

ANNEX A: KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS USED

ADM	Area Development Management Ltd
ALMP	Active Labour Market Programme
BIG	Benchmarking and Indexation Group
BMW Region	Border, Midlands and Western Region
CDB	County or City Development Board
CIE	Córas Iompair Éireann – State transport company
CIF	Construction Industry Federation
CPA	Combat Poverty Agency
CSF	Community Support Framework
DSCFA	Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs
EAP	Employment Action Plan
EHRD-OP	Employment and Human Resources Development – Operational Programme
ESF	European Social Fund
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
EU	European Union
FÁS	Training and Employment Authority
FIS	Family Income Supplement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
IBEC	Irish Business and Employers Confederation
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ICTU	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
IDPC	NAPS Inter-Departmental Policy Committee
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ISP	Integrated Services Process
LES	Local Employment Service
LIIS	Living In Ireland Survey
LLL	Life-Long Learning
LTU	Long-Term Unemployed
MABS	Money Advice and Budgeting Service
NAPincl	National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion 2001 - 2003
NAPS	National Anti-Poverty Strategy
NDP	National Development Plan 2000 - 2006
NESC	National Economic and Social Council
NESF	National Economic and Social Forum
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OP	Operational Programme
OPLURD	Operational Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development
PLCs	Post-Leaving Certificate Courses
PPF	Programme for Prosperity and Fairness
PRSA	Personal Retirement Savings Account
PRSI	Pay-Related Social Insurance
QAA	Qualified Adult Allowance
QCS	Quality Customer Services
RAPID	Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development
S & E	Southern and Eastern Region
SWA	Supplementary Welfare Allowance
TEP	Territorial Employment Pact
UN	United Nations
VTOS	Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme

ANNEX B: EXPLANATION OF TERMS

Combat Poverty Agency

The Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) is a Statutory Agency under the aegis of the DSCFA. The CPA constitutes a key element of the monitoring arrangements for the NAPS. It is currently overseeing an evaluation of the NAPS process, including consideration of the views and experience of the Community and Voluntary Sector, and has recently produced an initial assessment of the NAPS.

Economic and Social Research Institute

The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) is a not-for-profit organisation founded in 1960. Its aim is to bring the latest thinking in economics and the social sciences to bear on the actual and potential problems of Irish society. It is engaged in a broad programme of work covering economic forecasting and modelling, public finance, the labour market, social exclusion, education and health. ESRI research has been a vital constituent in the national debate on economic and social issues over the past 30 years.

Employment Action Plan

The Employment Action Plan (EAP) is produced annually to respond to the EU's Employment Strategy. The 2001 EAP is the fourth such Action Plan. Under the Employment Strategy, the EU issues Employment Guidelines annually reflecting the employment challenges facing the Union as a whole. The Guidelines are organised under four thematic pillars i.e. Employability, Entrepreneurship, Adaptability and Equal Opportunities between Women and Men. In addition, in 2001, for the first time, five horizontal guidelines were agreed covering aspects which affect employment policies in general. These horizontal guidelines related to:

- meeting EU-wide employment targets;
- life-long learning;
- social partnership;
- balance and integration between the Pillars of the Strategy/Regional Dimension;
- development of Indicators.

The format and contents of the EAP are intended to be consistent with the template proposed by the European Commission so as to facilitate comparisons across the Member States. Under that template, the broad economic and employment contexts and the mix of employment policies are first set out as a backdrop to specific actions taken in 2000 or planned for 2001. It is recognised that certain policies and actions will receive different priority across the Member States reflecting the challenges in the different labour markets. It is also recognised that policies and actions are not static and are constantly evolving in response to changing circumstances.

Equality Authority

The Equality Authority was formed on foot of the Employment Equality Act 1998 and the Equal Status Act 2000. It has a broad mandate to promote equality and to combat discrimination. This mandate covers nine grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion and membership of the Traveller community. It addresses equality in the workplace, in the provision of goods, services, facilities and education, and in the operation of registered clubs. The Equality Authority has both an enforcement and a developmental role.

FÁS

FÁS - the Training and Employment Authority - provides a wide range of services to the labour market in Ireland

Living in Ireland Survey

The Living in Ireland Survey (LIIS) is the Irish element of the European Community Household Panel, and is carried out by the ESRI (see above). A joint committee of the DSCFA, the CPA and the ESRI manages the survey.

National Anti-Poverty Strategy

The ten-year National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) sets out the extent of poverty and social exclusion in Ireland as well as identifying the strategic policy direction needed to tackle the issue. Developed by an Inter-Departmental Policy Committee, comprising high level officials from relevant Government Departments and Agencies including the CPA, and following wide-ranging consultation and participation with the Community and Voluntary Sector, the Strategy was launched by the Irish Government in 1997. The NAPS is currently being reviewed and revised, by way of an extensive process of involvement of stakeholders. This process will culminate in the publication of a revised strategy in November, 2001.

National Development Plan

The National Development Plan 2000-2006 (NDP) is a strategy document, which lays the foundation for Ireland's continuing economic and social development. It sets out a strategy, supported by commitments for funding, in the areas of infrastructural development, education and training, the productive sector and the promotion of social inclusion. It also contains a commitment and accompanying framework for the promotion of more balanced regional development. The Plan was framed after an extensive consultation process, including the Social Partners and regional interests, and reflects the broad consensus in the consultation process as to the future development needs of the country.

National Economic and Social Council

The National Economic and Social Council (NESCC) is a key high-level medium-term policy review forum involving senior officials, Social Partners, academics, and researchers.

National Economic and Social Forum

The National Economic and Social Forum (NESF) focuses on monitoring and analysing the implementation of specific measures and programmes, especially those concerned with the achievement of equality and social exclusion. Its membership includes members of the Oireachtas (Houses of Parliament), employer/business and farm bodies, the Community and Voluntary Sector, and representatives from Central and Local Government.

Programme for Prosperity and Fairness

National Partnership agreements have been in operation since 1987 and are negotiated between Government and the Social Partners (employers, trade unions, farmers, and the Community and Voluntary Sector). The Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (PPF) is the current three-year national agreement, for the period 2000-2003.

ANNEX C: KEY COMMITMENTS IN RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION 2001 - 2003

Department	Measure		2001 Estimate	2002 Estimate	2003 Estimate	Total 2001-2003
Justice, Equality and Law Reform	Childcare	€000	88,521	75,787	87,551	251,859
					87,551	
		IRE000	69,716	59,687	68,952	198,355
Health and Children	Mental Health, Physical Disability, Intellectual disability and autism	€000	108,855	176,858	216,708	502,421
		IRE000	85,730	139,287	170,671	395,688
Health and Children	Services for the elderly	€000	57,932	115,832	150,622	324,386
		IRE000	45,625	91,225	118,625	255,475
Social, Community and Family Affairs	Grants for community and voluntary services	€000	42,211	43,715	44,400	130,326
		IRE000	33,244	34,428	34,968	102,640
Environment and Local Government	Homelessness	€000	73,645	76,838	76,838	227,321
		IRE000	58,000	60,515	60,515	179,030
					TOTAL:	€1,436,313 IRE1,131,188

ANNEX D: FACILITATING PARTICIPATION IN EMPLOYMENT - OBJECTIVE 1.1 (A) (I)

Objective 1.1 (a) (I) Putting in place, for those in the most vulnerable groups in society, pathways towards employment and by additional material in relation to mobilising training policies to that end

DSCFA Employment Support Services (also constituent measures under the EHRD - OP's Employability Priority):

The Back to Work Allowance Scheme, the Back to Education Allowance Scheme and the proactive engagement with the unemployed by the locally based Jobs Facilitators continue to be the pillars of the DSCFA Employment Support Services. These schemes are key elements in the drive to achieve social inclusion and are designed to help those who have not worked for a long time to take their place in today's expanding work force. The Back to Work Scheme encourages long-term unemployed people, lone parents, and people who have been ill or incapacitated to take up either employment or self-employment. People getting Carer's Allowance who have ceased caring responsibilities are also eligible. Under this programme, participants are guaranteed a weekly payment for 3/4 years, which is not affected by any other income from employment or self-employment. The Back to Education Allowance (BTEA), administered by the DSCFA, is a second chance educational opportunities scheme designed to encourage unemployed people and other disadvantaged groups (e.g. lone parents, people with disabilities, people who have ceased caring responsibilities) to improve their skills and qualifications and, therefore, their prospects of returning to the active work force. 5,500 people availed of the Allowance in 2000. The BTEA is to be evaluated later in 2001. The year 2000 saw an enhanced focus within the Employment Support Services on the longer-term unemployed, lone parents and people with disabilities. The Jobs Facilitators began to adopt a more proactive individual case management approach to the problems of the long-term unemployed in 2000.

Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS): Support, by the Department of Education and Science, is provided for this second chance education and training programme for adults aged 21 and over who are at least 6 months unemployed. A total, of 5,000 places per annum, is offered. An evaluation of the scheme will be published in 2001.

Pilot scheme to assist persons unemployed for 5 years or more to return to work: This is a special pilot scheme, introduced by the DSCFA in August 2000, targeted at those who are 5 years or more on the Live Register. This initiative places participants with employers for a five or six week training period while continuing to receive their full existing social welfare entitlements, together with a special allowance. By the end of December 2000, 60 people had availed of this opportunity.

Adult Educational Guidance and Counselling Service: The piloting of an adult educational guidance and counselling service has begun aimed at supporting participants enrolled on adult literacy, VTOS and adult and community education programmes. Funds for this have been provided under the NDP. The initiative will be expanded on a phased basis with a view to having a comprehensive service in place by the end of the NDP. 11 projects began in 2000 under Phase 1 and there will be further expansion in future years. Linkages with other Agencies form a vital part of the initiative, particularly at the initial referral and progression stages.

Broadening Access to Third Level Education: The objective of this measure, is to facilitate and improve access to the labour market for the beneficiaries whilst improving their long-term employability through enhancing their educational qualifications. An Action Group on Access to Third Level Participation has finalised a report and made recommendations on broadening access by students from disadvantaged backgrounds, mature students and students with disabilities. A major expansion of funding will ensure that every college has an access officer and that targeted programme funding is increased significantly.

