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Minister's Foreword

I welcome the publication of this report which details the implementation of the updated ‘National Action Plan for Social Inclusion’ for the years 2015 and 2016. The report outlines progress on the 14 high level goals across the five lifecycle categories of children, working age, older people, people with disabilities and communities, while additional related developments are also reviewed.

This report highlights the combined effort across all government departments to work towards our goal of reducing poverty in Ireland.

The national social target for poverty reduction agreed by Government in 2012 is to reduce consistent poverty from 6.3% in 2010 to 4% by 2016 and to 2% or less by 2020. This was an ambitious target, particularly during a time of economic recession, but one to which the Government has remained committed.

Data from the CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) indicate that consistent poverty rose sharply after 2010, to a peak of 9.1% in 2013. The latest SILC 2016 data, released by the CSO in December 2017, indicate that this had reduced to 8.3%. A reduction of 6 percentage points would now be required to meet the 2020 poverty target.

The impact of the recovery is not yet fully reflected in the latest data, which reflect income conditions in 2015-2016. Since then unemployment has fallen from 9.4% in mid-2015 to 5.9% in early 2018. The number of people in receipt of working-age income and employment supports has also continued to fall.
The most recent Labour Force Survey figures are clear evidence that the Government’s Strategy on Jobs is working. Since 2012 the number of jobs in the economy has risen by over 350,000 with over 2.2 million people now at work in Ireland. Reforms such as the new Pathways to Work strategy; Pathways to Work 2016 – 2020, the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2024 and the new National Skills Strategy 2025 - Ireland’s Future, have all made a significant contribution to the recovery in employment in an inclusive manner while enabling employers to continue to grow their businesses.

Targeted developments such as those outlined in this report, including; the introduction of Free GP care for children under 6, the publishing of the Strategy to Combat Energy Poverty 2016-2019 and the Government’s commitment to publish a Migrant Integration Strategy are all contributing to a multi-dimensional approach to tackle poverty and inequality in Ireland.


My Department has started preparations for a new four year plan for the period 2018-2021. Like its predecessor, the plan will have a ‘whole of Government’ approach that aims to improve outcomes for the vulnerable and marginalised in our society, while recognizing a shared responsibility across Government to implement actions to achieve the overall objectives. The theme of the new plan is one of active inclusion, which will enable every citizen, notably the most disadvantaged, to fully participate in society, including having a job.

Stakeholder engagement continues to be a core theme of government policy to tackle poverty. In addition to the annual Social Inclusion Forum the department has undertaken a wider public consultation on the new plan.
Although 2015 saw the first reduction in the number of children in consistent poverty since 2008, child poverty rates in Ireland are still too high. I believe we must support the most financially vulnerable but with a particular focus on improving the incomes of families, including lone parent families, with children. We will continue to face this challenge through targeted improvements similar to those introduced in the 2018 Budget and we will continue to strive to take all children out of poverty. It is my intention that Government policies will continue to improve living standards in a manner that is felt in the daily lives of individuals, families and communities across the country.

Regina Doherty TD
Minister for Employment Affairs & Social Protection
Ráiteas ón Aire Gnóthaí Fostaíochta agus Coimirce Sóisialaí

Cuirim fáilte roimh fhoilsiú na tuarascála seo ina mionsonraítear cur chun feidhme an Phlean Gníomhchaíocha Náisiúnta um Chuimisiú Sóisialta nuashonraithe do na blianta 2015 agus 2016. Leagtar amach sa tuarascáil an dul chun cinn atá déanta maidir leis na 14 sprioc ardleibhéil a bhaineann leis na cúig catagóir seo a leanas de thimthriall na beatha: leanaí; aois oibre; daoine scothaosta; daoine faoi mhíchumas; agus pobail. Déantar athbhreithniú inti freisin ar fhobairtí gaolmhara breise.

Leagtar béim sa tuarascáil seo ar an gcomhiarracht atá déanta i ngach roinn de chuid an rialtais maidir le hoibriú i dtreo ár sprioc chun an bhochtaineacht a laghdú in Éirinn.

Is é an sprioc náisiúnta shóisialta arna chomhaontú ag an Rialtas in 2012 maidir leis an mbochtaineacht a laghdú ná an bhochtaineacht sheasta a laghdú ó 6.3% in 2010 go 4% faoi 2016 agus go 2% nó níos ísle faoi 2020. Ba sprioc uaillmhianach é sin, go mór mór le linn cúlaithe eacnamaíochta, ach is sprioc í dá bhfuil an Rialtas tiomanta i gcónaí.

Léirítear i Suirbhé na Príomh-Oifige Staidrimh maidir le Dálaí loncaim agus Mairreachtála (SILC) gur tháinig ardú gearr ar an mbochtaineacht sheasta i ndiaidh 2010, go buaic 9.1% in 2013. De réir na sonraí is déanaí ó SILC 2016, arna eisiúint ag an bPríomh-Oifig Staidrimh i mí na Nollag 2017, bhí laghdú go 8.3% tar
éis teacht air sin. Bheadh laghdú 6% ag teastáil anois chun sprioc 2020 maidir leis an mbochtaineacht a bhaint amach.

Nil tionchar an téarnaimh le feiceáil go hiomlán fós sna sonraí is déanaí, ina léirítear dálaí ioncaim in 2015-2016. Ó shin i leith, tá an ráta difhostaíochta tar éis titim ó 9.4% i lár 2015 go 5.9% go luath in 2018. Tá laghdú tar éis teacht ar bhonn leanúnach ar an lion daoine ag aos ioncam a bhuail tacaíochta oibre agus fostaíochta á bhfáil acu.

Is fianaise shoiléir iad na figiúirí ón Suirbhé ar Lucht Saothair is deanaí go bhfuil éifeacht ag baint le Straitéis an Rialtais i leith Fostaíochta. Ó bhí 2012 ann, tá méadú níos mó ná 350,000 tar éis teacht ar líon na bpost atá sa gheilleagar agus tá breis agus 2.2 milliún daoine ag obair in Éirinn anois. Tá atchóirithe amhail an straitéis Bealaí chun na hOibre; Bealaí chun na hOibre 2016-2020; an Straitéis Chuimsitheach Fostaíochta do Dhaoine faoi Mhíchumas, 2015-2024; agus an Straitéis Náisiúnta Scileanna 2015 - Todhchaí na hÉireann tar éis cur go mór leis an téarnamh ó thaobh fostaíochta de ar bhealach ionchuimsitheach, agus tá siad tar éis fostóirí a chumasú chun leanúint dá ngnóthais a fhorbairt ag an am céanna.

Tá na forbairtí spriocdhírithe go léir amhail na cinn a leagtar amach sa tuarascáil seo lena n-aírítear cúram Dochtúirí Ginearálta in aisce do leanaí faoi bhun 6 bliana a thabhairt isteach; Straitéis chun Tearcrochtaí Fuinnimh a Chomhrac, 2016-2019 a fhoilsiú; agus tiomantas an Rialtais chun Straitéis maidir le hímeascadh Imirceach a fhoilsiú, ag cur le cur chuige iltoiseach chun dul i ngleic leis an mbochtaineacht agus leis an éagothroime in Éirinn.

Tá sé mar bhunspríoc fós ag sochaí na hÉireann an bhochtaineacht a chomhrac agus áirítear sa Chlár an Rialtais Comhpháirtíochta an tiomantas docht atá ann chun Créit Comhrtháite um Ionchuimsíú Sóisialta nua a fhorbairt chun dul i ngleic leis an éagothroime agus leis an mbochtaineacht. Tiocfaidh sé sin ina chomharba ar an bPlean Gnóthaíochtaí Náisiúnta um Ionchuimsíú Sóisialta 2007-2016 agus ar an nuashonrú 2015-2017 a rinneadh air.
Ráiteas ón Aire Gnóthaí Fostaíochta agus Coimirce Sóisialaí

Tá ullmhúcháin tosaithe cheana féin ag mo Roinn chun pleán nua ceithre bliana a fhorbairt maidir leis an tréimhse 2018-2021. Amhail a réamhtheachtaí, beidh cur chuige idirghníomhaireachta i gceist leis an bpleán sin agus é mar aidhm ag an gcru chuige sin feabhas a chur ar thóthóraí do dhaoine leochaileacha agus imeallaithe inár sochaí, agus é a aithint ag an am céanna go bhfuil freagracht chomhróinntse ar fud an Rialtais maidir le gniomhaíochtaí a chur i bhfeidhm chun na cuspóirí foriomlána a bhaint amach. Is téama an phlean nua é an chuimsíú gniomhach, rud a chuireann ar chumas saoránachacha uile, go háirithe iad siúd is mó atá faoi mhíchumas, páirt iomlán a ghlacadh sa tsochaí, lena n-áirítear post a bheith acu.

Tá ranpháirtíocht páirtithe leasmhara fós ina croíthéama de bheartas an Rialtais maidir le dul i ngleic leis an mbochtaineacht. Chomh maith leis an bhFórum um Ionchuimsíú Sóisialta bliantúil, tá an roinn tar éis tabhairt faoi chomhairlíocht poiblí níos forleithne a dhéanamh leis an bpleán nua.

Cé gurbh é in 2015 a tháinig an chéad laghdú ó 2008 ar líon na leanaí atá á maireachtáil faoin mbochtaineacht sheasta, tá rátaí na bochtaineachta do leanaí fós ró-ard. Is é mo thuairim go gcaithfimid tacaíocht a thabhairt do na daoine is leochailí ó thaobh airgeadais de agus béim ar leith a chur ar ioncam na dheaghlach sin, lena n-áirítear teaghlaigh aon-tuismitheora, a bhfuil leanaí acu a fheabhsú. Leanaimid orainn ag tabhairt aghaidhe ar an dúshlán seo trí fheabhsúcháin spriocdhírithe a bhaint amach amháin na cinn a tugadh isteach le Cáinaisnéis 2018 agus déanfaimid ár ndícheall i gcónaí chun leanaí a shábháil ar an mbochtaineacht. Is é mo rúin go leanfaidh beartais an Rialtais d’fhéadhas a chur ar chaighdeáin mhaireachtála ar bhealach ar bhraithe i saol laethúil na ndaoine, na dheaghlach agus na bpobal ar fud na tíre.

Regina Doherty TD
An tAire Gnóthaí Fostaíochta & Coimirce Sóisialaí
Chapter 1
Introduction & Context
1.1 National Context


This Social Inclusion Report is part of the monitoring and reporting mechanisms provided for in the ‘NAPinclusion’. The report covers implementation of NAPinclusion measures during the period from January 2015 to December 2016. Preparation and compilation of the report was coordinated by the Social Inclusion Division (SID) of the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection, with support from relevant Government Departments that provided report material. This is the sixth report, the previous five covering the periods 2007, 2008, 2009-2010, 2011-2012 and 2013-2014 respectively.

Since 1997 Ireland has developed national anti-poverty strategies to provide a strategic framework in which to tackle poverty and social exclusion. The current strategy, the ‘National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016’ (NAPinclusion), identifies a wide range of targeted actions and interventions to support the overall objective of achieving the National Social Target for Poverty Reduction (NSTPR). The Plan adopts a life-cycle approach with goals set for each group: children; people of working age; older people and communities.

The Plan was updated for the period 2015 - 2017 to reflect the current issues and interventions to tackle poverty. This included a greater focus on modernising the social protection system, improving effectiveness and efficiency of social transfers and strengthening active inclusion policies. The Updated Plan contains 14 reformulated goals across Departments and Agencies with a remit in social policy, as part of a strategic approach to make a decisive impact on poverty over the period to 2017. The goals include a focus on early childhood development, youth exclusion, access to the labour market including measures for people with disabilities, migrant integration, social housing and affordable energy.
1.1.2 **National Social Target for Poverty Reduction**

Ireland has a long history of setting national targets to reduce poverty through policy frameworks such as the National Anti-Poverty Strategy and the ‘National Action Plan for Social Inclusion’. In 2012 the Government revised and enhanced the national poverty target as originally set out in 2007 under NAPInclusion. It was renamed the National Social Target for Poverty Reduction (NSTPR).

