

# Annual Progress Report on the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016

**March 2015**

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# Foreword

Meaningful and sustainable Public Service Reform has been a key element of the Government's strategic response to the economic crisis. It will also continue to be a critical part of our recovery.

In January 2014, the Government published its second Public Service Reform Plan covering the period 2014-2016. This built on the progress made on the first Reform Plan, which was published in November 2011. The 2014 Plan placed a particular emphasis on improving outcomes for service users, as well as maintaining the necessary focus on increased efficiency.

Just over a year on from the publication of the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016, and as part of a commitment made in that Plan, we are now publishing the Annual Progress Report on Public Service Reform. This sets out the main areas of progress on implementing the changes set out in that document, as well as taking the opportunity to reflect on some of the reform priorities and objectives for 2015.

The progress made so far is significant. As this progress report illustrates, the extent of the reform programme at a central, cross-cutting level is considerable and this is the primary focus of the report. I should also acknowledge the complementary reform programmes and initiatives underway at organisational and sectoral levels across the Public Service. This report provides a snapshot of just some of this important work.

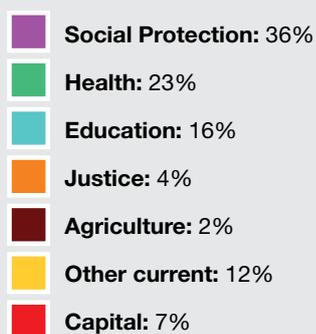
I wish to take this opportunity to thank all public servants for their contribution to our ongoing recovery. Their dedication and application has been the most important element in the progress that we have made in building a new Public Service. I look forward to further progress being made in the coming year.



**Brendan Howlin, T.D.**  
Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform

# The Public Service in Numbers

€53 billion Exchequer investment in public services in 2015



## Civil Service

84.8 million payments made to some

2.2 million beneficiaries of Social Protection pension and welfare schemes



2.3 million items of correspondence and



2.2 million phone calls answered by the Revenue Commissioners



630,000 passports issued (over 90% of domestic applications via Passport Express)



Over 130,000 applications processed under the Single Farm Payment Scheme (61% applied online)

## Education & Training

More than 56,000 teachers educating

860,000+ young people in schools



164,000+ students in full-time 3rd level education



270,000 further education and training places available

67,000+ pre-school children in the Early Childhood Care Programme



Over 4,000 inspections in schools and places of education

## Health



68,000 babies born in our hospitals



9.7 million home help hours delivered to

46,000 people

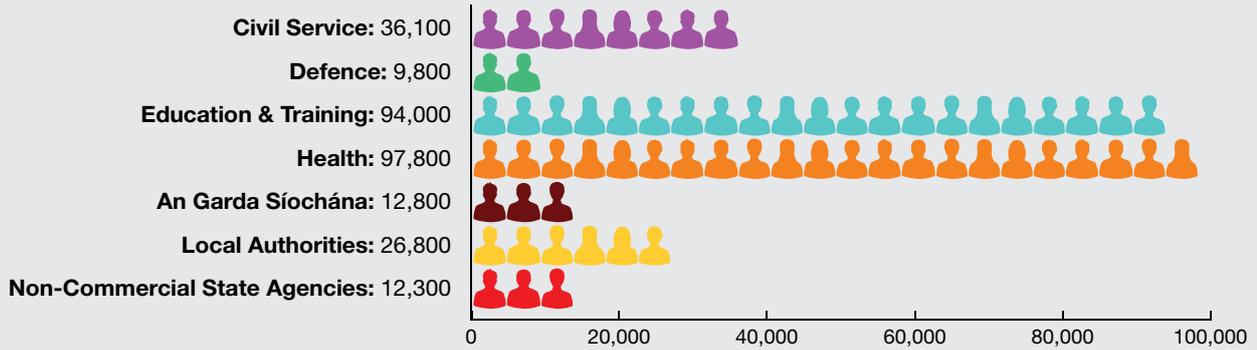


140,000 women attended BreastCheck

Over 3 million attended a hospital outpatient department



# 289,600 Public Service Employees



## Justice & Equality

400,000 roadside breath tests carried out at over

78,000 Garda checkpoints



21,000 conferred with citizenship

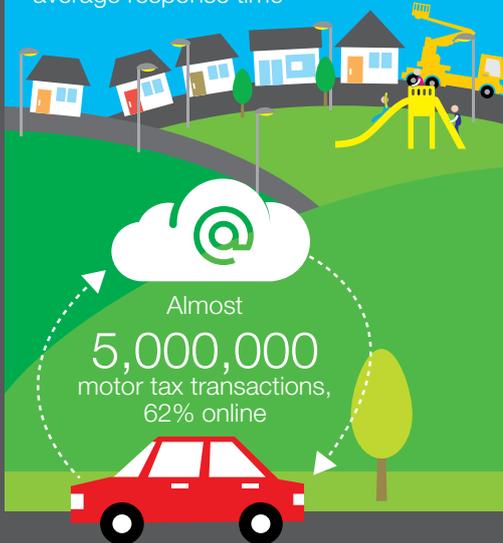
590,000 civil and criminal matters brought before the courts



4.2 million online Land Registry transactions

## Local Government

Almost 11,000 non-emergency issues reported to local councils via Fix Your Street - 1.5 working days average response time



Almost 5,000,000 motor tax transactions, 62% online

Fire services mobilised to over 39,000 incidents



7,500+ households benefitted from the Housing Adaptations Grants Scheme for older people and people with a disability

## State Agencies

47,000 businesses inspected by agencies on behalf of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland



24,600 homes and 900 public and commercial buildings upgraded through the SEAI Better Energy programme



Enterprise Ireland client companies support over

300,000



jobs in every town and village in Ireland

## Defence

428 Defence Forces personnel deployed overseas in 11 mission areas in 15 countries





# Executive Summary

## The importance of reform

Public Service Reform has played a key role in Ireland's recovery in recent years. Sustainable and far-reaching reform has been essential in ensuring that the Public Service has been able to continue to provide essential services and to protect vulnerable groups in society.

Reform continues to have a very important role. A high-performing and effective Public Service is critical to Ireland's attractiveness for business investment and employment creation. Similarly, the cost of providing public services impacts on taxation levels and the State's funding requirements.

The Public Service comprises approximately 289,600 members of staff across a very broad range of organisations delivering many different services. The infographic on the preceding pages provides just a few examples of the volume and diversity of services delivered across all sectors.

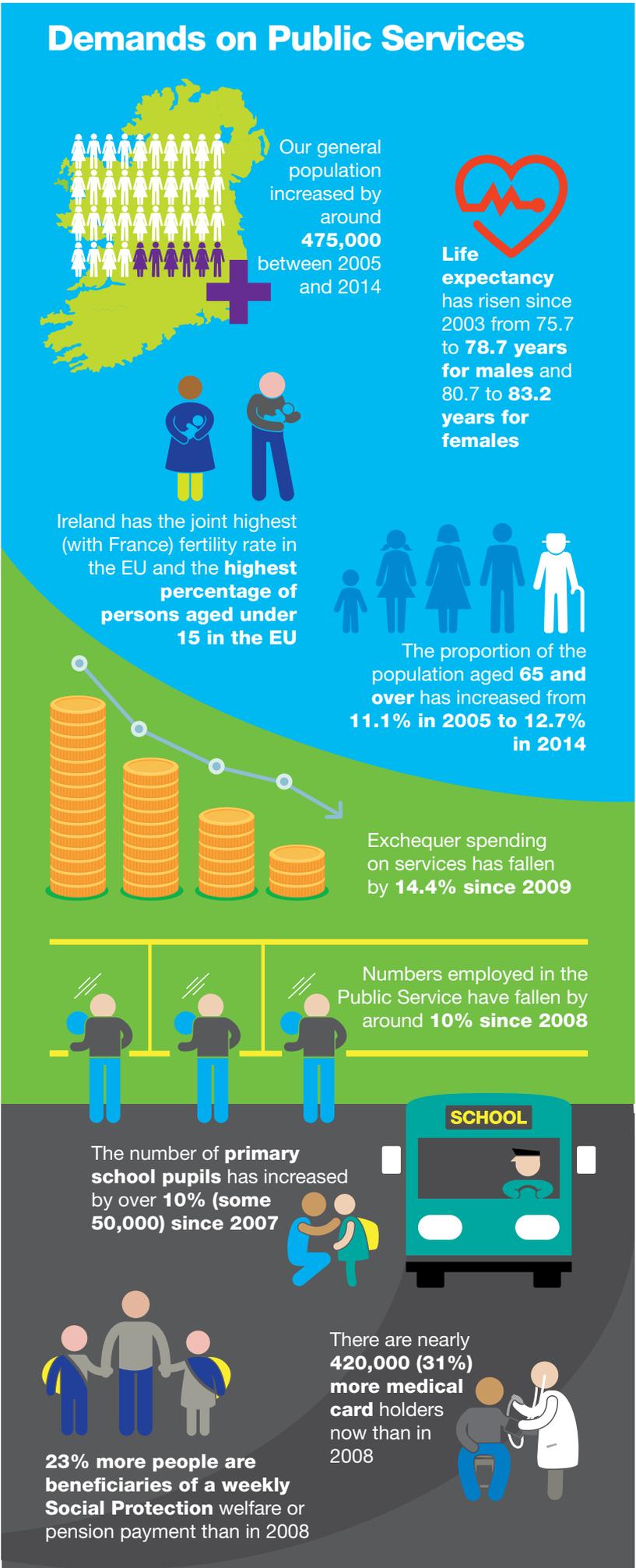
## First Public Service Reform Plan 2011-2013

When the Government's first Reform Plan was published in November 2011, the imperative for reform was clear. The pressing need for fiscal adjustment, reflected in the reduced numbers of public servants and allied to increased demand for services, meant that comprehensive reform in the administration and delivery of public services was critical in maintaining those services.

Public Service staff numbers have been reduced by approximately 10% and the Public Service pay-bill has been reduced by over 20% since 2009. This has been done at a time of increased demand for public services arising from demographic changes, as well as from the crisis itself, as illustrated in the infographic on this page.

While there is more work to be done, there is clear evidence that the Public Service has delivered significant change and is continuously improving. As set out in this and two earlier reports, good progress has been made in reducing costs; improving productivity; more online delivery of services; development of shared services; and putting in place the structures to reform public procurement and property asset management, to name just some areas. The two Progress Reports on the first Reform Plan that have been published, in September 2012 and in January 2014, can be viewed at: [www.per.gov.ie/public-service-reform](http://www.per.gov.ie/public-service-reform)

The recently published IPA Public Sector Trends report<sup>1</sup> has ranked Ireland in third place, behind only Finland and Sweden, in the European Union for the quality of its public administration, an improvement on fifth place in 2013. Ireland's public administration also scored well against indicators that assess the impact of public administration on the ability of companies to do business.



1 [www.ipa.ie/pdf/PUBLICSECTORTRENDS2014.pdf](http://www.ipa.ie/pdf/PUBLICSECTORTRENDS2014.pdf)

## Second Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016

Building on the progress made on the delivery of its first Reform Plan, the Government published its second Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016 in January 2014. As well as maintaining a focus on reducing costs and increasing efficiency, this new phase of reform has the ambitious goal of building a Public Service that will have positive outcomes for all stakeholders, including citizens, businesses and public servants themselves. This is about improving public services while continuing to achieve greater efficiency in how those services are delivered.

The key priorities of the 2014 Reform Plan include:

- The use of alternative models of service delivery and better engagement with customers;
- Making maximum use of digitisation and open data to deliver services and information in innovative ways;

- Utilisation of the 'reform dividend' to support service improvements; and
- Greater openness, transparency and accountability.

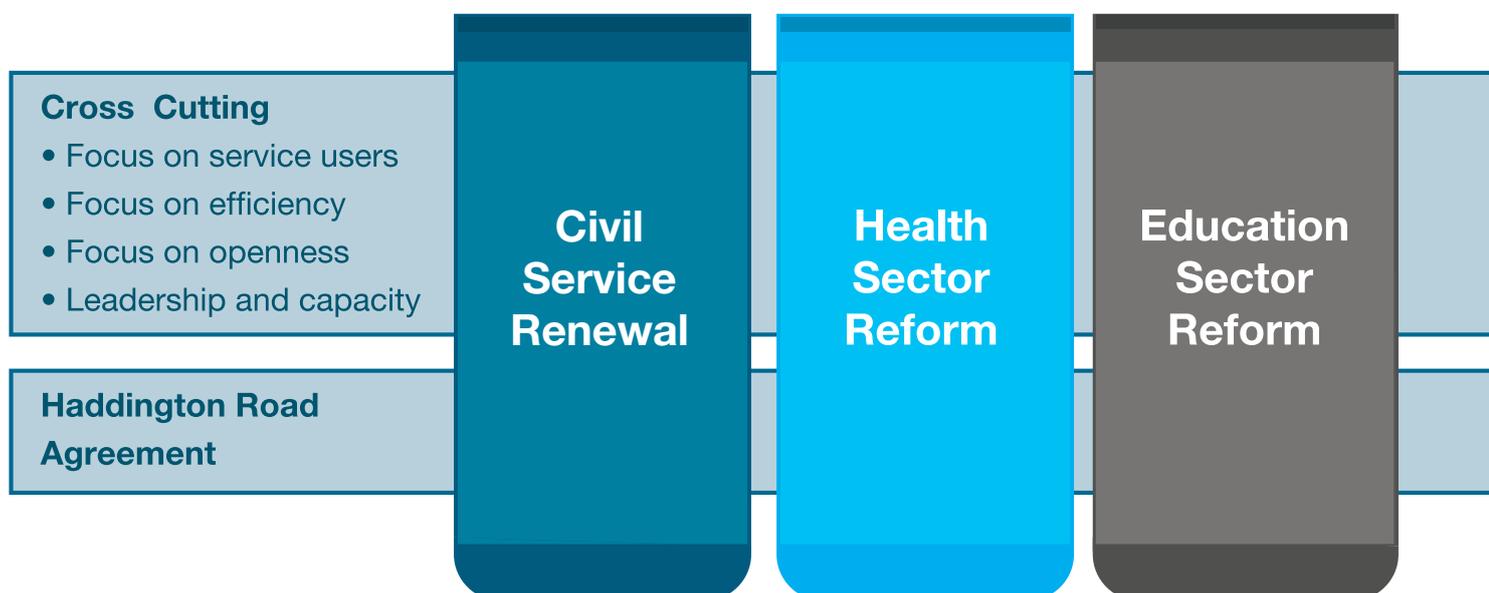
### Main areas of progress on cross-cutting reform

Strong progress has been made in implementing the reforms set out in the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016. These are set out in greater detail in the body of this report, with approximately 150 examples included. Particular highlights include:

- The Public Service pay-bill has been reduced from €17.5 billion in 2009 to a provisional outturn of €13.9 billion net of the Pension Related Deduction by end 2014, a reduction of over 20%;
- Overall staffing levels have been reduced by 10%, from 320,400 in 2008 to 289,600;
- A new Public Service ICT Strategy was published in January 2015 to create a new model for ICT delivery across the Public Service;

