



COMMUNITY PLATFORM
CHALLENGING POVERTY & INEQUALITY

Press release

Embargoed

Monday 13th July, 11.59 pm

Widening inequality hitting most vulnerable

New paper calls for progressive taxation and investment in communities and public services to ensure the rights and welfare of the most vulnerable in Irish society.

The Community Platform*, an alliance of 28 national organisations working against poverty and inequality in Ireland, today (Tuesday 14th July), launched '***A Future Perspective of the Community Platform***'. It draws on data available to show the devastation caused by austerity policies and growing economic and social inequality in Ireland. It poses specific challenges for government and all political parties to redress the damage to the lives of poor and marginalised communities caused over the past 6 years. It sets out a road map to build a more equal, inclusive and sustainable society.

Speaking on behalf of the Community Platform **Edel McGinley** said "It is essential that we take urgent action to undo the harm of austerity policies that have deepened poverty and inequality, incentivised low paid and insecure work, and increased discrimination. There is no evidence of recovery for many people and low income families are struggling to survive."

McGinley went on to say "The lack of investment in public services continues to undermine our society's ability to ensure those with the least have adequate supports and access to essential tailored public services. This coupled with the decimation of the community sector is deeply worrying as communities across Ireland become more and more distanced from decision makers and policies that affect their lives".

Brid O'Brien spokesperson for the CP said "austerity policies over the past 6 years have increased the rate of deprivation from 13.7% in 2007 to a staggering 30.5 % in 2013, the gender pay gap has widened from 12.6% to 14.4%, while the top 20% hold the same share of wealth as the bottom 60%".

Robin Hanan, speaking for the Platform, said: "The Community Platform is calling on the Government and all political actors to invest in a renewed, innovative, independent and effective community sector working with resourced communities; a progressive tax system which moves towards the EU norm of 40% to 45% of GDP; and a renewal of public services and publicly funded services to begin to level the playing field".

ENDS

CONTACT

Edel McGinley, Community Platform - 087 7485695

Robin Hanan, Community Platform -087-2386243

*Members of the Community Platform work to challenge poverty and inequality experienced on the grounds of gender and gender identity; family status, including carers and lone parents; age, including children, young people and older people; disability; sexual orientation; ethnic origin, including migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, Travellers and Roma; religion, including minority religions; and socio-economic status, including people who are unemployed or low paid, homeless people, and prisoners.

The Community Platforms vision for the future reflects our shared values of equality, including economic equality, social inclusion, social justice, dignity, participation and sustainability.

NOTES TO EDITOR

‘A Future Perspective of the Community Platform’ will be launched at 11.00am, Tuesday 14th July, in Buswells Hotel, Molesworth St, Dublin 2.

Speakers from Community Platform members include:

- Robin Hanan, European Anti-Poverty Network Ireland;
- Bríd O’Brien, Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed
- Edel McGinley, Migrant Rights Centre Ireland.

Key recommendations from the paper

The Community Platform seeks

- policies to advance a tax regime that is progressive, equitable and sufficient to invest in the services, income supports and quality work needed to build a more equal and inclusive Ireland
- policies to advance income equality
- action on job creation based on a commitment to decent work
- investment in public services and publicly funded services
- a comprehensive investment plan to advance the elimination of poverty and social exclusion
- a valuing of human dignity
- fulfilment of the rights of communities to participate in decisions that impact on their lives and broader and more critical participation of people in political and economic decision-making,
- a model of development that is balanced and environmentally sustainable
- a renewed, innovative, independent and effective community sector working with resourced communities that are thriving and diverse
- seeks mechanisms that make equality, human rights, and social inclusion central to policy related decision-making

Community Platform Members

- Age Action Ireland
- ATD 4th World
- Community Action Network
- Community Workers' Co-operative
- Cairde
- Debt and Development Coalition
- European Anti-Poverty Network Ireland
- Focus Ireland
- Gay and Lesbian Equality Network
- Immigrant Council of Ireland
- Irish Association of Older People
- Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed
- Irish Penal Reform Trust
- Irish Refugee Council
- Irish Rural Link
- Irish Traveller Movement
- Migrant Rights Centre Ireland
- National Adult Literacy Agency
- National Network of Women's Refuges and Support Services
- National Traveller Women's Forum
- National Women's Council of Ireland
- Pavee Point Travellers Centre
- Rape Crisis Network Ireland
- Simon Communities of Ireland
- Threshold
- Voluntary Drug Treatment Network
- Vincentian Partnership for Justice
- Women's Aid