

# PROTECTING RIGHTS AND TACKLING INEQUALITY

## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTION 2024 MANIFESTO



The 2024 EU parliamentary election is a pivotal opportunity to restore trust in the EU and the benefits of global multilateralism.

Candidates should unite behind a vision of Europe that is fair, equitable and compassionate, and remains true to the EU's founding values. To fulfil these values and achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while carrying out our human rights obligations, Oxfam Ireland is asking Ireland's MEPs to address four priority issues in the next parliamentary term.

1. Inequality
2. Climate Change
3. Migration
4. Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid

## INTRODUCTION

For decades, the European Union (EU) has been a major political force in the promotion of peace, democracy and shared prosperity. In a world faced with conflict, growing inequality and the climate crisis, it is more necessary than ever that the European Union's policies contribute to a just and sustainable world. However, in recent years, the EU and its Member States have turned inward, responding to short-sighted political agendas, rather than supporting human rights and sustainable development.

In the next parliamentary term, Ireland's MEPs have an opportunity to stand against this tide and provide visionary political leadership to protect the founding values of the European Union as set out in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities). The global challenges we face – including climate change, tackling rising inequality and responding to complex and protracted humanitarian crises – can only be solved on a multilateral basis.

## THE RISE OF THE FAR RIGHT

In the last number of years, we have seen a steady rise in the share of the vote of extreme far right- wing parties in many EU countries- it is likely that that this trend will continue in forthcoming European Parliament elections. The inability of EU governments to address extreme inequality is a key factor in this political trend. These extreme far right-wing parties have a clear anti-human rights agenda that is seeking to undermine hard fought for fundamental rights that EU citizens hold dear.

All Irish candidates should publicly declare which political grouping they intend to join if they are elected to the European Parliament. They should also clarify which political groupings in the European Parliament they intend to work with in coalition to advance their policy goals. This will ensure full transparency and allow Irish voters to make informed decisions in the election.

## 1. ADDRESSING INEQUALITY

The world is facing a global inequality crisis. An increasing gap between rich and poor is creating divided societies and stoking populist sentiment, especially when states are not able to provide timely, accessible and affordable public services. Moreover, the negative influence many digital and social media platforms are having on democratic institutions, digital rights, civil society space and young people, in the EU and around the world, needs to be addressed.

When public services are inadequate or unavailable, it places an inordinate burden on everyone, but especially women, as primary care-givers, often compromising their health and their opportunities for education and employment. Conversely, quality public systems increase women's economic opportunities and their decision-making power within the household and beyond, which can make a key difference in spreading care responsibilities more equitably.

**The EU's five richest billionaires have increased their wealth by 76 percent since 2020, from 244 billion euro to 429 billion. That sees their wealth growing at a rate of 5.7 million euros per hour. At the same time, 99 percent of the EU's population has become poorer. Oxfam has estimated that a progressive wealth tax of up to 5% on the EU's multi-millionaires and billionaires could collect 286.5 billion euros annually.<sup>1</sup>**

The multiple crises that have affected Europe and its global partners in recent years have increased the need for additional sources of finance. The climate crisis, the COVID pandemic, the war in Ukraine with its knock-on exacerbation of the food and energy crises, all require additional investments. Specifically, the EU committed to repay the recovery fund (grants part of [Next Generation EU](#)) and needs to find new common own resources to fund it. In addition to that, the EU needs additional resources to implement the European Green Deal, to provide sufficient climate finance

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<sup>1</sup> Oxfam (2024), *Inequality Inc*, <https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/wealth-eus-five-richest-men-soars-almost-6-million-euros-every-hour-2020#:~:text=Since%202020%2C%20billionaires%20in%20the,of%20the%20EU's%20recovery%20fund>

funds and to pay for loss and damage. Finally, the budget for international cooperation and humanitarian actions does not meet the needs, and risks being further stretched because of the Ukraine conflict response.

In this context, the risk is that EU countries will implement austerity policies, increase their debt or just fail to meet their commitments. New resources must be found to fund accessible public services. Private sector investment has a role to play, when regulated appropriately, but on its own has been shown to be ineffective in tackling inequality. This means taxing the wealthiest and the most profitable companies and polluters, through both new taxes and by strengthening the fight against tax avoidance.

The European Parliament does not have a legislative power on tax matters, but it has been very active on tax, especially since the establishment of the FISC committee, and it can put pressure on and influence both the Commission and the Council on tax matters.

