



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

Ministerial Brief Part a

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Minister for Social Protection, Community &
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Minister,

Firstly, on behalf of myself, the Management Board and staff, I would like to welcome you to the Department and to congratulate you on your appointment as Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

You are joining the Department during an extraordinary period in our country's history. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic over the last number of months has been challenging for all sectors of public service. Given the unprecedented demand for income supports, this Department has had to respond at a pace and a scale that is unequalled in any sector except the Health service. This briefing pack could, therefore, have been dominated by material dealing with Covid-19 related issues. However the core work of the Department and the services that it provides to the people of this country are what will engage you and the Government in the years ahead. For that reason the brief is centred on ongoing policy and service challenges rather than those that relate specifically to Covid-19. Nevertheless you will get a sense throughout this document of how the department and staff have risen to the challenge posed by Covid-19.

This brief sets out the main areas of responsibility of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

The brief is divided into two parts:

- **Part A** provides a high level overview of the Department's activities covering our policy responsibilities and objectives, our budget and finances, the services we deliver, and our organisational structure. It also highlights some topical issues which may require your early attention.
- **Part B** is the more detailed part of the brief including material covering the delivery of schemes and services; our compliance and anti-fraud strategy; corporate functions; and bodies under the aegis of the Department.

As is evident from the brief, the Department plays a key role in three of the major policy domains of any Government – the (re)distribution of income to assist social cohesion and equity of economic outcomes, the efficient operation of the supply side of the labour market to support economic activity and employment, and, the specification of employment rights and conditions to protect workers while supporting a flexible and effective enterprise sector.

In addition to these policy areas, the Department also holds direct line responsibility for very significant service operations. It is the largest payment organisation in the State, it operates the public employment service, it operates the General Registration Service (Births, deaths, marriages/civil partnerships) and it directly funds and oversees a wide range of employment programmes, citizen advisory services and pensions regulation. Approximately 80 million individual payments are made to Social Welfare recipients each year. Given the breadth and scale of its operations, the Department touches, in one way or another, on the lives of every person in the State and, with almost 6,200 permanent staff directly employed, is the second largest employer in the Civil Service (after Revenue).

This brief aims to give you an introduction to the Department which I hope will be helpful to you in the initial weeks. If there are any aspects of the Department's operations on which you would like to have more detail, I would be happy to arrange a more comprehensive briefing for you.

Finally, I wish you well in the role and can assure you that all of the management team and staff look forward to working with you over the coming months to develop and implement your policy and service agenda.

John McKeon
Secretary General

The Department's Mission

Our Mission:

To promote active participation and inclusion in society through the provision of income supports, employment services and related other services.

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

Our main functions are to:

1. advise Government and formulate appropriate social protection , social inclusion and employment rights policies
2. design, develop and deliver effective and cost efficient income supports, activation and employment services, advice to customers and other related services
3. work towards providing seamless delivery of services in conjunction with other departments, agencies and bodies
4. control fraud and abuse within the social protection system.

Scale of the Department's Business

The Department serves a wide and diverse group of customers including families, unemployed people, people with illnesses and disabilities, carers and older people. The Department's remit also requires a significant level of engagement with employers including the provision of a range of employment services to employers.

The Department administers over 70 separate schemes and services. Key services include:

- payment of a wide range of social insurance and social assistance income supports such as pensions, jobseeker payments, illness benefit, disability payments, carer's payments and supplementary welfare allowance, in addition to the universal payment of child benefit;
- through Intreo, the integration of employment and benefit payment services to ensure that the payment of income supports to people who do not have a job is directly linked to the important task of supporting people in their pursuit of employment, as well as training and education opportunities, in order to improve their job prospects;
- delivery of a range of employer services including recruitment services, online publication of job vacancies, employment supports (e.g. wage subsidy schemes available to people with disabilities) and redundancy and insolvency payments;
- a range of community services to promote social inclusion and provide a pathway to employment for those who are unemployed;
- through the Pensions Authority the regulation of private pension arrangements.

Our Strategic Objectives

As illustrated on the chart on the next page, the Department's policy formulation and service delivery is informed by the values of public service, customer focus, total professionalism, engaged staff and innovation as well as three key objectives:

1: Put the Client at the Centre of Policy and Service Delivery

2: Drive Cost Efficiency and Effectiveness

3: Develop Staff, Structures and Processes

The current **Statement of Strategy** sets out high-level strategies for these objectives, the outcomes to be achieved and the performance indicators to be used to measure their achievement.

A copy of the Statement of Strategy is being provided under separate cover. This Statement of Strategy will be updated in the coming months to reflect your policy and service priorities.

Our Mission, Strategic Objective and Values

The Department's Mission is:

To promote active participation and inclusion in society through the framework of employment rights and the provision of income supports, employment services and other services.



The Department's overall objective for 2017 to 2020 is:

To continue putting our clients at the centre of all our operations, providing an efficient and effective service and to continue developing our staff, structures and processes.

