

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



10 February 2023

Ms Sarah O'Farrell
Clerk to the Committee
Committee of Public Accounts
Leinster House
Dublin 2

Your ref: S1133 PAC33

Re: PAC 16 February 2023, Vote 40 Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
Appropriation Account 2021

Dear Ms O'Farrell,

I refer to your correspondence of 19 December 2022 concerning the meeting between myself as Accounting Officer and the PAC on 16 February in relation to the examination of the Appropriation Accounts 2021 for Vote 40 – Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).

Please find attached the following document as requested:

- Updated Brief on the 2021 Appropriation Accounts

The names of attendees are:

Contributing Witnesses –

Kevin McCarthy (Secretary General), Carol Baxter (Assistant Secretary), Sheenagh Rooney (Assistant Secretary), Toby Wolfe (Principal Officer), Laura McGarrigle (Assistant Secretary) and Lara Hynes (acting Assistant Secretary)

Non-Contributing Witnesses –

Gordon Gaffney (Principal Officer), Andrew Patterson (Principal Officer), Janice Witcombe (Principal Officer), Paula Quinn (Principal Officer), Michael Thornhill (Principal Officer) and Aidan Madden (Assistant Principal Officer).



I can be contacted on 087-2024847 on the day of the meeting to facilitate contact with attendees if required.

A copy of my opening statement will follow next week. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin McCarthy
Secretary General

**Examination of
Appropriation Account
Vote 40 – Children,
Equality, Integration,
Disability and Youth**

2021

**Committee of Public
Accounts Briefing Note**

February 2023

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Introduction

This briefing paper provides an overview of the Department and how its Vote is structured in the context of the examination by the Committee of Public Accounts of the 2021 Appropriation Account. While the Appropriation Account under examination relates to 2021, information for the previous year, along with provisional figures for future years are also provided, where relevant.

The establishment of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in 2011 resulted in the centralisation of a number of policy areas and programmes from a range of areas including health, education and justice. Its financial allocation was just over €400 million per annum at that time. A major increase in the size of the Vote occurred in 2014 with the creation of the Child and Family Agency, Tusla.

In 2020, the Vote further increased in terms of size and the range of responsibilities, following the transfer of functions from the Department of Justice (DJE) in respect of IPAS and of equality measures respectively. The name of the department changed to reflect its new role and responsibilities. It is now the Department of Children, Equality, Disability Integration and Youth (DCEDIY). Some Youth Justice areas transferred out at that time with some education responsibilities under Tusla transferring in 2021. The Department is currently preparing for a transfer from the Department of Health (DOH) in respect of the specialised community based disability services area of the HSE. It is expected that this transfer will occur in quarter one of 2023. In addition, 2023 will also see a further expansion of the provision for the Early Learning and Childcare sector.

Since the onset of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, there has been a very significant and continuing impact on the work of the Department. In particular, since the invasion began in February 2022 there have been over 72,000 Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTPs) who fled Ukraine and DCEDIY is providing accommodation for more than 53,000 of these. It is noteworthy that DCEDIY is also experiencing a significant increase in the number of international protection applicants Over 15,000 people sought International Protection in 2022 compared to the average projected arrivals of 3,500 per year. This

increased demand and use of emergency accommodation has had and will continue to have a very significant impact on costs and staff in 2023 and into the future, as the Department focuses on developing plans for long-term accommodation solutions.

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth has five programme areas, encompassing responsibility for child protection and welfare, prevention and early intervention, adoption, family supports, early learning and childcare, youth services and youth justice, as well as the areas of equality, integration, international protection and disability policy.

The total value of the allocation to the Vote in 2021 was €1.923 billion (€1.884 billion net). This was split between current expenditure of €1.887 billion and capital expenditure of €36.1 million. This includes a capital carryover allocation of €4.100 million. In 2021, some 89% of the Vote's funding was concentrated in three areas; Tusla, the Child and Family Agency (45%), Early Years Care and Education (33%) and International Protection Seekers (11%) respectively.

The Committee expressed an interest in examining the topics of Direct Provision and Emergency Accommodation (e.g. practical arrangements: public services, planning permission, fire safety)

Briefing on these areas is attached as an appendix to this document (Appendix 1).

Role of the Department

The Department continues to deal with the effects of the war in Ukraine. This significant ongoing situation severely increased the pressures and demands on the work of the Department.

As outlined previously, the Department's functions are organised into five programme areas. Further significant responsibilities will be added during 2023 when responsibility for specialist community based disability services transfer from the Department of Health.

The Statement of Strategy for the Department (2021-2023) sets out the mission statement for the Department with the objective "to enhance the lives of children, young people, adults, families and communities, recognising diversity and promoting equality of opportunity".

To achieve this, the Department is committed to:

- Developing and implementing evidence-informed policies and legislation; ensuring the provision of quality services is underpinned by strategic investment; helping the most vulnerable in our society to achieve their full potential.
- Promoting the development of an equal society, informed by the experience of past generations and seeking to respond to the needs of survivors.
- Working in partnership with all stakeholders, including public bodies and civil society to achieve better outcomes.
- Maintaining high standards of performance and corporate governance within our Department.

Vote 40 for the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth is structured in line with performance budgeting arrangements that align subhead allocations to the Department's high-level goals.

As stated above, the Department had five main programme areas and associated high-level goals in 2021.

The following table shows: Vote 40 Programme areas and associated high-level goals

Programme Area	High Level Goal
A. Children and Family Support Programmes	To support and improve the existing service delivery arrangements to protect and support the welfare of children, young people and families, including oversight of Tusla, the Child and Family Agency.
B. Sectoral Programmes for Children and Young People	To continue to support the provision of both universal and targeted services for the care, development and well-being of children and young people.

C. Policy and Legislation Programme	To oversee key areas of policy, legislation and inter-sectoral collaboration to improve the lives and well-being of children and young people.
D. An Equal and Inclusive Society	To undertake initiatives to promote equality and inclusion in Irish society.
E. A Fair and Efficient Support System for International Protection Seekers	To provide accommodation and related services to persons in the international protection process.

Appropriation Account 2021

Vote 40 Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

Appropriation Account 2021

		2021		2020
		Estimate provision	Outturn	Outturn
		€000	€000	€000
Programme expenditure				
A	Children and family support programme			
	<i>Estimate provision</i>	892,014		
	<i>Deferred surrender</i>	<u>1,812</u>		
		893,826	887,622	876,045
B	Sectoral programmes for children and young people			
	<i>Estimate provision</i>	730,256		
	<i>Deferred surrender</i>	<u>2,288</u>		
		732,544	680,612	600,685
C	Policy and legislation programme	36,681	28,896	27,621
D	An equal and inclusive society	30,128	26,634	19,530
E	A fair and efficient support system for international protection seekers	229,503	200,460	189,109
Gross expenditure				
	<i>Estimate provision</i>	1,918,582		
	<i>Deferred surrender</i>	<u>4,100</u>		
		1,922,682	1,824,224	1,712,990
<i>Deduct</i>				
F	Appropriations-in-aid	<u>39,121</u>	<u>39,175</u>	<u>35,646</u>
Net expenditure				
	<i>Estimate provision</i>	1,879,461		
	<i>Deferred surrender</i>	<u>4,100</u>		
		<u>1,883,561</u>	<u>1,785,049</u>	<u>1,677,344</u>

Surplus

The surplus of the amount provided over the net amount applied is liable for surrender to the Exchequer. Under section 91 of the Finance Act 2004, all or part of any unspent appropriations for capital supply services may be carried over for spending in the following year. €3.2 million in unspent allocations in respect of the capital elements of subheads A.3, A.4, B.5 and B.6 was carried forward to 2022.

	2021	2020
	€	€
Surplus	98,511,940	122,726,899
Deferred surrender	<u>(3,200,000)</u>	<u>(4,100,000)</u>
Surplus to be surrendered	<u>95,311,940</u>	<u>118,626,899</u>

Kevin McCarthy

Accounting Officer

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

31 March 2022

Summary

The net funding for the Department in 2021 amounted to €1.884 billion (2020: €1.800 billion) when Appropriations in Aid of €39.1 million (2020: €36.5 million) is taken into account. This includes a capital carryover allocation of €4.1 million. The outturn for the Vote was €1.785 billion (2020: €1.677 billion) resulting in a surplus of €99 million (2020: €123 million). The main factor influencing the allocation and outturn of the Department in 2021 was the continuing impact of Covid 19 and resulting restrictions in place. These matters affected the operation and functions of the Department as well as the overall allocation and the level of activities and expenditure across multiple subheads.

The following sections set out a summary of the allocations and outturn for 2021 along with details of the Covid 19 impacts.

Allocation 2021

The net value of the allocation to the Vote in 2021 was €1.884 billion (gross: €1.923 billion).

