European Commission

eGovernment in Ireland

ISA

eGovernment in Ireland, February 2016, Edition 18.0

Country Profile

Basic data and indicators

Basic Data

Population (1 000): 4 625,885 inhabitants (2015)

GDP at market prices: 189, 046 million Euros (2014)

GDP per inhabitant in PPS (Purchasing Power Standards EU 28 = 100): 134 (2014)

GDP growth rate: 5.2 % (2014)

Inflation rate: 0.3 % (2014)

Unemployment rate: 9.4 % (2015)

General government gross debt (Percentage of GDP): 107.5 % (2014)

General government deficit/surplus (Percentage of GDP): - 3.9 % (2014)

Area: 69,797 km^2

Capital city: Dublin

Official EU language: Irish (Gaeilge), English

Currency: EUR

Source: Eurostat

Political Structure

Ireland is a **parliamentary republic**. The Parliament (*Oireachtas*) consists of two Houses: *Dáil Éireann* (the Lower House, 166 elected members – this number is being reduced to 158 at the election taking place on 26 February 2016.) and *Seanad Éireann* (the Senate, 60 members). The Senate members are broken down as follows: 11 nominated by the Prime Minister (*Taoiseach*); 43 elected by five panels representing vocational interests, namely Culture and Education, Agriculture, Labour, Industry and Commerce, and Public Administration; and 6 elected by the graduates of two universities - three each - by the National University of Ireland and the University of Dublin (Trinity College).

The Head of State is the President of Ireland, elected directly by the people for a seven-year term renewable once. The formal powers and functions of the President are prescribed in the Constitution; the President, who does not have an executive or policy role, exercises them on the advice of the Government. Executive power is exercised by the Government, led by a Prime Minister (Taoiseach) who is appointed by the President upon the recommendation of the Lower House.

There are 31 local authorities with a total of 949 members known as councillors: 26 county councils, which are responsible for local government in 24 geographical counties including the county of Dublin (Dublin county has 3 county councils); 2 city and county councils; and 3 city councils. The council has jurisdiction or control throughout its administrative area. Each council administrative area, apart from the 3 Dublin county councils and the 3 city councils, has a system of municipal districts based on electoral areas. There are in total 95 municipal districts, integrating town and county governance.

The Constitution of Ireland was approved by the people in 1937; subsequent amendments have always been submitted to a referendum, with the last one taking place on 22 May 2015.

Ireland became a member of the European Union on 1 January 1973.

Head of State: President Michael D. Higgins (since 11 November 2011).

Head of Government: Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Enda Kenny (since 9 March 2011).

Information Society Indicators

Generic Indicators

The following graphs present data for the latest Generic Information Society Indicators for Ireland compared to the EU average. Statistical indicators in this section reflect those of Eurostat at the time the Edition is being prepared.

Percentage of households with Internet access in Ireland
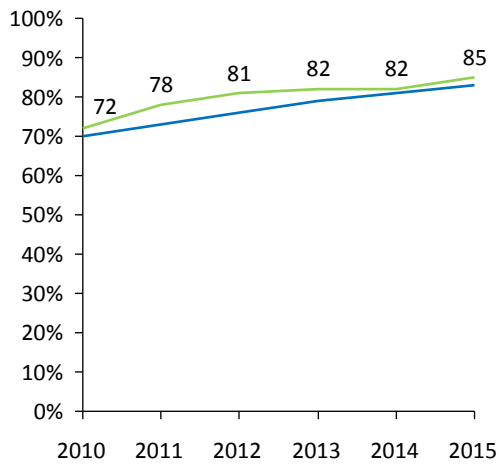
Percentage of enterprises with Internet access in Ireland
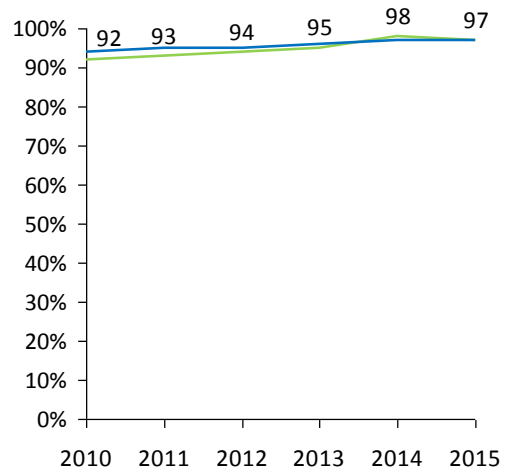
Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

——— Ireland
——— EU

Percentage of individuals using the internet at least once a week in Ireland
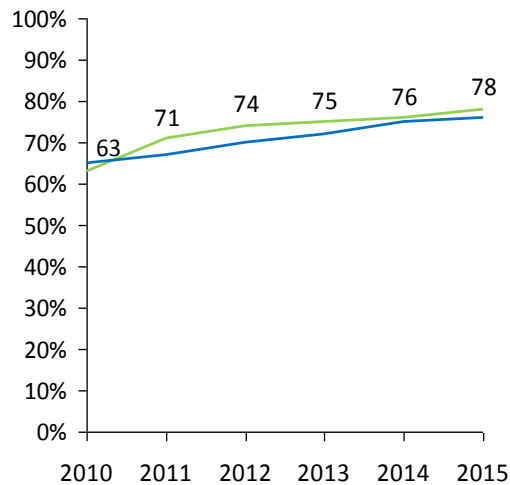
Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

Percentage of households with a broadband connection in Ireland
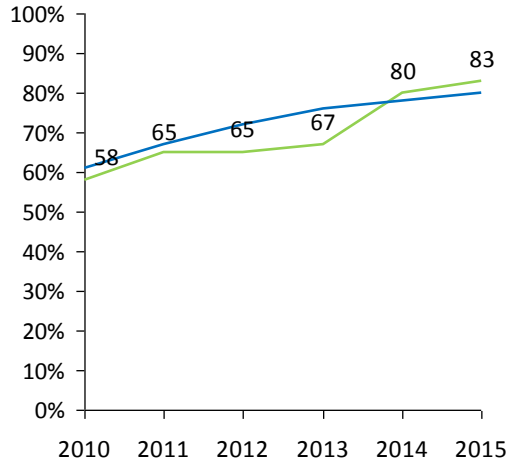
Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

Percentage of enterprises with a broadband connection in Ireland

Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

—— Ireland
—— EU

Percentage of individuals having purchased/ordered online in the last three months in Ireland
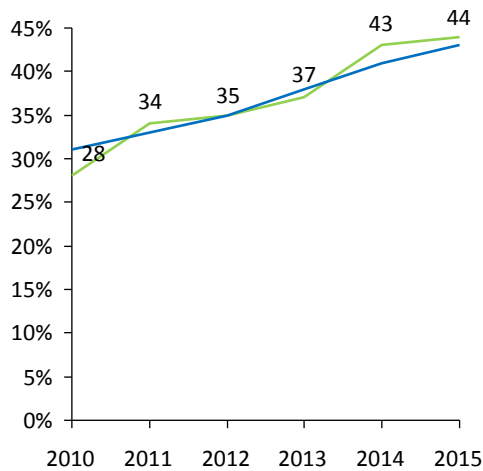
Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

Percentage of enterprises having received orders online within the previous year in Ireland
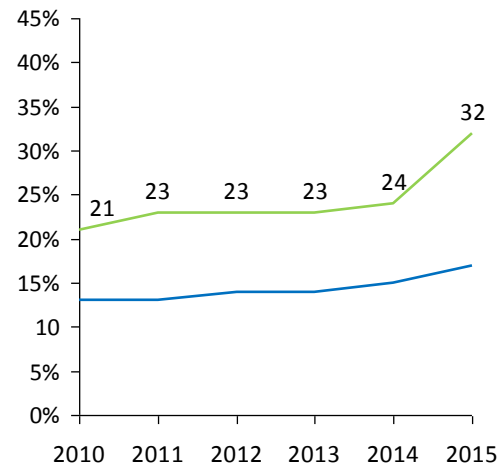
Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

eGovernment Indicators

The following graphs present data for the latest eGovernment Indicators for Ireland compared to the EU average. Statistical indicators in this section reflect those of Eurostat at the time the Edition is being prepared.