- 01** Put the Client at the Centre of Policy and Service Delivery
- 02** Drive Cost, Efficiency and Effectiveness
- 03** Develop Staff Structures and Processes

We Value

Public Service	We are dedicated to serving the people of Ireland in an efficient and impartial manner.
Customer Focus	We are totally committed to the positive difference we can make to our customers' lives and Irish society.
Total Professionalism	We are proud of our professionalism and commitment to quality in everything we do.
Engaged staff	We believe that our effectiveness as an organisation is dependent on a highly skilled and engaged workforce.
innovation	We believe that having the attitude and environment to adapt and innovate is core to our future success.



Looking Ahead – Policy Direction

50 key references/commitments in the Programme for Government relating to this Department are set out in Table A1 at the end of this document.

Future policy direction will also be informed by a number of important documents published recently. As will be seen most of the commitments in the Programme for Government are closely aligned with or reflect the measures proposed in these documents, which include:

Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020 - 2025

The [Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020 - 2025](#) was published in January 2020 and sets out the ambition for Ireland to become one of the most socially inclusive States in the EU. The Roadmap synthesises 66 key commitments to achieve seven high level goals across a number of policy domains/Departments and can, in particular, be considered to set the agenda for policy development within this Department.

The seven high level goals are to:

1. Extend employment opportunities to all who can work
2. Ensure work pays – fair pay, fair conditions for workers
3. Provide income security for older people
4. Support families – reduce child poverty
5. Reduce poverty among people with disabilities
6. Build inclusive communities – encourage active citizenship
7. Ensure that all people have access to quality services

Through delivering on these goals the Roadmap aims to reduce the number of people in consistent poverty in Ireland to 2% or less and to position Ireland within the top five countries in the EU under a number of leading social inclusion measures.

A Social Inclusion Roadmap Steering Group, to be chaired by the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection, has been established to monitor and oversee the implementation and progression of the Roadmap. There is a commitment to a mid-term review. This group is comprised of senior representatives from responsible Departments and will include two external members – Sr. Bernadette MacMahon from the Vincentian Partnership for Justice and Tricia Kielthy from the Society of St Vincent de Paul.

Roadmap for Pensions Reform 2018-2023

The [Roadmap for Pension Reform 2018 - 2023](#) was published in February 2018 and details specific measures presented under six strands. These measures are intended to improve pensions adequacy and sustainability, to modernise our pension system and to target resources at those most in need. The six strands are:

- Strand 1: Reform of the State Pension - including the 'Total Contributions Approach'
- Strand 2: Building Retirement Readiness - A New Automatic Enrolment Savings System
- Strand 3: Improving Governance and Regulation - including the EU Pensions Directive 'IORP II'
- Strand 4: Measures to Support the Operation of Defined Benefit Schemes
- Strand 5: Public Service Pensions Reform
- Strand 6: Supporting Fuller Working Lives

Pathways to Work – The National Employment Services Strategy

Against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic and rising unemployment, work has commenced in the Department to develop a revised *Pathways to Work* strategy, covering the period 2020-2025.

This work will be informed by inputs from the Labour Market Advisory Council and by Irish and International research evidence on the services and programmes that are most effective in supporting people make the transition from unemployment to employment.

Generally, and in rough order of effectiveness, these programmes fall into seven categories:

- Job search assistance and advice services (e.g. Intreo, Local employment services, JobPath)
- Work placement/experience programmes (e.g. The Youth Employment Support Scheme)
- Recruitment subsidies (e.g. Jobsplus, the Wage Subsidy Scheme)
- Specific skills training programmes (e.g. Courses provided by ETBs/Solas)
- Enterprise support/self-employment schemes (e.g. Back to Work Enterprise Allowance Scheme)
- Further/advanced education supports and services (e.g. Back to Education Allowance Scheme)
- State employment schemes (e.g. Community Employment, Tús)

In addition to these schemes for unemployed people, job retention schemes (to prevent labour shedding¹ and to promote job sharing as an alternative to full lay-offs) and in-work income supports are recognised as playing a key role in reducing unemployment and promoting re-employment.

Actuarial Review of the Social Insurance Fund

The Minister is legally required to undertake an Actuarial Review of the Social Insurance Fund (SIF) every five years. The fourth Actuarial Review, as at 31 December 2015, was published in October 2017.

The review found that given demographic projections (population ageing) and the expansion in scheme coverage (services and population cohorts) that the fund will enter deficit during the early 2020s and continue in deficit thereafter, accumulating a total deficit of over €335Bn in present value terms (over €400Bn gross) over the next 50 years, with the annual deficit growing to 3% of projected GDP by 2055. The report also found that if the four main benefits (pensions, illness, invalidity and unemployment) were to be fully funded,

¹ Employers laying employees off to reduce costs and protect profits

then the average social insurance contribution rate would need to more than double immediately, from an average of about 9% (across all contribution classes) to over 18%. The required contribution rate (employer and employee) to fund pensions alone is estimated at 15.5%.

These findings have implications for the further development of all social insurance schemes and, in particular, for pensions policy. Preparations are underway to tender for an updated review to inform future policy direction.

