

# Social Inclusion Report Incorporating Annual Reports for 2011 & 2012

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Published by

Department of Social Protection

Gandon House, Amiens Street

Dublin 1

*ISBN: 978-1-908109-19-4*

Department of Social Protection 2013

Dublin, Ireland, November 2013

## Table of Contents

<b>MINISTER’S FOREWORD.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 .....</b>	<b>4</b>
INTRODUCTION.....	4
<b>CHAPTER 2 .....</b>	<b>6</b>
NATIONAL SOCIAL TARGET FOR POVERTY REDUCTION .....	6
<b>CHAPTER 3 .....</b>	<b>9</b>
EUROPE 2020 POVERTY TARGET.....	9
<b>CHAPTER 4 .....</b>	<b>11</b>
CHILDREN.....	11
<b>CHAPTER 5 .....</b>	<b>18</b>
PEOPLE OF WORKING AGE.....	18
<b>CHAPTER 6 .....</b>	<b>21</b>
OLDER PEOPLE.....	21
<b>CHAPTER 7 .....</b>	<b>24</b>
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES .....	24
<b>CHAPTER 8 .....</b>	<b>27</b>
COMMUNITIES.....	27

## List of Charts

<b>Diagram 1: Children – Status of Actions by Department in 2012 .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Diagram 2: Working Age – Status of Actions by Department in 2012 .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Diagram 3: Older People – Status of Actions by Department in 2012.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Diagram 4: People with Disabilities – Status of Actions by Department.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Diagram 5: Communities – Status of Actions by Department in 2012.....</b>	<b>30</b>

## Minister's Foreword



I am pleased to present the Social Inclusion Report covering the implementation of the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016 (NAPinclusion) for the years 2011 and 2012. This periodic report is prepared in accordance with NAPinclusion monitoring and evaluation processes. The report is complemented by a separate reference table of actions containing progress material in respect of all individual NAPinclusion measures.

The review has identified progress across a wide range of policy areas during the review period. In general, Departments and Agencies have reported that progress has been made across many targets/actions associated with the NAPinclusion high level goals. However, evidence of the adverse impact of the economic downturn during the review period continues. In that light, I welcome further evidence that Departments and Agencies have sought to develop new approaches to implementing actions to compensate for curtailment of activities due to the prevailing economic circumstances.

Tackling poverty remains a fundamental aspiration of Irish society and the Government. The Government has re-affirmed its commitment to reducing poverty by revising and enhancing the national social target for poverty reduction. This aims to reduce consistent poverty to 4% by 2016 and to 2% or less by 2020. Additional sub-targets for addressing poverty among children and jobless households are also to be set.

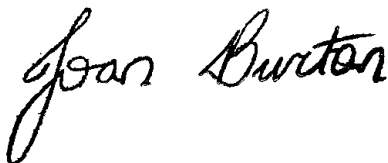
To support the implementation of the new target, my Department published the inaugural Social Inclusion Monitor earlier this year, to track progress on the target in an open and transparent manner. The Monitor and the Social Inclusion Report form a robust system of monitoring progress towards achieving the target and the implementation of NAPinclusion.

The challenges facing the country are now very different to when NAPinclusion was drawn up in 2007. Reforms relating to modernisation of social protection systems, improving effectiveness and efficiency of transfers and strengthening active inclusion are needed. In particular, active inclusion policies are needed to address the employment and social challenges.

My Department provides a wide range of income supports through the social protection system to those who are in need, at a cost of over €20 billion in 2013. Despite the requirement for savings in welfare expenditure, I have protected core weekly welfare rates in successive Budgets. Income support remains a key part of the Government's approach to protecting our citizens from the worst effects of the crisis. It is most welcome to see the strong performance of such social transfers in reducing poverty by over 60 per cent, one of the best outcomes in the EU, where the average is less than 40 per cent.

In addition to income support, activation measures are required to enable access to employment, especially for the significant percentage of the population living in jobless households. My Department has a central role to play in developing a joined-up policy approach to active inclusion, linking together income support, inclusive labour markets and access to services through initiatives such as Intreo and Pathways to Work.

The overriding objective for the Government is to increase employment, build real and sustainable economic growth and to protect those who are most vulnerable in our society. I am confident that the delivery of targeted policies across Government departments within the framework of the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion and other Government policies, boosted by the resources and commitment of the social partners and civil society, will lead to the achievement of the national social target for poverty reduction.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joan Burton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joan Burton, TD.

Minister for Social Protection

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016

This Social Inclusion Report is part of the monitoring and reporting mechanisms provided for in the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016 (NAPinclusion). The report covers the period from January 2011 to December 2012. Preparation and compilation of the report was coordinated by the Child & Social Inclusion Policy Division (CSIP) of the Department of Social Protection, with support from relevant Government Departments that provided report material. This is the fourth report, the previous three covering the periods 2007, 2008 and 2009-2010 respectively.

NAPinclusion identifies a wide range of actions and interventions to achieve the overall objective of reducing consistent poverty. The plan prioritises 12 high level goals in relation to children, people of working age, older people, people with disabilities and communities. It identifies up to 150 actions across Departments and agencies with a remit in social policy, as part of a strategic approach to make a decisive impact on poverty over the period to 2016.

#### National Poverty Target

A key element of NAPinclusion is the national poverty target, which sets out the Government's ambition for reducing and ultimately eliminating poverty.

In 2012 the Government revised and enhanced the national poverty target, which was renamed 'the national social target for poverty reduction'. The revised target is to reduce consistent poverty to 4 per cent by 2016 (interim target) and to 2 per cent or less by 2020, from the 2010 baseline rate of 6.2 per cent.

In addition, the government has agreed two new national sub-targets for children and jobless households, and to strengthen the implementation of the target through annual monitoring and social impact assessment.

#### Review of Reporting Structure

A review of the reporting structure for NAPinclusion was undertaken following the revision of the national poverty target in 2012. This included an evaluation of actions to establish their continued relevance. The review found that some were completed,

or had been overtaken by changes in policy and required updating. Following this review, it was decided to report on the 12 NAPinclusion High Level Goals in this report and separately the actions in tabular form, giving progress updates for the relevant period.

The Social Inclusion Report of NAPinclusion goals and separate table showing progress on NAPinclusion actions will be made available to stakeholders and the general public on the CSIP website [www.socialinclusion.ie](http://www.socialinclusion.ie) and on [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie). In preparing this report, CSIP consulted widely with the other relevant Government Departments that have responsibility for delivering the programme of actions set out in the NAPinclusion. Co-ordinators /liaison persons, in place in each department, liaised with CSIP staff and assisted in collating material. Departments submitted updates on progress, key developments and other material.

### **Economic Context of Period 2011 and 2012**

The review period of 2011 and 2012 followed a time of great challenge for the Irish economy, which was adjusting to a severe recession complicated by banking and fiscal crises. Ireland entered an ongoing EU/IMF Economic Adjustment Programme during this time, which included a joint financial support package of €85 billion.

