



EAPN IRELAND

NEWSFLASH

MAY 2026

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Dear Friend,

Your May NewsFlash contains reports from the annual Social Inclusion Forum, which was held in the Aviva Stadium. A huge thanks to all who gave their time and views & to the Department of Social Protection for hosting. We also feature the launch of the EU's first Anti-Poverty Strategy & EAPN Europe's Poverty Watch, which looks at Anti-Poverty Strategies across the EU, and news and events from members organisations.

To learn more about our work, and to keep up to date, please visit our [website](#), or follow us on [Twitter/X](#), [Bluesky](#), [Facebook](#), or [Instagram](#).

If you are in a position to support our work please [DONATE](#) by clicking this link. Every amount no matter how small, makes a difference. Go Raibh Maith Agat!

In solidarity,

James, Trishna and Clare

The EAPN Ireland Team

EAPN IRELAND NEWS



EAPN/CWI with Minister Dara Calleary at SIF




OUR TEAM at SIF

The annual Social Inclusion Forum took place in the Aviva Stadium on May 27th, with hard hitting and heartfelt presentations from activists who had attended the EAPN/CWI Preparatory Workshops. Ably assisted by our creative artists poet Anna D & rapper Talha Alali, who performed powerful bespoke pieces created for the day, the intervention had a strong impact on all those who attended. The delegation highlighted the devastating impact of poverty, the need for income adequacy and a shift away from the subsidisation of the private sector to deliver essential public services. The housing

crisis overshadowed all discussions, with the clear call for at risk of poverty to be calculated after housing costs are assessed.

At the event the Taoiseach launched the Government's new Anti-Poverty Strategy Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2026-2030, which reiterates the target of the last plan to reduce consistent poverty to 2% or less and to make Ireland one of the most socially inclusive societies in the EU. With the previous plan ending with those in consistent poverty at more than twice that rate, the message from the SIF was clear that implementation is key, and people cannot wait. If we are to tackle poverty a targeted approach to the most disadvantaged groups must be undertaken. We need to stop criminalising poverty and move to more direct cash payments to families through a universal care income and other measures. We acknowledge the work undertaken by the Department of Social Protection and very much appreciate the opportunity to engage with policy makers, including the Minister who participated throughout the day.



EAPN AGM

Thurs. June 11th 11.30am
Carmichael House
**BEYOND THE CRISIS
WORKSHOP ON HOUSING**

Speakers;
Ber Grogan Simon Community
Aisling Hedderman CATU
Moderator; Niamh Allen Focus Ireland

The workshop will look at the wider impact of housing insecurity on people's health, work, family life and ability to plan for the future. It will also explore practical and policy solutions, including stronger tenant protections, affordable and public housing, and long-term approaches that put people and communities first.

Through discussion and shared perspectives, the event aims to encourage new thinking on how everyone in Ireland can have access to safe, secure and affordable housing.

To register to attend in person please contact enquiries@eapn.ie before Friday 5th June.

BEYOND THE CRISIS -Workshop on Housing

There is no doubt, the housing crisis is one of the key drivers of poverty, with large numbers of people at risk of poverty after their accommodation costs are paid. We are delighted to host our annual workshop on this important issue and are honoured to have Ber Grogan, CEO of the Simon Community, & Aisling Hedderman Campaigns Officer with CATU, & our moderator Niamh Allen Head of Advocacy with Focus Ireland, all of whom are playing a key role in outlining what needs to be done. Come along on the day.

ALL WELCOME !

