



Summary Report on Progress to date under the PPF



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The Programme for Prosperity and Fairness aims to:

- Keep our economy competitive in a rapidly changing world;
- Provide a strong basis for further economic prosperity;
- Improve the quality of life and living standards for all; and
- Bring about a fairer and more inclusive Ireland.

The core objective of the Programme is to build a fair, inclusive society in Ireland based on:

- A dynamic and competitive economy;
- Full employment and the effective elimination of long-term unemployment;
- Equal opportunity;
- Lifelong Learning;
- Adaptation to the Information Society;
- The Promotion of Research and Development;
- Balanced and sustainable development between and within regions and between urban and rural areas;
- An entrepreneurial culture; and
- Ireland playing its full part in the European Union and the international community.

This report on the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness aims to outline progress to date on the delivery of many of the commitments contained in the PPF. The information contained in the report has been supplied by the relevant Government Departments and compiled and edited by the PPF Secretariat. The report has been kept as brief as possible and is intended as an overview guide. Further information on the PPF is available at www.taoiseach.gov.ie.

Framework I for Living Standards and Workplace Environment

Taxation - The Programme is well on the way to achieving the target increases of 25% or more in take home pay. For certain categories of taxpayer this target has already been exceeded. The gap between the standard rate band for a single person and that of a married one-earner couple continues to narrow, amounting in the present tax year to €9,000 compared to almost €18,000 in 1999. Following Budget 2002, no more than 26.7% of income earners are expected to pay tax at the higher rate in the tax year 2002. This compares with a figure of 32.2% in 1999. In addition, those on incomes equivalent to 90% of the minimum statutory wage figure (annualised) are not liable to income tax. The move to the more equitable system of tax credits was completed in April, 2001.

Pensions - A *National Pensions Reserve Fund* was established on 2 April, 2001, under the National Pensions Reserve Fund Act, 2000. The Government accepted the thrust of a reform package recommended by the Commission on Public Service Pensions in its final report in September, 2001, and set up a working group in January, 2002, to advise on implementation. The *Pensions Bill* was enacted in April, 2002, introducing, inter alia, a framework for Personal Retirement Savings Accounts (PRSAs) including an obligation on employers to provide mandatory access for employees to at least one Standard PRSA. A survey of occupational pensions was conducted by the CSO as part of its Quarterly National Household Survey in early 2002 - the results have been published recently. Substantial increases in old age SW pensions were provided for in Budget 2001 and Budget 2002, bringing the rate up to between €134 and €147.30 - well above the €127 (£100) per week target set out in the PPF.

Workplace Relations - *New Codes of Practice* on 1) Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures and 2) Voluntary Dispute Resolution (to be followed where collective bargaining arrangements are not in place) came into effect on 26 May, 2000. The *Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act* and the *Protection of Employees (Part-time Work) Act* came into effect on 31 May, 2001 and 20 December, 2001 respectively. A review of the *Worker Participation (State Enterprises) Act* was completed in March, 2002.

Public Service Modernisation - Progress is being made in achieving the key objectives for modernising the Public Service. The PPF required performance indicators in respect of the modernisation programme to be set for the sectors, including the Civil Service. The *SMI Implementation Group of Secretaries General* approved sectoral performance indicators for the Civil Service. Implementation Bodies have approved sectoral performance indicators for each of the other sectors. The robustness of these indicators has been assessed by Independent Quality Assurance Groups (which include an external business/customer representation) in each sector.

The PPF provides that payment of the final phase pay increase of 4% due in October, 2002 is conditional on these targets having been achieved. The *Civil Service Quality Assurance Group (CSQAG)* has completed its assessment of the progress reports of all of the Departments, Offices and State bodies under its remit. On the basis of this examination, the Group decided that the progress achieved in the twelve months to April last in all of these organisations warranted payment of the third phase pay increase of 4% in accordance with paragraph 4(c) of Annex II to Framework I of the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness. Letters to this effect were issued by the Chairman of the CSQAG on 25 July, 2002, to all of these organisations.

PA Consulting Group was commissioned to carry out an evaluation of progress of the modernisation programme in the Civil Service and this report was completed in March, 2002. The Government have noted the report and, in response to its recommendations, have asked the Implementation Group of Secretaries General to oversee the development of a new *Vision Statement, Strategy and Action Programme to 2007*, for the next phase of the modernisation programme within the Civil Service. Work on this is continuing with a view to its being completed in Autumn of 2002.

The work of the *Sectoral Quality Assurance Groups* is now nearing completion. All of the national partnership projects, which were allocated to the *Health Services Joint Partnership Forum*, are up and running. The strategic reviews of partnership arrangements in the Civil Service and Health Sector have been completed.

New financial management systems for local authorities, which will be more transparent, provide better management information and facilitate performance measurement have been introduced. The first phase (expenditure element) of the system has been rolled out to all authorities and the second phase is on target for full implementation next year.

Framework II for Prosperity and Economic Inclusion

Macroeconomic Context - Over the first two years of the Programme, annual GNP is estimated to have grown by an average of 7.7%. On an annual basis, employment expanded by almost 77,000 in the year 2000 and by a further 49,000 last year. During that period, this substantial growth in employment saw a further improvement in the unemployment rate. As measured by the Labour Force Survey basis, unemployment fell from 5.6% of the labour force in 1999 to an average 4.25% so far in 2002. Living standards, assisted by Budget measures, have continued to improve both for those in employment and those dependent on income support. The pace of economic expansion slowed markedly during 2001 as a result of both international and domestic developments. Recent turbulence in financial markets means that it is difficult to predict the pace of the US recovery and, consequently, there is no guarantee that the growth rates expected in the second half of the year and in 2003 will be realised. Account needs also to be taken of the recent appreciation of the Euro against both Sterling and the Dollar. Inflation now looks like averaging in the region of 4.5% for 2002 but service sector inflation is currently running at double this rate.

