

Annual Report 2016

Department of the Taoiseach

Annual Report 2016



A Message from the Taoiseach

2016 was a momentous year for Ireland as we commemorated the events of 100 years ago which led to our national independence, as well as looking with greater ambition and optimism to the future. The Department of the Taoiseach played a central role in the organisation of the hugely successful 1916 Centenary Commemoration Programme.

2016 also saw new challenges emerge, notably Brexit. The Department had prepared contingency plans in advance of the Brexit referendum. After the vote, there was a swift restructuring to ensure that Ireland's priorities were fully understood and addressed in the work undertaken by the EU institutions and by the British Government and the Northern Ireland Executive.

It was absolutely vital that our national interests were fully reflected in the guidelines for the Brexit negotiations which were recently approved by the European Council.

I am grateful for the support I received in representing Ireland, from my own Department, as well as from officials across Government Departments and in our diplomatic service.

While the emergence of the new challenge of Brexit, as well as the continuing legacies of the economic crisis in areas such as housing, show that there will always be more to do, the year 2016 saw further progress for modern Ireland.

We are seeing an increasingly strong economic recovery taking root and providing a solid basis for the social recovery and the improvements in public services that all of our citizens need.

When I was elected Taoiseach in 2011, I promised to restore our national pride and international reputation, to fix our public finances and to put our people back to work.

As a result of the sacrifices and efforts of the Irish people, combined with radical and firm Government action, unemployment is now at 6%, there are over 2 million people at work, we are on target for a balanced budget, and Ireland's national pride is restored.

Together with my ministerial colleagues, Paul Kehoe TD, Regina Doherty TD, Dara Murphy TD and Joe McHugh TD, I would like to thank the staff in the Department for their continued hard work and dedication.

Enda Kenny T.D.
Taoiseach

Introduction by the Secretary General

This is the final Annual Report under the Department of the Taoiseach's Statement of Strategy 2015-2017.

2016 saw significant changes in the structure of the Department, arising from the formation of the new Government, the changed relationship between Government and the Oireachtas, and as a response to the new challenges posed by Brexit.

We continued to engage in national priority issues, as directed by the Taoiseach, such as jobs and unemployment, housing and homelessness, health, justice reform, social inclusion, rural development and Brexit.

In addition to our existing responsibilities, which are set out in this report, the Department was assigned new responsibilities in areas as diverse as the Citizens Assembly, the Creative Ireland programme, the EU Digital Single Market, Data Protection, the renewal of Dublin's North East Inner City and the establishment of several independent inquiries.

The Department continues to be centrally involved in the reform and renewal of the Civil Service, through the work of the Civil Service Management Board.

The year 2016 was a particularly important year for the Department of the Taoiseach, as it saw the successful culmination of several years of careful planning for the Centenary Commemoration of the 1916 Rising.

I would like to thank all the staff of the Department for their hard work, professionalism and commitment throughout the year.

Martin Fraser
Secretary General

Our Mission

Our purpose is to help the Taoiseach and the Government to develop a sustainable economy and a successful society, to pursue Ireland's interests abroad, to implement the Government's Programme and to build a better future for Ireland and all her citizens.

Civil Service Vision

To provide a world-class service to the State and to the people of Ireland



Strategic Priorities 2015-2017



1. SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Ensuring jobs and growth are at the heart of Government policy



2. A SUCCESSFUL SOCIETY

Ensuring Government policies and services support a socially inclusive and fair society



3. EUROPE

Ensuring that Ireland plays a full and effective role in all aspects of the European Union



4. PEACE

Helping to maintain peace and further enhance relationships on the island of Ireland and between Ireland and Britain



5. PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

Overseeing the full implementation of the Programme for Government and the Statement of Government Priorities



6. SERVICE

Providing excellent support services for the Taoiseach and Government



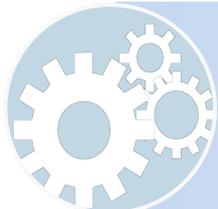
7. TRUST AND REFORM

Helping reform and restore trust in the institutions of the State



8. IRELAND IN A GLOBALISED WORLD

Working to protect our interests, maximise our influence and increase our prosperity in a globalised world



