



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth

Autism Innovation Strategy Consultation Paper



This is an Easy to Read version of the paper

April 2022



What is this paper about?



This paper is about a new plan for autism supports in Ireland.

The plan is called the Autism Innovation Strategy.



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth

This paper was put together by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.



The Department wants to talk to the public about the Strategy.

This is called a Public Consultation.



We have key questions which we would like you to answer.

Your answers will help us when we put the Strategy together.

The Minister's Vision





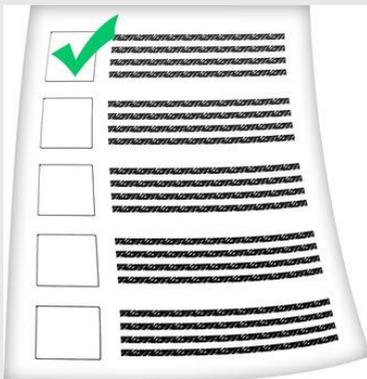
The Minister says



The Minister of State with responsibility for Disability is Anne Rabbitte, T.D.



In 2021, the Minister said that the Government would put together a strategy for autism in Ireland.



This strategy will have clear actions.

These actions will look at the challenges and barriers faced by people with autism across Ireland.



The Minister and Government think the public must learn and talk about autism.

They must raise awareness.



The Minister says



It is important that we listen to new ideas.
This is called innovation.



People with autism should have control over their
lives and the same rights as everyone else.
This is called empowerment.



We will work together on these three main ideas -
raise awareness, innovation, and empowerment.



The Autism Innovation Strategy will work with other
important plans and policies.
For example, the National Disability Inclusion
Strategy.



The Minister says



The Minister would like people with autism to take part in the Strategy from the start.

This means helping to put the Strategy together and then making sure it is put into action.



The Minister invites you to give your views on the first write up of the Strategy.

This is called a draft.



The Minister welcomes views from people with autism, their families, friends, and supporters.

The Strategy is a chance for Ireland to show the world how to have a more autism-aware society.



The Minister looks forward to working with you to make Ireland a more autism-friendly country.

Background Information





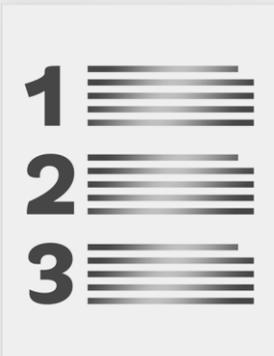
Background Information



In Ireland, many people with autism face challenges throughout their lives.



The Government promised to put the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into action.



The Autism Innovation Strategy will have actions so people with autism in Ireland can lead their best lives.



Government departments must work together on any gaps in services and supports for people with autism and their families.



Background Information



There are measures now to support the health and education needs of people with autism.



The HSE are putting the actions in place from a new report.

This report says how services can be made better for people with autism.



The HSE is paying for ASIAM's Autism Information Line.

This phone line gives support and advice.



The State is working to make sure that all children can get the right education supports.



Background Information



There are more special classes for children with autism, and a grant for children learning at home.



Colleges and universities are designing spaces where students with autism can have a break. For example, spaces with low lights, music, sensory equipment, or projectors.



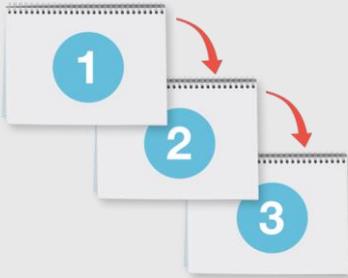
We will talk to the public to make sure the Strategy brings good changes in the lives of people with autism in Ireland.

Putting the Autism Innovation Strategy together



1

Step 1 – Public Consultation



There are a number of steps to put the Autism Innovation Strategy together.



Step 1 is the Public Consultation.
This is where we get people's views and ideas.



Anyone interested in the Strategy can answer the questions in this consultation paper.

You can find an answer form on our website:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/consultation/9a181-public-consultation-on-the-autism-innovation-strategy/>



Everyone is invited to give their views on supports and services now.

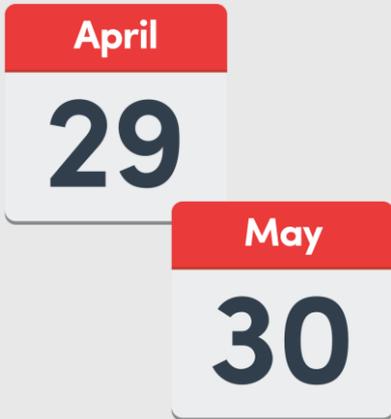
You can say what needs to change and what you think should be in the Strategy.

1

Step 1 – Public Consultation



What you say will help us to put the Autism Innovation Strategy together.

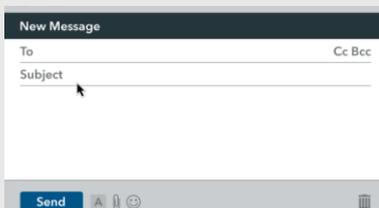


The Public Consultation will run from 29th April to 30th May.



If you have any questions about the Public Consultation, send them to

Autism_Strategy@equality.gov.ie



Put 'Autism Innovation Strategy Consultation Query' at the top of the email.

2

Step 2 – Strategy Oversight and Advisory Group



Shortly after the Public Consultation, we will ask people if they are interested in joining a group.



