



WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology.

#POVERTYTALKS | Dr Joe Whelan (PI) | Dr Eva Garcia Albarran

This project was funded by the Irish Research Council under Strand 1A of the New Foundations Grant Scheme.



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin



IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL
An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn



All Together in Dignity - Ireland
Working with those affected by chronic poverty



Contents

Foreword by Professor Emeritus Anthony McCashin	001
Acknowledgements	003
Author and citation details	004
Report authors	004
Citation information	004
Lay abstract	006
Introduction	007
Background and rationale	007
Research aims and objectives	008
Research Methodology	008
Participant selection	009
Mapping, walking and photography	009
Analysis	015
A participatory approach	015
Ethical considerations	016
Limitations	016
Poverty policy in Ireland: A brief chronology of recent developments	016
Current statistical trends on poverty in Ireland	020
Current policy	029
Remaining report outline	029

What does qualitative research offer?	031
Against all odds	031
Families and Poverty: Everyday Life on a Low Income	032
Uncovering Food Poverty in Ireland	033
Qualitative research: Applying creative methods	034
Themes from the walks: Maps, photographs and testimony	037
A walk with Andrew	038
A walk with Jimmy and Christina	041
A walk with Long	043
A walk with Annemarie	045
A walk with Gavin	048
A walk with Kye	051
A walk with Paul	054
A walk with Terence	056
A walk with Philip	059
A walk with Lorraine	062
Poverty in childhood and the effects across the life-course	065
Poverty as foreground and background	065
Just trying to survive	066
Poverty as a lack of options	068
No options and bad options	069
Territorial Stigma and Socioeconomic Discrimination	070
Territory	071
Habitus	072
A divided society:	
How the other half lives	074
Class as a dividing factor	075
Simple but not so simple	076
A corollary: Poverty as a waste of potential	077

Conclusion and recommendations	079
Policy making and inclusion	079
Future research strategies	080
Participation and coproduction where possible	082
Reference list	083
Endnotes	085



Foreword by Professor Emeritus Anthony McCashin

There is no shortage of information, public comment, or analytical material on poverty in Ireland. Indeed, the headline statistics about poverty and income inequality are one of the currencies of everyday life and conversation. However, an understanding of poverty and action to confront it require more than mere data; they require an insight into the lives of those experiencing poverty and an appreciation of their agency and voice. In design, execution, and presentation this research conveys such understanding and appreciation.

The study is underpinned by ATD's inclusive and participatory philosophy of research, and the scope and content of the study reflect the insights and lives of those who have experienced extreme poverty. 'Enforced deprivation' is a key term in the official vocabulary of poverty; this research brings that term to life vividly and forcefully by adopting an active and creative method of research and analysis. The authors and their co-researchers avoid the constraints of the conventional research interview.

They facilitated the participants to express their reflections in their own words by literally walking and talking with them on routes and in locations chosen by the participants

because they have particular meaning for them. In this way, the participants include in their stories references to specific events and places, and even buildings, that shaped key moments, or choices or events; the loss of a partner; the experience of a specific hostel; the street that separates rich from 'poor'; the community and school that shaped their childhood. The portrayal of poverty and deprivation here is not a static one; it reveals the interplay of childhood background, life experience, and the contingencies and traumas of various forms of exclusion; homelessness, addiction, childhood neglect.

Three features of the research command particular attention. First – and perhaps uniquely – the study participants are activists in varying ways: they have connected their personal experiences not only to the daily challenge of improving their individual lives but also to the society-wide challenge of poverty.

To coin an academic term, the poor have 'agency' This is an important corrective to our tendency view poverty wholly in terms of victimhood. Second, the participants can deploy their agency to observe and analyse the context in which they live – in particular, the class system and its pervasive effects

002

in education and housing. In fact, they can convincingly map and describe the spatial and geographical contours of class and social inequality. Third, participants' lives reveal a pattern familiar to readers and practitioners of qualitative research about poverty and inequality; the 'relational' aspects of poverty and social exclusion. They feel excluded, and see the processes by which their exclusion is enforced; media stereotyping, concentrations of social housing in specific communities, judgemental language and negative labelling. For some of the participants, these dimensions of poverty are as real and visceral as material deprivation.

The authors do not leap from the detail of the participants' lives to a litany of policy recommendations, conventionally understood. Agendas of reform across wide areas of social policy have already been composed, debated, and – in part – implemented. What this innovative research offers – in keeping with ATD's creative and participatory ethos – is a practical demonstration of how to include and amplify the voices and experiences of excluded citizens.



Anthony Mc Cashin
Trinity College Dublin
August 2023.

Acknowledgements

003

The research team would like to thank the Irish Research Council for granting the funding that made this research possible. Small research grants such as those available through the New Foundations scheme have a value that resonates far beyond the modest initial investment, and it is hoped that the outputs arising from this project demonstrate this. With respect to this specific report, the team would like to thank Professor Anthony McCashin for his generous foreword and also for his generosity, insight and kindness in feeding back on several drafts of this report.

The research team would also like to thank the staff at ATD Ireland who were partners in this research and who helped to make it all possible. Particular thanks to Dann Kenningham, Tara Doherty, Ciara Margolis and Rebecca Tighe. The community activists and friends of ATD Ireland who took part in the research ultimately helped to coproduce the project as a whole and so a huge thank you to Andrew, Jimmy and Christina, Gavin, Long, Annemarie, Philip, Kye, Paul, Terence and Lorraine, it is your collective words and insights that ultimately give this report any value it may have.

Author and citation details

Report authors

DR JOE WHELAN, School of Social Work and Social Policy Trinity, College Dublin: Principal Investigator and report author.

DR EVA GARCIA ALBARRAN, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin: Research Assistant.

With input, oversight and guidance from staff and community activists from ATD Ireland.

Citation information

Any citation of this report should use the following reference: Whelan, J. and Albarran, E.G. (2023) *Walking, thinking and talking: An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology: #PovertyTalks*. Dublin: School of Social Work & Social Policy, TCD and All Together in Dignity, Ireland. <https://doi.org/10.25546/103836>

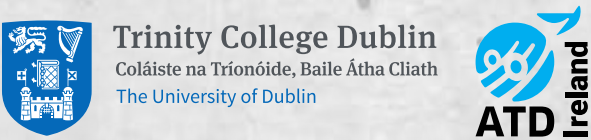
Research partners

ATD Ireland:

Registered Charity Number 20072131
Revenue Charity Number: CHY 18678

Registered Office: 30 Mountjoy Square East, Dublin 1, D01 K2F6

Visit: <https://www.atdireland.ie/wp/>



Abbreviations

ATD	All Together in Dignity	IPA	Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis
AROP	At risk of poverty rate	MESL	Minimum Essential Standards of Living
CP	Consistent Poverty	NAS	National Anti-Poverty Strategy
CSO	Central Statistics Office	SILC	Survey of Income and Living Conditions
DSP	Department of Social Protection	SVDP	St Vincent de Paul
EAPN	European Anti-Poverty Network	TCD	Trinity College Dublin
ED	Enforced Deprivation		
GOI	Government of Ireland		

List of figures

- FIGURE 1:** A map of Dublin city and the greater Dublin area.

FIGURE 2: Dublin 2 and surrounding areas.

FIGURE 3: Ballymun and surrounding areas.

FIGURE 4: The North inner city and city centre area.

FIGURE 5: European Poverty Policy from 2010–2021.

FIGURE 6: Antipoverty strategies Ireland (1997–2023).

FIGURE 7: Poverty by principal economic status.

FIGURE 8: Poverty by household composition.
- FIGURE 9:** Poverty by tenure status.

FIGURE 10: Enforced deprivation by principal economic status.

FIGURE 11: Enforced deprivation by household composition and year.

FIGURE 12: Types of deprivation experienced in 2022.

FIGURE 13: Food related deprivation by year.

FIGURE 14: Food deprivation by principal economic status.

FIGURE 15: Share of equivalised disposable income by both quintile and year.

Lay abstract

In Ireland, research that dwells on lived experiences in the context of poverty has been absent in recent years. The research presented in this report has sought to address this in creative ways. In the first instance, this research has been participative, with input from participants invited at all stages.

With respect to capturing lived experiences as a form of knowledge, the research has employed walking as a participatory arts methodology – using photographs, sound files and drawing/mapping to capture meaning.

Keywords

Poverty; exclusion; marginality; lived experiences; mapping; walking, talking, thinking.

The aim for this research has been to connect with lived experiences of poverty in ways that are tangible, visceral and visible.

Arising from analysis of the interview transcripts, findings which are presented as a number of discrete, yet interlocking themes suggest the following: poverty in childhood can have a major impact across the life course; poverty often manifests as a lack of good options; socioeconomic discrimination and the stigma of place are core features of poverty; experiences of poverty strongly illustrate a divided society.

Introduction

This research documented in this report is based on active research partnership between ATD Ireland, community activists/persons with lived experiences of poverty who volunteer with ATD, and the research team, based in The School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin. The research was funded by the Irish Research Council under Strand1a of the New Foundations grant scheme which aims to support small, discrete collaborative projects between researchers and civic society groups in the community and voluntary sector. ATD is a global organization with a growing presence in Ireland.

ATD work with people who are experiencing or have experienced poverty. ATD work with people from all walks of life, though many of the persons they work with are socioeconomically disadvantaged.

The work they do focuses on the realities of living with poverty and aims to affect positive change and achieve equality and social inclusion for all persons not only in Ireland but across the world. This project, which was co-produced with ATD and with community activists who volunteer with ATD, has aimed to make a substantial contribution and to add value to the work that ATD do. Ultimately, the research documented in this report will support ongoing work with people experiencing poverty while also supporting ATD's policy and advocacy work by contributing to an evidence-base for their work on the direction of future anti-poverty campaigns.

Background and rationale

In the absence of policy and sociological research that dwells on lived experience, our primary way of knowing about poverty in Ireland is through statistical information. In Ireland, the CSO is responsible for gathering statistics on a range of areas including the environment, the economy, health, education and social welfare. With respect to living conditions, the major annual CSO publication is the Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC). This is used to examine poverty in Ireland by reporting two related indicators, the 'at risk of poverty rate' (AROP) and enforced deprivation (ED). The 'at risk of poverty' threshold is defined as 60% of the median equivalised disposable income. It is a measure of relative income poverty. Enforced deprivation is an indicator of low living standards: to be considered forcibly deprived people need to have been unable to afford two items deemed necessary by society at large, such as being without heating at some stage in the last year or being unable to afford two pairs of strong shoes. In Ireland, the EU SILC data reports a figure for 'consistent poverty' and in order to be considered 'consistently poor', you need to be **both** 'at risk of poverty' and experiencing enforced deprivation. Drawing on the latest available data (CSO, 2022), in 2022, the consistent poverty figure stood at 5.3 % compared with a 4% rate in 2021. While this represents an increasing rate of consistent poverty, it still means

that the government in Ireland claim a reasonably low rate of overall poverty despite the fact that households may separately be experiencing enforced deprivation or be ‘at risk of poverty’ (see statistical trends on poverty further on for a more in-depth look at same). In SILC 2022, the AROP stood at 13.1%, a 1.5 percentage point increase on the 2021 estimate of 11.6%. This figure is similar to the 2020 estimate of 13.2%, indicating that the decrease in 2021 may have been temporary and linked to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated economic measures. Taken together these figures are revealing insofar as they tell us how many people are experiencing poverty and what kinds of things people can struggle to afford. However, the complexity of the day-to-day lived realities of those same persons remain obscured. Of course, this is not surprising, nor is it the job of statisticians to offer qualitative depth, rather, statistics such as these are useful for telling us ‘how many’ or ‘who’ or ‘how often’. Additional forms of research are therefore needed to bring to light the complex stories that underlie statistics. This report takes up this challenge and has sought to go beyond statistics to capture lived experiences using qualitative and creative techniques in partnership with an agency who are at the forefront of developing deeper understandings of poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage. By highlighting lived experience, the research aimed to address a significant gap in Irish social policy research. The practice of reporting lived experience and connecting what is happening ‘on the ground’ to policy developments that address societal challenges concerning social inclusion, poverty and material disadvantage, though growing, is nevertheless in its infancy

in the Irish context. This research, therefore, has aimed to demonstrate how knowledge of lived experiences can contribute to enhancing social inclusion and reducing poverty.

Research aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of this research have been to:

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of poverty in Ireland using photographs, sound files, video/film, drawing/mapping to capture meaning.
- Explore the hidden geographies of poverty using a creative, walking-based methodology.
- Document the voice of persons experiencing poverty.
- Document the challenges associated with experiences of poverty.
- Develop an artifact in the form of an animated-short in conjunction with the researchⁱ participants for use as a resource for ATD.
- Generate research data of relevance to ATD and related support and advocacy groups in their work with people experiencing poverty.

Research Methodology

This research was conducted using arts based creative methods which included mapping, walking and photography. Following O’Neill and Roberts’s (2020) ‘Walking Interview Biographical Method’ (WIBM) the research was designed around shared walking as an arts- based, biographical method for

conducting research that accesses the lived realities and cultures of individuals and groups, through sensory, spatial, embodied, affective aspects of lives/lived experiences (O’Neill and Roberts 2020). The creative application of walking as a biographical method extends critical biographical sociology; a deeply engaged, relational way of attuning that evokes knowing and understanding through empathetic and embodied learning and supports biographical research and critical analysis to explore:

- A sense of our past, present and future and their interconnections.
- The social conditions, social relations, social landscape and their relevance.
- The participatory, and policy orientated possibilities of biographical research.

Key concepts that guide the WIBM are: embodiment, memory, time, mobility, rhythm, passing, moments, the senses (O’Neill and Roberts, 2020).

Participant selection

The research involved a series of ten walks with eleven participants, two of whom took part as a couple. Participants were recruited through ATD exclusively and all of the participants were and remain community activists or friends of ATD. Almost all of the participants have had significant experiences of poverty. All of the participants agreed and indeed wished to have their first names used in the research report. The participants are introduced in more detail in the findings section, however for now, the names of those who took part are as follows: Andrew; Jimmy

and Christina (took part as a couple); Gavin; Long; Ann Marie; Kye; Philip; Paul; Terence and, finally, Lorraine.

Mapping, walking and photography

Participants were asked to ‘make a map’ of a walk they would like to take ideally incorporating a route they saw as meaningful to them in the context of experiences of poverty. Each ‘mapper’ had situational authority meaning they could choose where to go before and during the walks; maps did not have to be followed strictly or exclusively. Walks could be vigorous or gentle with a view to fostering participation from people of all walking abilities. Walks were intended to be less about covering distance and more about being in space (O’Neill and Roberts, 2020) All of the walks took place in various parts of Dublin city (see figure 1). Specifically, three of the walks (with Andrew, Gavin and Kye) took place on the south side of the city centre in the Dublin 2ⁱⁱ area taking in Grafton Street, St Stephen’s Green, Merrion Square, Nassau Street, Pearse Street and the environs surrounding Trinity College Dublin (see figure 2).

Two more walks took place in Ballymun (with Long and Anne Marie) in Dublin 9 (see figure 3). Five further walks (with Jimmy and Christina, Paul, Philip, Terence and Lorraine) took place in the north inner city and city centre area in and around Dublin 1 and including areas as diverse as the North Quays, Talbot Street, O Connell Street, Mountjoy Square, Portland Row, Granby Row, Dorset Street and Sheriff Street up towards Eastwall (see figure 4). During the walks, the

researcher entered into a conversational interview with the participants about their experiences of and thoughts and feelings about poverty. The interviews were structured only through the use of occasional prompts and the researcher took part as an active conversant. The walk route and landmarks encountered also often stimulated conversation, interpretation and insight leading to questions from the researcher and specific observations on the part of participants. The walking interviews were recorded on a Zoom H1 digital audio recording device.



Figure 1. A map of Dublin city and the greater Dublin areaⁱⁱⁱ.



Figure 2: Dublin 2 and the surrounding areas.



Figure 3: Ballymun and the surrounding areas.



Figure 4: The North inner city and city centre area.

Analysis

The recorded walking interviews were transcribed by a professional transcriber, and the transcripts were uploaded to NVivo 12 Plus for coding. The analysis and coding process was inspired by interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) techniques and, in particular, by the concept of a ‘double hermeneutic’ (Smith and Osborn, 2007: 53) which suggests that the researcher:

...is trying to get close to the participant’s personal world...but...cannot do this directly or completely. Access depends on, and is complicated by, the researcher’s own conceptions; indeed, these are required in order to make sense of that other personal world through a process of interpretative activity. Thus, a two-stage interpretation process, or a **double hermeneutic**, is involved. The participants are trying to make sense of their world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world (my emphasis).

This is an important point and one that should be borne in mind with respect to the themes reported further on in that while participants were given the opportunity to reflect on the content of the various themes, ultimately the themes represent the researcher’s interpretation of how the research participants interpret their own world.

A participatory approach

The research has participatory principles at its core and draws from ATD Ireland’s (2022) toolkit for conducting participatory research as a source of guidance. In particular, the concept of merged or the merging of knowledge underpins what is presented in this report. In terms of process, this has taken the following form:

- Consultation from the outset.
- Collaboration and ongoing opportunities for participant input throughout.
- Due consideration given to ownership and control of what is produced.

► Adapted from ATD Ireland (2022).

Working in partnership in this way has meant that the research was designed in consultation with ATD at the outset and that opportunities to review and reflect on the research process and on the various research outputs were continually made available to ATD as research partners and to the research participants as co-producers of the work. In practical terms this has meant meeting in-person to discuss and review progress and providing opportunities for feedback on drafts of various outputs including this report. Part of this research process has also involved the development of an animated short designed to capture the voices of the research participants and participants have also had opportunities to be involved in the various stages of this process.

Ethical considerations

As noted, this research was based on participatory principles and drew inspiration first and foremost from ATD Ireland’s (2022) own guide to doing ethical participatory research. Formal ethical approval for the research was obtained from The School of Social Work and Social Policy in TCD via the Social Research Ethics Committee. Prior to their participation participants were given an information sheet and consent form, the former detailing the study and how participant privacy and data would be protected and the latter obtaining consent from participants including consent to have the walking interview recorded and used to develop subsequent outputs. All participants were also advised of their right to withdraw from the study up to two weeks after their participation however, none did so.

Poverty policy in Ireland:
A brief chronology of recent developments

The purpose of this part of the introduction is to offer a brief overview of the policy landscape at a European and Irish level in order contextualise the findings in this report. Drawing on a recent publication from the EAPN (2023), entitled ‘Ireland’s contribution to the EU’s role in tackling poverty: Marking 50 years of Ireland’s membership of the EU’ it is possible track poverty policy at the European level. Whereas the EAPN have tracked policy across a span of some fifty years, figure 5 below, which is adapted from the EAPN report, documents the most recent developments:

Limitations

The study is small –scale and qualitative, consisting of a small number of qualitative walking interviews in a specific city in Ireland. In this respect, the data are locally contingent and are not generalisable to a larger population in a statistical sense. However, as this study employed intensive qualitative methods involving human participants it ultimately sought to elicit meaning and gain insight into and understanding of the daily, lived experiences of participants.

2010	Troika Programme In November 2010 Ireland entered an agreement with the Troika as the result of receiving a loan to address its budget deficit. This involved agreeing to a programme of policy reforms. This programme ended in November 2013, with some ongoing monitoring as part of the European Semester process. The Troika was made up of the European Commission, European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund.
2010	European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion
2010	European Semester Process An annual process for the coordination and surveillance of fiscal, economic, social and environmental policy.
2010	Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth Among its five targets, three of which are social, is the target ‘to lift at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2020.
2013	Social Investment Package Commission Communication on Investment Package accompanied by a Recommendation on Investing in Children – breaking the cycle of disadvantage.
2017	European Pillar of Social Rights The Pillar contains 20 principles and rights. It is under three areas i) equal opportunities and access to labour market i) fair working conditions and ill) social protection and inclusion
2021	European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan It contains a number of concrete measures for implementing the Pillar and three targets including ‘reducing by at least 15 million the number of people (including 5 million children) at risk of poverty or social exclusion by 2030*.

Figure 5: European Poverty Policy from 2010–2021.

