

## Press release

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# Minister of State Joe O'Brien hosts the Department of Social Protection's annual Social Inclusion Forum

From [Department of Social Protection \(/en/organisation/departments/departments-of-social-protection/\)](/en/organisation/departments/departments-of-social-protection/)

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Minister Joe O'Brien today hosted the annual Social Inclusion Forum in Croke Park, Dublin. This event brings together policy makers, service providers and service users from across Government Departments, people with direct experience of poverty and/or social exclusion and the community and voluntary groups working to address social inclusion issues and working to support those impacted. Attendees discussed and debated issues focused on national policies on poverty reduction and social inclusion.

The Department of Social Protection organised the Forum in partnership with the European Anti-Poverty Network Ireland and Community Work Ireland.

The Forum focuses on the delivery of the Government's Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025. The theme of this year's SIF is "Delivering Change and Achieving Ambition: Progress on the Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020 – 2025".

Four workshops on key Roadmap themes formed the basis of the Forum. Those key themes were:

- supporting people with disabilities
- supporting communities,
- expanding employment opportunities and
- core essentials

These were conducted with facilitators from the community and voluntary sector, and presentations from expert practitioners.

**Speaking ahead of the event today Minister Joe O'Brien said:**

"As Minister with responsibility for the Roadmap for Social Inclusion I like to take every opportunity possible to actively engage with those directly impacted by the issues of poverty and/or social exclusion and those working positively to address those issues. Every year the Social Inclusion Forum provides a unique opportunity for us all to engage over the course of a day-long event and in a structured way to ensure my officials and I have the opportunity to listen to everyone in attendance and hear the discussions at each of the different workshops. I believe the Social Inclusion Forum provides a vital opportunity for policymakers to engage with and take account of the lived experiences of those that their policies affect."

**Commenting on the Forum, Minister Heather Humphreys said:**

"The Social Inclusion Forum is an important event in the Government's diary, which allows for constructive engagement between government departments, people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and the community and voluntary sector groups representing them. I look forward to hearing about the experience of those attending and reading the report on the forum, which informs future policy making."

A report on the Forum will be published and made available on the Department of Social Protection's website on [gov.ie/SocialInclusion](https://www.gov.ie/SocialInclusion)  
(<https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/be955a-social-inclusion-division/?referrer=https://www.gov.ie/SocialInclusion/>).

**Note for Photo Desks:**

Pictures sent separately by Maxwell Photographs

## Note for Editors:

The 'Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025: Ambition, Goals, Commitments' was approved by Government and published in January 2020. The primary ambition of the Roadmap is to "reduce consistent poverty to 2% or less and to make Ireland one of the most socially inclusive countries in the EU." The latest CSO Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC) data, which was published in March of this year and relates to 2022 income, shows that consistent poverty has fallen from 4.9% in SILC 2022 to 3.6% in SILC 2023, this represents the lowest rate of consistent poverty on record (people are said to be in consistent poverty if they are both at-risk-of-poverty and experiencing material deprivation).

The Roadmap translates this ambition into 7 Goals underpinned by 81 commitments (actions) that will be taken to help deliver these goals.

Out of the 81 commitments contained within the Roadmap – 50 have either been fully achieved or achieved with ongoing delivery. The remaining 31 commitments are all in progress.

Today's Forum also provided space for delegates to discuss their views on the challenges Ireland faces, and the policy responses required. The report of today's Forum - which will be circulated to all Government Departments, to various stakeholders and to the public generally – will provide valuable input as the insights, conclusions and recommendations of the Forum are fed into the policymaking process and are available to all stakeholders.

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