



Roinn an Taoisigh
Department of the Taoiseach

Child Poverty and Well-being Programme 2023-2025



Taoiseach's Foreword

“Ending child poverty is a core ambition of this Government. This is important not only because we want every child to be happy and well-cared for, but also because happy childhoods are the foundation for realising broader economic, environmental and social goals. When I announced the establishment of a Child Poverty and Well-Being Programme Office, I did so because I believe stronger coordination across government will help us to make Ireland the best country in Europe to be a child.”



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



From Poverty to Potential: A programme for Child Poverty and Well-Being

Initial Programme Plan:
July 2023 - December 2025



Department of the Taoiseach
Child Poverty and Well-being Programme Office
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Child poverty and well-being...



Over time, Ireland has made substantial progress in addressing child poverty and supporting well-being. Today income supports, public services and community infrastructure all play an important role in protecting children from poverty and promoting child well-being.

Addressing child poverty is important because of what we know about the long-term effects of even transient experiences of child poverty (ESRI 2021).

In common with other countries, children are more likely to experience poverty than adults.

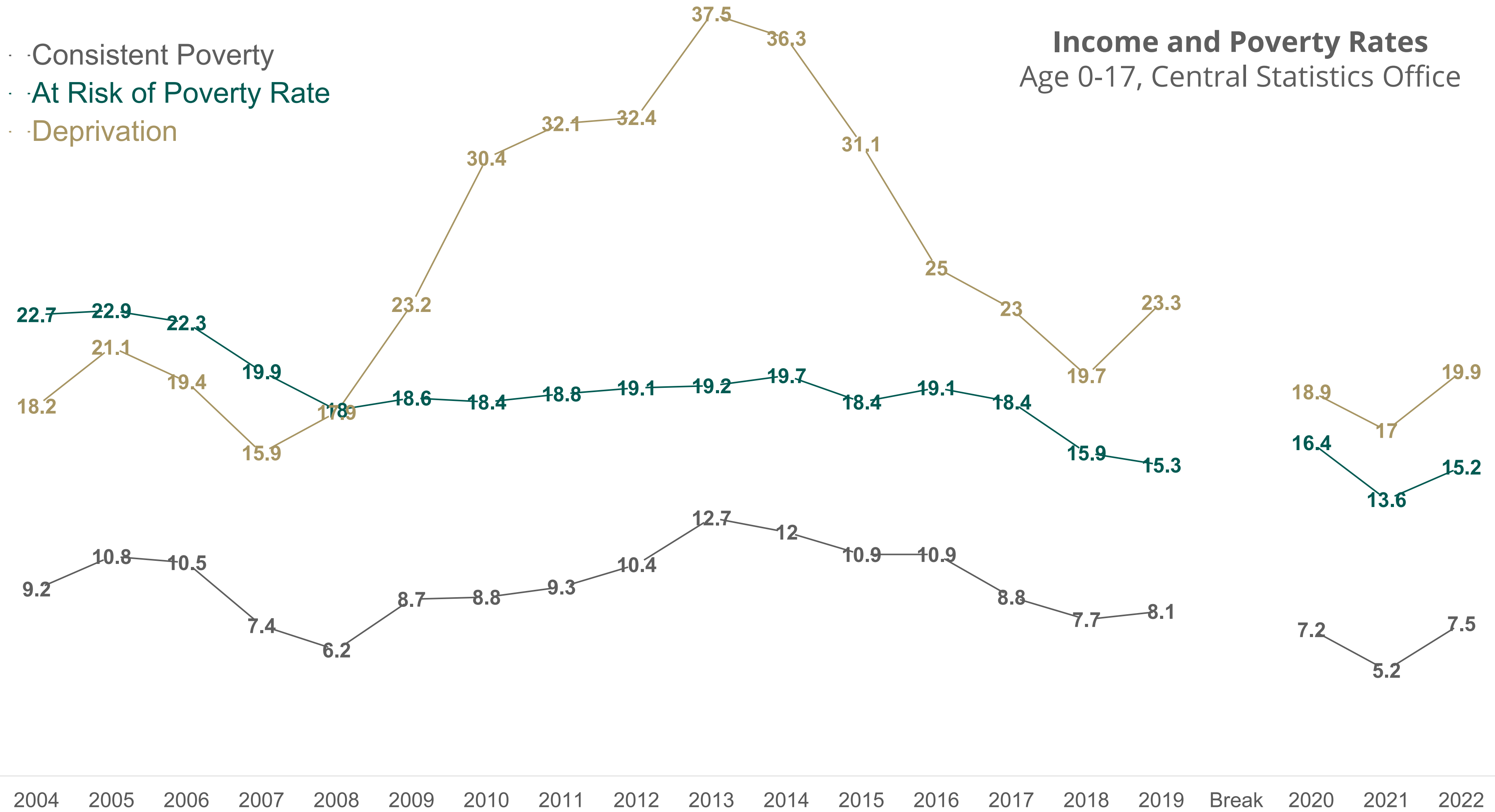
Some groups of children consistently fair poorly, including those living in lone parent households, rented households, households out of work, low levels of maternal education, children of migrants, minority ethnic groups, Traveller children, children with a disability.

