

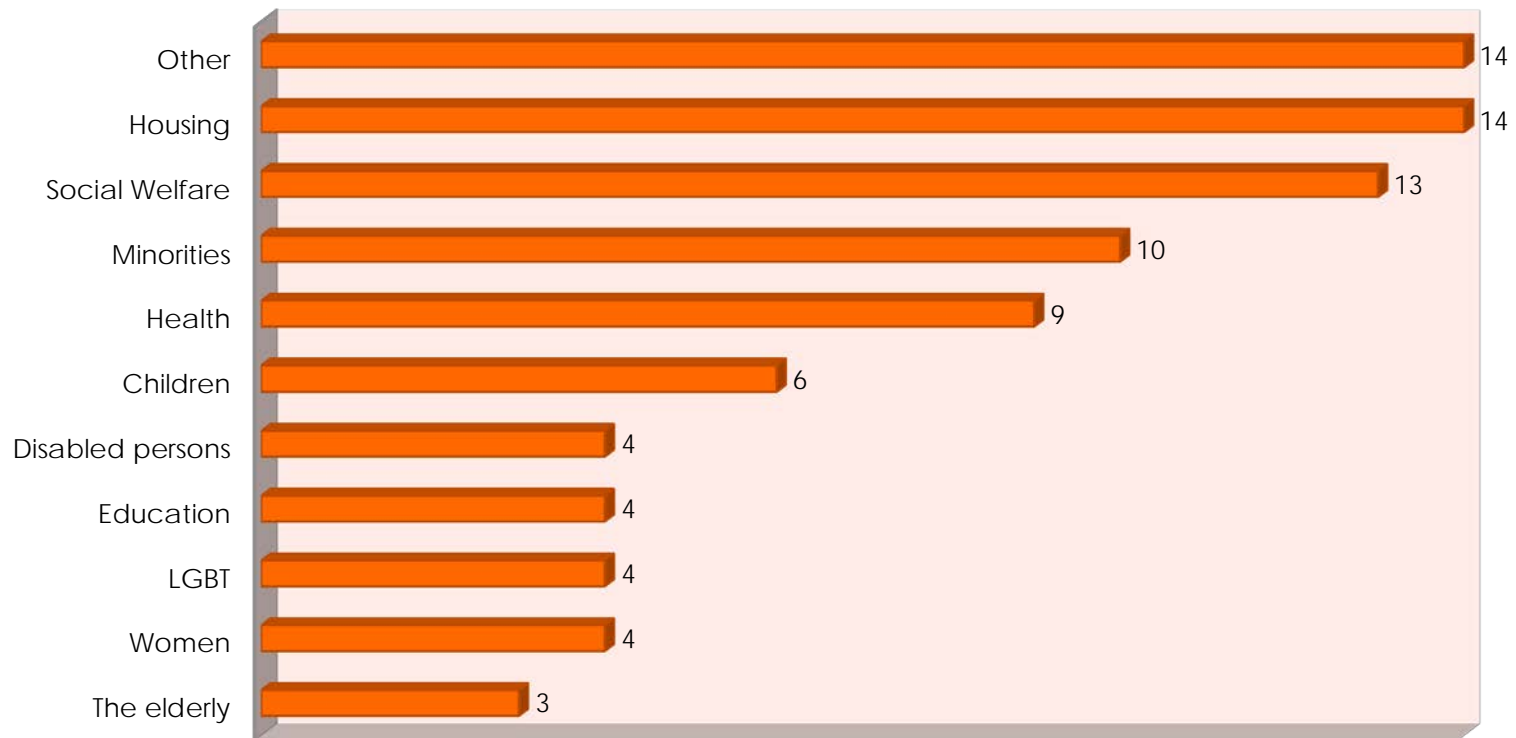


#FairBudget
#FairSlice

Human Rights Analysis of Budget 2015

From 37 Irish Civil
Society
Organisations

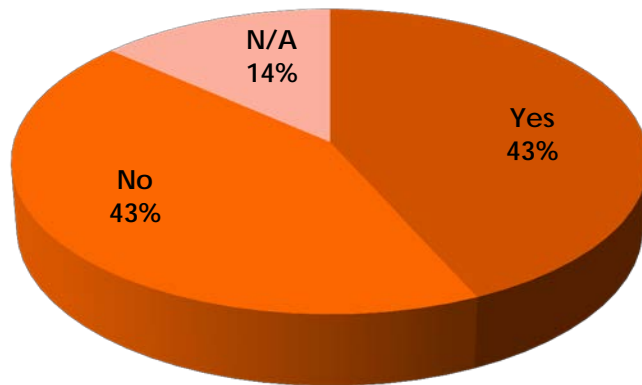
Areas of Human Rights represented in the Survey