The economy had contracted for the third consecutive year in 2010, leaving real GDP and GNP around 12% and 15% respectively below 2007 levels. Employment had fallen in 2010 by around 15%, with over 320,000 job losses leading to an average unemployment rate of 14.6% in 2011 and 14.7% in 2012, with around half of these totals accounted for by long-term unemployment. Furthermore, latest figures indicate that adults in jobless households, increased from 15.1% in 2010, to 15.9% in 2011.

The impact of the downturn in the economy on the public finances during the period preceding the review period was dramatic, however 2011 and 2012 saw a rebound in economic activity, with GDP recording the first full years of growth since 2007 with increases of 0.7% and 0.9% respectively.

The general government deficit for 2012 was 7.6 per cent of GDP or €12.5 billion, which represents a significant improvement from 2011 when an underlying deficit of 9.1 per cent of GDP was recorded. The improvement reflects primarily the impact of the Budget 2012 adjustment package and modest economic growth.

Inflation, as measured by the consumer price index, was 2.6 per cent in 2011 and 1.7 per cent in 2012 compared to inflation rates of -1.0 per cent for 2010 and -4.5 per cent for 2009.

## Chapter 2

### National Social Target for Poverty Reduction

#### Review of national poverty target

The Programme for Government (March 2011) stated that the elimination of poverty will be an objective of Government and that it is committed to achieving the targets in the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion to reduce the number of people experiencing poverty. In April 2011, the Government initiated a comprehensive review of the national poverty target, originally set out in 2007 in the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion. The purpose of the review was to review progress towards the target and to enable the Government to adopt appropriate and achievable national poverty targets to meet Ireland's contribution to the Europe 2020 Strategy (see chapter 3) and the commitment in the Programme for Government, in the light of economic circumstances.

The Minister for Social Protection oversaw the review, which was carried out by the Child & Social Inclusion Policy Division of the Department of Social Protection, and brought the recommendations arising from the review to Government for approval. A comprehensive process of public consultation and stakeholder engagement was initiated based on a consultation paper to inform the review. The Senior Officials Group on Social Policy contributed to and advised on the review, including the terms of reference and the draft recommendations. Relevant government departments and statutory service providers were consulted on an individual basis. The Department of Social Protection hosted an EU peer review to consider best practice in the setting of national poverty targets, which was attended by 10 Member States and countries, along with the European Commission and European stakeholders. A separate meeting on the review was also held with the European Commission. Further details of the policy briefing on the review of the poverty target together with supporting documentation can be found here:

<http://www.socialinclusion.ie/NPT.html>



## National social target for poverty reduction

Arising from the recommendations of the review, the Government adopted a new 'national social target for poverty reduction' as follows:

- To reduce consistent poverty to 4 per cent by 2016 (interim target) and to 2 per cent or less by 2020, from the 2010 baseline rate of 6.2 per cent.
- Ireland's contribution to the EU poverty target is to lift a minimum of 200,000 people out of the risk of poverty or exclusion by 2020 from the 2010 baseline.
- To set a national sub- target for the reduction of child poverty, to reduce the differential in the rate of consistent poverty between children and adults.
- To set a national sub- target for the reduction of poverty in jobless households, to reduce the concentration of the population in consistent poverty in these households.
- In addition, there will be two additional indicators to monitor progress towards the target:
  - 'vulnerable to consistent poverty' (the population experiencing basic deprivation and having an income between 60 and 70 per cent of the median)
  - 'absolute poverty' (individuals falling below the 60 per cent median at-risk-of-poverty threshold anchored at 2010 values).
- The implementation of the target will be strengthened by:
  - incorporating poverty impact assessment as part of an integrated and strengthened social impact assessment
  - producing an annual monitoring report on progress towards the target with input from stakeholders.

## **Social Inclusion Monitor**

The Social Inclusion Monitor was developed in order to strengthen the implementation of the national social target by monitoring progress towards the national poverty target and its related targets and indicators.

The first Social Inclusion Monitor relating to 2011 was published in March, 2013. It provides progress and trends on the four national targets, five supporting indicators and other contextual indicators. The data are primarily based on the Survey on Income and Living Conditions 2011, undertaken by the Central Statistics Office. A copy of the Social Inclusion Monitor can be found at this location:

<http://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Social-Inclusion-Monitor.aspx>

## **Social Impact Assessment**

In order to strengthen implementation of the new national social target for poverty reduction and to facilitate greater policy coordination in the social sphere, the Government decided to develop an integrated Social Impact Assessment (SIA). This provides an evidence-based approach to policy making which seeks to make clear in advance what the social impact of government policies will be. It builds on the experience of poverty impact assessment (PIA), a process assesses the likely impact of policies and programmes on poverty and inequalities which are likely to lead to poverty. SIA extends the focus of PIA to other aspects of social inequality, including gender, disability, age and ethnic status.

Social impact assessment is widely practiced at EU level, in particular by the European Commission, as a tool for mainstreaming social inclusion in public policy. It is intended to apply social impact assessment to a range of policy issues, in conjunction with government departments and other stakeholders.

## Chapter 3

### Europe 2020 poverty target

#### Europe 2020 Strategy

In June 2010, the European Council adopted *Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth* which sets out a vision of Europe's social market economy for the 21st century. The Strategy reinforces interaction between economic, employment and social policies which is deemed essential to foster sustainable growth, job creation and social and territorial cohesion.

As part of the Strategy, the European Council agreed five headline targets on employment; research and development; climate change; education; and poverty. The targets are seen as being interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The poverty target is to lift 20 million people out of the risk of poverty or social exclusion by 2020.

As their contribution to the Europe 2020 poverty target, Member States are required to set out national poverty targets in a *National Reform Programme (NRP)*, based on appropriate national indicators, taking into account national circumstances and priorities.

#### Ireland's National Reform Programme under the Europe 2020 strategy

The National Reform Programme sets out Ireland's contribution to the Europe 2020 poverty target as being to lift a minimum of 200,000 people out of the risk of poverty or exclusion by 2020 (combination of at-risk-of-poverty, basic deprivation and consistent poverty), using the 2010 baseline.

The NRP highlights the need for a joined-up and multi-disciplinary approach to policy, involving a wide range of actors, to meet the poverty target. This approach is underpinned by the EU concept of 'active inclusion' based on adequate income, inclusive labour markets and access to quality services. Thus, the poverty target is linked with the targets on employment and education.

The NRP notes the Government's priorities on poverty are to protect the most vulnerable from the worst impact of the crisis, to reform income supports for children and people of working age and to strengthen activation policy to support people back into work. Supporting measures include targeted social inclusion programmes, welfare reform and domestic energy efficiency initiatives. The achievement of these measures is dependent on the level of public resources available.

The NRP was informed by extensive consultation with stakeholders, including social partners, the Oireachtas Committee on European Affairs and regional bodies. The need for continued engagement with stakeholders in the implementation and further development of the NRP was acknowledged. Ireland's NRP 2011 and the 2012 update is available at: [http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/eng/Work\\_Of\\_The\\_Department/Economic\\_International\\_Northern\\_Ireland/Economic/NRP/](http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/eng/Work_Of_The_Department/Economic_International_Northern_Ireland/Economic/NRP/)

## Chapter 4

### Children

#### High Level Goals

##### **Goal 1: Education**

Ensure that targeted pre-school education is provided to children from urban primary school communities covered by the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) action plan.