## **IRELAND'S MEPS SHOULD HELP DESIGN FAIRER TAX SYSTEMS THAT ADDRESS INEQUALITY AND REDUCE POVERTY BY:**

- Asking for **more progressive corporate taxes**, starting with taxing share buybacks to disincentive the purchase by the company of their own shares, to more ambitious measures like sector-wide and automatic **windfall profit taxes** and a new system of progressive corporate taxation, where excess profit is regularly taxed at a much higher tax rate.
- Pushing the **Commission for a more active role on individual forms of taxation**, through the introduction of **EU capital gain and wealth taxes**, an **EU assets registry**, and a **ban on harmful tax regimes for individuals** (e.g. "golden passports").
- Continuing to call for **more effective measures against corporate tax avoidance**, like implementing more robust action on the EU tax havens list, the introduction of a fair redistribution of taxing rights in the EU (through a revision of the BEFIT or a new proposal<sup>2</sup>), adoption or implementation of an

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<sup>2</sup> Oxfam (2023) PR: EU Commission leaves big loopholes open for tax-dodging companies in new tax reform, <https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/eu-commission-leaves-big-loopholes-open-tax-dodging-companies-new-tax-reform>

effective legislation against shell companies and enablers of tax avoidance, introduction of an EU-minimum withholding taxes on passive income.

- Urging the Commission on the need for **progressive and fair environmental taxes**, that do not hit the poorest citizens and countries, and monitor the impact of existing measures on the poorest (e.g. the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism).
- **Engaging to build an ambitious framework convention on tax under the UN**, with the aim of ensuring that developing countries can participate equally in the global reform of international tax rules. Ireland and the EU are currently not supportive of this important multilateral approach at the UN.

## 2. CLIMATE CHANGE

The climate crisis is the greatest threat to humanity and to the planet. With our energy production and consumption models, Europe is carrying a historic responsibility. Instead of backsliding on climate commitments for short-term political gains, Europe must lead by example and ramp up climate action by committing to achieving climate neutrality by 2040. Simultaneously, the EU must provide new and additional climate finance to support low-income countries in adapting to the unstoppable effects of a climate crisis they did not create, and to compensate them for loss and damage. European leaders must also ensure that the EU's trade and industrial policies support climate and development objective.

Most importantly, the EU must ensure that there is a just transition as climate action that is not just and that doesn't share costs and benefits fairly will not succeed. In reality, the EU is trying to implement climate action on the cheap by retrofitting climate action onto a broken system. This will not generate citizen buy in and we are already seeing that climate action that doesn't address inequality is generating a backlash on many fronts. The approach to climate action has to change.

The crises in recent years have accelerated the need to seek a way out of last century's progress paradigm based on unbridled economic growth, intensive use of fossil fuels and subsidies for their production. Time is running out: societies' decarbonisation and the transition to clean energy can no longer be postponed. Nor can this be accomplished without linking

this transition to social justice. According to Eurostat, over 41 million people in the EU (9.3 % of the population) were unable to keep their home adequately warm in 2022<sup>3</sup>. As a result of the war in Ukraine, the situation has worsened in recent years.

The EU has committed to reducing its emissions by at least 55% by 2030 to meet its obligations under the Paris Agreement and reach climate neutrality by 2050. A significant share of these emission reductions is achieved through policies that rely on increased land use for the production of bioenergy. Such land-hungry 'net zero' policies are a threat to global food security<sup>4</sup>, forests and human rights. This danger is now compounded by the war in Ukraine. The conflict has put energy security at the top of the EU political agenda while driving prices of cereals, vegetable oil and other food products to record highs.

Charity retailers like Oxfam Ireland are playing an important role in mitigating the environmental impacts of the fashion industry (particularly fast fashion business models) through the promotion of secondhand clothing that supports a circular economy. Textile reuse contributes to carbon emission targets. Reuse is now key to the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy.

By shopping in a charity shop, consumers extend the life of goods they buy and donate, thereby significantly reducing their carbon footprint. 103,150 tonnes of carbon equivalent emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>e) were avoided through the merchandise processed by charity retailers in Ireland in 2023. This is the equivalent of 3.8 billion trees absorbing carbon in one day, or -the-road cars in Ireland<sup>5</sup>. The Waste Framework Directive (WFD) will mean the separate collection of textiles will begin in January 2025, the aim of which is to take all textiles (about 70 tonnes per year) out of the wastestream. It really important that charity retailers, as social enterprises, are supported to play a role in the collection, sorting and reuse of textiles is supported. Ireland is unique in having a larger network of charity shops than most EU members.

