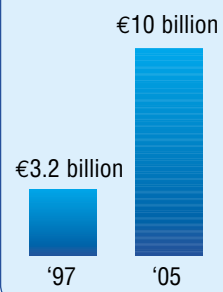


Health

Health Spend



There has been a lot of political debate about the health services of late. The contrast between the record of this Government and the last Fine Gael/Labour Government is strong. Since taking over from the Fine Gael / Labour in 1997 this government has:

- Tripled the money invested in health care to €10 billion in 2005.
 - Increased the number of doctors and nurses in our hospitals by 4,000.
 - Increased the number of consultant posts by over 320 an increase of over 25%.
 - Increased the number of nurse training places by over one third.
 - Created more than 3,500 extra residential and respite care places.
 - Provided Medical Cards to all over 70 years of age.
 - Established the Doctor only Medical Cards.
 - Established the National Treatment Purchase Fund
- Government policies are having positive results:-**
- 280,000 more patients were treated in 2004 than in 1997.
 - The National Treatment Purchase Fund has provided treatment for over 35,000 patients
 - The waiting list for some treatments, eg tonsils has gone.
 - More hospitals than ever are being built or renovated.
 - In 2005 alone the Government has commissioned an additional 709 acute beds in public hospitals at a cost of €65 million.

Labour & Fine Gael Record

- Health services disastrously mismanaged,
- Fine Gael's Michael Noonan was the worst ever Minister for Health in the history of the State. Recall his treatment of the Hep C victims.
- Health spending increased by fraction of the current level, just £400 million to £2.5 billion in 1997,
- Hospital waiting lists grew under Gael & Labour by 27%.
- Incredibly, in 1997, the Fine Gael/Labour Government cut funding for the Hospital Waiting List Initiative by 20%.



Massive hospital investment has been made by this Government.

Education



Some of the first Class Education facilities funded by this Government.

Investment in education has more than doubled since Fianna Fail returned to office. The annual spend on our schools and colleges now stands at an unprecedented €7 billion. Class sizes have been drastically reduced, more special teachers and class assistants have been employed and this Government has made the highest ever investment in pre-school and child care. Since 2000 over €1.02 million has been allocated to Pre-School and Playgroups throughout Wicklow.

Wicklow has done extremely well under this Government. Schools in every part of the Constituency have benefited from Government capital investment since 1997 including :

- **Arklow** - major investment in Templeraíneay.
- **Baltinglass** – New buildings for Scoil Chonglais & St Josephs NS new PE Hall .
- **Blessington** - a new 16 room primary school.
- **Bray** - new buildings for St. Cronan's N.S. for Marino Special School, major extension for St Patrick's NS, improvement works at Loreto Secondary School.
- **Brittas Bay** - major improvements for Brittas Bay NS.
- **Carnew** - major extension for Carnew Community College.
- **Delgany** –further improvements at, Delgany NS.
- **Enniskerry** – improvement works at Powerscourt NS.
- **Greystones** - extensions for St. Kevin's and St. Lawrence's NS.
- **Hollywood** – school extension for St Kevins NS.
- **Hacketstown** - new Vocational School costing over €3 million.
- **Kilcoole** - Colaiste Craobh Abhann, a priority with Dick for years.
- **Rathdrum** – extension to Avondale Community College.

And more is planned: Under the €555 m building programme for 2006 – 2009, Wicklow will benefit from even more Government investment, Colaiste Raithin, Bray will get its new building. Wicklow Town will get a new 1000 student second level College for Abbey Community College & De La Salle and St Peters & St Philomena's Ravenswell Bray will get a new school.

There can be no complacency. Even more investment is needed, particularly in special education. Our childrens' education is too important to go back to the bad old days of Fine Gael & Labour.

You can also contact Dick by phone, fax or e-mail at any of the following addresses:

E-mail: dick.roche@oireachtas.irlgov.ie

CONSTITUENCY OFFICE:

2 Herbert Terrace, Bray, Co. Wicklow. Tel: 01-286 3211, Fax: 01-286 7666

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT, HERITAGE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT,

Custom House, Dublin 1. Tel: 01- 888 2572, Fax: 01- 888 2627.

DICK ROACHE

www.dickroche.com

RAISING THE ISSUES. GETTING RESULTS. WORKING FOR YOU.

LOCAL NEWSLETTER

Dear Constituent,

We are now half way through the Dail term – a good time to examine the record of the Government & to compare it to the record of the parties that want to replace it.

