



News Release

Cullen announces Benefits Agreement between Ireland and the Channel Islands

“A positive development which will create an important change for people and their families”

The **Minister for Social and Family Affairs, Martin Cullen TD** has announced (Friday 6 July 2007) that an agreement has been signed between Ireland and the UK which ensures that from 1 October (2007), people who have been working **both in Ireland** and the **Channel Islands** i.e. the islands of Jersey and Guernsey, - islands which are not members of the EU - will now, for the first time have the years when they worked on these islands taken into account when applying for social welfare entitlements in Ireland. Typical entitlements could include short term benefits such as jobseekers and illness benefit and long term benefits such as state pensions.

Announcing the agreement, **Minister Martin Cullen** said: “This new agreement is a very positive development for workers and their families who have been employed in Ireland and on one of these islands in the past. Prior to this new arrangement, a person, who at one time or another, worked in Jersey or Guernsey and Ireland could not have the periods of social insurance - which they had built up during their working lives - added together in order to obtain a benefit or pension. I am delighted to announce today that this situation has now changed”. The Minister said: “Workers’ periods of insurance can now be combined to help them qualify more readily for benefits here in this country - or indeed on the Channel Islands”.

The formal title of the new agreement is the Convention on Social Security between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Minister Cullen added: “As Minister for Social and Family Affairs, I am committed to ensuring that both necessary and practical reforms are made and put in place which will create positive changes for people and their families.”

ENDS



Department of Social and Family Affairs

Editor's note:

The effect of the Convention is to cover people who have worked in **The Channel Islands:** Jersey, Guernsey (which under the agreement includes the islands of Alderney, Herm and Jethou) and in addition, the **Isle of Man** (which is now also covered under this new Convention – but it had also been covered under an existing agreement).

People moving between Ireland and the UK enjoy protection under EU social security regulations. This Convention now extends similar protection to people who have worked in Ireland and the Channel Islands, (which are not part of the EU), and vice versa.

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