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## **MINISTER MARY COUGHLAN LAUNCHES PUBLICATION ON IMMIGRANTS RIGHTS**

Mary Coughlan, Minister for Social and Family Affairs, today launched the Immigrant Council of Ireland's handbook on immigrants' rights and entitlements in Ireland. The handbook has been funded by a grant of €60,000 approved by Minister Coughlan from her department's scheme of grants for information and welfare rights projects.

The handbook is considered to be the first publication of its type focused on the needs of immigrants. The publication covers social welfare entitlements as well as all aspects of law, policy and practice relating to immigration in Ireland. More than 3,000 copies will be distributed nationwide to immigrants themselves as well as to information and advice workers in state and non-state organisations, including Citizen's Information Centres, health boards, employers and trade unions. The handbook will also form the basis for information leaflets to be published and translated into various languages.

"I find it enormously heartening that many highly talented people choose to migrate to Ireland to work, study and to live. These people enrich our society with their enthusiasm, vitality and talent.

"As a nation, we have a responsibility to ensure that they are aware of their rights and entitlements and are protected against exploitation. This publication is part of our response to this task," said Minister Coughlan.

**ENDS**

**1st July, 2003**



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**Note for News Editors**

**Immigrant Council of Ireland**

The Immigrant Council of Ireland is the national agency working for the rights and entitlements of all immigrants, mostly migrant workers, through information, legal aid and advocacy. It does not include asylum seekers.

It was established by Sr Stanislaus Kennedy in 2001 to identify new and emerging social needs in Ireland and to create appropriate and innovative responses to these needs.