with the remaining seven LCGs being established during 2021 and 2022. The SICAP Team have provided support to three Community based Singing Groups in the city, two are newly established since 2023, with the third in existence for over two years. Feedback from group members has been entirely positive with participants attesting to improved mental health, well-being, and social relationships as well as positive changes in self- and social identity, increased empowerment and connectedness with others.

Significant support has been provided to Traveller Groups in the city with SICAP directly supporting Pavee Beoirs, Pavee Lacken, Shining Stars and the Ballybane Traveller & Settled Women's groups on a weekly basis throughout the year. Staff have supported the groups with capacity building, planning, securing funding and networking. All of the Traveller based LCGs also engaged in workshops and training supporting their health & well being such as Reflexology & Relaxation, Aromatherapy Oils and their Uses, Women's Wellness, Healthy Bodies Healthy Minds and Tai Chi.

Walking Groups have been established in Ballybane, Westside & Ballinfoile directly as a response to the Lot Priority Group Mental Health. These groups are an example of one type of outdoor therapeutic supports being provided by and with GCP, alongside supports provided to the Community Gardens, in local woods and in estates.



The Ballinfoile Community Garden Harvest Party

4. Please outline the challenges faced and lessons learned in relation to the overall delivery of SICAP during 2023. Were you able to overcome any of the challenges? If so, please describe. (half a page - 1 page)

When planning service delivery some contingencies can be written into action plans, however not all such events can be allowed for. In particular the past twelve months has seen a threefold increase in individuals seeking International Protection with a growth across the city from three to twelve Direct Provision Centres. Such individuals have very complex needs not least of which is the necessity to acquire English as an additional language. The demand for tuition greatly exceeds our capacity for provision with more than three hundred individuals receiving tuition and as many again on a waiting list.

Community Development Staff faced increased demand across the communities during the year. This is possibly partly as a result of individuals experiencing isolation during covid. This increase in demand placed pressure on staff to respond to individual needs as well as responding to the needs of LCGs. The cost of living increase has resulted in many individuals seeking support from SICAP staff. Staff were able to signpost and refer on to appropriate organisations and also responded directly by engaging with TASC to provide Financial Resilience courses in 3 locations across the city as well as providing Healthy Food Made Easy courses in a number of locations.

Transport remains an issue particularly for older people and people with disabilities.

Recruitment and retention of volunteers and insurance costs continue to be issues faced by LCGs. Community Development staff used the Mayoral Awards as a method of promoting the fantastic work being done by LCGs, partly to acknowledge the great work of the groups themselves and also to showcase the work so people across the communities were more aware of these groups and might feel encouraged to seek them out and offer their support through volunteering. Staff also provided support to individual groups such as Eastside Community Drama who are struggling with numbers since covid. The group did a series of promotional events in their community, issuing formal invitations to residents and organisations in the locality and inviting each person to bring along a friend to fun filled evenings where the great work of the group was showcased. This volunteer recruitment drive was sustained and supported and eventually paid off with the group gaining almost one third new membership over the autumn period.

5. Please describe an approach or project that worked well in 2023 that you think would be useful to share with other SICAP implementers. (half a page)

Case Study: Approach of Two Ukrainian Support Workers

Approach: Under SICAP, the role and activities of the two Ukrainian Support Workers has developed in a manner that has led the workers themselves to act as agents of social inclusion. In collaboration with the Ukrainian coordinator, the Support Workers have successfully established relationships and networks across different communities and services in Galway City to provide ongoing support, translation, information sharing, and signposting for the Ukrainian refugee community.

Access to Ukrainian Community:

- Daily interactions and **natural links** as a result of being Ukrainian themselves.
- Setting up and maintaining a **Telegram channel** with 800 participants who have arrived in Galway city from Ukraine since early 2022. The channel allows the Support Workers to share and disseminate information within the community on an ongoing basis. This has included a wide range of information – activities in community and resource centres, employability supports, job opportunities, English language supports, advice and signposting targeting health needs, information around education (from primary to third level) and ‘how-to’ guidance on bureaucratic procedures like acquiring a PPS number or opening a bank account. The channel also allows participants to share information and experiences with one another and the support worker can actively log on and address people’s questions.
- **Information Flyers** (information re Ukrainian Response Team circulated to organisations and accommodation centres)
- **Instagram Page:** [Ukrainian Support Project in Galway \(@ukrainian_support_project\)](#) • [Instagram photos and videos](#)
- **Supporting Community Groups** (Kalyna, Harmony Choir, UA Mriya, UHUG)
- **Formal Consultation** with the Ukrainian Community in May 2023 (Survey, 2 focus groups, 6 interviews).