Regulatory Reform - Ireland participated in the OECD Regulatory Reform Peer Review in 2000 leading to the publication of a report, which was launched on 24 April, 2001. It was quite favourable in highlighting areas where progress had been made but also suggested other areas where improvement was necessary. The Government announced a wide-ranging action programme in response to the OECD Report including the establishment of a High Level Group charged with co-ordinating implementation of the regulatory reform agenda and, in particular, to oversee the institutional and policy proposals in response to the OECD Report

The High Level Group on Regulation has met 12 times since its establishment in April, 2001 and will be reporting to the Government in Autumn 2002. Its members include senior representatives of key Government Departments, independent regulatory authorities, the Competition Authority and the Office of the Director of Consumer Affairs. The Group's approach has been to analyse the validity and viability of assertions and recommendations made by the OECD through detailed communication with the relevant Departments.

The Group oversaw the drafting of the consultation document *Towards Better Regulation*, which was designed to initiate a major public consultation process on the theme of Better Regulation and is intended to lead to a National Policy Statement on Regulatory Management. To date, 86 submissions have been received from a broad range of organisations and individuals including from each of the four social partner pillars. Submissions are currently being analysed and collated with a view to publishing a summary document by the autumn. The Group also examined issues surrounding the development of a model of Regulatory Impact Analysis (RIA), recommended by the OECD as a tool for Departments in ensuring an evidence-based approach to policy-making. Other sectoral developments including the enactment of various pieces of legislation are detailed elsewhere in this report but would include the *Communications Regulation Act, 2002*.

In March, 2000, the Minister for Public Enterprise published a paper entitled *Governance and Accountability in the Regulatory Process: Policy Proposals*.

Benchmarking Airports - the *Commission for Aviation Regulation* was established on a statutory basis in February, 2001, following the enactment of the *Aviation Regulation Act, 2001*.

Competition - The Competition Act was enacted in 2002. Staff numbers in the Competition Authority have been increased and the Authority is currently carrying out a study of competition in the professions.

Public Transport - The Government published a consultative paper *A New Institutional and Regulatory Framework for Public Transport* in September, 2000. The consultation period was extended at the request of the *Public Transport Partnership Forum* to enable them to engage consultants to carry out independent research on transport regulation. The research was completed in July, 2001, and the Forum submitted their response in April, 2002. The Government published a further consultative document *New Institutional Arrangements for Land Use and Transport in the Greater Dublin Area* in March, 2001. This document proposes the establishment of a new strategic body for the Greater Dublin Area, which would, among other functions, act as a transport regulator.

Legislative proposals for the establishment of the new body will be finalised by the Government. In December, 2000, a licensing round was launched to encourage private bus operators to provide additional services in the Greater Dublin Area. Ten licenses have issued to date. *The Railway Procurement Agency (RPA)*, with responsibility for the procurement of light railways and metro, was established on 28 December, 2001, under the *Transport (Railway Infrastructure) Act, 2001*. A PPF Policy Framework for railways was approved by the Government in January, 2002. The Department of Transport has commissioned a strategic rail review to advise the Minister for Transport on future options for the development of the railways over the next 20 years. The review will be completed and presented to the Government by the end of 2002. Outputs delivered so far include: 246 miles of track renewal; a 50% increase in DART capacity; nearly 300 new buses acquired for the Dublin fleet (of which 93 are additional) in 2000 and 2001; and ongoing development of the three LUAS lines, construction of which remains on schedule.

Infrastructure - NDP Overview - Investment in the Economic and Social Infrastructure Operational Programme is significantly ahead of schedule with expenditure to the end of 2002 estimated to be over €10,245m in comparison to a published figure of €10,054m. As a result, over the first three years of the NDP, the Exchequer will have provided total funding of €8.5bn, as compared with a published OP commitment of €7.8bn, i.e. €740m more than its OP commitment.

PPPs - *A Framework for Public Private Partnerships* was agreed in June, 2001 with the social partners as represented on the *Public Private Informal Advisory Group on PPP's*. *The State Authorities (Public Private Partnership Arrangements) Act, 2002*, has been enacted.

Regional/Rural Development - A Public Consultation Paper, *The National Spatial Strategy: Indications for the Way Ahead*, setting out proposals for discussion on an approach to more balanced regional development, was published in September, 2001. Over 250 submissions were received in response. The Paper, and the supporting research, is available at www.irishspatialstrategy.ie. Detailed and complex work involved in preparing the *National Spatial Strategy (NSS)* is continuing, with a view to its publication soon. The *Report of the Advisory Committee on the Role of Women in Agriculture* was presented to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Rural Development in September, 2000. The working group established to discuss the possible extension of social insurance benefits to farm spouses who participate in the business reported in February, 2002. In July, 2001, the Government appointed Local Action Groups to facilitate access to funds under LEADER on a local/nationwide basis. The LEADER+ Programme and the LEADER areas based National Rural Development Programme were officially launched in November, 2001. Some €150m has been provided in public funding and Groups are now accepting applications for funding. A new pilot rural transport scheme, *Rural Transport Initiative*, was launched in July, 2001 and 33 community transport groups have been selected for funding. The *National Rural Development Forum* met for the first time on 2 May, 2000, to review the impact of existing programmes and to identify suitable policy responses to rural problems.

Small Business - The structures and funding for supporting micro-enterprises (start up and existing employing less than 10 people) have continued to be developed under the PPF (and NDP) through the 35 countrywide locations of the County Enterprise Boards. Under the lifetime of the PPF, these Boards have supported the creation of net employment totalling 6,131 since 2000.