Since 1997 Fianna Fail & our partners in Government the Progressive Democrats have delivered:

- Economic progress when other countries are having problems,
- On the Peace Process the gun has now been taken out of Irish politics,
- Record Social Welfare increases, particularly for pensioners,
- Tripled child benefit,
- Policies which allowed jobs to grow at an unprecedented rate,
- Reduced the unemployment rate to the lowest in the European Union,
- Reformed the taxation system with record cuts in personal tax,
- Major investments in public infrastructure,
- More progress on social inclusion than any other Government.

These are significant achievements. They benefit everybody. In contrast Fine Gael, Labour & the Greens who see themselves as an alternative government have delivered nothing. Nor have they offered any policies in spite of repeatedly promising to do so. We have had a hint from Pat Rabbitte about reintroducing wealth tax but he has refused to tell you on what : will it be on your income, your property or your savings? The Greens have also talked about increasing taxes proposing amongst other things an increase in Company tax, new taxes on property and additional tax on petrol, diesel & home heating fuel – 'carbon taxes'.

In the absence of policies from the Opposition Parties one can look at their record. Where Fine Gael, Labour & the Greens have taken control of local authorities we can already see failure – Bray Town Council has become virtually dysfunctional. We can also look at the record of their leadership. Enda Kenny has been in Dail Eireann for 30 years. He is a pleasant person but has achieved little or nothing. In Wicklow we have reason to recall Pat Rabbitte's record and his destructive influence. We can also recall how poorly Fine Gael & Labour performed in Government. It is worthwhile to contrast the position when they left office in 1987 & in 1997 to the progress Ireland is making under this Fianna Fail led Government.

In this Newsletter I depart from the usual format and compare the performance of the Fianna Fail / Progressive Democrat Government in a number of key areas with the alternative. As always I will be pleased to hear from you on any of the issues raised in the Newsletter or on any matters of concern to you or to your family.

Yours sincerely

Dick Roche, TD

Minister for the Environment, Heritage & Local Government



FIANNA FÁIL
THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

Road Infrastructure

Since Fianna Fail returned to office in 1997 Wicklow has benefited from major road projects including:

- The Arklow By-pass, a €69 m investment
- The €57 million Kilmacanogue – Glen of the Downs project
- The Rathnew and Ashford By-pass, a €182m investment
- Completion of the M50 – M11 interchange at Loughlanstown

Other major projects at the planning stage or underway include:

- The Greystones Southern Access Route – due for completion early next year,
- The Kilpedder Interchange - at planning stage,
- The Wicklow Town Port Access Road & Town Relief Road,
- Completion of the N11 upgrade from the Beehive to Arklow,
- At Minister Roche's request Wicklow County Council & the NRA are in discussions on a scheme for the N81 Blessington – Baltinglass Road.

Wicklow has also received a massive boost in funding for its county roads.

- €71 million allocated to county roads between 1998 & 2005
- In 2005 alone the total funding available for county roads was €19 million.
- In 1997 under Fine Gael and Labour the equivalent figure was €7 million.



Between 2000 and 2004, 350km of new national road has been completed. In 2005 alone, €1.4 billion was invested in national roads. Completion of the M50 makes it possible to drive 155km on motorway between Rathnew and Dundalk, giving better access to the main national road network benefiting Wicklow commuters and businesses.

Public Transport

This Government has invested more in Public Transport than any Government in the history of the state. Since 1997 the transport system has been radically reformed, the rail network has been upgraded, the capacity on the DART system has been doubled, the national bus fleets have been modernised, new commuter rail services put in place & the LUAS is up and running successfully.

Between 1997 and 2004 Government investment in public transport rose from €8 million to €686 million. In 1999 alone this Government committed 20 times as much to public transport as Fine Gael and Labour did in their best year. In 2000, State investment in public transport passed the €250 million mark for the first time ever.

Under this Government Wicklow has directly benefited from:

- The DART extension to Greystones & the upgrading of the DART system,
- The new Arklow to Dublin Commuter Service.
- The massive fleet investments in Dublin Bus and by Bus Eireann.
- Licensed private bus services.
- Funding for the rural transport network.



New Transport Modes Providing Better Public Transport for commuters.

Housing



This Government's policies have delivered remarkable results in housing:

- 2004 was the 7th consecutive year of record house building.
- Almost 77,000 new homes were completed last year.
- No country in Europe approaches this level of home building
- Government investment in social housing is at the highest ever
- €6 billion has been set aside for social housing over the period 2005 to 2009.

