

## **Written Answers.**

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**The following are questions tabled by Members for written response and the ministerial replies as received on the day from the Departments [unrevised].**

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*Questions Nos. 1 to 10, inclusive, answered orally.*

### **Employment Rights Issues**

11. **Deputy Seán Crowe** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in view of the recent concerns regarding crèches and child care, if he will consider developing regulations on the recruitment, placement and employment of au pairs. [33495/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Policy issues relating to childcare fall within the remit of my colleague, Ms Frances Fitzgerald T.D., Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. Issues relating to employment rights policy fall within my remit. Ireland's body of employment rights legislation protects all employees legally employed on an employer-employee basis in Ireland. Therefore, once it is clear that a person is working under a contract of employment in another person's home, on a full-time or part-time basis, that person has the same protection under employment law as other employees and as such, it is my view that no additional regulation is required.

It is important to distinguish such domestic employees from an au pair placement. A genuine au pair placement falls outside the scope of the employer-employee relationship.

The National Employment Rights Authority (NERA) has encountered individuals, described by their employers as au pairs, who have been found to be domestic employees and as such are fully protected by the State's employment rights legislation. NERA investigates such employers who are using the term au pair to avoid their statutory obligations under employment law. Complaints received by NERA concerning au pairs would first be examined using the "Code of Practice Determining the Employment or Self-Employment Status of Individuals" in order to determine whether or not the person is in fact an employee. Where the employment status of the person cannot be established or is in dispute the matter is referred to the Scope Section of the Department of Social Protection.

Where a person has concerns that employees may be exploited or are receiving less than their statutory entitlement, the matter can be reported to NERA for investigation. Cases for redress on matters relating to Employment Equality or Employment Rights legislation can be made on the workplace relations complaint form available from NERA or online at [www.workplacereactions.ie](http://www.workplacereactions.ie).

### **Industrial Relations Issues**

12. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the time-

table for finalisation of the legislation relating to work place relations. [33512/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Government is committed to reform of the State's Workplace Relations Services. The system that developed over the last sixty years had become unwieldy and complex; it lacked consistency, involved long delays and in some cases proved expensive for users. In short, the system was no longer fit for purpose and it was for this reason that I have commenced a root-and-branch reform with the objective of establishing a world-class Workplace Relations Service. Significant progress has been made to date and I am happy to report that in the last eighteen months a number of priority actions have been successfully delivered within the target timescale.

While considerable progress has been achieved to date on an administrative basis, completing the proposed reform requires the enactment of detailed legislation in order to provide the statutory basis for the new structures and processes. A significant amount of work has been completed on the preparation of the Workplace Relations Bill which will give statutory effect to the Reform proposals. In July 2012, I published a policy document – *Legislating for a World Class Workplace Relations Service* - which was submitted to the Oireachtas Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in order to give the Committee an early opportunity to shape the legislation. I had a constructive dialogue with the Committee on the basis of this document.

Enactment of the Bill will necessitate amendments to 22 primary acts, 12 specified parts or sections of acts and 71 statutory instruments. The Scheme of the Workplace Relations Bill has been approved by Government for priority drafting and was included on the 'A' list for the Government's Summer Legislative Programme 2013. Engagement is on-going with the Attorney General's Office and I am committed to the enactment of the legislation at an early stage with a view to having the proposed new structures in place from 2014.

I intend to progress the reform programme to the next stage with the same determination that has delivered the achievements to date. I am working towards delivery of the new two-tier Workplace Relations structure so that from next year two statutorily independent bodies will replace the current five. In the meantime I intend to continue to progress the reform and bring about further enhancements for users of the services on an administrative basis in the coming months.

### **Registered Employment Agreements**

13. **Deputy Seán Crowe** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the timescale by which he will legislate for registered employment agreements. [33494/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** In the judgment delivered on 9 May last in *McGowan and others v the Labour Court, Ireland and the Attorney General*, the Supreme Court held that Part III of the Industrial Relations Act 1946 was invalid having regard to Article 15.2.1 of the Constitution. The Article provides, in effect, that the exclusive power to make laws is vested in the Oireachtas. The Supreme Court took the view that Registered Employment Agreements are instruments having the status of laws made by private individuals. While the Constitution allows for the limited delegation of law making functions, the provision of the 1946 Act went beyond what is permissible under the Constitution.

The effect of this decision is to invalidate the registration of employment agreements previously registered under Part III of the 1946 Act. This is an important issue for many employers and their employees, particularly in relation to rates of pay and tendering for contracts. With these issues in mind, I intend as soon as possible to legislate for a revised framework that will be fully informed by the Supreme Court judgment.

## **Local Enterprise Offices Establishment**

14. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the timetable for completion of legislation for the establishment of local enterprise offices. [33496/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** In February this year, priority drafting of the County Enterprise Boards (Dissolution) Bill, 2013 commenced. The purpose of the Bill is to dissolve the County Enterprise Boards and transfer their functions, assets and liabilities to Enterprise Ireland. Following extensive consultations with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG), officials from my Department are finalising the text of the draft of the Bill in close consultation with the office of the Attorney General. The draft of the Bill will shortly be discussed by Government, and published, with a view to its early enactment once the Bill has completed its passage through the Houses of the Oireachtas.

## **Prompt Payments**

15. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if consideration will be given to further legislation for prompt payments, if the code of conduct for prompt payment fails to impact directly on the cash flow of small and medium enterprises. [33492/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Prompt Payments for goods and services rendered is critical to the effective working of any economy and is an issue on which this Government places great emphasis. In an effort to help ease cash flow difficulties for Irish small businesses operating under the current economic environment, while at the same time, setting an example for businesses in the private sector to improve their payment record by paying each other more promptly, Ireland has introduced, on a voluntary basis:

A 15 days prompt payment requirement for all central Government Departments to pay their business suppliers within 15 days of receipt of a valid invoice. This arrangement applies to all valid invoices received on or after 15 June 2009;

A similar arrangement has now being extended beyond central Government Departments to our State Agency Sector to include the Health Service Executive, the Local Authorities, State Agencies, and all other Public Sector Bodies, (with the exception of the Commercial Semi-State bodies). These new arrangements apply in respect of valid invoices received on or after 01 July 2011.

The most recent set of composite figures published are for Quarter 1 2013 and show that 92% of Government payments, valued at €468m, were paid to suppliers within 15 days. The Quarter 1 2013 returns also shows that 91% of Agencies' payments, under the remit of my Department and valued at €28.3m, were paid to suppliers within 15 days. The Late Payment Directive which established EU law in the area of prompt payments was originally introduced in 2000 and was recast in 2011 to modernise the law in this area. The Recast Directive (2011/7/EU) came into effect across the EU on 16 March 2013. The issue of prompt payment is now covered in Irish law by the European Communities (Late Payment in Commercial Transactions) Regulations 2012 (S.I. No. 580 of 2012).

This legislation will act as a deterrent to late payment and as a driver for payment on time by establishing a clear expectation in law that payment will be made according to agreed terms. It lays down the specific deadlines for the payment of invoices and establishes a right to compensation in the event of late payment in all commercial transactions, whether they relate to trans-

actions between private or public undertakings, or between undertakings and public authorities.

The Action Plan for Jobs 2013 contains commitments in respect of a Code of Conduct on Prompt Payments to improve cash flow for business and to take steps to enhance awareness of the need for prompt payments by all elements of business. Minister Perry recently announced agreement for the text of a Code of Conduct on Prompt Payments aimed at improving cash flow between businesses. The Code of Conduct is being developed by the Business Representative Bodies in Ireland with the support of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. Signatories to the Code will undertake to:

- Pay suppliers on time, within the terms of contract and in accordance with legislation;
- Give clear guidance to suppliers on payment procedure; and
- Encourage good practice by promoting adoption of the Code.

Prompt payments legislation serves as an important mechanism that can help to improve cashflow for businesses. I believe the publication of a Code of Conduct on Prompt Payments combined with the recent implementation of the Late Payment Directive and the 15 day prompt payment arrangement for the Public Sector, represents significant progress on the issue of prompt payments in Ireland in 2013.

### Employment Data

16. **Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the way job numbers, job losses and job creation figures correlated with exports over the past ten years. [33502/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** In the period between Quarter 1 2008 and Quarter 1 2012 the economy experienced the loss of 321,000 jobs. Throughout this period, those sectors which rely mainly on trading in the domestic market suffered the greatest job losses. For example, the Construction sector directly accounted for over 150,000 job losses between 2008 and 2012, while 48,000 jobs were lost in the Wholesale and Retail sector.

The sectors which have proved most resilient in maintaining or increasing employment levels during the economic crisis are those which are engaged in exporting goods and services. In examining the relationship between exports and employment, therefore, it is more appropriate to examine exports and employment for companies supported by the enterprise development agencies – which focus on exports - rather than the economy as a whole.

These companies account for the bulk of Irish exports (80% in 2012) and directly employed 294,000 in 2012. They are indirectly responsible for a similar number of jobs in ancillary and support services.

Table 1 shows the numbers in employment in companies supported by IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Shannon Development and Údarás na Gaeltachta between 2003 and 2012. The value of exports in these companies over the same period is also provided.

The table shows a reasonable correlation between employment and exports in these companies throughout the period 2003-2012. When exports performed strongly in the period 2003 to 2007, employment in agency assisted companies grew, with 23,500 jobs added in that period. As exports declined between 2008 and 2009, employment fell sharply. In the period 2008 to 2010, 45,000 agency supported jobs were lost.

Exports recovered again in 2010 and grew significantly during 2011 and 2012. In the past two years, enterprise agency supported employment has increased by almost 17,000. This is a positive development, bearing in mind the time lag between export growth and employment growth. This lag effect is due to the fact that firms may be operating below capacity when exports start to grow, or that firms may be reluctant to increase employment until export gains are seen as long-term and sustainable.

There are also many variables that need to be considered in examining the correlation between employment and exports, including the constituent components of our exports which change over time as some sectors of the economy experience a decline and new sectors start to emerge and grow. It is notable that since 2002 Services Exports have increased from €37 billion to over €90 billion in 2012 and now account for almost half of total exports. Other variables include the competitiveness of our firms and the degree of labour intensity of various sectors, which in turn are influenced by technological and innovative improvements.

**Table 1 – Agency supported companies: Employment and Exports 2003-2012**

-	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Employment, - 000	300.2	298.5	307.8	319.6	323.7	316.6	283.6	278.0	285.8	294.8
Exports - € billion	92.3	94.9	101.7	122.8	132.1	135.6	124.7	130.1	140.7	146.3 (est.)

Notes:

Data on exports is compiled by Forfás in the Annual Business Survey of Economic Impacts 2011 and captures data in respect of IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Shannon Development and Údarás na Gaeltachta.

Data on Employment is taken from the Forfás Annual Employment Survey.

### Microenterprise Loan Fund Issues

17. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will compare the interest rate of 8.8% payable under the microenterprise loan fund with the interest charges by banks to small and medium enterprises. [33499/13]

48. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will consider seeking a reduction in the interest costs of the microenterprise fund in order to promote take up of the scheme. [33498/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 17 and 48 together.

Microfinance Ireland (MFI) offers loans for 3 or more years at 8.8% fixed rate for all types of business needs including working capital and financing of business equipment to people who have been refused credit by the Banks. The Banks are offering standard variable rates for business loans and overdrafts for working capital at interest rates ranging from 6.5% to 8%. The interest rate charged by MFI reflects the higher risk profile, lack of security and possibly lack of trading history of many of the MFI applicants. The rate charged by MFI gives the customer the certainty of a fixed interest rate and fixed monthly repayments.

I can confirm that with over six months trading history now behind it, MFI is currently re-

viewing feedback in relation to the features of the Loan Scheme in order to ensure that the loan is as accessible as possible to potential applicants while at the same time providing reasonable protection to the taxpayer and private funding underpinning the Fund. Launching a variable rate loan product is being considered as part of that review. I should add that there is no feedback or evidence that a modest lowering of the interest rate will materially change the level of applications as the motivation for applicants to apply for the loan is based on their needs of having access to credit - having already been declined by their bank.

The key challenge for MFI is to ensure that people are aware that there is support for new and existing viable businesses with perceived or real higher trading risk that have been refused credit by Banks. In that regard MFI has been engaged with key influencers across the country to get that message across. To date this has included:

- Meeting regularly with the Local Enterprise Offices and other support enterprise agencies at national and local level to ensure that the loan offering is understood and supported by them in their dealings with local communities;

- Mailshots to every TD in the country to ensure they have loan information, brochures and website details available at their regular clinics;

- Meeting the Banks and the Credit Review Office to ensure that they refer people declined by them to MFI;

- Make presentations at local micro and small business seminars and workshops across the country in order to heighten awareness of the loan fund.

In addition MFI has run three radio campaigns across both national and local radio stations to raise awareness of the loan fund amongst local communities. The loan fund is demand led and there will be on-going promotional and awareness activities to ensure that awareness of the scheme is promoted to its full potential amongst relevant micro business groups across all sectors of business.

### **Job Retention**

18. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the progress to date on protecting employment of staff working on the UK loan book at a company (details supplied) in County Roscommon; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33279/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The process regarding the sale of Bank of America's (BOA's) UK credit card businesses is ongoing. The former MBNA Credit Card Processing facility in Carrick-on-Shannon now comprises two operations. The first, following the purchase of part of BOA's Credit Card portfolio by Apollo, is a new operation called AvantCard, which employs approximately 250 staff which transferred from BOA to AvantCard (Apollo) under TUPE regulations on 13 March 2013. The second operation remains in the ownership of BOA and employs approximately 200 people.

Apollo has acquired the entire building in Carrick and has leased back office space to BOA. BOA continues to look for a buyer for the remainder of the UK Credit Card book but no suitable buyer has been found to date. IDA Ireland remains in contact both locally and at corporate level with both BOA and Apollo/AvantCard to monitor progress and provide assistance, as appropriate, with respect to reconfiguring the Carrick facility. IDA continues to highlight the strengths of the Carrick site to a broad range of potential investors and hope that a satisfactory outcome can be reached soon.

### **Job Creation Numbers**

19. **Deputy Peadar Tóibín** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of additional jobs he expects to be created by the establishment of the €375,000 Enterprise Ireland competitive feasibility fund. [33490/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Enterprise Ireland launched the new Enterprise Ireland €375K Competitive Feasibility Fund on Monday 1st July 2013 aimed at stimulating new start-ups, or expansion of existing business activity in the aviation sector. This fund, which can provide up to €25,000 per project for 15 projects, is now open for applications, and will remain open until Monday 16th September 2013.

It is difficult to validate employment projections at a feasibility stage of a project but Enterprise Ireland is confident that a number of these projects will progress to High Potential Start-Up businesses and at that point validated job projections will be possible. The Competitive Feasibility Fund will support new start-up companies or individual entrepreneurs to investigate the viability of a new significant growth oriented business or proposition in the aviation sector. It will also support established companies or groups of businesses examine the potential for expansion, diversification or spinning out of a new enterprise in the industry. The funding will enable the promoters to reach firm conclusions regarding the project's viability and strategies for developing and commercialising the innovative product or service on international markets.

The fund is open to applications from the Aviation Sector including financial services associated with the sector, Aircraft and Engine leasing, Aviation software and IT, Training, Travel related software and related services, Small Aircraft Assembly, Aircraft Dismantle, Maintenance Repair Operations Airframe and Components, Composite Repair, Parts Manufacture, Aviation Services, and other engineering and technical activities.

### **Trade Agreements**

20. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the potential benefits and challenges for Ireland from the proposed transatlantic trade and investment partnership between the EU and the United States; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33573/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Following agreement at the Trade Council that I chaired on 14 June, the Commission now has a mandate to open negotiations with the U.S. on an historic Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The formal negotiations between the EU and the US are due to begin on 8 July 2013. While it is far too early to anticipate the eventual negotiated outcome of the Agreement, the negotiating mandate is broad based and positions the Commission to enter the talks with strong support from the Council to negotiate the best possible deal for Europe.

According to assessments made by the EU Commission and other European bodies, a comprehensive Trade and Investment Partnership could over time boost EU GDP by 0.5% per annum bringing significant economic gains as a whole for the EU. Given the current very low level of economic growth in the EU and in Ireland, this agreement will provide a significant injection of economic activity and consequently of new job opportunities. Based on those assessments, if Ireland simply benefited in proportion to the size of our economy within the EU, a comprehensive trade and investment partnership could over time provide gains to Ireland in the order of €800 million per annum in increased GDP and 4,000 new jobs.

An independent study by the London-based Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR), entitled 'Reducing Barriers to Transatlantic Trade', suggests the EU's economy could benefit

by €119 billion a year, up to 80% of which would come from cutting unnecessary costs imposed on business by having to comply with two separate sets of rules, and from liberalising trade in services and creating new access for exporters into the huge public procurement market in the U.S.

Given that negotiations have yet to begin, it is not possible to estimate in detail the impact on Ireland until there is greater clarity about any exchange of offers, the scale of the possible long term gains will have a positive impact on Ireland given our close trading and investment relationship with the U.S. In addition, many Irish exporters are part of European supply chains where their exports to the UK, Germany or elsewhere to the EU, feed into Europe's exports to the U.S. While tariffs are already low on trade across the Atlantic, the objective of abolishing even these will bring benefits to business in the short term. Tariffs that average about 3% on EU/U.S. trade may appear insignificant but tariffs can be a tax on business and especially where trade is between company affiliates. That is the case for a good proportion of trade between US multinationals in Ireland and the US market.

