



BUNREACT NA ÉIREANN  
CONSTITUTION OF IRELAND



Tithe an  
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Houses of the  
Oireachtas

**Comhchoiste um Airgeadas, Caiteachas Poiblí agus Athchóiriú,  
agus an Taoiseach**

Tuarascáil maidir leis an nGrinnscrúdú Réamhreachtach ar Scéim  
Ghinearálta an Bhille fán gCiste um Éire sa Todhchaí agus fán gCiste  
um Bonneagar, Aeráid agus an Dúlra.  
Meitheamh 2023

**Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform, and  
Taoiseach**

Report on Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the General Scheme of the Future  
Ireland Fund, Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund Bill  
January 2024



## Membership of the Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform, and Taoiseach

### Deputies

CATHAOIRLEACH	LEAS-CHATHAOIRLEACH			
				
John McGuinness Fianna Fáil	Bernard Durkan Fine Gael	Richard Boyd Barrett People Before Profit-Solidarity	Rose Conway-Walsh Sinn Féin	Pearse Doherty Sinn Féin
				
Damien English Fine Gael	Steven Matthews Green Party	Jim O'Callaghan Fianna Fáil	Peadar Tóibín Aontú	

### Senators

				
Maria Byrne Fine Gael	Pat Casey Fianna Fáil	Aidan Davitt Fianna Fáil	Alice-Mary Higgins Independent	Marie Sherlock Labour Party

### Membership History:

- Mick Barry, Sep 2020 – May 2023
- Michael D'Arcy, Sep 2020 – Sep 2020
- Mairéad Farrell, Sep 2020 – April 2023
- Neale Richmond, Sep 2020 – Jan 2023

## Cathaoirleach's Foreword



The Joint Committee agreed to conduct Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the General Scheme of the Future Ireland Fund, Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund Bill 2023. As part of its scrutiny the Joint Committee held one public meeting on the 22 of November to discuss the provisions of the General Scheme with officials from the Department of Finance and representatives of the National Treasury Management Agency. The Joint Committee also received further briefing from the Department of Finance.

This report sets out the details of that scrutiny, highlights a number of key issues and contains recommendations that the Joint Committee feel would enhance and strengthen the Bill.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the witnesses for their assistance to the Committee and to the Members of the Committee for their work in this process. The Joint Committee looks forward to the Bill's progression through the Houses of the Oireachtas and on engaging on the Bill again at Committee Stage.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John McGuinness". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

John McGuinness T.D.

25 January 2023

## Table of Contents

<b>Membership of the Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform, and Taoiseach .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Cathaoirleach's Foreword .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Recommendations .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Purpose of the Bill.....</b>	<b>5</b>
The Future Ireland Fund .....	5
The Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund .....	6
<b>Procedural basis for scrutiny.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Consideration of the General Scheme .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Meetings Held .....	8
Overview and Assessment of General Scheme .....	9
Part 1 – Future Ireland Fund .....	9
Part 2 – Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund .....	12
<b>Conclusion: .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>15</b>
APPENDIX 1 – Meeting Transcript .....	15
APPENDIX 2 – Opening Statements and submissions received .....	15
APPENDIX 3 – General Scheme of Future Ireland Fund, Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund Bill (2023) .....	15
APPENDIX 4 – Terms of Reference .....	16

## Recommendations

### Head 4

1. The Joint Committee has concerns regarding the continued investment by the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund in companies that are listed on the UN Human Rights Council database of businesses and enterprises involved in certain activities relating in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
2. The Joint Committee recommends that the Department of Finance and the National Treasury Management Agency expedite efforts to ensure that provisions are made to exclude investment by the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund into businesses and enterprises involved in certain activities relating in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
3. The Joint Committee recommends that the Department of Finance make appropriate efforts to ensure that provisions are made in relation to exclude the ISIF from investing activities that could contribute to human rights abuses.

### Head 6

4. The Joint Committee recommends the inclusion of measures within the legislation to ensure effective safeguarding around the early drawdown from the Funds.

### Head 9

5. The Committee recommends the inclusion of provisions in the legislation to ensure that the fund cannot be used to purchase carbon credits in the event that climate targets are not met.

### Head 12

6. The Joint Committee recommends that the Department provide further clarity with regard to Head 12 in relation to provisions which allow for additional contributions, above the €2 billion per annum.

## Introduction

The General Scheme of the Future Ireland Fund, Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund Bill 2023 was provided to the Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform, and Taoiseach ('the Committee') for decision on whether the Committee wished to undertake pre-legislative scrutiny in October 2023 – a link to the text of the General Scheme can be found at Appendix 4.