- This gross allocation was split between current of €1.887 billion and capital of €36.1 million (including carryover of €4.1m).
- The allocation in 2021 was split between the five programme areas, with 46% for Programme A, 38% for Programme B, 2% for Programme C, 2% for Programme D and 12% for Programme E.
- The net provision for 2020 was €1.800 billion.
- Appropriations in Aid have an estimated provision of €39 million, principally in relation to payroll deductions for the Department and Tusla, dormant account funds as well as EU receipts.

Outturn 2021

The outturn for 2021 shows a net outturn of €1.785 billion compared to the provision of €1.884 billion

- Surplus of €99 million (2020: €123 million).
- The lower than estimated outturn was mainly as a direct result of the Covid 19 pandemic.

- The continued impact of the Covid 19 pandemic and the evolving response resulted in making 2021 a very difficult year in which to accurately forecast expenditure, and most subheads of the Vote finished the year with a surplus.
- The bulk of the surplus is concentrated in two of the three larger programme areas; Programme B (€52 million) and Programme E (€29 million). Programme B, which relates to Early Years Childcare expenditure, was impacted by the closure of schemes for part of the year. Programme E, in relation to International Protection Seekers Accommodation, was impacted by curtailments to international travel.
- €3.2 million of the surplus was deferred. This is in relation to capital carryover where 10% of the allocation which was unspent in 2021, was carried forward to be utilised in 2022.

Transfer of functions

During the year, there were some minor changes in relation to the size and responsibilities under the remit of this Department. A small segment of educational responsibilities moved to Tusla the Child and Family Agency from the Department of Education and responsibility for the Balance for Better Business initiative transferred to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in January 2021. A transfer of the HSE's specialised community based disability services from Department of Health which is due to occur in quarter one of 2023.

ICT cyber-attack

After the establishment of DCEDIY, the Department of Health (DoH) continued to provide ICT services to DCEDIY. In December 2019, DCEDIY transferred delivery of most of its ICT services to the Build to Share (BTS) service provided by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO). The only service remaining on DoH infrastructure was the Financial Management Service (FMS). In 2020, a project commenced to move DCEDIY's FMS from DoH servers onto the servers of the OGCIO. This project had reached testing stage and was scheduled to be completed in the last quarter of 2021.

On 14 May 2021, the Health Service Executive (HSE) was subjected to a serious cyber-attack, through the criminal infiltration of their IT systems (e.g. PCs, servers). The HSE decided to shut down all of its IT systems and disconnect the network from the internet, in order to contain and assess the impact of the cyber-attack.

Separately, DoH had already implemented mitigating measures from 13 May 2021, following notifications of detected activity from a security partner. In response to an attack on 14 May 2021, DoH shut down services as a precautionary and investigative measure.

This immediately resulted in DCEDIY losing access to the server on which the FMS was held. Therefore, DCEDIY's Finance Unit no longer had access to the system that was used to process and record payments on a daily basis as well as various financial reports.

To ensure appropriate controls operate in respect of payments made outside of the FMS, changed processes were devised and implemented for the period 21 May 2021 to 26 June 2021, after which the DCEDIY FMS was housed on the OGCIO servers and normal processes resumed.

Covid 19 Impacts

The ongoing impact of the Covid 19 pandemic and the evolving response resulted in making 2021 a very difficult year in which to accurately forecast expenditure, and most subheads of the Vote finished the year with a surplus.

The main driver of the 2021 outturn was the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic and the effect that it had on all areas of the Vote. The changing landscape of 2021 resulted in:—

- Lower levels of recruitment and longer lead-in times for filling posts.
- All travel was curtailed and a number of training initiatives were cancelled.
- Capital expenditure in Oberstown Children's Detention School was delayed with complications arising in part from Covid restrictions and precautions.
- Temporary cessation from January to March 2021 of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) childcare schemes due to the fourth pandemic wave, which resulted in restrictions of childcare spaces to vulnerable children and the children of essential workers. In addition, registration levels following reopening were below original anticipated levels as the sector slowly reopened.
- Reduced Migration into the country resulted in fewer applications for asylum being made.

- Upgrades to State-owned International Protection centres were not realised due to curtailments in the construction sector.

Analysis of 2021 Expenditure

Administration Budget 2021

The administration budget is reported under Subheads A01, B01, C01, D01 and E01 in respect of pay and under Subheads A02, B02, C02, D02 and E02, in respect of non-pay. The administration budget supports the day-to-day operational costs associated with the running of the expanded Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

The provision for the 2021 administration budget amounted to €38.5 million.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
Total			
Administration - Pay	32,025	25,252	21,711
Administration - Non-Pay	6,422	4,925	4,064
Total	38,447	30,177	25,775

The outturn for 2021 was €30.177 million representing an underspend of €8.27 million, due to:

Pay is underspent by €6.773 million, mainly related to the changing landscape caused by the Covid 19 pandemic, which resulted in lower levels of recruitment and longer lead-in times than originally anticipated for filling replacement posts in 2021.

Non-pay is underspent by €1.497 million, relating to the disruption of normal business activities during the Covid 19 emergency, resulting in savings across a number of categories. A number of planned ICT projects due to take place in 2021 did not occur. This was due to delays in the tendering process for business analysis services, required by the ICT Governance Board, in respect of projects for large public-facing digital applications. In addition, there were delays due to the challenges faced with the extraction of reliable data from outdated Lotus Note applications, as well as business units awaiting legislation enactment required for commencement of planned projects. There were also underspends because of the 'work from home' mandate in place for virtually all of 2021.

At the end of 2021, the Department had 486 full time equivalent employees which is an increase from 365 at the end of 2020. There were a further 8 staff employed by the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes, down from 11 in the previous year. Agencies of the Department had 4,921 employees compared to 4,938 at the end of 2020.

The table below provides details of full time equivalent (FTE) for DCEDIY and its associated agencies for the years 2020-2021.

Note 5 Staffing and Remuneration

5.1 Employee numbers

Full time equivalents	2021	2020
Number of staff at year end		
Department	486	365
Commission of Investigation	8	11
Agencies of the Department (note 5.2)	4,921	4,938
	5,415	5,314

Funding by Programme Area

Programme A – Children and Family Support Programmes

High Level Goal: To support and improve the existing service delivery arrangements to protect and support the welfare of children, young people and families, including oversight of Tusla, Child and Family Agency.

The total provision in 2021 was €893.8 million, an increase of €12 million (1%) on 2020. This includes €1.8 million of capital carryover funds from savings in 2020.

- Tusla - €859.44 million (45% of the total Vote) (includes capital carryover of €1.7 million); and
- Youth Justice - Oberstown Children’s Detention Campus €28.18 million (1% of the total Vote) (includes capital carryover of €0.33 million)

The bulk of the increase related to Tusla, with an increased allocation of €20 million on core activities, less a reduction on non-core (Covid) costs of €8 million.

The outturn for programme A in 2021 was €887.6 million, an underspend of €6.2 million across the programme areas, the underspend on programme A is attributable across all the subheads.

Details regarding the distribution of the funds and outturn across programme A, are set out in the table below including 2020 outturn for comparison purposes:

Programme A Children and family support

		2021		2020
		Estimate provision	Outturn	Outturn
		€000	€000	€000
A.1	Administration – pay	4,229	3,283	3,511
A.2	Administration – non pay	1,125	886	496
A.3	Child and Family Agency			
	<i>Estimate provision</i>	857,961		
	<i>Deferred surrender</i>	1,482		
		859,443	857,345	840,080
A.4	Youth justice – including Oberstown Children Detention Campus			
	<i>Estimate provision</i>	27,853		
	<i>Deferred surrender</i>	330		
		28,183	26,108	23,831
A.5	Guardian ad Litem Executive Office	845	—	127
A.6	Child and Family Agency Covid related supports	1	—	8,000
		893,826	887,622	876,045

A03: Tusla, the Child & Family Agency, and**A06: Tusla, the Child & Family Agency Covid Related Supports**

Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, has responsibility for a range of universal and targeted services including:

- Child welfare and protection services;
- Educational welfare services;
- Foster care and private residential foster care;
- Pre-school inspection services;
- Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Services (DSGBV); and
- Community-based services related to the psychological welfare of children and families.

The outturn and provision for Tusla for 2021 shows the following:

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
A.3 Child and Family Agency	859,443	857,345	840,080
A.6 Child and Family Agency Covid-related Supports	1	0	8,000
Total	859,444	857,345	848,080

- Tusla's Estimate provision for 2021 was €859 million. This included a capital carryover allocation of €1.5 million.
- The outturn for A03 in 2021 was €857 million compared with the estimate provision of €859.44 million. Pay and pensions combined was behind profile by €10.7m or -3%, with non-pay ahead of profile by €10.7 million or -2%. Capital expenditure was behind by €2.1 million, as a result of Covid-19 restrictions in the construction sector which resulted in the pausing of work on two of Tusla's major capital projects. Supply chain issues in relation to the purchase of ICT equipment also contributed to the overall underspend.
- There was no equivalent estimate provision for A06 in 2021 versus €8 million provided for in 2020 in relation to Covid 19 costs.