##### **Goal 2: Education**

Reduce the proportion of pupils with serious literacy difficulties in primary schools serving disadvantaged communities. The target is to halve the proportion from the current 27%-30% to less than 15% by 2016.

##### **Goal 3: Education**

Work to ensure that the proportion of the population aged 20-24 completing upper second-level education or equivalent will exceed 90% by 2013.

##### **Goal 4: Income Support**

Maintain the combined value of child income support measures at 33%-35% of the minimum adult social welfare payment rate over the course of this plan and review child income supports aimed at assisting children in families on low income.

#### Progress on High Level Goals

Four of the twelve high level goals in NAPinclusion relate to children. This reflects the vision for children as set out in *Towards 2016* and recognises children (especially those in jobless households) are more vulnerable to poverty than adults. These high level goals emphasise education and income support as priority areas.

## Goal 1: Pre-school education

*Ensure that targeted pre-school education is provided to children from urban primary school communities covered by the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) action plan.*

- As reported in the previous Social Inclusion Report, this high level goal was superseded by the introduction of a free pre-school year under the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme for all children in January 2010, representing a major policy change from targeted interventions in Early Years to one of universal provision. The scheme is funded and administered through the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.
- The Department of Education and Skills has funded two practice frameworks (Síolta and Aistear) to support the development of quality provision in pre-school services. Síolta's Quality Assurance Programme is being implemented on a field-test basis by Voluntary Child Care Organisations (VCOs) working in partnership with the Early Years Education Policy Unit.
- 25 Síolta Co-ordinators, drawn from the VCOs were selected and trained to provide specialist support for participating ECCE setting. The Department of Education and Skills will continue to work with other departments and agencies to add value to existing childcare schemes.

## Goal 2: Addressing literacy difficulties in disadvantaged schools

*Reduce the proportion of pupils with serious literacy difficulties in primary schools serving disadvantaged communities. The target is to halve the proportion from the current 27%-30% to less than 15% by 2016.*

In 2012 the Department of Education and Skills published three evaluation reports on Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), one by the Educational Research Centre (ERC) and two by the department's inspectorate indicating the programme is making a measurable contribution to improving educational outcomes for children in DEIS schools.

## **Educational Research Centre Report**

This report is second in a series by the ERC, involving the evaluation of DEIS in urban primary schools focusing on English, reading and mathematics based on testing carried out in 2007 and 2010.

The initial findings of the evaluation show that:

- When comparing the overall average reading score in 2007 with its equivalent in 2010, urban schools revealed an overall improvement in average reading and maths achievement
- The improvements are statistically significant at all grade levels in both English reading and mathematics
- Improvements are greatest at lower grade levels, with the largest gain among 2nd class pupils
- Progress appears most marked among pupils with lower levels of achievement
- Positive change in achievement is most evident among junior grades.

## **Evaluation of planning in DEIS Schools**

The findings of the Inspectorate's evaluations on the effectiveness of planning and target-setting in 18 primary and 18 post-primary DEIS schools indicate that:

- A systematic planning process comprising target-setting, the implementation of appropriate strategies and interventions to achieve the targets set, the monitoring of progress and the review of targets in DEIS schools is necessary
- The reports recommend that the DEIS planning framework be made available to all schools to assist them in their school development planning and school self-evaluation processes.
- Further evaluations of the DEIS Programme will be completed over the course of 2012/13 and the outcome of these and any further evaluation reports will be considered in the context of the future of DEIS.

### Progress on various DEIS Initiatives.

The number of DEIS schools implementing the various literacy and numeracy programmes at the end of 2011/12 are as follows:-

- **Primary**
  - Reading Recovery: 238
  - First Steps: 334
  - Maths Recovery: 327
  - Ready Set Go Maths: 261
- **Post-Primary**
  - Junior Certificate Schools Programme: 186
  - Demonstration Library Project: 30

### Goal 3: Completion of upper second-level education

*Work to ensure that the proportion of the population aged 20-24 completing upper second-level education or equivalent will exceed 90% by 2013.*

- The Department of Education & Skills has adopted a broad-based approach to tackling early school leaving. Enhancing attendance, progression, retention and attainment are central elements of DEIS, the action plan for educational inclusion. Targeted interventions include the School Completion Programme (SCP), Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) services, additional funding for pupils at risk of early school leaving and alternative curricular options.
- Almost €692m was provided in 2012 for a wide variety of measures to tackle educational disadvantage, from pre-school to third level, including pre-school interventions, supports for tackling children’s literacy problems, reduced pupil teacher ratios, increased capitation grants, measures to tackle early school leaving and strengthen ties between the school, the family and the community. In addition, there are interventions in support of youth and in providing “second chance education” for young people and adults. Ireland has made progress towards its target to reduce the percentage of early school leavers which fell from 11.6% in 2009 to 10.6% in 2011 (Eurostat data).



- A number of measures have been put in place to support achievement of this target, including:
  - Implementation of the National Action Plan, “Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools” (DEIS). As of 1st September 2012, the number of schools participating in DEIS are as follows:
    - Primary Urban Band 1 Schools: 197
    - Primary Urban Band 2 Schools: 144
    - Rural Primary Schools: 324
    - Post Primary Schools: 195
    - Approximately 21% of all Primary schools and 27% of all Post Primary schools are included in the DEIS programme.
  - Integration of educational welfare services through the transfer of certain functions, under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, from Minister of Education and Skills to the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs in May 2011. A key objective and commitment in the Programme for Government is to protect and enhance the educational experience of children, young people and students. The development of a new integrated service, One Child One Team One Plan, involving SCP, HSCL and Educational Welfare Service is key to realising this objective. The new model of service delivery which is being developed and implemented by the National Education Welfare Board, now under the responsibility of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, offers further scope to enhance supports available to schools and families, particularly DEIS schools, to address educational disadvantage and improve educational outcomes for children and young people through improved attendance, participation and retention in school.
  - National Strategy to improve literacy and numeracy among children and young people. Children who do not learn to read, write and communicate effectively are more likely to leave school early and, hence, the strategy will support achievement of the national early school leaving target.
- The Department of Education and Skills’ latest Report on Retention Rates in Post Primary Schools presents the retention rates of pupils who entered the first year of the junior cycle in the years from 2005 to 2006 and completed second level schooling no later than 2012.

The report shows that:

- The percentage of students who sit the Leaving Cert overall has risen by more than 6% to 90.2% in 8 years.
- the average unadjusted Leaving Certificate retention rate in DEIS schools increased by almost 7 percentage points from 73.2% to 80.1% for students who entered second level in 2004 to 2006 while the (unadjusted) retention rate in non-DEIS schools increased from 87.4% to 92.7% for the same entry cohorts.

