



UPR Info pre-sessions

Human rights in Ireland

The right to adequate housing

Presentation by Mercy Law Resource Centre

MILRC
Mercy Law Resource Centre

About Mercy Law Resource Centre

Mercy Law Resource Centre (MLRC) is an independent law centre providing free legal help for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Speaking here today on the right to adequate housing and the major gaps in protection of this right in Ireland.

MLRC
Mercy Law Resource Centre

The right to adequate housing

Background to presentation here today:

Crisis in homelessness in Ireland not seen since the history of the State

Ireland's international human rights obligations in respect of the right to adequate housing: the International Convention on Economic Social and Cultural Rights

The right to adequate housing – serious gaps in protection

The right to adequate housing is not appropriately protected in Ireland:

Three key issues to raise today:

- The crisis in homelessness
- The lack of legal aid for evictions
- The failure of State rent supplement to meet market rent

MILRC
Mercy Law Resource Centre

The crisis in homelessness

The crisis in homelessness:

the failure to protect and make enforceable the right to adequate housing

Recommendations:

- Put recommendation of Convention re ESC rights and right to housing to referendum to put in Constitution;
- Ensure that further consideration of the issue is underpinned by participation, transparency and accountability

The lack of legal aid for evictions

The lack of legal aid for evictions: lack of legal security of tenure

Devastating effect of eviction. Technical legal arguments crucial before the courts.

Recommendation: expand the State legal aid scheme to include cases involving eviction from housing.

The failure of State rent supplement to meet market rent

The failure of rent supplement/HAP to meet market rent: Affordability and accessibility:

- We have a system of Rent Supplement/Housing Assistance Payment (HAP).
- It is not meeting market rent in urban areas particularly Dublin.
- This is widely recognised as a major cause of homelessness.

Recommendation: Introduce legislative and policy measures to ensure Rent Supplement/HAP can meet market rent.

Summary of recommendations

1. Put recommendation of Convention re ESC rights and right to housing to referendum to put in Constitution;
2. Ensure that further consideration of the issue is underpinned by participation, transparency and accountability
3. Expand the State legal aid scheme to include cases involving eviction from housing.
4. Introduce legislative and policy measures to ensure Rent Supplement/HAP can meet market rent.

The right to adequate housing

Presentation by Mercy Law Resource Centre

Thank you for your consideration and your time. We greatly appreciate it.

Maeve Regan

Managing solicitor

Mercy Law Resource Centre

25 Cork Street, Dublin 8, Ireland

www.mercylaw.ie

M L R C
Mercy Law Resource Centre