The Core Functions of the Department in 2016

- Delivering the Executive functions of the Taoiseach and the Government
- Providing the Government Secretariat
- Supporting the Taoiseach in carrying out his duties as Head of Government, including in relation to Oireachtas, Constitutional issues, Protocol, the European Council, the North/South Ministerial Council and the British-Irish Council
- Working with the Office of the President and with the Oireachtas
- Engaging with the formulation and implementation of Government policy, mainly through the system of Cabinet Committees, Senior Officials' Groups, the Programme for Government Office and the Parliamentary Liaison Unit
- the Office of the Taoiseach (as well as support for the Tánaiste)
- Support for Independent Ministers in Government
- the Office of the Government Chief Whip (who also has responsibility for the Central Statistics Office)
- Support for the Ministers of State assigned to the Department (with responsibility for Defence; for European Affairs, Data Protection and the EU Digital Single Market; and for Diaspora Affairs)
- the Government Press Office
- Providing briefing and advice for the Taoiseach on the full range of domestic policy issues and on international affairs (including through the work of the National Economic and Social Council)
- Supporting the Taoiseach and Government in the formulation and implementation of Ireland's EU, Northern Ireland and international policies, including coordination across the whole of Government
- Delivering support services through Protocol and Corporate Affairs Division (HR, Finance, IT and other services)



Highlights

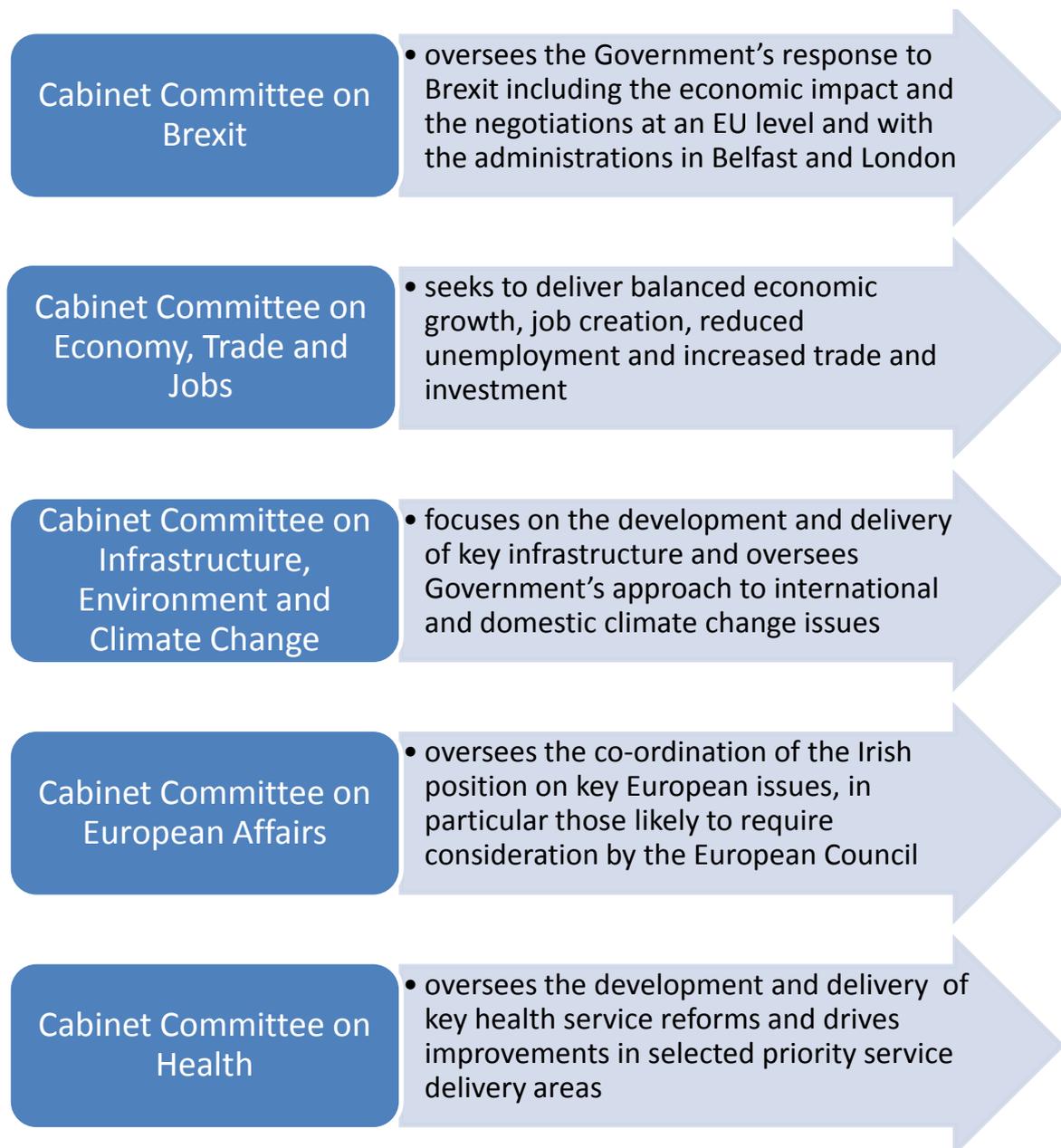
During 2016, the 190 staff of the Department of the Taoiseach dealt with:





