

# MINIMUM INCOME NEEDS FOR PEOPLE WITH VISION IMPAIRMENT

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MESL  
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MINIMUM  
ESSENTIAL  
BUDGET  
STANDARDS

RESEARCH CENTRE

**Follow up to research on:**

**A Minimum Essential Standard of  
Living for a Single Adult with  
Vision Impairment**

Provided facts and figures on the additional **needs and expenditure** that people with vision impairment require in order to have a Minimum Essential Standard of Living.

# Minimum Essential Standard of Living

- VPSJ has conducted Consensual Budget Standards research since 2004

Two parts to the research:

1. **Expenditure** required for a Minimum Essential Standard of Living (*MESL*) which meets physical, psychological and social needs.
2. **Income** needed to afford the expenditure – Minimum Income Standard (*MIS*)

# Minimum Essential Standard of Living



FOOD



CLOTHING



HEALTH



HOUSING



CHILDCARE



PERSONAL CARE



INSURANCE



SAVINGS



TRANSPORT



ENERGY



COMMS



EDUCATION



SOCIAL INCLUSION



HOUSEHOLD GOODS



HOUSEHOLD SERVICES



PERSONAL COSTS

- Standard which no one should be expected to live below
- Emphasis is on needs & not wants
- Cost is based on actual price of detailed basket of over 2,000 goods & services

## The Consensual Budget Standards methodology

- In the current study it is used to determine the **additional needs and costs** associated with vision impairment.
- This methodology has been used by the Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice (VPSJ) since 1996 to develop budget standards for a range of household types in the general population and its existing data covers 90% of households.

# Methodology

- The Consensual Budgets Standards methodology (CBS) involves facilitating **a series of focus group sessions** with members of the public who represent the household type under consideration.
- The facilitation process, which is detailed, time consuming and transparent, records the lived experience of households
  - › The report provides a detailed account of the methodology.

# Methodology

- The methodology enables the development of a **consensus** within each group and across the groups about the additional needs which people with vision impairment require in order to have an MESL.
  - › It also facilitates the development of consensus about the rationale for the inclusion of additional goods and services.



# Methodology

- Participants reach a socially negotiated consensus on the goods and services required in order to have an MESL.
- Experts are consulted as required – e.g. nutrition, household energy.

# Vision impairment

The previous study establishes the Minimum Essential Standard of Living for a single adult with vision impairment, with some useable sight, whose level of vision meets the eligibility criteria for state benefits.

- › While not everyone who fulfils the entitlement criteria has useable sight, 95% of those who access the NCBI services have some level of sight (NCBI, 2016).

# Vision impairment

## Definition

- For the purposes of these studies, the term vision impairment is used to refer to individuals whose level of vision meets the eligibility criteria for state benefits and have some useable sight.
  - › The person in the case study was also described in terms of working age, living alone in rented accommodation, on a bus route, in full-time employment and in good health.

# Vision impairment

## Case study

- “Aoife / Michael is a single, working age adult, and has a level of vision which meets the eligibility criteria for state benefits and has some useable sight. She / he lives alone in a one bedroom rented flat located on a public transport route in an urban area. She / he is in good health and is employed full time.”

An MESL for a single adult with  
Vision Impairment cost €285.76  
per week in 2016.



# Expenditure

<b>Main MESL</b>	<b>Vision Impairment MESL</b>	<b>Difference (additional cost)</b>
<b>€241.22</b>	<b>€285.76</b>	<b>€44.54</b>

# This presentation sets out to:

- Analyse the system as it currently stands
- Analyse the changes regarding rehabilitative work (recommended in ‘Making Work Pay for People with Disabilities’).

It examines scenarios of both being with and without employment with regards to identifying points of **income adequacy**, potential **welfare traps** and establishing the **Minimum Income Standard** gross salary requirement of a person with vision impairment.