Percentage of individuals using the internet for interacting with public authorities in Ireland
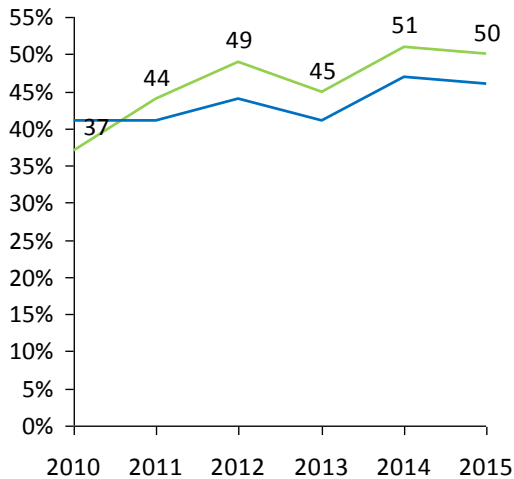
Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

Percentage of individuals using the internet for obtaining information from public authorities in Ireland
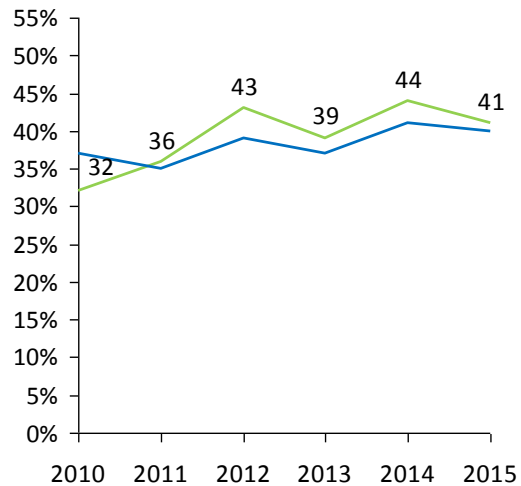
Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

—— Ireland
—— EU

Percentage of individuals using the internet for downloading official forms from public authorities in Ireland

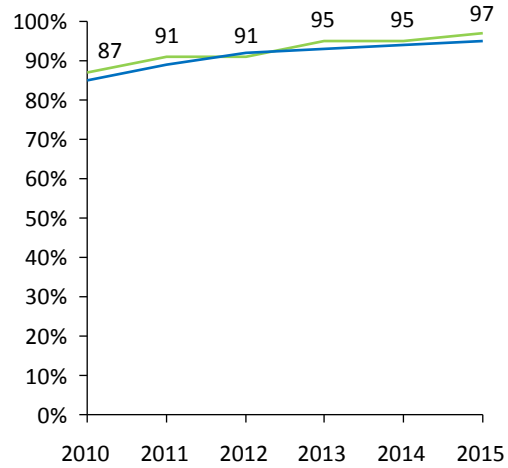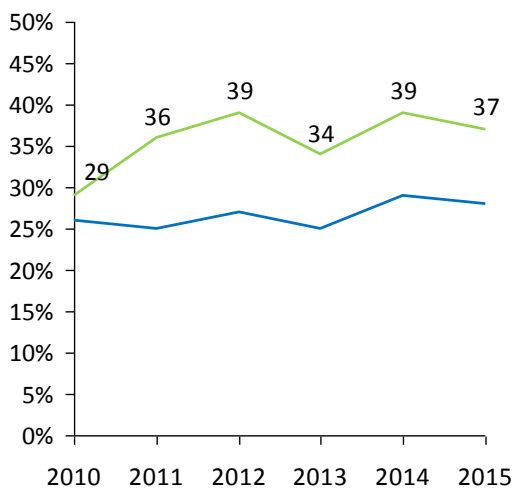Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

Percentage of individuals using the internet for sending filled forms to public authorities in Ireland
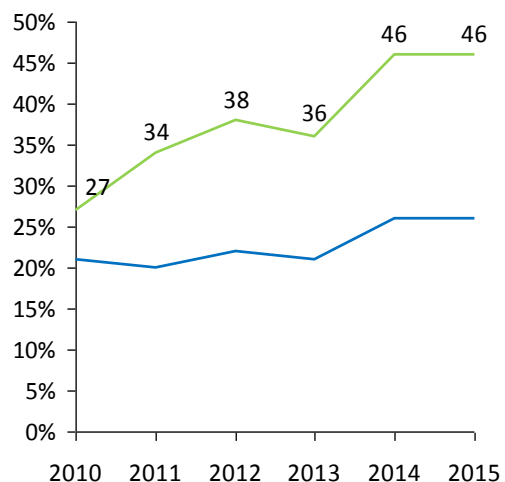
Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

eGovernment State of Play

The graph below is the result of the latest eGovernment Benchmark study[1], which monitors the development of eGovernment in Europe, based on specific indicators. These indicators are clustered within four main top-level benchmarks:

- **User Centricity** – indicates to what extent (information about) a service is provided online and how this is perceived.

- **Transparent Government** – indicates to what extent governments are transparent regarding: i) their own responsibilities and performance, ii) the process of service delivery and iii) personal data involved.

- **Cross Border Mobility** – indicates to what extent EU citizens can use online services in another country.

- **Key Enablers** – indicates the extent to which 5 technical pre-conditions are available online. There are: Electronic Identification (eID), Electronic documents (eDocuments), Authentic Sources, Electronic Safe (eSafe), and Single Sign On (SSO).

These top-level benchmarks are measured using a life-events (e.g. mystery shopping) approach. The following life-events were used for measuring the eGovernment Benchmark top-level indicators: Business start-up and early trading operations, Losing and Finding a Job, Studying, Regular business operations, Moving, Owning and driving a car, and Starting a small claims procedure. The figure below presents the development of eGovernment in Ireland compared to the EU average score.
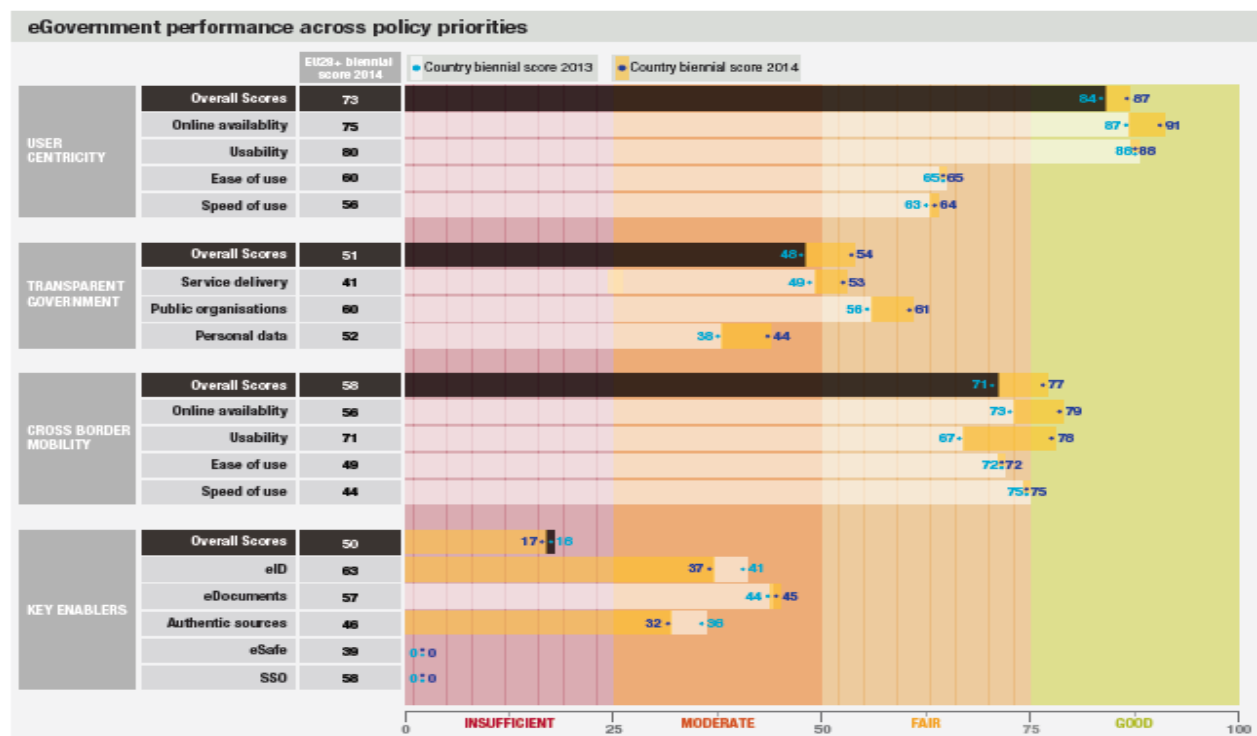
Source: eGovernment Benchmark Report 2015[2] Country Factsheet

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[1] eGovernment Benchmark Insight Report

[2] The latest version of country benchmark report was published in June 2015, however it shall be noted that it summarizes the country's biennial score of the preceding year (2014).

eGovernment History

Main developments and key milestones (in reverse chronological order)

For the latest developments, see: Joinup news.

Recent News

November 2015

In November 2015, Ordnance Survey Ireland launched GeoHive, a service that provides access, through a data catalogue and a map viewer, to a range of authoritative Irish spatial data. GeoHive allows users to use large amounts of data without the need to buy, collect, or store all that data. They can however easily use the information to make informed decisions. The service provides access to, amongst other things, Irish topographic, street address and aerial imagery.

June 2015

In June 2015, at the event organised by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, a new version of the national Open Data portal was presented. The key aim of the portal is to provide a single source of access to the official data in an open format. The beta version of the portal provides a link to the total number of 840 datasets, and the latest version of the portal also includes further improvements in the search-ability and ease of use of the portal. The event has also launched a public consultation on the two key documents: the Foundation Document for the development of the Public Service Open Data Strategy; and a Technical Framework to the datasets in open format on the portal gov.ie, as drafted by the Public Bodies Working Group. The event provided space for discussions on the topic of open data in the public sector, open data for business and open data for researchers and academia. The stakeholders included all national open data stakeholders in the country - i.e. civil society, businesses, research and academia, and public servants).

January 2015

In January 2015, the Public Service ICT Strategy was approved by the Government and published. The Strategy will enable the Public Service to build on existing successes and use ICT to operate in a more efficient, shared and integrated manner across all of Government. Through innovative use of ICT, citizens will be able to engage with Government through new digital channels, while achieving better efficiencies through sharing across the wider public service.

The Strategy identifies 5 key objectives aimed at providing a framework for innovation and excellence in ICT in the Public Service. The focus is on better sharing and integration of services; continued and improved digitisation of services; facilitating lawful sharing of data; improving governance of ICT; and improving the resource levels and skillsets in Public Service ICT.