Industrial Policy - (Irish owned) - €2.15bn has been allocated under the NDP for Research, Technology, Development and Innovation (RTDI) for industrial related activities. Enterprise Ireland have established a range of RTDI programmes to support in-company R&D. *Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)* has been established to administer the *Technology Foresight Fund* of €646.3m of the RTDI allocation in the NDP.

(Vulnerable sectors) - *County and City Development Boards* were established to facilitate an integrated approach to enterprise development at a local level for areas affected by closures.

(Foreign Direct Investment) - 13,500 new jobs were created in IDA supported companies in 2001 (lower than the record breaking previous four years), while 17,500 jobs were lost, mainly due to a global slowdown in the IT sector. This led to the first net decline in employment in overseas companies in over ten years. There are now over 1,237 IDA supported companies in Ireland employing 138,000 people - accounting for €47bn worth of exports annually and a spend of €14.2bn in the Irish economy.

Construction - An *Action Plan to Expand Capacity in the Construction Industry* was published by the Government in June, 2001. The plan took account of the recommendations made, in Spring 2001, by the Construction Skills Sub-Group of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs. The Task Force of the *Forum for the Construction Industry (FCI)* completed its first annual progress report on the Action Plan in July, 2002. A *Construction Safety Partnership Group* was established and devised a three-year plan to improve safety standards on construction sites.

Roads - 14 major projects, involving 106 km of major new roads, were completed in 2001 and a further 26 projects (201km) are under construction in 2002.

Housing - *Action on Housing*, was published by the Government in June, 2000, in response to the report by Peter Bacon and Associates entitled, "The Housing Market in Ireland: An Economic Evaluation of Trends and Prospects", and a review of social and affordable housing needs and programmes undertaken by the Department of the Environment and Local Government. It contains a range of further initiatives aimed at maximising housing output to meet the continuing strong demand for housing; increasing the supply of social and affordable housing to meet rising housing needs; strengthening the position of first time purchasers in the market; and improving the institutional arrangements to facilitate the delivery of housing related infrastructure and increasing overall housing supply. These measures have assisted in the attainment of record levels of housing output with new house completions for 2001 totaling 52,602, an increase of 5.6% on 2000. Increases in housing output have continued in the first quarter of 2002 with completions up 8.2% on the same period in 2001. As required under Part V

of the *Planning and Development Act, 2000*, local authorities have now completed their housing strategies and varied their development plans to incorporate these strategies. The social and affordable housing provisions of Part V apply to any application for planning permission made on developments of 5 or more houses or on land greater than 0.2 hectares.

Work is ongoing on the *National Spatial Strategy* which, when completed, will identify broad spatial development patterns for areas; will set down indicative policies in relation to the location of industrial, residential and rural development; and will attempt to deliver more balanced development between and within regions. The *Housing Forum*, established to involve the social partners with Government in tackling constraints on the achievement of the housing supply targets set out in the PPF and the NDP, has met on eight occasions to date with the next meeting to be held in Autumn 2002.

Energy - ESB - A new regulatory regime has been established in Ireland to facilitate and stimulate properly regulated and fair competition. The *Commission for Energy Regulation (CER)* was established in 1999 to oversee the regulation of the electricity industry and, this year, will be given responsibility for the natural gas sector. The *Electricity (Supply) (Amendment) Act* was enacted in April, 2001. The ESB has increased and accelerated its investment in the country's electricity infrastructure, particularly in the transmission and distribution networks.

Gas - The *Gas (Amendment) Act, 2000*, gives private developers the same entitlements and responsibilities as Bord Gáis Eireann in relation to access and acquisition of land for the purpose of pipeline construction. The *Gas (Interim) Regulation Act, 2002*, has brought the overall level of market opening, including power generation, from 75% to 85%. Full market opening is scheduled for 2005, at the latest.

Exploration - A comparative review of royalties and taxes on the minerals sector worldwide is continuing and data gathered in 2001 will feed into an economic model to examine different scenarios.

Sustainable Energy - In the first half of 2002, the *Sustainable Energy Act, 2002*, was enacted. It provides for the establishment of the Irish Energy Centre on a statutory basis under the new title *Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI)*. Programmes already launched or under preparation include a €21.1m research scheme in advanced domestic energy efficiency; a €12.7m Design Study Support Scheme to stimulate improved energy efficient design and construction in public sector buildings; a €9.0m Home Energy Rating Programme; and a €6.0m Industry Agreement Programme.

Agriculture - EU Common Positions on agriculture have been drawn up on the basis that the costs of EU enlargement will be accommodated within the funding provided for enlargement in the Agenda 2000 Financial Perspective. To date, the terms of the Agenda 2000 Agreement have been implemented in full and, where national discretion was allowed, in accordance with PPF principles. The EU Commission presented its proposals for the Mid-Term Review of Agenda 2000 on 10 July, 2002. Discussions are expected to continue in the Council of Ministers for several months. Ireland's objective in the negotiations on the review will be to protect, to the greatest extent possible, the benefits

to Ireland of the Agenda 2000 Agreement. At the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference held in Doha, Qatar, in November, 2001, it was agreed that non-trade concerns will be taken into account in the new round of multilateral trade negotiations.

NDP - €326.6m has been allocated to on-farm investment measures (i.e. waste management, dairy hygiene, animal welfare and installation aid) for the period of the NDP. Funding for the Rural Environment Protection Scheme and the Early Retirement Scheme will be reviewed by the end of 2003 in the NDP Mid-Term Review. A new area-based scheme was introduced in 2001, with compensation for those who incurred losses due to changes in the Headage Scheme. For farmers with mountain type land, the EU Commission agreed additional increases in payments in April, 2002. The young farmer installation aid scheme now provides for a premium payment of €9,523, an increase of 34% on the previous scheme. An additional 15% grant rate in disadvantaged agricultural areas and 5% in other areas is now payable under on-farm investment schemes to young farmers.