- 1,217,000 people have been issued with a Public Services Card, around 25% of the population;
- PeoplePoint, the Civil Service Human Resources and Pensions Shared Service, provides services to more than 26,000 employees across 21 organisations;
- Major alternative service delivery initiatives are being implemented, such as JobPath and the call centre for the Local Property Tax;
- The procurement reform programme is implementing a new centralised model for public procurement to generate significant savings in non-pay expenditure. €63.5 million was saved on procurement in 2014;
- Measures for improved and better integrated property management, set out in the *Accommodating Change – Measuring Success* report, are being implemented;

## Framework for Public Service Reform



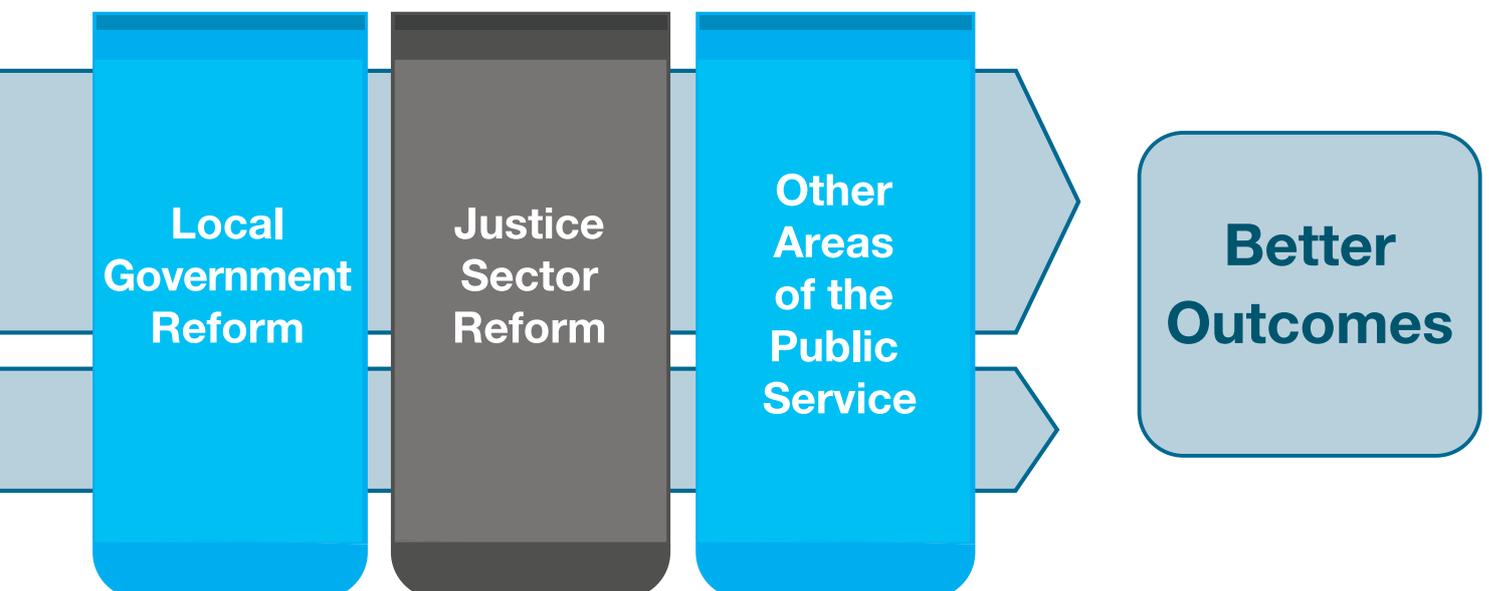
- The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, 2014 restores Ireland to the top tier of legal frameworks internationally for facilitating access to official information;
- Leadership is being enhanced by the implementation of the Senior Public Service (SPS) Leadership Development Strategy 2013-2015;
- Measures affecting more than 90% of the State Bodies to be merged or rationalised have been completed. When fully completed, there will be 181 fewer bodies operating in the Irish Public Service than in 2011;
- Implementation of the actions in the Civil Service Renewal Plan (October 2014) is underway; and
- The Haddington Road Agreement continues to play a critical role in improving productivity, reducing costs and enabling reform.

## Organisational / sectoral reforms

The main focus of this report is on the cross-cutting reforms that generally apply across all sectors of the Public Service. Alongside those, a broad range of specific reforms are taking place at organisational / sectoral level on foot of the major commitments to reform in the Programme for Government. The implementation of these reforms is led by the relevant Ministers and their Departments.

Under the Public Service Reform programme, there is a particularly strong focus on driving change in the key sectors of Health, Education, Local Government, Justice and the Civil Service, as set out in the Reform Framework chart below. Reform within and across Civil Service Departments and Offices is an important part of the reform framework and an outline of progress on the Civil Service Renewal programme is included in the box on the next page, with detail provided throughout this report.

These organisational / sectoral reforms are integrated with the implementation of the cross-cutting reforms from the Public Service Reform Plan, and the actions in the Haddington Road Agreement, in Integrated Reform Delivery Plans (IRDPs), which are produced annually by all Departments and major Offices. Progress on the implementation of the 2014 IRDPs has informed the development of this report, with around 150 examples of progress outlined, although the IRDPs include hundreds more reform initiatives across all sectors.



## Civil Service Renewal Plan: Progress

In October 2014, the Government published a Civil Service Renewal Plan to set out a roadmap for the future of the Civil Service. This Plan integrated the outcomes of the Independent Panel on Strengthening Civil Service Accountability and Performance, and the Civil Service Renewal Task Force. It set out a vision for the Civil Service and a 3 year action plan to achieve a more unified, professional, responsive, open and accountable Civil Service that can provide a world-class Service to the State and the people of Ireland. Since the publication of the Plan, significant progress has been achieved:

- The Government has approved the terms of reference for the establishment of an Accountability Board for the Civil Service (Action 1) to provide oversight on accountability and performance across the Civil Service system. An expressions of interest process has been initiated by the Public Appointments Service for the independent external members of the Board using the procedures set for State Board appointments;
- A Civil Service Management Board (Action 2) has been established to provide collective leadership and management to the Civil Service. The Board, made up of all Secretaries General and Heads of major Offices, has begun meeting on a monthly basis. Minutes of these meetings will be published regularly;

- Six out of the 25 Renewal Plan actions have been prioritised for completion by June 2015, including:
  - Establishing the first performance review process for Secretaries General (Action 12);
  - Identifying available options to strengthen the disciplinary code, in particular to address under-performance (Action 11);
  - Extending open recruitment in key areas to fill skills gaps (Action 8);
  - Carrying out the first Civil Service wide employee engagement survey (Action 25);
- Overall, 21 out of the 25 Renewal Plan actions have been initiated, including:
  - Developing a new shared model for delivering learning and development in the Civil Service (Action 9);

- Strengthening policy-making skills and developing more open approaches to policy making (Action 22);

- A central Programme Management Office has been established to coordinate and drive implementation of all 25 actions on a phased basis. The office has drawn together the skills and capabilities of staff from a range of Departments and Offices; and
- Building on the engagement process, which involved 2,000 staff and stakeholders during the development of the Renewal Plan, 500 staff have attended a Renewal Implementation Town Hall event. These events are part of an ongoing large-scale communications and engagement programme.

Further details on the Renewal Plan are included in the relevant sections of this report.



# Introduction

There is a specific commitment in the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016 to “publish a progress report on Public Service Reform each year”. The progress outlined in this Annual Report is primarily based on the objectives and actions set out in the Reform Plan, which can be seen at: [reformplan.per.gov.ie](http://reformplan.per.gov.ie)

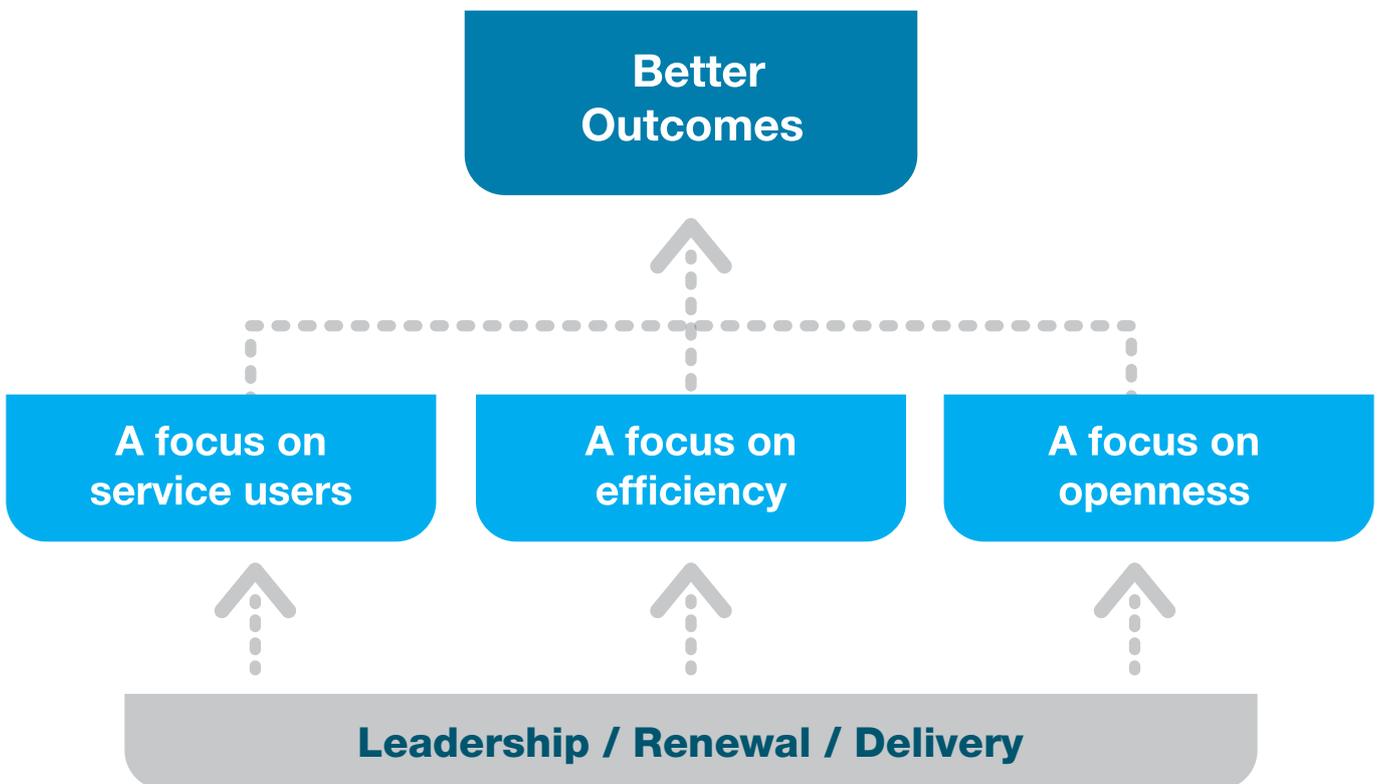
The Reform and Delivery Office (RDO) in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform coordinates and monitors the implementation of the more than 230 actions contained in the Reform Plan, compiling reports on progress on a quarterly basis. While this Progress Report is based on those actions, it does not address each of them individually due to their number but rather provides

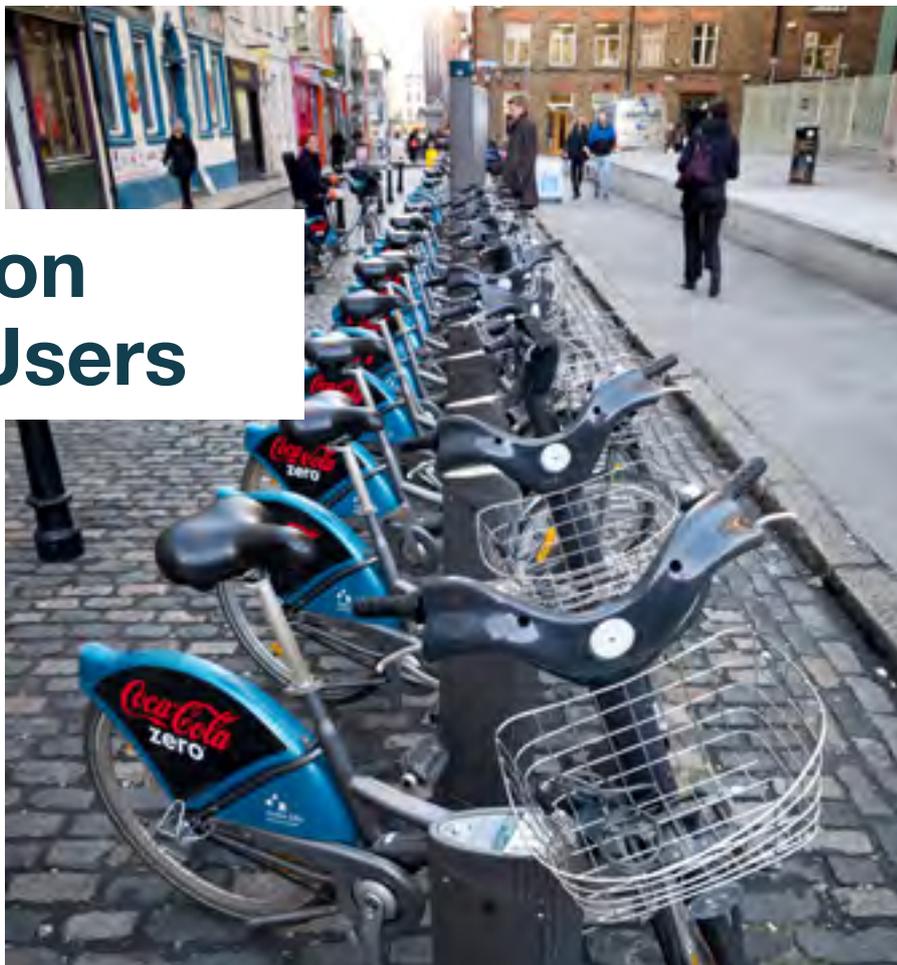
an overview of the progress being made in the thirteen cross-cutting areas set out in the Plan.

The Reform Plan has the central objective of delivering better outcomes for service users. As set out in the diagram below, these better outcomes will be delivered through a focus on service users, on efficiency and on openness, underpinned by a strong emphasis on leadership, renewal and delivery. The format of this document reflects those pillars of the reform programme, with a number of cross-cutting areas under each heading.

Many of these outcomes will be delivered at sectoral level in areas such as Health, Education, Local Government and Justice. This Progress Report also includes some examples of reforms at organisational and sectoral levels, under the various headings from the Reform Plan. However, the report does not intend to cover the full breadth of the reforms that have been implemented across all areas of the Public Service in recent years and particularly in 2014.

While recognising the considerable progress that has been made, further efforts will be required in the coming year, for the lifetime of the Public Service Reform Plan, and beyond. Details of some of the reform priorities for 2015 are set out at the end of each section.





