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Civil Service Overview, New Joiners' and Temporary Clerical Officers'

Profile, Trends and Insights

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Executive Summary

This research paper draws on the data from the Civil Service Human Resources Databank (CSHR Databank) which is sourced from the Human Resource Management System (HRMS). It provides an analysis of the Civil Service* workforce, as well as new joiner and temporary clerical officers (TCO) usage trends, with the aim of informing policy discussions on the drivers. It presents:

- A high level overview of the Civil Service*¹ workforce in 2020, excluding TCO's, which are analysed separately.
- A comparison of the profiles of new joiners to the Civil Service* during two time periods, recent new joiners 2015-2019 and earlier new joiners 2007-2009².
- An analysis of temporary clerical officer (TCO) usage from 2007 to 2019.

Key Findings

Number of employees

- The Civil Service*¹ number of employees (full time equivalent) has increased every year since the lifting of the moratorium in 2014.
- Similarly, the number of new joiners (headcount) has also increased every year, from circa 1,200 in 2015 to circa 3,000 in 2019 (250% increase).

Organisational trends

- The largest growth in FTE numbers was in the Department of Health (54%), the Garda Civilians (47%) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (43%) between 2015 and 2020.
- The biggest proportion of the new joiners went to the Office of the Revenue Commissioners (16%), the Department of Justice and Equality (9%), and Garda Civilians (9%) between 2015 and 2019.

Age distribution

- The Civil Service* age distribution differs considerably to the Irish labour force (ILF). The proportion of the Civil Service* workforce over the age of 54 in 2020 is 28% compared to 17% for the ILF, while the proportion of under 35's is 16% for the Civil Service* and 34% for the ILF.
- The new joiners' age distribution has changed significantly, becoming older, since the financial crisis. Approximately two thirds of all joiners were between the ages of 17 and 34 during 2006-2008, by contrast, during 2017-2019, two thirds were between the ages of 25 and 44.

Gender balance

- The Civil Service* gender balance was 59% female and 41% male in 2020.
- The new joiners' gender balance improved significantly (from 41% to 47% male) between 2006-2008 and 2017-2019. The biggest changes were at the Administrative Officer (male from 45% to 50%), Principal Officer (female 33% to 41%) and Senior Management grades (female 33% to 46%).

Generalist / Non-generalist skillset proxy

Caveat: the generalist³ / non-generalist skillset proxy derived from the grade structure is not a strong proxy, but it is the only centralised skillset data currently available.

- The Civil Service* appears to be 73% generalist and 27% non-generalist according to grade classification, with largest generalists in Clerical Officers and Executive Officer grades.
- New joiners classified as generalists has increased significantly (from 44% to 79%) between 2006-2008 and 2017-2019.

Temporary Clerical Officers usage

- There has been a steady increase in the total hours of Temporary Clerical Officers (TCOs) since 2009. Interestingly, there has also been an increase in the proportion of hours outside the summer months (June-August), rising from circa 50% of all usage in 2007 to circa 65% in 2019.

Key Policy Conclusions

- It is positive that the Civil Service has been able to attract an **increasing number** of new joiners since the lifting of the moratorium in 2014. Alignment of this increase in numbers with a strategic vision of the Civil Service is important, together with outcomes for citizens arising from the delivery of the organisational business strategies.
- It is also positive that the Civil Service has new joiners of all ages. However, there has been a significant change in the **age distribution**, becoming older, since the financial crisis. Whether this is due to a change in the age profile of applicants or a change in the age profile of successful applicants is beyond the scope of this paper, however, it may warrant future analysis. If this trend continues, it may further increase the difference between the age distribution of the Civil Service* and the Irish labour force (ILF), causing the Civil Service might become proportionately less representative of some age groups.
- The **gender balance** in new joiners (i.e. successful applicants) has improved. Whether this is due to a change in the gender balance of all applicants or just those who are successful is beyond the scope of this paper. However, further research on the characteristics of applicants would provide valuable insights and could also support the Programme for Government desire to increase the proportion of public and civil servants from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- The Irish Civil Service benefits from employees with generalist and non-generalist (including professional and technical grades) **skillsets**. The finding that a significant increase in the proportion of new joiners are classified as having a generalist skillset (caveat not a strong proxy) doesn't accord with the increased number of non-generalist recruitment campaigns.
 - Ongoing monitoring of the skillset composition Civil Service workforce in terms of generalist and non-generalist skillsets may support alignment with a strategic vision of the Civil Service and the potential use of digitalisation for routine activities at all grades to release staff capabilities and capacity.
 - For the current HR Management system (HRMS), under the existing generalist grades if a skill sub-categorisation were to be piloted for various skill streams (e.g. HR, Finance, ICT etc.) it would improve the new joiner data and inform future system design requirements. For any new HR management system, the permission to and automated capture and transfer of successful applicant's skills data should be considered as a key design feature, in order to readily assess the existing skillset of the workforce, to ensure that skillsets are optimally deployed, and to identify the future skill needs that need to be grown or acquired.
- **TCOs** can provide the ability to respond to seasonal or fixed period service demands. With the increasing usage of TCOs, it is important that the potential risk of over-reliance on TCOs, for critical service delivery to citizens, is monitored and mitigated as part of the organisational risk management process and that the associated increased activity levels for the HR unit is recognised.
- The organisational trends are an analysis of numerical trends only. They are designed to inform policy discussions on the **drivers of these trends** in the Departments/organisations, in the Public Appointment Service and in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Civil Service HR Division, Reform Division and Expenditure Divisions Vote teams.

¹ Throughout this paper Civil Service* is used to indicate that the workforce used does not include the Irish Prison Service as this data was not available from the HR Databank during the research timeframe and excludes TCOs analysed separately (section 4)

² Method note: The time periods 2006-2008 and 2017-2019 are used repeatedly throughout this paper as a means of contextualising recent joiner patterns.

³ Refer to the glossary in appendix 1 for details.

1. Introduction

This research paper draws on the data from the Civil Service Human Resources Databank (CSHR Databank) which is sourced from the Human Resource Management System (HRMS). It aims to perform an analysis of the Civil Service* workforce, as well as new joiner¹ and TCO usage trends, with the aim of informing policy discussions on the drivers of these numbers. It presents:

- A high level overview of the Civil Service* workforce in 2020 (excluding TCOs which are analysed separately);
- A comparison of the profiles of new joiners to the Civil Service* during two time periods; recent new joiners 2015-2019 and earlier new joiners 2006-2008;
- An analysis of temporary clerical officer (TCO) usage from 2007 to 2019.