The Government and Cabinet Committees

The Department provides the Secretariat to the Government. During 2016, the Government met 51 times and dealt with 850 Memoranda. Cabinet Committees continue to be central to the work of the Department in driving implementation of Government policy and effective cross-departmental collaboration. The Department provides the secretariat for Cabinet Committees and chairs the supporting Senior Officials' Groups. The Cabinet Committees were reconstituted following the establishment of a new Government in May, as follows:





The Government and Cabinet Committees

Cabinet Committee on Housing

- oversees the provision of affordable, quality and accessible housing, to increase housing construction and to work to end the housing shortage and homelessness crisis

Cabinet Committee on Justice Reform

- provides political oversight of the delivery of commitments in the 'Programme for a Partnership Government' to reform of the policing, justice and legal systems and related issues

Cabinet Committee on Social Policy and Public Service Reform

- oversees and co-ordinates in the areas of social inclusion, poverty reduction and service delivery
- supports the development and implementation of public service reform

Cabinet Committee on Regional and Rural Affairs

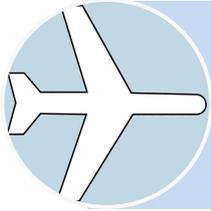
- promotes measures to ensure that the benefits of economic recovery are felt in every community, including through development of an Action Plan for Rural Development

Cabinet Committee on Arts, Irish, the Gaeltacht and the Islands

- seeks to promote the Irish language and support Gaeltacht communities and Irish-speaking households
- supports Arts, Culture and Heritage sectors specifically Culture 2025 and Creative Ireland

46

Cabinet Committee meetings held



State Visits and Events

During 2016, the Department organised, or assisted in organising, a number of notable events and inward official visits, including:

- Visit by Vice President of the United States, Mr. Joe Biden
- Visit by the Vice Chairman of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Ji Bingxuan
- Visit by the Prime Minister of Malta, Mr. Joseph Muscat
- Visits by French President François Hollande and the French Secretary of State for European Affairs, Mr. Harlem Désir
- Visit by President Anastasiades of Cyprus
- Visit by King Abdullah II of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
- Visit by the European Commission's Chief Brexit Negotiator, Michel Barnier

The Department also supported the Taoiseach and the Ministers of State as they represented and promoted Ireland at various meetings and engagements abroad.

Over the St. Patrick's Day period, the Taoiseach travelled to Washington DC and met with President Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, Speaker of the House of Representatives Paul Ryan and a number of other US political leaders. The Taoiseach also attended a series of official events in America to mark 1916 and the role of Irish-America in the Easter Rising. In a very rare honour, the Taoiseach planted an Irish Oak tree on the grounds of the United States Congress at Capitol Hill, at a centenary ceremony.

The Taoiseach also attended the World Economic Forum in Davos, and participated in trade and investment missions to Germany and the Netherlands which focused on increasing export markets, advancing trade opportunities and attracting investment. In November he travelled to Silicon Valley and New York to promote Ireland's attractiveness as a location for investment and trade and to communicate Ireland's priorities in the context of Brexit.

The Taoiseach travelled to Vatican City for a number of engagements including a private audience with Pope Francis.

He also attended seven European Council and other EU summit level meetings.

The Minister of State for the Diaspora and International Development travelled to Silicon Valley to address the Irish Network USA Annual Conference on the role of the Irish Diaspora.

The Minister of State for European Affairs, EU Digital Single Market and Data Protection continued to represent Ireland at the EU General Affairs Councils and undertook a strategic programme of engagements in EU Member States to outline the Government's position and priorities on Brexit.



1916 Commemorations

The Department was responsible for co-ordinating the 2016 Centenary State Commemoration Programme, a cross-government commitment to ensuring that 2016 was a year of rich, inclusive and diverse activities to mark the Centenary of 1916.

The Programme was an ambitious and wide-ranging national commemorative initiative, comprising seven strands, each with an extensive programme of events: State Ceremonial, Historical Reflection, An Teanga Bheo, Youth and Imagination, Cultural Expression, Community Participation, and Global and Diaspora.

Extensive collaboration was undertaken with Government Departments and Agencies, including the newly-established 2016 Project Office in the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces, the Office of Public Works, An Garda Síochána, Dublin City Council and private enterprise.

The Department took the lead in the organisation of a number of State ceremonial events including the Flag-Raising ceremony in Dublin Castle courtyard on 1st January. The Easter Sunday programme of events on 27th March commenced with a Wreath-Laying Ceremony in Kilmainham Gaol followed by the Ceremony at the GPO and a 4.5km parade showcasing military and emergency services with 3,500 personnel marching. The Department had overall responsibility for the ceremony and parade, to which 6,000 guests were invited. An estimated crowd of 250,000 lined the Parade route while 1.1 million people watched the parade on RTE, who also provided live feeds to BBC, CNN and SKY News. On Easter Sunday evening a State Reception was held in Dublin Castle with some 2,800 invited 1916 relatives and guests attending.

