



An Roinn Gnóthaí Fostaíochta
agus Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Employment Affairs
and Social Protection

Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

Annual Report 2019



Contents

Foreword Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection Regina Doherty	3
Foreword Secretary General John McKeon	5
Chapter1 The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection	7
Functions of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection	8
The Department's Mission	8
Scale of the Department's Business	8
Organisation of the Department	9
Offices and statutory bodies under the aegis of the Department	10
Chapter 2 2019 Performance	11
Economic and Employment Recovery Continues	12
Expenditure by Programme Area 2019	13
Organisations and Key Activities 2019	15
Number of Recipients by Scheme 2019	16
Social Inclusion and Poverty	17
Research into Funeral Poverty	19
Implementing Budget 2019 - €362m in additional expenditure	20
Social Impact Assessment of Budget 2019	23
Social Inclusion Forum 2019	24
2019 Pre-Budget Forum	25
Budget 2020 Measures Announced	26
Parent's Benefit	28
Customer Satisfaction Survey: An award-winning approach to customer engagement	28
ISSA Certificate Awarded to DEASP for Service Quality	29
Redundancy, Insolvency and Debt Recovery Activity in 2019	30
Online Services	31
Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Review	33
The Department's Strategic Objectives 2017-2020	34
Objective 1: Put the Client at the centre of policy and service delivery	35
Children and Families	36
Gender Recognition Act	38

Contents

Civil Registration Legislation	39
Secondary Benefits	40
People of Working Age	42
Employment Supports	43
Employment Support Services for individuals	44
Services to Employers	45
EURES and European job opportunities	45
Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System	48
Supports for Carers	49
Supports for Jobseekers with Disabilities	50
Research and Policy	53
Employments Affairs	54
Customer Communications	56
Objective 2: Drive cost, efficiency and effectiveness	59
Identity Management	60
Financial Management	64
Digital Innovation	65
International Relations and Regulations	70
EU Developments	71
Other International Issues	76
Objective 3: Develop Staff, Structures and Processes	77
One DEASP Staff Learning and Development Programme	81
Assistant Principal Forum 2019	84
Appendices	85
Legislation Enacted in 2019	86
Organisation Structure	88
Publications 2019	90
Minsters of the Department since 1947	91
Minsters of State at the Department since 1947	92



Foreword Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection Regina Doherty

I welcome the publication of the 2019 Annual Report of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

Since being appointed Minister in 2017, I have been immensely proud and honoured to lead the Department. This is a Department that positively impacts on the lives of almost every citizen in the State during their lifetime. When people experience key life events whether it be the birth of a child, the loss of employment, becoming ill or retiring, the Department is there to provide income support during these life events.

In 2019, each week, over 1.3 million people received a social welfare payment of one kind or another from my Department, with approximately 79 million individual payments being made throughout the year. Expenditure on the Department's schemes and services totalled €21 billion in 2019.

This annual report highlights the range of service and policy reforms implemented by the Department in the past year.

In November 2019, a new Parent's Benefit scheme was introduced, which allows both parents to access an additional two weeks paid parental leave in the first year of their child's life, in addition to the existing Maternity and Paternity allowances. Parent's Benefit is paid at a rate of €245 per week; the same rate as Maternity and Paternity Benefits.

My Department supports the most vulnerable people in our society, providing services and payments that assist people to find work and help to mitigate the financial hardship when work cannot be found or when people are simply unable to work. During 2019, we continued to innovate and plan new measures and policies to achieve this aim.

As part of our pre-budget consultation process during 2019, a pre-budget forum was held in Dublin castle in July with over 50 community and voluntary organisations attending. The forum concentrated on six key themes including supports for children and families, retired and older people, sustainable employment and pathways to work, income adequacy and social inclusion and supporting the most vulnerable in society.

In Budget 2020, the Living Alone Allowance was increased by €5 from €9 to €14 per week for over 160,000 pensioners, widows and widowers and over 40,000 people with disabilities. An increase of €10 per week in the income thresholds for the Working Family Payment for families with up to three children was also provided in Budget 2020, as well as an increase of €2 in the Fuel Allowance payment, raising it from €22.50 to €24.50 per week, and bringing its value to €686 over the course of the fuel season for 370,000 households.

In Budget 2020, we increased the weekly rate for a qualified child by €3 for children aged 12 and over and by €2 for those under 12 – recognising that the costs of raising and caring for children rise as they reach secondary school. This was accompanied by a €25 increase in the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance. Additionally, following the introduction of the new pilot program delivering Hot School Meals to 36 schools across the country, benefiting 7,000 children, an additional €4m in funding was provided to allow for the provision of additional hot school meals in 2020.

Foreword Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection Regina Doherty



Furthermore in 2019, work continued to improve access to social welfare for those who are self-employed. This began in 2017 with the extension of Treatment Benefits and Paternity Benefit to the self-employed. In November 2019, a new Jobseeker's Benefit for the Self-Employed scheme was introduced for those paying class S PRSI contributions.

In terms of employment conditions, during 2019 we enacted the Employment Provisions (Miscellaneous) Act 2018 – improving conditions for part-time and low paid workers. I am particularly proud of this legislation and consider it a landmark reform for workers.

Work also continued on the important reform and modernisation of our pension system and the Department completed a significant public consultation that will help to inform Government decisions on the operational structure for the Automatic Enrolment system in March 2019. Auto enrolment is a state sponsored supplementary retirement savings system, in which employees without personal retirement savings will be automatically enrolled into a quality assured retirement savings system. This new system is expected to enrol its first members in 2022.

It is important that economic recovery is broadly based and that all of society can benefit from improvements in the economy and society. Our long-term goals in this respect are set out in a new Social Inclusion Strategy - Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-25 - which was approved by Government in 2019, and subsequently published in early 2020.

As a Government, our top priority for 2020 was to continue our prudent approach to the economy and the management of public spending. Clearly, neither the impact nor scale of COVID-19 on Ireland's society and economy was foreseeable. However, I am proud to say that my Department has, together with the health service, been to the forefront of the Government's response to COVID-19. My Department's response was quick, effective and has supported hundreds of thousands of our citizens in their time of need. It gave people confidence and ensured that they were supported throughout these unprecedented times. I am immensely proud of the contribution my Department and all the staff have made in helping Ireland through these difficult times.

Since my appointment as Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection, I have been consistently impressed by the hard work and commitment of the Department's staff. On behalf of myself and of all in our society I thank them for their dedication, commitment, and tireless work on supporting so many across our country. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time leading the Department and I am proud of the achievements we delivered together.

Foreword Secretary General

John McKeon



This is the third Annual Report on the Department's Statement of Strategy 2017 to 2020 and sets out the progress made during 2019.

For many people 2019 was a year in which the benefits of Ireland's economic recovery became more tangible, with employment reaching record highs, falls in the level of poverty and a number of welcome budget increases in rates of payment across key social welfare payments, implemented from March.

At year-end 2019, approximately 2.36 million people were working in Ireland; the highest level of employment seen in the history of the State, with seasonally adjusted unemployment falling to 4.8% at end 2019. In addition, Ireland's Gross Domestic Product grew by an estimated 5%, making it the fastest growing economy in the European Union for the sixth consecutive year.

Notwithstanding this progress many people continue to rely on the Department's income supports and to avail of the employment and other services offered by the Department to help them live their lives. This report sets out the work of Department over 2019 giving some detail on the scale, scope and cost of its activities and highlighting just some of the achievements during the year.

For example, during 2019, the Department made good progress in the development of its digital services offering launching a new "Customer Dashboard" on MyWelfare.ie. This service proved invaluable in subsequently helping the Department to respond to the huge claimload received during the Covid-19 crisis in 2020. The service went live at the end of September and customers with a verified MyGovID account can access information about their active Departmental payments and their payment history over the past 24 months. Further digital enhancements included the availability of online applications for the Departments Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance scheme.

During the year the Department worked with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer to develop new plain English content for a new web presence on Gov.ie - the central website for all Government Departments' services and information. This represented a rework of all web content into a plain English format across all the Department's schemes and services, making it much more accessible and easier to understand. This work was largely completed by the end of 2019.

The Department also published its review of the findings from the Strawman Public Consultation Process for an Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System for Ireland, a Policy Review of Carer's Allowance and our response to the recommendations of the review group of the Gender Recognition Act, which included proposals to introduce legislation in this matter.

A number of important new pieces of legislation were enacted in 2019 including, the Parents Leave and Benefit Act 2019 which in turn led to the introduction of a new Parent's Benefit scheme. In addition, a new Jobseeker's Benefit for the Self-Employed scheme was launched for those paying Class S PRSI contributions.

Clearly, this report is being published in 2020, a year in which Irish society and the Irish economy look very different to how they did just a few short months ago. Covid-19 has impacted every citizen in the state in a way that was unimaginable just a few short weeks ago. The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection has been to the forefront of the Government's response, quickly developing the necessary legislation and creating the necessary income supports for those experiencing the health or

Foreword Secretary General

John McKeon



financial impacts of Covid-19. The work to support Irish society through this pandemic continues. As a Department, our priority is, as always, to address the needs of those who most need our help, to reduce poverty and enhance access to employment. This crisis reminds us of the important role this Department plays in Irish society.

Finally, and most importantly, I want to thank all the staff of the Department for their support of the Department's work and their ongoing commitment to serving the public. This dedication is exemplary and without their continued excellence none of the progress or achievements outlined in this report would be possible.

Chapter 1

The Department of Employment Affairs
and Social Protection



Chapter 1 The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

Functions of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

The Department supports the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection in the discharge of governmental, parliamentary and Departmental duties.

The main functions of the Department include:

- advising the Government and formulating appropriate employment, labour market, social protection and social inclusion policies;
- designing, developing and delivering effective and cost-efficient income supports, activation and employment services and providing comprehensive, accurate information to all of its customers;
- working towards providing seamless delivery of services in conjunction with other Departments, agencies and bodies; and
- controlling suspected fraud and abuse in relation to social welfare payments.

The Department's Mission

The Department's mission is to promote active participation and inclusion in society through a framework of employment rights and the provision of income supports, employment services and other services.

Scale of the Department's Business

The Department serves a wide and diverse group of clients including families, people in employment, unemployed people, people with illnesses and disabilities, carers, older people and employers. It has invested significantly in developing relationships with employers to position the Department as their preferred partner for recruitment and employment support services.

The Department administers more than 80 separate schemes and services, which affect the lives of almost every person in the State. Key services include:

- the payment of a wide range of social insurance and social assistance income supports such as jobseeker's payments, illness benefit, disability payments, pensions and supplementary welfare allowances, in addition to the universal payment of child benefit;
- through Intreo, the integration of employment and benefit payment services to ensure that the payment of income supports to people who do not have a job is directly linked to the important task of supporting people in their pursuit of employment, training and education opportunities, in order to improve their life chances;
- the provision of a range of employment supports, guidance and placement services to help jobseekers find and secure employment;
- the delivery of a range of employer services including recruitment services, online publication of job vacancies, employment supports (e.g. wage subsidy schemes available to people with disabilities) and redundancy and insolvency services;
- a range of community services to promote social inclusion and provide a pathway to employment for those who are unemployed;
- supporting and leading analysis and the development of policy in areas including income distribution, minimum wage, social transfers, pension provision, social inclusion, labour market participation and employment services, employment law, public employment services; and
- participation in the implementation of Government strategies for social inclusion under the Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020 - 2025 and the Europe 2020 Strategy for Jobs and Growth.

Chapter 1 The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

Organisation of the Department

At the end of 2019, the Department had a total of 5,823 full-time equivalent staff.

The Department's Organisation Structure as of March 2020 is set out in Appendix 2. From a customer perspective services are provided through:

- centralised offices at various locations countrywide. These offices administer the Department's many schemes and have a range of policy responsibilities. These include offices in Buncrana, Carrick-on-Shannon, Dublin, Dundalk, Letterkenny, Longford, Roscommon, Sligo, and Waterford;
- the Department's network of 62 Intreo Centres provide services primarily to jobseekers and single parents; and
- a range of service partners including Branch Office providers, Local Employment Services, Jobclubs, JobPath, Community Employment, Tús providers and EmployAbility companies.

Table 1: Staff Numbers - Full Time Equivalents

All Permanent Staff - by Grade	December 2017	December 2018	December 2019
Secretary General	1	1	1
Deputy Secretary	1	1	1
Assistant Secretary	9	10	11
Principal Officer	59.6	56.4	63.2
Medical Assessor	30.3	28.1	29.1
Assistant Principal	271.1	274.3	282.5
Administrative Officer	24.4	24.5	24.5
Higher Executive Officer	1495.6	1501	1466
Executive Officer	1477.1	1398.6	1397.6
Clerical Grades	2508.9	2513.3	2398.1
Service Grades	146.2	145.7	147.8
Total Permanent Staff	6025.1	5954.2	5822.8

Chapter 1 The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

Offices and statutory bodies under the aegis of the Department

- **The General Registrar's Office**

The General Registrar's Office is responsible for the registration of births, stillbirths, adoptions, marriages, civil partnerships and deaths in the State and operates a genealogical research facility. Day-to-day delivery of the registration service is provided by the Health Service Executive, through a network of Civil Registration Service offices across the State.
- **The Social Welfare Appeals Office**

This Social Welfare Appeals office is responsible for determining appeals against decisions on social welfare entitlement and insurability of employment.
- **The Social Welfare Tribunal**

This Social Welfare tribunal is a statutory body that deals with cases where entitlement to Jobseeker's Benefit or Jobseeker's Allowance is refused due to an involvement in a trade dispute. Where a person feels that they have been unreasonably deprived of employment because their employer refused or failed to follow the negotiating mechanisms available for settling disputes, they may apply to the Tribunal for an adjudication on the matter.
- **The Pensions Council**

This Pensions council provides advice to the Minister on matters of relevance to pensions, with a focus on policies to support the future sustainability and adequacy of pension provision.
- **The Pensions Authority**

This Pensions authority provides information, regulation and governance in relation to occupational and private pensions.
- **The Citizens Information Board**

Funded by the Department, the Citizens Information Board is the national agency responsible for supporting the provision of information, advice and advocacy on social and public services through the Citizens Information Services, and for the provision of the Money Advice and Budgeting Service. The Money Advice and Budgeting Service, in turn, provides Abhaile - a service to help homeowners find a resolution to their home mortgage arrears.
- **The Low Pay Commission**

The principal function of the Low Pay Commission is to examine and make recommendations to the Minister on the appropriate level of the national minimum wage and related matters.
- **The Labour Market Advisory Council**

A Labour Market Advisory Council was established in 2019 to provide advice to the Minister and the Government on the efficient operation of the labour market, with a view to increasing participation rates, minimising unemployment levels and reducing average unemployment durations.

Chapter 2

2019 Performance



Chapter 2: 2019 Performance



Economic and Employment Recovery Continues

While Covid-19 has had a dramatic negative impact on Ireland’s economy in terms of economic growth, employment and unemployment levels, the period immediately prior to the pandemic reflected Ireland’s strong economic performance. At the end of 2019 approximately 2.36 million people were working in Ireland; this was the highest level of employment in the history of the State. The period 2010 – to the end of 2019 economic growth has exceeded 20%. Ireland’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by an estimated 5% in real terms in 2019, making it the fastest growing economy in the EU for the sixth consecutive year.

In employment terms:

The Irish labour market continued to perform strongly. Employment increased by 3.5% in 2019, bringing total employment to 2,361,200 people, the highest number in the history of the State.
While overall employment is higher than the pre-crisis peak of 2007, the growth has been characterised by an increase in female employment (153,000 more women are at work now than in 2007).
The annual increase of 79,900 (+3.5%) in employment was comprised of an increase of 41,900 (+3.4%) in male employment and 38,000 (+3.6%) in female employment over the year.
Full-time employment was up 49,500 (+2.7%), and part-time 30,400 (+6.6%) over the year.
The Irish Labour Market has experienced consistent improvement in recent years, with a seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 4.8% in December 2019.
The long-term unemployment rate decreased from 2.1% to 1.6% during 2019, accounting for 35% of total unemployment in Q4 2019 compared to almost 40% in Q4 2018.
Unemployment levels at the end of 2019 were nearing rates last seen in the pre-economic crisis period.

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Live Register Figures Fall in 2019

At year end, December 2019, 185,300 people (seasonally adjusted, 181,996 non-seasonally adjusted) were signing onto the Live Register. This represents an annual decrease of 17,673 (-8.9%).

There has also been a steady fall in the number of people on the Live Register who are long-term unemployed (unemployed for 12 months or more). The number of long-term claimants on the Live Register in December 2019 was 67,558, representing an annual decrease of 15.1%.

Youth Unemployment Falls in 2019

Irish youth unemployment has fallen from a peak of 31.2% in 2012 to 12.6% in December 2019. Ireland's youth unemployment rate has been below the EU average for several years.

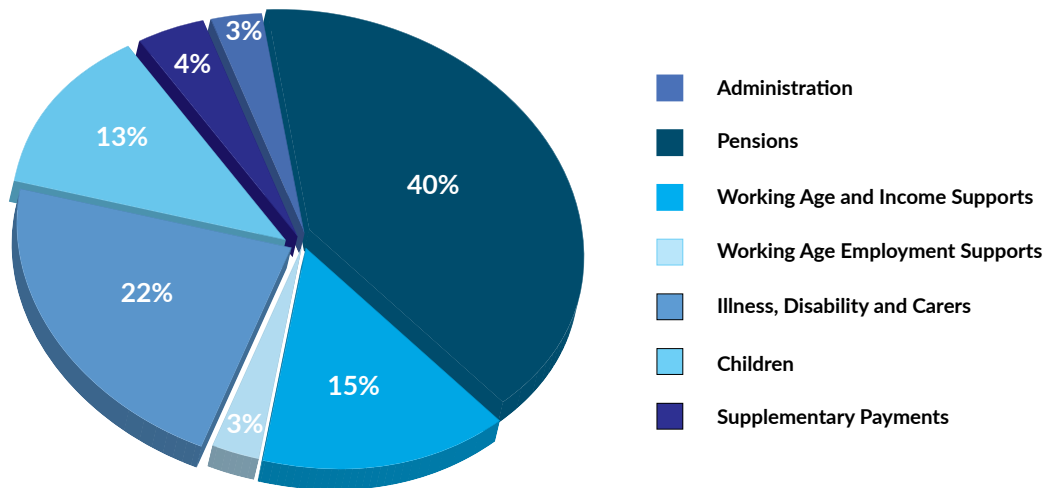
Expenditure by Programme Area 2019

The provisional outturn, or total expenditure of the Department for 2019 is €20.8 billion. The 2020 Revised Estimates Volume, presented to the Dáil in May 2020, provides for expenditure of €28 billion in 2020 for all Department schemes, services and administration. The significant increase in the allocation for 2020 mainly reflects the impact of Covid-19 related expenditure on the Pandemic Unemployment Payment and the Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme. The Department's expenditure is incurred across seven programme areas, as follows:

Programme Area	2019 Provisional Outturn*	2020 Revised Estimate	Percentage of Total Expenditure
Administration	€638,705,000	€658,968,000	3.1%
Pensions	€8,215,062,000	€8,425,470,000	39.6%
Working Age Income Supports	€3,259,020,000	€7,755,150,000	15.7%
Working Age Employment Supports	€694,007,000	€2,748,328,000	3.3%
Illness, Disability and Carers	€4,505,694,000	€4,752,750,000	21.7%
Children	€2,654,797,000	€2,783,170,000	12.8%
Supplementary Payments, Agencies and Miscellaneous Services	€787,371,000	€916,934,000	3.8%
Total Department Expenditure	€20,754,656,000	€28,040,770,000	100.00%

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Chart 1: Percentage of Total Expenditure by Programme in 2019



Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Organisation and Key Activities 2019

Table 3: 2019 at a Glance

Finance		Staff and Services			
Overall Budget 2019	€20.89 billion	Number of phone enquiries received	8,700,000	Number of Intreo Centres and branch offices	121
Gross voted public expenditure %	27%	Number of PSCs issued	516,000	Number of permanent staff	5823
Spend on salaries, support services and payments to service providers	€640 million	Number of Personal Public Service Numbers (PPSN) allocated	196,000	Number of schemes and services	Over 80
Employment Services		Payments		Control	
Job opportunities advertised on JobsIreland	Over 80,000	Applications processed	2.17 million	Control reviews	Over 600,000
Number of events for Jobsweek	123	Weekly payment recipients	Over 1.3 million	Control savings	€505 million
Participants in training, and employment programmes	23,481	Monthly Child Benefit recipients	630,000	Prosecutions of suspected fraud*	492
Jobseeker case officer engagements	185,520	Individual payments made	78.8 million	Monies recovered	€82 million

*before Courts as of end December 2019

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Number of Recipients by Scheme 2019

Scheme	2019
State Pension (Contributory)	431,224
State Pension (Non-Contributory)	94,854
Widow/Widower's or Surviving Civil Partner's Contributory Pension	122,502
Jobseeker's Allowance	138,867
Jobseeker's Benefit	34,807
One-Parent Family Payment	39,533
Supplementary Welfare Allowance (Basic)	15,779
Maternity Benefit	21,479
Paternity Benefit	851
Carer's Allowance	84,028
Carer's Benefit	3,173
Disability Allowance	146,755
Invalidity Pension	58,168
Illness Benefit	49,313
Occupational Injury Benefit	1,314
Child Benefit-Families	637,007
Working Family Payment	53,104
Domiciliary Care Allowance	41,939
Household Benefits	450,800
Free Travel	966,206
Direct Provision	4,150
Total Recipients	2,077,840

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Social Inclusion and Poverty

Progress made towards reaching the national social target for poverty reduction is reported annually in the Social Inclusion Monitor (SIM). The 2017 Monitor¹ was published in May 2019, and is based on the data from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) for 2017.

