



Roinn an Taoisigh  
Department of the Taoiseach

# Child Poverty and Well-being Programme Office

A Leadership Paradox?

Reflections on the  
First Year of the Child Poverty and Well-Being  
Programme Office

13 June 2024







*In what ways do you think child poverty manifests across society?*

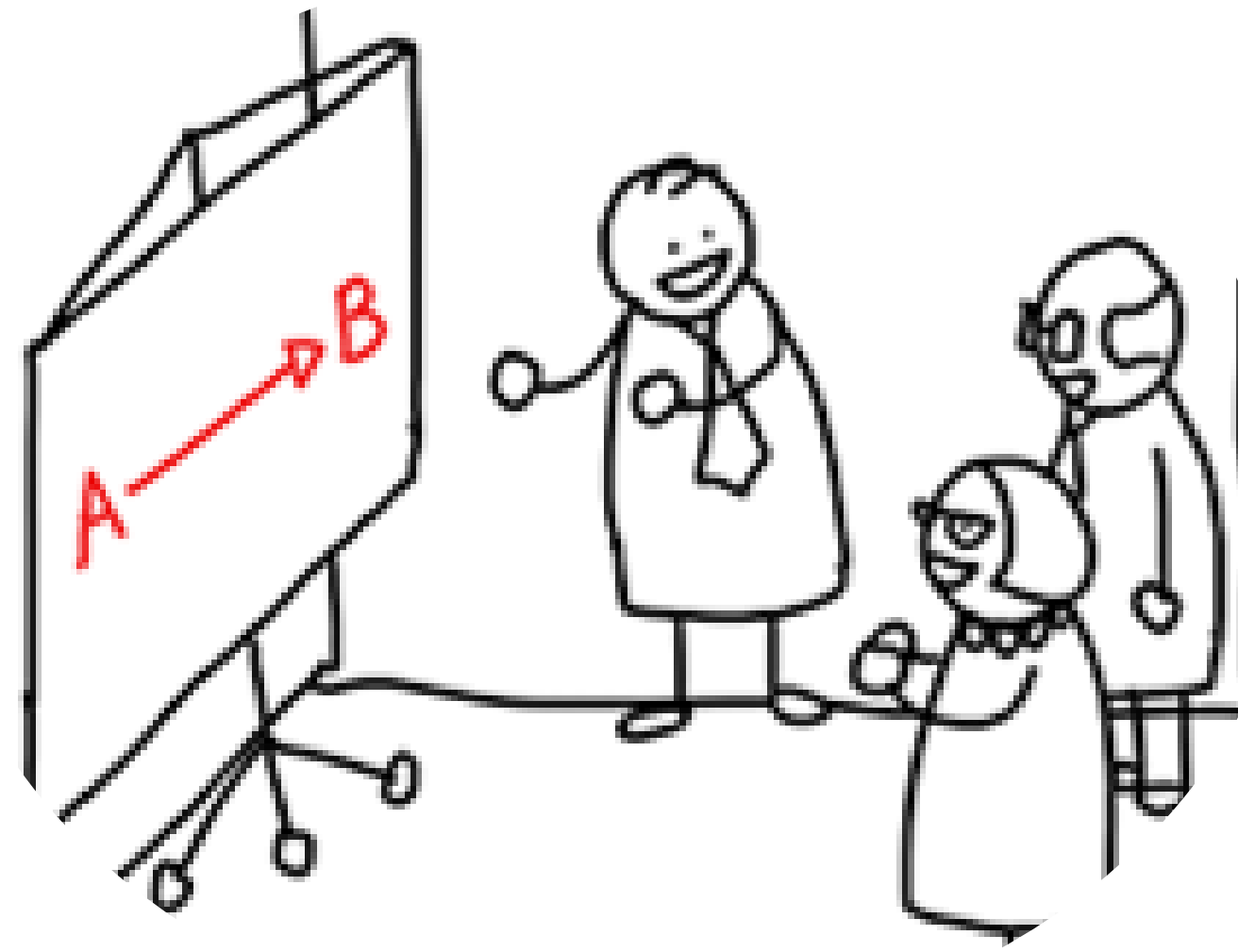
# Is child poverty a 'messy' problem?