# 1. A Focus on Service Users

The Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016 places a particular emphasis on improving outcomes for service users. This requires a change in how the Public Service designs and delivers services, and in how it makes decisions on resource allocation. The focus must be on more evidence based, longer-term and strategic policy-making and on greater integration within the Public Service, with the objective of better outcomes for the citizen and business customer.

## 1.1 Alternative Models of Service Delivery

Central to the objective of delivering better outcomes for service users is the use of innovative alternative delivery models to design and deliver better and more cost effective services in partnership with the voluntary, community and private sectors.

### Planning and developing capacity

All Government Departments and major Offices, as well as the key sectors of Health, Education, Justice and Local Government, have submitted detailed evidence-based External Service Delivery plans to Government. The purpose of these plans is to drive efficiencies and reduce costs, whilst simultaneously protecting the quality of services delivered to the public. Regular reports on progress with these plans

are being made to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

In addition to this planning programme, it is recognised that there is a need to up-skill and develop capacity and capability relating to the development and roll out of alternative models of service delivery. This represents a critical aspect of the work of the Reform and Delivery Office, providing a network of people and a learning resource centre, as well as training opportunities for Departments and Offices that are embarking on new and complex external delivery projects. Training in External Service Delivery has been provided to over 100 managers in the Public Service to date. This training programme has been refined and targeted to provide for specific training needs

resolution in more technical aspects of External Service Delivery.

### Debt management

A review of Debt Management performance across five key areas – the HSE; Local Government; the Department of Social Protection; the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; and the Courts Service – was completed and published in 2014. The review contains a number of cross-sectoral and sector-specific recommendations. A Debt Management Project Board, on which the relevant organisations are represented, will drive and monitor the implementation of these recommendations.

## Commissioning models for better service delivery

An initial process of engagement commenced with the Community and Voluntary (C&V) sector in 2014 regarding the Government's intention to examine the funding of this sector, moving away from block grants and towards the adoption of commissioning models. This programme will be significantly developed in 2015 in collaboration with public bodies that commission large grant amounts for the provision of services via the C&V sector.

The views of Departments and Offices, service providers within the C&V sector and service end-users will be sought to evaluate how best to manage this transition to commissioning across a wide suite of service provision. It will also provide an opportunity to assess the suitability of potential programmes for testing and scaling-up. This discussion will be advanced through a targeted public consultation beginning in the first half of 2015.

## Examples of alternative service delivery models

JobPath is one of the State's largest and most innovative External Service Delivery projects. This is a new programme of employment activation aimed at supporting the long-term unemployed and is being rolled out in 2015. Two preferred bidders will employ 1,000 staff in approximately 100 outlets across the country to assist the long-term unemployed in finding suitable employment and training opportunities. JobPath providers will be bound under contract to achieve specified levels of employment progression performance and customer service quality. JobPath will cost

an estimated €340 million but will provide gross benefit savings of approximately €525 million, based on contracts for four years with an additional two-year run-out period (to cater for jobseekers who are referred towards the end of the programme).

The externally-delivered call centre for the Local Property Tax handled over 660,000 calls in 2014 on behalf of the Revenue Commissioners. The vendor works closely with the Revenue Commissioners to provide frontline customer service to the public on issues relating to the Local Property Tax.

The Social Impact Investing pilot scheme, seeking private sector investment partners to provide long-term sustainable, stable homes for homeless families in the Dublin region, is well advanced. By the end of 2014, Focus Ireland had engaged with 108 of the 136 families identified as having urgent requirements under the scheme. Suitable alternative accommodation has been provided for them and work is ongoing to sustain them in their new homes. Focus Ireland is continuing to work with the remaining families involved in this project.

A memorandum of understanding is being drawn up between the Department of Health, the Health Service Executive, Atlantic

Philanthropies and Genio on the establishment of a Service Reform Fund. This Fund will support the acceleration of reform in the areas of disability and mental health services through projects commissioned with the assistance of non-profit providers, including Genio and others. Reform deliverables will focus on better outcomes for service users through migration to a person-centred model of services and supports for people with disabilities; and support for enhanced recovery initiatives for those with mental health difficulties, in line with the Government's stated policies.

## Irish Non-Profits Project

The accessibility of financial reporting data within the non-profit sector, for Government and the public, is being actively explored. The Government is committed to reactivating the Irish Non-Profits Project, a not-for-profit organisation in which the State has previously invested. This pilot project is concerned with data collection, interrogation and a reporting system for the non-profit sector which is estimated to be in receipt of approximately €4.4 billion annually. The reactivation of this project is in collaboration with Atlantic Philanthropies and the Ireland Funds.

### Priorities for 2015

- To progress debt management solutions across five sectoral areas.
- To conclude a funding arrangement for a financial data collection, interrogation and reporting system for the non-profit sector.
- To complete a public consultation on the transition from block-grants to a commissioning model for the delivery of services that are secured through the community and voluntary sector.
- To advise and assist Departments and Offices in the roll out and delivery of programmes and projects identified in their External Service Delivery Plans and to report to Government on milestones and achievements.

## 1.2 Digital Government

Digital Government presents enormous opportunities to transform service delivery to be more efficient, effective and designed to meet the needs of service users. Ireland's strong performance in this area has been recognised internationally. There are over 400 informational and transactional public services accessible via the Government's central portal – [www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) – with more to be added over time. For example, it is now possible to register a child, apply for student grants, pay taxes, apply for driving licences and car tests, track passport applications, and to interact with local authorities on a range of issues. However, there is more to be done.

### Public Service ICT Strategy

With this in mind, a new Public Service ICT Strategy ([ictstrategy.per.gov.ie/](http://ictstrategy.per.gov.ie/)) was published in January 2015. The Strategy will create a new model for ICT delivery across the entire Public Service, delivering more efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery through a more integrated, shared and digital environment. The Strategy has identified five key strategic objectives that will set the future direction for innovation and excellence in ICT within the Public Service:

- *Building to share* – this objective is concerned with creating shared services to support integration across the wider Public Service to drive efficiency, standardisation, consolidation, reduction in duplication and control cost;

- *Digital First* – this aims for the digitisation of key transactional services and the increased use of ICT to deliver improved efficiency within Public Bodies and provide new digital services to citizens, businesses and public servants;
- *Data as an Enabler* – in line with statutory obligations and Data Protection guidelines, this will facilitate increased data sharing and innovative use of data across all Public Bodies to enable the delivery of integrated services, improve decision making and improve openness and transparency between Government and the public;
- *Improve Governance* – this strives to ensure that the ICT Strategy is aligned, directed and monitored across Public Bodies to support the specific goals and objectives at a whole-of-government level and with an emphasis on shared commitment; and
- *Increase Capability* – the goal is to ensure the necessary skills and resources are available to meet the current and future ICT needs of the Public Service.

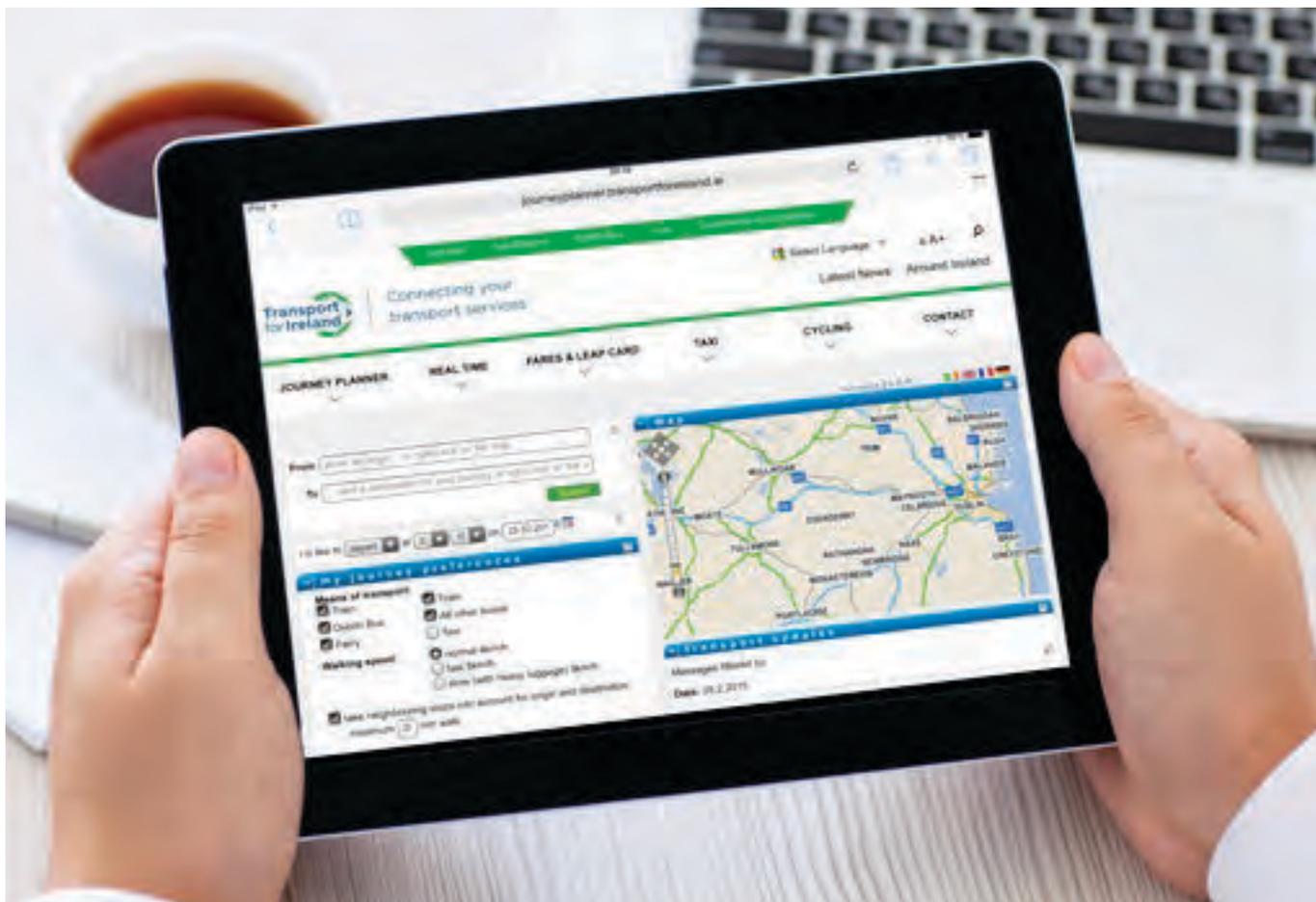
Progress has been made in identifying the top citizen and business transactional services, with a view to identifying further opportunities for digital delivery. Further digitisation will be planned on the basis of a rolling programme, with new projects being added as existing ones are completed. Prioritisation will be agreed and progress monitored centrally by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer in collaboration with the Chief Information Officer Council.

### Data sharing and open data

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform is currently developing a Data Sharing and Governance Bill. A significant consultation exercise to support the development of the Bill was undertaken in 2014. The objective of the Bill is to provide a legal basis for information sharing between Public Service Bodies, with associated transparency and governance obligations. This will support the implementation of the "Data as an Enabler" stream of the ICT Strategy.

The provision of Open Data promotes accountability and transparency and there are also potential economic benefits. Including through Ireland's involvement in the Open Government Partnership, the number of Open Data initiatives in Ireland is growing and includes Ireland Stat, the whole-of-Government performance measurement website, which is being piloted at present. The Fingal Open Data network and the Dublinked project have been instrumental in promoting data-driven innovation. Success stories include the re-use of the information published in the Residential Property Price Register by a number of property websites and the use of Dublin parking data to develop parking apps.

In the Health sector, progress has been made on the introduction of unique Individual Health Identifiers (IHI) for individuals, healthcare professionals and healthcare organisations. The ultimate benefit of these identifiers to all those who use health and social care services



is better quality and safer care. The Health Identifiers Act, 2014 provides the legislative framework for the implementation of all three identifiers.

The Property Registration Authority has developed a set of processes for the delivery of information services, including spatial data, to assist both public and private sector organisations to achieve strategic objectives. Demand for this data is increasing, with key information being provided to assist important national infrastructural projects.

A good example of data sharing between public bodies is the web-based service used to support the Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) system, which is the single national Awarding Authority for all new student grant applications, replacing the 66 local awarding authorities that existed previously. This service has been used to

provide required information in respect of all grant claimants who receive Department of Social Protection (DSP) payments directly from the DSP to SUSI, negating the need for each applicant to make separate enquiries to the DSP.

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Pobal and County Childcare Committees use a web-based model to manage the delivery, monitoring and reporting of the early years-related programmes with an annual value of approximately €260 million. Since the system was commissioned in October 2014, 96,000 children have been registered.

The DSP has recently introduced “Payment Object” functionality to its electronic payments system. This enables payments to be generated for items unrelated to DSP claims; payments to issue on behalf of other DSP systems; payments

to issue on behalf of agencies other than DSP; and consistent mechanisms for controlling, tracking and reporting on payments.

## Public Services Card

Access to public services continues to be improved through the ongoing roll-out of the Public Services Card (PSC) by the Department of Social Protection. The PSC provides for robust personal identification and enables individuals to access public services more efficiently, reduces the possibility of theft, forgery and fraud and preserves personal privacy to the maximum extent possible. Over twenty five percent of people living in the State now have their own PSC, with a total of 1,217,000 in use. Some 368,000 of this number includes free travel variants, which are being used to replace the old travel pass.



The Department of Justice and Equality (Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service) and the Department of Social Protection are working to develop a single Common Format EU Residence Permit (EURP) and Public Services Card.

## Broadband

The National Broadband Plan (NBP) aims to ensure that every citizen and business, regardless of location, has access to a high quality, high speed broadband service. This will be achieved through a combination of commercial investments and a State-led intervention in areas where commercial services will not be provided. In November 2014, the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources launched a public consultation on the National High Speed Coverage Map 2016. The map can be accessed at [www.broadband.gov.ie](http://www.broadband.gov.ie).

All second level schools in Ireland now have 100mbps Internet connectivity. This three year programme is a partnership between the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and the Department of Education and Skills. Most recently, the project has been extended to include all 21 full-time Educational Centres, which locally

deliver national programmes of teacher professional development.

## Online services

Revenue developed a range of new electronic systems in 2014, including a new Electronic Manifest System to facilitate imports and exports, a system to administer the Home Renovation Incentive Scheme, and an e-Form 12 Return of Income. It also introduced a Charitable Donations refund scheme and the VAT Mini One Stop Shop to facilitate the filing of returns and payment of VAT by suppliers of telecommunications, broadcasting and e-services in the EU. These all help to make Ireland the easiest country in the EU to pay business taxes (for the eighth year running) and rank Ireland as the most efficient facilitator in the transit of goods in the world.