Legislative Agenda for the Remainder of the Year

Attributing paid PRSI contributions and putting Covid-PUP on a discrete statutory basis

The previous Government decided to provide employees who were temporarily laid off as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic with an entitlement to paid PRSI contributions for the duration of the emergency. A General Scheme has been prepared. Attribution of PRSI contributions will apply to people on the Covid Pandemic Unemployment Payment, the Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme or Jobseeker's Benefit (as a result of the public health crisis). The contributions are to be awarded at the same class as the people concerned where paying immediately before they were laid-off.

Retirement Age

The *Social Welfare and Pensions Act 2011* provided that State pension age will be increased gradually to 68 years. If the retirement age is to stay at 66, this will require primary legislation.

Budget Bill

Drafting of the Budget Bill begins immediately after the Budget announcement annually and it must be enacted by the end of the year to enable increases in payments, or other measures (e.g. PRSI changes), which are to be implemented in January.

Parent's Benefit

If parent's leave and benefit is increased from two weeks it will require amendments to the Social Welfare (Consolidation) Act 2005 to provide additional week(s) benefit to self-employed people.

Pensions Indexation

The National Pensions Roadmap and the Roadmap for Social Inclusion provided for annual increases in the State Pension to be benchmarked at 34% of earnings and future increases linked to earnings and prices. Legislative change will be required to provide for this approach on a statutory basis.

Key Current Issues

Impact of Covid-19

The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, and the essential public health measures to contain its spread, saw the largest monthly increase in the unemployment rate in the history of the State.

In response to the economic and financial challenges posed by Covid-19 the Government, through this Department, took a number of measures:

- introduced an enhanced rate of Illness Benefit for people diagnosed with, or medically advised to self-isolate as a probable case of Covid-19
- introduced the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (Covid-PUP) and the Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS), the latter funded by this Department but administered by Revenue
- waived 'waiting days' for the Covid-19 Illness Benefit and for jobseeker payments
- extended the fuel allowance season by four weeks
- moved social welfare payments to a fortnightly rather than a weekly payment cycle

- extended the period for which payments can be held at post offices to 90 days and arrangements with An Post to enable nominated agents collect payments where necessary
- simplified the application process for rent supplement (30% increase in payees)
- introduced procedures to help one parent families where there was difficulties with maintenance payments
- temporarily suspended part of the *Redundancy Payments Acts* to prevent mass redundancies in businesses that may recover
- removed the obligation to attend a registration office in person to register a birth or a death for the duration of the public health crisis.

The impact of Covid-19 on demand for these services was both enormous and immediate. So far, in response to the Covid-19 crisis, the staff of the Department have processed over 1.2m claims from over 730,000 people. This is equivalent to over six years' worth of jobseeker claims.

People who lost their jobs as a result of the public health crisis were put into payment quickly. The Covid-PUP scheme was designed, developed and implemented in a matter of days.

To achieve this level of throughput, all non-essential work was suspended and staff were redeployed to processing Covid-19 claims. Staff are now, gradually, moving back to their normal roles and in many cases are working from home.

The Government made a number of subsequent amendments to the measures outlined above:

- The PUP payment rate is to be recalibrated from the first payment week in July – people whose previous earnings were less than €200 per week are to be placed on a reduced rate of €203 per week.

- TWSS payments can now be made in respect of people who were on maternity, paternity or illness related leave immediately prior to the onset of Covid-19
- These measures have been extended to August 2020.

The question of how the PUP and TWSS will evolve is to be considered during July.

Implications of Brexit

The main objective of the Department in relation to Brexit is to ensure that the reciprocity of social welfare rights and entitlements which currently exist for Irish and British citizens within the Common Travel Area, are safeguarded and maintained. Under the [Common Travel Area](#), Irish citizens and British citizens in each other's jurisdiction have the right to access social security benefits on the same basis as citizens of that state. This includes reciprocal arrangements for Social Insurance schemes, Social Assistance schemes and Child Benefit.

Current Arrangements

The operation of the current arrangements for social security between Ireland and the UK, and between the EU27 and the UK, has not changed. All social welfare payments made by DEASP, including pensions and Child Benefit, continue to be paid as normal.

Arrangements Post-Brexit

On 1st February 2019, a social security convention agreed between Ireland and the UK was signed at official level.

Under the terms of the agreement, all existing arrangements regarding Social Insurance entitlements will be maintained in Ireland and the UK. This means that Irish citizens living in Ireland maintain the right to benefit from Social Insurance contributions made when working in the UK and to access Social Insurance payments if living in the UK and vice versa.

Operational Challenges

Given the scale of the Department's activities, it is inevitable that operational challenges will arise – both with respect to business-as-usual operations and the transformation of business processes. The scale of our operations means that even a relatively small failure/error rate has significant consequences e.g. a 1% payment failure (99% success) results in 800,000 payments being affected. The Management Board will brief the Minister on current issues as they arise.

Key issues in the months ahead relate to the continued migration to online/digital service delivery (personal services will be maintained) using a Front-office/Back-office (FoBo) organisation model. Allied to this approach is the potential retention/extension in the use of remote/home working as an option for staff. The experience of Covid-19 where we made extensive use of online and remote working will inform our approach. An important consideration will also be the restoration of service activities that were suspended or scaled back during the Covid-19 period. Many of these (e.g. employment services, control activities, medical assessments etc.) require face-to-face interaction with clients and the ongoing restrictions limit our ability to fully resume service using previous delivery mechanisms.