The most recently available Survey on Income and Living Conditions data is for the year 2018 and was published by the CSO in November 2019². The results reflected the impact of the ongoing economic recovery and employment growth experienced in 2018 and show that some of the main indicators are at their lowest levels since 2008/2009.

The main changes included:

- a significant reduction in the consistent poverty rate which fell to 5.6% in 2018, down from 6.7% in 2017. This means that some 49,000 people are no longer living in poverty;
- a significant reduction in the basic deprivation rate, which fell to 15.1%, down from the 2017 figure of 18.8%. This is a continuation of the yearly decline in deprivation rates since the peak level of 30.5% in 2013;
- the rate of consistent poverty among children has fallen to 7.7% (92,000 children), down from 8.8% (105,000 children) in 2017. Having reached a high of 12.7% in 2013, the rate is now lower than the 2009 level;
- the Irish contribution to the Europe 2020 poverty target (measured by combined poverty) also improved. The 'combined poverty' rate in 2018 was 23.5%, down 14.2 % from a peak of 37.7% in 2013;
- the at-risk-of-poverty rate decreased from 15.7% to 14.0% in 2018. The at-risk-of-poverty threshold was €13,723 per annum or €262.99 per week for a single person; and
- Ireland's Gini Coefficient for 2018 was 28.9 which is below the EU average of 30.8.

Employment continues to be a significant factor when considering the poverty figures. The 2018 consistent poverty rate for those aged 16 years and over in employment is 1.6%, in comparison to 27.6% for those aged 16 years and over who are unemployed.

Similarly, the 2018 consistent poverty rate for households where there is no-one at work is 17.8%, whereas for households where one person is at work the rate is 5.4% and where two people are at work the rate is unchanged at 0.8%.

The continued growth of the economy, together with the increasing number of people in employment and the welfare measures introduced in recent budgets, is expected to result in further reductions in the number of people in consistent poverty, at risk of poverty or experiencing deprivation in 2019.

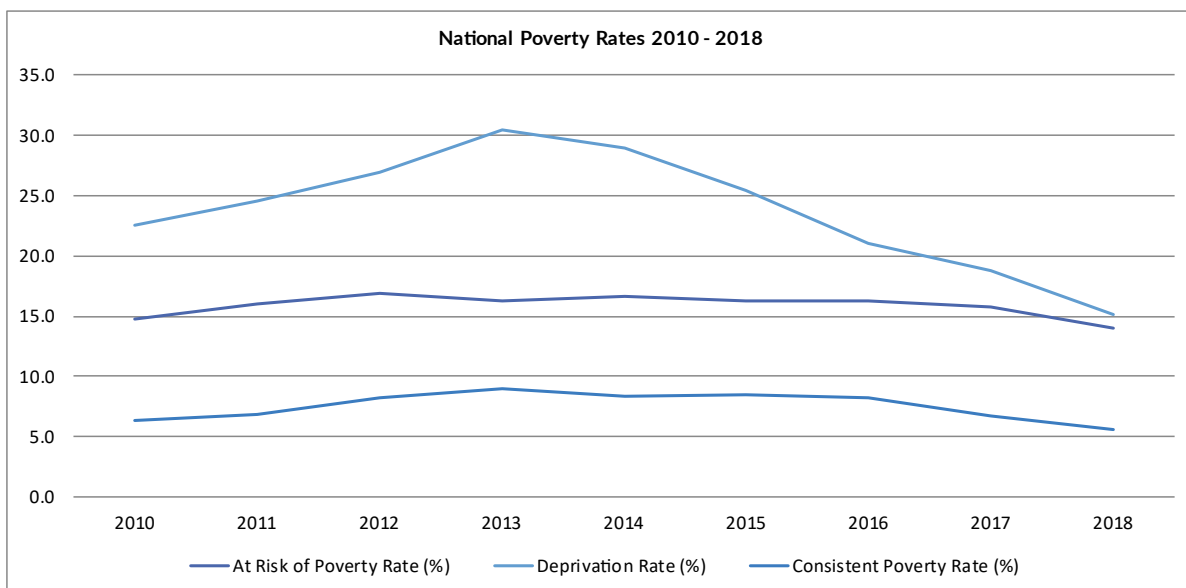
The trends in the three main national poverty indicators for the period 2010-2018 can be seen on the next page.

1 <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/156b21-social-inclusion-monitor/#2017>

2 <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-silc/surveyonincomeandlivingconditionssilc2018/>

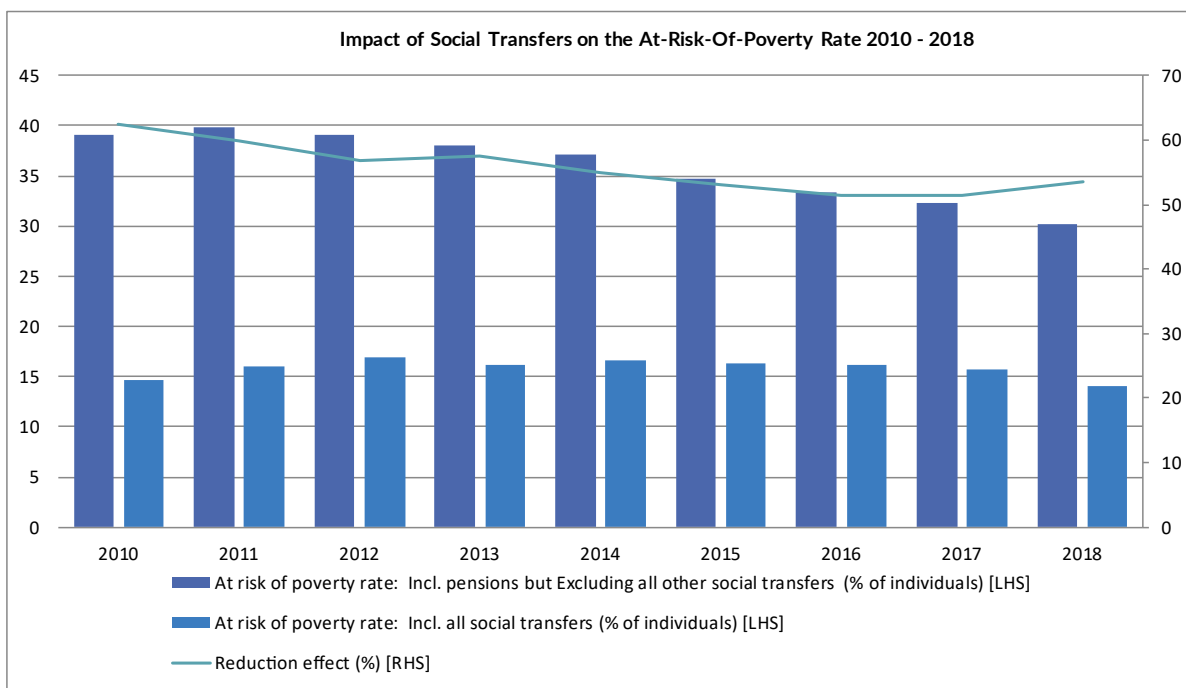
Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Poverty and Deprivation Rates for the period 2010 - 2018



Impact of Social Transfers on the At-Risk-of-Poverty rate

Social transfers in 2018 continued to perform strongly in reducing the *at-risk-of-poverty* rate. Social transfers (excluding pensions) reduced the *at-risk-of-poverty* rate from 30.2% to 14.0%, an absolute reduction of 16.2%. This represents a poverty reduction effect of 54%. Ireland remains one of the best performing EU Member States in reducing poverty through social transfers.



Source: Survey on Income and Living Conditions 2018, www.cso.ie

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Research into Funeral Poverty

In Budget 2020, the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection allocated €60,000 of funding to support the Irish Hospice Foundation in carrying out a research project into funeral poverty and the wider economic impact of bereavement in Ireland.

Approximately 30,000 people die in Ireland each year. Research indicates that each death has a significant impact on between 4 and 10 people.

Bereavement affects individuals and families in several ways, due to funeral costs, additional death-related expenses and loss of benefit or household income. Funeral poverty occurs when the cost of a funeral exceeds a person's ability to pay. It is a real concern for many bereaved people.

The Irish Hospice Foundation, supported by the Pensions Policy Unit of the Department, will conduct this research into the impacts of bereavement and how they can best be addressed.

The aims of the research project are as follows:

- engage, capture and build on experience and learning from other jurisdictions and other organisations with an interest in this area;
- establish a picture of the prevalence and realities of funeral poverty in Ireland and explore the economic impact on families of funerals and bereavement;
- explore the wider impact of bereavement on the Irish economy; and
- foster a deeper understanding at State level of the potential for social support to alleviate these financial impacts.

Funding from the Department will support the research which is now due to be completed during 2021, (the Covid-19 Emergency, has delayed the timeline for production of the final report).

The Irish Hospice Foundation issued a request for tender to engage a researcher in early February 2020. The Irish Hospice Foundation intends to have a researcher engaged by mid 2020, and the final report is due in 2021.

Chapter 2: 2019 Performance



Implementing Budget 2019 - €362m in additional expenditure

Budget 2019 saw further progress in the Programme for Partnership Government commitment to improvements in welfare payments for older people, people with disabilities, people who are ill and carers, among others. This budget provided for an increase in all weekly social welfare payments and focused on improving the economic and social wellbeing of children and families through a range of targeted and enhanced supports. It also saw a further enhancement in the social insurance entitlements available to self-employed workers. These measures accounted for an additional €362 million in overall expenditure. From March 2019, the maximum rate of all weekly payments was increased by €5 and proportionate increases were provided for qualified adults and those on reduced rates of payment.

Increased Payments to Families and Children

Budget 2019 also provided for the introduction of a new Parent's Benefit scheme, which allows both parents to access paid parental leave in the first year of their child's life. Both parents now have access to two weeks' each of this benefit, which will be paid at €245 per week, the same rate as Maternity Benefit and Paternity Benefit. The new scheme was introduced in November 2019.

In recognition of the need for greater income support for welfare-dependent households with children, the payment in respect of qualified children increased again in Budget 2019, by €2.20 (to €34 per week) for children under the age of 12 years, and by €5.20 (to €37 per week) for children aged 12 and over. The additional increase for children aged 12 and over recognised the higher costs faced by families with older children.

The income disregards for the One-Parent Family Payment and Jobseeker's Transition Payment both increased by €20, from €130 to €150 per week. This measure helps to encourage one parent families to stay in and return to work by increasing the amount of money they can receive from employment without reducing their social welfare payments.

A maintenance disregard was also introduced for the Working Family Payment, with a €95.23 per week disregard in respect of housing costs, and the balance of any maintenance being assessed at a rate of 50%.

The Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance increased by €25, from €125 to €150 for children aged 4 to 11, and from €250 to €275 for young people aged 12 to 22. A pilot programme delivering hot school meals to 7,200 children in 36 (DEIS Schools) Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools, at a cost of €1 million, commenced in 2019.

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Jobseeker's Benefit for the Self-employed

A new Jobseeker's Benefit for the self-employed scheme was introduced on 1 November 2019 for those paying Class S PRSI contributions. The new scheme is available to self-employed PRSI contributors who are no longer engaged in self-employment. This scheme builds on other significant social welfare improvements for self-employed people in recent years.

Many of the features of the existing Jobseeker's Benefit (available to those paying PRSI Classes A, H or P) apply to the new scheme including:

- a person must be capable of, available for and genuinely seeking work;
- a self-employed person who loses their self-employment will have to satisfy the qualifying conditions for the new scheme including satisfying a PRSI contribution requirement;
- rates of payment are the same as those paid to those receiving the historic Jobseeker's Benefit – the maximum personal weekly rate is currently €203;
- payments and increases are aligned with this Jobseeker's Benefit; and
- the duration for the new scheme will be for six or nine months dependent on the number of PRSI contributions, like the existing scheme of Jobseeker's Benefit for employees.

Recipients will be required to participate in the Department's activation processes such as referral to group information sessions, one to one interviews with a case officer and subsequent case officer engagement and support to find employment/self-employment.

Self-employed persons who do not have enough contributions and who are operating businesses at low levels of income, can continue to access the means tested Jobseeker's Allowance, if they satisfy the conditions of the scheme.

**Being your own boss
can be great.
We're here when
it's not.**

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Chapter 2: 2019 Performance



Scheme for Self-employed Professional Artists on Jobseeker's Allowance

A pilot scheme for self-employed artists on Jobseeker's Allowance, was launched in June 2017. It is an initiative under the Creative Ireland Programme.

The scheme, which initially applied to visual artists and writers who are classified as self-employed artists, exempts them from jobseeker's activation (for example having to meet with a Department case officer) for 12 months, however the other scheme conditions (including a means test) continue to apply.

The pilot scheme was reviewed in 2019 and it was decided to extend it on a permanent basis to a wide range of other self-employed artists, including those working in the performing arts and film. The scheme was extended from September 2019 and over 100 professional artists were availing of the scheme in December 2019.

Social Welfare Christmas Bonus

The Christmas Bonus recognises the needs of people who are long-term financially dependent on their social welfare payment for all or most of their income. It helps people meet the extra expenses incurred over the period and provides a boost for local economies. In 2018, the Christmas Bonus was paid at a rate of 100% of the weekly rate of payment for the first time since 2008. In December 2019, the bonus was once again paid at 100% to over 1.2 million long-term social welfare recipients, including pensioners, people with disabilities, carers, lone parents and the long-term unemployed.

Other Payments

The 2019 Fuel Allowance season was increased by one week, from 27 weeks to 28 weeks. This increased the total fuel allowance paid over the fuel season by €22.50, from €607.50 to €630.00.

Funding for the Free Travel and Free TV Licence schemes was increased by €5 million for each scheme.

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Social Impact Assessment of Budget 2019

Each year the Department publishes its social impact assessment of the welfare and income tax measures in the recent budget. The assessment builds on prior analyses prepared by the Department to inform Ministerial deliberations on the budget. The publication is intended to contribute to public understanding of the impact of budgetary policy.

Social impact assessment is an evidence-based methodology which estimates the likely effects of policies on household incomes, families, poverty and access to employment. It uses the ESRI tax/welfare model, SWITCH, to simulate the impact of budgetary changes on a representative sample of households drawn from the CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions.

In February 2019, the Department published its social impact assessment of the welfare and income tax measures in Budget 2019. As well as the main welfare and income tax measures in Budget 2019, the assessment also took account of the increase in the national minimum wage.

The principal finding was that average household incomes would increase by 0.7% (€7.40 per week) as a result of Budget 2019. The bottom two income quintiles gained most, with smaller gains among the middle and top quintiles. The bottom quintile gained over twice that of the top quintile (1.3% compared to 0.5%). Welfare measures primarily benefitted lower-income households whereas income tax measures were most beneficial to those in higher-income households.

The assessment found that non-earning households (lone parents, couples with and without children and single people) gained most from Budget 2019 (with an increase of between 2.5% and 3.3%). The assessment showed that social transfers continued to perform well in reducing poverty with an estimated 0.2% reduction in the population at-risk-of-poverty.

The full Budget 2019 Social Impact Assessment is available on the Department's website www.gov.ie/deasp.

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Social Inclusion Forum 2019



In May 2019, the Department convened the 15th Social Inclusion Forum of stakeholders to address issues relating to poverty and social inclusion. The theme of the forum was 'Collaborative Working at Local and National Level'.

This forum gives people who are directly affected by poverty and social exclusion, and those who work with them, a voice in the development and implementation of the policies that directly affect them.

The event also provides a forum for wider public consultation and discussion on social inclusion issues between officials from Government Departments, community and voluntary organisations and people experiencing poverty, in relation to the updated National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2015 - 2017 and its successor, which was developed in 2019.

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

2019 Pre-Budget Forum



📷 **Minister Doherty and Minister McGrath with attendees at the Pre-Budget Forum 2019.**

The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection has held an annual Pre-Budget Forum for over 30 years. In 2019, it was hosted by Minister Regina Doherty and Minister of State for Disability issues, Finian McGrath and moderated by Suzy Byrne in Dublin Castle on 5th July. It offers a unique opportunity for the community and voluntary sector, employee and employer representatives attending to present their views on what they feel should be included and prioritised in Budget 2020. It helped to inform the Minister and officials in the Department on how the budget could be targeted to those most in need.

“ **A very professional, well-organised and practical event. An example of a positive engagement between the DEASP and representatives of stakeholder groups with an open exchange of ideas and a solution-focused process.** ”

Feedback from an attendee at the 2019 Pre-Budget Forum.

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Budget 2020 Measures Announced



Budget 2020 was framed in a period of uncertainty and within tighter financial parameters than recent years. Despite this, a series of targeted measures were introduced, focusing on the most vulnerable people in Irish society.