EAPN EUROPE NEWS

EU LAUNCHES FIRST ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

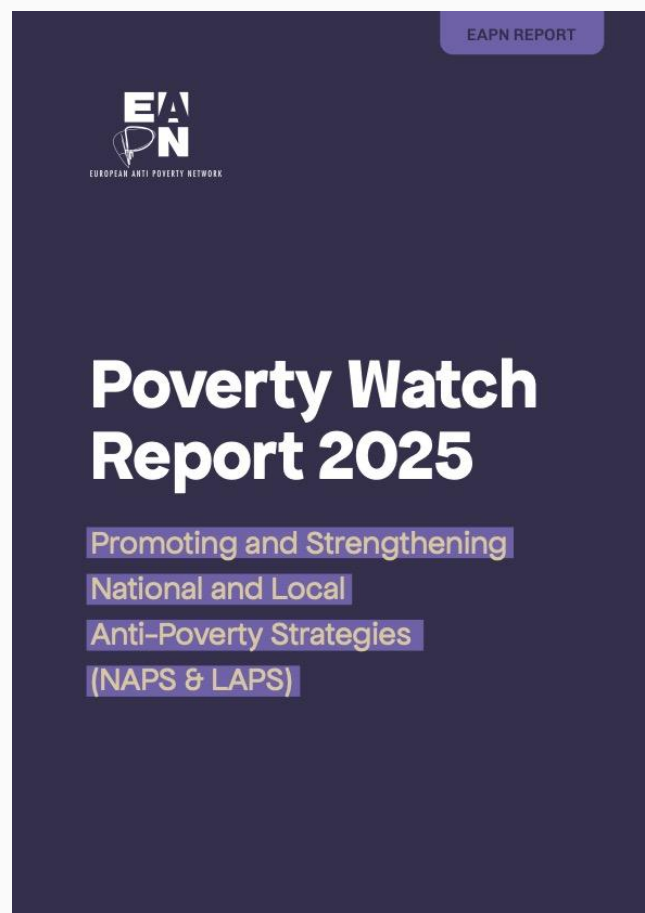


EAPN Europe welcomes the European Commission's commitment to eradicating poverty through the first-ever EU Anti-Poverty Strategy, available [HERE](#) This is a historic moment for millions of people across Europe who experience or have experienced poverty, for those working on the ground, and for organisations that have long called for such an initiative. In a context marked by relentless crises, deepening social inequalities, austerity, deregulation and war, this represents an important political step forward.

However, unless it is matched by concrete action, it will remain words on paper. Real work begins now.

Unfortunately it lacks clear, binding targets and pathways toward eradication and does not sufficiently address the systemic root causes of poverty and social exclusion. Also, the strategy doesn't address the inadequacy of the existing social protection schemes, a cornerstone to any anti-poverty and social inclusion efforts. Our main concern is the gap between the Commission's stated ambitions and its broader political priorities, including ongoing underinvestment in social rights, alongside increased focus on defence, security and competitiveness. EAPN will launch a more detailed analysis in the upcoming weeks & stand ready to work with EU institutions and Member States to ensure that this strategy leads to real, measurable change.

Read EAPN Ireland's Press Statement [HERE](#)



LAUNCH OF EAPN EUROPE POVERTYWATCH

EAPN Europe launched its annual PovertyWatch in mid-April “Promoting and Strengthening National and Local Anti-Poverty Strategies” (NAPS & LAPS), at an event co-organised with the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) Civil Society Organisations’ Group in Brussels. The report provides a comprehensive analysis of current National Anti-Poverty Strategies (NAPS), highlighting common challenges as well as good practices across Europe. Built on a bottom-up approach, the report draws on findings from nineteen EAPN national networks. These findings clearly demonstrate the crucial role of coordinated action across all levels of governance, local, national, and EU, in achieving the eradication of poverty in Europe. Bridget Kelly from the Irish Traveller Movement & Board member of EAPN Ireland make an excellent presentation to the Brussels event highlighting the extreme poverty & marginalisation of Travellers & Roma in Ireland.

Read the full report in the link above!