The award winning [www.myplan.ie](http://www.myplan.ie) initiative has seamlessly integrated over 400 forward plans of the 31 city and county councils with a wide range of other spatial planning relevant maps and data including floodplain mapping, heritage designations, location of schools, unfinished housing survey data and census data within an intuitive and free to use web browser. With over 700 users on average per day, the system provides a portal to the forward planning functions of the

entire local government sector. MyPlan has been chosen as the basis for a number of wider public service ICT platforms including the portfolio management system operated by NAMA, and the award winning [www.scoilnet.ie](http://www.scoilnet.ie) interactive teaching aid for young geography students.

Dublin City Council, on behalf of the four Dublin local authorities, is advancing an online planning application service which is now due for completion by Quarter 2 2015. Online planning application services are also provided by Cork and Mayo local authorities.

### Fix Your Street

([www.fixyourstreet.ie](http://www.fixyourstreet.ie)) is an online facility through which non-emergency issues can be reported to a local authority. It enables members of the public to report incidents related to the public realm anywhere in Ireland and for these issues to be redirected to the appropriate local authority for attention. In 2014, there were 10,923 uses of Fix Your Street, with an average response time of 1.5 working days by the relevant local authority.

The Office of Public Works (OPW) now ensures that all water level and river flow archive data is published on the near real time website [www.opw.ie/hydro-data](http://www.opw.ie/hydro-data) with 58 station data sets now posting. Usage of the real time website, [www.waterlevel.ie](http://www.waterlevel.ie), is strong - there were more than 250,000 visits recorded during 2014.

In 2014, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine completed a significant extension to its online services offering with the addition of the Online Payment and Account Enquiry application. This new application is available to all of its customers as the *Financial Self-Services* (FSS) application within the [agfood.ie](http://agfood.ie) portal. The

application empowers customers to securely view all of their financial transactions with the Department, print/download account statements and make payments online. The rollout of the application has continued over the past nine months with access to the FSS now provided to approximately 55,000 farmers.

The revised and enhanced version of the Property Registration Authority's website to allow people to find information on properties and land, [www.landdirect.com](http://www.landdirect.com), was rolled out in July 2014. As well as providing an online payment facility for account holders, additional functionality was added to enhance the user experience and increase the range of services available.

The *IFORIS iNet* service was launched in late 2012 to allow Forest Owners to submit annual forestry premium applications online. Use of the facility in 2014 was 46% of the total 20,020 applications submitted.

The Building Control Management System (BCMS) ([www.localgov.ie/en/BCMS](http://www.localgov.ie/en/BCMS)) is a public portal which facilitates real time, shared access to building project data countrywide to all Building Control Authorities and Fire Officers, with the potential to link to planning data as the system evolves. The system is now live for 9 months, with almost 80% of applications online. BCMS data is now available for analysis and reporting with significant numbers of applications, electronic payments and properties. Completion Certificates are also now part of the system.

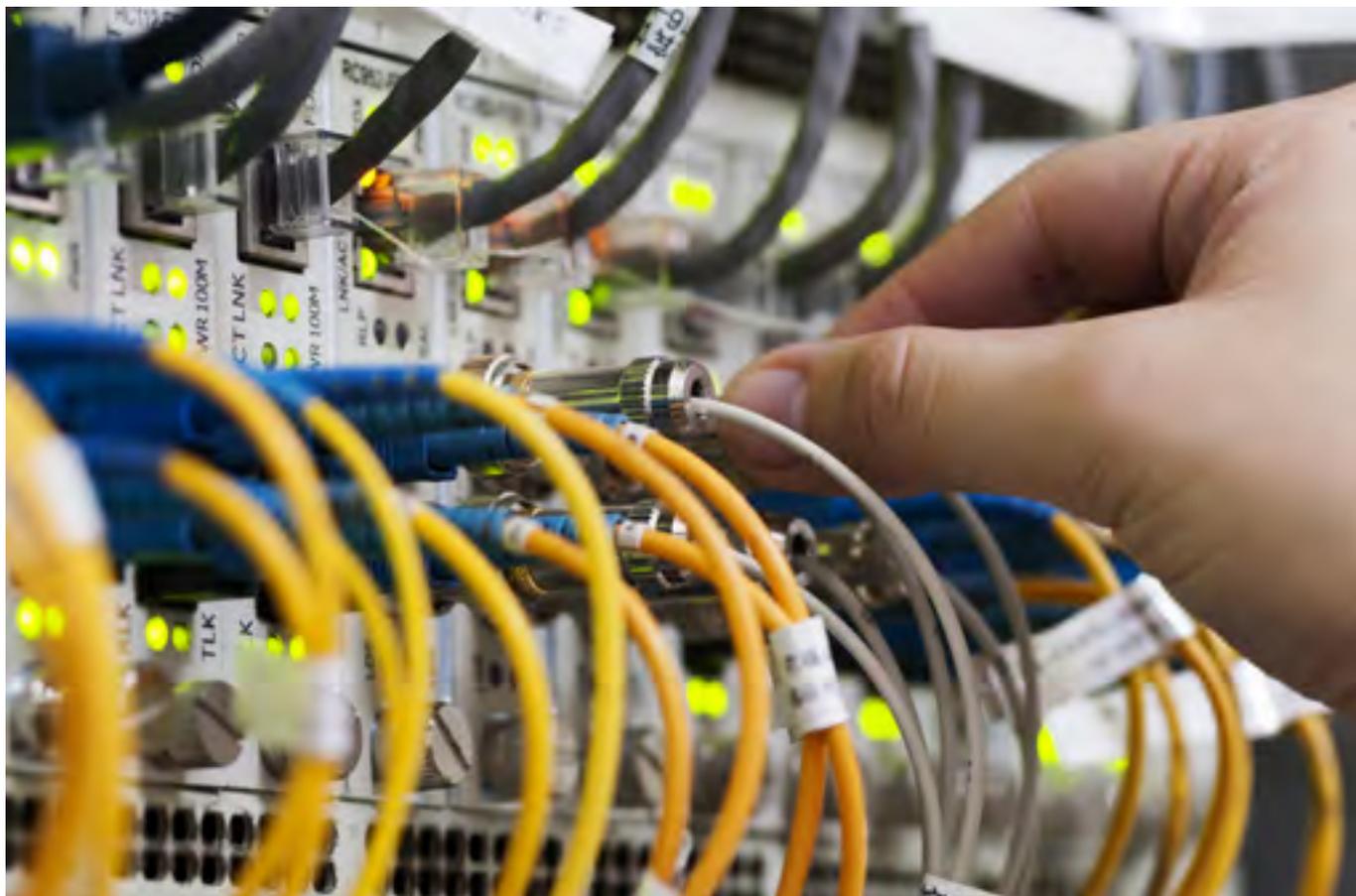
The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport's Online Sports Capital Register (OSCAR) allows clubs to register and to submit grant applications and payment requests online. It streamlines the application process by validating applications online before submission.

The implementation of the Patents Office system to facilitate the

electronic filing of trade mark applications and the e-payment of the trade mark application fee has been successfully completed and the system went live in early April 2014. By end 2014, 85% of all trade mark applications were filed electronically, greatly exceeding expectations for the first year of the service and confirming customer demand for effective eService solutions.

In 2014, the Medical Council developed a mobile enabled website to respond to an increasing trend in access via mobile devices. The Council receives over 500,000 visits to its site annually and approximately 200,000 visits to its free 'check the register' facility ([www.medicalcouncil.ie/Public-Information/Check-the-Register/](http://www.medicalcouncil.ie/Public-Information/Check-the-Register/)) which allows members of the public, employers and others to check the registration status of any doctor on the register.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed



a range of online and social media services. The new map-based section of its website, [gis.epa.ie/myenvironment](http://gis.epa.ie/myenvironment), gives the public information on the quality of the environment in their local area. Similarly, [www.splash.epa.ie](http://www.splash.epa.ie) is the EPA's online service with up to date information on bathing water quality. The Air Quality Index for Health ([www.epa.ie/air/quality](http://www.epa.ie/air/quality)) is another online service from the EPA, which provides information about air quality.

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland has developed an online tool – Monitoring and Reporting – which is a secure, easy to use application which allows public bodies to directly track, analyse and report their energy use. There are 40,000 electricity and gas meters stored in the system, which facilitates automatic uploading of usage information saving significant time in collating such data.

As part of a suite of initiatives to use technology to make the Oireachtas more accessible, the Oireachtas App was launched in 2014 and has since been enhanced for Apple and Android users. Oireachtas TV is now included with Oireachtas App, in addition to live video and audio of the Dáil, Seanad and Committee rooms.

## Administrative improvements

The Department of Education and Skills is developing a Digital Strategy for Schools, to be published in 2015, which will set out a five year programme to maximise the use of digital

technologies to transform teaching, learning and assessment at primary and post primary level. This strategy will contain actions that will facilitate schools and teachers in adapting new methodologies for teaching and engaging with students, using ICT in a seamless way in teaching, learning and assessment.

The Primary Online Data (POD) system is a central database for student and some school data which is hosted by the Department of Education and Skills. Primary schools are able to access the system using the Department's *Esinet* secure portal to maintain their students' data. The pilot program ran successfully at Easter 2014. The population phase is now underway and will be completed by Quarter 2, 2015.

Revenue continued to develop its use of analytics in areas such as real-time risk interventions in PAYE and VAT and use of social network analysis to identify potential fraud. In 2014, Revenue also developed an online correspondence facility for Local Property Tax queries and correspondence, providing a secure channel for using email.

In 2014, Revenue provided ICT services to some 35 Public Service Bodies, including server hosting storage provision, web services for security and access functions such as tax clearance, computer based printing and mailing.

In An Garda Síochána, the PULSE person and vehicle look-up smart phone app has been developed. A review of the testing phase of the project is currently underway.

### Priorities for 2015

- Commence implementation of the Public Service ICT Strategy.
- Continue to roll out the Government Cloud Network to support delivery of digital services throughout the country.
- Office of the Government Chief Information Officer to support Departments and Agencies to deliver projects to digitise key citizen and business transactional services.
- Identify and implement opportunities to improve administration and services across the Public Service, including through Integrated Reform Delivery Plans.
- Identify further opportunities for data sharing across Public Service organisations, to reduce the administrative burden on citizens and businesses.
- Continue the rollout of the Public Services Card and increase its take-up by public bodies.
- Continue to implement the National Broadband Plan.

## 1.3 Improving Customer Experience

### Engaging with customers

A key objective of the Reform Plan is to enhance how the Public Service engages with service users, with a view to improving the quality of their interaction with the Public Service and to facilitate service improvements at organisational and sectoral levels.

At the end of 2014, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform commissioned a survey of the general public to determine levels of satisfaction with, and perceptions of, the services provided by Civil Service Departments and Offices. The fieldwork is almost complete and the results of this survey, to be published in April 2015, will help to identify areas that require priority attention.

Departments and Offices are also undertaking their own customer surveys. For example, there was a positive response to the recent OPW Customer Survey, with 76% of business customers who responded satisfied with the service provided, while 97.3% of visitors to OPW sites were satisfied with the service provided. The Office of the Revenue Commissioners has also designed its third PAYE Customer Survey, to issue in mid-2015.

Increased use of plain language continues to be promoted across the Public Service to make interaction simpler for service users. The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) was engaged by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to deliver plain language training for staff in Departments and Offices. A

handbook on the use of plain language for public servants was also developed in conjunction with NALA.

### Customer Charters

In 2014, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform published a report on its review of the Customer Charter process in the 33 Departments and Offices represented on the Quality Customer Service Officers' Network. This network promotes customer service improvement in the Civil Service and is supported by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine has recently concluded discussions on a new Charter of Farmer's Rights which includes specific delivery targets



for farmer customers, for example, response times for communications. A monitoring committee - which meets three times yearly - involves stakeholder representatives and is independently chaired.

The Education (Admission to Schools) Bill, 2014 is currently being drafted and will provide the legislative underpinning for a Parents' and Students' Charter. Following publication of the Act, there will be a consultation process with a view to drafting the principles that will form the framework for a Parent and Student Charter in every school. The purpose of the Charter is to strengthen the position of parents within the school system and to bring about a culture change in how schools engage with and involve parents (and students in an age related manner).

## Designing customer services

Service Design is an emerging and innovative approach to improving

public services by streamlining processes and improving the customer experience. In partnership with the Northern and Western Regional Assembly and the Centre for Design Innovation in IT Sligo, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has piloted Service Design training workshops for public servants to further develop capacity in this key area of reform. Service Design will continue to be promoted during 2015, including through a major conference on 9/10 June in Dublin Castle.

Extended opening hours have been introduced in Intreo offices in the Department of Social Protection and in Passport Offices.

The new Intreo Offices, specially designed by the Department of Social Protection and the Office of Public Works, act as a single point of contact for all employment services and supports for both Jobseekers and Employers, providing support regarding benefits entitlements, advice on training

options and assistance in securing employment. 46 Intreo offices have been opened and it is intended to formally open the remaining 14 offices (12 of which are already providing Intreo services) during 2015.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's counter appointments service is now in place in its Dublin and Cork Passport Offices. This system allows customers to book, via a simple web-based system, guaranteed time slots before travelling to the Passport Office. The priority in the system is given to those with urgent travel needs and all others are encouraged to use the Passport Express service. This is a customer-orientated service removing the necessity for the public to queue in the Passport Office as they have an allocated time in the office for their passport application submissions.

The new Irish Passport Card, which will be accepted for travel within the European Union and





the European Economic Area, was launched in January 2015 and will be available from mid-July. This card will supplement the traditional Passport and is the first of its kind in the world. It will also provide a useful backup travel document within Europe in the event that someone loses their passport while travelling. A new Smartphone App was also launched which will make it easy to apply for the card – the app includes a feature allowing a photograph to be taken that will meet international standards for passports.

The British-Irish Visa Scheme was launched and commenced in China in October 2014. This historic initiative facilitates nationals requiring a short-stay visa to travel freely within the Common Travel Area using a single visa issued by either Ireland or the UK. The initiative will be further extended in 2015.

## Quality assessment and evaluation

A quality assurance system is being rolled out to all Citizens Information Services (CIS) and Money Advice

and Budgeting Services (MABS). This system includes agreed standards for information, advice and advocacy and budgeting services and has been implemented by the Citizens Information Board (CIB). Almost all services (i.e. 90 Services, including CIB Websites) have achieved European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Gold Star validation to date.

In the Education sector, the new self-evaluation model articulates a clear set of standards for schools and focuses on outcomes for the learner, the objective of which is to embed a model of continuous improvement in schools. Schools completed self-evaluation reports and provided summary reports to parents in June 2014. This is in addition to ongoing inspections of schools and other places of learning, of which there are over 4,000 annually.

## Streamlining services

In the areas of Housing and Planning, the roll out of the statutory pilot for the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) in seven local authority areas commenced in

Autumn 2014 and full rollout will continue in 2015. HAP is being introduced to provide a more integrated system of housing supports and aims to allow all social housing supports to be accessed through one body (the local authority) and to allow recipients to take up full-time employment and still keep their housing support.