### **Job Initiatives**

21. **Deputy Catherine Murphy** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the position regarding the key commitment to develop an international content services centre; if he expects funding for such a project or similar project to come from the recently announced strategic investment fund; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33469/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Sean Sherlock):** In order to deliver on a commitment in the Programme for Government regarding the development of an International Content Services Centre, my Department commissioned a Feasibility Study as part of the deliberative process around this proposal to examine what structures and policies could be developed to make Ireland a world centre for managing and trading in intellectual property. The objectives of the study were to identify and describe the emerging trends in IP Portfolio Management in corporations globally; and taking account of such global emerging trends, to identify options and models for Ireland to leverage its existing strengths to become an internationally attractive centre for managing and trading in IP, such that this could realise an economic and jobs potential.

The Study, which was undertaken by Deloitte, was finalised in January 2013 and is now being considered by officials in the Department in the context of wider policy developments and economic conditions domestically and globally. Following this consideration, proposals will be developed regarding the next steps to be taken resulting from the findings of the Study. At present, proposals and criteria for funding of initiatives under the Strategic Investment Initiative are at an early stage of development and it is too early to say if an international content services centre would fit within the scope of the Fund.

### **Job Creation Issues**

22. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which he has monitored gains or losses in the domestic job sector in each of the past three years to date; if any particular issues have been identified as being fundamental in the creation of a conducive economic environment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33522/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** My Department and its development agencies continuously monitor job gains and losses to ensure that the Government's offering to business in both the domestic and multinational sectors is attuned closely to the needs of business. Details of job gains and losses are set out at Tables 1 and 2.

The outcome of this close monitoring is to be seen through the Action Plan for Jobs 2013 which includes 333 actions for delivery across all Government Departments and 46 Agencies and Offices to ensure a whole of Government approach in addressing the current difficult economic situation.

The Plan also includes seven landmark projects, or Disruptive Reforms, that the Government has identified as having the potential to impact significantly on job creation. Employment retention and creation continues to be the Government's primary objective. I am confident that we now have a structure in place that is delivering the type of actions needed to continue supporting business.

Basically, the Action Plan for Jobs is all about improving the competitive position of Irish business. Competitiveness improvements are underpinning Ireland's return to growth. Costs have reduced across the economy, in a number of areas including: property, business services and labour costs. This has provided a positive environment for exporting companies, who have fuelled growth over the past two years.

**Table 1 showing the total new jobs created, job losses and net change in Enterprise Ireland Client Companies in each of the years from 2010 to 2012**

Employment Data	2010	2011	2012
Total Employment	159,808	166,359	169,451
New Jobs Created	10,987	14,023	12,861
Job Losses	-15,354	-10,453	-9,523
Net Change	-4,367	+3,570	+3,338

**Table 2 showing the total new jobs created, job losses and net change in CEB-Supported Companies in each of the years from 2010 to 2012**

Employment Data	2010	2011	2012
Total Employment	32,994	32,614	33,430
New Jobs Created	4,510	5,331	4,858
Job Losses	-4,958	-5,901	-4,602
Net Change	-448	-570	+256

### Job Creation Numbers

23. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the value of investment secured and the number of jobs created in 2012 and to date in 2013 by IDA Ireland in north Dublin, particularly in Dublin 5, Dublin 13 and Dublin 17. [33413/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Forfás Employment Survey for 2012 shows that there were 511 companies supported by IDA Ireland in Dublin which employed 55,344 employees. In 2012, 6,839 new jobs were created in IDA client companies in Dublin while 3,059 were lost. The Survey does not provide data for County Dublin by postal district. Comparable figures for 2013 will be available following the completion of the 2013 survey which is expected to be completed by Forfás in November of this year.

The Survey does not provide details of investment secured by particular areas within County Dublin. IDA Ireland has indicated that, as is evidenced by announcements made by the Agency

over the last number of years, a significant number relate to Dublin as leading global corporations investing in Ireland wish to have access to a significant population pool in excess of 1 million. In 2012, announcements of investment in Dublin accounted for approximately 50% of the total investments announced by IDA Ireland. Of the 11 announcements made to date in 2013 by the Agency, 50% of them relate to Dublin.

### **Job Creation Issues**

24. **Deputy Timmy Dooley** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the way he believes the problem of regional employment blackspots can be tackled; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33558/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The achievement of balanced regional growth is a core objective of Government. Promoting entrepreneurship, attracting inward investment and facilitating the key infrastructural needs of Irish enterprise across all regions is vital to ensuring a vigorous pipeline of new business leaders, new business ideas and entrepreneurial activity. The Action Plan for Jobs is a whole of Government, national strategy aimed at creating and sustaining jobs across all regions of the State. The objective of balanced regional development is supported by the EU Commission's Regional Aid Guidelines, which recognise that some regions can face significant structural disadvantage. Regional Aid Guidelines permit Member States to grant higher investment aid in areas suffering such structural disadvantage.

All of the enterprise development agencies have regional structures to maximise local opportunities. Both Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland have offices in Limerick, Cork, Waterford, Galway and Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. This regional spread allows the agencies to drive take-up of their services and supports such as entrepreneurship programmes focused on identifying new business opportunities, at a local level, thereby maximising take up and impact. In addition, EI has a network of 110 Community Enterprise Centres in operation across the regions. At present, two thirds of employment in Enterprise Ireland client companies, well in excess of 100,000 jobs, is currently located outside of Dublin.

The establishment of a one-stop-shop to provide micro-enterprise support through the dissolution of the existing CEB offices and the creation of a new network of Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) will ensure an enhanced delivery of support to micro-enterprises in the regions and nationally. Microfinance Ireland is also providing support to such businesses. This comes in the form of loans available to microenterprises of up to €25,000 to start-up, newly-established or growing firms employing less than 10 people with viable business propositions that do not meet the conventional risk criteria applied by the banks. The Fund has a significant entrepreneurship focus and is open to anyone with a viable business proposal.

LEADER, which falls under the remit of my colleague, the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government also provides both direct and indirect support to enterprise start-ups and already established microenterprises in rural areas all over Ireland. Since 2009, almost €20m has been provided for direct support to enterprise in rural Ireland through the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2007-2013. A significant proportion of the resources provided through the RDP Training Measure, which has registered a further €10m in expenditure to date, also provides indirect capacity building and mentoring support for rural entrepreneurs.

To support the development of a pipeline of High Potential Start-Ups across all regions of the country, Enterprise Ireland has the following initiatives in place:

- The New Frontiers Programme

- Competitive Feasibility Fund aimed at stimulating start-ups and creating jobs and growth in the regions.

- The “Get Export Ready” Programme encompasses a wide range of practical measures for early exporters focusing on export readiness, the importance of research, developing a value proposition and the skills of export selling.

- Innovation Vouchers worth €5,000, give small companies access to the vast knowledge available in Irish Institutes of Technology, Universities and other public research bodies.

I believe that these measures combined with other initiatives set out in the Action Plan for Jobs will assist the development of investment and employment opportunities at regional level and across the country generally and help to achieve our objective of making Ireland the best small country in which to do business.

### **Employment Rights Issues**

25. **Deputy Seamus Kirk** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his views on collective bargaining rights for employees; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33576/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** It has been the consistent policy of successive Irish Governments, including this one, to promote collective bargaining through the development of an institutional framework supportive of a voluntary system of industrial relations that is premised upon freedom of contract and freedom of association and underpinned by a legislative framework, including the Trade Union and Industrial Relations Acts. There is also an extensive range of statutory provisions designed to back up the voluntary bargaining process, together with long-established dispute settling institutions that play an important role in disputes relating to collective bargaining.

In the absence of a practice of voluntary collective bargaining, subject to agreed qualifying criteria, the Industrial Relations Acts, 2001 & 2004, provide for a mechanism by which the fairness of the employment conditions of workers in their totality could be assessed. A 2007 decision of the Supreme Court in *Ryanair v The Labour Court* impacted on the process to be followed where issues pursued to the Labour Court under the Industrial Relations Acts, 2001 and 2004 to resolve problems between employers and workers on employee representation issues where that could not be done through existing procedures.

The Programme for Government contains a commitment to reform the current law on employees’ right to engage in collective bargaining (the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2001), so as to ensure compliance by the State with recent judgments of the European Court of Human Rights. With this in mind, in late 2012, I wrote to relevant stakeholders inviting their observations on the matter. Submissions have been received and follow up meetings took place between Departmental officials and stakeholders up to end May 2013. Legal advice on issues arising is awaited.

I hope to be in a position to put proposals to Cabinet later this year. In this context, I am certain that satisfactory arrangements can be put in place that will reconcile Ireland’s constitutional, social and economic traditions, and international obligations, whilst at the same time ensuring continued success in building Ireland’s domestic jobs-base and in attracting overseas investment into the economy.

### **Export Growth**

26. **Deputy Barry Cowen** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his views

on the likely impact of the recent fall in exports on employment levels in the State; the way he believes exporting firms may be assisted to maintain and win new markets in the context of the ongoing eurozone economic weakness; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33553/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** I refer the Deputy to my reply to Priority Question No 1 (33643/13) earlier in this afternoon's Session. Ireland's open economy needs to have the export of goods and services at the heart of its economic strategy. The excessive growth in the reliance on property in the years up the crisis was not only unsustainable but it undermined Ireland's competitiveness in export markets and caused a steady decline in our export market share. The economic transition which we are now undertaking must be founded solidly on exporting with the innovation and enterprise that is necessary to support it.

Employment in agency supported exporting companies fell by over 46,000 between 2007 and 2010. However in the past two years this has been reversed and 22,000 net additional persons are now at work in those exporting companies. This has been built on strong performances by both Irish owned and foreign owned companies in export markets. The fall in exports recorded in the first quarter has broken with this trend. My Department and Agencies are closely monitoring this situation. It is clear that there has not been a negative impact in employment during that first quarter. A number of factors are at work such as the re-pricing of pharmaceutical products which are coming off patent and a downgrading of demand in many of our key trading partners.

Other sources of data suggest that export growth can be sustained. They underpin the importance of work to build up our position in export markets through initiatives in the areas of trade promotion and innovation. In this context, Enterprise Ireland has established a Potential Exporters Division as a new way of engaging with Irish companies and providing them with mentoring, business advocate support and financial support. A pilot initiative will also be commenced, focusing on enabling companies to research, evaluate and plan market entry strategies in new geographic markets. A total of 15 Ministerial Trade Missions will take place in 2013 to existing and emerging markets.

In addition, Enterprise Ireland's Overseas Offices will work with indigenous companies to help them realise new market opportunities. We are developing a series of initiatives to assist our manufacturing companies to step up their performance and penetrate new markets.

### **Job Losses**

27. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the progress to date on protecting employment at companies (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33280/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** In relation to Covidien, IDA Ireland is unaware of any current issues in relation to the facility in Athlone. However, on 29 September 2011, the company announced 100 voluntary redundancies at the facility. The redundancies were a result of a manufacturing line for one product being transferred to Thailand. The redundancies were to take place over a two year period and the company is currently completing this process.

In relation to Alkermes, a review of its Athlone operations was undertaken as a result of a fall in demand for certain pharmaceutical products that had become generic or are nearing the

end of their commercial life. Following the review, the company decided to reduce the number of staff at their Athlone facility. Reductions of approximately 100 to 130 staff are expected to take place over a two-year period as these older product lines are phased out. The company anticipate that a reduction in staff numbers will be achieved through a combination of natural attrition, voluntary redundancy and compulsory redundancy. While this will inevitably have a regrettable impact on the staff affected, favourable redundancy terms and outplacement services will be provided and discussed as part of the consultation process with employees.

The Athlone facility will continue to play a strategic part in Alkermes' future business, and significant investment is planned to be made at the site over the next number of years which will allow Alkermes to focus primarily on the manufacture of newer, advanced pharmaceutical product lines. World-class development and manufacturing activities at the plant will remain robust and will continue producing global pharmaceutical products. The Alkermes facility in Athlone will remain strategically important to Alkermes' global development and manufacturing network. Headquartered in Dublin, Alkermes currently employs 440 people between its corporate headquarter offices in Dublin and its facility in Athlone.

I am confident that the on-going efforts of IDA Ireland and the other development agencies will continue to enhance job creation in the Athlone area.

### **Aircraft Leasing Sector**

28. **Deputy Sandra McLellan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the key factors promoted by his Department and agencies to encourage development of the aviation leasing industry. [33508/13]

46. **Deputy Peadar Tóibín** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the value and number of jobs directly sustained by the aircraft leasing sector. [33491/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 28 and 46 together.

Details of the number of employees in the aircraft leasing sector are not available as, for statistical purposes, that sector is included with others to form the financial services sector in which there were 16,803 people employed in 2012. I am mindful, however, that the aviation sector contributes approximately €4.1 billion directly to the Irish economy and that Ireland is responsible for half of the world's aircraft leasing. A report from Oxford Economics in 2012 estimated the air transport industry directly employed 26,000 people and a further 16,000 people are estimated to be employed along the air transport supply chain.

In light of the above, the Government, through its Action Plan for Jobs 2013, agreed that it would support the development of the aviation industry in Ireland. In that regard, I recently launched the new Enterprise Ireland €375,000 Competitive Feasibility Fund. The Fund will provide up to €25,000 to support new start up companies or individual entrepreneurs to investigate the viability of a new significant growth oriented business or proposition in the aviation sector. It will also support established companies or groups of businesses to examine the potential for expansion, diversification or spinning out of a new enterprise in the industry. The funding will enable the promoters to reach firm conclusions regarding the project's viability and strategies for developing and commercialising the innovative product or service on international markets. The fund, which will remain open until 16 September, is open to applications from the aviation sector including financial services associated with the sector, aircraft and engine leasing, aviation software and IT, training, travel related software and related services,

small aircraft assembly, and other engineering and technical activities.

IDA Ireland continues to market Ireland as a location for aircraft leasing on the basis of a number of selling points, including the following:

- Ireland is an established major centre of global significance, with 9 of the top 10 industry leaders having operations in Ireland. This is partly due to the longevity of the industry going back to the establishment of GPA as one of the first aircraft leasing companies in the world;
- The availability of a talented pool of people with superior levels of expertise and commercial technical and legal experience;
- A pro-business and technologically advanced environment; and
- An attractive corporate tax rate and double taxation treaty network.

IDA Ireland has confirmed that the above points are consistently cited as reasons why key global corporations continue to select Ireland as a destination of choice for aircraft leasing. The aircraft leasing sector continues to grow globally and, notwithstanding competition from other locations, IDA Ireland has assured me that it will continue to seek to win investment in this sector.

### **Employment Rights Issues**

29. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his plans to improve the level of compliance with Labour Court recommendations with particular reference to where State agencies are involved. [33282/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Labour Court conducts hearings on trade disputes and issues recommendations setting out its opinion on the dispute and the terms on which it should be settled. The Labour Court is a court of last resort in the industrial relations process, and it is expected that the parties come to the process in good faith and consequently are prepared to give serious consideration to the Court's recommendation.

However, the system of industrial relations in Ireland is essentially voluntary in nature and recommendations of the Labour Court are not legally binding. Neither the Labour Court, nor I, can compel a company to comply with such recommendations. Ultimately, responsibility for the settlement of a trade dispute rests with the parties to the dispute.

### **National Minimum Wage**

30. **Deputy Barry Cowen** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his views on the national minimum wage in view of the recent comments of his colleague the Minister for Social Protection; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33575/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The current Programme for Government contained a commitment to reverse the €1 per hour reduction in the National Minimum Wage introduced by the previous Government on 1 February 2011. The increase was provided for in the Social Welfare and Pensions Act 2011 and effected by the National Minimum Wage Act 2000 (Section 11) (No. 2) Order 2011 from 1 July 2011. The restoration of the National Minimum Wage to €8.65 per hour represents a significant commitment by the Government to protect the lowest paid and most vulnerable workers. I have no plans for further adjustments to the National Minimum Wage at this time.

## **Public Procurement Regulations**

31. **Deputy Martin Ferris** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the outcomes that have been achieved through the implementation of the action plan for jobs with regard to making public procurement more accessible to small and medium enterprises. [33505/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Action Plan for Jobs includes a number of measures to support SMEs to access public procurement opportunities. These measures are being delivered by various bodies, including Enterprise Ireland, InterTradeIreland, the National Procurement Service (NPS) and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The NPS and Enterprise Ireland are continuing to encourage SMEs to register on the Government's eTenders website to enable forthcoming procurement opportunities to be brought to their attention. Since the upgrade to the eTenders website in November 2012, an additional 12,000 companies have registered with the site. This brings the current total of registered suppliers to approximately 82,000.

As well as publishing contract notices, the new eTenders site has a wide range of additional functionality that will allow other aspects of the procurement process to be completed electronically. This additional functionality is improving and generating efficiencies for both the public and private sectors.

In order to encourage greater SME participation in procurement, the NPS and InterTradeIreland have, over the past three years, conducted a targeted programme of education for suppliers who wish to learn more about doing business with the public sector. This programme consists of seminars, workshops and large scale 'meet the buyer' events hosted nationwide. Enterprise Ireland has also participated in these events. To date, over 4,500 SMEs have attended events of this nature throughout the country. SMEs are being actively encouraged to form consortia or similar business relationships to improve their bids for larger contracts.

In the context of the reform of public procurement and the establishment of a national Procurement Office, my Department and Enterprise Ireland are in on-going dialogue with the new National Procurement Officer to ensure that opportunities for SMEs to access procurement opportunities are taken into consideration and that tendering criteria are proportionate. Last year, my Department and Enterprise Ireland introduced a new Procuring Innovation initiative to make better use of the innovation available in Irish-based companies to provide solutions to the public sector. This initiative has resulted in some promising contacts between contracting authorities and SMEs. The objective is to build further on this initiative in 2013.

Full details of the implementation of the actions aimed at improving SMEs access to procurement are published in the quarterly Progress Reports on the Action Plan for Jobs which are published on my Department's website, [www.enterprise.gov.ie](http://www.enterprise.gov.ie).

