



An Chomhairle Náisiúnta Eacnamaíoch agus Shóisialta  
National Economic & Social Council

# Social & Civil Dialogue in a Time of National and European Crisis: Ireland

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# 2011 meeting of ESCs in The Hague

May 2011 Ireland report:

- Extent and nature of economic crisis
- Council not convened since July 2010

November 2011 Ireland report:

- New government decisions eased relations with social partners
- Council convened June 2011 & attended by PM
- Council work: 'Activation Policy' & 'Economic Recovery'



## Since we met in November 2011

1. Main themes in public policy debate and relations between social partners
2. Review of NES
3. The work of NES



# Main themes in public policy debate & relations between social partners

1. Employment relations issues less salient:
  - Private sector – decentralised, but little pressure
  - Public sector: ‘Croke Park Agreement’
2. Distributional effects of 2012 budget debated
3. Welfare and activation reforms debated
4. Main theme has been **macroeconomic recovery** and **EU response to the euro crisis** (in general & with respect to debts of Irish banks)



## Review of NESCS

1. Council discussions Sept-Oct 2011
2. Govt closed Sustainable Development Council & asked NESCS to take its agenda
3. Dept. of Public Expenditure & Reform put NESCS on list for 'Review/Closure'
4. PM Dept. announced 'Review of NESCS'
5. Four analyst staff seconded from NESCS to PM's department
6. PM Dept. 'Review of NESCS' outlined in April



# PM Dept's Statement on Review of NESCS

1. *Role*: NESCS is unique multi-lateral forum
2. *Function (and three key activities)*:
  - Advise on *strategic* issues of economic, social & environmental development
  - Expert analysis on specific issues
  - A forum for dialogue (sometimes without report)
3. *Size & composition*: may reduce to 3 (or 2) per pillar & consider other spheres (science/technology/local govt)
4. *Secretariat*: link more to closely to PM's Dept
5. *Communications*: devise new strategy



## Council & Secretariat Work 2011-12

### 1. *Promoting Economic Recovery & Employment in Ireland* (report Jan 2012):

- Perspectives on the euro & global economic crisis
- Domestic demand
- Credit & finance
- Employment, welfare and activation policy
- Enterprise policy



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  - Domestic demand
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  - Employment, welfare and activation policy
  - Enterprise policy
2. Govt requested NESC response to *Draft National Strategy for Sustainable Development*, published Jan 2012



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  - Domestic demand
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  - Employment, welfare and activation policy
  - Enterprise policy
2. Govt sought NESC response to *Draft National Strategy for Sustainable Development*, published Jan 2012
3. Council discussion on developments in the EU



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# Council & Secretariat Work continued

## 4. Climate Change:

- Govt requested NESC Secretariat to report on:
- Measures to meet Ireland's 2020 targets (June 2012)
- Transition to a low-carbon economy (December 2012)



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- Studies on education, policing, disability, eldercare homes, home-care for the elderly, end-of-life care



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