

## **Integration of Combat Poverty Agency and Office for Social Inclusion 1 July 2009**

From 1 July 2009, the Combat Poverty Agency and the Office for Social Inclusion have been integrated to form a new division within the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

The integration of both bodies is in accordance with the Government Decision announced in Budget 2009. It creates a unified structure combining the significant experience, expertise and knowledge among the staff of both bodies and is designed to provide more effective and streamlined support for Government and the wider community in addressing issues of poverty and social exclusion.

The Division has a central role in advising on the further development of the strategies for social inclusion and in monitoring and evaluating progress in their implementation. This will be done in collaboration with the Inter-departmental Senior Officials Group, chaired by the Department of the Taoiseach, government departments and agencies, and local authorities.

A major priority for the Division is to ensure that the views of stakeholders, especially those experiencing poverty, are clearly and comprehensively available to Government in relation to all aspects of this process. Promoting and developing consultation and collaboration with these stakeholders will, therefore, form a significant part of the functions of the new Division..

Other functions of the new Division that support the strategies include research on key aspects of poverty and social exclusion, poverty impact assessment of social inclusion related policies and their implementation, communications, including raising awareness on poverty challenges, emerging trends, and the progress being achieved under the strategies, facilitating the exchange of good practice drawn from local, national and international levels.

The strategic plan for the new Division is being finalised at present and is scheduled for publication in the Autumn.

The location of the new division from October 2009 will be Gandon House, Amiens St, Dublin 1. Until then, the staff of the new Division will remain in their current locations. The present postal/web addresses and contact details will continue to operate until then (see [www.combatpoverty.ie](http://www.combatpoverty.ie) and [www.socialinclusion.ie](http://www.socialinclusion.ie)).