Doras Luimni, We're Not Leaving, Crosscare, Focus Ireland, One Family, The Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice (VPSJ), INOU, Community Law and Mediation, GLEN, Gay and Lesbian Equality Network, European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) Ireland, Disability Federation of Ireland, The Alzheimer Society of Ireland, Inclusion Ireland, Migrant Rights Centre Ireland, Children's Rights Alliance, SVP, Irish Advocacy Network Ltd, Unite, Threshold, ENAR Ireland, Threshold, Age Action, Nasc, the Irish Immigrant Support Centre, Simon Communities of Ireland, Irish Refugee Council, National Travellers MABS, Peter McVerry Trust, National Women's Council of Ireland, Mental Health Reform, Public Interest Law Alliance, The Integration Centre, Barnardos, Treoir, National Information Centre for Unmarried Parents, Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice, Amnesty International Ireland, South Dublin Community Platform, Future Voices Ireland

Pre-budget Opportunities & Involvement

Q: Do you feel you had enough opportunities to input into government decision-making on Budget 2015?



Q: Please indicate all options you participated in for pre-budget work?

Submissions to one or more government departments	25
Attendance at pre-budget forums	21
Correspondence with Ministers	18
Presentations before Committee	14
Meetings with specific departments	13
Other	11

Note: Half the organisations participated in three or more pre-budget activities

Pre-Budget Recommendations

Q: Were any of your recommendations from your submissions/pre-budget work reflected in budget decisions?

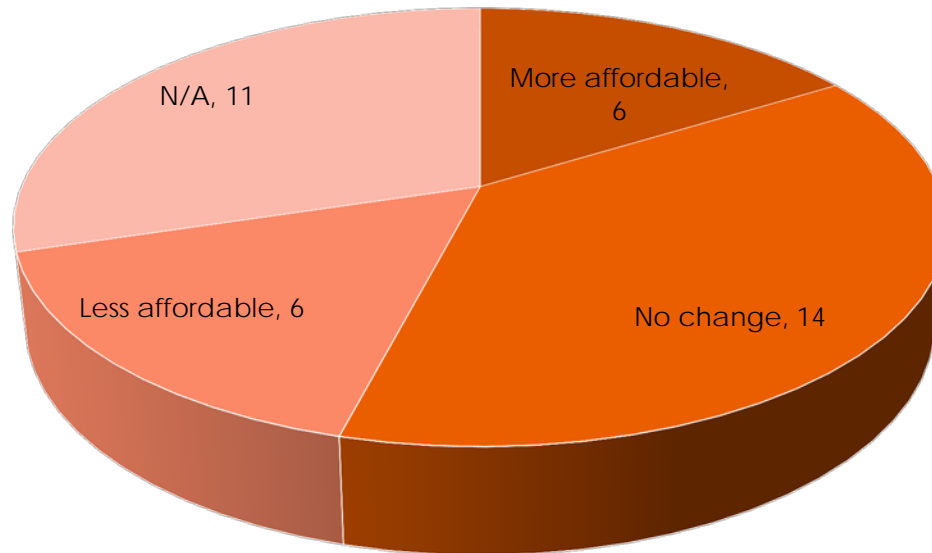
Yes, all of them	0
Most of them but not all	2
Some but only minor	13
No reflection of our submission(s)	7
N/A	15

Q: What recommendations were reflected and to what extent?