Other events co-ordinated by the Department included an Interfaith Ceremony at Glasnevin Remembrance Wall on 3rd April; a Battle of the Somme Commemoration on 9th July at the National War Memorial Gardens in Islandbridge; and the National Day of Commemoration on 10th July in the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham in honour of all Irish people who died in past wars or on service with the United Nations.

Creative Ireland, launched in December, is a new five-year whole-of-government initiative building on the successful 2016 Commemorations Programme. It aims to improve access to cultural and creative activity in every county in the country. The Creative Ireland programme is being led by a dedicated Project Office in the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and reports to the Cabinet Committee on Arts, Irish, the Gaeltacht and the Islands.



Strategic Priority 1 **Sustainable Economy**

Growth in the economy remains strong and equips Ireland to deal with coming challenges. The Department continued to support the Taoiseach and Government with a focus on policies that can contribute to continuing growth, job creation and increased trade and investment and to ensure that the benefits are shared across society, both in urban and in rural areas, taking account in particular of the economic challenge posed by Brexit.

The Cabinet Committee on Economy, Trade and Jobs continued its work to support sustainable economic growth and maintained a strong focus on competitiveness, including in response to reports from the National Competitiveness Council. It continued to drive implementation of the Action Plan for Jobs, with over 93% of measures for 2016 delivered as set out in Quarterly Reports. It also monitored progress under Regional Action Plans for Jobs, and measures to support SMEs, including those impacted by Brexit.

It oversaw implementation of Pathways to Work, supporting those without work back into the labour force. The rollout of JobPath has resulted in more regular and ongoing engagement with people who are unemployed, with 84,000 jobseekers referred to JobPath by the end of December. It also supported delivery of the National Skills Strategy and implementation of other measures to support growth, including Enterprise 2025 and Innovation 2020. The Department also supported cross Government engagement in the European Semester process, including preparation of Ireland's National Reform Programme.

The Government established a new Cabinet Committee on Regional and Rural Affairs which oversaw preparation of the Action Plan on Rural Development containing 276 actions to support economic and social progress in rural Ireland. There was also a specific focus on the National Broadband Plan and the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce Report and flood risk management measures. The eight Regional Action Plans for Jobs place a strong focus on stimulating regional growth ensuring that 70% of the 65,100 new jobs created in 2016 were outside Dublin.

A Labour Employer Economic Forum has been established to bring together representatives of employers and trade unions with Government to discuss economic, employment and labour market issues. The inaugural meeting took place in October and was chaired by the Taoiseach.

The Cabinet Committee on Infrastructure, Environment and Climate Action continued to support the delivery of key infrastructure and associated policies and to address the climate change challenge in pursuing a fair and achievable target for Ireland under the EU2030 Climate and Energy Framework. Initiatives and actions supported during 2016 included the Energy and Climate Framework, including the EU2030 Negotiations and the EU Emissions Trading System Reform and National Mitigation Plan, plans for the National Dialogue on Climate Change and the New ERA Portfolio Report.



Strategic Priority 2

A Successful Society

The Department supports the Taoiseach and Government through the relevant Cabinet Committees to advance policies and services that promote a fairer society and ensure that the recovery reaches everyone.

The Cabinet Committee on Housing oversaw the development and publication of the Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness which sets out 84 actions under five pillars to increase housing supply by 25,000 new homes every year by 2021 through an investment of €5.5 billion. Detailed quarterly progress reports are published on actions including specific measures to increase housing supply, move families out of homelessness and provide more social housing.

The Cabinet Committee on Social Policy and Public Service Reform continued to provide a basis for cross-Departmental co-ordination in areas of social policy and social inclusion. In the area of education, the Committee considered the new allocation model for Resource Teachers and the review of DEIS Education Inclusion Services. Other work advanced in 2016 included reviewing developments towards a new National Disability Inclusion Plan, new Childcare provisions, the development of the new Migration Integration Strategy and preparations for the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy.

The Cabinet Committee on Health continued to provide oversight of the development and delivery of key health service improvements in line with the commitments in the Programme for Government. The Cabinet Committee used the strengthened HSE's Performance and Accountability Framework to monitor performance in the health service and accountability for health expenditure. The Committee reviewed progress on implementation of the Action Plan on Waiting Lists, the Winter Initiative, the eHealth Strategy, and progress towards the establishment of the National Children's Hospital. The Committee also reviewed updates of the Nursing Home Support Scheme and Mental Health Services. An allocation of €500 million additional funding mid-year to the Department of Health was used for mental health services, disability services and an increase in home help hours.