A situation is complex or messy when there is a multitude of interrelated variables (stuff!) AND there is a range of perspectives.

		Perspectives	
		Single	Many
Variables	Few	Less complicated difficulty	Less complex mess
	Many	Complicated difficulty	Complex mess

Source: Open University (2024) Systems and Strategy



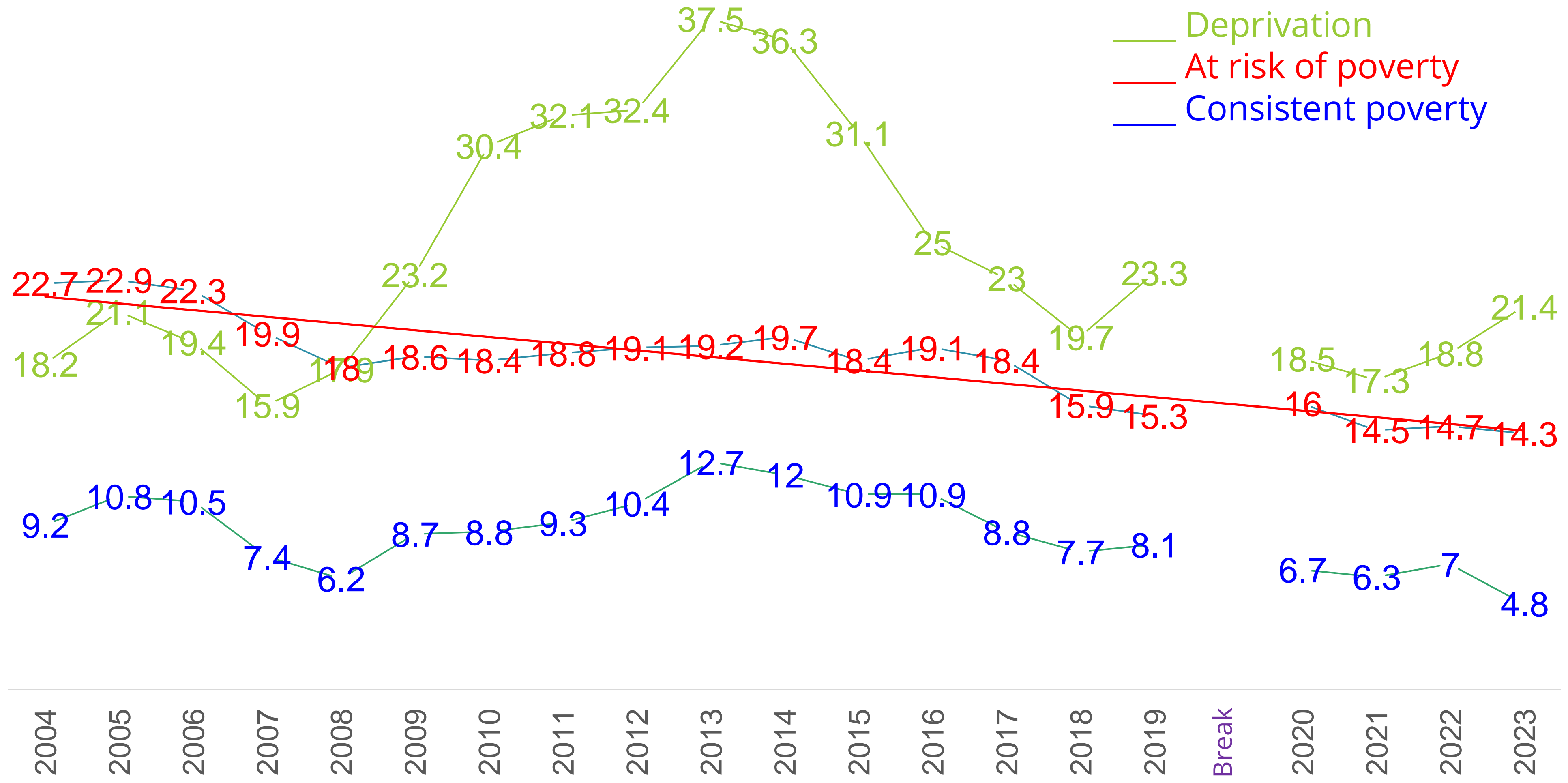




# Child Poverty...

- ✓ Children are more likely to be in poverty than adults.
- ✓ Child poverty is about more than money.
- ✓ Child poverty travels across generations.
- ✓ Certain groups of children are at much greater risk.
- ✓ Child poverty is situated in families and communities.
- ✓ Not all poor children live in income poor households.
- ✓ There is an established and ambitious policy agenda.