Three draft Regional Waste Management Plans were published for public consultation in Autumn 2014, with submissions invited by the three new Waste Management Planning Regions in Spring 2015. It is expected that the plans will be adopted in 2015 and will set out a framework for the prevention and management of waste on a regional basis. They are statutory documents that set policies for the development of waste collection and treatment infrastructure over the medium term, taking account of regional demographic, economic, environmental and social conditions.

Work is progressing with Irish Water and the Water Services Transition Office (WSTO) for the completion of the transfer of water services assets and liabilities to Irish Water from local authorities. Publication of the Water Services Strategic Plan recently outlined how, as well as delivering higher capacity and quality standards, the plan will increase efficiency, improve resilience to climate change effects and promote more sustainable practices.

The Road Safety Authority has taken over responsibility for issuing driving licences from local authorities and manages the National Driver Licensing System (NDLS). This centralised approach offers greater efficiencies in the overall delivery of the service, as well as providing a better and more uniform service to all end users. Almost 580,000 full driving licences and learner permits were issued by the NDLS in 2014.

## Business customers

The Public Service continues to develop its interaction with business customers, with a view to improving services and reducing the regulatory and administrative burden on them.

The 2014 Work-Programme of the High Level Group on Business Regulation includes further work on business burdens in new regulatory proposals, a focus on planning permission procedures and risk-based enforcement.

A report was made by the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) sub-group in September 2014 recommending improvements to Government, to ensure that business impacts are properly taken into account.

The Companies Act, 2014 is expected to be commenced in

June 2015. The Act consolidates the existing 16 Companies Acts (which date from 1963), Statutory Instruments and court judgments into one single Act, making it easier for companies to be informed of, and to understand, their legal obligations. The Act also introduces a number of streamlining reforms designed to make it easier and less expensive to operate a company in Ireland.

Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) have been established in every local authority to promote business development and job creation, to nurture entrepreneurship and innovation and to deliver high quality, accessible supports, advice and guidance at local level for micro and small businesses. Local Community Development Committees have also now been established in all 31 local authority areas.

A shared service Road Management Office (RMO) has been established by local authorities for the purpose of, among other things, providing a central point of contact for telecommunications companies to apply to local authorities for road opening licences. This will facilitate the roll out of broadband across the country.

The Companies Registration Office (CRO) rolled out system changes

designed to facilitate the filing of electronic financial statements by companies with the Office. To date, there has been a good take-up, with over 5,400 sets of financial statements filed since March 2014.

The Health and Safety Authority's free online risk assessment and safety service, BeSMART, part of the Taking Care of Business programme, has substantially reduced administrative burdens and compliance costs for businesses. In addition, employers who have been inspected by the Health and Safety Authority now receive an email inviting them to complete an online confidential survey on their experience of the inspection process. The results have been very positive and have confirmed that the current inspection model is striking an appropriate balance.

Implementation of the new postcodes system has commenced and the design of the system and brand name *Eircode* was approved by Government in April 2014. The postcodes system is due to be launched in Quarter 2, 2015. *Eircode* will benefit businesses as they can use *Eircode* to help plan delivery logistics or services to communities. It will also make the delivery of services and goods to households easier, as well as facilitating the location of an address in an emergency.

### Priorities for 2015

- Continue to drive greater engagement with customers in the design and delivery of improved services.
- Completion and publication of the survey of Civil Service customers.
- Continue to identify and implement specific initiatives to enhance customer services in organisations and sectors.
- Launch and implementation of Eircode postcodes system.
- Completion of the roll-out of Intreo offices to support job-seekers.



## 2. A Focus on Efficiency

While the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016 has a particular focus on service improvement, it also maintains the emphasis on reducing costs and increasing efficiency. This is necessary to ensure that the Public Service is sustainable and that resources are available to meet priority services and to support key projects.

### 2.1 The Cost of the Public Service and Productivity

In response to the scale of the challenge facing both the economy and the public finances, considerable savings have been made across the Public Service, with Gross Voted Expenditure being reduced from its peak of €63.1 billion in 2009 to €54 billion in 2014 – a reduction of 14.4%.

The Public Service pay bill has been reduced from €17.5 billion in 2009 to a provisional outturn of €13.9 billion, net of the Pension Related Deduction, by end 2014, a reduction of over 20% (see chart on next page), while overall staffing levels have reduced by some 10% from 320,400 in 2008 to 289,600 at the end of 2014. This has been done while meeting increased demographic growth and demands on public services, as set out in

the infographic in the Executive Summary.

These cost reductions and substantial productivity increases have allowed the Government the scope to reinvest in key frontline services such as education, health and policing through the recruitment of additional staff. This is a reform dividend that will help sustain the Public Service Reform agenda by re-investing some of the efficiency savings being delivered into improved services.

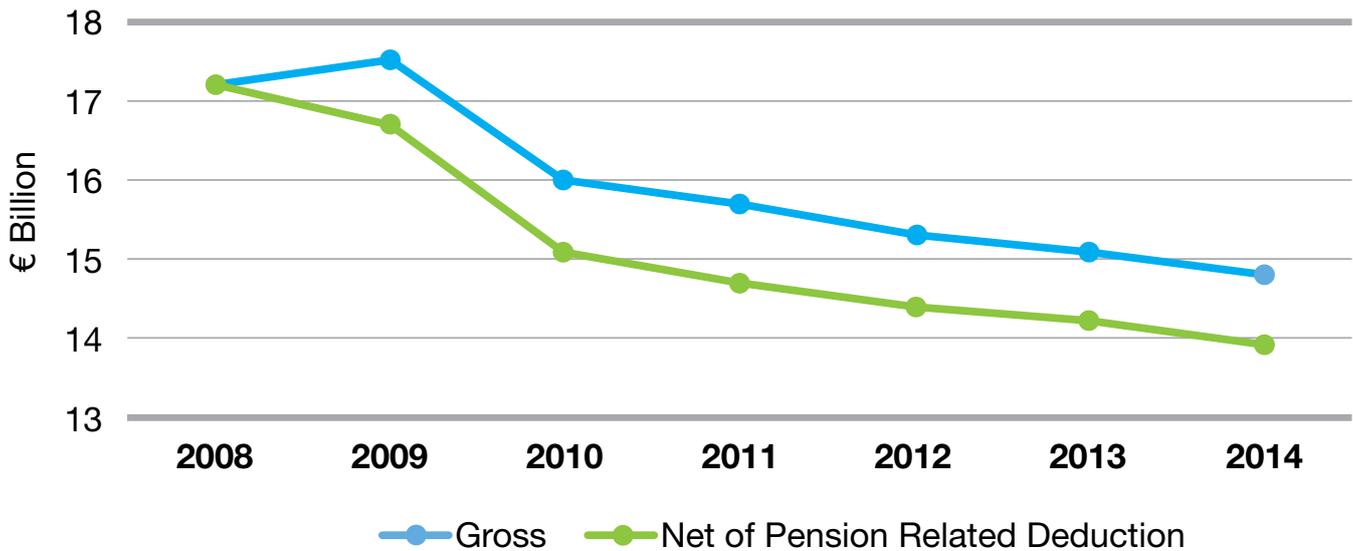
#### **Delegated approach to staffing**

The Moratorium on Recruitment and Promotion in the Public Service and the Employment Control Frameworks (ECFs) were central

to delivering savings and, in doing so, played a key role in stabilising the public finances. These tools, however, were never intended as a permanent policy response for the management of public service staffing. Coupled with the improvement in public finances, it is considered timely to return to more appropriate management of Public Service staffing.

The new delegated approach, outlined in the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-16 and the Civil Service Renewal Plan (Action 18), will give Departments and Offices greater flexibility in managing staffing resources, including recruitment and promotion, subject to binding pay bill ceilings and delivering on further efficiency and reform objectives. This represents

## Public Service Pay 2008-2014



a distinct next step in staff management in the Public Service by shifting the focus away from cuts and onto cost management, containment, reform and efficiency.

### Haddington Road Agreement

The Public Service Stability (Haddington Road) Agreement has played a critical role in maintaining the delivery of frontline public services, reducing the cost of delivering those services and enabling the reform programme. The achievement of the Government's fiscal targets, and keeping the Public Service pay bill at sustainable levels, was significantly aided by the substantial reductions and constraints that have applied to Public Service pay and pensions, as well as the revenue accruing from the Pension Related Deduction and Public Service Pension Reduction.

In addition to the reductions applied to the pay and pensions bill, the measures introduced through the Haddington Road Agreement have seen an unprecedented structural increase in productivity across the Public Service. This includes almost

15 million additional working hours annually. A notable achievement of the Croke Park and Haddington Road Agreements is the fact that public servants have made this contribution in an atmosphere of cooperation with significant reform and the maintaining of industrial peace.

As outlined elsewhere in this Report, the Public Service is reorganising to change the way in which services are delivered. The agreed arrangements under the Haddington Road Agreement, and its predecessor, are ensuring that management can smoothly deal with the impacts those changes have on staff, including through rationalisation, changed work practices, redeployments and voluntary exits where necessary.

### Sectoral measures

In the Education sector, the additional hours under the Haddington Road Agreement are being utilised to provide supervision and substitution in a substantial change to the existing Scheme. The Agreement enabled payments under the Scheme amounting to approximately €116 million per

annum to be discontinued with effect from the commencement of the 2013/14 school year, achieving a substantial annual saving for the lifetime of the Agreement while maintaining smooth delivery of this key public service.

In the Health Sector, the increased hours of attendance for certain staff under the Agreement have been in operation since July 2013 and have provided nearly five million hours of additional working time to the health service annually. These hours have been available to mitigate dependency overtime, to deal with service-related matters such as pressure in emergency departments, increased out-patient and day case activity and extended clinic opening hours. They have also facilitated improved flexible working practices with additional shifts and the expansion of certain programmes and the delivery of the National Service Plan. The usage of the extra hours in these areas has also contributed to the increased roll out of the longer day (8am–8pm).

The Local Government Sector has also implemented the requirements of the Haddington Road Agreement

from July 2013. The implementation of increased hours for certain staff has provided an additional 1 million hours to the sector on an annualised basis. The hours have been deployed to continue to provide front line services in the light of the reduction in staff numbers of over 27% since 2008 and to reduce the use of overtime in the sector. The Haddington Road Agreement has provided the basis for the fundamental restructuring of the system of local government with the merger of local authorities and the abolition of town and borough councils.

Under the Haddington Road Agreement, the review of An Garda Síochána which will encompass all aspects of the operation and administration of An Garda Síochána, is at an advanced stage and is expected to be completed shortly. It is anticipated that this review will give rise to recommendations to further enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the force. The outcome of the Review will support existing measures which have been implemented, including the new roster that was introduced in 2013 to ensure a more efficient use of Garda resources, with the result that more members are working at peak times when they are most needed, particularly at weekends.

A major programme to civilianise immigration functions, currently undertaken by members of An Garda Síochána, was announced in September 2014. These functions include frontline immigration checks at Dublin Airport and immigration registration functions and will result in approximately 125 Gardaí being redeployed; 75 as a result of the civilianisation of immigration checks at Dublin Airport and 50



from the transfer of the immigration permission registration function from An Garda Síochána to the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service of the Department of Justice and Equality.

In advance of the expiry of the Haddington Road Agreement in 2016, it is expected that discussions on pay and related issues will commence in the coming months between public service employers and unions. Any

such discussions will, of course, have regard to the pace of the State's recovering fiscal position in 2015 and 2016. The legal position concerning the financial emergency legislation, which has underpinned the reductions to date, will also be addressed as part of sustainable pay setting arrangements in the Public Service for the future. These, and related future negotiations, will be carried out in accordance with the industrial relations machinery in place.

### Priorities for 2015

- Roll-out of delegated arrangements for staffing in the Public Service.
- Continue to drive and support implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement in a consistent manner across the entire Public Service.
- Maintain oversight of savings and efficiencies achieved under the Agreement.
- Support local cost management and containment, and securing better outcomes for the resources allocated at the level of the workplace.
- Engage in a process to deliver future sustainable pay setting arrangements, post Haddington Road Agreement.

## 2.2 Shared Services

Shared services is a key element of the Public Service Reform programme and a National Shared Services Office has now been established within the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to lead shared service strategy and the implementation of shared services projects. The new Office is directly responsible for overseeing shared service delivery within the Civil Service. As part of its wider leadership role, it also provides expert guidance and support to other Public Service sectors in progressing their shared service commitments.

### Civil Service shared services

Significant progress continues to be made in advancing shared services within the Civil Service. *PeoplePoint*, the Human Resources and Pensions Administration

Shared Service, is in operation since March 2013 and already services more than 26,000 employees across 21 organisations. *PeoplePoint* provides a number of HR services to its customers such as leave, absence, pension and pay administration. The remaining organisations will transition to *PeoplePoint* in phased tranches throughout 2015, bringing the customer total to over 31,000 across 38 organisations.

A single Payroll Shared Service Centre (PSSC) for the Civil Service is now operational and Departments and Offices are transitioning on a phased basis. The Centre, which is based in three locations, Galway, Killarney and Tullamore, was officially opened by the Minister of Public Expenditure and Reform in December 2014. The PSSC now services 21 Client organisations and currently issues

over 67,000 payments per month to over 20,000 payees. When fully operational, in 2016, the PSSC will provide payroll, pension and travel and subsistence services to 120,000 payees.

Detailed design work is progressing on the Financial Management Shared Services project and a Request for Tenders for a single Financial Management System is currently being developed. A baseline exercise for the Single Public Service Pension Scheme has been completed and a Programme Board established.

Following a baseline study of existing Learning and Development provision across 40 Public Service Bodies, a feasibility study was completed. Informed by this, work is now being advanced to implement a new shared model for learning and development across



the Civil Service to support civil servants and facilitate continuous professional development (Civil Service Renewal Plan, Action 9).

## Sectoral shared services

Shared service projects are also progressing well within the key Public Service sectors of Education, Health and Local Government, in line with their individual shared services plans. For example, Laois County Council is leading the rollout of a payroll and superannuation shared service known as *MyPay* for Local Government. Ten local authorities transitioned to *MyPay* during 2014 and, when fully operational, this will deliver savings of €4.3 million per annum.

Payroll and Financial Management Shared Services for the Education and Training Boards are proceeding as a priority in the Education Sector. A feasibility

study and business case for a single integrated finance system is advancing in the Health Sector, together with work on an e-invoicing solution.

### Priorities for 2015

- Continue to transition customer organisations to shared services in line with agreed migration plans.
- Ensure continuous service improvement across shared services centres.
- Further advance shared services programmes based on robust shared services methodology.
- Develop and revise governance frameworks, standards and policies, including through the development of appropriate legislation.

## 2.3 Public Procurement

### Establishing the Office of Government Procurement

During 2014, good progress was made on establishing the Office of Government Procurement (OGP), rolling out its new structures, building a spend analytics capability and developing and implementing procurement policy initiatives. All governance arrangements for the advisory and oversight structures, such as the Board and Steering Committee, have been established and are operating effectively.

There is a forecast outturn for 2014 procurement savings of €63.5 million, including €16.5 million in energy cost avoidance across the OGP and sector sourcing organisations. This is less than target due to the delays in establishment of the OGP.