The Department supported the Ministerial Taskforce established in 2016 to support the long-term economic and social regeneration of the North East Inner City and the work of Kieran Mulvey in preparing his report, setting out specific recommendations to support the area's regeneration.

The National Economic and Social Council (NESC) continued during 2016 to advise the Taoiseach on strategic issues for Ireland's economic, social and environmental development. The NESC Secretariat continued its work on providing policy assistance to several Departments.



Strategic Priority 3 **Europe**

The Department continues to support Ireland's standing as a respected and influential member of the European Union through developing a strategic approach to Ireland's engagement with the EU, including through bilateral engagement and alliance building; and by ensuring coherence across priority policy positions taken by Ireland in relation to EU matters.

The Department supported the Taoiseach in his role as a member of the European Council and his attendance at four European Councils and three additional Summit level events. The European Council's discussions dealt with the ongoing migration crisis in the Eastern and Central Mediterranean and in Europe, the negotiations and outcome of the UK referendum on leaving the EU, and the future of Europe.

The Department also coordinated six specific bilateral visits and meetings with EU leaders – PM Muscat, Malta; President Anastasiades, Cyprus; President Hollande, France; Chancellor Merkel, Germany; and Prime Minister Cameron and Prime Minister May, UK.

Promoting Ireland's interests in the European Union is of paramount importance as our economic wellbeing is intrinsically interlinked with it. The Department is coordinating with all relevant Departments/Agencies to ensure an effective whole-of-government approach to the Brexit negotiations that takes full account of the Government's negotiating priorities. The Government's preparation for the result of the UK Referendum on EU membership was extensive. Contingency work was done prior to the Referendum and, since the result, intensified analysis and scenario planning has been carried out across all key sectors. There has also been extensive engagement and consultation including through the All-Island Civic Dialogue process.

Following the UK referendum result, significant organisational change was implemented, including the movement of a considerable amount of EU related functions and resources back to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and a restructuring within the Department of the Taoiseach to create a new International, EU and Northern Ireland Division. This Division supports a new Cabinet Committee to oversee the overall Government response to Brexit, as well as the Cabinet Committee on European Affairs.

The Department also supported the Minister of State for European Affairs, the EU Digital Single Market and Data Protection both at the European Council and at eight General Affairs Council meetings which considered preparatory work for European Councils and enlargement of the Multiannual Financial Framework. The Taoiseach, along with 15 other EU leaders, wrote to the President of the European Council in December, to reaffirm the importance of the Digital Single Market and a new Interdepartmental Committee, chaired by the Minister of State, has been established to coordinate and oversee its implementation in Ireland.



Strategic Priority 4 **Peace**

The Department continued to support the work of the Taoiseach and Government in helping to maintain peace and manage relationships on the island of Ireland and between Britain and Ireland.

The Irish and British Governments continue to work closely together to support and encourage political stability in the Northern Ireland Executive. There has been steady progress, overseen by quarterly review meetings, on the implementation of the Stormont House Agreement.

The Taoiseach met Prime Minister Cameron in January to discuss political, economic and security developments in Northern Ireland. Both Governments confirmed their support for the full implementation of the Good Friday and St. Andrew's Agreements and reviewed progress under the UK/Ireland Joint Work Programme.

The Taoiseach also met with Prime Minister May in July to discuss a range of mutual interests in light of the UK/EU Referendum and also the current situation in Northern Ireland and the UK/Ireland Joint Work Programme.

For the fifth consecutive year the Taoiseach attended and laid a wreath at the Remembrance Sunday ceremonies in Enniskillen commemorating those from all traditions who gave their lives in the First World War.

In June the Taoiseach attended the British Irish Council Summit hosted by Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, with whom he also had a bilateral meeting. The theme of the Summit was the issue of unpaid carers. The Taoiseach also attended an extraordinary meeting of the Council in July following the result of the UK/EU Referendum to discuss its implications for Member Administrations. A further summit in Cardiff in November focused on emerging impacts of Brexit for Members.

In July the Taoiseach chaired the 22nd plenary meeting of the North South Ministerial Council in Dublin Castle, at which it was agreed that the Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive would work together to ensure that the benefits of North South co-operation are protected and maintained following the UK/EU Referendum. The Taoiseach also attended a further plenary meeting of the North South Ministerial Council in November in Armagh, at which a set of principles governing a common approach to issues arising from Brexit was agreed.

The All-Island Civic Dialogue's inaugural meeting, hosted by the Taoiseach in November, was the first in a series of sessions to discuss both the challenges and opportunities arising from Brexit. Over 300 representatives from the island of Ireland attended and three further sectoral meetings were held in 2016 focusing on further education and training, agri-food, and education and research.