Without going into the policy minutiae, figure five demonstrates an active policy landscape at the European level in the context of poverty and social inclusion. However, as noted in the first 2010 entry of figure 5, against the backdrop of a global recession, Ireland entered a bailout programme in 2010 meaning that whatever social policy was developed during this period was developed in the context of internationally mandated and domestically imposed austerity.

In this respect, much of what took place in the Irish social policy landscape was the opposite of development in a progressive sense and was instead characterised by intense retrenchment of the very things most likely to go towards preventing poverty namely, community services and the social protection system (Dukelow and Considine, 2014a; 2014b). This had a real and documented impact on people already experiencing poverty while simultaneously forcing more people into poverty (see Kerrins, 2016, MacMahon and McEvvoy, 2018; Whelan, 2022; 2023).

In terms of exclusively domestic policy developments in the area of poverty across roughly the same time period, the **National Action Plan for Social Inclusion: 2007-2016** or **NAPInclusion**, (GOI, 2007) built on the previous **National Anti-Poverty Strategy** (GOI, 1997) with an ambition:

To reduce the number of those experiencing consistent poverty to between 2% and 4% by 2012, with the aim of eliminating consistent poverty by 2016.

Perhaps overtaken by the global and domestic events alluded to above, these targets were missed, and consistent poverty rose from 4.2% in 2008 to 9.1% in 2013 before falling to 8.3% in 2016 (CSO, 2016) and gradually falling

thereafter. What is interesting about the **NAPInclusion** policy document is that, whether unintentionally or by design, it begins a process of shifting language away from poverty and toward the idea of social inclusion in terms of how policies were titled. The next major policy milestone in the area of poverty in Ireland came by way of the **Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025** (GOI, 2020). Alongside an ambition to make Ireland one of the most socially inclusive states in the EU, this policy set a target to reduce the national consistent poverty rate to 2% or less of the population. As noted above, consistent poverty stood at 5.3% as of 2022.

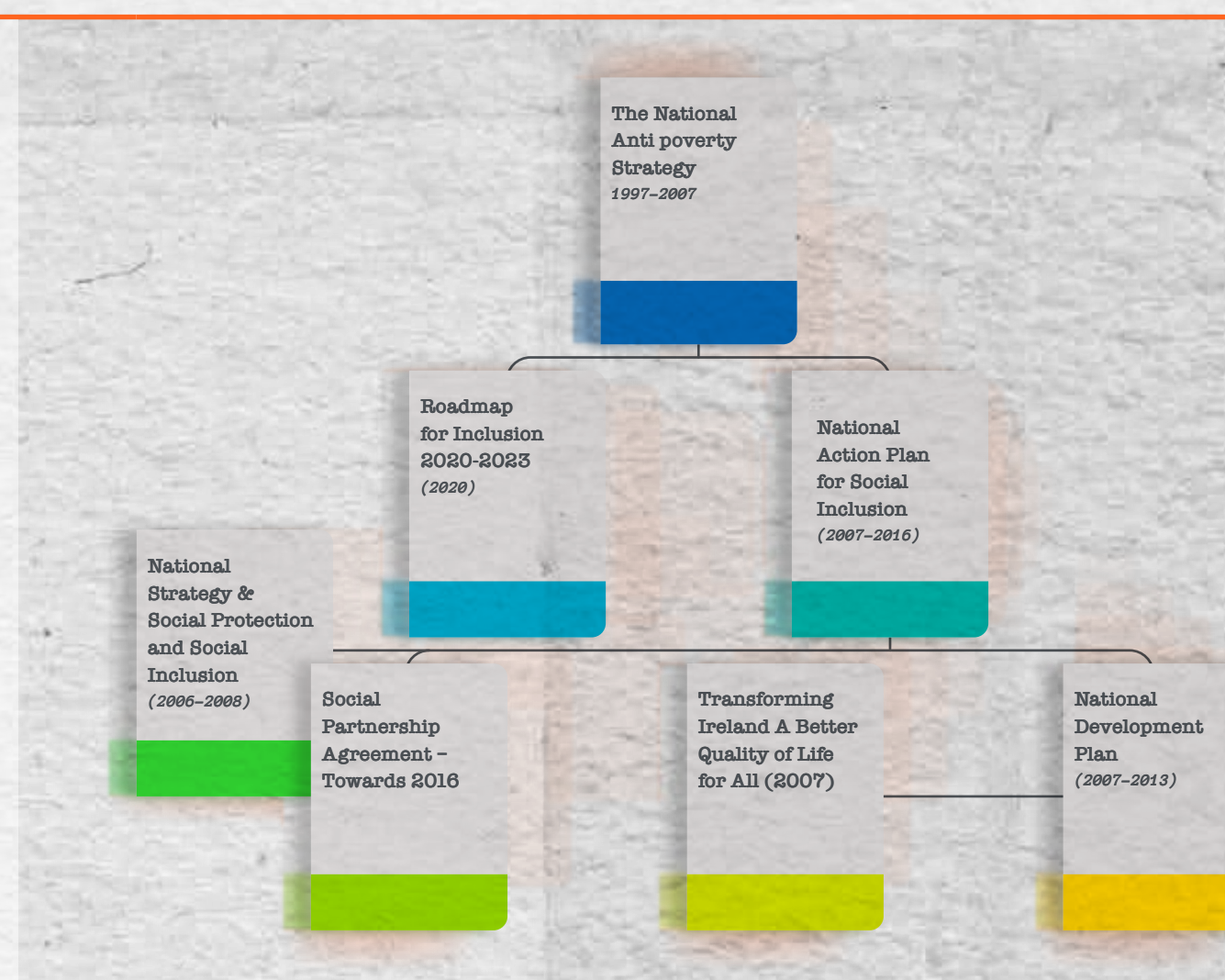


Figure 6: Antipoverty strategies Ireland (1997-2023).

Under the hood, so to speak, of formal policy programmes concerned with poverty and social inclusion the concept of ‘poverty proofing’, later to become known as ‘poverty impact assessments’ was proposed as something that should form part of all social and public policies to be introduced in Ireland following the publication of the first **National Anti-Poverty Strategy in 1997** (GOI, 1997). Poverty impact assessments were proposed as a way of assessing all policies and programmes for their potential to impact, positively or negatively, on people at risk of poverty

or already experiencing poverty. The **Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025** does recognise in principle the importance of poverty impact assessments as a way to monitor and evaluate the development and effectiveness of a range of social policies required to address and reduce poverty in Ireland (GOI 2020). However, now over twenty-five years since the introduction of ‘poverty proofing’ as a concept, the extent to which the poverty impact assessment of Irish social policies and programmes actually happens and, moreover, what this looks like in practice is unclear.

020

Current statistical trends on poverty in Ireland

Continuing with an eye to domestic poverty, it is possible to look beyond the top line figures of 13.1% AROP, 17.7% ED and 5.3% CP in 2022, to drill down further in order to get a sense of who is most affected within them. Although this report is primarily concerned with lived experiences, this is nevertheless an important undertaking in the context of offering a broad macro picture in the which the qualitative data can be grounded. Conversely, the qualitative data have the effect of grounding the statistics reviewed here to some degree. In what follows, AROP, ED and CP are all focused on to greater and lesser degrees with a particular focus on ED as perhaps the most tangible poverty metric of the three. Drawing on the latest available data, we can see that the cohort who are most at risk of poverty by principal economic status are those described as unemployed:

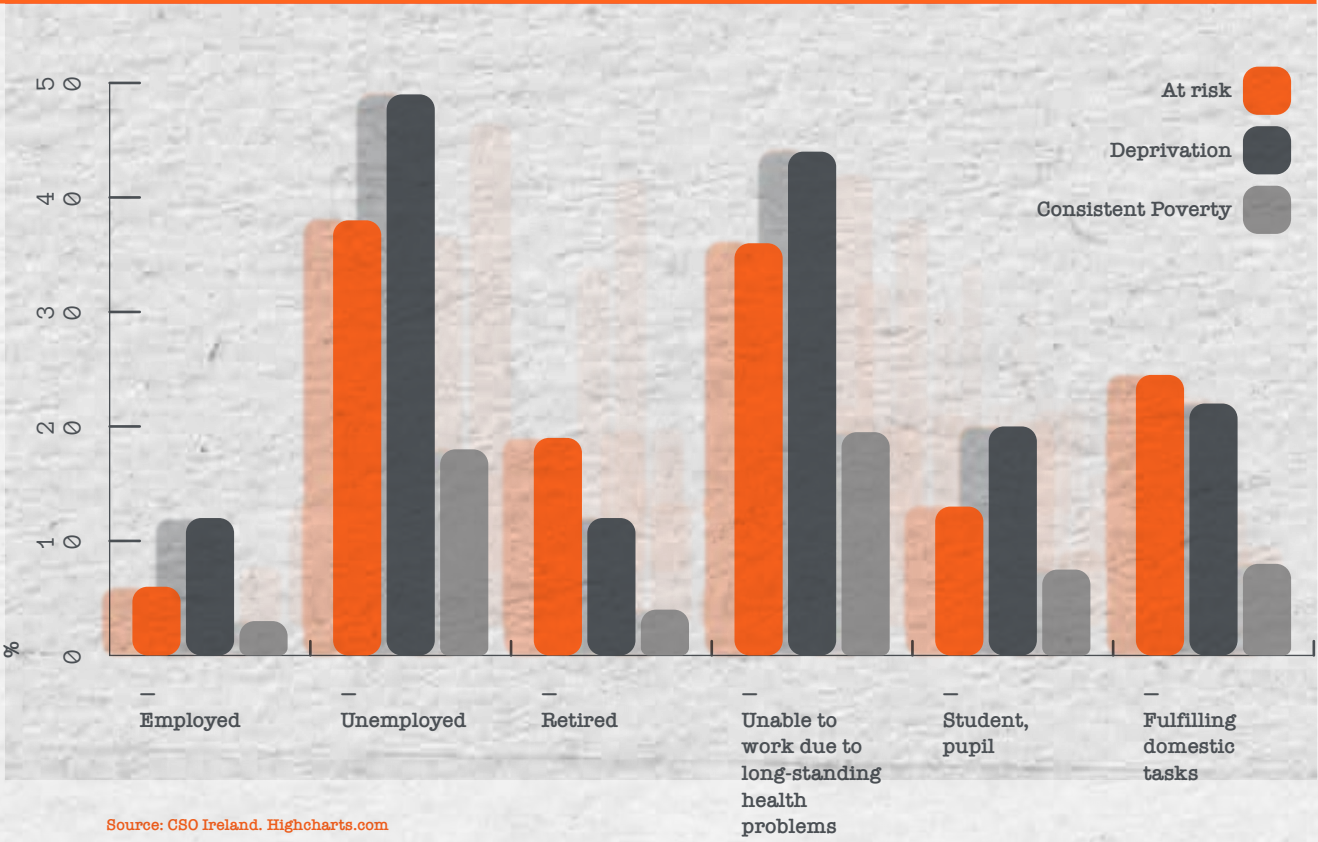


Figure 7: Poverty by principal economic status.

Unemployed persons also showed high levels of deprivation and consistent poverty as did those unable to work due to long-standing health problems. All categories in figure 7 show significantly higher levels of poverty across all three metrics when compared to those designated as employed thus demonstrating the potential of work as a barrier to poverty, though it is clearly not an absolute barrier. If we next look at poverty rates across all three metrics by household composition, we can see that very few household types remain unaffected by poverty. However, we also see that single parent households remain significantly over-represented in the context of ED with single adults aged both under and over 65 experiencing the highest levels of being AROP.

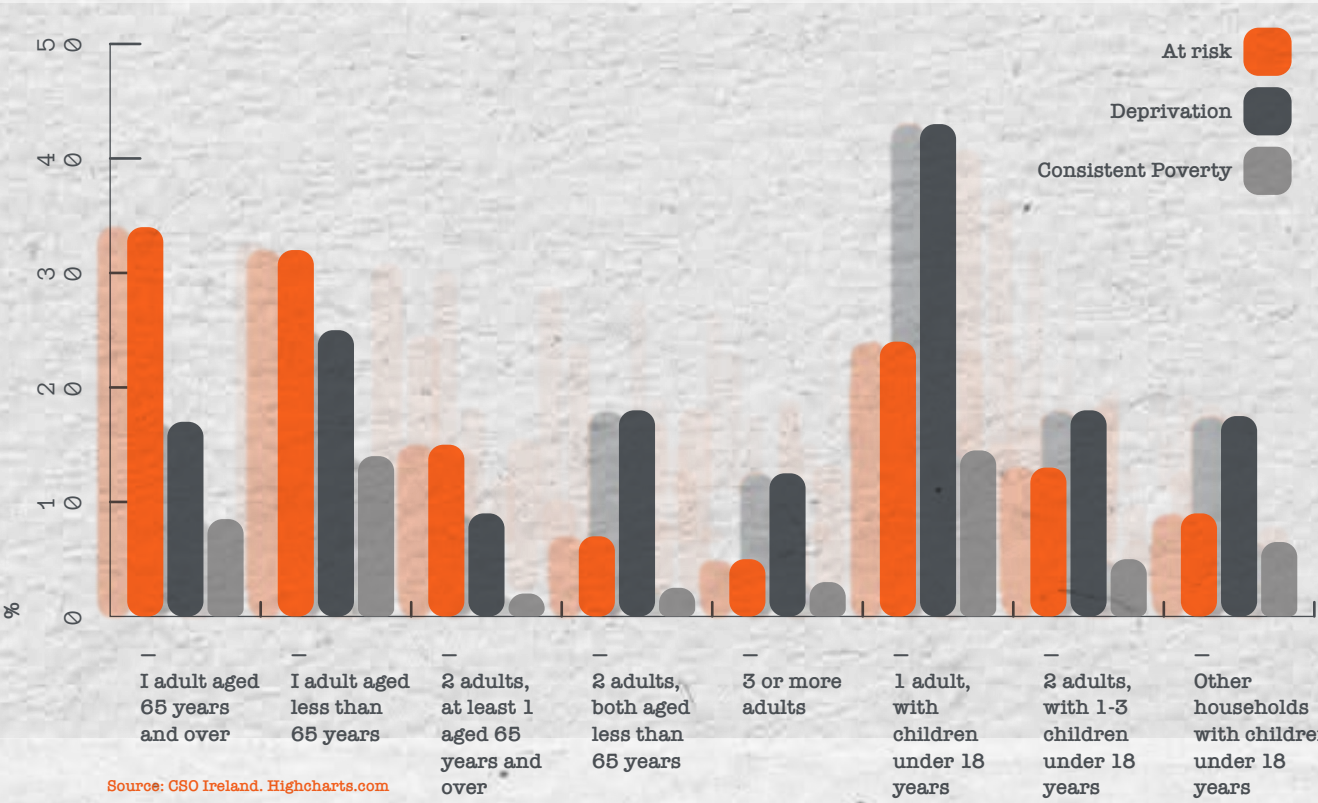


Figure 8: Poverty by household composition.

Property ownership has always been associated with income and wealth and therefore there is a strong correlation between tenure status and poverty. In the CSO figures for 2022 those renting having much higher rates of poverty across all three metrics, as can be seen in figure 9:

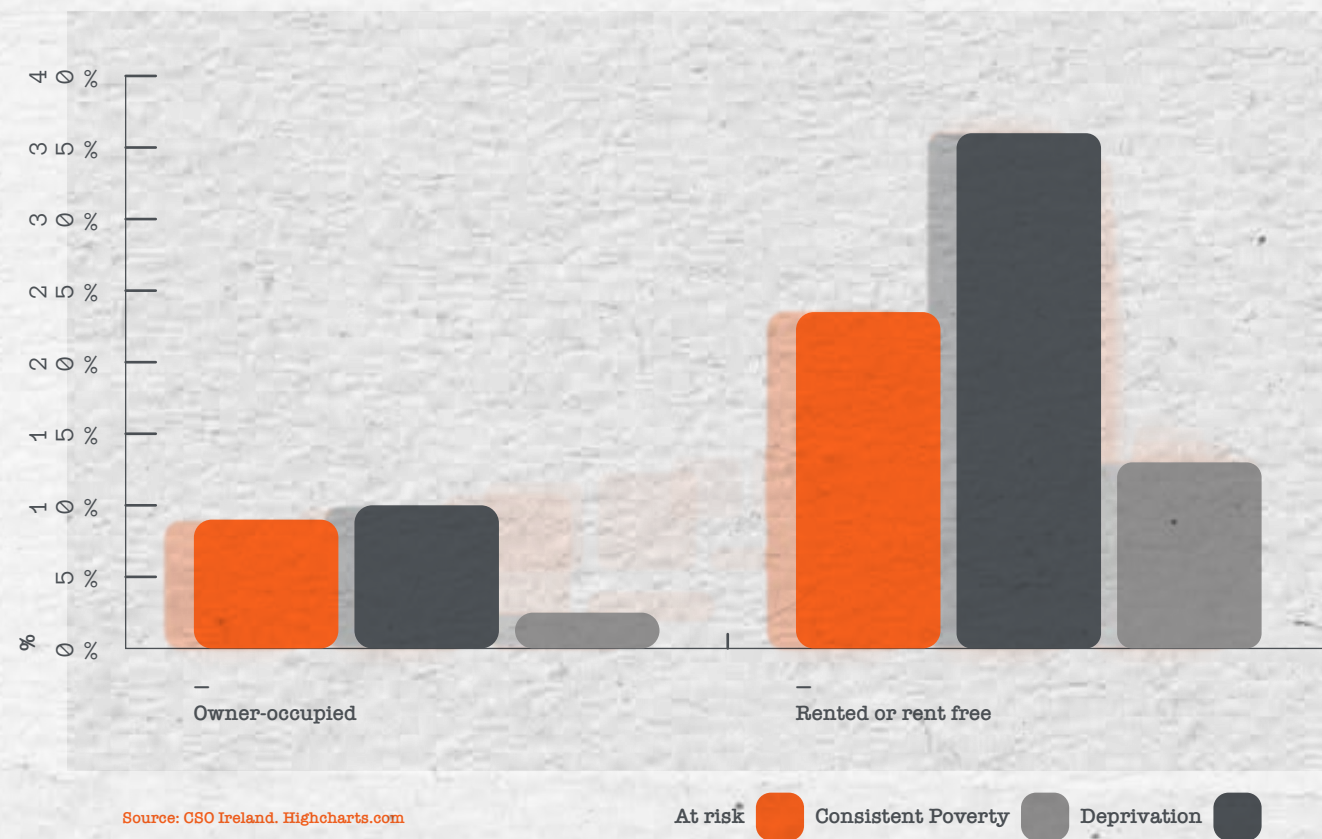


Figure 9: Poverty rates by tenure status.

Almost all of the participants who took part in the research documented in this report relied on rented accommodation in some form.

Turning our attention to ED exclusively, it is possible to get a sense of what those experiencing deprivation found it most difficult to afford and also who found it difficult to afford. Looking at ED by principal economic status across three years, in Figure 10 we again see that an absence from the labour market correlated to higher levels of enforced deprivation, and this is a consistent trend across a number of years.