Research questions:

To inform ongoing discussions on what might the Civil Service look like in 3, 5 and 10 years' time, this paper analysed the HR data to answer the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics of the current Civil Service* workforce?
2. Who are the new joiners entering the Civil Service?
3. What is the trend in usage of Temporary Clerical Officers (TCOs)?

The paper is structured as follows:

- Section 2 presents a high level numerical overview of the Civil Service* workforce (full time equivalents) as of January 1st 2020, in terms of organisations; age distribution, grade structure, gender by grade and generalist/non-generalist skillset proxy.
- Section 3 profiles the new joiners to the Civil Service*, comparing those joining during 2015-2019 and 2007-2009, in terms of organisations, age distribution, grade structure, gender by grade, and generalist/non-generalist skillset proxy.
- Section 4 presents an analysis of temporary clerical officer (TCO) usage trends between 2007 and 2019.
- Section 5 summarises the key insights and presents future research options.

¹ New Joiners in this paper refers to individuals who joined the Civil Service* in a specified year and have no prior Civil Service* experience (i.e. their PPSN was never previously registered on the HR management system).

Methodology and limitations

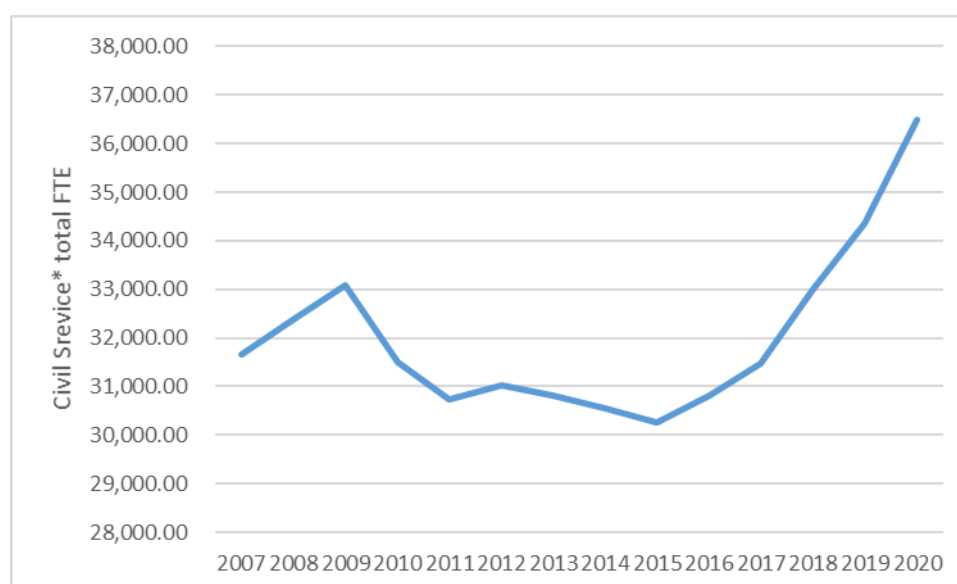
- This paper used year end human resource (HR) administrative data from the CSHR databank for the years 2006-2008 and 2015-2019. As no data on the Irish Prison Service was available from this source during 2019, the insights represent the Irish Civil Service, excluding the Irish Prison Service (denoted as Civil Service*).
- As the paper uses year-end HR data, it does not account for new joiners who joined and exited within the same year.
- This paper only accounts for the total number of TCOs that were active at the end of each month, therefore any TCOs who exited within a month are not accounted for in that month's total. Hence, there is some understatement of the amount of TCO hours used in each month. However, as every month is affected, the trend remains reliable.
- This paper only examines new joiners to the Civil Service*, this means that any joiner with previous service is excluded from the analysis, regardless of how short that service was.

2. Civil Service* - profile and trends

2.1 Civil Service* number of employees.

The number of full time equivalent (FTE) employees in the entire Civil Service (including prisons) at the beginning of 2020 was 40,785 an increase of 6,086 (18%) on 2014². However, this paper will focus on the trend of the total Civil Service* FTE, as data for the Irish Prison Service is not available on the HR databank. Figure 1 shows the trend in the start of year total Civil Service* full time equivalent (FTE) employees between 2007 and 2020. The number of full time equivalent (FTE) employees in the Civil Service* at the beginning of 2020 was 36,499, an increase of 6,229 (21%) on the trend low point of 2015. The total FTE has grown by an average of approximately 4% per annum since 2015. Note that the single biggest yearly increase during the period was 2019, at 6%.

Figure 1 – Civil Service total FTE 2014-2020



Source: CSHR Databank

2.2 Civil Service* by organisation

Table 1 shows the workforce of the 15 largest Civil Service* organisations by FTE, as a percentage of the 2020 total FTE, and their size compared to 2015. The two largest organisations, the Revenue Commissioners (18%) and the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP 16%), account for 34% of the workforce. The 5 largest organisations account for 58% of the workforce while the 10 largest account for 73% of the workforce.

² Source: DPER Numbers Policy Unit dataset which holds data from 2014 onwards

Table 1 – Civil Service* organisations by % FTE at the start of 2020 (1st January)

Department	No. of FTE	% of 2020 total FTE	FTE size in 2015 vs 2020
Revenue Commissioners	6,576	18%	+14%
Employment Affairs and Social Protection	5,827	16%	-6%
Agriculture, Food and the Marine	3,340	9%	+15%
Garda Civilians	2,867	8%	+47%
Justice and Equality	2,476	7%	+37%
Education and Skills	1,386	4%	+18%
Foreign Affairs and Trade	1,329	4%	+43%
Courts Service	1,074	3%	+15%
Business, Enterprise and Innovation	865	2%	+8%
Central Statistics Office	825	2%	+22%
Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	558	2%	+19%
Housing, Planning and Local Government	789	2%	+10%
Office of Public Works	787	2%	+41%
Transport, Tourism and Sport	575	2%	+35%
Health	525	1%	+54%

Source: CSHR Databank

As the sample of organisations in Table 1 illustrates, there has been significant growth in FTE numbers (excluding TCOs) between 2015 and 2019, with organisations growing by an average of 25%. The organisation with the largest increase was the Department of Health (54%), while the largest decrease was Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (-6%).