All social welfare measures announced came into effect in January 2020, and include:

- a €5 increase to the Living Alone Allowance. This increases the payment from €9 to €14 per week for over 160,000 pensioners, widows and widowers and over 40,000 people with disabilities;
- increases in the qualified child payment by €3 per week for children aged 12 and over and by €2 per week for those aged under 12, bringing the rates to €40 and €36 respectively;
- a further increase in the earnings disregard for the One-Parent Family payment and Jobseeker's Transition Payment by €15, from €150 to €165 per week, increasing the incomes of working lone parents;
- enhancement of the School Meals programme to deliver hot meals instead of cold lunches to up to 35,000 children;
- restoration of the full-rate of Jobseeker's Allowance for 25-year-olds; and, for 18 to 24-year olds, payment of the full rate for young people living independently and in receipt of State housing supports;
- an increase of €10 per week in the income thresholds for the Working Family Payment for families with up to 3 children;
- an increase in the Fuel Allowance payment by €2, raising the payment from €22.50 to €24.50 per week, and bringing its value to €686 over the course of the fuel season for 370,000 households;
- the introduction of a disregard for Blind Welfare Allowance in means-tested social welfare payments; and
- an increase in the hours that carers can work or study outside the home from 15 hours to 18.5 hours per week.

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Measures for Families and Children

One-Parent Family payment and Jobseeker's Transitional payment recipients will receive an increase of €3 for child dependents aged 12 and over, and €2 for children under 12. This corresponds to €40 and €36 respectively.

The income disregard for the One-Parent Family payment and Jobseeker's Transitional payment will increase by €15, from €150 to €165 per week.

The income thresholds for the Working Family Payment have increase by €10 per week for families with up to three children This will ensure that families already availing of this employment support will benefit from an additional €6 per week.

As part of Budget 2020, €150,000 was allocated to the Department to examine international best practice in relation to maintenance payments by liable relatives and on how Ireland can achieve better outcomes in a proactive manner for families. This allocation will be used to support a judge-led "Child Maintenance Review Group" which will provide recommendations as to how to make concrete and practical improvements in this complex area.

The Child Maintenance Review Group's work are to commence work will get underway soon and its purpose is to consider and make recommendations on:

- the current treatment within the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection of child maintenance payments;
- the current provisions relating to the liable relatives regarding child maintenance; and
- the establishment of a State Child Maintenance Agency.

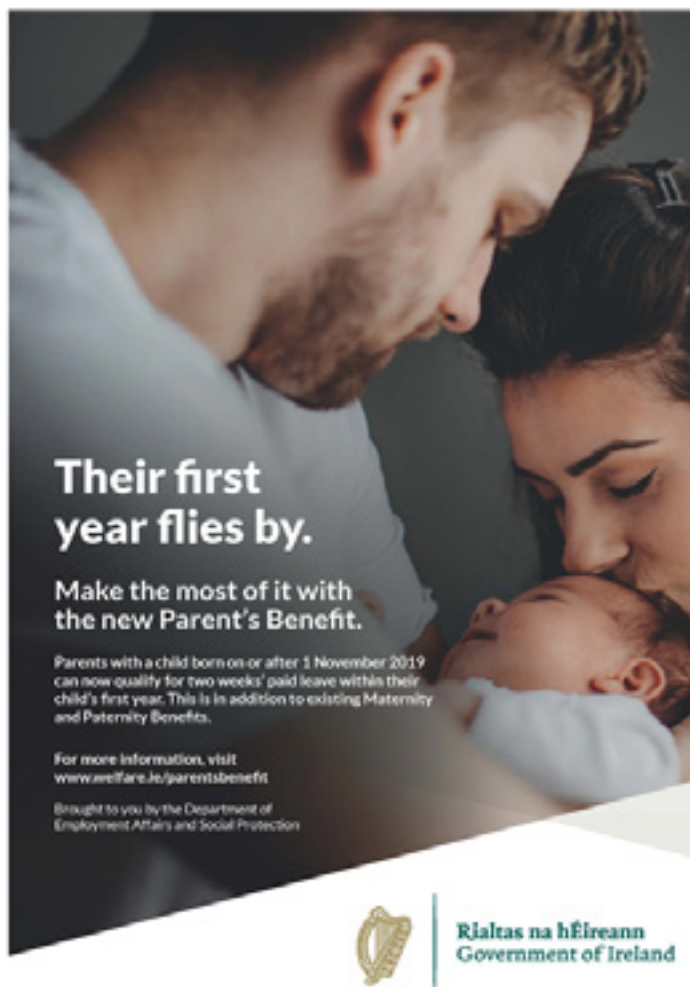
Jobseeker's Allowance and Supplementary Welfare Allowance

Budget 2020 abolished the age-related reduced rate of payment for 25-year olds, and provided for the payment of up to the maximum weekly personal rate of €203 for Jobseeker's Allowance recipients and €201 for Supplementary Welfare Allowance, an increase from the 2018 rate of €157.80. This measure is effective from January 2020.

For jobseekers aged 18-24 years who are living independently and are directly in receipt of State housing supports, Budget 2020 increased Jobseeker's Allowance and Supplementary Welfare Allowance to the maximum weekly personal rate of Jobseeker's Allowance (€203) or Supplementary Welfare Allowance (€201). This measure is effective from January 2020.

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Parent's Benefit



Parent's Benefit advertisement by DEASP 2019

In 2019, the Department introduced a new Parent's Benefit scheme. It is available in respect of any child born or placed with their adoptive parents from 1 November 2019.

The benefit is available to new parents who are on Parent's Leave from work to care for their child and covered by PRSI.

This measure provides two weeks payment to each parent of a child, aged under one year or in the first year following an adoption.

The Parent's Benefit scheme is designed to be family-friendly and flexible, allowing parents to take one week or two at a time. Each parent will be able to take this new paid leave any time during their child's first year.

When a parent chooses to avail of this new leave to spend additional time with their baby, they will be entitled to a payment of €245 per week from the Department.

This Parent's Leave and Benefit is an additional entitlement and does not affect any existing entitlements such as maternity, paternity or adoptive.

Customer Satisfaction Survey: An award-winning approach to customer engagement

Since 2015, the Department has undertaken customer satisfaction surveys to understand how its customers interact with, and experience, unemployment supports and services offered to jobseekers through Intreo. The surveys provide essential feedback and assist the Department in tailoring and developing its services, while providing an indication of emerging issues and challenges.

Overall jobseeker satisfaction with Intreo and Branch Office services has been consistently high, with scores across touchpoints regularly achieving a score of above 4, from a maximum score of 5.

Building on its success with jobseekers, the customer satisfaction survey will be extended to additional customer groups in 2020.

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

ISSA Certificate Awarded to DEASP for Service Quality



From left to right: Secretary General of the ISSA Marcelo Abi-Ramia Caetano, Secretary General of the DEASP John McKeon and President of the ISSA Prof. Dr Joachim Breuer.

The DEASP is a member of International Social Security Association (ISSA), which is based in Geneva. ISSA is the world's leading international organisation for social security institutions, Government departments and agencies, with 320 member institutions in over 150 countries. ISSA provides guidelines on a number of different aspects of social security such as communication by social security institutions, return to work and integration and governance.

In 2019, the DEASP was awarded the ISSA Certificate of Excellence in recognition of the Department's application of the International Social Security Association (ISSA) guidelines on service quality. This is evidence of the Department's ongoing commitment to the principles of service quality and in providing high quality services to those who need the support of the Department.

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Redundancy, Insolvency and Debt Recovery Activity in 2019

The Redundancy Payments Scheme is governed by the Redundancy Payments Act 1967 (as amended) and provides for eligible employees to be paid from the Social Insurance Fund where an employer is unable to make the statutory redundancy payment.

Under the Protection of Employees (Employers' Insolvency) Acts, 1984 – 2004, the Insolvency Payments Scheme addresses situations where an employer has become legally insolvent. A liquidator appointed to wind up the business can submit applications on behalf of employees for outstanding entitlements. This includes arrears of pay, holiday pay, pay in lieu of minimum notice, some unpaid pension scheme deductions and various awards made under employment rights legislation.

The Department administers both schemes, and recorded a decrease in applications in 2019.

Table 5: Redundancy and Insolvency Scheme Applications 2019

Redundancy and Insolvency Scheme Applications	2017	2018	2019
Redundancy Payments Scheme Applications	3,056	2,845	2,446
Insolvency Payments Scheme Applications	2,875	2,287	2,114

Both schemes are supported by an online application option. All insolvency applications, and almost 85% of redundancy applications, were made online in 2019.

Debt Recovery of Redundancy and Insolvency Payments

As redundancy and insolvency payments are made on behalf of the employer, every payment becomes a debt against the employer. It is the Department's policy to make every effort to recover the debt in full. The Department has a dedicated debt recovery unit, which manages all aspects of the recovery process.

In 2019, the number of employer debtors engaging with the Department increased on previous years as outlined in the table below.

Table 6: Redundancy and Insolvency Payments Schemes - Recovery of Employer Debt 2019

Year	Amount recovered	Number of repayments	Number of debtors that made repayments
2016	€10.6m	4,022	585
2017	€6.7m	4,707	758
2018	€9.7m	7,658	924
2019	€12.7m	10,877	1,550

Chapter 2 2019 Performance

Online Services

Over the course of 2019, the Department continued to grow the online services available through MyWelfare and WelfarePartners.

MyWelfare.ie Progress in 2019

The first dedicated advertising campaign for MyWelfare.ie was undertaken in Christmas 2019 to begin to raise awareness of the Department's new online services.

The Department also began work on delivering an important new feature - a customer dashboard. The development of the MyWelfare customer dashboard is transformational in terms of current and future online services the Department can deliver for its customers.

The service went live at the end of September 2019. Customers with a verified MyGovID account can now access the following details on their MyWelfare dashboard:

- status of all their active claims with the Department;
- date of last payment;
- payment amounts over the past 24 months;
- breakdown of payment amounts for certain schemes; and
- filter for payments made within specified dates.

In delivering the customer dashboard, the Department has created services that achieve efficiency in the delivery of services and supports to our customers.

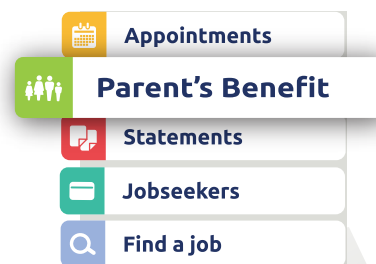
The Government is committed to enhancing its digital services and as part of this commitment the Department added an online pension review application to MyWelfare.ie in January 2019. The online application was firstly proto-typed and repeatedly tested with older people and people in receipt of a State Pension prior to being launched online.

During 2019, 8,551 customers availed of the online application service to assess the value of their State Contributory Pension.

In November 2019, an online application for the new Parent's Benefit scheme went live on MyWelfare.ie. Parent's Benefit is available for all parents of new babies born or children adopted from 1 November 2019. This benefit provides two weeks' paid leave for each parent within their child's first year, which can be taken as either two consecutive weeks or two separate weeks.

The online application for Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance scheme went live on MyWelfare from June to September 2019, with a large uptake of 9,080 claims in this period.

MyWelfare had over 1 million visitors in 2019, recorded over 2.5 million user sessions, and recorded 7.2 million-page views.



Chapter 2 2019 Performance

MyWelfare Scheme applications 2019 v 2018

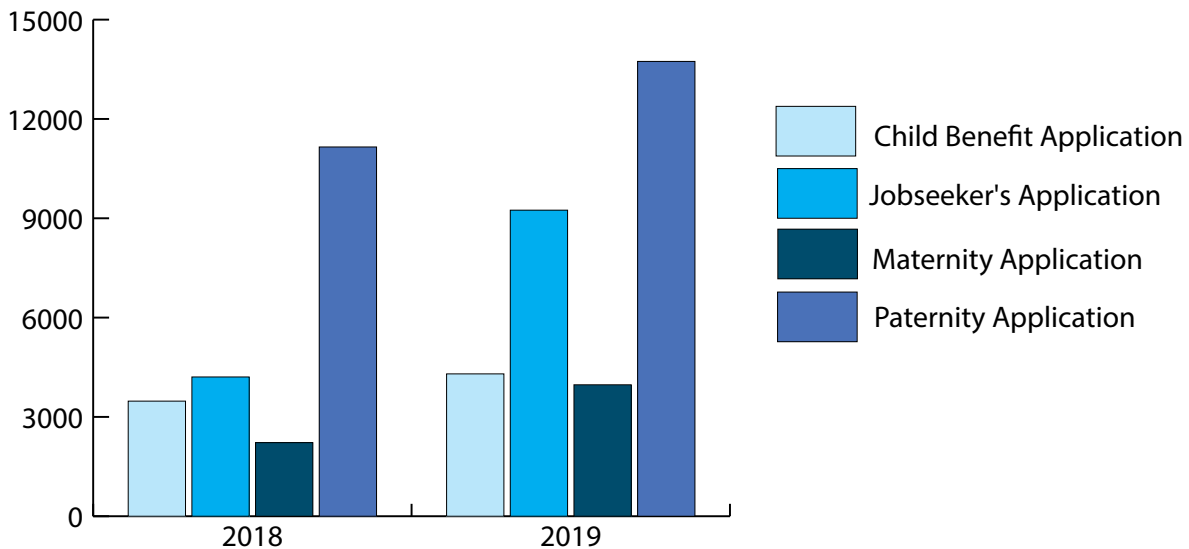


Table 7: Online application by scheme 2019 v 2018

Scheme Application	2018 Total	2019 Total
Child Benefit Application	3,477	4,300
Jobseeker's Application	4,207	9,245
Maternity Benefit Application	2,223	3,971
Paternity Benefit Application	11,154	13,738

Welfare Partners

Welfare Partners is the Department's online portal for key strategic business partners of the Department, these include dentists, opticians and audiologists. These business partners provide services to customers on behalf of the Department.

In 2019, Welfare Partners were the overall winners of two awards; The Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Award and the Ireland eGovernment Health & Medical Award. The judges commended the contribution of Welfare Partners to developing connected Government and the innovative use of the Revenue ROS digital certificate to authenticate users.

In 2019, the Department processed 1.3 million claims, valued at €92.8 million and now 97.2% of practitioners use the online service. This level of uptake has been a major achievement and is a real vote of confidence from our stakeholders on the usability and reliability of this new system.

In May 2019, the Department published its strategy for Welfare Partners which sets out the rationale, principles and the expected benefits this channel will bring to our business partners and the Department.

Chapter 3

Strategic Objectives and Review



Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

The Department's Strategic Objectives 2017-2020

The Statement of Strategy 2017-2020 is the Department's eleventh Statement of Strategy.

The Department's overall mission for the period is "to promote active participation and inclusion in society through the framework of employment rights and the provision of income supports, employment services and other services."

The Department's overall objective for 2017 to 2020 is "to continue putting our clients at the centre of all our operations, providing an efficient and effective service and to continue developing our staff, structures and processes."

The statement strategy identifies three Strategic Objectives to focus the activities of the Department in pursuit of this mission:

OBJECTIVE

Put the client at the centre of policy and service delivery

1

OBJECTIVE

Drive cost, efficiency and effectiveness

2

OBJECTIVE

Develop staff, structures and processes

3

Chapter 3: Strategic Objectives and Reviews

OBJECTIVE

Put the client at the centre of policy and service delivery

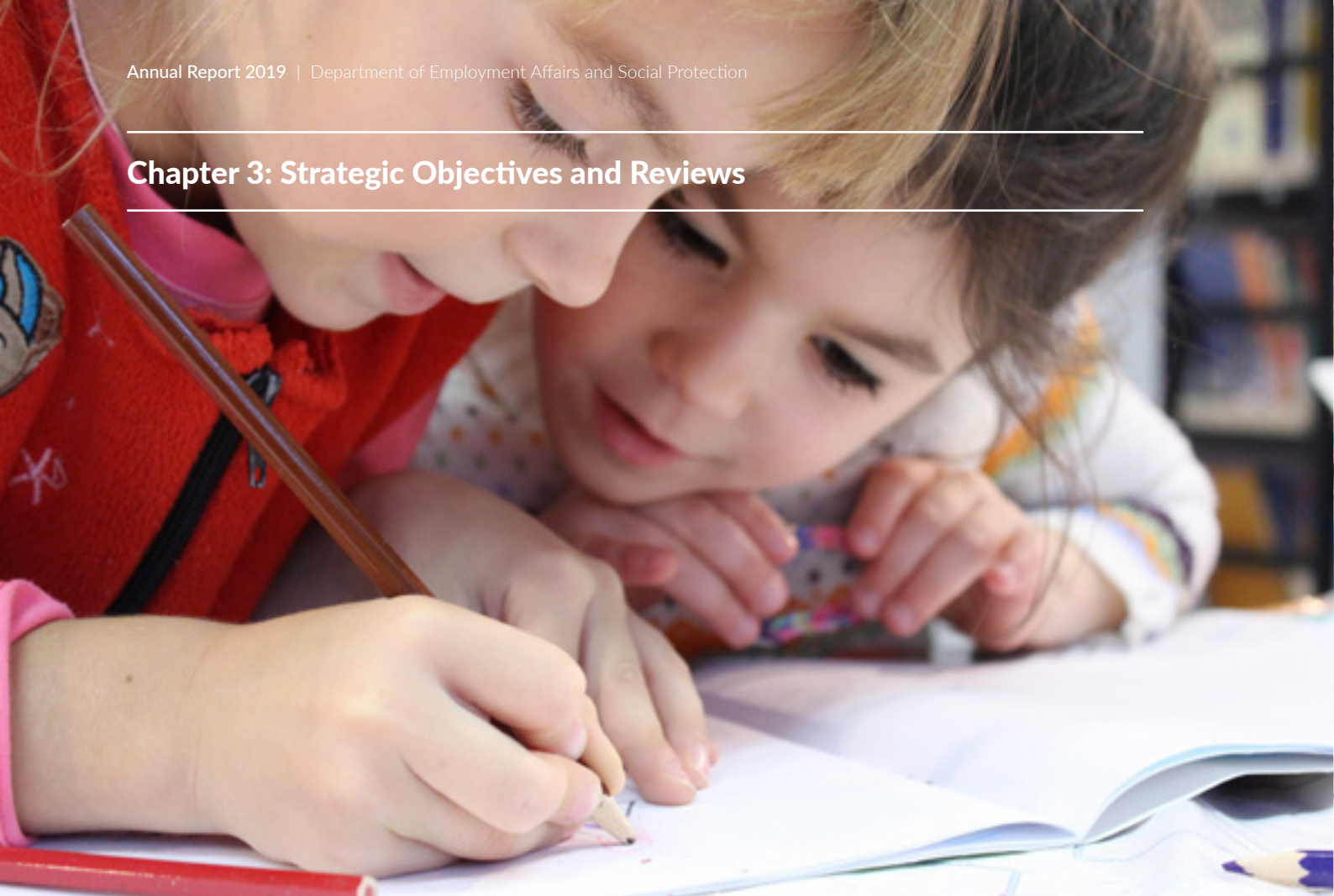
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Objective 1 Put the client at the centre of policy and service delivery

Objective 1 of the Department's Statement of Strategy 2017 to 2020 is a commitment to put the client at the centre of its services and policies. High-level strategies identified to deliver on this objective include:

- delivering client focused commitments in the Programme for a Partnership Government and broader Government policy;
- contributing to government social protection and employment policy formulation through economic analysis and evaluation. This is supported by the Department's participation in the Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service's Medium-Term Strategy 2016 to 2019;
- ensuring speedy access to accurate decisions, payment and reviews, for all schemes and services;
- focusing on maximising employability by providing income support, targeted activation and training referral, development and employment services;
- working with other Departments, offices, agencies, employers and stakeholders in providing client-centred services;
- attaining better outcomes by tackling poverty for children and families, people of working age, people with disabilities and older people by providing appropriate income supports;
- ensuring that the Department's services and information resources are accessible to people with disabilities; and
- identifying client service requirements and establishing client satisfaction levels through regular surveys and the provision of feedback mechanisms.