A specific and large scale issue that will arise in the short to medium term will be the transition of hundreds of thousands of people currently in receipt of the PUP (or benefitting from the TWSS) to our standard jobseeker payment and employment services platforms. This is a significant piece of work (again a multiple of many years work in a short period of time) that will consume both human and IT resources in the third and fourth quarters of the year.

Management and Organisation of the Department

Locations

The headquarters of the Department is located in Áras Mhic Dhiarmada, Store Street, Dublin 1. The Department also has large offices in Buncrana, Carrick-on-Shannon, Dundalk, Letterkenny, Longford, Roscommon, Sligo (our biggest office with over 600 staff), and Waterford. These offices provide a mix of activities from administering schemes (e.g. Child Benefit, Illness and Pension schemes) to managing the Department's Client Identity and financial accounting operations.

The delivery of jobseeker, lone parent, and community welfare and employment services is managed through a regional structure which comprises eight Divisional areas. Each Division is headed up by a Divisional Manager (at Principal Officer level) who has responsibility for all of the day-to-day operational issues in the division across the three streams of the Department – social protection services, community welfare services and employment services. Services at local level are delivered through a nationwide network of 63 Intreo Centres, four control offices and 58 Branch Offices.

Approximately two thirds of the Department's staff are based outside Dublin.

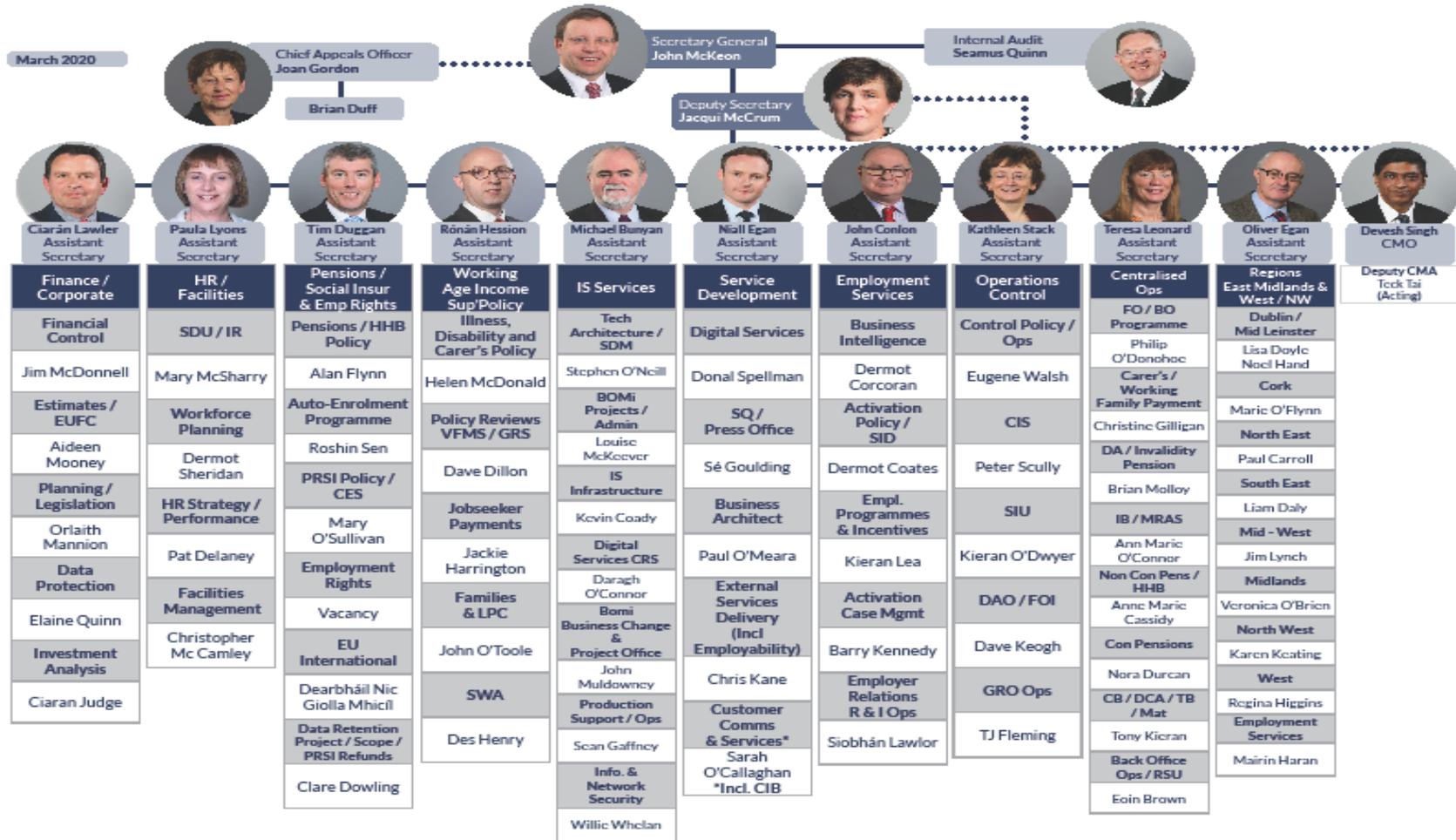
Organisation Structure

Responsibility for managing the affairs of the Department is held by the Management Board reporting to the Secretary General. An organisation chart is provided overleaf.