As the EU determines its **2028–2034 financial priorities**, the time has come to align the Union’s budget with its values. Unfortunately the European Commission seems to be heading in the opposite direction from the idea of a social Europe. EAPN warns: every euro allocated to defence instead of welfare and every reform that constrains social protection, widens the inequality gap. **A truly forward-looking MFF must:**

- Embed poverty eradication as a binding objective.
- Guarantee strong social earmarks and anti-austerity safeguards.
- And ensure civil society and people experiencing poverty have real seats at the table.

Investing in poverty eradication is not a cost. It is an investment in Europe’s social future and democratic credibility.

Read the full report [HERE](#)

OTHER NEWS

CONSULTATION EVENT ON POTENTIAL WORKING AGE & TARGETED CHILD PAYMENTS

The Department of Social Protection is holding an in-person consultation event for members of the public and stakeholders on potential welfare reforms .

Date: Tuesday June 2nd

Time: 10.30am- 1pm

Venue; Revenue Building, O’Connell Street (D01 YT32)

If you are interested in attending contact WACPConsultation@welfare.ie to confirm your attendance, and any accessibility or dietary requirements.

CONSULTATION ON GOVERNMENT’S DIGITAL WALLET

Digitalisation of the majority of public services including, for example, applying for social housing, obtaining a marriage certificate or registering for key welfare supports, such as the working family payment is underway. Part of this plan, is a Government Digital Wallet to store important documents

This will mean that people can have digital versions of their birth cert, driving license, European health card, and other official documents stored safely and securely in a digital wallet on their mobile, with the aim of making it much easier to access public services and verify identity both online and in person. However with digital exclusion is already affecting many people, particularly older people and those with poor literacy, and it is extremely important that people are not further left behind.

A public consultation and testing phase was announced by the Minister in early April, which will shape how the wallet works. This initiative flows from an EU Regulation which mandates all Member States to make available a Digital Wallet by end of 2026. You can have your say or register to be part of the testing phase [HERE](#)

DAIL DEBATES EARTH DAY MOTION

In mid-April the Dail discussed a motion tabled by the Green Party on Earth Day linking the key issues of the Climate crisis with the energy crisis. EAPN believes that this is a central issue for the wellbeing of everyone in Ireland. It is absolutely essential that Ireland honours and implements binding targets to reduce our emissions by 51% by 2030, that we prioritise solar and wind energy above the fossil fuel industry and critically that a just transition is developed to ensure that, in particular, vulnerable households, receive targeted supports to protect them from energy hikes and enable more accessible & speedy household energy upgrades. As it stands, we are far off course on achieving these measures and there needs to be an urgent elevation of these policies. We are watching!

BEFORE WE DIE CAMPAIGN

In late April RTE's Katie Hannon broadcast a special edition of Drivetime from the home of Jane Johnstone in Wexford, a mother of two adult boys with intellectual disabilities, and member of 'Before We Die' an organisation of aging parents lobbying and organising for care for their disabled adult children, as they themselves get older. This programme is a must listen, an example of the strength & resilience of the human spirit and parents' unconditional love, but it also sheds a light on the exclusion and marginalisation of these

families and the complete lack of Government action to address it. This cannot continue. These supports are urgently needed and further foot dragging is unacceptable to us all. The full interview is available [HERE](#)

SAVE THE DATE - SIMON WEEK CONFERENCE

This conference will bring together partners, practitioners, and stakeholders from across the sector to exchange insights, examine key challenges, and consider solutions to homelessness in Ireland. The agenda will feature local, national and European perspectives, alongside contributions from people with lived experience.

Save the date: Thursday 24th September, 2026

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

Membership is open to individuals and organisations who support our aim to put the eradication of poverty at the top of the Irish and European Agenda. Click [HERE](#) to join!

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EAPN (European Anti-Poverty Network) Ireland is a network of anti-poverty groups working to put the eradication of poverty at the top of the EU and Irish agenda through information, training, advocacy and networking. Web: www.eapn.ie

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EAPN Ireland receives core funding from the Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO) which is funded by the Government of Ireland through the Department of Rural and Community Development



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



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government supporting communities

