



PhD Position in Sociology:

***‘Comparing Refugee Children’s Resilience in Irish Schools:
EU Temporary Protection and Other Refugee Backgrounds’***

Post Title:	PhD Researcher in Sociology: Refugee Children in Irish Schools
Post Status:	48 months , Full-time
Starting Date:	September 2025
Department/Faculty:	Department of Sociology, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy Centre for Forced Migration Studies, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures
Reports to:	Professor Daniel Faas Dr Rachel Hoare
Location:	Trinity College Dublin (Dublin, Ireland)
Stipend:	Maintenance stipend Euro 25,000 per annum plus full tuition fees (EU/non-EU). In addition, the Department offers a teaching assistantship as non-stipend pay.
Closing Date:	12th June 2025 (23:59 BST)

Summary of post

Doctoral Researcher in Sociology

The **Department of Sociology at Trinity College Dublin** is seeking to recruit a highly motivated and outstanding doctoral researcher for a period of 4 years (48 months). The successful candidate will conduct an innovative project exploring **how cultural identity and institutional practices shape refugee children’s educational experiences and resilience-building capacity in Irish schools**. They will be co-supervised by Professor Daniel Faas (Department of Sociology, primary supervisor) and Dr Rachel Hoare (Director of Trinity Centre for Forced Migration Studies (TCFMS), secondary supervisor).

While Ireland has one of the highest school enrolment rates for Ukrainian refugee children in the EU, preliminary evidence suggests varying support experiences among refugee children based on their cultural background and migration status. Through an **interdisciplinary lens** combining education, sociology and psychology, this project examines how cultural recognition and inclusive practices manifest in two primary and two post-primary schools in high-refugee concentration urban areas. The **methodology** includes focus groups with European (Ukrainian) and non-European refugee children to explore how different cultural groups navigate identity formation, resilience and intercultural friendships within the Irish



education system. Semi-structured interviews with teachers and parents will analyse how school communities can foster inclusive environments that celebrate cultural diversity. Through this comprehensive approach, the project aims to understand how educational institutions can become models of inclusive societies where cultural diversity and refugee resilience mutually strengthen communities.

Project Funding: Trinity Research Doctorate Award for Group-based Research Project

The PhD will be funded through the **Trinity Research Doctorate Award for Group-based Research Projects**. The successful candidate will be part of an interdisciplinary group of researchers working on projects linked under the umbrella project 'Refugee-thrive: Building trauma-informed refugee resilience in the face of the evolving challenges of forced displacement'. The four PhD projects are:

1. Comparing refugee children's resilience in Irish schools: EU Temporary Protection and other refugee backgrounds.
2. Refugees as peace builders: countering populist narratives and building refugee resilience for integration.
3. Mutual adaptation of refugees and the host society: building resilient communities through informal language learning and storytelling.
4. Building refugee resilience through an ethical-legal analysis of the international protection framework in Ireland.

Moving beyond traditional views of refugees as recipients of aid, these projects recognise their capacity for resilience - their ability to navigate towards and negotiate for resources in culturally meaningful ways. By pairing disciplines in innovative combinations (sociology with psychotherapy, peace studies with nursing and midwifery, linguistics with literature and law with medical ethics), Refugee-Thrive explores how institutional practices, refugee agency, community engagement and legal frameworks can better support refugee agency, resilience and inclusion in Ireland.

This research directly advances multiple UN Sustainable Development Goals by promoting quality education (SDG4), gender equality (SDG5), reduced inequalities (SDG10), and peaceful societies (SDG16). The programme ensures social impact by actively involving refugee communities throughout the research process, from design to dissemination. Output will include academic publications, evidence-based policy recommendations across education, health, housing and justice sectors, media engagement, multilingual resources, community workshops and a major conference uniting refugee communities, policymakers and service providers.

The successful candidate is expected to contribute to the academic activities of the Department of Sociology (<https://www.tcd.ie/sociology/>) and the Trinity Centre for Forced Migration Studies (TCFMS) (<https://www.tcd.ie/global/forced-migration-studies/>). TCFMS creates an interdisciplinary community connecting research, teaching, policy and practice. By bringing together academics, practitioners, and experts with lived experience, TCFMS develops collaborative research initiatives aimed at improving outcomes for forcibly displaced persons. The successful candidate will join this dynamic research community, benefiting from



cross-disciplinary networks and opportunities to contribute to meaningful, impact-oriented scholarship.

Applicants are asked to submit a **research statement** that demonstrates how their research background and skills match with the project.

Applicant profile

Applicants are expected to have a strong interest in the topic and to be intrinsically motivated to work on the project. They are expected to have an excellent knowledge of qualitative methodology, and to be competent in using software packages (such as NVivo).