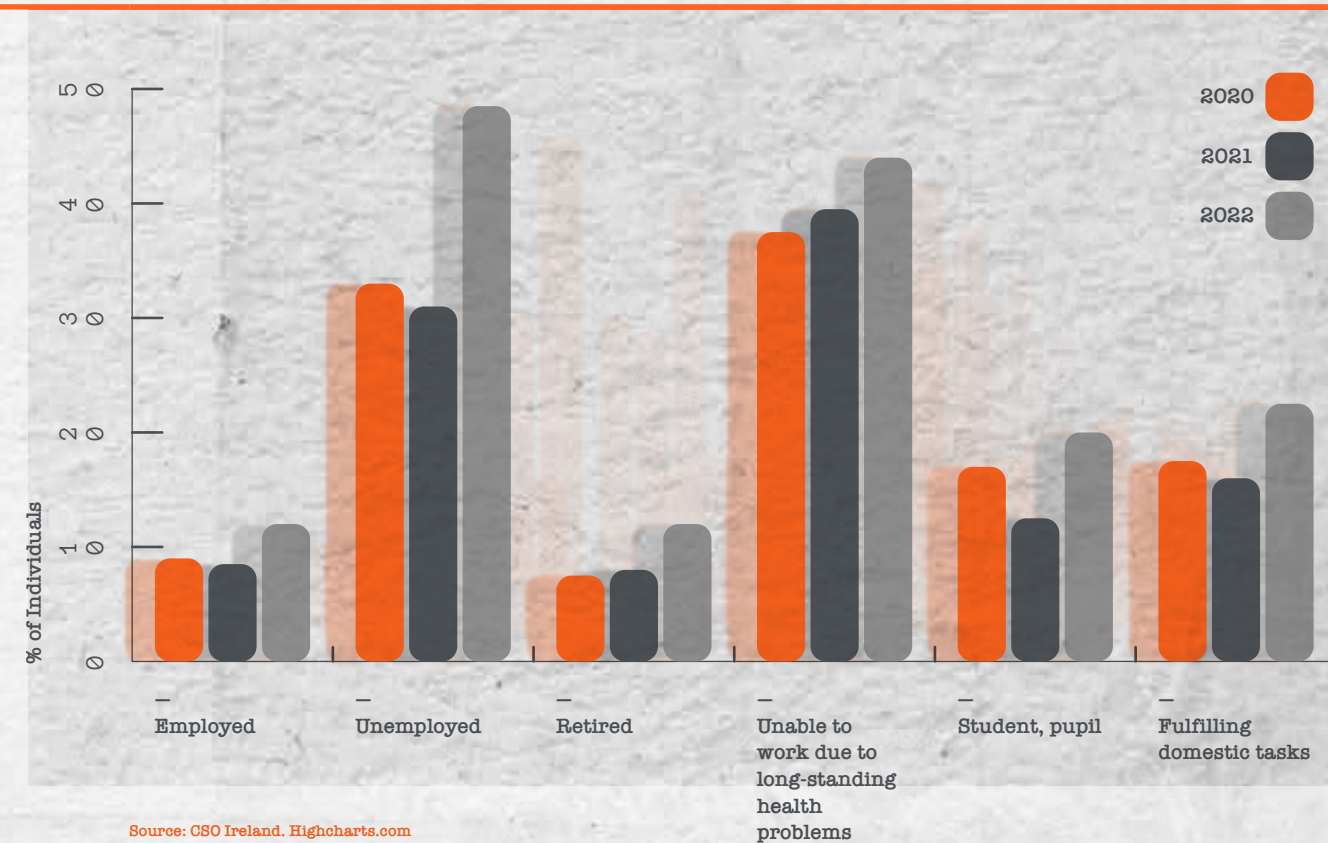


Figure 10: Enforced deprivation by principal economic status.

Figure 11 allows us to focus on ED by both household composition and year and so we can see that single parent households experience consistently high levels of ED, and the trends for single adults aged both over and under 65 given above in figure 8 remain consistent over time also.

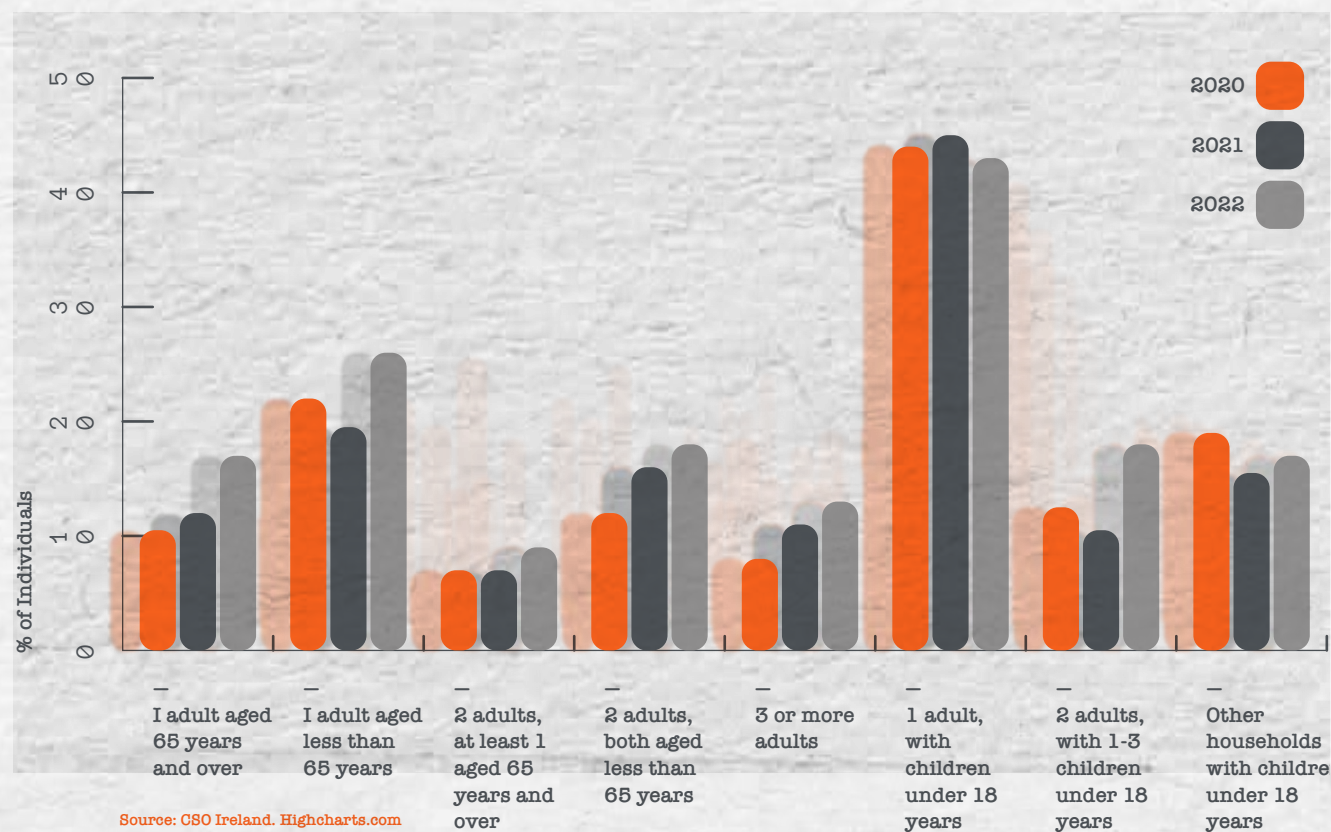


Figure 11: Enforced deprivation by household composition and year.

A theme explored in the report in the context of the qualitative data is that of poverty in childhood and the effect of this across the life course. The figures presented in figure 11 above show a strong correlation between households where children are present and high levels of ED.

Having looked at levels of ED across different groups, we next turn our attention to the kinds of items that people experiencing deprivation can find it difficult to afford.

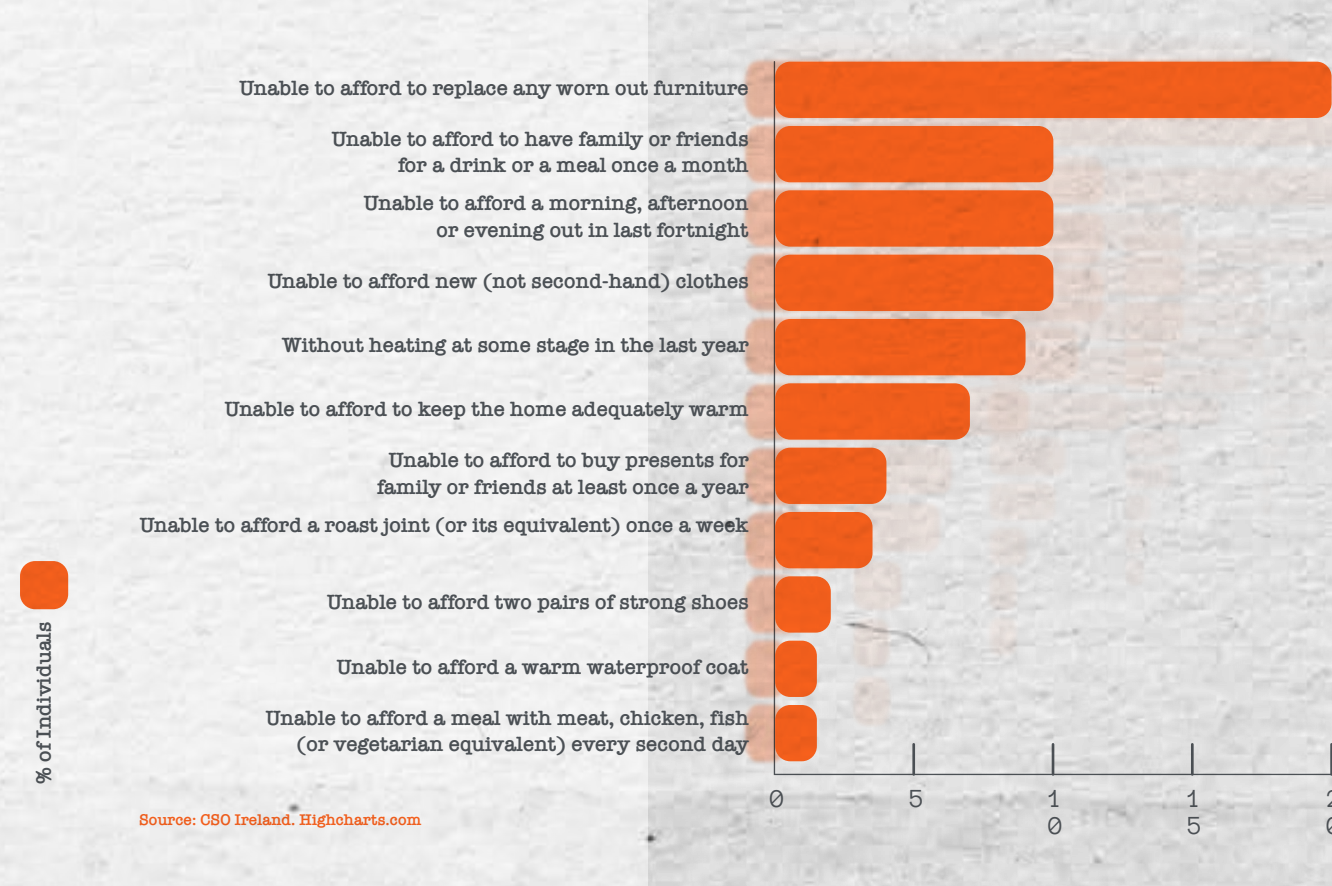


Figure 12: Types of deprivation experienced in 2022.

Unsurprisingly, given the trends historically, the highest percentage item on the deprivation index was the in/ability to replace worn out furniture. However, the 2022 figures also give a sense of what deprivation can mean in terms of lifestyle with distinctly social activities making up the next two highest scoring items. Food poverty can also be seen as a form of deprivation for some with just over one in a hundred (1.4%) unable to afford a meal with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day as seen in figure 12:

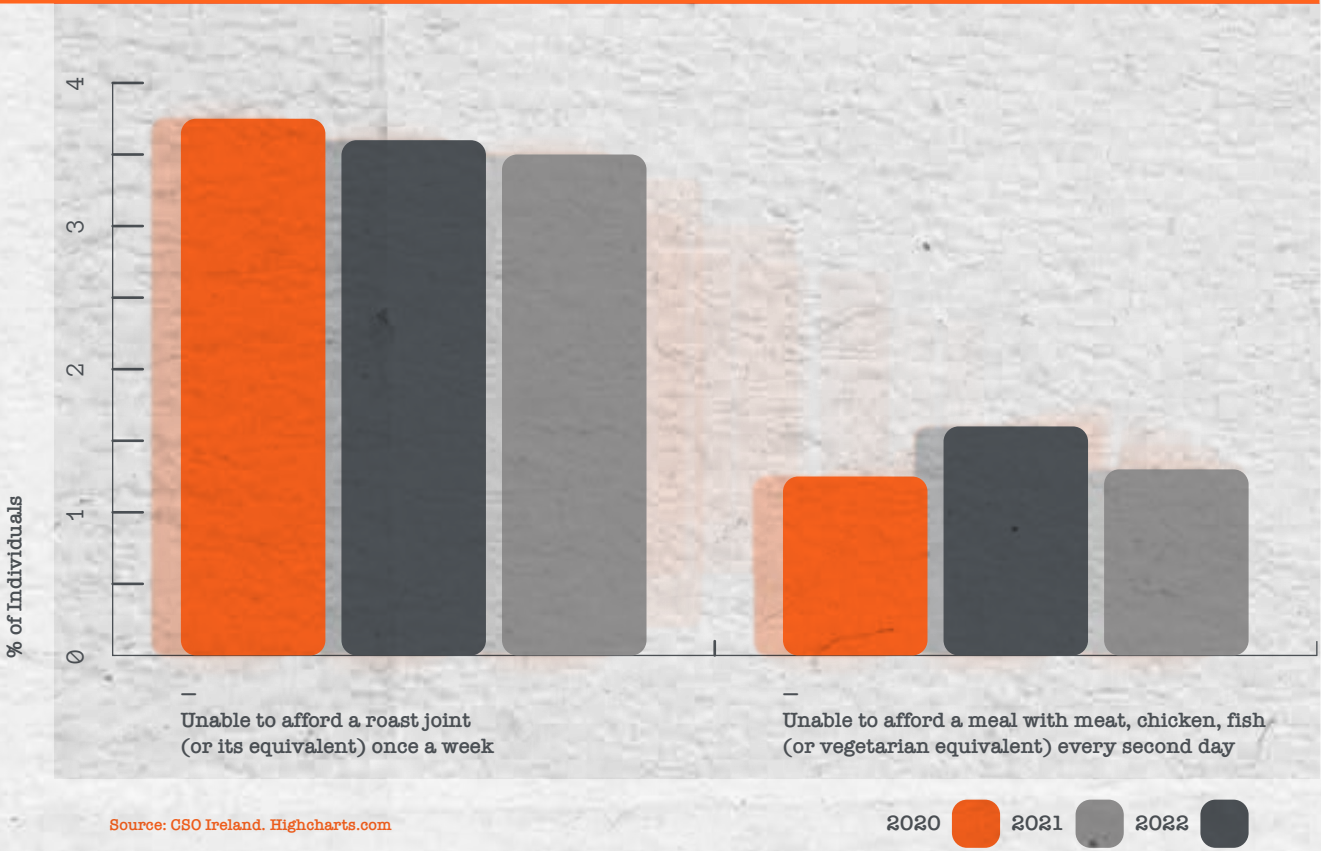


Figure 13: Food related deprivation by year.

When we analyse these figures in more detail, we can see a strong correlation between those with the highest levels of poverty across all three metrics and those experiencing deprivation relating to food.

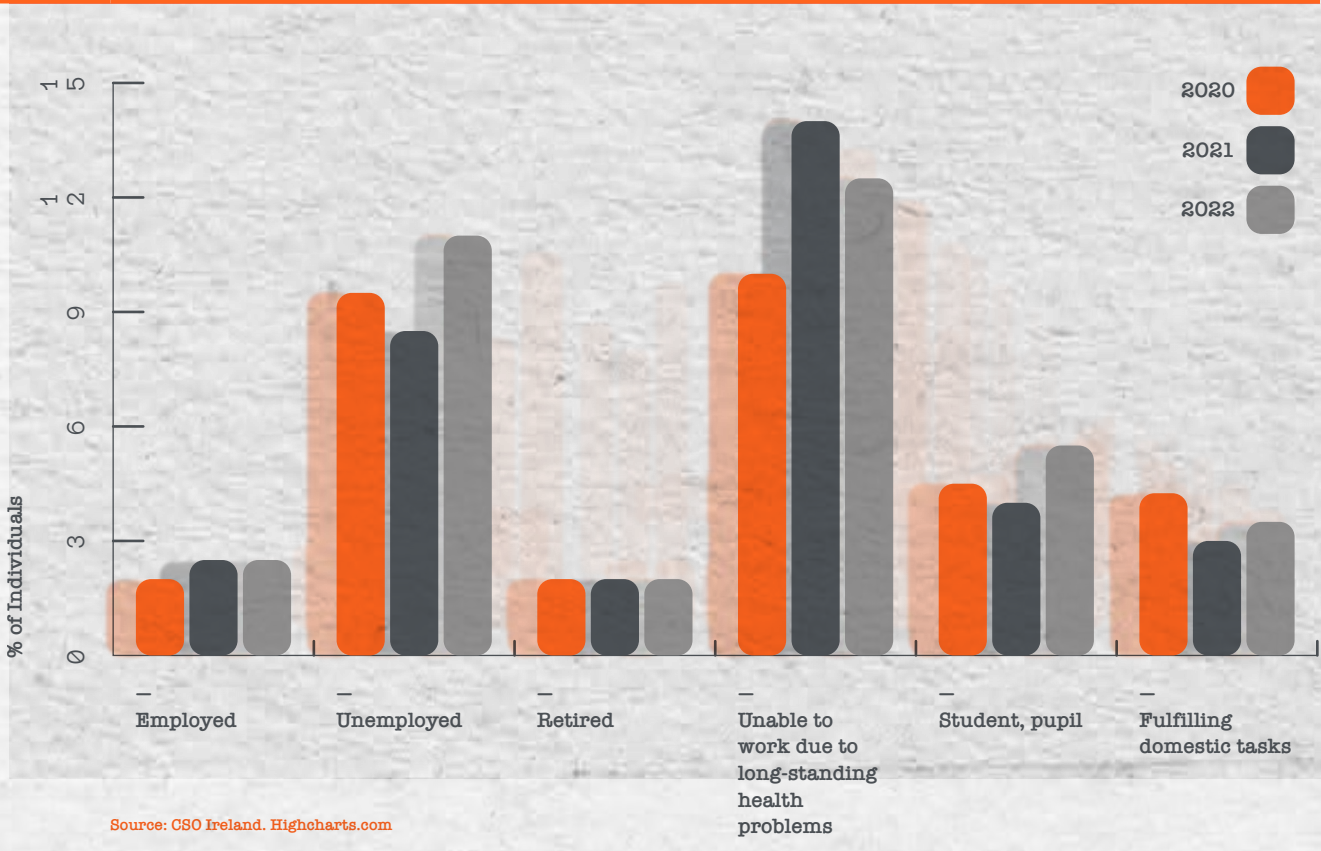


Figure 14: Food deprivation by principal economic status.

According to the Vincentian MESL Research Centre (2023), there has been significant pressure on the minimum living costs from mid-2021, which has led to cumulative increases in the core minimum essential standards of living (MESL) of 18.9% nationally over the three years from March 2020 to March 2023. Furthermore, given that the cost of the MESL basket of goods has increased by an average of 10.6% nationally in the year to March 2023, it is very likely that the SILC 2022 figures with respect to deprivations like food poverty have increased in the year to 2023.

Before leaving this section on statistical trends one last area worth covering briefly is that of income inequality. Later in the analysis, stories of great hardship will be recounted by many of the research participants. It is worth remembering that although experiences of poverty form the centrepiece of this research, there is also considerable income disparity in the country in which these experiences play out. In this respect, figure 14 shows that the richest 20% of persons had four times the income of the poorest 20% and that this is a statistic that has remain largely unchanged over the previous three years.

