



An Roinn Gnóthaí Fostaíochta
agus Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Employment Affairs
and Social Protection

Minister Doherty Addresses Annual Social Inclusion Forum

New Roadmap for Social Inclusion to be published in the next few weeks

Insights, conclusions and recommendations of Forum

to Inform Government Policymaking

#SIF2019

Wednesday, 22 May, 2019: The Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Regina Doherty T.D., today informed the Social Inclusion Forum that she would be bringing a new *Roadmap for Social Inclusion* to Government very soon and she expects to publish it in the next few weeks. The Minister was speaking at the annual Forum which took place in the Aviva Stadium Conference Centre.

The Social Inclusion Forum was established by Government as a part of monitoring progress on the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion. The Forum gives people who are directly affected by poverty and social exclusion and those who work with them a voice in the development of policy, and in the ways that the policies are implemented.

Minister Doherty said:

“The Roadmap for Social Inclusion will state a clear ambition to achieve the long-held, but as yet unrealised, target of reducing consistent poverty and will go beyond that by making Ireland the most socially inclusive State in the EU. Crucially, the roadmap will set out clear commitments to make this vision a reality.

“This ambition and these commitments will reflect the views of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion and the Community and Voluntary sector groups that work with them. Views were received through a special online public consultation process last year and valuable input was also received at the 2017 and 2018 annual Social Inclusion Forum as well as at our annual pre-budget events.

“The feedback through all of these channels identified a broad range of themes from the assurance of rates of welfare payments, to the provision of good-quality and affordable services, to the importance of supports for engagement with education and the labour market. I’m confident that this new Roadmap for Social Inclusion has captured and responded to the views and concerns that you have expressed.”

Minister Doherty stressed that the forthcoming Roadmap for Social Inclusion would provide leadership, direction and accountability across all Government Departments to ensure its targets were met. She emphasised:

“This will be a plan with clear goals and specific commitments and I intend to publish a Roadmap which explicitly sets out the Department responsible for each commitment and what the timelines are. This will help all of these Departments to understand what they need to do to deliver on these commitments and, just as importantly, it will hold them to account for playing their role in delivering on our shared ambition. Through existing plans, the various Departments are already beginning to sound the right tunes in terms of inclusion but every orchestra needs a conductor and the roadmap will lead the way.”

Today’s Forum also provided space for delegates to discuss their views on the challenges Ireland faces, and the policy responses required. The report of today’s Forum - which will be presented formally to Government, and circulated to all Government Departments, to various stakeholders and to the public generally – will provide valuable input as the insights, conclusions and recommendations of the Forum are fed into the policymaking process and are available to all stakeholders.

The Social Inclusion Division of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection organised the Forum with the assistance of Community Work Ireland (CWI) and the European Anti-Poverty Network Ireland (EAPN Ireland).

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Note for Editors:

Statistics on Poverty in Ireland

Progress made towards reaching the national social target for poverty reduction is reported annually in the Social Inclusion Monitor. The latest poverty data available shows improvements in living conditions, income inequality and poverty. The most recent edition of the Social Inclusion Monitor was published in 2019 and is based on 2017 EUSILC data. Further information is available at: www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Social-Inclusion-Monitor.aspx

Social Inclusion Forum

The annual Social Inclusion Forum was established by the Government as part of the structures to monitor and evaluate National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2017. The aim of the Forum is give people who are directly affected by poverty and social exclusion and those who work with them a voice in the development of the policies that directly affect them, and in the ways that policies are implemented. The main conference documents and speaker presentations will be available online after the event. It will be possible to download copies of the report and presentations from www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Social-Inclusion-Division.aspx and www.socialinclusion.ie .

National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007 – 2017

This 10-year plan of the Irish Government aimed at tackling poverty was recently updated for the period 2015 - 2017 to reflect current issues and interventions to tackle poverty.

Social Inclusion

Ensuring marginalised people and those living in poverty have greater participation in decision making which affects their lives.

The Forum is organised by the Social Inclusion Division of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection in partnership with the European Anti-Poverty Network Ireland and Community Work Ireland.

Social Inclusion Division

The role of the Social Inclusion Division is to support the Minister and Government in developing and implementing Government strategies for preventing, reducing and ultimately eliminating poverty and social exclusion. The Division also promotes greater social inclusion and social cohesion in collaboration with other stakeholders including, in particular, people experiencing poverty.

European Anti-Poverty Network Ireland (EAPN Ireland)

The European Anti-Poverty Network Ireland is a network of groups and individuals working against poverty. EAPN Ireland is the Irish link to the European Anti-Poverty Network which brings together civil society organisations from across the European Union to put the fight against poverty at the top of the EU, national and local agenda.

Community Work Ireland (CWI)

Established in 1981, Community Work Ireland (formerly the Community Workers' Co-operative) is a national membership organisation that seeks to promote quality community work as a means of addressing poverty, social exclusion and inequality, and contributing to the creation of a more just, sustainable and equal society.

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