Major research activities conducted by the candidate will involve (1) collaborating closely with your research supervisors; (2) becoming familiar with the main theoretical debates in the field by engaging in a systematic reading of the literature and writing a state-of-the-art literature review for your project; (3) designing qualitative research instruments including semi-structured interviews and focus groups; (4) conducting advanced qualitative data analyses from a comparative perspective; (5) summarizing and interpreting results for a social science audience and developing policy implications; (6) presenting work in front of different audiences at local, national and international level in conferences or networks; (7) publishing articles arising from the study together with the research supervisors.

We are looking for enthusiastic PhD candidates who would like to acquire high-level training in sociology and in writing a cutting-edge PhD dissertation at Trinity College Dublin.

Qualifications

- MA, MSc or MPhil degree in Sociology, Education, Migration and Ethnic Studies, Social Policy or in any cognate fields.

Essential research skills

- excellent analytical skills;
- knowledge of qualitative methods in the social sciences;
- familiarity with the literature on refugees, migration and education in Ireland;
- experience in the management and analysis of qualitative data – preferably in a comparative perspective;
- technical skills in *NVivo* or a comparable software package or willingness and competence to acquire such skills in a short amount of time.

Other essential knowledge and skills

- strong interpersonal and relational skills;
- an interdisciplinary approach;
- excellent written and verbal communication skills in English;
- ability to structure and pursue an independent research project;
- strong motivation to publish in academic journals;
- good organisational skills;
- ability to work effectively in a team.



Desirable skills

- interest in or basic knowledge of comparative case study research;
- interest in pursuing an academic or teaching career.

The PhD Programme at TCD Sociology

The candidate will join the PhD programme at the Department of Sociology of Trinity College Dublin, Ireland's leading university which is located on a historic campus in the heart of Dublin. The Department will provide all logistic, academic and intellectual support and integrate the successful candidate into a vibrant doctoral programme at TCD, while offering additional economic supports to cover fees and basic expenses related to the PhD programme. PhD students at the department are embedded in the interdisciplinary context of the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy which also includes economics, political science, and philosophy.

PhD students in Sociology enjoy a wide range of training opportunities. For example, students participate in a research training programme in the department and have the opportunity to join Masters level courses (including courses on research methods). Moreover, our PhD students are supported to attend high-quality international workshops and summer schools.

PhD students are expected to collaborate closely with their supervisors and will produce a PhD based on four papers of a publishable standard. PhD students also acquire teaching experience by providing teaching support in our undergraduate programme (4 hours per week during term times).

Standard expectations of the post

- Critical, systematic and analytical review of relevant literature for the project.
- Writing academic output (working papers, chapters, journal articles) in excellent English.
- Conducting empirical research using primarily qualitative methods.
- Actively writing and submitting research papers for publication and contributing to joint projects or related submissions with the PhD supervisors.
- Attending meetings, workshops, and conferences.
- Disseminating academic work to specialised and general audiences.
- 4 hours of teaching a week during the statutory term (facilitating undergraduate tutorials).

Application Procedure

Informal enquiries are welcome and can be made directly to Professor Daniel Faas, Professor in Sociology, Department of Sociology at Trinity College Dublin; daniel.faas@tcd.ie or Dr Rachel Hoare, Assistant Professor and clinician working with refugees, Centre for Forced Migration Studies at Trinity College, Dublin; rmhoare@tcd.ie.



To apply, candidates should submit:

1. a **motivation letter** clearly indicating how the applicant's profile and skills fit the requirements of the job position (max. 1 page);
2. a **full curriculum vitae**
3. A concise **research statement** no longer than 1,500 words excluding references (see explanation below)
4. the names and contact details of **two referees** (with email addresses included);
5. at least one example of your written work (in English) that shows your analytical and writing skills in a social science discipline.

via email to

- Professor Daniel Faas (daniel.faas@tcd.ie) and Dr Rachel Hoare (rmhoare@tcd.ie)

before the **closing date of June 12th, 2025 (23:59 BST)**.

Applications must indicate exactly "*PhD Application – Refugee Children in Irish Schools*" in the subject line.

Research statement

Applications will be considered based on a candidate's academic record and a **short research statement** to be submitted alongside the usual application documents (motivation, CV, references, writing sample). The research statement demonstrates a candidate's research experience and skills in sociological research as well as a brief outline of their research interests in relation to the project. The statement should be **no longer than 1500 words** (excluding references).

Institutional background information

The Department of Sociology

Sociology is a member of the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy, one of 24 Schools within Trinity College. The Department's principal research clusters are: Migration, Identities and Diversity; Comparative Inequalities, Education and Families; Power, Conflict and Resistance; Digitalisation and Social Networks.