# Child poverty rates have gradually declined over the last 20 years, but deprivation is volatile





# Poverty has long-term consequences

“... exposure to EV [Economic Vulnerability] during childhood is associated with poorer outcomes ... These outcomes cover a range of key dimensions, including **cognitive and educational attainment, school engagement, socio-emotional development, life satisfaction, self-concept, chronic illness/disability, obesity, health behaviours (for example, smoking, drinking for the '98 cohort) and quality of relationships...** In the majority of cases, there appears to be a cumulative effect of exposure ... That said, **even transitory spells of EV are associated with worse outcomes** compared to never experiencing EV” (ESRI, 2021).



Fás Aníos in Éirinn  
Growing Up in Ireland





# Intergenerational poverty

Those who experience poverty in childhood face an increased risk of experiencing it as adults

Most of the relationship between poverty in childhood and in adulthood is explained by educational attainment and current employment situation

This suggests the need for social policy aimed at breaking the cycle of poverty... policies that seek to reduce persistent inequalities in educational outcomes, from early childhood through education, are crucial.





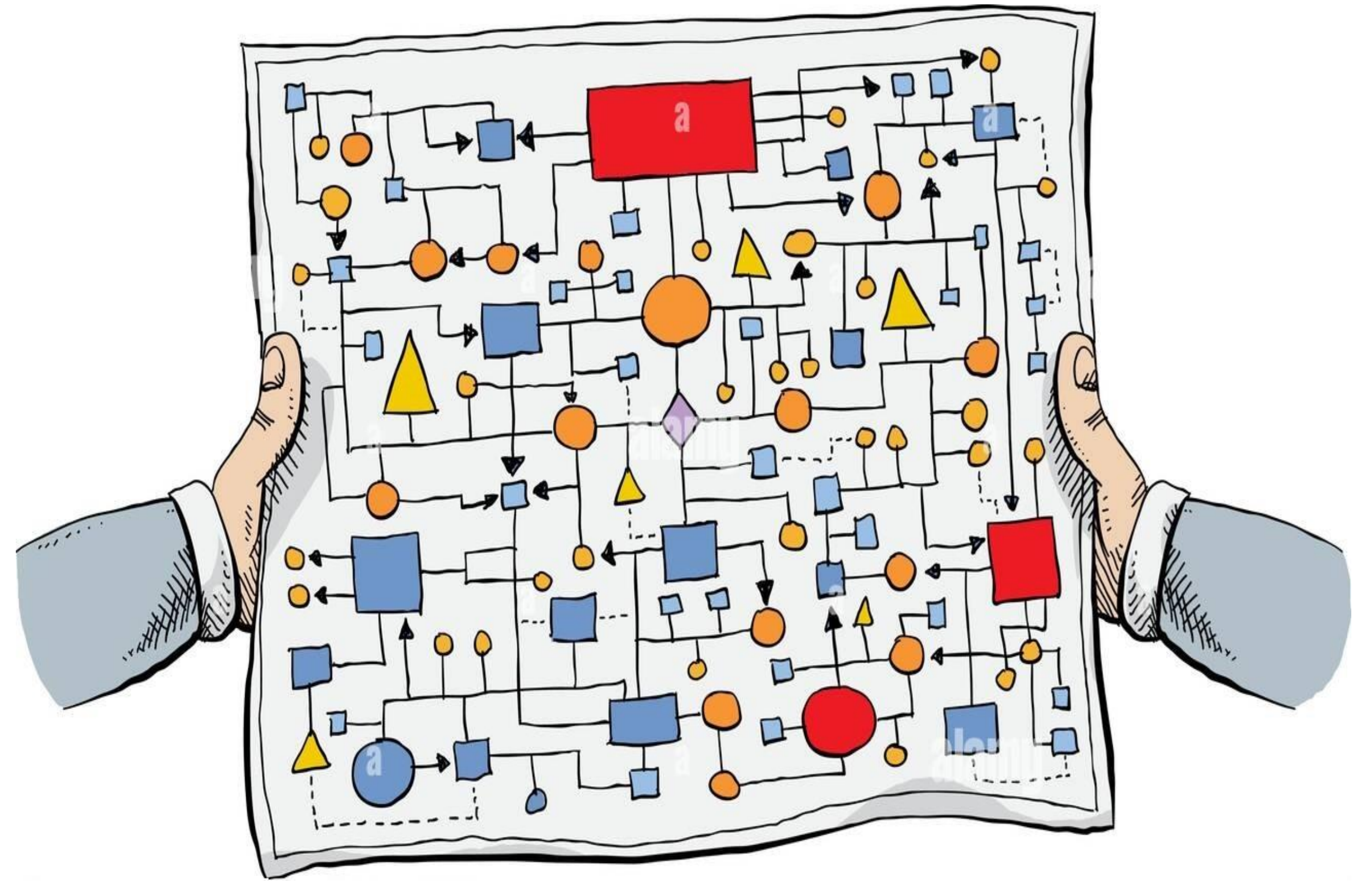
*“We want all children to be happy and well cared for”*

