

# The Advocacy Initiative

## Who Cares About Social Justice Advocacy?

In November 2012 The Advocacy Initiative undertook the first of two public polling exercises. The purpose is to understand what the general public think of the lobbying, campaigning and advocacy work of the community and voluntary sector.

The polling, conducted by nfpSynergy, involved an online survey of 1,436 respondents over the age of 16. The respondents were balanced to reflect the diversity in the general population including age, gender and socioeconomic status.

The full data set is available on [www.advocacyinitiative.ie](http://www.advocacyinitiative.ie) and will be updated following the next instalment in April 2013. Our objective is that this information will support those working in the community and voluntary sector to communicate their advocacy and build their support base.

Feel free to use this data, however if you do please reference 'Survey commissioned by The Advocacy Initiative, nfpSynergy, February 2013'.

### So what does the public think?

**72%** believe it is important for charities to campaign and lobby government. The majority (**51%**) recognise campaigning as part of the 'cause' of charities and non-profits.

**37%** believe that non-profit groups are allowed to engage in political lobbying, **19%** think they are not, but the majority don't know.

**56%** think charities and non-profit groups can organise protests and demonstrations, while **12%** are of the opinion they cannot.

**15%** think charities and non-profits have an influence on law and policy, but **46%** think they should be influential.

Charities and non-profit groups are the only sector that the public would like to have more influence on government (compared with trade unions, business, farmers, and religious bodies/churches).

**29%** of respondents are concerned that charities and non-profit groups spend too much time lobbying and not enough directly helping people.

**57%** believe that greater involvement of charities and community groups in national policy making would ensure that vulnerable people are better provided for in the current crisis.

The most common involvement in campaigning activities for respondents is adding your name to a petition (**37%** for 16-24 year olds and **39%** for 55-64 year olds). Followed by joining a social networking site and sending a campaign postcard. People are least likely to attend a public meeting or demonstration.



*The Advocacy Initiative is a three-year community and voluntary sector project that promotes understanding, awareness and effectiveness of social justice advocacy in Ireland. By creating the conditions for stronger social justice advocacy, the Initiative will strengthen policy responses to existing and emerging challenges in addressing poverty and social exclusion, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable society.*

For more information go to: [www.advocacyinitiative.ie](http://www.advocacyinitiative.ie)