Fortunately, the child poverty rate had been decreasing since 2014, but 2022 (2021 data) saw an increase.



Income and Poverty Rates Age 0-17, Central Statistics Office

- Consistent Poverty
- At Risk of Poverty Rate
- Deprivation

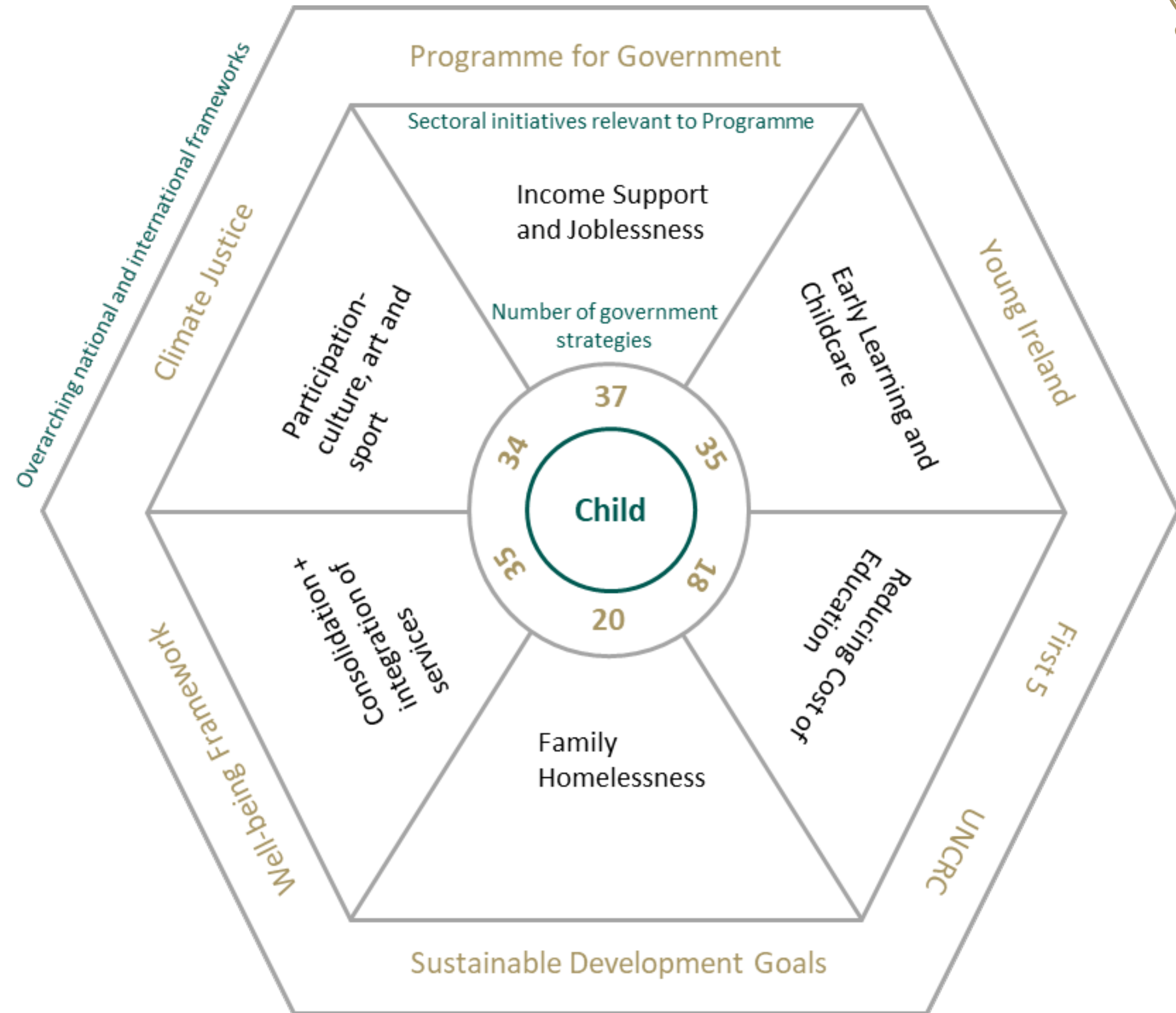




Existing Cross-cutting priority

Existing policy....

The Programme Office has undertaken a policy-mapping exercise across six key areas. Initial scoping includes 50+ policies and strategies.



Role of the Programme Office



Following an announcement in December 2022, the Child Poverty and Well-being Programme Office was established in the Department of the Taoiseach in Spring 2023 to coordinate and focus Government action on child poverty and well-being.

The role of the Office is to:

1. Monitor the delivery of policy commitments by Departments and their Agencies across the six priority areas and focus on specific areas of action.
2. Undertake a small number of strategic initiatives which have the potential to increase the impact of current and emerging measures to end child poverty and improve child well-being.

The Office will work closely with DCEDIY to contribute to the work and structures of *Young Ireland* (the new National Framework on Children and Young People), including providing regular updates on progress to the Policy Forum, the National Advisory Council, and child participation structures. The Programme Office will be a *Spotlight* initiative under the new Framework.

In August 2023, the Office published its initial work programme for the next two and a half years, *From Poverty to Potential: A Programme Plan for Child Poverty and Well-being 2023-2025*

First Programme Plan



- ✓ Identifies the progress which has been made and the challenges that remain, including the contextual and intergenerational experiences of poverty.
- ✓ Describes the ambition for change for each of the six priority areas, including specific focus issues for each area.
- ✓ Defines the specific purpose of the Programme Office.
- ✓ Describes the governance and monitoring mechanisms.
- ✓ Identifies a small number of cross-government actions which will be undertaken by the Programme Office.
- ✓ Sets out a specific, focused and time-bound programme of work over two-and-a-half years (July 2023 - December 2025).



6 Priority Areas




In April, Government decided on six priorities to reflect the dual and interconnected nature of the remit of the Programme Office mandate in that they focus both on child poverty and child well-being.



Child friendly summary







