



**Tithe an
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**Houses of the
Oireachtas**

**AN COMHCHOISTE UM LEANAÍ, MÍCHUMAS, COMHIONANNAS AGUS
LÁNPHÁIRTÍOCHT
CLÁR OIBRE – 2020/2021**

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN, DISABILITY, EQUALITY AND
INTEGRATION
WORK PROGRAMME – 2020/2021**

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. SELECT COMMITTEE	1
A. Legislation (Bills) SEE 3(c) also.....	1
B. Estimates and other Financial Matters	1
C. Referrals of Motions and Other Matters	2
D. Engagement with Ombudsman	2
3. JOINT COMMITTEES.....	2
A. EU Business	2
Scrutiny of EU Legislative Proposals.....	2
Engagement with Ministers	2
Engagement on the Statutory Departmental Scrutiny Report	2
Engagement with European Bodies	3
B. Key policy and governance priorities	3
C. Pre-Legislative Scrutiny/Post-enactment.....	5
D. Engagement with Chairpersons Designate.....	5
E. Travel.....	5
4. AGREEMENT OF WORK PROGRAMME.....	6
Appendix 1: Terms of Reference of the Joint Committee	7
Appendix 2: Members of the Joint Committee	12
Appendix 3: Bodies under the aegis of the Department and associated Commission.....	13

Joint Committee on Children, Disability, Equality and Integration

Work Programme 2020/2021

1. INTRODUCTION

The Joint Oireachtas Committee on Children, Disability, Equality and Integration was established by Dáil Éireann on 30th July 2020 and Seanad Éireann on 25th September 2020. Standing Orders 100(4) (Dáil Éireann) and 77(4) (Seanad Éireann) require that *"as soon as may be following its appointment and thereafter at annual intervals, each Select Committee shall prepare a work programme and shall lay such programme before Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann"*.

2. SELECT COMMITTEE

The function of the Select Committee is to consider Bills, Estimates and other business referred to it by Dáil Éireann which relates to the Department of Children, Disability, Equality and Integration.

A. Legislation (Bills) SEE 3(c) also

The Select Committee will consider any Bills referred to it by Dáil Éireann, relevant to the Department during the period covered by this Work Programme.

The Government Legislative Programme for Autumn 2020 identifies the Bills relevant to the Department of Children, Disability, Equality and Integration as follows:

Heads of Bill in Preparation:

- Parent's Leave and Benefit (Amendment) Bill
- Adoptive Benefit Bill
- Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Bill

Heads of Bill approved - expected to undergo Pre-Legislative Scrutiny (PLS):

- Certain Institutional Burials (Authorised Interventions) Bill

Revised Heads of Bill in preparation:

- Disability (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill

Preparatory work underway:

- Child Care (Amendment) Bill
- Children (Amendment) (Alternatives to Suspended Sentences) Bill
- Children (Amendment) (Sentence Remission) Bill

Bills on the Order Paper:

- Gender Pay Gap Information Bill 2019 (Report)

B. Estimates and other Financial Matters

The Select Committees are tasked with consideration of annual Estimates for Public Services that fall within their remit. The Estimates are Ministers' spending plans for the coming financial year. When the Estimates are referred to the Select Committee for consideration, the Committee will have a valuable opportunity to question the Minister

on financial allocations and associated output targets for the coming year. A Supplementary Estimate may be considered later in the year if additional monies are required by the relevant Government Department. The Select Committee is required to consider the Estimates but is not empowered to amend them.

In addition, the examination of the Annual Output Statements (AOS) including performance, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public monies and Value for Money (VFM) Reviews is another important part of scrutinising Government expenditure, should such statements become available.

C. Referrals of Motions and Other Matters

From time to time, matters may arise and may be referred to the Select Committee by the Dáil. It is not possible to say in advance what those matters might be or when they might arise due to the fact that they come to the committee as a result of decisions taken elsewhere (e.g. at EU level). However, the Select Committee will schedule the necessary meeting(s) to ensure that the matter is considered within the prescribed timeframe.

D. Engagement with Ombudsman

A Select Committee may in respect of any Ombudsman charged with oversight of public services within the policy remit of the relevant Department or Departments, consider such motions relating to the appointment of an Ombudsman as may be referred to the Committee, and such Ombudsman reports laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas as the Committee may select.