A04: Youth Justice including Oberstown Children Detention Schools

Irish Youth Justice Services (IYJS) provides funding for the following initiatives:

Governance and oversight of the Oberstown Children Detention Schools Campus (OCDC), a national service that provides a safe and secure environment for young people remanded in custody or sentenced by the Courts for a period of detention, the sole institution of its kind in the State.

Also funding State Claims Agency work on legal cases against OCDC and the Department.

The outturn and estimate provision for IYJS for 2021 is shown in the table:

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
A.4 Youth Justice- Children's Detention Schools	28,183	26,108	23,831

- The overall provision for 2021 was €28.2 million. This includes a capital carryover allocation of €0.333 million.
- The outturn for 2021 was €26.1 million, an underspend of €2 million which was mostly due to delays in capital works as a result of Covid-19 restrictions in the construction sector during the year, resulting in the large saving. The outturn for this subhead in 2020 was €24 million or €4 million below provision.

A05: Guardian Ad Litem Executive Office

The objective of the Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) Office is to regulate the existing system of GAL appointments and to extend the system so that GALs can be made available to any child who would benefit from one, within the public law system.

The outturn and provision for the GAL Executive Office for 2021 is shown in the below table:

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
A.5 Guardian Ad Litem Executive Office	845	0	127

- The GAL Executive Office had a provision of €0.845 million in 2021. The outturn was €Nil due to the launch date being delayed as the underpinning legislation lapsed on the dissolution of the Dáil. This, combined with the need for redeployment of the project team staff to more urgent Departmental priorities arising from Covid 19, resulted in a temporary pause in the operational planning for the introduction of the new service and a consequential pause in spending in all areas of the project apart from the development of the IT system.

Programme B – Sectoral Programmes for Children and Young People

High Level Goal: To continue to support the provision of both universal and targeted services for the care, development and well-being of children and young people

The total provision in 2021 was €730 million, an increase of €44 million (6%) on 2020 (€686 million).

The main elements of this programme funding are the three Early Learning and Childcare Subheads that encompass the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme, the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) school programme and the National Childcare Scheme (NCS), as well as Youth Organisations and Services, Dormant Accounts and other smaller subheads.

In subhead B3 ECCE and AIM Pre-School Programmes, there was an underspend of €Following reopening, registrations for the NCS were lower than anticipated.

Original savings of €16 million due to reduced service delivery costs because of Q1 restrictions and reduced demand for crisis supports on foot of ongoing government Covid supports developed in 2020 that were extended into 2021, were identified. €10 million of these savings were repurposed and utilised to provide for a Covid Ventilation Scheme for the childcare sector.

Programme B Sectoral programmes for children and young people

		2021		2020
		Estimate provision	Outturn	Outturn
		€000	€000	€000
B.1	Administration – pay	8,003	6,313	6,087
B.2	Administration – non pay	1,513	1,182	849
B.3	ECCE and AIM pre-school programmes	334,500	323,154	243,661
B.4	National Childcare Scheme and other childcare programmes	214,726	185,958	118,772
B.5	Childcare programmes: delivery supports and other initiatives			
	<i>Estimate provision</i>	88,716		
	<i>Deferred surrender</i>	2,288		
		91,004	84,411	62,796
B.6	Youth organisations and services (part funded by the National Lottery)	69,789	68,575	64,701
B.7	Creative Ireland	100	7	14
B.8	Economic and social disadvantage measures (Dormant Accounts funded)	10,008	9,388	9,586
B.9	Programme for Peace and Reconciliation	2,900	1,624	2,244
B.10	Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) COVID related supports	1	—	82,697
	<i>Prevention and early intervention programmes</i>	—	—	9,278
		732,544	680,612	600,685

The outturn for Programme B in 2021 was €681 million, an underspend of €52 million across the programme areas per the following table below, the largest underspends in Programme B relate to the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic on the provision of early learning and childcare across the four Early Years subheads. This variance is primarily a result of underspends on the early learning and childcare beneficiary programmes, following the suspension of funding of these schemes during the Covid 19 closures from January to March 2021 and over the duration of the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS), followed by lower than anticipated demand upon re-opening.

B03: ECCE and AIM Pre-School Programmes

This subhead supports the delivery of the free pre-school year under the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme, which provides children within the eligible age range with access to fully funded early learning and care for the two years before they start primary school. It also provides for the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM), which is designed to ensure that children with a disability can access and participate meaningfully in the ECCE programme.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
B3: ECCE and AIM Pre-School Programmes	334,500	323,154	243,661

The funding provision for B03 in 2021 amounted to €334 million, an increase of €84 million or 17% against the 2020 provision. While indicating an increase of €84m year on year, when taking into account the reallocation of the €88.4 million of funds moved in 2020 for Covid supports, and to address pressures elsewhere on the Vote, in reality the figures reflect a real net reduction of €4.1 million over the original 2020 allocation. This reduction in allocation is due to demographic changes; declining birth rates (2.9% drop from 2016 to 2017 and a further 1.7% drop from 2017 to 2018).

The outturn for 2021 was €323.1 million – an underspend of €11.3 million. This compares to an outturn in 2020 of €243.7 million. The underspend in 2021 can be attributed to:

- the suspension of the ECCE scheme from Jan – Mar 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions of just over €4million
- an underspend in AIM due to service providers paying staff using EWSS funds rather than AIM funding of approximately €15million offset by;
- funding of €7.5 million was repurposed to cover the new Covid-19 Operational Support Payment (COSP)
- a slight overspend on the ECCE programme support payments of circa €1 million

B04: National Childcare Scheme and Other Childcare Programmes

This subhead supports beneficiary funding for the National Childcare Scheme (NCS), which has replaced the targeted early learning, and childcare programmes including the Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) programme, Training, and Employment Childcare (TEC) programmes respectively. This subhead also contains funding for the CCS and TEC Programme Support Payment.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
B4: National Childcare Scheme and Other Childcare Programmes	214,726	185,958	118,772

Subhead B04's overall provision for 2021 was €214.7 million, representing an overall decrease of €60 million over 2020, driven by a review of the expected reduced demand for 2021, following the Covid-19 pandemic.

The NCS was introduced in November 2019 and provides a single, easy to access system of financial subsidies for parents in Ireland towards the cost of early learning and childcare.

The outturn for 2021 was €186 million - an underspend of €29 million. This compares to an outturn in 2020 of €119 million. The 2021 underspend can be attributed to lower than anticipated NCS registrations following the reopening of early learning and childcare services after the Covid-19 closures, resulting in savings of just under €32million in NCS programme funding and approximately €1.5 million in NCS Programme Support Payment (PSP). €4.5 million of these savings was used to fund Covid-19 Operational Support Payment (COSP) providers.

B05: Childcare Programmes; Delivery Supports and other Initiatives

This subhead makes provision for capital programmes, quality related measures and a range of other costs associated with the administration, implementation and delivery of the funded-early learning and care programmes, including continued systems development of the National Childcare Scheme.

Subhead B05's overall provision for 2021 was €91 million. This includes a capital carryover allocation of €2.2 million. This represents an overall decrease in provision of €14.8 million over 2020 driven by expected reduction in demand following the pandemic. The outturn for 2020 was €62.8 million.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
B5: Childcare Programmes: Delivery Supports and Other Initiatives	91,004	84,411	62,796

The outturn for 2021 was €84.4 million – an underspend of €6.5 million, due to an underspend on Pobal administration, Better Start and NCS service delivery costs arising from reduced NCS activity due to Covid-19 restrictions.

B06: Youth Organisations and Services

Youth Organisations and Services provide the funding to support the delivery of a range of youth work programmes and services for young people.

These resources fund youth services throughout the country, including services for those at risk of disadvantage and help address some of the remaining challenges faced by LGBTI+ young people.

Overall provision for 2021 was €69.8 million, an increase of €3.9 million over the 2020 provision (4%).

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
B6: Youth Organisations and Services (Nat Lottery)	69,789	68,575	64,701

The outturn for 2021 was €68.6 million, compared to an outturn in 2020 of €64.7 million. The 2021 outturn represents a minor underspend of €1.2 million, due mainly to:

- The restricted timeframe for youth services to fully utilise their provisions because of the pandemic.

B7: Creative Ireland

The Creative Ireland Programme is an “All of Government Programme” led by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) in partnership with other Government Departments, agencies and local authorities, which aims to place creativity at the centre of public policy. It is a 5-year initiative, designed to mainstream creativity in the life of the nation so that individually and collectively, Irish people can realise their full potential.

B7’s provision in 2021 was €0.1 million, this was the same as in 2020.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
B.7 Creative Ireland	100	7	14

The outturn for 2021 was €0.007 million – an underspend of €0.093 million due to the impact of Covid-19.

B08: Intervention Programmes for Children (Dormant Accounts Funded)

The Dormant Accounts Acts 2001-2012, together with the Unclaimed Life Assurance Policies Act 2003, provide a framework for the administration of unclaimed accounts in credit institutions (i.e. banks, building societies and An Post) and unclaimed life assurance policies in insurance undertakings.