Chapter 3: Strategic Objectives and Reviews



Children and Families

Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance

The Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance helps eligible families with the extra costs of clothing and footwear when children start school each autumn. The rates of the payment for the 2019 scheme were €150 for children aged 4 to 11, and €275 for children aged 12 years and over.

In 2019, as in previous years, most of the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance payments were paid automatically, with no application required by customers. This process identified 115,540 families that, on the basis of the information available, qualified under the scheme and these payments were made in July 2019.

2019 was also the first year in which people could apply for Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance online at www.mywelfare.ie. In total, just over 39,500 applications were processed during 2019 by the Department.

Overall 143,150 families and some 263,400 children, benefitted from the scheme, at a cost of €53.5 million during 2019.

Chapter 3: Strategic Objectives and Reviews



📷 Minister Doherty launching the Hot School Meals Scheme in Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School in Goldenbridge, Inchicore.

School Meals Programme

The School Meals Programme provides funding towards the provision of food services for disadvantaged school children. Funding was provided to 1,580 schools and organisations, supporting over 250,000 children; at a cost of €54.3 million during 2019. The programme is an important component of policies to encourage school attendance and extra educational achievement.

As part of Budget 2019, it was announced that the Department would commence a pilot scheme from September 2019; providing hot school meals in primary schools at a cost of €1 million for 2019 and €2.5 million in 2020.

An evaluation of the hot school meals pilot is being undertaken to determine if the pilot has been successful; early indications suggest that it is very positive.

Budget 2020 provides for an extension of the hot school meals option from September 2020 to a further 35,000 primary school children who are currently receiving a cold lunch option.

This Department has implemented an inspection programme for all schools and organisations participating in the scheme. Approximately 1,500 organisations have been inspected since August 2015. In 2019, some 247 schools and organisations were inspected, and the results are currently being analysed. Inspections support the schools and organisations in ensuring that the scheme is delivered in line with the Department's policy, and thereby ensuring a maximum benefit to the children.

Each school has a Service Level Agreement in place, which clearly sets out both the Department's and the school's/organisations' obligations in implementing the scheme.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Gender Recognition Act

In November 2019, the Minister published her response to the recommendations of the review group established to conduct a review of the Gender Recognition Act 2015. This included proposals to introduce legislation that would:

- simplify the path to legal gender recognition for children aged 16 and 17 years, by introducing an arrangement for self-declaration, with parental consent; a simple revocation process; and by making family mediation support available on a voluntary basis;
- for 16 and 17-year olds, record on the gender recognition certificate, that it is awarded on the basis of self-declaration only (in order to bring greater clarity to the fact that legal gender recognition is separate and distinct from any question of medical intervention);
- provide that a gender recognition certificate may be used to provide proof of change of name as well as proof of change of gender; and
- provide that Irish citizens born outside the State and living outside the State would be allowed to apply for a gender recognition certificate.


While the legislative proposals relate to children over 16 years, the Minister, in conjunction with the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, also agreed to commission research to examine issues of concern relating to children under 16 years.

In addition, the review group recommended extending legal gender recognition to non-binary people, while also recognising the complexity of the issue and acknowledging that a comprehensive impact analysis may be required. An interdepartmental group has been established and is tasked with carrying out this impact assessment and submitting a report to Government for consideration by the end of 2020.

In the meantime, Government Departments and other public bodies will take positive steps to improve the position of non-binary people.

A number of other recommendations are more administrative in nature and are being implemented, or will be progressed under Ireland's National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019 – 2021.



 Minister Regina Doherty and Moninne Griffith, Chair of the Review Group of the Gender Recognition Act 2015 with members of the Review Group

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Civil Registration Legislation

The Civil Registration Act 2019 was enacted in May 2019. It is mainly a set of amendments to existing legislation that addresses issues such as:

- making possible the inclusion of the name of a second parent in birth registrations for donor-conceived children, mainly benefiting same-sex female couples;
- aligning civil registration legislation with existing legislation on presumption of paternity;
- a role for a next of kin in providing a Coroner with additional details in relation to a deceased person's particulars;
- sharing of civil registration data and records with a body such as the National Library or National Archives;

- collection of additional details in respect of deceased persons in order that the CSO can comply with obligations under EU Regulations; and
- other technical amendments.

The Civil Law (Presumption of Death) Act 2019 was enacted in July 2019. The primary purpose of this Act is to deal with the civil law status of missing persons. It puts in place a statutory framework which would provide for the making of a presumption of death order by the Courts in respect of missing persons. It is designed to assist the families of missing persons in dealing with the management of the missing person's estate. The Act also introduces provisions in the Civil Registration Act 2004 for the establishment of a register of presumed deaths, providing for registrations to be made on foot of a presumption of death order from the Courts. This will allow family members to obtain a certificate from the registrar in much the same way as obtaining a death certificate. Establishment of this register will also be of genealogical and statistical value.



Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Secondary Benefits

Telephone Support Allowance

The Telephone Support Allowance came into effect in June 2018. This is a targeted payment of €2.50 per week, paid automatically to those in receipt of a qualifying primary payment, as well as both a Living Alone Allowance and Fuel Allowance. At December 2019, 131,562 customers were in receipt of the allowance. The estimated cost of the Telephone Support Allowance was €16.1 million in 2019.

Fuel Allowance

Fuel Allowance is a means-assessed payment to help householders receiving long-term social welfare payments who are unable to provide for their own heating needs. It is paid weekly between October and April at an estimated cost of €240 million in 2019.

The option for qualifying customers to receive their fuel allowance in two lump sum payments was introduced from October 2017. By December 2019, 66,108 individuals (almost 18% of eligible customers) opted to receive their allowance by way of a lump sum payment.

Rent Supplement

In 2019, the rent supplement scheme supported approximately 19,800 tenancies per month at a cost of approximately €125.3 million. In recognition of the difficulties in the rental market, the Department continues to implement a targeted, case-by-case approach that allows for flexibility and supports tenants to remain in their homes.

A protocol arrangement with Threshold operates in the areas where housing supply issues are particularly acute covering Dublin, Cork, Meath, Kildare, Wicklow and Galway City.

During 2019, approximately 1,200 families and individuals, or 24 per week, were supported through increased rent supplement payments.

At the end of 2019, the total number of flexible payments provided to support people in their homes was over 14,300. The Department also provides supports to tenants towards rent deposits and rent in advance under the Exceptional Needs Payment scheme. In 2019, 1,900 such payments were made at a cost of almost €1.4 million.

Under the Housing Assistance Payment scheme, responsibility for the provision of rental assistance to those with a long-term housing need is transferring to Local Authorities. The Housing Assistance Payment was successfully implemented in 2017 completing Action 2.4 of the Rebuilding Ireland - Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness.

The performance of the scheme has remained in line with forecast for 2019, with Rent Supplement recipients declining by approximately 7,500 cases by year end. There are a number of factors for this decline, including: improved macro-economic conditions, on-going Rental Accommodation Scheme and local authority transfers. The most significant feature, however, remains the introduction of Housing Assistance Payment and its associated transfer programme for those with long-term housing needs from Rent Supplement.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Exceptional and Urgent Needs Payments

Under the Supplementary Welfare Allowance scheme, the Department may make a single Exceptional Needs Payment to help meet essential, once-off expenditure which a person could not reasonably be expected to meet out of their weekly income. An Urgent Needs Payment is a once-off payment made to people who may not normally qualify for Supplementary Welfare Allowance but who have an urgent need which they cannot meet from their own resources.

The Emergency Needs Payment scheme is demand-led and payments are made at the discretion of officers from the Department's Community Welfare Service. The Community Welfare Service administer the scheme to ensure that the payments are provided to those most in need of assistance. In 2019, over 92,000 payments issued under the Exceptional Needs Payment and Urgent Needs Payment schemes at a provisional cost of €43 million.

The housing category is the largest expenditure within the scheme and accounts for approximately 60% of the expenditure. There was an increase in expenditure in this category in 2019, which includes support through the payment of rent deposits, rent in advance and assistance towards furniture and household appliances.

Supports for International Protection Applicants

Applicants for International Protection are people who have applied for refugee status or subsidiary protection and whose cases have not been decided by the International Protection Office.

The Department pays Daily Expenses Allowance to protection applicants who reside in the system of direct provision provided by the Department of Justice and Equality. The rate of the allowance, which is for personal incidental expenditure, increased with effect from March 2019 from €21.60 per week per person to €38.80 for adults and €29.80 for each child. Expenditure on the scheme in 2019 was €11.2 million.

Additional supports are provided to applicants for international protection under the Exceptional Needs Payment scheme and the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance.

Since 2018, applicants for international protection who have not received a decision on their application within nine months can apply to the Department of Justice and Equality for a permission to access the labour market. When a protection applicant has permission to access the labour market, they can engage with our Department's case officers and employment supports. In addition, if they are in employment and have children, they may qualify for the Working Family Payment.

During 2019, the Department continued to work with the Department of Justice and Equality to ensure that protection applicants have access to our supports quickly.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

People of Working Age

JobsWeek 2019



Minister Regina Doherty with SIMI representatives at JobsWeek 2019, at Dublin Castle.

In March the Department's Intreo service hosted JobsWeek 2019. Over 123 events were held across the country as part of this annual dedicated week of activity to showcase the services and supports available to both jobseekers and employers.

From 25 to 29 March 2019 it is estimated that some 15,000 jobseekers connected with over 600 employers in 93 events held across the country.

Once again there was an increase in the number of targeted events tailored to meet the needs of specific jobseekers. This approach has been found to produce better measurable outcomes for specific client groups and sectoral employers.

In 2019 seminars were live streamed for the first time. The combination of online and onsite events enhanced the overall success, offering additional options to jobseekers and employers alike.

There was an increase in the number of employer events, which is reflective of the Department's work to encourage employers to engage with us.

The flagship 2019 Intreo Careers Fair at Dublin Castle brought together 2,700 jobseekers and those seeking a new career with employers, education training providers and employment advice services.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Employment Supports

Working Family Payment

The Working Family Payment is an important income support for people in low income employment who have children. It is a weekly tax-free payment that facilitates employment and is important in reducing child poverty and in-work poverty in line with the Government's objectives.

It provides a clear financial incentive for those with children to avail of employment opportunities. As of December 2019, 53,104 individuals received the Working Family Payment in respect of 119,471 children. The expenditure figure for Working Family Payment for 2019 was €397.2 million.

Back to Work Family Dividend

The Back to Work Family Dividend scheme helps to support primary social welfare recipients move into employment and helps reduce child poverty in line with the Programme for Government Commitments. The Back to Work Family Dividend scheme had 5,345 recipients in payment on 31 December 2019 (with 11,048 child beneficiaries). The expenditure figure for Back to Work Family Dividend for 2019 was €18.36 million.

Treatment Benefits

The Treatment Benefit Scheme provides dental, optical and aural services to insured workers, the self-employed and retired people who have the required number of social insurance (PRSI) contributions.

The Department processed and paid 1.3 million treatment benefit claims in 2019. Over 97% of these claims were processed online through the WelfarePartners portal. Some 1.9 million



Receive up to €150 extra per week with Working Family Payment.

The Working Family Payment is money the government pays to working parents depending on the level of their income and how many children they have.

To find out if you qualify, visit www.welfare.ie/wfp or contact your local Intreo Centre.

Brought to you by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection



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Working Family Payment advertisement by DEASP in 2019.

eligibility assessments were also completed via the WelfarePartners portal, with 1.4 million of these having their eligibility to treatment benefits confirmed within seconds. Overall, the Department spent €92.8 million on the treatment benefit scheme in 2019, in respect of 1.3 million completed treatments.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Employment Support Services for individuals

The Department offers a range of employment schemes and other supports to encourage long-term unemployed people to return to work. A number of service-delivery partners work with the Department in the delivery of these schemes and supports, to assist in the smooth transition of people returning to employment.

Participants on the Departments two main schemes - Community Employment and Rural Social Scheme, work an average of 19.5 hours per week. Participants are paid a minimum of €225.50 per week, but this amount may increase, depending on the number of dependents linked to their social welfare status.

Community Employment

The aim of Community Employment is to enhance the employability and mobility of disadvantaged and unemployed persons by providing work experience and training opportunities for them within their communities. It also helps long-term unemployed to re-enter the workforce by breaking their experience of unemployment through a return to work routine.

Schemes are usually sponsored by voluntary and community organisations wishing to benefit the local community. Virtually all participants are engaged in some element of service support and delivery – for example amenities management, arts and culture, sports, childcare and health-related services.

The Community Employment Drug Rehabilitation Programme Framework was implemented in January 2016 to facilitate the participation of individuals referred by drug addiction and treatment services. Participants have access to multiple supports and specialist inputs as required from social, education and health services, as well as the supports provided by this Department.

The programme provides access to recognised qualifications to support ongoing rehabilitation and re-integration into active community and working life.

Rural Social Scheme

The Rural Social Scheme is an income support initiative that provides part-time employment opportunities for farmers or fishers in receipt of certain Departmental payments and who are under-employed in their primary occupation.

The Rural Social Scheme is delivered through a network of 35 local development companies and Údarás na Gaeltachta. The scheme has become a key part of many rural communities, who benefit from the skills and talents of local farmers and fishers. Participants can also improve existing skills, or develop new ones, while performing valuable work in their communities.

Since 2017, all new participants commencing on the Rural Social Scheme must be over 25 years of age; a six-year overall participation limit also applies. This enables other farmers and fishers to avail of the scheme and keeps participants close to the labour market. However, Rural Social Scheme participants who commenced on the scheme prior to 1 February 2017 may remain for the scheme if they continue to satisfy the eligibility conditions.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Services to Employers

Over 80,000 job vacancies were advertised on JobsIreland.ie and on the EURES jobs site. In 2019 a series of training, information workshops and job fairs were held to promote awareness and use of the free JobsIreland.ie online recruitment portal.

EURES and European job opportunities

European Employment Service (EURES)

EURES Ireland through its national co-ordination office and network of advisors provides a European wide recruitment service to employers, and advice and support to jobseekers who wish to work in the EU/EEA.

EURES is a network for cooperation between the public employment services of Member States and the European Commission. Since 2014, a series of changes have taken place in the EURES network across Member States, underpinned by Regulation (EU) 2016/589 which expands the EURES network and makes it an effective instrument for any jobseeker or employer interested in intra-EU labour mobility.

EURES Ireland organises international recruitment projects, jobs fairs and online events on behalf of Irish and European employers. In addition, EURES Ireland works with significant European employers to source vacancies of interest to unemployed Irish workers and with Irish-based companies to help satisfy their specific skills needs in areas such as Information Technology, language skills or nursing and medical fields.

In 2019, EURES Ireland organised a major European Online Job Day event 'Careers in Ireland' which was run in conjunction with the Jobsweek Careers Fair on the 28 March. A total of 48 employers and 1,726 jobseekers participated in the event.

In May 2019, EURES Ireland in collaboration with EURES Spain ran a dedicated onsite and online recruitment event for Irish based employers. Ten employers travelled for the onsite event attracting over 400 jobseekers. In addition, a further 44 employers and 1,712 jobseekers participated online. Participants obtained employment in the hospitality and health sectors and feedback from both employers and jobseekers was very positive. In September, 36 employers travelled to London to participate in an 'Irish Careers Fair'. The purpose of this fair was to support employers to encourage workers from the greater London area to work in Ireland.

EURES Ireland coordinates and implements a 'Co-Sponsored Placement programme' under the Youth Guarantee and 'Your First EURES Job' and 'Reactivate' mobility schemes, which offer jobseekers support in taking up employment, work experience and training in other EU countries. It can also provide financial support towards travel to an interview, re-location and language training etc. This scheme helps employers who are having difficulty recruiting staff with specific skills required to work in their company.



Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

EURES Ireland and Northern Ireland Cross Border Partnership

The EURES Ireland and Northern Ireland Cross Border Partnership, established in 1993, is one of 12 such partnerships in Europe involving 19 countries. Partnership activities are 90% funded through the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation. The Partnership seeks to address the obstacles that cross border workers, employers and jobseekers face by, for example, providing information on cross border taxation issues, social security benefits and medical services. It also encourages opportunities in the cross border region through cross border job fairs, work shadow placements and employability programmes.

Labour Market Advisory Council

A Labour Market Advisory Council was established in 2019 to provide advice to the Minister and the Government on the efficient operation of the labour market, with a view to increasing participation rates, minimising unemployment levels and reducing average unemployment durations.

The Council, which comprises experts from academia, the community and voluntary sector, industry and trade union organisations, will hold its inaugural meeting in 2020.

Potential Labour Market Disruptions

The labour market in Ireland is subject to potential disruptions over the short to medium-term, ranging from challenges such as decarbonisation, rising trade tensions related to Brexit and increased automation.

As part of our Brexit preparedness planning, the Department established the Brexit Liaison Group in conjunction with the Department of Education and Skills and SOLAS. Over time, the membership of the Brexit Liaison Group has been expanded

to include senior officials from several other Government Departments and representatives from State Enterprise Agencies.

Under the auspices of the Brexit Liaison Group, a series of inter-agency collaboration and planning events were hosted across six regional locations (Dundalk, Waterford, Cork, Donegal, Galway and Tipperary) to promote Brexit preparedness, foster inter-agency linkages and raise awareness of existing State supports.

Pathways to Work Strategy 2016–2020

The Pathways to Work Strategy includes 86 actions across 11 Departments and agencies and 10 performance metrics against which progress is measured. By the end of 2019, over 93% of actions were completed or on course for completion. Given the much-improved economic context, the Department is in the process of developing a successor strategy for the period 2020-2025.

The Intreo Public Employment Service is the system of services provided both directly by the State and through contracted services which “help match supply and demand of the labour market through information, placement and active support services at local, national and European level” (European Commission, 2017). The next iteration of the Pathways to Work Strategy will seek to further develop and support the role of the Public Employment Service.

The strategy will also focus on ensuring that better labour market outcomes are achievable for all groups in Ireland’s society, and that our labour force is well positioned to respond to future economic challenges and developments. Moreover, the revised framework will be the successor for the Action Plan for Jobless Households (2017-2020). The strategy will focus on groups that are currently underrepresented in our workforce and who would benefit from closer attachment to the labour market. Strategy publication is expected in mid-2020.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025: Ambition, Goals, Commitments

Development of the new social inclusion strategy continued during 2019, incorporating inputs and views from the community and voluntary sector and the other Government Departments. The new Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025 was completed in 2019, approved by Government and published in January 2020. It is a whole-of-government strategy with a five-year timeframe and will have a mid-term review to facilitate an evaluation of the impact of the Roadmap commitments.

Building on the work of its predecessors, the roadmap aims to reduce the number of people in consistent poverty in Ireland to 2% or less and to position Ireland within the top five countries in the EU under several leading social inclusion measures.

Towards this end, the new roadmap contains seven high level goals with 22 specific targets which will be delivered by 66 unique commitments (actions) across Government. The roadmap will, in addition, act as a reference point and framework for the renewal and development of future sectoral strategies.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System

The Department continues to build on its commitment in 'The Roadmap for Pensions Reform 2018 - 2023', to design and develop a supplementary retirement savings system, known as Automatic Enrolment, by 2022. It is estimated that approximately two thirds of people working in the private sector are not contributing to a supplementary pension. Automatic Enrolment will see a transition from the current system, which is purely voluntary, to one which will, subject to certain parameters, automatically enrol employees into a quality assured retirement savings system. The saver will maintain the freedom of choice to opt-out. The policy objective of automatic enrolment is to encourage long-term saving amongst those who may otherwise suffer an unwanted and significant reduction in living standards at retirement.