Modernisation of Employment Services: The new organisational structures for the management, development and operation of the Employment Services have been implemented. FÁS has now taken over the responsibility for administration of the Local Employment Service and a new National Employment Service Advisory Committee, including the Social Partners, has been established.

FÁS Action Plan for the Long Term Unemployed: The number of long term unemployed as a proportion of unemployed on FÁS training increased from 11% in 1997 to 22% in 1999. In 2000, the target was increased to 25% but this target has not been achieved due to the very rapid decline in long-term unemployment. The figure of long term unemployed on FÁS training courses stood at 18% at end of year 2000. FÁS will review this approach in 2001.

High Support Scheme: As provided for in the PPF, a new High Supports process is being developed in consultation with the Social Partners aimed at addressing the needs of persons unable to either get, or keep, a job in the open labour market employment due to personal barriers such as age, health, literacy and numeracy factors. Work on this process is at an advanced stage and will be finalised as soon as possible.

Employability Study Report: An Advisory Group drawn from the DSCFA, Department of Finance and Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment was established to oversee this project. The ESRI was engaged as consultants and the final Report, which will form part of the ESRI's Policy Research series, was launched on 17th May 2001. The main findings are:

- there are different dimensions of employability or factors that reduce a person's employability;
- the main factors associated with reduced employability (based on Labour Force survey, Living in Ireland survey etc.) are
 - age;
 - gender and, for women, having children;
 - level of previous employment experience;
 - education levels and, in particular, literacy;
 - location i.e. rural as opposed to urban;
 - access to transport;
 - residence especially urban Local Authority.
- measuring the extent of employability difficulties is problematical but data generated through the EAP on the 'not progression ready' category may provide some help here;
- as far as policies to help people with employability difficulties are concerned, a separate payment for people with employability difficulties is not recommended;
- referral, guidance and counselling appears to be a successful approach and targeted interventions of this kind may be necessary. These should be linked to the EAP process;
- special interventions may be needed for certain groups in particular e.g.
 - serious illness;
 - drug abuse - referral to appropriate agencies;
 - domestic/personal difficulties – counseling;
 - literacy - National Adult Literacy Agency programmes;
 - childcare barriers should also be addressed.
- need for increased co-ordination between the DSCFA and FAS;
- more accurate information is needed on the characteristics of those on the Live Register.

The Report will now be considered in detail and its implications and recommendations assessed. Consultation may take place with appropriate Government Departments, relevant Agencies and the Social Partners. In particular the DSCFA will be looking at ways to enhance the further development of the close working relationship with FAS in the context of the EAP.

Waterford and Galway, Live Register of Unemployment, Studies by the DSCFA: The Terms of Reference for both Studies were to:

- generate a statistical profile of long-term and short-term unemployed people within the scope of the project;
- identify the issues facing long-term and short-term unemployed people in seeking work and examine the extent to which these represent barriers to employment, particularly in the context of available employment opportunities.

The Galway Unemployment Live Register study consisted in the main of a survey of a substantial part of the Live Register in the Galway Social Welfare Local Office catchment area and also involved the collection of information in relation to employment vacancies. It was carried out during May and June 2000. Following are some of the Key findings of the Galway Live Register study:

- low education levels are a major feature with 54% of the long-term customers (compared to 25% of the short-term) having only primary or no formal education;
- literacy problems are a key issue. 34% of the long-term unemployed (15% short-term) said they had a literacy difficulty;
- 11% of long-term customers have never worked. 75% of these have a literacy difficulty and 84% have only primary or no formal education;
- just 23% of long-term and 32% of short-term customers felt they had experience to offer a prospective employer. The number who said they had a skill or qualification were lower still;
- access to transport was a difficulty with 36% of the long-term customers (13% short-term) not having a car or suitable public transport.

- a total of 637 jobs were identified. However, 54% of the long-term unemployed did not have the minimum education requirement for any of the jobs identified. 31% of vacancies required a third-level education, while just 3% of the long-term and 10% of the short-term unemployed had this level.

Similar to the Galway study, the Waterford study consisted in the main of a survey of a substantial part of the Unemployment Live Register in the Waterford Social Welfare Local Office catchment area and also involved the collection of information on employment vacancies. It was carried out during October and November 2000. Following are some of the key findings of the Waterford study:

- low education levels are a major feature with 52% of the long-term customers (compared to 24% of the short-term) having only primary or no formal education;
- literacy is a big issue. 23% of long-term customers (11% short-term) said they had a literacy difficulty;
- 8% of long-term customers have never worked. 48% of these have a literacy difficulty and 76% have only primary or no formal education;
- just 17% of long-term and 24% of short-term customers felt they had experience to offer a prospective employer. The numbers who said they had a skill or qualification to offer were lower still;
- 47% of the long term unemployed are aged 45 years and over 38% of the long-term unemployed see age as a barrier to getting work;
- 46% of the long term unemployed and 40% of the short term unemployed had heard about the last job they applied for through word of mouth or contacts;
- a total of 276 job vacancies at the time of the survey were identified. However 52% of the long-term customers had access to only 76 of these jobs because of educational requirements specified.

While the findings from both the Galway and Waterford surveys will complement the DSCFA's ongoing efforts to assist those unemployed to find work, or to return to appropriate and relevant education or training, direct comparisons between the findings of both surveys would be misleading. Before valid comparisons could be made a number of factors would have to be taken into account. These factors would, inter alia, include:

- the economic and labour market environments of both areas;
- the duration on the Unemployment Live Register of customers in both samples;
- the times of the year each survey was undertaken;
- the age distribution of customers in each sample.

The DSCFA is currently examining how best the data emerging from both surveys may be used to develop appropriate responses for different groups on the Live Register. The data from the Galway survey has also been used by the ESRI in the context of the Employability Study which it has carried out on behalf of the DSCFA.

Employment of People with Disabilities in the Public Service : A public sector target of 3% employment of people with disabilities exists currently. The Department of the Environment and Local Government is taking action to encourage Local Authorities that have not yet reached the 3% quota to achieve this target by the end of December, 2002. The recommendations of a joint research project, by the Equality Authority and the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, on the 3% target will guide progress in this area.

Disabilities Bill : A Disabilities Bill, providing for positive action measures to advance and underpin the active participation of people with disabilities in society, is being prepared, with a view to publication in 2001.

ANNEX E: DEVELOPING POLICIES TO PROMOTE THE RECONCILIATION OF WORK AND FAMILY LIFE - OBJECTIVE 1.1 (A) (II)

Additional material in relation to Objective 1.1 (a) (II) Developing policies to promote the reconciliation of work and family life, including the issue of child and dependent care

Statutes relating to the family: The Parental Leave Act (1998) covers unpaid leave, to enable the parent to take care of the child, and it also entitles an employee to a number of paid days leave (force majeure) to deal with family emergencies. A Working Group, including Social Partners, has been set up to review the operation of the Act.

The Maternity Protection Act, 1994 has been amended to increase the entitlements to maternity leave (attracting payment subject to PRSI contributions) from 14 weeks to 18 weeks and additional (unpaid) maternity leave from 4 weeks to 8 weeks.

The Adoptive Leave Act, 1995 was also amended to provide for increased entitlements to adoptive leave (attracting payment subject to PRSI contributions) from 10 weeks to 14 weeks and additional (unpaid) adoptive leave, from 4 weeks to 8 weeks, in line with the increases in maternity leave. The increases apply to employees commencing maternity or adoptive leave on or after 8 March 2001. In the case of unpaid leave, any employee, who would be due to commence additional (unpaid) maternity or adoptive leave on or after 8 March 2001, is entitled to 8 weeks leave.

The Government decided that the Adoptive Leave Act, 1995 will be amended in line with the recommendations of the Report on the Working Group on the Review and Improvement of the Maternity Protection Legislation, where appropriate.

Part-time Work: The Protection of Employees (Part-Time Work) Bill, 2000, designed to prevent part-time workers being treated less favourably than full-time workers, is expected to be enacted by end July, 2001.

Capital Allowances for Expenditure on Childcare Facilities: Capital allowances have been introduced for expenditure on childcare facilities which meet the required standards for such facilities as provided in the Childcare Act 1991. The allowances will be at 15% per annum for the first six years and 10% in year seven for capital expenditure on a building or part of a building used as a childcare facility. Budget 2000 provided for accelerated capital allowances of 100%.

Public Service Crèches: In his Budget 2000 speech, the Minister announced the provision of €12.7million (IR£10 million) capital to allow for the provision of 15 civil service crèches.

Childcare Measures re Adult Education and Training: At local level, the childcare measures will continue to be supported through the Vocational Education Committees (VECs) to support access of parents, to the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS), Youthreach and Senior Traveller Training Centres programmes for unemployed adults and early school leavers, by providing childcare facilities. The budget for childcare, to support access by Early School Leavers and the unemployed to VTOS, Youthreach and Senior Traveller Training Centre programmes, in operation through the VECs is €3.15million (IR£2.48million) in 2001. Currently 1,050 participants are benefiting (1,308 children).

ANNEX F: PREVENTING THE EXCLUSION OF PEOPLE FROM THE WORLD OF WORK BY IMPROVING EMPLOYABILITY – OBJECTIVE 1.1 (B)

Additional material in relation to Objective 1.1 (b) Preventing the exclusion of people from the world of work by improving employability through human resource management, organisation of work and life-long learning

Back to Education Initiative: The Back to Education Initiative (BTEI), funded via €1,304million (IR£1,027million) from the NDP, provides for an expansion of part-time Youthreach, Post Leaving Certificate and Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme options.

The BTEI will play a key role both in addressing the needs of those with minimal or no educational qualifications and providing a re-entry route for those who wish to upgrade their skills in line with emerging needs. Access to information and communications technology training, electronic technician training, language skills, enterprise development, business, tourism, art and craft, child care, and a broad range of disciplines within the industry and services sector, will form part of the approach as will access to the Junior and Leaving Certificate examinations and other access programmes. Community education opportunities will be expanded and supported as part of the Initiative, given the success of the model in reaching very marginalised groups.

Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses: Support will continue, by the Department of Education and Science, for one and two year Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses of integrated education, training and work experience outside the third level sector (certification provided by National Council for Vocational Awards). Current expenditure on PLCs (excluding maintenance grants) is some €54.6million (IR£43million) (aided by the EU). Over 25,000 places are available on PLC's, of which 33% are taken up by people aged over 21. The overall target is to increase the opportunities for participation in life-long learning through a significant expansion of part-time options with 50,000 early school leavers and adults participating by 2006.

Expert Group on Future Skills Needs: The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs will continue its ongoing review of the skills requirements of the economy as outlined in its second report. In addition, the Group conducted specific reviews of multi-media skills requirements and in-company training in 2000.

ANNEX G: GUARANTEEING THAT EVERYONE HAS THE RESOURCES NECESSARY TO LIVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH HUMAN DIGNITY - OBJECTIVE 1.2 (A) (I)

List of Income Support Measures Provided by the DSCF A

Type of Benefit, Pension or Assistance	Total numbers end 2000
Old Age (Contributory) Pension	86,217
Retirement Pension	78,370
Old Age (Non-Contributory) Pension	90,652
Pre-Retirement Allowance	12,521
Total Old Age	267,760
Widow/er's (Contributory) Pension	100,374
Widow's (Non-Contributory) Pension	17,367
Deserted Wife's Benefit	12,654
Deserted Wife's Allowance	1,613
Prisoner's Wife's Allowance	3
One Parent Family Payment	74,120
Total Widowers & One Parent Families	206,131
Maternity Benefit	6,130
Health and Safety Benefit	30
Adoptive Benefit	10
Orphan's (Contributory) Allowance	1,148
Orphan's (Non-Contributory) Pension	749
Child Benefit	509,095
Total Children	517,162
Disability Benefit	46,940
Invalidity Pension	48,663
Injury Benefit	828
Interim Disability Benefit	488
Disablement Benefit	10,925
Death Benefit	665
Disability Allowance	54,303
Carer's Benefit	50
Carer's Allowance	16,478
Blind Person's Pension	2,229
Total Illness, Disability and Caring	181,569
Unemployment Benefit	46,644
Unemployment Assistance	69,509
Total Unemployment	116,153
Back to Work Allowance	34,506
Back to Work Enterprise Allowance	4,503
Back To Education Allowance	4,181
Part-Time Job Incentive Scheme	474
Family Income Supplement	13,062
Farm Assist	7,888
Smallholders	163
Total Employment Supports	64,777
Total Supplementary Welfare Allowance	25,094
Total Rent Allowance	472
TOTAL ALL SCHEMES	1,379,118

Disbursement of Funds from Dormant Accounts : The Government has approved legislation under which deposits in banks and other financial institutions, that have not been accessed for fifteen years, can be claimed by the State, paid to a fund to be administered by the National Treasury Management Agency and, other than meeting claims for refunds from owners, disbursed to those who are economically, educationally, physically or socially disadvantaged. The scheme for disbursement of surplus dormant funds will be overseen by a Dormant Accounts Fund Disbursement Board to be established and supplied with guidelines by the Minister for Social, Community and Family Affairs. The legislation will come into effect on 1 April, 2002.

ANNEX H: ACCESS TO DECENT AND SANITARY HOUSING AS WELL AS OTHER BASIC SERVICES - OBJECTIVE 1.2 (B)

Additional material relevant to Objective 1.2 (b) Implementing policies which aim to provide access for all to decent and sanitary housing as well as the basic services necessary to live normally having regard to local circumstances (electricity, water, heating etc.)

HOUSING

Multi-annual Local Authority Housing Programme: In a major drive to increase Local Authority housing output a new multi-annual Local Authority housing programme was introduced commencing in 2000. Under this initiative a comprehensive funding package was agreed to deliver 22,000 Local Authority houses over the four-year period 2000 – 2003. This was further boosted in the Government's Action on Housing in June 2000, when an additional 1,000 starts per annum were announced. Therefore, in total, the multi-annual programme will deliver 25,000 Local Authority housing starts over the period 2000 – 2003. Local Authorities have been asked to front load their programmes with a view to ensuring that the maximum number of Local Authority houses are completed as quickly as possible. €7.62billion (IRE6billion) is provided for social and affordable housing in the NDP. This was further increased in the Government's Action on Housing (June 2000), bringing the total to be provided over the period of the NDP to some €8.89billion (IRE7billion) in order to ensure that the social housing needs of some 100,000 households are met between 2000 - 2006.

Voluntary Housing Sector: The Government is also committed to increasing output from the voluntary housing sector over the coming years. The aim is to increase output from the voluntary sector to 4,000 units per annum. This year voluntary bodies will build about 1,000 units of accommodation. A monitoring system is in place to record project activity and track developments in the voluntary housing sector at Local Authority level.

Private Rented Sector: Government proposals for major reforms in the private rented residential sector, arising from the recommendations contained in the report of the Commission on the Private Rented Residential Sector, were announced in January 2001. The reforms provide for improved security of tenure for tenants and the establishment of a Private Rented Residential Tenancies Board to deal primarily with disputes arising between landlord and tenants. Other measures, agreed for implementation, relate to graduated notice to quit periods, rent levels and rent reviews, registration of tenancies and tax incentives. Work is progressing on the legislation required to give statutory effect to many of these reforms and, pending its enactment, arrangements are being made for the establishment of the Board on an ad-hoc basis in the Autumn.

Supplementary Welfare Allowance: The Supplementary Welfare Allowance (SWA) scheme provides a Statutory guarantee of a prescribed level of resources "to every person in the State whose means are insufficient to meet (their) needs". Most beneficiaries are recipients of rent supplement, a periodic SWA payment made in respect of private sector rent costs, mainly to people whose main, or sole, source of income is a primary weekly social welfare payment. A fundamental role of the SWA system, and the Community Welfare Officers (CWO) who administer the scheme at a local level, is currently underway. It is proposed that housing needs, currently addressed through local long term rent supplement payments, will in future be met in the main by Local Authorities, through a combination of social housing provision and private sector rental assistance. Proposals in that regard are under consideration.

Area Based Housing Regeneration: Under the NDP, funding is being provided to Local Authorities for the improvement and upgrading of their stock including comprehensive redevelopment or refurbishment of a number of social housing complexes as part of area based regeneration initiatives designed to tackle serious problems of multiple deprivation, particularly in inner-city areas. The NDP also provides for expenditure under the existing private home improvement schemes available to assist those considered the most vulnerable to have necessary works undertaken to their homes. Other Housing Assistance Schemes include House Purchase Loan Assistance, Housing Aid for the Elderly, Rent Assistance, Shared Ownership and Affordable Housing Schemes.

Housing Strategies: Under the Planning and Development Act, 2000, each planning authority is obliged by mid-2001 to prepare a housing strategy to provide for the housing of the existing and future population of the area, having regard among other things to the need to ensure that housing is available for those on different levels of income and the need to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds. On insertion of the housing strategy in their land-use development plan the authority may provide that a proportion, up to 20%, of residentially zoned land will be reserved for the provision of social and affordable housing. The planning authority must then require as a condition of the grant of planning permission the transfer of ownership of that proportion of the land, or an equivalent number of built houses or serviced sites, to the Local Authority at a price equivalent to the existing use value of the land.

The NDP will underpin future housing development by integrated infrastructural investment in water, roads, public transport and social and community infrastructure. Housing objectives are fully reflected in public transport planning and investment under the NDP.

FUEL POVERTY

Fuel Poverty : Fuel poverty is among the issues emerging from the NAPS review Working Group dealing with housing/accommodation issues. The National Fuel Scheme is a central plank of Government policy, in this regard, which ensures that particular groups benefit from an allowance towards fuel costs.

TRANSPORT

Accessibility to Public Transport: Bus Átha Cliath now has over 250 low floor buses in service and a further 56 are on order for delivery this year. The position in Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford is that practically the entire Bus Éireann fleets in these cities have been converted to low floor and it is anticipated that this process will be completed by end 2001. Bus Éireann has also taken delivery of twenty midi buses which are low-floor wheelchair accessible. These will be tested on a number of rural routes throughout the country. This performance will be evaluated, particularly in relation to the operation of low-floor type vehicles in rural locations over difficult operating terrain and conditions. The company is continuing to monitor developments in relation to the design and manufacture of long distance coaches which would improve Bus Éireann's capacity to meet the needs of people with mobility impairments. The new Dublin Area Rapid Transport (DART) and suburban railcars, currently being introduced on the Iarnród Éireann network, are wheelchair accessible.

The commitment, in the PPF, concerning public transport initiatives in rural areas, is supported by the provision of €4.44million (IRE3.5million) in the NDP. A new scheme, the Rural Transport Initiative (RTI), is aiming to encourage local or community-based initiatives to provide public transport services in such areas. It is planned that the funding will be used to support a number of pilot rural transport projects in the period 2001 to 2006. The projects to be funded will be selected following a national call for proposals. Policy in this area is being developed with the assistance of the Public Transport Partnership Forum's sub-group on rural transport. The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform will continue to provide funding for the implementation phase of the two pilot transport projects focusing on accessible transport in rural environments.

ANNEX I: EFFECTIVE ACCESS TO EDUCATION, JUSTICE AND OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SERVICES - OBJECTIVE 1.2 (D)

Further material in relation to Objective 1.2 (d) Developing, for the benefit of people at risk of exclusion, services and accompanying measures which will allow them effective access to education, justice and other public and private services, such as culture, sport and leisure

JUSTICE

Courts Service: The Courts Service has established a protocol for consultation with court users in relation to court buildings and court facilities. All projects will include a list of accommodation requirements and any other special features which may be needed for particular groups, such as audio-visual facilities, wheelchair access, special facilities for family law cases, information desk, victim support rooms, access for disabled, etc. The views and requirements of court users, including people with disabilities, shall be accommodated as far as possible within the overall capital cost limit for the project.

The Small Claims Court has been established with branches in all District Courts in order to provide prompt and inexpensive access to the Courts for the general public in relation to consumer claims not exceeding €1,280 (IRE1,000).

In the recently published Courts and Court Officers Bill, 2001, the jurisdiction limits of the District and Circuit Courts are proposed to be increased, with effect from 1 January 2002, to €20,000 (IRE15,750) and €100,000 (IRE78,750), respectively. Again, this is part of the Departmental policy to reduce the costs of litigation and to make justice more easily available to the general public.