Some of the Department's functions are discharged by five bodies under the aegis of the Department - the Citizens Information Board (including MABS), the Pensions Authority, the Pensions Council, the Low Pay Commission and the Social Welfare Tribunal.

In addition, the Labour Market Advisory Council advises the Minister and Government on public policy options to ensure the efficient operation of the Labour Market.

DEASP Organisation Chart



Department Finances

Funding

The Department's expenditure is funded from two sources - the Exchequer via Vote 37 and the Social Insurance Fund (SIF). The SIF is funded by Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI) contributions from employers, employees and the self-employed. It is important to note that the SIF is funded and operated on a 'pay as you go basis' with revenues in any year being used to fund expenditure in that year rather than being invested to cover future benefits to current contributors.

Following on from the 2020 REV estimates voted on by the Dáil on 28th May 2020 the financial outturn for 2020 is premised on:

- Total Vote 37 expenditure of €16,517Bn vs €10,871Bn in 2019
- Total SIF expenditure of €11,646Bn vs €10,016Bn in 2019
- Total SIF Income of €9.7Bn vs €12.3Bn in 2019
- A SIF operating deficit of €1.95 billion in 2020 reducing the accumulated surplus by half to stand at €1.94 billion at end of 2020.

The total expenditure allocation for 2020 is **€28.04 billion, an increase of €7.28 billion or 35.0%** on the 2019 provisional outturn of €20.76 billion. All Departmental Estimates are published in the Revised Estimates Volume. The 2019 outturn included expenditure of €279 million in respect of the Christmas Bonus.

(The 2020 allocation does not include a provision for the payment of a Christmas Bonus. Usually, a Government decision is made on Budget Day, subject to the Exchequer finances.).

Make-up of the Department's Expenditure

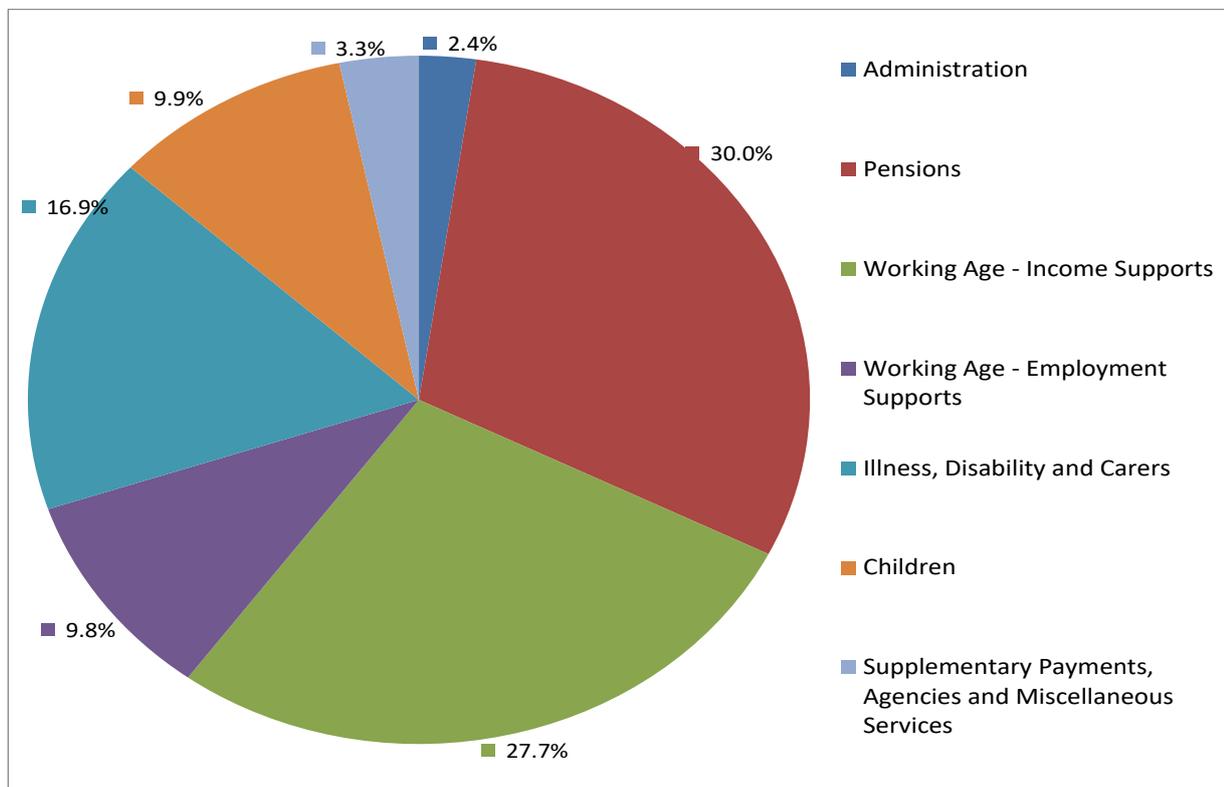
Expenditure by the Department falls into three main categories:

- Income support payments represent 87.8% of all expenditure. These include both insurance (PRSI) based and means-tested payments made on a weekly basis to jobseekers,

retired people, carers, people in low paid employment with dependent families as well as people with disabilities. In 2020, this category includes funding for the Covid PUP.