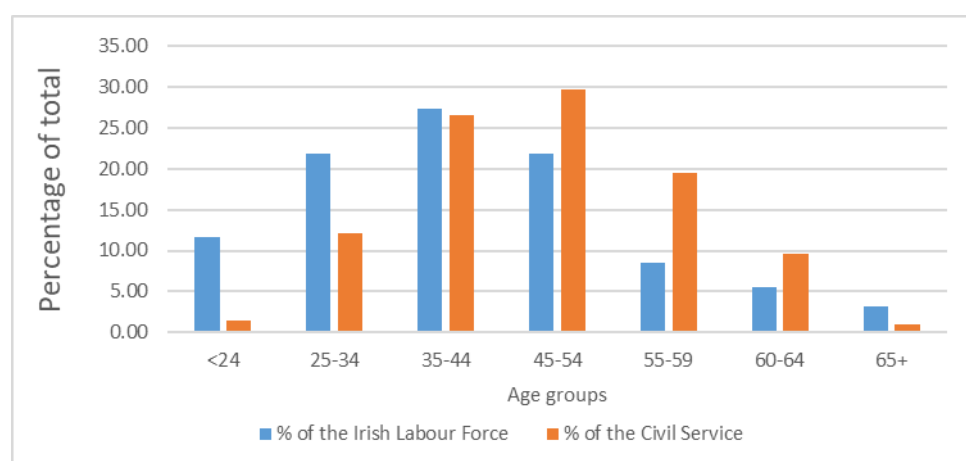
2.3 Civil Service* age distribution

Figure 2 compares the age distribution of the Civil Service* workforce with the age distribution of the Irish labour force (ILF) at the 1st January 2020. The Irish Civil Service strives to be representative of the population it serves, the ILF here acts as a proxy for determining how the age profile of the Civil Service* represents the Irish population eligible for work. The age distributions indicate that the Civil Service* differs from the Irish working population, with 28% of the Civil Service* workforce aged 55 or older, compared to 17% for the ILF. Additionally, 16% of the Civil Service* are under the age of 35, compared to 34% for the ILF. Hence the Irish Civil Service* does not appear to be fully representative, however, as the entry criteria to the Civil Service is aged 17 and over, compared to 15 for the ILF, this is a representative proxy.

Having such a large proportion of the Civil Service* workforce over the age of 55 presents a significant business risk in the medium term. Most of the civil servants that are over the age of 55 are members of the pre-2004 pension schemes, under which they can retire at the age of 60. Therefore, there is a

growing number who will be eligible to retire within the next 5 years, which presents a considerable business risk to the delivery of services and business strategies over the next 5-10 years. However, retirement eligibility does not equate to expected retirements, and retirement eligibility alone should not form the basis of succession planning. Further strengthening of workforce planning within organisations is expected to yield further enhancements to the accuracy of estimating retirements which would form the basis of succession planning.

Figure 2 – Civil Service* workforce age distribution.

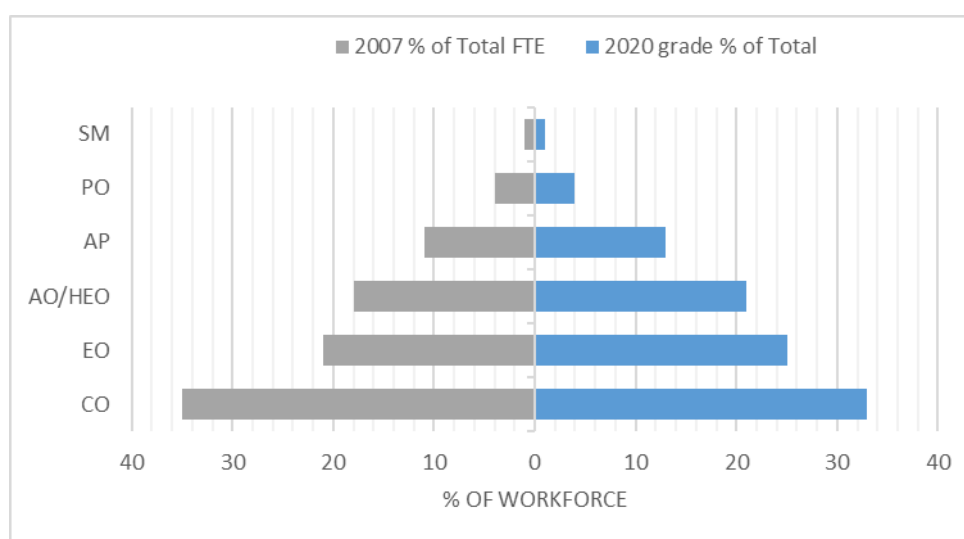


Source: CSHR Databank and CSO Labour Force Survey Quarterly Series

2.4 Civil Service* grade structure

The Civil Service* grade structure has changed slightly between 2007 and 2020. Figure 3 shows each grade as a percentage of the Civil Service* total FTE. The biggest changes are at the Assistant Principal (AP), Administrative Officer (AO)/Higher Executive Officer (HEO) and Executive Officer (EO) grades which all increased as a proportion of the Civil Service* workforce during the period. The increase in AO/HEO numbers was driven largely by growth in the HEO grade, which increased by 40%. The increase in EO numbers were at least partly driven by the combination of the EO and SO grades in 2017. The senior management and PO grades remained proportionate to the size of the workforce, which indicates that their FTE totals grew by 18% in the period. The Clerical Officer (CO) grade declined slightly in proportion, falling from 35% to 33%, yet there was a 9% increase in FTE numbers during the period. The rise in CO numbers has occurred during a period of significant ICT investment, as the Civil Service invests in implementing its Information and Communication Technology (ICT) strategy.

Figure 3 – Civil Service* grade structure 2007 vs 2020



Source: CSHR Databank

2.5 Civil Service* by gender and grade

Table 2 shows the breakdown of the Civil Service* workforce total FTE by gender and grade as of January 1st 2020. The closest gender balance came at the Administrative Officer (AO) and Assistant Principal (AP) grades, while the greatest variance is amongst the Clerical Officer (CO) and Executive Officer (EO) grades.

