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Charles was recently awarded an Irish Research Council (IRC) Postgraduate Scholarship. His research project, which is supervised by Dr. Cliodhna Murphy, is entitled 'Charting the Construction and Implementation of the Right to Social Security under EU Immigration and Asylum law in Ireland.' The extent to which different categories of migrants can access social welfare payments has often been a highly contentious social and political issue. Often, it is argued that migrants are capable of endangering the financial resources of the State, or may move to another State purely for the purposes of receiving more generous social benefits. This is particularly important in the Irish context, due to both its historically low levels of inward migration and its comparatively underdeveloped welfare state. His primary aim is to explore if European Union (EU) citizens, third-country labour migrants and asylum seekers can be considered to have a right to welfare payments in Ireland, and what the content of that right might be in a practical sense if such a right exists.

As EU law is based on the principle of free movement of persons, this has led, in principle, to a broader level of access to welfare payments for citizens of other EU Member States. The thesis will therefore, as a secondary objective, seek to establish how significantly EU law has altered the way in which Ireland administers its 'Social State' programmes such as welfare, as well as its influence, if any, on access to welfare payments for labour migrants and asylum seekers arriving from outside the EU. By comparing these groups, it will also be possible to examine if the Irish executive has made any legal distinctions among them, and if so, why this may be the case. The project will be socio-legal in nature as it examines legal, administrative and policy-based instruments in these areas, as well as utilising interviews with key stakeholders who can speak towards the practical application of the law for each of the affect groups.