

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Accommodation Recognition Payment (ARP) is currently enabling accommodation for over 35,000 Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTPs) across 19,000 households^[1] around Ireland. It is a government provided tax free payment of €800 per month (per property) to those accommodating BOTPs. It has successfully provided a cost-effective solution to State provided accommodation for BOTPs as part of Ireland's response to the conflict in Ukraine.

Based on the findings from the IRC host survey, we make the following policy recommendations:

1. EXTEND ARP TO MARCH 2026

- Our survey found that the ARP is important for 86% of hosts to continue hosting. Should this proportion of hosts withdraw their pledges, there is a risk that over **30,000 additional people will be competing for private rental accommodation** or large numbers of BOTPs could be forced into homelessness, particularly as they are not entitled to access State homeless services. The latter can be seen in Poland as they ended a similar scheme without a transition period.

-91% of hosts were not previously registered as landlords. This shows that the majority of people opened up their homes only for this specific purpose^[2] and should ARP cease, it is likely that many of these accommodation options will not be made otherwise available on the private rental market. Ultimately, the discontinuation of ARP could mean that **almost 17,300 accommodation solutions would no longer be utilised while in the midst of a housing crisis**^[3].

-The Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) states that Member States shall ensure that BOTPs have access to suitable accommodation. Should ARP not be extended until March 2026, the State will need to explore alternative accommodation measures, such as broadening BOTP's entitlements to State provided homeless

accommodation, reopening accommodation centres or allowing BOTPs to avail of additional rental supports.

-33% of pledged accommodation among respondents were in locations where private rental accommodation rates, even after tax, are generally more profitable than availing of the ARP^[4]. This suggests that the ARP does not excessively distort the private rental market and that many pledgers are motivated by the humanitarian cause.

-Although the majority of hosts are motivated by humanitarian reasons, hosting is not cost free. 42% of hosts found financial cost from hosting challenging, suggesting that the ARP has been an enabler for them to continue.

-Our survey found that **there is a desire among pledgers to continue to host**. 81% of hosts indicated that they were willing to extend the arrangement, however, the majority^[5] of these hosts reported that their decision to extend is dependent on the continuation of the ARP.





2. EXPLORE HOSTING/ARP AS AN ACCOMMODATION SOLUTION FOR OTHER COHORTS

-91% of hosts reported a positive experience with hosting, describing it as 'rewarding' and 'worthwhile'.

-66% of hosts indicated that they were open to hosting guests from cohorts other than BOTPs. This potentially represents over 13,000 accommodation solutions[6]. Given that the State is currently unable to provide accommodation for all arriving asylum seekers and that homeless shelters are operating at capacity, a similar model should be explored as a solution to alleviating pressure on State provided accommodation for other cohorts as well as relieving some of the strain on the private rental market.

3. PROMOTE THE USE OF LICENSE AGREEMENTS

-While license agreements are not a prerequisite for availing of the ARP, they are a requirement when pledging through the IRC and our consortium partners. Our survey found that less challenges were reported among those who had license agreements in place[7]. License Agreements provide for better regulation of placements.

4. HARNESS THE INTEGRATION BENEFITS FROM HOSTING

-ARP has not only provided accommodation solutions, but it has also been **invaluable to many BOTP's integration into Irish society**. 83% of hosts said they had a role in helping their guests integration.

-56% of hosts who mostly spoke with guests in person (rather than via a translation app) reported a **significant improvement in their language abilities**.

-Integration and language skills will greatly assist BOTPs as Ireland transitions out of the TPD and into longer term options.

5. PUT EXIT STRATEGIES IN PLACE FOR A PLANNED TRANSITION OUT OF THE TPD

-66% of hosts found worrying about their guest's future challenging, which may be related to the uncertainty they experience.

-BOTP's ability to access alternative accommodation must be considered. Supports such as workshops on tenancy rights and accessible rental assistance should be made available.

-Clarification must be provided to BOTPs on their options for remaining in Ireland after March 2026.

-As March 2026 will approach quickly, assuming ARP is extended, **it is important that the remaining year is used to implement a planned and phased transition out of ARP and the TPD**. Similar accommodation programmes in other EU States suggest that a minimum of six months is required for this and to ensure that hosts and guests are informed in a manner which allows them time to plan their next steps.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] According to the Department of Social Protection Figures as of 19th January 2025, there are currently 18,991 active ARP claims in respect of 35,427 BOTPs. These figures also show that 48,991 BOTPs have been accommodated under the ARP scheme since its introduction in July 2022.

[2] Additionally, 61% of survey respondents had pledged rooms in their family homes.

[3] 91% of 18,991 (current number of properties in receipt of ARP).

[4] For rent to be more profitable than ARP, it would need to be approximately €1,600 per month. According to the latest figures from the RTB Standardised Average Rent (Q1 2024), this is only the case for counties Dublin, Wicklow and Kildare.

[5] 73% of the 81% of hosts willing to extend.

[6] 66% of 18,991 current pledged accommodation solutions availing of ARP.

[7] Hosts in independent placements, likely without a License Agreement in place, found sharing their space 25% more challenging and the financial side of hosting 11% more challenging than those who went through the IRC consortium group or their local authority. 66% of hosts found License Agreements to be helpful.