Department staff are highly international and our research combines advanced quantitative methods applied to real-world data with the use of sophisticated and diverse qualitative methodologies. Our research links to several College priority research themes: 'International Integration' centred within Trinity Research in Social Science (TRISS), 'Identities in Transformation' and 'Inclusive Society' within the Trinity Long Room Hub (TLRH) and 'Ageing' within the Longitudinal Study of Ageing (TILDA). The Department has a long-standing collaboration with Ireland's premier research institute, the Economic and Social Research



Institute (ESRI) and has strong links with other disciplines such as Medicine, Psychology, Immunology and Neuroscience.

The Department has an active postgraduate programme. It is home to an MSc in Comparative Social Change delivered jointly with University College Dublin, as well as an MPhil in Race, Ethnicity, Conflict. It has a structured PhD programme combining advanced methodological training with transferable skills workshops. There are around 15 PhD students and our doctoral graduates have positions in academic institutions, non-governmental organisations and the private sector.

Further information on the Department of Sociology is available at: www.tcd.ie/sociology

School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

The School of Social Sciences and Philosophy was formed in 2005 and comprises the Departments of Economics, Philosophy, Political Science and Sociology, together with the Policy Institute. With over 45 full-time academic staff, the School has an international reputation in research and is committed to the dissemination of its knowledge and expertise to the benefit of the wider community, with the Policy Institute providing an important channel for policy analysis and evaluation. The School is home to the unique undergraduate degree in PPES (Philosophy, Political Science, Economics and Sociology). It also contributes to undergraduate degrees in Business, Economic and Social Studies (this includes Political Science and Sociology), Philosophy, History and Political Science, Philosophy and Political Science, Law and Political Science, Geography and Political Science, Sociology and Social Policy, and European Studies. Over 100 graduate students are conducting research across the four disciplines.

Further information on the School is available at: www.tcd.ie/ssp

The Trinity Centre for Forced Migration Studies

The Trinity Centre for Forced Migration Studies (TCFMS) is committed to addressing one of today's most pressing global challenges. With Trinity College Dublin becoming a member of the University of Sanctuary network in March 2021, the Centre embodies the network's core principles: learning about forced migration, ensuring a culture of welcome, sharing ideas and practices, and engaging in outreach and advocacy activities.

The Centre aligns with Trinity's Strategic Plan (2020/25) "Community and Connection," championing the university's values of being inquisitive, pioneering, responsible, inclusive, and collaborative. As the first forced migration research centre of its kind on the island of Ireland, TCFMS promotes interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary study of factors determining and resulting from forced displacement.

TCFMS facilitates networking and collaboration between academics, policy-makers, NGOs, and experts with lived experience to address critical research needs in this area. The Centre contributes to Trinity's Research Charter by harnessing collective expertise for the greater good. Regular activities include an annual lecture or conference and seminars with speakers from academia, civic society, and the NGO sector, all open to the public.



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

The Centre creates an interdisciplinary community connecting research, teaching, policy, and practice, developing collaborative initiatives aimed at improving outcomes for the over 110 million forcibly displaced persons globally (UNHCR, 2023). PhD students who become affiliated with the Centre will benefit from cross-disciplinary networks and opportunities to contribute to meaningful, impact-oriented scholarship.

Further information on the Trinity Centre for Forced Migration Studies is available at: www.tcd.ie/global/forced-migration-studies

Trinity College Dublin

Founded in 1592, Trinity College is at the nexus of tradition and innovation, offering undergraduate and postgraduate programmes across 24 schools and three faculties: arts, humanities, and social sciences; engineering, maths and science; and health sciences. Spread across 47 acres in Dublin's city centre, Trinity's more than 20,000 strong student body comes from all 32 counties of Ireland, and 16% of students come from outside the country. Of those, 40% are from outside the European Union, making Trinity's campus cosmopolitan and bustling, with a focus on diversity.

As Ireland's leading university, the pursuit of academic excellence through research and scholarship is at the heart of the Trinity education. Trinity is known for intellectual rigour, excellence, interdisciplinary approach, and research-led teaching. Home to Nobel prize-winners such as scientist Ernest Walton and writer Samuel Beckett, Trinity draws visitors from across the world to its historic campus each year, including to the Book of Kells and Science Gallery which capture the university's connection to both old and new. Trinity accounts for one-fifth of all spin-out companies from Irish higher education institutions, helping to turn Ireland into an innovation-intensive, high-productivity economy. That culture of innovation and entrepreneurship is a defining characteristic of our campus as we help shape the next generation of job creators.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to the employment policies, procedures and practices which do not discriminate on grounds such as gender, civil status, family status, age, disability, race, religious belief, sexual orientation or membership of the travelling community.