### **Live Register Numbers**

32. **Deputy Martin Ferris** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the impact of jobs policy on the number of young persons employed when the Government came to power and the most recent quarterly household figures. [33504/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** In the three years prior to the Government coming into office, over 300,000 people had lost their jobs, including 145,000 people under the age of 25. By comparison, in the last two years, there has been a significant slow-down in the decline in the number of young people at work. Recent labour market figures published by the CSO indicate that the number of people under 25 years of

age in employment decreased by 4,000 in the year between Quarter 1 2012 and Quarter 1 2013. The number of unemployed people under 25 years of age fell by 10,000 in the twelve month period to Quarter 1 2013, while the unemployment rate for young people fell from 29.7% to 26.6% over the same period. This downward movement in youth unemployment in Ireland differs from the trend in the EU as a whole, where youth unemployment has continued to rise. However, youth unemployment continues to present a major challenge for Ireland as it does for most other Member States.

The work which the Government is doing through the Action Plan for Jobs aims to transform our economy from one that became over-dependent on property, construction and debt, to one focused on enterprise, innovation and exports. The Action Plan is focussed on sustaining and creating employment for all, including young people. There are a range of initiatives in place under the Action Plan and Pathways to Work to support young people looking for employment. These include programmes such as JobBridge, Springboard, Momentum and the ICT Action Plan, which are delivered by the Departments of Social Protection and Education and Skills. A recent independent evaluation of the Jobbridge scheme conducted by Indecon Economic Consultants found that 61% of interns progressed to paid employment after completing their internship. These progression outcomes are among the best in Europe for similar schemes.

My Department is also keen to support young entrepreneurs and, in this context, initiatives such as Enterprise Ireland's Competitive Start Fund and New Frontiers Programme, along with the Microenterprise Loan Fund, will all contribute to supporting young entrepreneurs. The Government will also publish a Policy Statement on Entrepreneurship, including youth entrepreneurship, later this year.

### **Job Creation Issues**

33. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his views on the way employment levels in the call centre industry can be protected and enhanced; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33571/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The customer contact industry continues to be an invaluable source of employment creation from multinational companies locating in Ireland across a range of industry sectors including finance, IT, life sciences and e-commerce. As an increasingly important component in the way companies differentiate themselves, the customer contact centre has evolved into a multi-functional, multi-lingual environment, which adapts new digital technologies at an early stage to service a global customer base.

According to the Contact Centre Management Association of Ireland (CCMA) who published the findings of its research into the role of contact centres throughout Ireland in 2011, the sector employs more than 29,000 people, with a spread of over 100 contact centre operations nationwide. The CCMA findings show very positive results against the backdrop of a challenging economic climate and emphasise a focus on growth and business retention within the sector.

IDA Ireland continues to seek to attract customer support companies to locate in Ireland as part of its overall strategy to attract foreign direct investment (FDI). This strategy has proven to be successful and Ireland is now home to a broad range of companies based in different industries servicing multiple markets. Examples of such companies include, Google, Facebook, Lufthansa, Cook Medical, Hertz, EMC, Merrill Lynch, EA Games and Riot Games. Recent announcements by Paypal and Zenimax further endorse the successful strategy being pursued by IDA Ireland.

The Irish owned Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector, which is a sub sector of the

services industry and involves the provision and management of non core processes and services by third parties under contract, grew out of customer management activities. This sector is now growing through the provision of specialist services to meet specific market needs in regulated and compliance driven sectors, including finance and administration, HR services and Public Sector outsourcing. Within customer management, the Irish sector is developing a strong position in the multilingual sub-sector. There are over 6,000 people employed in Enterprise Ireland supported companies who had total sales and exports of over €180m and €60m, respectively in 2012. Growth in the past 3 years has been driven by Irish companies supplying multi-lingual tech and financial services support to the overseas divisions of multinationals and growth in services to the Irish banking and public sectors.

The Irish BPO sector provides significant opportunities to both maintain and expand employment based on securing business opportunities, both domestically and in export markets. Enterprise Ireland is working with client companies to identify and pursue opportunities identified in the public sector and with the base of multinational companies operating in Ireland. The Agency is also supporting clients to access export markets, specifically the UK, in specialised niche market sectors such as the public sector, insurance and other financial services.

Enterprise Ireland is working with BPO Companies to:

- Develop technology platforms, specifically in the areas of Cloud Computing and Data Analytics, which are currently the two main drivers of technological change in the global BPO market.

- Ensure that they can compete in key areas such as sales and marketing, data analytics and advisory capacity.

- Assist them in building the best management teams and service innovation capability in the industry.

- Given Ireland's strengths in terms of technology, skills and existing base of companies, to continue to develop our offering in terms of knowledge intensive services. These services require high levels of expertise in the industries they service combined with sophisticated customer interaction and decision making.

- Support a cluster development project for 13 BPO companies to investigate the potential opportunity in overseas markets.

In accordance with the Action Plan for Jobs 2013, Enterprise Ireland and IDA are committed to working together to put in place a joint strategy to further establish Ireland as the best location in Europe from which to deliver complex, added value services. The vision for the Irish owned sector is to have a competitive BPO sector with companies of international scale which will result in continued increased employment growth in Ireland.

### **Job Creation Numbers**

34. **Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the effect of the return to recession on the jobs numbers and job creation numbers. [33503/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The most recent Quarterly National Accounts published by the Central Statistics Office on 27 June indicate that for the first Quarter of this year, Ireland's GDP declined by 0.6% compared to the fourth quarter of 2012. This follows on from contractions in the last two quarters of 2012. The contraction in GDP in the first quarter of 2013 is attributable to the fall in consumer spending and a decline in exports due to the impact of a weak global economy.

However, these figures should not be seen in isolation. Gross National Product increased by 2.9% in the first quarter of the year. It should also be noted that the most recent trade figures published by the CSO show that the value of goods exported recovered in April 2013 and were up 6% on the same month in 2012. Meanwhile, the volume of retail sales increased modestly in May. Despite the contraction in GDP, we have seen an annual increase of 20,500 in the number of people in employment to Quarter 1 2013, with employment growth on a seasonally adjusted basis up by 23,700 in the last three quarters.

The unemployment rate decreased from 15% in the first quarter of 2012 to 13.7% in the first quarter of 2013 – the first time the unemployment rate has fallen below 14% for some years. The Government will continue to build on this progress through the Action Plan for Jobs, as we transform the economy from one based on unsustainable debt to one based on enterprise, innovation and exports.

### **Job Creation Targets**

**35. Deputy Pádraig Mac Lochlainn** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the actions of his Department or agencies to meet with emigrants and encourage them to return to work. [33501/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** At a macro level the Government's strategy is to re-build the economy and accelerate the transition to a sustainable, jobs-rich economy based on enterprise, innovation and exports. It is in this way that we will create the environment in which sustainable jobs will be created, living standards will be raised and Ireland will be regarded as an attractive location in which to live and work.

More specifically, engaging with the Diaspora to strengthen and form new relationships is a particular Government priority underpinned by the Global Irish Economic Forum. For example, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland's Senior Management team are focusing on the roll-out of a number of joint initiatives, including marketing and events aimed at attracting entrepreneurs and start-ups to Ireland, and ongoing engagement with Irish emigrants through the Global Irish Network. IDA Ireland engages with the Irish Diaspora working in multinational companies in its role to attract new Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to Ireland and to build on the existing FDI base to support Irish management to win new business. The ability of the investor to source the very best quality people, with appropriate levels of training and experience, is a prime consideration and a real location differentiator. Attracting skilled Irish emigrants back to Ireland is an important component in creating this skill base. The "Succeed in Ireland" initiative to attract greater numbers of inward investors to Ireland provides direct financial incentives to people around the world to create employment in Ireland by rewarding people responsible for bringing sustainable jobs to Ireland.

Enterprise Ireland (EI) also plays a significant role in forging linkages with Ireland's Diaspora. Under the Action Plan for Jobs 2012, EI initiatives included the establishment of a €10m International Start-up Fund and a targeted marketing campaign making greater use of existing networks in the IDA and the wider Diaspora. In 2012, twelve overseas entrepreneurs were supported by Enterprise Ireland to establish their companies here. This campaign is continuing in 2013. Enterprise Ireland is also involved in the establishment of a website [www.itshappening-here.ie](http://www.itshappening-here.ie) which features opportunities in Irish SMEs in the ICT sector and allows our Diaspora a full view of the potential opportunities for employment and advancement.

The Government recognises that there has been an increase in emigration, particularly amongst young people, since the start of the recession. However, the CSO data also indicates that significant numbers of Irish migrants have been returning to the country since 2008. For example, 20,600 Irish people returned to Ireland in 2012. These are people who had previously

emigrated seeking work, and many of them are coming home having gained skills and experience abroad that we can now capture to strengthen the operation and management of companies based here.

While there will always be people who choose to emigrate for personal or professional reasons, the Government's aim is that, by continuing the process of transforming our economy step by step through the Action Plan for Jobs, we can provide opportunities for employment in Ireland.

### **Non-Resident Companies**

36. **Deputy Brian Stanley** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of Irish registered non-resident companies in the State. [33506/13]

50. **Deputy Brian Stanley** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his plans to monitor the actions of Irish registered non-resident companies in the State. [33507/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 36 and 50 together.

I refer the Deputy to my response to Question 115 of 30 May 2013 in which I indicated that I understood from my colleague, the Minister for Finance, that he has been advised by the Revenue Commissioners that the number of companies that are incorporated here but non-resident for tax purposes is not available as they are not separately compiled. Therefore, it is not possible to provide the information requested.

As indicated in my reply to Questions Nos. 116 to 118, inclusive, of 30 May 2013, significant measures were taken in response to concerns in the 1990s regarding Irish Registered Non-resident companies. These can be found at sections 42-51 of the Companies (Amendment) (No. 2) Act, 1999 as amended.

The relevant measures placed the following obligations on companies wishing to incorporate in Ireland:

Firstly, as a precondition of incorporation, every application for registration is required to demonstrate that the proposed company intends to carry on an activity in the State.

Secondly, the Act requires that every company registered in the State is required to have and maintain at least one director that is resident in the European Economic Area or the company must hold a bond to the value of €25,394.76.

The requirement for either a bond or an EEA resident director does not apply if the company obtains from the Registrar of Companies a certificate that the company has a real and continuous link with one or more economic activities in the state. The company concerned must provide proof of such a link. A statement from the Revenue Commissioners that it has reasonable grounds to believe that the company has such a link is deemed proof of a link under the Act.

Additionally the number of directorships which can be held by one person was limited to 25 (subject to certain exemptions). Finally, the Act contained enhanced strike-off provisions and enhanced notification to the Companies Registration Office where directors have resigned. The Companies Bill 2012 contains similar provisions to sections 42-51 of the Companies (Amendment) (No. 2) Act, 1999 as amended.

### **Job Creation Numbers**

37. **Deputy Mick Wallace** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the

number of jobs that were created here as a result of Presidency initiatives, during Ireland's Presidency of the EU Council; the number of Presidency initiatives that created jobs for young persons; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33545/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** My Department has played a central role in driving the overarching policy theme of our EU Presidency of “promoting sustainable economic growth and jobs and building Europe’s competitive advantage”. The issue of employment creation is one that is challenging all Member States across the Union. Under our Presidency we have made progress in a significant number of areas that can create the right environment for growth and employment in accordance with the “Compact for growth and jobs” as agreed by Heads of State and Government in June 2012.

I placed a strong emphasis on advancing measures that can boost the EU’s competitive edge globally. Overall, our Presidency achieved major successes across the policy spectrum and has significantly enhanced the reputation of this country at home and abroad. Our good standing and reputation is a vital ingredient in making this country attractive to investors and for instilling confidence leading ultimately to jobs and growth. This will assist us in building on the average of 2,000 jobs per month created in the private sector over the last twelve months in contrast to the loss of 7,500 jobs per month during the years 2008-2010.

Within the various Council formations which I had the honour to chair, we succeeded in attaining agreements on all of the significant funding Programmes under the EU’s new 2014-2020 Budget, itself agreed during our Presidency. For example, on the agreement on the new €70 Billion research and development Programme, Horizon 2020, Ireland argued strongly, and successfully, in favour of a greater emphasis on the SME sector. In addition to new specific supports, such as access to finance and debt and equity facilities, for SMEs, it has now been agreed that the target for SME participation in relevant areas of Horizon 2020 should be increased from 15% to 20%. This is a significant change given the proposed scale of Horizon 2020. In line with the Action Plan for Jobs we will pursue funding and other opportunities under EU Horizon 2020 for specific sectoral activities of national importance and in line with our national research priorities.

Agreement was also achieved on the €2.03 Billion dedicated Programme for Competitiveness and SMEs (COSME Programme) which will provide targeted financial support for SMEs. In particular, I welcome the proposed equity facility for growth-phase investment which will support the development of the EU wide Venture Capital market, as well as the Loan Facility which will provide direct or other risk sharing arrangements with financial intermediaries to cover loans for SMEs. We also built on the progress already made in reducing business costs by the administrative burden reduction efforts of the Commission and Member States. At the end of 2012 annual administrative savings totalling almost €288 million representing a 19% reduction have been achieved for business in Ireland as against 2008.

Proposals on State Aid Modernisation (SAM) were also agreed. These new State Aid Regulations will take account of post-crisis structural reforms and industrial restructuring which Member States are undergoing and the need for better alignment of State Aid with Europe 2020 objectives.

A number of important files which were vital to completing the EU Single Market were also agreed or significantly advanced, including those on recognition of Professional Qualifications, Public Procurement, and the Accounting Directive. Agreement on these will make it easier to move and work across all Member States and to lower transaction costs for SMEs.

In the area of Patents, remarkable progress was made to complete the Single Market in that sector with the signing of an International Agreement on a Unified Patent Court by 25 partici-

pating Member States during the Competitiveness Council on 19th February last. It has been estimated that users of the Unified Patent Court could save somewhere between €148 and €289 million per year, compared to the present costs of €1.5 million in some Member States of such litigation.

Agreement was reached at the EPSCO Council on the Youth Guarantee, which promises to provide young people with a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed. In addition, the European Council approved a Youth Employment Initiative amounting to €6 billion for the period 2014-2020 to support measures aimed at addressing youth unemployment and, in particular, to support the Youth Guarantee for regions with particularly high levels of unemployment. Furthermore, political agreement was reached on the EU programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) with a proposed budget of €815 million for the period 2014-20 period. EaSI will support Member States efforts in the design and implementation of employment and social reforms by means of policy coordination, identification, analysis and the sharing of best practice.

Under Ireland's Presidency of the EU, we attached great importance to promoting the EU's external trade agenda for the benefit of Irish companies and for the wider EU economy and its exporters. Trade is essential to job creation: 30 million jobs or 10% of the EU workforce depend on exports. In June, we reached agreement among EU Trade Ministers on the mandate to start talks on an EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. Reaching agreement among EU Trade Ministers on the terms of the EU's negotiating mandate has been a top priority for the Irish Presidency. According to assessments made by the EU Commission and other European bodies, a comprehensive Trade and Investment Partnership between the U.S and the EU could over time boost EU GDP by 0.5% per annum and help create approximately 400,000 jobs in the EU. Based on those assessments, if Ireland simply benefitted in proportion to the size of our economy, a comprehensive trade and investment partnership could over time provide gains to Ireland in the order of €800 million per annum in increased GDP, and 4000 new jobs.

### **Research and Development Funding**

38. **Deputy Áine Collins** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the amount in euros currently being spent on research and development as a percentage of Ireland's GDP. [33275/13]

47. **Deputy Áine Collins** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the way in which he intends to reach the required spend on research and development of 3% of GDP under Horizon 2020; and the measures being put in place to ensure that this target is reached. [33276/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** I propose to answer Questions Nos. 38 and 47 together.

I assume the Deputy is referring to Ireland's research intensity target under the Europe 2020 Strategy which is to improve the conditions for research and development, in particular with the aim of raising combined public and private investment levels in this sector to 2.5% of GNP (approximately equivalent to 2.0% of GDP). The latest available data show that the research intensity rate for 2012 is estimated at 2.11% of GNP (1.71% of GDP). The estimated research intensity rate for 2013 is 2.16% of GNP (1.73% of GDP). This is encouraging against the backdrop of the economic and fiscal situation and I believe that we are on track to achieve the research intensity target by 2020. Ireland's National Reform Programme update for 2013

submitted by the Government to the European Commission in April reflects this projection.

The Government's strategy has been to put in place a range of initiatives with the overarching aim of accelerating both the economic and societal return on our public investment in Science, Technology and Innovation. A number of initiatives are also in place designed to encourage more private investment in R&D. Specific initiatives include:

- Research Prioritisation which is being implemented on an all of Government basis targeting the majority of competitive public STI investment in the 14 areas which are most likely to deliver economic and societal returns, particularly in the form of jobs – support is also being targeted at relevant underpinning technologies as well as related infrastructure.

- An Intellectual Property Protocol is now in place which gives more clarity and certainty around ownership of IP emerging from state funded research – this will facilitate greater transfer of ideas to market. A key element of this – establishing a Central Technology Transfer Office – is in the final stages of completion.

- The remit of Science Foundation Ireland is being expanded to cover applied research, aligned with the 14 priority areas to further support the development of research findings into commercial opportunities.

- In July last year the Government agreed targets for enterprise participation in publicly funded research to drive behaviour of research funders to encourage more collaboration with enterprise.

- In late February this year the largest ever state and industry co-funded research investment in Ireland was announced – SFI's research centres awards includes overall investment of €300million with two thirds coming from the exchequer and one third from industry (cash and in-kind support) involving over 150 industry partners in 7 centres over a 6 year period.

- The latest business expenditure figures are very encouraging showing an increase from €1.83bn in 2010 to €1.86bn in 2011 with estimates of a further increase to €2bn for 2012.

