



**An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection**

www.welfare.ie

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**Statement on the Live Register - Tackling unemployment the
priority for Government**

“The Government is concerned by the difficulties that households are facing due to unemployment and job creation is the priority for Government,” said **Minister for Social Protection, Éamon Ó Cuív TD today.**

“We recognise that the issues around job creation and unemployment require a strategic approach across Government. It is for this reason that An Taoiseach Brian Cowen TD re-organised the key departments involved in assisting people who have lost their jobs and require income support and assistance in education and training and in creating new jobs in enterprise and through innovation.”

Responding to the Live Register figures published today by the CSO, **Minister Ó Cuív said:** “The Live Register rises every June without exception, due to seasonal factors. It has now reached 444,900 on a seasonally adjusted basis which includes 64,000 people who have casual or part time work. The month-on-month increase in the Live Register for June 2010 is the lowest June increase since 2007. This increase in the Live Register during the summer months will be reversed in the autumn.

“A significant number of those people who came on to the Live Register since the beginning of May are people who were in receipt of the Back to Education and Training Allowance. Recipients of the Back to Education and Training Allowance qualify for Jobseeker’s payments during the summer break. At the end of May 2010 there were 6,000 more people (a 70% increase) supported by the Back to Education and Training Allowance compared to the end of May 2009. Many of those are now on the Live Register over the summer period.

“Job creation is a priority for Government. We recently launched the Employer PRSI Incentive Scheme as part of a much bigger Government strategy to deal with the difficulties of unemployment and the need to create new jobs. The Employer PRSI Incentive Scheme will support job creation and counter the drift of people into long-term unemployment and welfare dependency. This scheme is focused on people who have been on the Live Register for 6 months or more.”

The Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Innovation, Batt O’Keeffe TD, said: “We know that behind every set of unemployment figures lie many



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human stories - and the loss of even one job is always one too many. However, the Government's strategy is as much about creating new jobs as it is about supporting unemployed workers so that they can get back into the labour force as the economy turns.

“Our training programmes and extra places in further and higher education are re-skilling our workforce to take up new jobs in growth areas of the economy. And the Government will persist with our focus on the core recovery policies that will get people back to work: competitiveness; human capital; innovation; infrastructure; green economy; and trade.”

Minister Ó Cuív added: “Across the Government we are providing income supports for vulnerable people, more training and education places for those who need to re-skill and supporting innovation and diversification in areas ranging from technology to food production and outdoor activity tourism.

“The issue of enforced inactivity is a huge challenge for people when they are unemployed and seeking work. I am bringing measures in the Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill through the Houses of the Oireachtas at present in the area of job activation and meaningful work activity for people seeking work. Once statutory responsibility for job activation schemes transfer to my Department in July (they include the Community Employment Scheme; Rural Social Scheme, the Community Services Programme and Job Initiative scheme) I will examine ways to use these schemes to create further opportunities to provide social employment.” At present there are over 50,000 people involved in the entire range of activation programmes across Government departments and state agencies (including the Back to Education and Training Allowance participants).

“The Government re-affirms its commitment to protecting the most vulnerable of all ages and to creating the conditions that will create new jobs,” concluded Minister Ó Cuív.

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