- Employment programmes and other services are 9.8% of all expenditure. These include schemes such as Community Employment, TÚS, Back to Education and Back to Work Enterprise Allowance (a support for self-employment). In 2020, this category includes funding for the Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS).
- Administrative costs are 2.4% of all expenditure. This includes salaries, payments to service providers (e.g. An Post, JobPath) and IT development and operations.

DEASP Expenditure by Programme in 2020



Expenditure Breakdown	2019 REV estimate	2019 Provisional Outturn	2020 REV estimate	Programme % of Total Expenditure in 2019 Outturn	Programme % of Total Expenditure in 2020 REV
	€000	€000	€000	%	%
Administration	665,608	638,705	658,968	3.1%	2.4%
Pensions	8,041,130	8,215,062	8,425,470	39.6%	30.0%
Working Age - Income Supports	3,193,760	3,259,020	7,755,150	15.7%	27.7%
Working Age - Employment Supports	702,270	694,007	2,748,328	3.3%	9.8%
Illness, Disability and Carers	4,410,390	4,505,694	4,752,750	21.7%	16.9%
Children	2,678,240	2,654,797	2,783,170	12.8%	9.9%
Supplementary Payments, Agencies and Miscellaneous Services	806,126	787,371	916,934	3.8%	3.3%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	20,497,524	20,754,656	28,040,770	100.0%	100.0%

Monitoring of the Department's Financial Performance

The following reports are used to inform the Government, the Minister and Management Board on the financial performance of the Department:

- An estimate of expenditure and Social Insurance Fund income is provided on the 3rd last day of each month to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The Minister is provided with a short information note outlining the main features shortly before publication.
- Detailed provisional financial data for the previous month is provided to the Minister and the Management Board on the 6th working day of each month along with a report detailing expenditure against profile² by scheme and highlighting variations (underspends and overspends) and the background to same.

² Expenditure for each of the Department's schemes and services is "profiled" at the beginning of the year, estimating expenditure for each month. Expenditure in each month is then compared against the original estimate contained in the profile.

Expenditure in the Year to Date

At end May, overall DEASP Expenditure is €11.7 billion. This is €2,955.9m (34%) higher than originally profiled in December 2019. The main variances are as follows:

- i. COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payments cost €1,714.4m.
- ii. The COVID-19 Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme cost €1,171.5m.
- iii. Expenditure on COVID-19 Illness Benefit was €26.3m.
- iv. A number of schemes receiving a double week at end of May resulted in expenditure being brought forward from June to May. These cost approximately €15 million.
- v. Extension of Fuel Allowance season for four weeks from mid-April to mid-May cost €34m, of which an additional two weeks for some schemes will fall in May at a cost of approximately €8m in May
- vi. Jobseekers expenditure is €40.7m (4.9%) above profile.

At end of May, Social Insurance Fund (SIF) Income is €4.6 billion in the year to date. This is €427.6m (8.6%) below profile for the year to date and €196.6 million lower than for the same period last year.

COVID-19 impact on the 2020 REV estimates for the Department

The 2020 Revised Estimate approved by the Dáil on 28th May 2020 provides funding for decisions made by Government up to that point – including providing for the payment of the Covid-PUP up to 9th June and the temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS) up to the following week. The specific allocations were as follows:

- i. €2,230 million for Pandemic Unemployment Payment;
- ii. €2,073.9 million for Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme;
- iii. €74 million for enhanced COVID-19 Illness Benefit

- iv. An additional €1,189.4 million for Jobseeker's Benefit
- v. An additional €975.3 million for Jobseeker's Allowance
- vi. An additional €44.5 million for Redundancy Payments (informed by the Live Register assumptions)
- vii. An additional €8.9 million for Insolvency Payments (informed by the Live Register assumptions)
- viii. An additional €34 million which provided an extension of four weeks in the fuel season from mid-April to mid-May of this year
- ix. An additional €98.9 million for Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance
- x. An additional €70 million for Rent Supplement (upward pressure on recipients arising from higher unemployment)
- xi. An additional 1,000 places on both Community Employment and TUS costing €5.5 million net of underlying transfer of funding from Jobseeker's Allowance. The gross cost will be €15.5m.

Since the 2020 REV estimates were voted upon by the Dáil, the Government approved the extension of the PUP and TWSS schemes until mid-August 2020. This extension will require a supplementary estimate later this year, the timing and amount of which will be dependent on how employment levels recover in the months ahead.

