



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí Department of Social Protection

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€1.1 billion committed to Employment Supports for Jobseekers in Budget 2015 welcomed by Minister Kevin Humphreys

- Doubling of JobsPlus places to 6,000 with €12 million extra funding.
- An extra €10 million for Back to Work Enterprise Allowance to support start-ups.
- Funding of €373 million available for 25,500 Community Employment places.
- €22 million for new Back to Work Family Dividend.

The Minister of State at the Department of Social Protection, Kevin Humphreys T.D. welcomed the allocation of €1.1 billion for working age employment supports across a range of programmes in the Department of Social Protection in Budget 2015.

Minister Humphreys said: **“As Minister of State for Activation my number one priority is to help people who have lost their job to get back to work. This funding package will ensure we have a strong and diverse range of programmes targeted so people get the help, placements and income supports they need to get back to work.”**

A doubling of the number of places on the JobsPlus scheme will encourage employers to hire those who have been out of work for 1 year or more. 60% of those hired under JobsPlus to date have been out of work for over 2 years; this shows how immensely invaluable JobsPlus is to people who are experiencing long term unemployment.

Minister of State Humphreys said **“During my national tour, I have met with employees and employers who have benefited from the JobsPlus scheme and I’ve heard first-hand how it gives those who are out of work for a long time, a chance to get back into employment.”**

Minister Humphreys also commented on the funding allocated to programmes within his area of responsibility: **“The €22 million committed in the Back to Work Family Dividend will incentivise those with young families to bridge the cost gap of getting back to work.”**

“We will continue to support those who want to set up their own business with an extra €10 million in funding allocated for the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance.”

“Along with getting people back to work, my Department helps to build communities through the Community Employment Scheme. I am delighted to confirm funding of €373 million in 2015 which will fund 25,500 places across the country.”

“I have been able to protect and expand the funding for Community Employment by nearly €16 million which will ensure an allocation of 25,500 places in 2015 across over 1,000 projects.”

The Community Employment allocation will provide continued support for the new 3 year community-based childcare programme for participants with a budget of €29 million for 2,200 dedicated places. €15 million is also committed to the Community Employment Drug Rehabilitation Schemes with over 1,000 places.

This funding package will also make provision for the roll-out of new Health and Social Care programme for Community Employment to ensure participants have adequate qualifications to take-up employment opportunities in this area and to support local service delivery, and provide ongoing support to over 1,000 Community Employment Sponsoring Organisations who manage these projects in a voluntary capacity. I also plan to hold annual meetings with the sponsors on a Divisional basis to hear their views.

“Community Employment is at the heart of our role in getting people back to work with quality experience and training, while supporting social inclusion in every town, village and parish in Ireland.” Minister Humphreys added.

PRESS RELEASE ENDS