### Emigration Data

39. **Deputy Pádraig Mac Lochlainn** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will consider responding to the findings of the National Youth Council report on emigration; their effect on the labour force and detailing the steps taken by his Department to stem the tide of emigration and actions taken to encourage the return of emigrants. [33500/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** I am aware of the "Time to Go" report which Marian Harkin, MEP, launched on behalf of the National Youth Council earlier this year. This is a very useful piece of independent research on the phenomenon of emigration in Ireland today and outlines some of the positive and negative aspects of emigration amongst young people. The recommendations in the Report are, however, outside the direct remit of my Department.

The Government recognises that there has been an increase in emigration, particularly amongst young people, since the start of the recession. However, CSO data also indicates that significant numbers of Irish migrants have been returning to the country since 2008. For example, 20,600 Irish people returned to Ireland in 2012. These are people who had previously emigrated seeking work, and many of them are coming home having gained skills and expertise abroad that we can now capture to strengthen the operation and management of companies

based here.

At a macro level, the Government's strategy is to re-build the economy step by step so that we can provide opportunities for sustainable employment in Ireland based on enterprise, exports and innovation. We are doing this through the Action Plan for Jobs process and have seen a stabilisation in the labour market in recent months, with over 20,000 extra people at work in the first Quarter of 2013 compared to 2012.

As part of the Action Plan for Jobs, the Government has a range of initiatives in place to support young people looking for employment. These include programmes such as JobBridge, Springboard, Momentum and the ICT Action Plan, which are delivered by the Departments of Social Protection and Education and Skills. A recent independent evaluation of the JobBridge scheme conducted by Indecon found that 61% of interns progressed to paid employment after completing their internship.

My Department is also keen to support young entrepreneurs and, in this context, initiatives such as Enterprise Ireland's Competitive Start Fund and New Frontiers Programme, along with the Microenterprise Loan Fund, will all contribute to supporting young entrepreneurs. The Government will also publish a Policy Statement on Entrepreneurship, including youth entrepreneurship, this year. I have recently set up an Entrepreneurship Forum which will provide a key input in informing the Government's Policy Statement on Entrepreneurship.

### **Job Creation Issues**

40. **Deputy John Browne** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the way he believes crowd funding of enterprise can be supported and encouraged; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33582/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Crowdfunding, in respect of enterprise and other activities, is becoming an ever more popular alternative financial mechanism for businesses and promoters across the globe to access finance in a difficult financial market. In its various forms, crowdfunding allows individuals, businesses and promoters to solicit capital from funders, using social networks and crowdfunding platforms to finance projects. It appears to be affording real opportunities in the area of alternative finance for SMEs. Use of the mechanism appears to have seen substantial growth globally in the recent past and it is seen by many sponsors as a means of "democratising" access to funds and supply of capital and moving the model away from venture capitalists and angel investors.

However, crowdfunding is in its infancy and financial returns on capital will dictate its overall success. Data is not yet readily available domestically, at EU level or internationally with which to analyse its impact to date, although moves are afoot at EU level to consider methods to address this data deficiency.

As the industry needs time to "find itself" and should not be over burdened by regulation before the required platforms have been given the time to grow and develop, I am keeping the issue under review as to how best to utilise its benefits to promote business development. It is certainly too early to provide a specific regulatory mechanism for the concept, but my officials will continue to monitor the issue in collaboration with all other key stakeholders in this matter. As set out in the Action Plan for Jobs 2013, we have committed to investigate the potential for alternative funding mechanisms including peer to peer lending, supply chain finance and crowdfunding.

I am also aware that crowdfunding is being discussed seriously within the European institu-

tions and the OECD as an alternative source of SME financing. Ireland will continue to actively engage with the relevant Institutions in these deliberations and is fully committed to providing an appropriate policy response with regard to the emerging need to establish a European framework and ecosystem for best practices.

In view of the early stage of development of this concept, my Department would of course welcome any stakeholder views on how to optimise the potential of this developing phenomenon for securing additional finance for business growth and jobs.

### **Job Creation Numbers**

41. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the timeline for the establishment of the synthesis and solid state pharmaceutical centre at the University of Limerick; the number of research jobs it will support; the target number of jobs it will ultimately lead to in the pharmaceutical sector; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33580/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Synthesis and Solid State Pharmaceutical Centre (SSPC) at the University of Limerick was officially launched on 1 July 2013. The total funding to the SSPC, through the Science Foundation Ireland Research Centres programme amounts to €40m to directly support 90 top-class researcher positions for the next six years. The SSPC will provide critical support to Ireland's pharmaceutical sector which directly employs over 60,000 people with exports of €50 billion annually. The SSPC research excellence will greatly assist IDA Ireland's foreign direct investment capability and also strongly underpin many indigenous firms.

A critical industry concern currently relates to retention of the economic value of important drugs, many of which will soon lose their patent protection. Seventeen industry partners are contributing €10m towards the SSPC's activities. They include very significant employers here such as Pfizer, Glaxo Smith Kline, Eli Lilly, Merck, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Roche, Bristol Meyers Squibb, Clarochem Ireland, and Abbvie amongst others.

### **International Agreements**

42. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will confirm that he intends to ratify International Labour Organisation convention 189 on domestic workers; and the timescale for its ratification. [33514/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Richard Bruton):** I welcomed the adoption of the Decent Work for Domestic Workers Convention and Recommendation at the 2011 International Labour Conference of the International Labour Organisation. I recently attended this year's International Labour Conference in Geneva and chaired an Informal Ministerial on the subject of Domestic Workers. Also as part of Ireland's Presidency I ensured the conclusion of a Council Decision which authorises EU Member States to ratify the Convention. The European Parliament must now consent to the Council Decision and the timeframe for this depends on European Parliament procedures. However I understand Parliament will decide by November of this year. If as expected, Parliament consents to the Council Decision, I can move forward with the ratification process.

In tandem with this work at EU level, at National level my officials have carried out an assessment of the implications of ratifying the International Labour Organisation's Convention 189 on Domestic Workers. The Attorney General has also confirmed to me that there are no legal obstacles to Ireland's ratification of the Domestic Workers Convention. It is important to

note, that domestic workers are protected by virtue of the fact that the full suite of employment rights legislation, including that of redress for violations of their employment rights, apply to domestic workers in the same way as they apply to other categories of employees in Ireland. Also it is worth pointing out that NERA has carried out a programme of inspections involving Domestic Workers as well as continuing to respond to any complaints it receives from Domestic Workers.

A voluntary Code of Practice for Persons Employed in Other People's Homes was developed under the Industrial Relations Act 1990. The Code sets out certain employment rights and practices for persons employed in other people's homes and encourages good practice and compliance with the law in such employment situations. In any proceedings before a court, or a workplace relations dispute resolution body, a code of practice shall be admissible in evidence and any provision of the code which appears to the court, body or officer concerned to be relevant to any question arising in the proceedings shall be taken into account in determining that question.

### **Credit Guarantee Scheme Applications**

43. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the target for drawing down from the microenterprise loan fund and the credit guarantee scheme for the coming year. [33510/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** When I introduced both these schemes to the House this time last year I clearly indicated that the take-up of both schemes is dependent on SME customer demand levels. The annual value of potential demand from SMEs is very difficult to assess. This makes the setting of an upper limit of annual lending capacity which ought to be made available via Schemes difficult to set precisely. From the outset, I have emphasised that the figures used are estimated and that the exact requirements could be lower or higher depending on SME credit demand needs and economic conditions over the duration of the Schemes. The figures quoted are most definitely not targets for the Schemes and there will be no specific targets set for the schemes for the coming year as they will remain demand led schemes.

The Credit Guarantee Scheme (CGS) can facilitate up to €150m of additional lending per annum. When the Scheme was launched in October 2012, I made a commitment to review the Scheme after 12 months of operation. However, due to the low level of utilisation of the Scheme, I have brought forward the review process to examine ways to improve future performance and take-up. An external consultant will be selected very shortly to commence the formal review of the Scheme which I intend will be concluded by end quarter 3 2013. Any changes to legislation arising from the review will take place after that date.

In relation to MFI and based on the existing business model, Microfinance Ireland (MFI) can support up to €8.8m of lending to microenterprises per annum. The key challenge for MFI is to ensure that people are aware that there is support for new and existing viable micro enterprises with perceived or real higher trading risk that have been refused credit by banks. In that regard MFI has been engaged with key influencers across the country to get that message across. There will be on-going promotional and awareness activities to ensure that awareness of the scheme is promoted to its full potential amongst relevant micro business groups across all sectors of business.

### **IFSC Clearing House Group**

44. **Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his views on the working of the IFSC clearing house group; the potential for increased employment

in the IFSC; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33568/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The IFSC Clearing House Group has a critical role to play in bringing together high level representatives from the public and private sectors to debate and address issues facing the competitiveness of the international financial services industry. It is chaired by the Secretary General of the Department of the Taoiseach. That Department also services the meetings and publishes the minutes of these meetings on its website.

The Secretary General of my Department and senior representatives of the IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland – both of whom have a role in promoting the sector in the international arena - are among the public sector representatives on the Group. Their key objective is to ensure our industrial promotional policies and activities assist in maximising the employment creation potential of this growing international sector.

Given its critical role and the dynamic environment in which this sector operates, the Department of the Taoiseach recently invited a small public/private sector team to discussions about the workings of the Clearing House Group and to examine how best to maximise the potential of the sector. The Secretary General of my Department and the CEO of IDA Ireland are among the public sector members of this team, which I understand is to have its first meeting shortly.

With some 33,000 jobs, the international financial services sector is already a significant employer in Ireland. The 5 year Strategy for the sector launched by the Taoiseach in 2011, targeted an increase of 10,000 jobs in IFSC companies by 2016. The Action Plan for Jobs 2013 reaffirms Government's commitment to this objective. Good progress has been made already with more than 65 new investments over the period January 2011 to date in 2013 with associated employment potential (gross jobs) of approximately 6,000.

These investments are significant achievements in view of the global crisis that has impacted the industry over the last two years and highlight Ireland's on-going attractiveness for investment and the Government's on-going commitment to the development of the sector.

### **County and City Enterprise Boards Abolition**

45. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will reconsider plans to dissolve the county enterprise boards; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33554/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Micro and small businesses are the engine of the Irish economy employing over 650,000 people. A key part of the Government's plans for jobs and growth is ensuring that we deliver a truly world-class service for this sector. The purpose of restructuring the current model for the delivery of State supports to that sector is to rejuvenate and enhance the national model so as to ensure that the micro and small business sector is properly positioned to be a lead player in relation to job creation and to the economic recovery process.

The new Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) will draw and build on the successful County Enterprise Board (CEB) model which has supported over 33,000 jobs across the country since 1993, as well as 900 new projects per annum and almost 25,000 training participants per annum. The enhanced model is designed to harness the best elements of the enterprise agencies and local government and to support local business and contribute to local development. For the first time, the skills, experience and resources of Enterprise Ireland, the CEBs and the Local

Authorities will be combined in a structured and coherent manner to benefit micro and small businesses. The LEOs will be the first-stop-shop through which all information on State supports for small and micro businesses can be accessed and where businesses with clear high growth potential can be fast-tracked to the next level of support from EI.

As part of the reform process, the CEBs will be dissolved and their functions, assets and liabilities transferred to Enterprise Ireland to be delivered by the LEO in each Local Authority area under a robust Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Enterprise Ireland and the Local Authorities. The SLA will set out robust Performance Indicators measuring employment, start-ups and other metrics. A key element of new structure will be the consistent application of policy across all LEOs from the evaluation of applications to the spending of budgets allocated. This will be monitored using the agreed SLA in each Local Authority. The on-going drawdown of budgets by LEOs will be contingent on them reaching agreed targets.

Minister Perry and I have consulted widely in the context of this proposed reform and we view the restructuring of the supports as an important opportunity to get a combined effort in behind start-ups and small business and we shall vigorously work to harness the potential of the new model.

*Question No. 46 answered with Question No. 28.*

*Question No. 47 answered with Question No. 38.*

*Question No. 48 answered with Question No. 17.*

### **Businesses in Border Areas**

49. **Deputy Michael Colreavy** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the additional measures his Department will advocate to address the challenges facing businesses in Border areas. [33515/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** North South economic co-operation is and will remain a priority of mine and of the Government. *InterTradeIreland*, the North South Implementation Body whose remit is to promote increased cross-border trade and business development, has a wide range of programmes to assist businesses on an all-island basis. Examples of *InterTradeIreland's* programmes that are having a significant impact are: *Acumen*, which is designed to stimulate cross-border business for small and medium enterprises in Ireland and Northern Ireland; *Fusion*, *InterTradeIreland's* flagship three-way partnership technology transfer programme; *Go-2-Tender*, which provides businesses with the confidence, knowledge and skills to tender successfully for public sector contracts; and *Innova*, a unique cross-border collaborative Research & Development programme offering companies an opportunity to accelerate new product, process or service developments through partnering with a company in the other jurisdiction.

*InterTradeIreland* have adapted their offering in recent years, as a result of economic circumstances, to meet the specific needs of SME's, North and South. Their key programmes are now focused on promoting trade and innovation activities among SME's which it is hoped will lead to an increase in the number of firms engaging in cross-border business and exporting to the other jurisdiction, and taking innovative steps to trading themselves out of difficult operating environments. This approach has proved very successful. For example, in 2012, there were 92 First Time Innovators firms (against a target of 35) and 67 First Time Exporters firms (against

a target of 50) as a direct result of these firms participating in *InterTradeIreland's* programmes.

*InterTradeIreland* is co-funded by my Department and its counterpart in Northern Ireland, and I am glad to say that we have managed to avoid curtailing *InterTradeIreland's* budget in recent years despite ongoing economic pressures. I believe that the Body's unique all-island offering to SME's provides specifically tailored support for SME's that want to engage in cross-border trade.

In addition to the work of *InterTradeIreland*, Enterprise Ireland works closely with its counterpart organisation, *Invest Northern Ireland*, on a range of initiatives to benefit enterprise development in the border region. These include activities such as *Bridging the Border* Seminars/partnering events, which are designed to promote joint opportunities between firms, North and South, in areas such as licensing and commercial agreements, sub-contracting, technical co-operation and business partnerships. These are practical measures that can help address barriers to firms looking to trade in the other jurisdiction.

Another useful tool in assisting businesses in border areas is the INTERREG Programme. My Department has co-funded some 28 enterprise projects, to a value of €58m, under this EU Programme with the N.I. Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment over the last number of years. This funding has assisted local micro projects in the border region to get up and running, through the provision of mostly training and capacity-building. It is hoped that the next strand of the INTERREG Programme will see projects being approved that have a more economic development focus.

Increasing cross-border trade and the development of the economy in the border region will continue to be a key priority. My Department will continue to work with the enterprise agencies, including *InterTradeIreland*, on developing appropriate supports that encourage cross-border trade.

*Question No. 50 answered with Question No. 36.*

### **Job Creation Issues**

51. **Deputy Seamus Kirk** asked the Minister for Jobs; Enterprise and Innovation the timeline for the joint industry Government task force on the Big Data sector; its potential for job creation; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33567/13]

56. **Deputy Thomas Pringle** asked the Minister for Jobs; Enterprise and Innovation the progress made in developing the two Big Data pilot projects within the public service; if the first formal meeting of the joint Industry/Government task force has taken place; any decisions that were made; and his views on the way he sees this industry creating jobs. [33518/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 51 and 56 together.

The overall ambition associated with the Big Data disruptive reform is to "build on existing enterprise strengths to make Ireland a leading country in Europe in Big Data and data analytics". It is estimated that data collected and generated by companies and governments is growing by approximately 40% per year. An independent study by the Centre for Economics and Business Research (Cebr) recently identified the potential demand by businesses in Ireland for a total of 6,000 new deeply data analytics roles by 2018.

In that context, the Government has agreed two specific deliverables in the Action Plan for

Jobs 2013 which are associated with the Industry-Government Taskforce:

- To oversee a mapping of existing and planned initiatives across Government and the private sector that can contribute to Ireland's reputation as a leader in the areas of Big Data and data analytics (Q3 2013);

- To identify and commence at least two new pilot initiatives whereby data analytics will be employed to address specific challenges delivering economic impact and/or improved public services (Q3 2013).

These actions are complemented by nine other actions for delivery in the 2013 Action Plan for Jobs relating to areas such as R&D investment for data analytics, investment in high performance computing, initiatives around education and skills for data analytics, standards development and Open Government. On 1 May 2013, the Taoiseach, Tánaiste and I met with the six Government-appointed industry partners to discuss the mechanisms for taking forward the Big Data disruptive reforms. At this meeting, it was agreed that:

- an Assistant Secretary General in my Department would lead the public sector engagement on the Big Data disruptive reform;

- Mr Liam Casey, Ms Heather Reynolds and Mr John Herlihy would assist as industry partners in helping to deliver the Big Data disruptive reform.

To progress the initiative, it was agreed to form an *ad hoc* working party as a precursor to the establishment of the formal Industry-Government Taskforce on Big Data and Data Analytics. The working party, which will be chaired by my Department, will comprise representatives of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Social Protection, the Department of Health, Forfás, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Science Foundation Ireland, NSAI and the three industry partners (or nominees). In line with the commitment in the Action Plan for Jobs 2013, an immediate next step is to transition from the ad hoc working party mechanism to the more formal Industry-Government Taskforce on Big Data and Data Analytics.

Membership of the Taskforce is based around a core group with the flexibility to co-opt additional members from the public and private sector to reflect specific areas of focus and sectoral expertise. The core group consists of the Assistant Secretary General of my Department with:

- The Government Chief Information Officer from Department of Public Enterprise and Reform.

- Senior officials nominated by Central Statistics Office, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Science Foundation Ireland, National Standards Authority of Ireland.

- Government appointed Industry Partners or nominees.

It is envisaged that the full membership of the Taskforce will be announced in the coming weeks, coinciding with the first formal meeting of the Taskforce in July.

### **Proposed Legislation**

52. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the timescale for completion of the consumer and competition Bill. [33517/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Work on the drafting of the Consumer Protection and Competition Bill is progressing and I expect to publish

the Bill during Q3 2013.