Looking Ahead - Expenditure/Budget

The **Stability and Growth Pact** (SGP) requirements set the context for any increases in overall general Government expenditure.

The 2020 **Summer Economic Statement** (SES) indicates the overall fiscal space available for expenditure and tax measures in Budget 2021.

The formulation of the Budget is also informed by papers prepared by the *Tax Strategy Group* chaired by the Department of Finance with membership comprising senior officials and political advisers. Its purpose is to outline options and issues to be considered in the budgetary process.

Papers relating to PRSI and social welfare issues are prepared for the Tax Strategy Group by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and are usually published in July. Recent papers include:

[Impact of measures in Budget 18 and 19 on the SIF](#)

[Social Protection Package - Budget 2020 Issues - Tax Strategy Group - 19/07](#)

Separately, as part of the multi-annual approach to expenditure management, each year the Government publishes three-year Ministerial Expenditure Ceilings on Budget Day. The Gross Voted Current and Capital Expenditure Ceilings over the period 2020 to 2022, inclusive, are outlined in this table:

DEASP Expenditure Ceilings, 2020- 2022*

Year	DSP (Current and Capital) Expenditure Outturn/REV/Ceiling (€m)	Annual Change (€m)
2020	28,040 (REV)	
2021	21,356 (Ceiling)	-6,684
2022	21,617 (Ceiling)	+260

**Estimates for 2021 and 2022 were published in the 2020 expenditure report which accompanied Budget 2020 in October 2019. These figures will be revised taking account of expenditure performance in 2020.*

Appendix A1: Commitments/References in Programme for Government Relating to

DEASP

<i>Not in order of priority</i>	<i>Commitments/References</i>
1	<i>We will improve budgeting for demographic-related costs. Spending in the areas of health and social welfare will be prioritised for improved budgeting. Each minister will be required to produce service improvement and reform plans in conjunction with DPER. Budget overspends within the budgetary year must be included in department budgetary plans each year, in line with changes in Budget 2020.</i>
2	<i>Protect core weekly social welfare rates.</i>
3	<i>Recognise the importance of ancillary benefits and eligibility criteria to vulnerable groups.</i>
4	<i>A set of wellbeing indices to create a well-rounded, holistic view of how our society is faring.</i>
5	<i>Any changes to social welfare provision to be gender and equality-proofed.</i>
6	<i>Examine options for a pension solution for carers, the majority of whom are women, particularly those of incapacitated children, in recognition of the enormous value of the work carried out by them.</i>
7	<i>Work across government to address food poverty in children and ensure no child goes hungry.</i>
8	<i>We will establish a Commission on Welfare and Taxation to independently consider how best the tax system can support economic activity and promote increased employment and prosperity, while ensuring that there are sufficient resources available to meet the costs of the public services and supports in the medium and</i>

	<i>longer term.</i>
9	<i>Explore how Ireland can be at the forefront of protecting citizens' rights with respect to facial recognition technology, access to encryption tools, and net neutrality.</i>
10	<i>We are committed to the introduction of personalised budgets, improving the provision of services for people with disabilities through a range of options, including service brokers, and empowering people to choose the supports that most meet their needs. This will be based on the experience of the pilot schemes.</i>
11	<i>We will use the recent research into the cost of disability to individuals and families to properly inform the direction of future policy.</i>
12	<i>Develop initiatives that improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities living in rural areas, including through remote working options.</i>
13	<i>Fast-track the return to Disability or Invalidity Pension for people where employment opportunities do not succeed.</i>
14	<i>Fine-tune and expand targeted employment schemes, such as the Wage Subsidy Scheme (WSS) and the Ability Programme, to help more people with disabilities stay in the workforce.</i>
15	<i>Commit to the social farming model, recognising the value of offering farming and horticultural work experience to people availing of health and social services, including disability services (in conjunction with the Department with responsibility for rural and community development)</i>
16	<i>Promote an awareness and support programme for employers to support the recruitment and retention of people with disabilities.</i>
17	<i>Review whether the legal provisions surrounding collective redundancies and the liquidation of companies effectively protect the rights of workers.</i>
18	<i>Amend the Organisation of Working Time Act, bringing Defence Forces within the</i>

	<i>scope (in conjunction with Department of Defence).</i>
19	<i>Improving the quality and security of jobs.</i>
20	<i>Increase the availability of activation schemes, including those run by local employment services.</i>
21	<i>Implement an upskilling and reskilling programme so that workers from sectors that are unlikely to return to full capacity in the following year can avail of the opportunities in other more sustainable sectors. (In conjunction with Department of Education and Skills)</i>
22	<i>Put in place strong and varied labour-market activation programmes.</i>
23	<i>Enhance back-to-work schemes and initiatives to assist in upskilling those who are seeking new employment opportunities after the crisis.</i>
24	<i>Review the Back to Education Allowance, to ensure that it can help those unemployed as a result of COVID-19 to access education and training.</i>
25	<i>Continue to fund the Mortgage Arrears Resolution Service, Abhaile. (in conjunction with Department of Justice and Equality)</i>
26	<i>Introduce returnships in partnership with employers, to support women who have taken time out of work to raise their families or care for loved ones, to re-enter the labour market through new education, training, and personal development programmes.</i>
27	<i>Maintain the entitlement for the Free Travel Scheme for all individuals aged 66 and over. Work with private bus operators and the National Transport Authority (NTA) so that the Free Travel Scheme is available on all publicly licensed bus routes. (In conjunction with the Department of Transport)</i>
28	<i>Remove the need for a person aged 16 and 17 years to have two specialist reports before they can apply for legal gender recognition. Research into under 16s who are transgender. Further work on legal recognition of non-binary people.</i>