An extensive consultation process on a proposed approach to implement Automatic Enrolment – the 'Strawman' proposal – concluded in March 2019. Subsequently, the Department completed an analysis of the substantial material collated from the consultation process, in order to determine how the feedback received may assist with the design of the system. In addition, the Economic and Social Research Institute completed a research project, commissioned by the Department, on the economic impacts of introducing Automatic Enrolment.

Drawing on the findings of the consultation process and of the Economic and Social Research Institute's research, the Government approved, in October 2019, significant elements of the design of the Automatic Enrolment system. This included key decisions in relation to the target membership, the contribution rates, the policies in relation to opting-out and re-enrolment, the administrative arrangements and organisational approach and the investment options.

The Government's decisions on the design of Automatic Enrolment and the timelines for the next steps, along with reports on the findings from the consultation process, the full suite of consultation submissions and the ESRI's analysis, were published on the Department's website in October/November.

In addition, the Department successfully secured funding from the EU's Structural Reform Support Service to provide technical support in the design and implementation of the Automatic Enrolment system. In July 2019 a project team was established led by policy/operational experts from Denmark and Sweden.

The Structural Reform Support Service project team is assisting the Department with a number of areas where work is on-going so as to produce design options for Government to consider. These areas relate to the scope and role of the Central Processing Authority; the nature and functions of the registered providers; the investment framework and funds to be offered by registered providers, including the design of the default fund and the pay-out phase; the design of the State financial incentive; and the phasing of implementation.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Supports for Carers

During 2019, the Department continued to provide and to build on supports for carers. Developments during the year included:

Funding for Family Carers

The Minister approved funding of €1.76 million to provide a range of training and supports for family carers in December 2018 from the Dormant Accounts Action Plan 2018. This provided funding for 12 projects that operated throughout 2019.

The funding focusses on projects that promote training and supports for family carers. It includes the provision of structured training, information and support networks including the development of support groups to assist with transition at the end of the caring role, under the theme of personal and social development of people who are economically or socially disadvantaged. The projects were selected as part of a competitive process, organised by Pobal, that evaluated each of the applications against a number of predefined criteria.

In November 2019, the Dormant Accounts Fund Programme 2020 was launched, which includes funding approved by the Minister of €5 million to provide further supports for family carers, young carers and to assist people with disabilities to engage with the labour market, training and educational opportunities.

Annual Carers Forum 2019

As part of its commitments under the National Carers Strategy, the Department hosts the Annual Carers Forum. The Forum provides an opportunity for carer representative groups to discuss issues with relevant Departments and state agencies. Participating Departments and agencies in the forum are Health; Children and Youth Affairs; Education and Skills; Justice and Equality; Housing, Planning and Local Government; Transport, Tourism and Sport, the Health Service Executive and Tusla. There are a range of participating carer's organisations including Care Alliance Ireland and Family Carers Ireland.

The most recent forum was held on 21 May 2019 and was attended by over 70 participants including individual carers and representatives of carers' organisations.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Supports for Jobseeker's with Disabilities

In 2019, the Department continued to provide a wide range of work-related supports for people with disabilities, designed to support increased participation by people with disabilities in the labour force. These include, the Wage Subsidy Scheme, the Ability Programme and the Willing Able Mentoring/GetAHEAD programmes for graduate jobseekers with disabilities. In addition to these, as part of its contracted employment service provision, the Department entered into contracts with 24 companies in 2019 for delivery of EmployAbility services on its behalf.

Ability Programme

Ability is the pre-activation programme for young people with disabilities aged between 15 and 29 years of age. Its aim is to promote employment prospects and meaningful social roles for young people with disabilities, in particular young people who are distant from the labour market, through engagement in training and personal development activities, followed by an incremental exposure to work.

The funding for this programme amounts to around €16 million over a three-year period and is being provided jointly under the EU's European Social Fund Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning Operational Programme, (2014-2020) and the Irish Exchequer.

Pobal have been contracted by the Department to manage the programme and it is being delivered through 27 community and voluntary groups from around the country. The projects being funded have been designed to assist young people in their transition from school to further education and employment. Person-centred, case management approaches that support participants to achieve their desired employment goals is the primary focus. It is expected that Ability will support over 2,600 young people with disabilities aged between 15 and 29 over the course of the programme.

EmployAbility

For 2019, the Department entered into contracts with 24 companies for delivery of EmployAbility Services on its behalf. The aim is to provide support to and enable jobseekers with disabilities to secure and maintain paid employment in the open labour market, leading to independence and career progression. These companies receive referrals from the Department (or from the Departments other nominated service providers, including the Local Employment Services), where people with disabilities may benefit from intensive employment supports.

The combined value of the contracts entered in 2019 was €9.8 million. The services are delivered through a mix of office and outreach locations operated by individual contractors across 31 locations around the country. Overall, the service provides an active caseload of about 3,000 individuals at any one time.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Willing Able Mentoring and GetAHEAD Programmes

AHEAD (Association for Higher Education Access and Disability) runs the Willing Able Mentoring Programme and the GetAHEAD Programme for third-level students and graduates with disabilities. Both programmes are funded by the Department. AHEAD is based at University College Dublin see www.ahead.ie.

Willing Able Mentoring is a work placement programme which aims to promote access to the labour market for graduates with disabilities and build the capacity of employers to integrate disability into the mainstream workplace.

Participating employers (WAM Leaders) collaborate with WAM to offer mentored, paid, work placements for graduates with disabilities.

WAM is unique in that it seeks to engage and support employers in order to simultaneously develop the potential of employers and graduates with disabilities. Since 2005, the WAM Programme has provided over 400 placements for graduates with disabilities in both the public and private sectors, including within the Department.

GetAHEAD has been running since 2005. It is a network of students and graduates with disabilities currently making the transition from third-level education to full-time employment. GetAHEAD works to up-skill graduates with disabilities by providing training events and valuable information covering a wide range of topics and resources including volunteering and work experience, interview and CV preparation, and advice on job seeking, legal entitlements and available grants.

Wage Subsidy Scheme

The Wage Subsidy Scheme offers financial support to private sector employers who employ people with disabilities. Sometimes the nature of a disability can restrict an employee's productivity in comparison with other staff, irrespective of their ability to do a job. In situations where this results in a loss of productivity for the employer, the Wage Subsidy Scheme allows the employer to make up this loss through grant assistance in the form of a wage subsidy. The scheme is open to employers who can provide between 21 and 39 hours of employment per week to employees with a disability.

In April 2019, the Wage Subsidy Scheme was moved to a new IT platform. This will provide more informative data regarding the use of the subsidy and will allow the Department to review same with a view to increasing its effectiveness and efficiency. The operational payments area for Wage Subsidy Scheme was moved in April 2019 to a central payments team in Carrick-on-Shannon.

At the end of 2019, there were over 1,690 employers supported under the Wage Subsidy Scheme employing 2,755 employees with a disability. Over 8% of employers registered for the Wage Subsidy Scheme are also availing of the Wage Subsidy Scheme Strand II top-up payments, that is, they are employing three or more Wage Subsidy Scheme employees.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

This Department has a role to act promptly on any reports it receives of alleged abuse of its customers, consulting with or involving as appropriate other relevant agencies including the HSE or An Garda Síochána. Investigations of alleged abuse are coordinated by the Safeguarding Unit in the Department which can be contacted at: +353 71 91 93 260.

In 2019, over 160 abuse reports, enquiries and investigations in relation to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults were dealt with by the Department's Safeguarding Unit.

To promote staff awareness on adult safeguarding, key information and updates are circulated and information on safeguarding for customers is made available through the Department's website.

The Department was represented at the 2019 Irish launch of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, which is held on June 15 each year in support of the United Nations International Plan of Action, which recognises the significance of elder abuse as a public health and human rights concern.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Research and Policy

Make Work Pay

The Make Work Pay report was published in 2017, following a commitment in the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for people with disabilities (2015 -2024). It was undertaken in order to better identify how people with disabilities could be supported to achieve their employment ambitions.

Recommendation No. 2b of the report sought a change in legislation - to dispense with the requirement that work be of a 'rehabilitative nature' for the Disability Allowance earnings disregard, where a person in receipt of Disability Allowance wishes to take up employment. In line with this recommendation, the relevant legislation was amended from 1 January 2019.

Research into the Cost of Disability

The issue of the cost of disability was raised by people with disabilities and groups at the Department's annual pre budget forum held in advance of preparation for Budget 2019. As part of the measures outlined in Budget 2019, Minister, Regina Doherty, announced her intention to commission a research project examining the cost of disability.

The cost of disability is defined as the amount it costs a person with a disability to achieve the same standard of living as a person without a disability. It is recognised nationally and internationally that people with disabilities may incur extra living costs such as heating, disability aids and equipment, medical and drug costs, care costs and transport costs.

The research will look at three main items. Firstly, the conceptual underpinnings of a cost of disability will be examined. Secondly, it will analyse what would be a reasonable estimate of a cost of disability in varying circumstances for people living in Ireland. Thirdly, the implications for public policy and service delivery will be teased out.

It is envisaged that the research will provide quantitative estimates of the cost of disability using a number of approaches. This will include research data based on the direct experience of people with disabilities.

This is the first step in reaching an in-depth understanding of this complex issue. It is anticipated that this research, when complete, will inform policy direction in relation to the provision of adequate supports to meet the needs of people with disabilities from a whole-of-government perspective. The research is being carried out by Indecon International Consultants.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Employments Affairs

The Department is responsible for regulating terms and conditions of employment that are fair and reasonable - balancing the interests of workers and employers to ensure that economic activity and employment is sustainable.

Employment Rights

Employment rights legislation was strengthened by the commencement, on 4 March 2019, of the Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2018.

The implementation of the Act has been a success. This is largely as a result of a large scale public information campaign delivered with the co-operation of both employer and employee representative groups.

The Act delivers on the Programme for Government commitment to address the challenges of the increased casualisation of work and to strengthen the regulation of precarious employment.

The Act of 2018 provides that:

- employers must give to employees their core terms of employment within five days of starting work;
- zero hours contracts are restricted to situations where the work is of a genuinely casual, emergency or short-term relief nature;
- there are minimum payments for people when they are called into work, but sent home without work;
- “band of hours” system has been introduced whereby an employee can request to be placed on a contract that better reflects the hours they have worked over a 12-month reference period;

- there are strong anti-penalisation provisions, including recourse to the Workplace Relations Commission, for employees who invoke their rights under this legislation; and
- the national minimum wage rates for younger people and trainees have been simplified.

The experience of the implementation of the Act has been informing the ongoing preparations for the transposition of the EU Transparent and Predictable Working Conditions Directive, which is directly in the same policy space.

Preparations are at an advanced stage for the transposition of the revised EU Posted Workers Directive, which has a deadline of 30 July 2020. Liaison with the Office of the Attorney General and Social Partners has been ongoing with a view to exercising the powers conferred on the Minister under Section 3 of the European Communities Act 1972 to transpose the Directive by way of Statutory Instrument.

Liaison with the Office of the Attorney General, the Department of Justice and Equality, and the Department of Defence was ongoing throughout 2019 in the development of legislation to amend the Organisation of Working Time Act to bring the Defence Forces and An Garda Síochána within its scope.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Low Pay Commission

The Low Pay Commission was established under the National Minimum (Low Pay Commission) Act 2015. Its main functions are to make evidence-based recommendations to the Government on the appropriate rate of the National Minimum Wage and on related matters referred to it by the Minister.

This recommendation is evidence-based; based on research, consultation with employers, workers and their representatives, and written and oral evidence from a wide range of organisations.

Since its establishment in 2015, the Commission has submitted recommendations on the appropriate National Minimum Wage for 2015 to 2019. All the Commission’s recommendations for increases in 2016 to 2019 have been accepted by Government.



National Minimum Wage advertisement by DEASP in 2019.

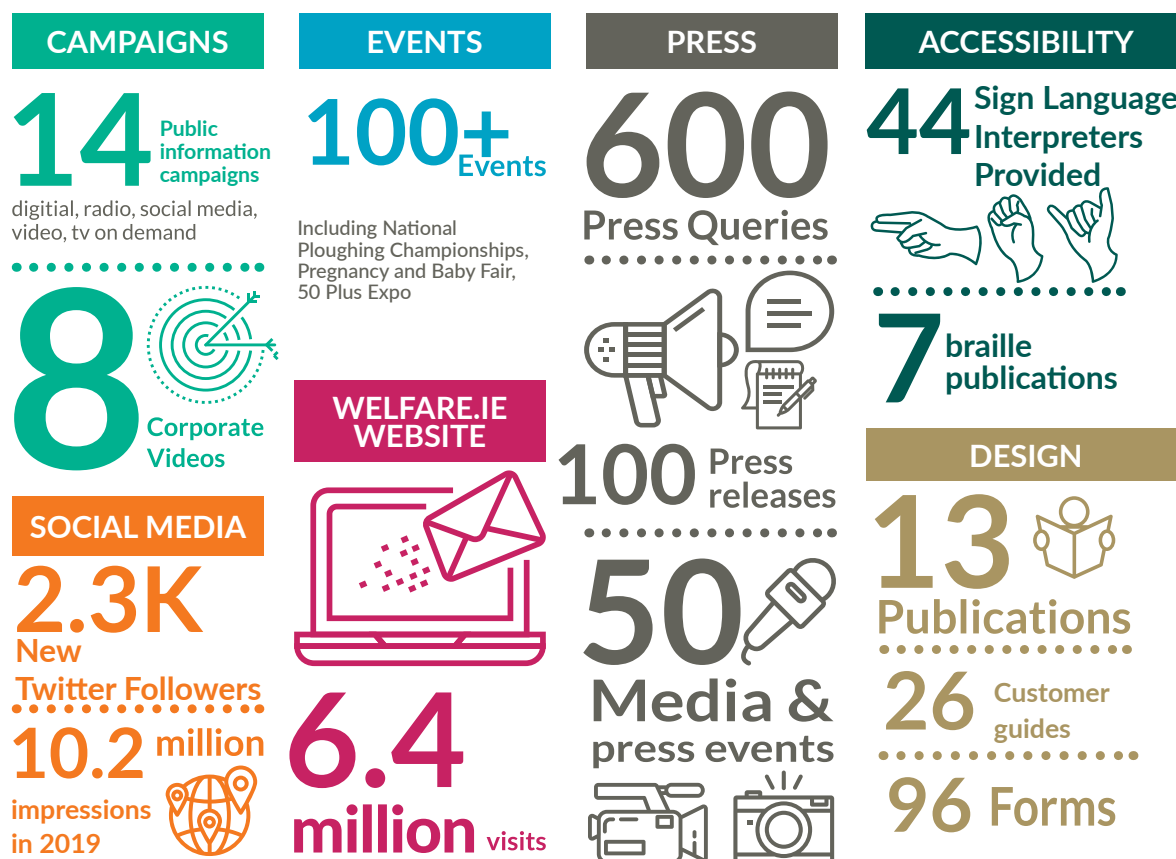
Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Customer Communications

Through public information campaigns, public engagements at key events, social media campaigns and customer publications, the Department seeks to ensure that members of the general public are fully aware of the range of welfare supports and services that are available to them and that this information is delivered in accessible formats.

In order to achieve this objective in 2019 the Department:

- delivered 14 public information campaigns, across a range of media formats including print, radio, outdoor, digital and social media channels;
- produced and updated three plain English guides to the Department’s schemes and services, ‘Families and Children’, ‘Illness, Disability and Caring’ and, ‘Retired and Older People’. These have also been made available in Irish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian and Spanish languages;
- developed two new plain English guides; ‘Employer Services and Support’ and ‘Jobseekers’ Supports’;
- developed and updated a range of customer application forms for the Department’s schemes and services, with a total of 48 forms developed or re-designed in 2019; and
- the Department also completed the annual dispatch of its most commonly used application forms to An Post for distribution to post offices.



Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Gov.ie

A Government's decision was made in 2017 to move all Government Departments to a single central website - Gov.ie. Since then, a team based at the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform have led this project, including the building of the website infrastructure.

As the largest Government Department, with over 80 schemes and services, the DEASP had the largest amount of existing content to review, update and redevelop for publication on Gov.ie.

Beginning in March 2019, the Department worked with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer to review existing content and develop new plain English content in a highly collaborative nine month project. In a commitment to ensuring that people accessing information on essential schemes and services could get the clearest and simplest possible understanding information, all scheme and service text was developed in plain English in consultation with the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA). The final text for each scheme and service was then approved by each business area in the Department and approved by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, before being made available on Gov.ie. All DEASP scheme and service

information have achieved a high readability score (capable of being read and understood by a 6th class student), and feedback has been very positive to date.

The Department went live on Gov.ie site in Q4 2019, with the full site migration and switch off of the old welfare.ie site to be completed in early 2020.

Several sections of the Department have dedicated micro-sites on Gov.ie including:

- **Intreo** : An Intreo micro-site was constructed which displays the Intreo link to important Intreo services from a single location. It also includes a "find your local Intreo Centre" facility via Google maps;
- **The Low Pay Commission site**: This is a standalone micro-site in the gov.ie style and format; and
- **General Register Office site**: This is also a standalone micro-site in the gov.ie style and format with a homepage that provides all schemes and services info.

Gov.ie is now a central portal for all Department services and information and initial feedback has been very positive.



Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Translation and Interpretive Services

The Department is committed to providing a professional, efficient and courteous service to all its customers. Specific commitments are included in the Department's Customer Charter relating to the provision of interpretive and translation services and the provision of information in alternative formats such as Braille and Audio.

In 2019, the Department arranged for translation to or from Irish of some 879 documents. In addition, there were over 3,885 translations into 56 other languages. Over 1,700 customers were provided with the services of a language interpreter to assist them in their interactions with the Department, 44 customers availed of the services of a Sign Language Interpreter and 24 received information in alternative formats.

The Irish Remote Interpreting Service which offers a video link to a live Irish Sign Language Interpreter is available across the network of Intreo offices. Department staff are happy to arrange this service on behalf of a customer, as an alternative to the in-person Sign Language Interpreter services currently in place, based on the customer's needs. The Irish Remote Interpreting Service is available Monday to Friday between 8.00am and 8.00pm.

Official Languages Act

The Department continued to provide services through Irish in 2019 in line with the requirements of the Official Languages Act 2003. The Department's Customer Charter and Action Plan states that the Department will 'provide high quality services through Irish and/or bilingually and inform customers of their right to choose to be dealt with through one or the other of the official languages.'

The Department's Language Scheme 2019 to 2022 set out the Department's commitments to customer service in Irish and advises of the availability of services through Irish.

Customer Representative Forums

The Customer Representative Forums have been firmly established itself as an important quarterly opportunity for the Department to create meaningful conversation, information sharing as well as feedback and engagement with its key customer representative groups. The aim to share information about changes, projects, services and Department plans.

Each event is evaluated by participants to provide important guidance on their information needs and preferences. A wide range of national customer representative organisations are invited to attend the forums as well as a range of business areas from across the Department.

Migrant Consultative Forum

The Migrant Consultative Forum was set up in 2012 to address issues raised in the 'Person or Number?' report, which had been prepared in February 2012 by three Non-Government Organisations who represent migrant groups. The forum consists of representatives of Free Legal Advice Centres, Crosscare, Doras Luimní, New Communities Partnership, One Family, North Dublin Citizens Information Service, Citizens Information Board and several areas of the Department.