### **Foreign Direct Investment**

53. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which this country remains competitive for foreign direct investment; the extent to which any particular issues have been identified as obstacles in attracting such investment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33521/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The attraction of foreign direct investment (FDI) to Ireland has been, and will continue to be, an integral part of Ireland's economic success. Foreign owned firms contribute substantially to Ireland's exports, jobs, expenditure in the Irish economy and to Exchequer funds. FDI plays a key role in stimulating the development of new sectors in Ireland, in enhancing our research, development and innovation performance, in contributing to balanced regional development and in accelerating the achievement of critical mass within sectors.

Ireland has earned a strong reputation for being able to compete globally for FDI. The IBM Global Location Trends Report 2012 ranks Ireland as a top location in world for Inward Investment. Ireland is listed:

- First in the world for inward investment by quality and value.
- First in Europe for jobs created in Research and Development.
- First in Europe for investment in the Pharmaceutical sector.
- Second in Europe and fourth globally for the number of investment jobs per capita.

Ireland's favourable tax regime and financial support systems for research and development underline the Government's determination to continually enhance the country's attractiveness to overseas companies. The Government acknowledges that ambitious national job creation targets can only be achieved with the active co-operation of a highly skilled workforce allied to world class research, development and innovation (RD&I) facilities. Today, Ireland's advanced manufacturing technologies deliver continuous innovation and sustainable success in high-value manufacturing.

IDA Ireland has indicated that there are a number of factors which are considered by potential investors before deciding to locate here. These include:

- A pro-business and technologically advanced environment.
- An attractive corporate tax rate.
- An educated and talented workforce.
- A blend of appropriate skill sets.
- Access to world class infrastructure - road access to key cities, ports and international airports.
- A range of affordable, state-of-the-art property solutions
- A track record of success coupled with the right attitude and ambition of its people.

In seeking to win FDI, IDA constantly promotes the availability of these factors to potential investors.

Amid significant economic challenges globally and locally, IDA Ireland achieved a strong FDI performance in 2012. There were 145 individual investments, with over 40% from companies coming to Ireland for the first time. 12,722 gross job gains were generated with 6,570 net new jobs gains across a broad range of sectors. Helping FDI clients to transform their operations within Ireland has also led to a significant reduction in employment losses, producing a strong year overall. Despite this success, Ireland faces a highly competitive landscape, with notable strong competition for FDI arising from the UK, the Netherlands and Switzerland, in particular. Key global markets are slowing down, particularly in Europe, which is a key focus for IDA's existing and potential clients.

IDA Ireland has assured me, however, that there are definite opportunities for growth in the IT/technology sector, in specific areas of financial services, in life sciences, in social/digital media and in sectors where consolidation is taking place on a pan-European basis. The IDA's global team is determined to pursue these opportunities vigorously in 2013 in order to ensure that another 132 new investment projects, which will yield another 6,000 net new jobs, are won in accordance with the Government's Action Plan for Jobs 2013.

### **Health and Safety Inspection Numbers**

54. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of health and safety inspections undertaken last year and the target for inspections in the coming year. [33513/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) is the national statutory body with responsibility for enforcing occupational safety and health law, promoting and encouraging accident prevention, and providing information and advice to all companies, organisations and individuals. The Authority is also the national Competent Authority for REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) and other chemicals legislation. It operates under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the Chemicals Acts 2008-2010. The aim of the Authority is to make occupational safety, health and welfare an integral part of doing business in every Irish workplace and to ensure that the manufacture and use of chemicals in Ireland do not affect human health or the environment.

One of the ways the Authority attempts to achieve its aim is through the implementation of its national programme of workplace inspections. Details of the Authority's national inspection programmes are outlined in its annual Programmes of Work, which are submitted to me as Minister for approval and published on the Authority's website ([www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)). The Authority carried out 13,835 workplace inspections in 2012 and aims to carry out 12,850 such inspections in 2013. Further details on the Authority's 2012 inspection programme, including information on the numbers of inspections (including investigations) undertaken in different sectors of the economy are available in its 2012 Annual Report, which is available to download at [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie). Similar information in relation to the sector-by-sector breakdown planned for its 2013 Programme of Work is also available on the HSA website.

### **Broadband Services Provision**

55. **Deputy Sandra McLellan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if consideration will be given by his Department to survey access to broadband by micro and small enterprises and its impact on job creation. [33509/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Access to broadband in Ireland is a policy matter for my colleague, the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Pat Rabbitte, T.D. who has recently announced the launch of a nationwide Broadband Mapping Project. This is a key step in delivering the National Broadband Plan which commits to broadband speeds of 30Mbps and, where possible, higher speeds to all parts of Ireland through a combination of public and private investment.

The mapping exercise will help identify where broadband services are already in place or planned by service providers in the coming three years. It will identify the gaps in provision that need to be filled with state-supported investment. It will look at broadband availability in each locality and therefore will encompass all broadband users, both households and businesses. My Department is supportive of this initiative and looks forward to the outcomes of the exercise, particularly in the context of the availability of broadband for businesses.

My Department is also working closely with the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in relation to an initiative in the Action Plan for Jobs to increase the number of businesses trading on-line. The objective of this initiative is to achieve a step-change in the number of businesses, and particularly small businesses, trading on-line for the first time. It will provide a voucher of up to €2,500 to companies to support them in commencing to trade on-line. My officials are working with the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources on finalising the arrangements for the scheme which will be run on a pilot basis in 2013 prior to a wider roll-out in 2014.

*Question No. 56 answered with Question No. 51.*

### **Joint Labour Committees Review**

57. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation when he will make public his response to the Labour Court recommendations on the review of the JLCs. [33493/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The new Section 41A of Industrial Relations Act 1946 (inserted by Section 11 of the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2012) provides that reviews of each Joint Labour Committee (JLC) will be carried out by the Labour Court, as soon as practicable after the commencement of the Act, and at least once every 5 years thereafter. In this context, the Labour Court appointed Ms Janet Hughes to undertake the review of the 10 existing JLCs on its behalf. The Review was completed on 12 April last.

The review assisted the Labour Court's deliberations as to whether any JLC should be abolished, maintained in its current form, amalgamated with another JLC or its establishment order amended and the Labour Court is required to make recommendations to me to this effect. The Labour Court submitted its report of the review and recommendations in relation to the 10 existing JLCs to me on 22 April last. The report is detailed, comprehensive and complex and required careful examination and consideration.

Since its receipt, the Supreme Court, on 9 May last, issued its decision in relation to the constitutionality of Registered Employment Agreements (*McGowan and others v The Labour Court, Ireland and the Attorney General*). I was concerned that this decision may have had implications for Joint Labour Committees and Employment Regulation Orders. With that in mind, I sought legal advice on this point, which I am currently considering. It is my intention to publish both the Report and my proposals in the very near future.

## **Credit Guarantee Scheme Application Numbers**

58. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the level of the value of the take-up of credit guarantees as a percentage of the maximum value of €150 million for last year and the target drawn down of guarantees for the coming year. [33511/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Credit Guarantee Scheme (CGS) which commenced operation on 24 October last was designed to be capable of facilitating up to €150m of additional lending per annum. For 2013 to date 4% of this capacity has been utilised with 49 loans facilitated, valued at €6.4 million. I intend to publish the 2nd quarter Progress Report on the Scheme on the Department's website shortly. I expect this to show slow but real progress in comparison with the published Progress Report for 2012, where there were six live guaranteed facilities resulting in €582,000 being approved through the scheme.

From the outset, I have emphasised that the potential utilisation figures used are estimated and that the exact requirements of the Scheme would be demand led. Utilisation could be lower or higher depending on SME credit demand needs and to date this has been lower than expected. I would like to repeat today that the figure of €150 million is the maximum lending capacity. It is not a target for the Scheme.

When the Scheme was launched in October 2012, I made a commitment to review the Scheme after 12 months of operation. However, due to the low level of utilisation of the Scheme, I have brought forward the review process to examine ways to improve future performance and take-up. An external consultant will be selected very shortly to commence the formal review of the Scheme which I hope will be completed by end Quarter 3. Any changes to legislation arising from the review will take place after that date.

## **Consumer Protection**

59. **Deputy Derek Keating** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will consider regulation underpinning consumer law or meaningful legislation to protect the consumer in view of the practice by retailers and multiples, particularly from the UK, of increasing substantially the price of their goods far in excess of the exchange rate; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33278/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The price of goods and services as and between Member States of the European Union can differ for a variety of reasons. Insofar as prices in this jurisdiction are concerned, the European Communities (Requirements to Indicate Product Prices) Regulations 2002 (S.I. No. 639 of 2002) require traders to indicate the selling price in Euros of products offered for sale. The Regulations, which are enforced by the National Consumer Agency (NCA), do not prevent traders from indicating the price of those goods in other currencies such as Sterling, so long as the Euro price is indicated.

I am aware that some goods in addition to carrying the mandatory Euro price also carry a Sterling Price indication. I also am aware of concerns that have been raised in the past in relation to differentials as and between the sterling and euro prices for certain dual priced goods. Where there is a significant difference between the euro price and the sterling price for a good, it is primarily a matter for the trader concerned to explain to his/her customers why he/she is imposing such different prices. I would encourage any consumer who is concerned in relation

to the differential between the euro and sterling prices for goods in particular retail outlets to demand an explanation from the retailers concerned as to the reasons for such differentials. If consumers are unhappy in relation to the differential in prices or the explanation for such differentials, they may wish to seek better value elsewhere.

In this regard the National Consumer Agency, as part of its statutory mandate, conducts regular price comparison surveys to provide consumers with information as to the different price offerings that are available in the marketplace. Evidence available to the Agency shows that consumers have become much more discerning in relation to their shopping habits, are actively seeking better value for money and that price is becoming a pre-eminent determinant in relation to where they do their shopping. Consumers can and are demonstrating their willingness to positively seek out value and are not prepared to give their custom to traders, who they do not believe offer value for money.

As regards general price comparisons between this country and the UK, the most recent Central Statistics Office's Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices, which is the accepted measure for comparing price inflation across the EU, found that prices in Ireland had risen by 0.5% in the 12 months to April 2013, whereas prices in the UK had risen by 2.4% in the same period. It is clear, therefore, that we are becoming more competitive price wise in comparison with the UK. This improvement in our competitiveness is most welcome, not least by consumers, and follows on from the specific measures taken by the Government to restore national competitiveness. The Government is fully committed to pursuing the competitiveness agenda, so as to ensure that Irish consumers receive and can expect to receive a fair deal in the goods and services that they buy.

### **Northern Ireland Issues**

60. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if in view of recent revelations by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary that the Northern Ireland historical enquiries team, HET, failed properly to investigate crimes committed by the British military, and in view of the fact that the HET and PSNI have relentlessly pursued confidential tapes held at Boston College to the exclusion of any other line of inquiry regarding offences committed in this State, he is prepared to assert jurisdiction over this matter. [33705/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** It is vitally important for the future of Northern Ireland that a stable and lasting peace be firmly established. As stated in the Good Friday Agreement, the tragedies of the past have left a deep and profoundly regrettable legacy of suffering. We must never forget those who have died or been injured, and their families. In the context of the "Together: Building a United Community" initiative by the Northern Ireland Executive, the Northern Ireland Assembly will shortly establish an All Party Working Group under an Independent Chair to consider and make recommendations on issues that cause community divisions, including Dealing with the Past.

The HET has an important role to play in ensuring that the families of all of the victims of violence in the past can pursue the truth of what happened to their loved ones, and it plays a significant part in the pursuit of justice. I am aware of the comprehensive Inspection Report by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary into the PSNI's Historical Enquiries Team. I believe it is essential that the HET operate to the highest standards of effectiveness and impartiality, so that the people of Northern Ireland – and in particular, the families of the victims whose cases are being reviewed – can have confidence in it. Consequently I welcome Chief Constable Baggett's acceptance of the Inspection Report's Recommendations and his commitment to work with the Policing Board on ensuring their delivery.

I am glad to inform the Deputy that there is close and ongoing co-operation between the Garda Síochána and the PSNI on all aspects of policing. The two police forces have in place a joint Cross Border Policing Strategy which has as its aims to improve public safety throughout Ireland, to disrupt criminal activity and to enhance the policing capability of both police services on the island. The Garda Commissioner and the Chief Constable of the PSNI who have responsibility for operational policing co-operation have repeatedly emphasised that the close and high quality co-operation between their forces has been instrumental in preventing attacks, combating criminality and saving lives.

### Overseas Development Aid Provision

61. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the amount of money granted or donated in foreign aid and to which organisation and-or country presented in tabular form for the years 2010, 2011 and 2012; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33598/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Joe Costello):** The Government is strongly committed to Ireland's aid programme which has been internationally recognised as one of the best in the world. Over the past three years - 2010 to 2012 - Ireland has contributed substantial and stable funding to Official Development Assistance (ODA). In total, in the three years, Ireland has contributed almost €2 billion to ODA, of which about 80% was managed under Vote 27 - International Cooperation through the Development Cooperation Division of my Department – known to the public as Irish Aid. The remainder consists of ODA eligible contributions from other Government Departments - principally the Departments of Finance, and Agriculture Food and the Marine - and Ireland's share of the EU Development Cooperation Budget. A breakdown of ODA figures for 2010, 2011 and 2012 between Vote 27 and Other ODA is provided in the table.

Breakdown	Vote 27	Other ODA	Total ODA
2012	507.45	121.53	628.98
2011	520.18	136.86	657.04
2010	521.55	154.28	675.83

A detailed analysis of Ireland ODA's for 2010 and 2011 – across, inter alia, aid sectors, recipient countries and multilateral organisations - is currently published in the statistical annexes attached to the Irish Aid annual reports, and also available for down load from the Irish Aid web site at <http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/news-publications/tags/annualreport/>. The 2012 statistical annexes are currently being finalised - with a similar analysis - and will be available on the Irish Aid website later this summer. I will arrange for a copy of the 2012 Irish Aid Annual Report to be forwarded to the Deputy following publication.

### Human Rights Issues

62. **Deputy Seán Kenny** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the position in respect of illegal organ harvesting and trading; the measures taken to ensure that no Irish company, organisation or individual is involved in such practices; the steps taken to outline concerns in this matter to the Chinese authorities, particularly with regard to the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33719/13]

65. **Deputy Joe McHugh** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade his views on the position of Falun Gong practitioners in Chinese society. [33808/13]

66. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade his views regarding forced organ harvesting (details supplied); his plans to bring forward laws that will stop all Irish companies, organisations, persons, physicians and the health services from being accomplices in the heinous crime of organ trafficking; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33846/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 62, 65 and 66 together.

I also propose to make a statement on the matter. The Government follows closely reports of human rights violations against Falun Gong practitioners, including reported cases of organ harvesting, and is concerned about the situation. Human rights issues, including the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners, are issues discussed regularly with the Chinese authorities during both bilateral and multilateral meetings.

Through the formal framework of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, which was established in 1995, the EU continues to share with China its experience in the field of human rights protection and promotion, and to urge China to take clear steps to improve the human rights situation. The latest session of this dialogue took place on 25 June 2013 and provided the EU with the opportunity to express its concerns about a wide range of human rights issues in China, including the treatment of ethnic and religious minorities, deprivation of liberty, and criminal and administrative punishment. At this meeting, the EU also enquired about measures taken so far by China to ratify the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights, signed in 1998 in view of China's undertaking made during the 2009 Universal Periodic Review (UPR) to ratify the Covenant at an early date.

In February 2013, officials from my Department met with representatives of the Irish Falun Dafa Association. During this meeting the Irish Falun Dafa Association discussed the issue of organ harvesting and ways in which human rights issues are raised with Chinese authorities by both Ireland and the EU. Officials in my Department are meeting again this week with the Falun Dafa Association regarding the issue of organ harvesting.

In relation to measures taken to ensure no Irish company, organisation or individual becomes involved in the mistreatment of Falun Gong practitioners, a Common Position adopted by the European Council in 2008 outlines that Member States shall deny an export licence if there is a clear risk that military technology or equipment to be exported might be used for internal repression. Ireland, together with our EU partners, will continue to address human rights issues with China, including those related to the Falun Gong, in frequent and regular dialogue, through our contacts in both Dublin and Beijing and through the relevant multilateral channels, including at the next United Nations Universal Periodic Review of human rights in China, scheduled for October 2013.

### **Public Sector Staff Recruitment**

63. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade his plans to advertise all temporary, contractual, permanent and other similar forms of attaché positions at various embassies and diplomatic missions publicly through forums such as the Public Appointments Service and *publicjobs.ie* in the future; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33749/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** The Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) has a statutory role in ensuring that appointments in the organisations that are subject to its remit and to which it has awarded public service recruitment licences, which includes the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, are made on merit and as a result of fair, transparent, impartial and ethical appointment processes that embrace genuine equality of opportunity. This role is pursued through regular audits of the recruitment activities of the organisations concerned. In its recruitment practices at headquarters and abroad my Department is particularly guided by the *CPSA Code of Practice on Appointment to Positions in the Civil and Public Service* which lays down minimum standards for all aspects of appointment processes.

However, the Deputy will appreciate that recruiting staff to local posts by Missions abroad involves locally-tailored selection processes that may reward additional candidate competencies including proficiency in the English, local and Irish languages, knowledge of Ireland and local knowledge. Also, while endeavouring to recruit from the widest possible pool of available and relevant talent and experience, which we are committed to under the *Code of Practice*, Missions are constrained by the need to keep advertising costs to a minimum or avoid them altogether. This is done by targeting candidates through use of relevant local free websites.