This subhead supports projects funded from resources made available under the Dormant Accounts Fund. The purpose of measures must assist:

- the personal and social development of persons who are economically or socially disadvantaged;
- the educational development of persons who are educationally disadvantaged; or,
- persons with a disability.

B08's overall provision for 2021 was €10 million, which aligned to the provision for 2020. The 2021 provision included a once off addition of €3 million under the Covid-19 Stability Fund for Community and Voluntary, Charity and Social Enterprises run by the Department of Rural and Community Development, funded through the Dormant Accounts Fund.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
B8: Intervention programmes for children and young people (dormant accounts funded)	10,008	9,388	9,586

The outturn for 2021 was €9.4 million – an underspend of €0.6 million, due mainly to delays in projects and associated expenditure.

B09: Programme for Peace and Reconciliation

The PEACE IV Programme is a cross border initiative funded by the EU, the Irish government and the Northern Ireland assembly, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

- It is designed to support peace and reconciliation through youth work in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland;
- The eligible area for the PEACE IV Programme for 2014-2020 is Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland (including Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo);
- The Children & Young People programme under Peace IV will target young people aged between 14-24 years who are disadvantaged, excluded or marginalised, have

deep social and emotional needs, and are at risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour, violence or dissident activity;

- The Programme has a particular focus on cross border and cross community reconciliation;

B09's provision for 2021 was €2.9 million, increased from €2.2 million in 2020. The outturn for 2021 was €1.6 million – an underspend of €1.3 million due mainly to the impact of Covid-19 and the demand led nature of the payments.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
B9: Programme for Peace and Reconciliation	2,900	1,624	2,244

B10: Early Learning & Care (ELC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) Covid-19

Related Supports

A new Subhead B10 was added to the Vote in June 2020 to show separately those financial supports and interventions which were announced specifically to support the early learning and childcare sector during Covid-19. Funding was repurposed from other early learning and childcare subheads to meet these new developments. B10 comprised the provision for the Temporary Wage Subsidy Childcare Scheme (TWSCS), as well as provisions for the once-off reopening grants and once-off Covid-19 capital grants, which were made available to support the phased re-opening of services from 29 June 2020.

B10's overall provision for 2020 was €109.5 million, which reflected Covid-19 once off re-opening of services and Capital grants such as the Temporary Wage Subsidy Childcare Scheme (TWSCS), Capital reopening grant and the playground outdoor equipment grant, which were required by the sector in 2020 due to closures, which did not recur in 2021.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
B.10 Early Learning & Care and School Age Covid Related Supports	1	0	82,697

B: Prevention and Early Intervention Programmes

The focus of the funding under this subhead is to strengthen and develop prevention, early intervention, and family support services. The funding is directed to Tusla's Prevention, Partnership and Family Support Programme (PPFS), which is an evidence-led approach to prevention and early intervention work.

The PPFS Programme is strongly connected and aligned to the National Policy framework developed through 'Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures' (BOBF).

The Subhead allocation for 2020 amounted to €9.5 million. This funding was subsumed into the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) Subhead A03 for 2021 onwards.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
Prevention and Early Intervention Programmes	0	0	9,278

Programme C – Policy and Legislation Programme

High Level Goal: To oversee key areas of policy, legislation and inter-sectoral collaboration to improve the lives and well-being of children and young people.

The total provision for this Programme area for 2021 was €36.681 million, an increase of €2 million on 2020. The main elements of the funding under this Programme go towards Children and Young People's Policy Framework and Other Programmes, the Adoption Authority of Ireland, the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes and certain related matters, the Magdalen Fund, the National Longitudinal Study and other research programmes and the Office of the Ombudsman for Children.

Details regarding the distribution of the funds and outturn across the programme are set out in the following table:

Programme C Policy and legislation

		2021		2020
		Estimate provision	Outturn	Outturn
		€000	€000	€000
C.1	Administration – pay	10,086	7,828	7,271
C.2	Administration – non pay	1,975	1,478	1,015
C.3	Miscellaneous legal fees and settlements	539	—	2
C.4	National Longitudinal Study and other research programmes	4,810	3,833	2,380
C.5	Children and young people’s policy framework and other programmes	6,898	6,048	5,458
C.6	Adoption Authority of Ireland	5,626	4,219	5,151
C.7	Office of the Ombudsman for Children	2,955	2,955	2,450
C.8	Commission of Investigation	2,792	1,981	2,354
C.9	Magdalen Fund	1,000	554	1,540
		36,681	28,896	27,621

The outturn for Programme C in 2021 was €36.681 million, an underspend of €7.8 million across the programme areas per the table above. All subheads in Programme C finished the year with an underspend, the largest of which was realised in C06; the Adoption Authority of Ireland as a result of the unpredictability of legal costs and delays in the enactment of legislation with regard to Tracing and Information. The rest of the underspend relates mainly to the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic particularly in terms of the commencement of the GUI Longitudinal Study fieldwork.

C03: Miscellaneous Legal Fees and Settlements

This subhead relates to possible costs from miscellaneous legal fees and settlements, which may arise over the course of the year.

The overall provision for C03 in 2021 was €0.539 million, which remained the same from 2020.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
C.3 Misc. Legal Fees and Settlements	539	0	2

The outturn for 2021 was €Nil.

The underspend in 2021 reflects the variable nature of expenditure in the subhead and the resultant difficulties in general in predicting the outcomes and costs associated with legal cases and matters.

C04: National Longitudinal Study and Other Research Programmes

This subhead supports Growing Up in Ireland (GUI) - the National Longitudinal Study and other Research Programmes administered and supported by the Department.

C04's overall provision for 2021 was €4.810 million, an increase from €3.210 million in 2020. The gross provision under Subhead C04 fluctuates from year to year in line with the costs incurred during the various stages of the GUI data collection cycle.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
C.4 National Longitudinal Study and Other Research Programmes	4,810	3,833	2,380

The outturn for 2021 was €3.833 million – this is an underspend of €1 million, due mainly to:

- Amendments to the planned GUI / Longitudinal study fieldwork methods as a result of the pandemic, with work conducted remotely rather than via the traditional home based interviews.

C05: Children and Young People’s Policy Framework

This subhead supports a range of programmes and activities including;

- Voice of the child and participation
- International Initiatives
- Children and Young People’s Services Committees
- Youth Actions for Climate Justice

The subhead’s overall provision for 2021 was €6.898 million, an increase of €0.85 million from €6.048 million in 2020.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
C.5 Children and Young People’s Policy Framework	6,898	6,048	5,458

The outturn for 2021 was €6.048 million, compared to an outturn of €5.458 million in 2020.

The underspend of €0.850 million in 2021 was due mainly to:

- Underspends across a number of programmes mainly related to Covid-19 impacts resulting in delays and postponement of scheduled campaigns across all areas of the subhead.
- The continuation of remote working also yielded some savings.

C06: Adoption Authority of Ireland

The Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI) has responsibility for the direct operational implementation of legislation and Government policy relating to adoption.

Subhead C06's overall provision for 2021 was €5.626 million, which was relatively in line with the 2020 allocation.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
C.6 Adoption Authority of Ireland	5,626	4,219	5,151

The outturn for 2021 was €4.219 million, compared to the outturn in 2020 of €5.151 million. The 2021 underspend of €1.4 million was mainly due to difficulties in the predictability in timing and scale of legal costs. There were also delays in the enactment of legislation with regard to timing for Information and Tracing purposes combined with an underspend also on pay and pensions following delays in filling vacancies.

C07: Office of the Ombudsman for Children

The Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO) was established in 2004. The OCO, which is independent in the delivery of its functions and does not charge for same, is a human rights institution that promotes the rights and welfare of young people under 18 years of age, living in Ireland. The OCO also investigates complaints about services provided to children by public organisations.

Subhead C07's overall provision in 2021 was €2.955 million, an increase from €2.865 million in 2020.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
C.7 Office of the Ombudsman for Children	2,955	2,955	2,450

The outturn for 2021 was €2.955 million, an increase of €0.5 million on expenditure in 2020 of €2.450 million and was in line with the estimate provision.

C08: Commission of Investigation

The Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes was tasked with examining the experience of mothers and children resident in Mother and Baby Homes and a representative sample of County Homes.

The Commission was required to address seven specific issues on the practices and procedures relating to the care, welfare, entry arrangements and exit pathways for the women and children who were residents of these institutions. The primary function of the Commission was to provide an account of what happened to vulnerable women and children in these institutions during the period 1922 - 1998.

The Commission concluded its work at the end of February 2021. The focus of this subhead was revised to respond to the Final Report of the Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation.

Following a proposal from the Minister for Children, Equality Disability, Integration and Youth, the Government has approved a suite of 22 specific measures, arising from the Report of the Commission. The Department has published a high level Action Plan to drive implementation of these measures, many of which respond directly to the concerns and need of survivors and former residents of Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions.

Subhead C08's overall provision for 2021 was €2.792 million, a decrease of €1 million from €3.792 million in 2020. The reduction in the provision reflects the winding up of the Commission in 2021.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
C.8. Commission of Investigation MBH	2,792	1,981	2,354

The outturn for 2021 was €1.981 million, compared to an outturn in 2020 of €2.354 million.