3. JOINT COMMITTEES

The duties of the Joint Committee are discharged in two ways (i) there will be items of business referred to it by one or both Houses and (ii) it can select business for consideration itself, from the areas within its terms of reference.

A. EU Business

Scrutiny of EU Legislative Proposals

The scrutiny of draft EU legislative proposals will continue to be a standing agenda item of the Joint Committee. Draft proposals will be brought to the attention of the Joint Committee in line with the 2013 mainstreaming models as agreed by the Working Group of Committee Chairs (WGCC) by setting out priority (Schedule A) and non-priority (Schedule B) items. The Joint Committee will consider all proposals as they arise during the period covered by this Work Programme.

Engagement with Ministers

Ministers of the Government attend EU Council meetings in their relevant policy areas and it is intended that the Joint Committee will invite the Minister for Children, Disability, Equality and Integration from time to time to give oral briefings following such meetings.

Engagement on the Statutory Departmental Scrutiny Report

There is a requirement under Section 2(5) of the European Union (Scrutiny) Act 2002 for Ministers to report twice yearly to both Houses on the measures, proposed measures and other developments in relation to the European Communities and the European Union in relation to which he/she performs functions. The Joint Committee can consider these reports with the Secretary-General of the Department.

Engagement with European Bodies

The Committee will engage with European bodies, where suitable, such as the EU Commission and the EU Parliament and its committees during 2020-21, including delegation visits where appropriate.

B. Key policy and governance priorities

The Joint Committee is empowered to consider such other policy issues as it may select within its terms of reference. In addition to core business such as engagement with the Minister and Minister of State, Departmental officials and respective bodies on policy and government issues, it should be possible to focus on a number of topics within the remit of the Department of Children, Disability, Equality and Integration with the aim of producing well-researched reports and laying them before the Houses in 2020-21.

The Joint Committee will prioritise some of the following issues along with current issues or other matters that arise from time to time.

General
1. Follow-up on Reports published by the previous administration;
2. Examine progress on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals related to Children, Disability, Equality and Integration and Youth set out in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
3. Discussion in relation to the social contract – what does a social contract between the Oireachtas and the residents of Ireland look like in relation to children, disability, equality and integration – visualising the future of Ireland;
4. Domestic Violence
5. Examination of the final Report of the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes;
Children and Youth Affairs
1. Child poverty and homelessness <i>and</i> issues which disproportionately affect one parent families, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• access to childcare and employment;• Increased risks of poverty;• statutory maintenance;• access to courts; and• supports for one parent families during and after COVID 19
2. Consideration of the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on young people’s mental health including reports such as ‘How’s Your Head – Young Voices during COVID-19’, a national consultation with young people on mental health and wellbeing during Covid-19;
3. Early intervention and educational disadvantage in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Steps being taken to re-engage students with education including students with special educational needs and other vulnerable categories• Provision of specific and additional support to children living with disadvantage and childhood poverty• Social inclusion strategies• School meals;
4. Review of Tusla, the operation of the Tusla Inspectorate and the decentralisation of Tusla operations, also to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of clear measurements of Tusla guidelines;• Examination of Tusla’s policies around school attendance among children in care;

- After supports for children who were in care prior to turning 18; and
- Examination of Foster Care Services;

Disability

1. Matters referred by the Special Committee on Covid-19 response, which include:
 - The impact on funding and services provided in the disability sector including a review of the Section 38/39 funding allocation model
 - The implementation of the 2012 report, Time to Move on from Congregated Settings: A strategy for Community Inclusion
 - The resumption of daily services and educational supports for those with a disability
 - The financial impact on those in employment and employment opportunities
 - Issues around access to technology and the use of telemedicine;
2. Engagement with the Minister of State with responsibility for Disability;
3. Disability-related resource issues including:
 - ASD provisions in schools
 - SNA numbers and conditions of employment review
 - Waiting lists for assessments of children with disabilities or in need of supports and waiting list for supports such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS);

