

# Extracts from the *Draft Programme for Government (2020)* of Particular Relevance to Community and Voluntary Organisations, Charities and Social Enterprises

Prepared by The Wheel

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## PAGE 6 — INTRODUCTION — Our Shared Future

This is a defining moment for our country. We face urgent challenges which touch every community. In striving together against something which threatens us all, we have shown we can surprise ourselves - adapting quickly, building new alliances and collaborating in ways we never expected. All to realise a common purpose: our common future.

This is a Programme to recover our economy, rebuild our society, renew our communities, and respond to the challenges we face both nationally and internationally. We must take the good things we have learned from the pandemic and apply them towards a resilient future.

The new Government will make every effort to get people back to work, to reopen businesses, while developing the strategies and the policies to drive this forward. We will stimulate the economy through investment in public infrastructure, and critical areas such as housing, healthcare, transport and energy.

The wellbeing of our nation, however, goes beyond the narrow confines of economic growth. Over the next five years the Government will use wellbeing indicators as well as economic indicators to point out inequalities and help ensure that policies are driven by a desire to do better by people.

## PAGE 12 — MEASUREMENT

The Government is conscious that we need to supplement our existing economic measurements with new ones. We know that our existing measures of economic performance fail to measure matters such as damage to the environment and voluntary work. They also overlook equality of opportunity, distribution of wealth and income and only value public expenditure on the basis of the inputs used, not the outcomes achieved.

We will develop a set of indicators to create a broader context for policy making, to include;

- A set of well-being indices to create a well-rounded, holistic view of how our society is faring.
- A balanced scorecard for each area of public policy focused on outcomes and the impact that those policies have on individuals and communities. Initially this will be focused on housing, education and health.

The development of this work will be informed by the experience of other jurisdictions which have developed similar measures in recent years. Through the Department of the Taoiseach, we will convene a group of experts from the **public service, academia, NGOs** and the private sector to guide this work.

Once developed, we will ensure that it is utilised in a systematic way across government policymaking at local and national levels in setting budgetary priorities, evaluating programmes and reporting progress. This will be an important complement to existing economic measurement tools.

## **PAGE 21 — NATIONAL ECONOMIC PLAN**

In consultation with stakeholders, seek to utilise the surplus from the National Training Fund to implement an upskilling and reskilling programme along with the additional funding for Further and Higher Education institutions.

## **PAGE 23 - NATIONAL ECONOMIC PLAN**

### **Regulation and Costs**

Establish a forum in which all sectoral regulators measure their regulatory approaches against best practice. Its task will be to test Irish preparedness for emerging challenges and make recommendations to Government and submit an annual report to the Dáil.

## **PAGE 28/29 — INSURANCE**

### **Insurance Reform**

Insurance costs are a hugely significant issue for businesses, motorists, households and a range of sporting, community and voluntary groups. We need to ensure that insurance acts as a safety net that enables our economy and our society to fully function. Addressing high claim pay outs and competitive issues will be critical in building an insurance system which is affordable and reliable and underpins a vibrant economy.

The Government will continue to prioritise reform of the insurance sector with particular emphasis on motor, public liability and employer liability insurance.

We will:

- The Cabinet committee on Economic Recovery and Investment will prioritise the issue of insurance reform.
- Work to protect customers during and after the COVID-19 crisis with particular emphasis on business disruption insurance, travel insurance and rebates for motor insurance customers.
- Support the Central Bank's direction on compensating businesses with disruption cover for infectious diseases.
- Tackle insurance costs by:

- Recognising the work of the Personal Injuries Guidelines Committee under the Judicial Council to provide guidance on personal injury claims.
- Enhancing and reforming the role of the Personal Injuries Assessment Board.
- Regulating claims management companies and claims harvesters.
- Considering changes to the Occupiers Liability Act and the Civil Liability Act (duty of care) to strengthen waivers and notices to increase protections for consumers, businesses, sporting clubs and community groups.
- Strengthening the Solicitors (Advertising) Regulations of 2002.
- Considering the need for a constitutional amendment to enable the Oireachtas to set down guidelines on award levels.
- Get tough on insurance fraud by:
  - Seeking to increase coordination and cooperation between An Garda Síochána and the insurance industry. We will seek to expand the Garda Economic Crime Bureau which deals with fraud. Under new structures, it will train and support Gardaí in every division to ensure expertise and skill is diffused across the State.
  - Increasing the penalties for fraudulent claims.
  - Reviewing the penalties for fraudulent claims.
  - Placing perjury on a statutory footing, making the offence easier to prosecute. We will broaden the scope of the Perjury and Related Offences Bill, ensuring that the maximum penalty on indictment should be harmonised with the equivalent maximum penalties for largely similar offences in the Civil Liability and Courts Act 2004.
  - Ensuring that fraudulent claims are forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP).
  - Publishing insurance fraud data.
  - Exploring the feasibility of obliging fraudulent claimants to pay the legal expenses for defendants.
- Increase transparency, tackle anti-competitive behaviour and foster competition by:
  - Giving the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) effective enforcement powers to punish and deter anti-competitive conduct.
  - Requesting the industry and stakeholders to give an assessment of the expected impact on premium levels of the key reforms being fully introduced.
  - Expanding, with urgency, the National Claims Information Database to employer liability and public liability to track the level of claims.
  - Establishing a databank within the Central Bank for new entrants.
  - Prioritising the establishment of a fully functioning European-wide single insurance market.
  - Working to remove dual pricing from the market.
  - Creating an office within Government tasked with encouraging greater competition in the Irish insurance market.