Food, Marine & Forestry - Food industry development initiatives of the NDP contain an indicative public funding allocation of €358m covering capital investment, research and development, marketing and promotion and human resource development. The *Food Quality Assurance Schemes Review Group* was established and reported in May, 2001. The National Standards Authority of Ireland has been requested to draw up generic guidelines, which will have the effect of setting minimum standards for relevant quality assurance schemes.

Marine - Negotiations on the EU Commission's proposals for reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) are underway. The Irish negotiating position is informed by the work of the National CFP Review Group. The *Fisheries Amendment Act, 1999*, created a framework for inland fisheries management and service delivery. The NDP provides €217.13m to support investment to develop a sustainable, quality-driven seafood industry, €87m for investment in seafood processing, €31.73m to support aquaculture investment and €35.45m to support investment in inland fisheries.

Forestry - An environmentally friendly initiative for managing Ireland's forests was introduced in September, 2000. The initiative includes a national forest standard supported by a Code of Best Practice. There is an allocation of c. €686m for afforestation incentives under the NDP and the CAP Rural Development Plan.

Environmental Policy - The *National Climate Change Strategy* was published in November, 2000. This sets in place policies and measures across all sectors to ensure that Ireland meets the Kyoto Protocol target of limiting green house gas emissions to 13% above 1990 levels by 2012.

The Government's *Litter Action Plan* was published in February, 2001. The National Hazardous Waste Management Plan was published by the EPA in July, 2001. The *Waste Management (Collection Permit) Regulations, 2001*, introduced controls on commercial waste collection. The Plastic Bag Levy, introduced on 4 March, 2002, has removed over 1 billion plastic bags from circulation and raised over €3.5million up to the end of June. The *Waste Management (Landfill Levy) Regulations, 2002*, introduced a landfill levy (€15

per tonne), operative from 1 June, 2002. The *Waste Infrastructure Scheme* was introduced in March, 2002 for waste infrastructure to support greater re-use and recycling. The Government published the new Waste Management Policy Statement '*Preventing and Recycling Waste: Delivering Change*' in March, 2002.

In June, 2002, an agreement was signed reducing the sulphur content of all bituminous coal and petcoke nationally and extending the ban on the sale of bituminous coal to four additional areas from 2003, with phased increases in sales of smokeless products in a further four areas. Ireland's *National Report for the World Summit on Sustainable Development* was published in August, 2002.

Framework III for Social Inclusion and Equality

Social Inclusion - NAPS - The Revised *National Anti Poverty Strategy (NAPS)* was published in February, 2002, setting new key targets to reduce, and if possible eliminate, consistent poverty and to achieve a rate of €150 per week in 2002 terms for the lowest rates of social welfare to be met by 2007. Other targets include eliminating long-term unemployment as soon as circumstances permit but in any event no later than 2007, and to halve the proportion of pupils with serious literacy difficulties by 2006. Other areas covered by the strategy are: health; housing and accommodation; vulnerable groups; urban and rural poverty; and access to services.

Poverty proofing - arrangements have been reviewed by the NESC and their report, *Review of the Poverty Proofing Process*, was published in December, 2001.

Income Adequacy - The *National Minimum Wage Act, 2000*, became law on 1 April, 2000. From 1 July, 2001, the national minimum hourly rate of pay is €5.97 and this will increase to €6.35 per hour on 1 October, 2002. The Report of the *Social Welfare Benchmarking and Indexation Working Group* was completed in September, 2001.

SW Payments - Budget 2001 provided for increases across a range of SW payments. In Budget 2002 the Child Benefit payment for third and subsequent children was increased by €31.80 per month bringing the monthly rate to €147.30.

Social Insurance System - The *Working Group on Administrative Individualisation* was established and has completed its report, which has been published. The actuarial review of the Social Insurance Fund has been completed and will be published shortly. The Working Group on the development of a fully inclusive social insurance model has been established.

Carers - The *Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2002*, provided for an easing of the qualifying conditions for entitlement to Carers Benefit.

Urban Disadvantage - Partnerships and Community Groups have developed their strategic plans up to 2006. The plans have been assessed by Area Development Management (ADM) Ltd. and funding has been allocated for the period 2001-2003. The *National Drugs Strategy* was launched in May, 2001, and brings all elements of drugs

policy in Ireland together into a single framework. It also provides for the establishment of *Regional Drugs Task Forces*. Since 2001, €14.2m has been approved to implement fourteen updated *Local Drugs Task Force* action plans. A total of 5 cities are participating in the tax incentive based *Urban Renewal Scheme*. See also details on the RAPID Programme below under Targeted Investments.

Rural Poverty - The strategy set out in the *White Paper on Rural Development* endorses and supports the objectives set out in NAPS and will ensure that a socially inclusive dimension underpins the overall strategy for rural development. See also details on the CLÁR Programme below under Targeted Investments.

Local Governance - All *Strategic Policy Committees* are now established in local authorities. All 34 *County/City Development Boards* are fully operational and almost all have published their strategies for economic, social and cultural development. The rollout of NAPS is progressing under the auspices of the Departments of Social and Family Affairs, Environment and Local Government and the Combat Poverty Agency. Pilot Social Inclusion Units have been established in the nine local authorities operating Strand I of the RAPID Programme

Targeted Investments in Disadvantaged Areas - The *Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development (RAPID) Programme* was launched in February, 2001 and under Strand I of the Programme, 25 urban areas were identified using objective criteria. Action Plans have been drawn up for each area and implementation of these plans is underway in Government Departments. Under Strand II of the Programme, 20 provincial towns were selected and implementation teams have been established. It is expected that plans for the areas in Strand II will be completed by the end of the year. The *CLÁR Programme* - a targeted investment programme in rural areas - was launched in October, 2001. The Programme will fast track NDP spending in the 16 areas identified.