During 2019 the work of the Migrant Consultative Forum continued. The forum focused on advancing key areas identified in the work plan, namely, Training, Customer Action Plan, Supplementary Welfare Allowance and Exceptional Needs Payments administration.

Three meetings were held during 2019. Examples of some of the more significant items discussed during the year include: Working Family Payment, Supplementary Welfare Allowance (signposting, awareness, exceptional needs payments such as funeral expenses), Customer Care (interpretive services), Consent and GDPR, PPS Number Applications, Habitual Residence Conditions, Activation (customers with limited English literacy skills).

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

OBJECTIVE

Drive cost, efficiency and effectiveness

2

Objective 2 - Drive cost, efficiency and effectiveness

Corporate Governance Framework

The Department's Corporate Governance Framework, which is reviewed annually, sets out our governance standards which are fundamentally about delivering priorities, achieving objectives, behaving with integrity and acting in the public interest. This framework is part of a common approach to governance shared across the civil service as set out in the Civil Service Renewal Plan and will continue to evolve over time in line with best practice.

We aim to have in place appropriate structures and processes for directing and managing our organisation so that all stakeholders can be assured that the organisation is operating effectively and efficiently. It is about transparency, accountability, consistency and operating in a participative environment. We continue to seek new ways of doing things for the benefit of our customers and all stakeholders.

Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) Act 2014 introduces a positive duty on public bodies to have due regard to human rights and equality issues. Our Department's mission is to promote active participation and inclusion in society through the framework of employment rights and the provision of income supports, employment services and other services.

The Department's objective is to continue putting our customers at the centre of all our operations, providing an efficient and effective service and continue developing our staff, structures and processes. As a Department we are totally committed to the positive difference we can make to our customers' lives and Irish society, and have a responsibility to our staff who deliver our services daily.

The Department facilitated training on Implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty for 29 staff members in November 2019 – provided by Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission which included a presentation on Traveller and Roma Issues by representatives from Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Identity Management

Personal Public Service (PPS) Number

The Department provides identity management services to public service agencies, facilitating the use of the PPS Number in the delivery of public services, developing online services and enhancing systems for control of fraud and abuse. A total of 196,177 PPS numbers were allocated in 2019.

Assuring a Secure and Verified Identity

Many public services are not only of high value (for example the State pension is valued at over €12,000 per annum) but also require the use of personal data of the service users. In order to ensure that personal identities can be verified in a manner that protects access to this data and simplifies customer service the Department developed a process known as SAFE (Standard Authentication Framework Environment).

SAFE registration is used to verify a person's identity and enables individuals to gain access to public services more efficiently and with a minimum of duplication of effort. At the same time, it preserves their privacy to the maximum extent possible.

A Public Service Card is a physical token that can be held by a person and used to prove that their identity has been verified. It can also be used to access some services in a simple manner for

example, travel passes for public transport by people entitled to free travel or to access social welfare payments in An Post.

SAFE verification also enables a person to register for MyGovID services to access secure online services such as Maternity Benefit, Jobseeker payments and Paternity Benefit, Parent's Benefit thereby reducing the need for a customer to visit an Intreo Centre or submit paper forms by post.

MyGovID customers can also access Department payment and contribution statements, Revenue online tax services and online driving licence renewals, using a single log in. To date, over 3.22 million people have been SAFE registered.

During 2019, over 520,100 Public Service Cards were issued, bringing to over 4.16 million the total number of Public Service Cards issued by year end 2019. This includes over 1.29 million Public Service Cards providing an entitlement to Free Travel.

As a result of facial matching procedures, facilitated by the SAFE registration process, a total of 227 cases of suspected identity fraud have been detected and referred for investigation since the inception of the Public Service Card. These cases are at various stages of the investigation and prosecution process.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Compliance and Anti-Fraud Activity

A new Compliance and Anti-Fraud Strategy for 2019–2023 was published in September 2019.

The overall aims of the Strategy are to:

- prevent fraud and error entering the social welfare system;
- discourage non-compliance with the social welfare system;
- detect instances of suspected fraud and error as quickly as possible; and
- have appropriate governance and oversight arrangements in place.

The strategy consists of four pillars (Prevent, Deter, Detect and Account) which will be leveraged over the next five years to ensure that suspected fraud and non-compliance in our welfare system is kept to a minimum during the lifetime of the strategy.

Overall, across the four pillars, 26 areas of control activity are outlined. Some of these are ongoing while others will have specific annual targets set which will have to be met over the lifetime of the strategy.



Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Control Reviews

During 2019, the Department conducted over 600,000 claim reviews. These consisted of a review of a person’s eligibility to receive support and involved several approaches including direct customer enquiries, face-to-face engagement and inspections, including inspections of employer workplaces and financial records. In-depth investigations may be needed where fraud is suspected. These are undertaken by the Special Investigations Unit, which is supported by seconded officers of An Garda Síochána specifically assigned to support complex investigations.

The Department continues to emphasise the obligation on customers to report changes in their lives or circumstances. Even small changes in income or family circumstances can impact on the rate of payment a person is entitled to receive. The consequences of these changes can be significant,

particularly as overpayments accumulate quickly. This can result in repayments having to be made from ongoing social welfare payments or earnings for long periods.

The expertise of our staff is central to rolling out an effective prevention and detection approach and to improving the services we can deliver to our customers.

However, with complex schemes, mistakes do occur. We try to ensure that clear, understandable information about scheme conditions is communicated to customers. Our staff support customers when corrections are required and act swiftly to minimise the impact of such mistakes.

Compliance and Anti-Fraud achievements in 2019	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department reviewed the entitlement of over 600,000 customer claims, including where inspections and investigations were undertaken. • Control savings, which include some element of overpayments, are recorded at €505 million for 2019. • Overpayments of benefit and assistance on individual cases amounted to €116 million over the course of the year. • Repayments of €82 million were made in respect of customer overpayments in 2019. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department considered 505 cases for prosecution in 2019. At the end of 2019, the Chief State Solicitors Office had 492 Departmental cases in the court system. • The results of control surveys on the State Pension (non-contributory) and Back to Work Enterprise Allowance schemes were published during 2019. The Department moved to a new model of rolling surveys on major schemes in 2019. • The Department published a new 5-year control strategy in 2019 to cover the period 2019-2023. This strategy builds upon the successes of the Compliance and Anti-Fraud Strategy 2014-2018.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

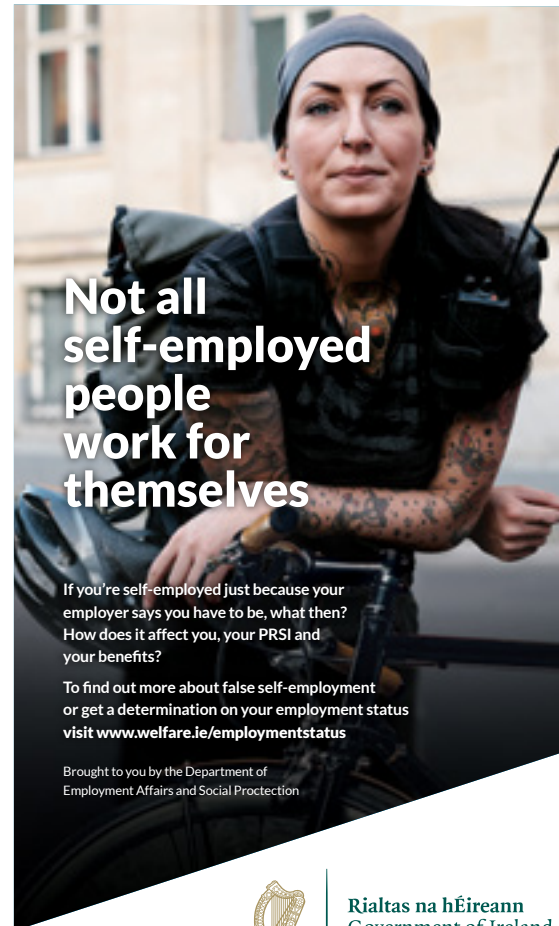
False Self-Employment

False self-employment is an employment relationship which creates the appearance that a person is self-employed, when, for all practical purposes they operate as an employee working in a business. Such arrangements lead to avoidance of tax and social insurance payments and deny affected workers key employment rights.

In order to increase the detection of false self-employment, the Department established a new Employment Status Investigation Unit which commenced investigating potential cases of false self-employment in September 2019. The Scope Section, part of whose function is to decide on employment status cases, was expanded in order to deal with the increased level of investigations in this area.

Building on the existing Code of Practice, a new document, the Guidance on determining employment status, was agreed by an inter-Departmental working group in December 2019. The new Guidance document was circulated to Irish Congress of Trade Unions and Irish Business and Employers Confederation in December 2019 and legislative provisions commenced being drafted in order to place this Guidance on a statutory basis. The new legislation is intended to be brought forward as part of the Social Welfare Bill 2020. Liaison between the Department, the Department of Revenue and the Workplace Relations Commission continued in this regard during the year.

The development of new legislative provisions commenced in late 2019 to introduce anti-victimisation protections for workers who wish to query their employment status in situations where the employer/contracting party penalises them for doing so. Development of a new offence in relation to employers who deliberately misclassify employees as self-employed also commenced with a view to enactment in 2020.



Not all self-employed people work for themselves

If you're self-employed just because your employer says you have to be, what then? How does it affect you, your PRSI and your benefits?

To find out more about false self-employment or get a determination on your employment status visit www.welfare.ie/employmentstatus

Brought to you by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

False self-employment advertisement by DEASP in 2018

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Financial Management

Project Governance and Procurement Policy

The Project Governance Committee is a subcommittee of the Department's Management Board. It oversees and approves programmes and projects and monitors their progress and expenditure. The Project Governance Committee met seven times in 2019 to ensure that project proposals are evaluated and prioritised in line with Government programme, the Statement of Strategy and business plans. The Project Governance Committee monitors the budgets and resources assigned to projects and tracks their progress to ensure that they are delivered on time, achieving best value for money, and that best practise is adopted in respect of procurement and governance matters.

The Department increasingly draws from Framework Agreements established as a result of central public service tendering by the Office of Government Procurement. In 2019, the Department used frameworks from the Professional Services category such as Accounting, Audit and Financial Advisory Services; from the Facilities Management and Maintenance category such as Commercial Cleaning Services and from the Information and Communication Technology and Office Equipment category for the provision of Computer Devices. In addition, the Office of Government Procurement issues regular status updates on procurement policy matters. In 2019, these included information on the effect of Brexit and Social Considerations in Procurement

and the launch of the electronic European Single Procurement Document (eESPD). The Department incorporated the information notes into our procedures and policy and guidelines and circulated the information to staff.

The Department maintains a contracts database, a central register of all major contracts entered into by the Department. The contracts database was remodelled in 2019 to facilitate the capture of additional information which can be used for analytical purposes and to monitor that records are classified correctly.

In accordance with Section 8 of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2014, which requires FOI bodies to routinely publish as much information as possible in keeping with the principles of openness, transparency and accountability the Department publishes details of all public contracts valued at over €25k and all ICT projects valued over €10k.

The Department continues to be represented on the Inter Departmental Project Manager Leaders and Advisory Service (PMLAS) which is committed to developing project management capacity throughout the public service using the One Learning programme. In this regard the Department continued to train and develop staff and as a result 76 staff across the Department completed the Foundations in Project Management training course and 17 staff attended courses dealing with procurement matters.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Digital Innovation

The Way We Work

If 'Digital by Desire' is the key tenet of the Department's Digital Strategy, then customer centric design is the cornerstone of all MyWelfare service development. Involving the customer in the digital journey from the initial design phase pays dividends in the short term, as the service will better fit their needs, and in the longer term, as there is a shared ownership and commitment to new online services.

The Department is committed to following the principles of Service Design, by putting the customer at the centre of the design process and

getting their input both early in the design phase and at regular intervals. Before we start to build any online service, we develop prototypes of the proposed service and invite users to interact with them and give valuable feedback. We do this with staff, customers, and customer representative groups and can go through various iterations until we agree on a final service design to build that best meets customer needs. The adoption of Service Design, user testing and building iterative prototypes has transformed the way we approach projects of this nature.

Manage your welfare services anytime, anywhere.

Visit www.mywelfare.ie for Payment and PRSI Contribution Statements, to make appointments and more.

Brought to you by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

MyWelfare.ie

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Digital Services Strategy

Summary Digital Services Channel Strategy 2017 - 2020

Objective



Online Digital Services for DEASP Customers

Why introduce online?

1 Improve customer service

Current and growing demand for secure, fast and efficient online services for our customers

2 Serve increasing number of customers

Demographics and other changes creating increased and long-term demands in Department's services

3 Improve efficiencies

Online delivery provides an opportunity to improve our processes, and to improve and better manage workflows in line with available resources

Principles

1 Channel and Service choice

Digital is one channel among suite of channels

2 Digital by Desire

Design Services around the customer for digital receipt and processing

3 Self Service options

Self service options introduced across office network to support digital

4 Minimum or zero touch processes

Design processes to maximise efficiencies from digital

5 Process adaption

Design process around customer and technology

6 High quality customer support

Support the customer on the online journey using latest technologies

7 Safe and Secure

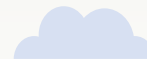
Deliver a service that is safe and secure for customers and Department

Benefits to Customers

- * Better and faster service - 24/7
- * More choice - additional channel
- * Safe and secure
- * Easier for Customers

Benefits to Department

- * Improved Customer Service
- * Operational efficiencies
- * Potential to improve internal processes
- * Helps deal with increasing customer numbers



Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

MyWelfare.ie

MyWelfare.ie is the online home of the welfare services. It allows customers easy online access to a range of services including making appointment, ordering statements, updating customer details and applying for certain payment and services. Available from all internet connected devices MyWelfare.ie is safe, secure and accessible anytime.

MyGovID

MyGovID is a secure online account for accessing public services online. MyGovID accounts have been developed so that they can also be used by other Government Departments and State agencies to authenticate customers online.

MyGovID is currently used to provide authenticated access to the Department's MyWelfare online service, the Revenue Commissioners' myAccount online service, Student Universal Support Ireland for student grant application service, the National Driving Licence Service for online renewal of driving licences and to the JobsIreland website. In 2019 this was extended to include the National Childcare Scheme and to Voter.ie where people in the Dublin area can register to vote and update their electoral details online. Work is underway with other Government Departments and State agencies to help them to use this facility to provide their services online.

Over the course of 2019, there has been an increased take-up of this service by customers with over 1,300,000 MyGovID accounts registered.

Table 9: MyWelfare.ie scheme applications 2019

Online Appointments	
Create Irish Language PPSN/PSC Appointment	1,095
Cancel a PPSN/PSC Appointment	23,049
Amend a PPSN/PSC Appointment	18,109
Create Sign Language PPSN/PSC Appointment	1,733
Create a PPSN/PSC Appointment	245,985
Apply For Services/Schemes	
Back to School	9,080
Parent's Benefit	171
Parent's Benefit Manage My Claim	3
PRSI Refund	901
Pension T12	8,551
Create Close Claim Request	7,397
Create Holiday Request	4,132
Maternity and Paternity Payment Method Change	79
Child Benefit Application	4,300
Jobseeker Application	9,245
Maternity Benefit Application	3,971
Paternity Benefit Application	13,738
Change of Address	11,579
Contribution History Statement - Level 0	23,831
Contribution History Statement - Level 2	25,295
Contribution History Statement - Level -1	159
Payment Statement Request	27,964
Jobseeker Certifications	
Notification to Certify Online	4,554
Declaration Submitted	3,603
Activation	
My Work and Skills data	773

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Welfare Partners

Welfare Partners (www.welfarepartners.ie) is a digital service for business partners (dentists, opticians and audiologists) of the Department. Welfare Partners has been designed to be fully accessible, secure and responsive and utilizes the Revenue Online Service (ROS) digital certificate for authentication. Utilising the ROS digital certificate infrastructure on WelfarePartners allows us to leverage the current ROS infrastructure, which is well established across the business community.

Community Employment Sponsors can complete Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) for participants through the Welfare Partners site, submit wage and training budget claims and engage with the Department online thus replacing the historical practices which were paper based and labour intensive.

Treatment Benefit delivered via our Welfare Partners site is one of the most successful online services that we have delivered to date.

Table 10: WelfarePartners.ie Services Requests for 2019

Service Type	Service Details	Number of Requests
Individual Learning Plan	Status Change Request	138,040
	Individual Learning Plan Request	130,218
	Update Outcome Request	83,160
Scheme Application	Community Employment Application	876
Treatment Benefit Eligibility Assessment	Dental Benefit	1,335,351
	Medical Appliance Benefit	38,352
	Optical Benefit	758,170
	Create Medical Necessity	22,281
Treatment Benefit Contact Update	Contract Details Update	28

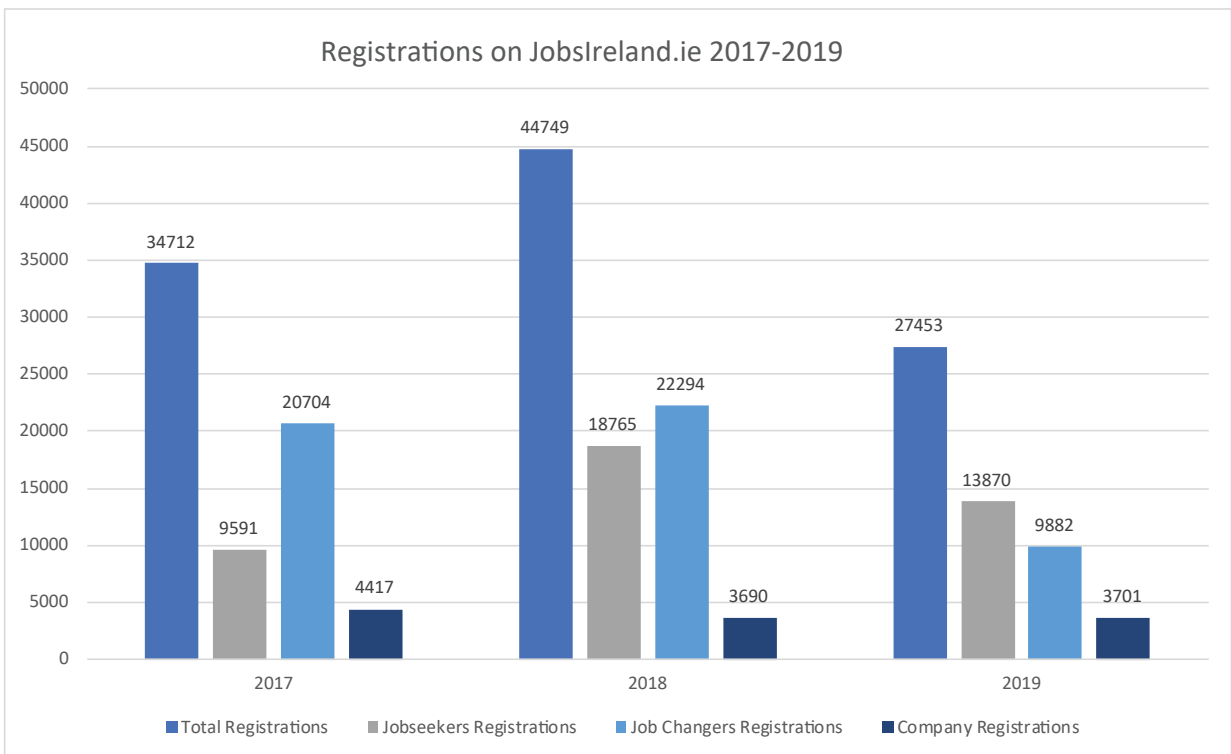
Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

JobsIreland

JobsIreland.ie is the Department’s recruitment website. The website hosts vacancies for both private employers and Department schemes such as the Youth Employment Support Scheme. In 2019 over 80,000 vacant positions were advertised on JobsIreland.ie. Both Jobseekers and Job Changers can register on the website together with employers from every industry.

