



Department of Social and Family Affairs

Minister Coughlan Welcomes Esri Report Confirming Continuing Fall In Consistent Poverty In Ireland

Government policy continues to help people to move out of poverty, according to an independent report conducted by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) said Mary Coughlan Minister for Social and Family Affairs today.

Minister Coughlan said "The ESRI report "Monitoring Poverty Trends in Ireland: Results from the 2001 Living in Ireland Survey" confirms the downward trend in consistent poverty in Ireland, which has been reduced by about two-thirds between 1994 and 2001.

"The report shows that our target of reducing consistent poverty to below 2%, as set out in the revised National Anti-Poverty Strategy, can be achieved,"said Minister Coughlan.

The National Anti-Poverty Strategy target, announced in February of 2002, is based on the ESRI measure of poverty that takes into account not only people's income but also indicators of deprivation such as the lack of adequate heating or clothing.

Using this measure the ESRI has found that consistent poverty fell from 15.1% in 1994 to 5.2% in 2001. In addition, consistent poverty among children has been reduced from 17% in 1997 to 6.5% in 2001. This data, in unpublished form, informed the development of the National Action Plans for Social Inclusion (NAPsincl) which were submitted to the EU earlier this year.

The Minister added: "This report presents clear evidence that the policies pursued by Fianna Fáil led Governments have been successful in helping the most vulnerable in our society to better their situation. Through our prudent management of the recent period of economic uncertainty and our continuing investment in social spending I am confident that we have ring-fenced these gains and will continue to bring poverty levels down."

ENDS

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