

Human Rights

Equality



Respect for Human Dignity

Solidarity

## European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) Ireland

### Manifesto for European Parliament Elections

## Delivering on EU Values to End Poverty

113 million people in the EU, or over 22% of the population, is at risk of poverty and social exclusion. In Ireland 750,000 people are living below the poverty line. Across the EU there has been a rise in far-right nationalism and a lack of solidarity among EU leaders in how to move forward and to address the key challenges facing Europe.

### Delivering on EU values

The European Parliament election in May are a time for voters in Ireland and across Europe to hold our politicians to account and to vote in Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) who will commit themselves to progressing the common values of the European Union. These include respect for human dignity and human rights, equality and solidarity.

*“The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.”*

Treaty of the European Union

This manifesto responds to the calls of Irish people who took part in Government and EAPN Ireland Citizen’s Dialogues on Europe which took place across the country. The resounding priority for people was that they wanted to be part of a European Union that lives up to its values and where all its policies support their delivery. People expressed a strong desire for fairness – fairness in the opportunities available to citizens, fairness between generations, fairness between Member States, fairness in Europe’s dealings with the rest of the world and fairness towards the environment. They want the EU to tackle social exclusion and stronger interventions at a European level to combat discrimination, integrate migrants and improve access to services. Not doing this was seen to undermine the existence of the European Union.

Those running for election to the European Parliament, political parties and political leaders need to spell out how they will deliver on EU Treaty values.

## Delivering on Promises

EU leaders have agreed a lot of commitments. Now we need to see delivery.

- In 2010 the EU agreed to the **Europe 2020 Strategy**. This includes 5 social and environmental targets including the commitment to lifting 20 million people out of poverty and social exclusion by 2020. After the economic crash and years of austerity policy drove more people deeper into poverty there is still 15.5 million more people to lift out of poverty to achieve the target. Even if the plan succeeds it will still leave over 94 million people in poverty and social exclusion. This is almost one in every five people in the EU. We need new ambitious commitments to poverty reduction for after 2020.
- In 2015 the EU and its members states all signed up to the **17 UN Sustainable Development Goals**. In doing so they committed themselves to deliver a balanced social, environmental and economic future by 2030 which included the promise to leave no-one behind. The first of these goals is 'No Poverty'.
- In 2017 all EU leaders, included the heads of all Governments also signed up to the 20 employment and social rights which are the **European Pillar of Social Rights** covering areas such as equality, decent work, adequate income and access to quality services including housing and health.

The European Parliament has increased decision-making powers as it decides on EU laws and policies along with the governments of the EU member countries. It is crucial that those seeking election to the European Parliament on the 24<sup>th</sup> May have a commitment to the EU values and to ensuring that promises made by EU leaders on our behalf are delivered upon. Those of us who believe in these values have a responsibility to vote for those we believe will fight for these values to be made a reality and to hold those we elect to account over the coming five years of their term in the European Parliament.

### Our priorities for the next 5 Years for delivering on EU values

1. Economic policies which promote human rights, tackle poverty and inequality and guarantee wellbeing.
2. Adequate and accessible social protection and social welfare supports which ensure a dignified life for all who need it for as long as they need it.
3. Effective implementation of existing political commitments, including the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the European Pillar of Social Rights, which ensure a sustainable future where everyone has an income to live with dignity and can access quality service and a decent job without discrimination.
4. Effective participative of people which harness the expertise of all key actors including people experiencing poverty and the organisations representing them.

**We invite candidates to show commitment to make #EUPovertyFree**  
Sign the pledge on <https://www.eupovertyfree.eu/commitments/>

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The European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) Ireland is a network of almost 200 groups and individuals which is committed to a sustainable Ireland and Europe free of poverty and social exclusion, with high levels of equality, where political, economic, social and cultural rights are respected.

Contact: EAPN Ireland, 100 North King St., Smithfield, Dublin 7, Tel: 01-8745737 web: [www.eapn.ie](http://www.eapn.ie)

 [@EAPNIreland](https://twitter.com/EAPNIreland)  [enquiries@eapn.ie](mailto:enquiries@eapn.ie)