



Mary Coughlan Minister For Social And Family Affairs Today Welcomes A Decrease In The Unemployed Figures

Mary Coughlan Minister for Social and Family Affairs today welcomed a decrease in the numbers of people unemployed.

The numbers unemployed (ILO basis) fell by 1,600 in the year to 83,600. This represents a decrease of 2,300 on the previous quarter and leaves the unemployment rate at 4.4%, down on the rate of 4.6% at the same time last year. This is the first annual decrease since Q2 2001.

Seasonally adjusted the unemployment rate fell from 4.5% to 4.4% quarter on quarter. The relevant rate for males was 4.7% while the female rate was 4.0%

Employment grew in the year by 52,300 or 2.9% and full-time work accounted for 85% of this increase at a time when the labour force grew by 50,800 to 1,919,500 in the year.

“Recent positive trends in the level of unemployment are maintained, a sign of the positive effect of Government policies in tackling unemployment and providing jobs. Despite ever decreasing numbers of people on the Live Register the social welfare budget this year will provide over €11billion.

This is the highest amount ever allocated to social protection payments, and this record funding allocation is being spent on targeting disadvantage, caring for our older people and those in need of care, our children, those less well off and those who have lost their jobs. This Government remains committed to tackling social exclusion and disadvantage, “concluded Minister Coughlan.

Ends June 16th 2004