Social and Affordable Housing and Accommodation - New Housing - At the end of 2001, completions/acquisitions under the local authority housing construction programme were just under 5,000 houses, with over 7,000 houses commencing or being acquired during the year. At the end of 2001, the halfway point of the multi-annual programme to provide for 25,000 housing starts in the period 2002-2003, almost 50% of the target was completed. A record level of output was achieved by the voluntary housing sector in 2001 at some 1,250 units. The social and affordable housing provisions of Part V of the *Planning and Development Act, 2000*, apply to any application for planning permission made on developments of five or more houses or on land greater than 0.2 hectares.

Private Rented Sector - Government proposals for reform in the private rented sector arising from the *Report of the Commission on the Private Rented Sector* were announced in January, 2001. Measures announced in the Finance Act, 2002, will facilitate an increase in supply of rental accommodation.

Homelessness - The Government published an *Integrated Strategy on Homelessness*, offering a new approach to the way services are to be planned, funded and provided. The Youth Homelessness Strategy was launched in October, 2001, with €5m additional funding in 2002 towards the cost of implementation. A *Homeless Preventative Strategy*, to target at risk groups leaving institutional care, was published in February, 2002.

Traveller Accommodation - All major local authorities are now implementing their five-year Traveller accommodation programmes. In 2000, 18 new permanent halting site bays and 49 new group houses were provided, and 137 local authority houses were allocated to Traveller families. 81 halting site bays and 22 Traveller group houses were refurbished to bring them up to modern standards. In 2001, 54 new halting site bays (permanent, emergency and temporary) and 83 new group houses were provided, and 162 local authority houses were allocated to Traveller families. 23 halting site bays and 22 Traveller group houses were refurbished to bring them up to modern standards.

Social Economy - The *Social Economy Programme* was established in 2000. €20.55m is provided in the 2002 Estimates for the Programme and a total of €331.87m up to 2006. The target is up to 2,500 jobs to be created by 2003. 169 of the 266 Social Economy enterprises approved for full grant support have commenced operation, employing 991 grant-supported employees.

Supporting Voluntary Effort - The *White Paper on a Framework for Supporting Voluntary Activity and for Delivering the Relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary Sector* was published in September, 2000. Implementation of the White Paper decisions is part of the remit of an Implementation and Advisory Group, drawn from the relevant Government Departments, statutory agencies and the community and voluntary pillar.

Healthcare - Health Strategies - A National Health Strategy (NHS), *Quality and Fairness: A Health System for You*, was launched in November, 2001, following extensive consultation. A combination of greater investment and reform of the system will provide a high-quality and accessible health service for all. The Strategy contains 121 actions across a wide range of goals.

In line with commitments in the National Health Strategy, the contract has been awarded for the audit of functions and structures in the health system. A Legislation Unit has been established in the Department of Health and Children. Priority has been given to drawing up new legislation to implement goals set out in the Strategy in respect of eligibility for services. Work has commenced on a review of structures within the Department of Health and Children. The *Health Board Executive (HeBE)*, an important structure aimed at supporting improved working between health boards, was established by Order in February, 2002.

Primary Care - A New Direction, published in association with the NHS, provides for a new model of primary care involving a core inter-disciplinary primary care team, interacting with a wider network of health and social care professionals. A Task Force to drive implementation and a Steering Group to ensure stakeholder representation have

been established. Action 19 of the Primary Care Strategy provides for mechanisms for active community involvement in primary care to be established.

The National Health Research Strategy was launched in September, 2001. A comprehensive National Health Information Strategy has been finalised and will be submitted to the Government in September, 2002. The Working Group on NAPS and Health, which completed its report in July, 2001, proposed, among other things, a monitoring framework. The NHS contains a commitment to establish a Population Health Unit, which will facilitate developments in relation to data and research issues in the NAPS area. NAPS health targets aimed at reducing inequalities in health have been included in the National Health Strategy.

A Traveller Health Strategy 2002 - 2005 was published in February, 2002, with €8.2 million approved for funding its implementation.

Review of Bed Capacity - *Acute Hospital Bed Capacity: A National Review* was published in January, 2002. The Government is committed to providing an additional 3,000 beds for public patients in acute hospitals over the next 10 years.

Health Promotion - An updated *Health Promotion Strategy* for 2000-2005 was published and an alcohol awareness campaign was launched. The report of the *Strategic Task Force on Alcohol* was published in May, 2002. Investment of €45m since 2000 to implement the Cardiovascular Health Strategy, *Building Healthier Hearts*, has brought about, in a systematic and coherent manner, significant development across the spectrum of health services for the prevention, detection, treatment and rehabilitation of heart disease. 17 Springboard projects, for the support of children at risk and their families, are fully established. Work is ongoing to establish 5 new Springboard projects in 2002, with priority being given to RAPID areas. Since 2000, all health boards have expanded their drug treatment and rehabilitation services. 6,118 people are currently receiving methadone treatment compared with 4,387 at the end of January, 2000.

Mental Health - The *Mental Health Act, 2001*, will significantly improve safeguards for persons with a mental health disorder who are involuntarily admitted for psychiatric care and treatment. An independent agency, to be known as the *Mental Health Commission*, was established in April, 2002.

People with Disabilities - A Working Group to examine the feasibility of introducing a Cost of Disability Payment has been established and has commissioned the National Disability Authority to carry out research on its behalf. This research will concentrate on the additional costs incurred by people with disabilities.

Women's Health - *The Plan for Women's Health 1997-1999* has been evaluated and the report will be published shortly in the form of a position paper by the Women's Health Council.