The underspend of €0.8 million versus the estimate provision was due to lower than anticipated costs incurred in the implementation of the Government's response to the Commission report.

C09: Magdalen Fund

This is a specific subhead for a compensation fund in relation to the Magdalen Laundries, established in 2013 on foot of the recommendations contained in the Magdalen Commission Report (Quirke Report).

The ex-gratia scheme was established for the benefit of women who were admitted to and worked in the 10 Magdalen Institutions as well as St Mary's Training Centre Stanhope Street and the House of Mercy Domestic Training School Summerhill, Wexford.

Subhead C09's overall provision for 2021 was €1 million, a decrease of €2.3 million. Fewer than expected applications were received in 2021.

Programme D – An Equal and Inclusive Society

High Level Goal: To undertake initiatives to promote equality and inclusion in Irish society.

Programme D's main elements of funding go towards the National Disability Authority, Refugee and Migrant Integration, Grants to National Women's Organisations, Traveller and Roma, Positive Action for Gender Equality, Equality and LGBTI initiatives and the Decision Support Service, respectively.

Details regarding the distribution of the funds and outturn across the programme are set out in the following table:

Programme D An equal and inclusive society

		2021	2020
	Estimate provision	Outturn	Outturn
	€000	€000	€000
D.1	Administration – pay	1,186	681
D.2	Administration – non pay	213	318
D.3	National Disability Authority	5,178	4,218
D.4	Refugee and migrant integration	7,700	4,345
D.5	Grants to national women's organisations	556	525
D.6	Traveller and Roma initiatives	4,925	3,579
D.7	Positive Action for Gender Equality	3,650	1,825
D.8	Equality and LGBTI initiatives	920	779
D.9	Decision Support Service	5,800	3,260
	30,128	26,634	19,530

The outturn for Programme D in 2021 was €26.634 million, an underspend of €3.494 million across the programme areas per the table above.

The majority of subheads in Programme D finished the year with an underspend, the largest of which was in subhead D04 Refugee and Migrant Integration. The underspend was primarily driven by the continued impact of Covid-19 on the number of programme refugees coming into Ireland and on the consequent number of refugees resettled across the country.

Subhead D08 Equality and LGBTI Initiatives recorded an overspend due to grant payments to a greater number of LGBTI organisations than originally anticipated.

D03: National Disability Authority

The Department provides funding to the National Disability Authority (NDA), under D03, to deliver on its statutory duty as the independent State agency to provide information and evidence-informed advice to the Minister and officials on matters of policy and practice relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities. This informs the Department as well as many other government departments and public bodies.

In late 2020, the NDA was assigned new functions on a statutory basis, when it was nominated as the monitoring body for compliance with the EU Web Accessibility Directive (WAD), transposed into Irish legislation in September 2020.

It was also the body requested to prepare a report on the operation of the Irish Sign Language Act 2017, as per section 10 of the ISL Act 2017, which requires the Minister to generate a report on the operation of the Act at certain intervals. Subhead D03's overall provision for 2021 was €5.178 million, an increase of €0.3 million on 2020.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
D.3: National Disability Authority	5,178	4,754	4,218

The outturn for 2021 was €4.754 million, compared to €4.218 million in 2020. The outturn for 2021 was €0.424 million below profile due to delays in progressing and commencing projects because of the impact of the pandemic.

D04: Refugee and Migrant Integration

This subhead supports costs for the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) and delivers on the Government's pledge to support international humanitarian efforts.

A portion of the funding under this subhead is used to support migrant integration measures, under the Migrant Integration Strategy.

Subhead D04's overall provision for 2021 was €7.7 million, an increase of €0.65 million on 2020 of €7.055 million.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
D.4: Refugee and Migrant Integration	7,700	4,814	4,345

The outturn for 2021 was €4.814m – an underspend of €2.886 million, compared to a 2020 outturn of €4.345 million. The underspend in 2021 was due to:

- Delays in the arrival of programme refugees due to the Covid-19 restrictions and the consequent reduction in the number of refugees resettled.
- IRPP mission and travel costs were impacted by the restrictions also.

D05: Grants to National Woman's Organisations

The subhead supports a grant for core expenditure of the National Women's Council of Ireland.

Subhead D05's provision for 2021 was €0.556 million, which was relatively in line with the provision for 2020 of €0.525 million.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
D.5: Grants to National Women's Orgs.	556	556	525

The outturn for 2021 was €0.556 million, which was in line with the estimated provision.

D06: Traveller and Roma Initiatives

The subhead supports a focus at national and local level on coordinated delivery of services and supports to improve outcomes for the Traveller and Roma Communities.

Subhead D06's provision for 2021 was €4.925 million, an increase of €1 million on the 2020 allocation of €3.88 million.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
D.6: Traveller and Roma Initiatives	4,925	4,914	3,579

The outturn for 2021 was €4.914 million, which was in line with the estimated provision.

D07: Positive Action for Gender Equality

This subhead supports core funding for specified women's organisations (the National Collective of Community-based Women's Networks, NCCWN), funds projects to support women's return to employment and female entrepreneurship under ESF funded Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL), and funds initiatives to promote equality for women and girls, under the National Strategy for Women and Girls.

Subhead D07's provision for 2021 was €3.650 million, a decrease of €1.255 million on the 2020 allocation of €4.905 million.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
D.7: Positive Action for Gender Equality	3,650	3,414	1,825

The outturn for 2021 was €3.414 million, compared to the outturn in 2020 of €1.825 million. The underspend of €0.2 million in 2021 was due, in the main, to the continued impact of the pandemic delaying and extending projects and consequently delaying expenditure.

D08: Equality and LGBTI Initiatives

The subhead funds projects to support LGBTI community services and funds initiatives to promote LGBTI equality under the National LGBTI Inclusion Strategy.

Subhead D08's provision for 2021 was €0.931 million which was the same in 2020.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
D.8: Equality and LGBTI Initiatives	931	1670	779

The outturn for 2021 was €1.670 million – an overspend of €0.739 million, due to an expansion in the number of qualifying organisations to receive grant payments, following the DPER sanctioned Virement for the re-allocation of other Equality subhead provisions.

D09: Decision Support Service

The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 (the 2015 Act), provides a modern statutory framework to support decision-making by adults with capacity difficulties. It ultimately provides for the end of the wardship system and the establishment of a new Decision Support Service (DSS).

Subhead D09's provision for 2021 was €5.8 million, an increase of €2.3 million from 2020 which was €3.5 million.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
D.9: Decision Support Service	5,800	5,354	3,260

The outturn for 2021 was €5.354 million – an underspend of €0.446 million. This was due to lower than expected expenditure on an ICT system project, the commencement of which was delayed.

Programme E – A Fair and Efficient Support System for International Protection Seekers

High Level Goal: To provide accommodation and related services to persons in the international protection process.

Programme E consists of funding towards the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, International Protection Seekers Accommodation (Direct Provision) to meet the costs associated with the provision of accommodation for international protection seekers, and funding to support the process of bringing State-owned accommodation provided to asylum seekers into compliance with the standards agreed with key stakeholders.

Details regarding the distribution of the funds and outturn across the programme are set out in the following table:

Programme E A fair and efficient support system for international protection seekers			
		2021	2020
	Estimate provision	Outturn	Outturn
	€000	€000	€000
E.1 Administration – pay	8,521	6,818	4,161
E.2 Administration – non pay	1,596	1,231	1,386
E.3 Asylum Migration and Integration Fund	1,386	1,580	355
E.4 International protection seekers accommodation	218,000	190,831	183,207
	229,503	200,460	189,109

The outturn for Programme E in 2021 was €200.46 million, an underspend of €29.043 million across the programme areas, per the table above. The principal area of the underspend was E04 International Protection Seekers Accommodation, due in the main to the Covid 19 pandemic and restrictions in travel reducing the level of arrivals. Subhead E03 recorded an overspend, due to a catch up in 2021 in relation to grant payments delayed in 2020, as a result of the impact of Covid 19.

E03: Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

The subhead provides for initiatives under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (“AMIF”), one of the EU Home Affairs financial instruments for the programme period 2014 to 2020. AMIF supports national and EU initiatives that promote the efficient management of migration flows and the implementation, strengthening and development of a common EU approach to asylum, migration and integration.

Subhead E03’s provision for 2021 was €1.386 million, a reduction of €0.383 million on 2020, which was €1.769 million.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
E.3: Asylum Migration and Integration Fund	1,386	1,580	355

The outturn for 2021 was €1.580 million – an overspend of €0.194 million was due to delayed grant payments from 2020, due to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on project timelines, being paid in 2021.

E04: International Protection Seekers Accommodation

This subhead supports the provision of accommodation and related services to persons in the international protection process.

Subhead E04’s provision for 2021 was €218 million, an increase of €17 million compared with €200.62 million for 2020.

Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth	Estimate Provision 2021	Outturn 2021	Outturn 2020
	€'000	€'000	€'000
	Total		
E.4: International Protection Seekers Accommodation	218,000	190,831	183,207

The outturn for 2021 was €191 million – an underspend of €27 million due to:

- The provision of accommodation for persons in the international protection process being demand led. Migration into the country stalled due to international travel restrictions in place, as a result of the pandemic.
 - Independent living in six of the State-owned centres not commencing.
-

Appropriations in Aid

Appropriations-in-aid represent income to the Department over the course of the year that, under section 2 of the Public Accounts and Charges Act 1891, may be used to meet expenditure to the extent authorised by the annual Appropriation Act.

It principally consists of receipts relating to payroll deductions such as Additional Superannuation Contribution, as well as receipts relating to the Dormant Accounts Fund (subhead B.8) and the EU in respect of the Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (subhead B09) and ESF (subheads D04 & D07) and Asylum, Migration & Integration Fund (subhead E03).

Note 4 Receipts

4.1 Appropriations-in-aid

	Estimated €000	2021	2020
		Realised €000	Realised €000
1 Superannuation scheme – Child and Family Agency	8,893	8,580	8,933
2 Superannuation scheme – non-teaching staff of Oberstown Children Detention Campus	670	656	653
3 Superannuation scheme – Adoption Authority of Ireland	1	—	—
4 Superannuation scheme – Office of the Ombudsman for Children	2	—	—
5 Miscellaneous	336	469	507
6 Dormant Accounts receipts	10,008	9,389	9,585
7 Programme for Peace and Reconciliation	2,370	1,330	1,839
8 EU receipts	8,200	9,699	5,444
9 Receipts from additional superannuation contributions on public service remuneration	8,641	9,052	8,685
Total	39,121	39,175	35,646

Appendix 1 - Direct Provision

The State has a responsibility to provide material reception conditions to IP applicants that do not have sufficient means to have an adequate standard of living as provided for under S.I. No. 230/2018 - European Communities (Reception Conditions) Regulations 2018.

In 2022, over 15,000 people have applied for international protection. The annual estimate for arrivals was 3,500 based on figures for 2017 to 2019. In the first month of 2023, over 1,200 persons sought international protection - 300 per week or 38 people per day for 2023 so far. As of 05 February 2023, there are 19,741 people accommodated in the IPAS accommodation system as a whole. This includes the National Reception Centre and IPAS accommodation centres (7,296), City West (740), temporary tented (101) and emergency (11,604) accommodation. Of this total, 4,096 are children.

At this time last year there were a total of 7,500 people in IPAS accommodation.

In addition, arrivals from Ukraine who are beneficiaries of the European Union's Temporary Protection Directive who require accommodation due to the Ukraine crisis has significantly increased pressure on available accommodation resources.

As of 7th February 2023, 67,000 Ukrainian Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection have arrived in Ireland with over 54,500 of these arrivals seeking. The pressure on the State to accommodate over 74,000 people currently has led to significant shortages particularly for the international protection cohort. All of the limited accommodation capacity within the International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS) system is currently being used. However, IPPS continue to source accommodation and support solutions for IP applicants through the use of pre-reception facilities, emergency accommodation and the tender process.

Intensive efforts are being undertaken daily by staff in DCEDIY to source emergency accommodation. However, procuring enough bed space to keep pace with incoming arrivals remains extremely challenging, leading to very significant shortages.

The response to the ongoing migration crisis has entered an extremely difficult phase; with no apparent accommodation for IPAs at scale available into the short term to medium term.

The overflow facility at the Citywest Transit Hub has reached capacity and it became necessary to pause arrival of new international protection applicants (IPAs) into the overflow facility at Citywest from 24 January. Since the paused entry, the total number of IPAs who were unable to be accommodated stands at 139 people, as at 10 February. The situation remains under close review.

The Department is also faced with the loss of accommodation capacity as hotels decide to return to the tourist market. IPAS will have lost over 3,000 bed spaces in the first four months of 2023.

Requests for Tender to increase IPAS capacity

The Department continues to seek to acquire further accommodation and, on 18 January 2022, published a request for tender (RFT) to procure additional accommodation for singles, couples and families seeking international protection. This did not provide sufficient capacity, and as such it was republished on 7 October 2022 with a deadline of 8 November 2022 for receipt of Tenders.

This tender process is a key step in the Government's strategy to end reliance on emergency accommodation for IP applicants and will assist in alleviating the accommodation pressures currently being experienced. The first phase of the tender resulted in eight successful

tenderers admitted to Panel 1 for singles and couples accommodation and eight admitted to Panel 2 for family 'own door' accommodation. The IPPS team is currently finalising service contracts with all of these.

The first new family accommodation from Panel 2 went live early October in Ballybofey, Co. Donegal. It is expected that successful tenderers from the republication will be added to the Panels in Quarter 1 of 2023.

It is important to note the severe constraints in the private rental market at present that is impacting on the ability of persons with status to move on from IPAS accommodation.

Challenges faced by IPPS – Protests and Community Engagement

There is a growing number of protests outside accommodation centres which is another obstacle faced by IPPS.

DCEDIY deplores protests that intimidate vulnerable IPAs including children, many of whom have fled war and persecution, and are causing fear and distress for centre staff and management. When DCEDIY is made aware of any planned protests it makes An Garda Síochána aware of them.

Over the past year, communities across Ireland have demonstrated great solidarity and welcome for those who come here seeking refuge. However the increase in protests has made community engagement in terms of opening new accommodation centres extremely sensitive and requires extensive engagement by the Minister's Office with local elected representatives.

While efforts are made to notify public representatives and State agencies in advance of utilising a building for accommodation of IPAs, the emergency nature of the response

required means that advance communications are not as comprehensive or as early as the Department would like.

Due to the sheer scale of the present crisis this inevitably means that emergency accommodation of those seeking refuge must be occupied on a faster timeline than would otherwise be the case.

Before the opening of any facility the Department engages with local representatives to provide information as soon as possible following the agreement of terms with contractors.

These constraints limit the time window for advance consultation, however, the Department are cognisant of these issues and are working towards improving advance communications for elected representatives, local authorities and local communities in this regard.

Other Steps taken to increase capacity

The Department has made every possible effort to secure accommodation and has sought support from the widest possible range of organisations to provide accommodation to IPAs.

Since the 1st of December 2022, IPPS have brought into use over 1,700 additional bed spaces. Where request for tender processes have not delivered the required capacity, the Department has engaged in emergency accommodation sourcing through networks with other State accommodation providers such as the local authorities, through newspaper advertisements, through cold calling and the use of online booking engines.

The Department has reached out to other Government Departments such as the Department of Education for school and third level institution facilities; the Department of Defence for unused barracks and buildings; the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media for sporting and arts facilities; the Department of the Environment, Climate and

Communications and the Office of Public Works for buildings that can be used to accommodate people. Many of the offers that have come through these requests have resulted in accommodation, both temporary and longer term.

The Department continues to evaluate all offers of accommodation made to it as quickly as possible and welcomes offers from providers who will accommodate international protection applicants. Last week, Minister O’Gorman wrote to Ministerial colleagues seeking their assistance in sourcing buildings to facilitate emergency rest centre operations to address the increase in arrivals.

The sourcing of accommodation for IPAs is becoming increasingly challenging for single males in particular. The lead in for IP accommodation can at times be lengthy and complex particularly with regard to appraisal and evaluation from a building control regulations and renovation timelines perspective and on negotiations and contract engagement.

The Department in co-operation with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, introduced a planning exemption for the change of use of office buildings and other warehouse type facilities to assist in addressing the shortfall in IP accommodation. Unfortunately, the take up of this exemption by accommodation providers has been limited thus far.

However, there is no delay from the Department in regard to its evaluation of offers and proposals are being appraised and agreed at a rapid pace. There is significantly more demand for accommodation on account of Ukrainian displaced persons requiring accommodation and the increasing number of protests in communities adds another layer of complexity to providers offering their accommodation to IPAS.

IPAS Accommodation Centres – Background and services provided

IPAS is a division of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), with responsibility for the provision of accommodation and related services to people in the International Protection process. Under EU and International Law, Ireland is obliged to examine the claim of any person who arrives into the country seeking international protection.

While that claim is being examined by the Department of Justice, IPAS offers accommodation and related services to IP applicants who wish to accept the offer of accommodation from the Irish State. This includes all meals and utilities, full access to public medical services and a weekly personal allowance is paid to each person at a rate of €38.80 for adults and €29.80 for children.

After six months, IP applicants are eligible to work if they have not received a first decision on their application.

Living in a centre is completely voluntary and residents may leave at any time and source their own accommodation.

Reception services for international protection applicants refers to a range of services offered to persons who have applied for an international protection status (refugee or subsidiary protection) or for a permission to remain in the country. These services are offered to persons who do not have the means to provide for themselves and are provided by a range of government departments and agencies. This is commonly known as Direct Provision.

Who provides services to IP applicants?

