



Department of Social and Family Affairs

Further Fall In Live Register Shows Positive Policies Working – Mary Coughlan Minister For Social And Family Affairs

The falling Live Register figures show the positive effect of Government policies to reduce unemployment, create jobs and tackle poverty, said Minister Mary Coughlan today.

“A strong economy means more jobs and that means less unemployment and a real assault on poverty,” said Minister Coughlan today.

“I welcome the further decrease in the Live Register as very encouraging,” the Minister added. The latest figures show a decrease of 10,424 on the figure at the beginning of 2004 with seasonally adjusted figures also showing a decrease of 3,000 for the same time.

The end-May figures show a fall of 2,688 on April of this year down to 161,972 - a year on year decrease of 4,133 when compared with May of last year.

“This is the first time since 2000 when both the unadjusted and seasonally adjusted Live Register figures were lower at end-May than at the start of the year,” Minister Coughlan said.

“These latest figures suggest that the numbers on the Live Register are responding to the relatively buoyant labour market existing at this time and recent positive trends in unemployment are being maintained.”

As a Government we are determined to tackle poverty, and this is being done with targeted social inclusion spending and maintaining a vibrant and enterprising economy which provides jobs and opportunity.

“Over 200,000 people have been lifted out of poverty. That’s because jobs have been created and because of major increases in direct support for poorer families and communities,” said Minister Mary Coughlan.

“This Government intends to build upon the unprecedented rises in Social Welfare spending and targeted social inclusion spending to end consistent poverty in Ireland once and for all.

“It is worth noting, that under this Government, the lowest levels of social welfare rates have increased by 62 per cent since 1997 – which is 27 per cent more than the increase in the cost of living in this period. That means real increases and real spending power for social welfare recipients.

“It is also worth noting that this Government’s social welfare Budget provision for this year is more than €11 billion which is the highest amount ever allocated to social protection payments. This is more than double the amount provided by the opposition parties in 1997, which is some measure of their commitment to the less well off, the disadvantaged, the old and vulnerable. The average rise in the lowest social welfare rates under the opposition Rainbow was €2.74 compared to €7.39 under this Government.



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"Our record funding allocation to the social welfare budget is being spent on targeting disadvantage, caring for our older people and those in need of care, our children, those less well of and those who have lost their jobs.

ENDS May 4th 2004