Equality - *The Equal Status Act* came into effect in 2000 and provides against both direct and indirect discrimination in the non-employment areas. A Working Group established in October, 2000 is overseeing implementation of equality proofing action. The Equality Authority has recently launched reports on *Implementing Equality for Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals* and on *Implementing Equality for Older People*. The Department

of Justice, Equality & Law Reform commissioned research to develop mechanisms to monitor progress in achieving gender equality. Its report was published in October, 2001. Drafting work on the *National Plan for Women* has been completed and a submission will be made to Government shortly.

Disability - The *Disability Bill, 2001*, was published in December, 2001, providing for positive action measures to advance the participation of people with disabilities in society, including access to public buildings and services etc. A consultation process is currently underway. While the *Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2002*, fell with the dissolution of the Dail, the Minister for Education and Science proposes to bring forward legislation in the autumn, providing for children and adults who have special educational needs arising from a disability.

Racism - A National Anti-Racism Awareness programme, *Know Racism*, was launched in October, 2001, to address racism and to promote an inclusive intercultural society. A core Budget of €5.7m has been allocated to the programme over the three-year period 2001-2003. In March, 2002, the Government launched a discussion document entitled, *Towards a National Action Plan against Racism in Ireland*. A consultative process is in progress involving a series of regional consultative seminars and a number of thematic seminars on key issues. Submissions are invited from interested parties and a report will issue in 2003.

Travellers - The Traveller Communication Strategy, *Citizen Traveller*, completed its three-year programme at the end of 2001. Following an evaluation of its effectiveness, €380,000 has been allocated for 2002. A Progress Report on the recommendations of the *Task Force on the Travelling Community* was launched in April, 2001.

Framework IV for Successful Adaptation to Continuing Change

Life-Long Learning - *The White Paper on Adult Education, Learning for Life*, was published in August, 2000. The *Task Force on Life Long Learning* held its final meeting in May, and its report will be submitted to Government in September, 2002. The Board of FÁS has re-established the *National Apprenticeship Advisory Committee* (NAAC) with expanded terms of reference and including representatives from all key stakeholders in apprenticeship. It was agreed that the work of the Committee should encompass that proposed for the Special Task Team under the PPF. The composition of the *Educational Disadvantage Committee* was announced on 13 December, 2001, and it includes in its membership a number of people from voluntary and other organisations with experience in tackling disadvantage.

Labour Market - The mainstreaming of Community Employment is progressing. Appraisal of the Active Labour Market Programmes (ALMPs) is underway.

Childcare and Family Friendly Policies - *National Children's Strategy* - The Strategy was launched in November, 2000 and the *National Children's Office* has been

established to co-ordinate its implementation. Three major areas of work are: co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of the *Children Act, 2001*; co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of the National Youth Homelessness Strategy, which was launched in October, 2001, with €5m additional funding in 2002; and the development of a *National Play and Recreation Policy*. A Cabinet Committee on Children has been established and a broader role given to the Minister of State with responsibility for Children. The *National Children's Advisory Council* was established in May, 2001. The first *Dáil na nÓg* convened in September, 2001, and the first *Comhairle na nÓg* convened in February, 2002. In April, 2002, the Government announced the decision to establish a *National Longitudinal Study on Children*. Ombudsman for Children legislation was passed in April, 2002. There has been ongoing investment in the infrastructure necessary to support the implementation of *Children First - National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children*, which was published in 1999. The *Best Health for Children* report was published in 2000 and sets out a core programme of child health surveillance. A review of the *Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations, 1996*, commenced in January, 2002 and will make recommendations on amendments by the end of 2002. The Government's commitment to provide a statutory underpinning for the Family Mediation Service will be delivered by the establishment of the Family Support Agency provided in the Family Support Agency Act, 2001.

Family Friendly Policies - The *National Framework Committee on Family Friendly Policies* has been established to assist in raising awareness and to promote family friendly working arrangements. The Committee, chaired by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, has commenced work on the development of a Code of Practice on the manner in which statutory Parental and Force Majeure Leave can be taken.

Carers - The *Carer's Leave Act* was enacted in July, 2001.

Information Society - The *Electronic Commerce Act* was signed into law on 10 July, 2000. Final Draft of the Regulations to give effect to the e-Commerce Directive are expected to be ready for circulation to other member states by the end of July, 2002. In 2002, Forfás initiated a new e-Business monitoring process and appointed consultants to evaluate the policy issues surrounding the development of e-Business in Ireland. The baseline report will be completed in September, 2002. Overall, the implementation of the eEurope 2002 Action Plan's 68 objectives has been a success. eEurope 2005 Action Plan is a follow-on from the Barcelona European Council's call for the development of a new eEurope Action Plan by the Commission. The recent Seville European Council endorsed the 2005 objectives. On 26 June, 2002, the North South Ministerial Council approved, in principle, the establishment of a Steering Group to develop the *Digital Island* concept (aimed at exploiting digital technology initiatives on an all-island basis) and to report progress to the next meeting of the Council in October, 2002.

Infrastructure - The Working Group established to focus on identifying and agreeing priorities for action by Government agencies to facilitate the provision of broadband infrastructure and services at the required world-class levels in Ireland reported in March, 2002, and its recommendations were agreed as the basis for a Government Action Plan to provide local access infrastructure on a PPP-type basis. The objective is to put Ireland in the top decile of the OECD broadband league table within five years by ensuring

widespread availability of advanced broadband services and infrastructure within that timeframe. Under the NDP, €34m was allocated to support the rollout of broadband to the regions, while €200m was allocated to leverage and accelerate investment in competitive advanced broadband infrastructure and services in the regions. *MediaLab Europe [MLE]*, established in partnership with the MIT as a university-level, highly innovative research centre in the high-tech and multimedia sector, is now in its second year.

eBusiness - The Enterprise Ireland *eBusiness Acceleration Fund*, established to fast-track significant scale projects to allow existing businesses to trade and operate electronically, has been fully allocated to 102 projects. It is envisaged that 40 in-depth cross-sectoral case studies will be published. An independent evaluation of the whole fund has just commenced and the final report will be published in November, 2002.

eGovernment - The Government is accelerating the delivery of public services online as part of the Information Society agenda. The new *Information Society Action Plan* was published in April, 2002, and contains a commitment to have all public services that are capable of electronic delivery available online, through the Public Services Broker, by 2005.

