

**ABUSE REPORT**

# Hi-tech devices used in abuse of women

■ Women's Aid says technology used to stalk and control victims

by Evelyn Ring

MOBILE phones and computers are increasingly being used as tools to abuse, control and stalk women, a report from Women's Aid reveals.

Many of the 14,613 women who called the Women's Aid helpline last year said telephone, surveillance and computer technologies were being used to harass and intimidate them.

Women reported:  
■ How their home and mobile calls were being monitored, as well as their texts by their partners and ex-partners.  
■ How their phone conversations were being

**INCIDENTS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE**

- 14,613 incidents of domestic abuse reported last year.
- 8,629 incidents of emotional abuse.
- 3,479 incidents of physical abuse.
- 1,679 incidents of financial abuse.
- 826 incidents of sexual abuse.
- 335 reported rapes within relationships.
- 1,814 specific disclosures of child abuse that included beatings, attempted stabbings and children being thrown across the room.

## JUSTICE POÉTIQUE



The farce that started with Thierry Henry's infamous handball to rob Ireland of a place in the World Cup ended yesterday when France lost to South Africa and went crashing out of the tournament.

Picture: Getty Images

THE World Cup isn't just about winning — especially not for

training session on Sunday. After the one-time champions'

## 25% of Irish people at risk of poverty

by Ann Cahill  
Europe Correspondent

WE are failing to face up to the true extent of poverty in our society, according to a report from EU.

The survey of living standards throughout Europe has revealed that the level of poverty in Ireland is more than twice what people here believe it to be.

Using a yardstick which defines those living in poverty in Ireland as a typical family with a disposable income of less than €232 a week, the survey shows 25% of people are either at risk of poverty or are deprived of many of the material essentials they need to live.

Irish people who were surveyed believe, however, the figure is less than half that, at just 10%.

The survey shows that in most other countries the perception regarding the reality of poverty is much closer.

The survey also reveals how one person in every 25 surveyed said they feared having to leave their homes in the next year because they were having problems paying for it.

Twice that number said there was a high risk they would fall behind with rent or mortgage payments, while 20% rated their risk as moderate.

One in six people said they ran out of money to buy everyday essential goods and services at least once in the past 12 months while more than a third said they struggle regularly to pay their bills on time.

A third of those surveyed said it had become more difficult to pay health bills over the last few months and many believed they will have trouble paying for food and other daily items over the coming year.

One in five said they could not cope with an unexpected bill of €1,000, slightly fewer than the EU average.

A similar number feared they may not be able to meet repayments for goods such as furniture and appliances.

On the jobs front, 15%, or one in six, feared they could be let go in the next 12 months.

The Irish were among the most pessimistic when it came to their chances of finding new employment within six months, with 62% saying it would be very problematic.

A spokesman for the European Anti-Poverty Network in Ireland said there was undoubtedly a gulf between perception and reality of poverty in this country.

"We have one of the highest rates of lone parents with one or two children at risk of poverty in the EU — and the new social welfare bill will make this worse," he warned.

EU leaders have agreed to make reducing poverty a key part of their next 10-year programme.

At their summit in Brussels last week they set a target of cutting the number of people in poverty by 20 million and in the autumn they are due to bring forward programmes setting their national targets.