

# Regional Seminars as part of Ireland's National Programme for the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion

The Community Workers' Co-operative  
The European Anti-Poverty Network Ireland  
*with the support of*  
The Community Platform



[www.2010againstopoverty.eu](http://www.2010againstopoverty.eu)



*These regional seminars  
are supported by*  
the Social Inclusion  
Division, Department  
of Social and Family Affairs



COMMUNITY PLATFORM  
CHALLENGING POVERTY & INEQUALITY

# Introduction

**The immediate challenge now is to secure the realisation of the targets set by the Irish Government to reduce the number of those experiencing consistent poverty to between 2% and 4% by 2012**

Over the past number of years, Ireland has made progress in tackling poverty. The at risk of poverty rate, for example, fell from 18.5% in 2005 to 14.4% in 2008, and the consistent poverty rate fell from 7% to 4.2% in the same period. However, it is vital not to be complacent about the reduction in poverty rates; more significant progress could have been made on poverty and social exclusion over the past number of years if the issues had received more of a focus. The immediate challenge now is to secure the realisation of the targets set by the Irish Government to reduce the number of those experiencing consistent poverty to between 2% and 4% by 2012, with the aim of eliminating consistent poverty by 2016, despite the economic and social crisis facing Ireland. To that end there is a growing realisation of the need to focus more on addressing the structural causes of poverty, exclusion and inequality.

Though, as many have highlighted, those living in poverty are at risk of social exclusion and similarly those who experience social exclusion are at risk of poverty, it is crucial that the understanding of social exclusion and inequality is not confined to an analysis of poverty rates. Social exclusion and inequalities are not always a consequence of poverty and require broader analysis and strategies to address them.

Poverty and exclusion are themselves complex phenomenon and the intergenerational nature of poverty and social exclusion (where the chances of experiencing sustained poverty in adulthood are related to child poverty) is a particular challenge.

Particular groups are more vulnerable to poverty and exclusion including: women, long-term unemployed, children, older people, people from disadvantaged communities, ex-offenders, people from ethnic minority communities including Travellers and migrants, lone-parents, and people with disabilities. The cumulative nature of the effects and impacts of poverty, social exclusion and inequality is another challenge that will need to be addressed, and there is a particular need to hear of the experiences of those that are living with these.

# 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion

The 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion is an important year in the struggle to ensure that poverty and social inclusion remain at the top of the agenda of the EU and its member states including Ireland. It marks an opportunity to take stock on progress to date in the fight against poverty, as well as a moment for reflection and planning moving forward. The four main objectives of the 2010 Year – recognition, ownership, cohesion and commitment – represent an opportunity to state categorically that:

- poverty and social exclusion are unacceptable
- poverty and social exclusion are bad for society in general
- the eradication of poverty and social exclusion is a collective challenge for all
- the eradication of poverty and social exclusion must be firmly put, and remain, at the top of the agenda of the EU and its member states.

#### Four main objectives lie at the heart of the European Year:

- **Recognition:** Recognising the right of all people to live in dignity and to play a full part in society.
- **Ownership:** Increasing public ownership of social inclusion policies and actions, emphasising everyone's responsibility in tackling poverty and marginalisation.
- **Cohesion:** Promoting a more cohesive society, by raising public awareness of the benefits for all of a society where poverty is eradicated and nobody is condemned to live on the margins.
- **Commitment:** Reiterating the EU's strong political commitment to fight against poverty and social exclusion, promoting this commitment at all levels of governance.

The European Year should raise public awareness of poverty and social exclusion in Europe and convey the message that poverty and exclusion are obstacles to social and economic progress. It should help challenge the notion that the fight against poverty is a cost for society and reaffirm the importance of collective responsibility, involving not only decision makers but also public and private actors. The European Year should also contribute by giving voice to people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, for example by strengthening the organizations in which they participate and involving them in activities designed to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty.