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<sup>3</sup> European Parliament (2023), *Energy poverty in the EU*, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/733583/EPRS\\_BRI\(2022\)733583\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/733583/EPRS_BRI(2022)733583_EN.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Oxfam (2021), *Tightening the Net*, <https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/net-zero-carbon-targets-are-dangerous-distractions-priority-cutting-emissions-says>

<sup>5</sup> Charity Retail Ireland, (2024) *Charity Retail Impact Report 2023*, <https://charityretail.ie/impact-of-charity-retail/>

## IRELAND'S MEPS SHOULD TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE NEXT EU PARLIAMENT BY:

- Ensure the costs and benefits of climate action are shared fairly by **supporting actions to ensure a just transition throughout the EU.**
- Ensuring that **EU climate and energy legislation is reviewed to achieve at least 65% reduction** in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.
- Pushing for an **energy transition within the EU that is fair, accessible, equitable and incorporates a gender-based perspective.** The EU must reduce its energy demand, shift entirely to sustainable renewable energy, eliminate all fossil-fuel subsidies and all support for crop-based biofuels. Ensuring that **farmers in both Ireland and the EU and around the world are properly supported financially to transition to sustainable food production and that trade rules and regulatory frameworks (especially food commodities)** don't disadvantage small farmers in the global South.
- Increasing the EU's share of **grant-based climate finance** for mitigation, adaptation, **loss & damage** and supporting low- and middle-income countries in accessing clean, accessible and reliable energy.
- Ensuring the EU leads by example by ramping up climate action by **committing to achieving climate neutrality by 2040.**
- Ensuring that **charity retailers in Ireland**, as social enterprises, are supported to **play a central role** in the collection, sorting and reuse of textiles, as part on the implementation of the Waste Framework Directive (WFD) on textiles after 2025.

## 3. ASYLUM AND MIGRATION

Migration remains at the forefront of the EU agenda, with Member States' conflicting priorities and lack of political will undermining the rights of people seeking protection in Europe and the rule of law at our borders. Pushbacks and border violence have become a systematic practice at Europe's internal and external land and sea borders, while the EU Commission as guardian of

the treaties stands by instead of holding perpetrators of fundamental rights violations accountable.

Meanwhile, access to asylum, reception conditions and asylum procedures in several EU countries of arrival and destination, are not meeting minimum standards required under EU law, such as in Greece<sup>6</sup>. Simultaneously the EU is co-funding and co-managing prison-like centres at the EU's external borders that subject refugees and migrants to detention-like conditions and truncated 'border procedures' with inadequate safeguards and due process guarantees. Rather than investing in the building of adequate reception and asylum processing capacities, in an alarming growing trend throughout Europe, European governments are increasingly criminalising humanitarian aid workers; legal aid providers; search and rescue organisations and human rights defenders supporting refugees.

Despite promises to comply with international law and EU principles and values, and to protect fundamental rights, we have seen the EU strike dysfunctional and non-transparent migration deals with neighbouring countries to outsource its responsibilities, diverting scarce development funds to pay the bill. At a time of multiple interlinking global crises, the EU needs to ensure that aid is used to end poverty in the Global South and to boost partner countries' economies - not to end migration and boost borders. This externalisation agenda seeks to blackmail third countries into assuming its asylum responsibilities, or into stopping migration toward the EU, (even though 74% of the world's refugees are hosted in low and middle income countries). This takes various forms, from dysfunctional migration deals with non-EU countries (e.g. EU-Turkey Agreement), to funding and training foreign security forces and border control (Libya), to attempts to introduce migration and readmission cooperation conditionality into trade relations with developing countries (Generalised Scheme of Preferences) and visa policies. Most recently, several Member States' governments and political groups are exploring models to outsource asylum processing and protection provision to non-EU countries. Such proposals are in clear breach of international, European and EU law, and where attempts have been made to implement them, this has always resulted in the violation of refugees' and migrants' human rights.

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<sup>6</sup> Oxfam and the Greek Council for Refugees. (2020, *Diminished, Derogated, Denied*, <https://www.oxfamireland.org/node/1323>)

In the same vein, the EU has, for the first time, introduced a 10 percent migration marker in its main development funding instrument (NDICI), despite widespread warnings from civil society. Our research<sup>7</sup> has shown that this has led to potential misuse or diversion of development funding for activities aimed at stopping migration. This misguided approach will only weaken Europe's standing as an equal partner to developing countries at a time when they are already facing the devastating effects of multiple interlinking global crises, such as the food and climate crisis.