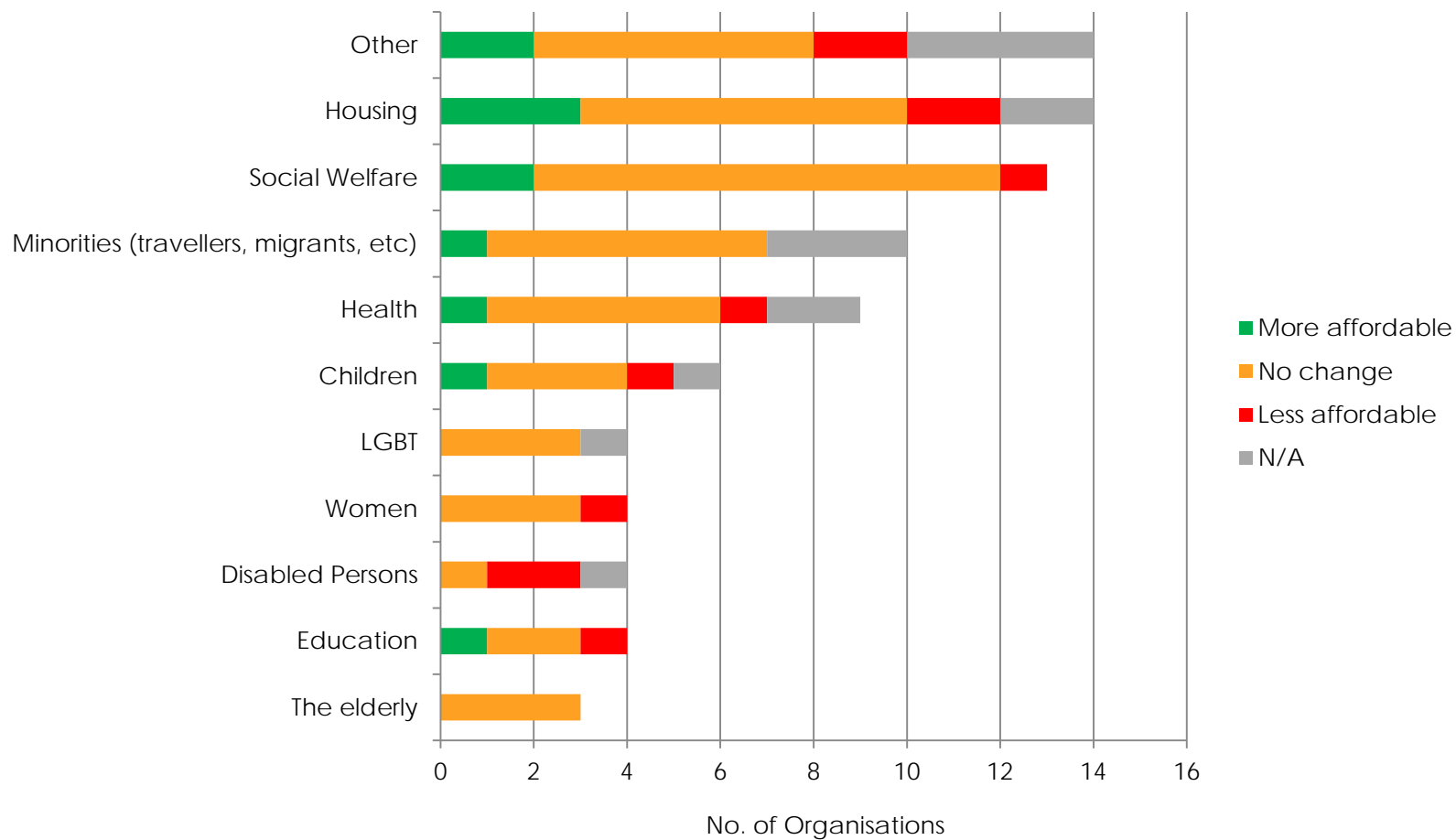
- Child benefit was increased, Tusla was given appropriate funding, budget for a comprehensive social housing programme was delivered
- No increase in provision of badly needed publicly subsidised childcare. No increase in overall social welfare payments or tackling of pension inequality for older women
- Asked for reversal of lone parent income disregard happening in Jan 2015 (as part of 3 years of measures against lone parents)-no change
- Requested €1 billion in funding per annum for social housing, a figure of €2.2 billion has been quoted, We also requested additional funding for homeless services and a 16% increase was provided for.
- Asked for the full retention of the Free Travel scheme which was noted in the Statement of Government Priorities by Minister. Asked for an increase in the living alone allowance to €3.80 but got €1.30. We asked for the full restoration of the Christmas Bonus-partial
- Establish a cost of disability commission - not reflected in Budget 2015 Make work pay for people with a disability - not reflected in Budget 2015 Introduce individualised budgets for people with a disability - not reflected in Budget 2015
- Begin the process of increasing all basic social welfare payments towards that necessary to achieve a Minimum Essential Standard of Living

Affordability of Rights in Budget 2015

Q: Did the budget make your client/target groups' capacity to access that right(s)

