

# COMMUNITY CONNECT

October 2024, Edition



## CULTUR MIGRANT CENTRE NEWSLETTER



### Meath Culture Night: A Celebration of Diversity

On 20th September, Cultur Migrant Centre proudly hosted Meath Culture Night at Solicite Art Centre, bringing together a colourful array of cultures in a vibrant celebration of diversity. The event was a huge success, offering attendees an unforgettable evening filled with performances, food, and activities that showcased the rich heritage of different countries.

Throughout the night, the stage was alive with performances from talented individuals representing a variety of cultures. The audience was treated to traditional dances, music, and songs from around the world, creating an atmosphere of cultural pride and shared enjoyment.



No cultural celebration would be complete without a taste of the world's cuisines, and Meath Culture Night did not disappoint. Guests were able to sample delicious finger foods from various countries, each dish offering a new and exciting flavour experience. From savoury bites to sweet treats, there was something to satisfy every taste bud.

Children were also catered for, with fun activities like face painting and doll-making workshops. The little ones delighted in having their faces painted in colourful designs, while the doll-making stations allowed them to craft their own dolls inspired by different cultures.



## Communities Connect Hosts Mentors and Mentees Networking Event

On September 3, 2024, the Communities Connect Project held a lively Networking Event for mentors and mentees at the Ardboyne Hotel in Navan, bringing together over 50 participants. This gathering marked the first time these individuals met as a group since the project began in 2023, showcasing the strong connections that have developed.

Over the past two years, the initiative has engaged more than 150 people and enrolled 42 mentees, with volunteer mentors meeting their mentees monthly for nine months. The event celebrated the transformative power of mentorship, highlighting how these relationships help individuals learn from one another and face challenges together.



Now in its second phase, Communities Connect continues its mission to support International Protection Applicants by fostering inclusive communities. By pairing young males aged 18 to 30 living in direct provision with local mentors, the project aims to create allies and build stronger connections.

The Cultúr Migrant Centre, a key partner, is committed to advocating for refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants in Meath and Louth, working towards an inclusive society.

## Be Safe in Your Space :- Community Safety Ambassadors



Our ongoing Community Safety Ambassador project, proudly funded by the Department of Justice, is all about empowering our community to become a safer place for everyone. This initiative engages and educates community members on safety practices, equipping them with tools and knowledge to foster a secure and supportive environment. Want to know more about this impactful project? Follow us on social media for updates, tips, and ways you can get involved!



## Traditional Irish Dish: Irish Stew

Irish Stew is one of the most iconic and well-known dishes in Ireland. It's a hearty, simple meal made from local ingredients, reflecting Ireland's agricultural roots. Traditionally made with mutton or lamb, potatoes, carrots, onions, and parsley, this dish embodies the warmth and hospitality of Irish culture.

### Irish Stew Recipe

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#### Ingredients:

- 1.5 kg (3.3 lbs) lamb shoulder or neck, cut into chunks
- 1 kg (2.2 lbs) potatoes, peeled and halved
- 4 large carrots, sliced
- 2 large onions, sliced
- 3 cups of water or beef stock
- Fresh parsley, chopped for garnish
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Optional: 1-2 bay leaves

#### Instructions:

1. **Brown the Meat:** In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat a little oil and brown the lamb on all sides. This helps seal in the flavor.
2. **Layer the Ingredients:** Remove the lamb and set it aside. In the same pot, layer the bottom with half of the sliced onions and potatoes, then add the browned lamb, and finally, top with the remaining onions, potatoes, and carrots.
3. **Add Liquid:** Pour in the water or beef stock until it almost covers the ingredients. Season with salt and pepper, and add bay leaves if using.
4. **Simmer:** Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat, cover, and simmer gently for 2 to 3 hours until the meat is tender and the vegetables are cooked through.
5. **Garnish and Serve:** Check the seasoning, garnish with fresh parsley, and serve hot with traditional Irish soda bread on the side.

When traveling or living in another country, tasting local dishes can be a profound way to connect with the culture and its people. Sharing a meal can break down barriers, foster understanding, and provide insight into a country's history and values. Irish Stew, for example, connects you to the land and people of Ireland—a humble yet flavourful dish passed down through generations, carrying with it the stories of family gatherings, harsh winters, and a deep appreciation for life's simple pleasures.

In every country, food tells a story, and when we share in another culture's cuisine, we partake in that narrative, building new connections and appreciating the richness of the world's culinary diversity.



## Ongoing Initiatives: Shaping Our Future

At Cultur Migrant Centre, we are dedicated to empowering and supporting migrant communities through a variety of innovative projects and programmes. Our ongoing initiatives reflect our commitment to providing essential services, fostering integration, and advocating for the rights and well-being of migrants.

