

# **National Action Plan Against Poverty and Social Exclusion (NAP Inclusion), 2006-2008**

## **What is the National Action Plan Against Poverty and Social Exclusion or NAPs (incl.)?**

When the Irish government signed up to the Lisbon Agenda in 2000 it committed itself to making “a decisive impact on poverty” by 2010. To this end it is now being asked by the EU to put together a plan on how it intends to work towards this during the years 2006 to 2008. The Office for Social Inclusion<sup>1</sup> has been given the task of compiling the government’s plan which be submitted to the European Union on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007.

The broad objectives for the national plans are listed by the Office of Social Inclusion as follows:

1. Facilitating participation in employment;
2. Facilitating access by all to
  - a. *resources* (such as social welfare payments)
  - b. *rights*
  - c. *goods*
  - d. *services* (such as health, education, housing, transport, cultural, legal, Recreational and sporting services);
3. Preventing the risks of exclusion such as homelessness, addiction, indebtedness, living in disadvantaged areas;
4. Helping the most vulnerable groups such as children, lone parents, older people, people with disabilities, the unemployed, migrants, Travellers, ethnic minorities, prisoners and their families, people discharged from institutions;
5. Mobilising all relevant bodies such as government departments, local authorities, statutory agencies, etc., in fighting poverty and social exclusion. Creating greater awareness about the plan among policy makers and the general public.

## **Is this relevant to the work of IASE?**

The *NAPs (incl.) 2006-2008* is important to IASE for the two main reasons:

Firstly, it is our opportunity, as volunteers and/or staff within Supported Employment, to let the government know what we think it should be doing in relation to the objectives outlined above, to pass on the benefits of our experiences working within disadvantaged communities at local level.

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<sup>1</sup> Office for Social Inclusion is the Government office, located in the **Department of Social and Family Affairs**, with overall responsibility for developing, co-ordinating and driving the **National Action Plan Against Poverty and Social Exclusion 2003-2005**.

Secondly, the previous NAPs(incl.) plan, recognised the link between unemployment and poverty. It is important for the future of Supported Employment that IASE is listed by name as an organisation that the government intends to support during the period 2006-2008.

### **Possible Considerations for IASE:**

- The promotion of a “rights-based approach” in relation to access to employment
- The need for broader participation in implementing the plan at local level
- The need for clear targets to be set and a clear system of monitoring progress
- The separation of anti-poverty and social inclusion measures from their broader economic context (that will be dealt with in the new National Development Plan 2007-2013)

### **How can we influence what goes into the plan?**

IASE can feed into the plan in a number of ways.

#### *Written submissions*

The Office of Social Inclusion is currently compiling a draft of the plan based on submissions received to date. Once the draft is available the opportunity to make further submissions will be offered to interested groups.

#### *Consultation Meetings*

A number of consultation meetings will be held around the country. These are being organised and facilitated by the Office for Social Inclusion. One of these will be held in the West & Midlands Region - November 29<sup>th</sup> Mullingar Park Hotel, Dublin Road, Mullingar.

#### *Through other Representative Organisations*

Perhaps you or organisation is a member of another organisation that is making a submission to the NAPs(incl.). For example, the European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN) is currently canvassing community and voluntary groups around the country to see what local-level groups feel should be included in the plan.

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### **Useful sources of information:**

The National Action Plan on Poverty and Social Exclusion 2003 – 2005

[http://www.socialinclusion.ie/publications\\_plan.html](http://www.socialinclusion.ie/publications_plan.html)

Implementation and Update Report on Ireland’s National Action Plan on Poverty and Social Exclusion 2003 - 2005

<http://www.socialinclusion.ie/documents/EUJuneReportFinal.doc>

Website of the Office for Social Inclusion

[http://www.socialinclusion.ie/pub\\_consult.html](http://www.socialinclusion.ie/pub_consult.html)