#### **Goal 4: Child and Family Income Support**

*Maintain the combined value of child income support measures at 33%-35% of the minimum adult social welfare payment rate over the course of this plan and review child income supports aimed at assisting children in families on low income.*

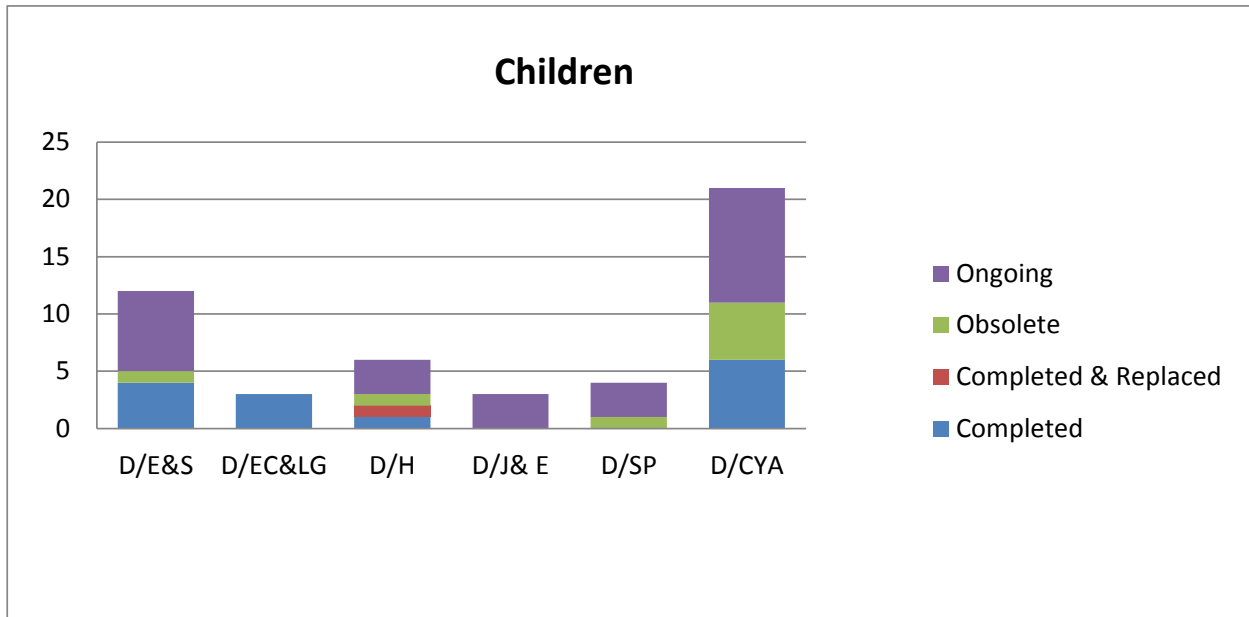
- The Department of Social Protection reported that the NAPinclusion income support target for children was achieved in 2011 and 2012. The combined value of child income support measures were maintained at 33% to 35% of the minimum adult Social Welfare payment rate. As a result of the need to reduce the Government expenditure in the context of the fiscal crisis, child benefit rates were lowered in Budget 2011. Budget 2012 maintained the child benefit rate for the first and second child; reduced the rates for the third and subsequent children and discontinued grants for multiple birth children. These measures also reflected structural reforms proposed in the Value for Money Review of Child Income Support (CIS) policies and programmes which included proposals to standardise child benefit rates.
- The Advisory Group on Tax and Social Welfare was established in June 2011 to address a number of specific issues and make cost-effective proposals for improving employment incentives and achieving better poverty outcomes, particularly child poverty outcomes. The group prioritised the area of family and child income supports and presented its report on this issue in 2012. In its report the group was unanimous in its view that the State should provide some income support for all children and targeted support to no or low income families. There was a strong preference in the group towards a two-tier (CIS)<sup>2</sup> payment approach underpinned by the potential it affords to rationalise the overall child income support system while minimising work disincentives.

- The Department of Social Protection reported that the rates of payment of Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance (BSCFA) for 2011 were maintained at the 2009/10 levels i.e. €200 for children aged 2 to 11 years and €305 for children aged 12 years and over. For the 2012 scheme, payment was made for children between 4 and 11 years of age at €150 and at €250 for children aged 12 to 22 years. In 2011 and 2012 the scheme was administered centrally by the Department of Social Protection with the majority of BSCFA entitlements being fully automated with no application form required from customers. Prior to 2011, the scheme was administered regionally through the Health Service Executive

### Progress on specific actions in the National Action Plan

In addition, the National Action Plan contains 49 actions for children, covering issues such as early childhood development and care, nutrition, homelessness, youth justice and children’s participation in decision making. Of these actions 26 are on-going along with 1 completed and replaced and reported on in the [Table of Actions](#), 14 are complete while 8 are obsolete. See Diagram 1 hereunder for further detail of departments involved with the Children Lifecycle.

**Diagram 1: Children – Status of Actions by Department in 2012**



The Department of Children and Youth Affairs has the highest number of actions (21) in this lifecycle followed by the Department of Education & Skills with 12 actions. Further details of progress on specific actions in the National Action Plan are available in the [Table of Actions](#) associated with this report at the following locations: [www.socialinclusion.ie](http://www.socialinclusion.ie) and [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)

<sup>2</sup>A Policy and Value for Money Review of Child Income Support and Associated Spending Programmes, Department of Social Protection, (Dublin, November 2010)

## Chapter 5

### People of Working Age

#### High Level Goals

##### **Goal 5: Employment and Participation**

Introduce an active case management approach that will support those on long-term social welfare into education, training and employment. The target is to support 50,000 such people, including lone parents and the long-term unemployed, with an overall aim of reducing by 20% the number of those whose total income is derived from long-term social welfare payments by 2016. This target will be reviewed in the light of experience.

##### **Goal 6: Income Support**

Maintain the relative value of the lowest social welfare rate at least at €185.80, in 2007 terms, over the course of this Plan, subject to available resources.

#### Progress on High Level Goals

Two of the twelve high level goals in the NAPinclusion relate to people of working age. These emphasise employment, participation and income support as priority issues.

##### **Goal 5: Introduce active case management approach to support employment and participation**

Introduce an active case management approach that will support those on long-term social welfare into education, training and employment. The target is to support 50,000 such people, including lone parents and the long-term unemployed, with an overall aim of reducing by 20% the number of those whose total income is derived from long-term social welfare payments by 2016. This target will be reviewed in the light of experience.

Intreo is a new service from the Department of Social Protection, formally launched in the Intreo Centre, Sligo on the 15th October 2012. This initiative provides a single point of contact for all employment and income supports. Designed to provide a

more streamlined approach, Intreo offers practical, tailored employment services and supports for jobseekers and employers alike. The new service will be rolled out to additional locations during the course of 2012 and 2013.

In relation to the Intreo programme and case management approach, the Department of Social Protection reported that the profiling of all new unemployed customers at its offices is in place. Selection by Probability of Exit (PEX) for further engagement with the Department in the area of activation will be in place in all of these offices by mid-2013.

### **Goal 6: Maintain the relative value of lowest social welfare rate**

Maintain the relative value of the lowest social welfare rate at least at €185.80, in 2007 terms, over the course of this Plan, subject to available resources.