In addition to advertising vacancies on the JobsIreland.ie website, vacancies are also promoted through social media channels Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

Registrations on JobsIreland.ie 2017-2019



Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

International Relations and Regulations

Freedom of Information

The Department handled 2,647 Freedom of Information requests in 2019. Of these, 2,367 (89%) were from members of the public requesting copies of their personal details held by the Department, 269 were non-personal and 11 were of a non-personal/mixed nature.

The Department is committed to the provision of consistent and high-quality Freedom of Information responses and appropriate training to its staff.

Table 11: Freedom of Information Requests Received 2015-2019

Year	Personal	Non-Personal	Mixed	Total
2019	2,367	269	11	2,647
2018	2,032	467	11	2,510
2017	2,101	325	17	2,443
2016	1,848	231	10	2,089
2015	1,932	223	1	2,156

European General Data Protection Regulation

2019 was the first full year under new data protection legislation since the implementation of European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) on 25 May 2018.

As one of the largest data controllers in the State, the Department has a dedicated unit working to ensure compliance with data protection legislation. This unit, led by the Data Protection Officer, monitors and advises on risks to personal data and/or compliance with data protection law that they become aware of or anticipate.

In order to satisfy the transparency requirements of the GDPR, all customer facing forms in use by the Department include a short form privacy statement and point customers towards the full Privacy Statement available both in English and in Irish on the Department's website.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews



EU Developments

Preparations for the United Kingdom's Exit from the EU

To ensure the continuation of the existing social security arrangements between Ireland and the United Kingdom post Brexit, a Convention on Social Security was agreed between the Governments of Ireland and the United Kingdom under the Common Travel Area arrangements and was signed on 1 February 2019. The ratification process in the Oireachtas was completed in March 2019.

The Governments of Ireland and the UK also reaffirmed their joint commitment to the Common Travel Area by entering a Memorandum of Understanding on 8 May 2019.

The UK ratified the Withdrawal Agreement before withdrawing from the EU on 31 January 2020 and an associated transition period now applies lasting until 31 December 2020. During this transition period the EU acquis will continue to apply to the UK, and the Convention stands ready to be given effect when required.

The withdrawal of the UK from the European Union (Consequential Provisions) Act 2019, which was to deal with a “no-deal” Brexit, was signed by the President on 17 March 2019. Part 11 covers social security issues and Part 12 amends the Protection of Employees (Employers’ Insolvency) Act 1984.

The Department’s input into the wider Government contingency and preparedness processes continued throughout 2019. In addition, the Department continued to contribute to and monitor EU developments, particularly those concerning the application of the Withdrawal Agreement provisions and on the future EU/UK social security coordinating arrangements (particularly through contributing to the development of the EU level contingency regulation and coordinated approach).

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Establishment of the European Labour Authority

Regulation (EU) 2019/1149 establishing a European Labour Authority was adopted in June 2019 and came into force on 1 August 2019. The aim of the European Labour Authority is to foster agile and efficient work, conducive to reaching solutions to the challenges faced in the areas covered by the regulation. The authority will:

- contribute to ensure that EU rules on labour mobility and social security coordination are enforced in a fair, simple and effective way;
- make it easier for citizens and businesses to reap the benefits of the internal market; and
- assist national authorities in cooperating for the effective enforcement of the rules.

Member States agreed in June 2019 that the seat of the new agency should be in Bratislava, Slovakia. The activities of the European Labour Authority began in mid-October 2019 with the first meeting of its management board and the process of recruiting the key staff of the authority having commenced.

The European Labour Authority is expected to reach its full operational capacity by 2024, when it is estimated it will have approximately 140 staff, of which some 60 will be experts seconded from Member States. The European Labour Authority's annual budget will be around €50 million. An official of the Workplace Relations Commission is Ireland's management board member while the alternate member is from the Department.

Directive on Transparent and Predictable Working Conditions in the EU

Directive (EU) 2019/1152 on Transparent and Predictable Working Conditions in the EU was adopted in June 2019 and came into effect on 1 August 2019. This directive sets new rights for all workers, particularly addressing insufficient protection for workers in more precarious jobs, while limiting burdens on employers and maintaining labour market adaptability. In particular, the directive provides that all workers in the EU will have the right to:

- more complete information on the essential aspects of the work, to be received early by the worker, in writing;
- a limit to the length of probationary periods at the beginning of the job;
- seek additional employment, with a ban on exclusivity clauses and limits on incompatibility clauses;
- know a reasonable period in advance when work will take place, for workers with very unpredictable working schedules, as in the case of on-demand work;
- anti-abuse legislation for zero hours contract work;
- receive a written reply to a request to transfer to another more secure job; and
- receive cost-free the mandatory training that the employer has a duty to provide.

Member States have three years, up to 1 August 2022, in which to transpose this directive and work is underway for its transposition into Irish law.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Directive on Work-Life Balance for Parents and Carers

Directive (EU) 2019/1158 on Work-Life Balance for Parents and Carers was adopted in June 2019 and came into force on 2 August 2019. While the provisions of this directive relate, in the main, to statutory entitlements to various forms of family leave, for which the Department of Justice and Equality has responsibility, several aspects of this directive relating to paid paternity, parental and carers' leave have social protection implications.

The main elements of the directive are:

- the introduction of paternity leave: under the directive, fathers must be able to take at least 10 working days of paternity leave around the time of birth of their child, compensated at least at the level of sick pay;
- ensuring that two out of the four months of parental leave are non-transferable between parents and compensated at a level that is determined by the Member States;
- the introduction of carers' leave: workers providing personal care or support to a relative will be entitled to five days leave per year; and
- the extension of the right to request flexible working arrangements to carers and working parents of children up to eight years old.

Member States have three years, up to 2 August 2022, in which to generally transpose the provisions of this directive. There is a two-year extension to 2 August 2024 to implement some aspects of the paid parental leave period. Work is underway for its transposition into Irish law. As a first step towards the phased implementation of the provisions of this directive, a new two-week Parent's Leave and associated Parent's Benefit scheme was introduced with effect from 1 November 2019.



Council Decision on Employment Guidelines

As part of its European Semester Winter 2019 Package, which was published in February 2019, the European Commission approved a proposal to maintain the 2018 Council Decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States.

The Employment Guidelines present common priorities and targets for national employment policies. Following its adoption by Council in June 2019, Council Decision (EU) 2019/1181 on guidelines for the employment policies of Member States came into force on 8 July 2019.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Decision on Enhanced Cooperation between Public Employment Services

Decision No 573/2014/EU establishes the European Network of Public Employment Services and this Network was to run until 31 December 2020. In September 2019, the European Commission published a proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No 573/2014/EU on enhanced cooperation between Public Employment Services.

The European Network brings together the Public Employment Services of all EU Member States, as well as Norway and Iceland and involves the European Commission. The Network has been established to contribute to the European Employment Strategy to create more and better jobs throughout the EU, as an integral part of the Europe 2020 growth strategy. The Network promotes cooperation among Public Employment Services and supports them in boosting their performance and preparing for future labour market challenges. It implements an EU wide benchmarking initiative (combining benchmarking and mutual learning) aimed at enhancing Public Employment Services capacity, effectiveness and efficiency.

The aim of this proposal is to prolong the period of the establishment of the European Network until 31 December 2027, in order to capitalise on the results achieved so far, to further foster and encourage cooperation between Public Employment Services and to continue to contribute to modernising and strengthening EU-wide Public Employment Services.

In order to ensure a seamless continuation of the Network's activities, it is proposed that this latest Decision should apply from 1 January 2021. Discussions at Council commenced in September 2019, when there was wide support among Member States for this decision, and these discussions are continuing during 2020.

Revision of EU Regulations on Coordination of Social Security Systems

The European Commission published proposals in December 2016 for the revision of the EU Regulations on the Coordination of social security systems. These proposals focus on a number of areas of coordination where it is considered that improvements are required, e.g. access to social benefits for economically inactive EU citizens; coordination of Long-Term Care Benefits; Unemployment Benefits for cross-border workers; Family Benefits which replace income during child-raising periods, and applicable legislation in the case of posted workers.

The proposals also provide for a number of technical amendments to the procedures of the recovery of social security benefits and contributions, cross-border data sharing and the calculation of benefits and costs to be reimbursed between Member States.

Following agreement on their positions, negotiations between the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission commenced in January 2019 and focused on the proposals relating to unemployment benefits for cross-border workers and the applicable legislation in the case of posted workers.

Despite intensive efforts, it was not possible to reach agreement in the limited time available before the Parliament completed its term in advance of the May 2019 European Parliament elections. Following these elections, negotiations with the new parliament recommenced in October 2019 and will continue into 2020.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

The Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council

The Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) debates and decides on EU business (both legislative and non-legislative) in the area of social policy. The agenda covers matters relating to employment, social inclusion, equality, as well as social protection issues which span a number of different Departments. The Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection is the lead attendee at the Council meeting and attended meetings in 2019 during which a wide range of issues were discussed such as the “Economy of Wellbeing”, the Semester Process, the UN Sustainable Development goals.

The European Semester

The European Semester is the EU’s annual cycle of economic policy guidance and surveillance. Ireland’s participation in the process is led by the Department of An Taoiseach. The Department has a significant input into the process, particularly in relation to the cross-Department inputs required in relation to the discussions at the EU level Social Protection Committee and Employment Committee.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Other International Issues

The Council of Europe: Revised European Social Charter

The Revised European Social Charter is a Council of Europe treaty to promote and protect socio-economic rights. Ireland has also ratified the Additional Protocol to the Charter providing for a system of Collective Complaints, lodged by the social partners and other non-governmental organisations recognised by the Council of Europe.

The Department is the lead Department for the charter and has responsibility for coordinating Ireland's reporting obligations across Government.

Annual reports submitted by Ireland are examined by the European Committee on Social Rights, an independent expert body. The annual report submitted in December 2019, focused on updates relating to open collective complaints against Ireland.

Bilateral Agreements

The Department maintains bilateral social security arrangements with several countries. In 2019, a review of the agreement with the USA was conducted in partnership with US officials who visited Ireland for that purpose.

Study Visits

In June 2019, the Department hosted a week-long study visit officials from Greece. The visiting delegation was comprised of officials from the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Solidarity as well as from the Single Social Security Agency. During the visit the delegations met with officials in Dublin, Sligo and Carrick-on-Shannon. A wide range of issues were discussed such as state pensions, fraud and control measures, as well as the decision making and appeals processes.

Transnational Organisations

The Department represents Ireland on the OECD's Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Committee (ELSAC) which aims to foster comprehensive, cost-effective and innovative employment and social policies to promote strong, sustainable economic growth, high employment rates and enhance social inclusion in members and, as appropriate, non-members.

The Department also participates in the "Windsor Conference" which is a group Social Affairs and/or Employment Affairs Departments from six countries (Ireland, UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand and Canada). The group meets approximately every 18 months to discuss issues and challenges of mutual interest. The most recent meeting was held in the UK, in September 2019.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews



OBJECTIVE

Develop staff, structures and processes

3

Objective 3: Develop Staff, Structures and Processes

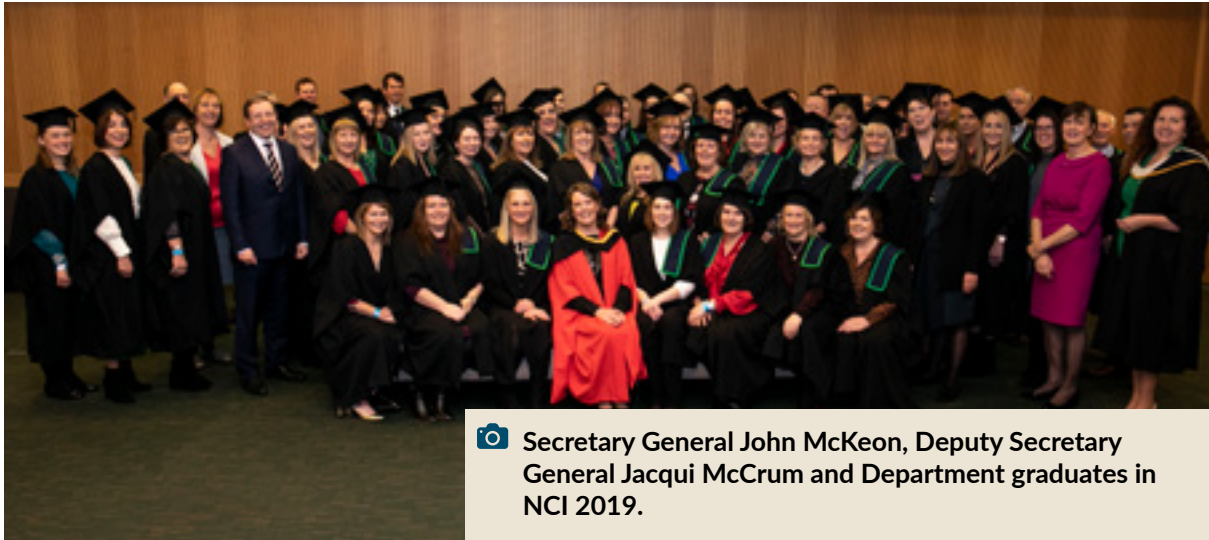
Learning and Development

The Staff Development Unit is responsible for developing and implementing the Department's Learning and Development Strategy, supporting and planning provision of training and learning across the Department and fostering staff engagement and innovation. The unit develops, delivers, and oversees high quality training and education provision in order to ensure that staff are fully equipped to competently and confidently perform their roles. Learning and development needs are addressed through a mixture of internally and externally delivered training and education using a blended approach of instructor-led and eLearning. The Staff Development Unit also invests in and supports ongoing professional development of both its own national tutor/trainer team and the wider divisional and HQ trainer network, including achievement of QQI Level 6 Certification in Training and Development and provision of corporate membership of the Irish Institute of Training and Development.

In 2019, Staff Development Unit successfully retained the Excellence Through People Award under the National Human Resource Management Scheme, following a surveillance assessment by the National Standards Authority of Ireland.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Accredited Education Programmes



The Department continued to invest heavily in learning and development in 2019. Since 2016, the Department has an educational partnership with the National College of Ireland to develop and deliver a suite of Quality and Qualifications Ireland accredited education programmes for staff in frontline roles.

Since September 2018, National College of Ireland and the Department have 7 Programmes on the National Framework of Qualifications (at NFQ Levels 6, 7 and 8) and incremental rollout commenced in 2019. Across the suite, six programmes were designed for staff in the following frontline roles Case Officer, Designated Person, Deciding Officer, Manager in an Intreo Centre, Social Welfare Inspector and Appeals Officer, while a seventh Certificate in Social Protection Studies was designed to provide an understanding of the role the Department plays in Government and in broader society with a focus on excellence in customer service.

Since commencement of the accreditation project, circa 350 staff have enrolled across 10 intakes to the accredited suite, including 100 staff who were supported to complete a Level 8 Certificate in Employability Services which was provided during the developmental phase. Programmes are under the governance of National College of Ireland School of Business and students from the Department graduate annually.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Engagement and Innovation

The Engagement and Innovation programme was initiated in 2013. Through project teams, this programme provides an opportunity for staff to utilise their expertise in the application of an alternative and innovative approach to problem-solving and service improvement. Projects undertaken within the Engagement and Innovation framework are time bound, results-focused and driven by leadership teams with representation of staff across the grade structures. A feature of the initiative is its collaborative approach which encourages further engagement through open and inclusive discussion by all team members.

To date, 163 Engagement and Innovation projects have been undertaken and 129 projects have been completed with findings and recommendations informing further policy development within the Department. The Engagement and Innovation Programme won a Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Award in the category of leading Civil Service Renewal in 2016. An Engagement and Innovation event is planned for 2020 to recognise the projects carried out in the last year. This event will provide an opportunity to present pivotal projects and further raise the profile of the programme.

High-level leadership teams chaired by the Secretary General and Assistant Secretaries, will meet quarterly to encourage and enable full participation across the Department. The leadership teams strive to support innovation and staff engagement, particularly through the establishment of local Project Leadership Teams and the dissemination and implementation of findings and recommendations which arise.

Staff Engagement

The convening of staff forums for all staff across the Department is key part of the Department's Staff Engagement Initiative. Following the completion of successful pilots early in the year, the programme to deliver staff forums to all Clerical Officers across the Department continued throughout 2019 during which time staff fora for clerical officers were held in Donegal, Limerick, Kerry, Galway, Mayo, Sligo, Dundalk and Navan. By the end of 2019, 1,500 Clerical Officers had participated in a staff forum in their division/business area.

Feedback from both staff and management about the forums has been extremely positive and issues raised by staff are continually reported to local management as well as to members of the Management Board. The development of Fora for Executive Officers and Higher Executive Officers is underway and these will be implemented in early 2020.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Management Development Programme

During 2019, a Management Development Programme of targeted learning and development based on a multi-disciplinary approach was developed and rolled out to newly appointed Principal Officers and Assistant Principal Officers in the Department to meet their early identified management and competency development needs.

The programme is based on three interconnected pillars:

- flexible modular hop-on-hop off structured instructor-led programme of training in key management development skills and competencies;
- mentoring programme; and
- action learning programme.

The Principal Officer Development also incorporates Subject Matter Expert Briefing sessions on matters of relevance to senior managers in the Department. By the end 2019, 45 Assistant Principal Officers and 15 Principal Officers were participating in their respective Development Programmes.

A new Development Programme for newly appointed Executive Officers to Department was developed and rolled out during Q4 2019. The Programme is based on the three pillars as outlined above and by the end 2019, 30 executive officers had began their modular learning.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

One DEASP Staff Learning and Development Programme

Since the commencement of the One DEASP Learning and Development Programme in 2014, over 17,000 staff attendances have been recorded at instructor-led courses. In 2019 there were over 2,400 attendances. In addition, over 16,000 e-learning modules have been completed by staff; in 2019 approximately 8,900 such modules were completed.

Other training, outside the scope of this programme, saw approximately 5,000 staff attend various internal and external training courses.

One DEASP Awards



Secretary General John McKeon, Deputy Secretary General Jacqui McCrum, Gráinne McBride and Joe Kinsella from SDU receiving an award at One DEASP Awards 2019.

This Awards Programme, now in its fifth year is an integral part of the overall One DEASP organisational development initiative. It recognises where an exceptional contribution is made to the Department which demonstrates the Department's five core values. Some changes to the awards system were introduced in 2019. For each of the five values, five nominees were selected. The winner and runner-up in each category were not announced until the awards ceremony. In view of the outstanding quality of the submissions received and in a departure from previous years,

the evaluation committee and the Secretary General each decided to give two additional special recognition awards.

The One DEASP Awards ceremony was held on 28 November 2019. Laurie Byrne and the late Noreen Moran were the Overall Winners of the 2019 One DEASP Values Recognition Awards. The awards were presented by Secretary General, John McKeon along with Deputy Secretary General, Jacqui McCrum.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

OneLearning Shared Learning and Development Service

In 2019, almost 1,700 staff attended OneLearning training courses in over 40 different subject areas. A significant development in 2019 was the launch of the OneLearning portal or website in the Department which allows staff to book available places on courses or register their interest in courses from a wide-ranging catalogue. This development provides all staff with a view of all courses being delivered and provides easy access to the booking process.