- The revised headline target is to reduce consistent poverty to 4 per cent by 2016 (interim target) and to 2 per cent or less by 2020, from the 2010 baseline rate of 6.3 per cent.
- The child-specific poverty target is to lift at least 70,000 children out of consistent poverty, based on the 2011 baseline rate of 107,000 by 2020.
- Ireland’s contribution to the Europe 2020 poverty target is to lift a minimum of 200,000 people out combined poverty (consistent poverty + at-risk-of-poverty + basic deprivation) between 2010 and 2020.

Progress towards the NSTPR is reported annually in the Social Inclusion Monitor, which includes data from the most recent CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions.\(^1\)

The latest results from the CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions for 2016 shows improvements in living conditions and some progress towards the national social targets. Consistent poverty was effectively unchanged at 8.3% in 2016. Consistent poverty among children fell by 7,000 in 2016. The Irish contribution to the EU poverty target also improved, with ‘combined poverty’ falling by 198,000 people in 2016. Given the continuing economic recovery throughout 2017 and measures introduced in Budgets 2017 and 2018, it is reasonable to expect future figures to show further improvement.

However, there is a long way to go to achieve the national social targets. Consistent poverty was at a low of 4.2% in 2008 during the height of the boom. It

subsequently increased with the economic crisis. With the years lost between 2009 and 2012 reducing it now by over 75% is very ambitious and unlikely to be achieved. There is a commitment in the Programme for a Partnership Government to review the NSTPR in 2017 in the context of the finalising of the new national anti-poverty strategy.

1.1.3 Child Poverty
In line with the child-specific poverty target, to lift over 70,000 children out of consistent poverty by 2020, the Government has committed to implementing a whole-of-government approach to tackling child poverty, building on the lifecycle approach in NAPinclusion.


In conjunction with its partner departments and stakeholders in the voluntary/community sector the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP), as the department designated with lead responsibility for Outcome 4 under Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: Economic security and opportunity, continued to work towards the adoption of the whole-of-government approach.

In support of this process an ad hoc group, comprising partner Departments and stakeholders from the community and voluntary sector was convened to work on producing a plan on how best to tackle child poverty. The group was co-chaired by the DEASP and the Children’s Rights Alliance. NGOs members include Barnardos, National Youth Council of Ireland, One Family and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Consistent poverty among children fell from 11.5% in 2015 to 11.1% in 2016. This equates to 132,000 children in 2016 (down from a peak of 152,000 in 2014). However, despite this decrease, 95,000 children still have to be lifted out of consistent poverty to meet the target by 2020.
1.1.4 NAPinclusion Reporting Mechanisms

There are a range of regular reporting mechanisms in NAPinclusion including the Social Inclusion Monitor, the Social Inclusion Forum and Social Impact Assessment amongst others.

The Social Inclusion Monitor\(^2\) (SIM) is an annual report which monitors progress towards the national social target for poverty reduction, including the sub-target on child poverty and Ireland’s contribution to the Europe 2020 poverty target. It is prepared by the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection based on the annual CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC). The 2016 monitor is the sixth edition and relates to 2016 SILC data\(^3\).

The Social Inclusion Forum\(^4\) (SIF) was established by the Government as part of the structures to monitor and evaluate NAPinclusion. A Social Inclusion Forum was held in both 2015 and 2016. This annual event is part of the institutional structures put in place to underpin the implementation, monitoring and on-going development of the Government’s social inclusion agenda. It provides a forum for wider public consultation and discussion on social inclusion issues, in particular for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion and the groups that work with them. The Forum also provides an opportunity for engagement between officials from Government Departments, community and voluntary organisations and people experiencing poverty in relation to the NAPinclusion. A conference report is prepared each year and is laid before both Houses of the Oireachtas.

Social Impact Assessment\(^5\) (SIA) is an evidence-based approach which estimates the likely distributive impact of policies on income and social inequality. Assessing the social consequences of budgetary policy is of particular importance


in order to protect the most vulnerable in society and to monitor the crucial role of social transfers in preventing welfare and other recipients from falling into poverty.

The Government has developed an integrated social impact assessment to strengthen implementation of the national social target for poverty reduction and the sub-target on child poverty and to facilitate greater policy co-ordination in the social sphere. It applies social impact assessment to a range of policy issues, in conjunction with government departments and other stakeholders.

The Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection has published a social impact assessment of Budgets 2015, 2016 & 2017. The social impact assessment of Budget 2017 found that welfare and income tax policies would result in an increase in average household incomes by 1 per cent (equivalent of almost €9.20 per week. Furthermore, it found that non-earning lone parents and couples with children gained most from Budget 2017 with non-earning lone parents and couples with children gaining most (up to 4.5% more). The assessment showed that social transfers continued to perform strongly in reducing poverty with an estimated 0.8 percentage point reduction in the population at-risk-of-poverty.

A review of NAPinclusion goals was conducted in 2015 as part of the 2013 & 2014 annual report to establish their continued relevance. This review indicated that some were completed or had been overtaken by circumstance or changes in policy and required updating. In such cases, appropriate text was drafted to describe new or similar activities, which was circulated to stakeholder departments for consideration /approval.

This current Social Inclusion Report 2015 & 2016 is also part of the reporting mechanisms, and concentrates on recording the actual implementation of measures envisaged in Napinclusion and the Update. In preparing this report, the Department consulted widely with the other relevant Government Departments that have responsibility for delivering the programme of actions set out in the NAPinclusion. Co-ordinators/liaison persons, in place in each department, liaised with division staff and assisted in collating material. Departments submitted updates on progress, key developments and other material.
1.2 EU & International Reporting

1.2.1 Ireland’s National Reform Programme

In June 2010, the European Council adopted *Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth* which sets out a vision of Europe’s social market economy for the 21st century. The Strategy reinforces interaction between economic, employment and social policies which is deemed essential to foster sustainable growth job creation and social and territorial cohesion.

As part of the Strategy, the European Council agreed five headline targets on employment; research and development; climate change; education; and poverty. The targets are seen as being interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The poverty target is to lift 20 million people out of the risk of poverty or social exclusion by 2020. As their contribution to the Europe 2020 poverty target, Member States are required to set out national poverty targets based on appropriate national indicators, taking into account national circumstances and priorities.

Ireland’s contribution to the Europe 2020 poverty target is to lift a minimum of 200,000 people out combined poverty (consistent poverty + at-risk-of-poverty + basic deprivation) between 2010 and 2020. Member states have to report on the target and related actions in an annual National Reform Programme (NRP). There was an improvement in ‘combined poverty’, the Irish contribution to the Europe 2020 poverty target, with the rate falling from 33.7% in 2015 to 29.2% in 2016. This equates to 1.4 million people, and represents a decrease of 21,512 on the 2010 baseline. Thus, just under 200,000 people will have to be lifted out of combined poverty to meet the Europe 2020 target.

1.2.2 Country Specific Recommendation

The National Reform Programme is also the reporting mechanism for the Country Specific Recommendations (CSR), which are agreed each year between the EU

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Commission and EU Member States. The two most recent Country Specific Recommendations issued to Ireland by the Council as part of the European Semester have referred to addressing the poverty risk of children (Council of the European Union, 2015; European Commission 2016b). Ireland’s Country Specific Recommendations for 2016 in relation to social policy were to:

- Expand and accelerate the implementation of activation policies to increase the work intensity of households and address the poverty risk of children.
- Pursue measures to incentivise employment by tapering the withdrawal of benefits and supplementary payments.
- Improve the provision of quality, affordable full-time childcare.

In 2016\(^7\) the number of children in jobless households fell by 7.1% since 2012. There was also a fall in the proportion of children (aged 0 to 17) at risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE) in 2015. Long-term unemployment rose sharply in the recession, from 31,000 in 2007 to a peak of over 200,000 in early 2012. However, during the recovery, the number of long-term unemployed fell to 92,000 in 2016, down by over 112,000. Improvements have continued through 2015, both in absolute terms and in converging towards the EU average.

Based on the Eurostat Labour Force Survey there were 253,000 jobless households in 2016. Although the figure for Ireland has fallen from a high of 23% in 2012 to 17.6%, as a result of the economic recovery, the Government has set out a number of reforms including the ‘Action Plan for Jobless Households’, which was published in September 2017.

The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection has pursued a range of active labour market reforms over recent years including the roll out of two support programmes for jobseekers (Intreo and JobPath). Reforms of further education and training, aimed at promoting re-skilling and up-skilling, have also made steady and continuous progress. The Government has also achieved some success in addressing child poverty by, for example, enhancing inclusion.

programmes. The Housing Assistance Programme and Family Income Supplement (now known as Working Family Payment) have reduced disincentives to return to work, while access to childcare has gradually improved.

1.2.3 UN Sustainable Development Goals
In September 2015, a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals was agreed at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in New York. These goals, which are universally applicable, represent an ambitious plan to eradicate poverty, address environmental degradation and climate change and build a more peaceful, fair and sustainable world by 2030.

The agreement of these goals sets the course for the entire world to deliver a more sustainable, prosperous and peaceful future for all. A number of these goals specifically relate to poverty and as such are relevant to the ‘National Action Plan for Social Inclusion’. These include eradicating extreme poverty, reducing by half the proportion of men, women and children living in poverty, and implementing appropriate social protection systems and measures. Ireland will be reporting on progress on the SDGs at regular intervals.

The following chapters will provide detail of the progress made across the range of goals set in the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2015-2017, for each of the life-cycle groups. Each chapter starts with a short table outlining key points followed by more detailed updates provided by each Department.®
Chapter 2

Children
Goal 1: Early Childhood Care and Education
Continue to invest in high-quality early years care and education for all children through free pre-school provision, by supporting families with childcare costs, in particular families on low incomes, and by improving the quality of provision.

Department of Children & Youth Affairs (DCYA)
There has been significant investment in high-quality early years and education including;

2015
• €7 million for childcare services under the Early Years Capital Programme.
• Work on the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM)
• The instigation of the LINC (Leadership for Inclusion) programme
• €85 million childcare package

2016
• €6.5 million was provided for Early Years Capital Programme.
• Most of the Child Care Act 1991(Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 came into effect.
• The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school scheme was extended.
• The Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) was introduced.
• The LINC programme commenced.
• The Affordable Childcare Scheme (ACS) introduced.
Goal 2: Literacy and Numeracy

Increase the percentages of primary children performing at the highest levels in the National Assessment of Mathematics and English Reading by at least 5 percentage points at both second class and sixth class by 2020. Reduce the percentage of children performing at or below the minimum level in the National Assessment of Mathematics and English Reading by at least 5 percentage points at both second class and sixth class by 2020.

Department of Education & Skills (DES)

2015

An Interim Review of the National Strategy: Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life 2011-2020 commenced in 2015, in order to take stock of the successes and challenges encountered with its implementation to date. This interim review involved consideration of research findings, both national and international, and a consultation process with a wide range of stakeholders.