Minister Roche has also allocated funds for improving existing houses:

- €1.7m for James Everett Park
- €9.0 m. for Fassaroe Estates
- €1.2 m. for Central heating schemes in County Wicklow
- A major scheme for Seacrest Estates, Wicklow Town is at the planning stage.

In 2005 alone almost €36 million was allocated by Minister Dick Roche to Wicklow Councils for house building. When Deputy McManus was Minister for Housing a total of €31 million was allocated over 3 years.

Labour & Fine Gael Record

- Local authority housing output was cut by 11% to a low of 2,632 houses under Fine Gael and Labour.
- In 1997 Fine Gael and Labour allocated €271 million to social housing. In 2004 Minister Dick Roche allocated €1 billion to the same programme.
- In 1987 under Fine Gael & Labour jobs in the Building Industry slumped to 71,000. When they left Government in 1997 employment was only 96,000. Under this Government employment in Building & Construction has grown to 235,000.

Protecting the Environment

Dick Roche has been active in every major environmental campaign in Wicklow over the last 20 years, including the **Coollattin Woods** campaign, in highlighting the scandal of the sale of **Glending** Blessington, in the campaigns to move **power lines** and **telecommunications** masts away from homes and schools and in the original **Ballynagran** campaign. Dick also campaigned tirelessly against the scandal of **illegal and unauthorised dumping**. While other public representatives have been active on some campaigns Dick has been active on them all on your behalf.

As Minister for the Environment Dick has:

- Made the first ever Ministerial Direction requiring the removal of material illegally dumped close to housing.
- Provided funding for the recycling centres at Arklow, Bray and Wicklow.
- Earmarked funds for a recycling centre for Blessington which the Council has not yet taken up.



Long before becoming Minister for the Environment Dick Roche established a solid record as a campaigner for the protection of the environment.

Jobs



Major new investments bringing jobs into the constituency.

The record of Fianna Fail in Government:

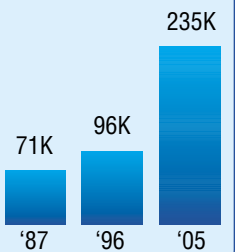
- Government policies have led to the creation of 602,000 new jobs since 1998.
- 2 million people now have jobs in Ireland – the highest ever.
- Government policies have cut the unemployment rate to 4.3%.
- Over 253,000 people are working in Jobs in building and construction alone.
- Ireland has become a world leader in high Technology and Pharmaceuticals industries.

The shameful record of Fine Gael and Labour:

- In 1987 under Fine Gael and Labour over 260,000 people were out of work.
- The unemployment rate reached 16% in 1987.
- In 1997 under Fine Gael & Labour unemployment was 10.3%.
- Under Fine Gael and Labour over 30,000 people per year were emigrating.
- The building and construction industry was on its knees in 1987 under Fine Gael and Labour now its booming.

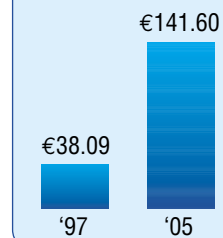
Ireland now has the lowest level of unemployment in the European Union. This didn't happen by accident. Sound Government economic policies and the social partnership arrangements pioneered by An Taoiseach have paid dividends.

Building Industry Jobs



Welfare

Child Benefit



The record of this Government cannot be matched by any other Government in the history of the State. There have been record improvements in pensions and family supports in every Budget since 1997 when the current Government parties took office.

The Record of this Government:

- Old Age Non-Contributory Pension up from €67.50 in 1997 to €166.00 in 2005.
- Old Age Contributory Pension up from €78.00 per week to €179.30 per week.
- Widows and Widowers Pensions, over 66, up from €67.50 to €166.00 per week.
- Free schemes extended.
- Medical cards to all over 70.
- Budget increases paid from 1 January, 23 weeks earlier than Fine Gael & Labour.
- Childrens' Allowances increased to €141.60 per month for 1st and 2nd children.
- A family with 4 children now receives €637.50 per month in child benefit.

Labour & Fine Gael Record

- Old Age Contributory Pension increased by a miserable average of €2.95 per year.
- Child Benefit increases of £1 and £5 given by Fine Gael and Labour
- Child Benefit was only €38.09 under Fine Gael and Labour in 1997.
- It will always be remembered that one of Ruairi Quinn's Budgets gave the Old Age Pensioners a miserly £1.60 per week. The meanest move against pensioners since Fine Gael cut the Old Age Pension.

For a full list of Dick Roche's Constituency Clinics please telephone 01 286 3211.