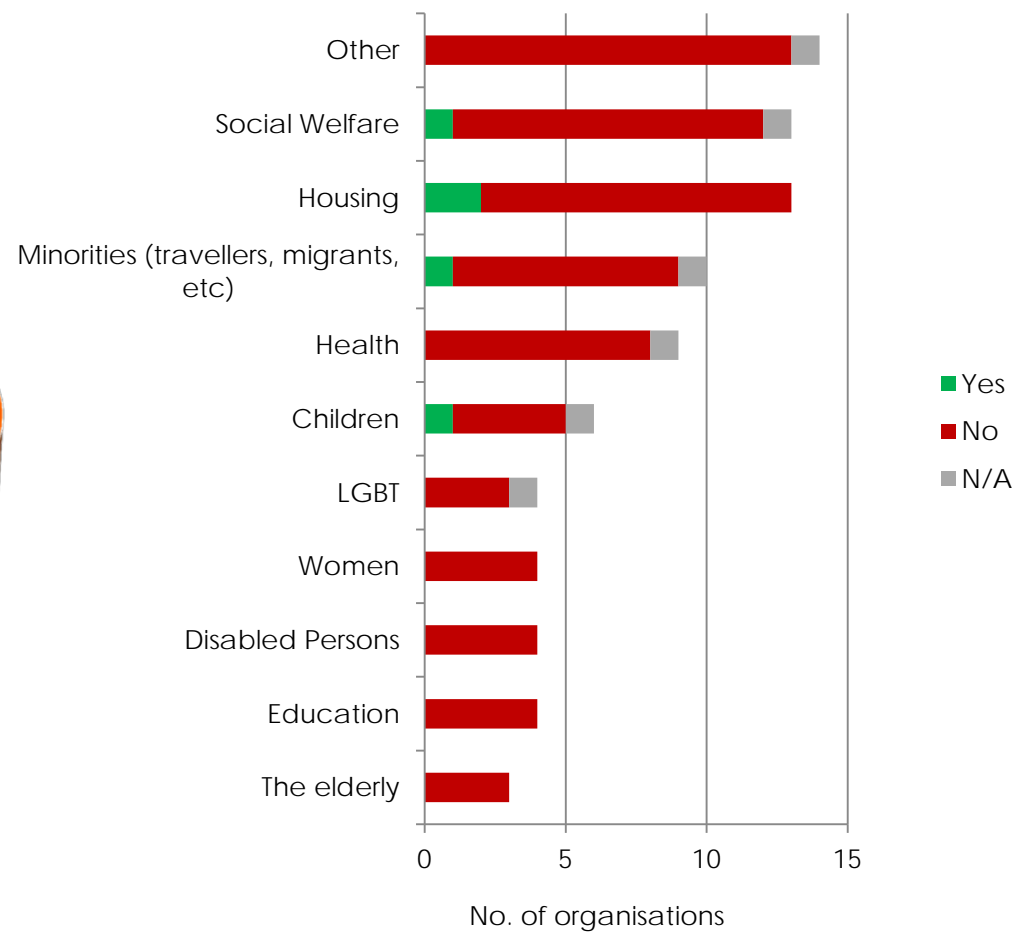
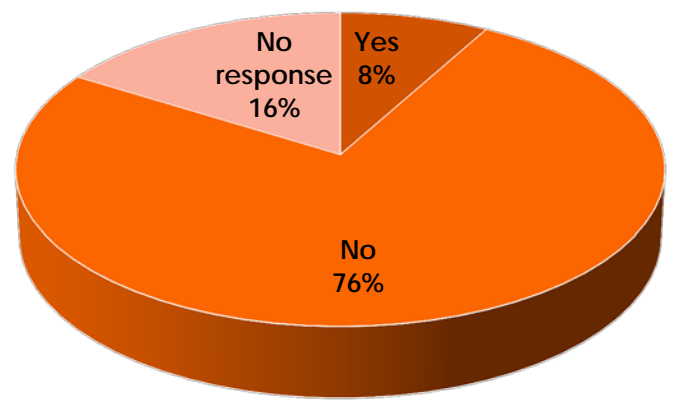