2016

The interim review of the National Strategy: Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life 2011-2020 concluded in late 2016 with the publication of PISA (2015) and TIMSS (2015)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Goal 3: Participation in Education</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promote a well-educated workforce supporting Ireland’s recovery and deliver high standards of living for our citizens by reducing the percentage of 18-24 year olds with at most lower secondary education and not in further education and training to 8%; and increasing the share of 30-34 year olds who have completed tertiary or equivalent education to at least 60%.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Department of Education &amp; Skills (DES)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ireland has positive progress for both targets in 2015 and 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Early school leavers**
EU2020 headline target for early school leaving is 10%.  
National target set by Ireland is 8%  
2015 – 6.9%  
2016 – 6.3%

**Target for 30-34 year olds who have completed tertiary or equivalent education**
EU2020 Target is over 40%  
Ireland’s target is at least 60%  
2015 – 52.3%  
2016 – 52.9%

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Goal 4: Child Income Support</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Maintain the combined value of child income supports at 33%-35% of the minimum adult social welfare payment rate and maximize their effectiveness in reducing child poverty, while continuing to support all parents with the costs of rearing children.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Department of Employment Affairs &amp; Social Protection (DEASP)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The target to maintain the combined value of child income support measures at 33% to 35% of the minimum adult social welfare rate was achieved in 2015 and 2016.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1 Department of Children & Youth Affairs

Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme
There have been a number of developments with the ABC Programme throughout 2015 and 2016;

- A national evaluation framework for the Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme has been designed. The evaluation is in progress, and is being overseen by an International Expert Advisory Group. An interim report was expected in 2017, with the final report in 2018.
- In 2015 a task-focused group was established to examine how best to mainstream the learning from the ABC Programme in the domains of policy and provision to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- An ABC Learning Community Planning group was also established to provide areas to share learning, knowledge and practice, and support to one another to deliver effective and integrated services.
- In 2016, the Department held an EU Peer Review event, at Dublin Castle, on the theme of Prevention and Early Intervention services and their role in improving outcomes for children at risk of poverty and social exclusion.
- The Department further developed and refined its plan through the Quality and Capacity Building Initiative (QCBI). The QCBI aims to take a coordinated approach to enhance the capacity, knowledge and quality in prevention and early intervention for children, young people and their families, with a focus on those who are at risk of developing poor outcomes. Four key components have been identified that aim to align data; harness evidence; enhance implementation through coaching and development; and embed prevention and early intervention approaches through a quality framework.
- Owing to their earlier transition into the ABC Programme, the three former Prevention and Early Intervention Programme (PEIP) sites were due to come to the end of their contracts in mid-2016. Funding was secured to extend contracts to August 2017 in line with the rest of the sites.
**Affordable Childcare Scheme (ACS)**

It was announced in October 2016 that a new Affordable Childcare Scheme (ACS) would be introduced. The ACS will replace the existing targeted childcare programmes with a single, streamlined and more user-friendly scheme includes “wraparound” care for pre-school and school-age children. The new scheme will provide a system from which both universal and targeted subsidies can be provided towards the cost of childcare. It will also create a flexible platform for future investment in childcare funding supports, allowing net income thresholds to be adjusted and subsidies to be expanded to more children and families over time.

Developments in Childcare Programmes;

- **The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016:** The majority of regulations came into effect in June 2016. The Regulations provide that each employee working directly with children attending the service must hold at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

- **Early Years Capital Programme:** In 2015 this programme provided €5 million in funding to community and not for profit childcare services and €2 million for both private and community childcare facilities. In 2016 funding €6.5 million was provided for Early Years Capital funding. This funding was specifically for pre-school providers who wanted to expand their services to cater for more children from September 2016. 1,006 services nationwide benefited from this measure.

- **The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme:** This scheme was extended so that every child would be able to access free pre-school from the age of three until they start school (entering pre-school in the September, January or April after they turn three). Children now benefit from an average of 61 weeks of the scheme, up from 38 weeks.

- **The Access and Inclusion Model (AIM):** AIM was introduced in September 2016. The key objective of AIM is to support pre-school providers to deliver an

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9 affordablechildcare.ie
inclusive pre-school experience, ensuring that children with a disability can fully participate in the ECCE programme, thereby reaping the benefits of quality pre-school education. AIM is a child-centered model involving seven levels of progressive support depending on the needs of the child and the pre-school.

- The LINC programme: This programme commenced in September 2016 as part of a broader package of education and training supports to upskill the early year’s workforce in relation to inclusion and disability

**Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures (BOBF) - The National Policy Framework for Children & Young People 2014-2020**

BOBF is the first overarching national policy framework for children and young people aged from birth to 24 years. It was launched by the Department of Children and Young Affairs in 2014. It establishes a shared set of outcomes for children and young people to which all government departments, agencies, statutory services and the voluntary and community sectors work, to ensure a coherent response for children and young people. The National Strategy for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making, 2015-2020 and The National Youth Strategy 2015–2020 are constituent strategies of BOBF.

The National Strategy for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making, 2015-2020 was published in June 2015. It is the first strategy on the participation of children and young people in decision-making in Europe. The goal of the strategy is to ensure that children and young people have a voice in their individual and collective everyday lives across the five national outcome areas of Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures. The first Annual Report on the implementation of this Strategy was published in July 2016. A practical guide to including seldom-heard children and young people in decision-making toolkit was published in 2015.

The National Youth Strategy 2015–2020, was launched in October 2015. The Strategy identifies some 50 priority actions to be delivered by Government

Departments, State agencies and others, including voluntary youth services. These actions were designed to address matters that are a high priority for young people themselves. They include issues such as access to online youth mental health services, a national Obesity Policy and Action Plan, opportunities for those young people furthest from the labour market, and youth entrepreneurship initiatives in schools and youth work settings.

**Development of Youth Facilities and Services in Disadvantaged Areas**

There was significant provision in the development of youth facilities and services in disadvantaged areas over 2015/16 including the following;

- The Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund supports in the region of 230 mainstreamed projects. Funding of €18.4m was made available in 2015 and €18.9m in 2016. This fund was established to assist in the development of preventative strategies in a targeted manner, through the development of youth facilities, including sports and recreational facilities and services in disadvantaged areas where a significant drugs problem exists or has the potential to develop.

- €1m in capital funding was made available to targeted youth services over 2015/2016. Projects and services in receipt of funding under the Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund were eligible to apply.


- In 2016, five VFM Sample Projects, with a total allocation of €200,000, were initiated in four areas of need: West Wicklow, South Tipperary, East Cavan and Drogheda.

- The Youth Employability Initiative, announced in October 2015, is funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund to provide €600,000 for voluntary youth services


for programmes for young people who are not in education, training or employment (NEET).

- The Department has embarked on an exercise, in conjunction with Pobal and each Education and Training Board (ETB) Youth Officer, which will map youth service provision across the State. This mapping exercise will assist the Department and the relevant ETB in developing a detailed socio-demographic profile in terms of both population numbers and deprivation levels.

**Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSCs)**

The blueprint for the development of CYPSC was published in June 2015. In 2015 and 2016 seed funding was made available from the Department of Children & Youth Affairs to support projects chosen from the 3 year plans of each CYPSC. National roll out of the CYPSC was completed in 2016. Twenty seven CYPSC's were established with a total of 26 co-ordinators. This included 5 CYPSC’s in the Dublin region and some counties sharing a CYPSC co-ordinator. All co-ordinators are employed by Tusla with joint funding from the Department and Tusla.

**Pilot Bail Supervision Scheme**

A pilot Bail Supervision Scheme was launched in the Dublin region in November 2016. The Bail Supervision Scheme aims to provide a wraparound service and therapeutic supports in the community for children and their families, which assists children on remand to comply with bail conditions, thus reducing the need for children to be remanded in detention. A contract was awarded to Extern to provide the Bail Supervision Scheme on a pilot basis in the Dublin area, for two years, with continuous evaluation and review.
2.2 Department of Education & Skills

National Strategy: Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life 2011-2020\(^{13}\)

An Interim Review\(^{14}\) of the National Strategy: Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life 2011-2020 commenced in 2015, in order to take stock of the successes and challenges encountered with its implementation to date. This interim review involved consideration of research findings, both national and international, and a consultation process with a wide range of stakeholders. It concluded in late 2016 with the publication of PISA (2015)\(^{15}\) and TIMSS (2015)\(^{16}\).

The Interim Review published in 2017, has shown the considerable progress made at the mid-way point in the Strategy. Ireland’s progress in promoting a high level of literacy for all has been especially impressive. Irish students ranked 3rd out of 35 OECD countries in reading in PISA 2015. It has also identified areas where additional focus is needed if Ireland wants to achieve its ambition, as set out in the ‘Action Plan for Education 2016-2019’, to have the best education and training system in Europe in the next nine years.

The most recent National Assessment in English and Mathematics was in 2014. The table below shows the original targets, progress recorded and the new targets set following the interim review.

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Overall performance on English reading in Sixth class was significantly higher in NA 14 than in NA ’09, by 13 score points. The corresponding effect size, 0.26, can also be considered substantively important. Significant performance increases were also observed for Reading Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension component subscales, and for the Retrieve, Infer, Integrate & Interpret and Examine & Evaluate process subscales.

Overall performance on mathematics in Second and Sixth classes was significantly higher in NA ’14 than in NA ’09, by 14 score points and 12 score points, respectively. The effect size at Second class was 0.28 and at Sixth class was 0.24, both of which can be interpreted as being substantively important (that is, they can be considered large).

The table below shows the results for PISA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading: at or above level 4 15 year olds</td>
<td></td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading: at or above level 5 (highest achievers) 15 year olds</td>
<td>No corresponding targets in 2011 strategy</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading: at or below level 1 15 year olds</td>
<td></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics: at or above</td>
<td>15 year</td>
<td></td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TIMSS 2015 (November 2016) found that, at primary level, Irish pupils’ mean score in Mathematics was significantly higher in 2015 than in 2011.

The next National Assessment in English and Mathematics is due to be held in 2020.

**Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS)**

‘Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) the Action Plan for Educational Inclusion’, was launched in May 2005 and remains the Department of Education & Skills policy instrument to address educational disadvantage. There were 825 schools included in the programme in the 2016/17 school year.

In 2015 ‘Learning from the Evaluation of Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) programme’ – an Economic and Social Research Institute (ERSI) Report commissioned by the Department of Education & Skills on the implementation over ten years of DEIS was published. The report assessed the main findings of this research and provided advice to inform future policy direction in relation to educational disadvantage including DEIS.

Following on from this publication, a process to review the DEIS programme began in 2015 and was nearing completion at the end of 2016. The review process examined all aspects of DEIS. The development of a new assessment framework using centrally held Central Statistics Office and Department of Education & Skills data for the identification of schools for inclusion in a new Programme was included in the review process.

Testing was undertaken in 2016 by the Educational Research Centre and the DES Inspectorate to assess pupil achievement outcomes and planning in schools

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17 [https://www.esri.ie/pubs/R539.pdf](https://www.esri.ie/pubs/R539.pdf)
participating in the DEIS Programme. Results were to be published in 2017. Further information including a range of published DEIS evaluation documents are available on the ERC website at www.erc.ie

The School Completion Programme
The School Completion Programme is a core element of the Educational Welfare Service provided by Tusla. The programme enables local communities to develop tailored strategies to maximise participation levels of those at risk of early school leaving. Tusla’s Education Welfare Service has a responsibility to ensure that every child attends school regularly, or otherwise receives a certain minimum education. It supports regular school attendance, tackles problems of absenteeism and provides a general educational welfare service. The service receives referrals from school authorities, parents and others relating to concerns for the educational welfare of individual children.

A review of the operation of the School Completion Programme by the Economic and Social Research Institute was published in 2015. The review found that there has been an improvement in attendance levels and in the proportion of young people staying in school until Leaving Certificate. It also concluded that the School Completion Programme, along with DEIS has played an important role. Tusla has taken a number of actions to strengthen the operation of the programme, such as improving annual retention plans and having discussions with relevant stakeholders on the review findings and on how to strengthen the core functions of the programme.

The Programme for Partnership Government committed to the development of a School Completion Strategy. This Strategy was to be developed during 2017.