## PAGE 39 — A NEW ENGAGEMENT MODEL

We will develop a new model of engagement with citizens, sectors and regions as an early priority for government, building on the learning of recent years. It shall embrace:

- Dialogue on a structured basis, so that the diverse elements of society can input into the process. There will be a specific youth dialogue strand.
- A process of accountability on progress, including an annual review.
- Promotion of citizen, sectoral and regional involvement in delivering actions within their own sphere of influence.

## **PAGE 45 — CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES**

Continue to invest in community and voluntary family support services and youth work recognising their value in preventing harm and in responding to the needs of vulnerable Families.

## **PAGE 45 — DELIVER MORE CARE IN THE COMMUNITY**

Supporting the Dialogue Forum working with voluntary organisations to build a stronger working relationship between the State and the voluntary healthcare sector.

## **PAGE 61 — THE LEADER PROGRAMME**

We will support a LEADER Programme and deliver a Rural Development Programme which is led by independent Local Action Groups and supported by Local Community Development Committees.

We will:

- Prioritise a state-led Rural Development Programme to bridge the gap between the wind-up of the existing LEADER Programme and implementation of the new Programme.
- Simplify and reduce bureaucracy and promote the role of independent Local Action Groups
- (LAGs), while ensuring that strong accountability and transparency mechanisms are in place to protect taxpayers' money.
- Prioritise national and local government support to pursue extra EU funding opportunities through Community Led Local Development (CLLD).
- Apply to the EU for exemption from State Aid rules constraining the potential of the LEADER Programme to help communities and small business, particularly in the context of COVID-19.
- Review capital funding restrictions under the LEADER Programme for broadband.
- Increase Rate of Aid available to private enterprise through LEADER from 50% to 75% for capital projects.

## **PAGE 62 — YOUNG PEOPLE AND RURAL IRELAND**

- Support the work of Young Social Innovators to assist young people to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath in Ireland, to address issues facing their communities and the country as a whole, and to harness their energy, skills and talent.
- Expand access to social innovation programmes to all post primary schools.

## **PAGE 74 — A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT**

- Progress to a living wage over the lifetime of the Government.
- Improve jobseeker supports for people aged under 24 over the lifetime of the Government.
- Increase availability of activation schemes including those run by local employment services.

## **PAGE 76 — ANTI POVERTY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION MEASURES**

- Request the Low Pay Commission to examine Universal Basic Income, informed by a review of previous international pilots, and resulting in a universal basic income pilot in the lifetime of the Government.
- Continue to support the annual Social Inclusion Forum as an important means of promoting engagement between people experiencing poverty and exclusion, the community and voluntary sector and Government.

## **PAGE 78 — DISABILITY**

Resource the National Disability Inclusion Strategy, with an emphasis on close collaboration between state agencies and civil society.

## **PAGE 88 — COMMUNITY ARTS**

We will:

- Develop initiatives enabling the National Cultural Institutions to go on tour to towns across the country.
- Develop innovative support schemes for small local festivals, amateur dramatics and musicals.
- Encourage the next generation of young artists by creating new bursary schemes.
- Consider creating a new National Town of Culture competition.
- Work to ensure that local authorities are sufficiently supported to allow the fulfilment of long-term strategic cultural and arts planning at a local level.
- Expand Creative Schools, ensuring every child in Ireland has access to tuition and participation in art, music, drama and coding. Ensure it continues beyond the life of Creative Ireland and to work with the Department of Education to achieve this.
- Foster further collaboration between local authorities and local arts organisations through Creative Communities.

## PAGE 91 — SPORT

- Work with Sport Ireland to ensure all National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs) adopt the Governance Code for the Community, Voluntary and Charity Sector by end 2021. The Code brings together good principles of governance for sport, recognising that there is no single model of good governance for the sector.
- Support sporting bodies receiving public funds to develop evaluation tools for their programmes and initiatives.
- Work with sporting clubs to increase volunteer training to focus on issues such as child welfare, disability awareness, first aid, sports administration and governance, and fundraising.
- Continue the Sports Capital Programme for clubs and local authority sportsgrounds and the Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund (LSSIF). We will prioritise sports capital investment in areas of historic low levels of participation and deprivation.

## PAGE 91 — Community Development, Social Inclusion and Public Participation

We will initiate a new Anti-Poverty, Social Inclusion and Community Development Action Plan framed around the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, underpinning sound community development practices, and reflecting a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on poverty and social inclusion.