We are working tirelessly to create opportunities, build strong communities, and pave the way for a brighter tomorrow for migrants and their families. Our projects include :

- Career FastTrack Project
- Be Safe In Your Space Project
- CYPSC Louth/Meath Project
- Upskilling & Reskilling
- Community Safety Ambassadors programme
- Conversational English Class
- Community Development

### Funders



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt  
Department of Justice



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,  
Michumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Oige  
Department of Children, Equality,  
Disability, Integration and Youth



An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



Arna chomhchistiú ag  
an Aontas Eorpach

Co-funded by the  
European Union



### UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Conversational English Classes**

Thursdays 10am - 12 Noon

Tuesday 7pm - 9 pm

Navan Library, Railway Street Navan. Meath

- **Ratoath Conversational English Class**

Wednesdays 7pm - 9pm

The Venue, Ratoath Main Street.

- **Inspire Women**

Wednesday 23, November 2024

Newgrange Hotel , Navan

- **International Protection and Innovation Fund**

Tuesday , 6th November 2024

Cork Park

- **Launch of Map of Opportunities**

Tuesday , 10th December 2024

Newgrange Hotel Navan



## Volunteer Spotlight on Rauri Somers: A Passionate Educator and Artist

We are excited to shine a light on Rauri Somers, our dedicated English teacher who goes above and beyond in his commitment to education and community service. Beyond his role in the classroom, Rauri volunteers at the Cultural Migrant Centre, where he supports newcomers in their journey to integrate into our vibrant community.



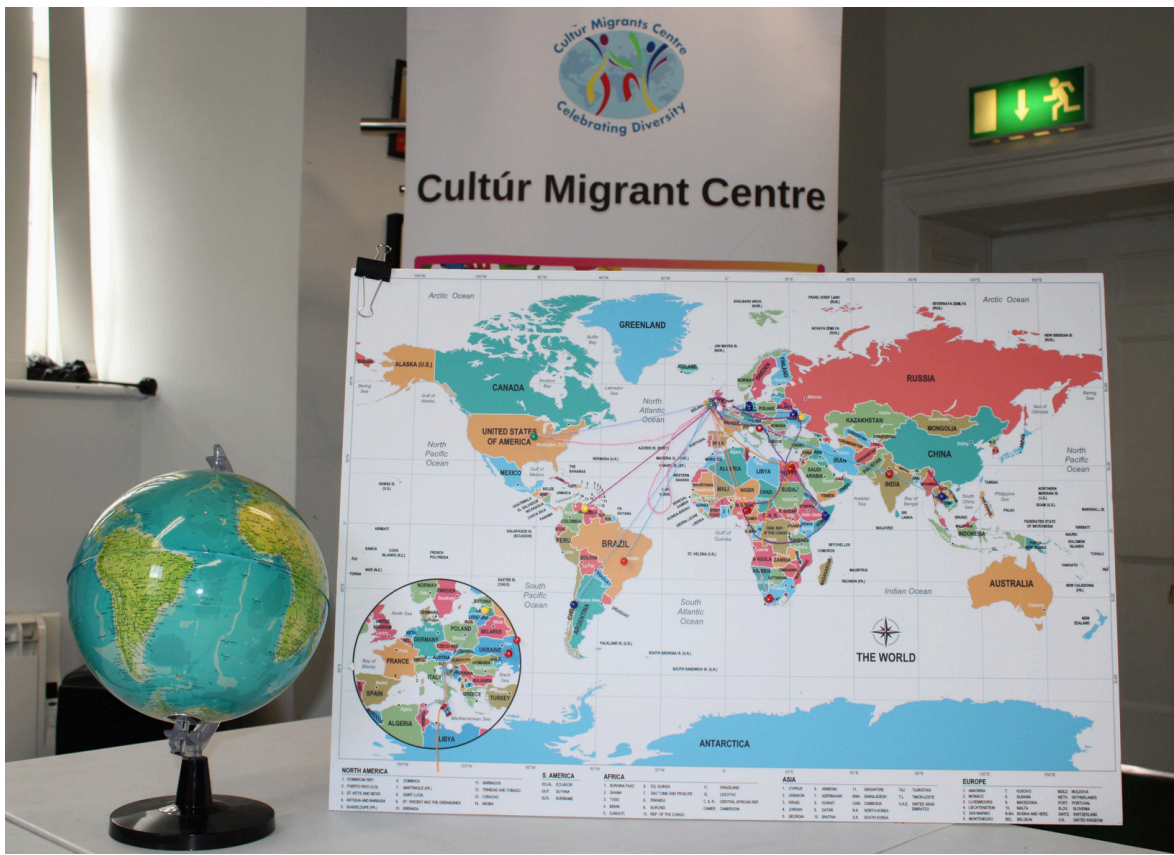
At the Cultural Migrant Centre, Rauri shares his passion for language and culture, helping individuals from diverse backgrounds navigate the challenges of settling in a new environment. His enthusiasm for teaching English not only equips his students with vital communication skills but also fosters a sense of belonging and confidence. We are proud to have Rauri as part of our community, inspiring both his students and fellow volunteers with his dedication and creativity. His contributions make a significant difference in the lives of many, and we look forward to seeing the positive impact of his efforts at the Cultural Migrant Centre and beyond. Thank you, Rauri, for your hard work and commitment to making our community a better place!