Table 2 - Grade and gender breakdown

Grade	Total FTE	Female %	Male %
Senior Management (SM)	295	36	64
Principal Officer (PO)	1,539	44	56
Assistant Principal (AP)	4,848	50	50
Higher Executive Officer (HEO)	5,212	57	43
Administrative Officer (AO)	2,555	47	53
Executive Officer (EO)	8,987	61	39
Clerical Officer (CO)	11,914	70	30
Other ³	1,149	37	63
Total	36,499	59	41

Source: CSHR Databank

The total female proportion of the workforce is approximately 2% higher than shown in table 1, with the male proportion approximately 2% lower, when the analysis is conducted on headcount numbers (i.e. ignoring shorter working week/year). This deviation is observed at all grades and may indicate that female civil servants are more likely to avail of the shorter working year/week.

³ Other grades refers to Staff Officers, Service Officers and numerous other grades with very low volumes.

2.6 Civil Service * - Generalist / Non-Generalist skillset proxy

Table 3 displays each Civil Service* grade classified as either having a generalist⁴ or non-generalist⁵ skillset.

While it is generally agreed that skills are critical aspect of workforce planning, there is currently no centralised skills data available on the workforce. This new classification was created to show what the current data indicates. However, it is not a strong proxy as there are many specialist skill streams (e.g. IGEEs, HR etc.) that are currently captured in generalist grades. The insight from this analysis is that there is a need to consider the introduction of sub-categorisation in the HR Management System (HRMS) standard grades for the various skill streams (e.g. HR, Finance, ICT etc.).

The highest proportion of generalists are in the CO and EO grades. The lowest proportion of generalists are in the AO grade.

Table 3 – Generalist / Non-generalist skillset proxy at the start of 2020

Grade	Grade classification type	FTE	Percentage of Grade
Total	Generalist	26,551	73%
	Non Generalist	9,948	27%
EO	Generalist	7,797	87%
	Non Generalist	1,190	13%
HEO	Generalist	4,463	86%
	Non Generalist	749	14%
CO	Generalist	9,724	82%
	Non Generalist	2,190	18%
AP	Generalist	2,798	58%
	Non Generalist	2,050	42%
SM	Generalist	919	50%
	Non Generalist	915	50%
AO	Generalist	732	29%
	Non Generalist	1,823	71%

Source: CSHR Databank

⁴ Refer to the glossary in appendix 1 for a definition.

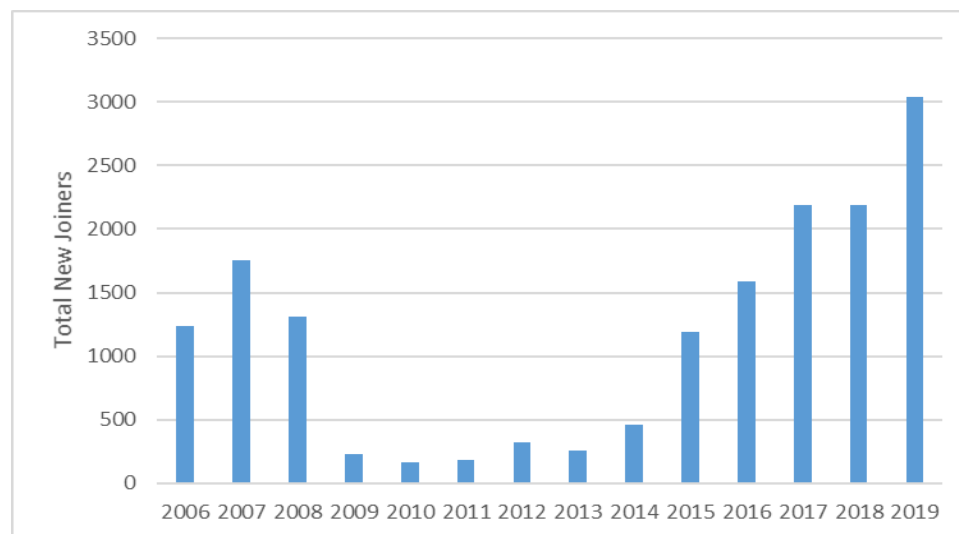
⁵ Refer to the glossary in appendix 1 for a definition.

3. New joiners to the Civil Service* - profile and trends

3.1 New joiner – number of employees

Figure 2 shows total annual new joiners to the Civil Service* in the years immediately before and after the introduction of the Public Service recruitment moratorium in 2009⁶. An average of approximately 1,400 civil servants were hired per year in the three years prior to the moratorium in 2009, compared to an average of approximately 2,500 per year between 2017 and 2019. Total new joiner numbers have increased each year since the lifting of the moratorium.

Figure 4 – Civil Service* new joiner numbers



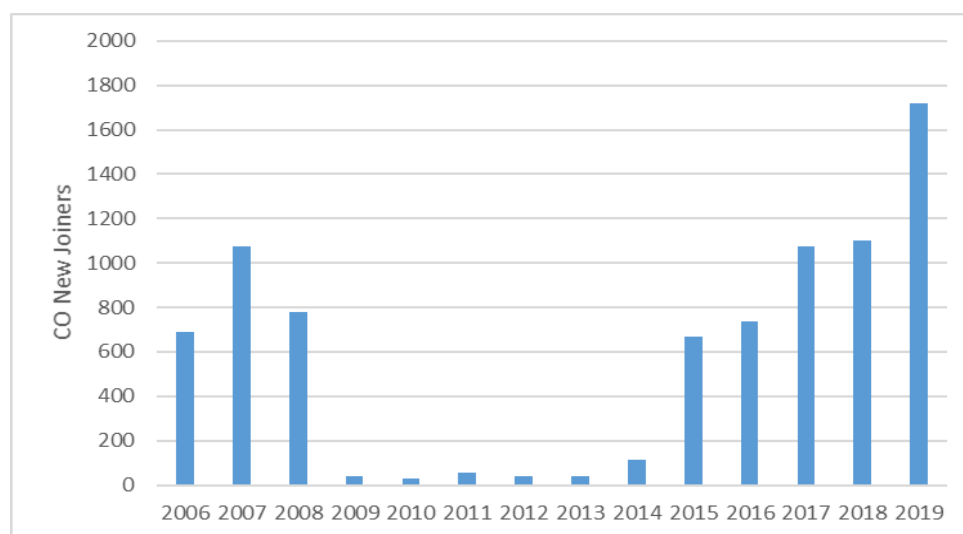
Source: CSHR Databank

3.1.1 New joiner numbers – Clerical Officers (COs).

From 2015 to 2018, annual new joiners to the CO grade remained largely consistent with pre-moratorium levels. However, new joiners in 2019 diverged considerably with over 1,700 CO's joining, compared to approximately 1,100 in 2018.