This plan is about helping children in Ireland and making their lives better. The Government want to make sure that every child has enough money, is well looked after, and is able to enjoy and take part in the things they like to do outside school like playing sports, doing art and other activities they like.

 **Rialtas na hÉireann**
Government of Ireland

A Programme for Child Poverty and Well-Being

This plan is about helping children in Ireland and making their lives better. The Government want to make sure that every child has enough money, is well looked after, and is able to enjoy and take part in the things they like to do outside school like playing sports, doing art and other activities that they like. Poverty means not having enough of what you need. Because it is so important that every child has enough of what they need, the Taoiseach decided to set up a Child Poverty and Well-being Programme Office.

The Taoiseach wants the Office to make sure that all the different parts of Government work together to help all children have what they need to be healthy, happy and safe. The Child Poverty and Well-being Programme Office has made a plan. In this first plan, the Government has picked a few things that will make a big difference to children. Over the next 2.5 years, we especially want to:

-  **Help families who need more money and make sure they have enough to buy what they need.**
-  **Make sure there are enough spaces in crèches, playschools and afterschool clubs where kids can go to play, learn, make friends and have fun.**
-  **Make it easier for families to buy things that children need for school like books, lunches and uniforms.**
-  **Help families to make sure that every child has a home and to stop families from becoming homeless. We want to make sure that homeless families can get a new home as soon as possible.**
-  **All kids are different, and they need different things. We want families to be able to easily find out who can help them. Sometimes it can be hard for families to get the help they need because different services are not working together. We want to change that.**
-  **Help kids join in activities outside of school like art, music and sports without worrying about how much it costs.**

Every year, the Government decides how to spend its money. The Office want to make sure that when the Government is deciding how to spend this money that it will do everything it can to help children who do not have enough of what they need. To do a good job the Office will need to work with lots of different people including people in Government and people in organisations that help children and families.