Specific Rights and Affordability in Budget 2015



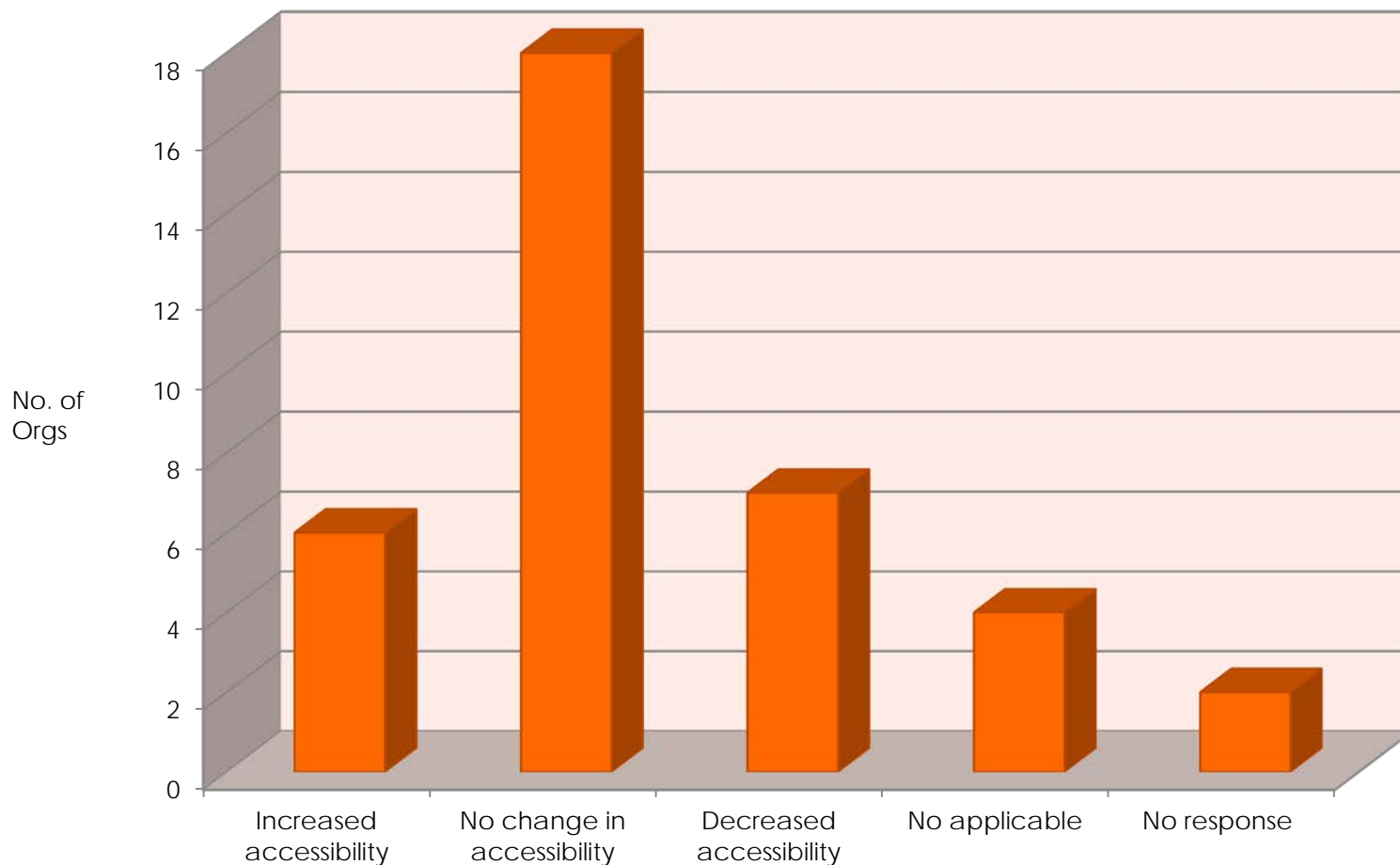
Adequacy of Budget 2015 Spending on Rights

Q: In your view was the main issue you work on/your target group adequately allocated for financially in the Budget?