### **Passport Applications**

64. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if a second passport can be issued to Irish citizens which they require to travel to certain countries around the world for whom it would provide an inconvenience to display stamps in their passports from particular countries that would create some difficulty for them to enter into other countries for the reason of their previous travel history; the documentation an individual would need to supply to his Department in order to avail of a second passport; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33750/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** I am pleased to confirm that the Passport Service does operate a system to provide a second passport to Irish citizens who are regularly required to travel into countries where possession of an entry/exit stamp or visa from another state would likely prevent a person's entry into that country. Applicants are required to complete the standard passport application form and additionally include a letter from their employer detailing the circumstances of the case and providing sample travel plans which show regular travel into the countries concerned.

*Questions Nos. 65 and 66 answered with Question No. 62.*

### **Overseas Development Aid Issues**

67. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade further to Parliamentary Question No. 67 of 3 July 2013, if he will further outline details on the number of Irish companies with interests in Africa; the countries in which they operate, in view of the fact that the information is not commercially sensitive; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33931/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Joe Costello):** In 2012 some 160 Irish companies participated in the Africa Ireland Economic Forum, an annual event hosted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade with the objective of supporting Irish companies interested in investing or trading in Africa. The range of interests

expressed by Irish companies in Africa varies from agribusiness to financial services and telecommunications. The majority of companies are interested in initially trading and investing in the more mature South African market, often using South Africa as a basis to penetrate other markets in the region. In November 2012, I led an Enterprise Ireland trade mission involving 35 Irish companies to South Africa to further strengthen Irish private sector links with the southern Africa region.

Last year I also led a trade focused visit to Nigeria and Ghana, which involved senior representatives from Enterprise Ireland and An Bord Bia. This has resulted in a significant increase in the level of interest by Irish companies in West Africa. During July, visits are taking place by officials from my Department, Enterprise Ireland and An Bord Bia to Nigeria to prepare for a trade mission, which will involve a number of Irish companies, scheduled for November 2013. Irish companies are also involved in pursuing additional business opportunities across African markets without necessarily linking directly with my Department or with state agencies.

The Africa Strategy of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade launched in 2011, outlines a new relationship with Africa which not only includes development aid but also seeks deeper political and economic relations. This approach has been warmly welcomed by all of our partner countries in Africa and has created a framework for closer relations with the Irish private sector that is already engaged across the continent.

### **Deposit Protection Scheme**

68. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the total amount of deposits covered by the State across banks and credit unions under the deposit protection scheme; the number of financial institutions participating in the scheme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33841/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The Deposit Guarantee Scheme covers deposits by individuals in participating credit institutions. All deposit-taking credit institutions in Ireland are required by law to participate in the Deposit Guarantee Scheme. The scheme currently covers all 395 credit unions in Ireland and 37 banks and building societies. Further information can be found on the Central Bank of Ireland's website at <http://www.centralbank.ie/paycurr/paysys/dgs/pages/about.aspx>. The Deposit Guarantee Scheme is funded by a charge on the credit institutions participating in the scheme. The cost of compensation payments is met from the balances in the Deposit Protection Account. In the event of the Deposit Protection Account being insufficient to fund a compensation event, any difference is made up using advances from the Central Bank or the State; the remaining participating institutions are then responsible for the repayment of these advances.

The Central Bank of Ireland ("the Bank") is responsible for the operation of the Deposit Protection (Guarantee) Scheme - DGS. I am advised by the Bank that it currently holds data on total deposits held by financial institutions. The Bank has explained that while it holds data relating to total deposits, not all of the deposits are covered by the DGS scheme (e.g. only amounts up to €100,000 are currently covered and there are various exclusions from coverage, such as large companies and inter-bank deposits).

The Bank advises me that it is currently working with Credit Institutions in order to receive data on actual coverage under the Deposit Guarantee Scheme. Formal powers to request this data are in the Central Bank (Supervision and Enforcement) Bill 2011. The Central Bank (Su-

pervision and Enforcement) Bill 2011 has passed all stages in the Oireachtas and is currently with the President for signature. I anticipate that the bill will be signed by the President in the coming days and following this the Central Bank will make the necessary arrangements to ensure that such information is fully accessible to it where required.

### **Tax Forms**

69. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Finance if a person (details supplied) in County Kildare may be facilitated with the appropriate forms; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33666/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I have been advised by the Revenue Commissioners that a form P45 was received by them on 13 August 2012. If the person concerned has not yet received a copy of the P45 this should be requested from the former employer. As the person concerned ceased employment in August 2012, a form P60 would not be issued by the employer for 2012. The relevant form is the form P45. PAYE Balancing Statements (P21s) for 2011 and 2012 will issue to the person concerned shortly.

### **Banking Sector Investigations**

70. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance further to Parliamentary Question No. 220 of 3 July, the exact dates as to when the Garda Bureau of Fraud Investigation was issued a court order; when it took possession of the evidence outlined in the question response; the date the bank was compelled and the date on which the Nyberg banking commission received the evidence outlined; the dates on which civil litigants were provided with evidence and if he will list the litigants. [33670/13]

71. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the reason the Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement used a court search warrant to seize information from Anglo Irish Bank in 2009 while the Garda Bureau of Fraud Investigation used a court order to seize its information. [33672/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 70 and 71 together.

Neither I nor my Department have any role in the on-going Garda or other regulatory investigations into Anglo Irish Bank or any other Irish Bank. It would be completely inappropriate for the Department of Finance to act outside of its legal powers and interfere with any investigation that could compromise potential future criminal or civil investigations by the bodies responsible under statute. I am advised that all of the covered banks are fully complying with those investigations and it would not be appropriate for me to comment any further.

### **IBRC Liquidation**

72. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the number of staff currently assigned to the special liquidator of Irish Bank Resolution Corporation and to confirm if they are current or former employees of KPMG. [33673/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The Special Liquidators have confirmed that there is on average a total of 192 people from KPMG working on IBRC (in Special Liquidation) part time and full time.

## Public Interest Director Responsibilities

73. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if the former public interest director (details supplied) at Anglo Irish Bank informed the Government of the existence of recorded phone conversations at the bank. [33674/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The person named was a director but not a public interest director at Anglo Irish Bank. There were two public interest directors appointed to the board of Anglo Irish Bank in December 2008. However after nationalisation there were no further specific public interest directors on the board of IBRC. Mr Alan Dukes had been appointed as a public interest director in Dec 2008 and was made Chairman of Anglo Irish Bank in June 2010. Mr Frank Daly was also appointed as a public interest director in Dec 2008 and left the board in Dec 2009.

The Department of Finance was aware of the existence of tape recordings of phone conversations in the bank and that there were a number of investigations progressing into Anglo Irish Bank and that the Board and senior management of Anglo/IBRC were fully co-operating with them. It is not the role of the Department to interfere with investigations that are being conducted by the authorities. I am not aware of the content of the recorded phone conversations held by the bank being raised with my Department by any member of the board of IBRC.

## Tax Exemptions

74. **Deputy John McGuinness** asked the Minister for Finance if an application in the name of Self Help Africa (details supplied) for changes to the memorandum and articles of association will be expedited and approved. [33692/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** As I informed the Deputy in my reply to question no. 178 on 2 July 2013, this is a matter for the Revenue Commissioners. Self Help Africa has a charitable tax exemption and recently sought approval to amend its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The required approval was granted by Revenue on 16 May. The Revenue Commissioners made direct contact with the charity on foot of the Deputy's previous question to ensure there were no further issues requiring clarification. The charity confirmed that there are no outstanding issues.

## Pension Provisions

75. **Deputy John McGuinness** asked the Minister for Finance his plans to address the issues which have been raised relative to retirement funds such as ARFs and AMRFs and the fact that individuals have lost considerable money which was set aside for their pension funds; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33693/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised that there are a small number of pension funds that may not be entitled to compensation under the deposit guarantee scheme, DGS, or the eligible liabilities guarantee scheme, ELG, due to the nature of the products or deposit options in which those account holders invested. It is important to note that at the time the products were offered to customers there was no additional guarantee provided by the State in respect of those products. It was always the case that the ELG scheme covered only those liabilities which were entered into during the issuance window. In relation to the DGS Scheme, I am advised that the DGS Regulations explicitly specify which deposits are excluded from coverage under that Scheme. Deposits held by pension funds and retirement funds fall within the category of excluded deposits, though small self-administered pension schemes are

included. The decision to include SSAPs and exclude ARFs, AMRFs and other pension funds/instruments was based on the fact that SSAPs are usually small schemes administered by the member(s) of the scheme whilst ARFs are managed by a qualified fund manager through a credit or investment institution.

There are currently no plans to alter the terms of the Deposit Guarantee Scheme. If customers are concerned about the coverage for their pension fund they can contact either my Department in respect of queries on the ELG Scheme or the Central Bank with queries about the DGS Scheme.

### **IBRC Liquidation**

76. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Finance the position regarding any discussions that have taken place between the Irish Credit Union movement and liquidators of Irish Bank Resolution Corporation with particular reference to any financial losses that will accrue to any credit union arising from investments that were made in good faith in the form of bonds; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33707/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** As I have previously outlined, certain tracker bonds sold to credit unions which were liabilities of IBRC at the time of the liquidation have a structured deposit element which is covered by the Deposit Guarantee Scheme (DGS) for that element of the product. As a result the first €100,000 of any claim from these depositors is covered under the DGS. The products purchased by some credit unions were not covered by the Eligible Liabilities Guarantee (ELG) Scheme and there was no other State guarantee attaching to the products. Unfortunately, if a product is not eligible under the ELG Scheme, the holders of the product rank as unsecured creditors in the liquidation, in accordance with Irish company and insolvency law. Credit unions and other fixed deposit holders affected have been advised to deal with the Special Liquidator in relation to this matter. Any discussions between the Special Liquidator and IBRC fixed deposit holders is a matter for the Special Liquidator and those deposit holders.

### **IBRC Liquidation**

77. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Finance if in the event of the Irish Nationwide Building Society loan book transferring to the National Asset Management Agency, individual mortgage holders would not have protection from the Ombudsman or the code of conduct on mortgage arrears. [33709/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I have been advised by the Special Liquidators that the residential mortgage customers of IBRC (in Special Liquidation) continue to enjoy the protection of the Central Bank Code of Conduct on mortgage arrears and other protections in Irish consumer law. The Special Liquidators are currently engaged in the valuation of IBRC loans and it is expected that they will begin the loan sales process later this year. I have been advised by NAMA that until that process has been completed, it is not possible to know which sub-portfolios within the IBRC loan book will be acquired by NAMA and which will be sold to third parties.

Only after NAMA has had an opportunity to review its acquired loans will it be in a position to determine its approach towards managing them.

### **Universal Social Charge Yield**

78. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the total amount of revenue that would be raised by the Exchequer through universal social charge for the year 2014 if there were no changes to its current rates; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33855/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The most recently published fiscal forecast was contained in the SPU in April with estimated USC receipts in 2013 of €3,970m. If there was no change in USC rates, the estimate for 2014, consistent with the SPU, is c. €4,110m. It should be pointed out that these figures may be comprehensively revised in the context of the White Paper and Budget 2014 as emerging fiscal and economic data are taken on board.

### **Universal Social Charge Yield**

79. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide a tabular breakdown of the revenue generated by universal social charge for income brackets of €5,000 beginning with the €0 to €5,000 bracket for 2013 and the expected revenue for 2014 if there were no changes to the current rates; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33856/13]

80. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide a tabular breakdown of the revenue generated by universal social charge by age group in brackets of 5 years beginning with 15 to 20 year olds for 2013 and the expected revenue for 2014 if there were no changes made to the current rates; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33857/13]

81. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide a breakdown of revenue generated by universal social charge by gender for 2013 and the expected revenue for 2014 if there were no changes to the current rates; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33858/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 79 to 81, inclusive, together.

I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that while the necessary detailed basic data is not compiled in such a manner as would enable an income distribution of expected receipts to be provided, a modelled distribution of the estimated amount of USC due for the tax year 2013 by reference to projected incomes for 2013 has been compiled and is set out in the following table. Information of this type is not available for 2014.

I am also informed by the Revenue Commissioners that the figure for total USC provided in the table is a projected estimate of the total USC liability in respect of the tax year 2013 and is not intended to correspond to the cash receipts expected to be collected in the corresponding calendar year. Figures of cash receipts are subject to timing arrangements and can also be distorted by cash flow adjustments. The figures are estimates from the Revenue tax forecasting model using actual data for the year 2010, adjusted as necessary for estimated income and employment trends in the interim. These are, therefore, provisional and likely to be revised.

As far as is practicable income ranges are in brackets of €5,000 up to €100,000, thereafter the range bands expand over wider brackets in the higher income ranges. Moreover, because of the Revenue Commissioners' obligation to observe confidentiality in relation to the taxation affairs of individual taxpayers and small groups of taxpayers, the breakdown by income bands requested by the Deputy is not provided in relation to incomes exceeding €2 million due to the small numbers of income earners with incomes in excess of that level. It should be noted that Gross Income is as defined in the Revenue Statistical Report 2011.

The numbers of income earners shown in the table counts a married couple who has elected or has been deemed to have elected for joint assessment as one tax unit although USC is an individualised charge and as such the estimated liability is calculated on the basis of individual incomes. Income range values commence in the table at €10,036, which is the point of income at which liability to USC commences. Corresponding information by reference to age or gen-

der is not available.

**Projected income distribution of USC payers.**

Range of Gross Income - €	Number	Amount of USC - €
10,036 - 15,000	140,639	41,565,010
15,001 - 20,000	165,154	86,743,582
20,001 - 25,000	182,668	146,355,934
25,001 - 30,000	172,512	189,214,278
30,001 - 35,000	154,550	217,086,921
35,001 - 40,000	141,209	242,163,441
40,001 - 45,000	114,414	229,954,056
45,001 - 50,000	92,370	213,947,664
50,001 - 55,000	76,049	199,613,016
55,001 - 60,000	60,822	178,312,810
60,001 - 65,000	50,856	165,294,250
65,001 - 70,000	42,831	152,620,434
70,001 - 75,000	37,032	144,001,097
75,001 - 80,000	30,157	127,037,210
80,001 - 85,000	25,138	114,015,182
85,001 - 90,000	20,802	101,398,521
90,001 - 95,000	17,533	91,294,832
95,001 - 100,000	14,592	80,991,330
100,001 - 120,000	39,573	250,529,725
120,001 - 140,000	21,472	165,566,332
140,001 - 160,000	12,169	110,385,690
160,001 - 180,000	7,927	82,688,526
180,001 - 200,000	5,388	63,571,589
200,001 - 250,000	7,891	110,723,961
250,001 - 300,000	4,303	74,518,291
300,001 - 350,000	2,552	52,930,608
350,001 - 400,000	1,643	39,282,463
400,001 - 450,000	1,152	31,537,873
450,001 - 500,000	807	24,788,772
500,001 - 750,000	2,091	81,390,484
750,001 - 1,000,000	742	41,870,392
1,000,001 - 2,000,000	661	57,170,458
Over 2,000,000	141	38,040,330
Overall Total	1,647,839	3,946,605,061

**Tax Yield**

82. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the total amount of revenue that would be raised by the Exchequer through pay as you earn tax for the year 2014 if there were no changes to its current rates and allowances; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33859/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The most recently published fiscal forecast was contained in the SPU in April with estimated PAYE receipts in 2013 of €9,630m. If there is no change in PAYE rates or allowances, the estimate for 2014, consistent with the SPU, is c. €10,225m. It should be pointed out that these figures may be comprehensively revised in the context of the White Paper and Budget 2014 as emerging fiscal and economic data are taken on board.

### **Tax Yield**

83. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide a tabular breakdown of the revenue generated by pay as you earn tax for income brackets of €5,000 beginning with the €0 to €5,000 bracket for 2013 and the expected revenue for 2014 if there were no changes to the current rates; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33860/13]

84. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide a tabular breakdown of the revenue generated by pay as you earn tax by age group in brackets of 5 years beginning with 15 to 20 year olds for 2013 and the expected revenue for 2014 if there were no changes made to the current rates; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33861/13]

85. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide a breakdown of revenue generated by pay as you earn by gender for 2013 and the expected revenue for 2014 if there were no changes to the current rates; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33862/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 83 to 85, inclusive, together.

I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that while the necessary detailed basic data is not compiled in such a manner as would enable an income distribution of expected receipts to be provided, a modelled distribution of the estimated amount of PAYE due for the tax year 2013 by reference to projected incomes for 2013 has been compiled and is set out in the following table. Information of this type is not available for 2014.

I am also informed by the Revenue Commissioners that the figure for total PAYE provided in the table is a projected estimate of the total PAYE liability in respect of the tax year 2013 and is not intended to correspond to the cash receipts expected to be collected in the corresponding calendar year. Figures of cash receipts are subject to timing arrangements and can also be distorted by cash flow adjustments. The figures are estimates from the Revenue tax forecasting model using actual data for the year 2010, adjusted as necessary for estimated income and employment trends in the interim. These are, therefore, provisional and likely to be revised.

As far as is practicable income ranges are in brackets of €5,000 up to €100,000, thereafter the range bands expand over wider brackets in the higher income ranges. Moreover, because of the Revenue Commissioners' obligation to observe confidentiality in relation to the taxation affairs of individual taxpayers and small groups of taxpayers, the breakdown by income bands requested by the Deputy is not provided in relation to incomes exceeding €2 million due to the small numbers of income earners with incomes in excess of that level.

It should be noted that Gross Income is as defined in the Revenue Statistical Report 2011. A married couple which has elected or has been deemed to have elected for joint assessment is counted as one tax unit. Corresponding information by reference to age or gender is not available.

In relation to income distribution by gender, the deputy may wish to note that historical details on the incomes of different marital status groups for the income tax year 2010 are pro-

vided in Tables IDS 1 to 17 of the income distribution chapter of the Revenue statistical report for 2011, which is available on the Revenue website at [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie). Table 5 in that group refers specifically to mainly PAYE earnings.