December 2014

On 3 December 2014, the HSE launched a new website, www.undertheweather.ie which was developed in conjunction with GPs and pharmacists. It provides a wealth of information on many common illnesses and is the best place to get advice about the symptoms of Respiratory Syncytial Virus and other ailments, how to manage them and when you are likely to get better.

The rollout of the Public Services Card (PSC) is continuing with 900,000 cards expected to be issued by the end of 2014. The PSC currently is being used for Social Welfare payments and the Free Travel pass scheme. Over time, it will evolve to become the mechanism by which citizens can easily validate their entitlement to public services and the infrastructure that supports the card will be used to support the delivery of a range of other services. The card was first introduced in 2012 by the Department of Social Protection.

September 2014

From 19 September 2014 (the 'e-day'), Government Departments, Local Authorities and State Agencies no longer use cheques in their dealings with businesses.

July 2014

On 22 July 2014, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform launched Ireland's national Open Data Portal and research reports. The portal, data.gov.ie, is populated with data from Government Departments and other public service bodies. As this is an ongoing project, the range of data available will increase over time.

June 2014

On 18 June 2014, the road transport operator's licence website rtol.ie was launched. The site allows road haulage and road passenger transport operators to apply for - and manage - their licences online. It builds on the successful motortax.ie website which has processed 17M online tax renewals to June 2014.

In June 2014, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform announced an updated Databank website that provides comprehensive information on every aspect of Government expenditure over the years. Users can easily create tables and spreadsheets showing how spending on current, capital, or pay has evolved since 1994, whether for the whole of Government or for individual Departments.

February 2014

Following on from the appointment of a Government CIO (Interim), a new Public Service ICT Strategy is being developed in conjunction with the Public Service CIO Council. It will refresh the existing eGovernment and Cloud Computing strategies by reflecting the new opportunities emerging as new technologies and consumer preferences change.

The Public Service ICT Strategy will set out a high-level vision to reinforce ICT's role in supporting Public Service Reform and Transformation. It will identify a number of key strategic objectives that will set the future direction for innovation and excellence in ICT within the Public Service.

The Strategy is aligned with the objectives of the [Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016](#) of increasing efficiencies and the overarching objective of providing better outcomes for citizens, businesses and public servants though embracing the latest technological advances.

The Strategy will be published in January 2015 and will be followed by a Strategic Implementation Plan.

December 2013

During 2013, the introduction of Local Property Tax (LPT), was a major administrative challenge for Revenue. The online element of this process can be seen at [revenue.ie](#), which facilitates property owners in self-assessing, filing and paying the new tax. To ensure the optimum customer experience, a number of new technologies were exploited, including: in-memory data grid for improved response times; high volume database replication to provide 24 * 7 online availability; geo coding to create an online interactive guide providing indicative property values; a mobile app providing real-time returns and payments statistics for senior Revenue managers; and social media monitoring technology to identify customer sentiment.

September 2013

On 19 September 2013, the [e-day](#) was announced. This day will occur on 19 September 2014, following which the public sector will no longer write cheques to business users, nor will the public sector accept cheques from business users. In preparation for e-day, all Government Departments and Offices, local authorities and State agencies [were requested](#) to review their use of cheques and acceptance of cheques from businesses, and the corresponding actions of all bodies under their aegis. This initiative was one of a number arising from the [National Payments Plan](#) launched in April 2013.

March 2013

On 26 March 2013, the Borrow Books library announces that it would provide users with a new service enabling them to search the online catalogues and websites of Irish public library authorities and request books, CDs, DVDs, etc. to be delivered to their own local branch.

More specifically users will now be able to enter search terms in the search box on the homepage; select the results from the chosen library service listing; check the catalogue listing for the item they are looking for; fill in the Borrow Books form; and click the 'send your request' button to have the request processed.

April 2012

On 12 April 2012, Mr Brendan Howlin T.D., the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, publishes the government's new approach to eGovernment: 'Supporting Public Service Reform - eGovernment 2012-2015' in an effort to deliver faster, better and more efficient public services to citizens and businesses. Intelligent, targeted use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and eGovernment are key enablers for these improvements. The new strategy places citizens and businesses at the centre of eGovernment".

On 10 April 2012, the city council of Limerick, Ireland's third largest city shows more and more use of free and open source in order to rid itself of IT vendor lock-in. It began three years ago by switching to the free and open source suite of office tools LibreOffice, replacing a proprietary office suite.

February 2012

On 9 February 2012, the Irish Minister of State responsible for the Office of Public Works (OPW), Brian Hayes TD launched a pilot project on eInvoicing across a number of Government Departments and other public sector bodies. The project is overseen by the National Procurement Service (NPS) of the OPW, while the Institute of Technology Sligo provides research and technical coordination.

September 2011

As announced on 19 September 2011, a new Government websitehealthcomplaints.ie is launched to provide information on how to make a complaint or comment about a healthcare or social care service in Ireland. The website is currently maintained by the Office of the Ombudsman, the Government agency under the governance of a committee that represents 19 public and voluntary agencies

June 2011

On 30 June 2011, the new Irish Government platform www.gov.ie is launched by Brendan Howlin, Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to provide centralised and integrative access to over 300 public services and websites. The portal provides links to three different types of services: Online Services, Government Websites, Citizens Information.

On 21 June 2011, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform launches a new online Databank of expenditure information, which provides full, open access to a vast range of information about how public money is spent in Ireland. The new Databank website provides comprehensive information on every aspect of Government expenditure over the years, including an automatic graphical representation of tables and spreadsheets.

May 2011

In May 2011, Government capabilities in the Justice Sector are advanced through the Criminal Justice Interoperability Project (CJIP). It is an innovative and creative solution to what was a labour intensive administrative process prone to delays. CJIP facilitates the electronic exchange of data and supports all business between Ireland's National Police Service (*An Garda Síochána*) and the District Courts nationally.

March 2011

On 23 March 2011, the National Library of Ireland receives the Open Source eGovernment Award for its online catalogue in Ireland's eGovernment Awards for 2011. The award recognises the National Library's use of open-source software in its Single Discovery Interface Project, particularly the VuFind Discovery Interface and the Apache Solr search platform, to improve and simplify access to its collections.

February 2011

On 18 February 2011, Ireland's Local Government Computer Service Board (LGCSB), a public sector body that provides shared ICT services to local government, announces its move to open source software. Following a recent 15-20 % cut in its IT budget, the LGCSB aims to save on licence costs and to prepare local government for a future that will involve social media, the semantic web and web 3.0 technologies.

2001 - 2010

Due to extensive length of the document, the eGovernment History has been shortened in the latest version of the eGovernment factsheet. Nevertheless, the information for years 2001 – 2010 can be fully retrieved here.

eGovernment Strategy

Main strategic objectives and principles

Public Service ICT Strategy

A new Public Service ICT Strategy has been developed by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) in collaboration with the Public Service Chief Information Officer (CIO) Council. The Strategy, which was approved by Government and published in January 2015, sets out the Government's overall approach to ICT and contains a series of principles to ensure momentum is maintained in this area.

The *Public Service ICT Strategy* sets out a high-level vision to reinforce ICT's role in supporting Public Service Reform and transformation. It identifies a number of key strategic objectives that will set the future direction for innovation and excellence in ICT within the Public Service:

- **Build to Share:** creating ICT shared services to support integration across the wider Public Service to drive efficiency, standardisation, consolidation, reduction in duplication and control cost;

- **Digital First:** Digitisation of key transactional services and the increased use of ICT to deliver improved efficiency within Public Bodies and provide new digital services to citizens, businesses and public servants;

- **Data as an Enabler:** In line with statutory obligations and Data Protection guidelines, facilitate increased data sharing and innovative use of data across all Public Bodies to enable the delivery of integrated services, improve decision making and improve openness and transparency between Government and the public;

- **Improve Governance:** Ensure that the ICT strategy is aligned, directed and monitored across Public Bodies to support the specific goals and objectives at a whole-of-government level and with an emphasis on shared commitment; and

- **Increase Capability:** Ensure the necessary ICT skills and resources are available to meet the current and future ICT needs of the Public Service.

The Strategy sets out to build on the ICT foundations that will deliver government services of the future. It is aligned with the objectives of the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016 and the goals of the Civil Service Renewal Plan and has the overarching objective of providing better outcomes for citizens, businesses and public servants though embracing the latest technological advances.

Public Service Reform Plan 2014 - 2016

A new Public Service Reform Plan was published on 14th January, 2014. Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016 sets out objectives and actions for Public Service Reform over the next three years. Under the Plan, the reform agenda will be about protecting and improving public services.

There are four key themes running through the **new Reform Plan**:

- delivery of improved outcomes for service users – based on using alternative models of service delivery and improvements in service delivery at sectoral and organisational levels;

▶ achieving and utilising the "reform dividend" – freeing up resources by making existing processes more cost effective and efficient, and using the savings to invest in improved services;

▶ greater digitalisation and use of open data – to deliver services and information in innovative ways;

▶ more openness, transparency and accountability – to strengthen trust in government and public services, and to enhance public governance

The plan was complemented by a [progress report](#) that sets out the progress achieved on the implementation of the previous Reform Plan.

eGovernment Strategy 2012 - 2015: Supporting Public Service Reform

The Programme for [Government and the Public Service Reform Plan](#) highlight information and communications technologies (ICT) as key enablers to deliver improved public services. Strong focus is placed on the customer by making better use of technology to improve the customer experience, including a number of priority actions for public bodies which are intended to enhance public service delivery; ensure that citizens and businesses have ease of access to a range of services through multiple channels; improve data sharing across public service organisations; and, develop a more integrated approach. Other actions covered may include cloud computing, the use of data centres, sharing of common ICT services, open data, and social networking.