Domestic Violence/Violence against women: The issue of violence against women spans a number of Departments:

- the Department of Health and Children is responsible for the provision of services to victims;
- the Department of the Environment and Local Government assist in the provision of crisis accommodation;
- the Department of Education and Science is responsible for educating children in relation to the Social Personal and Health Education Programme;
- the DSCFA fund community development programmes and grant aids local groups dealing with the issue;
- the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform's responsibility is to deal with perpetrators, including the establishment of perpetrator programmes.

To date, this has involved the funding of a Domestic Violence Intervention Pilot Programme in Cork, the funding of MOVE (Men Overcoming Violent Emotions) and the funding of First Contact, a telephone referral service for potential perpetrators of violence. The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform has also facilitated research in relation to facets of the issue. The Government appointed a National Steering Committee (NSC) on Violence against Women and have given the Committee the task of providing a multi-Agency, multi-disciplinary and cohesive response to women experiencing violence. The remit of the Committee is also to inform Government policy in relation to the measures to be implemented to support women who are victims of violence.

In addition, eight Regional Committees have been appointed, one in each of the eight Health Board areas. Their role is to look at local issues in relation to the delivery of services to victims of violence and report to the NSC about this work and highlight any problems. Funding to the non-Government organisations for the provision of services is allocated by the relevant Health Board and the Regional Committees have an input into the decision making process around service requirements and delivery by the various organisations.

To date, the work of the NSC has resulted in securing improved funding for the provision of services to victims, improvements in the provision of emergency accommodation, an education programme dealing with the issue in the schools, research in relation to aspects of the issue, undertaking Public Awareness Campaigns in relation to the issue and work relating to the establishment of National Referral Helpline, including the production of a National Directory of Services.

Youth Diversion Schemes: The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform is funding over 50 Garda (police) Youth Diversion Projects in a number of urban centres for young people involved, or a risk of getting involved, in crime. The Projects operate a range of activities and programmes to assist in addressing anti-social and offending behaviour. Government approval has been obtained for the expenditure of €20.32million (IRE16million) under the NDP for the expansion of the scheme. The year 2000 saw the first two phases of this expansion, with 10 projects being added in May and a further 12 in October.

Official funding for victim support organisations: Victim Support is a volunteer-based organisation dedicated to providing support services to crime victims. Key characteristics include:

- funded by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform;
- services delivered via a network of branches throughout the country by trained volunteers;
- managed by full-time professional staff;
- services include practical advice and support for victims, a 24 hour referral service, a court accompaniment scheme and a special service for families of murder victims.

Human Rights Commission: A Human Rights Commission is being established in Ireland under the recently enacted Human Rights Commission Act, 2000. The Commission, to be established under the Act, will be a powerful new independent body charged with the task of keeping under review the adequacy and effectiveness of Ireland's laws in relation to the protection of Human Rights in their widest sense.

North South links: The Equality Authority has developed a valuable relationship with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. Joint board meetings have been hosted and a Working Group to support north/south co-operation has been established.

OTHER SERVICES:

Improvements proposed for Voters with Disabilities: The Minister for the Environment and Local Government published the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2000 in December 2000. The Bill, provides for a number of measures that will assist people who have a disability or a literacy problem.

Access to Social Welfare Public Offices: The DSCFA, in conjunction with the Office of Public Works, is working towards the objective of making all DSCFA public offices accessible to people with disabilities and significant progress was made during 2000 when, the number of accessible public offices increased from 105 to 129, out of a total of 161 public offices.

Optical Scanning Facilities in Public Libraries: A scheme to provide optical scanning facilities for the visually impaired in public libraries, which will provide facilities such as text to speech conversion software using a personal computer (PC) equipped with a large visual display unit, will continue during 2001. It is expected that such equipment will be installed in approximately 100 public libraries at a total cost to the exchequer of €0.44million (IR£0.35million). A sum of €1.08million (IR£0.85million) is also available in 2001 to continue the initiative of providing Internet PCs in public libraries for use by members of the public.

Irish Sports Council (ISC)-Recreational Sports Grants: Grants are provided to a range of organisations to promote programmes with a particular emphasis on targeting groups/sectors of the community that might be described as disadvantaged. Grants totalling €0.06million (IR£0.05million) in 2001 will be distributed among organisations such as the Irish Heart Foundation and Irish Countrywomen's Association to target, among others, children with special needs and women to encourage everyone to get involved in sport for the benefits it brings in terms of the quality of life. In addition to the above grants, €0.6million (IR£0.5million) was recently announced in the 2001 Budget for Sport for Older People. It is expected that arrangements for the distribution of this allocation will be finalised and approved within the next few weeks. Organisations such as Age and Opportunity, The Federation of Active Retirement Associations and the Irish Senior Citizens Parliament will be the main beneficiaries of this allocation.

ANNEX J: EXPLOITING FULLY THE POTENTIAL OF THE KNOWLEDGE-BASED SOCIETY AND OF NEW INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES - OBJECTIVE 2(A)

Additional material in relation to Objective 2(a) Exploiting fully the potential of the knowledge-based society and of new information and communication technologies and ensuring that no-one is excluded, taking particular account of the needs of people with disabilities

Fastrack to Information Technology (FIT): The objective of the FIT organisation is to meet labour shortages in the IT industry while creating job opportunities for the long-term unemployed. FIT is an industry driven concept and most of the main industries based in Ireland are involved. The current FIT project involves a three-year programme to train 3,500 long-term unemployed to a position where they are qualified to take up positions in industry. The involvement of the private sector companies ensures the ready availability of jobs. Based on the results of an independent evaluation of the current FIT programme, expected to be available before the end of the year, decisions can be taken on how best to move forward.

Skillnet College: - A new 'Skillnet College' internet based learning system, which has the potential to deliver computer based learning programmes to multiple users in their locality, has been established by FAS, the national Training and Employment Authority. FAS will co-operate with the Director of Homeless Services in Dublin to provide complementary training /development supports to homeless persons who have been afforded access to accommodation and health services.

Technology in Schools: An investment programme costing €95.2million (IR£75million) is being provided between 2000 and 2002 augmenting existing technology introduced under Schools IT 2000 to develop an advanced curriculum support programme.

On-line Access to Services, Information and Support (OASIS): OASIS (www.oasis.gov.ie) is a new public service information system provided over the Internet. It works by structuring information around key life events, e.g. birth, education, housing, work and retirement, and provides an electronic one-stop-shop by gathering information from all relevant sources for each event. It comes under the aegis of Comhairle, a State Board reporting to the Minister for Social, Community and Family Affairs.

ANNEX K: IMPLEMENTING ACTION TO PRESERVE FAMILY SOLIDARITY IN ALL ITS FORMS – OBJECTIVE 2 (C)

Additional material in relation to Objective 2(c) Implementing action to preserve family solidarity in all its forms

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND CHILDREN – FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

Family Support Workers: These workers are employed by Health Boards to provide direct assistance to families experiencing difficulties in coping. They are often mature women who have good parenting and home-making skills. They work with families for a specific number of hours per week under the overall supervision of a Social Worker. Assistance is usually provided for quite a long period e.g. 6 months to one year.

Community Child Care Workers: These not only work directly with individual children, but also with families, in a preventive role. With individual families, work can include the development of a programme to manage a child's behavioural difficulties, through helping a parent stimulate a child or preparing a family for the return of their child from care.

Parenting Programmes: These programmes help parents to improve their parenting skills, to control anger and develop strategies for coping with children's difficult behaviour. Parents may be required to attend these programmes as part of the conditions attached to the granting of a Supervision Order under the Child Care Act 1991.

Pre-school Services: At present Health Boards fund various voluntary service providers who run pre-school services (crèches, community playgroups etc.) in disadvantaged areas. In addition some Health Boards fund places for individual children in local pre-schools to provide respite to parents who are not coping or where there are concerns about a child's welfare. Funding of approximately €4.95million (IR£3.9million) was provided in 1999 to fund up to 8,000 places.

After-school Services: These services cater for older children in disadvantaged communities. Help with homework is provided as well as various supervised recreational activities. Again these services provide respite to troubled families and help to improve the educational achievements and self-esteem of the children concerned.

Family Resource Centres: These are a community resource which are readily accessible to all families in the district in which they are located. They provide a wide range of activities including mother and toddler groups, parenting courses, personal development programmes, after-school groups and teenage groups.

Neighbourhood Youth Projects: These enable young people to remain in their own communities while receiving skilled help directed toward resolving personal or family problems. They provide a resource to mobilise the potential of the neighbourhood in which they are located to define and meet the needs of the younger people.

Community Mothers Programme: This programme is an effective method of offering parents support in their child rearing task. It is based on a home visiting strategy in which trained Community Mothers or Family Development Nurses help to empower parents, to enable them to reach their potential and develop their skills.

Teenage Parents Support Projects: The main purpose of the pilot Initiative developed as part of the National Child Care Investment Strategy announced in December 1998 is to identify and develop models of good practice in the development of care plans for young parents, particularly those deemed to be at risk. A pilot programme was initiated in Dublin, Galway and Limerick which would identify single teenage parents who are deemed medium risk at ante-natal stage. Once identified, the Projects provide a range of additional support services through the pregnancy and beyond it for the parent and child. The intention is to improve parenting capacity and, in doing so, reduce social admissions to acute hospitals.

ANNEX L: TO HELP THE MOST VULNERABLE – OBJECTIVE 3(A)

Additional material in relation to Objective 3 (a) Promoting the social integration of women and men at risk of facing persistent poverty, for example, because they have a disability or belong to a group experiencing particular integration problems.

EQUALITY ISSUES

The EQUAL Initiative : The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment will launch the EU's EQUAL Initiative in Ireland during 2001. The Initiative will invest in the region of €47million (IR£37million) up to 2006 in partnership projects aimed at combating discrimination and exclusion in relation to employment under a number of priority themes, as follows, in addition to which, a separate measure will be aimed at asylum seekers consistent with Government policy:

Employability

- facilitating access and return to the labour market for those who have difficulty in being integrated or re-integrated into a labour market which must be open to all.

Entrepreneurship

- opening up the business creation process to all by providing the tools required for setting up in business and for the identification and exploitation of new possibilities for creating employment in urban and rural areas.