## Intern Spotlight:

Sijjal Shafique is a dedicated Social Psychologist and current student at The University of Limerick, pursuing an Erasmus Mundus Masters in the Psychology of Global Mobility, Inclusion, and Diversity in Society. With a strong passion for intercultural competence, she focuses on helping individuals navigate cross-cultural challenges.

At the Cultúr Migrant Centre, Sijjal is involved in impactful projects like "Be Safe in Your Space," which aims to improve relationships between migrants and law enforcement, and the "Community Development Project," designed to foster community empowerment and resilience. Her research includes studies on the quality of life of Afghan refugees, Psychological Capital, and Academic Adjustment. Additionally, she has collaborated with mental health professionals at the Punjab Institute of Mental Health in Pakistan. As an Erasmus Mundus Scholar, Sijjal is particularly committed to empowering South Asian women by facilitating access to global educational opportunities, securing scholarships, and bridging the gap between local and international psychological research.



## Celebrating Independence: Honouring Diverse Journeys

At Cultúr Migrants Centre, we understand the profound significance of Independence Days around the world. These days mark not just the birth of nations but also the ongoing journeys of individuals who seek freedom and opportunity. Several countries celebrate their Independence Days, each with its own unique history and cultural significance:

## Upcoming Independence Days

### November

- Poland - November 11
- Angola - November 11
- Latvia - November 18
- Oman - November 18
- Lebanon - November 22
- Albania - November 28
- Panama - November 28
- Barbados - November 30
- Yemen - November 30

### December

- Finland - December 6
- Kenya - December 12
- Bahrain - December 16
- Kazakhstan - December 16
- Qatar - December 18

### January

- Haiti - January 1
- Czech Republic - January 1
- Sudan - January 1

## ☀️ Upcoming International Holidays: Late October - December ☀️

As we move through the final months of the year, many cultures around the world celebrate significant holidays. Here are some notable international events to mark on your calendar:

### November

- **Día de los Muertos** (Mexico) - November 1-2
- **All Saints' Day** (Various Christian nations) - November 1
- **Bonfire Night** (UK) - November 5
- **Diwali** (India, various Hindu communities) - November 12 (date may vary)
- **Veterans Day** (US) - November 11
- **Remembrance Day** (Commonwealth nations) - November 11
- **Thanksgiving** (US) - November 23 (fourth Thursday of November)
- **St. Andrew's Day** (Scotland) - November 30

### December

- **Hanukkah** (Jewish communities) - December 7-15
- **Bodhi Day** (Buddhist communities) - December 8
- **Las Posadas** (Mexico, Central America) - December 16-24
- **Winter Solstice/Yule** - December 21
- **Christmas** (Christian nations, globally) - December 25
- **Kwanzaa** (US, African-American cultural celebration) - December 26 - January 1
- **Boxing Day** (UK, Canada, Australia) - December 26
- **New Year's Eve** (Global) - December 31

### January

- **New Year's Day** (Global) - January 1
- **Orthodox Christmas** (Eastern Orthodox Christian nations) - January 7
- **Lohri (Northern India, Punjab)** - January 13
- **Martin Luther King Jr. Day** (US) - January 15 (third Monday of January)
- **Chinese New Year** (East Asia) - January 22 (date varies)

These holidays represent a mix of cultural, religious, and national celebrations from around the world, each bringing its own unique traditions and spirit!

They remind us of the rich diversity of traditions and historical milestones celebrated across the world. Whether commemorating independence, religious festivals, or honoring military service, these events offer a time for reflection, gratitude, and community.



## AGM Update: Welcoming New Board Members

At our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on the 18th of September, we experienced a moment of transition as many of our long-standing board members stepped down, making way for a new generation of leadership. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the departing members for their years of service and dedication to Cultur.

In their place, we are excited to welcome our new board members, who bring fresh perspectives and a deep commitment to advancing Cultur's Migrant Centre mission. Their leadership marks the beginning of a new chapter for our organisation, and we look forward to the innovative ideas they will bring to the table. As we move forward with this renewed team, we are optimistic about the future and ready to take on new challenges and opportunities. Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to grow and evolve!

Thank you for reading!

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