Links to Services and Local Community: Through the different access points, the Support Workers receive communication from the community looking for information and help to access a range of different services and supports. They then facilitate people in overcoming barriers to access these services (lingual, cultural, social, physical – transport etc.) These have included:

- **Galway City Partnership** – Goal 1.6 (Supporting inclusion of Community Groups), Goal 2.12 (Linking individuals to English language, employability, training, educational and self-employment supports) Bridge Project (Linking on shared refugee issues across BOTP and IPA communities), Tus (helping Ukrainian self-refer into the programme)
- **Education** – REALT Officer, Childcare Networks, Links to individual schools and principals, Home Schools Liaison, CYPSC, Tusla, CDNT
- **Health** - HSE Social Inclusion Team, NUIG Hospital Social Work Team, Adult Mental Health, CAMHS Unit
- **Community** – Westside Resource Centre, Ballybane and Balinfoile Community Centres, Westside Library, Youth Work Ireland, Foroige, Galway City Museum, Volunteer Centre
- **Housing** – Irish Red Cross, IOM, Offer A Home with GCC, UCTAT, Accommodation Managers

Example: A single mother living in a temporary accommodation with a four-year old child who was diagnosed with difficulties with speech development in Ukraine. The woman speaks a little English and is looking for a school place for her child. The Support Worker will link with the HSE Social Inclusion Team, the Childcare Network in her area, the Child Disability Network and the REALT Officer on behalf of the woman to ensure the child receives support to get a diagnosis in Ireland and will have a smooth transition in starting school. Further, the Support Worker will also offer to link the woman to additional supports like English classes, the Tus programme or other employability trainings/supports as well as social and youth supports like a community choir, a weekly coffee morning or activities run by Youth Work Ireland for young children in her area. Further, the Support Worker also links the woman to other Ukrainian parents who have experienced similar barriers with children with learning difficulties so that the woman may feel supported by the community as well as by the Support Worker.

Conclusion: The approach of the Ukrainian Response under SICAP at GCP has meant that the Ukrainian Support Workers have developed a broad knowledge and understanding of the different roles and responsibilities of different organisations and actors across Galway City in order to support and facilitate the Ukrainian community's participation and access which in turn fosters and encourages social inclusion and community activation. The Support Workers advocate for the Ukrainian community on a daily basis. This approach has been hugely successful in empowering the community to take initiative to get involved and disseminate information and experience amongst themselves thus supporting each other to overcome barriers and participate in their new communities.

6. Please reflect on the programme supports that DRCD and/or Pobal provided to LDCs in 2023. Were they helpful? Would you recommend any changes in approach or content? (quarter of a page)

Guidance: Please consider the SICAP thematic workshops, guidance provided etc.

We found the SICAP Support Workshops, Communities in Action- Sustainable Development very informative.

IRIS Monitoring & User Support Admin Team (Rebecca Mc Carthy) is a fantastic support on IRIS and most recently with preparing for Individual file closures and data migration to the new system.

7. Please provide any more comments or information that you think DRCD/Pobal should be aware of around SICAP (quarter of a page)

A considerable and additional challenge during 2023 was the preparation, collation and submission of SICAP 2024-2028. This complex process had to be navigated whilst simultaneously ensuring that the extant iteration continued to be contemporaneously delivered. The demands placed upon us by the necessity to meet reporting requirements for the end of SICAP 2018-2023 has been drain on time which takes away from programme delivery.

Annex 1 – Updates to the IRIS database

Please confirm that you have completed the following end-of-year requirements:

✓	A narrative for each of the 2023 Actions has been input in the Update on Progress field under the End of Year report section of the action record. The <i>Action Progress Report</i> can be generated to view the updates for each action. Please note that for Lots which contain offshore Island communities, but are not Island specific Lots, LDCs are required to provide details of work carried out with Islands in their action narrative.
✓	2023 financial and beneficiary data input is complete.
✓	2023 data quality issues identified on system dashboards and views have been rectified.
✓	Potential duplicate records have been reviewed and deactivated if appropriate.
✓	2023 data follow-up has been carried out, as appropriate (e.g., LLL activity outcomes, still in employment/self-employment).
✓	ESF exit data has been recorded for ALL Individuals supported to date.
✓	ESF 6 month follow-up has been recorded for Individuals who exited SICAP up to end May 2023.
✓	LDC contact information and staff member listing are up-to-date.
✓	2023 End of Year Financial and Monitoring report (including the signed costs charged report, Lot Summary Report and goal outcome reports) has been uploaded to IRIS.