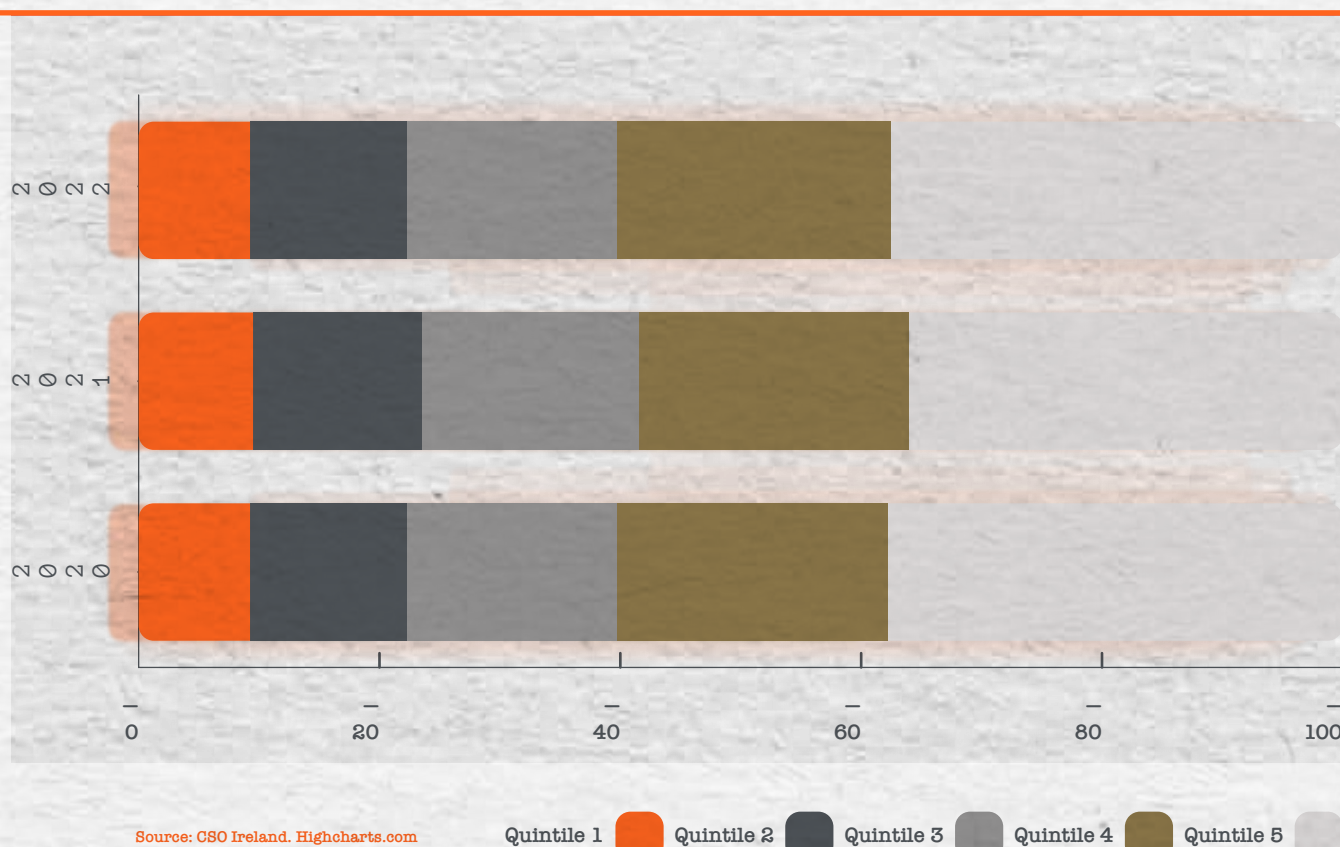


Figure 15: Share of equivalised disposable income by both quintile and year.

There can be no moral argument for poverty and there is arguably no moral or policy argument for this type of income inequality. These figures and all of the data presented above, offer a context for the qualitative testimony of the research participants.

Current policy

Poverty, according to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is considered ‘the greatest social challenge for the entire world, developing and developed’ (UN, 2016:15). Therefore, eradicating poverty has been a commitment at international and national level. In the Irish context, the *Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025*, notes that ‘this Roadmap is focused on 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’. With a shift to social inclusion at the core of poverty, this policy acknowledges that:

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 people in society generally (Government, 2020: 11).

The ambitions, goals, and targets of the *Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025* use an expanded approach, which moves away from the traditional income poverty focus, and goes towards building social inclusion. In doing so, it targets specific measures and goals to capture progress across housing, healthcare, childcare and social integration, which can underpin a better quality of life for all (GOI, 2020). However, the

ambitious strategy aiming to reduce the national consistent poverty rate to 2% or less of the population by 2025 and become one of the most inclusive states in the EU, does not seem to have fully taken the voices of those living in poverty into consideration. This is a serious omission given that any meaningful emphasis on social inclusion in the context of poverty should naturally include the voices of those most affected. Moreover, by not placing the voices of those with direct experience at the centre of policy design, the problem of poverty continues to be defined in predominantly monetary and resource-based terms. These, of course are important considerations in the context of poverty, yet by focusing on these exclusively, there is a danger of silencing those whose testimony might allow for a deeper and more nuanced understanding of poverty and social exclusion.

Remaining report outline

The remainder of the report is taken up by three further substantive sections. The next brief section acts as a bridging section and explores the character and value of qualitative research, drawing on several examples before illustrating the uniqueness of the research documented in this report. The second remaining section presents the findings from the research. From a lived-experience perspective, it covers a number of themes related to experiences of poverty. Each participant, along with their walk maps and a sample of their photography is introduced. The overall or anchor theme of this section focuses on the question: ‘What can poverty do?’

030

This question is explored through the introduction of a number of discrete, yet interlocking themes as follows: childhood poverty and the effects across the life course; poverty as a lack of good options; socioeconomic discrimination and territorial stigma; how the other half live: a divided society. The section finishes with a corollary which returns to the question, 'What can poverty do?' and suggests that ultimately poverty represents a waste of potential. The final section of the report offers a brief discussion on the implications of what has been presented.

031

What does qualitative research offer?

The findings section of this report presents materials that were both gathered and analysed using what may be broadly referred to as qualitative techniques (Bryman, 2012; Gronmo, 2020) and so before presenting the findings, it will be useful to offer a brief discussion of what qualitative research offers while also highlighting the values that this type of research is underpinned by. Taking values as a starting point, this report and the project as a whole embraces qualitative research with a 'big Q', meaning it embraces qualitative methods, but also, equally importantly, qualitative values (Braun and Clarke, 2021). The intention, therefore, is to both champion the doing of qualitative research as a means of arriving at real, distinctive and meaningful social scientific knowledge while also championing lived experience as a form of knowledge. Simply put, 'big Q' qualitative research aims for depth of understanding over and above probability and breadth. This can lead to criticisms based on particular understandings of generalisability. In this respect, it should be noted qualitative research *does* lack generalizability when it is understood only through one particular type of generalizability, that is, statistical-probabilistic generalizability. However, statistical-probabilistic generalisability is not the goal here nor in 'big Q' qualitative work in general. Moreover, qualitative

research based on 'big Q' values can in fact be strengthened by the deep focus permitted by smaller sample sizes (Crouch and McKenzie, 2006). Indeed, Crouch and McKenzie (2006) have suggested that small sample sizes are often preferable in forms of exploratory research, qualifying this by noting that such research would ultimately be grounded or embedded within existing and ongoing cognate research.

Qualitative methods can take many forms including interviews, community studies and focus groups all of which potentially offer significant value depending on the research context. The research documented in this report has employed creative methods based on mapping, walking and photography and the precise value of this approach will be covered further on. Firstly, however, the value of qualitative methods generally will be described by drawing on specific examples of qualitative research in an Irish context and in the context of poverty and social exclusion each of which demonstrate what qualitative methods can reveal that other methods, taken in isolation, can't.

Against all odds

In a study by Daly and Leonard (2002) entitled '*Against all odds: Family life on a low income in Ireland*' the lives of thirty families living with

and experiencing poverty and social exclusion are rendered in detailed and complex terms, exposing the nuances at the heart of experiences of poverty. This study was based on in-depth interviews with parents and children in three locations across Ireland. In the foreword to the study (2002: xvii-xviii) the value of the qualitative reporting contained within is made clear and it is noted that:

The study brings added value to what we already know about the difficulties facing poor families and children in two distinct ways. As a qualitative study, it gives a first-hand expression to the voice and experience of families affected by poverty, revealing the various facets by which poverty traumatises family life. In addition, the study reveals the diverse experiences of individual family members affected by poverty, in particular the different ways in which poverty is experienced by adults and children.

With this important point of distinction to the fore, the study goes on to offer a fine-grained glimpse into the complex nature of experiencing poverty covering poverty as it relates to income and budgetary constraints while also explicating the realities of everyday life for people experiencing poverty. Ground-breaking in both scope and focus Daly and Leonard's (2002) study clearly demonstrates the value of qualitative reporting and the unique insights that it can offer. What is particularly unique is the focus on the everyday lives of the participants, one of whom, the husband in a family, notes that:

Life is rotten. I'm just getting down all the time. I don't look to the future at all now. It's one thing one day and another thing the next day, another bill or something else. I'm not entitled to the

Christmas bonus or the fuel allowance. We borrow money during the week, from one week to another. I see the politicians on telly saying all they're doing for people who are not working. They're doing nothing. I watch the Budget and that when it's on. They give you a rise and you don't get it for six months and then the rent goes up (2002: 59).

This excerpt from Daly and Leonard's (2002) study shows that the poor are not merely the passive recipients of social policy but rather that they live and breath social policy and its consequences. It shows also that people are not immune to the ideological messages that underpin social policy. This captures the unique value inherent within and justice orientated possibilities of qualitative reporting by revealing that which might otherwise remain 'hidden in statistics' (Whelan, 2023).

Families and Poverty: Everyday Life on a Low Income

In a study that in very many ways builds and updates the work of Daly and Leonard (2002), *Families and Poverty: Everyday life on a low income* by Daly and Kelly (2015) continues the task of documenting the everyday lives and experiences of persons on low income in ways that are starkly rendered. The study sample comprised 21 lone-parent and 30 couple families from cities such as Belfast and Derry. Many of the families involved in the study consisted of households that were either partly or entirely absent from the labour market. The latter is an important point as, in the first instance, the study offers a perspective unique to qualitative reporting

by problematising individualistic explanations for unemployment through showing that the reasons for not working were often complex and included sickness or disability or the lack of accessible childcare. Moreover, many of the participant families clearly experienced significant financial hardship and in a further demonstration of the value of qualitative reporting it was shown that a majority of the respondents had significant mental or physical health problems that were clearly strongly linked to their social and economic circumstances. In terms of revealing aspects of poverty that statistical measures alone are not sufficient to uncover, the textures of life on a low income comes through strongly. The study shows that as people on low incomes make decisions, rent or mortgage payments, utility bills and food purchases were prioritised while expenditure on social participation or leisure were often the first things to go. The study also shows that in many households the needs of children were almost always given precedence over and above the needs of parents, which meant that budgeting was managed in order to cover food, clothing and other aspects relating to children's lives. In a further key example, which shows what qualitative research can reveal, an obvious commitment to the well-being of children was prevalent suggesting that the often-proffered link between poverty and poor parenting is not rooted in sufficient empirical evidence. Moreover, the study demonstrated how family networks often play a part in supporting low-income households in various ways. However, despite aspects of apparent solidarity, the shame and stigma that can be associated with poverty was also strongly evident and respondents described experiences of embarrassment

and shame related to being poor. An excellent example of the power, value and justice orientated possibilities of qualitative reporting, Daly and Kelly's (2015) study continues to be significant and important for the insights it lends and the contribution it makes to an understanding of experiences of poverty and social exclusion.

Uncovering Food Poverty in Ireland

In a recent study by Drew (2022), *Uncovering Food Poverty in Ireland: A hidden deprivation*, the core of what is offered is based on semi-structured qualitative interviews with forty-two participants documenting their experiences using foodbanks in Dublin. The study places the phenomenon of food poverty or food deprivation at its centre and is an excellent example of what qualitative research can reveal, offering a complex and nuanced picture of food poverty. In this respect, Drew's (2022) analysis demonstrates how experiences of food poverty, far from being discrete, are in embedded within experiences of social security, or a lack thereof, in general. Strong links are forged between food poverty and experiences of poverty and deprivation in general and the work demonstrates how groups such as lone parents, who are perennially overrepresented in poverty statistics, are likely to be overrepresented with respect to need in the context of food poverty also. As an overarching framework, Drew (2022) deploys a pathways approach which effectively documents how the people interviewed for his study first found themselves experiencing deprivation in the context of food and how they found their way through the food poverty

034

landscape in trying to have their needs met. This unique approach allows Drew (2022) to look beyond statistics on food poverty to offer a more fully fleshed picture of what having needs as they relate to food can consist of. The analysis presented is robust and the data Drew (2022) draws upon are rich, detailed and evocative. The testimony given by the research participants continually exposes experiences of food poverty as being located within and linked to many other facets of experience such as debt, unemployment, disability, housing, and inadequate levels of social assistance. Moreover, the data demonstrate a hierarchy of need, of which, food often sits at the bottom. The complexity of food poverty emerges and there are clear examples of food deprivation being unevenly dispersed across families as parents go without so that children can eat, medication is often gone without, people go to bed and wake up hungry, special occasions foster a sense of dread and money lenders are often an unwelcome reprieve. Underlying all of this is a palpable sense of the shame, stigma and personal failure that the respondents take on. When one considers that the testimony captured in Drew's (2022) work stems from a recent study and not from a historical document, it is difficult not to be continually dismayed if not surprised by the grinding precarity that underpins the experiences of the respondents and this too is noted for the effect it has on the mental and physical well-being of those who took part in the study. As with the previous studies cited here as exemplars in the qualitative tradition, part of the value in Drew's (2022) study lies in the justice that is rendered by including the voices of those who may not traditionally have a

034

voice while also fostering the potential for further forms of justice with respect to broader conceptualisations of and possibilities for inclusion.

Qualitative research: Applying creative methods

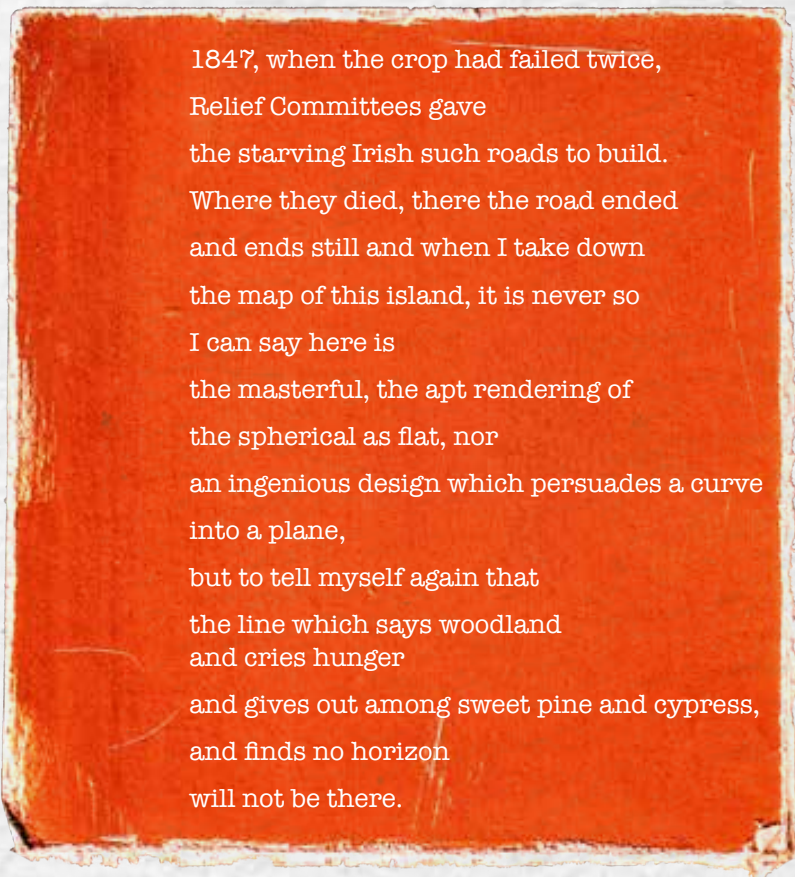
The original research presented in this report seeks to emulate and go beyond the types of studies cited above in terms of offering something valuable and unique based on 'big Q' qualitative research while also extending the possibilities for what this can consist of through the employment of creative methods. This is an attempt to lend additional textures to our understanding of poverty while also expanding on what might be meant by inclusion. As noted in the introductory section of this report, the methods employed in this research have been inspired by O'Neill and Roberts's (2020) 'Walking Interview Biographical Method' (WIBM). Before presenting the findings, it will be useful to further ground the particularities of the approach and show how and also why it was deemed useful for this project.

WHY WALKING

In the first instance, as part of the codesign of this project walking was suggested as an alternative to traditional qualitative interviews and was universally endorsed by both the research partners and the participants. The possibilities of walking as a way capturing meaning and as a vehicle through which a discussion on poverty could take place was immediately apparent. This is particularly true given that the research participants

035

were offered the opportunity to choose where they would like to walk and so had an immediate ownership of how they would like to frame their thoughts and contribution. Walking can offer a frame for experience and can help to conjure memories which may echo in a landscape while not appearing on any maps. The possibility of walking in the context of uncovering, connecting to and understanding experience is distinct. In the poem, *That the Science of Cartography is Limited*, Eavan Boland traces the textures of a landscape, textures that maps may fail to capture but that are part of a place, nonetheless. Of the time of the Great Famine she writes:



1847, when the crop had failed twice,
Relief Committees gave
the starving Irish such roads to build.
Where they died, there the road ended
and ends still and when I take down
the map of this island, it is never so
I can say here is
the masterful, the apt rendering of
the spherical as flat, nor
an ingenious design which persuades a curve
into a plane,
but to tell myself again that
the line which says woodland
and cries hunger
and gives out among sweet pine and cypress,
and finds no horizon
will not be there.

Many of the research participants understood the prospect of space being inhabited by ghosts, echoes and potentials instinctively so that, for example, Andrew, carefully curated

his walk in order to make deliberate and conscious observations on poverty which he threaded through his own story. Walking through Grafton Street Andrew was able to illustrate contrasts and divides as he saw them, later passing Dáil Éireann, the Irish Parliament, Andrew made direct connections between experiences of poverty, his own and those of others, to what he saw as failures of government policy. Kye took the opportunity of walking to tell the story of two people who he loved and to whom he was close, taking in several landmarks in a journey that marked those same people's progression across the city, a city in which they struggled for survival, a city etched with pain that does not show on a map. Joy does not show on maps either. Jimmy and Christina took part as a couple and used the opportunity of being in space to tell the story of how they met, supported one another, became a couple and later married. Their story revolved around a place, The Granby Centre, which is run by Salvation Army and opened in Dublin in 1994, Poverty and hardship has been a feature of Jimmy and Christina's story, it has also been part of what brought them together. There are many more examples of being in space lending depth and meaning to the interview process from across the dataset. Bearing this out, Kinney (2017: 2) notes that:

In the participatory walking interview the route chosen by the participant to walk is not necessarily representative of a route the participant normally follows, nor does it represent the participants' usual routines or habits. The researcher accompanies the participant on a walk around a geographical location that the participant has selected which is related to the topic being

investigated...The purpose of this format is to enable the researcher to access the participants' attitudes and knowledge about a specific geographical area...

This additional layer of access that came through being in space and walking along together was a strong feature of the walks that underpin the research reported further on and many insights that arguably would not have been possible in the context of a traditional interview emerged over the course of the walks through connections with sound, visuals, the built environment and the relevance of landmarks. It can also be noted that walking while conducting an interview undoubtedly had an equalising effect and did much to address the power imbalances that can sometimes characterise the traditional interview. In this respect, Kinney (2017: 3) further notes that:

Walking alongside a participant is regarded as an inclusive process compared with the traditional sit-down interview because it is viewed more as a partnership, thus reducing power imbalances. It allows participants to feel more comfortable with the research because it is being conducted in a geographical location that they are familiar with...

This latter point about inclusion is important and ultimately foreshadows one of the core conclusions and recommendations of this report which suggests fostering conceptualisations of inclusion for both research and policy making.

MAPPING AND PHOTOGRAPHY

In their photo essay with Faye, O'Neil and McHugh (2017: 207) note that:

...using walking methods, sociologically, alongside arts-based...interventions (in this case photography...), participatory collaborations between the arts and social research might make a significant contribution to better knowledge and understanding...

Undoubtedly the photography that formed part of this project added an additional and wholly relevant texture and form of data which has had the effect of also lending additional understanding. So that, for example, Paul who photographed Aldborough House (featured further on) saw the abandoned and decaying spectre of this landmark in North Inner-city Dublin as symbolic of the abandonment and decay of this part of the city in general. Paul also sees the potential asset to the area that Aldborough House could be and sees this as analogous to the potential of the area itself if the right supports and policies were there to help realise it. Philip's photograph of the gate of Mountjoy prison tells a story of the history of the city that has been woven into myth and literature (and the auld triangle, went jingle, jangle) while also telling part of his own story, the prison being a place where Philip spent many years of his life. There are many more examples from across the collection of photographs of images that make real and tangible connections with the experiences of the photographers, and these add depth and nuance to the experiences and observation recounted in the walking interviews. In the next section, each participant is introduced along with their map and a selection of their photography and themes from the walking interviews are reported.