Objectives of the eGovernment Strategy

- The user comes at the centre of eGovernment policy. A new approach is introduced to transform the engagement of citizens and businesses with the state, and reduce the costs of public service delivery and take-up.

- It is built on the significant progress already been achieved in eGovernment by Public Bodies, understanding that mistakes have been made and important lessons have been learned, equally identifying challenges and actions for further progress.

- It recognises the need to continue existing eGovernment initiatives that deliver real benefits to users, but also requires from public bodies to consider the potential of new and emerging technologies to improve public service delivery and to ensure that services reach the people for whom they are intended.

- It acknowledges that all citizens and businesses can benefit from using eGovernment services.

- It provides a roadmap for public services embracing the potential benefits of eGovernment and identifies a list of overarching actions for the period until end-2015.

Key eGovernment principles under this strategy:

- The needs of citizens and businesses are at the centre of eGovernment.

- Public services should be delivered through the most appropriate channels.

- eGovernment should reduce the administrative burden for citizens and businesses.

- eGovernment projects should reflect business process improvements, delivering demonstrable

- Efficiency, effectiveness and value for money gains.

- Public bodies should work to ensure that the online channel 2 is the most attractive option for customers.

Public Service Reform Plan (2011 - 2015)

EGovernment is also addressed within the [Public Service Reform Plan](#) published on 17 November 2011, where the intent to launch a new eGovernment Strategy within 2012, in order to maximise electronic service delivery through innovative solutions, is announced. The Public Service Reform Plan addresses a wide range of issues such as:

- implementation of shared services models for HR, payroll, pensions etc;

- evaluation of new business models for the delivery of non-core services;

- reform of public procurement processes and property rationalisation; and

- reducing costs, addressing duplication and eliminating waste to support job creation.

The Comprehensive Review of Expenditure process will set out a key set of objectives and priority areas to be funded. The delivery of these objectives will be supported by the ongoing reform in each Sector, along with an agreed set of cross-cutting reform initiatives. The intent of the cross-cutting initiatives is to reduce duplication and support the delivery of more streamlined services and support structures. These will continue to be enabled by the ongoing progress being made in the implementation of the Public Service Agreement.

At the heart of this reform agenda is a focus on five major commitments to change:

- Placing customer service at the core of every action;

- Maximising new and innovative service delivery channels;

- Radically reducing costs to drive better value for money;

- Leading, organising and working in new ways; and

- Strong focus on implementation and delivery.

National Recovery Plan (2011 - 2014)

The importance of eGovernment is also reflected in the Irish Government's '[National Recovery Plan (2011-2014)](#)', which has identified the domain as a key priority area.

According to the Plan Ireland's eGovernment strategy focuses on improved delivery of information electronically, enhanced electronic delivery of services and better use of shared technology approaches. The plan also recommends ways of overcoming some of the difficulties and barriers that exist with placing certain information and services online. Most public bodies actually publish comprehensive information on their services and schemes online; a wide range of public services are presently either fully or partially available online, and many public bodies are using shared technology approaches to deliver these.

In the general spirit of looking towards the future, a comprehensive Identity Management Policy for the Public Service is being developed. This is necessary given the dependence on many schemes and services on proper identification of customers, the need to facilitate greater personalisation in the delivery of services and the need to comply with international legislation and obligations. Once the research and consultations are completed, a proposal will be submitted to Government for consideration. This action will be carried out during 2011.

Previous eGovernment Strategies

eGovernment Strategy 2010

The previous eGovernment Strategy of Ireland was set out in the <u>eGovernment Strategy 2010</u>, a strategy drafted by the Irish Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Current status

Most services that are readily amenable to delivery by electronic means have been delivered. Access to many of these is available through the Online Services portal on the <u>Government website</u>. Additionally, Ireland has significantly increased its standings in the EU eGovernment Benchmarks and is considered one of the top two performers in the delivery of eProcurement services. However, it is clear that much remains to be done, both in terms of eGovernment being prioritised within civil and public service bodies, and in terms of moving services or part of them more online.

This Strategy details the Government's goals for the next phase of eGovernment development. It acknowledges the particular difficulties there are with further provision of online facilities. It sets out the phased approach that can be taken to overcoming these barriers and achieving those goals.

Goals of eGovernment Strategy

The Government wants to see a significant improvement in the use of electronic means for delivering public services and sets the following goals for the next phase of its eGovernment Programme:

- **Goal 1 - Enhanced Information Provision:**Information about all services (in terms of how they work, availability, access, eligibility, and costs) will be improved. This improvement will be in terms of quality (facility in usage and available details) including examples and Frequently Asked Questions where appropriate. The improvement will also be in terms of provision over as many channels as are appropriate such as the web, through mobile phones/technologies, and by intermediaries.

- **Goal 2 - Enhanced Electronic Delivery of Services:**The online delivery of all services by all public bodies will be improved and every effort will be made to eliminate the need for non-online channels. Public bodies will endeavour to ensure that their services are as amenable to self-service as possible, and in this way, will strive to reduce staffing requirements by minimising the need for keying-in and validating data, and verifying eligibility.

- **Goal 3 - Enhanced Use of Shared Approaches:**The public service will seek to make as much use as is feasible of shared approaches in the achievement of Goals 1 and 2. In this regard, public bodies will make greater use of centralised process support systems such as identity registration and authentication, means assessment, payments, and forms services, as they become available. Public bodies will seek to aggregate and centralise the delivery of services of the same type which are now distributed across bodies and authorities.

The Irish Government believes that all efforts will have to be phased in over time, and in some cases, services will have to be delivered electronically on a partial basis. The Government proposes to concentrate on this under two distinct categories. The first involves **service-specific improvements**, which should be possible in the short-medium term. The second relates to **organisation** or **sector** or **system-wide improvements** that are likely to take a medium-longer term.

eGovernment in the 'Transforming Public Services' Programme (2008 - 2010)

The 'Transforming Public Services' (TPS) Programme launched in November 2008 set out actions aimed at a radical overhaul of the Irish Public Service while placing the citizen/user of public services at the centre of its work. The TPS Programme was the term given to the 'Report of the Task Force on the Public Service' and the 'Government Statement on Transforming Public Services', elaborated below:

'Report of the Task Force on the Public Service'

The report recommended a range of initiatives which the Task Force deemed to be implemented over the three years following its publication, namely the development of a strategy by which eGovernment delivers coherent and citizen-focused services, and more closely supports greater efficiency in administrative processes. The Task Force believed that the greater use of shared services (for internal administration and direct service delivery), more ambition in relation to eGovernment and improved central and local management of ICT can simultaneously yield significant cost savings and service improvements for the citizen.

'Government Statement on Transforming Public Services'

In its related Statement on TPS, on the occasion of publication of the report, the Government outlines an integrated package of measures to deliver real change in its public services. These measures form the basis for the transformation of the Irish Public Service. The Government has committed to a significant expansion in the number of online services available to the individual and business user. It intends to see the development of shared services on a wide scale across the Public Service as a means of reducing administrative costs and spreading best practice by building up centres of expertise.

New Connections-A Strategy to realise the potential of the Information Society (2002 - 2005)

The Irish eGovernment strategy was set forth in 'New Connections - A Strategy to realise the potential of the Information Society', which was presented in March 2002. The Government aimed to have all public services capable of electronic delivery available online through a single point of contact by 2005. This overarching objective was a central focus for all Departments and Agencies through their Statements of Strategy under the Public Services Management Act, resulting in the eGovernment agenda being clearly integrated with mainstream business strategy and objectives.

Information Society Action Plan (1999 - 2001)

In January 1999, the Government launched the 'Implementing the Information Society in Ireland' action plan, which laid down a series of actions and initiatives for the period 1999 - 2001, comprising development of telecommunications infrastructure (national availability of broadband included), new legislation and other measures to enable both public and private businesses to operate online and a range of eGovernment initiatives and projects. Its main objective was to ensure that the benefits of the Information Society would be availed of by Irish citizens and businesses, thus contributing to the ongoing improvement of both the society and the economy.

eGovernment Legal Framework

Main legal texts impacting on the development of eGovernment

eGovernment Legislation

Current status

There is currently no overall eGovernment legislation in Ireland. However, administrative guidelines for implementation of related Government Decisions are issued by "Circular". The latest circular regarding eGovernment was Circular 5 of 2012 Arrangements for eGovernment, which advised of new arrangements for enhancing and monitoring progress with eGovernment in keeping with the Public Service Reform Plan and Government Decision which approved the eGovernment Strategy, eGovernment 2012-2015.

Data-Sharing and Governance

In October 2013, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform brought a Memorandum to Government setting out a series of actions to improve data-sharing in the public service. Chief among these was the development of the Heads of a Data-Sharing and Governance Bill.

On 1 August 2014, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform published a policy paper entitled, "Data Sharing and Governance: Policy Proposals", which set out key elements of proposed legislation. Interested parties were invited to make submissions responding to the policy proposals. The Department received many constructive submissions, which are published below. The submissions received have contributed significantly to the development of policy on Data-Sharing, and the Department is very grateful to the respondents for their contributions to date.

On 24 November 2014, a public information event was held to discuss the outcomes of the consultation. The event was addressed by Robert Watt, Secretary General of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform; Helen Dixon, Data Protection Commissioner; and Daragh O'Brien of Castlebridge Associates. This event allowed for useful discussion of the main policy issues from different perspectives.