This group is called the Strategy Oversight and Advisory Group.



The Group's main job will be to check if the Strategy is put into action.



This Group will be Chaired by the Minister.

2

Step 2 – Strategy Oversight and Advisory Group



You can tell us if you want to join the group.
This is called an Expression of Interest.

We will let you know more details about making an Expression of Interest shortly.

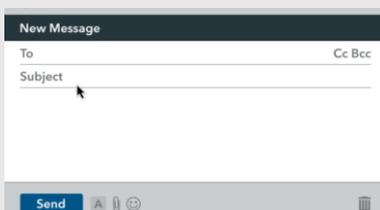


We want to have people with experience of living with autism on the group.



If you have any questions about making an Expression of Interest, send them to

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Put 'Autism Innovation Strategy EoI Query' at the top of the email.

3

Step 3 – Next Steps

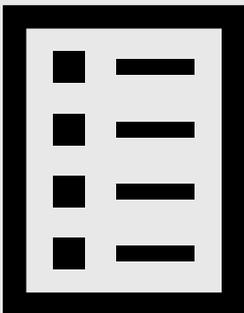


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Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, will work with other government departments to write the first draft of the Strategy.



We will make sure that all the views and ideas from the public consultation are heard.



Once we have finished the first consultation on the Autism Innovation Strategy, there will be a second consultation to finish the Strategy.



This will make sure that everyone has a chance to have their say on the actions.

The Questions

Questions



1. What do you think about it?

- Good
- Bad
- Not sure





Topic 1: Innovation



The Autism Innovation Strategy wants to find new and different ways to support people with autism to have a better life.



New ways of working are very important in the areas of education, employment, health, and housing.



We need to think differently about services and supports.

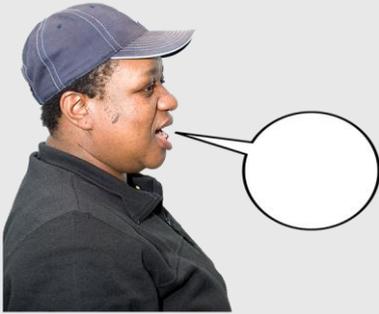


Do you have examples of new and different ways of working that we could use in Ireland?

Would this make it easier for people with autism to use services and supports?



Topic 1: Empowerment



Empowerment means that people with autism can make their own choices and be in control of their lives.



People with autism and their families must have a say in the plans, policies, and decisions that affect them.



Empowerment is an important part of the Autism Innovation Strategy.

This will make sure that people with autism can take full part in their communities and in Irish Society.



Do you have examples of good ways to support the empowerment of people with autism?

Could these be used in Ireland and be part of the Strategy?



Topic 1: Raise Awareness



In Ireland, we talked about and became more aware of autism in the last few years.



Not all people with autism are the same or have the same support needs.

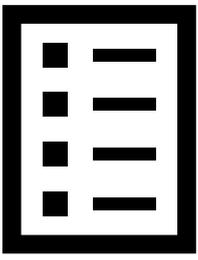


If we raise awareness then we can help people to understand the barriers and challenges that people with autism face.



Do you have examples of good ways to raise awareness?

Could these be part of the Strategy and used in Ireland?



Topic 2: Writing the Strategy



The aim of the Autism Innovation Strategy is to have clear actions.

The Government will achieve these within 18 months.



These actions should make a big difference to as many people as possible.



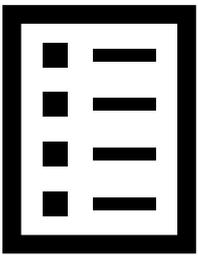
We want the actions to give us a more equal society.

We want everyone to have the same rights.



We will think about how to raise awareness.

We will think about innovation and empowerment.



Topic 2: Writing the Strategy

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We also want to look at four areas called pillars.



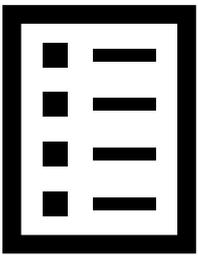
1. A society that understands and supports people with autism.



2. Public services that everyone can use.



3. Communities that everyone can be part of.



Topic 2: Writing the Strategy



4. Building the skills of people with autism so they can speak up for themselves and make their own choices and decisions.



What are the main challenges and barriers that the Strategy should focus on for the next 12 to 18 months?



Do you have ideas for actions in the Strategy to deal with these challenges and barriers?



Topic 3: Working with other policies and plans



The Autism Innovation Strategy will work with other policies and plans for Ireland.

One is the National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017 to 2022.



The other is the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015 to 2024.



Think about the challenges or barriers that people with autism face in Ireland?

How can the policies we have now be stronger at dealing with these?



What new actions would build on work under the National Disability Inclusion Strategy and the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities?

Topic 4: The words we use



People use different words to talk about autism.
Different words mean different things to people and groups across Ireland and the world.



The Autism Innovation Strategy will use the words that people with autism in Ireland prefer.



In this paper, we have used the words autism and people with autism.
The Public Consultation will help us to agree on the best words to use in the future.



What words should be used in the Autism Innovation Strategy to talk about autism and people with autism?



More information



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
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Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth

This information was put together by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.



ACE Communication helped with this Easy to Read information.

Experts by Experience helped to put this booklet together.



You can get more information:

Autism_Strategy@equality.gov.ie