A number of departments from the Irish Government work together to provide the following services for people living in accommodation centres:

- the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth offers accommodation and related support services and also provides access to the free Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme for eligible children aged between 2 years 8 months and 5 years 6 months;
- the Department of Social Protection pays a weekly personal allowance to each resident and covers any exceptional needs;
- the Department of Education provides school places for children resident in the centres and children also have access to the free pre-school scheme, the Early Childhood Care and Education programme;
- the HSE provides mainstreamed health services to residents.

How many IPAS accommodation centres are there?

There are 46 IPAS accommodation centres. In addition, people are accommodated in the National Reception Centre at Baleskin. There are also 123 emergency centres, 1 temporary tented accommodation site and 3 Emergency Reception and Orientation Centre (EROCC) centres that host primarily Syrian and Afghani refugees that arrive under the UNHCR Resettlement Programme.

Supports available for Persons with Status

As of the end of January 2023, there were 5,040 persons with status in IPAS accommodation. This refers to a person with refugee status/subsidiary protection or persons with Stamp 4 permission to remain in the State.

IP applicants who have been granted an international protection status (refugee status or subsidiary protection status) or a permission to remain have the same access to housing supports and services as Irish and EEA nationals. There are a number of supports available to persons with status to assist in accessing housing in the community when leaving

accommodation centres. The Department has a specific team in IPAS who work in collaboration with DePaul Ireland, the Peter McVerry Trust, officials in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the County and City Management Association to collectively support residents with status, or a permission to remain, to access housing options.

In addition to assisting with housing applications, both DePaul Ireland and the Peter McVerry Trust support the person's integration into the community as fully as possible. This includes providing information about vocational and training courses, such as suitability, locations and eligibility, CV preparation and aid with medical issues, should they arise.

It is important to note the severe constraints in the private rental market at present that is impacting on the ability of persons with status to move on from IPAS accommodation.

IPAS Budget

The IPAS budget allocation for accommodation for 2023 is €363.436, million, an increase of 57% (€132.6 m) over the original 2022 allocation of €€230.836, 97% of which relates to the cost of accommodation services for applicants in commercially owned and State-owned centres. This cost also covers the accommodation costs for almost 5,000 people with status that have yet to move on from IPAS accommodation.

The 2022 allocation was intended to allow IPAS to continue to provide accommodation to those seeking international protection and to cover the projected increase of costs related to an additional 4,500 applicants. However, in 2022 over 15,000 people arrived in Ireland seeking accommodation while their application for international protection is processed by the International Protection Office. For context, over the period 2017-2019 an average of 3,500 people applied for protection each year.

The accommodation of IPA is a demand-led process with applicants arriving in the country and seeking accommodation spontaneously.

Appendix 2 - Emergency Accommodation (practical arrangements: public services, planning permission, fire safety etc.)

International Protection Seekers

The Department currently has 123 emergency centres at various locations around the country, providing accommodation for 11,604 people in the international protection process.

While emergency accommodation varies and some centres provide independent living facilities and own door accommodation, much of it provides bed-and-board accommodation in congregated settings in hotels and guesthouses. Moving away from the use of emergency accommodation is a key element of the work programme set out in the *White Paper to End Direct Provision*. Accommodation options procured through the Request for Tender process will enable the Department to move away from emergency accommodation in congregated settings and to improve the quality of the accommodation available to residents pending the full implementation of the *White Paper*.

The end of the use of emergency beds was originally targeted for the end of 2022. This is in the context of the wider Government commitment to end Direct Provision by the end of 2024.

Inspection of emergency IP accommodation

Premises providing emergency accommodation to protection applicants are not covered by the National Standards and, therefore, are not included in the IP inspection process. However, any issues that emerge in respect of such premises are immediately flagged by officials with the management of the premises for immediate resolution.

The inspection process operated by IPAS for dedicated accommodation centres is to ensure that providers adhere to their contractual obligations. Emergency accommodation

providers do not have the same contractual obligations. Such premises are however required to be compliant by law with health and safety regulations and planning requirements and may be subject to inspections by a range of authorities in this regard, including the relevant Local Authority, the Environmental Health Office of the HSE and the Health and Safety Authority. In addition Fáilte Ireland, as the body responsible for ensuring that accommodation standards meet visitor needs, sets the requirements for the various categories of tourist accommodation and provides for processes for the regular monitoring of the standards in hotels and all other forms of approved accommodation.

Planning Permission considerations

The planning considerations to change the use of buildings, such as office blocks, to facilitate emergency use as accommodation centres is underway between the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integrations and Youth (DCEDIY) and the Department of Housing. A regulation is expected to be laid before the Houses of Oireachtas shortly that will allow for the designation of buildings for emergency use.

With respect the use of office buildings for emergency accommodation currently, the Department is co-operating with the appropriate Authorised Officers in the relevant Local Authorities. The Department has ensured that Fire Risk Assessment consultants are put in place to ensure that the required fire safety standards are met.

Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTPs)

Overview:

Since the outbreak of war at the end of February, Ireland has welcomed over **72,000** Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTPs) who have fled Ukraine, and DCEDIY is providing accommodation for more than **53,500** of those (approx. 75% of all BOTP arrivals and increasing over time). Of these, more than 48,500 are in serviced accommodation (hotels,

B+B's, self-catering, etc.) and approx. 1,725 in emergency accommodation. Approximately eight in ten are women or children. When added to the 19,741 international protection applicants in State accommodation, DCEDIY is accommodating seven times as many people now compared with 2021.

Metrics on Key State Services Provided to Those Fleeing Ukraine

- 73,556 PPSNs have been issued to BOTPs (**Male 37%/Female 63%**)
- **12,800** child benefit claims have been issued.
- **33,800** primary claimants of state income support.
- **54,700** medical cards have issued (**75%** of Eligible Total arrivals).
- Approximately **14,400** BOTP pupils have enrolled in schools across the country to date (**92%** of Eligible Total Arrivals).
- Approximately **12,500** beneficiaries of temporary protection in employment.

Procedures on arrival in Ireland

Those arriving into Dublin Airport or Dublin Port are transported to the City West Convention Centre for allocation of Temporary Protection Certificates by D/Justice officials, and registration for PPSN numbers with the D/Social Protection. Those looking for accommodation move to the Transit Hub where they are processed and allocated available accommodation, and then transported to that accommodation.

The Department has procured an overnight facility at Dublin Airport (operational since Monday 24th October 2022) to accommodate arrivals from later flights as part of the response to the current pause at Citywest Transit Hub. Arrivals on later flights receive shelter and food overnight and are bused to Citywest for processing in the morning.

Health Service Executive (HSE) personnel are also onsite in the Transit Hub to assist with any medical issues that may arise and influence accommodation offered.

Arrivals to other points of entry into Ireland are processed by Department of Justice and DSP officials, and are then assisted by Local Authorities or NGOs in registering with for accommodation and transport.

Share of BOTP arrivals by point of entry to date-

- Dublin Airport (83%)
- Rosslare Port (7%)
- Dublin Port (4%)
- Shannon Airport (3%)
- Cork Airport and Other Airports/Ports (3%)

Citywest Transit Hub - tasks and staffing

Citywest Transit Hub (CWTH) is currently being used as a processing centre to register people seeking assistance with accommodation and to match them with accommodation available. Department of Justice (DOJ) and Department of Social Protection (DSP) are also processing BOTPs in Citywest for temporary protection certificates and PPSNs between 8am and 8pm, 7 days a week.

The DCEDIY Unit at CWTH has a present complement of 40 staff all based at the Citywest Transit Hub, Saggart, Co, Dublin. The Unit comprises three teams, each with different staff needs particular to the task in hand.

These teams are:

- Team 1: Facilities Management Team
- Team 2: Processing Team
- Team 3: Operations/Management Support Team

The **Facilities Management Team** is responsible for the oversight and implementation of health and safety, fire safety, crisis management, procurement, invoicing and liaison with all other operational agencies located in the CWTH. The team essentially manages the Citywest facility itself and all the requirements of a site that accommodates the needs of an average of 800 people per night.

The **Processing Team** provide a 24/7 presence in CWTH. The main responsibility of this team is to assign accommodation to newly arrived BOTPs once they have been granted temporary protection by the Department of Justice staff onsite. The team also processes the relocation of BOTPs from specific locations as happened with Gormanston Camp as well as bespoke family reunifications. Effectively, the team processes as many BOTPs as possible out of CWTH and onwards to temporary accommodation each day.

The **Operations/Management Support Team** carries out the back-office or support function to allow the Processing Team to fulfil their role as seamlessly as possible. This means ensuring there is sufficient accommodation, adequate transport and enough staff on duty as needed so that as many BOTPs as possible are transported to suitable accommodation from CWTH every day. It is also responsible for key operational areas such as child protection, systems development, and operational liaison with key stakeholders (DOJ, DSP, HSE, SDVC and with Facilities Management).

This team is also responsible for drafting, implementing and reviewing the policies that cover the operations of the CWTH, i.e. Refusals, Admittance, Family Reunification, Use of transport, Child Protection.