The OGP now has access to 63% of the total estimated public sector spend data and this will help inform sourcing strategies. The OGP has a particular focus on customer engagement and Key Account Managers are in place to support larger and strategic customers.

### Sourcing

A number of centralised contracts and frameworks were put in place by the OGP over the course of the year for notebook and tablet computers, ICT consumables, bulk fuels, fuel charge card services, stationery, Garda vehicles and Freedom of Information training.

Two successful 'Meet the Buyer' events, organised around the OGP category structures, were held in Belfast and Dublin in October and early November in 2014, in conjunction with InterTrade Ireland and attended by over 1,000 suppliers. The OGP have also had

a presence at a number of other business events such as the 'Taking Care of Business' seminar and the National Ploughing Championships.

In December 2014, the OGP published a 2015 Target Schedule of Contracts and Frameworks to provide an indication to customer Departments / Agencies and to the market, by quarter, of when it expects to have particular contracts and frameworks in place for the eight central categories managed by the OGP sourcing organisation.

### Procurement policy

The OGP delivered a number of key policy initiatives over the course of 2014.

Circular 10/14, containing new public procurement guidelines that make it easier for small businesses to bid for State business, was launched in April.

The OGP continues to engage with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, InterTrade Ireland, Local Government and Enterprise Ireland to support SME engagement in public procurement and to progress the supporting actions in the Action Plan for Jobs 2014.

The transposition of the new procurement directives is progressing and a considerable number of submissions were received as part of a public consultation process. These are now being reviewed so as to inform the transposition process.

A working group on the inclusion of social and sustainability clauses in public procurement has been established. A total of 11 projects have been identified by the OGP and sector sourcing organisations for inclusion in a Social Clauses Pilot.

The OGP published the report on the review of the performance of the public works contracts, setting out four interim recommendations for amendments to the conditions

of contract and a framework for engagement on a medium-term strategy encompassing the broader procurement of capital projects.

### Priorities for 2015

- Full implementation of the centralised procurement model and completion of recruitment to the OGP.
- Focus on generating the €150 million 2015 savings target for the procurement reform programme - €80 million from the OGP and €70m from the sectors.
- The OGP to take on all sourcing activity in scope from Departments and agencies valued above €25,000 for spend falling in eight categories: Facilities Management and Maintenance; Fleet and Plant; ICT and Office Equipment; Managed Services; Marketing Print and Stationery; Travel and HR; Professional Services; and Utilities.
- Service Level Agreements between the OGP and customer Departments and Agencies will be concluded and Key Account Managers will set up and implement their Client Account Plans.
- Implementation of systems to support sourcing activities.

## 2.4 Property Asset Management

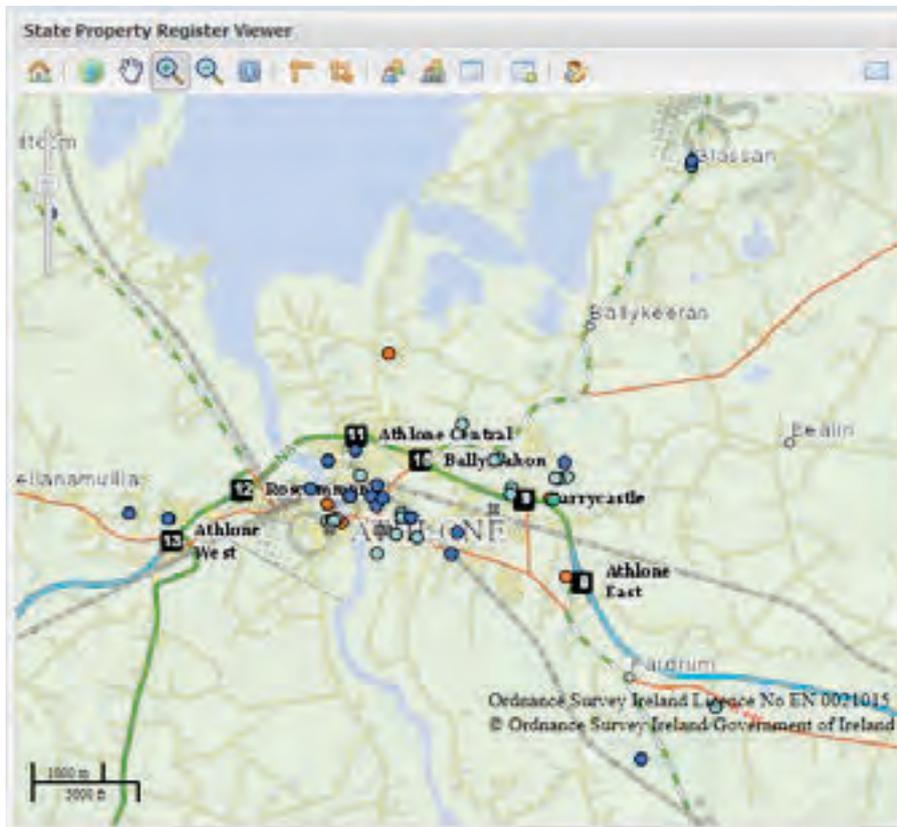
The key objective of the property asset management reforms being implemented under the Public Service Reform Plan is to manage the Public Service property portfolio in a professional, coordinated and efficient manner that maximises value for money and facilitates business needs and service provision. The Government agreed a range of measures to realise the benefits of better property management and these are set out in *Accommodating Change – Measuring Success*, the Government's Property Asset Management Delivery Plan, which was published in July 2013.

### Collaborative approaches to property

The Office of Public Works (OPW) has taken the lead role in driving these changes across the Public Service and progress is overseen by a cross-sectoral Property Asset Management Steering Group. A key element of the property asset reforms is making greater use of collaborative approaches to the use of State property. For example, where several Public Service Bodies are located in separate premises in a town, there may be opportunities to share office accommodation thereby reducing the State's property footprint and releasing property for other uses or disposal.

Central to this overall strategy is the principle that Public Service Bodies should, in the first instance, seek to meet their property requirements by transacting with other State bodies. Protocols on intra-State property asset transfer and sharing have been agreed which will make this process much easier. These measures will significantly reduce transaction costs.

This collaborative approach is being facilitated by an Intra-State online map-based property register, developed by the OPW to inform the decision making process around property transactions. Public property holders are currently engaged in providing their property data for inclusion in the register.



The Property Registration Authority (PRA) is working with public property holders to drive registration of all publicly-owned properties and to streamline the process for doing so.

## Property performance

The ISEN 15221 standard for Facilities Management has been introduced in a number of pilot surveys of properties in the OPW's portfolio. The objective is to provide a consistent performance measurement and benchmarking standard for similar property types across the portfolio in order to identify opportunities for space efficiencies. Further targeted surveys will be undertaken on a phased basis. The OPW's office accommodation design standards have been developed to drive more efficient use of office space by optimising the use of open plan and minimising the number of enclosed workstations, where possible, to reduce space requirements.

## Property rationalisation

The OPW is continuing to rationalise its owned portfolio through its property disposal programme. In 2014, 83 properties have been disposed of or reassigned for alternative State use. Proceeds raised from the sale of 30 OPW properties in 2014 was in the order of €5.5 million. A further 30 properties will be brought to market in 2015. Other property holders who have realised savings through property rationalisation include the Department of Defence which sold 22 of its properties at a total value of €3.5 million in 2014. Sale has been agreed on a further 20 Defence-owned properties, to be finalised in 2015.

Making more efficient use of existing office space, coupled with the fall in Civil Service numbers, has generated significant savings in the OPW's annual rent bill since 2009. The value of savings delivered under the lease rationalisation and re-negotiation programme from 2009 to 2014 is

€111 million and it has yielded a surrender of over 1.2 million square feet of office accommodation, which results in substantial ongoing annual savings. The drive to further optimise office space will include moving towards more modern efficient office space that will provide for higher office occupation densities. While this phase of the programme will require substantial investment, it will yield considerable long-term savings.

## Maintenance

Since 2013, the OPW has been the shared service provider responsible for statutory maintenance contracts and building maintenance works for all State owned and occupied buildings. The OPW's focus is more on preventative maintenance to prevent problems rather than reactive maintenance to fix them. For example, in 2013, the OPW carried out €1.6 million of planned building maintenance on long-term roof repairs. In 2014, a total of €2.4 million in planned maintenance was completed.

Following the successful implementation of a Measured Term Maintenance Contract in Dublin, the OPW has completed a project to develop a Measured Term Refurbishment Contract for the Mid-West region. This is expected to achieve resource savings in tendering for minor capital refurbishment projects. Subject to a review, this will be rolled out nationally in 2015 and 2016. The OPW is engaging with the Office of Government Procurement and other State property owners to identify opportunities to achieve savings in the operation of the Minor Capital Works projects across the State portfolio.



## Energy efficiency

The new phase of the *Optimising Power @ Work* energy efficiency scheme is progressing with monitoring equipment installed in a number of large facilities, including Tallaght Hospital, 11 prisons, 3

HSE Corporate Estates properties, Sligo IT, 2 large buildings in Trinity College, Dublin and 10 local authority headquarters buildings. The total energy spend in the buildings currently participating the new programme is approximately €15 million per annum.

### Priorities for 2015

- Public Service stakeholders to progress the implementation of the property reform programme.
- Surveys of OPW office accommodation to be rolled out on a targeted phased basis in accordance with the ISEN 15221 Standard.
- Identify further opportunities to rationalise OPW's property portfolio through property disposal and space rationalisation mechanisms.
- Identify and implement even more cost efficient maintenance approaches.

## 2.5 Public Expenditure Reform

Wide-ranging reforms of the State's budgetary architecture have been implemented in recent years. These include the introduction of multi-annual Ministerial Expenditure Ceilings, regular comprehensive reviews of public expenditure, the publication of the updated Public Spending Code, the ongoing rollout of the performance budgeting initiative and the establishment of the Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service.

### Comprehensive Review of Expenditure

The multi-annual Ministerial Expenditure Ceilings allow for greater transparency of how public resources are to be allocated across Government Departments over a three year period. The decisions around these allocations were informed by the latest Comprehensive Review of Expenditure (CRE).

The objective of the CRE was to provide the Government with a comprehensive set of policy options that would serve to re-align spending with the revised Programme for Government priorities, meet overall fiscal objectives and explore new and innovative ways of delivering Government policy in a reformed Public Service. The results of this process were published in October 2014 as the *Comprehensive Expenditure Report 2015-2017*. The supporting work that helped to inform this process, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's Evaluation Papers and other evaluation work are available online at [www.per.gov.ie/comprehensive-review-of-expenditure](http://www.per.gov.ie/comprehensive-review-of-expenditure)

### Public Spending Code and Performance Budgeting

The work carried out by Departments for the CRE, as well as for ongoing reviews of how public money is used, is supported by the updated Public Spending Code. The Public Spending Code contains the set of rules and procedures that apply to ensure that Value for Money standards are upheld across the Irish Public Service. In particular, it provides Departments with guidance on best practice in conducting appraisal and evaluation of current and capital expenditure.

The performance budgeting initiative provides a structured way of presenting and publishing public service performance information. The pilot Ireland Stat website now presents over 1,200 performance metrics for 35 programmes across 11 Ministerial Vote Groups. This is expanding with additional data being captured on an ongoing basis.

### Improved decision making

In order to enhance the capacity of the Civil Service to conduct this

type of work, the Government has established the Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service (IGEES) and this continues to be developed as an integrated cross-Government service, enhancing the role of economics and Value for Money analysis in public policy making. The service now has more than 70 economists working on a wide range of policy issues.

The 'whole of year' budgetary process is intended to provide the Oireachtas with the opportunity to debate the allocation of resources for the current year and engage in constructive dialogue with Ministers and their Departments on spending plans for the following year and prioritisation of spending areas.

Together, these reforms improve the framework for public spending to ensure Value for Money is delivered for the taxpayer and to help ensure that resources are focused to best effect. They also provide citizens with access to an unprecedented volume of information about how and for what purpose public resources are allocated.

#### Priorities for 2015

- Continue the implementation and development of the above expenditure reforms across the Public Service.
- A priority is the ongoing work to enhance Ireland's fiscal transparency, in particular to ensure that the comprehensive, frequent and reliable information that is available is presented in a less fragmented manner.
- Continue to expand Ireland Stat to include additional datasets.



## 3. A Focus on Openness, Transparency and Accountability

The Government is committed to further strengthening governance arrangements and making the operation of Government and the Public Service more open and accountable. As well as improving decision making, the aim is to build trust in Government and in the institutions of State. To this end, considerable progress has been made in implementing the Government's programme of legislative and political reforms.

This focus on greater accountability and transparency is also reflected in the series of reforms to the budgetary process made in recent years, to ensure better oversight in allocating and spending public money. Further details of these can be seen in section 2.5.

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### 3.1 Government and Legislative Reform

#### Freedom of information

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, 2014 extensively reforms Freedom of Information providing for the State's FOI regime to be restored to the top tier of legal frameworks internationally for facilitating access to official information. It substantially removes the restrictions introduced under the 2003 Act, extends FOI to almost all public bodies, and provides a framework for the extension of FOI to non-public

bodies in receipt of significant funding from the Exchequer. The upfront FOI application fee was abolished, accompanied by a significant re-design of the search and retrieval fees regime in place since 1998, allowing for up to five hours search, retrieval and copying time at no charge and caps on the amount of such fees that can be charged.

These FOI reforms are complemented by a major drive to improve the operation of FOI by

public bodies, following a review of the operation of FOI undertaken by an External Review Group. The findings led to the development of a comprehensive Code of Practice, which is available at [www.foi.gov.ie](http://www.foi.gov.ie).

#### Ethics, transparency and oversight

Following a substantial review of Ireland's current Ethics framework, development of new legislation for a comprehensive, reformed and modernised Public Sector

Standards Bill is underway. The aim is to support and promote ethical conduct.

The Protected Disclosures Act, 2014 is a new departure in Irish law. The main objective is the protection of workers in both the public and private sectors against reprisals in circumstances where they make a disclosure of information relating to serious wrongdoing in the workplace.

It is expected that the Regulation of Lobbying Bill, 2014 will be enacted shortly. This will establish an online register of lobbyists that will be managed by the Standards in Public Office Commission and will require those on it to disclose their lobbying activities at regular intervals throughout the year.

The Open Government Partnership is a multilateral initiative launched in 2011. Ireland became a full member of this global partnership in July 2014, reaffirming Ireland's commitment to governmental

transparency and reform. Work is now underway in implementing Ireland's first Open Government Partnership National Action Plan (published in July 2014), which contains 26 commitments spanning three core areas: Promoting Open Data and Transparency; Building Citizen Participation; and Strengthening Governance and Accountability to rebuild public trust in Government.

Building on previous measures, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has put in place structures to ensure that appointments to State Boards must be advertised openly on the State Boards portal ([www.stateboards.ie](http://www.stateboards.ie)), which is operated by the Public Appointments Service. The revised approach sets out comprehensive criteria for the filling of vacancies on State Boards in consultation with key stakeholders, such as the current Chair of the State Board concerned and the Public Appointments Service.