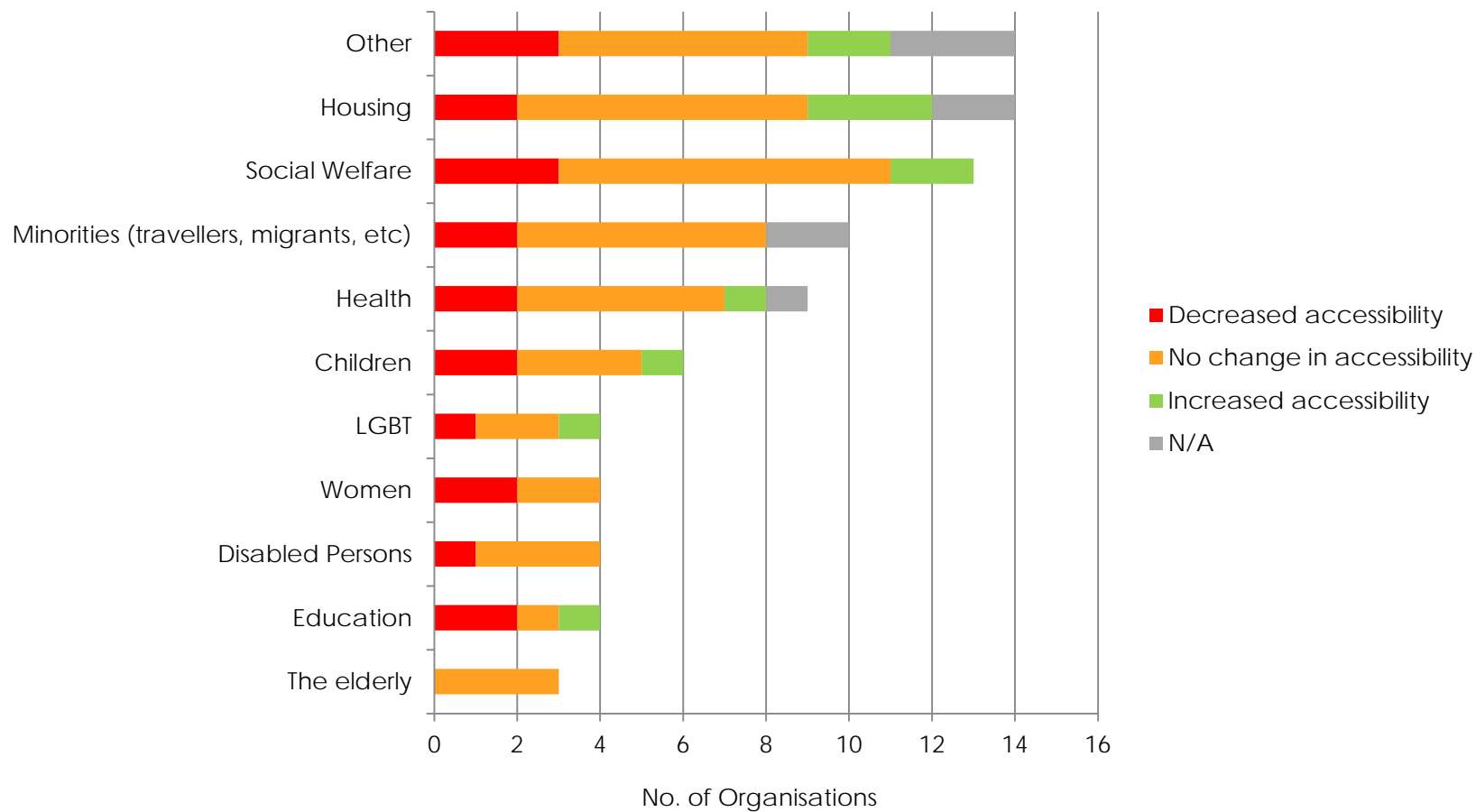


Does Budget 2015 increase access to Human Rights?

Q: Will your client/target group be better able to access the right(s) as a result of Budget 2015?

