



**An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection**

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Minister Burton opens Limerick Local Employment Service

The Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton TD, opened new premises for Limerick Local Employment Service at Watch House Cross, Limerick, today (*Friday, 1st July 2011*).

Limerick Local Employment Service (LES) opened its doors in 1996 to provide an independent, integrated and personalised service to meet the needs of unemployed people in the area. The Service operates as a one-stop-shop for information, career and education guidance, job mediation, advice and support, referrals to appropriate agencies and services, job placement and aftercare support, all from one accessible location.

Speaking in Limerick today, Minister Burton said: "This approach very much fits with my Department's policy of integration of services. The Community Welfare Service and FÁS Employment and Community Employment Services are in the process of integrating into my Department. This will provide us with opportunities to deliver services differently, to be responsive to people's total needs and to get meaningful results for the people who avail of our schemes and supports."

Minister Burton also referred to JobBridge, the National Internship Scheme which she launched on Wednesday, 29th June. JobBridge, which consists of 5,000 places, will give individuals on the Live Register for at least three months the opportunity to undertake a quality internship in a host organisation in the private, public or community or voluntary sectors for a six month or a nine month period. Interns will receive an allowance of €50 per week in addition to their existing social welfare entitlement. The website, www.jobbridge.ie, is live from today, Friday 1st July, 2011 for the purposes of advertising internship places.



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Minister Burton continued: "I am struck by the enthusiastic and imaginative way Limerick LES has approached the delivery of their services. The Service has a record of high placement into employment despite the economic climate and has been a pioneer in a number of areas. The idea of group engagement or engaging with a number of clients at one time to ensure maximum efficiency was adopted by my own Department and Limerick LES at a very early stage and this has proved very successful. I have no doubt that the Service will promote the new internship scheme, which will be of benefit to both host organisations and interns in Limerick and beyond."

To mid-June this year, Limerick LES registered 1,008 new clients and placed 110 people in employment, including self employment, and 250 people progressed to education and training. In 2010, 2,087 people registered with the Service of which 1,191 progressed to employment, education and training.

Minister Burton concluded by saying: "Limerick LES is an example of a real partnership approach working on the ground with all the agencies and the communities working together and is one which I welcome. I wish all of you well in your work in this state of the art premises.

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