Equality

1. Consideration of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019–2021 and the National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy 2018-2020;
2. Review of the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021 to ensure that the successor strategy has a stronger outcomes focused approach;
3. Gender Equality Module, including:
 - Consideration of the National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017 – 2020 (NSWG) and in particular any gaps identified by Citizens’ Assembly on gender equality
 - Gender-proofing of Government policies and budgetary decisions
 - Examination of the proposed amendment to the gender ground in equality legislation as set out in the Programme for Government
 - The Gender Pay Gap
 - Equality of Access to the workplace and employment activation – Pathways to Work Strategy;
4. The introduction of a new ground of discrimination to the Equal Status Act based on socio-economic disadvantaged status;
5. Racism and Hate Speech Module including:
Forthcoming Action Plan Against Racism for Ireland (instigated by the Department of Justice and Equality via independent Committee in June 2020) and other issues around tackling racism, including that experienced online

Integration

1. Actions needed *in* the short term in Direct Provision centres particularly relating to:
 - improving living conditions;
 - halting the use of emergency accommodation;
 - regulating and inspecting Direct Provision centres and in consideration of the impact of Covid-19
 - children living in Direct Provision
 and the Challenges facing the migrant Community, in particular due to Covid-19;
2. Examination of the potential resurgence of the migration crisis in the EU including consideration of:
 - the Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020;
 - rise of anti-migration the sentiment; and

- the significant impact of climate change on migration;

3. Those living illegally in Ireland and the possible routes to the resolution of their status

The Dáil passed an instruction on 30 July, to each Sectoral Committee that “the work programme provided for in Standing Order 100(4) shall include the consideration of such aspects of;

- the State’s response to the Covid-19 pandemic;
- science, research and development and innovation; and
- progress on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals set out in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

These areas are built into this programme.

In addition to issues which have been identified by the Joint Committee as areas of priority, the Committee will continue to examine ongoing and potential issues pertaining to its remit until the end of 2021.

C. Pre-Legislative Scrutiny/Post-enactment

The Government Legislative Programme makes provision for the publication of a number of Bills. In accordance with Standing Order 173 Ministers are now required, save in exceptional circumstances and with the permission of the Business Committee, to bring the general scheme or draft heads of a Bill to a Joint Committee for consideration. Committees are empowered to consider the draft heads of Bills but can decide in relation to a particular Bill that such consideration is not necessary. The Committee will examine all referrals by the Minister for Children, Disability, Equality and Integration on a case by case basis and will carry out pre-legislative scrutiny on all Bills where it deems it necessary.

In accordance with Standing Order 197, some 12 months following the enactment of a Bill, save in the case of the Finance Bill and the Appropriation Bill, the member of the Government or Minister of State who is officially responsible for implementation of the Act shall provide a report which shall review the functioning of the Act and which shall be laid in the Oireachtas Library. The Committee is empowered to require the Minister/Minister of State to attend before the Committee in relation to the consideration of the report [Standing Order 96(12)].

D. Engagement with Chairpersons Designate

In accordance with Standing Order 96(11) the Joint Committee is empowered to engage with the chairperson designate of a body or agency under the aegis of the Department of Children, Disability, Equality and Integration prior to their appointment to discuss their strategic priorities for the role. It is an opportunity for chairpersons designate to discuss with the Committee the approach they will take as chairperson and to give their views as to what contribution they can make to the agency or body to which they are proposed to be appointed. The Joint Committee will where feasible meet with chairpersons designate as nominations arise during the year.

E. Travel

In accordance with Standing Order 96(15) the Joint Committee may decide, subject to financial, administrative and procedural constraints, to undertake travel as it considers necessary to further progress the Work Programme. Such travel may include attendance at conferences or meetings, or study visits related to issues within its remit. The

Working Group of Committee Chairs will make recommendations in relation to apportionment of moneys available for travel subject to the consent of the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission [Dáil Standing Order 120(4)(a)].

4. AGREEMENT OF WORK PROGRAMME

This Work Programme of the Joint Committee on Children, Disability, Equality and Integration for 2020/2021 was agreed by the Joint Committee at its meeting on 17th November 2020. In accordance with Standing Orders of Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann, it was agreed on 17th November 2020 that the Work Programme would be laid before both Houses of the Oireachtas.



Kathleen Funchion T.D.
Chair

17th November 2020

Scope and context of activities of Select Committees.

94. (1) The Dáil may appoint a Select Committee to consider and, if so permitted, to take evidence upon any Bill, Estimate or matter, and to report its opinion for the information and assistance of the Dáil. Such motion shall specifically state the orders of reference of the Committee, define the powers devolved upon it, fix the number of members to serve on it, state the quorum, and may appoint a date upon which the Committee shall report back to the Dáil.

