



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# 2021 Social Inclusion Forum

## Opening Plenary Session

### Monday 12 April |

**Implementing the Roadmap  
for Social Inclusion:** reducing  
poverty and improving social inclusion





# Overview

- Defining poverty and social inclusion
- Background to the Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025
- Scene setting: poverty trends 2010-2019
- Governance and implementation of the Roadmap
- Whole of Government approach
- Progress to date: challenges and delivery
- Programme for Government: *Our Shared Future*
- Engagement and ongoing research



## Definition of poverty and social exclusion (1997)

*'People are living in poverty if their income and resources (material, cultural and social) are so inadequate as to preclude them having a standard of living which is regarded as acceptable by Irish society generally. As a result of inadequate income and resources, people may be excluded and marginalised from participating in activities which are considered the norm for other people in society.'*

**National Anti-Poverty Strategy, 1997**

Captures the multi-dimensional nature of poverty but does not define social inclusion

# Roadmap for Social Inclusion, 2020-2025

## Defining social inclusion



*‘Social inclusion is achieved when people have access to sufficient income, resources and services to enable them to play an active part in their communities and participate in activities that are considered the norm for other people in society’.*

## Roadmap for Social Inclusion, 2020-2025

Moves the emphasis to what we are striving to achieve; with a focus on the positive difference that policy can, and should, make to the lives of people and to our society.

# The Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025:

## Ambition, Goals, Commitments



The Roadmap was developed over a two year period, informed by a public consultation process, ongoing engagement from Community & Voluntary sector and engagement with other departments.

This includes through the previous editions of the Social Inclusion Forum and contributions made at Community & Voluntary Pillar meetings, Pre-Budget Forum, etc.

The Roadmap was approved by Cabinet and published in January 2020, shortly before the COVID-19 pandemic.

# The Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025:

## Ambition



*“Reduce consistent poverty to 2% or less and to make Ireland one of the most socially inclusive countries in the EU”.*

Seven High-Level Goals underpinned by 66 unique Commitments

1. Extend employment opportunities to all who can work
2. Ensure work pays – fair pay, fair conditions for workers
3. Provide income security for older people
4. Support families - reduce child poverty
5. Reduce poverty among people with disabilities – help them to maximise their ability
6. Build inclusive communities – encourage active citizenship
7. Ensure that all people have access to quality services