The structure of the Irish National Programme will focus on the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016 (NAPinclusion) which takes account of the life cycle stages – children, people of working age, older people, people with disabilities and communities. The programme envisages that provision will be made in a number of events for the exchange of experience, expertise and good practice with other countries and jurisdictions.

# Regional seminars

As part of Ireland's programme, the Social Inclusion Division of the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht has tendered to the CWC, EAPN Ireland and the Community Platform the organisation of four regional seminars to mark the 2010 Year. The focus of these seminars will be on providing the opportunity for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion to voice and articulate the issues they are facing and present suggestions for ways in which the issues that they are living with can be addressed at local, national and international levels.

**Each seminar will have workshops on the four main themes of the 2010 Year:**

## **(1) Child poverty**

One of the priority goals in the NAPinclusion is to ensure that every child grows up in a household with access to sufficient resources, supports and services, to nurture and care for the child, foster the child's development and full and equal participation in society. It is anticipated that the exploration of child poverty will focus on:

- Policies and programmes that are specifically directed at children. These will include pre-school and early education, especially in disadvantaged areas, links between school, home and community, and access to play, recreational and cultural activities
- The supports parents need to reconcile work and family life, including affordable child care.

## **(2) Access to quality work and learning opportunities**

Unemployment is the main challenge to be met in reducing poverty and social exclusion. However, even before the economic downturn disproportionate numbers in certain categories of the working age population were largely excluded from the labour market. These included lone parents, parents of larger families, people with disabilities, ethnic minority communities including Travellers and migrants and people living in areas of urban and rural disadvantage.

This theme will examine how best barriers to employment participation for all categories can be removed, including those that may exist within the social protection system and how more effective "active" supports can be provided, especially for those most removed from the labour market or vulnerable to becoming long term unemployed.

## **(3) Access to services**

The main focus of this theme will be on services for older people, especially those living alone.

The provision of access to services of good quality makes a major contribution to the prevention, reduction and ultimate elimination of poverty and social exclusion. Services mainly include education, training, employment supports, health, care, housing, transport.

## **(4) People with Disabilities**

This theme will focus on improving access to employment through the removal of barriers and the creation of appropriate incentives and improving access to services for people with different physical and mental disabilities.

# Participation

Participation in the seminars will include, but not be confined to, a combination of the following:

- Family Resource Centres – management, staff and members of the communities in which/with which FRCs work
- Projects funded under the Community Development Programme - management, staff and members of the communities in which/with which CDPs work
- RAPID Area Implementation Teams
- Other locally based organisations such as Refugee Support Groups, Women's Networks, Traveller Groups etc.
- Local Development Companies
- Statutory agencies
- Local authorities
- Other interested individuals or groups.

The seminar organisers are committed to facilitating and supporting the participation of people experiencing poverty and the organisations that work with them. In addition, financial supports will be available to people experiencing poverty and social exclusion to facilitate participation.

Region	Location	Date
West	Menlo Park Hotel, Galway	May 11th
North East	Fairways Hotel, Dundalk	May 13th
South East	Talbot Hotel, Wexford	May 18th
South	Imperial Hotel, Cork	June 3rd

# Programme

10am	Welcome and Introduction	Ann Irwin, Community Workers' Co-operative
10.15am	2010 EU Year to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion – background and objectives	Social Inclusion Division, Department of Social and Family Affairs
10.30am	Workshops - please see below for further information on the workshop presentations in each location	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Child poverty</li> <li>2. Access to quality work and learning opportunities</li> <li>3. Access to services - with a particular focus on older people</li> <li>4. People with disabilities</li> </ol>
12.15pm	Plenary and conclusion	<p><b>Feedback from workshops</b></p> <p>Response from the Social Inclusion Division including information on the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2010 Social Inclusion Forum</li> <li>• Concluding comments and next steps.</li> </ul>
1.00pm	Close and Lunch	A light lunch will be provided

# Workshops

Each workshop will commence with a brief input on an example of good practice, followed by an input highlighting the realities facing those experiencing poverty and social exclusion and a facilitated discussion. Each workshop will be asked to feedback the main points of discussion to the plenary session.

