

PRESS RELEASE

21 June 2024

Winners Announced for Refugee Week 2024 Photography Competition

Wexford County Council's Local Authority Integration Team is proud to announce the winners of the Refugee Week 2024 Photography Competition. The competition, themed "Our Home," received numerous inspiring and poignant submissions that beautifully captured the essence of what home means, particularly through the experiences of refugees and their supporters.

The competition judges were deeply moved by the diversity and depth of the entries, each one telling a unique and heartfelt story. The winning photographs stood out for their emotional resonance, creativity, and powerful narratives saying "*We are incredibly impressed by the talent and sensitivity shown in this year's submissions*"

Amanda Byrne, Acting Director of Service, Ukraine Response, Human Resources and Corporate Affairs, Wexford County Council added "*The photographs capture the spirit of Refugee Week, highlighting the importance of home and the resilience of those who have had to rebuild theirs.*"

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all participants for their thoughtful and compelling entries, and to our judges for their dedication and insight. This competition has underscored the power of photography to convey profound messages and foster understanding and empathy within our community.

Refugee Week is an annual event dedicated to celebrating the contributions, creativity, and resilience of refugees around the world. It provides a platform for displaced individuals to share their stories and for communities to show their support and solidarity.

1st Prize:

Winner: Sasha Batoka

Title of Photograph: "Tea time"

Description: Whatever happens there's always a time for cup of tea.

This flask reminds me the same, which I left in my cupboard in Kharkiv. The flavour of mint, thyme, honey, seabuckthorn and lemon bring me to my previous life, bring me back to home.

2nd Prize :

Winner: Artem Vartanyan

Title of Photograph: "Cleaning my Garden"

Description: I am 71 years old, I am from Ukraine, from the Donetsk region, Bakhmut. In this photo, I am cleaning the garden, unfortunately, my house was

destroyed by a rocket and I only have a few pictures of my house left. Now all I have left are the memories of my home. This is the perfect place for me!

3rd Prize :

Winner: Ganna Akhundova

Title of Photograph: "Routine"

Description: I've moved from place to place several times in Ireland. In each place I've lived, I've always used common cutlery. There was no need for my own plate or cup. Even at work, we had corporate mugs with logos.

I remember strolling through a charity shop with a friend while she was looking for a plant pot. Then I caught myself thinking that I have no need for any things like that. They wouldn't fit into my small suitcase. Now, I have my own plants in pots, my own cups, and many other things that won't fit into a suitcase.

The winning photographs will be displayed at the Wexford Town Library on World Refugee Day 20th June, 2024 until 30th June, 2024.

For further information about the competition and upcoming events, please contact:

Local Authority Integration Team
Wexford County Council
Email: integration@wexfordcoco.ie

ENDS



1st Prize Winner: Sasha Bratkova

Title of Photograph: "Tea time"

Description: Whatever happens there's always a time for cup of tea.



2nd Prize Winner: Artem Vartanyan
Title of Photograph: "Cleaning my Garden"



3rd Prize Winner: Ganna Akhundova
Title of Photograph: "Routine"



Hiella Akhundova accepting 3rd Prize on behalf of her mother Ganna , presented by John Caulfield , (Integration Support Worker , Wexford LAIT)



Sasha Bratkova accepting 1st Prize presented by John Caulfield , (Integration Support Worker , Wexford LAIT)