It is intended that new arrivals are allocated accommodation as quickly as possible with minimum duration of stay (less than 72 hours) at Citywest. Since 9th November 2022, the Irish Government has communicated that it will not be able to provide accommodation for newly arriving/newly acquired pets in State funded accommodation. At present, the provision of State funded accommodation is extremely challenging and there will be times

when accommodation is not immediately available. If persons wish to avail of state funded accommodation, they will need to make personal arrangements for their pets at their own cost.

Every effort is made to minimise the waiting time and to ensure that those waiting are comfortable, with food, a rest area and a children's play area provided. Supplies including food, water, hygiene products, medical services and interpretation/translation services are available onsite at Citywest Transit Hub.

A Child Safeguarding statement has been signed into operation in the Citywest transit hub. As children are present on site at all times, this Statement has been adopted to ensure best practice is followed in line with the provisions of the Children First Act 2015 and the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

The Transit Hub has also adopted a number of other protocols including: Admittance Protocol, Refusals Protocol and Alcohol Protocol. The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (D/CEDIY) has taken the lead in implementing and monitoring the implementation of these procedures.

Tusla have a full time on-site officer who works hand in hand with DCEDIY to implement the Statement.

Pause at Citywest Transit Hub

In addition to the current pause with effect from 24 January, arrivals were previously paused to City West Transit Hub on 14 July, 2 September, and 20 October, when capacity was reached. This is kept under review and when numbers reduce due to accommodation availability the hub is reopened. Priority access is given at all times to those who are vulnerable.

Safeguards at Citywest

- Unaccompanied Minors and Children

Unaccompanied minors under the age of 18 years, who arrive in Ireland seeking temporary protection, will be referred to TUSLA, who will provide relevant supports, including accommodation.

The European Commission has highlighted the fears of exploitation that may happen as a result of the war and mass migration.

In 2022, and significantly increasing since the commencement of the war on Ukraine on 24th February, 491 unaccompanied minors have been referred to Tusla, the Child and Family Agency. Of this total, 220 unaccompanied minors arriving from Ukraine have been referred to Tusla. There are currently 65 unaccompanied minors that arrived from Ukraine in Tusla's care, and 107 children arriving from elsewhere. Before the war, Tusla would have expected to have between 90 and 95 unaccompanied minors seeking international protection in its care at any one time, out of about 150 to 170 referrals a year.

Unaccompanied minors who arrive at ports of entry to Ireland are referred to Tusla for a child protection needs assessment as provided for under the Child Care Act, 1991. In the first instance, Tusla makes every attempt to contact relatives of the child and to reunite the child with family members or friends. If children cannot be reunified with family or friends, they are received into the care of Tusla or accommodated under Section 5 of the Child Care Act, 1991.

These children are placed by Tusla either in small specialist residential care centres, or with specifically recruited foster families under a Fáilte Care foster care programme. The children are automatically entitled as children in care to a medical card and access to primary and secondary education services. In addition, a Social Worker is allocated to them to develop a

care plan and monitor the progress of the child / young person's care. The care plan may involve specialist English language tuition, intensive educational supports and therapeutic work in respect of trauma.

- **Fire Safety**

The *Citywest Transit Hub Safety Statement and Risk Assessment* document incorporates Fire Safety procedures, including:

- Fire detection and alarm systems
- Emergency lighting
- Elements of structure-steel columns
- Portable fire extinguishers
- Smoke curtain
- Fire doors and fire escape doors
- External fire hydrant
- Smoke control system
- Detection and alarm systems tested to IS 3218:2013
- Emergency lighting serviced to IS3218:2013

Provision of Accommodation to BOTPs

The responsibility of DCEDIY is to provide short term accommodation to BOTPs. Total expenditure by the Department in response to the Ukraine crisis was approximately €600m as of 9 February 2023. Over 48,000 beds are contracted to the Department for Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection in more than 700 settings including hotels, guesthouses, B&Bs, hostels, commercial self-catering and certain other repurposed settings. In some instances, BOTPs have been placed temporarily in accommodation reserved for international protection applicants who now urgently need this accommodation.

Emergency Accommodation

In response to requests from DCEDIY, Local Authorities nationwide stand up emergency accommodation at short notice to assist at peak times. Local Authorities can provide up to 75 beds in one location in a variety of sites. These can include for example local parish centres, community centres or school halls.

The accommodation is basic and lacks privacy, as it is usually a communal setting for large groups of people. Local volunteers are onsite to provide supports. A dedicated team in the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth manages relocations to accommodation within the Department's portfolio.

Tented Accommodation (Barracks) and Sports Facilities

Temporary emergency accommodation at Gormanston Army Camp provided capacity for up to 320 persons until 8 October 2022. Operations have now ended at this facility. The Defence Forces provided ongoing assistance throughout the operation of the Gormanston facility and discussions continue with them with a view to future accommodation solutions at Defence Forces facilities, which could offer basic winter-appropriate accommodation to several hundred BOTPs.

DCEDIY, in partnership with the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces, has been operating Kilbride Army Camp as a temporary rest centre for single male BOTPs since 7 November 2022. A Facilities Management Company operates the Camp on behalf of DCEDIY. While the Defence Forces maintain a presence at the Camp, they are not involved in the day to day operation of the refugee service provision.

Due to the acute shortage of IP accommodation, and single male IP accommodation in particular, the Department of Defence agreed on Friday 27 January 2023, to the temporary use of Kilbride Army Camp for single male IPs, in addition to single male BOTPs.

Capacity at Kilbride increased from the original 74 beds to 124 beds from 31 January 2023 as a result of completion of renovation works at a second accommodation block onsite.

The number of refugees on site can fluctuate on a daily basis depending on arrivals into the country and moving people out. On the morning of 07 February 2023, there were 112 single male refugees assigned to Kilbride.

The intention remains that no refugee shall remain in Kilbride for longer than 3 weeks on average.

The Department has also previously utilised tented facilities at other State-owned International Protection Accommodation Service centres on a temporary basis to provide short-term emergency accommodation to International Protection Applicants while additional capacity is being sourced.

Relocations

If the initial accommodation for a beneficiary is in emergency accommodation, every effort is made to move them to serviced accommodation as quickly as possible. Those in serviced accommodation are advised that this accommodation is temporary and that they may be moved into pledged or other medium-term accommodation as soon as this is available, and that this may not be in the same area as the initial temporary accommodation. The central consideration is meeting our obligations regarding safety and security of the displaced people fleeing Ukraine.

Bespoke moves for education, employment or other reasons cannot be entertained owing to system capacity and accommodation constraints. Assistance is available from Local Authorities and implementing partners to help locate suitable pledged accommodation if an individual wishes to stay in the same area. Where the HSE recommends relocation on medical grounds, or to achieve family reunification, a limited number of moves can be facilitated. A dedicated resource from the HSE has been seconded to the DCEDIY to assist in responding to such medical related requests.

In almost all circumstances, BOTPs are moved from hotels only where contracts are coming to an end or where they have been in accommodation reserved for international protection applicants. It is extremely difficult to secure sufficient IP accommodation. When contractors agree to accommodate IPs and where BOTPs are on-site, BOTPs are generally moved to alternative suitable accommodation in order to meet our obligations to accommodate IPs . As summer approaches, we are conscious that more moves may be required if providers opt to pivot back to accommodating tourists. (As of now, we have no providers who have notified us of their intention to do so.)

Accommodation Standards

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in consultation with DCEDIY and relevant State agencies/Departments developed a standards document within the context of the Humanitarian Crisis Housing Taskforce. The guidance is broadly based on homeless emergency accommodation which has been developed in recent years to respond to the needs of those presenting as homeless and to reduce reliance on commercial hotel and B&B accommodation. This generally consists of serviced type accommodation arrangements for families and/or individuals and shared facilities for cooking, laundry, recreation etc.

The document provides guidance on appraisal criteria, including general considerations such as location, current state of building, general standards, accommodation standards, statutory requirements etc.

The document refers to and includes standards in accommodation covering:

- Structural Condition
- Sanitary Facilities
- Heating Facilities
- Food Preparation and Storage and Laundry
- Ventilation
- Lighting
- Fire Safety
- Refuse Facilities and
- Gas, Oil and Electrical Installations

The standards applied clearly state that buildings offering temporary accommodation for use by those fleeing the war in Ukraine must be safe, well maintained and in good repair. Accommodation providers must comply with fire safety obligations/regulations. The standards clearly state that adequate provisions should be made in relation to fire safety e.g. compliance with a fire safety certificate or the obligations under the Fire Services Acts.

In this context each building should contain

- a suitable fire detection and alarm system (mains wired) for the particular building installed and maintained to current applicable standards and legislation
 - an emergency evacuation plan,
 - drawings of each floor displayed inside the entrance door to dormitories, bedrooms, or family accommodation, showing all escape routes from the building .
- Emergency lighting shall be provided in all common areas.

Fire detection and alarm systems and emergency lighting systems shall be maintained in accordance with current standards.