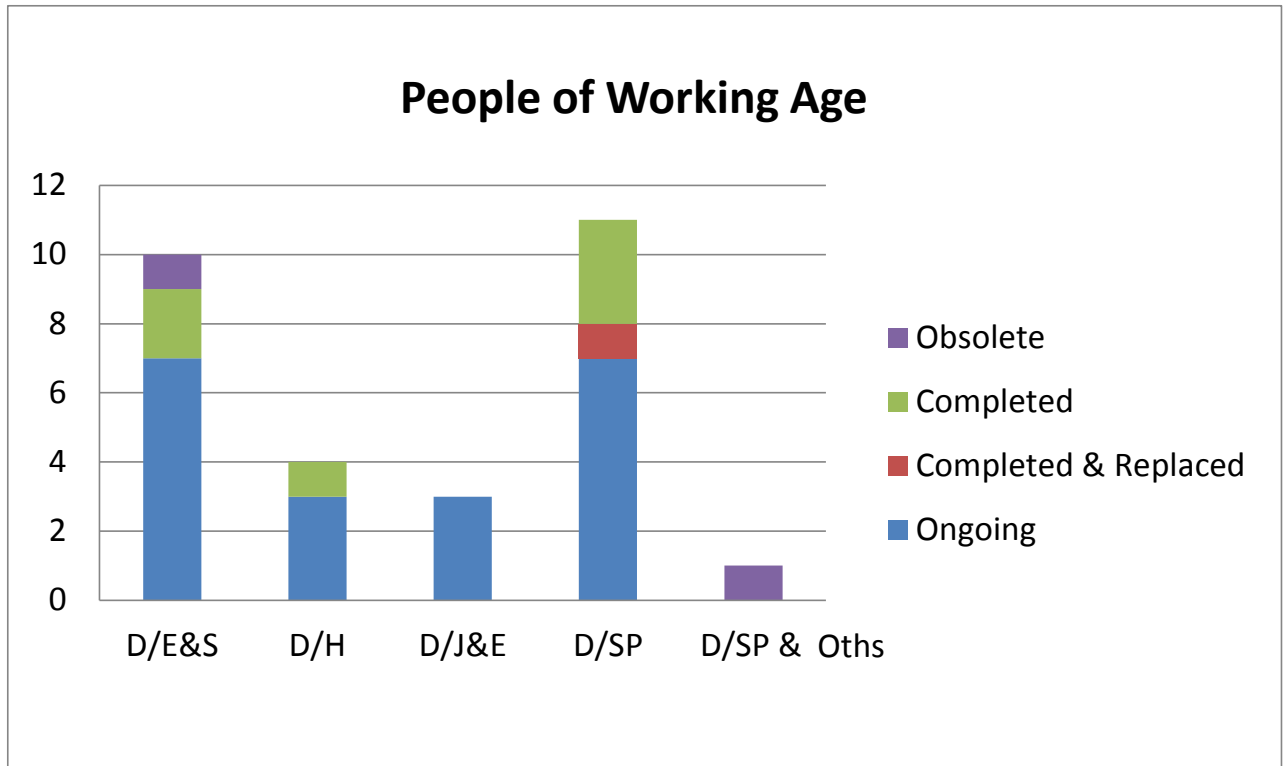
The Department of Social Protection reported:

- In Budget 2011, the maximum personal rate of all working age payments was reduced by €8.00 per week. The lowest rate of social welfare payment following Budget 2011 was €188 per week.
- In Budget 2012, there was no change in the rates of primary weekly social welfare payments, or increases for qualified adults and qualified children.

### **Progress on specific actions in the National Action Plan**

In addition the Plan contains 29 further targets/actions, covering issues such as literacy, second chance education and equality. Of these actions, 20 are ongoing along with 1 completed & replaced and reported on in [Table of Actions](#), 6 are complete while 2 are obsolete. See Diagram 2 hereunder for further detail of departments involved in Working Age Lifecycle.

**Diagram 2: Working Age – Status of Actions by Department in 2012**



The Department of Social Protection has the highest number of actions (11) in this lifecycle followed closely by the Department of Education & Skills with 10 actions. Further details of progress on specific actions in the National Action Plan are available in the [Table of Actions](#) associated with this report at the following locations: [www.socialinclusion.ie](http://www.socialinclusion.ie) and [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)

## Chapter 6

### Older People

#### High Level Goals

##### **Goal 7: Community Care**

Continue to increase investment in community care services for older people, including home care packages and enhanced day care services, to support them to live independently in the community for as long as possible.

##### **Goal 8: Income Support**

Maintain a minimum payment rate of €200 per week, in 2007 terms, for all social welfare pensions over the course of this Plan and, if possible, having regard to available resources and the Government's commitment in Towards 2016, to enhance this provision. The overall pension structures and system to provide income supports for pensioners will be reviewed in the light of the forthcoming Green Paper on Pensions, to be finalised at end March 2007. This will review all the pillars of pension provision.

#### Progress on High Level Goals

Two of the twelve high level goals in the NAPinclusion relate to older people. These emphasise income support and community care as priority issues for older people.

##### **Goal 7: Investment in community care services for older people**

*Continue to increase investment in community care services for older people, including home care packages and enhanced day care services, to support them to live independently in the community for as long as possible*

The Government is committed to developing and implementing national standards for the home support services. This approach was reflected in the HSE Service Plan 2012 and included a new Public Procurement Framework for home care services, new National Quality Guidelines for Home Care Support Services and new National Home Help Guidelines. These measures have been designed to improve relevant aspects of HSE home care provision nationally. Home Help is the traditional mainstream support service.

Key data for 2011 - 2012 is as follows:

Activity/Funding	2011	2012
Home help hours provided	11.01m	10.30m
No. of clients benefiting, end Dec	51,000	50,000
Total Funding €m	211	205

Home Care Packages (HCP) provide enhanced supports over and above mainstream supports:

Activity/Funding	2011	2012
No. of clients in receipt of HCP, end Dec	11,970	10,870
No. of clients benefiting, throughout calendar year	15,270	15,780
Total Funding €m	138	138

### Goal 8: Income Support

*Maintain a minimum payment rate of €200 per week, in 2007 terms, for all social welfare pensions over the course of this Plan and, if possible, having regard to available resources and the Government's commitment in Towards 2016, to enhance this provision. The overall pension structures and system to provide income supports for pensioners will be reviewed in the light of the forthcoming Green Paper on Pensions, to be finalised at end March 2007. This will review all the pillars of pension provision.*

### The Department of Social Protection reported:

In Budgets 2012 and 2013 the State Pension was maintained at a maximum of €230.30 per week for contributory payments and €219 per week for non-contributory payments. Taking in to account Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation levels since 2007, this means the goal of maintaining the payment rate of €200 per week is being achieved and exceeded.

Latest figures (August 2012) indicate that the 'at risk of poverty' rate for those aged over 65 has dropped from 27.1% in 2004 to 9.6% in 2010. The consistent poverty rate for those aged over 65 has dropped from 3.9% to 0.9% over the same period. Social welfare pensions are the main source of income for Irish pensioners and account for 63.4%% of average weekly income (up from 56.8% in 2004).