Participation in Education
Early school leavers are defined as 18-24 year olds with at most lower secondary education and who are not in further education and training. The EU2020 headline target for early school leaving is 10%. The national target set by Ireland is 8%.

\[18\text{ https://www.esri.ie/publications/review-of-the-school-completion-programme/} \]
Ireland's current share of early school leavers fell from a baseline of 10.8% in 2011 to 6.3% in 2016 representing very positive progress in excess of the target.

The EU2020 Target for 30-34 year olds who have completed tertiary or equivalent education is over 40%, Ireland's target is at least 60%. In 2015 Ireland reached 52.3% and 52.9% in 2016.

**National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)**

While supporting the development of the academic, social and emotional competence of all students, the Department’s psychological service, NEPS, prioritises its support for students at risk of educational disadvantage and those with special educational needs.

- In 2015 NEPS produced and disseminated the Well-being in Primary Schools Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion.
- Under the ‘Action Plan for Education 2016-2019’ considerable priority is afforded to the support of mental health and wellbeing, in this regard, the ‘Action Plan for Education 2016-2019’ commits to the expansion of NEPs staffing numbers by 65 psychologists.
- During 2016 a national recruitment process commenced to form regional recruitment panels to allow for both for the recoupment of staffing losses in the NEPS services but also to commence the realisation of the staffing increase commitment.

**Evaluation of Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Primary Schools**\(^\text{19}\)

A new evaluation model 'Evaluation of Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Primary Schools' was introduced in September 2016. It has facilitated the gathering of comprehensive and up-to-date information on the quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs in primary schools. Since its introduction;

- The model has been deployed in 15 primary schools

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• Thirteen subject Inspections were conducted in mainstream schools at post-primary level
• Ten evaluations were conducted in Youthreach centres
• All schools with High Support Units, Special Care Units and Children Detention Schools were inspected during 2016.

The Inspectorate expected to publish a Composite Report on the Education of Children in Detention and Care based on evaluations carried out between 2013 and 2015 in 2017. The evaluation model for these schools has also been updated, in light of the findings of the Composite report.

**Special Educational Needs**

The National Council for Special Education undertook a comprehensive assessment of the Special Needs Assistants (SNA) scheme and commenced work on the development of proposals for a new model for allocating SNAs. The report of the comprehensive assessment and the proposals for the new model were scheduled to be completed by the end of March 2018.

Assistive technology continues to be funded to ensure that children with special educational needs are supported in accessing the curriculum. The Department’s psychological service, NEPS, amongst other services, prioritises its support for students with special educational needs.

**Traveller Education**

In accordance with the Traveller Education Strategy, provision for Travellers has been mainstreamed with previously segregated provision now funded as part of the mainstream system. A number of Traveller-specific supports remain in the system to assist with the transition to the mainstream system of pupils, previously provided for in segregated provision. These comprise of: 141 alleviation resource teacher posts for schools with significant numbers of Travellers. Schools receive additional pupil capitation for Travellers at a rate of €70 per pupil for Primary, and €201 per pupil for Post Primary.
The phasing out of the two remaining Traveller-only Special schools was under discussion with the schools patron.

The Department of Education & Skills participated in the Steering Group established to oversee the development and implementation of a new National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (NTRIS 2016-2020), which was led by the Department of Justice & Equality (DJE).

### 2.3 Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection

**Back to Work Family Dividend (BTWFD) Scheme**

The Back to Work Family Dividend (BTWFD) scheme was introduced in 2015 and aims to help families to move from social welfare into employment. This is available to lone parents who move into employment including those who avail of the Family Income Supplement. The BTWFD allows customers to retain the Increase for Qualified Child (IQC) portion of their former payment, for two years, with full IQC entitlement (worth €1,550 per child) in the first year and 50% entitlement in the second year. This provides a significant incentive for families with children who move into employment – as reported by the ESRI\(^{20}\). The Department continues to monitor the incentives for welfare recipients to transition from welfare into employment with the aim of continuing to maintain the incentive into employment.

**Child Income Support**

2015 saw the first reduction in the number of children in consistent poverty since 2008. A number of budget measures were introduced in relation to child income support over the two years;

2015
• The monthly rate of Child Benefit rate increased by €5 from €130 to €135
• A new 2 week Paternity Benefit Scheme was introduced.

2016
• The monthly rate of Child Benefit increased by a further €5 to €140 per month.
• An increase from €9.60 to €15.60 per week in the child rate of Direct Provision Allowance paid in respect of children living within the system of Direct Provision was approved.
• As part of Budget 2016 Family Income Supplement (FIS) (subsequently renamed to Working Family Payment) increased by €5 per week for families with one child and €10 per week for families with two or more children.

The target to maintain the combined value of child income support measures at 33% to 35% of the minimum adult social welfare rate was achieved in 2015 and 2016. The Department continues to monitor and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Child and Family Income Supports in reducing child poverty.

School Meals Programme
In 2015 an additional €2m was provided for School Meals in 2015 bringing the total allocation to €39m. The additional funding was used to increase funding to existing Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) schools by about 20% in most cases. Priority was given to breakfast clubs which provide very positive outcomes for vulnerable children in terms of their school attendance, punctuality and energy levels. DEIS schools not already in the scheme were encouraged to join.

In 2016 a further €3m was provided for School Meals in 2016 bringing the total allocation to €42m. This additional funding was also used so that all DEIS schools could provide a breakfast for all pupils if required and lunch for the majority of pupils. Focus continued to be on the provision of breakfast clubs and the inclusion of existing DEIS schools not participating in the scheme.
2.4 Department of Health

Free General Practitioner (GP) care
Free GP Care for children under 6 commenced in 2015. All children registered under the Scheme can attend a participating GP without charge.

In addition to free GP visits, the GP visit card for children under 6 covers specific assessments at age 2 and 5 and enhanced care for children with asthma.

See Chapter on Communities for more information.

Medical Cards
In November 2016, the Government approved the preparation of the Heads and General Scheme of a Bill to give children in receipt of Domiciliary Care Allowance (DCA) automatic entitlement to a medical card. The legislation means that all children in respect of whom a DCA payment is made will automatically qualify for a medical card and, therefore, no longer be subject to the medical cards means test at any point in the future while in receipt of DCA. In the region of 30,000 DCA medical cards would be assigned.
Chapter 3
People of Working Age
### Goal 5: Labour Market Activation

Provide all registered unemployed people with efficient, work-focused income supports together with the supports and direction required to help them plan and implement a pathway into employment. In particular provide people who are long-term unemployed and young unemployed with opportunities to enhance their job prospects through value-adding job search, guidance, work experience, education and training activities.

#### Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection (DEASP)

**2015**
- Pathways to Work 2015 was launched. This was the last iteration of the Government’s strategy covering a four year period (2012-2015) to tackle the unemployment crisis.
- An updated Pathways to Work 2016-2020 was under development within the Department.

**2016**
A new Pathways to Work (PtW) strategy, Pathways to Work 2016 – 2020, was published in January 2016. The strategy considers how activation approaches developed during a time of recession should be adapted for a time of recovery and as a tool of social/active inclusion during a period of prosperity.

### Goal 6: Welfare to work

Provide effective support to jobseekers and recipients of the jobseeker’s transitional payment (former recipients of One-parent Family Payment) via the Department’s Intreo offices and provide information on available in-work supports should they transition into employment.

#### Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection (DEASP)

The Department of Employment Affairs Social Protection undertook an extensive reform to the One-Parent Family Payment (OFP).

**2015**
- The final phase of the OFP scheme reforms took place on 2 July, 2015, when the maximum child age threshold of the scheme was reduced to 7 years.

**2016**
- The activation of lone parents on a jobseeker's payment commenced across all offices in early 2016.

The Department's Social Impact Assessment of Budgets 2015 and 2016 shows gains for lone parents of €18.55 per week for working lone parents and €7.90 per week for non-working lone parents.

**Goal 7: Youth Employment**

Engage all unemployed young people under the age of 25 through Intreo, with a view to ensuring that they receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. Enhance employability skills for young people through non formal and informal learning opportunities.

**Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection (DEASP)**

Under the Youth Guarantee process there is now monthly engagement by Intreo case officers with unemployed young people, from the time they become unemployed, to assist them to prepare and implement personal progression plans for employment.

The number of young people who became unemployed and remained so for 4 months or more fell from a baseline of 37,200 in 2013 to:

- 2015 - 28,200
- 2016 - 23,000

The youth unemployment rate fell consistently from 2013 baseline of 27% to:

- 2015 - 20.3%
- 2016 - 17%
**Goal 8: Employment of people with Disabilities**
Support the increased participation of people with disabilities in work by building skills, capacity and independence; providing bridges and supports into work; making work pay; promoting job retention and re-entry into work; providing seamless support and engaging with employers, as part of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2024.

| Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection (DEASP) |
| Department of Justice & Equality (DJE) |

**2015**
- A ten year Comprehensive Employment Strategy (CES) was launched to ensure a co-ordinated approach to support persons with disabilities to progress into employment. This strategy is a cross-government approach co-ordinated by the Department of Justice & Equality.

**2016**
- Over the course of 2016, the DEASP worked in conjunction with the National Disability Authority (NDA), the HSE, the Department of Health and the Department of Education & Skills to develop an effective co-ordinated policy approach to assist individuals with disabilities, including those who require a high level of support, to obtain and retain employment.
- In October 2016 the Government announced funding of €2 million would be provided for projects to deliver pre-activation supports for people with disabilities in 2017.

**2015 & 2016**
- The Integrating Employment and Mental Health Support (IEMHS) aimed to demonstrate how existing mental health and supported employment (EmployAbility) services can fulfil the best practice Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model of supported employment through improved integration. During the period 2015 and 2016, DEASP collaborated with the HSE, Genio and Mental Health Reform with IEMHS.
DEASP progressively rolled out its full activation support service to people with disabilities who wish to avail of the service on a voluntary basis. The first phase of this roll-out commenced in 2015 with the service being provided in ten Intreo Centres. The service was extended to all other locations over the course of 2016.

During 2015 and 2016 the Department conducted a range of reviews relating to illness/disability policy including:

- An Evaluation of the EmployAbility Service.
- The Evaluation of the Disability Activation Project
- Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection Report on Disability Allowance Survey 2015
- Make Work Pay for people with disabilities
Chapter 3. People of Working Age.

3.1 Department of Justice & Equality

Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2024\(^{21}\)

The Government launched the Comprehensive Employment Strategy (CES) for People with Disabilities in 2015 to ensure a co-ordinated approach to support persons with disabilities to progress into employment. The strategy requires a cross-government approach that brings together actions by different departments and state agencies in a concerted effort to address the barriers and challenges that impact on employment of people with disabilities.

An implementation group meets regularly to oversee the implementation of the strategy and ensure that each Government Department is fulfilling its obligations and meeting its targets.

The Linkage Programme

The Probation Service continues to advance initiatives designed to address patterns of criminal behaviour associated with social exclusion, with an emphasis on restorative justice initiatives. In particular, it has supported the extension of the Linkage Programme to increase the number of offenders successfully placed in employment, education or Community Employment schemes.

In 2015, 1,800 offenders were referred by the Probation Service to Training and Employment Officers of the Linkage Programme. 1,435 of these referrals were sent for placement and 677 individuals were placed in employment, education or Community Employment Schemes. In 2016, 1,763 offenders were referred by the Probation Service to Training and Employment Officers of the Linkage Programme, of which 1,325 were referred for placement and 614 individuals were placed in employment, education or Community Employment Schemes.

3.2 Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection

Pathways to Work (PtW)

The goal of Pathways is to ensure that as many jobs as possible go to people on the Live Register. Ireland has made significant progress since the nadir of the jobs crisis, when unemployment peaked at over 15%. The Pathways to Work (PtW) strategy 2012 - 2015 has played a key role in this progress.