Themes from the walks: Maps, photographs and testimony

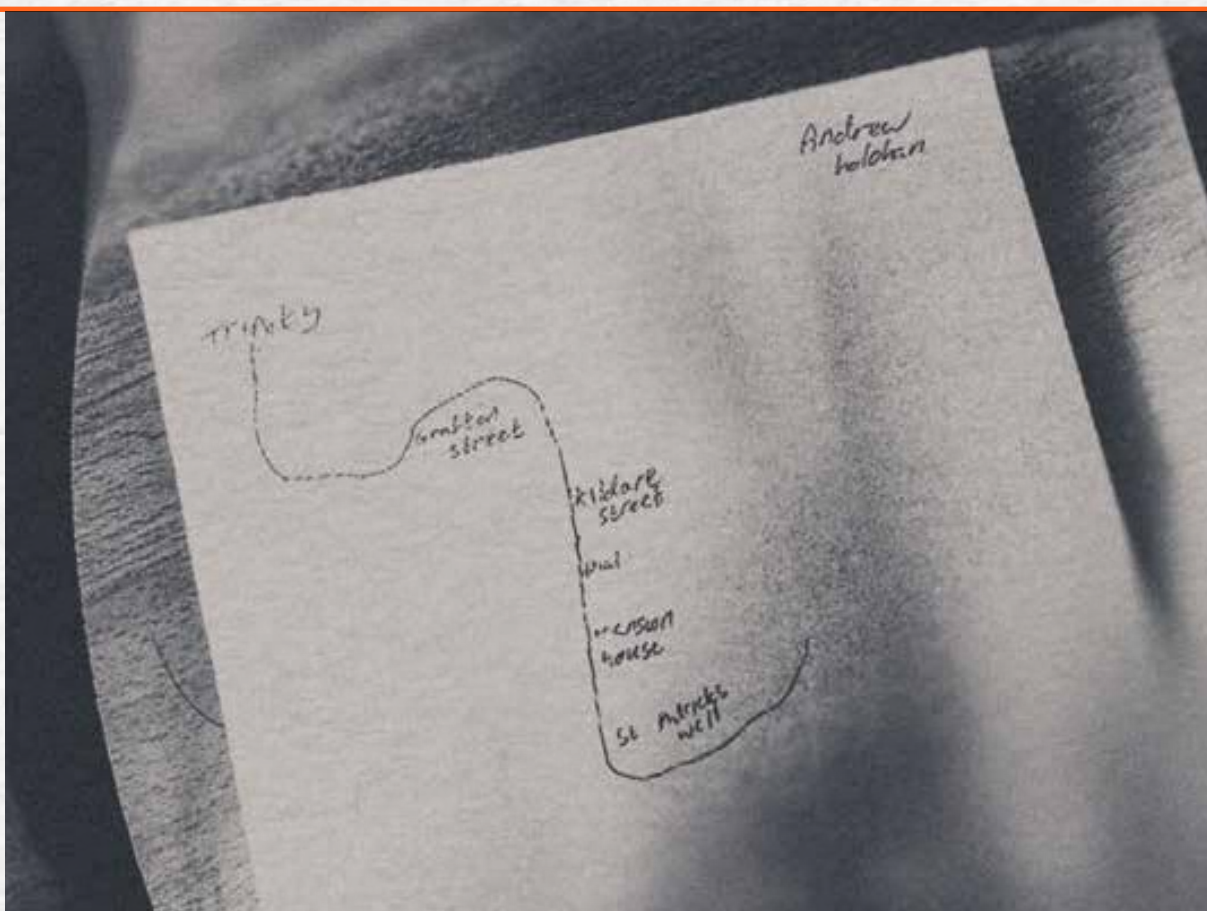
In this section, the findings arising from the walking interviews are presented. Each participant, along with their walk maps and a sample of their photography^{iv} is introduced. The overall or anchor theme of this section focuses on the question: '*What can poverty do?*' This question is explored through the introduction of a number of discrete yet interlocking themes that were carefully constructed via a deep analysis of the interview transcripts.

The first of these themes draws on testimony that illustrates experiences of poverty in childhood and the effect that this can have across the life-course. Following this, the theme of poverty as a 'lack of good options' is introduced and explored. The third theme focuses on experiences of socio-economic discrimination and on how such experiences are often linked to territorial stigma. The fourth theme illustrates the notion of a 'divided society' and the section finishes with a corollary which suggests that ultimately poverty represents a waste of potential.

The discussion and conclusion section that follows this section will explore the implications of what has been presented by returning to the question '*What can poverty do?*' Because qualitative data is 'messy' by nature, structure has been 'imposed' upon it through the construction of these themes and this has involved separating out and distinctly presenting aspects of a common experiences which, in reality, are intimately intertwined. This simply means that some degree of overlap between themes is unavoidable. As noted in the introduction, a light 'double hermeneutic' which takes a lead from IPA has been used as a form of analysis and it is important to mention this here again to remind readers that what follows represents a researcher's interpretation of how the research respondents have interpreted their own lives and the world they live in.

A walk with Andrew

Andrew is an anti-poverty campaigner and activist who has a strong connection with ATD Ireland. He is married and a father of two. He is also somebody with lived experiences of poverty and of addiction both of which he spoke about during the walking interview.



A walk map drawn by Andrew.

Andrew chose to walk up Grafton Street, across St Stephen's Green and down Kildare Street. For Andrew, the symbolism of the walk focused on contrasts. Grafton Street is a bustling and wealthy shopping street on Dublin city centre's south side, yet as evening draws in, homelessness services begin to appear to offer aid to those who need it. Kildare Street houses Dáil Éireann where the Irish Government sits, and this was symbolic for Andrew in the context of what he sees as failures of policy in the areas of poverty and socioeconomic discrimination.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology



Harry Street from Grafton Street. At the top of the picture, The Westbury Hotel, where Andrew has previously applied for a job as a porter, can be seen.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology



Dáil Éireann from Kildare Street.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology

A walk with Jimmy and Christina

Jimmy and Christina are a married couple who decided to take part together. They are both community activists with ATD Ireland and both have had significant lived experiences of poverty. They have also both had experiences with different forms of social support services, and both spoke openly about their lives and stories. Jimmy, in particular, spoke openly about experiences of addiction. For this interview, Jimmy and Christina chose to meet and talk at a location that is deeply symbolic to both of them, the Granby centre.



A drawing of the Granby centre by Christina.

Located on Granby Row near the Rotunda Hospital in Dublin 1, the Granby centre is run by the Salvation Army and opened in Dublin in 1994. It is a place of great significance to Jimmy and Christina as this is where they met, formed a relationship and ultimately became a part of each other's lives and stories.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology



The Granby Centre, Dublin 1.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology

A walk with Long

Long is a Chinese national who has lived in Ireland for over thirty years. He is a father of one and a talented and trained artist. He has had a longstanding involvement with ATD Ireland. He is also someone who has experienced and witnessed poverty at different times throughout his life.



A walk map by Long.

Long chose to walk in Ballymun, Dublin 9 where he has lived for over 25 years. Long's map took us from his house to Poppintree Park in Ballymun, a spot he frequently visits. Of particular relevance to Long are the swans that populate the lake in Poppintree park. For Long, the strength and longevity of the bonds between mating pairs of swans was deeply symbolic and it was clear that Long felt there were lessons to be learned from the inherent nature of the how swans love and care for one another.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

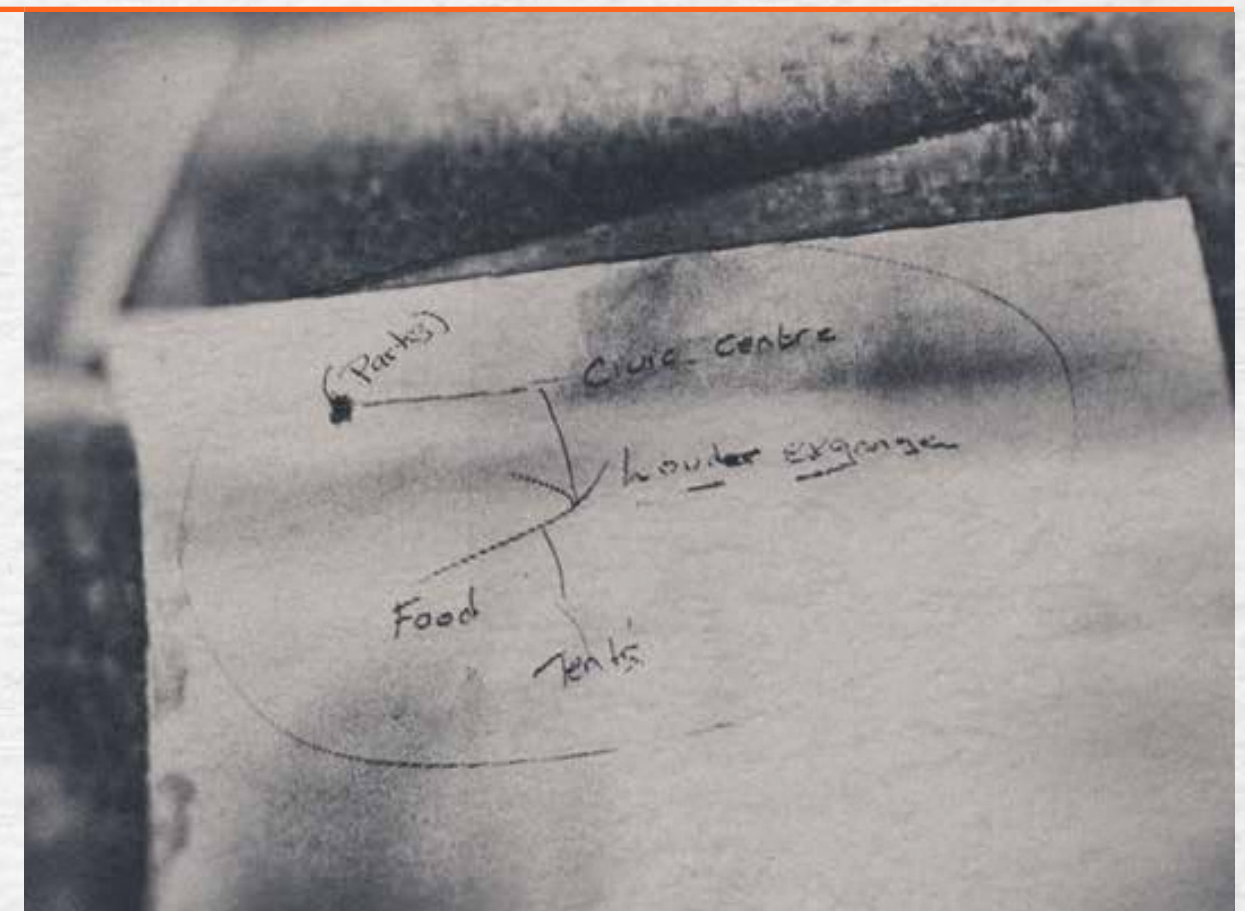
An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology



The lake at Poppintree Park, Ballymun, with swans and other birds.

A walk with Annemarie

Like Long, Annemarie also lives in Ballymun. Annemarie comes from a big family. Alongside caring for her own children, Annemarie has been involved in caring for siblings, nieces and nephews over many years. Annemarie is involved in community activism through ATD and is someone with lived experience of poverty stretching back to childhood. Annemarie is also someone with experiences of domestic violence, addiction, and interacting with social services, all of which she spoke about with intense honesty and openness during the map making and walking interview.



A walk map by Annemarie.

Annemarie chose to walk in Ballymun. The map brought us to many of the places that are or were frequent stop-offs in Annemarie's life. For Annemarie, Ballymun as a place was central to her story and so the walk as a whole was symbolic of this.



The entrance to the Civic centre in Ballymun.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology



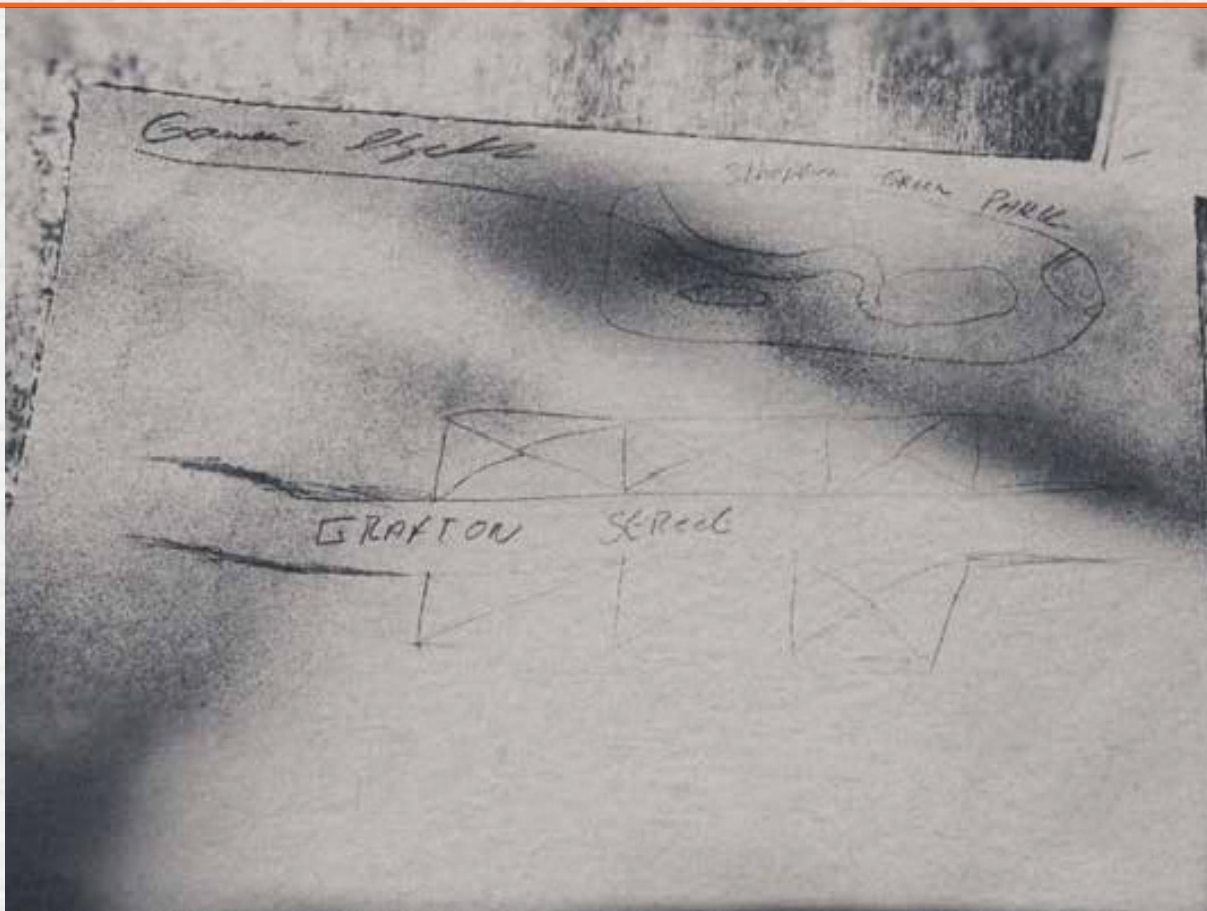
The 'labour exchange' now Intreo office in Ballymun.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology

A walk with Gavin

Gavin is a campaigner and community activist with a strong connection to ATD Ireland. A self-proclaimed 'fitness fanatic', Gavin is also someone who has experienced poverty, stigma and socio-economic discrimination stretching back to early childhood.



A walk map by Gavin.

Incredibly proud of where he comes from though deeply conscious of the effect that the stigma of place can have, Gavin chose to walk up Grafton and on into St Stephen's Green Park as a way of framing his story and contrasting where he comes from with where we walked.



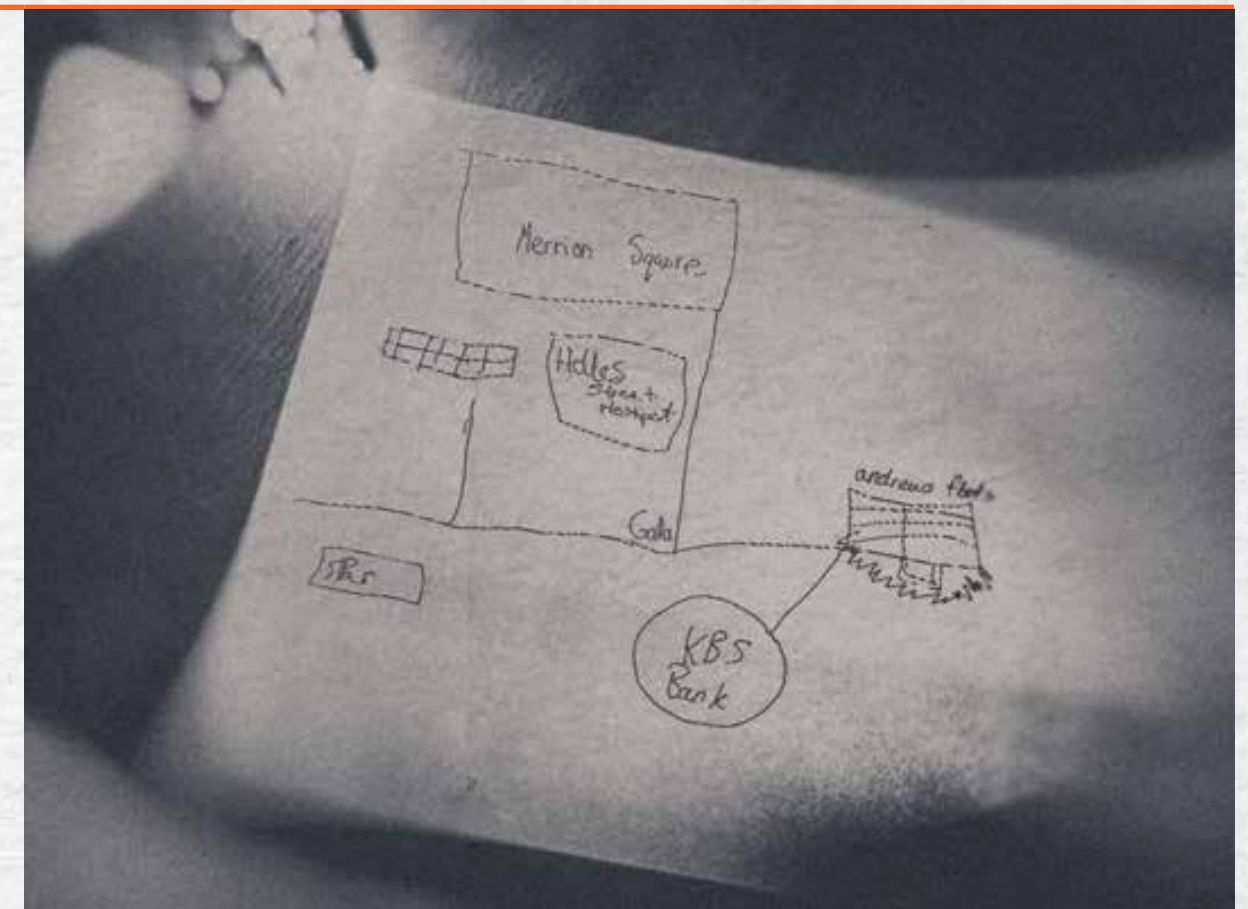
St Stephen's Green Shopping Centre from the top of Grafton Street.



St Stephen's Green Park.

A walk with Kye

Kye is a community activist with a strong connection to ATD. Kye is also a care leaver and someone who has experienced poverty throughout his life. Kye is deeply ambitious and hopes to one day use his experience to help others who find themselves in similar situations.



A walk map by Kye.

Kye's chosen walk began at Merrion Square in Dublin 2, passing close by Hollis Street Maternity Hospital and taking in a number of landmarks before finishing at the top of Pearse Street, close to Trinity College. Kye's walk told the story of a homeless couple, a man and a woman whom he was close too, and of their movements over time, taking-in the narrow space at the top of a set of steps which the couple used as a place to sleep, an abandoned flat owned by the Peter McVerry Trust that the couple occupied for a short time and an abandoned Dublin Corporation flat complex next to which the couple lived and slept. The events recounted by Kye ultimately culminate in deep tragedy as the male partner in the couple died from hypothermia in depths of winter.