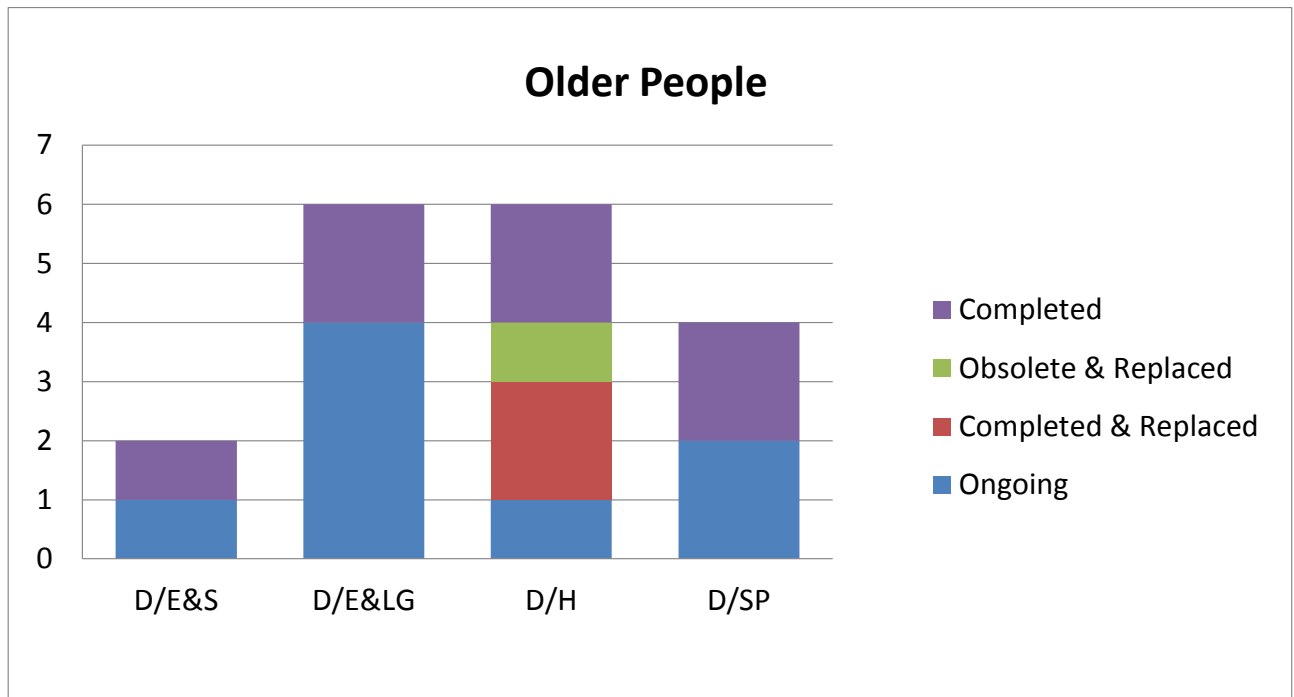
**Pension Action Completed:** The Green Paper on Pensions in 2007 and the National Pensions Framework in 2010.

**Pension Action Being Considered:** Following on from the National Pensions Framework, consideration is currently being given to structures that would allow those who want to work longer to postpone draw down of the State pension and upon retirement receive an actuarially increased benefit. In addition, for those with contribution shortfalls at pension age, to put in place structures to allow them to receive additional benefits if they continue to make paid contributions for pensions purposes while remaining in work or self-employment.

**Progress on specific actions in the National Action Plan**

In addition the Plan contains 18 targets/actions covering issues such as housing, long-term care and participation. Of these actions 11 are on-going along with 2 completed and replaced 1 obsolete and replaced and these are reported on in [Table of Actions](#). In addition 7 are complete. See Diagram 3 hereunder for further detail of departments involved with the Older People Lifecycle.

**Diagram 3: Older People – Status of Actions by Department in 2012**



The Department of Health and the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government have equal number of actions in this lifecycle with one third each (6).

Further details of progress on specific actions in the National Action Plan are available in the [Table of Actions](#) associated with this report at the following locations:

[www.socialinclusion.ie](http://www.socialinclusion.ie) and [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)

## Chapter 7

### People with Disabilities

#### High Level Goal

##### Goal 9: Employment and Participation

Increase the employment of people with disabilities who do not have a difficulty in retaining a job. The immediate objective is to have an additional 7,000 of that cohort in employment by 2010. The longer term target is to raise the employment rate of people with disabilities from 37% to 45% by 2016, as measured by the Quarterly National Household Survey. The overall participation rate in education, training and employment will be increased to 50% by 2016. These targets will be reviewed in the light of experience and the availability of better data.

#### Progress on High Level Goals

The NAPinclusion high level goal, in line with the National Disability Strategy, emphasises participation in education, training and employment.

##### Goal 9: Increase employment of people with disabilities

*Increase the employment of people with disabilities who do not have a difficulty in retaining a job. The immediate objective is to have an additional 7,000 of that cohort in employment by 2010. The longer term target is to raise the employment rate of people with disabilities from 37% to 45% by 2016, as measured by the Quarterly National Household Survey. The overall participation rate in education, training and employment will be increased to 50% by 2016. These targets will be reviewed in the light of experience and the availability of better data.*

- The Comprehensive Employment Strategy is now being dealt with on a Cross Departmental basis in the Implementation Plan for the National Disability Strategy which is currently being developed by the Minister of State for Disability, Equality, Mental Health and Older People in the Department of Health and Department of Justice, Equality and Defence and progress has been reported as follows:

- In November 2011, the Minister of State appointed 2 new groups to assist her in the implementation of the National Disability Strategy, the National Disability Strategy Implementation Group (comprising of 10 Government Departments) and the National Disability Stakeholders Group. The Department of Social Protection has submitted its actions for inclusion in the National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan which is scheduled to be signed off by all parties in April 2013.
- Employment supports for people with disabilities which were previously administered and operated by FÁS, namely Supported Employment, Wage Subsidy Scheme and Reasonable Accommodation Fund, transferred to Department of Social Protection in Jan 2012, under the reallocation of FÁS responsibilities.

Number of People with Disabilities registered on the Department of Social Protection Employment Support Schemes/Programmes at year end.

Year	Wage Subsidy Scheme	Supported Employment	Community Employment
2012	1209	2827	2831
2011	1133	2903	3932

The Reasonable Accommodation (Disability Support / Awareness Budget line) is made up of a number of demand led grant programmes with small budgets. Only actual expenditure against budget is recorded.