Successive Pathways to Work (PtW) strategies have focused on:

1. Facilitating new entrants to the Live Register to get back to work (2012) – with a focus on the newly unemployed.
2. In addition, facilitating those long-term unemployed, and youth unemployed, to get back to work (2014 (Youth Guarantee); 2015; 2016-2020).
3. In addition, facilitating those currently inactive working age adults (not in receipt of Jobseeker payments) with a capacity and desire to work, to get into employment (2018-2020). People who are not defined as jobseekers in the traditional sense and may face barriers to gaining employment.


The new strategy, ‘Pathways to Work 2016 – 2020’, was published in January 2016. The strategy considers how activation approaches developed during a time of recession should be adapted for a time of recovery and as a tool of social/active inclusion during a period of prosperity. Accordingly, in addition to focussing on people who are registered as unemployed and while continuing to focus on the Long Term Unemployed (LTU) and youth unemployed, activation may during a period of economic growth and recovery seek to encourage other ‘non-active’ cohorts to participate in the labour market.

This ‘Pathways to Work Strategy’ therefore takes a two-pronged approach:

1. **Consolidation**: Consolidating the recent reforms to the Public Employment and Welfare Services and optimising provision to maximise outcomes for its clients.

2. **Development**: Gradually expanding access to activation services, as resources allow, to other non-employed people of working age.

Of 86 actions in PtW 2016-2020, 42% were completed and/or on-going in 2016, including:

- Promoting Intreo services for voluntary engagers and those with a disability
- Establishment of Regional Skills Fora
- Establishment of protocols between DEASP and other employment services providers
- New apprenticeships in place

Quarterly status reports\(^2\) on progress on all Pathways to Work actions were published on [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)

**Stepping Stones**

Stepping stones to work are provided through schemes and employment initiatives such as:

- **Rural Social Scheme (RSS)** – provides income support for low-income farmers and fishermen/women on certain social welfare payments. In return, people participating in the RSS provide services that benefit rural communities. An additional 500 places were announced in 2016.

- **The Tús Initiative** - is a community work placement scheme, providing short-term work opportunities, targeted at the long-term unemployed. At least 1,000 places are available for younger unemployed. In addition, 20% of available places are available for assisted referrals including persons on Jobseekers Transitional

Payments (formerly One Parent Family customers).

**Gateway** - is a local authority labour activation scheme that provides short-term work and training opportunities for long-term unemployed people who have been on the Live Register for over 2 years. The work opportunities are to benefit the local area. In 2015 and 2016 3,000 Gateway places were available to the long term unemployed. The number of places filled at the end of 2016 was 2,913.

**Community Employment (CE) schemes** - is designed to help people who are long-term unemployed (or otherwise disadvantaged) to get back to work by offering part-time and temporary placements in jobs based within local communities. New rules on community employment provide access to all from age 21; this will benefit younger unemployed who will now have earlier access. In addition certain categories e.g. drug rehabilitation, ex-offenders and refugees, will be able to access at age 18.

**Job Fairs**
The Department hosted a variety of Job Fairs across the country throughout 2015 and 2016, ranging from large general Career Fairs catering for a range of job categories across a variety of business sectors to smaller, sector-specific Job Fairs. Jobs Week is an annual event that provides an opportunity to promote the range of Intreo supports and services to employers and jobseekers. Jobs Week 2016 saw 160 events nationwide attended by 600 employers and over 16,000 jobseekers including;

- Intreo Careers Fair in Dublin Castle Fair (50 employers recruiting for over 500 jobs & 2,000 jobseekers attended)
- Mid-West Job Fair in Limerick (2,500 attended)
- Buncrana and Letterkenny Job Fairs (2,800 attended)
- Bio-pharma Graduate Fair in Athlone (1,000 attended)

Other events around the country included smaller sector-specific Job Fairs, ‘Education, Training and Development Fairs’, CV clinics and 1-2-1 coaching sessions for jobseekers.
Chapter 3. People of Working Age.

**One-Parent Family Payment (OFP)**
The Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection undertook an extensive reform to the One-Parent Family Payment (OFP) including the introduction of the Jobseeker's Transitional Allowance (JST) for lone parent's whose youngest child is aged 7-13. The implementation of the final phase of the One-Parent Family Payment (OFP) changes took place in July 2015. This involved supporting lone parents on a jobseeker's payment back into employment and commenced across all offices in early 2016. While the customer is on the jobseeker's transitional payment access to these supports are potentially available for up to seven years while their youngest child is aged 7 to 13 years. This is a much broader support than the 12 month engagement that normally applies for jobseekers from their one to one meeting. The aim of this broader support is to improve the individual's employment prospects.

Budgets 2015 and 2016 introduced a number of measures that were of benefit to lone parents including the alignment of the Jobseeker's Transitional Payment (JST) means test more closely with the One-Parent Family Payment means test resulting in a more generous means test for JST customers. The Department's Social Impact Assessment of Budgets 2015 and 2016 showed gains for lone parents of €18.55 per week for working lone parents and €7.90 per week for non-working lone parents.

**Youth Employment**
Under the Youth Guarantee process there is now monthly engagement by Intreo case officers with unemployed young people, from the time they become unemployed, to assist them to prepare and implement personal progression plans for employment. Where young people do not find work quickly, additional supports are offered through places on employment and training schemes. Over 80% of such offers relate to upskilling through further education and training.

The number of employees supported by the JobsPlus scheme increased from

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[24](https://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/jobsplus.aspx)
3,000 to 6,000 in 2015. All employees who qualified for JobsPlus Youth\(^{25}\) since the changes to the eligibility criteria were introduced in February 2015 are sent a form to confirm their eligibility and this can be presented to prospective employers.

The number of young people who became unemployed and remained so for 4 months or more fell from 37,200 in 2013 to 28,200 in 2015 and to 23,000 in 2016. The youth unemployment rate fell from 27% to 17% over this period.

The following table outlines the number of new participants on youth training schemes in 2015/2016.

<p>| Programme                                                      | Number of New Participants |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youthreach/Community Training Centres</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>FET for unemployed people</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Momentum</td>
<td>1,056</td>
<td>122</td>
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<tr>
<td>BTEA (excl. Momentum)</td>
<td>2,416</td>
<td>2,158</td>
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<tr>
<td>VTOS</td>
<td>827</td>
<td>843</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOLAS (Former FÁS) training for unemployed</td>
<td>7,152</td>
<td>5,875</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>11,451</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,998</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>JobBridge</td>
<td>2,294</td>
<td>928*</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Work Experience and Training</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2,302</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Employment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tús</td>
<td>1,388</td>
<td>1,280</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gateway</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Employment</td>
<td>726</td>
<td>855</td>
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</table>

Subsidised Private-Sector Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subsidised Private-Sector Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTWEA (self-employment)</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JobsPlus, including JobsPlus Youth (employee jobs)</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>732</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JobPath – Employment Activation Programme

In 2015 the Department introduced JobPath. This new programme of employment activation is aimed specifically at the long-term unemployed (over 12 months and including those aged under 26 years of age) and those most distant from the labour market, to assist them to secure and sustain full-time paid employment or self-employment.

Employment of People with Disabilities

The Department progressively rolled out its full activation support service to people with disabilities who wish to avail of the service on a voluntary basis. The first phase of this roll-out commenced in 2015 with the service being provided in ten Intreo Centres. The service was extended to all other locations over the course of 2016. Training has been delivered to over 60 Case Officers to provide specialised support to people with disabilities presenting at Intreo Centres.

Under the CES, the Department engages with employers on an ongoing basis and promotes existing workplace supports such as:

- EmployAbility
- the Wage Subsidy Scheme
- the Reasonable Accommodation Fund (encompassing the Workplace Equipment/Adaptation Grant)
- the Personal Reader Grant
- the Job Interview Interpreter Grant
- the Employee Retention Grant
- the Disability Awareness Training Support Scheme
During the period 2015 and 2016, the Department collaborated with the HSE, Genio\textsuperscript{26} and Mental Health Reform\textsuperscript{27} in the Integrating Employment and Mental Health Support (IEMHS). This pilot project aimed to demonstrate how existing mental health and supported employment (EmployAbility) services can fulfil the best practice Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model of supported employment through improved integration.

Over the course of 2016, the DEASP worked in conjunction with the National Disability Authority (NDA), the HSE, the Department of Health and the Department of Education & Skills to develop an effective co-ordinated policy approach to assist individuals with disabilities.

During 2015 and 2016 the Department conducted a range of reviews relating to illness/disability policy including:

- An Evaluation of the EmployAbility Service\textsuperscript{28}
- The Evaluation of the Disability Activation Project\textsuperscript{29}
- Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection Report on Disability Allowance Survey 2015\textsuperscript{30}
- Make Work Pay for people with disabilities\textsuperscript{31}

In 2016 the Government announced funding of €2 million would be provided for projects to deliver pre-activation supports for people with disabilities in 2017.

\textsuperscript{26} https://www.genio.ie/
\textsuperscript{27} https://www.mentalhealthreform.ie/projects/integrating-employment-mental-health-supports-iemhs/
\textsuperscript{31} https://m.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Make-Work-Pay.aspx
Chapter 3. People of Working Age.

3.3 Department of Education & Skills

**Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2014-2019**

The ‘Further Education and Training (FET) strategy 2014-2019’ aims to deliver a higher quality learning experience leading to better outcomes for all those who engage in it.

Active inclusion is one of the key goals of the ‘FET Strategy’. Programmes are delivered for a wide range of groups who are disadvantaged or at risk of exclusion with the aim of enabling every citizen to fully participate in society.

FET is funded through SOLAS and delivered by the 16 Education and Training Boards. The Government invests over €800 million in further education and training annually through SOLAS and the Education and Training Boards, providing over 270,000 places annually to support the delivery of high quality education and training at levels 1 to 6 of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) to over 320,000 beneficiaries.

The Department of Education & Skills and SOLAS through the ‘Strategy Implementation Advisory Committee’ (SIAC) monitor the implementation of the Strategy on an on-going basis. A mid-term review of the Strategy was due commence in 2017.

**National Skills Strategy to 2025 (NSS)**


The strategy was developed in the context of significant reform in the education and training sector to ensure a more dynamic, responsive and high quality system that provides all learners with the knowledge and skills they need to participate

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fully in society and the economy.

The Strategy has over 150 measures and over 50 different stakeholders and provides a framework for skills development that will help drive Ireland’s growth both economically and societally over the next decade.

**Regional Skills Fora**

In 2016, nine Regional Skills Fora were established to foster greater engagement between the education and training system, employers and other enterprise stakeholders in building the skills of each region.

The Fora have been established to align with wider Government policy and initiatives on regional economic development, including the Regional Action Plans for Jobs. The innovative structure of the fora sees the work plan within each region being driven by key stakeholders in the region including employers, enterprises and education and training providers.

**The Apprenticeship Implementation Plan**

The Apprenticeship Council was established in November 2014 through the ‘Apprenticeship Implementation Plan’. In January 2015 the Council made an open call for new apprenticeship proposals. The Council received 86 proposals from consortia of enterprise, professional bodies and education and training providers. Following a comprehensive evaluation process the Council identified 25 new programmes that were both sustainable and ready to enter a detailed planning and development stage.

A review of the curricula for the existing craft apprenticeship began in early 2015 and from this five curricula were validated:

- Carpentry and Joinery,
- Electrical,
- Plumbing,
- Metal Fabrication and

• Heavy Vehicle Mechanic.

A further 14 curricula were submitted to Quality & Qualifications Ireland (QQI) for validation in December 2016.

As of 31st December 2016, two new apprenticeships have commenced, Insurance Practitioner and Industrial Electrical Engineer, with more planned for 2017.

The ‘National Access Plan for 2015-19’ was launched in December 2015. The plan contains 5 key goals and more than 30 actions, intended to assist under-represented groups to participate in third level education. It contains a number of targets for specific categories of students, including disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, mature students, and members of the Travelling community.