**Projected PAYE incomes for 2013**

Range of Gross Income - €	Numbers in range	Amount of PAYE Tax - €
5,000 or less	214,055	0
5,001 - 10,000	148,969	114,733
10,001 - 15,000	165,387	987,260
15,001 - 20,000	183,831	28,985,438
20,001 - 25,000	189,876	121,138,291
25,001 - 30,000	168,196	213,561,657
30,001 - 35,000	146,152	295,779,889
35,001 - 40,000	131,949	429,139,548
40,001 - 45,000	105,829	480,080,823
45,001 - 50,000	84,906	508,811,454
50,001 - 55,000	69,502	514,330,768
55,001 - 60,000	55,210	478,341,305
60,001 - 65,000	46,100	460,045,292
65,001 - 70,000	38,612	433,201,735
70,001 - 75,000	33,460	426,508,556
75,001 - 80,000	26,902	385,199,014
80,001 - 85,000	22,236	355,074,230
85,001 - 90,000	18,322	323,560,115
90,001 - 95,000	15,354	296,882,283
95,001 - 100,000	12,626	266,210,309
100,001 - 120,000	33,692	845,298,264
120,001 - 140,000	17,600	571,617,849
140,001 - 160,000	9,513	380,074,397
160,001 - 180,000	5,911	280,131,248
180,001 - 200,000	3,846	209,549,339
200,001 - 250,000	5,091	334,395,530
250,001 - 300,000	2,478	207,736,732
300,001 - 350,000	1,349	137,814,408
350,001 - 400,000	798	96,184,628
400,001 - 450,000	485	68,688,347
450,001 - 500,000	301	47,971,557
500,001 - 750,000	683	137,230,461
750,001 - 1,000,000	196	59,894,619
1,000,001 - 2,000,000	140	65,210,942
Over 2,000,000	44	85,786,609
Overall Total	1,959,601	9,545,537,627

**Tax Collection**

86. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide in tabu-

lar form the complete list of tax expenditures that are due to those who pay USC, PRSI and/or PAYE and the cost of these tax expenditures for the year 2013 and the expected distribution for the year 2014 if there are no changes to the rates and eligibility criteria; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33863/13]

87. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide in tabular form the distribution of tax expenditures due to those who pay USC, PRSI and/or PAYE by gender for the year 2013 and the expected distribution for the year 2014 if there are no changes to the rates and eligibility criteria; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33864/13]

88. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide in tabular form the distribution of tax expenditures due to those who pay USC, PRSI and/or PAYE by age in 5 year brackets beginning with the 15-20 year old bracket for the year 2013 and the expected distribution for the year 2014 if there are no changes to the rates and eligibility criteria; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33865/13]

89. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide in tabular form the distribution of tax expenditures due to those who pay USC, PRSI and/or PAYE by income bracket in brackets of €5,000 beginning with the €0 to €5,000 bracket for the year 2013 and the expected distribution for the year 2014 if there are no changes to the rates and eligibility criteria; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33866/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 86 to 89, inclusive, together.

I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that the total identifiable costs to the Exchequer which are currently available relate to income tax and corporation tax allowances, reliefs, exemptions and tax credits and are shown in Table IT6 on the Revenue Statistical Report for 2011 which is accessible on the Revenue website at [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie). The information is located under the main chapter heading of Income Tax and shows the information for the years 2009 and 2010 which are the most recent years for which the necessary detailed historical information is available. A breakdown of these estimates of costs by reference to liability to USC, PAYE and PRSI or by gender, age and income bracket is not available and could not be provided without undertaking an extensive and costly development of the Revenue tax model.

#### **Tax Yield**

90. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the total amount of revenue expected to be raised by Capital Gains Tax for the year 2014 if there were no changes made to the rates and criteria for chargeable assets; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33867/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The most recently published fiscal forecast was contained in the SPU in April. The CGT estimate underpinning the 2013 forecast was c. €360m. If there is no change in the CGT rate or criteria, the estimate for 2014, as per the SPU, is c. €370m. It should be pointed out that these figures may be comprehensively revised in the context of the White Paper and Budget 2014 as emerging fiscal and economic data are taken on board.

#### **Tax Reliefs Availability**

91. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the total cost of all reliefs that can be claimed in respect of Capital Gains Tax and if he will provide a tabular breakdown of the value of each relief by category for 2013 and the expected cost for 2014 if there were

no changes to the rates and criteria for chargeable assets or eligibility for reliefs; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33868/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that the main reliefs/exemptions that can be claimed in respect of Capital Gains Tax are as follows:

Appropriation to and from stock in trade (section 596 TCA 1997)

Rollover relief (section 597 TCA 1997) [now only available in limited circumstances]

Retirement relief (sections 598/599 TCA 1997)

Relief on dissolution of farming partnerships (section 598A TCA 1997)

Transfer of business to a company (section 600 TCA 1997)

Replacement of qualifying premises (section 600A TCA 1997)

Personal exemption (section 601 TCA 1997)

Chattel exemption (section 602 TCA 1997)

Wasting chattels (section 603 TCA 1997)

Transfer of site from parent to child (section 603A TCA 1997)

Principal private residence relief (section 604 TCA 1997)

Relief for certain disposals of land and buildings (section 604A TCA 1997)

Disposals to authority possessing compulsory powers (section 605 TCA 1997)

The reliefs for which claims made can currently be identified in tax returns are those that are entered to the Form 11 personal income tax returns filed by non-PAYE taxpayers for 2011, the latest year for which this information is available. These are Disposal of Principal Private Residence, Retirement relief - within the Family, Retirement Relief – outside the Family, Disposal of a site to a child and Other Reliefs (to be specified). Claimants for the Personal Exemption are also identified.

In the case of the Personal Exemption it is tentatively estimated that the Exchequer cost in terms of tax forgone in respect of claimants who filed a Form 11 tax return for 2011 was in the region of €4 million. Claims for the other identified reliefs require the entry to the tax return of the consideration value and not the actual capital gain. There is therefore no basis on which a nominal gain could be identified and on which an estimate of Exchequer cost of the tax relief could be calculated.

It should be noted that any corresponding data returned by PAYE taxpayers in the income tax return (Form 12) is not captured in the Revenue computer system. However, any PAYE taxpayer with non-PAYE income greater than €3,174 is required to complete an income tax return (Form 11).

## **Tax Yield**

92. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the total amount of revenue expected to be raised by Capital Acquisitions Tax for the year 2014 if there were no changes made to the rates and criteria for chargeable assets; and if he will make a statement on

the matter. [33869/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The most recently published fiscal forecast was contained in the SPU in April. The Capital Acquisitions Tax (CAT) duty estimate underpinning the 2013 forecast was c. €375m. If there is no change in the CAT rate, the estimate for 2014, as per the SPU, is c. €370m. The reason for the decline is the non-recurrence of once offs which are scheduled to accrue in 2013. It should be pointed out that these figures may be comprehensively revised in the context of the White Paper and Budget 2014 as emerging fiscal and economic data are taken on board.

#### **Tax Reliefs Availability**

93. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide a full list of all possible exemptions and reliefs applicable to capital acquisitions tax and to provide, in tabular form, the cost of each said exemptions and reliefs in 2013 and the expected cost in 2014 if there are no changes to the rates of capital acquisitions tax and the eligibility criteria of the applicable exemptions and reliefs; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33870/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Given the various exemptions and reliefs from Capital Acquisitions Tax and the scale of the information on them being sought by the Deputy it is not possible to answer the question in the time available. I will contact the Deputy directly with a reply.

#### **Tax Yield**

94. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the total revenue raised for the Exchequer in 2013 and the revenue expected to be raised in 2014 from the Discretionary Trust Tax and to show the split between the once off charge for assets placed in a discretionary trust and the annual charge for assets placed in a discretionary trust; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33871/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is not possible to answer the Deputy's question on Discretionary Trust Tax in the time available. I will contact the Deputy directly with a reply.

#### **Tax Yield**

95. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the total revenue raised for the Exchequer through Stamp Duty for 2013 and the revenue expected to be raised through 2014; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33872/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The most recently published fiscal forecast was contained in the SPU in April. The stamp duty estimate underpinning the 2013 forecast was €1,180m. If there was no change to stamp duty rates, estimated stamp duty yield in 2014, consistent with the SPU, would be €1,050m. The Deputy should be aware that €170m of the 2013 forecast relates to the Health Insurance Levy payable in January 2013 in respect of health insurance policies issued in the last five months of 2012. The substantial fall in 2014 is accounted for by the fact that from May 2013 the Health Insurance Levy no longer accrues to the Exchequer but is paid into the Risk Equalisation Fund. It should be pointed out that these figures may be comprehensively revised in the context of the White Paper and Budget 2014 as emerging fiscal and economic data are taken on board.

#### **Tax Yield**

96. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide a break-

down, in tabular form, of the revenue raised for 2013 and the revenue expected to be raised for 2014 from each taxable asset liable for Stamp Duty; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33873/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The most recently published fiscal forecast was contained in the SPU in April. The stamp duty estimate underpinning the 2013 forecast was €1,180m. If there was no change to stamp duty rates, estimated stamp duty yield in 2014, consistent with the SPU, would be €1,050m. The Deputy should be aware that €170m of the 2013 forecast relates to the Health Insurance Levy payable in January 2013 in respect of health insurance policies issued in the last five months of 2012. The substantial fall in 2014 is accounted for by the fact that from May 2013 the Health Insurance Levy no longer accrues to the Exchequer but is paid into the Risk Equalisation Fund. It should be pointed out that these figures may be comprehensively revised in the context of the White Paper and Budget 2014 as emerging fiscal and economic data are taken on board.

€m	2013	2014
Other	530	575
Health Insurance Levy	170	0
Pension Levy	480	480
Total	1180	1050

*Note: Figures may not exactly sum due to rounding*

### Tax Reliefs Availability

97. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide a full list of all exemptions and reliefs that are applicable to stamp duty and a breakdown, in tabular form, of the cost to the Exchequer for 2013 and the expected cost for 2014 for each of the above listed exemptions and reliefs; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33874/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that given the variety of exemptions and reliefs that apply to Stamp Duty it is not possible to answer the question in the time available. I will contact the Deputy directly with a reply.

### Tax Yield

98. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide, in tabular form, the expected revenue that would be generated for the Exchequer in 2014 through Value Added Tax at each percentage point from 0 to 35 for each of the separate categories of produce that Value Added Tax is charged on; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33875/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that the full year cost or yield to the Exchequer from increasing or reducing the 9%, 13.5% and 23% rates, are provisionally estimated as follows. These figures are estimates in terms of 2013 expected yields. Corresponding estimates for 2014 are not yet available.

VAT rate	Estimated cost/yield from 1% change
9%	+/- €125m
13.5%	+/- €230m
23%	+/- €250m

A pro-rata calculation may be applied to these figures to arrive at the impacts of greater or lesser increases or decreases to the respective rates.

The Deputy will be aware that Irish VAT law is governed by the EU VAT Directive, and any changes made to the VAT rates must be guided by EU VAT law. In this context, where the zero rate of VAT is increased, children's shoes and clothes could only be increased to the standard rate (23%) while other goods at the zero rate could be increased to a reduced rate of 5% or more, provided only two reduced VAT rates are in operation. As such, there are no figures provided for a 1% increase on the zero rate. In addition, most items applying currently at the 13.5% cannot be reduced below 12%.

As stated earlier, the costings in the table relation to the 9% VAT rate relates to 2013 figures. From 2014 all goods and services applying at this rate are scheduled to revert to 13.5%, and so any change that would result in a rate lower than 13.5% on this activity would result in a cost to the Exchequer. However, costings in relation to the items currently at the 9% rate for 2014 are not yet available. Any decision on a deviation from this policy will be taken in the context of Budget 2014.

### **Tax Yield**

99. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the total revenue raised for the Exchequer through Deposit Interest Retention Tax for the year 2013 and the expected yield of this tax for 2014 if there is no change to the rate charged; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33876/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** As the Deputy will be aware, the DIRT rate was increased by 3 per cent in Budget 2013. The most recently published fiscal forecast was contained in the SPU in April. The DIRT forecast underpinning the 2013 projection was c. €650m. If there is no change in the applicable DIRT rate, the estimated yield in 2014 is c. €675m, which includes carryover from the Budget 2013 measure. It should be pointed out that these figures may be comprehensively revised in the context of the White Paper and Budget 2014 as emerging fiscal and economic data are taken on board.

### **Tax Yield**

100. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the total amount that would be raised for 2014 if Deposit Interest Retention Tax was applicable to interests on deposits where the beneficial owner is a non-resident; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33877/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that basic data are not available on Revenue records to provide a basis for compiling estimates of the impact on the Exchequer from the proposal mentioned in the question. Accordingly, the specific information requested by the Deputy cannot be provided. In many cases a non-resident individual with an Irish bank account may be resident in a country with which Ireland has a Double Taxation Agreement (DTA) and any liability to Irish tax on the deposit interest may be relieved by the DTA between the State and the other jurisdiction. In such cases, no additional income would arise to the Exchequer from applying DIRT to such accounts and it is more administratively efficient to exempt such accounts from DIRT, on the furnishing of a Non-resident Declaration, rather than charging the tax and operating a refund scheme.

**Tax Yield**

101. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the total amount of revenue raised for the Exchequer from vehicle registration tax for 2013 and the revenue expected to be raised for 2014 if there is no change to the rates and there is no change to the vehicle categories and to provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the revenue and expected revenue for 2013 and 2014 respectively by category of vehicle; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33881/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The most recently published fiscal forecast was contained in the SPU in April. The VRT estimate underpinning the 2013 excise forecast was c. €480m. If there is no change in the VRT rate, the estimate for 2014, as per the SPU, is c. €490m. It should be pointed out that these figures may be comprehensively revised in the context of the White Paper and Budget 2014 as emerging fiscal and economic data are taken on board.

It is not possible at this time provided to give a detailed breakdown of expected revenue per category of vehicle. However, the Deputy might like to know the breakdown of VRT by category for the previous four years.

New Cars	2009	2010	2011	2012
Cars	€	€	€	€
A1	16,373,166	66,604,753	88,854,953	119,390,303
A2	76,322,051	108,562,065	133,854,115	107,053,328
A3	53,138,901	47,502,223	27,202,265	20,220,250
A4	38,220,314	31,518,427	18,474,002	13,000,405
A5	28,911,030	16,916,079	11,022,671	9,546,576
A6	15,603,672	9,295,367	8,606,705	9,187,720
A7	5,826,393	6,481,364	4,705,419	1,104,780
Cat B - Car Derived Vans	2,694,107	2,283,993	3,444,872	6,833,348
Cat C - Com- mercial Vehs	617,550	713,513	1,609,405	2,610,143
Cat M - Motor- cycles	1,273,160	912,019	749,055	645,310
<b>Total</b>	<b>238,980,344</b>	<b>290,789,803</b>	<b>298,523,461</b>	<b>289,592,163</b>

Used Cars	2009	2010	2011	2012
Cars	€	€	€	€
A1	3,093,608	5,918,644	9,339,385	11,289,045
A2	24,556,996	22,717,951	27,598,305	32,913,929
A3	41,197,776	27,683,401	25,687,500	22,913,638
A4	25,720,073	14,427,506	11,844,292	8,868,979
A5	17,351,800	8,428,912	5,593,867	4,800,477
A6	10,585,284	5,946,563	3,820,044	3,723,100
A7	8,611,877	5,009,664	3,039,494	2,218,970

Used Cars	2009	2010	2011	2012
Cat B - Car Derived Vans	2,998,088	1,090,668	1,088,015	1,220,808
Cat C - Com- mercial Vehs	1,030,100	672,617	1,292,500	1,430,200
Cat M - Motor- cycles	1,276,956	799,458	526,883	374,512
Total	136,422,558	92,695,384	89,830,285	89,753,658

### Tax Yield

102. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the expected revenue generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the individual, if an average single individual not currently in employment with no dependants were to return to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33882/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question takes up employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate.

It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€2,997
Total Deductions	€5,779
Net Pay	€25,706

### Tax Yield

103. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the expected revenue generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the individual, if

an average individual not currently in employment with a dependent spouse were to return to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33883/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question takes up employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate.

It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€1,347
Total Deductions	€4,129
Net Pay	€27,356

#### Tax Yield

104. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the expected revenue generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the individual, if an average single individual not currently in employment with one dependent child were to return to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33884/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question takes up employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate.

It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650

Tax Credit	€
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

## Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€1,347
Total Deductions	€4,129
Net Pay	€27,356

## Tax Yield

105. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the expected revenue generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the individual, if an average individual with a dependent spouse and one dependent child were to take up full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33885/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question takes up employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate.

It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

## Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€537
Total Deductions	€3,319

Tax Liability	€
Net Pay	€28,166

### Tax Yield

106. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the expected revenue generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the individual, if an average single individual not currently in employment with two dependent children were to return to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33886/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question takes up employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate.

It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€1,347
Total Deductions	€4,129
Net Pay	€27,356

### Tax Yield

107. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the expected revenue generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average person with a dependent spouse and two dependent children were to take up full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33887/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question takes up employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and

therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate.

It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€537
Total Deductions	€3,319
Net Pay	€28,166

#### Tax Yield

108. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the expected revenue generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average single person not currently in employment with three dependent children were to return to take up full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33888/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question takes up employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate.

It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€1,347
Total Deductions	€4,129
Net Pay	€27,356

### Tax Yield

109. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the expected revenue generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average person with a dependent spouse and three children were to take up full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33889/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question takes up employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate.

It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€537
Total Deductions	€3,319
Net Pay	€28,166

### Tax Yield

110. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the expected revenue generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average single person currently in part-time employment with no dependants were to move to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33890/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question is working part time in 2013 for 20 hours a week at the minimum hourly rate of €8.65 per hour, which equates to an annual income of €8,996 per annum. In 2014, the individual takes up full time employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate.

