

PRESS RELEASE

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EU considered force for good in Ireland, and in the world, survey shows

Despite Irish EU Presidency, support decreasing slightly since 2012

A new opinion poll, undertaken by RedC on behalf of Dóchas, the umbrella group of Ireland's Development NGOs, shows that belief in the positive role of the EU remains high among people living in Ireland.

The survey, undertaken in June among a representative sample of 1,000 people of all ages, social groups and across the country, shows that over half of all respondents think the EU plays a positive role in Ireland, and that an even greater number (almost 70%) believe the EU to be a force for good in the wider world.

“This research shows that, despite the criticism of the EU's role in the bank bailout, people in Ireland continue to believe that the EU is a positive force here in Ireland, and even more so on the global stage,” said Hans Zomer, Director of Dóchas.

“It is encouraging to note that more than half of respondents recognise that the problems and challenges we face in Ireland are intrinsically linked to global issues, and that we cannot separate poverty and inequality here at home from global policies. These findings strengthen our resolve to work with NGOs and civil society organisations in Ireland to find global solutions to problems of poverty, inequality and exclusion,” continued Zomer.

Dóchas commissioned the survey as part of its work aiming to shape the Irish EU Presidency which comes to an end on 30 June.

As part of its EU project, Dóchas has teamed up with domestic “charities” and organisations, to learn from their work and to seek shared solutions to the challenges of growing poverty and inequality.

“This survey illustrates how people in Ireland agree with us that many of Ireland's problems are linked to global policies. And our work has taught us that the priorities of home-based ‘charities’ are strikingly similar to those of the poor people we work with in developing countries: Around the world, people want to see greater emphasis placed on inequality, lack of political influence, environmental degradation and economic structures that don't seem to benefit ordinary citizens. This survey is an encouragement to continue to bring those priorities to the attention of policy-makers, whether they are in Ireland, in the EU, in the UN or in Africa,” said Zomer.

The survey also shows that, despite the high-profile Irish EU Presidency, support for the EU is decreasing compared to last year. Despite these figures and the Irish Presidency of the EU taking place from January to June this year, these figures actually represent a decrease in support for the same questions when polling took place last year.

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NOTES FOR THE EDITORS:

- A detailed report on the survey findings is available here: www.dochas.ie/Shared/Files/2/Attitudes_toward_the_EU.pdf
- Further information on Dóchas' work on the Irish EU Presidency is available at: www.worldwewant.ie
- Dóchas is the association of Irish Non-Governmental Development Organisations and a member of CONCORD Europe. It provides a forum for consultation and cooperation between its 51 member organisations, and helps them speak with a single voice on development issues. For more information, visit: www.dochas.ie.