Adaptability

- promoting life-long learning and inclusive work practices which encourage the recruitment and retention of those suffering discrimination and inequality in connection with the labour market;
- supporting the adaptability of firms and employees to structural economic change and the use of information technology and other new technologies

Equal opportunities for Women and Men

- reconciling family and professional life, as well as the reintegration of men and women who have left the labour market, by developing more flexible and effective forms of work organisation and support services.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Comhairle: Comhairle, launched in June 2000, replaced the National Social Services Board (NSSB) and the information service provided by the National Rehabilitation Board (NRB) with a new mainstream information and support service from a network of local centres. The improvement of information and support services for people with disabilities was among the key recommendations contained in the report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities. Building on the expertise and resources of both the NSSB and the NRB at local, regional and national levels, Comhairle ensures that services for people with disabilities has become an integral part of mainstream information, advice and advocacy services for all using social services. People with disabilities have the services relevant to them delivered by Comhairle in the same way as their fellow citizens, rather than through a separate Agency. Comhairle currently supports some 85 independent Citizens Information Centres which are locally based.

Assessment of Home Support and Personal Assistance Services: Given the significant funding which is being invested in the provision of these services and the importance of these services in enabling people with disabilities to live independently and carers to be provided with respite and support, it has been agreed that a review of these services and the assessment procedures currently in force needs to be undertaken. The Department of Health & Children will therefore be establishing a Working Group to undertake this review.

People with Disabilities Ireland: The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform will continue to fund the operation of People with Disabilities Ireland. This organisation, consisting of people with disabilities who were elected by people with disabilities, was established in March, 2000 to promote the human, civil, social, economic, political, cultural and recreational rights and freedoms of people with disabilities.

Statistical Needs on Disabilities: The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform will continue to initiate arrangements to review and identify key statistical needs in relation to people with disabilities or categories of people with disabilities for the purposes of informing policy, planning and the delivery of services as directed in the PPF.

Disabilities Bill: The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform is progressing work on a Disabilities Bill to provide a Statutory basis for positive action measures to advance and underpin equal participation by people with disabilities in society.

MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS INCLUDING IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

Conference on Racism: The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform will be participating at official level in the UN World Conference Against Racism which will take place in Durban, South Africa in September, 2001. In preparation for the event, the Council of Europe held a European Conference on Racism in October, 2000.

Establishment and Role of the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA): In March 2000, the Government decided to establish a new agency, the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA). With effect from 2 April 2001, the RIA replaced the Directorate for Asylum Support Services and incorporated the Refugee Agency, which operated under the aegis of the Department of Foreign Affairs, and has responsibility for:

- planning and co-ordinating the provision of services to both asylum seekers and refugees;
- co-ordinating the implementation of integration policy for all refugees and persons who, though not refugees, are granted leave to remain;
- responding to crisis situations which result in relatively large numbers of refugees arriving in Ireland within a short period of time (e.g., the Kosovars who were invited to Ireland in 1999).

Pending the enactment of legislation to establish the RIA on a Statutory footing, the RIA is operating on a non-Statutory basis with an Interim Advisory Board. The Board is representative of the key Government Departments with responsibilities for asylum seekers and refugees, and of the wider community.

Integration Report: The decision to establish the RIA follows an earlier decision of the Government that the recommendations in the report of the Interdepartmental Working Group on the Integration of Refugees should form the framework for integration policy and be implemented. The establishment of a single organisational structure - within the overall framework of structures for asylum and immigration - for co-ordinating the implementation of integration policy is one of the key recommendations of the Working Group. The RIA is the vehicle for implementing this recommendation and its establishment will facilitate a cohesive, co-ordinated approach to both the reception of asylum seekers and the integration of refugees.

Public Awareness Campaign: The creation of a tolerant, inclusive society is a prerequisite for the successful integration of ethnic minorities. The Government has allocated a core budget of €1.9million (IR£1.5million) per annum, beginning on 1 January, 2001. Preparations are in train for a formal launch of the campaign following completion of certain tasks to be carried out as part of the planning and development of the launch.

OLDER PEOPLE

Review of the Financing of Long-Term Care: In November 2000, the DSCFA appointed consultants to examine the strategic issues involved in the future financing of long-term care. The study, which involves an assessment of alternative financing and funding approaches and their feasibility in the Irish context, is expected to be completed by mid-2001. The study, which also involves the Department of Health and Children and the Department of Finance, will encompass the financing of personal long-term care needs both in the community and in institutional care and the potential of the private sector or a combined public/private sector approach to develop new initiatives in this area.

Reconciliation of work and care of older people: A Working Group of the Department of Health and Children, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, the DSCFA, the Equality Authority, and the relevant representative organisations will be set up to report on strategies for the care of older people from the labour market perspective.

Free Schemes: The Free Travel Scheme is available to all people resident in the State aged 66 years or over, to all carers in receipt of Carer's Allowance, to carers of people in receipt of Prescribed Relatives and Constant Attendance Allowance and also to certain people with disabilities under that age who are in receipt of certain welfare type payments. The other Free Schemes of Electricity/Gas Allowance, Free Television Licence and Telephone Allowance are available to people living in the State, aged 66 years or over, who are in receipt of a social welfare type payment or who satisfy a means test (Those over 70 years of age do not have to satisfy the means test). They are also available to people with disabilities under the age of 66 who are in receipt of certain welfare type payments. In addition, widows/widowers aged from 60 to 65 whose late spouses had been in receipt of the Free Schemes retain that entitlement. Everyone below relevant tiered income thresholds is also entitled to medical cards from the State. From 1 July, 2001, all persons of 70 years of age and upwards will be entitled to free medical care regardless of income.

TRAVELLER COMMUNITY

Traveller Community: The first progress report on the implementation of the Recommendations of the Task Force on the Traveller Community was submitted to Government in December, 2000 and was published in April, 2001. €0.38million (IR£0.3million) will be provided out of the budget of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to the Traveller Communication Committee to fund the third and final tranche of the Traveller Communication Programme, entitled, "Citizen Traveller". €0.06million (IR£0.05million) was provided by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to the Traveller Mediation Service operated by Pavee Point Traveller Centre. More funding will be provided in 2001.

EX-OFFENDERS

Ex-Offenders: One of the groups at risk of integration problems are ex-offenders. The Department of Education and Science has allocated 196.79 whole-time teacher equivalents (over 200 individual teachers) through the VECs, on the basis of recommendations from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, to support prison education services in 2000/2001.

The **Probation and Welfare Service**, under the auspices of the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform, will continue its involvement in the development of workshops and training projects which aim to reduce recidivism, particularly in areas of disadvantage. A number of new projects will come on stream in 2001 and will also be developed under the Service's National Development Plan in 2001. The Service will maintain and extend its commitment to increase localisation of office accommodation into areas where crime and offending is prevalent. Intensive Probation Supervision programmes will continue for offenders aged 17-25 years. As well as providing cognitive behavioural and educational programmes aimed at reducing offending, these programmes will also facilitate young offenders to move into apprenticeships in certain industries. The Service will continue, and extend, funding already committed to innovative projects aimed at reducing violence against women.

CONNECT Programme: Within the community, crime affects areas of disadvantage disproportionately and can diminish the quality of life significantly for the whole neighbourhood, as well as impacting seriously on the individual victims of crime and their families. The NDP makes provision on behalf of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform for an integrated programme to combat crime by promoting social inclusion through employment. The programme is being delivered by the Prison Service, the Probation and Welfare Service and the Garda Síochána (police service).

The prisons element of the programme is called CONNECT and is conducted through a collaboration of the Irish Prison Service and the National Training and Development Institute of the Rehab Group. It provides a comprehensive programme of vocational preparation for people in prisons to follow and pathways to labour market participation after their release. The programme is planned to cater for an average of 1,150 participants per year. A detailed pilot study indicated that, 25% of these may expect to achieve labour market participation after they leave prison, given the strength of the economy at present. Research is showing that many of the people who are committing crime and who are being dealt with by the criminal justice system are themselves from areas of disadvantage and are following a cycle of crime which may begin with dropping out of school, frequently involves substance abuse and leads on to successive periods spent in prison. The cycle of crime is often generational, with children following the patterns of their parents. The NDP programme to combat crime is preventative and aims to break the cycle of crime. Its innovative character is that it is located within a policy of social inclusion where it may better relate with the causal factors of the problem and provide a service that can benefit all those affected by crime, both the victims and also those who will chose to break from crime.

WOMEN

National Plan for Women: A National Plan for Women is being developed in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Following finalisation of the draft Plan, the Department will engage in a widespread consultation process. The Department envisages completion of the Plan by end 2001. The Plan will use, as a framework, the 12 critical areas of concern headings as set out in the Beijing Platform for Action. Social inclusion measures for women will be identified under the headings such as Women and the Economy, Women and Poverty and Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women.

Advisory Committee on the Role of Women in Agriculture: The Advisory Committee on the Role of Women in Agriculture, established by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, issued its Report in September 2000. The Report includes recommendations on specific measures to facilitate women farmers in having a more fulfilling and equal role in agriculture and wider rural development. The range of issues covered included:

- women in the agricultural work force;
- a statistical evaluation of women farmers including marital status, single/joint operation of family farms and farm inheritance patterns;
- education and training including information technology;
- participation and representation of women at political and organisational level;
- personal finance, economic and other legal issues;
- social inclusion.

The Report highlighted the availability of services such as childcare, care of older people and transport as an important element in underpinning social inclusion in rural areas. The recommendations in the Report are being followed up and will be considered by the NAPS review Working Group on rural poverty.

EDUCATION

Education Equality Initiative: An Education Equality Initiative, from which disadvantaged men's and women's groups will benefit, commenced in 2000. This initiative seeks to address educational disadvantage through the strategic allocation of funding of €4.44million (IRE3.5million) under the NDP with the support of the European Social Fund. 18 projects were selected for the first phase and 5 of these are in the "less advantaged" Border/Midland/Western region of the country.

Non-National pupils with English Language deficits: Primary schools, with fifteen or more non-national pupils with significant English language deficits, are automatically entitled to an additional temporary teacher for up to two years. Grant aid is paid to primary schools with between four and fourteen non-English speaking non-nationals to enable them to acquire the services of a suitably qualified person to teach them English. Additional resources based on a pupil/teacher ratio of 15:1 will be allocated at second level as the need arises.