# The Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025: Ambition

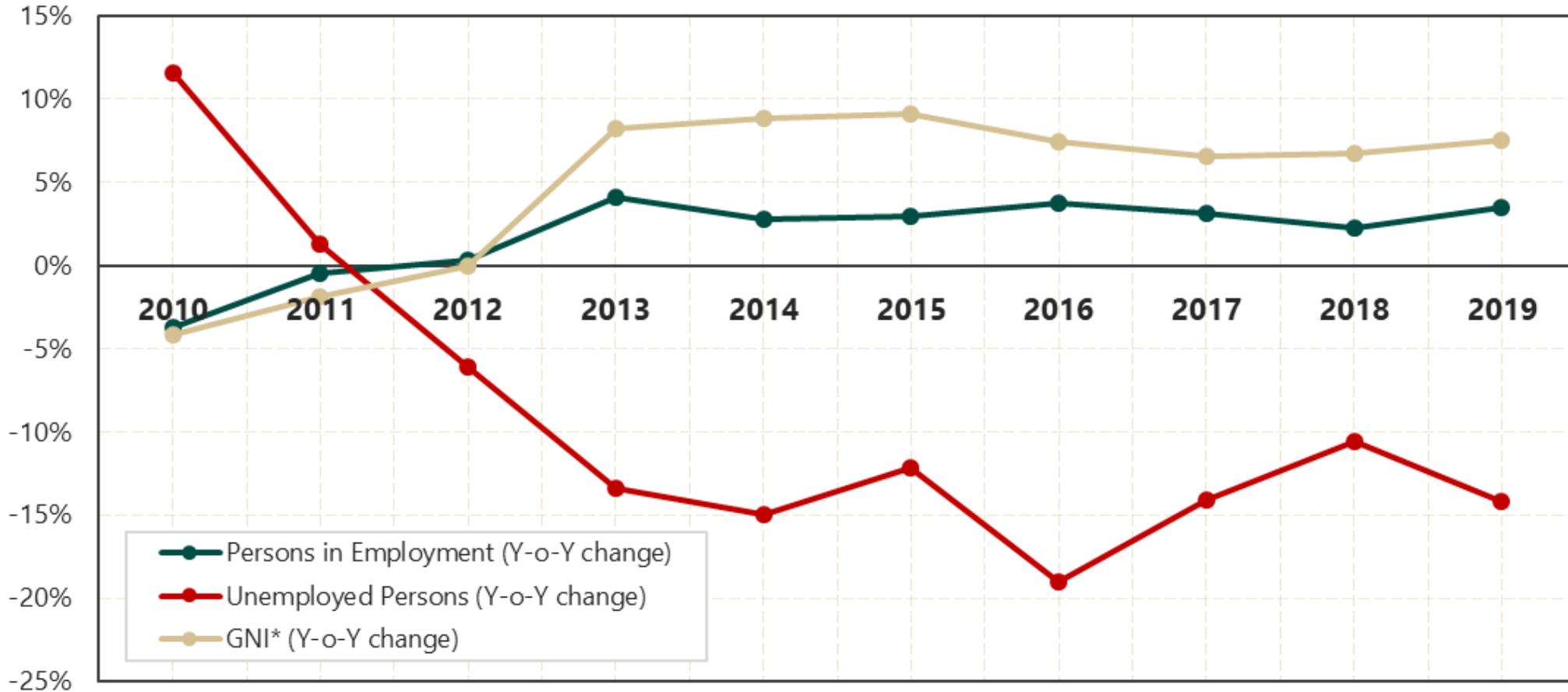


Tracked against 22 targets (EU and National level) covering:

- Poverty (including child poverty)
- Deprivation
- Income Distribution
- Housing
- Health
- Early Learning and Care
- Social Participation/Active Citizenship