## **IRELAND'S MEPS SHOULD STAND UP FOR THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS AND ASYLUM SEEKERS WITHIN THE EU BY:**

- **Monitoring the implementation of the EU's Asylum and Migration Pact** to ensure that fundamental rights, the rule of law and the right to asylum are upheld at European land and sea borders and within Member States. Most notably, **the Parliament should push for an effective and mandatory solidarity mechanism prioritising relocation.**
- Pushing for the **rapid establishment of independent border monitoring mechanisms at the EU's land and sea borders**, in line with recommendations from civil society regarding their independence and functioning, and based on lessons learned from the (so far inadequate) mechanisms established in Greece and Croatia.
- **Monitoring the Commission's role as Guardian of the Treaties and holding it accountable when it fails to launch disciplinary action** such as infringement proceedings **against Member States** who systematically breach EU asylum law. The EU Parliament should strengthen its monitoring of migration-related spending (e.g. AMIF, NDICI), across relevant Committees (e.g. LIBE, CONT, BUDG, DEVE) and request the suspension of funding to Member States as well as relevant agencies (FRONTEX, EUAA) involved or complicit in breaches of EU asylum acquis or fundamental rights, including in third countries.
- **Demanding equal access to and increased scrutiny over** the selection and implementation of activities funded under the **NDICI 10% migration**

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<sup>7</sup> Oxfam Novib, (2023), *From Development to Deterrence*, <https://www.oxfamnovib.nl/Files/rapporten/2023/Development-to-deterrence-migration-spending-under-210923-en.pdf>

**component.** Currently, the Council is given a far higher degree of scrutiny under the new informal coordination group, while the implementation and governance of migration related spending under the NDICI remains highly untransparent to the public and civil society. Particular attention should be paid to compliance with ODA guidelines, to ensure that migration related spending under the NDICI is in line with the instrument's stated aim and international aid rules.

- Challenging the conclusion of **untransparent migration 'agreements' with non-EU countries and attempts to externalize the EU's border management**, reception, asylum processing and protection responsibilities to non-EU countries.
- Pushing the EU Commission and relevant agencies to **focus their efforts on upholding the right to asylum in the EU, increasing reception and asylum processing capacity on EU territory and increasing safe and regular pathways to Europe.**

## 4. DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND HUMANITARIAN AID

The EU is a major global donor in its own right and with its member states, the largest donor in the world, with over €351 million of Ireland's ODA budget channelled directly through EU institutions in 2022<sup>8</sup>. However, the recently leaked draft briefing book published by the EU's Department for International Partnerships (DG INTPA)<sup>9</sup> indicates a pivot away from human-centred commitments to sustainable development, and a move towards prioritising competition, trade, and the interests of the EU to the detriment of the interests of partner countries. It indicates a disproportionate reliance on the private sector and specific industries of interest to the EU, while leaving almost no room for a deliberate sustainable development agenda, human rights, addressing inequalities, or 'leave no one behind' approaches. Moreover, the brief is silent on the impact of inequality and its root causes, for example vicious debt cycles, tax injustice and power imbalances in international fora such as the UN Security Council.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ireland.ie/en/irish-aid/who-we-work-with/international-organisations/european-union/> accessed 28.05.2024

<sup>9</sup> DG INTPA (2024). Briefing Book - International Partnerships (Draft), <https://www.politico.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/18/draft-IntPa-briefing-for-next-Com-April-2024-1-cleaned.pdf>

DG INTPA is entrusted with supporting its partner countries on their path to sustainable development, reducing poverty, and promoting human rights. But its flagged future direction, if brought to fruition, risks damaging the EU's credibility and reputation as a reliable partner and risks the achievement of the SDGs globally. This should be a major concern for Irish candidates, as this proposed change in direction does not correspond with the objectives or approach set out in Ireland's development policy, 'A Better World' (2019)<sup>10</sup>. The proposals are also in contravention of Article 3.5 of the Treaty of the European Union (1992)<sup>11</sup> and of article 208 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union<sup>12</sup>, which gives to EU's development cooperation policy the primary objective of reducing poverty. We should be proud that Ireland ranks second among EU member states in terms of shares of ODA with gender equality as a policy objective (78%)<sup>13</sup>. This good work risks being undone by the proposed new direction by DG INTPA.