We will also want to hear from children about what they think about how we can help children and families. Every year, the Office will tell people about how this plan is going and what is working and what is not working. This plan will take some time, but we will work hard to make sure that children and families will not need to worry about having money to buy the things that kids need to grow up happy and well.





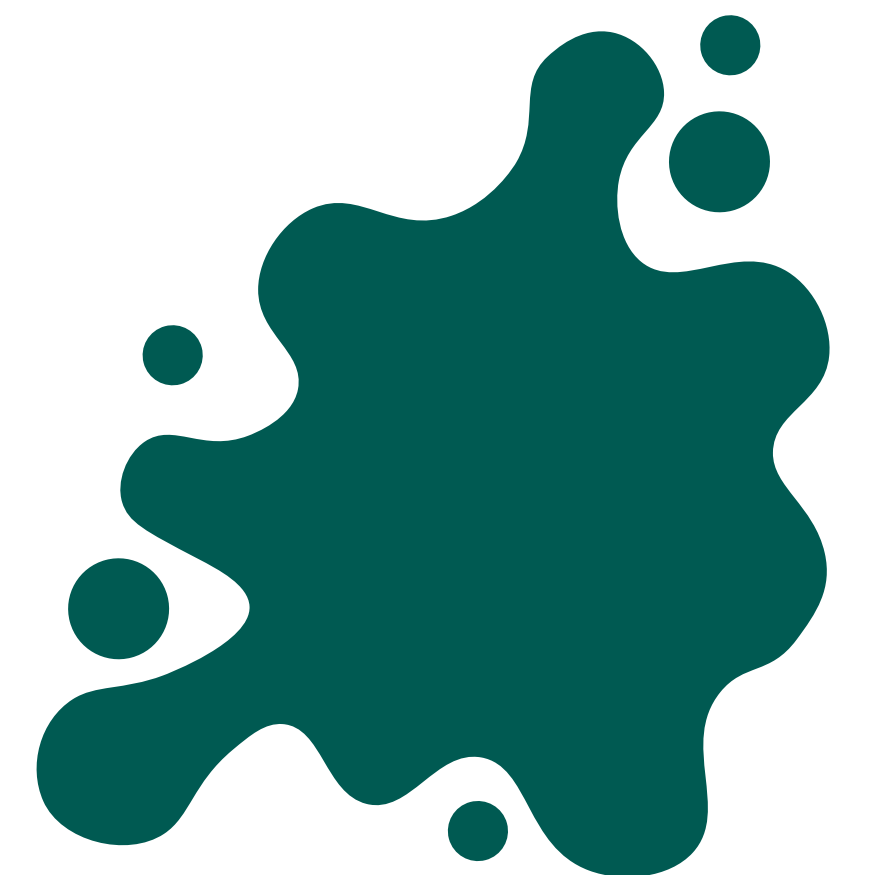
Governance Structure



Proposed Cross Government Initiatives



1. A focus on child poverty in the annual budget
2. Change programme to support service integration
3. Tools to enhance policy and implementation focus
4. Child-services workforce development



A Focus on Child Poverty in the Annual Budget



The annual budget is a critical moment in which Government articulates its ambition for the coming year. Given the Government's commitment to reducing child poverty, the extent to which the budget reduces child poverty and strengthens children's well-being is an important area of work for all concerned.

In order to prepare a child poverty budget, Departments will be asked to outline their overall spending that will impact on child poverty, as well as their spending in relation to the six priority areas.

The budget may build on existing analyses, such as the distributional analyses currently published by the Department of Finance, performance and equality budgeting activities led by DPENDPR, and child expenditure mapping being conducted by DCEDIY with other Departments.



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