



## An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí Department of Social Protection

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### Department of Social Protection publishes results of independent Jobseeker Satisfaction Survey Jobseekers give marks of 4.4 out of 5 to customer services

**23 March 2016** Three in four jobseekers (76%) believe that Intreo, the Department of Social Protection's jobseeker service, improves their prospects of getting a job.

The finding is contained in a new, independent customer satisfaction survey of the Department's Intreo service.

The survey found:

- 89% of clients surveyed say staff are friendly, are very good at their job and do their best to help clients.
- 86% feel that their claim is processed quickly and 76% say that the Intreo service helps to improve their prospects of getting a job.
- 90% agree that opening hours are convenient, offices are easy to get to, and premises are a nice place to be.

The survey was carried out by W5, an independent market research company.

The survey was contracted by the Department in keeping with commitments under *Pathways to Work*, the Government strategy to help jobseekers back into work, training and education.

*Pathways*, developed by the Department, was introduced in 2012 as the Government's overarching response to the unemployment crisis.

Under the plan, a national employment and entitlements service – Intreo – was established to provide one-stop shops for jobseekers where they could receive their employment supports and income supports in the one place for the first time.

Intreo integrated the employment services previously offered by FÁS and the welfare services previously provided by the Department of Social Protection and the HSE. It saw the introduction of new, faster service processes and significantly improved jobseeker centres, known as Intreo centres.

Under the *Pathways* strategy, the Government committed to undertaking a programme of evaluation studies, including customer satisfaction surveys, to ensure that the ongoing reform programme is informed by customer feedback.

W5 surveyed jobseekers to gather their experiences with Intreo offices, Intreo staff, and Intreo services and processes.

Jobseekers' overall view of Intreo offices is positive. Overall satisfaction was scored at 4.38 on a scale of 1 – 5. On the key aspects of premises, staff, services and processes, reaction is almost uniformly positive.

Best rated aspects of the service are the quality of the new Intreo centres and the professionalism and customer service ethos of staff.

Reflecting on the findings, Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton T.D., said: **'I am pleased at these positive results, which show the progress that has been made in transforming the Department over the past five years from a passive benefits provider to an active and engaged employment service. The single most important aspect of this work is the benefit to jobseekers themselves. Behind every new job is a person or family benefitting from the recovery in their own lives. Unemployment has fallen from a crisis peak of 15.1% to 8.8% now, and while there is much more work to do, Intreo has already proved its worth. I would like to thank the staff of the Department for their hard work and for their commitment to change during a very difficult period; it is a commitment that is clearly appreciated by our clients.'**

Minister of State, Kevin Humphreys echoed the Tánaiste's comments. **"Since I took on the brief of Minister of State in the Department, I have been hugely impressed by the progress that has been made in changing what were once just a dole offices into modern employment centres – I have no doubt that this change has played a huge role in helping many people to get back into work and to reduce overall unemployment levels. The fact that it has also generated such a positive feedback from clients is testament to the commitment and dedication of all staff in the Department."**

This first survey provides a baseline measure of customer satisfaction. As part of the Department's commitment to gathering client feedback, it is intended that survey will be repeated in Autumn 2016.

**ENDS**