

# **BASICS YOU NEED TO KNOW WHILE SETTLING IN IRELAND**

**by Maria Gkioni and Dimitrios Tsouros**

## **PPS NUMBER (like the Greek AFM)**

In Ireland the PPSNumber (Personal Public Service Number) is a personal reference number that allows you to gain access to social welfare benefits and services in Ireland.

Without a PPSN you will not be able to get a job or any state Benefits. It is used for taxation purposes as well. You can not apply for a PPSN before you move to Ireland. You must be living in Ireland and have proof of address in order to get your PPSN.

You can get a PPSN from your local Social Welfare Office. You will be asked for the following documents:

1. passport
2. proof of address (household bill) in your name.

For more information you can phone the Department of Social and Family Affairs at : 0035317043236 (from abroad) or 017043236 (from Ireland)

## **BENEFITS**

1. Child Benefit
2. Early Childcare Benefit
3. Family Income Supplement
4. Back to School clothing and footwear allowance
5. One Parent Family Payment

1 & 2. Child Benefit is payable to the parents of children under 16 years of age. You need to send a claim form (CB1) and the child's Birth Certificate to the Child Benefit Section of the Department of Social and Family Affairs in order to apply.

If you are getting Child Benefit for a child under 5.5 years old you will also get the Early Childcare Supplement.

**RULES:** You need to apply for the payment within six months of:

1. The birth of your baby
2. The month the child became member of your family or
3. The month the family came to live in Ireland

WHERE TO APPLY:  
CHILD BENEFIT SECTION  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND FAMILY AFFAIRS  
SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES OFFICE  
ST.OLIVER PLUNKETT ROAD  
LETTERKENNY  
DONEGAL  
IRELAND  
TELEPHONE:0035317043000  
LO CALL:1890400400  
[www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)

3. One-Parent Family payment is a payment for men and women in Ireland who are bringing children up without the support of a partner. It is payable to an unmarried person, widow(er), separated or divorced person. It is subject to certain conditions and you must satisfy a means test.
4. Family Income Supplement (FIS) is a weekly tax-free payment available to married or unmarried employees in Ireland with children. It is designed to offer assistance to people on low pay.

To qualify for FIS your net average weekly family income must be below a certain amount for your family size.

**RULES:**

FIS is a tax-free weekly payment for employees:

1. Working 19 or more hours per week
2. Where the employment is likely to last at least 3 months
3. Looking after one or more children
4. Earning less than a set amount which varies according to family size.

How to apply:

You can download an application form for FIS at [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie). Ensure you include with you application your latest P60, 2 recent payslips and a copy of your Certificate of Tax Credits for the current tax year.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND FAMILY AFFAIRS  
GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS  
BALLINALEE ROAD  
LONGFORD  
IRELAND  
TELEPHONE:0035317043000

5. The Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance is designed to help meet the cost of uniforms and footwear for students. The scheme operates from 1<sup>st</sup> June to 30<sup>th</sup> September each year. To be eligible for this allowance

1. You must be receiving certain social welfare payments
2. Your total household income must be below a certain amount
3. The child must be between 2 and 22 years in full time education

How to apply:

You can phone the DSFA Lo-call leaflet line number 1890202325

## **IRISH SCHOOLS**

The Irish school year for primary school children starts from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 30<sup>th</sup> June. The school day starts at 9 and ends at 3. Kids start primary school around the age of 4 to 5. Schools have 2 years of infant classes followed by class 1 to class 6.

To apply to a school just apply directly to the school of your choice. More info about the Irish primary school can be found on “ Scoilnet”.

Lots of schools in Ireland are boys only or girls only.

Also they wear uniforms in most of the schools and books are NOT supplied by the school.

## **HEALTHCARE**

Private healthcare insurance is very common in Ireland. There are three insurance providers currently in Ireland

1. VHI (a semi-state body)
2. QUINN DIRECT (the second largest provider)
3. VIVAS (the newest provider in Ireland)

For more information on defferent plans:

[Vhi.ie](http://Vhi.ie)

[Quinn direct.ie](http://Quinn direct.ie)

[Vivas.ie](http://Vivas.ie)

## **MOBILE PHONES**

There are four network providers: O2 , VODAPHONE ,METEOR ,”3”

They all offer pay as you go options (kartokinito), as well as bill phones.