With the support of €1.52million (IRE1.2million), from the Department of Education and Science, over a two year pilot programme, the Refugee Language Support Unit, was established in Trinity College in 1999, which has completed benchmarks for English Language proficiency for school-going and asylum seeking children. All adult refugees presenting for English Language Tuition will be assessed and assigned to appropriate classes. A register of English language tuition providers will be maintained. Arrangements will be made to implement, within existing budgets, the proposals regarding education provision for refugees and asylum seekers set out in the White Paper on Adult Education. A co-ordinator has been appointed to engage in action research on a pilot basis in the Dublin area to assess level of language needs in the area, and to examine models of good practice, which will inform future good practice.

ANNEX M: TO HELP THE MOST VULNERABLE – OBJECTIVE 3 (B)

Additional material in relation to Objective 3 (b) Moving towards the elimination of social exclusion among children and giving them every opportunity for social integration

Child Care Services: The Child Care Act, 1991 places a legal obligation on every Health Board to promote the welfare of children in its area who are not receiving adequate care and attention. In implementing the Act, the primary emphasis is on prevention or early intervention and supporting such children in their own family or community. Only as a last resort are alternative appropriate services, to place children outside of the home, provided and, where possible, this involves a thorough care approach.

Since 1991 additional revenue funding of the order of €168.9million (IRE133million) approximately has been invested to develop child welfare protection and family support services and to strengthen the capacity of the Health Boards to meet the demands of new legislation. Child protection services which deal with the investigation and management of alleged cases of sexual and other forms of child abuse have been further developed in each Health Board.

In addition, a range of child care and family support initiatives have been developed by Health Boards including: specialist nurseries, parenting courses, community mothers programme, family and adolescent resource centres, support work with families experiencing difficulties, child psychiatric and psychology services, support for foster care groups, neighbourhood youth projects, youth homeless support services, bereavement support groups, suicide prevention projects and various mentoring programmes. Health Boards also provide funding to relevant voluntary and community organisations who provide less problem focused child care and family support services which are, in principle, open to all who are encountering the ordinary challenges of parenting and family living.

Longitudinal Study of Children in Ireland: In February, 2001, the DSCFA and the Department of Health and Children jointly announced the commissioning of a design brief for a National Longitudinal Study of Children. The Longitudinal Study will make a significant contribution to knowledge about the lives of children and their families today. Its findings will help the Government to develop effective and responsive policies and services which meet the needs of children and their families in a changing environment.

National Educational Welfare Board: A new National Educational Welfare Board will be established in 2001 under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. This Board will include representatives from the education partners and State Agencies with the emphasis on assistance to schools, families and children rather than penalties. The Board will have the responsibility for implementing the Bill and ensuring that its objectives are met. The Board's activities, both locally and nationally, will be co-ordinated with those of other child and family support organisations. A network of Educational Welfare Officers will be allocated to areas on the basis of local need. This development involves the first ever-national response to supporting school attendance. A total of €5.4million (IRE4.25million) is being allocated over the next 3 years to facilitate the establishment of the Board and the enactment of the provisions of the Act.

Children at Risk/Young Offenders: The Department of Education and Science supports the following services to support the needs of this group:

- five **Youth Encounter** projects at an estimated annual cost of €0.63million (IRE0.5million), excluding teachers salaries, employing 125 non-teaching staff and catering for up to 125 young people who have become involved in minor delinquency or are at risk and have become alienated from the mainstream system;
- three **Line** projects, that bring together the community, State Agencies and relevant Government Departments, to provide a direct and immediate response for young people from 8-18 years who have dropped out of the system due to disruptive behaviour or habitual non-attendance;
- five **Young Offenders Centres** catering for 186 long-stay and 20 short-term/remand places. A significant refurbishment programme, including pre-release units, costing a total of €26.66million (IRE21million) is being put in place to meet the obligations of these Centres under the Children Bill.

Youth Homelessness: The Department of Health and Children is preparing a National Youth Homeless Strategy which will emphasise the importance of prevention. It is expected to publish it during 2001.

The Springboard Initiatives - Family Support Projects for Children at Risk: The objective of the Springboard projects is to establish a pilot Family Support Project in a number of identified communities throughout the country. These projects work intensively with children, mainly in the 7-12 year age group, who are at risk, and their families. Coherence in terms of focus and target groups is maintained with all of the projects committed to directly working with children and families at risk, inter-Agency collaboration, and the involvement of local structures for consultation with communities and partnerships with families. Within that framework there is, of necessity, considerable local diversity in the manner and content of service provision between the individual pilot project areas. As of January 2001 Springboard projects operate in all but two of the Health Board/Authority (Northern Area Health Board and East Coast Health Board) areas. The Letterkenny (North Western Health Board) Springboard Projects closed in July 2001. However, three additional Springboard Projects are identified for these areas. Funding will be provided from the childcare development funds.

A recent evaluation of the quality of services provided showed that the projects are providing high quality, best practice services, that the Initiative is meeting a recognised need to support vulnerable families and that it is ideally located within communities to meet that need. The projects have improved personal and family life for parents and children. Project staff have the right approach and skills and professionals and families believe the Projects are working well in partnerships with other agencies.

School Meals: The School Meals Scheme provides financial assistance to Local Authorities, except County Councils, for the provision of school meals for national school children who are "unable by reason of lack of food to take full advantage of the education provided for them." The Department funds 50% of the food costs. The remaining 50% is funded by the Local Authority, which also funds the administration costs - theirs and the schools. An Inter-Departmental Working Group has been established to review the existing Scheme with a view to developing proposals for the future of school meals provision. The Working Group is expected to report in the Summer of 2001, following which it is intended to bring proposals to Government regarding a reformed School Meals Scheme.

Children First - National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children: Children First - National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children were published in September 1999 and represent a major development in strengthening arrangements for the protection of children. The objectives of the Guidelines are to improve the identification, reporting, assessment, treatment and management of child abuse.

Ombudsman for Children: As part of the decision to prepare a National Children's Strategy in 1999, the Government also directed that legislative proposals be prepared for the establishment of an Ombudsman for Children. The office of the Ombudsman for Children will provide an independent mechanism to vindicate the rights of children as required under the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child. The principal functions of the Ombudsman for Children will be to promote the welfare and rights of children, to act as a catalyst for change, to respond to individual complaints, to establish mechanisms through which there will be regular consultation with children and to provide an advisory role to Government.

Foster Care: Foster Care is the main form of alternative care provided by the Health Boards for children who cannot be looked after within their own homes. A Working Group was established to look at all aspects of the foster care service and its report will be published shortly. It is intended to submit this to the Government with a view to publication.

Children Bill 1999: The Children Bill 1999 deals primarily with the area of juvenile justice. However, it also places additional responsibility on Health Boards in relation to children, where behaviour is such that it poses a real and substantial risk to health, safety, development or welfare, and who are in need of special care and protection. The Bill contains new legal provisions under which such children can be taken into care. The Bill will establish Family Welfare Conferences on a Statutory basis. The goals of a Family Welfare Conference are to strengthen families' capacities to provide for and manage their troublesome young person while satisfying statutory and or professional concerns about the young person. It is expected that the Bill will be enacted with implementing regulations in place by the end of 2001.

The Social Services Inspectorate (SSI): The Social Services Inspectorate was established in 1999 and monitors all personal social services operated by the Health Boards/Authorities. However, for the first three years, it will concentrate on the child care area by promoting and ensuring the development of a quality service for children in care, both residential and foster care.

Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers: The immediate and the ongoing needs of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers relating to accommodation, medical and social needs and access to education as well as their application for refugee status are addressed by the Health Boards who have a statutory responsibility in this regard. The Department of Health and Children, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Health Boards are liaising to keep under review and to progress the necessary development of services for unaccompanied minors including the planning of specific reception/accommodation facilities. These developments will be ongoing during 2001, and subsequent years, as required, with a view to ensuring that appropriate services are in place to meet the needs of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers. The Refugee Act, 1996 (as amended) came into operation on 20 November 2000. Section 8(5) of the Act provides that where a child 18 years arrives, enters the country alone, the Immigration/Authorised officer must inform the relevant Health Board/Authority. The provision of the Childcare Act 1991 will apply to such children. All Health Boards have nominated liaison officers to liaise with the Immigration Officers. Approximately 505 applications for unaccompanied minor status were received in the Eastern Regional Health Authority area in 2000. Of these 244 were 17 year olds and 113 were 16 year old. 324 of the 505 were placed in Bed and Breakfast or hostel accommodation and 108 were placed with relatives with the remainder going mainly to care, private rented accommodation or direct provision

Early Childhood Education: The White Paper on Early Childhood Education, "Ready to Learn" published in December 1999 sets out the Government's policy in relation to the development and implementation of a comprehensive early education policy, to which €93.96million (IRE74million) has been allocated under the NDP. €6.965million (IRE5.485million) was provided in 2001 towards the implementation of the White Paper on Early Childhood Education. In addition, in excess of €6.35million (IRE5 million) annually will be provided to support 2,368 pre-school socio-economically and special needs children participating in the Early Start intervention programme for pupils aged 3 years who are most at risk in areas of social disadvantage, the 52 pre-school classes for up to 636 Traveller children, a Dublin Inner City Project in Rutland St. and a CABAS (Cork Applied Behavioural Analysis Scheme) programme for children with autism.

"Giving Children an Even Break" - Primary School Level Programme: The objective of this programme, operated by the Department of Education and Science, is to make a significant impact in addressing educational disadvantage in primary schools and enhancing the life chances of many young people who might not otherwise reach their true potential. This programme will benefit 2,276 primary schools and involve the appointment of 204 extra teachers and extra funding of over almost €33million (IRE26million) to be spent over a three-year period 2001-2003 targeting children who are most at risk of not reaching their potential in education. The Programme will have two distinct elements - Urban and Rural. The Urban element will include the allocation of sufficient staff to selected schools to enable them to implement a maximum class size ratio of 20:1 in Junior classes and 29:1 in Senior classes over the course of the Programme. As part of the Rural element a total of 73 clusters of schools will be created with each cluster sharing the services of one teacher co-ordinator which will result in the allocation of an additional 54 posts to participating rural schools. Grants will also be provided to 1,469 targeted rural schools.