It is important to note that the most [recent Dóchas Worldview research](#) published in March and funded by DFA shows that 76% of Irish people believe it is important that the Irish Government provides overseas aid, up from 74% in 2022. This is consistent with the Eurobarometer survey from Sept 2023, where 74% of respondents agreed that tackling poverty should be one of the EU's main priorities. A true partnership approach doesn't only focus on the EU's own interests (be that trade, security or migration).

The EU is also one of the largest humanitarian aid donors through ECHO; it is currently widely recognised as one of the most principled donors putting humanitarian needs to the forefront and ensuring that people and communities in need get lifesaving support. Irish MEPs need to ensure that the proposed new direction of DG INTPA doesn't roll back on these humanitarian commitments. Ireland has already shown leadership in highlighting the need for a permanent, immediate and unconditional ceasefire in Gaza, so that the massive humanitarian needs there can be addressed. Especially given Ireland's leadership role in highlighting need for

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<sup>10</sup> Irish Government, (2019) *A Better World*, <https://www.ireland.ie/en/irish-aid/news-and-publications/publications/publication-index/a-better-world-irelands-policy-for-international-development/>

<sup>11</sup> "In its relations with the wider world, the Union shall uphold and promote its values and interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens. It shall contribute to peace, security, the sustainable development of the Earth, solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights, in particular the rights of the child, as well as to the strict observance and the development of international law, including respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter." EU,(1992), *Treaty on the European Union (Maastricht Treaty)*, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/about-parliament/en/in-the-past/the-parliament-and-the-treaties/maastricht-treaty>

<sup>12</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C:2016:202:FULL>, accessed 28.05.2024

<sup>13</sup> OECD (2024), DAC Network on Gender Equality: Latest data on official development assistance (ODA) for gender equality and women's empowerment, [https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD/DAC/GEN\(2024\)1/en/pdf](https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD/DAC/GEN(2024)1/en/pdf)

a sustainable ceasefire in Gaza, so that the massive humanitarian needs there can be addressed. For the past decade humanitarian needs have grown much faster than funding on a global scale. In recent years, the compound crises of conflict, Covid-19 and climate shocks have been completely swamped by the Ukraine conflict response, to which the EU and bilateral donors allocated a substantial amount of resources.

In 2022 and 2023, ECHO's humanitarian budget has been stretched thin. In 2022 a fifth of it was allocated to the Ukraine crisis, at the expenses of other protracted conflict situations whose humanitarian appeals have been vastly underfunded. ECHO's reserves have been fast depleted (through frontloading) and the same mechanism is unlikely to hold in the next five years.

Negotiations for the next EU multi-financial framework (MFF) will begin soon after the European elections. This is a critical moment for the EU's leadership. The EU needs to bolster its humanitarian and development budget to ensure it is fit for purpose, including by increasing annual ODA and meeting the 0.7% GNI goal. This also means prioritizing human rights, sustainable development, and the fight against inequality in all foreign policies and budgets, rather than expecting miracles from the private sector to do 'less with more'. Specifically, the humanitarian budget needs to meet ever-growing needs, and humanitarian work needs to be embedded into sustainable and long-term resilience programming that aims for structural change.

## **IRELAND'S MEPS MUST PRIORITISE AND ADVOCATE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE EU BY:**

- Ensuring that any **future EU policy on international partnerships and development are aligned with efforts to achieve the SDGs and bolster human rights. They should also be aligned with Ireland's own ODA approach and comply with the EU's treaties.**
- Ensuring that the next round of the **MFF bolsters the EU's humanitarian and development budget to ensure it is fit for purpose, including by increasing annual ODA and meeting the 0.7% GNI goal.**

This also means prioritising human rights, sustainable development, and the fight against inequality in all foreign policies and budgets.

