



Living in the shadows...

## DOES IT ONLY HAPPEN TO ME?

### Recommendations regarding the recognition of the 10<sup>th</sup> ground

1. We call on all members of the Oireachtas to support the parliamentary process that will lead to the adoption of the Private Member's Bill, the Equality (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2017, introduced by Mr. Jim O'Callaghan TD and Ms. Fiona O'Loughlin TD.
2. We invite all concerned stakeholders to monitor the advancement of the research project contracted by the Department of Justice and Equality (DJE) to "create a more precise definition of any potential new equality ground". The work on this piece of research is due to commence in September 2019 with a completion date of December 2019. (See Chapter, The Irish Journey So Far)
3. We call on the Department for Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) to include in the new National Action Plan for Social Inclusion, a 'Roadmap for Social Inclusion', a provision to regularly monitor discrimination on the basis of socio-economic status and in doing so, to inform the Department of Justice and Equality and the public at large of the hidden experiences of unequal treatment suffered by members of disadvantaged communities in Ireland.
4. We recommend to the Department of Communication, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) responsible for the overall implementation of the transformative UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development to develop expertise on socio-economic discrimination. Goal 10 (on inequalities), Goal 1 (on poverty) and many other Goals of the Agenda should aim to serve the 'greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development: eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty' and the "Leave No One Behind" promise. We call on the DCCAE and the Government to include the improvement of the Equal Status Act with the recognition of new grounds in the next National Implementation Plan of Agenda 2030. We invite all civil society organisations involved in the Irish Coalition 2030 to support the recognition of the SES ground as a critical element in the achievement of Goal 10.

5. If the Private Member's Bill introduced in 2017 is not adopted before the end of the current Dáil and the call for General Elections, we invite concerned Irish stakeholders and political parties to work together to make sure all Elections Manifestos will include a commitment to improve the Irish Equal Status Act with the added protection for citizens of new recognised grounds of discrimination including the socio-economic status.

6. We invite concerned Irish stakeholders to join with other European stakeholders and EU State members advocating for the adoption of the EU Anti-Discrimination Horizontal Directive and in the follow up of the adoption of the 2017 EU Pillar of Social Right to work together to include the Socio-Economic Status as a recognised ground in the future monitoring and development of EU legislation. To reinforce these efforts, we would count on three European bodies (The European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI) and the European Network of Equality Bodies (Equinet) to address socio-economic discrimination as unequal treatment and as a process preventing citizens to enjoy effective access to their rights.

### Recommendations regarding the Public Sector Duty

1. We call on Public Sector Duty bearers and other stakeholders to partner with service user groups to develop training and awareness raising programmes vis-à-vis discrimination based on socio economic status. These programmes could become mandatory for all Public Service Providers once the new ground becomes recognised.
2. We invite all concerned medical and other stakeholders to discover the professional training programme initiated by Dr. Austin O'Carroll and colleagues at the Irish College of General Practitioners. The North Dublin City GP Training Scheme has been designed so that "every person and community has access to a professional, quality and holistic general practitioner service that will allow them maximise their health irrespective of background and economic status."

(ICGP 2017). The use of Health Inclusion personnel should be further developed in major hospitals.

3. We invite the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission to become a key stakeholder in the hoped-for improvement of the Irish Equal Status Act with the added protection of citizens from socio-economic discrimination. With other stakeholders and partners, the IHREC could prepare or further develop a strategy for awareness raising, training and monitoring related to discrimination based on socio economic status.

4. We invite all concerned stakeholders to monitor the latest international evidence-based practice and legislation on socio-economic status discrimination, and especially evidence recognising the values and perspectives of service users.

5. We invite all stakeholders concerned to support and monitor the implementation of the "The Future of Policing in Ireland" framework, with a special focus on the provisions aimed at developing a human rights based approach.

6. Inspired by Senator Lynn Ruane's speech on socio-economic shaming in school, we would support any initiatives to highlight the hidden negative experiences of children and young people from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds in the education system, and to explore new ways to unleash their potential.

7. Inspired by calls of focus group participants, we would support any initiatives to highlight the hidden situations of discrimination experienced by children and young people in the child protection care system as well as persons with criminal conviction.

#### **Additional calls on Public Sector Duty bearers:**

- Run and/or support targeted or general public campaigns that enhance the lived experience of service users and highlight the mistreatment of deprived sections of society.

- Identify the mitigation strategies developed by service users to avoid discrimination or arbitrary treatment so as to find formal and informal ways to support them.

- Develop partnership approaches between the service user and provider - allowing service users to be active agents in service delivery promotes dignity, inclusion and self-esteem.

- Involve in a structured way at national level representatives of service users from vulnerable communities in the regular monitoring of the delivery of the Public Sector Duty.

- Support mechanisms and initiatives such as peer group support that empower service users and reduce the fear factor.

- Experiment with 'compensation schemes' or positive discrimination service delivery to mitigate the cumulative impact of the discrimination process.

## **Our common duty**

1. We call on all political parties and on organisations of independent candidates to improve the social mix in their list of election candidates.

2. We call on media to assess their practice if they are at risk of disseminating messages which can reinforce socio-economic prejudice and discrimination.

3. We invite all stakeholders concerned to assess, both in Ireland and in other jurisdictions, civil society initiatives focused on challenging stereotypes and prejudices in relation to communities from very economically deprived areas. Reducing and counteracting the negative narratives and the lack of knowledge about real life in socio-economic disadvantaged areas will help contribute to the prevention of discrimination based on socio-economic status.

4. We invite all stakeholders concerned to take stock of the learnings from the new international "The Hidden Dimensions of Poverty" Report. Focusing on what so far was remaining "in the shadow" of lives in poverty, the work by an Oxford University – ATD International team gives new conceptual tools in order to better understand the impact of socio-economic discrimination and why it is important to recognise it.

5. We invite all citizens to develop an interest in approaches and practices which prevent individuals in engaging in negative interactions, stereotyping, blaming and shaming. Among these approaches, we name for example the Non Violent Communication approach, among many others.

6. We call on all members of the ATD community group in Ireland to continue their voluntary commitment and work of fostering knowledge and understanding, bringing people together, support and advocacy, and policy development, so as to bring about positive change for those people in society who continue to be discriminated against on socio economic and other grounds and who remain left behind.

**Full report at :**

**[www.atdireland.ie/wp/socioeconomicdiscrimination](http://www.atdireland.ie/wp/socioeconomicdiscrimination)**