During 2014, the Department of Justice and Equality's legislative programme included a number of measures to enhance civic responsibility and accountability. The Fines (Payment and Recovery) Act, 2014 delivers on the Programme for Government commitment to recover unpaid fines. The new Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) and the Court of Appeal were also established in 2014. Work on the Legal Services Regulation Bill is continuing. The intention is that the new Legal Services Regulatory Authority will come into operation in the first half of 2015.

## Statute Law Revision

On an ongoing basis, the Statute Law Revision Programme conducts comprehensive reviews of primary and secondary legislation, leading to the repeal or revocation of obsolete legislation and instruments. This provides a more accessible Statute Book



for citizens, as the complicated stock of legislation is reduced and simplified. It also provides valuable assistance to, and saves time and costs for members of the public, legal professionals, parliamentary counsel, civil servants and any other persons who are involved in the drafting, analysis, or interpretation of legislation or instruments.

## Open data and data sharing

The Open Data initiative forms a core element of Ireland's first Open Government Partnership National Action Plan. Publication of official non-personal data in open format has the potential for significant economic, social and political impact in terms of the potential re-use in the development of new products and services, achieving efficiency gains through sharing of data inside and between public administration, and in fostering the participation of citizens in political and social life. Thus Open Data provides a unique opportunity to use and re-use public data, to create the standard infrastructure necessary which fuels economic, governmental and societal activity across many different domains.

In July 2014, the national portal [data.gov.ie](http://data.gov.ie) was launched providing one searchable website for public data, together with a number of reports including a Best Practice Handbook on Open Data and the Publication of Open Data handbook.

Following the launch, a public consultation process was undertaken by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on the issue of Open Data. The results of this process informed the development of a substantive work programme which is currently being implemented to progress the Open Data Initiative. This includes the further development of the portal [data.gov.ie](http://data.gov.ie), development of a National Strategy for Open Data, development of the technical framework to underpin the publication of high quality datasets on the portal, and dissemination and outreach activities to raise

awareness of Open Data with a view to ensuring the potential benefits are realised.

A public consultation process was also undertaken to inform the drafting of a new Data Sharing and Governance Bill, which is currently being developed by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The objective of the Bill is to provide a legal basis for information sharing between Public Service Bodies, with associated transparency and governance obligations.

### Priorities for 2015

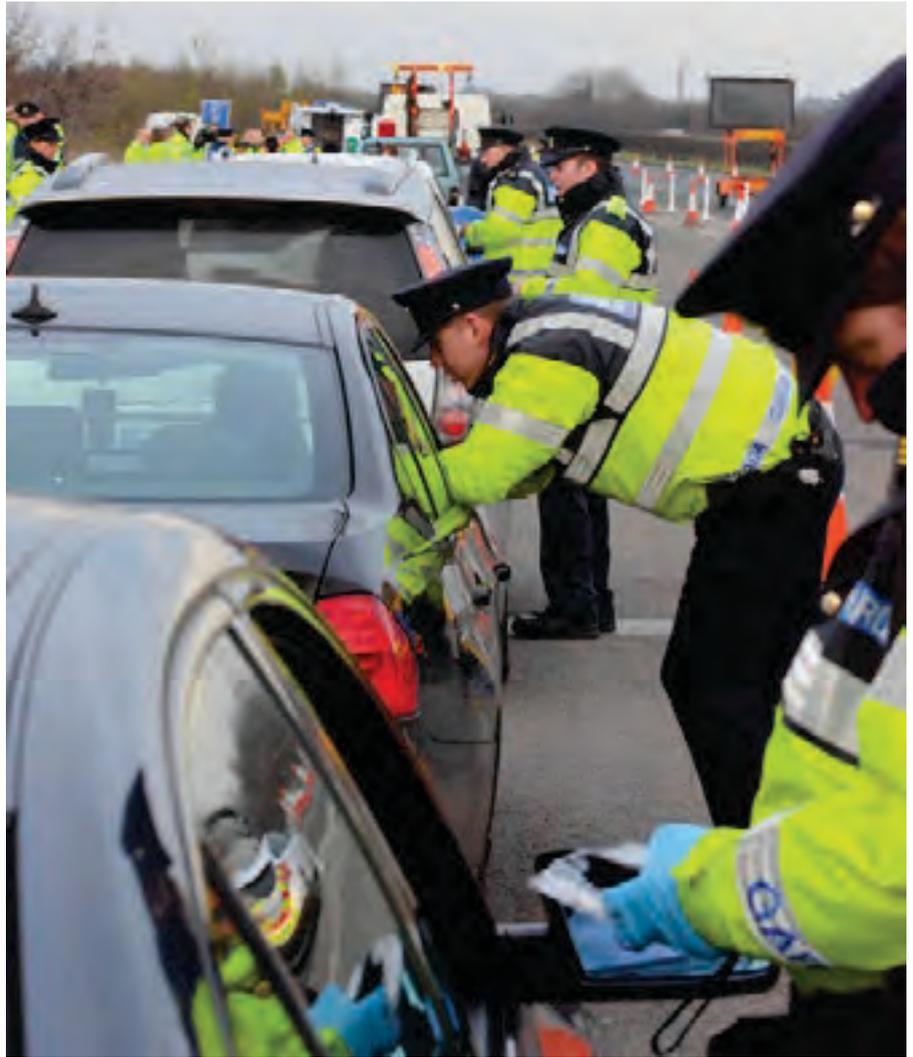
- Publication of the Data-Sharing and Governance Bill.
- Publication of guidance for public bodies on the Protected Disclosures Act.
- Enactment of the Regulation of Lobbying Bill.
- Enactment of the Statute Law Revision (Secondary Instruments) Bill.
- Publication of the Public Sector Standards Bill.
- Provision of policy advice, guidance and support to public bodies in the implementation of the FOI Act 2014 and the Code of Practice.
- Implementation of the Open Government Partnership National Action Plan.
- Implementation of Open Data work programme including development of the National Strategy on Open Data and further development of [data.gov.ie](http://data.gov.ie)
- Initiate phased implementation of related actions in the Civil Service Renewal Plan (Action 22).

## 3.2 Performance and Accountability

### Civil Service Renewal

One of the most critical elements of the reform agenda is strengthening Civil Service accountability and performance. The establishment of an Accountability Board for the Civil Service (Civil Service Renewal Plan, Action 1), chaired by the Taoiseach and balanced with ministerial, Civil Service and external membership, is an important step in strengthening accountability and performance across the Civil Service by introducing greater oversight of delivery.

Alongside this, changes are also underway to ensure each Department publishes an assignment framework annually, so that responsibilities of senior managers across the Civil Service and 'who does what and to whom they are answerable' is clear. This framework will be clearly linked with Departments' Statements of Strategy and Business Plans. (Civil Service Renewal Plan, Action 21).



### Local Government

The Local Government Reform Act, 2014 has radically reformed political structures, with the number of local authorities being reduced from 114 to 31. In addition to the new municipal district arrangements, the Act provides for a wide range of reforms to local authority functions and structures, including enhanced local authority governance and management. It also includes stronger oversight of local authority performance through a new independent National Oversight and Audit Commission for Local Government (NOAC) and the establishment of Local Community Development Committees in place of the City and County Development Boards.

In its oversight role, NOAC will be undertaking thematic reviews of local authority functions from which to develop more outcome focussed performance indicators and to identify, support and disseminate best practice. Among the specific activities it plans to undertake in 2015, as part of its financial scrutiny role, is an examination of the major revenue collection accounts of the 31 local authorities and a review of quality assurance reports produced by local authorities under Part A of the Public Spending Code.

### Garda

The Government is implementing a comprehensive justice reform programme to put in place effective arrangements for the oversight, governance and accountability of An Garda Síochána. This

programme is being supervised by the Cabinet Committee on Justice Reform and includes the establishment of a new independent Policing Authority. Approval was given for priority drafting of this Bill and Ms. Josephine Feehily was appointed as the Chairperson-designate for the Authority in November 2014.

The programme also includes enhancement of the powers of the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (GSOC). The Garda Síochána (Amendment) (No. 3) Bill, 2014 has been passed by both Houses of the Oireachtas. The Bill updates the Garda Síochána Act, 2005 and other relevant legislation. It has the main objectives of bringing the Garda Commissioner within the remit of GSOC for the first time; extending

GSOC's powers of investigation in relation to complaints involving suspected criminal behaviour; ensuring that An Garda Síochána provides information sought by GSOC for an investigation as soon as practicable; and providing greater autonomy for GSOC in examining An Garda Síochána's practices, policies and procedures. The Garda Commissioner has recently announced a number of changes at senior ranks. These changes are a critical element of the transformation programme, as they will allow An Garda Síochána to develop new structures, units and approaches required to ensure the best possible service to the public.

## Health Sector

One of the Department of Health's priorities is to reform operational systems to drive high performance. This includes the implementation of the HSE's Accountability Framework that was approved by the HSE Directorate and published in the National Service Plan 2015. This provides an additional level of clarity and transparency to the process of accountability. The HSE has completed Phase 3 of the development of the Finance

Operating Model. Phase 4 of the Financial Reform Programme commenced in January 2015.

In recent years, the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) has published a number of reports of its investigation into the delivery of healthcare services in a number of locations. The Department of Health intends to develop a mechanism with the HSE and HIQA to monitor the implementation of the recommendations contained in the various HIQA Reports.

## Further Education and Training and Higher Education

Major reforms in the Education and Training Sector see the implementation of the Further

Education and Training Strategy and the Higher Education Strategy to improve performance and accountability. The new oversight and funding agency SOLAS plays a key role in relation to quality and accountability within the Further Education and Training Sector. A new funding model based on performance levels is being implemented through the agreement of annual Further Education and Training Service Plans with the Education and Training Boards. Implementation of the Higher Education Strategy sees the development of a new system of governance and a new performance framework to increase accountability of autonomous higher education institutions for public funding and performance against national priorities.

### Priorities for 2015

- Initiate phased implementation of relevant actions in the Civil Service Renewal Plan.
- Implementation of a range of reforms to enhance performance and accountability in the Health, Education, Local Government and Justice sectors.





## 4. Leadership, Renewal and Delivery

Strengthening governance and the capacity for delivery of change has been a central pillar of reform since the Government's first Public Service Reform Plan was published in 2011, illustrated by the establishment of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. This capacity has been further strengthened through the creation of the Reform and Delivery Office within the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in 2011 and the creation of reform delivery teams within Government Departments and Offices.

Across the Civil Service, the vision and actions in the Civil Service Renewal Plan (October 2014) will provide a framework for the work in train across Departments and Offices, to develop and enhance leadership and delivery capabilities through an implementation programme focused on achieving a more unified, professional, responsive, open and accountable Civil Service within a three-year period.

These priorities and actions will inform the development of leadership and human resources in the wider Public Service. Therefore, while many of the reforms set out below are for the Civil Service, there is a wider Public Service context.

## 4.1 Leadership

Effective leadership at all levels and all sectors of the Public Service is crucial in supporting economic recovery and driving effective delivery of services to the citizen. It is also critical to the delivery of reform.

### Civil Service leadership

A Civil Service Management Board has been established (Civil Service Renewal Plan, Action 2) which will provide collective leadership and management of the Civil Service for the first time. It is chaired by the Secretary General to the Government and has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Civil Service Renewal Plan. The Board, whose membership includes all Secretaries General and Heads of major Offices, has overall collective responsibility for managing the performance and operation of the Civil Service, including overseeing talent management and performance management systems for senior managers. The Board meets monthly and will publish an Annual Report and the minutes of each meeting.

### Senior Public Service

The development of a structured, integrated and co-ordinated system for leadership development and talent management is an important priority. Leadership has been enhanced by the introduction of the Senior Public Service (SPS) and good progress is underway in implementing the SPS Leadership Development Strategy 2013-2015.

Work is ongoing to support the implementation of a range of development initiatives. The second tranche of the SPS Executive Coaching Programme has been rolled out across the



Civil Service and to the CEOs of Non Commercial State Agencies. There are currently 52 participants on the programme across both sectors. A communications course was piloted in October 2014 and, following positive feedback, two further courses were run in November 2014. Three moves took place at Assistant Secretary level under the SPS Mobility Protocol.

Many of the actions in the Civil Service Renewal Plan will help support senior managers in their roles and enhance their capacity to carry out their roles in a more

flexible and agile system with the assistance of shared and expert resources. In particular, a culture of high performance at senior levels is being strengthened and work to develop performance management approaches for Secretaries General and Assistant Secretaries has been initiated (Civil Service Renewal Plan, Action 12). A number of leadership development supports are under consideration to complement this work, in particular the introduction of a development centre approach for senior managers (Civil Service Renewal Plan, Action 10).

### Priorities for 2015

- Continue to progress the aims of the Public Service Reform Plan and the Civil Service Renewal Plan by developing and implementing programmes, courses and supports to meet systemic, organisational and individual needs.
- Learning and development opportunities such as the Executive Coaching Programme will continue to be provided and extended to other sectors of the Public Service.
- Initiate phased implementation of relevant actions in the Civil Service Renewal Plan.

## 4.2 Human Resources Management Reforms

### Performance management

It is critical that performance management systems are designed to support managers in getting the best from staff. The electronic performance management system, ePMDS, was rolled out to 14 Civil Service Departments/Offices in February 2014 and the system is performing well. Calibration was introduced on a pilot basis for the 2013 performance evaluations and a review of the pilot was carried out in 2014. Work has also begun to review the disciplinary code (Civil Service Renewal Plan, Action 11).

### Workplace policies

The Public Service Sick Leave Scheme came into effect in March 2014 for the majority of the Public Service and commenced in the Education Sector in September 2014. The Scheme was introduced with the intention of reducing the high and unsustainable cost of sick leave for the Public Service by substantially reducing the period of time for which paid sick leave is available.

A new bullying and harassment policy, *Dignity at Work*, was finalised in 2014. This sets out the procedures under which a staff member can take a complaint of bullying or harassment in the work place, emphasising the importance of informal dispute resolution methods in the workplace, such as mediation, on the basis that the outcomes are far better for both the individuals and the organisations concerned.

### Workforce planning

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has been involved in the development of a new delegated sanction policy for

staffing (Civil Service Renewal Plan, Action 18). A Workforce Planning Network has also been established, meeting on a quarterly basis to share best practice and to provide support in managing staff resources in the Civil Service.

Arrangements have also been put in place for the redeployment of staff in certain circumstances. Over 12,000 staff have been redeployed under these arrangements.

Some recruitment to the Civil Service took place in 2014, with competitions at Clerical Officer, Executive Officer and Administrative Officer levels. In addition, the Public Appointments Service has recently undertaken competitions for specialist roles such as Economists and ICT specialists. An open competition at Principal level has commenced and an open competition at Assistant Principal level is also planned (Civil Service Renewal Plan, Action 8). In parallel, work is beginning to expand career and mobility opportunities in the Civil Service so that Departments can more readily match available skills with roles (Civil Service Renewal Plan, Action 15).