The Committee decided to undertake pre-legislative scrutiny of the General Scheme by holding a meeting on 22 November 2023 with representatives of the Department of Finance and the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA).

## Purpose of the Bill

The purpose of the Future Ireland Fund, Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund Bill 2023 is to provide for the establishment of:

- The Future Ireland Fund; and
- The Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund

## The Future Ireland Fund

Over the coming decades, it is expected that the State will face significant future expenditure and revenue pressures. These include the cost of providing for an ageing population (pensions, health care and long-term care costs), climate neutrality and digitalisation of economies. The creation of a Future Ireland Fund is intended to help ensure these costs can, in part, be alleviated. This would be achieved by the Fund contributing resources to the operation of the State, the fungibility of which would provide the possibility of increased or additional public expenditure or taxation changes in other policy areas.



## The Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund

In Ireland, fiscal policy has tended to be pro-cyclical and capital spending has been especially susceptible to pro-cyclicality. An adequately capitalised fund is considered a good means to support counter-cyclical fiscal policy. The structure of the Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund mirrors that of the Future Ireland Fund.

However, there are distinct differences between the two funds and different approaches to payments, investment and withdrawal. The Bill will also provide for the funds to be owned by the Minister for Finance. They will be managed and invested by the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA).

The [General Scheme](#) of the Future Ireland Fund, Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund Bill 2023 Bill contains 28 Heads in 7 Parts as follows:

Relevant Heads of Bill	Measure	Discussed in Report
1	Interpretation	
2	Establishment and purpose of the Future Ireland Fund	
3	Investment policy for Future Ireland Fund	Page 9
4	Investment strategy for Future Ireland Fund	Page 9, 10
5	Payments to Future Ireland Fund	Page 11
6	Payments to Future Ireland Fund beyond 2035	Page 11, 12
7	Payments from Future Ireland Fund to Exchequer	
8	Use of the capital of the Future Ireland Fund from 2041	
9	Establishment of the Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund	Page 12, 13



10	Investment policy for Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund	
11	Investment strategy for Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund	
12	Payments to Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund	Page 13, 14
13	Payments to Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund beyond 2030	
14	Payments from Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund to Exchequer for the purposes of Head 9.1(a)	
15	Payments from Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund to Exchequer for the purposes of Head 9.1(b)	
16	Management of the Funds	
17	Controlling Interests	
18	Reviews	
19	Expenses of the Agency in relation to the Funds	
20	Investment in Fossil Fuel Undertakings	
21	Keeping of accounts	
22	Report and information to the Minister relating to the operation of the Funds	
23	Taxation measures	
24	Amendment of the Act of 1990	
25	Amendments to the Act of 2014	
26	Repeal of National Surplus (Reserve Fund for Exceptional Contingencies) Act 2019	
27	Administration Fees and Expenses	
28	Short Title and Commencement	

## Procedural basis for scrutiny

Pre-legislative consideration was carried out in accordance with Standing Order 174A, which provides that, prior to its presentation or introduction, a General Scheme of a Bill shall be given to the committee empowered to consider Bills published by the relevant member of Government.

## Consideration of the General Scheme

### Meetings Held

The Committee held a meeting on 22 November 2023 to discuss the provisions of the General Scheme with officials from the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform and representatives from the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA). Further details and links to the opening statement and the Official report of this meeting are included in appendices to this report.

#### Witnesses

- Mr Nick Ashmore – Director, Ireland Strategic Investment Fund, National Treasury Management Agency
- Mr Dave McEvoy – Director, Funding and Debt Management, National Treasury Management Agency
- Ms Susan O'Halloran – Chief Legal Officer, National Treasury Management Agency
- Mr Oliver Gilvarry – Assistant Secretary, Banking and Financial Stability Division, Department of Finance
- Mr John McCarthy – Chief Economist, Department of Finance
- Mr Pat Leahy – Principal Officer, Banking and Financial Stability Division, Department of Finance

## Overview and Assessment of General Scheme

### Part 1 – Future Ireland Fund

Part 1 of the General Scheme deals with the establishment of the Future Ireland Fund.

**Head 3** sets out the investment policy upon which the Agency is to develop the investment strategy (as opposed to requiring the development of a policy document). This mirrors the approach taken in s.39 of the Act of 2014<sup>1</sup> in relation to the establishment of the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF). **Head 3.3** provides that the investment of the Fund will be invested responsibly. The purpose of this provision is to require the NTMA to take account of ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) considerations in the investment process.