The steps where the couple slept, near Holles Street Maternity Hospital.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology



A disused and derelict block of Dublin Corporation flats, the shed at the right-hand side of the picture is where the man Kye spoke about during interview died.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology

A walk with Paul

Paul is a community activist with strong roots in north inner-city Dublin. Paul also has a long-standing connection with ATD. Couched in his own lived experiences, Paul is a passionate advocate for social justice and is deeply conscious of social inequalities, socio-economic discrimination and territorial stigma. Paul's walk told a story of north inner-city Dublin as a place that is often overlooked or forgotten about, a place of strong community despite adversity while also being a place where tragedy, created by what Paul sees as failures of policy, is often close at hand and visible in the built environment.



Aldborough House, 27-28 Portland Row, Dublin 1.

Aldborough House is a landmark Georgian building in Dublin, Ireland. Built as a private residence by 1795, the original structure included a chapel (since lost) and a theatre wing. The house was used for periods as a

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology

school, barracks and post office depot, before becoming vacant in the early 21st century. For Paul, Aldborough House was symbolic of policy failures characterised by a lack of meaningful government intervention in north inner-city Dublin. Seemingly abandoned and slowly dilapidating, for Paul, Aldborough House represented a potential and much needed resource for the community.



'Home' a sculpture on the corner of Buckingham Street Lower, Sean MacDermott Street Lower and Killarney Street.

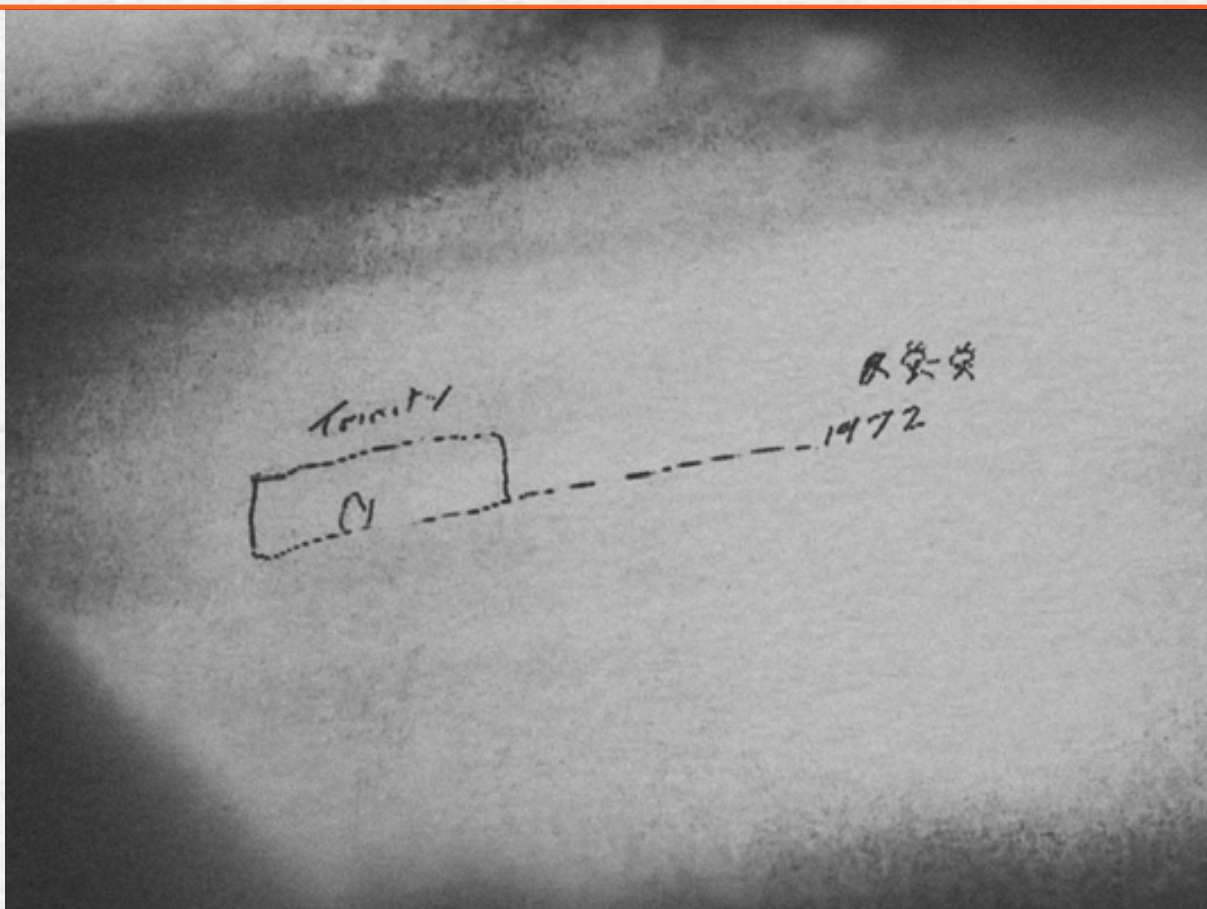
A sculpture entitled *Home*, erected to commemorate lives lost to drug use, for Paul, this was also deeply symbolic of policy failures and of the inequalities associated with place.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology

A walk with Terence

A proud Liverpudlian with strong Irish roots, Terence is a long-time friend of ATD Ireland. A storyteller in the truest sense, Terence spoke at length about his upbringing, his family, his struggles in life and his deep sense of connection to both Ireland and Liverpool.



A walk map by Terence.

Terence chose to walk firstly from the gates of Trinity College Dublin to the Famine Memorial Statues on Dublin's North Dock. For Terence, the statues are deeply evocative and moving and the position of the statues close to the Irish Financial Services Centre is replete with symbolism. The second leg of the walk brought us to a memorial to the victims of the Dublin and Monaghan bombings on Dublin's Talbot Street. The bombings represent an event which has had a deep and lasting impact on Terence who was in the city and close by at the time of the explosion.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology



The Famine Memorial Statues with the IFSC in the background, Custom House Quay, North Dock, Dublin 1.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

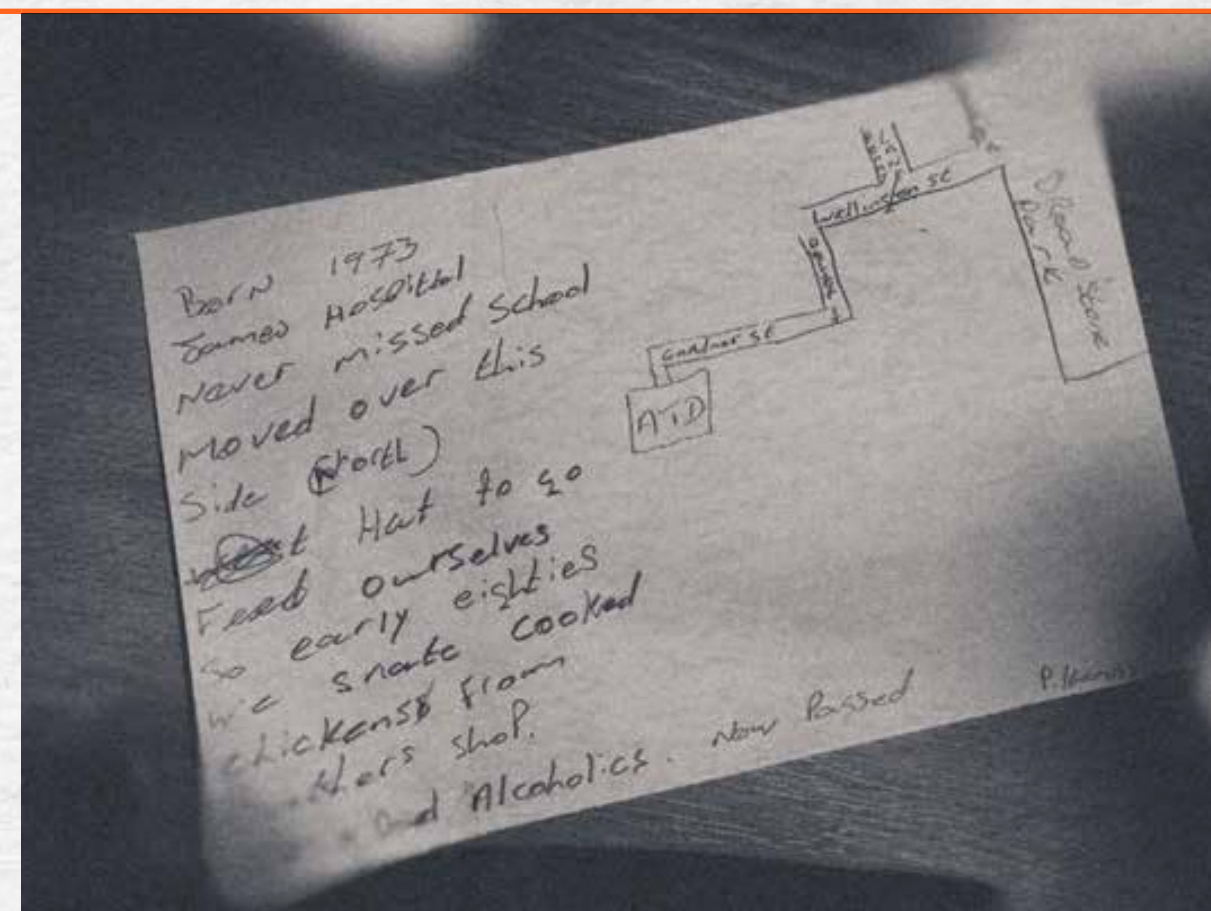
An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology



A memorial to the victims of the Dublin and Monaghan bombing, Talbot Street, Dublin 1.

A walk with Philip

An activist with a strong connection to ATD Ireland, Philip is also someone with experiences of poverty, addiction and the prison system all of which he spoke openly about over the course of the walk, drawing connections between each as he did so.



A walk map by Philip.

With deep roots in Dublin's north inner city, Philip's walk told the story of his life, taking us along part of the Royal Canal to the doors of Mountjoy prison behind which he lived at various times in his life. From there to the flats at St Mary's Place on Dorset Street in Dublin 1 where Philip spent the majority of his childhood years and formative years.



An entrance to Mountjoy prison painted with a piece of art that references Dick Shannon's 'The Auld Triangle'.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology



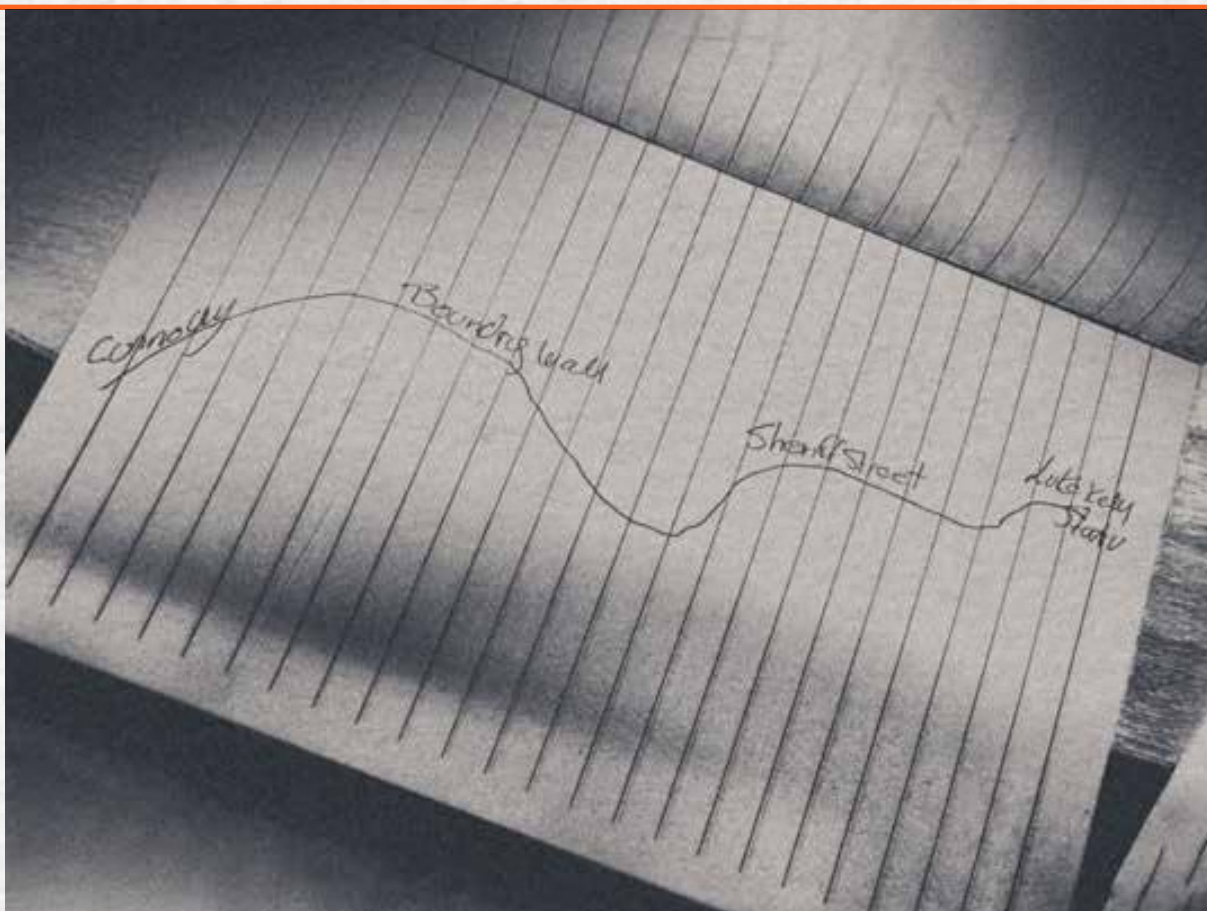
St Mary's flat complex, Dublin 7.

WALKING, THINKING & TALKING

An exploration of the lived experiences and hidden geographies of poverty using walking as a participatory arts methodology

A walk with Lorraine

From East Wall in Dublin 3 originally but with deep familial roots in the Sheriff Street, Dublin 1, area, Lorraine is activist with ATD and someone with lived experiences of poverty, socioeconomic discrimination and addiction all of which she spoke about openly during the walk.



A walk map by Lorraine.

Lorraine's walk took us from outside Connolly Station to Sheriff Street, the latter, a place of significant importance to Lorraine and where she spent much of her childhood and formative years. From here, we walked toward a sculpture commemorating the famous Dubliner and inner city native, Luke Kelly, before crossing the road and finishing our walk on the Royal Canal.



At the corner looking onto Sheriff Street on the right.



Bust of Dubliner, Luke Kelly with whom Lorraine's father shared a name and a talent for singing. The Royal Canal is to the right and flows beneath the bridge in the background.

Poverty in childhood and the effects across the life-course

All of the research participants touched on their childhoods in various ways. In doing so, significant traumas were often recounted and for some these included witnessing and being caught up in domestic violence and abuse, falling foul of the criminal justice system from a young age, experiencing and witnessing addiction and substance use alongside being hungry, cold and experiencing difficulty in the education system. In some instances, a picture of solidarity was also apparent, a sense of place and of community that could be at once stigmatising and galvanising was evident.

What was common in almost all the stories and events recounted, whether these were stories of traumas or of solidarities, was either the presence of poverty as a backdrop or of significant social issues leading to or being exacerbated by poverty. The purpose of this first theme therefore is to surface the life-course connections that are apparent between the adults I walked and talked with and the children they once were. In doing so, the qualitative and tangible effects of poverty across the life-course are brought into stark resolution.

Poverty as foreground and background

Child poverty is defined by The Children's Rights Alliance as:

...the deprivation of essential resources for a minimum standard of living. What that means, is a child in poverty, has limited or no access to the basic essentials

which we would consider the bare minimum any citizen should have such as healthcare, housing, education, food (Children's Rights Alliance, 2022: 3).

Much of the testimony where participants reflected on their childhood in turn reflects this definition. However, the words and stories of the participants also evoked textures that go beyond a lack of material resources to offer a complex picture of what poverty in childhood can mean and of what it can mean for the adult who emerges from childhood and youth. Below, Jimmy talks about his childhood and of his mother's struggle with addiction and the effect that this had on his family:

So, at the age of two, I was taken away from my mother by social workers because my mother was an addict. She was an alcoholic. Everything she was doing was based on drink.

Having experienced the effects of addiction on his family as a child, Jimmy would go on to experience significant issues with addiction himself and throughout his life. When asked about what poverty has meant to him throughout his life, Jimmy is able draw strong links between the presence of poverty in a society and how this can potentially intersect with a range of other social problems:

...what I think poverty means to me is society...because you can come from addiction background, you come from mental health background, you come from violence in the home or anything like that and that's what...leads...people to poverty.

What is interesting about Jimmy's statement here is that he presents a range of social and personal problems—from addiction to coming from a violent home—as potential precursors to

experiences of poverty. For Jimmy then, poverty can touch anyone and can move from the background to the foreground thus exacerbating existing struggles or can even emerge as a symptom of existing struggles. Yet for others who took part in the walking interviews, poverty in childhood was the background against which all else played out. In recalling her childhood, Annmarie conjures images of extreme poverty and deprivation:

I've lived with poverty all my life love, from the time I can ever remember. I'm stealing - since I'm at the age of 10 - I'm stealing for food for my family... Like I'd go out at 10 years of age robbing for food and if I brought money back to my father I got me dinner, if I brought no money back I got no dinner.

Annmarie describes poverty in stark terms here. This is a type of existential poverty, a poverty perhaps thought long banished in the Global North, where even basic sustenance is at stake. Against this backdrop of extreme poverty, Annmarie was a child who also witnessed addiction:

My father was an alcoholic. My mother [had a] drink dependency...

Annmarie also who grew up in a home where extreme violence was the norm and played out in front of her and her siblings while also impacting them directly:

...nine children and a husband [who was] very violent and hit me mother and my mother would say 'my kids won't be always small'.

These harsh childhood circumstances had a profound effect on Annmarie, and, like Jimmy, Annmarie would experience poverty and addiction in her adult life, and this would affect her in the context of her role as a caregiver.

In the below excerpt, Annmarie draws a line from her childhood to adulthood and in doing so illustrates the profound effects of childhood poverty across the life-course:

...I never had a childhood, never, never ever had a childhood and I always told myself that I would give my children a much better childhood than me, but I left them, I have to say, a million times better than myself but I could have gave more. I wasn't there emotionally because I had an addiction that I carried throughout my childhood.

Just trying to survive

In recalling her childhood and the extreme poverty and deprivation she experienced, Annmarie drew attention to the need to rob and sometimes beg for food just to be able to eat, just to be to be able to survive.

...we starved, walked from Finglas to Coolock, me and my mother and my sister for food, for food at Peter McVerry and I'd stand there and I'd be the beggar of the family like it was horrible.

Like other aspects of her childhood, a line can be drawn here too, and the spectre of hunger was also a feature of the poverty and deprivation that Annmarie experienced as an adult:

I was on my own and I couldn't buy food. I just couldn't eat. I couldn't think. But that was only like...I had an addiction, I'd no money for food. I was six stone. I was on me meals. I really was. I was broken. I was - it was me rock bottom. Really, really, my rock bottom.

The type of extreme and grinding poverty experienced in childhood meant that Annmarie often had to steal or go hungry, and this was something that was

true for other participants also. Philip is someone that grew up in a deprived part of North inner-city Dublin where poverty, addiction and myriad other social problems loomed large and hunger as part of that poverty was a thread in the fabric of Philip's childhood. In the next excerpt, Philip describes getting day old but still fresh bread from a local baker and using this to help feed his own family and many others on the street where he lived:

Yeah we used to come up to the baker man and we've only €1.50 or, 'how many breads will you give us for that?' and because the bread was brought back yesterday - that's the way it used to happen - the bread was brought back and you'd go up the next day and you'd get that bread - still fresh obviously like you know - and you get that bread and you get eight, ten, twelve batch loaves, all long pans for your €1.50 and I used to come up and get them and go down and give them to most people on me street, you know like. Of course, I'd keep enough for the family alright.