Workshop	Galway 11th May	Dundalk 13th May	Wexford 18th May	Cork 3rd June
<b>Child Poverty</b>	The New Way of Working- An Initiative to Promote School Attendance -- Bridget McGreil, National Education Welfare Board, Regional Manager, Galway and Iggy Keane, Assistant National Co-Ordinator, School Completion Programme	The New Way of Working- An Initiative to Promote School Attendance -- Michael Doyle, National Education Welfare Board, Regional Manager, Dundalk and Denis McCarthy, Regional Manager, Home School Community Liaison Programme	Children and Young People's Participation in Decision Making: Reaching out to the Seldom Heard – the Experience of Wexford Comhairle na nÓg -- Olive McGovern, Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and Kieran O'Donoghue, Ferns Diocesan Youth Services.	The Free Pre-School Education Initiative – Cork's Experience -- Catherine Hynes, Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and Kathryn O'Riordan, Cork County Childcare Committee
<b>Access to Quality Work and Learning Opportunities</b>	Profiling Exercise undertaken of the Unemployed in Ireland -- Barry Kennedy Regional Manager Department of Social Protection	Initiatives for working age through RAPID -- Jerry Murphy Programme Manager Pobal	Activation -- Evelyn O'Donnell Employment Support Services, Department of Social Protection	Social Inclusion Model Pilot -- Ann Gilton FÁS
<b>Access to services</b>	Older People On the Move – the case of Sligo Rural Transport -- Terri McGourty, Rural Transport Development Programme Officer, Pobal	Louth – An Age Friendly County -- Mary Deery, Louth County Council and Rod Bond, Netwell Centre, Dundalk Institute of Technology	Getting Informed about Services and Entitlements -- Geraldyn McGarry, Information, Publications and Social Policy Manager, Citizens Information Board	Supporting Older People to Live in Safe Communities -- Sgt. Trevor Laffan, Community Policing, Garda Síochána, Cork
<b>People with Disabilities</b>	Advocacy in Action -- Clare O'Neill, Advocacy Officer, Mayo Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities	Training, Education and Work – Creating a Pathway. -- Máirín Haran, Department of Social and Family Affairs and ESF Funded Disability Activation Project Mullingar	Working Together to Access all Areas – the Cashel Gold Star Initiative in Action -- Anne Bradshaw, Community Development Officer, HSE and Manager Cashel Gold Star Initiative	Services and Support Provision for People with Disabilities – a Life Planning Approach. -- Dr. Anne Marie Rooney, Standards Officer, National Disability Authority

# Registration Form

Name	<input type="text"/>
Organisation (if any)	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>
Telephone	<input type="text"/>

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## Workshops (please indicate your first, second, third and fourth preference)

Child poverty	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to quality work and learning opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to services – with a particular focus on older people	<input type="checkbox"/>
People with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>

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## Do you have any specific requirements (food, access, interpretation etc.)

Dietary	<input type="text"/>
Interpretation	<input type="text"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>

## Please indicate whether you have participant support requirements\*

Transport	<input type="text"/>
Caring	<input type="text"/>

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## Please return registration form to the Community Workers' Cooperative

Forms can be returned by email to: [2010@cwic.ie](mailto:2010@cwic.ie)

Or by post to Community Workers Cooperative (CWC)  
Unit 4 First Floor, Tuam Road Centre, Tuam Road, Galway, Ireland

## Seminar preference (please tick your seminar preference) and final date for registration:

Galway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Return by Wed 5th May	Dundalk	<input type="checkbox"/>	Return by Fri 7th May
Wexford	<input type="checkbox"/>	Return by Fri 7th May	Cork	<input type="checkbox"/>	Return by Fri 21st May

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## For further information please contact the CWC at:

**Phone:** +353 (0)91 779 030 **Fax:** +353 (0) 91 680 023 **email:** [2010@cwic.ie](mailto:2010@cwic.ie)

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\* Participant supports are available to those who are unwaged.