⁶ No data is available on the CSHR databank from before 2006.

Figure 5 – Growth in total Clerical Officers (COs) numbers

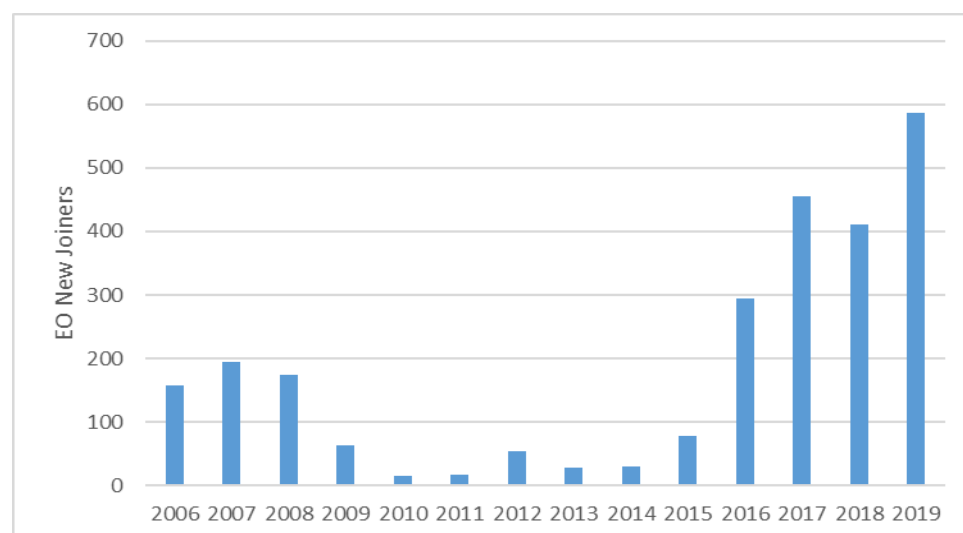


Source: CSHR Databank

3.1.2 New joiner numbers – Executive Officers (EOs)

New joiners to the EO grade rose sharply following the lifting of the moratorium in 2014, rising from an average of 175 per year in the three years prior to the moratorium to an average of 484 per year between 2017 and 2019.

Figure 6 – Growth in total Executive Officer numbers



Source: CSHR Databank

3.2 New joiners by organisation

Table 4 shows the 21 largest Civil Service* organisations (accounting for 90% of the workforce) with the proportion of the total new joiners that they received between 2015 and 2019. The Office of the

Revenue Commissioners is the organisation that received the highest proportion of intake between 2015 and 2019, followed by the Department of Justice and Garda Civilians.

Table 4 – Organisations new joiners' %

Organisations	New joiners %	Organisations	New joiners % 2015-2019
Revenue Commissioners	16%	Housing, Planning and Local	2%
Garda Civilians	9%	Office of Public Works	2%
Justice and Equality	9%	Oireachtas	2%
Agriculture, Food and the Marine	7%	Public Expenditure and Reform	2%
Employment Affairs and Social Protection	7%		
National Shared Services Office	5%	Transport, Tourism and Sport	2%
Courts Service	4%	Communications Climate Action & the Environment	1%
Foreign Affairs and Trade	4%		
Central Statistics Office	3%	Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	1%
Education and Skills	3%		
Business, Enterprise and Innovation	2%	Property Registration Authority	1%
Health	2%	Legal Aid Board	1%

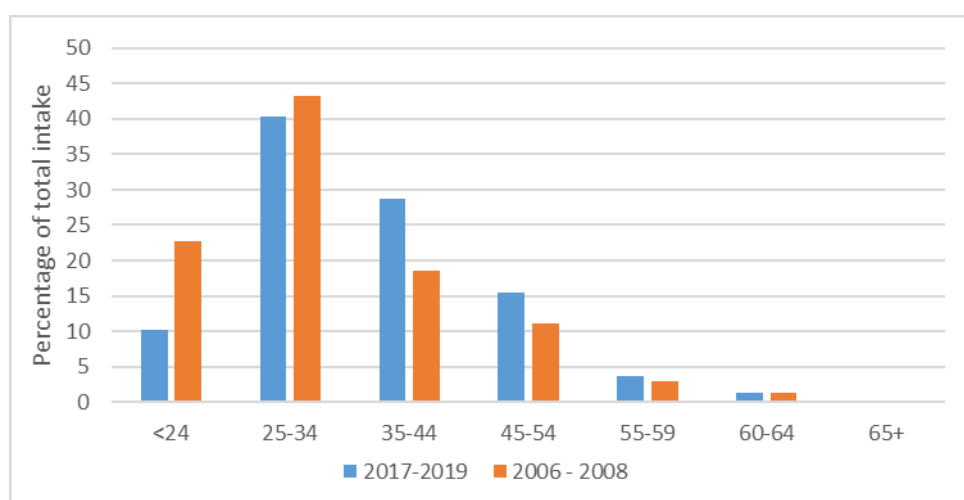
Source: CSHR Databank

3.3 New joiners age distribution

Figure 7 compares the age distribution of new joiners during 2017-2019 with new joiners during 2006-2008. The data indicates that successful applicants to the Civil Service* are being hired are from all age cohorts, across all grades. The data also shows that new joiners are now older across all the grades, with those under the age of 35 reducing from 66% of the total intake during 2006-2008 to 51% during 2017-2019. The biggest changes in age distribution are at the EO and AP grades.

The wide age distribution of new joiners since 2015 is likely contributing to the rightward skew shown in figure 2. This aging may further intensify if the new joiner age distribution remains unchanged, and if civil servants work beyond age 65 in greater numbers in light of The Public Service Superannuation (Age of Retirement) Bill 2018.