However, cheap day-old bread was not always available and was certainly not enough and so Philip had to find other ways to get the food he needed. In the below exchange, Philip describes stealing chickens from a butcher's window:

Philip: And that's where we used to get the chickens, because they had no front window and the stalls used to come out onto the path and we'd just go up, look at the chickens, 'right, grab that one by the legs, that one by the legs and that one and that one', and grab four chickens and run up the road like that with four chickens.

Joe: Yeah, yeah.

Philip: But we had to do that to eat like and it was shit like, you know?

Philip is describing engaging in what might be constituted as survival crime here as a part of the story of his childhood. Eventually Philip would fall foul of the criminal justice system and end up being criminalised at an extremely young age:

I was twelve and I got three years in an institution, in an industrial school...

There is a long history of poor children being sent to industrial and reform schools in Ireland and history has also shown how these were often places of significant abuse and neglect (see Rafferty and O' Sullivan, 2002 for a visceral account of same). Just as it was possible to draw a line from Annmarie's childhood of extreme poverty to the struggles in her adult life it can be suggested that engaging in criminal activity during childhood by robbing as means to survive had a profound effect on Philip's adult life a sizable proportion of which was spent in the prison system:

Philip: Today I'm fifty now, I'd say I've spent [over 20 years] in prison.

Joe: Yeah. All in the Joy^v or in different prisons?

Philip: In Patrick's, in the Joy, in Wheatfield, in Spike Ireland, in Castlebay, in the Midlands...

Alongside needing to survive in a harsh and deprived environment as a child, it is arguably clear that one of the reasons that Philip got involved in criminality is due to a perceived lack of alternative options. Poverty therefore is not just about what you don't have, it is also about what you can't do, and this brings us to the second theme 'poverty a lack of options'.

Poverty as a lack of options

If Philip continued to engage in criminal activities leading to long and frequent periods of imprisonment throughout his life because of a lack of options and alternatives, this is something that Paul recognises as an all too familiar feature of the life trajectories of people from deprived and disadvantaged areas who may be experiencing addiction or other struggles:

...it's very few people like the idea of going to prison and it's a mad man that keeps wanting to go back and like a lot of people that I would talk to would say the same thing, 'No, I don't want to go back, there's nothing in it, there's nothing in it' and then consequence of their life might involve them getting arrested for bleedin' shoplifting for trying to get the price of some drugs or something stupid like that and they're back into the system again.

Many of the research participants were able to recount incidents in multiple contexts where a lack of options, couched in the broader experience of poverty and deprivation affected them or those around them profoundly. Some of this was related to place and to socioeconomic status which are themes that will be presented in more detail further on. Many of the insights offered by the research participants spoke to a lack of options leading to forms of social exclusion, something which was defined in the *Partnership 2000 for Inclusion and Competitiveness* by the Irish Government as far back as 1996 and repeated in the *Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025* as follows:

Social exclusion can be succinctly described as cumulative marginalisation from production (unemployment),

from consumption (income poverty), from social networks (community, family and neighbours), from decision making and from an adequate quality of life (GOI, 1996: 17).

Poverty as a lack of options was something that many of the participants were able to speak about in an interpretive sense and at a remove, while others gave direct biographical examples. In the below exchange, Andrew talks about how being perceived in a particular way based on characteristics which appear to attach to a set of social biases, can limit access to the labour market, potentially leading to poverty:

Andrew: Yeah because people aren't getting the opportunity to actually access employment because of where they're from, so that will lead, eventually, to poverty.

Joe: Yeah. Yeah.

Andrew: There's this woman that - our daughters go to the same school - and because she's a foreign national, a recovering addict, she can't even get a cleaning job, can't afford her bills, like her bills are gone sky high and especially with the cost-of-living crisis it's unbelievable. People are just looking for part time work...

Andrew looks outward and suggests that coming from a certain place or having had particular life experiences can have a real impact on access to basic opportunities. Andrew suggests that this can lead to poverty or perhaps exacerbate existing poverty. This is something that Lorraine also spoke about both at a remove, like Andrew, and in the context of her own biography. In this first excerpt below, Lorraine talks about the struggle faced by children

going to school in what might be seen as impoverished or disadvantaged areas:

I mean some of these kids are going to school and they are putting in a lot of hard work and then when they got to try to get into these colleges, because of their postal code or the way they speak, they get refused opportunities...

Lorraine follows this by reflecting on this situation in the context of her own life:

And just like me, these kids grow up thinking that there's no life for them, you know? This is it. Loads of the kids here are in gangs...because when you're brought up being told all your life that you're no good, you'll never be anything... eventually you start to believe it.

Lorraine's insights here are at once outward looking and couched in biography, describing a situation in which, because options are limited, those with such limited options, coupled with a perception perhaps 'that there's no life for them' choose to embrace what they find close at hand and so often go in directions where options are likely to become even more limited.

No options and bad options

Like Lorraine, Gavin was able to recognise this backdrop of poverty and disadvantage as being overtly deterministic and also links this to place while relating it to his own biography:

So you have two spotless, blameless children that are like three and four years of age and you're going to place them into a community that's like that, that's so run down, the crime rate, everything, what do you expect them children to be?

For Gavin, there is no equivocation here, when you have a society that is deeply divided along a pronounced poverty line, a line either side of which there are clear 'haves' and 'have nots', then the options for those who have little or nothing are severely limited by default.

Being born into a home where poverty is a backdrop is not an immoral act, children, as Gavin put it, are 'blameless'. Yet, blameless or not, children born into poverty have less options so that Gavin can rightly ask; 'what do you expect them children to be?'.

Paul, reflecting on similar thoughts answers this question by sketching a comparison between two fifteen-year-old children from very different backgrounds and in doing so, illustrates, in powerful terms, what no options or bad options can mean:

...there's a fifteen year old gets up every morning, goes to school, either had a cricket bat or a tennis racket on the back of the bag and all, going out to the door.

There's fifteen year old lucky to have a bag going out - on his back - going out, is going out, you're walking down the road down by the cricket club or the tennis court or whatever on your way to school...this [other] fella has to avoid the stolen car that's burnt out on the corner, the drug dealers who want to tempt him into a life of, you know, addiction or whatever, peer pressure of let's not go to school and school's crap, so there's no opportunities around here and the one who seems to make the best opportunity is the one who gets involved in the drug dealing or the crime...

This powerful illustration by Paul gets quickly to the heart of what a lack

of options, perceived or otherwise, can mean. ‘Perceived’ is a loaded word here as it suggests that there are options ‘out there’ and what prevents such options from being accessed may come down to oversight or a lack of will. However, this is a gross oversimplification that skirts very close to a narrative that individualises poverty and so it should be cautioned that for something to be perceivable, it must seem like a viable option in the first place. Yet even where someone from a poor background or from a disadvantaged area recognises or seeks to avail of options outside of those described by Paul, significant barriers can still be present in the form of territorial stigma and socioeconomic discrimination, and this brings us to our next theme.

Territorial Stigma and Socioeconomic Discrimination

If poverty can be characterised, in part, as a lack of options leading to social exclusion and potentially to a range of other social problems, there are also aspects of what it means to be poor, to be impoverished, and to come from socioeconomically deprived communities that can further exacerbate an already diminished sense of self or sense of community. Whereas poverty as a lack of options is predominantly defined here through an interpretation of the data and is clearly adjacent to social exclusion, there are definitions of territorial stigma and socio-economic discrimination that are recognisable and already in use so that constructing themes that demonstrate and evidence these takes

the form of analytical abduction. ATD Ireland have long campaigned toward the censure and eradication of socioeconomic discrimination which they describe in the following terms:

Socio- economic discrimination can occur in many forms and can be experienced both individually and collectively. It is often felt within public services, such as in healthcare, housing and accommodation, when seeking employment, education, social welfare or with the police. Those with a lived experience also report everyday incidences of discrimination as a result of their accent, clothing, haircut, address, employment status, etc. People report not being able to get a taxi to their home, being followed around in stores or being refused service in a restaurant. The stigma and shame that results from discrimination has huge effects on mental health and wellbeing. In addition, it can also enormously restrict a person’s life and opportunities (ATD Ireland, 2023: np).

Much of what ATD Ireland describe here will be recognisable from the data that have been presented so far. However, there is testimony within the data that demonstrates ATD’s Ireland’s description in even starker terms. ATD’s Ireland’s description also denotes the importance of place by noting that socioeconomic discrimination can be felt collectively or can lead to differential treatment such as not being able to get a taxi home. This speaks to territorial stigma which Meade (2021: 191–192), describes as:

...a phenomenon that both expresses and normalizes the othering and the negative construction, representation, and government of certain geographical communities and places.

Meade’s (2021) definition is instructive in that it moves the focus beyond an

understanding of territorial stigma that is purely about the ‘stigmatised territories’ to suggest that the stigma attached to places does not emerge in a vacuum and that stigmatisation of place is not a neutral act. Rather, people and places are othered ‘somehow’ and perhaps even by design and, moreover, this practice is normalised through representation and governance. Under the next number of headings, territorial stigma and socioeconomic discrimination are explored starting with territorial stigma before moving on to socioeconomic discrimination to show how the stigma associated with place can manifest beyond the geographical boundaries of those places.

Territory

Many of the research participants were able to draw very direct links between place or territory and the limitations that can arise through associations with stigmatised territories. Like the previous theme, this was something that some participants were able to interpret from a distance by looking outward. Others were able to interpret their own lived experiences in a way that captured feelings and instances of socioeconomic discrimination and territorial stigma. In the below excerpt, Long talks about the stigma of place and what this can mean for young people who come from Ballymun where Long lives:

Many young people, many, they grow up they will go to other country, will go to the cities, other place, to build a new life, because the Ballymun, the reputation, generation to generation is bad and you know difficult to changing the people’s thoughts...When you live in Ballymun, they think not much future, young people.

Long is very clear here. He sees a significant association between Ballymun as a place and what people can expect in their lives. Coming from Ballymun means coming from a place that has a negative reputation, something which Long suggests is immutable. Therefore, if people from Ballymun want to ‘build a new life’ the only viable option is to leave, to leave the place and the stigma associated with it, to go to somewhere new so that they can effectively be from somewhere new and have a new address. Long is interpreting the effect of his surroundings here by focusing on what he has observed over a long period of living in Ballymun. However, for others, interpretations were located in both observation and personal biography. Gavin for example, who grew up in Darndale Dublin 17, has strong convictions about how Darndale as an area has been let down by the state through poor governance and a lack of basic infrastructure coupled with strong feelings about the effects that negative representations of places like Darndale can have for those who live there:

There was no infrastructure, there was no jobs, any, like you couldn’t even apply for a job cause soon as they knew you were from Darndale like they wouldn’t employ you.

Gavin’s words here demonstrate that the conditions that exist in a deprived community coupled with how that community is generally perceived work together and can have profound consequences for community members. Gavin offers deep insight through his testimony on the stigmatising and discriminating effects that can accumulate beyond the geographically bounded regions of a community or area. In doing so, as he did in earlier testimony, he draws attention once again

to a moral dimension, in this case the moral economy of representation:

Now were all unique individuals, we're all unique human beings, like none of us have the same fingerprint do you know what I mean, like none of us think the same, we're all unique, but because we're all in a community we're all tarnished with the same brush...and then you have like the media, who want to slander us, who want to come along with their articles and just keep slandering and slandering the community... I inherited the stigma of that community straight off the bat. Straight off the bat I inherited the whole stigma [and] everything that came along with it.

This powerful testimony from Gavin captures the essence of what it means to be stigmatised through an association with place; to be denied your individuality, your uniqueness because of your address, to be represented in a way that feels slanderous, that tarnishes. For Gavin, there is no rational or moral argument to be had here. Being born into or otherwise living in an impoverished, disadvantaged or potentially stigmatised area is not an immoral act, yet it can come with an unwanted inheritance which, sadly, can determine much. That same unwanted inheritance can be mobile and can attach to persons beyond the geographic boundaries of community, ultimately manifesting in socioeconomic discrimination.

Habitus

French sociologist and anthropologist, Pierre Bourdieu used the concept of habitus as a way to begin to understand how social conditions can reproduce themselves and this is an instructive concept in the context of socioeconomic

discrimination. Loic Wacquant (2005: 316), collaborator and friend of Bourdieu, describes habitus as being:

...the way society becomes deposited in persons in the form of lasting dispositions, or trained capacities and structured propensities to think, feel and act in determinant ways, which then guide them.

In considering what shapes habitus, Bourdieu (1984: 170) notes that:

Habitus is neither a result of free will, nor determined by structures, but created by a kind of interplay between the two over time: dispositions that are both shaped by past events and structures, and that shape current practices and structures and also, importantly, that condition our very perceptions of these.

In simple terms, where you come from, both in the geographical sense and with respect to your social class, is important; it helps to shape you and is often reflected in how you dress, talk, walk and generally present yourself to the world. Habitus is particularly recognisable through the plain fact that people from different communities, even where those communities are not spatially located very far apart, talk differently in terms of accent and phraseology, perhaps dress differently, perhaps even walk differently, consume differently and so on. Habitus can also be reflected back onto persons in the context of how they are perceived and treated, particularly when they venture beyond the geographically bounded confines of their community. Below, Lorraine talks about feeling as though she was being treated differently in the workplace because of her accent:

I do feel I was treated differently and it made me even, when I started going in, trying to change the way I

spoke and - which is something that I just refuse to do now because this is the way I speak, I don't know any other way, you know what I mean?

Lorraine also offered an insight which shows that it's not just how you sound that can invite negative responses, but also how you say what you say:

Like people [would] call their mother 'Mother', 'Mum', 'Mam', we'd say 'Ma'. So to other people that was classed as common and disrespectful, you shouldn't call your Ma 'Ma', but to us that was normal. It meant the same thing. We just shortened it down...So if we went outside of the area and if you called your mother 'Ma' in public, everyone'd be looking at you.

Lorraine's testimony here captures an important texture of socioeconomic discrimination. In the past, she has felt that she was treated differently because of her accent or the words she used. She is also very conscious that this kind of discrimination is much more likely to occur 'outside of the area', that is, outside of her immediate community. She clearly recognises these circumstances as circumstances in which discrimination is taking place as she tries to temper how she is received by adjusting her accent before finally refusing to do so. In this act of reclamation, Lorraine shifts the burden of discrimination away from herself and locates it in those who would treat her differently in the first place 'this is the way I speak, I don't know any other way'; with this statement, Lorraine seems to be asking; why should anyone be treated differently because of that?

Gavin is also able to look outward and shift the moral responsibility for socioeconomic discrimination away from himself. In the first

instance, Gavin talks about being perceived differently because of his appearance and how he presents:

...I'm walking up Grafton street like the clothing I choose to wear like people can just take it oh tracksuit, tracksuit, tracksuit and then you're sort of, you're looked upon as if you're from a completely different class, based off your image... you can walk into that Starbucks over there yeah, and just the way I'm dressed, just the way I talk, people are going to look at you. And it's always people from the upper class. And you do get that and it can be blatant sometimes and all it can be is a looking you up and down by the eyes? That's still discriminating. That's just like 'who are you?'

Gavin recognises what he sees as very open and even blatant discrimination. In this next excerpt, Gavin is also unequivocal about the emotional impact that being perceived in the way he describes above can have. Yet, he removes the burden from himself and even manages to empathise with those who would treat him differently:

Oh you feel it. And do you know what it hurts but, then again you have to realise it's not you who's the issue. If they're setting out to hurt people, they're probably hurting as well or something.

Comfortable in his own skin, Gavin is able to deflect and look outward. He feels as though he is sometimes treated differently, and this can hurt. However, he refuses to take on the burden for how he is treated, refuses to locate it within himself. Gavin is also very conscious of class and conscious of the reality that for him, being discriminated against or treated differently comes, in the main, from a different place in society and from people with a very

different lived reality. This is something that many of the research participants were able to recognise and interpret in different ways and this evokes the idea of a ‘divided society’ which brings us to our final theme.

A divided society: How the other half lives

American social reformer and ‘muckraking’ journalist and photographer Jacob Riis famously coined the phrase ‘How the other half lives’ as a way to evocatively capture the conditions prevailing in the tenements in New York at the end of the 19th century. *How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the Tenements of New York* (1890) is an example of early photojournalism documenting squalid living conditions in New York City slums in the 1880s. The photographs served as a basis for “muckraking” journalism by exposing the slums to New York City’s upper and middle classes. Through this project, Riis exposed and documented a divided society, a society in which one group, the upper and middle classes, had virtually no knowledge or understanding of how people in poverty, ‘the other half’ lived. In *Poverty in Dublin: A study*, authored by John Hughes and published in 1914, the spectre of a divided Dublin, which Hughes (1914: 2) describes as a city of ‘startling contrasts’ is made apparent:

Even the casual viewer, with no more serious aim than a few hours sight-seeing, cannot fail to notice the many startling contrasts. Grandeur and meanness, dignity and degradation, luxury and wretchedness, vie with each other in her very conformation... The noble pile of the Four Courts is

flanked on either side by row upon row of tumbledown human habitations. The towering spire of the ancient Cathedral of St Patrick overshadows half a score of streets and alleys crowded with ill-clad children, whose playful gaiety seems strangely out of harmony with the surrounding wretchedness.

The language here is clearly antiquated, yet Dublin arguably remains a city of ‘startling contrasts’ where great wealth and poverty exist side by side. On the one hand, this divide is often visible, geographically bounded and therefore obvious. However, the divide can also be less obvious, less tangible and can be based on what one group of people can generally expect to experience in life versus the expectations of others. Adding a further texture, the city is also experienced very differently by different people, and this can even be true of how the very same spaces are experienced. Andrew captures this divide by focusing on Grafton Street and linking to this to his own biography:

...I was homeless and as we’re walking up Grafton Street it’s one of the richest places, I feel, in Dublin, with all the big shops and everything and the cardboard that they leave out at night... people use it to actually make a house, a bed, for them and that was me.

Andrew’s observation, which he connects with his own experiences of homelessness, aptly demonstrates how shared spaces can be experienced very differently, how great wealth can exist next to poverty and how the cast-off packaging of consumer goods can become the bedding of those who society has also cast-off. In demonstrating how shared spaces are often experienced very differently, Andrew touches on a very real point of division.

Class as a dividing factor

Gavin also uses the example of Grafton Street as stark reminder of how society is divided and in doing so conjures the sense of a divided society which chimes with Riis’s (1890) notion of ‘how the other half lives’:

It would strike me because Grafton street is connected - like it’s over in the south side and it’d be connected with people from the actual south side...and you’d see all the nice fancy shops you know by people in and out shopping, yeah life is good, whatever they worked hard for it whatever, passed down through heritage, you know what I mean? They grew up in a community that they had great resources in and they’re just getting - that’s their way of living. You know so there’s a massive class division within Ireland.

Gavin talks directly here about class division. However, he also suggests that an obliviousness on the part of those who have access to resources as part of their lived experience, an obliviousness that obfuscates ‘how the other half lives’. Gavin uses place as a vehicle through which to get at a deeper more endemic type of divided society, a society in which one group, a more affluent group, does not see or where they do see does not have the ability to empathise with the ‘other’. Yet, quite aside from the notion of an oblivious divide, Gavin was also able to reflect on the purposeful use of space to demark division:

And then some of the shops, instead of having a bit of compassion to say like, alright we’ll allow a homeless man sleep in the doorway, they’re putting steel bars in so they’re blocking access for homeless people to get shelter in the

night because there’s just not enough accommodation in Dublin City.

Noting the proliferation of hostile architecture in the city, Gavin interprets this as a further dividing line between the haves and the have nots. The recognition of a society divided along class lines was an interpretation offered by many of the research participants. Here, for example, Terence suggests that class divisions underpin and usurp many other factors of identity:

...it’s really a class system, because the rich were always - it wouldn’t matter whether they were Muslim, Hindu or whatever, the rich were always together.

Paul is also someone who strongly suggests that social class underpins a divided society and couches this in his own lived experience:

...I’d be getting up going to school in the morning and there’d be two or three stolen cars burnt out across the road and all this stuff kind of going on and the politicians would be saying the same things about what they’re going to do and how they’ll change everything, and it’s never changed. And for me, it goes back to...class thing. There’s definitely a class system and a class distinction in this country...