Having considered the submissions received, the Department prepared a draft General Scheme of the Data-Sharing and Governance Bill which was submitted to Government for approval to commence drafting of the Bill.

In July 2015, the Government approved the drafting of the Data-Sharing and Governance Bill 2015, along the lines of the General Scheme, subject to such drafting or technical amendments as may be agreed between the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and the Attorney General.

Freedom of Information Legislation

Freedom of Information Act (2014)

A new Freedom of Information Act came into force on 14 October 2014. It provides for the commitments in relation to freedom of information contained in the Programme for Government by removing the main substantive restrictions in access to official information introduced in 2003, extending FOI to all public bodies unless specifically exempt in whole or

in part and providing a framework for the extension of FOI to non-public bodies in receipt of significant funding from the Exchequer. The legislation also provided an opportunity for a necessary consolidation modernisation and updating of the legislation. The Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003 are **repealed** under the new Act.

Freedom of Information (Amendment) Act (2003)

The Freedom of Information Act (FOI) went into effect on 21 October 1998. It was lastly amended on 11 April 2003 notably in relation to Section 19 (Government Records) and Section 20 (Deliberations of Public Bodies). FOI asserts the right of members of the public to obtain access to official information to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy.

FOI derives from the following broad principles:

▸ Decisions by public bodies should be more open to public scrutiny.

▸ Those affected by decisions of public bodies should have the right to know the criteria used in making those decisions.

▸ Citizens, as shareholders in public bodies, should have the right to examine and review the deliberations and processes of public bodies.

▸ Every individual should have the right to: know, correct and complete information held in government records about him or her.

The public bodies prescribing to the regulations of the Act include universities, institutes of technology and colleges of education, RTE and TG4, major service providers in the intellectual and physical disability fields, voluntary hospitals and bodies in the enterprise/support sector. A full list of public bodies to which the FOI Act applies is available on the FOI Central Policy Unit website. The Act does not apply to the National Police Service and a number of other bodies, including the Health and Safety Authority, the Central Bank, the Financial Services Authority, the Irish Financial Services Regulatory Authority and the National Treasury Management Agency.

Public bodies are required to publish information relating to their structure, functions, duties, descriptions of records, and the internal rules, procedures, practices, guidelines and interpretations. The Office of the Information Commissioner oversees and enforces the Act. Decisions of the Commissioner are binding and can be appealed only on a point of law.

Data Protection/Privacy Legislation

Data Protection Strategy 2014 - 2016

The mission of the strategy is to protect the individual's right to data privacy by enabling people to know, and to exercise control over, how their personal information is used, in accordance with the Data Protection Acts and related legislation.

Data Protection (Amendment) Act (2003)

The Data Protection Act of 1988 was amended in 2003 to ensure full compliance with the EU Data Protection Directive (95/46/EC).The aim of the Directive is to establish common standards of data protection across Member States in order to protect personal privacy and to ensure the smooth operation of the internal market, while ensuring adequate levels of data protection in countries outside the European Economic Area to facilitate and encourage international trade (Department of Justice and Law Reform). The Data Protection Commissioner oversees and enforces the Act. Copyright and Related Rights Act (2000).

This Act affects a total reform of Irish copyright and related rights law, bringing it fully into line with the requirements of EU and international law in this area. It places Ireland among world leaders in terms of standards for copyright protection.

eSignatures Legislation

Electronic Commerce Act (2000)

The Electronic Commerce Act 2000, which became law on 20 September 2000, implements the EU Directive on a Community framework for electronic signatures (1999/93/EC). The Act provides (with some exceptions) for the legal recognition of electronic signatures, electronic writing and electronic contracts. It authorises the use of encryption and sets the rights and obligations of Certification Service Providers (CSPs).

eCommerce Legislation

Electronic Commerce Act (2000)

The Electronic Commerce Act became law on 20 September 2000. It implements the EU Directive on a Community framework for electronic signatures (1999/93/EC) and, in part, the EU Directive on electronic commerce (2000/31/EC).

The Act provides (with some exceptions) for the legal recognition of electronic signatures, electronic writing and electronic contracts. It authorises the use of encryption and sets the rights and obligations of Certification Service Providers (CSPs).

European Communities (Directive 2000/31/EC) Regulations (2003)

The Minister for Enterprise Trade & Employment signed the regulations in 2003 with a view to giving effect to those remaining provisions of the EU Directive on electronic commerce (2000/31/EC) not transposed into Irish law by the Electronic Commerce Act.

eCommunications Legislation

Communications Regulation Act (2002)

By means of the Communications Regulation Act 2002 and of secondary legislation (a number of statutory instruments), Ireland transposed all Directives under the EU regulatory framework for electronic communications, namely: Directive 2002/21/EC (Framework Directive); 2002/20/EC (Authorisation Directive); 2002/19/EC (Access Directive); 2002/22/EC (Universal Service Directive); and 2002/58/EC (Directive on privacy and electronic communications).

eProcurement Legislation

The Office of Government Procurement commenced operations in 2014 and together with four key sectors (Health, Defence, Education and Local Government), is responsible for sourcing all goods and services on behalf of the Public Service. In addition, the OGP is also responsible for procurement policy and procedures. Information on procurement legislation, directives and regulations can be found at http://www.procurement.ie/publications .

European Communities (Award of Public Authorities' Contracts) Regulations (2006)

Ireland implemented on 29 June 2006 the EU Directive on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts (2004/18/EC) into Irish law with the enactment of the European Communities (Award of Public Authorities' Contracts) Regulations 2006 (S.I. No. 329 of 2006).

European Communities (Award of Contracts by Utilities Undertakings) Regulations (2007)

The 2007 regulations (S.I. No. 50 of 2007) gave effect to the EU Directive on the co-ordination of procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors (2004/17/EC), as amended by Directive 2005/51/EC of 7 September 2005.

National Public Procurement Policy Framework (2004)

The National Public Procurement Policy Framework, published in 2004, aims at driving the four strands of the procurement reform agenda: aggregating public sector demand, building procurement capacity/capability in the public sector, developing procurement training and education, and incremental development of eProcurement systems.

Re-use of Public Sector Information (PSI)

European Communities (Re-Use of Public Sector Information) (Amendment) Regulations (2015)

In December 2015, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Mr Brendan Howlin T.D., signed statutory regulations which transpose Directive 2013/37/EU **on the re-use of Public Sector Information (PSI)** into Irish law, thereby enhancing the rights of Irish citizens and businesses to re-use existing information held by public bodies in new products and services.

Directive 2013/37/EU (which amends an earlier PSI Directive from 2003 (Directive 2003/98/EC)) affects how the information can be re-used, once it has been legitimately accessed, by placing obligations on the public sector to the benefits of re-users. It has amended the PSI regime established by the 2003 Directive in the following ways:

- The general principle underlying the PSI regime is changed to ensure that accessible documents are re-usable for commercial and non-commercial purposes;
- The fees chargeable by public sector bodies for re-use of documents are capped at marginal cost, with important exceptions;
- The means of redress available to a re-user must now include the possibility of review by an impartial body capable of making binding decisions (In Ireland, the Information Commissioner will take on this role);
- The scope of the regime is extended to documents held by museums, libraries and archives, with important differences around charging and permissions;
- There are new transparency requirements for situations in which charges are made.

These enhancements to the EU-wide arrangements for access to Public Sector Information complement the Government's overall open data agenda, which aims to encourage the making

available of certain types of data and information held by public bodies (for example data on transport, education, crime and environment) for the benefit of citizens and organisations who wish to make use of it for either commercial or non-commercial purposes.

European Communities (Re-Use of Public Sector Information) Regulations (2005)

This statutory instrument (secondary legislation, S.I. No. 279 of 2005) transposes the EU Directive on the re-use of public sector information (2003/98/EC) into Irish Law. It came into effect on 1 July 2005.

eGovernment Actors

Main roles and responsibilities

National eGovernment

Policy/Strategy

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

The overall responsibility for the eGovernment policy and the provision of central eGovernment infrastructure and services lies with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Coordination

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has the overall responsibility for coordinating the implementation of eGovernment policy across the Public Service in Ireland.

Implementation

Government Departments and Agencies

Individual Government Departments and Agencies are responsible for developing specific eGovernment plans in relation to their own areas of operation and for implementing eGovernment projects within the framework of their competences.

Support

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform monitors eGovernment development and provides regular comprehensive progress reports to Government.

Audit/Assurance

Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General

The Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General is tasked with:

- auditing and reporting on the accounts of public bodies;
- establishing that transactions of public bodies are in accordance with the legal authorities governing them and that funds are applied for the purposes intended;
- providing assurance on the system of internal financial control put in place by each body;
- examining whether each body administers its resources economically and efficiently, and sets up mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of operations.

Data Protection

Data Protection Commissioner

The Data Protection Commissioner is responsible for upholding the rights of individuals as set out in the Data Protection Act, and enforcing the obligations upon data controllers. The Commissioner is appointed by the Government and is independent in exercising his/her functions.

Other

Office of the Information Commissioner

The main functions of the Information Commissioner are the following:

▶ review the decisions of public bodies in relation to Freedom of Information (FOI) Act requests and, where necessary, the making of binding, new decisions;

▶ review of the operation of the FOI Act to ensure that public bodies comply with its provisions;

▶ foster an attitude of openness among public bodies by encouraging the voluntary publication of information above and beyond the minimum requirements of the Act;

▶ prepare and publicise observations on the practical operation of the Act.