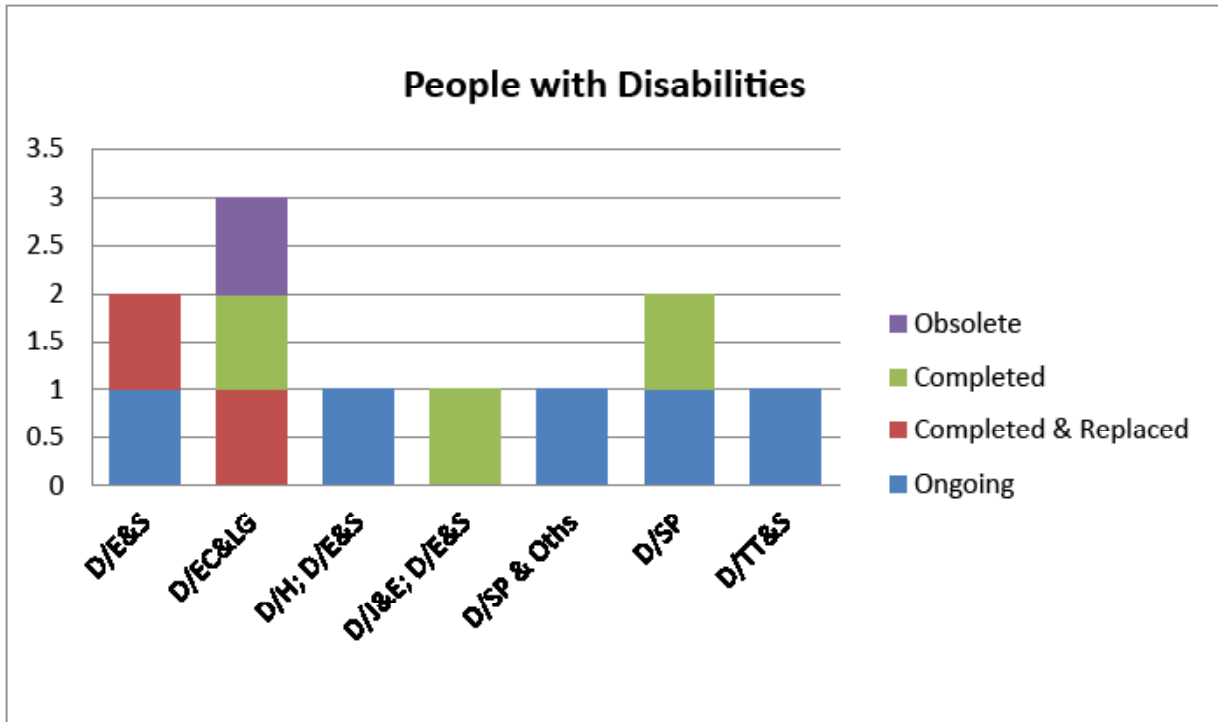
The total expenditure was as follows:

Year	€
2011	392,000
2012	368,000

### Progress on specific actions in the National Action Plan

In addition the Plan contains 11 targets/actions covering housing, income support, education and access to buildings, infrastructure and public transport. Of these actions, 5 are on-going along with 2 completed and replaced and reported on in [Table of Actions](#), 3 are complete while 1 is obsolete. See Diagram 4 hereunder for further detail of departments involved with the People with Disabilities Lifecycle.

**Diagram 4: People with Disabilities – Status of Actions by Department**



The Department of Environment, Community and Local Government has the highest number of actions (3) in this lifecycle followed by the Department of Education & Skills and the Department of Social Protection with 2 actions each. Other departments have one each.

Further details of progress on specific actions in the National Action Plan are available in the [Table of Actions](#) associated with this report at the following locations: [www.socialinclusion.ie](http://www.socialinclusion.ie) and [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)



## Chapter 8

### Communities

#### High Level Goals

##### **Goal 10: Housing**

Deliver high quality housing for those who cannot afford to meet their own housing needs and to underpin the building of sustainable communities. An important element will be the enhanced housing output reflected in Towards 2016, which will result in the accommodation needs of some 60,000 new households being addressed over the period 2007 to 2009. This will embrace meeting special housing needs (the homeless, Travellers, older people and people with disabilities).

##### **Goal 11: Health**

Develop 500 primary care teams by 2011 which will improve access to services in the community, with particular emphasis on meeting the needs of holders of medical cards.

##### **Goal 12: Integration of Migrants**

Develop a strategy aimed at achieving the integration of newcomers in our society. As an initial action, resources for the provision of 550 teachers for language supports in the education sector will be provided by 2009 and access to other public services through translation of information and supports will be improved.

#### **Progress on the High Level Goals**

Three of the twelve high level goals in the NAPinclusion relate to housing, health and the integration of migrants.

### **Goal 10: Deliver housing for those with housing needs**

*Deliver high quality housing for those who cannot afford to meet their own housing needs and to underpin the building of sustainable communities. An important element will be the enhanced housing output reflected in Towards 2016, which will result in the accommodation needs of some 60,000 new households being addressed over the period 2007 to 2009. This will embrace meeting special housing needs (the homeless, Travellers, older people and people with disabilities).*

The Department of Environment, Community and Local Government reported that:

The needs of some 9,100 households were met in 2011 through the various range of social housing delivery mechanisms. While a detailed breakdown of output in 2012 is not yet available, funding of some €670 million was provided under the various housing schemes, including regeneration and adaptation grants, in 2012.

### **Goal 11: Primary Care Teams**

*Develop 500 primary care teams by 2011 which will improve access to services in the community, with particular emphasis on meeting the needs of holders of medical cards.*

The Department of Health reported that:

The Government is committed to the implementation of the Primary Care Strategy. The key objective of the Strategy is to develop services in the community which will give people direct access to integrated multi-disciplinary teams of general practitioners, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and others. Additional services such as speech and language therapy, dietetic and podiatry services will be provided on a network basis. It has been estimated that up to 95% of people's health and social service needs can be properly met within a primary care setting and Primary Care Teams (PCTs) contribute greatly to enhancing community based health services in these areas.

Following a realignment of HSE areas and amalgamation of some teams, the HSE has identified 484 Primary Care Teams to be developed by the end of 2013. At the end of December 2012, 426 Primary Care Teams were operational, i.e. holding clinical team meetings on individual client cases, providing services to almost 4 million of the population. Some 1,692 GPs and over 2,636 HSE allied health professionals were participating in these PCTs.

## Goal 12: Strategy for integration of newcomers

*Develop a strategy aimed at achieving the integration of newcomers in our society. As an initial action, resources for the provision of 550 teachers for language supports in the education sector will be provided by 2009 and access to other public services through translation of information and supports will be improved.*

The Department of Education and Skills reported:

The Intercultural Education Strategy (IES Strategy) aims to ensure that:

- All students experience an education that “respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership” (Education Act, 1998).
- All education providers are assisted with ensuring that inclusion and integration within an intercultural learning environment become the norm.

The strategy continues to be implemented within the constraints imposed by the current economic climate.