Figure 7 – Civil Service* Joiner Age distribution 2017-2019 versus 2006-2008

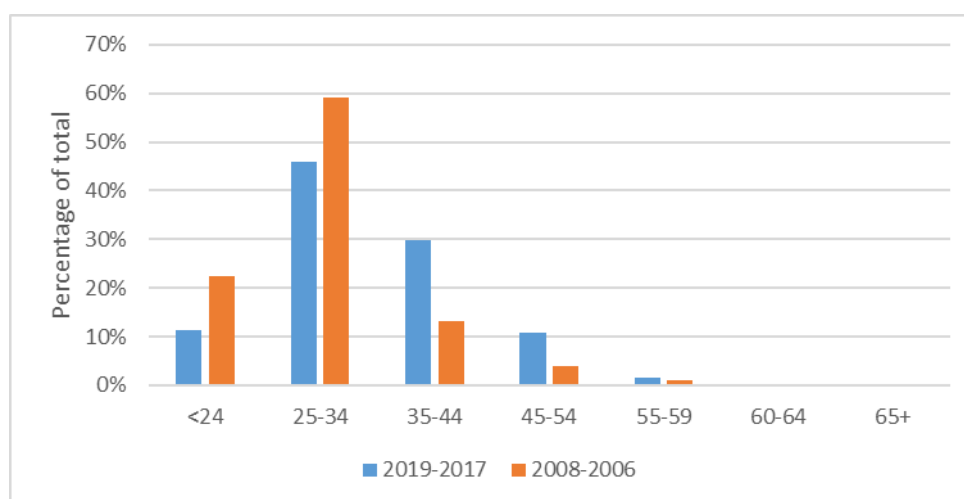


Source: CSHR Databank

3.3.1 New joiner age distribution – Executive Officers (EOs).

Figure 8 compares the age distribution of EO new joiners during 2017-2019 with those during 2006-2008. Recent new joiners are older, with new joiners under the age of 35 reducing from approximately 81% to 57% and new joiners over the age of 44 increasing from 5% to 13% comparing 2006-2008 with 2017-2019.

Figure 8 – Executive Officer new joiner age distribution 2017-2019 versus 2006-2008

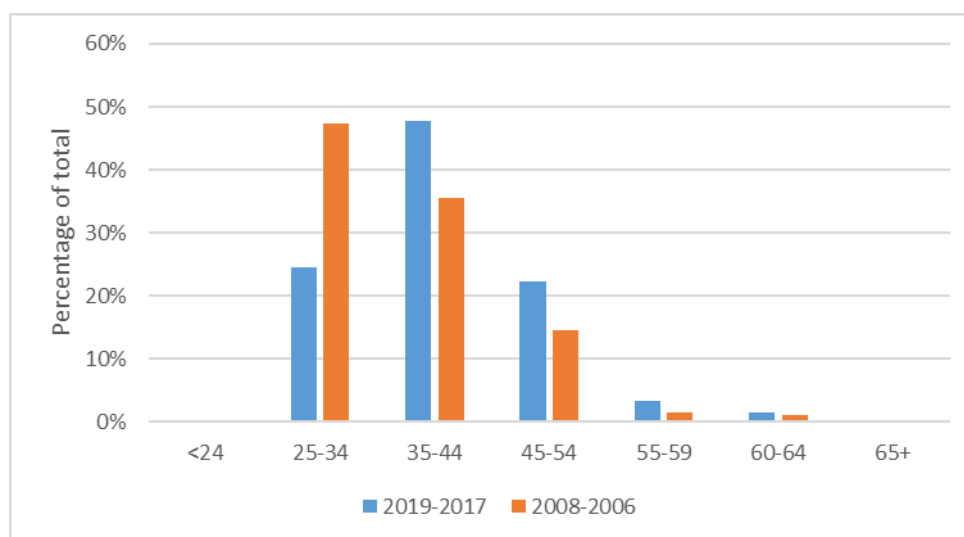


Source: CSHR Databank

3.3.2 New joiner age distribution – Assistant Principals (APs).

The age distribution of AP new joiners shows similar divergence between the periods. Recent new joiners are older, with new joiners under the age of 35 reducing from approximately 47% to 25% and new joiners over the age of 44 increasing from 17% to 26% comparing 2006-2008 with 2017-2019.

Figure 9 – Assistant Principal new joiner age distribution 20017-2019 versus 2006-2008

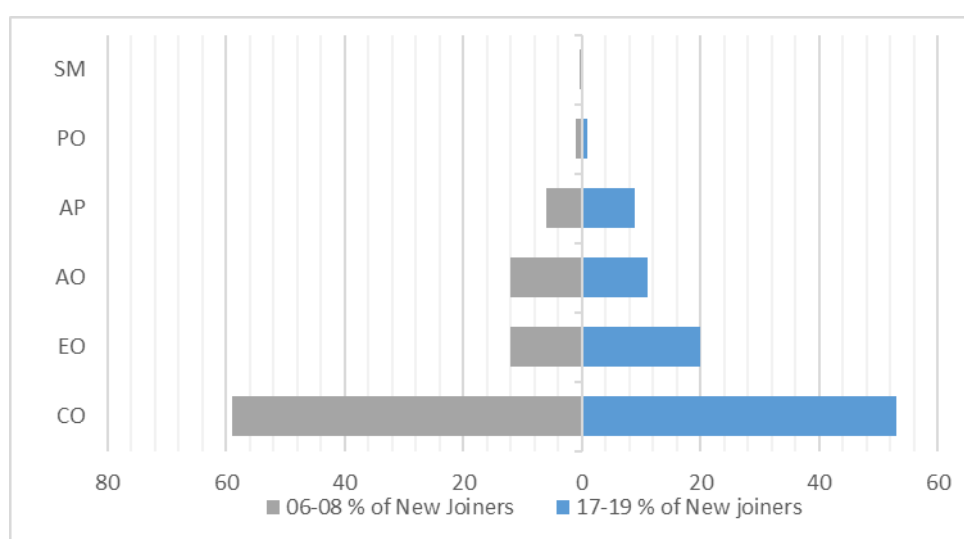


Source: CSHR Databank

3.4 New joiners' grade

Figure 10 and table 5 summarise the new joiners to each grade from 2006-2008 and 2017-2019. Figure 10 shows new joiners to each grade as a percentage of all new joiners. The breakdown has changed considerably between the two time periods, the biggest change is the Clerical Officer grade, where the percentage of new joiners has dropped from almost 60% between 2006 and 2008 to 53% between 2017 and 2019. Conversely, the percentage of new joiners has risen at the EO grade from approximately 12% to 20% and risen at the AP grade from 6% to 9%.