(2) It shall be an instruction to each Select Committee that—

- (a) it may only consider such matters, engage in such activities, exercise such powers and discharge such functions as are specifically authorised under its orders of reference and under Standing Orders;
- (b) such matters, activities, powers and functions shall be relevant to, and shall arise only in the context of, the preparation of a report to the Dáil;
- (c) it shall not consider any matter which is being considered, or of which notice has been given of a proposal to consider, by the Joint Committee on Public Petitions in the exercise of its functions under Standing Order 125(1)¹; and
- (d) it shall refrain from inquiring into in public session or publishing confidential information regarding any matter if so requested, for stated reasons given in writing, by—
 - (i) a member of the Government or a Minister of State, or
 - (ii) the principal office-holder of a State body within the responsibility of a Government Department or
 - (iii) the principal office-holder of a non-State body which is partly funded by the State,

Provided that the Committee may appeal any such request made to the Ceann Comhairle, whose decision shall be final.

(3) It shall be an instruction to all Select Committees to which Bills are referred that they shall ensure that not more than two Select Committees shall meet to consider a Bill on any given day, unless the Dáil, after due notice to the Business Committee by a Chairman of one of the Select Committees concerned, waives this instruction.

¹ Retained pending review of the Joint Committee on Public Petitions.

Functions of Departmental Select Committees.

95. (1) The Dáil may appoint a Departmental Select Committee to consider and, unless otherwise provided for in these Standing Orders or by order, to report to the Dáil on any matter relating to—

- (a) legislation, policy, governance, expenditure and administration of—
 - (i) a Government Department, and
 - (ii) State bodies within the responsibility of such Department, and
- (b) the performance of a non-State body in relation to an agreement for the provision of services that it has entered into with any such Government Department or State body.

(2) A Select Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order shall also consider such other matters which—

- (a) stand referred to the Committee by virtue of these Standing Orders or statute law, or
- (b) shall be referred to the Committee by order of the Dáil.

(3) The principal purpose of Committee consideration of matters of policy, governance, expenditure and administration under paragraph (1) shall be for—

- (a) the accountability of the relevant Minister or Minister of State, and
- (b) to assess the performance of the relevant Government Department or or a State body with the responsibility of the relevant Department, in delivering public services while achieving intended outcomes, including value for money.

(4) A Select Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order shall not consider any matter relating to accounts audited by, or reports of, the Comptroller and Auditor General unless the Committee of Public Accounts—

- (a) consents to such consideration, or
- (b) has reported on such accounts or reports.

(5) A Select Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order may be joined with a Select Committee appointed by Seanad Éireann to be and act as a Joint Committee for the purposes of paragraph (1) and such other purposes as may be specified in these Standing Orders or by order of the Dáil: provided that the Joint Committee shall not consider—

- (a) the Committee Stage of a Bill,
- (b) Estimates for Public Services, or

- (c) a proposal contained in a motion for the approval of an international agreement involving a charge upon public funds referred to the Committee by order of the Dáil.

(6) Any report that the Joint Committee proposes to make shall, on adoption by the Joint Committee, be made to both Houses of the Oireachtas.

(7) The Chairman of the Select Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order shall also be Chairman of the Joint Committee.

(8) Where a Select Committee proposes to consider—

- (a) EU draft legislative acts standing referred to the Select Committee under Standing Order 133, including the compliance of such acts with the principle of subsidiarity,
- (b) other proposals for EU legislation and related policy issues, including programmes and guidelines prepared by the European Commission as a basis of possible legislative action,
- (c) non-legislative documents published by any EU institution in relation to EU policy matters, or
- (d) matters listed for consideration on the agenda for meetings of the relevant Council (of Ministers) of the European Union and the outcome of such meetings,

the following may be notified accordingly and shall have the right to attend and take part in such consideration without having a right to move motions or amendments or the right to vote:

- (i) members of the European Parliament elected from constituencies in Ireland,
- (ii) members of the Irish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and
- (iii) at the invitation of the Committee, other members of the European Parliament.