This plan will build upon the Department of Rural and Community Development's *Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities: A five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland 2019-2024*.

We will also:

- Carry out a comprehensive review of Public Participatory Networks and Local Economic and Community Plans to ensure they are fit for purpose for climate action and community development Task every local authority/Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) with developing a County Integration Strategy to promote, through a participative process, the inclusion of minorities.
- Support the Community Sponsorship Ireland programme to support the integration of refugees.
- Publish a strategy to support volunteering, including the development of a comprehensive supporting infrastructure and measures to disseminate best practice.
- Fully implement Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities, the five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland up to 2024.
- Introduce, on a phased basis, a number of projects similar in approach to Community Development Projects (CDPs).
- Commit to the introduction of an annual small capital grants programme administered through local authorities for the maintenance, improvement and upkeep of community centres.

- Support and enhance the Social Innovation Fund Ireland programme to help secure additional philanthropic funding sources specifically for community based programmes and projects in the areas of climate justice, rural and community development.
- Update the Dormant Accounts (Amendment) Acts 2005-12 to expand the eligibility of projects and programmes under the funding scheme to include biodiversity, environmental awareness and climate change.
- Ensure that Men's and Women's Sheds are properly resourced.
- Refine and build on a range of programmes to support communities including CLÁR, the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), Community Service Programme (CSP) and Community Enhancement Programme (CEP).

### **Community Call**

- We will sustain Community Call as we emerge from COVID-19, and examine the merits of maintaining it on a more permanent footing as a means of linking the wide range of services and supports available at local level and into an overarching cross-departmental group at national level.

### **PAGE 92 — SOCIAL ENTERPRISE**

- We will build on Ireland's first ever National Social Enterprise Policy.

### **PAGE 92 — CHARITIES**

- We will update legislative provisions with the Charities Regulator to ensure it has the necessary powers to increase trust and confidence in the management and administration of charities.

### **PAGE 98/99 — FURTHER EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION SECTORS**

- Enable a culture of lifelong learning within the workforce, with a focus on increasing lifelong learning rates from 9% currently to 18% by 2025.
- Recognise the role of community education and its vital role in our communities by supporting its schemes and initiatives post COVID-19.

### **PAGE 101 — RESEARCH**

- Examine the need for specialist research institutions outside the Higher Education system.
- Propose simplification of the application processes for grant funding from EU-funded research and innovation projects. Work at EU level to promote greater SME take-up of research and innovation funding.

## **PAGE 105 — CROSS BORDER RELATIONS**

- Support initiatives by civil society, the community sector, and the arts and cultural sector aimed at promoting constructive and inclusive dialogue around the future of the island.
- Support delivery of the PEACE IV programme and work with our EU partners and UK Government to secure the necessary funding for an EU PEACE PLUS programme.

## **PAGE 114 — Overseas Development Assistance**

- Make annual, sustainable progress, ultimately achieving the UN target of 0.7% of Gross National Income by 2030. We will set a monetary expenditure floor on the basis of 2019, to be calculated over a rolling current three-year average.
- Continue to provide multi-annual funding for humanitarian action and work to develop flexible approaches where humanitarian and development needs meet.
- Ensure that all Irish aid is spent in a way that is in full compliance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals

## **PAGE 113 — WORK OF THE UN**

- Continue to work towards the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals, aimed at ending poverty, reducing inequality, and tackling climate change.

## **PAGE 119 — LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

- Review participatory structures to enhance statutory Part VIII processes.
- Carry out a comprehensive review of PPNs and LECPs, to ensure that they are fit for purpose for climate action and community development.
- Incentivise local authorities to bring forward pilot participatory budgeting projects.
- Mandate the establishment of climate action SPCs in each local authority.

## **PAGE 120 — ELECTORAL REFORM**

- Establish a fund to support political and electoral research by academics and researchers.

## **PAGE 121 — PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM**



- Continue and re-invigorate participation by the public sector in Open Government Partnership.
- Establish a policy innovation office within the public service, primarily staffed by expertise seconded from academia, the NGO and the private sector, as well as other national governments and institutions, to take a challenge-based approach to the major issues facing the country. We can learn in particular from the COVID-19 cross-governmental response.
- Prioritise cross-public service collaboration to enhance the whole-of-government strategic ownership and delivery of public policy priorities.

## **PAGE 122 — Social Dialogue**

The Government recognises the importance of regular and open engagement with all sectors of society. This is particularly important as we steer our way out of the pandemic, rebuild our economy and support communities that have been severely impacted by COVID-19.

We will:

- Establish a unit in the Department of Taoiseach to coordinate social dialogue. It will create new models of sectoral engagement.
- Utilise public consultations and citizens' assemblies and strengthen current mechanisms such as the National Economic Dialogue and the Labour Employer Economic Forum (LEEF).
- Ensure, in all our engagements, that the role of the Oireachtas and Government in policy formation is fully respected.

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[Full document available here.](#)

Questions?

Contact The Wheel's Director of Public Policy, Ivan Cooper: [ivan@wheel.ie](mailto:ivan@wheel.ie).