Early Literacy Measure: The Early Literacy Measure, with €14.92million (IRE11.75million) NDP funding, will involve the implementation of a pro-active approach to preventing literacy difficulties, an improvement of the effectiveness of the school remedial service, better home/school co-operation on literacy, the development of support materials and the systematic monitoring of progress.

Home, School Community Liaison Co-ordinators: Every designated disadvantaged school- 311 primary and 211 second level- was invited to participate in the Home School Liaison Scheme. 176 co-ordinators at primary level and 211 at second-level support this programme. A National Co-ordinator oversees the day-to-day operation of the Scheme.

Learning Support Teachers: Support for the Learning Support Scheme, which provides assistance for children experiencing learning difficulties, particularly in core areas of literacy and numeracy, will be continued in 2001. Based on the level of need, all schools have access to this service. The number of teacher posts is currently 2040; 1480 at primary level and 560 at post-primary level. Schools with enrolments of over 600 are being allocated a Learning Support post; those with under 600 are being allocated 0.5 of a post. Courses in remedial education will continue to be provided at 6 centres for approximately 150 primary and post-primary remedial teachers.

Resource Teachers: Support for the Resource Teachers Scheme, operated in schools, catering for pupils with more severe learning difficulties and disabilities, will continue in 2001.

Guidance Service in Second Level Schools: The Guidance Service has a funding allocation of €124.43million (IRE98million) under the NDP. One of its key objectives is to play a major preventative role in helping young people at risk of leaving school early. Over €5.08million (IRE4million) will be provided to augment existing provision by creating a Guidance Fund to enable increased guidance provision to be made in second-level schools. 50 additional posts were announced in early 2001.

Special Needs Students: The Education Act, 1998 provides that the admissions policy of schools must specifically cover students with disabilities and special education needs. School plans must ensure that the objective of equality of access to and participation in school by students with disabilities and special education needs are met. Supports for special needs students in the school system include;

- special toilets and wheelchair ramps in national schools;
- resource teaching and childcare supports on the basis of assessed needs. (approx. €17.78million (IRE14million) in 2001);
- assistive technologies and the expansion of the Learning Support teacher service to every school;
- provision of Information and Communication Technology equipment for children with special needs;
- improving educational support for children with autism including a nationwide pre-school education service for all children with autism, the extension of the school year through the month of July, the doubling of special needs assistant cover for each special class catering for children with autism, a programme of specialised training and the development of policy for autism by a recognised expert in that field and a clinical psychologist;
- each student with dyslexia in 31 schools around the country will be provided with a laptop computer for home and school use (€2.54million (IRE2million)) and grant supports for students and schools along with inservice for teachers;
- on-line education and training for students with Cystic Fibrosis using information and communications technology (ICT) to fill the educational gap caused by recurring illness and prolonged hospitalisation. Students will be provided with an up-to-date computer set up at home, complete with connection to the Internet and suitable learning software. Significantly, the educational programme provided will deliver a modular course in ICT skills leading to a recognised Information Technology qualification (€0.32million (IRE0.25 million));
- students at post-primary level with disabilities will continue to be catered for on an integrated basis in mainstream post-primary schools. Such students will be supported by special support teachers and / or special needs assistants. The level of support is based on the assessed needs of the individual student.

Education of Traveller Children: The Department of Education and Science's policy objective, supported by €12.44million (IRE9.8million) under the NDP, is to increase the number of Traveller children benefiting from education and to integrate Traveller children into mainstream education to the maximum extent possible. The Guidelines for Primary Schools on Developing a School Plan indicate that school policies need to be formulated on the arrangements for the education of the children of the Travelling community. The Advisory Committee on Traveller Education (including Traveller representatives, the National Association of Traveller Training Centres and the Partners in Education) advises the Minister on the educational needs of Travellers.

8 - 15 Early School Leaver Initiative: The Initiative has been extended to June 2002 and will be expanded during 2001. Funding will increase over the next phase with €8.25million (IRE6.5million) committed to the Initiative for the year 2001 and €9.01million (IRE7.1million) in 2002. The Initiative involves 17 pilot projects in 14 areas to test models of integrated, area-based co-ordination of services for young people at risk of early school leaving. Models of good practice will be developed with a view to their integration into mainstream policy and practice. 51 Primary Schools and 27 Post-Primary Schools are involved in the Initiative.

Stay in School Retention Initiative: The key objective of this Initiative, costing €12.7million (IRE10 million) annually, is to retain pupils in school up to the completion of Leaving Certificate. The Scheme involves 117 second-level schools. Participating schools are required to devise focused and targeted integrated plans that involve local Agencies in collaborative actions in support of young people at risk. Three co-ordinators support schools in this work.

Youthreach: This programme aims to provide education, training and work experience to young people generally aged 15-18 with no formal education or training qualifications.

Guidance for Early School Leavers: Funding has been provided to facilitate a guidance/counselling and psychological service for early school leavers in Youthreach, Community Training Workshops and Traveller Training Workshops and Traveller Training Centres.

Young People's Facilities and Services Fund: The multi-Agency Young People's Facilities and Services Fund structures are aimed at supporting young people "at risk". This Initiative specifically targets the 10-21 age group and aims to assist in the development of preventative strategies in a targeted manner through the development of youth facilities, including sport and recreational facilities, and services in disadvantaged areas where a significant drug problem exists or has the potential to develop. The aim of the Fund is to attract young people, in these areas, at risk of becoming involved in drugs, into more healthy and productive pursuits. Over 330 projects and initiatives have been approved funding of €53.84million (IR£42.4million) over the three year life of the Fund as part of area-based integrated strategies and national/regional initiatives. Of this amount, almost €47.87million (IR£37.7million) has been targeted at the Local Drug Task Force Areas. An External Evaluator was appointed recently to provide a comprehensive assessment and evaluation of the Fund's performance and impact, at National Plan and project levels.

ANNEX N: TO HELP THE MOST VULNERABLE – OBJECTIVE 3(C)

Additional material for Objective 3 (c) Developing comprehensive actions in favour of areas marked by exclusion

Telecommunications: €75million (IR£59.07million) in funding has been provided for the extension of broadband facilities to the less developed parts of the country. Under the first call for proposals for the E-Commerce and Communications Measure of the NDP, 13 projects have been selected. These projects will promote investment in advanced communications and information age infrastructure throughout the country targeting the less developed regions of the BMW and South and East and will also promote the development of the Information Society.

Public Transport: The Public Transport Partnership Forum, established under the PPF, will determine a policy approach and processes for the award of grants for pilot rural transport projects from the €4.44million (IR£3.5million) provision in the NDP. An Interdepartmental Committee, to be established under the chairmanship of the Department of Public Enterprise, will bring forward proposals to Government for a new policy on rural public transport.

County and City Enterprise Boards: Provision has been made in the micro-enterprise measure of the Local Enterprise Development Sub-Programme of both the Border, Midlands and Western (BMW) and Southern and Eastern (S & E) Regional Operational Programmes, for the County and City Enterprise Boards to provide grant assistance to worthwhile commercial ventures promoted by the long-term unemployed or those made redundant.

Forestry: The Department of the Marine and Natural Resources, in consultation with farmers and farmers' representative groups, recognises the key role of farm families in forestry and wishes to increase farmer participation, thus assisting farm families to remain on the land through diversification and increased incomes. The framework for supporting forestry under the NDP reflects this objective of improving the level of farmer participation as part of the overall national programme of sustainable forestry development.

Coastal Communities: The Department of the Marine and Natural Resources is responsible, under the NDP, for a range of measures supporting the development of fisheries, aquaculture and related industries. This sustainable development of the seafood sector, allied with targeted programmes for improving coastal infrastructure, will have positive effects in terms of employment and income generation in isolated rural communities.

White Paper on Rural Development: The rural development policy agenda is defined, in the White Paper on Rural Development, as all Government policies and interventions which are directed towards improving the physical, economic and social conditions of people living in the open countryside, in coastal areas, towns and villages and in smaller urban centres outside of the five major urban areas. The agenda will, at the same time, facilitate balanced and sustainable regional development while tackling issues of poverty and social exclusion.

The overall strategy decided by Government provides for

- balanced regional development to ensure that the benefits of economic and social progress are distributed throughout rural areas;
- investment in services and infrastructure;
- sustainable economic development;
- human resources development;
- a determined focus on poverty and social exclusion.

The NDP gives practical expression to the commitments in the White Paper. There is a specific chapter on Rural Development in the NDP with a commitment to public investment of €8.51billion (IR£6.7billion), over the period of the NDP, in actions which directly impact on rural areas. This package covers agriculture, food, forestry and fisheries, rural infrastructure and rural enterprises.

LEADER Programme: LEADER is the EU initiative for Rural Development which enables rural communities to involve themselves directly in the local development process. Groups are provided with funding and are approved to implement 'business plans' for local development that they themselves have drawn up.

LEADER, in the period to the end of 2006, will be delivered in two ways, the new EU Initiative, LEADER+ and a new mainstream LEADER type National Rural Development Programme. Funding of over €148.56million (IR£117million) has been allocated to the new LEADER Programmes over the period.

LEADER+ will have public funding of some €73.64million (IR£58million). The European Commission's intention is that LEADER+ will be confined to a limited number of rural areas. The essential aim of the measure will be to encourage the emergence and testing of new approaches to integrated and sustainable development in rural communities. The National Rural Development Programme, with a public contribution of some €74.91million (IR£59million), will complement the LEADER + Programme but conditions will be less restrictive. The programme will operate on a nation-wide basis. The two programmes, currently being finalised, will complement other programmes and measures under the Structural Funds and, in particular, will promote the bottom-up process of local development. The programmes can thus make a significant impact by contributing to the general economic and social development of rural areas.

Sports Programmes: The 2001 Sports Capital Programme will provide funding for sports organisations, clubs and community groups in respect of sport and recreation. Under the Programme, special priority will be given to the development of facilities in disadvantaged areas. Allocations for 2001 will be made by the middle of the year.