(9) A Select Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order may, in respect of any Ombudsman charged with oversight of public services within the policy remit of the relevant Department consider—

- (a) such motions relating to the appointment of an Ombudsman as may be referred to the Committee, and
- (b) such Ombudsman reports laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas as the Committee may select: Provided that the provisions of Standing Order 130 apply where the Select Committee has not considered the Ombudsman report, or a portion or portions thereof, within two months (excluding Christmas, Easter or summer recess periods) of the report being laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas.²

² Retained pending review of the Joint Committee on Public Petitions.

Powers of Select Committees.

96. Unless the Dáil shall otherwise order, a Committee appointed pursuant to these Standing Orders shall have the following powers:

- (1) power to invite and receive oral and written evidence and to print and publish from time to time—
 - (a) minutes of such evidence as was heard in public, and
 - (b) such evidence in writing as the Committee thinks fit;
- (2) power to appoint sub-Committees and to refer to such sub-Committees any matter comprehended by its orders of reference and to delegate any of its powers to such sub-Committees, including power to report directly to the Dáil;
- (3) power to draft recommendations for legislative change and for new legislation;
- (4) in relation to any statutory instrument, including those laid or laid in draft before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas, power to—
 - (a) require any Government Department or other instrument-making authority concerned to—
 - (i) submit a memorandum to the Select Committee explaining the statutory instrument, or
 - (ii) attend a meeting of the Select Committee to explain any such statutory instrument: Provided that the authority concerned may decline to attend for reasons given in writing to the Select Committee, which may report thereon to the Dáil, and
 - (b) recommend, where it considers that such action is warranted, that the instrument should be annulled or amended;
- (5) power to require that a member of the Government or Minister of State shall attend before the Select Committee to discuss—
 - (a) policy, or
 - (b) proposed primary or secondary legislation (prior to such legislation being published),

for which he or she is officially responsible: Provided that a member of the Government or Minister of State may decline to attend for stated reasons given in writing to the Select Committee, which may report thereon to the Dáil: and provided further that a member of the Government or Minister of State may request to attend a meeting of the Select Committee to enable him or her to discuss such policy or proposed legislation;

- (6) power to require that a member of the Government or Minister of State shall attend before the Select Committee and provide, in private session if so

requested by the attendee, oral briefings in advance of meetings of the relevant EC Council (of Ministers) of the European Union to enable the Select Committee to make known its views: Provided that the Committee may also require such attendance following such meetings;

- (7) power to require that the Chairperson designate of a body or agency under the aegis of a Department shall, prior to his or her appointment, attend before the Select Committee to discuss his or her strategic priorities for the role;
- (8) power to require that a member of the Government or Minister of State who is officially responsible for the implementation of an Act shall attend before a Select Committee in relation to the consideration of a report under Standing Order 197;
- (9) subject to any constraints otherwise prescribed by law, power to require that principal office-holders of a—
 - (a) State body within the responsibility of a Government Department or
 - (b) non-State body which is partly funded by the State,

shall attend meetings of the Select Committee, as appropriate, to discuss issues for which they are officially responsible: Provided that such an office-holder may decline to attend for stated reasons given in writing to the Select Committee, which may report thereon to the Dáil; and

- (10) power to—
 - (a) engage the services of persons with specialist or technical knowledge, to assist it or any of its sub-Committees in considering particular matters; and
 - (b) undertake travel;

Provided that the powers under this paragraph are subject to such recommendations as may be made by the Working Group of Committee Chairmen under Standing Order 120(4)(a).'

Appendix 2: Members of the Joint Committee

Chair: Kathleen Funchion (SF)
Patrick Costello (GP)
Cathal Crowe (FF)
Alan Dillon (FG)
Joe Flaherty (FF)
John Paul Phelan (FG)
Sean Sherlock (LAB)
Mark Ward (SF)
Jennifer Whitmore (SD)

Senators: Mary Fitzpatrick (FF)
Sharon Keogan (IND)
Erin McGreehan (FF)
Lynn Ruane (IND)
Mary Seery Kearny (FG)

Appendix 3: Bodies under the aegis of the Department and associated Commission

List of State Agencies (pre-transfer of functions)

Child and Family Agency - Tusla

Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, was established in 2014 under the Child and Family Agency Act 2013. Its functions were previously carried out by the HSE, the Family Support Agency and the Educational Welfare Board. Tusla's establishment mirrors the decision to set up a separate Department of Children and Youth Affairs, transferring responsibility for a range of services for children and young people from the then Department of Health and Children and the HSE.

