



**€45 MILLION IN SOCIAL WELFARE LUMP SUM PAYMENTS
ARE PAID THIS WEEK - COUGHLAN**

This week almost 45 million euro will be paid out in the form of lump sum payments to 470,000 long-term social welfare customers (mainly pensioners) who cash their book payments at Post Offices. The payments will be made on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday this week.

The lump sum payments are for Budget rate increases effective from the beginning of January, and are in addition to normal weekly social welfare payments. Individual lump sum payments will vary, depending on the personal rates payable. Customers who are paid by electronic means at Banks and Post Offices are already receiving their payment at the increased Budget rate since the start of the year. Some 210,000 people will get a 6 weeks payment as their current pension books expire this week. These include people getting Carer's Allowance, One Parent Family Payment, Invalidity Pension, Widow's and Widower's pensions. A total of 11.5 million will be paid to these recipients.

Some 260,000 others will get a 13 weeks payment. These are mainly people receiving Old Age, Retirement and Blind pensions, and Disability Allowance. The lump sum payments will comprise the 6 weeks increase due from the first week in January and a 7 week advance payment of their increase up to April when they will receive their renewal books. A total of 33.5 million will be paid to these groups of people. Minister Mary Coughlan said "This is the second year that virtually all short-term social welfare customers have received their full increases from the start of January. In addition, this year, for the first time, some 130,000 long-term customers who choose the option of direct payment into accounts at banks, post offices and other financial institutions have also received their full increase from the start of January. We are now delivering increases as a lump sum to the balance of our customers who cash their book payments at Post offices.

I am pleased that this year, more of the Department's customers have received their Budget increase from the start of the year, and that all our customers will again have the benefit of the increases from an early stage of the year."

ENDS

11th February, 2003



Examples of Lump Sums

- A pensioner getting the Old Age (Contributory) pension claiming an increase for a dependent spouse who is also over 66 years will get a lump sum payment of EUR 230.10. A widow or widower over 66 years on a contributory pension of EUR 155.80 a week will receive a lump sum payment of EUR 66.00.
- A person on a One Parent Family Payment at maximum rate now receives EUR 124.80 a week and will get a lump sum payment of EUR 36.00.
- A person getting a Carer's Allowance at maximum rate now receives EUR 129.60 a week and will get a lump sum payment of EUR 42.00 this week.