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Contact Us

If you or any of your staff or clients have queries with regard to:

- **Emigration from Ireland**
- **Returning to Ireland**
- **Immigration**

and for full details of the services available including opening hours, outreach locations and publications please feel free to contact us:

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Website: www.migrantproject.ie

Follow us on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/LivinginIreland>

And see also our new multi-language website:

www.livinginireland.ie

1. Crosscare Migrant Project presents to the Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection on the Habitual Residence Condition

The Oireachtas Joint Committee on Social Protection, consisting of **TDs and Senators**, held a **debate on the Habitual Residence Condition (HRC)** on 27th October. Representatives from Crosscare Migrant Project (CMP), the Free Legal Advice Centres (FLAC) and the Department of Social Protection were invited to attend.

CMP made a submission to the Committee specifically in relation to the application of the HRC to returned Irish emigrants. In our presentation, we argued for a number of reforms, including **correct and consistent implementation of the legislation**. The Committee listened to the arguments put forward, and was critical of the poor treatment experienced by those most in need of assistance.

The Department of Social Protection is currently in the process of drawing up **new policies and guidelines** regarding 'habitual residence' and how it is examined, and we hope that these will take account of the issues we raised on behalf of our clients and every returning emigrant who needs the support of the State.

Watch and listen to the Committee debate by clicking on the following link: <http://www.tinyurl.ie/HRCdebate>

Crosscare Migrant Project's full submission to the Committee is available to read [on our website](#) or by clicking [here](#)

If you would like more information on the HRC and how it may affect a returning Irish citizen, or if you are aware of any cases of Irish people refused a payment based on failure to satisfy the HRC, please get in touch with us.

If you do not wish to receive this e-bulletin, please contact amytyndall@crosscare.ie

2. The 4 year National Recovery Plan & Budget 2011

The Irish Government's **4 year National Recovery Plan** was released on 24th November, in which the Government proposes to make €15 billion savings by 2014.

Some of the changes expected to be introduced as a result of the plan include

- a reduction of €1 in the **minimum wage** from €8.65 to €7.65;
- dramatic **reductions in social welfare expenditure** including reductions in the rate of payments if necessary;
- a reduction in **income tax** credits and exemptions;
- a **property levy** for householders to be introduced in 2012;
- the introduction of **water metering** by 2014.

While there is no current proposal to change the existing State pension rate, the plan seeks to **increase the age at which people qualify for the pension** to 66 in 2014, 67 in 2021 and 68 in 2028. There will also be no increase in value of the State pension over the period of the plan 2011 - 2014.

The Budget is due to be announced on 7th December which will set out the precise tax raising and spending cut measures to be taken for 2011 which are expected to amount to €6 billion as part of the first year of the four-year plan. We will provide a further update on the changes announced in our January 2011 bulletin.

3. Congratulations to the Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas on its 25 year anniversary

The Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas (ICPO) held a **successful conference** earlier this month to celebrate their twenty-fifth anniversary year. The Conference 'Bridging the Distance – Supporting Irish Prisoners Overseas and their families' was officially opened by the President of Ireland Mary McAleese.

The ICPO works on behalf of Irish prisoners overseas and their families by offering them **information, friendship, support and advocacy**, and by visiting Irish prisoners abroad where possible.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the work of the ICPO, or anyone requiring their services can **contact them** via their website <http://www.catholicbishops.ie/prisoners-overseas>, or by phone at 00353 1 505 3156.

Take part in our survey on Returning to Ireland:
www.migrantproject.ie