Promoting North/South Partnership - Substantial progress continues to be made by the North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC) and the North/South Bodies towards the full and effective implementation of their mandate, as provided for in the Good Friday Agreement. One of the most commercially significant examples has been the agreement reached on the establishment of *Tourism Ireland*, the new all-island tourism company, which from 1 January, 2002 took over the marketing roles of Bord Fáilte and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board in promoting Ireland as a single destination in the overseas market. In June, 2002, the North/South Ministerial Council agreed an outline structure for a North/South Consultative Forum. The Joint Chairs of the North/South Working Group on the Forum will be in contact with the Social Partners in the South and the Northern Ireland Civic Forum, inviting them to set up a Steering Committee, which will plan and organise the first Conference of the Forum. A Human Rights Commission, as provided for in the Good Friday Agreement, was formally established in July, 2002.

Commitment to the Wider World - Emigrants - The *Task Force on Policy regarding Emigrants* was established in December, 2001. Their report was presented recently to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and has been published on his Department's website.

EU - Negotiations on the enlargement of the EU are progressing and are scheduled to conclude by the end of 2002. Ireland will assume the Presidency of the European Union from 1 January, 2004, until 30 June, 2004. A report on a comprehensive communications strategy aimed at improving the transmission of information on the EU to the public was commissioned and this report was presented to the Department of Foreign Affairs in July, 2002. The European Convention on the Future of Europe is progressing with its debate. The second report of the National Forum on Europe confirmed the national consensus in favour of enlargement of the EU. Following the Seville European Council, the

Government published the 26th Amendment of the Constitution Bill, which sets out wording for a second referendum on the Treaty of Nice.

Official Development Assistance - In September, 2000, the Government announced that Irish Official Development Assistance (ODA) would reach the UN target of 0.7% of GNP (almost €1bn in current estimates) in 2007. This commitment has been reiterated in the new Programme for Government. Total ODA was €320.1m in 2001 (0.33% of GNP). Steps are being taken to implement the recommendations of the Report of the Ireland Aid Review Committee, published in March, 2002.

Framework V for Renewing Partnership

Monitoring of PPF - The structures to monitor overall implementation of the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness have been in place since its commencement in accordance with the arrangements set out in commitment 5.3 of the Programme. The *National Implementation Body* (NIB) was established under the adjustment to the terms of the PPF in December, 2000 to oversee the delivery of the industrial peace and stability provisions of the PPF. This body continues to meet as necessary to consider, in particular, the potential implications of any ongoing disputes of special national importance. The number of workdays lost due to industrial disputes has fallen from 97,046 in 2000, to 3,632 in the first quarter of 2002.

Institutional Support - The *National Centre for Partnership & Performance* (NCPP) was established in July, 2000, to provide a strategic focus to the deepening of partnership and the improvement of performance in the workplace, in both the public and private sectors. The Centre published its Strategic and Operational Plan for the period 2002 - 2005 in March, 2002, following an extensive consultation process. Other key activities to date include the establishment of a National Research Advisory Panel to stimulate and co-ordinate relevant research, as well as a Network of Strategic Alliance Partners to facilitate discussion and co-ordination across agencies concerned with organisational change. In July, 2002, the Centre published partnership guidance for the unionised commercial sector, *Working Together for Change and a Modern Workplace*. Current activities include the development of competency frameworks for those involved in managing change through partnership; working with the health sector on planning for the implementation of the Health Strategy through partnership; and the development of guidelines on forms of employee financial involvement with IBEC and ICTU. The Centre is also preparing proposals for a Forum on the Workplace of the Future, as provided for in the Programme for Government. The NCPP, together with the NESC and NESF will move in the Autumn to new premises at 16 Parnell Square, where the three bodies will operate under the aegis of the new *National Economic and Social Development Office* (NESDO).

PPF Benchmarking - The NESC published its report, *Benchmarking the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness in March*, 2002. Follow-up action co-ordinated by the Department of the Taoiseach and involving the Central Statistics Office and other Government Departments is now underway.

Legislation under the PPF

Framework I for Living Standards and Workplace Environment

- ESOT legislation amended and improved in Finance Act, 2002 and Finance Act, 2001.
- National Pensions Reserve Fund Act, 2000.
- Pensions (Amendment) Act, 2002.
- Protection of Employees (Part-Time Work) Bill, 2000.
- *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Bill. (proposed)*
- *Protection of Employees (Fixed-Term Contracts) Bill. (proposed)*

Framework II for Prosperity and Economic Inclusion

- Aviation Regulation Act, 2001.
- Transport (Railway Infrastructure) Act, 2001.
- Railway Safety Bill, 2001.
- State Authorities (Public Private Partnership Arrangements) Act, 2002.
- Planning and Development Act, 2000.
- European Communities (Internal Market in Electricity) Regulations, 2000.
- Electricity (Supply) (Amendment) Act, 2001.
- Electricity Bill, 2002. *(proposed)*
- Gas (Amendment) Act, 2000.
- Gas (Interim) Regulation Act, 2002.
- Sustainable Energy Act, 2002.
- Agriculture Appeals Act, 2001.
- Waste Management (Collection Permit) Regulations, 2001.
- Waste Management (Collection Permit) (Amendment) Regulations, 2001.
- Waste Management (Landfill Levy) Regulations, 2002.
- Communications Regulation Act, 2002
- Competition Act, 2002

Framework III for Social Inclusion and Equality

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- National Minimum Wage Act, 2000.
- Social Welfare Act, 2000.
- Social Welfare Act, 2001.
- Social Welfare (No. 2) Act, 2001.
- Carer's Leave Act, 2001.
- Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2002.
- Building Regulations, 2000 (Part L and Part M).
- Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2002.
- Electoral (Amendment) Act, 2001.
- Referendum Act, 2001.