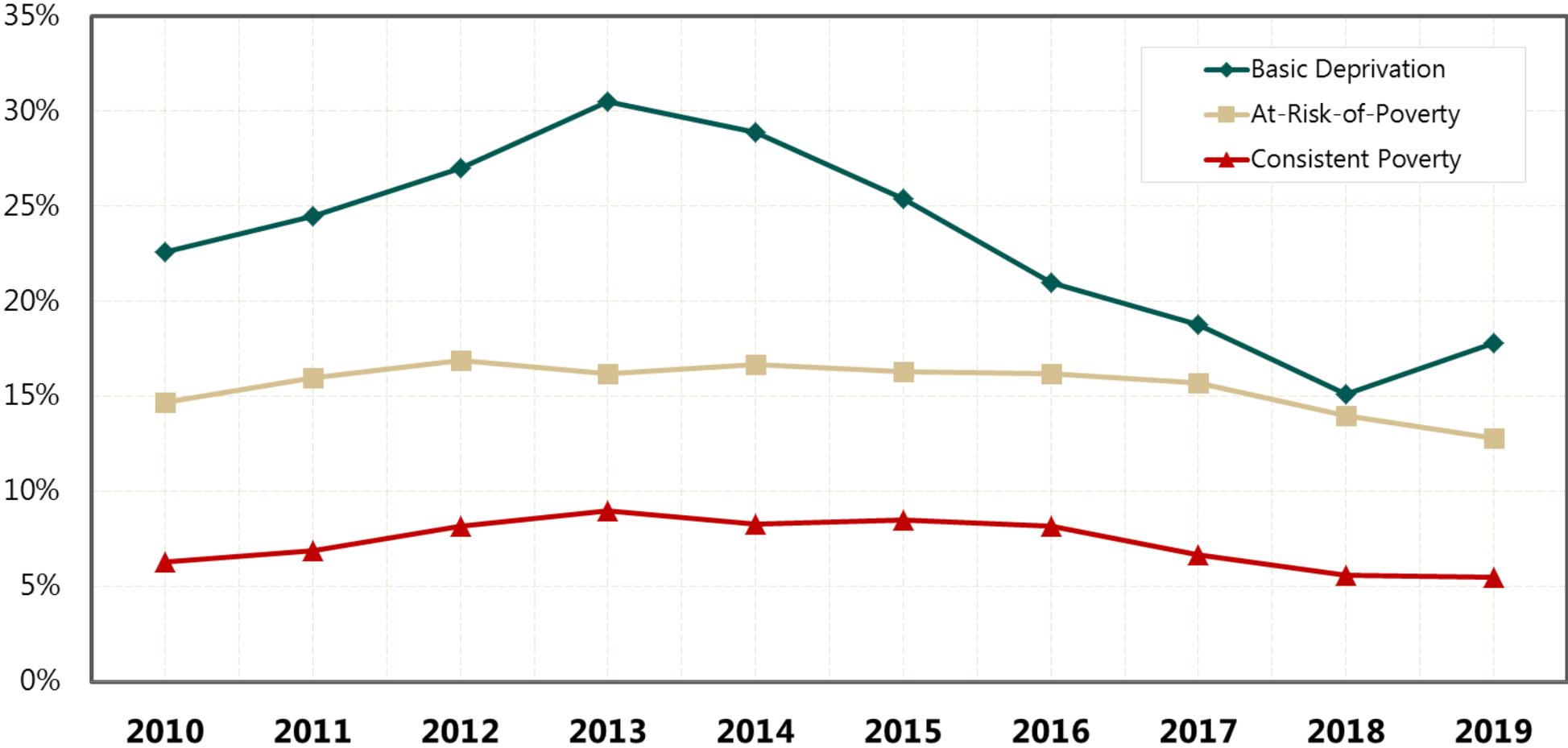


# Scene setting 1: Economic Trends 2010-2019





# Scene setting 2: Poverty Trends 2010-2019



# The Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025:

## Governance & implementation arrangements



Social Inclusion Roadmap Steering Group has been established, chaired by Minister O'Brien, comprising of senior officials from each Department and representatives from the community and voluntary pillar.

This group has met twice already, with a third meeting scheduled for July, and will monitor implementation and progress on all commitments across Government.

In addition, the Roadmap is subject to monitoring at Cabinet, Senior Official and Department level. The Roadmap was also the subject of a recent meeting of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection, Community and Rural Development and the Islands.

# Whole of Government approach



<b>Department</b>	<b>No. commitments</b>
Social Protection	26
Health	10
Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	6
Environment, Climate & Communications	2
Rural & Community Development	2
Education	1
Further & Higher Ed, Research, Innovation & Science	1
Housing, Local Government & Heritage	1
Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media	1
Multiple Departments	19



## Progress to date

As of end-2020, progress of Roadmap commitments was as follows:

Achieved	8
Achieved with ongoing delivery	6
In progress	48
To commence	5
Deferred	2



## Progress to date contd.

Commitments currently in progress include revised timeframes as a result of COVID-19; a significant number of commitments are due for completion by end of 2021.

Progress in some areas has been delayed by the pandemic but will commence shortly with a revised timeframe for delivery.

Communications campaigns to increase awareness of in-work income supports and other welfare benefits have been deferred due to the pandemic. However, additional campaigns were undertaken over the past year re: the availability of various COVID-19 related supports.

The impact of COVID-19 on employment levels will be reflected in campaigns in 2021 with an increased focus on re-training supports and supports for people aiming to re-enter employment, particularly those from sectors that are most severely affected.



## Delivery to date

There have been several notable areas of delivery, including:

- An additional three weeks of Parent's Leave and Parent's Benefit are available to each parent of a child born or adopted on or after 01 November 2019 (bringing the total to five weeks).
- Extensions to Hot School Meals programme for 2021. 189 schools, including 171 DEIS schools were recently chosen for this programme in 2021. Hot School Meals funding also continued during the recent Easter holidays.
- Publication of new National Volunteering Strategy 2021 - 2025 in December 2020.



# Programme for Government

The new Programme for Government, *Our Shared Future*, further commits to the rigorous implementation of this Roadmap to ensure that social inclusion and poverty reduction remain at the heart of government for the next five years.

Programme for Government reiterates many Roadmap commitments, including committing to targeted supports for lone parents, people with disabilities, people experiencing energy and/or food poverty, and people experiencing unemployment.

# Roadmap for Social Inclusion, 2020-2025

Mid-term review: 2022



An independent mid-term review of the Roadmap for Social Inclusion will take place before the end of 2022. This will allow for re-framing commitments in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges it poses, the new Programme for Government and other new strategies at both national and EU level.

This will also encapsulate input and contributions made during the Social Inclusion Forum and future engagement and consultation with the community and voluntary pillar.

# Roadmap for Social Inclusion, 2020-2025

## Engagement & ongoing research



The Department of Social Protection has a long-standing poverty and social inclusion research programme, and currently commissions research from the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI).

The first research output from this programme, to be published later in 2021, will examine the validity of the basic deprivation measure. Further research will seek to identify additional metrics and data to inform delivery of the Roadmap.

The Department also continues its engagement through the Community & Voluntary Pillar.



Thank you and enjoy the Forum!