Strategic Priority 5 **Programme for Government**

The Programme for Government office in the Department supports the Taoiseach in driving progress on commitments in the new Programme for a Partnership Government, which was published in May. The office monitors the implementation of these commitments across all Departments and reports to Government on a regular basis.

In December, the Government published its first Progress Report on the Programme, setting out the progress made to date across all Departments and including the measures announced under Budget 2017. All Departments finalised their new three-year Statements of Strategy setting out their key objectives and priorities reflecting the Programme for Government commitments for which they are responsible, including new Human Rights objectives under the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014.

The Department continued to progress implementation of the commitments under its own responsibility, mainly focused on Oireachtas and Constitutional reform. A number of Dáil reforms were implemented arising from the Report of the All-Party Oireachtas Sub-Committee on Dáil Reform in May including a new cross party Business Committee giving more power to parliament to plan its own business including the weekly agenda for the Dáil, a new Budget Oversight Committee to enhance the role of the Oireachtas in the budgetary process, additional time for questions, new rules facilitating multiple technical groups and the more family friendly grouping of votes on Thursdays. For the first time the election of the Ceann Comhairle was by secret ballot and the proportionate allocation of Oireachtas Committee Chairs was carried out under the d'Hondt system.

The Department established a Parliamentary Liaison Unit to facilitate the enhanced relationship between the Government and the Oireachtas. It provides support to Ministers and their Departments on Oireachtas matters, with a particular emphasis on assisting with Private Members' Business.

The Citizens' Assembly was established in July. It has a membership of 99 citizens and an independent Chairperson, Supreme Court Judge, Justice Mary Laffoy. The Assembly held its inaugural meeting in October and meets monthly to consider a number of key issues: the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution; how we best respond to the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population; fixed term parliaments; the manner in which referenda are held; and how the State can make Ireland a leader in tackling climate change. It will report directly to the Houses of the Oireachtas and its first report and recommendation will be on the Eighth Amendment.



Strategic Priority 6 **Service**

The Department provided a wide range of support services to the Taoiseach, the Government and members of the public, as well as internal support services in 2016. This included work associated with Government meetings, Parliamentary Questions, briefings, speeches, Freedom of Information requests, Internal Audit, tours of Government Buildings, responding to representations from the public, organising events and responding to media queries. The Department also provided administrative support to two Commissions of Investigation and the Citizens' Assembly throughout the year.

During 2016, Corporate Affairs Division played an active part in the Department's preparations for, and planning of, the 2016 Commemorations events; provided administrative support during the change of Government; and implemented significant Departmental restructuring.

The Department's HR Unit continued to provide human resource services to employees and managers in the Department in collaboration with PeoplePoint and the Payroll Shared Services Centre. The HR Unit also implemented a Learning and Development Programme designed to support employees in their roles, their career development and business needs. A Mentoring Programme for Clerical Officers was initiated and a series of personal effectiveness courses were run. There was continued emphasis on performance management (including through focused induction and probation processes) and a 97% PMDS compliance rate was achieved for 2016.

The Department's Management Services Unit completed a number of maintenance projects in 2016 and dealt with 1,638 helpdesk calls. The Department's Information Management Support Unit administered the transfer of 1,578 files or file parts in respect of the year 1986 to the National Archives in line with the National Archives Act.

The Department's Finance Unit continued to deliver financial and procurement support services to the Department in close consultation with the Office of Government Procurement. An updated Policy on Procurement and Payments to Suppliers was also published on the Department's website. The Finance Unit also actively supported the cross-Civil Service Financial Management Shared Services Project throughout the year.

Projects completed by the Department's ICT Unit during 2016 included establishing connectivity to the Government Cloud Infrastructure and upgrades/enhancements to various business systems and databases, including the eCabinet; PMDS; FOI; Protocol; and Press Office databases. 5,916 helpdesk calls were completed and a number of technology upgrades carried out, including the implementation of an enhanced backup solution.



Strategic Priority 7 **Trust and Reform**

Throughout 2016, the Department provided support to the Taoiseach and Government in reforming and restoring trust in the institutions of the State.

Following a process of collaboration with a range of stakeholders, including public submissions, the Department prepared and published its 2016 National Risk Assessment. It identifies 28 strategic risks, both financial and non-financial, which Ireland faces, with a view to stimulating public debate on those risks and the appropriate responses.

The Department supported the work of the Civil Service Management Board, chaired by the Secretary General, which met monthly to oversee implementation of the Civil Service Renewal Plan. Progress included new Corporate Governance departmental frameworks, further open recruitment campaigns and new initiatives developed to improve gender balance in the Civil Service, a new mobility scheme for executive and clerical officers, a new ratings format for performance management of staff and a new performance review process for Secretaries General and Assistant Secretaries, the first review under the programme of organisational capability reviews undertaken in the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, and the second annual Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Awards.

