



NEWS RELEASE

NOVEMBER 2 2009

**Statement from the Department of Social and Family Affairs
regarding Live Register figures reported in the Irish Examiner**

The Department of Social and Family Affairs would like to clarify that the Live Register figures published by the CSO each month **includes all claims awaiting decision**. Once a claim is registered, it is counted for Live Register purposes regardless of whether the individual is in receipt of Jobseeker's Benefit, Jobseeker's Allowance or awaiting a decision on their claim.

This means that the Live Register figure of 423,639 for September 2009, published by the CSO, includes some 14,300 Jobseeker's Benefit claims and 43,900 Jobseeker's Allowance claims which were awaiting decision at the end of September.

The Department of Social and Family Affairs has taken a series of initiatives in response to the increase in claims for Jobseeker's payments. Since May 2008, some 350 extra staff have been assigned to local offices, new Central Support Units who solely decide Jobseekers claims and to the Departments Inspectorate, particularly to undertake means assessment.

In addition to this a number of measures have been taken in recent months to improve claim processing procedures. Included in this is a new streamlined process for people who had a claim in the previous two years, an improved procedure for those moving from Jobseeker's Benefit to Jobseeker's Allowance and the roll out of a new fast tracking process for the registering and deciding, where possible of claims in one dedicated appointment.

ENDS

**Department of Social and Family Affairs
2nd November 2009**