Other Learning and Development Activities in 2019:

- 2,449 staff completed various instructor-led One DEASP courses provided by Staff Development Unit and Divisional Training staff. Courses delivered included induction, customer service, Habitual Residence Condition, revised decisions, means and scheme specific training;
- 8,900 e-learning sessions were completed across a range of areas. Some 5,800 staff completed the data protection module in this period;

By the end of 2019, 3,858 staff had attended various externally delivered training, supporting various business needs. A further 6,292 attended various internal learning and development events including on the job training and various staff fora across the Department.

Continuous professional development is also facilitated through the Refund of Fees Scheme which supports staff undertaking courses primarily in their own time that support the business needs of the Department. In the academic year 2018/2019, 103 staff were supported in undertaking courses from Foundation Level to Level 10.



A Scholarship Scheme, to undertake a Master's Degree, was also made available as a development opportunity to staff grades below that of Administrative Officer interested in developing their academic knowledge and deepening their professional competence in certain core areas prioritised by the Department which are of particular relevance to its work such as operations and project management. Four staff members were selected for this scholarship.

Irish Language Training

Irish language training was promoted through STÓR to assist the Department in achieving its obligations for delivery of services through Irish. Irish language courses are delivered by Gaelchultúr via OneLearning offering a range of professional Irish language courses to staff within the Department. In 2019, 74 staff commenced the Teastas sa Ghaeilge Ghairmiúil (Certificate in Professional Irish) at various levels.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Annual Social Welfare Summer School



The 20th Social Welfare Summer School was held in Dublin City University from 11 to 17 August 2019. The theme of the 2019 summer school was “20 Years of Welfare Reform: Moving from Passive to Active Welfare.”


This week-long residential event is a joint initiative between the Department and the Department for Communities, Northern Ireland (DfC). The event connects staff from both Departments and other related bodies and facilitates important discussion on social policy issues and sharing of best practice.

There were 48 delegates from DfC and the Department attending, and with overall satisfaction rating of 88% the event was a great success. Planning is now underway for the 2020 Summer School which will be held in Queens University, Belfast.

Chapter 3 Strategic Objectives and Reviews

Assistant Principal Forum 2019



 **Secretary General John McKeon addressing Assistant Principal Forum 2019.**

The Department's annual Assistant Principal Forum was held in Dublin Castle on 9 and 10 April 2019. Over 225 Assistant Principals from across the Department attended.

The Assistant Principal Forum is an important event in the Department's Staff Engagement Calendar which brings Assistant Principal Officers together to discuss the priorities for the coming year as well as looking at key strategic issues and challenges. The event is an important networking opportunity for geographically dispersed Assistant Principal Officers across the Department.

Over the two days, participants had the opportunity to hear contributions and presentations from both Departmental and external speakers: including an external perspective from Social Justice Ireland, the Social Policy Think Tank and University College Dublin School of Social Policy. The external contributions made for a lively debate in the Questions and Answers sessions afterwards.

There was an emphasis during the 2019 forum on Performance and Performance Management and its value to staff, managers and the Department. The importance of improving and managing performance was covered at length by the Secretary General in his opening address to the forum.

Presentations along with Questions and Answers were delivered on Communications and Customer Service, The Legal Services of the Department, Staff Engagement, front office back office update, Digital Services update, Engagement and Innovation, the Civil Service Renewal Plan, the Assistant Principal Officer Development Programme and Accredited Learning.

The Department's Deputy Secretary General, Jacqui McCrum delivered the closing address to the participants and the forum concluded with an Open Panel Discussion on the issues raised over the course of the two days for which members of the Department's Management Board were present to answer questions and discuss issues raised by participants in the audience.

Appendices



Appendix 1 Legislation Enacted in 2019

Legislation Enacted in 2019

Social Welfare Acts 2019

Civil Registration Act 2019 (No. 13 of 2019)

Social Welfare Act 2019 (No. 34 of 2019)

Social Welfare (No. 2) Act 2019 (No. 48 of 2019)

Regulations and Orders made by the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection in 2019

Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No.1) (Domiciliary Care Allowance - Normal Residence of Qualified Child) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No.11 of 2019)

Occupational Pension Scheme (Revaluation) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 31 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No.2) (State Pension (Contributory)) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 40 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Supplementary Welfare Allowance) (Amendment) (No.1) (Earnings Disregard) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No 41 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No.3) (Earnings Disregard) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 42 of 2019)

Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2018 (Commencement) Order 2019 (S.I. No. 69 of 2019)

Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017 (Payments in Respect of Certain Medical Certification and Reports Under the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 73 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Rent Allowance) (Amendment) (No. 1) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 101 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No.4) (Change in Rates) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No.102 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No.5) (Jobseekers Transitional Payment) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 103 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Occupational Injuries) (Amendment) (No.1) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 107 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Supplementary Welfare Allowance) (Amendment) (No.2) (Diet Supplement) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 108 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 6) (Working Family Payment) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 109 of 2019)

Social Welfare, Pensions and Civil Registration Act 2018 (Commencement) Order 2019 (S.I. No. 116 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment No.7) (Assessment of Means) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 130 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Supplementary Welfare Allowance) (Amendment) (No.3) (Assessment of Means) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 131 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No.8) (Assessment of Means) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No 202 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Supplementary Welfare Allowance) (Amendment) (No.4) (Assessment of Means) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No 203 of 2019)

Social Welfare Occupational Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No 239 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No 9) (Days to Be Treated as Days of Incapacity for Work) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No 241 of 2019)

Appendix 1 Legislation Enacted in 2019

Regulations and Orders made by the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection in 2019 Continued

Social Welfare Occupational (Consolidated Occupational Injuries) (Amendment) (No 2) (Provisions as To Incapacity for Work) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No 242 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No.10) (Assessment of Means) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No 303 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Supplementary Welfare Allowance) (Amendment) (No.5) (Assessment of Means) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No 304 of 2019)

Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005 (Specified Bodies) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No 344 of 2019)

European Union (Supplementary Pension Rights) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 447 of 2019)

Adoption Act 2010 (Abridged Certificate) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 508 of 2019)

Social Welfare ACT 2019 (Part 2) (Commencement) Order 2019 (S.I. No. 550 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 11) (Jobseekers Benefit) (Self-Employed) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 551 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Contributions and Insurability) (Amendment) (No. 1) (Jobseeker's Benefit (Self-Employed)) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 552 of 2019)

Parents Leave and Benefit Act 2019 (Commencement of Certain Provisions of Par 5) Order 2019 (S.I. No. 553 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No.12) (Parent's Benefit) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 554 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Temporary Provisions) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 580 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 13) (Working Family Payment) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 634 of 2019)

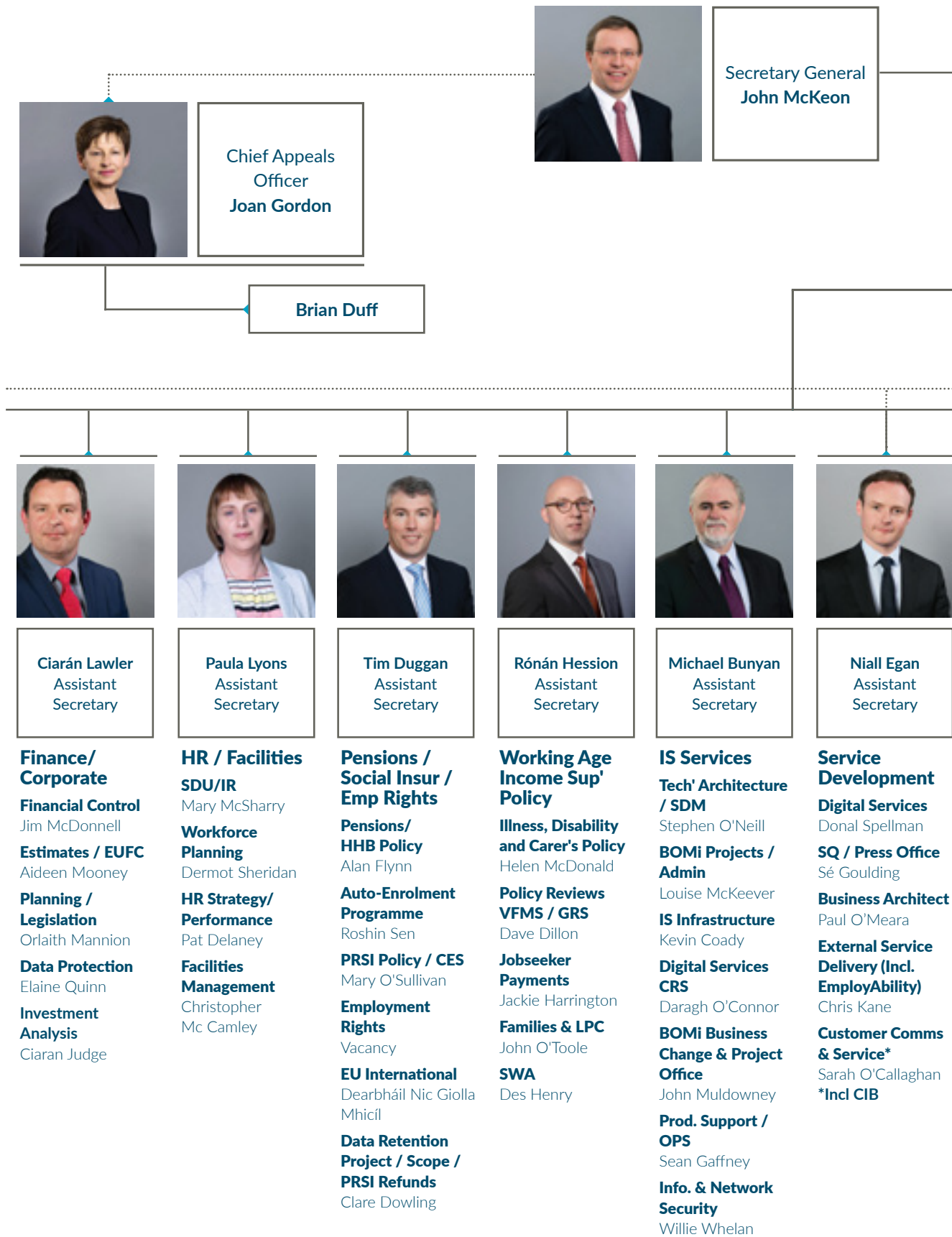
Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 14) (Carers) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 635 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 15) (Jobseeker's Transitional Payment) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 636 of 2019)

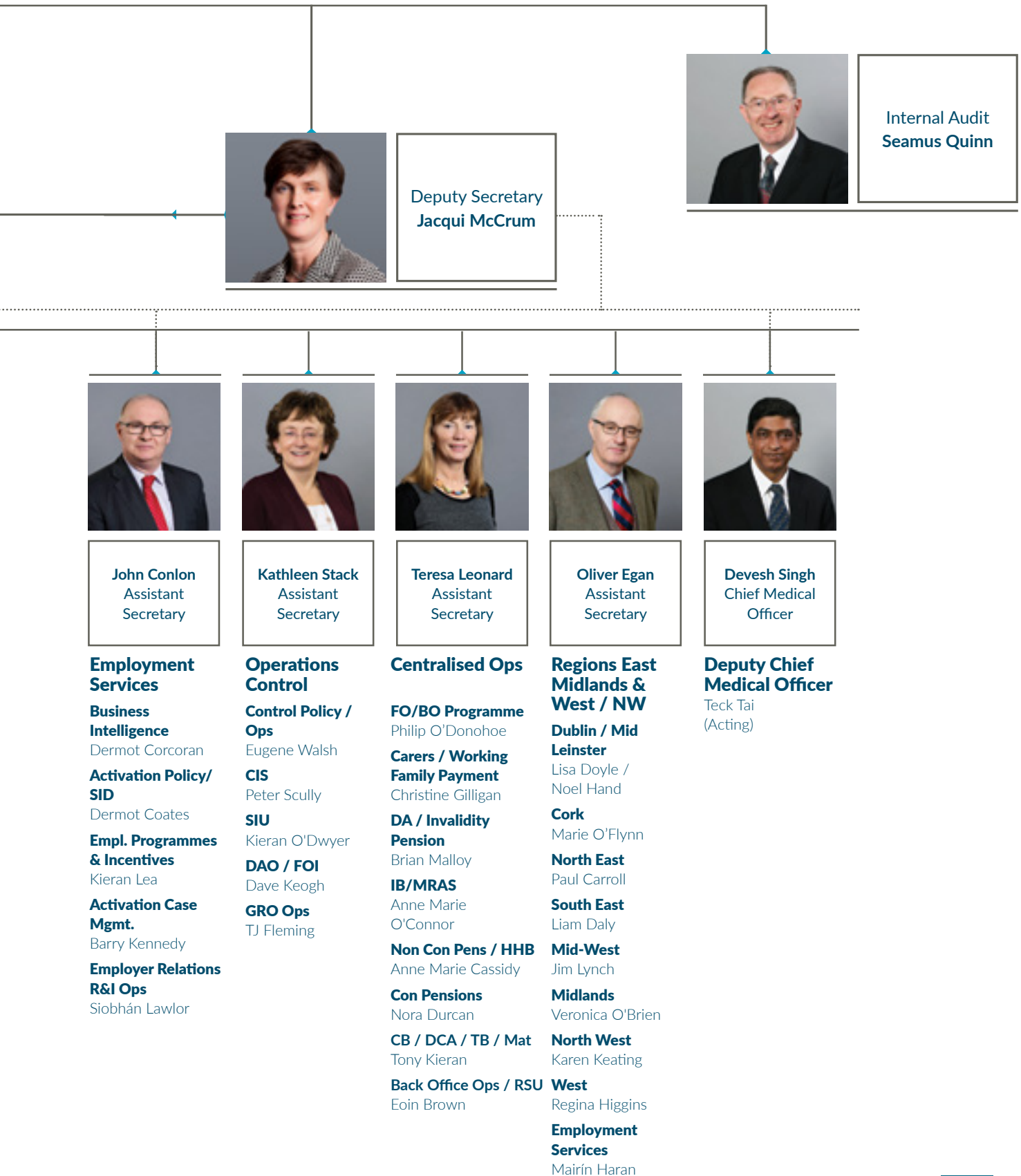
Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No.16) (Assessment of Means) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 666 of 2019)

Social Welfare (Consolidated Supplementary Welfare Allowance) (Amendment) (No. 6) (Assessment of Means) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 667 of 2019)

Appendix 2 Organisation Structure March 2020



Appendix 2 Organisation Structure March 2020



Appendix 3 Publications 2019

Publications 2019

Publications 2019
A Policy Review of Carer's Allowance, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
Access to Childcare and Home Care Services across Europe: an analysis of the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), 2016 (Research by the Economic Social Research Institute, 2019, funded by the Department)
A Public Consultation on an Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System Findings of the Automatic Enrolment Focus Group Meetings
A Public Consultation on an Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System Findings of the Written Submissions
A Public Consultation on an Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System Summary of Findings of the Consultation Seminars
A Public Consultation on an Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System Summary of Findings of the Online Surveys
Compliance and Anti-fraud Strategy 2019 - 2023
Compliance and Anti-fraud Strategy Report for 2018
Control Survey of Back to Work Enterprise Allowance
Control Survey of State Pension (Non-contributory)
Design of an Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System Update and Next Steps
ESRI - ESRI Working Paper No. 640, October 2019 - A micro-macro-economic analysis of pension auto-enrolment options
Gender Recognition Act 2015: Annual Report for 2018;
Gender Recognition Act 2015: Report to the Oireachtas under Section 7 of the Act.
Overview of findings from the Strawman Public Consultation Process for an Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System for Ireland - link
Report of the Social Inclusion Forum 2018
Social Impact Assessment of the welfare and income measures in Budget 2019
Social Inclusion Monitor 2017
Summary of progress in the Design of an Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System for Ireland and next steps - October 2019
Technical Paper on Social Inclusion and Access to Care Services in Ireland: An Analysis of the Central Statistics Office (CSO) Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC), 2016 (Research by the Economic Social Research Institute, 2019, funded by the Department)

Appendix 4 Ministers of the Department since 1947

Ministers of the Department since 1947

Minister	From	To
James Ryan	22 January 1947	18 February 1948
William Norton	18 February 1948	14 June 1951
James Ryan	14 June 1951	2 June 1954
Brendan Corish	2 June 1954	20 March 1957
Patrick Smyth	20 March 1957	27 November 1957
Seán MacEntee	27 November 1957	24 June 1959
Seán MacEntee	24 June 1959	12 October 1961
Kevin Boland	12 October 1961	21 April 1965
Kevin Boland	21 April 1965	16 November 1966
Joseph Brennan	16 November 1966	2 July 1969
Kevin Boland	2 July 1969	6 May 1970
Joseph Brennan	6 May 1970	14 March 1973
Brendan Corish	14 March 1973	5 July 1977
Charles J Haughey	5 July 1977	12 December 1979
Michael Woods	12 December 1979	30 June 1981
Eileen Desmond	30 June 1981	9 March 1982
Michael Woods	9 March 1982	14 December 1982
Barry Desmond	14 December 1982	14 February 1986
Gemma Hussey	14 February 1986	10 March 1987
Michael Woods	10 March 1987	18 July 1989
Michael Woods	18 July 1989	13 November 1991
Brendan Daly	13 November 1991	11 February 1992
Charlie McCreevy	11 February 1992	12 January 1993
Michael Woods	12 January 1993	15 December 1994
Proinsias De Rossa	15 December 1994	26 June 1997
Dermot Ahern	26 June 1997	17 June 2002
Mary Coughlan	17 June 2002	29 September 2004
Séamus Brennan	29 September 2004	14 June 2007
Martin Cullen	14 June 2007	7 May 2008
Mary Hanafin	7 May 2008	23 March 2010
Éamon Ó Cuív	23 March 2010	9 March 2011
Joan Burton	9 March 2011	6 May 2016
Leo Varadkar	6 May 2016	14 June 2017
Regina Doherty	14 June 2017	

Appendix 5 Ministers of State at the Department since 1947

Ministers of State at the Department since 1947

Minister	From	To
Michael J. Kennedy	19 June 1951	24 April 1954
Michael J. Kennedy	24 April 1954	2 June 1954
Michael J. Kennedy	1 March 1957	23 June 1959
Michael J. Kennedy	23 June 1959	15 September 1961
John Geoghan	9 July 1969	5 February 1973
John Geoghan	2 March 1973	14 March 1973
Frank Clusky	14 March 1973	25 May 1977
Tom Nolan	25 March 1980	17 December 1980
Tom Hussey	17 December 1980	30 June 1981
Mary Flaherty	30 June 1981	9 March 1982
Denis Gallagher	23 March 1982	27 October 1982
Rory O'Hanlon	27 October 1982	14 December 1982
Fergus O'Brien	16 December 1982	15 December 1983
John Donnellan	15 December 1983	14 February 1986
Seamus Pattison	14 February 1986	20 January 1987
Joan Burton	14 January 1993	17 November 1994
Bernard J Durkan	20 December 1994	26 June 1997
Máire Hctor	11 July 2007	7 May 2008
Máire Hctor	13 May 2008	22 April 2009
Áine Brady	22 April 2009	9 March 2011
Kevin Humphreys	15 July 2014	6 May 2016
Finian McGrath	6 May 2016	
Pat Breen	6 May 2016	