A progress report was published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in July and all 25 actions have now been initiated. The Department also provided support to the Civil Service Accountability Board, which is chaired by the Taoiseach and meets quarterly.

Public Service Reform measures continued to be supported during 2016 through the work of the Cabinet Committee on Social Policy and Public Service Reform. The Department also continued to roll out new requirements in relation to Freedom of Information, protected disclosures and lobbying.

The Cabinet Committee on Justice Reform oversaw a number of reform measures to the policing, justice and legal system, including the development of the Garda Síochána's five year Reform and High Level Workforce Plan, transfer of responsibility for senior Garda appointments from the Government to the Policing Authority and publication of the General Scheme of a Bill to reform the judicial appointments system.

The Department received no disclosures from its employees or former employees in 2016 under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014.



Strategic Priority 8 **Ireland in a Globalised World**

The Department works with other Departments to promote Ireland's interests globally and to maximise our influence politically and economically. The Department supported the Taoiseach in driving increased investment, trade and jobs, strengthening Ireland's bilateral and political relations and developing shared responses to global and regional challenges including through his programme of international visits and engagements.

The Government attaches great importance to engaging with those who have left Ireland and with those of Irish Heritage globally. The Department supports the work of an Interdepartmental Committee on diaspora policy chaired by the Minister of State for the Diaspora and International Development.

In 2016 funding was provided to 105 local and community organisations for projects and initiatives under the Local Diaspora Engagement Fund. 24 local Authorities were also funded to enable them to develop strategies for diaspora engagement at local and community levels.

The Department also supported the Ireland's Edge Conference at the Other Voices festival in Dingle, Co. Kerry which looked at how to position Ireland as a destination for diaspora who are considering returning home to work and new opportunities for the diaspora in creative areas, performance and the arts.

A bid for the Rugby World Cup 2023 was launched in November. The bid is supported by both Governments on the island of Ireland. The Department of the Taoiseach chairs the Inter-Departmental/Agency Group which has been established to co-ordinate the input of the public sector in support of the bid.

The Department also supported the Minister of State for European Affairs, the EU Digital Single Market and Data Protection in overseeing implementation of the Government's roadmap to ensure Ireland's approach to data protection in the digital economy is best-in-class globally. The Department established a small Data Protection Unit to lead on this. In 2016 progress continued on the Government Data Forum, establishment of an Inter-Departmental committee on Data Related issues and promotion of awareness of the new European General Data Protection Regulation.

During 2016 the Taoiseach undertook an extensive series of engagements to represent and promote Ireland abroad and at home. In January and November respectively trade and investment missions to Germany, the Netherlands, Silicon Valley and New York were held to promote Ireland and advance trade opportunities. The Taoiseach also travelled to Washington DC for St. Patrick's Day to attend a series of events with President Obama and Vice-President Biden. Visits to Prime Minister Cameron in January and Prime Minister May in July, as well as a series of bilateral visits and meetings with EU leaders, were part of a broader consultation and engagement campaign focussed on Brexit.



Strategic Priorities 2016-2019

Following the decision of the Taoiseach to hold a general election in February and the subsequent formation of the new Government, a new Statement of Strategy was prepared for the Department. To support the work of the Taoiseach and Government six strategic priorities have been identified in the Department's Strategy Statement 2016 – 2019. These will be reported on in the 2017 Annual Report.

- A. SUPPORT FOR THE TAOISEACH AND GOVERNMENT**
- B. SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY**
- C. A BETTER SOCIETY**
- D. STRONG RELATIONSHIPS IN EUROPE AND THE WORLD**
- E. BREXIT**
- F. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**



Department of the Taoiseach Expenditure for the year 2016

2016 Provisional Outturn €000

ADMINISTRATION

Salaries, Wages and Allowances	11,866
Travel and Subsistence	473
Training and Development and Incidental Expenses	937
Postal and Telecommunications	252
Office Machinery & Office Supplies	1241
Offices Premises Expenses	280
Consultancy Services	0
Total Administration	15,049

OTHER SERVICES

National Economic and Social Development Office Grant	1,822
Tribunals of Inquiry	1,086
EU Engagement	276
Irish Personnel in EU and International Institutions	1,553
Commissions of Investigation	2,489
Data Protection	248
Diaspora Affairs	825