- Equal Status Act, 2000.
- Mental Health Act, 2001.
- Disability Bill, 2001 *(consultation process underway)*.

Framework IV for Successful Adaptation to Continuing Change

- Electronic Commerce Act, 2000.
- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.
- Youth Work Act, 2001.
- Children Act, 2001.
- Family Support Agency Act, 2001.
- European Convention on Human Rights Bill, 2001 (committee stage).
- Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2002 (proposed).
- Twenty-sixth Amendment of the Constitution Bill, 2002 (proposed).

Framework V for Renewing Partnership

- National Economic and Social Development Office Bill, 2002.

Appendix II

Working Group Reports completed under the PPF (with relevant website locations)

Framework I for Living Standards and Workplace Environment

- 1.1.5 Work-related Expenses and Benefits
(paper submitted to Tax Strategy Group) www.gov.ie/finance
- 1.3.4 Working Group on Employment Status www.entemp.ie/empstgrprep.doc
- 1.4.1 Benchmarking Body on Public Service Pay www.gov.ie/finance
- 1.4.1 Evaluation of the progress of the Strategic Management Initiative
www.bettergov.ie
- 1.4.1 Review of Partnership in the Civil Service
- 1.4.1 Agreement on Introduction of Upward Feedback into the Performance
Management and Development System www.gov.ie/finance

Framework II for Prosperity and Economic Inclusion

- 2.3.3 The Framework for Public Private Partnerships www.ppp.gov.ie
- 2.5.2 Report of the Advisory Committee on the Role of Women
in Agriculture www.gov.ie/daff
- 2.8.1 Forum for the Construction Industry (expanding supply)
www.environ.ie/pdf/actionplan.pdf
- 2.8.1 Construction Industry Skills Sub-Group
- 2.12.1 Expert Group on Food Quality Assurance Schemes
- 2.12.12 Timber Industry Development Group
(currently under consideration by the Tánaiste)

Framework III for Social Inclusion and Equality

- 3.1.1 Working Group on Rural Poverty NAPS Review
- 3.1.1 Working Group on Educational Disadvantage NAPS Review
- 3.1.1 Working Group on Employment NAPS Review
- 3.1.1 Working Group on Housing and Accommodation NAPS Review
- 3.1.1 Working Group on Health NAPS Review
- 3.1.1 Working Group on Urban Disadvantage NAPS Review
- 3.1.1 NAPS Review Income Adequacy Group
- 3.1.1 Steering Group on the NAPS Review
- 3.2.1 Working Group on Benchmarking and Indexation of
SW Payments www.welfare.ie
- 3.2.2 WG on Administrative Individualisation
(currently under consideration by the Minister)
- 3.3.2 Group to review National Drugs Strategy

- 3.6.1 Working Group on Targeted Investment Programme for Disadvantaged Areas
- 3.7.2 Report of the Commission on the Private Rented Sector
- 3.10.3 Working Group to review Bed Capacity in Hospitals
- 3.10.5 Medical Card Review Group
- 3.10.11 Traveller Health Advisory Committee www.doh.ie/publications
- 3.12.6 Advisory Committee on Equality Agenda for
Older People www.equality.ie/public.shtml
- 3.12.6 Advisory Committee on Sexual Orientation www.equality.ie/public.shtml
- 3.12.6 Advisory Committee on Equality for Lesbians,
Gays and Bisexuals www.equality.ie/public.shtml

Framework IV for Successful Adaptation to Continuing Change

- 4.1.2 Expert Group on Teacher Allocation Process at Second Level
(report due for publication shortly)
- 4.1.4 Planning Group on Special Needs Education
- 4.1.7 Task Force on the Physical Sciences
www.gov.ie/educ/pdfs/taskforcereport.pdf
- 4.1.10 National Youth Work Advisory Committee
(currently under consideration by the Minister)
- 4.1.13 Task Force on Agricultural Education and Training
- 4.1.16 Action Group on Access to Third Level Education
- 4.3.8 Working Group to review the Parental Leave Act www.justice.ie
- 4.6.1 Task Force on Emigrants
- 4.6.6 Ireland Aid Review Committee

Framework V for Renewing Partnership

- 5.3 Benchmarking the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness
www.nesc.ie

Appendix III

New Institutions established under the PPF

Framework I for Living Standards and Workplace Environment

- Sectoral Quality Assurance Groups
- Sectoral Implementation Bodies

Framework II for Prosperity and Economic Inclusion

- Commission for Aviation Regulation
- Railway Procurement Agency
- Public Transport Partnership Forum
- National Rural Development Forum
- Science Foundation Ireland
- Forum for the Construction Industry
- Construction Safety Partnership Group
- Housing Forum
- Sustainable Energy Ireland
- Food Quality Assurance Schemes Review Group

Framework III for Social Inclusion and Equality

- National Office for Social Inclusion (to be established shortly)
- The Health Board Executive

Framework IV for Successful Adaptation to Continuing Change

- Family Support Agency (as provided for in the Family Support Agency Act, 2001)
- Education Disadvantage Committee
- National Children's Office
- National Children's Advisory Council
- Dáil na nÓg
- Comhairle na nÓg
- MediaLab Europe

Framework V for Renewing Partnership

- National Implementation Body
- National Centre for Partnership and Performance
- National Economic and Social Development Office