The ‘Access Plan’ aims to mainstream the ‘access’ agenda so that responsibility for promoting greater diversity extends beyond designated access officers. The Plan also aims to empower students in the development of access policy, and strengthen the links between further and higher education.

3.4 Department of Children & Youth Affairs

Childcare
In 2015 the DCYA set up an Inter Departmental Group to consider future investment in childcare. That group recommended reform of the childcare schemes including, the Training and Employment Childcare (TEC) scheme and the creation of a single scheme that would be more accessible and enable subsidisation of lower income families regardless of dependency on social welfare

payments. Budget 2016 provided seed funding for the development of this new scheme and work began on its development. Examples of other investments in Childcare programmes to support parents include:

- Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Programme: costs for 2016 were €38,633,526 with 24,561 approved children registered for the programme call 2015/16.
- Childcare Employment and Training Support (CETS) scheme: costs for 2016 were €11,914,000 with 3,991 approved children registered for the programme call.
- After-School Child Care Scheme (ASCC): cost €1,515,000 for 2016 with an uptake of 669 registered childcare places for the programme call.
Goal 9: Community Care
Continue to support older people to live in dignity and independence in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. Where this is not feasible, support access to appropriate quality long-term residential care.

Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government (DHPLG)
‘Rebuilding Ireland an action plan on Housing and Homelessness’ was published in July 2016. It sets out a range of commitments to support older people.

Goal 10: State and Workplace Pensions
Maintain the adequacy and sustainability of State pensions and improve, where possible, outcomes through the pension reform process. Develop a roadmap and timeline for the introduction of a universal, supplementary workplace retirement saving system that considers the constituent factors involved in constructing an efficient and effective broad scheme: design features; cost estimates and phase-in timeframe.

Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection (DEASP)
Throughout 2015/16, the commitment to maintain adequacy of state pensions has been exceeded. The real value of the state pension in 2016 was 7% up on its 2007 level. In the same period work also continued on establishing the evidence base to underpin fundamental decisions which will be required when selecting the appropriate operational framework and design elements for a new automatic enrolment universal retirement savings system. It was intended that by end 2017 Government would detail the measures which would be taken and the timelines involved to deliver automatic enrolment when publishing a wider 5 year pension reform plan. (Subsequently published in Feb 2018)
4.1 Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government

Rebuilding Ireland an action plan on Housing and Homelessness

‘Rebuilding Ireland’ was published in July 2016. The comprehensive plan addresses all aspects of the housing system under five Pillars:

- Address Homelessness
- Accelerate Social Housing
- Build More Homes
- Improve the Rental sector
- Utilise Existing Housing

The plan recognises that the ageing of our population represents one of the most significant demographic and societal developments that Ireland faces in the years ahead, with the number of people over the age of 65 expected to reach 1.4 million by 2041. The implications for public policy in areas such as housing are considerable.

A new cross-Departmental/inter-agency approach will therefore be taken to progress housing initiatives for older people, including a Dublin City Council pilot project for a sixty-home development, with opportunities for similar proposals in other local authority areas to be pursued in parallel.

Given the importance of housing adaptation and other grants that help older people live comfortably in their own homes for longer through local authority and HSE programmes, the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government will explore how the process of accessing these grants can be streamlined and simplified.

See Chapter on Communities for more information.

36 http://rebuildingireland.ie/
Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes
In 2015, total funding of €50.5m was provided under the suite of Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes for older people and people with a disability and 7,596 grants were paid. There are commitments under both the Programme for Government and Rebuilding Ireland to increase the funding for the scheme. Total funding of €56.25m was provided in 2016 and 8,010 grants were paid. The Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government is continuing to work with local authorities to review the delivery of the scheme and streamline the application process for applicants.

4.2 Department of Rural & Community Development

Seniors Alert Scheme
The Programme for Government provides for significant investment in the Seniors Alert Scheme to provide additional safety and peace of mind for those living at home. The Department undertook to consider new approaches to the Seniors Alert Scheme in 2014 and arising from this, it was decided that the scheme would be managed by Pobal, given organisation’s significant experience in delivering programmes on behalf of Government. While Pobal manages the scheme on behalf of the Department, it is important to note that the Department retains responsibility for the strategic policy direction of the Scheme. It also maintains an oversight role in relation to Pobal’s delivery of the Scheme.

Between September 2015 and December 2016, almost 8,000 participant installations were completed. In 2016, Pobal engaged consultants to inform the future development of the Scheme. Following this process, a new version of the Scheme came into effect on 1 November 2017.
4.3 Department of Education & Skills

**Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2014-2019**

In the ‘Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019’, Goal 2 relates to Active Inclusion and aims to support the active inclusion of individuals of all ages and abilities to participate in further education and training to enable full participation in society. Within FET there is no upper age eligibility applicable to its programmes. The ‘National Skills Strategy 2025’ has set targets to increase participation. The Programme for Government includes the commitment to support an increase in the number of flexible courses available, giving people the opportunity to attend courses part time, during evenings, in the summer and at weekends.

4.4 Department of Health

**National Positive Ageing Strategy**

The Department of Health has recently formulated new arrangements to implement and monitor implementation of the ‘National Positive Ageing Strategy’ (NPAS). These new arrangements establish mechanisms that will give stakeholder groups effective and on-going access to Government Departments and State Agencies relevant to older people. This includes an annual Forum for stakeholders to identify what they consider to be their key priorities for Government for the coming year and the next three years; and establishing clear channels of communications between stakeholders and relevant Government Departments.

As part of the NPAS implementation process, a ‘Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative’ has been established in collaboration with the HSE’s Health and Wellbeing Programme and the Atlantic Philanthropies to measure the impact of

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the Strategy and establish an ongoing system for measuring and reporting on Positive Ageing. The Initiative will monitor changes in older people’s health and wellbeing linked to the goals and objectives of the ‘National Positive Ageing Strategy’. This will be done primarily through the development of Positive Ageing indicators to be published every two years.

The Initiative is intended to provide evidence of the factors contributing to positive ageing, including at local level and ultimately inform policy responses to population ageing in Ireland. The first national Positive Ageing Indicators report was published in 2016 and highlights many of the positive and negative aspects of growing old in Ireland.

**National Dementia Strategy**

A National Dementia Office was established in the HSE in early 2015 to drive implementation of the Strategy. A €27.5 million ‘National Dementia Strategy Implementation Programme’, co-funded by the HSE and the Atlantic Philanthropies, is under way.

This Programme provides for Dementia Specific Intensive Home Care Packages, a public awareness campaign, and supports for GPs and Primary Care Teams to diagnose and manage dementia. Other actions in the Strategy are being addressed to improve the experience of people with dementia across social care, primary care, acute services and long term care. A five year Community Nursing Unit Programme for Older People is also on-going.

**Review of the Nursing Homes Support Scheme**

An Interdepartmental/Agency Working Group has been established to progress the recommendations contained in the ‘Nursing Homes Support Scheme’ (NHSS) Review.

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Developments to date include:

- Significant progress been made in relation to the implementation of the administrative reforms to the Scheme.
- A Steering Committee chaired by the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF) & including representatives from the Department of Health, the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform and the NTPF was established to oversee the review of prices payable to private and voluntary nursing homes under the Scheme. External consultants were engaged by the NTPF in 2016 to assist in its review of the pricing mechanism. The NTPF have responsibility for the development of this report, although Department officials continue to engage with the NTPF regarding the review.
- The first progress report on the implementation of recommendations contained in the NHSS Review was made to the Cabinet Committee on Health in September 2016.

**Community Intervention Teams (CITs)**

The main focus of Community Intervention Teams (CITs) is the prevention of avoidable hospital admission and the facilitation of early discharge from hospitals through the provision of care in the community. CITs services are additional to existing mainstream community services.

Over 2015 and 2016, there was a significant increase in the number of CITs in place, with thirteen full time and one part time involved in the programme. In 2015, there were 19,675 patient referrals to CIT and 27,633 referrals in 2016.

This service is particularly important for patients aged over 65 years, who make up a large proportion of total CIT activity. The provision of this service has a positive impact on both reducing acute hospital attendance and length of stay in this patient group. The HSE continues to focus on developing CITs nationally within primary care settings.
Chapter 5

Communities
Goal 11: Social Housing
Create a more flexible and responsive system of social housing support including a range of actions to ensure that social housing supports are responsive to people’s needs as well as to improvements in their circumstances.

Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government (DHPLG)

2015
- Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme - 5,680 additional households were supported across 18 local authority areas at year end

2016
- ‘Rebuilding Ireland’ was published in July 2016. As well as strengthening the existing housing-led approach in Dublin, Rebuilding Ireland also commits to extending it to other urban areas, focusing on persistent rough sleepers and long-term homeless households.
- Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme - 12,075 additional households were supported across 28 local authority areas at year end, including the accelerated roll-out of the scheme to 9 further local authorities under ‘Rebuilding Ireland’

Goal 12: Primary Healthcare
Develop primary care services in the community which will give people direct access to integrated multi-disciplinary teams of general practitioners, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and others.

Department of Health (DOH)
Primary Care Centres (PCC) continue to facilitate the shift from acute care towards primary care. They provide modern well equipped facilities where Primary Care Teams are located enabling a range of multi-disciplinary services to be provided. At the end of 2016, there were 99 PCCs operational and 37 locations where primary care infrastructure was under construction or at an advanced planning stage. A further 47 locations were at preliminary stages of development.
## Goal 13: Migrant Integration

Promote the integration of migrants, and encourage social inclusion, equality, diversity and the participation of migrants in the economic, social, political and cultural life of their communities though a new migrant integration strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department of Justice &amp; Equality (DJE)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2015</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2016</strong></td>
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## Goal 14: Affordable Energy

Identify an appropriate energy poverty methodology and the data tools necessary to estimate and track energy poverty levels. Reform existing efficiency programmes, or develop new programmes as the best way of addressing energy poverty in the long term, as part of a new national affordable energy strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department of Communications, Climate Action &amp; Environment (DCCAE)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2015</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2016</strong></td>
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5.1 Department of Health

Primary Healthcare
The reorganisation outlined in the ‘Community Healthcare Organisations (CHO) Report’ progressed in 2015 and 2016. Primary care services were organised and managed across 9 Community Healthcare Organisations (CHOs) and delivered by 484 Primary Care Teams (PCTs). 96 Primary Care networks, which deliver a range of services in addition to those delivered by the PCTs, were mapped at national level.

At the end of 2016 there were;
- 99 Primary Care Centers (PCCs) operational
- 37 locations where primary care infrastructure was under construction or at an advanced planning stage.
- 47 locations at preliminary stages of development.
- 96 Primary Care Networks supporting the PCTs

Funding of €4m was made available in 2016 to recruit 83 new full-time staff in Speech and Language Therapy services to specifically focus on speech and language therapy waiting lists in Primary Care and Social Care for children up to 18 years of age. At the end of 2016, the recruitment of 53 staff had commenced with recruitment for the remaining 30 on-going.

A further €5m was allocated in for counselling and psychological supports in Primary Care for children under 18 years of age. This would support the recruitment of 20 full time psychologists and 114 assistant psychologists on a two-year pilot basis across the primary care psychology services. The recruitment of the full time posts had commenced at the end of 2016. Cover for absences are decided by HSE local management operating within the funding envelope provided to them.

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41 https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/corporate/choreport.html
A Diabetes Cycle of Care which commenced on 1\textsuperscript{st} October 2015, aims to improve clinical outcomes for patients and reduce complications often experiences with this condition. The cycle of care includes two scheduled review consultations annually comprising an annual review and follow-up visit. As at end 2016, approximately 85,000 patients had been registered for the cycle of care by their GPs.

