



European Anti-Poverty Network Ireland

Press Statement on Programme for Government

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Many commitments in Our Shared Future will contribute to addressing poverty, but the lack of a commitment to an adequate income for those on social welfare is a major flaw.

The European Anti-Poverty Network Ireland has welcomed many of the commitments in the draft Programme for Government but highlighted that a failure to commit to setting a benchmark for an adequate income for those dependent on social welfare will leave many languishing in poverty and unable to afford a life with dignity.

The Programme for Government does commit to implementing the Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025, which was published in January this year. However, this Roadmap also does not include a commitment to income adequacy for those on social welfare. An integrated approach to addressing poverty has to ensure adequate incomes for all, alongside access to quality services and decent jobs for those who can work.

Measures that EAPN Ireland welcomes include:

- The commitment to progress to a living wage
- Publication of a new national Action Plan against Racism and a new Migrant Integration Strategy; end Direct Provision
- Implementing Sláintecare
- Implementing a number of projects similar in approach to Community Development Projects;
- Examining the introduction of socio-economic disadvantaged status as a new ground inequality legislation
- Specific measures for undocumented migrants, Travellers, people with disabilities and other groups in society.

Paul Ginnell, Director of EAPN Ireland stated *“There are gaps we would like to see addressed in this Programme and many areas that need more detail, but our main concern is that positive commitments are delivered on. This involves a political will to make change and to implement rather than just write plans and strategies. It will also involve adequate resources and the Programme is far from convincing on how adequate taxation will be available.”*

The Programme for Government commits to publishing a medium-term roadmap with Budget 2021 detailing how Ireland will reduce the deficit and return to a balanced budget.

Mr Ginnell concluded by saying that *“There are major concerns about how the commitment to reducing the budget deficit will be achieved and if it means a return to austerity policy. Before this crisis there were almost 700,000 people at risk of poverty. The Government must remember ongoing commitments*

to poverty proofing all policy which is about ensuring that policy decisions do not lead to more people ending up in poverty, but also help achieve our commitments to reducing poverty.”

Ends

- Download Programme for Government – Our Shared Future [here](#).