29	<i>Ensure that Rent Supplement and Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) levels are adequate to support vulnerable households, while we increase the supply of social housing.</i>
30	<i>Ensure that the increases in the carbon tax are progressive by spending €3 billion on targeted social welfare and other initiatives to prevent fuel poverty and ensure a just transition. Older people are prioritised.</i>
31	<i>Set out a pathway for the future implementation of the Temporary Wage Subsidy.</i>
32	<i>Set out the future distribution of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment, based on the principles of fairness and equity</i>
33	<i>Improve jobseeker supports for people aged under 24 over the lifetime of the Government.</i>
34	<i>Request the Low Pay Commission to examine Universal Basic Income, informed by a review of previous international pilots, and resulting in a universal basic income pilot in the lifetime of the Government.</i>
35	<i>Progress to a living wage over the lifetime of the Government.</i>
36	<i>Drive digital transformation in the public service, with greater integration of digital services. Budget and expenditure plans must include measures that drive digitisation.</i>
37	<i>Continue to prioritise and protect supports for lone parents, having regard to the recommendations of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection's Report on the Position of Lone Parents in Ireland (2017).</i>
38	<i>Act to reform our child maintenance system and address key issues such as calculation, facilitation, and enforcement, guided by international best practice and in light of the findings of the Murphy Review.</i>
39	<i>Extend paid parental leave for parents, to allow them to spend more time with their baby during its first year. (in conjunction with Department with policy responsibility for Equality)</i>

40	<i>Maintain the State Pension as the bedrock of the Irish pension system.</i>
41	<i>[Provide that] 65 year olds who are required to or chose to retire early can receive an 'Early Retirement Allowance or Pension' at the same rate as jobseekers benefit without a requirement to sign on, partake in any activation measures or be available for and genuinely seeking work.</i>
42	<i>Establish a Commission on Pensions to examine sustainability and eligibility issues with state pensions and the Social Insurance Fund. The Commission will outline options for Government to address issues including qualifying age, contribution rates, total contributions and eligibility requirements.</i>
43	<i>Pending the report of the Commission on Pensions and any subsequent Government decisions on its recommendations, the State Pension age will remain at 66 years and the increase to 67 years will be deferred. This will allow full consideration by Government of any permanent changes. The Commission will report by June 2021. The Government will take action having regard to the recommendations of the Commission within 6 months.</i>
44	<i>Introduce a Total Contributions approach, aligning a person's contributory pension more closely with the contributions they make. This will include a provision for credited contributions, ensuring that people who take time off work to care for loved ones are not disadvantaged.</i>
45	<i>Auto-enrolment: we will seek to gradually deliver. Matching contributions by workers and employers. State will top up. Phased roll out over a decade. Opt out to be included. Range of retirement products. Charge cap on pension providers.</i>
46	<i>Introduce a system to enable people to defer receipt of their state contributory pension on an annual basis, to include actuarial increases in payment as soon as practicable.</i>
47	<i>Facilitate those without a full social insurance record to increase their retirement provision by choosing to continue making PRSI payments beyond pensionable age.</i>

48	<i>Consideration will be given to increasing all classes of PRSI over time to replenish the Social Insurance Fund to help pay for measures and changes to be agreed including, inter alia, to the state pension system, improvements to short-term sick pay benefits, parental leave benefits, pay-related jobseekers benefit and treatment benefits (medical, dental, optical, hearing).</i>
49	<i>Continue to support the annual Social Inclusion Forum as an important means of promoting engagement between people experiencing poverty and exclusion, the community and voluntary sector and Government.</i>
50	<i>Investigate the provision of paid leave and social protection provision to victims of domestic violence. (in conjunction with Department of Justice and Equality)</i>

Appendix A2 - Key Publications

Corporate Publications

[DEASP Annual Report 2018](#)

[DEASP Statement of Strategy 2017-2020.pdf](#)

[DEASP Corporate Governance Framework 2018](#)

[Customer Charter and Customer Action Plan](#)

Policy & other Documents

[Compliance and Anti-Fraud Strategy 2019 – 2023](#)

[Summary of progress in the design of an Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System for Ireland - October 2019](#)

[Future Jobs Ireland 2019](#)

[Pathways to work 2016 -2020](#)

[Review of Gender Recognition Act 2015](#)

[Roadmap for Pension Reform 2018 - 2023](#)

[Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020 - 2025](#)

[The Pensions Authority Statement of Strategy 2016 - 2020](#)