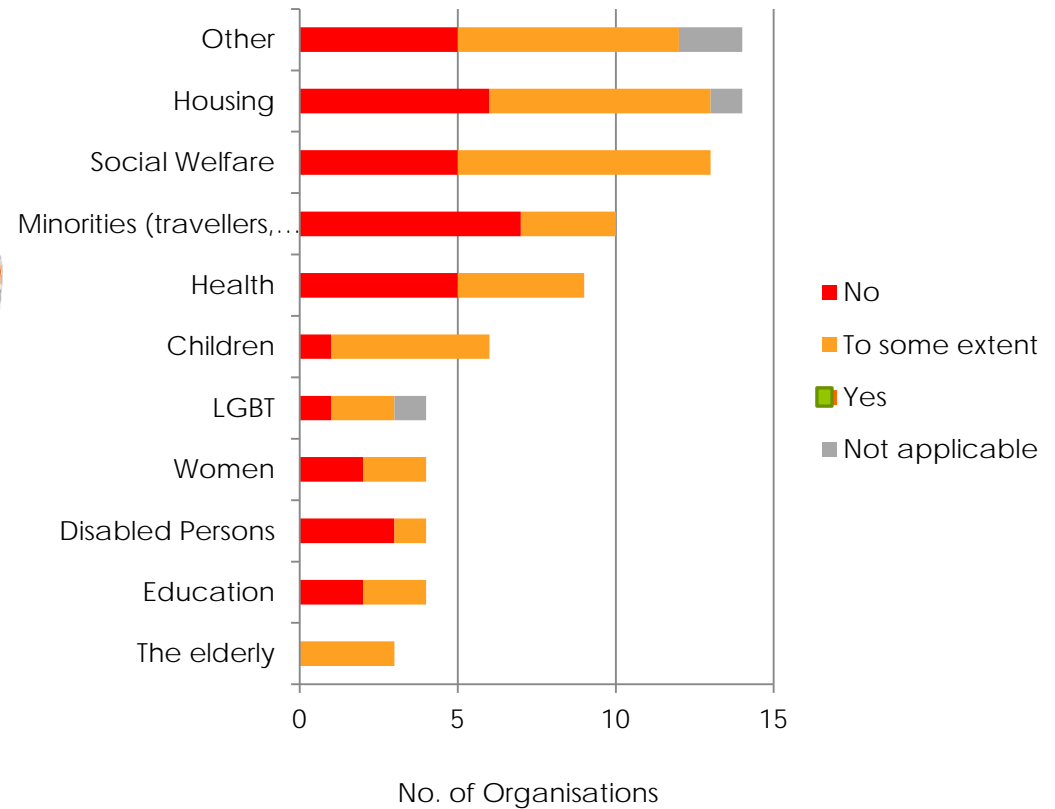
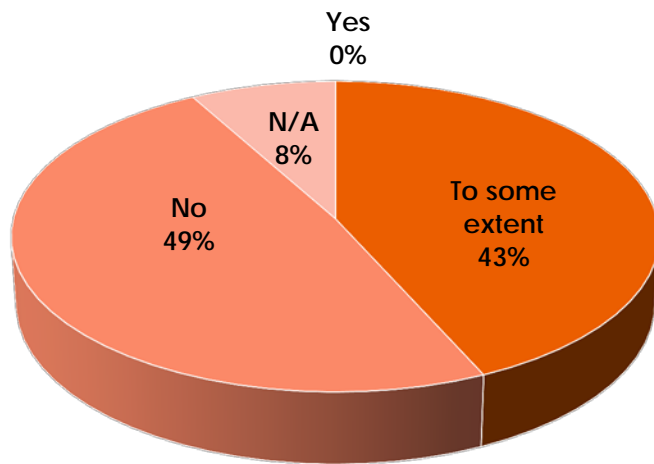


Accessibility to Rights in Budget 2015



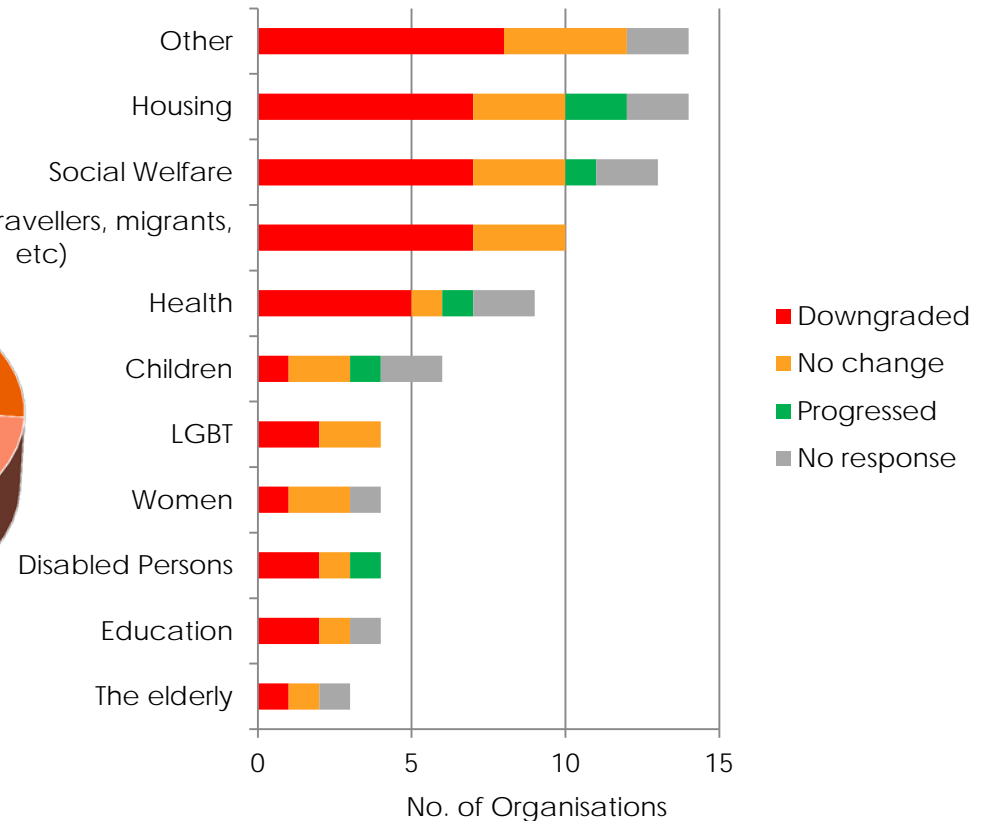
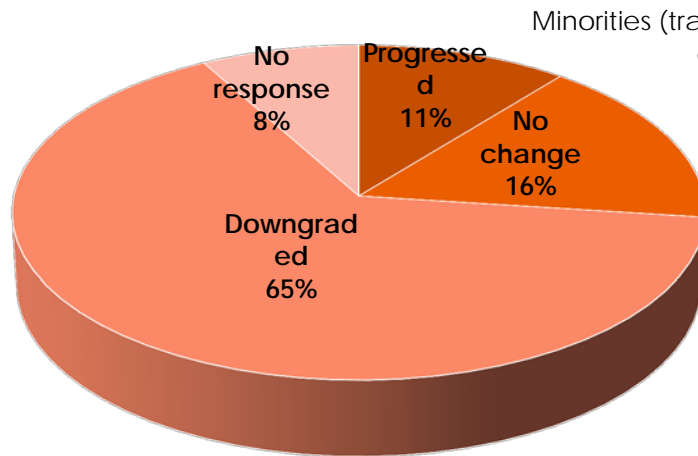
Protection of the Minimum Core