The Office of the Revenue Commissioners also held open recruitment competitions for specialist posts at Principal, Assistant Principal and Administrative Officer levels, recruiting 66 staff at these levels in 2014.

### PeoplePoint

During 2014, 21 Public Service Bodies transferred their transactional human resources (HR) business to the HR Shared Services Centre (PeoplePoint). The HR Policy Unit in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform supported these bodies throughout this transition process by providing an essential interface with the individual HR Units, facilitating a reduction in staff numbers working on transactional HR in local HR Units. The changing landscape in terms of structure and function across the Civil Service sector is being monitored and will support better human resource management across the Civil Service.

#### Priorities for 2015

- Developing strategic HR capability in the Civil Service.
- eProbation system to automate the staff probation process.
- Ongoing programme of recruitment at all grades.
- Significantly develop strategic HR capability.
- Continue and intensify the review and overhaul of key employment policies (e.g. review of disciplinary code by end Quarter 2 2015).
- Review of Public Service Sick Leave Scheme to be conducted following one year in operation (due to commence in Quarter 2 2015).
- Initiate phased implementation of relevant actions in the Civil Service Renewal Plan.



## 4.3 Organisational Performance

The improvement of organisational performance is a central objective of the Government's reform programme. This includes cross-cutting reforms such as those in ICT, HR and leadership development and increased productivity, as well as through greater openness and accountability. It also includes broader reform initiatives, either sectoral (for example *Putting People First*, for Local Government Reform) or organisational (such as the Department of Social Protection's *One DSP* programme or the Central Statistics Office's *CSO 2020 Strategy*). Within the Civil Service, this will be given emphasis through the introduction of an organisational capability review programme (Civil Service Renewal Plan, Action 20).

### Strategy Statements

The publication of new Strategy Statements by all Departments and major Offices every three years links sectoral outcomes to Departmental and Agency operational activities and sets the strategic ambition for Departments and Offices in the coming years. New Strategy Statements will be published shortly and will set out the over-arching goals and objectives for the coming years for each Department and Office.

In addition, a range of complementary measures will be implemented under the Civil Service Renewal Programme to strengthen strategic and business planning processes, including the introduction of a single Statement of Strategy for the Civil Service (Civil Service Renewal Plan, Action 4).

### State Agencies

As part of the State Agency Rationalisation Programme, measures affecting more than 90% of the bodies to be merged or rationalised under the first Public Service Reform Plan are completed. When the remainder are fully completed, there will be 181 fewer bodies operating in the Irish Public Service than in 2011 as a result of the measures taken in the programme. As well as improving administrative efficiencies, an estimated €24 million in annual savings will be achieved when the various measures are fully in place.

A new Code of Practice for the Governance of State Agencies is being developed and will be published shortly. In addition, a clear policy on the establishment of Agencies will be introduced, as well as ensuring that the governance structure of agencies is consistent with their legislative

underpinning (Civil Service Renewal Plan, Action 3).

## Organisational reforms

The County Enterprise Boards (CEBs) were legally dissolved in April 2014 and replaced by Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) at the same time. The LEO structure combines the expert knowledge of the former CEBs, the business development expertise of the local authorities and is overseen by a Centre of Excellence in Enterprise Ireland. A Service Level Agreement (SLA) is in operation between Enterprise Ireland and the local authorities in respect of each LEO.

Implementation of a wide ranging reform programme in higher education is underway to: enhance the quality of research, teaching and engagement in the system; modernise governance and accountability of institutions; and restructure the system to achieve those aims. In particular, the setting up of regional clusters of higher education institutions will lead to significant improvements in the delivery of programmes to students as well as to better links with industry. Consolidation in the institutes of technology and the teacher education sector will enhance quality of provision and create institutions of critical mass and excellence.

The reform of the further education and training (FET) sector envisages a key role for Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in relation to the future delivery of FET in an integrated manner. As part of this reform process, all 19 Training Centres previously run by FÁS were transferred from SOLAS to the ETBs during 2014.

In October 2014, the HSE launched the Community Healthcare Organisations (CHO) report following a review of the existing

Integrated Service Areas structure. The report sets out plans for a comprehensive reorganisation of health services outside the acute hospital system, with the primary focus on providing the maximum proportion of care to people in the communities where they live and to achieve joined-up, integrated services. The implementation of the recommendations of the CHO report is a key priority of the HSE's National Service Plan for 2015.

The National Ambulance Service (NAS) project to rationalise the number of control rooms across the State to one national centre on two sites, in Tallaght and Ballyshannon, is now entering the final phase. The development of an Intermediate Care Service within the NAS was significantly enhanced during 2014 with the procurement of 25 vehicles and the recruitment and training of additional staff having taken place.

Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, was established in early 2014 and is now the dedicated State Agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children. It represents the most comprehensive reform of child protection, early intervention and family support services ever undertaken in Ireland. It is an ambitious move which brings together some 4,000 staff and an operational budget of over €600 million.

In the Defence sector, the re-organisation of the Permanent Defence Forces (PDF) reduced the number of Army Brigades from three to two, reassigned personnel from Headquarters and support functions to operational Units and improved operational capacity within a PDF strength ceiling of 9,500 personnel.

The Workplace Relations Bill was published in 2014. This will provide a statutory basis for a new workplace relations structure,

which will see the existing five State bodies (Labour Relations Commission, National Employment Rights Authority, Equality Tribunal, and the first instance functions of the Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT) and the Labour Court) being replaced by the new Workplace Relations Commission, with the appellate functions of the EAT transferring to an expanded Labour Court. The aim of the Bill, to be enacted shortly, is to create a modern, user-friendly, world-class employment workplace relations system that will provide significant benefits for its users while also delivering savings for the taxpayer.

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government undertook an organisational review in order to ensure it is best organised to deliver on its mandate. Continued implementation of the reorganisation will result in a more agile, flexible and responsive Department.

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) published its longer term reform strategy in 2013, known as *CSO 2020*. This focuses on the provision of a continuous improvement in its services, as well as ensuring that the CSO is positioned to meet future requirements of official statistics. The initial projects being implemented under the *CSO 2020* programme include: development of a comprehensive Quality Management Framework; Improvement in Service to Customers and Statistical Outputs; the National Accounts IT Project; and Household Survey Development.

## Improving performance and business processes

Performance level agreements have been agreed between the Department of Education and

Skills and its agencies to improve governance and management. Work is continuing on the development of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and / or Service Level Agreements (SLAs), as appropriate, with all agencies under the remit of the Department. Such agreements are in place with 10 agencies, while seven further agreements, including SLAs for agencies that already have MOUs in place, are still under development, or at an advanced stage, and are expected to be completed shortly.

The performance agreements with the Higher Education institutions form part of the roll-out of the System Performance Framework and set out indicators and targets relating to student profiles, access, research, teaching and engagement activity. Performance funding will be allocated on the basis of meeting these targets and will drive diversity in the system and provide a mechanism for steering the system and holding it accountable for meeting national priorities

and system objectives set by Government.

Since 2014, the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht also has SLAs in place with all of its National Cultural Institutions. Similarly, during 2014, the Department of Justice and Equality put in place formal Performance Agreements with a number of its agencies and this work is continuing.

The new Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) was established in October 2014. When complete, a new register of charities will, for the first time in this country, contain extensive first-hand information about the charities sector in Ireland. By the end of 2014, the CRA had contacted some 4,500 charities, with charitable tax exemptions, seeking extensive information on their finances and structures required for the building of the Register of Charities and for the future regulation of the sector. The Register is also open to applications for charitable

status from those charities that are not in receipt of charitable tax exemptions. The Authority also launched a new website [www.charitiesregulatoryauthority.ie](http://www.charitiesregulatoryauthority.ie).

Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act, 2001 was commenced in January 2014, meaning that for the first time in the history of the State, teachers must be registered to be paid from State funds (except in specific exceptional circumstances). Over 80,000 teachers are registered with the Teaching Council, including teachers from primary, Montessori, special education, post-primary and further education sectors.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is now implementing the recommendations of a systems review of all Overseas Development Programme Partner Countries. The review was completed in 2014 and informed a comprehensive work programme to strengthen management systems across a range of areas from planning;





risk management; financial management; human resource management; approval and appraisal systems; and information management systems.

The OPW has established a Business Transformation Unit to support improved ways of working in the delivery of office accommodation and property services, and to develop new processes and structures to support Property Asset Management Reform.

Under the Department of Social Protection's programme of organisation development, *One DSP*, a study was completed on culture and values, the results of which are now being rolled out across the Department. A significant learning and development initiative and a programme of engagement and innovation to encourage engagement by all staff across the organisation to contribute to changes in their day-to-day work have also been introduced.

## Working together

Within the Civil Service, new steps to improve the way the Civil Service works across organisations and approaches cross-cutting projects

are in development, including the introduction of formal assignment of senior responsible owners for these projects (Civil Service Renewal Plan, Action 5).

The Public Service is also taking a broader perspective and working together, as well as with the voluntary and private sectors to achieve improved outcomes. A good example of this is the way in which the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces continue to provide assistance to Enterprise Ireland and Enterprise Ireland companies. In addition, the Defence Forces are involved with academia and research institutes in various projects, who benefit from the expertise offered by the

Defence Forces. A total of 48 research, training and innovation projects involving Irish indigenous companies are already being supported directly by the Defence Forces under this initiative.

The OPW is working with the Department of Education and Skills to progress delivery of the Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development (RAPID) programme for schools projects, both new constructions and extensions. Five schools projects have recently been completed. Three are due to be completed shortly and the design of six new school projects is well underway. The OPW is also delivering a very ambitious programme to provide new Intreo offices for the Department of Social Protection to meet a key Government priority of addressing the issue of long term unemployment, with 46 offices already opened.

As part of the implementation of the Department of Social Protection's Compliance and Anti-Fraud Strategy 2014-2018, 20 Gardaí joined the Department's Special Investigation Unit in December 2014. These officers will increase the investigative capacity of the Department to prevent, detect and deter social welfare fraud.

### Priorities for 2015

- Publication of Strategy Statements for all Departments and Offices.
- Completion of remaining mergers as part of the State Agency Rationalisation programme.
- Publication of new Code of Practice for the Governance of State Agencies.
- Initiate phased implementation of relevant actions in the Civil Service Renewal Plan.

## 4.4 Delivery of Reform

The delivery of the ambitious reforms set out in the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016 require an ongoing emphasis on implementation, building on the structures and processes developed under the 2011 Public Service Reform Plan.

### Strengthening governance

Governance at a central level is led by the Cabinet Committee on Social Policy and Public Service Reform, which drives and oversees the reform programme, meeting regularly to review progress on reform and identify strategic priorities for further attention.

The Cabinet Committee is supported by the Advisory Group of Secretaries General and the Reform and Innovation Network. The latter has recently been reconstituted following a review of its terms of reference to ensure that it continues to play an important role in linking the central reform agenda to organisational and sectoral reform programmes.

Significant progress has been made in recent years in developing the governance and programme management capacity and capability at organisational and sectoral levels, and this is now a significant contributor to the progress being made.

The Civil Service Management Board has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Civil Service Renewal Plan. The Board also has overall collective responsibility for managing the performance and operation of the Civil Service.

### Sectoral emphasis

An Education and Training Reform Board oversees and drives the reform programme in that sector, supported by the Public Service Reform Programme Management Office (PMO) in the Department

of Education and Skills, which coordinates, manages and supports the implementation of the education and training reform programme across the sector.

The Local Government Sector established a PMO to drive its reform programme and this reports to a high level Oversight Group. The PMO will be integrated into the Local Government Management Agency which will become the vehicle to drive change and reform in the sector. The sector is focussed on embedding governance and assurance in reform delivery, capturing benefits and lessons learnt and the development of all opportunities for delivery optimisation.

Similar approaches to improve the governance and programme management of reform have been introduced in both the Health and Justice sectors.

### An integrated approach

The Reform and Delivery Office (RDO) in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform supported the development of 21 Integrated Reform Delivery Plans (IRDPs) for 2014 from major Sectors, Departments and Offices. These plans set out how Departments and Offices will implement the cross-cutting reforms in the Public Service Reform Plan, as well as organisation

and sector specific reforms, and plans for the implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement. The RDO also developed a new online reporting tool to facilitate reporting by Departments and Offices on those plans – quarterly for the main sectoral Departments and every six-months for other Departments and Offices.

### Supporting delivery

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform is maintaining a focus on strong and effective programme management and governance arrangements, both centrally and within each of the main sectors. It promotes up-skilling and development of project and programme management capability in Departments, Offices and Sectors. In recent months, training for reform teams in change management and in service design has been provided by the Department. This, and other training supports, will continue to be provided during 2015.

As well as organising networking events and training for staff involved in reform, a Reform and Delivery Office portal contains a range of tools to share best practice and to support organisations in implementing their reform programmes, including resources in the areas of change management, project management, programme management, communications management and risk management.

### Priorities for 2015

- Continue to strengthen governance and capacity to deliver reform centrally and in Departments and Sectors.
- Monitor and report on progress being made on the implementation of the Public Service Reform Plan and Integrated Reform Delivery Plans.
- Establish a central Programme Management Office in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to coordinate and drive the implementation of the Civil Service Renewal Plan.



# Conclusion

Significant progress has been made in implementing the Government's Public Service Reform programme, from the first Reform Plan in 2011 and now the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016.

The Public Service is now considerably smaller and more sustainable. It is less expensive and more efficient. Its capacity and capability to plan and deliver change has increased significantly. However, the Public Service today finds itself at another important juncture. Reform remains as important as ever as the Public Service seeks to become ever more flexible and responsive; efficient and effective; and customer-focused. While the economy is recovering, budgets will remain constrained in the coming years. In addition, demographic and other pressures will mean that reform of the Public Service will continue to be a priority.

The focus for 2015 will be to continue to drive the reform agenda, both in terms of ensuring delivery of the reforms set out in the Public Service Reform Plan

2014-2016 and the Civil Service Renewal Plan, and in ensuring implementation of the organisation and sector specific reforms set out in the Integrated Reform Delivery Plans of Departments and Offices for 2015.

It will be necessary to build on the progress made to date and to ensure that the Public Service is equipped to deliver the next phase of reform, focusing on ensuring better outcomes for service users, while maintaining the focus on efficiency.

In looking at how they design and deliver their services, a concerted effort will be made by public bodies to improve how they engage and interact with services users.

Innovative models for the provision of services will be considered. This will involve consideration of alternative delivery methods and increased use of technology to make services more effective, accessible and efficient.

The Public Service will continue to ensure that it is increasingly more efficient in its administration, delivering value for money for taxpayers. This will include adoption of shared services models and enhanced public procurement and property management.

Further measures will be taken to rebuild trust in the institutions of the State, through the continued implementation of the Government and legislative reform programme.

The reform programme will be underpinned by steps to improve leadership and human resource management within the Public Service.

A further progress report on the Public Service Reform Plan will be published in early 2016.