Gross Total	23,348
--------------------	---------------

Less Appropriations-in-Aid	(763)
----------------------------	-------

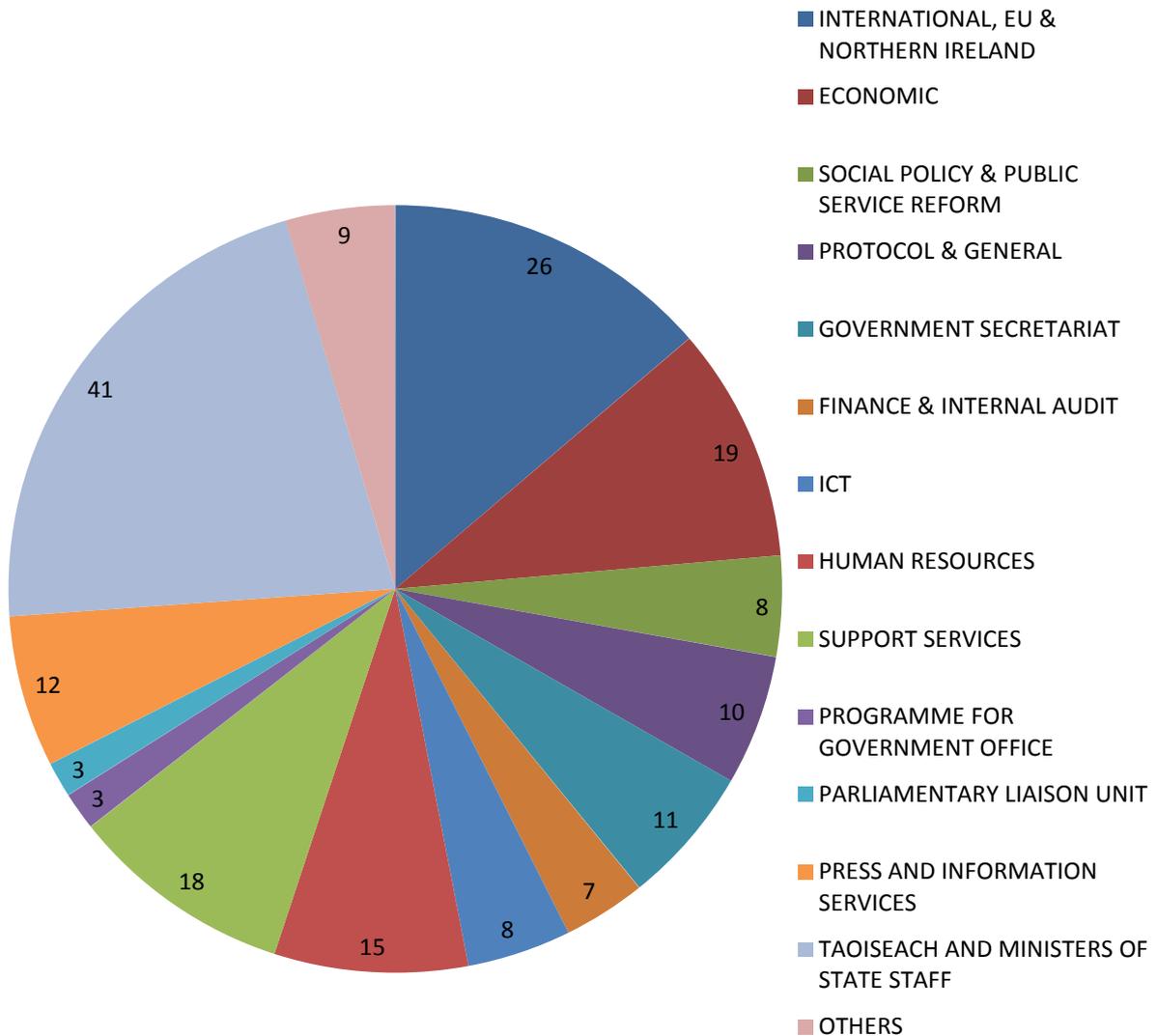
Net Total	22,585
------------------	---------------

(Interest paid in 2016 because of late payments totalled €792)



Staffing

Staff in the Department *



*There were 190 whole-time-equivalent staff working in the Department at end 2016



Overview of Energy Usage in 2016

Energy usage in the Government Buildings complex, including the Department of the Taoiseach, is administered by the Houses of the Oireachtas. In recent years there have been some significant changes in the way energy services are provided and in the way service charges are apportioned among the different tenants of the complex.

Energy usage is incurred for lighting, heating, air conditioning, hot water, office and IT equipment, and catering equipment. Work is ongoing in the Department to decrease our electricity usage. Measures taken during 2016 included the installation of LED light bulbs throughout the building.

The Department is currently reviewing energy usage and energy reporting in collaboration with the Houses of the Oireachtas and, as a result, specific data on energy usage in 2016 is not available at time of publication of this Report. This data will be published on the Department's website as soon as it becomes available.