## Language Support

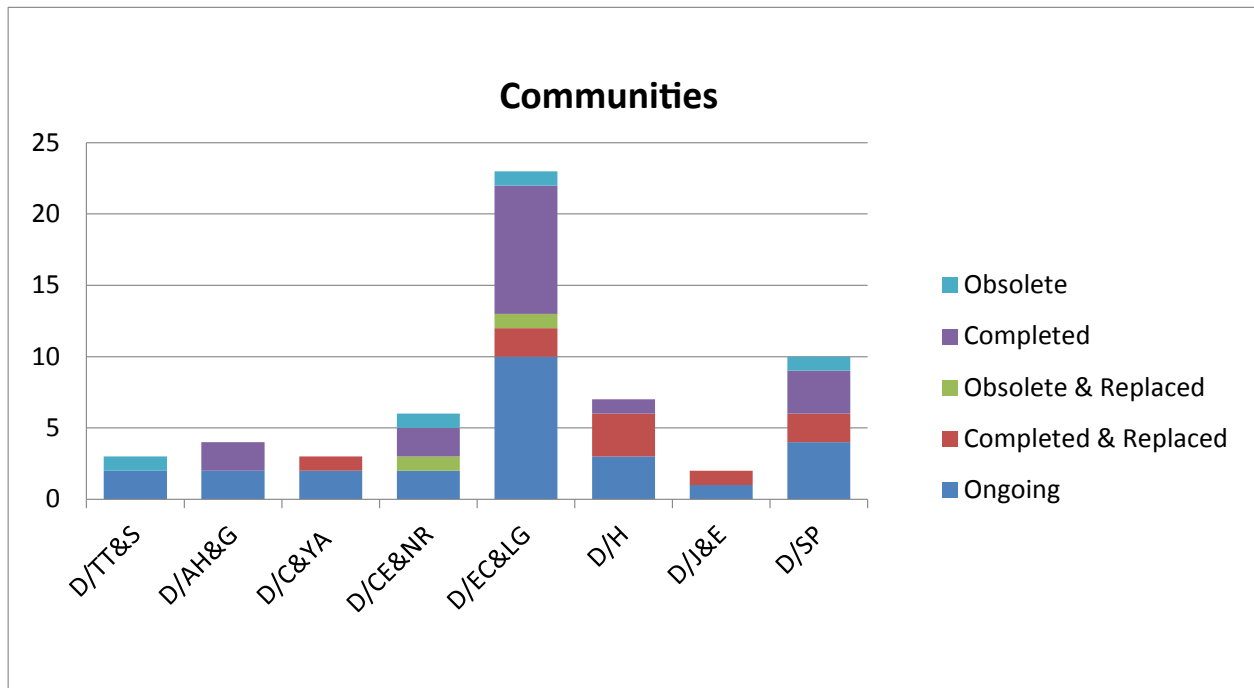
- Since September 2012 the combined resources available for learning support (General Allocation Model at Primary) and language support at both primary and second level have been merged into a single simplified allocation process.
- There are currently over 4,700 such posts allocated to schools at primary level and 777 posts at post primary level. This includes the standard learning/language support allocation that is given to all schools and the additional support that is provided to schools that have high concentrations of pupils that require language support.
- Further additional temporary language support posts are provided on the basis of appeals to the Staffing Appeal Boards.
- The Adult Literacy Service, funded by the Department of Education and Skills and delivered by Vocational Education Committees (VECs) nationwide, is focused on those with low levels of literacy skills and includes English language tuition for adult immigrants and basic education services. Adult literacy, in addition to reading and writing, now extends to such basic education as numeracy, social and personal development, learning to learn and IT skills.



### Progress on specific actions in the National Action Plan

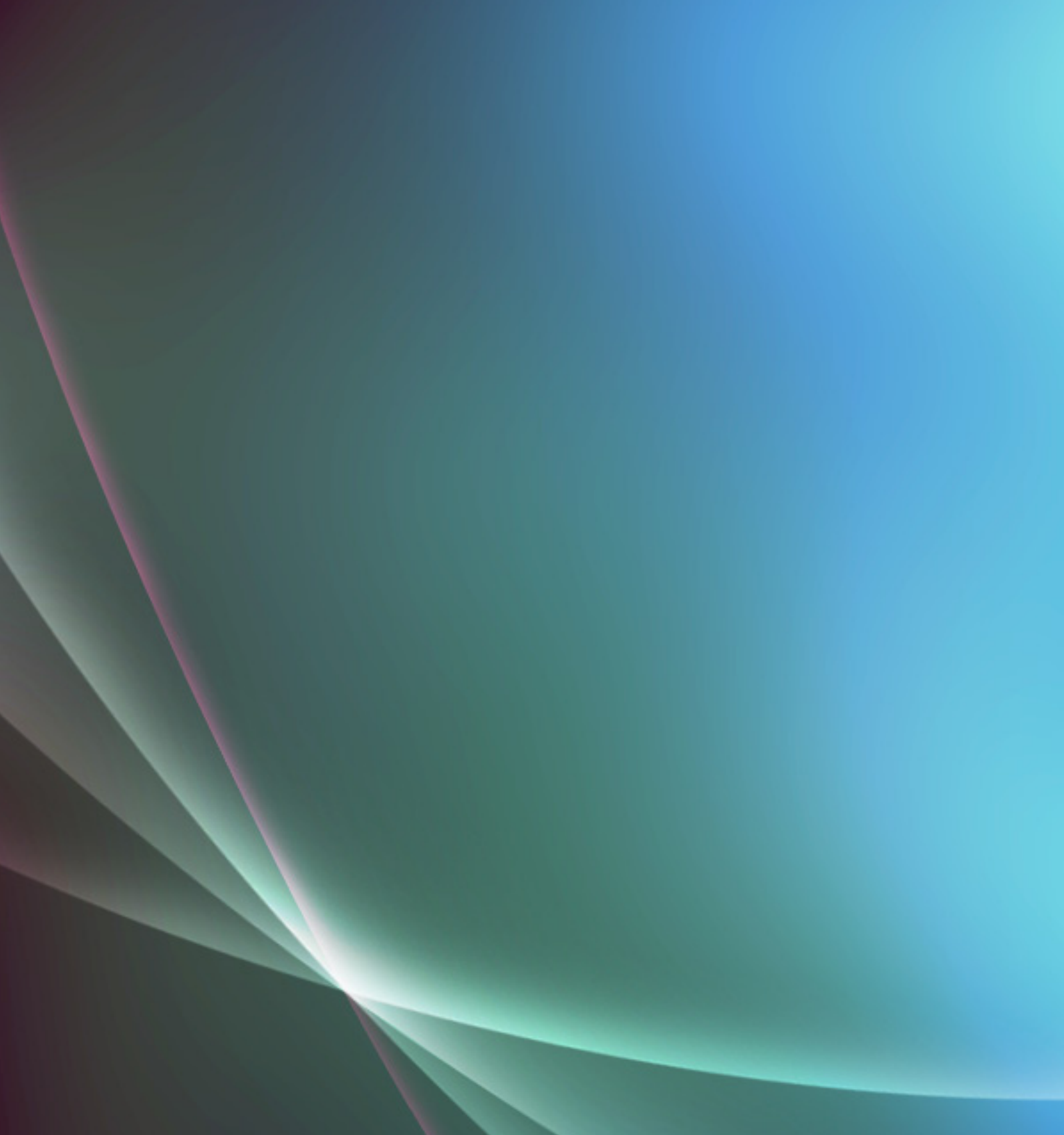
In addition the Plan contains 58 targets/actions covering issues such as transport, fuel poverty, the arts and cultural initiatives. Of these actions 26 are on-going along with 9 completed and replaced, 2 obsolete and replaced and these reported on in the [Table of Actions](#), 17 are complete while 4 are obsolete. See Diagram 5 hereunder for further detail of departments involved with the Communities Lifecycle.

**Diagram 5: Communities – Status of Actions by Department in 2012**



The Department of Environment, Community and Local Government has the highest number of actions (23) in this lifecycle followed by the Department of Social Protection with 10 actions.

Further details of progress on specific actions in the National Action Plan are available in the [Table of Actions](#) associated with this report at the following locations: [www.socialinclusion.ie](http://www.socialinclusion.ie) and [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)



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