Q: Have the rights of vulnerable groups been properly respected and promoted in Budget 2015?



Impact of Recession on Human Rights

Q: How have the human rights which your organisation work on been impacted in Ireland since the recession?



Government's Actions in Recession

- Children in low income household were disproportionately affected by austerity budgets – universal payments like child benefit were cut, adult social welfare (for parents) was reduced, public services faced funding cuts and more taxes were introduced.
- The needs of the most marginalised and the lower income groups were not acknowledged and addressed.
- The right to good quality, affordable housing has been downgraded due to the recession generally. Progressive cuts to rent supplement budget was not necessary or proportionate
- Harsh cuts in cash supports and services to children made in previous budgets were not reversed in Budget 2015. These cuts continue to hinder children's access to their rights
- It has yet to be seen if the regression of rights will be redressed in the coming years to get to a level of adequate social welfare supports and quality services. This Government did not reduce the social welfare rates but made cuts to other secondary supports and to qualification criteria.
- The government only appear to assist people on the Live Register, they have made getting back to work harder for people with a disability or people parenting alone. However, for those on the Live Register, it is not regrettably the right to work that is informing their activation measures but an increasing focus on control and expenditure reduction.
- The regression in the rights of young people has very clearly been: (i) continued (i.e. not temporary), (ii) not necessary, (iii) completely disproportionate, and (iv) no minimum core was protected. The rights of young people to a job, to decent pay and conditions (in Ireland), to equal rates of social welfare, to an affordable quality house, and to a third level education have all been attacked through successive budgets

Conclusions: Have Human Rights been sufficiently considered in Budget 2015?

- Generally the findings of the 37 surveys indicate that Budget 2015 should have considered human rights in the budgetary process and decision-making as the current process is totally deficient in equality, transparency and participation.
- Accessibility, affordability and adequacy has seen a limited move in the right direction in housing, social welfare, health and children but vulnerable groups in society were neglected to a large extent in accessing public services in this budget
- More specifically adequate investment & measures to increase accessibility to public services were neglected in Budget 2015, those dependent on the State will see little improvement in standard of living especially when water charges are taken into account
- The recession and austerity measures had a significantly negative impact for 65% of organisations on housing, social security, health, for disabled persons and in particular for minorities (Travellers, Roma, migrants)
- Overwhelming majority of organisations believe Government should take a human rights approach to budgeting to ensure a fairer more equal society

Recommendations: To Reform Budgetary Processes & Decision Making

- Using human rights as a reference point for the budgetary process would help to ensure that public policy decisions are non-discriminatory, are geared at the protection and advancement of human rights and the prioritisation of the most vulnerable.
- We agree with as far as an impact assessment should form part of the Budget. However, it also needs to be recognised that a balance to be struck between different groups.
- There is a requirement for government to adhere to internationally recognised human rights protections and adopt a human rights based approach.
- Crucial to also have equality and gender proofing
- The social and even physical environment needs more attention so that we maximise health for everyone.
- We call for a children's rights approach to budgeting
- We support the equality budgeting campaign. We also asked for the government to disability proof the budget 2015 proposals.
- human rights based would ensure that access to home care etc are rights based rather than resource reliant.
- Not only should they do it because it would be the right thing to do but they should do it as it would facilitate a better and more effective use of resources