- **Holding the Commission to account** in the use of the NDICI Global Europe ensuring that it meets its ODA eligibility requirement of 93%.
- **Holding the EU accountable to commitments held in the regulation** and push for exceeding these targets particularly in areas of public service provision. These include the minimum 20% for human development, the 85% target of actions that should have gender equality as a principal or significant objective, and the 30% climate target.
- **Championing Women's Rights Organisations** and increase the share of its ODA being channeled to these groups.
- **Increasing the humanitarian aid budget line** (HUMA) to a minimum of €2.6 billion per year to allow the European Commission to continue funding all programmes implemented by their humanitarian partners.
- **Ensuring funds from the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve** (SEAR) are additional to the current humanitarian aid budget line and can be mobilised for humanitarian crises outside the EU throughout the whole financial year in a predictable way.
- **Ensuring predictability and continued commitment to people** in need by guaranteeing that EU budget payment appropriations are at least at the same level as commitment appropriations.
- Holding the EU accountable on the implementation of **ECHO's Equitable Partnership Guidelines**. This policy has the potential to bring about a meaningful change in the humanitarian system and programme cycle in different contexts, by involving, consulting and letting local and national humanitarian actors lead emergency responses. Oxfam welcomed the contents of the policy: its roll-out is now paramount.
- Ensuring that the **2021 EC Communication on EU Humanitarian Action**, the first ever agreed by the EU, is fully on track in terms of policy, political and operational leadership in its commitments, amongst which the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. The EU has not yet implemented its commitments to operationalise the HDP nexus, in particular by ensuring that all EU services, from development, political and humanitarian branches, adequately connect with each other to reduce risks, needs and vulnerabilities

in countries experiencing protracted crises. Funding instruments should be more flexible, sustainable, multi-year and less earmarked for meaningful programming across the HDP nexus.

- Ensuring that the EC and EU MSs are held accountable for **Policy Coherence for Development** by requiring them to implement **spillover analyses** for their policies (e.g. tax, trade, etc...) to monitor the external effects of EU policies on partner countries in the global South.

## CONCLUSION

In an address to the Irish Association of Contemporary European Studies, President of Ireland, Michael D Higgins, stated that:

“We have arrived...at a critical juncture in the history of the European project. We are at a moment when a new departure is required – when a new departure is possible. We can, together, breathe new life in the European vision, and in doing so, we will also be saving a model on which the peoples of other continents have placed their gaze and considered exemplary for their own future cooperation<sup>14</sup>.”

In the next parliamentary term, Europe’s achievements must focus on improving the lot of our shared humanity, forging a solidarity that extends to those beyond Europe’s shores. To do this, EU institutions must address the global challenges of economic inequality – including gender inequality - climate change and migration. The EU must maintain its strong global leadership in development cooperation and humanitarian aid to ensure that people affected by poverty, conflict or crisis receive the support and protection they need. Oxfam stands ready to assist.

## OXFAM IRELAND

Oxfam Ireland is part of Oxfam International, a global confederation of 21 independent and interconnected affiliates working across 66 countries to end

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<sup>14</sup> <https://president.ie/en/media-library/speeches/creating-a-new-moment-for-the-european-union-problems-and-prospects>, accessed 28.05.2024a

poverty and injustice. Oxfam Ireland mobilises the power of people to build a global movement that transforms lives and creates lasting change.

Oxfam Ireland is an all-island organisation that is embedded in many communities throughout the island of Ireland. We have 48 charity retail shops that provide sustainable and affordable options to people. These shops are run with the help of 900 volunteers. Every year approximately 250,000 people provide donated goods for use in our shops. In addition, during 2023 alone, 21,650 individuals donated to support our work and 31,207 people took campaign actions. These donations and campaign actions combined with the revenue generated in our shops, support Oxfam Ireland's life-changing long-term development projects; life-saving humanitarian assistance and campaigning and advocacy to tackle the root causes of poverty and injustice. We are both humbled and inspired at the level of civic participation that Oxfam Ireland fosters throughout the island. This high level of participation provides a clear demonstration of the broad public support for our actions and approaches.

We believe that everyone has the right to thrive in a just and sustainable world. To this end, we work collaboratively to challenge discrimination, exclusion and exploitation; we empower communities to build better lives for themselves, and we continue to provide direct, life-saving assistance to people facing crisis and disaster.

In all of this, we work to fight inequality, recognising that ending poverty is only possible by tackling systemic inequality and injustice. Poverty arises from the violation of people's basic human rights. When someone is denied the right to own land, the right to education, access to basic services like clean water, a fair price for the crops they grow, or a fair wage for the work they do, the result is poverty.

**Last year, Oxfam Ireland, with support from Irish Aid, worked in over 11 countries and reached 14.5 million people through our development and humanitarian programmes.**

At EU level, Oxfam challenges EU policies to make them work for people in poverty. In Brussels, we work to influence key decision-makers in the EU institutions to ensure that EU policies affecting poor countries have a far reaching, positive impact on the lives of those most in need.

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