Paul identifies what he sees as a weak and perhaps unscrupulous political class who make promises to working class communities but fail to deliver. For Paul, this typifies a divided society. Yet for others, many aspects of their lives which may first seem innocuous can also be indicative of a divided society, of how the other half live.

Simple but not so simple

Kye is somebody who has experienced significant trauma over the course of his relatively short life and much of this happened against a backdrop of poverty and social disadvantage:

Poverty would be close to...me and my family would have experienced a lot of it growing up you know? It wasn't always a simple run for our side.

Continuing with the theme of 'how the other half live' Kye has had a life that has been extraordinary by any standard. Kye has experienced homelessness, he has lived on the street, he has been in the care system:

Yeah. I've meself experienced homelessness. I was in the care system from the age of three and I've experienced homelessness.

Kye has had to rely networks of friends and family members, also on the streets, for support and shelter. He has had to live in tents in public parks:

Yet I only had two sets of clothes; the clothes on me back and the clothes in me bag. That was it, because that's all I could carry around all day. I'd nowhere to go and thank God I had a lot of people around me at the time that I would have known on the streets, that like family members, that would have been able to support me like. But they still didn't have accommodation so I would have had to live rough. And we were living up in the phoenix park in a tent for a good few months, just behind the railings there and like I know the side of that life...

This all clearly speaks to the theme of a divided society in obvious and concrete terms in that most people will thankfully not have to experience what Kye has experienced and therefore the associated trauma, the grinding precarity of what Kye describes will be alien to most people. Yet there is an even deeper and arguably even more striking component to the divided society that speaks not to what most people won't experience but, rather, to what most people do experience and take for granted.

Me ma ended up in prison for a long space of time, so me and me brother were taken into care. So we would've never got like to see certain things, like even to this day some of me friends will say 'Kye would you ever see the movie Shrek?' and I'd say 'no, I've never seen that'...

In this last excerpt, Kye talks about being in care, something that most people won't experience, he talks about his mother being in prison, again, something that most people won't experience. However, he also talks about something as simple as seeing a popular film, something that most people can and will do without ever really thinking about it. In doing so, he lends an additional texture to what might be understood about how society is divided, about how the other half lives. Kye's life, a life in which poverty has been a continuous backdrop to other experiences, has not been simple. Because of this, seemingly simple things have often been out of reach. Whether in care, in tents or on the street, Kye's life has been about survival. Simple things like watching a film are as alien to Kye as the prospect of having no home to shelter in is to most other people.

A corollary: Poverty as a waste of potential

Drawing on the work of Amartya Sen, the capability approach to thinking about poverty is concerned with what people are capable of, what they can do and what they can be. It shifts the focus from monetary and material resources. Sen (2009) suggests that, in analysing well-being, we should shift our focus from 'the means of living', such as income, to the 'actual opportunities a person has', namely their functionings and capabilities. We might say that Sen is writing here about potential and the capacity to realise it. Taking all of what has been presented so far and returning to the question posed at the outset of this section '*what can poverty do?*' ultimately it can be suggested that poverty can reduce functionings, remove capabilities and destroy potential. However, it is not necessary to look only at what has gone before as many of the research participants spoke to the idea of poverty as a waste of potential in various ways. For example, Christina, in the below exchange, talks about the stories that she has heard of lives wasted:

Christina: Like you do hear the stories of how homeless people are killed.

Joe: Yes of course yeah.

Christina: A couple of years ago a young man was killed in a wheelie bin.

Joe: Yeah it's horrendous.

Christina: Do you know what I mean? And like it's avoidable.

Christina looks outward here and talks about the avoidable and often violent deaths of people experiencing homelessness. Other participants were very direct about poverty as a waste of potential and could link this to their own lives. Poverty as wasted potential was something that angered and frustrated many of the participants as the exchange with Paul below shows:

Paul: And one thing I hate - I kind of hate and it kind of fuels a passion in me for that sense of injustice, is when I see what I believe to be our biggest resource, and that's our people, being undervalued or just neglected or left behind, you know the way?

Joe: Yeah.

Paul: Not being given an opportunity because we don't know who - we don't know who we're leaving behind, you know what I mean?

Joe: Yeah.

Paul: We don't know what they're capable of, who they could have been, who they could be, you know what I mean?

Joe: Yeah.

Paul: They could be the cure for cancer, we just don't know, you know?

Here Paul touches on not only what impoverished or deprived people are deprived of, but also on what society is deprived of when so much human potential is allowed to go to waste. This frustrates Paul, he sees this as a deep injustice. However, not just an injustice for those who are left behind, but ultimately an injustice for society as a whole. In finishing this corollary on poverty as a waste of potential, I give the last word to Andrew as someone who has experienced poverty, addiction and homelessness and has gone on to use

this experience to become a community activist who has spoken at a UN event in New York to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty:

[I've] yet to meet an addict or a person in poverty that isn't talented...

This short but powerful insight sums up the notion of poverty as a waste of potential and allows us to circle back to Sen (2009) and the concepts of functionings and capabilities. Talent, as Andrew notes, is not the issue here: people who are or who have experienced poverty and other challenges do not lack talent. Potential is not at issue either, as Paul has pointed out: we deprive ourselves of an abundance of potential when we fail to foster the functionings and capabilities of persons. Ultimately then, wasted potential comes down, not to individual persons but to the 'actual opportunities a person has'. In the next section, the report concludes with a brief discussion and set of recommendations.

Conclusion and recommendations

The statistics presented in the first section of the report show that poverty and enforced deprivation continues to be a problem in Ireland. Indeed, the statistics suggest that, after a period of shrinkage, poverty is a growing problem once again. Yet, though poverty is a clearly a problem and one which runs contrary to both international and domestic ambitions, it can remain abstract when thought about only in statistical terms. The lived experiences documented in the findings section of this report go beyond statistics. They show what poverty has really been like for people who have had to live it and who took part in this research. The testimony, gathered in the course of a series of walking interviews, makes concrete many aspects of poverty that would otherwise remain abstract, remain 'hidden in statistics' (Whelan, 2023). The overarching goal of this research has been to champion lived experience in the area of poverty as a vital component of a holistic evidence base and to tangibly demonstrate, through this research report and other outputs, the real value of voice and testimony. In this final brief section, considerations for policy, and research methods and strategies in the context of participatory research on lived experience are addressed, and these are coupled with a set of recommendations.

Policy making and inclusion

Through mapping policy in the context of poverty and asking, 'what's the problem represented to be?' (Bacchi, 2009) it can be suggested that poverty as a policy problem in the Irish context is represented in predominantly statistical terms. By briefly focusing on question four of Bacchi's framework and specifically on the part of the question which asks, 'where are the silences?' it can be suggested that the voice and testimony of those directly affected by poverty remains largely unheard and that not enough has been done in contemporary poverty policy to surface these voices. Focusing in the main on The *Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025* as the dominant policy suite covering poverty in the Irish context, this is not to suggest that the policy neglects the idea of including those with lived experience and those who work with people experiencing poverty. Indeed, the consultation process alluded to in the policy document notes that:

Views were sought from people experiencing poverty and social exclusion and the Community and Voluntary sector groups working with them in a number of ways: through an online public consultation process which took place in February 2018; at the 2017 and 2018 annual Social Inclusion Forum¹ and through regular meeting between

the Department and the Community and Voluntary sector (GOI, 2020: 11).

However, quite where the specific voices of those experiencing poverty have ended up in the policy or how those voices have influenced the overarching policy direction remains obscured and where the consultation process is referenced it tends to be referred to in the context of policy themes that emerged during the process. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, the precise nature of inclusion is something that needs to be problematised. Including voices via online consultation processes or through regular meetings with the Community and Voluntary sectors is fine, however, these steps, when taken alone, make for a decidedly anaemic practice of inclusion that allows for virtually no creative methods of including those with lived experience. An important aspect of this point is that by expecting people with lived experience of poverty to participate exclusively through the ways described in *The Roadmap*, there is a very real danger of disempowerment. The policy making arena is not an equal space and not everyone policy makers might wish to include possess the agency to articulate their experiences or simply ‘add their voice’. In this respect, more creative modes of inclusion must be considered.

RECOMMENDATION

Social policies in the areas of poverty need to develop a more expansive conception of consultation and inclusion with a view to surfacing and centrally placing the voices of those directly affected by poverty in the policymaking frame. Expansive in this context also refers to how voices are included in ways that are creative, substantive and meaningful.

So, for example, inclusion might take the form of direct consultation, but it might also include the use of art, photography, workshops, or other creative process that can help policy makers connect with the lived experiences of people and people to connect their lives to policy.

Future research strategies

Literature on poverty in the Irish context covers several strong themes including experiences of energy poverty, food poverty and an emerging literature on experiences, stigma and shame associated with poverty. Many of these themes are built upon and added to in this research report and new understandings have also been developed. There is a latent theme running through the literature on poverty which suggests that the voices of those with direct experiences of poverty as an overarching social problem and with direct experiences of discrete forms of poverty need to be heard from and listened too in order to shape policy. However, though this critique comes, in part, from the literature itself, it could also be suggested as something sociological and policy-based researchers and research needs to work harder to get right. In the research documented in this report, several highly complex and nuanced themes which are based on a researcher’s interpretation of the data are presented. These themes capture the psychosocial dynamics of experiences of poverty in a way that moves beyond resource-based issues to more intangible but nevertheless impactful aspects of experience including, socioeconomic and territorial stigmas and geographies of poverty. These textures of experience, while undoubtedly rooted within resource

and redistribution issues, nevertheless need to be continually surfaced and presented as aspects of experience in the context of a normative social science which seeks to do ‘muckraking’ in the tradition of Jacob Riis and latterly, Gary T Marx. To not approach the doing of social science in this way is to potentially give succour to a form of epistemic injustice and testimonial smothering (Fricker, 2007). Moreover, these textures of experience in the context of poverty, that is, textures which go beyond resource and redistribution issues, are something which civil society groups like ATD Ireland and many of the community activists who took part in the research are deeply committed to addressing in overtly tangible ways. For example, ATD Ireland are part of an alliance^{vi} called ‘#addthe10th’. The purpose of this group is to have socioeconomic status recognized as the tenth ground of discrimination in Irish equality legislation, namely the Equal Status Act and the Employment Equality Act. There are currently nine grounds of discrimination set out in equality legislation including gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, membership of the Traveller community and race. The exclusion of socioeconomic status represents a significant gap and ATD Ireland note that:

Those experiencing this form of discrimination currently have no way of seeking any form of legal redress and have no protection in the law. Socio-economic discrimination can occur in many forms and can be experienced both individually and collectively.

It is often felt within public services, such as in healthcare, housing and

accommodation, when seeking employment, education, social welfare or with the police (ATD Ireland, 2023: np).

ATD Ireland also point to other jurisdictions where similar legislation already exists such as in Hungary where Article 8 of the Act CXXV of 2003 on Equal Treatment and the Promotion of Equal Opportunities prohibits discrimination on the basis of social origin and financial status and in Scotland where the Parliament there enacted the Fairer Scotland Duty^{vii}, which “places a legal responsibility on particular public bodies in Scotland to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions. That campaigns like this that are deeply invested in by civil society groups and community activists tell us that issues associated with poverty, and which go beyond resource and redistribution issues, are important and therefore need to be the focus of significant research.

RECOMMENDATION

Much like the previous recommendation, the recommendation here devolves, in a sense, upon the inclusion of voice. However, in this instance, it is not to say simply that a research practice that includes lived experience need to be developed as this is already a growing area of policy based and sociological research. Rather, the recommendation is for a normative social science with clear values, and which engages in ‘muckraking’ by moving away from being concerned only with resource and redistribution issues, and moving toward a social science which exposes the realities faced by those with whom we research to those who need to see and hear about them. This is

a research agenda of radical possibilities and is rooted, in part, in the idea of recognition as given by Honneth (1995) wherein recognition as the basis for societal relations is accorded conceptual priority, and concerns around resources and redistribution are addressed through the socially inclusive practices that this fosters. Substantively, this would mean that researchers work harder to have things like poverty more fully recognised and that the recommendations that arise from research would go beyond calling for more resources.

Participation and coproduction where possible

The final area to be addressed in this report is that of participation and coproduction. This research project has been based on creative methods and has incorporated a participatory approach. While it must be acknowledged that not all research projects are suited to such approaches, it must also be acknowledged that where they are, the rewards are potentially incalculable. Using creative methods such as walking and photography and coproducing research with a group of active research participants allows for a sense of investment and ownership on the parts of all involved. It is not fully without risk (walking is generally riskier than sitting still, dogs may follow you and buskers may interrupt you) yet being outdoors and in space with someone while engaging in a conversation is also inherently rewarding and a very natural setting that induces openness and informality. Walking as a method for conducting research can access the lived realities and cultures of individuals and group through affective aspects of lives/ lived experiences (O'Neill and Roberts

2020). As noted in the introduction, maps do not always capture social geography, therefore offering a research participant 'situational authority' by allowing them to curate a walk offers the possibility for connections, echoes and observations to shape the texture of an interview and elicit rich insight. To return again to ATD Ireland's Toolkit for conducting participatory research participatory research in this instance has meant a purposeful process which has included:

- Consultation from the outset.
- Collaboration and ongoing opportunities for participant input throughout.
- Due consideration given to ownership and control of what is produced.

RECOMMENDATION

When and where possible, researchers should engage in participatory research as a way of coproducing knowledge. Arts based creative methodologies can help to make research accessible and meaningful for research participants and should be considered when safe and practicable. Alongside offering the potential for rich and meaningful connection and all-party investment in the research process, participatory research also has emancipatory potential and offers the prospect of diffusing power imbalances in the research process.

Reference list

ATD Ireland (2022) *The Hidden Dimensions of Poverty – International Participatory Research: A toolkit to conduction participatory methodology*. Dublin: ATD Ireland.

ATD Ireland (2023) *Socioeconomic Discrimination*. Available at: <https://www.atdireland.ie/wp/socio-economic-discrimination-add-10th-ground/#:~:text=Socio%2D%20economic%20discrimination%20can%20occur,welfare%20or%20with%20the%20police>. (Accessed 28/08/2023).

Bacchi, C. L. (2009) Analysing Policy: What's the Problem Represented to Be?. London: Pearson.

Boland, E., (2000) That the Science of Cartography Is Limited. *The Literary Review*, 44(1), pp.27–27.

Bourdieu, P. (1984) *A social critique of the judgement of taste*. London: Routledge.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2021) 'One size fits all? What counts as quality practice in (reflexive) thematic analysis?', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*. (18)3, pp. 328–352.

Bryman, A (2012) *Social Research Methods: 4th Edition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Central Statistics Office. (2016) *Survey on Income and Living Conditions: 2016*. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/index.html> (Accessed: 20 April 2023).

Central Statistics Office. (2022) *Survey on Income and Living Conditions: 2022*. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/index.html> (Accessed: 20 April 2023).

Children's Rights Alliance (2022) *Submission to the Mid-Term Review of the Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020–2025*. Available at: https://www.childrensrights.ie/sites/default/files/submissions_reports/files/Children%27s%20Rights%20Alliance%20Submission%20to%20Review%20of%20Roadmap%20Social%20Inclusion.pdf (Accessed 28/08/2023).

Crouch, M. and McKenzie, H. (2006) The logic of small samples in interview-based qualitative research. *Social science information*, 45(4), pp.483–499.

Daly, M. and Kelly, G. (2015) *Families and poverty: Everyday life on a low income*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Daly, M. and Leonard, M. (2002) *Against all Odds: Family life on low income in Ireland*. Combat Poverty Agency. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10147/624014> (Accessed: 28/08/2023).

Drew, M., (2022) *Uncovering Food Poverty in Ireland: A Hidden Deprivation*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Dukelow, F. and Considine, M. (2014a). Outlier or Model of Austerity in Europe? The Case of Irish Social Protection Reform. *Social Policy & Administration*, 48(4), pp.413–429.

Dukelow, F. and Considine, M. (2014b) Between retrenchment and recalibration: The impact of austerity on the Irish social protection system. *J. Soc. & Soc. Welfare*, 41, p.55.

European Anti-Poverty Network (2023) *Ireland's contribution to the EU's role in tackling poverty: Marking 50 years of Ireland's membership of the EU*. Available at: https://www.eapn.ie/publications_ireland/irelands-contribution-to-the-eus-role-in-tackling-poverty/ (Accessed on 28/08/2023).

Fricker, M., (2007) *Epistemic injustice: Power and the ethics of knowing*.

Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Government of Ireland (1996) *Partnership 2000 for Inclusion and Competitiveness*. Dublin: Government of Ireland.

Government of Ireland. (1997) *National Anti-Poverty Strategy*. Dublin: Government of Ireland.

Government of Ireland. (2007) *National Action Plan for Social Inclusion: 2007–2016*. Dublin: Government of Ireland.

Government of Ireland. (2020) *Roadmap for social inclusion Ireland 2020–2025*. Dublin: Government of Ireland.

Grønmo. S. (2019) *Social Research Methods: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. London: SAGE.

Honneth, A. (1995) *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hughes, J.B. (1914) *Poverty in Dublin: A Study*. Dublin: Office of the “Irish Messenger”.

Kerrins, L. (2016) “If I even had to buy a packet of tea towels, that’s taking something away from the kids”: The experience of economic austerity for one parent families assisted by the Society of St Vincent de Paul in the Republic of Ireland’, *Irish Journal of Applied Social Studies*, 16(2), p. 2.

Kinney, P., (2017) Walking interviews. *Social research update*, 67(1–4).

MacMahon, B., McEvoy, O. (2018) *Stories of Struggle*. Dublin: St Vincent de Paul

Meade, R. (2021) Territorial stigmatization in theory and practice, and its implications for community development: an introduction to the

themed section. *Community Development Journal*, 56(2), pp.191–202.

O’Neill, M. and McHugh, C. (2017) Walking with Faye from a direct access hostel to her special place in the city: Walking, body and image space. A visual essay. *Journal of Social Work Practice*, 31(2), pp.207–223.

O’Neill, M. and Roberts, B. (2020) *Walking methods: Research on the move*. Abingdon. Routledge.

Riis, J. (1890/2009) *How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the Tenements of New York*. Scotts Valley: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

Sen, A. (2009) *The Idea of Justice*. London: Allen Lane.

Smith, J.A. and Osborn, M. (2007) Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis. In Smith, J.A. [Ed], *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Research Methods*. London: Sage, pp 53–80.

Vincentian MESL Research Centre (2023) *Annual Update 2023* Available at: <https://www.budgeting.ie/publications/mes1-2023/> (Accessed on 28/08/2023).

Wacquant, L. (2005) Habitus. In Becket, J and Milan, Z [Eds], *International Encyclopaedia of Economic Sociology*. London: Routledge.

Whelan, J. (2022) *Hidden Voices: Lived experiences in the Irish Welfare Space*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Whelan, J. (2023) Hidden in statistics? On the lived experience of poverty. *Journal of Social Work Practice*, (37)2, pp. 137–151.

Endnotes

- i This has involved the development of an animated short which captured the voices of the research participants. It can be viewed at the project website at: <https://sites.google.com/view/povertytalks> and on the ATD Ireland Website at: <https://www.atdireland.ie/wp/>
- ii Dublin is divided into 24 postal districts (although there is no D19) with the even numbered postal districts (D2, D4, D6, D6W etc) being generally on the south side of the River Liffey and odd numbered districts (D1, D3, D5, D7 etc) being on the north side of the River Liffey. The exception to this the area including and surrounding and The Phoenix Park which, while on the north side of the Liffey, forms part of the Dublin 8 district.
- iii All maps created using GeoHive Map Viewer. See: <https://webapps.geohive.ie/mapviewer/index.html>
- iv A full gallery of maps and photographs is available to view on the project website at: <https://sites.google.com/view/povertytalks>
- v Mountjoy prison on Dublin’s northside near the banks of the Royal Canal.
- vi Other Alliance members include: Association for Higher Education, Access and Disability (AHEAD), Community Action Network (CAN), Free Legal Advice Centres (FLAC), European Anti- Poverty Network Ireland (EAPN Ireland), Independent Living Movement Ireland (ILMI) and Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOU).
- vii Under Section 42, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 Ireland does have a Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty which tasks Public Bodies’ with a Statutory Duty to Eliminate Discrimination, Promote Equality, and Protect Human Rights of Staff and Service Users.