**Primary Care Services**

The HSE rolled out a pilot in 2015 to provide GPs with direct access to ultrasound at ten primary care sites across four Community Healthcare Organisations (CHO) in the South and West. The onward referral rate to a hospital setting for further radiological/medical investigations was approximately 15-20\% which demonstrates the success of the initiative. It highlights the effectiveness of having direct access to ultrasound available for GPs and is further relieving pressure on hospital services and decreasing waiting lists.

The initiative commenced in Quarter 4 of 2015 with eight of the ten primary care sites to provide the service being live at the end of that year. At the end of 2015 there were 869 referrals and at the end of 2016 over 13,700 referrals. Primary Care Centres with onsite x-ray facilities were in Arklow, Athlone and Mitchelstown at the end of 2016. The HSE continues to explore the development and expansion of diagnostic services in Primary Care.

**Healthy Ireland**

An annual Healthy Ireland Survey\textsuperscript{42} was commissioned to enhance data collection and monitoring capacity to track progress in achieving targets to evaluate the success of the Healthy Ireland Framework. The Survey, which involves in-home, face-to-face interviews with a sample of approximately 7,400 individuals representative of the Irish population aged 15 and over, is carried out on behalf of the Department by Ipsos MRBI.

\textsuperscript{42} [https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/healthy-ireland/surveys/]
Results of the surveys were published in 2015 and 2016. The Survey provides an up-to-date picture of the nation’s health with a robust and credible baseline set of data on a range of health behaviours.

**National Drugs Strategy 2009-2016**

Progress reports on the ‘National Drugs Strategy’, as at end 2015 and at end 2016, are available on the Department of Health website. In the context of the development of a new strategy for the period after 2016, an international expert panel carried out a rapid review of the ‘National Drugs Strategy 2009-2016’.

**Out-of-hours GP services**

Ninety percent of the population have access to GP out-of-hours services in 14 centres nationally, in all HSE regions, in at least part of every county. These services received approximately 981,000 contacts in 2015 and 1,090,000 contacts in 2016. Over 2,000 GPs provide services in the co-ops. The approach of initial telephone triage which may be followed by attendance at a treatment centre is regarded by the HSE as a good proxy measure for hospital avoidance via Emergency Department attendance.

In 2015, funding of approximately €43 million was provided by the HSE in respect of GP out of hours’ fees (special type consultations and supplementary out of hours’ fees). In 2016, this amounted to approximately €44 million. These figures do not include GP out of hours’ costs in respect of call centres, drivers, nurse triage services, etc.

**Free General Practitioner (GP) Care**

Free GP Care for children under 6 commenced in 2015. All children registered under the Scheme can attend a participating GP without charge.

The Government is committed to the continued development of GP capacity to ensure that patients across the country continue to have access to GP services and that general practice is sustainable in all areas into the future. Several efforts

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to increase the number of practising GPs have been undertaken in recent years. These include changes to the entry provisions to the General Medical Service (GMS) scheme to accommodate more flexible/shared GMS/GP contracts, and to the retirement provisions for GPs under the GMS scheme, allowing GPs to hold GMS contracts until their 72nd birthday, as well as the introduction of enhanced supports for rural GP practices.

Separately, the State is seeking to train more GPs to provide GP services to the population. In 2009, there were 120 GP training places and in 2016 there were 172 training places filled. The Government is committed to further increasing this number.

See Chapter on Children for more information.

**National Carers Strategy**

The Department of Health works together with the HSE to implement the health-related actions in the ‘National Carers Strategy’. The HSE has reported progress in a number of areas including the following:

- the establishment of a Multi-Divisional ‘National Carers Strategy Group’ in the HSE to progress implementation of the Strategy
- the establishment of a Steering Group to look at gaps in respite service provision and consider the development of performance indicators for respite services
- the publication of a discharge planning guide for acute hospitals
- the development of a carer page on the HSE website
- the development of Service User, Family Member and Carer engagement processes in the Mental Health area
- the development with the InterRAI consortium of a needs assessment tool for carers, and the continued provision of respite services within the available budget

The Department of Health and the HSE met with carers' representatives during 2015 and 2016 to discuss the implementation of the ‘National Carers Strategy’.
The Department has published progress reports on implementation of the ‘National Carers Strategy’ for the period September 2014-September 2015 (third report) and September 2015-December 2016 (fourth report).

In 2015 & 2016 the Department of Health and HSE representatives attended the annual Carers Forum, hosted by the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection, and chaired the Health thematic sub-group at each of these sessions, where carers and their representatives discussed the health issues of greatest concern to them.

5.2 Department of Justice & Equality

Migrant Integration
The review of Ireland’s approach to the integration of migrants continued throughout 2015/2016. This review was to ensure that the policy remained fully in keeping with the Government’s commitment in the Programme for Government. In December, 2016, the Government agreed to the publication of the ‘Migrant Integration Strategy’. It envisages a whole-of-Government approach involving actions by all Departments.

The Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration (OPMI) continues to implement the Government commitment in relation to migrant integration, partly through financial assistance to projects promoting integration of immigrants and combating racism. In 2015-2016, funding of around €2.35m was provided to organisations (mainly local authorities and NGOs) to promote integration and inclusion.

Other Funding/Programmes:
- 2015/2016: Ireland admitted 532 persons as Programme Refugees under its resettlement programme.
- 2015/2016: 240 people who arrived in Ireland from Greece under the European Union Relocation Programme were in the process of being resettled into their new communities.
• 2015: Work continued on administering the European Integration Fund (EIF) and the European refugee Fund (ERF) – both have since been replaced by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014-2020.

• 2016: applications for funding were sought under the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) 2014-2020 and the European Social Fund Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020.

• Integration at local level is further supported through Local Authority refugee resettlement projects which are funded through Irish Refugee Protection Programme grants supported by EU AMIF funding.

**National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021**

The ‘National Disability Inclusion Strategy’\(^44\) was prepared on foot of a comprehensive consultation process that commenced in 2016. The purpose of this process was to identify and agree specific actions and timescales for delivery under the following eight themes;

- Equality and Choice
- Joined up policies and public services
- Education
- Employment
- Health and Wellbeing
- Person centered disability services
- Living in the Community; and
- Transport and access to places

Implementation of the Strategy will be overseen by a Steering Group, with representatives of relevant Departments, agencies and disability stakeholders. The Group is chaired by the Minister of State. The ‘National Disability Strategy Steering Group’ will publish an annual report on progress made in each year of the Strategy.

National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy

Development of a new National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy is underway. The Inclusion Strategy includes comprehensive public consultation with the Traveller community, NGOs and other interested parties as part of a three phase process.

- Phase 1 - identification of key themes for the new Strategy. (completed)
- Phase 2 - identification and agreement of high-level objectives under each agreed theme. (completed)
- Phase 3 - identification of detailed actions to achieve each agreed objective, with associated timescales, key performance indicators, institutional responsibilities and monitoring arrangements. (commenced in May 2016)

The draft strategy will be considered by the National Traveller and Roma Strategy Steering Group, before being submitted for consideration by Government. This process will provide for a set of very real actions which are needed to bring about a real improvement in quality of life for Travellers and Roma. This Strategy will involve the development and implementation of a range of cross-cutting policy measures in order to address the issues facing the Traveller and Roma communities. It will take a whole-of-Government approach to addressing issues facing the Traveller community in particular, including a sustained intervention to tackle feuding and anti-social behaviour.

The areas covered by the Inclusion Strategy include employment, accommodation, health, education, discrimination, children and youth, gender equality and cultural identity.

Government decided that the question of recognising Travellers as a distinct ethnic group will be addressed in the context of the new Strategy.
5.3 Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment

**Affordable Energy Strategy**
A review of the ‘Affordable Energy Strategy’ was carried out in 2015. A public consultation\(^4\) and public workshop took place.

The ‘Strategy to Combat Energy Poverty 2016-2019\(^5\)’ was published in February 2016. The strategy builds on the progress and experience developed over the previous four years since the publication of the first ever Government strategy on Affordable Energy. It expands the reach of existing energy efficiency schemes and commits the Government to developing and piloting new measures to find more effective ways to focus energy efficiency efforts on those most at risk of energy poverty. It also puts in place the structures and the accountability to ensure that the challenge is effectively addressed at every level of Government and public service. Accompanying the strategy is an assessment of the level of energy poverty in Ireland using the objective methodology.

Progress on the actions in this strategy will improve the evidence base around the multiple benefits of energy efficiency as well as providing an accurate measure of the number of people in Ireland who are living in or at risk of energy poverty.

**Warmth and Wellbeing Scheme**
The requisite capital funding for the programme has been provided and the ‘Warmth and Wellbeing Scheme’, which is a Pilot Scheme, has been operating in areas of Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) since mid-2016. The scheme aims to measure the health impacts of significantly improving the energy efficiency


of a person’s home who is living with a chronic respiratory condition. An independent analysis of the health and social inclusion outcomes of participants is being carried out alongside delivery of the scheme.

**Warmer Homes Scheme**

The Warmer Homes Scheme is the Government’s main energy efficiency scheme for people in or at risk of energy poverty. The scheme provides free energy efficiency upgrades to eligible households.

In 2016 the eligibility of the Warmer Homes scheme and the Warmth and Wellbeing scheme were expanded to include those in receipt of the One Parent Family payment (OFP).

**The National Broadband Plan (NBP)**

Much progress was made under the ‘National Broadband Plan’ during the period 2015/2016. Extensive stakeholder consultations took place during 2015. In December 2015 the Procurement Process was formally launched and in October 2016 the Minister announced that three bidders in the procurement process had formally indicated that they were proposing a predominantly fibre to the home solution for rural Ireland.

The 2020 High Speed Broadband Map was also published in 2015, this followed ongoing engagement with industry and public consultation.

In 2016, a Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce was established to address immediate issues in relation to mobile phone and broadband coverage. A Regional Telecommunications Unit was established, in the Department of Rural & Community Development (DRCD), to work with local authorities and interested stakeholders to assist in the commercial deployment of telecommunications networks and mitigate any potential barriers to the rollout of the NBP. The Department continued to liaise closely with industry and relevant other Departments and agencies to assist in the commercial deployment of telecommunications networks. The Department provided co-funding with DRCD to each local authority to appoint a broadband officer.
Since the publication of the ‘National Broadband Plan’ in 2012, €2.5bn has been invested in upgrading and modernising networks which support the provision of high speed broadband and mobile telecoms services. These investments should assist in significantly improving the coverage and quality of broadband and mobile voice and data services throughout the country.

In 2012, less than 700k of premises had access to high speed broadband. In 2016, over 1.4 million or 61% of all premises could access high speed broadband services provided by commercial operators. By end of 2020 it is expected that nine out of ten premises will have access to high speed broadband.

5.4 Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government

**Rebuilding Ireland an action plan on Housing and Homelessness**

‘Rebuilding Ireland’ was published in July 2016. Under this action plan, the existing housing-led approach in Dublin will be strengthened and extended to other urban areas, focusing on persistent rough sleepers and long-term homeless households. The Dublin Region Homeless Executive was committed to tripling the target for tenancies under its ‘housing first’ programme from 100 to 300. Additional funding was provided in 2016 for the commissioning of the additional Intensive Case Managers (ICM) as part of Dublin’s Housing First service and staff team.

As well as strengthening the existing housing-led approach in Dublin, Rebuilding Ireland also commits to extending it to other urban areas, focusing on persistent rough sleepers and long-term homeless households.

See Chapter on Older People for more information.

**Housing Agency Fund**

Under the ‘Rebuilding Ireland’, an Acquisitions Fund of €70m, which is a revolving fund, has been established with the objective of acquiring 1,600 units over the...
period to 2020 for social housing use. The Housing Agency is currently actively engaged with banks and investment companies in relation to its acquisitions programme. Funding was made available to the Agency for the acquisition of housing in 2016 and the Agency drew down €6,741,000 from the Department in Q4 2016.

**Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Scheme**
The Department continued to roll-out the HAP scheme on a statutory phased pilot basis:

- 2015 – 5,680 additional households were supported across 18 local authority areas at year end
- 2016 – 12,075 additional households were supported across 28 local authority areas at year end, including the accelerated roll-out of the scheme to 9 further local authorities under ‘Rebuilding Ireland’

Local authorities, along with the assistance of local Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection Staff, continued to identify and transfer long-term Rent Supplement recipients to HAP.

**Programme of upgrading social homes**
A systematic programme of upgrading for social homes, focussed particularly on improving energy efficiency and combatting fuel poverty, has been underway since 2013 with an investment of €107m made to end 2016. Starting with the most energy inefficient homes, a total of over 58,000 social homes have had their energy efficiency improved.

This programme is now continuing with the next phase including, where necessary, the replacement of windows and doors as well as the insulation of social homes. Alongside the energy efficiency programme, some 7,200 social homes that had become empty were also insulated and refurbished before being re-let. This work has been underway since 2014 with a total investment to end-2016 of €85m.
The Government has continued investment in the regeneration programme, focussing on areas with large concentrations of social housing that can be characterised by the most extreme social exclusion, unemployment and anti-social behaviour.

Spend on regeneration in 2015 and 2016 was €50m and €59.9m respectively, principally on projects in Dublin, Limerick, Cork City Dundalk, Sligo and Tralee.

**Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS)**

A further 382 (2015) and 319 (2016) housing units were delivered under the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS), which provides funding to approved housing bodies to provide housing for the elderly, homeless and people with a disability, including for people with disability moving out of congregated settings into community based living.

Funding continues to be provided under the CAS towards the provision of accommodation for all of these categories.

**Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP)**

The Department’s 2015 capital budget for Traveller-specific Accommodation was €4.3m, of which €4.1m was drawn down. This increased by almost 22% to €5.5m in the 2016 allocation and local authorities drew down €4.3m. In 2015 the Local Authorities achieved 94% provision of their Traveller Accommodation targets for the year. Provision increased in 2016 and the Local Authority targets were exceeded by 5% seeing 500 families provided with accommodation against a target of 475. Midterm into the fourth TAP, 58% of the overall target for the programme has been achieved. This reflects the increase in funding in 2014 which continued into 2015 and 2016.

In 2016 the Housing Agency commissioned an expert, independent review of capital/current funding for Traveller-specific accommodation to date, having regard to targets contained in the Local Authority TAPs and actual units delivered, the current status of accommodation funded, and funding provided for accommodation maintenance and other supports. The objective of the Housing
Agency commissioned review was to provide factual information, analysis and identification of particular challenges, as a key platform to undertake an audit in 2017 of implementation and delivery of the TAPs, with a focus on appropriate supply of accommodation.

5.5 Department of Rural & Community Development

Libraries Capital Investment Programme 2016-2021
A new Libraries Capital Investment Programme for 2016-2021\(^47\) launched in January 2016. €23m will be invested in 17 capital projects over the programme, including the roll out of the 'My Open Library' which will see a further 20 pilot sites offering extended opening hours (8am-10pm, 7 days per week) on a self-service basis during unstaffed hours.

Free Library Membership introduced in January 2016, opens up inclusiveness and opportunity of access to 15 million items in the 333 libraries and many on line resources for recreation and lifelong learning.

The Single Library Management System will provide a platform for the provision of free access to core library services, a single library membership card, universal membership and a national digital library. The single Library System continued to be rolled out on a phased basis in 2016. The final roll out was due to take place in 2017. It will be complimented by the mainstream roll-out of the National Distribution Service which continued to be implemented on a pilot basis in 2016.

An alternative approach, a Regional Collaborative Model, was agreed at the end of 2016. This approach aims to establish stronger, more effective and efficient public libraries and deliver better library services to local communities and citizens.

The National Literacy Programme, Right to Read, was piloted in 26 libraries nationally. It was due to be rolled out in mid-2017.

**Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)**

Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), the successor programme to the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP), launched in 2015. The aim of SICAP is to reduce poverty, promote social inclusion and equality through local, regional and national engagement and collaboration. The Programme is managed locally by 33 Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) with support from Local Authorities. Programme actions are delivered by Programme Implementers across 51 Lot areas.

The SICAP 2015-2017 target groups were:

- Children and Families from Disadvantaged Areas
- Lone Parents
- New Communities (including Refugees/Asylum Seekers)
- People living in Disadvantaged Communities
- People with Disabilities
- Roma
- The Unemployed (including those not on the Live Register)
- Low Income Workers/Households
- Travellers
- Young Unemployed People from Disadvantaged areas
- NEETs – Young people aged 15-24 years who are not in employment, education or training.

Funding for 2015 was in the order of €26.8m. In the nine months up to the end of 2015, SICAP supported 2,506 Local Community Groups (LCG’s) and 36,854 individuals on a one-to-one basis. The Programme assisted 2,322 LCGs either in formation, development or progression and these groups in turn supported over 125,000 people.

In 2016 funding of €37.5 million was made available for SICAP. During 2016, SICAP supported 47,511 individuals on a one-to-one basis and 3,076 LCGs, to
improve their life-chances and opportunities. Members of 1,048 LCG’s were assisted by SICAP to participate in local, regional or national decision-making structures with over 218,000 people supported in total. Over 55,000 children received education or developmental support.

**Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development (RAPID) Programme**

The ‘RAPID programme’ is aimed at improving the quality of life and the opportunity available to residents of the most disadvantaged communities in Irish cities and towns. It aims, in a focused and practical way, to reduce the deprivations faced by residents of disadvantaged communities. It attempts to do this through targeting significant state resources at the needs of disadvantaged areas.

The 2016 Programme for Partnership Government gave a commitment to reactivating the RAPID Programme. The logistical and other arrangements for the programme remained under consideration within the Department as at year end 2016 and it was anticipated that the re-cast RAPID would roll out in 2017. A total of €5 million has been made available for the Programme in Budget 2017, breakdown as follows:

- €2.5 million – Dublin North East Inner City
- €2 million – all 31 Local Authorities
- €0.5 million – legacy funding commitments from RAPID (original programme)

### 5.6 Department of Culture, Heritage & Gaeltacht

**Gaeltacht and Island communities**

The linguistic, cultural and economic development of the Gaeltacht remains a high-level goal of the Department as evidenced by the significant progress made in rolling out the language planning process under the Gaeltacht Act 2012 and the ‘20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030’. In this context, Údarás na Gaeltachta continues to create 500 Gaeltacht-based jobs per annum, while the Department’s ‘Irish Learners Scheme’ provides Gaeltacht families with the
opportunity to earn significant income not just during the summer months but all year round.

During 2015/2016 the Department continued with its various initiatives and measures directed towards supporting the social, cultural and economic development of the inhabited offshore islands so as to ensure they survive as viable communities.

A number of capital projects aimed at improving access for island communities to the mainland have been included in the new ‘National Development Plan’. The Department also continues to tender on an ongoing basis for passenger and cargo transport services to all of the offshore islands in order to ensure regular access to mainland-based public services and recreational activities.

**Making Great Art Work (2016-2025)**

In 2015 the Arts Council published its strategy document ‘Making Great Art Work’. (2016-2025)\(^{48}\). This strategy places specific emphasis on the need to plan and provide for children and young people. The five high-level values of the strategy include a commitment to excellence, as well as respect for diversity of artistic practice, of public engagement, and of social and cultural traditions. The strategy also commits to working to achieve full implementation of the Arts in Education Charter.

**Participation by Children in Arts and Cultural Activities**

The Department has continued to encourage participation by children in arts and cultural activities throughout 2015 & 2016 through programmes etc. such as;

- In 2016 the Arts Council and Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) published ‘Arts and Cultural Participation among Children and Young People – Insights from the Growing Up in Ireland study’\(^{49}\). The research provides very

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\(^{48}\) [http://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/Making_Great_Art_Work.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/Making_Great_Art_Work.pdf)

useful insights in terms of children's exposure to arts and culture and identifies barriers to engagement with the arts.

- In 2016 the Creative Ireland programme\textsuperscript{50} was launched and places a special focus on enabling the creative potential of every child.
- Funding of almost €750,000 for more than 60 local arts organisations around the country is being made available under Stream 3 of the ‘Arts and Culture Capital Scheme’ 2016-2018.

### 5.7 Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport

**Rural Transport Programme (RTP)**

The National Transport Authority (NTA) progressed with integration of local and rural transport, including the ‘Rural Transport Programme’ (RTP) and implementation of the restructuring of the RTP. During 2016, 1.765 million passenger journeys were recorded on over 242,000 transport services funded under the RTP. Funding of €11.86m was provided to the Programme in 2016.

The restructuring has consolidated services through a streamlined network of 17 LocalLink offices which manage the services on behalf of the National Transport Authority (NTA).

A key feature of the new services is greater integration with existing public transport services and better linkages between and within towns and villages. The development of core services to support initiatives aimed at addressing social exclusion in rural areas is a key consideration of all proposals.

**Enhancing Participation in Sport**

In 2016, 17 Local Sports Partnerships (LSP’s) received funding from Sport Ireland for Sports Inclusion Disability Officer (SIDO) posts. These SIDOs continue to roll out sports ability days, boccia, football for all, wheelchair basketball etc. to promote on-going and active participation. Those LSPs that do not have a SIDO received funding to deliver training in the area of sports and disability.

\textsuperscript{50} https://creative.ireland.ie/en
In 2016, Sport Ireland allocated €50,000 in funding to the CARA Centre. Sport Ireland is also continuing to fund the 3 Major Field Sports (GAA, Soccer and Rugby). The Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport provided an additional allocation to Sport Ireland in 2016 for 17 Community Sports Development Officers within the LSPs. The aim of this funding is to foster and encourage a culture of active participation, supporting opportunities for, and access to, sport and physical activity through LSPs.

5.8 Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection

Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS)
The role of MABS was expanded in 2015 with the establishment of a Dedicated Mortgage Arrears MABS service (DMA MABS) across the MABS network, to help people specifically with home mortgage arrears. There are now 32 specialist DMA advisors working across 27 locations countrywide, assisting borrowers to assess the options available to them and, where required, negotiating with lenders on their behalf. To end December 2016, almost 2,800 people have availed of the DMA MABS service. Additionally, MABS has established a national network of court mentors. The mentors attend each listed repossession Court hearing nationwide and provide support to distressed borrowers who are facing the loss of their home and signposting them to the appropriate services.

MABS is also the gateway to a new service launched in 2016, known as Abhaile, which provides access for people, who are insolvent and in home mortgage arrears, to defined levels of independent expert financial and/or legal advice and assistance, free of charge.

To end December 2016, over 3,537 vouchers for services have been issued, in respect of over 2,300 principle private residences (PPR’s). Of the vouchers issued to date;
- 2,856 relate to the provision of personal insolvency practitioner services,
- 565 are for legal advice services on issues related to mortgage arrears, and
- 116 are for legal aid services relating to Section 115A Appeals, as defined under the Personal Insolvency (Amendment) Act 2015.

5.9 Department of Children & Youth Affairs

The Family Resource Centre (FRC)
In 2015 and 2016 the Child and Family Agency continued to provide financial support through the ‘Family Resource Centre Programme’. This support typically covers the employment of two to three members of staff and some overhead costs of the centres.

The Counselling Grants Scheme
In 2015 and 2016 the Child and Family Agency continued to provide financial support to a broad range of national regional and local organisations providing marriage and relationship counselling, child counselling, the Rainbows peer support programme for children and bereavement counselling and support on the death of a family member.
## Appendix 1: Government Department Names

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government Department’s</th>
<th>Previous Department name (if changed since 2015)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Agriculture, Food &amp; Marine</td>
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