



## European Anti Poverty Network Ireland

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## Poor and marginalised increasingly silenced as impact of recession takes hold

**Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010:** The voice of the poor and the marginalised has been silenced by the current recession as – unlike most other groups in society – they have no groups to represent them, according to Philip O'Connor, Chairperson of Poverty Network Ireland.

“The over 14% of Irish people living in poverty and those who are increasingly unemployed have few advocates and little power. The infrastructure supporting people in poverty is fragile and over-burdened. The infrastructure that does exist has been seriously diminished by the loss of community supports,” said Mr. O'Connor.

Mr. O'Connor made his remarks at a launch of a book commemorating the European Anti Poverty Network Ireland. The new book, *Ireland and the Inclusion Strategy: Lessons Learned and the Road Ahead*, reflects on the experience made in tackling poverty and social exclusion in Ireland over the past decade, acknowledging that even at the height of Ireland's economic success there were significant problems for people at risk of poverty including access to services, inequality and access to the labour market. The book also sets out a vision for Ireland that serves people and society ahead of powerful economic lobby groups.

Thirteen expert contributors – including representatives from civil society and the civil service – assess the impact of the European Social Inclusion Strategy. Ireland was once to the fore – and set out a roadmap for how European countries can tackle poverty at national level, leading to a fairer and more equal society.

Welcoming newly appointed Minister for Community, Equality and Gaeltacht TD – who launched the book – Mr. O'Connor encouraged the Minister to continue positive initiatives and policies that were implemented by successive governments over the decade.

“It is important to recognise that while many issues were unresolved during the recession; considerable progress was made in tackling poverty and social exclusion through imaginative and effective policies. That progress did not happen as a result of genuine dialogue and partnership between the government and marginalised individuals and groups. It is also important to remember – a similar two decades of progress in tackling poverty began in the eighties, a period of challenges just as serious as those today. That proves that it is not just a matter of political commitment to the poorest in society,” said Mr. O’Connell.

#### **Note to editors:**

- ▶ *Ireland and the European Social Inclusion Strategy: Lessons Learned* will be launched by Pat Carey TD, Minister for Community, Equality and Social Inclusion at Wynn’s Hotel, Lower Abbey Street, at 5pm on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010. All welcome.
- ▶ Speakers will include Minister Carey (Irish Government), Philip O’Connell (EAPN Ireland), and Fintan Farrell (Director of EAPN Europe).
- ▶ Copies of the book are available from EAPN Ireland or from [www.eapn.ie](http://www.eapn.ie)

#### **For more information or to arrange interviews contact:**

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Tags: [EAPN Ireland book launch](#), [voice of poor people not being heard](#)

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