Figure 10 – New joiners by grade 2006-2008 versus 2017-2019



Source: CSHR Databank

Table 5 shows the total new joiners to each grade across the two time periods. There was an increase of 73% in new joiners when comparing 2006-2008 with 2017-2019. All grades have more new joiners, with the biggest increase at the EO (179%) and AP (150%) grades.

Table 5 – New joiners by grade 2006-2008 versus 2017-2019

Grade	New Joiners Increase	New joiners 2017-2019	New Joiners 2006-2008
AO	329	829	500
AP	407	673	266
CO	1,648	3,888	2,536
EO	930	1,449	519
PO	45	87	42
SM	1	13	12
Other	57	462	405
Total	3,121	7,401	4,280

Source: CSHR Databank

3.5 New joiners' gender and grade

Table 6 compares the gender balance of new joiners of 2006-2008 with 2017-2019. All grades have seen greater parity in their new joiner gender profile, with the greatest change at the EO, PO and Senior Management grades and the least change at the AP grade.

Table 6 – Gender trends of new joiners 2017-2019 versus 2006-2008

New joiners gender breakdown	2006-2008		2017-2019	
	% female	% male	% female	% male
Senior Management	33%	67%	46%	54%
PO	33%	67%	41%	59%
AP	59%	41%	58%	42%
AO	55%	45%	50%	50%
EO	56%	44%	48%	52%
CO	64%	36%	57%	43%
Total	59%	41%	53%	47%

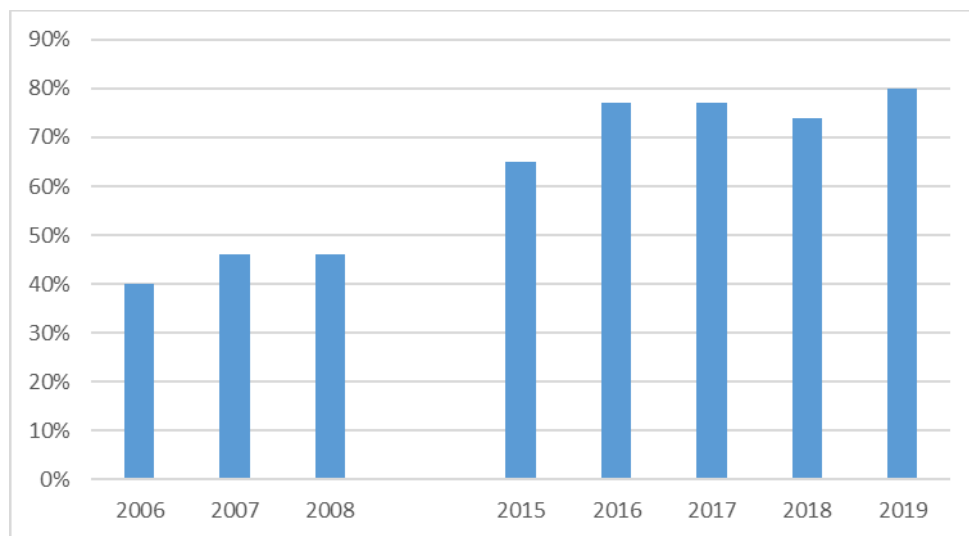
Source: CSHR Databank

3.6 New joiners' generalist / non-generalist skillset proxy

The analysis of skillsets in new joiners had the same challenges as those of the overall workforce (refer to section 2.6).

The available data suggests that in years following the lifting of the moratorium in 2014, the proportion of generalists in new joiners rose to levels far exceeding those in the years preceding the introduction of the moratorium. The data suggests that by 2019 the generalist proportion had risen to 80% of new joiners, compared to 40% in 2006. The generalist proportion of new joiners increased across all grades with the exception of EO. The largest change was new joiners to the CO grade, rising from 47% to 94% generalist when comparing 2006-2008 with 2017-2019.

Figure 11 – Civil Service* new joiners generalist percentage 2006 – 2019



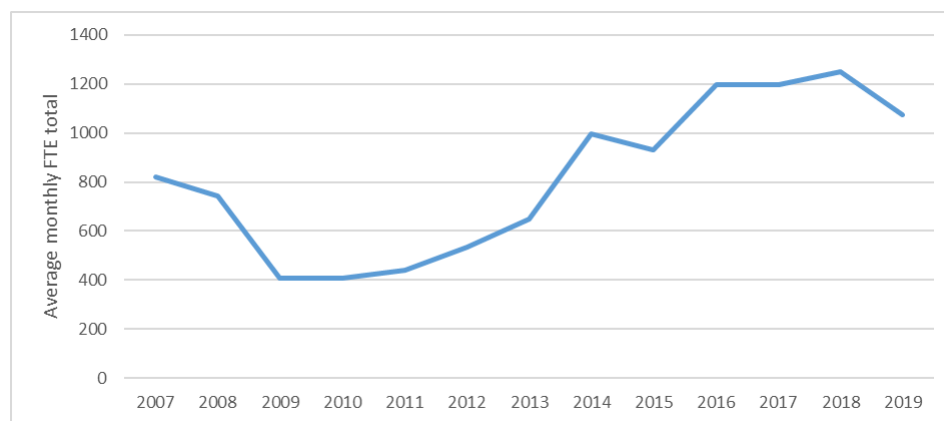
Source: CSHR Databank

4. Temporary Clerical Officer (TCO) usage trends

4.1 TCO yearly trend

Yearly TCO usage⁷ has been trending upwards since 2009. Figure 12 shows the average monthly TCO FTE in each year 2007 to 2019. However, it is important to note that the data used in this analysis shows only the total number of TCO's active at the end of each month. Hence, a TCO who started and finished their contract within the month would not be recorded in the end of month figures. But as this issue is present in all months and all years during the period, the trends shown in figures 12 and 13 provide a reliable basis for initial insights⁸.