Regional & Local eGovernment

Strategy

Local Councils

Local authorities develop strategies based on their respective ICT and eGovernment needs.

Implementation

Local Councils

Local authorities implement their respective strategies with the support of the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA).

Support

Local Government Management Agency

The Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) is a state agency of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government established in 2012 to provide a range of services to the Local Government Sector.

It was created following the merger of the Local Government Computer Services Board, Local Government Management Services Board and An Comhairle Leabharlanna. The LGMA provides a range of services within the context of its statutory remit, in support of co-ordinated and cost effective delivery of Local Government services and policy.

Audit/Assurance

Local Government Audit Service (LGAS)

The LGAS is an external audit service providing independent credibility to the financial stewardship function of local authorities and other bodies.

The Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) is a state agency of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government established in 2012 to provide a range of services to the Local Government Sector.

It was created following the merger of the Local Government Computer Services Board, Local Government Management Services Board and An Comhairle Leabharlanna. The LGMA provides a range of services within the context of its statutory remit, in support of co-ordinated and cost effective delivery of Local Government services and policy.

eGovernment Who's Who

Main eGovernment decision-maker and executive

Minister responsible for eGovernment

Brendan Howlin
Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform

Contact details:
Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Government Buildings
Upper Merrion Street, Dublin 2,
Tel.: +353 1 676 75 71
Fax: +353 1 678 99 36
E-mail: Minister@per.gov.ie
Source: http://per.gov.ie/

Government Chief Information Officer

No photo available

Vacant position[3]
Government Chief Information Officer (to be appointed)

Contact details:
Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Government Buildings
Upper Merrion Street, Dublin 2,
Tel.: +353 1 676 75 71
Fax: +353 1 678 99 36
E-mail:
Source: http://per.gov.ie/

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[3] Last update: 07 February 2016.

eGovernment Infrastructure

Main eGovernment infrastructure components

Portals

Government portal

Public Bodies continue to deliver informational and transactional services through their own websites. The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has complemented the work of individual Public Bodies by maintaining the www.gov.ie portal. This portal provides easy access to more than 430 online information and transactional services.

Citizens Information website

Launched in April 2001, the Citizens Information website is run by the Citizens Information Board, Ireland's national agency responsible for providing information and advice on social services, operating under the aegis of the Department of Social Protection. The website provides guidance on a wide range of subjects, such as employment rights, buying a home, moving abroad and education.

The subjects covered are divided into 14 categories, representing life events and activities, allowing users to readily access a relevant topic. Sourced from a wide variety of service providers and agencies, the information is backed up by case studies, supporting documentation and downloadable forms.

Irish Government News Service portal

The Irish Government News Service portal affords a view of government from the vantage point of Government Buildings itself. It reviews the wide range of government activity and then reports certain key events as news. All government press releases are accessible either via RSS feed or links to all Government Departments. The site's central task is to select a variety of events and report on them objectively. It also features 'Issues', where useful thematic information, not tied to a particular date, is presented. It enables people with an interest in Government dealings to view the latest developments on one website. It is produced by a team in Government Buildings, involving the Government Information Service, Government Press and IT.

Local Enterprise

There are over 80 different Government supports for Irish start-ups and small businesses. This online guide is to help Irish start-ups and small businesses navigate the range of Government supports to see which could possibly apply. Local Enterprise Office provides advice, information and support to starting up or growing a business. With dedicated teams across the Local Authority network in Ireland, Local Enterprise Offices offer a wide range of experience, skills and services.

Additional portals include for example:

▸ the Department of Social Protection's network of Intreo Centres, which provide practical, tailored employment services and supports for jobseekers and employers alike; and

▸ online services such as www.businessregulation.ie, which provides, in one place, details of the main regulations which affect businesses.

Network

Government Networks (GN)

GN is a privately managed, wide area multi-carrier, national network (WAN) connecting public service agencies on a data, voice and video capable network. It is designed primarily to facilitate easy, efficient, secure and reliable communication between Government agencies, and to support existing and future Government applications. A mechanism for providing agencies with a secure access to the Internet is included, as well as a means for agencies to securely host Internet services. The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in conjunction with the Government Networks Programme Board has established GN on behalf of the non-commercial public sector.

GN offers a number of potential cost and operational benefits: inter-agency collaboration and delivery of joined-up government services; access for all agencies to network capability and products/technology (regardless of size); execution of a number of standard day-to-day infrastructure services allowing agencies to focus on their core programmes and services; improvement of security of government information systems; incorporation of Internet access costs for Government agencies into one highly resilient infrastructure; commercial advantages of an aggregated procurement approach, resulting in reduced costs.

eIdentification/eAuthentication

Personal Public Service Number (PPSN)

The PPS number is a unique personal identifier and is used extensively by Government Departments and other authorised users to provide the public with secure access to a wide range of public services. State agencies that use PPS numbers to identify individuals include the Department of Social Protection, the Revenue Commissioners and the Health Service Executive (HSE). It is mandatorily assigned to every Irish child at birth. The PPSN may be used in:

▸ All social welfare services;

▸ The Free Travel Pass;

▸ Pupil ID;

▸ Public health services, including the medical card and the Drugs Payment Scheme;

▸ Child immunisation;

▸ Schemes run by the Revenue Commissioners, such as mortgage interest relief;

▸ Housing grants;

▸ Driver Theory Testing and driver licences.

The 'SAFE' programme, jointly sponsored by the Departments of Social and Family Affairs and of Finance, has defined levels of person registration and authentication.

PAYE Anytime Service

The Revenue Commissioners' PAYE Anytime Service provides a means for PAYE (employees) customers to: view their tax record; claim a wide range of tax credits (service charges, union subscriptions and Rent Credit etc.); apply for tax refunds including health expenses; update an address; declare additional income; request a review of tax liability for previous years; re-allocate credits between spouses and track correspondence submitted to Revenue. PAYE is based on the use of a Personal Identification Number.

In 2015, Revenue introduced myAccount, which is a single access point for secure online services (excluding ROS) such as PAYE Anytime, Local Property Tax, Home Renovation Incentive and many more using a single login and password.

Revenue Online Service (ROS)

The Revenue Commissioners also provide a Revenue Online Service (ROS) for business customers. This system provides a means for business customers to: file returns online; make payments by debit card, debit instruction or online banking (Online Banking applies to Income Tax only); obtain online details of personal/clients Revenue Accounts; calculate tax liability; conduct business electronically and claim repayments. The ROS service is based on qualified electronic signatures.

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has developed a system which provides a Single Customer View of public service identity repositories.

Single Customer View

Every resident of Ireland appears in a number of public service databases. For example, a typical person of working age appears in the databases of the Department of Social Protection (PPSN), Revenue (PAYE), HSE (Drug Payment Scheme), Department of Foreign Affairs (Passport) and Department of Transport (driver licensing and vehicle registration).

The Single Customer View is a system which takes records from these databases and links them together. The data stored is the "Public Service Identity" dataset as defined in the Social Welfare legislation.

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform maintains and operates the Single Customer View on behalf of the Department of Social Protection which is the Data Controller for the purposes of Data Protection.

Electronic Passports

In October 2006, the Passport Office within the Department of Foreign Affairs started issuing the Irish electronic passport (ePassport). An ePassport is the same as a traditional passport with the addition of a small integrated circuit (or 'chip') embedded on the photo page. This chip securely stores biographical information which is visually displayed on the data page of the passport and a digital image of the photograph which facilitates the use of facial recognition technology at ports-of-entry. The chip technology allows the information stored on an ePassport to be read by special chip readers at a close distance. It incorporates digital signature technology to verify the authenticity of the data stored on the chip. The Irish ePassport facilitates facial measurements which can be used with facial recognition technology to verify the identity of a bearer.

In 2015, a Passport Card was introduced. The Irish Passport Card, can be used by Irish citizens for travel within the EU/EEA and Switzerland. The Card is available to all Irish citizens who are over 18 years and in possession of a valid Irish Passport. Applications can be submitted online or through the free app from anywhere in the world.

Public Service Card (PSC)

The PSC ensures that people can access public services across a number of channels, including online, via telephone or in person at a public office, with a minimum of duplication while preserving their privacy to the maximum extent possible.

In February 2011, approximately three million PSCs started being issued for citizens over 16 allowing access to public services. Issuing a PSC involves a face-to-face registration process which includes the collection of a photograph and signature. Online appointments to be registered for a Public Services Card (or to get a PPS number) can be made at https://www.mywelfare.ie/. PSCs will gradually replace cards currently in use, such as the Social Services Card and the Free Travel card, with highly secure cards featuring laser engraving personalisation, a contact chip, a signature, a photograph and an expiry date. The rollout of the Public Services Card (PSC) is continuing with a cumulative total of 1,700,000 cards expected to be issued by the of end 2015.

Event Publishing Service

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform runs the Event Publishing Service which provides information on registered deaths to all public service bodies.

eProcurement

eTenders Procurement portal

eTenders is the central government eProcurement platform serving as a single point of access for all Irish public sector procurement opportunities. The site advertises on a daily basis notices for EU and sub-EU threshold contracts for the public sector including central Government, local authorities, Health Boards and hospitals, universities and schools. The service is freely available for use by the public. Contracting authorities are obligated to use the eTendering platform and to electronically publish procurement opportunities over € 10 000. In addition, it is mandatory for public authorities to use the electronic means for all payments, as well as for ICT purchases. In terms of procurement efficiency, the innovative SupplyGov.ie (formerly LAQuotes.ie) is a procurement system which facilitates Local Authorities and other state agencies in procuring goods and services from Suppliers and Contractors.