**Head 4** provides that the NTMA is responsible for determining, monitoring and keeping under review the Future Ireland Fund investment strategy. The strategy must be in accordance with the principles set out in Head 3 and include a description of how the Agency will invest responsibly, including with reference to investment exclusions or the basis for making such exclusions.

The Committee heard that at present, there is in place a sustainable and responsible investment strategy which lays out how the NTMA approaches responsible investment. The strategy aligns with UN principles for responsible investment and a policy of active ownership is pursued, which varies depending on the investment market – whether it is public, private or Irish.

There is also a practice of exclusion on a practical basis for certain categories of investment which occurs in one of two forms, either voluntary or through legislation.<sup>2</sup> Exclusions include fossil fuels, tobacco, cluster munitions and anti-personnel mines.

The Committee highlighted concerns around the continued investment by the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF) in companies that are on the UN Human Rights

<sup>1</sup> [National Treasury Management Agency \(Amendment\) Act 2014, Section 39 \(irishstatutebook.ie\)](https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/27/section/39/enacted/html)

<sup>2</sup> [Cluster Munitions And Anti-Personnel Mines Act 2008 \(irishstatutebook.ie\)](https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2008/act/27/enacted/html)

Council Database of businesses and enterprises involved in certain Israeli settlement activities relating in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.<sup>3,4</sup>

Officials noted that there is legislation before the Dáil regarding this issue and advised Members that work is ongoing with regard to drafting legislation to exclude investments that are active in the Occupied Palestinian territory (OPT). While divestment is an option, the Committee heard that the legislation would require an assessment as to how this would work in practice. To this end, the Assistant-Secretary of the Department of Finance advised that they have been engaging with a number of parties such as the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, the NTMA and the office of the Attorney General.

Members noted that the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund investment strategy is set by the NTMA following consultation with the Minister and as such, observed that there is no legislative requirement in order to adapt the investment strategy of the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund in order to divest.

### Recommendation

1. The Joint Committee has concerns regarding the continued investment by the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund in companies that are listed on the UN Human Rights Council database of businesses and enterprises involved in certain activities relating in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
2. The Joint Committee recommends that the Department of Finance and the National Treasury Management Agency expedite efforts to ensure that provisions are made to exclude investment by the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund into businesses and enterprises involved in certain activities relating in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
3. The Joint Committee recommends that the Department of Finance make appropriate efforts to ensure that provisions are made in relation to exclude

<sup>3</sup> [Database Pursuant to Human Rights Council Resolution 31/36 | OHCHR](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Microsoft Word - 23-06-30 Update.docx \(ohchr.org\)](#)

the ISIF from investing activities that could contribute to human rights abuses.

**Head 5** provides for the financing of the Future Ireland Fund. Each year from 2024 to 2035, 0.8% of GDP will be invested in the Fund (c.€4.3 billion in 2024). In addition, c. €4.1 billion from the National Reserve Fund will also be transferred to the Fund in 2024.

**Head 6** provides for a review process by Government to determine whether additional contributions should be added to the Fund post 2035 or whether Government should vary or cease contribution to the Fund. The review will include the Minister for Finance in consultation with the Minister for Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform presenting a report to Government.

Based on the report, Government shall decide on whether to amend contributions to the fund. This will then require a Dáil resolution to amend contributions for a further specified period.

Members noted that at present with regard to funds operated by the NTMA, the amount in contributions each year is a decision made by the Government. As such, the statutory obligation towards contribution represents a departure to the status quo in introducing a legal obligation on the Government to provide a certain amount of funding.

It is intended to put in place triggers to allow the Minister to reduce contributions in part and in full to the Fund to deal with exigencies such as a fall in corporation tax revenues, or an economic downturn. The Committee heard that this approach envisages an automatic commencement of full funding unless the conditions that gave rise to the partial or full reduction in contributions no longer applies.

Officials from the Department of Finance clarified that the amount in contributions can only be reduced if the Minister obtains approval of the Dáil, by resolution. This is a safeguard to ensure that in the case of volatility contributions may be reduced or

stopped, if necessary. In the event that the Minister attempts to do so but cannot obtain a resolution of the Dáil, reducing or ceasing contributions would be illegal.

The Heads envisage no payment from the Future Ireland Fund until 2041, with the intention that the return from the Fund would be used to support Government expenditure over a longer period. Members queried what measures are contained within the Bill to prevent drawdown prior this, making reference to the National Pension Reserve Fund (NPRF)<sup>5</sup> which had a drawdown date of 2025 but was accessed much earlier, due to the financial crash. Officials advised that the Bill does not contain any measures to prevent early drawdown.

