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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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Follow us on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/LivinginIreland>

And see also our new multi-language website:

www.livinginireland.ie

1. New figures released on Irish citizens refused social welfare payments in 2010 due to the Habitual Residence Condition

Statistics recently released by the Department of Social Protection show that **650 Irish citizens were refused a variety of social welfare payments** in 2010 because they were judged not to satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition.

However the true number of Irish citizens refused benefits is **likely to be considerably higher**, because figures for the first half of 2010 were significantly undercounted by the Department due to industrial action. In addition, data on **Supplementary Welfare Allowance refusals is not collected** and so the number of people refused this back-up payment is not known.

| Payment type | No. of Irish nationals refused on HRC |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Carer's Allowance | 51 |
| Jobseeker's Allowance | 463 |
| Child Benefit | 57 |
| Disability Allowance | 54 |
| One Parent Family Payment | 24 |
| State Pension (Non-contributory) | 1 |
| Total | 650 |

We have written to the **new Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton**, to highlight our ongoing concerns about the effects of the Habitual Residence Condition (HRC) on returned Irish emigrants, and have requested that the proposed new HRC guidelines specifically take account of permanently returned Irish emigrants. We continue to work to try to improve what is an unacceptable situation for vulnerable people who have a clear connection with their home country of Ireland.

If you are aware of any Irish people refused a payment on such grounds, please get in touch with us.

2. Combining social insurance contributions from abroad

If you have worked in another **EU/EEA country** before returning to Ireland, the social insurance contributions you have paid there may help you to **qualify for an Irish social insurance payment** such as Jobseeker's Benefit or Illness Benefit when you return to Ireland.

Usually, your **last social insurance contribution must be paid in Ireland**, so if you pay at least one Class A PRSI contribution after you return to

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Ireland (equivalent to one week's work), your social insurance contributions paid in the other EU/EEA country can then be combined with your Irish contribution to help you qualify for a social insurance payment.

You should **get forms U1 (formerly E301) and/or S1 (formerly E104)** from your local social security office before you leave the other EU/EEA country, as they provide a record of your social insurance contributions. Form U1 is used for unemployment benefits, and form S1 is used for sickness benefits.

If you have not obtained forms U1 or S1 before returning to Ireland, when you make your application in Ireland the Department of Social Protection can obtain the relevant details for you if you state on your application form the other EU/EEA countries you have worked in.

3. Preliminary results of our survey on returning to Ireland

We received 258 responses to the survey we carried out in 2010 on returning to Ireland. The responses came from the following groups:

| | |
|--|-----|
| Irish people living abroad considering returning to Ireland | 120 |
| Irish people who have already returned to live in Ireland | 50 |
| Family/friends of Irish citizens living abroad considering returning to Ireland | 17 |
| Organisations that provide information or assistance to Irish people living abroad | 45 |
| 'Other' | 26 |

Responses received from organisations indicate that they feel the most important issues for people returning to Ireland to be aware of include **access to benefits and entitlements and the habitual residence condition**. This contrasts with the responses we received from individuals, who indicate that they feel it is most important to have information about **finding a job**.

Both the organisations and the individuals who responded to the survey indicated that the **top reason for people returning to Ireland is joining family members**. Other key reasons included retirement, unemployment abroad, and lifestyle/opportunity.

Interestingly, while most people indicated they had some level of links or support available to them in Ireland in the form of family members or friends, more than 10% of respondents indicated that they would have no support available to them in Ireland if they returned to live here.