Irish Sports Council (ISC) Designated Areas Scheme: To help combat the problems of drug abuse, crime and social inclusion, particularly among young people in areas of social and economic disadvantage, the Irish Sports Council has allocated a budget of €1.03million (IRE0.81million) for selected National Governing Bodies to operate over an initial three-year period (€0.344million (IRE0.271million) per year). The purpose of this allocation is to help these selected National Governing Bodies set up programmes which if successful would help young people at risk overcome the isolating effects of social exclusion in designated areas. The various programmes have provided opportunities for leadership skills, administration skills, refereeing courses and coaching skills. The local communities have also benefited, as this scheme has placed a working structure of qualified teachers, leaders and coaches at the disposal of local clubs and organisations in addition to providing an alternative to anti-social activities for the young people of the area.

ANNEX O: TO MOBILISE ALL RELEVANT BODIES – OBJECTIVE 4

Additional material relative to Objective 4 – Mobilising all relevant bodies

White Paper on Supporting Voluntary Activity: The White Paper on Supporting Voluntary Activity was published, by the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs, in September 2000 and marks a fundamental change in the official approach to support for the Community and Voluntary Sector.

The main features of the White Paper are:-

- formal recognition of the role of the Community and Voluntary Sector;
- introduction of mechanisms in all relevant public service areas for consultation with the Community and Voluntary groups;
- multi-annual funding to become the norm for agreed priority services and community development activities;
- transfer of responsibilities for charity regulatory matters from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs;
- designation of Voluntary Activity Units in relevant Government Departments;
- holding of regular policy fora by relevant Departments and Agencies;
- 'best practice' guidelines in relation to consultation by Statutory Agencies with the Community and Voluntary Sector and in relation to funding mechanisms and systems, to which all Government Departments and Statutory Agencies will be expected to adhere;
- a strong commitment by the Government to follow up and implement all the decisions in the White Paper;
- an ongoing review of funding programmes and schemes, to be carried out by an Implementation and Advisory Group working under the aegis of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Social Inclusion;
- €8.89million (IRE7million) funding has been made available in the White Paper to enhance the capacity of the Community and Voluntary Sector to organise itself at national level, to foster the development of additional support and training with the Sector and to further support volunteering.

The White Paper was drafted and refined with the assistance of a Steering Group and was the subject of an extensive consultation process, culminating in a national seminar in March 2000.

A new White Paper Implementation Unit has been established in the DSCFA in order to ensure the implementation of the decisions contained in the White Paper. An Implementation and Advisory Group with representation from the Community and Voluntary Sector as well as the State Sector will be established shortly. A number of funding schemes will be put in place and work has begun on the preparation of the draft legislation on charities. The main objectives of the unit are to:-

- establish, represent the DSCFA on, and provide secretariat to the Implementation and Advisory Group;
- effectively and efficiently administer allocation of financial support for volunteering, funding and consultation mechanisms;
- represent the DSCFA and Departmental interests in relation to volunteering;
- initiate and prepare overhaul of Charities Legislation;
- ensure appropriate administrative framework to encourage Corporate Social Responsibility;
- plan the DSCFA's role in relation to the disbursement of funds arising from draft Dormant Accounts Bill 2001.

National Committee on Volunteering : The UN General Assembly, in its 52nd session on 20 November, 1997 co-sponsored by 123 countries, proclaimed 2001 the International Year of Volunteers (IYV). The objective of IYV 2001 is to enhance recognition, facilitation, networking and promotion of volunteer services. The PPF provided for the establishment of a National Committee on Volunteering (NCV) with the long-term aim of devising strategies and actions for supporting volunteering. The NCV was launched on 5th December 2000 and has a total membership of 38. Membership of the Committee is drawn from relevant Government Departments, universities with related research or training roles, business and industry, foundations, leading non-Government Organisations and community groups together with some individuals in their personal capacity.

In recognition of the importance of volunteering and to mark 2001 as UN International Year of Volunteers, a budget of €1.27million (IRE1million) has been allocated by the Government for the NCV. The NCV has made significant progress in its work to date. Due to the size of the National Committee, the majority of its work is being carried out at sub-committee level. To date, the Chairman has established 4 sub-committees to address specific issues in relation to volunteering and in relation to the IYV. The National Committee has set aside €0.44 (IRE0.35million), from the €1.27million (IRE1million) allocated, for a grant scheme to mark the year. A Grants Sub-Committee was established to advise on the workings of this scheme. The scheme was advertised in the national newspapers on 29th March 2001, with a closing date of 11th May 2001. A total of 500 applications have been received. An Assessment Committee, comprised of members of the National Committee, has been established to assess these applications. Applicants will be notified as to the outcome of their application by end June 2001. One of the key functions of the National Committee is to organise a number of activities to mark IYV 2001. In this context, an Implementation sub-committee has been established to draw up an action plan for IYV 2001.

The key functions of the NCV are:

- to provide a national focus for volunteering in the context of IYV 2001;
- to develop awareness of the role which volunteers play in Irish society;
- to oversee central celebratory events marking the role of volunteers in Ireland;
- to contribute to the work at an international level connected with IYV 2001;
- to oversee the management of IYV 2001 in Ireland;
- to provide support for voluntary and community organisations at local and national level, to run events and carry out activities celebrating and highlighting the role of volunteers in their organisations and to recruit additional volunteers.

The Committee has also been asked to examine and make recommendations on:

- the possibilities for recognition and accreditation for voluntary work and for training undertaken as a volunteer;
- measures to widen the pool of volunteers;
- the range of supports needed in order to promote, sustain and develop volunteering.

Local Government Anti-Poverty Learning Network: The PPF includes a commitment to introduce the NAPS initiative, including poverty proofing, in Local Authorities. In supporting Local Authorities to meet the challenges that this poses, the Department of the Environment and Local Government and the DSCFA are working with the CPA on a number of projects. The Local Government Anti-Poverty Learning Network was initiated by the CPA, in collaboration with the Department of the Environment and Local Government and the DSCFA, to support the development of a strong anti-poverty focus within local government. Twenty-seven Local Authorities have joined the Learning Network to date. Over the period of the NAPincl, the Learning Network will provide education and training for Local Authority personnel on a range of issues, including the extent and nature of poverty, poverty trends, research and data, and local, national and international responses to poverty.

Social Inclusion Co-ordination Working Groups: Better co-ordination of social inclusion activities at a local level will be pursued through the newly established local City/County Development Board Social Inclusion Co-ordination Working Groups. Pilot Social Inclusion Units have been established in nine Local Authorities to foster a strategic and cross-cutting approach to social inclusion in Local Authorities. Social Inclusion Co-ordination Working Groups will report on progress to their Community Development Board and to the Task Force on the Integration of Local Government and Local Development Systems. The work of the Local Authority Social Inclusion Units will be monitored by a Working Group representative of the Department of the Environment and Local Government, the DSCFA and the CPA. Funding of €1.14million (IRE0.9million) will be provided over the three-year period 2001-2003 to support the establishment and operation of the pilot Social Inclusion Units.

EU-funded Trans-national study: Involvement of Excluded Persons: The CPA, the National Anti-Poverty Strategy Unit of the DSCFA, and the National Anti-Poverty Networks, were partners in an EU-funded transnational study to develop ways to involve excluded persons in the development, implementation and evaluation of national anti-poverty strategies. A final evaluation of the study will be available in 2001.

Resources for County and City Development Boards (CDB) Process: Considerable resources are being directed to supporting the CDB process. Each county and city has appointed a Director of Community and Enterprise, a senior Local Authority official, together with support staff to assist the CDB in preparing and overseeing the implementation of the Strategy and in co-ordinating social inclusion activities at local level. In addition, the Community and Voluntary Fora (representative of the local community including the disadvantaged), established as part of the CDB process, received €1.27million (IRE1million) in funding in 2001.

URBAN Initiative: A new URBAN Programme, known as URBAN II, was published by the EU Commission in May 2000. URBAN II is an EU Programme which seeks to respond to the problems of deprived urban neighbourhoods in crisis, through economic and social regeneration. Under the URBAN II Initiative, €10.6million (IRE8.4million) (EU and Exchequer funding) will be focused on Ballyfermot, the priority area selected by the Government, over the period 2000 to 2006. Following extensive local consultations in Ballyfermot, Dublin Corporation drafted the Community Initiative Programme in consultation with this Department. The Programme was submitted to the EU Commission in November 2000. Discussions are ongoing with the EU Commission on the details of the URBAN II Programme. This will be followed by the drafting of the more detailed Programme Complement which will identify measures/projects under which investment will take place.

Traveller Community Health Issues: Additional revenue funding of €1.27million (IRE1million) has been allocated to Health Boards for the development of new services for Travellers. The following are among new developments planned in the Eastern Regional Health Authority region:

- the provision of a training course in Primary Health Care. The course will be targeted at community workers from Traveller organisations and Public Health Nurses from the Health Boards.
- the production of a video and accompanying workbook on Traveller Children's Health.
- the provision of training / education programmes on mental health.

Training in Traveller Awareness will be delivered to staff in the Southern Health Board, Midland Health Board, North Western Health Board, and South Eastern Health Board. The Western Health Board will appoint additional nursing staff to support Community Nursing. The North Western Health Board, North Eastern Health Board and Mid Western Health Board will enhance and expand their Primary Health Care Projects. The South Eastern Health Board is to establish and support a Primary Health Care Project.

Irish Territorial Employment Pacts: The Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation is the national co-ordinator for four Irish Territorial Employment Pacts (TEPs) set up as part of the European Commission initiative to mobilise local Social Partner support in tackling unemployment. The Irish TEPs are based in the Dublin region, Limerick, Dundalk/Drogheda and Co. Westmeath. They build on the experience of local development, with a specific focus on opportunities for unemployed people to access existing local jobs or to create new employment. The Department monitors progress and supports the TEPs throughout the year, in particular in relation to integrating and mainstreaming of their actions. The Department, in consultation with the Department of the Taoiseach, Area Development Management Limited and the Pacts, drew up the Guidelines for the drawing down, implementation and monitoring of the Pacts Programmes of Activities for the years 2001 - 2003.

National Advisory Committee on Drugs : The Committee has been established on a non-Statutory basis for an initial three year period. Its membership reflects Statutory, community, voluntary, academic and research interests as well as representation from relevant Government Departments. The Committee operates under the aegis of the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation.