Members noted the early drawdown of the National Pension Reserve Fund and recommend that consideration be given to safeguarding/ringfencing the fund in order to prevent early drawdown.

### Recommendation

4. The Joint Committee recommends the inclusion of measures within the legislation to ensure effective safeguarding around the early drawdown from the Funds.

## Part 2 – Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund

Part 2 deals with the establishment of the Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund.

**Head 9** provides for the establishment of the Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund. It outlines the twin objectives of this Fund, to support expenditure by the State in times of significant deterioration in the public finances, with the intention that the resources would be used support capital expenditure and to support projects to achieve climate and nature goals.

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<sup>5</sup> [National Pensions Reserve Fund \(NPRF\) | NTMA](#)

Members queried if it were the case that Ireland were not meeting its climate targets, whether proceeds from the Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund could be used to purchase carbon credits. Officials advised that the intent of the fund is for measures that would help achieve targets, such as capital projects to reduce CO2 emissions, or towards the improvement of water quality or biodiversity.

However, upon questioning it does not appear that there are any specific measures within the Bill that would prevent the fund being used for the purchase of carbon credits. The Committee considers that this is an area which warrants clarification.

### Recommendation

5. The Committee recommends the inclusion of provisions in the legislation to ensure that the fund cannot be used to purchase carbon credits in the event that climate targets are not met.

**Head 12** provides for the financing of the Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund (ICNF). The level of contribution to the Fund will be limited to €14 billion which equates to 5% of GNI\*, the current annual target for capital expenditure under the National Development Plan. Members noted that the General Scheme allows the Government to increase contributions to the Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund but that total contributions cannot exceed €14 billion and queried whether there are any factors which would allow additional funding (e.g., if there were additional corporation tax revenues).

Officials from the Department of Finance confirmed that there was no intention to increase contributions on a one-off basis but that there will be further review in 2030 which will allow the Government to consider if it wishes to continue with the €2 billion funding.

Head 12 of the General Scheme notes that:



*“the total contributions from the Exchequer under 12.1 and 12.2 shall be no more than €14 billion by 2023”.*

However, Head 12.3 adds that

*“Dáil Éireann may, on a proposal from the Minister, pass a resolution allowing additional funding above the annual contribution provided for in Head 12.2, to be provided to the Fund from the Central Fund. Where such funding is provided the total contribution to Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund shall not exceed €14 billion and in the event that the fund reaches €14 billion before 2030 the contribution process in Head 12.2 shall cease.*

Further clarity should be provided to the Committee in terms the provisions which allow for additional contributions, above the €2 billion per annum.

### Recommendation

6. The Joint Committee recommends that the Department provides further clarity with regard to Head 12 in relation to provisions which allow for additional contributions, above the €2 billion per annum.

## Conclusion:

The Committee welcomes the preparation and publication of the General Scheme and is broadly supportive of the measures it proposes to introduce. The Committee is of the opinion that the General Scheme would be improved by the inclusion of its recommendations.

The Committee recommends that the Minister considers the report and provides a response on the matters raised in advance of Second Stage of the Bill.

The Committee looks forward to the speedy introduction of the Bill and to engaging further on it as it progresses through the Houses of the Oireachtas.

## Appendices

### **APPENDIX 1 – Meeting Transcript**

The transcript of the meeting is available [here](#).

### **APPENDIX 2 – Opening Statements and submissions received**

A briefing note was provided by the Department of Finance to the Joint Committee.

This note is available [here](#).

The opening statement given by Mr Oliver Gilvarry, Assistant Secretary, Banking and Financial Stability Division, Department of Finance is available [here](#).

The opening statement given by Mr Nick Ashmore, Director, Ireland Strategic Investment Fund, NTMA is available [here](#).

### **APPENDIX 3 – General Scheme of Future Ireland Fund, Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund Bill (2023)**

The General Scheme of the Future Ireland Fund, Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund Bill (2023) is available [here](#).

## APPENDIX 4 – Terms of Reference

### Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform, and Taoiseach

#### Terms Of Reference – Standing Orders 94, 95 and 96 (as amended) July 2020

Standing Orders 94, 95 and 96 – scope of activity and powers of Select Committees and functions of Departmental Select Committees

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); 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.

### **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—

(a) for the accountability of the relevant Minister or Minister of State, and

(b) to assess the performance of the relevant Government Department or of a State body within 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.

### **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).



### Houses of the Oireachtas

Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2  
D02 XR20

[www.oireachtas.ie](http://www.oireachtas.ie)

Tel: +353 (0)1 6183000

Twitter: @OireachtasNews

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