The online tendering tools provided for public sector purchasers include the online creation of notices with approved eSender status and the attachment of tender documents for downloading by suppliers. Suppliers can submit tenders online, manage their tenders and receive email alerts when tenders of interest to them have been advertised. An online pre-qualification questionnaire submission and evaluation facility is also in place.

The site is managed by the http://www.procurement.ie/.

Other Infrastructure

Digital Mapping System (DMapS)

Digital Mapping is the most extensive and challenging project undertaken by the Irish Property Registration Authority (PRA). The purpose of the project was to convert the Land Registry's extensive paper maps record base into digital form, providing a world class database and transactional system to support the ongoing processing of legal casework within the PRA and the delivery of a wide range of spatial information online to customers.

The digital mapping services are available through the 'landdirect.ie' portal. As of July 2010, all 26 counties are digitised, thus completing the roll-out of digital mapping. As a result, parcel boundary data for these counties is now available for inspection online.

The ISDE portal was launched in October 2008 and operates as an inter-departmental and cross-agency the INSPIRE Directive.

eGovernment Services for Citizens

Availability and sophistication of eServices for Citizens

The information in this section presents an overview of the basic public services, which were identified by the European Commission and Member States under the Your Europe initiative that is an EU site designed to help citizens do things in other European countries – avoiding unnecessary inconvenience and red tape in regard to moving, living, studying, working, shopping or simply travelling abroad.

The groups of services for citizens are as follows:

1. **Travel**

2. **Work and retirement**

3. **Vehicles**

4. **Residence formalities**

5. **Education and youth**

6. **Family**

7. **Consumers**

1. Travel

Passenger rights, documents you need

Passport

Responsibility: Central Government, Department of Foreign Affairs, Passport Office

Website: http://www.dfa.ie; https://www.eforms.gov.ie/en/

Description: Information on passport application process and online facility to request application forms. Passport holders can register to receive reminders of an expiry date and can track the progress of their passport application online. A passport appointment service is available for those travelling at short notice.
The Irish Passport Card, can be used by Irish citizens for travel within the EU/EEA and Switzerland. The Card is available to all Irish citizens who are over 18 years and hold a valid Irish Passport. Applications can be submitted online or through the free app from anywhere in the world.

Money and charges

VAT: declaration, notification

Responsibility: Central Government, Revenue Commissioners

Website: http://www.revenue.ie/

Description: The system allows submission and payment facilities for all VAT returns by all traders or their nominated tax agent. In addition to the standard VAT return, the System supports submission of - Annual Return of Trading Details (RTD Form) and statistical returns - Intrastat and VIES as required.

2. Work and retirement

Working abroad, finding a job abroad, retiring abroad

Income taxes: declaration, notification of assessment

Responsibility: Central Government, Revenue Commissioners

Website: http://www.revenue.ie/

Description: The Irish Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) system is based on a cumulative system whereby tax deductions are balanced over an entire tax year. The tax deductions are made at source and various allowances are also calculated at source. This proactive approach to service delivery means that there is no requirement for the vast majority of employees to submit a tax declaration. Most tax credits/reliefs are automatically carried forward on the PAYE taxpayer's record. Furthermore, claims for credit and tax record look-ups can be performed online.

Job search services by labour offices

Responsibility: Central Government, Department of Social Protection

Website: http://www.welfare.ie/en/pages/intreo_home.aspx

Description: Intreo is a new service from the Department of Social Protection. Intreo is a single point of contact for all employment and income supports.

Professional qualifications

Legal information systems

Responsibility: Several entities

Website: http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/home.html,

Description: Several websites provide Irish legislation in an electronic form. The electronic Irish Statute Book (eISB) includes Acts of the Oireachtas and Statutory Instruments, the official versions of which remain the printed versions published by Government Publications. The eISB also includes the Legislation Directory. Other sources of Irish information are for example the Irish Legal Information Initiatiatice, Irish Statuse Book, or Irish Law Site.

Taxes, unemployment and benefits

Personal Public Service Number (PPSN) I

Responsibility: Departments of Social and Family Affairs and of Finance

Website: http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/social_welfare/irish_social_welfare_system/personal_public_service_number.html

Description: The PPSN is a common identification number used for taxation and social welfare purposes which is gradually being extended across the public service in the interest of improving customer service. It is mandatorily assigned to every Irish child at birth.

Personal Public Service Number (PPSN) II

Responsibility: Irish Tax and Customs

Website: http://www.revenue.ie/en/online/paye-anytime.html

Description: This eService provides a means for PAYE (employees) customers to: view their tax record; claim a wide range of tax credits (service charges, union

subscriptions and Rent Credit etc.); claim a wide range of tax credits and wide range of tax refunds including health expenses; update an address; declare additional income; request a review of tax liability for previous years; re-allocate credits between spouses as well as track the correspondence submitted to Revenue. PAYE is based on the use of a Personal Identification Number.

Unemployment benefits

Responsibility: Central Government, Department of Social Protection

Website: http://www.welfare.ie/

Description: Provides online services and comprehensive details of the main unemployment payments available from the Department.

3. Vehicles

Driving licence

Driver's licence

Responsibility: Central Government, Department of Transport, Road Safety Authority

Website: http://www.rsa.ie/; https://eforms.gov.ie/en/

Description: Information and forms for download purposes. Licence holders can register for an automatic reminder of an expiry date. An online driving test application is also available.

Registration

Car registration (new, used, imported cars)

Responsibility: Central Government, Revenue Commissioners

Website: http://www.revenue.ie/

Description: The system allows registered motor dealers to fully register and pay the registration tax for all new vehicles. All used imported vehicles are required to be produced for inspection at a Revenue Office.

4. Residence (and other) formalities

Documents and formalities

Certificates (birth, marriage): request and delivery

Responsibility: Central Government, Department of Health and Children, General Register Office

Website: www.certificates.ie

Description: Electronic form to apply for a life event certificate.

Criminal Record Certificate

Responsibility: An Garda Síochána (Ireland's National Police Service)

Website: http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving_country/moving_abroad/leaving_ireland/police_certificate.html

Description: Not available as an eService.

Declaration to the police (e.g. in case of theft)

Responsibility: Central Government, An Garda Síochana (National Police Service)

Website: http://www.garda.ie/

Description: Online submission of report to An Garda Siochana.

Housing (building and housing, environment)

Responsibility: Local Government

Website: http://www.dublincity.ie/

Description: Electronic intake with an official form to start the procedure to obtain a building or renovation permission.

Waste

Responsibility: Environment, Community and Local Government

Website: http://www.environ.ie/en/LocalGovernment/LocalGovernmentAdministration/LocalAuthorities/

Description: The local authority can provide advise you on waste disposal and recycling facilities via phone or in person, yet no eService is available.

Elections abroad

Participation in Irish elections

Responsibility: Local Authorities

Website: http://www.checktheregister.ie/PublicPages/AppForms.aspx

Description: Participation in the Irish elections is not available as an eService. Applications forms are available on www.checktheregister.ie, however when complemented they must be returned to the local authority.

5. Education and youth

School, university

Enrolment in higher education/university

Responsibility: Higher education institutions, Central Applications Office (CAO)

Website: http://www.cao.ie/

Description: Online application system, including submission and payment of application fees, confirmation and offers. CAO has been delegated by higher education institutions in Ireland the task of centrally processing applications to their first year undergraduate courses. The participating institutions retain the function of making decisions on admissions.

Public libraries (availability of catalogues, search tools)

Responsibility: Central Government/Local Government, the Library Council

Website: http://www.library.ie/; www.borrowbooks.ie

Description: Libraries offer the possibility to search for a specific title and to perform an electronic reservation. Libraries also offer the possibility of joining book clubs, as well as a wide range of other services.

Student grants

Responsibility: Central Government/Local Government, Department of Education and Skills

Website: https://www.grantsonline.ie/

Description: Online applications for Student Grants. Under the free fees initiative, the DES meets the tuition fees of eligible students who are attending full-time undergraduate courses. Such courses must generally be of at least two years duration, at approved colleges. These colleges include the publicly funded colleges and a number of non-publicly funded religious colleges which are approved for the purposes of the Higher Education Grants Scheme and which are part of the CAO system of entry.

Researchers

Information and assistance to researchers

Responsibility: EURAXESS Ireland

Website: http://www.euraxess.ie/academic/default.aspx

Description: EURAXESS Ireland provides information and assistance to mobile researchers – by means of the web portal and with the support of our national EURAXESS Service Centres. The portal contains practical information concerning professional and daily life, as well as information on job and funding opportunities.

Public libraries (availability of catalogues, search tools)

Responsibility: Central Government/Local Government, the Library Council

Website: http://www.library.ie/; www.borrowbooks.ie

Description: Libraries offer the possibility to search for a specific title and to perform an electronic reservation. Libraries also offer the possibility of joining book clubs, as well as a wide range of other services.

Research support

Responsibility: Irish Research Council

Website: http://www.research.ie/

Description: The mission of the Irish Research Council is to enable and sustain a vibrant research community in Ireland. To address the broad skills and research needs within society, we support excellent researchers in all disciplines from Arts to Zoology.

