



**TITHE AN OIREACHTAIS**

**AN COMHCHOISTE UM  
OIDEACHAS AGUS COIMIRCE SHÓISIALACH**

**An Cion Polaitiúil maidir le COM (2012) 617 togra le haghaidh Rialacháin  
ó Pharlaimint na hEorpa agus ón gComhairle maidir leis an gCiste um  
Chúnamh Eorpach do na Daoine is Díothaí**

**Márta 2013**

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**HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS**

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND SOCIAL PROTECTION**

**Political Contribution on COM (2012) 617 proposal for a Regulation of  
the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for European  
Aid to the Most Deprived**

**March 2013**

## **TITHE AN OIREACHTAIS**

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## **Joint Committee's Political Contribution on COM (2012) 617 - proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived**

### **1. Introduction**

The Joint Committee on Education and Social Protection broadly welcome the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived and its aim.

On 12 December 2012, the Joint Committee discussed the Commission's proposal and agreed that the proposal warranted further scrutiny and to invite officials from the Department of Social Protection to a meeting to assist it with its examination of the proposal.

Officials from the Department attended a meeting of the Joint Committee on 19 December 2012 and outlined the proposal taking into consideration any issues with the application of the principle of subsidiarity in the proposed measure. The officials outlined the main aims and objectives of the proposal and answered questions from the Members. The officials also indicated the Irish Government's view and that the Minister for Social Protection is supportive of the proposal (see [www.oireachtas.ie](http://www.oireachtas.ie) for a transcript of the meeting).

Following the briefing from the officials, the Joint Committee agreed to write to stakeholders seeking their views and observations on the proposal. The Joint Committee wrote to Focus Ireland, St Vincent de Paul, Cross Care, Threshold and the European Anti-Poverty Network. The Joint Committee analysed and considered the views and observations from the stakeholders.

The Joint Committee wishes to thank the Department and stakeholders for their assistance in relation to the Committee's work on this significant proposal.

### **2. Decision of the Committee**

On 6 March 2013, the Joint Committee agreed the enclosed political contribution be forwarded to the Minister for Social Protection, Ms Joan Burton TD, Mr. José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, Mr. Martin Schulz MEP, President of the European Parliament and Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council.

The Joint Committee further agreed that, in the interests of inter-parliamentary cooperation on EU matters, to forward a copy of this report to the appropriate Committee in each EU Member State's National Parliament and to ensure that a copy is made available to Ireland's MEPs and to Ms. [Pervenche Beres](#), Chair of the European Parliament Committee on Employment and Social Affairs.

Joanna Tuffy T.D,  
Chair,  
Joint Committee on Education and Social Protection

## **Joint Committee's Political Contribution on COM (2012) 617 proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived**

1. The Joint Committee on Education and Social Protection is pleased to participate in the on-going dialogue between National Parliaments and the European Commission and is grateful for the opportunity it affords to contribute to policy development in the European Union. The Joint Committee intends to avail of the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty to the fullest extent and looks forward to the further enhancement of the political dialogue between the Commission and the Houses of the Oireachtas which is a key factor in the development of better EU policy and laws which properly reflect the concerns and needs of Irish citizens.
2. The Joint Committee has considered the European Commission's proposal in some detail and held a public hearing on the matter with the Department of Social Protection. The Joint Committee also wrote to several stakeholders seeking their views and observations. Following its deliberations, the Joint Committee has prepared this Political Contribution which seeks to address the key issues and asks that the views and positions set out in this contribution are taken into account in the on-going negotiations.
3. The Joint Committee agrees that the level of funding provided in the programme would not contribute significantly enough to make a difference in the lives of the intended groups of citizens the fund hopes to assist and would like to see the level of funding increased. The 'Income and Living Conditions (SILC) Thematic Report on Children 2004-2010', found that in 2010 the at risk poverty rate for all persons in Ireland was 15.8%. The survey also found that in 2010, 22.5% of the Irish population were materially deprived. Material deprivation was established by listing 11 items and being unable to afford 2 or more of these items. One of the items listed was being unable to afford to eat a meal with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day.
4. The Joint Committee agrees that the proposal should be widened to include items like 'starter packs'. Starter packs can be defined as material goods for a person or family that is moving from homelessness into a home. Items such as plates, cutlery and small appliances such as kettles and toasters as well as a week's worth of food should be included in the starter packs. Article 2 should be amended as follows to include a broad definition of 'starter pack' and Article 4(1) of the regulation to be amended to include mention of 'starter packs'.

*"The Fund shall support national schemes whereby food products and basic consumer goods for the personal use of homeless persons or of children are distributed to the most deprived persons through partner organisations selected by Member States. Where persons are leaving homelessness this may take the form of 'starter packs'.*

5. The Joint Committee agrees that under Article 18 the financing rate should be 100% and not be co-financed with Member States having to provide up to 15% of the public eligible expenditure. Article 18 amended should read - *'The **financing** rate at the level of the operational programme **shall be 100%** of the public eligible expenditure.'*
6. The Joint Committee agrees that the proposal should make a specific reference to the ETHOS definition (European typology of homelessness).
7. The Joint Committee agrees that the implementation of the fund should be kept as simple and flexible as possible to allow Member States to use the fund to target the most deprived persons or households.
8. The Joint Committee agree that the delivery of food and other goods should be planned with organisations which can also provide information and other supports and services to help people towards independence and out of poverty and also persons identified as being at risk of homelessness.
9. The Joint Committee agree that the fund should also support programmes such as food banks.
10. The Joint Committee looks forward to receiving the Commission's response to its observations and it hopes that the Committee's recommendations can be taken into account.

Joint Committee on Education and Social Protection  
6 March 2013

**APPENDIX 1: Membership  
List of Members (Joint Committee on Education and Social  
Protection)**

Chairperson: Joanna Tuffy (Lab)  
Deputies: James Bannon (FG)  
Ray Butler (FG)  
Joan Collins (PBPA)  
Clare Daly (IND)  
Brendan Griffin (FG)<sup>3</sup>  
Jim Daly (FG)<sup>6</sup>  
Derek Keating (FG)<sup>5</sup>  
Charlie McConalogue (FF)<sup>1</sup>  
Nicky McFadden (FG)  
Jonathan O'Brien (FG)<sup>4</sup>  
Willie O'Dea (FF)<sup>2</sup>  
Aodhán Ó Ríordáin (Lab)  
Aengus Ó Snodaigh (SF)  
Brendan Ryan (Lab)

Senators:  
Jim D'Arcy (FG)  
Fidelma Healy Eames (FG)  
Marie Moloney (Lab)  
Averil Power (FF)  
Diarmuid Wilson (FF)  
Mary Moran (Lab)<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Deputy Charlie McConalogue replaced Deputy Brendan Smith on 19 July 2012

<sup>2</sup> Deputy Willie O'Dea replaced Deputy Barry Cowen on 19 July 2012

<sup>3</sup> Deputy Brendan Griffin replaced Deputy Áine Collins 20 September 2012

<sup>4</sup> Deputy Jonathan O'Brien replaced Deputy Seán Crowe 25 September 2012

<sup>5</sup> Deputy Derek Keating replaced Deputy Mary Mitchell O'Connor 16 October 2012

<sup>6</sup> Deputy Jim Daly replaced Deputy Simon Harris 20 November 2012

<sup>7</sup> Senator Mary Moran was appointed to the committee 19 December 2012