



Society of St Vincent de Paul

Pre-Budget Submission
to Joint Committee on
Finance, Public
Expenditure and Reform

Thursday 3rd November
2011



Overview of Presentation

- Calls for help to SVP Regional Offices
- Experience of people contacting SVP for help
- Don't cut their lifeline: SVP priorities for Budget 2012

Dramatic increase in calls for help

	2010	2009	2008
Dublin	+36%	+34%	+11%
Mid West	+23%	+18%	+24%
Galway	+36%	No change	+10%
Cork	+45%	-	-

SVP Regional Offices

January to June 2011:

- 43% of calls for help from one parent families, and a further 20% from couples with children
- 73% of calls made by women
- 12% of calls came from foreign nationals, SVP members report people struggling due to Habitual Residence Condition and barriers to accessing education
- 77% in receipt of social welfare, mainly means tested payments such as One Parent Family Payment, Disability Allowance and Jobseekers Allowance, highlighting long term reliance on social welfare and consequent erosion of resources
- People asking for food vouchers, help with fuel/energy costs, help with the cost of education, delays or difficulties in accessing social welfare payments, housing related costs

Trapped by the System

Married man on Jobseekers Allowance, four children; temporary work twice in the last year; long delays in accessing social welfare payment and Rent Supplement after work dried up; SVP provided food vouchers and other supports but still struggling with rent; afraid to apply for temporary work in the future because of the delay in reinstating payments



Books or Food?

Derek contacted the SVP on a Friday evening when his family had €3 to last them until the next week. He had to pay school expenses for his three children which meant the family had no money for food that week. The SVP organised an immediate visit with food vouchers so that they could eat until their social welfare payment came through.

Budget 2012

- Protect adult social welfare payments, Qualified Child Increases, Family Income Supplement levels and eligibility for social welfare payments
- Make the social welfare system more responsive to atypical work and self employment
- Establish a National Book Rental Scheme in Primary and Secondary schools

Budget 2012

- Protect eligibility to the medical card and the services provided under this scheme
- Rent Supplement – no increase in tenant contribution
- No disconnections in winter: make binding
- Protect poorest from any increase in the Carbon Tax
- Banks to provide and promote appropriate, accessible and free Basic Payment / Bank accounts, available via the Post Office Network