6. Family [37]

Children, couples

Child allowances

Responsibility: Central Government, Department of Social Protection

Website: http://www.welfare.ie/

Description: Online application for Child Benefit payments for a first child. Payment automatically increases upon registration of the birth of subsequent children.

Certificates (birth, marriage): request and delivery

Responsibility: Central Government, Department of Health and Children, General Register Office

Website: www.certificates.ie

Description: Electronic form to apply for a life event certificate.

7. Consumers

Shopping (your rights), unfair treatment

Citizens Information website

Responsibility: Citizens Information Board (national agency)

Website: http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/

Description: Citizens Information website is run by the Citizens Information Board, Ireland's national agency responsible for providing information and advice on social services, operating under the aegis of the Department of Social Protection. The website provides guidance on a wide range of subjects, such as employment rights, buying a home, moving abroad and education.

eGovernment Services for Businesses

Availability and sophistication of eServices for Businesses

The information in this section presents an overview of the basic public services, which were identified by the European Commission and Member States under the Your Europe initiative that is an EU site designed to help citizens do things in other European countries – avoiding unnecessary inconvenience and red tape in regard to doing business abroad.

The groups of services for businesses are as follows:

1. **Start and grow**

2. **VAT and customs**

3. **Selling abroad**

4. **Staff**

5. **Product requirements**

6. **Finance and funding**

7. **Public contracts**

8. **Environment**

1. Start and grow

Start-ups, European Company

Local Enterprise

Responsibility: Local Enterprise Office

Website: https://www.localenterprise.ie/

Description: This online guide is to help Irish start-ups and small businesses navigate the range of Government supports to see which could possibly apply. Local Enterprise Office provides advice, information and support to starting up or growing a business.

Registration of a new company

Responsibility: Central Government, Companies Registration Office

Website: http://www.cro.ie/

Description: If a business is being established using the entrepreneur's true name, there is no requirement for the business name to be formally registered. If a business is to be carried out under a name other than the entrepreneur's true name, registration of the business name is obligatory and can be registered online. If formal registration is required, it is not possible to fully register a company electronically, under Irish law, as a statutory declaration cannot be made electronically. However, the Companies Registration process in Ireland is quick and efficient.

Intellectual property rights

e-Register of industrial property applications

Responsibility: Irish Patents Office

Website: https://www.patentsoffice.ie/en/

Description: Information about IP in Ireland, and two online services are available. These two services are the following: online payments (for renewal fees, trade mark registration fee(s) and patent grant fee(s) by credit, or debit card), and trade mark e-filling (for trade mark).

Annual accounts

Submission of data to statistical offices

Responsibility: Central Government, Central Statistics Office (CSO)

Website: http://www.cso.ie/

Description: Submission of data to the statistical office can be performed electronically.

2. VAT and customs

VAT – Basic rules, Cross-border VAT, Check a VAT number (VIES), VAT refunds

Revenue Online Service (ROS) (incl. electronic payments)

Responsibility: Central Government, Revenue Commissioners

Website: http://www.revenue.ie/en/online/ros/index.html

Description: Revenue Online Service (ROS) is provided for business customers by the Revenue Commissioners. This system provides a means for business customers to: file returns online; make payments by debit card, debit instruction or online banking (Online Banking applies to Income Tax only); obtain online details of personal/clients Revenue Accounts; calculate tax liability; conduct business electronically and claim repayments. The ROS service is based on qualified electronic signatures.

VAT: declaration, notification

Responsibility: Central Government, Revenue Commissioners

Website: http://www.revenue.ie/

Description: The system allows submission and payment facilities for all VAT returns by all traders or their nominated tax agent. In addition to the standard VAT return, the System supports submission of - Annual Return of Trading Details (RTD Form) and statistical returns - Intrastat and VIES as required.

Excise duties

Corporate tax: declaration, notification

Responsibility: Central Government, Revenue Commissioners

Website: http://www.revenue.ie/

Description: The system allows submission and payment facilities for Corporation Tax returns by companies or their nominated tax agent. Companies filing electronically receive an electronic copy of the Notice of Assessment. The system can accept returns information generated from third party software, as well as Revenue supplied forms.

Customs declaration

Responsibility: Central Government, Revenue Commissioners

Website: http://www.revenue.ie/en/

Description: Online facilities for carrying out customs declarations are available in Ireland via the Revenue On-Line Service (ROS).

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" style="background:#b6d46e">Reporting imports/exports</td></tr>
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Importing and Exporting

Responsibility: Irish Tax and Customs

Website: http://www.revenue.ie/en/customs/businesses/importing/

Description: Several documents required in relation to imports and exports can be accessed via the website of the Irish Tax and Customs.

3. Selling abroad

Providing services abroad, distance selling, importing/exporting rules

Export (Information and advice)

Responsibility: Enterprise Ireland

Website: http://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/Export-Assistance/

Description: Enterprise Ireland is a state agency responsible for supporting the development of manufacturing and internationally traded services companies. The website has a dedicated section committed to facilitation of the development of a strong exporting sector by offering flexible solutions to client needs.

Competition rules, unfair contract terms, consumer guarantees, defective products

Irish law - Legal information systems

Responsibility: Several entities

Website: http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/home.html,

Description: Several websites provide Irish legislation in an electronic form. The electronic Irish Statute Book (eISB) includes Acts of the Oireachtas and Statutory Instruments, the official versions of which remain the printed versions published by Government Publications. The eISB also includes the Legislation Directory. Other sources of Irish information are for example the Irish Legal Information Initiative, or Irish Law Site.

4. Staff

Terms of employment, social security, equal treatment, redundancies

Social contributions for employees

Responsibility: Central Government, Revenue Commissioners, Department of Social Protection

Website: http://www.revenue.ie/, www.welfare.ie

Description: The system allows payment of social contribution (PRSI) and payroll tax (PAYE) by employers, on a monthly/quarterly basis, as required. It also allows for submission of the annual return of employees PAYE and PRSI information. The system is fully compatible with and supports the submission of returns generated from third party software as well as from Revenue supplied forms.

Workplace Relations

Responsibility: Central Government, Workplace Relations Commission

Website: https://www.djei.ie/en/Who-We-Are/Offices-Agencies/Workplace-Relations.html

Description: The Workplace Relations Commission has responsibility for information provision, workplace advice, mediation, conciliation, adjudication, inspection and enforcement in relation to employment rights, equality and equal status matters and industrial relations.

The Labour Court, in addition to providing an appeals mechanism against Adjudication Officer decisions and determinations, establishes Joint Labour Committees, registers Joint Industrial Councils and investigates Trade Disputes affecting the public interest.

See also
http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/employment/enforcement_and_redress/national_employment_rights_authority.html

5. Product requirements

CE marking, mutual recognition, standardisation in Europe, classification, labelling, packaging

National Standards

Responsibility: National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI)

Website: https://www.nsai.ie/

Description: Exhaustive information on the national standards is available on the website, yet no eService is available.

Chemicals (REACH)

Irish REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals, EU Regulation no 1907/2006) Information point(s)

Responsibility: Health and Safety Authority

Website: http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Your_Industry/Chemicals/REACH/

Description: Useful information materials and the text of the national enforcement legislation are available on the website. Furthermore, the Irish REACH Helpdesk Service is available to provide further information.

6. Finance and funding

Access to funding, EU funding programmes

Enterprise Ireland

Responsibility: Enterprise Ireland

Website: http://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/funding-supports/

Description: Enterprise Ireland is a state agency responsible for supporting the development of manufacturing and internationally traded services companies. The website provides detailed information on the process of provision of funding and supports to the companies of different size - from entrepreneurs with business propositions for a high potential start-up through to large companies expanding their activities, improving efficiency and growing international sales.

7. Public contracts

Rules and procedures, tools and databases, reporting irregularities

Public procurement / eProcurement

Responsibility: Central Government, Office of Government Procurement

Website: http://www.etenders.gov.ie/

Description: eTenders is the central government procurement portal. It provides information and tools for electronic public procurement. Online tendering tools are provided for public sector purchasers including: online creation of notices with approved eSender status; attachment of tender documents for downloading by suppliers; online clarifications between buyers and suppliers; online submission of tenders by suppliers; site forums for the different sectors involved in public procurement; and comprehensive guidance material. For suppliers there are free email alerts when tenders of interest to them have been advertised, as well as management of their notices and tenders. An online pre-qualification questionnaire facility has also been rolled out.

8. Environment

EMAS certification, energy labels, eco-design, EU eco-label

Environment-related permits (incl. reporting)

Responsibility: Central Government, Environmental Protection Agency

Website: http://www.epa.ie/

Description: Online submission of requests for environment-related permits. The EPA provides customised and segmented information on environmental-related regulation and obligations, regarding both the AER/PRTR and for IPCC, Waste and Waste Water Discharge applications ('www.epa.ie'). Applicants can also request a determination as to whether an activity requires a waste licence, waste facility permit, certificate of registration, or none of these at
http://www.epa.ie/licensing/licques/article11declarations/ .

An action supported by ISA

This action is supported by ISA, the European Commission's programme for interoperability solutions for European public administrations.

Why ISA?

Administrative procedures have the reputation of being lengthy, time-consuming and costly.

Electronic collaboration between public administrations can make these procedures quicker, simpler and cheaper for all parties concerned, in particular when transactions need to be carried out cross-border and/or cross-sector.

ISA supports this type of electronic collaboration.

With more than 40 actions it provides tools, services and frameworks for the modernisation of public administrations in Europe, across e-borders and sectors.

More on the programme:

http://ec.europa.eu/isa/

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