- Reducing poverty has enormous benefit for **each child**.
- Saves **money** by reducing demands for social services like welfare, health, crime.
- Supports a more dynamic, efficient and productive **economy**, by making sure that everyone has the potential to contribute.
- Will enhance social cohesion and protect **democracy**.
- That social cohesion will help support the changes needed for **climate action**, to reduce pressure on the environment.
- Enriches us **culturally and artistically** by creating the conditions for everyone with talent to realise their potential.

# What do you think the role of central Government is?



**Your views?**



www.alamy.com



# Role of Centre of Government



Ensuring high-quality decision making

Risk management and foresight

Policy coordination across government

Managing government transitions

Whole-of-government vision

External and internal communications

Driving cross-cutting policies

Implementation and monitoring of performance

# Role of the Programme Office



The Child Poverty and Well-being Programme Office was established in the Department of the Taoiseach in Spring 2023 to coordinate and focus Government action on child poverty and well-being.

Its role is to:

1. **Monitor** the delivery of policy commitments by Departments and their Agencies.
2. Undertake a small number of **strategic initiatives** which have the potential to increase the impact of current and emerging measures.

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

# Six priority areas



\*PRIORITY #1

PRIORITY #2

PRIORITY #3

PRIORITY #4



# Four Cross-Government Initiatives



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

# Taoiseach's Ambition



My vision for Ireland is a country where all children are given an equal chance, where we break down the barriers to education, where we give people the security of home ownership and the certainty of dignity in ill health and old age. A country where we realise a fair, caring, tolerant and diverse society, founded on the strong economy and full employment. We can underpin this societal aspiration by setting an overarching goal. I set that ambition at our Child Poverty Summit last week and I am telling you today we will make Ireland the best country in Europe to be a child. This will be Ireland's moon shot, if you will, and it will be the guiding focus of everything I do. (Taoiseach Simon Harris)

Collaborative

Comprehensive

Complicated



Convening

Innovative &  
imagination

Leadership/management





**Music  
Generation**

# Music is Our Home

## Verse 1

Days go by, living life  
Through a window, of things they can't buy  
They could help, they could try  
But greed's too hungry to help another life

They know well they need help  
But lies are easy, the truth doesn't sell  
They're aware, they don't care  
The money's theirs, why can you share?

## Chorus:

Whenever you feel hidden, music will make you seen.  
Whenever you feel silenced, music can help you dream.  
What are you gonna do?  
When music's calling you?

## Verse 2

We're told from a young age  
The only certain things we keep  
The only thing that can't be robbed from  
us is a dream

But childhood dreams cost too much to  
keep alive  
In order to keep living we must let them  
die

## Chorus

## Bridge:

We march together to a single drum  
A force that binds, us one by one  
Reminds us where we all come from  
We'll never be controlled

Music is worth more than gold  
It's from our souls, it can't be sold  
I'm looking for a place to go,  
Music is our home

## [Instrumental]

## Chorus x2







“We came all the way to explore the Moon, and the most important thing is that we discovered the Earth.” -  
William Anders.



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# Thank you

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