Tusla is responsible for child welfare and protection services, including family support services; family resource centres and associated national programmes; early years (pre-school) inspections and domestic, sexual and gender-based violence services; and services relating to the psychological welfare of children.

Tusla is currently the most significant agency under the Department's remit, in terms of size and budget. It employs some 4,500 WTE (about 40% of whom are social workers) and has a budget of €817.4m for 2020m.

Oberstown Children Detention Campus

Oberstown Children Detention Campus is 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 principal objective of the campus under the Children Act 2001 is to provide appropriate care, education, training and other programmes to young people between 12 and 18 years with a view to reintegrating them successfully back into their communities and society. The framework for providing these objectives is through CEHOP which focuses on providing Care, Education, Health and wellbeing interventions, Offending behaviour programmes and Preparation for leaving. The Oberstown CDC employs 271 WTE and its 2020 financial allocation is €24m.

Adoption Authority of Ireland

The Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI) is an independent body established under the Adoption Act 2010. The purpose of the Adoption Act 2010 is to improve standards in both domestic and intercountry adoption. The goals and objectives of the AAI are:

- To achieve the highest standard in the regulation and operation of adoption services in Ireland;
- To apply informed and balanced decision-making in adoption services, in accordance with national and international law and evidence-based practice;
- To inform and influence adoption policy and service delivery by reason of a practical understanding of the operations of the legislation through the provision of a comprehensive information, research and communications framework; and
- To plan and implement the changes required in organisation policies and operational procedures in line with emerging legislative changes.

The AAI employs 25 WTE and its 2020 financial allocation is €5.7m.

Office of the Ombudsman for Children (OCO)

The Office of the Ombudsman for Children is an independent body established under the Ombudsman for Children Act, 2002. It investigates complaints about services provided to children by public organisations and the service is free and independent. The Ombudsman is a presidential appointment and reports directly to the Oireachtas. The OCO employs 21 WTE and its 2020 financial allocation is €2.9m.

Gaisce, the President's Award: The President's Award is the National Challenge Award given by the President to young people in Ireland between the ages of 15 and 25 years. The purpose of the award is to reward young people who have set and achieved a demanding challenge for themselves in each of 4 different areas of activity (Community involvement, Personal Skill, Physical recreation, Adventure journey). There are 3 awards; bronze, silver and gold, which reflect different levels of time and commitment.

Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes: headed by Judge Yvonne Murphy. The Final Reports are due to be presented to the Minister for Children, Disability, Equality and Integration at the end of October 2020.

Additional State Agencies (post transfer)

Two additional state agencies will fall under the remit of the Department post the transfer of functions.

The National Disability Authority

Responsibility for the National Disability Authority (NDA) will transfer to this Department when disability responsibilities transfer from the Department of Justice.

The NDA is an independent statutory body that provides information and advice to the Government on policy and practice relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities. Its mandate is set out in the National Disability Authority Act 1999, with additional functions assigned under the Disability Act 2005.

The NDA functions include research, developing and collaborating on the development of relevant statistics; assisting in the development of standards; developing codes of practice and monitoring the implementation of standards, codes and employment of persons with disabilities in the public service. The NDA employs 35 WTE and its 2020 financial allocation is €4.8m.

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission is Ireland's national human rights and equality institution. It is an independent public body that accounts to the Oireachtas, with a mandate established under the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 (IHREC Act 2014).

The IHREC Act includes and further enhances the functions of the former Irish Human Rights Commission and the former Equality Authority.

The IHREC purpose is to protect and promote human rights and equality in Ireland and build a culture of respect for human rights, equality and intercultural understanding in the State.

Its work is determined independently by fifteen members of the Commission whose diverse membership broadly reflects the nature of Irish society. The IHREC employs 64 WTE and its 2020 financial allocation is €6.8m.

Disability Services delivered by the HSE and Section 38 and 39 Organisations

Budgetary responsibility for over €2.2bn is expected to transfer from the Department of Health to this Department. The HSE is the statutory agency responsible for the delivery of these service and they do this through a mix of HSE direct provision as well as through 266 non-statutory section 38 and 39 service providers, and private providers. Seventy percent of specialist disability services are dependent on 266 voluntary organisations and these vary significantly in terms of size, geographic coverage and range of services.