



NEWS RELEASE

4<sup>th</sup> April 2007

**OVER ONE MILLION CHILDREN TO BENEFIT FROM  
CHILD BENEFIT INCREASES WHICH BEGIN THIS WEEK**

***MORE THAN 340,000 CHILDREN IN WELFARE & LOW INCOME FAMILIES  
GAINING BY OVER EUR30 A MONTH FROM COMBINED ALLOWANCES***

The Minister for Social Affairs, Séamus Brennan T.D., announced today that more than one million children from half a million families will benefit from Child Benefit increases which come into effect from this week.

As a result of the new increases, Child Benefit rises to EUR160.00 a month for each of the first two children and EUR195.00 for the third and subsequent children.

Child Benefit is being increased by EUR10.00 a month for both the lower and higher rates of child benefit. It brings, for example, the monthly income from the benefit to EUR320 for a family with two children, increasing to EUR710 for those with four children, and to almost EUR1,500 for a family with eight children.

In the case of the 340,000 children of families on social welfare who have been receiving since January the single rate weekly Qualified Child Increase of EUR22, the rises in the QCI and Child Benefit combined will mean they are well over EUR30 a month better off from these supports alone.

Child Benefit payments have now increased over fourfold in the past ten years and are paid to more than one million children at a cost in 2007 of more than EUR2 billion. **(County breakdown of figures detailed below)**



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Minister Brennan also released updated statistics detailing how the increases in welfare supports, including Child Benefit, Qualified Child Increase (formerly Child Dependence Allowance or CDA's), Family Income Supplement and Back to School Allowance, in addition to the EUR1,000 a year Early Childcare Supplement, is boosting the incomes of families on welfare, jobseekers and low incomes.

These show, for example,

- A Lone Parent earning EUR16,000 and with one child aged under six has gained by EUR1,347 to bring the annual income from welfare alone to EUR11,842. For a Lone Parent in similar circumstances, but earning EUR20,000, the gain is over EUR3,740.
- For a Lone Parent with two children - one aged under 12 and one under six years - and earning EUR20,000 the income from welfare supports this year will be EUR13,564, a gain of EUR4,230.
- For a couple with two children - one aged under six - formerly on Jobseekers Allowance but now with earnings of EUR10,400, the gain from supports is almost EUR4,700 and brings their income from welfare to over EUR20,000.
- In the case of a single person with no earnings and on Jobseekers Allowance, their income from welfare is EUR10,483, an increase of EUR1,176. For a couple in similar circumstances, social welfare payments amount to over EUR17,000, a gain of over EUR1,880.
- A Lone Parent with four children and with no earnings will have a total welfare income of almost EUR26,500, an increase of more than EUR2,500 on the 2006 payments.

Minister Brennan said: "With these new increases the Government has surpassed its commitment on child benefit. Honouring this commitment represents a significant contribution to the alleviation of child poverty and support for children generally. Child Benefit is a universal payment that supports all children in all circumstances. However, despite exceptionally high investment in welfare supports, the reality is that we still have unacceptable remaining levels of child poverty. It is not acceptable that in modern, 21<sup>st</sup> century Ireland there should still be children who must still endure poverty, deprivation and distress. That is why I am determined to find ways of channelling additional and targeted resources directly to support these children and their families. The rise in the Qualified Child Increases for the first time in over a decade in the last Budget signalled a more selective approach to child income support by targeting more resources directly



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towards that one third of children who are mainly in Lone Parent families and other welfare and low income households.

"In recent years we have lifted more than 100,000 children out of poverty and now we must strive to complete the task. I have long held the view that implementing a second tier of targeted payment for children in low income and welfare families is the most effective method of tackling child poverty. I see the increased and improved Qualified Child Increase as representing a substantial move in that direction and that is why I deliberately took the decision to focus increased child supports in this area".

Minister Brennan also outlined updated details regarding the payment of the Early Childcare Supplement to all children aged six and under. "The payment is being made by my Department on an agency basis for the Office of the Minister for Children. The payment of EUR250 per child in respect of the quarter January to March will be made on April 10<sup>th</sup> this year, with further payments in July (for quarter April to June) and October (for quarter July to September) and December (for the last quarter of the year). No application is necessary for this support. The payment will issue automatically in the same way that the customer currently receives their Child Benefit."

Increases in Child Benefit will be paid to families who are paid by electronic methods on Tuesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Families who are paid by book payment will get the increase for April and May in a voucher to be picked up at their local post office on the first Tuesday in May. Renewal books being issued in June will include the increase.

Details of Child Benefit increases from April 2007 are detailed below:

<b>Number of Children</b>	<b>CB Old Rate</b>	<b>CB New Rate</b>	<b>CB Annual Increase</b>
1 child	150.00	160.00	120.00
2 children	300.00	320.00	240.00
3 children	485.00	515.00	360.00
4 children	670.00	710.00	480.00
5 children	855.00	905.00	600.00
6 children	1,040.00	1100.00	720.00
7 children	1,225.00	1295.00	840.00
8 children	1,410.00	1490.00	960.00



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### County Breakdown

The following is the breakdown of the number of children and families benefiting from Child Benefit per county:

Counties	Families	Children
Carlow	7,822	14,704
Cavan	8,517	17,553
Clare	14,722	29,304
Cork	63,408	122,448
Donegal	19,838	40,078
Dublin	149,370	276,201
Galway	28,917	57,872
Kerry	17,559	34,202
Kildare	27,749	53,070
Kilkenny	10,826	21,428
Laois	8,629	17,171
Leitrim	3,678	7,452
Limerick	24,418	46,410
Longford	4,755	9,684
Louth	16,783	31,762
Mayo	15,555	32,022
Meath	23,249	45,061
Monaghan	7,394	14,847
Offaly	9,496	18,872
Roscommon	6,918	13,902
Sligo	7,688	15,217
Tipperary	20,468	39,968
Waterford	15,259	28,860
Westmeath	11,564	22,966
Wexford	19,141	36,808
Wicklow	18,589	34,924

### **Minister Announces Funding Of 600m For New Budget**

***Some 2 million People To Qualify Next Year Entitlements***

**Press Release Ends**