Figure 12 – Total yearly TCO usage 2007-2019



Source: CSHR Databank

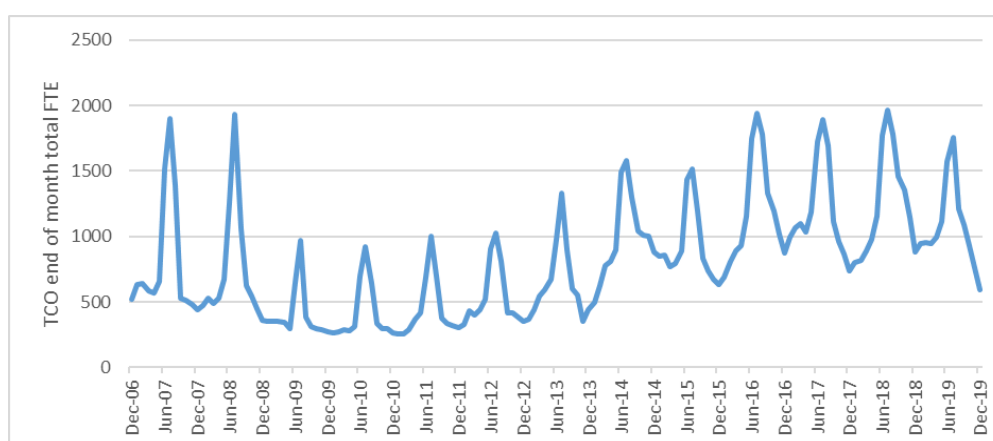
4.2 TCO monthly usage trend

Figure 13 shows that TCO usage is subject to seasonality with a high peaks during the summer period (June, July and August). However, since 2007 TCO usage outside of the summer months has increased, as a result, the proportion of TCO usage concentrated in the summer months has declined every year. In 2007 approximately 50% of all TCO usage was concentrated in the summer months, this has fallen to 35% by 2019. While usage still spikes in the summer, increased usage is evident throughout the year.

⁷ Defined in this paper as the average number of TCO's active at the end of every month in each year.

⁸ Further research on TCO usage would benefit from using anonymised data from the payroll system (CorePay), which was not available to the author within the project timelines.

Figure 13 – TCO monthly usage trend 2007-2019



Source: CSHR Databank

5. Summary of key insights

- Total yearly new joiners have increased every year since the lifting of the moratorium in 2014, rising from circa 1,200 in 2015 to circa 3,000 in 2019.
- The Civil Service* age distribution is skewed significantly to the right, with 28% of the total current workforce over the age of 55. The age distribution of new joiners is likely contributing to this.
- The gender balance of joiners between 06-08 and 17-19 has improved across all grades. The biggest changes were at the EO, PO and Senior Management grades.
- While the joiner proportion of the Civil Service* appears to be growing, significant concerns over the data remain.
- Highest proportion of new joiners 2015-2019 was in the Revenue Commissioners (16%), Department of Justice and Equality (9%), and the Garda Civilians (9%).
- Highest full time equivalent growth between 2015 and 2019 was in the Department of Health (54%), the Garda Civilians (47%) and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (43%).
- The use of TCO's has trended steadily upwards since 2009, with increases seen across all months of the year not just summer period.

This research paper is one of a series on the Civil Service workforce in Spending Review 2020 to further strengthen strategic workforce planning.

6. Future research

The findings of this paper indicate that the Civil Service numbers are growing at a significant rate.

The paper presents an analysis of the Civil Service* workforce at the start of 2020, as well as new joiner⁹ and TCO usage trends, with the aim of informing policy discussions on the drivers of these numbers. The following further research questions remain:

- (i) What are the strategic drivers of the growth in Civil Service* numbers (FTE) and new joiners?
- (ii) What might be the Irish Civil Service* of the future look like if the profile and behaviour of past joiners and exits remain constant?
- (iii) How might the pool of applicants be influencing the new joiner profile? While this paper identifies who is joining, it offers no insights into who is applying. An analysis of the profile of all applicants at the various stages of the recruitment process would help to explore the influence of the recruitment process and candidate pool on the profile of new joiners; i.e. how do applicants with less experience fair when competing for roles that do not have experience requirements, are any groups entering the process but not successfully emerging from the process etc.
- (iv) Analysis of the Irish Prison Service data, once available, would provide a comprehensive Civil Service perspective.

⁹ New Joiners in this paper refers to individuals who joined the Civil Service* in a specified year and have no prior Civil Service* experience (i.e. their PPSN was never previously registered on the HR management system).

Appendix 1: Glossary

Full time equivalent (FTE)

This is the number of active employees measured on a full time equivalent basis, rather than counted individually (i.e. headcount).

Headcount

This is the number of active employees, not all of whom work full time. Hence, this figure is greater than the full time equivalent employee number.

Generalist

This term is used throughout the paper as a skillset proxy, albeit not a strong one. The generalist category refers to the HRMS system grade classification based on the employee's contract, which often arises from large scale recruitment campaigns. The pay grades classified as generalist are standard and higher in each grade, as applicable. For example Assistant Principal (AP) standard codes 3235 and 63235 and AP higher codes 1450 and 61450.

Non-generalist

This term is used throughout the paper as a skillset proxy, albeit not a strong one. The non-generalist category refers to the HRMS system grade classification based on the employee's contract, which encompasses all those not within generalist grades (including professional and technical grades, etc.).

Equivalent grades

These are non-generalist grades, sometimes professional and technical grades, where the grade is aligned to the most appropriate generalist grade for data categorisation purposes. Yet the pay scales may differ and span more than one generalist grade.

Professional and technical grades¹⁰

Within Professional and Technical there are 18 specialist grades:

1. Accountant/Auditor	7. Inspector	13. Planner
2. Architect	8. Law Clerk	14. Psychologist
3. Barrister	9. Marine Biologist	15. Quantity Surveyor
4. Dental Surgeon	10. Medical General Practitioner	16. Scientist
5. Engineer	11. Nursing Staff	17. Solicitor
6. Examiner of Maps	12. Pharmacist	18. Veterinary Surgeon.

Teachers and members of An Garda Síochána (police force), and staff of local authorities and of the health services belong to the wider public service, rather than the Civil Service. Their salaries, however, are also paid from central government funds, through the Departments of Education, Justice, Environment and Health respectively.

¹⁰ Source: Government of Ireland (2008), [‘Civil Service Manual 2008’](#), page 17.

Quality Assurance process

To ensure accuracy and methodological rigour, the author engaged in the following quality assurance process.

- ✓ Internal/Departmental
 - ✓ Line management
 - ✓ Spending Review Steering group
 - ☐ Other divisions/sections
 - ☐ Peer review (IGEES network, seminars, conferences etc.)
- ☐ External
 - ☐ Other Government Department
 - ☐ Other Steering group
 - ☐ Quality Assurance Group (QAG)
 - ☐ Peer review (IGEES network, seminars, conferences etc.)
 - ☐ External expert(s)
- ☐ Other (relevant details)



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