

An Roinn Gnóthaí
Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of
Foreign Affairs and Trade



Committee of Public Accounts

02 JAN 2020

Received

Ms. Éilis Fallon
Committee Secretariat
Committee of Public Accounts
Leinster House
Dublin 2

20 December 2019

Dear Ms. Fallon,

Dear Ms. Fallon,

I refer to your correspondence on Thursday 28th November, 2019.

Regarding the Committee's request, I have attached a note which details the breakdown of expenditure from the Official Development Assistance budget on the provision of services for people claiming International Protection in Ireland.

This expenditure comes from a range of Government Departments and adheres to the OECD Development Assistance Committee's (DAC) reporting directive on 'In-Donor Refugee Costs', which was approved by member states in 2017. This directive allows specified costs arising in the first year of a refugee or asylum seekers stay in any DAC member state to be classified as Official Development Assistance.

The attached note details how in light of these new directives, the Department and the Department of Justice and Equality, worked with statistical experts from the OECD DAC, to determine what existing expenditure under the Department of Justice and Equality, and other Government Departments' votes qualified as Official Development Assistance, under the approved reporting directives.

If the Committee has any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Niall Burgess
Secretary General

In-Donor Refugee Costs

Briefing Note

Reporting Official Development Assistance

The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is comprised of 30 OECD member states, including Ireland. The DAC sets standards for Official Development Assistance (ODA), collates data on members spend on ODA, and conducts regular peer reviews of DAC members to assure the quality of ODA.

The DAC defines ODA as 'Government aid that promotes and specifically targets the economic development and welfare of developing countries'.

ODA data is collected and verified by the DAC before publication on the OECD website. Agreed, detailed statistical reporting directives ensure all DAC donors report ODA data under a consistent, standard and comparable reporting regime.

All OECD DAC member states, including Ireland, report their ODA expenditures in accordance with these statistical reporting directives. The agreed statistical directives set out the criteria which member states use to determine which elements of their government expenditures can be deemed ODA for reporting purposes.

Approximately 70% of Ireland's total ODA is channelled through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Vote 27 International Cooperation). The remaining 30% is made up of Irelands share of the EU Development Cooperation Budget and ODA eligible contributions made by Government Departments other than the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Among those other Government Departments which contribute to Ireland's overall total ODA reported expenditure are the Departments of Finance; Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Communications, Climate Action and the Environment; and Justice and Equality.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade reports Ireland's overall total ODA expenditure to the DAC. This reporting includes ODA expenditure managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Vote 27 International Cooperation) and that expenditure managed by other Departments within their own Votes.

Total Irish reported ODA is also included, in annex form, in the Government of Ireland Annual Report on International Development, a publication of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

In-Donor Country Refugee Costs

In 2017, the DAC, following requests by its members, approved reporting directives for assessing what costs may be categorised as ODA for refugees or asylum seekers across all DAC member states.. These costs are known as 'In-Donor Refugee Costs'. In effect, this allowed certain costs arising in the first year of a refugee or asylum seekers stay in any DAC member state to be classified and reported as ODA.

DAC statistical experts visited Dublin in 2017 to work with Irish officials to determine if existing expenditure under the Department of Justice and Equality, and other government Departments' votes qualified as ODA, under the agreed DAC methodology for calculating in-donor refugee costs.

Following that visit, it was agreed with DAC experts that €36 million of existing Irish Government expenditure on refugees and asylum seekers could be reported as ODA in Ireland's 2017 statistical returns. These costs are incurred in the Voted expenditure of the relevant government Departments.

It is noteworthy that: (1) this was additional to the amount allocated by the State for ODA in Budget 2017; and (2) this is expenditure which the State was incurring in any case.

Furthermore, only costs arising in the first year of a refugee or asylum seekers time in Ireland qualify for reporting under the agreed methodology. These costs are included in the total ODA reported expenditure for Ireland.

As part of the agreed DAC methodology with the OECD DAC, the following costs can be included in the calculation of the statistical return.

- Accommodation,
- Education for both children and adults,

- Refugee Legal Service,
- Exceptional Needs Payments (once off payments including clothes, prams etc),
- Direct Provision Allowance,
- Health Services (including medical cards, medical screening, maternity costs) and resettlement costs.

ODA eligible expenditure comes from a range of government departments, as outlined in annex 1.

Annex 1.

2017 ODA In-Donor Eligible Costs Amount (€ m)	Lead Department	Eligible Costs
€22.38 m	<i>Department of Justice and Equality</i>	Accommodation, Local Authority Resettlement Grants, Grants to Irish Red Cross, Refugee Legal Services,
€4.61	<i>Department of Education and Skills</i>	Primary and Post Primary Education, Language Support, Adult Literacy, Transport to School
€4.20	<i>Department of Health</i>	Medical Care, Medical Screening, Maternity Costs
€3.53	<i>Department of Employment and Social Protection</i>	Direct Provision Allowance, Exceptional Needs Payments
€1.24	<i>Department of Children and Youth Affairs</i>	Pre-School, Unaccompanied Minors
€0.15	<i>Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade</i>	UNHCR Resettlement Costs