It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€8,996
USC	Nil
PRSI	Nil
Income Tax	Nil
Total Deductions	Nil
Net Pay	€8,996

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€2,997
Total Deductions	€5,779
Net Pay	€25,706

#### Tax Yield

111. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the expected revenue generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average person currently in part-time employment with a dependent spouse were to move to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33891/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question is working part time in 2013 for 20 hours a week at the minimum hourly rate of €8.65 per

hour, which equates to an annual income of €8,996 per annum. In 2014, the individual takes up full time employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate.

It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€8,996
USC	Nil
PRSI	Nil
Income Tax	Nil
Total Deductions	Nil
Net Pay	€8,996

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€1,347
Total Deductions	€4,129
Net Pay	€27,356

### Tax Yield

112. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the expected revenue generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average single person currently in part-time employment with one dependent child were to move to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33892/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question is working part time in 2013 for 20 hours a week at the minimum hourly rate of €8.65 per hour, which equates to an annual income of €8,996 per annum. In 2014, the individual takes up full time employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the

latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that Family Income Supplement (FIS) has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate.

It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€8,996
One Parent family payment	€10,026
Total Gross Income	€19,022
USC	Nil
PRSI	Nil
Income Tax	Nil
Total Deductions	Nil
Net Pay	€19,022

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€1,347
Total Deductions	€4,129
Net Pay	€27,356

#### Tax Yield

113. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the expected revenue generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average person currently in part-time employment with a dependent spouse and one dependent child were to move to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33893/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question is working part time in 2013 for 20 hours a week at the minimum hourly rate of €8.65 per hour, which equates to an annual income of €8,996 per annum. In 2014, the individual takes up

full time employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate.

It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€8,996
USC	Nil
PRSI	Nil
Income Tax	Nil
Total Deductions	Nil
Net Pay	€8,996

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€537
Total Deductions	€3,319
Net Pay	€28,166

#### Tax Yield

114. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the expected revenue generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average single person currently in part-time employment with two dependent children were to move to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33894/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question is working part time in 2013 for 20 hours a week at the minimum hourly rate of €8.65 per hour, which equates to an annual income of €8,996 per annum. In 2014, the individual takes up full time employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that Family Income Supplement

(FIS) has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate.

It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€8,996
One Parent Family payment	€11,575
Total Gross Income	€20,571
USC	Nil
PRSI	Nil
Income Tax	Nil
Total Deductions	Nil
Net Pay	€20,571

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€1,247
Total Deductions	€4,129
Net Pay	€27,356

#### Tax Yield

115. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the expected revenue generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average single person currently in part-time employment with a dependent spouse and two dependent children were to move to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33895/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I assume the Deputy refers to a married individual. In such a case it is further assumed that the individual in question is working part time in 2013 for 20 hours a week at the minimum hourly rate of €8.65 per hour, which equates to an annual income of €8,996 per annum. In 2014, the individual takes up full time employ-

ment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate.

It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€8,996
USC	Nil
PRSI	Nil
Income Tax	Nil
Total Deductions	Nil
Net Pay	€8,996

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€537
Total Deductions	€3,319
Net Pay	€28,166

#### Tax Yield

116. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the revenue expected to be generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average single person currently in part-time employment with three dependent children were to move to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33896/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question is working part time in 2013 for 20 hours a week at the minimum hourly rate of €8.65 per hour, which equates to an annual income of €8,996 per annum. In 2014, the individual takes up full time employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that Family Income Supplement

(FIS) has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate. It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€8,996
One Parent family payment	€13,125
Total Gross Income	€22,121
USC	Nil
PRSI	Nil
Income Tax	Nil
Total Deductions	Nil
Net Pay	€22,121

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€1,347
Total Deductions	€4,129
Net Pay	€27,356

#### Tax Yield

117. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the revenue expected to be generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average person currently in part-time employment with a dependent spouse and three children were to move to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33897/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question is working part time in 2013 for 20 hours a week at the minimum hourly rate of €8.65 per hour, which equates to an annual income of €8,996 per annum. In 2014, the individual takes up full time employment earning the average industrial wage (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment

that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate. It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€8,996
USC	Nil
PRSI	Nil
Income Tax	Nil
Total Deductions	Nil
Net Pay	€8,996

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	€
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€537
Total Deductions	€3,319
Net Pay	€28,166

### Tax Yield

118. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the revenue expected to be generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average person not currently in employment with a working spouse were to take up full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33898/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question is not working in 2013. However, in 2014, the individual takes up full time employment earning the minimum wage €17,542 (i.e. 39 hours @ €8.65 per hour \* 52 weeks = €17,542). It is further assumed, that the working spouse in 2013 is working full time and earns the average industrial wage in 2013 and 2014 (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be

entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate. It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	Spouse 1
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€1,347
Total Deductions	€4,129
Net Pay	€27,356

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	Spouse 2	Spouse 1
Earnings	€17,542	€31,485
USC	€547	€1,523
PRSI	Nil	€1,259
Income Tax	€208	€2,997
Total Deductions	€755	€5,779
Net Pay	€16,787	€25,706

#### Tax Yield

119. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the revenue expected to be generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average person with a working spouse and one dependent child were to take up full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33899/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question is not working in 2013. However, in 2014, the individual takes up full time employment earning the minimum wage €17,542 (i.e. 39 hours @ €8.65 per hour \* 52 weeks = €17,542). It is further assumed, that the working spouse in 2013 is working full time and earns the average industrial wage in 2013 and 2014 (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate. It should be noted that following

tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	Spouse 1
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€537
Total Deductions	€3,319
Net Pay	€28,166

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	Spouse 2	Spouse 1
Earnings	€17,542	€31,485
USC	€547	€1,523
PRSI	Nil	€1,259
Income Tax	€208	€2,997
Total Deductions	€755	€5,779
Net Pay	€16,787	€25,706

#### Tax Yield

120. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the revenue expected to be generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average person with a working spouse and two dependent children were to take up full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33900/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question is not working in 2013. However, in 2014, the individual takes up full time employment earning the minimum wage €17,542 (i.e. 39 hours @ €8.65 per hour \* 52 weeks = €17,542). It is further assumed, that the working spouse in 2013 is working full time and earns the average industrial wage in 2013 and 2014 (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate. It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

10 July 2013

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	Spouse 1
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€537
Total Deductions	€3,319
Net Pay	€28,166

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	Spouse 2	Spouse 1
Earnings	€17,542	€31,485
USC	€547	€1,523
PRSI	Nil	€1,259
Income Tax	€208	€2,997
Total Deductions	€755	€5,779
Net Pay	€16,787	€25,706

#### Tax Yield

121. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the revenue expected to be generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average person with a working spouse and three children were to take up full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33901/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question is not working in 2013. However, in 2014, the individual takes up full time employment earning the minimum wage €17,542 (i.e. 39 hours @ €8.65 per hour \* 52 weeks = €17,542). It is further assumed, that the working spouse in 2013 is working full time and earns the average industrial wage in 2013 and 2014 (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate. It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650

Tax Credit	€
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	Spouse 1
Earnings	€31,485
USC	€1,523
PRSI	€1,259
Income Tax	€537
Total Deductions	€3,319
Net Pay	€28,166

Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	Spouse 2	Spouse 1
Earnings	€17,542	€31,485
USC	€547	€1,523
PRSI	Nil	€1,259
Income Tax	€208	€2,997
Total Deductions	€755	€5,779
Net Pay	€16,787	€25,706

**Tax Yield**

122. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the revenue expected to be generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average person currently in part-time employment with a working spouse were to move to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33902/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question is working part time in 2013 for 20 hours a week at the minimum hourly rate of €8.65 per hour, which equates to an annual income of €8,996 per annum. In 2014, the individual takes up full time employment earning the minimum wage €17,542 (i.e. 39 hours @ €8.65 per hour \* 52 weeks = €17,542). It is further assumed, that the working spouse in 2013 is working full time and earns the average industrial wage in 2013 and 2014 (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate. It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

## Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	Spouse 1	Spouse 2
Earnings	€8,996	€31,485
USC	Nil	€1,523
PRSI	Nil	€1,259
Income Tax	Nil	€1,496
Total Deductions	Nil	€4,278
Net Pay	€8,996	€27,207

## Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	Spouse 1	Spouse 2
Earnings	€17,542	€31,485
USC	€547	€1,523
PRSI	Nil	€1,259
Income Tax	€208	€2,997
Total Deductions	€755	€5,779
Net Pay	€16,787	€25,706

## Tax Yield

123. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the revenue expected to be generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average person currently in part-time employment with a working spouse and one dependent child were to move to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33903/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question is working part time in 2013 for 20 hours a week at the minimum hourly rate of €8.65 per hour, which equates to an annual income of €8,996 per annum. In 2014, the individual takes up full time employment earning the minimum wage €17,542 (i.e. 39 hours @ €8.65 per hour \* 52 weeks = €17,542). It is further assumed, that the working spouse in 2013 is working full time and earns the average industrial wage in 2013 and 2014 (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate. It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	Spouse 1	Spouse 2
Earnings	€8,996	€31,485
USC	Nil	€1,523
PRSI	Nil	€1,259
Income Tax	Nil	€1,496
Total Deductions	Nil	€4,278
Net Pay	€8,996	€27,207

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	Spouse 1	Spouse 2
Earnings	€17,542	€31,485
USC	€547	€1,523
PRSI	Nil	€1,259
Income Tax	€208	€2,997
Total Deductions	€755	€5,779
Net Pay	€16,787	€25,706

#### Tax Yield

124. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the revenue expected to be generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average single person currently in part-time employment with a working spouse and two dependent children were to move to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33904/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I assume the Deputy refers to a married individual. In such a case it is further assumed that the individual in question is working part time in 2013 for 20 hours a week at the minimum hourly rate of €8.65 per hour, which equates to an annual income of €8,996 per annum. In 2014, the individual takes up full time employment earning the minimum wage €17,542 (i.e. 39 hours @ €8.65 per hour \* 52 weeks = €17,542). It is further assumed, that the working spouse in 2013 is working full time and earns the average industrial wage in 2013 and 2014 (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate. It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

## Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	Spouse 1	Spouse 2
Earnings	€8,996	€31,485
USC	Nil	€1,523
PRSI	Nil	€1,259
Income Tax	Nil	€1,496
Total Deductions	Nil	€4,278
Net Pay	€8,996	€27,207

## Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	Spouse 1	Spouse 2
Earnings	€17,542	€31,485
USC	€547	€1,523
PRSI	Nil	€1,259
Income Tax	€208	€2,997
Total Deductions	€755	€5,779
Net Pay	€16,787	€25,706

## Tax Yield

125. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the revenue expected to be generated for the year 2014, assuming no changes to the taxation relevant to the person, if an average person currently in part-time employment with a working spouse and three children were to move to full-time employment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33905/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It is assumed that the individual in question is working part time in 2013 for 20 hours a week at the minimum hourly rate of €8.65 per hour, which equates to an annual income of €8,996 per annum. In 2014, the individual takes up full time employment earning the minimum wage €17,542 (i.e. 39 hours @ €8.65 per hour \* 52 weeks = €17,542). It is further assumed, that the working spouse in 2013 is working full time and earns the average industrial wage in 2013 and 2014 (i.e. €31,485 for 2012 based on the latest information available). In addition, it should be noted that any social welfare payment that an individual may be entitled to has not been taken account of for the purpose of these computations. Furthermore, it is assumed that the individual is not in receipt of a medical card and therefore does not benefit from the concessionary Universal Social Charge (USC) rate. It should be noted that following tax credits have been included in the computation where relevant:

Tax Credit	€
PAYE tax credit:	€1,650
Personal tax credit:	€1,650
Married tax credit:	€3,300
One parent family tax credit:	€1,650
Home carer tax credit:	€810

#### Tax Liability 2013

Tax Liability	Spouse 1	Spouse 2
Earnings	€8,996	€31,485
USC	Nil	€1,523
PRSI	Nil	€1,259
Income Tax	Nil	€1,496
Total Deductions	Nil	€4,278
Net Pay	€8,996	€27,207

#### Tax Liability 2014

Tax Liability	Spouse 1	Spouse 2
Earnings	€17,542	€31,485
USC	€547	€1,523
PRSI	Nil	€1,259
Income Tax	€208	€2,997
Total Deductions	€755	€5,779
Net Pay	€16,787	€25,706

#### VAT Rebates

126. **Deputy Seamus Kirk** asked the Minister for Finance his plans to make on-farm micro energy installation eligible for full VAT refund on capital spend; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33913/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Farmers and other persons who are registered for VAT are accountable persons for VAT in respect of all their taxable activities, whether those activities consist solely of farming or both farming and other activities such as the generation of electricity for provision to the national grid. As accountable persons for VAT, they would be entitled to claim input credit for VAT charged on the installation of an on-farm micro energy generator, for use in their taxable activities.

In so far as farmers who are not registered for VAT are concerned, they are not in the normal course entitled to credit for, or repayment of, VAT incurred by them on their business inputs. However, under the Value-Added Tax (Refund of Tax) (Flat-rate Farmers) Order 2012 farmers not registered for VAT are also entitled to a direct and full refund of VAT in respect of farm buildings, fencing, land improvement works and, where purchased after 1 January 2012, micro energy equipment for farming use.

### Tax Credits

127. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the revenue that would be raised for the Exchequer if personal rather than employee tax credits were phased out for income earners over €100,000, with €1 in tax credits being lost for every €2 earned; the impact this would have on income earners' average tax take, using categories €100,001-€150,000, €150,001-€200,000 and €200,001+ per annum, within the existing rate; if a new 48% band applied to the income in excess of €100,000, what the effective tax rate increase would be for income earners in those categories; and if he will state the existing effective tax rates. [33915/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Unfortunately, it was not possible to collate the information required for this answer in the time allowed. I will provide the Deputy with the answer in writing shortly.

### Tax Credits

128. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the revenue that would be raised for the Exchequer if tax credits, personal and employee, were phased out for income earners over €100,000 with €1 in tax credits being lost for every €2 earned; the impact that would have on income earners' average tax take, using categories €100,001-€150,000, €150,001-€200,000 and €200,001+ per annum, within the existing rate; if a new 48% band applied to the income in excess of €100,000, what the effective tax rate increase would be for income earners in those categories; and what the existing effective tax rates are. [33916/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Unfortunately, it was not possible to collate the information required for this answer in the time allowed. I will provide the Deputy with the answer in writing shortly.

### Special Educational Needs Staffing

129. **Deputy Shane Ross** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide reassurance that special needs assistants who have been unemployed for longer than a year will be eligible to be placed on a panel for further recruitment either in their current school or elsewhere, as per the Haddington Road agreement; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33588/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairi Quinn):** As the Deputy will be aware, a new set of proposals for a public service agreement were put forward by the Labour Relations Commission which now form the Public Service Stability Agreement 2013-2016 (the Haddington Road Agreement, a copy of which has been forwarded to the Deputy). One aspect of this Agreement relates to supplementary assignment arrangements for Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) and as both Unions that represent SNAs namely, SIPTU and IMPACT, have signed up to the Haddington Road Agreement, the Department has now implemented supplementary assignment arrangements for SNAs for the 2013/2014 school year. The detailed arrangements are set out in Departmental Circular 0037/2013 which issued on 1 July 2013, a copy of which has been forwarded to the Deputy.

The first part of the LRC proposals for supplementary assignment arrangements for SNAs outlines that the supplementary assignment arrangements only apply to current SNAs who are notified that they are to be made redundant. Accordingly, with effect from 1 May 2013 once an SNA with a minimum of one year's service is notified by his/her employer that he/she is to be made redundant then he/she shall be deemed to be a member of a Supplementary Assignment

Panel for SNAs.

SNAs who were made redundant prior to 1 May 2013 are free to apply for SNA positions. However, the revised rules on SNA recruitment are as set out in Departmental Circular 37/2013, the purpose of which is to facilitate those SNAs who are notified that they are to be made redundant in filling SNA vacancies which become available in other schools/ETBs. Accordingly, those SNAs who are members of the SNA Supplementary Assignment Panel are afforded preferential treatment in the filling of SNA vacancies. As the LRC proposals are part of a wider public-sector pay agreement that represent compromises by both employers and unions, I do not have the ability to alter the terms of that agreement.

### **Third Level Fees**

130. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if his attention has been drawn to correspondence from a person (details supplied) followed by medical report; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33684/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** Under the terms of my Department's Free Fee Initiative the Exchequer meets the cost of tuition fees in respect of eligible students who are pursuing full-time undergraduate courses of study which are a minimum of two years duration in an approved higher education institution. The main conditions of the scheme are that students must be first-time undergraduates, hold inter alia EU/EEA/Swiss nationality in their own right, and have been ordinarily resident in an EU/EEA/Swiss state for at least three of the five years preceding their entry to an approved third level course. The Deputy will appreciate that as the rules of the scheme are of general application that it is not possible to make an exception in any individual case. It should also be noted that Higher education institutions are autonomous bodies and the criteria governing the level of tuition fees to be charged (EU or Non EU rate), in cases where undergraduate students do not qualify for free fees is a matter for the institutions to determine in accordance with their own criteria. Tax relief at the standard rate of tax may be claimed in respect of tuition fees paid for approved courses at approved colleges of higher education. Further information on this tax relief is available from the Revenue Commissioners on [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie).

### **Education and Training Provision**

131. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills in view of fact that the north inner city of Dublin has the highest number of lone parents in certain areas and pockets of 60% unemployment, his Department's response to addressing their educational and training needs. [33427/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The Department of Education and Skills funds a wide variety of education and training provision in Dublin's north inner city. City of Dublin VEC and FÁS, for example, both provide various flexible education and training options for both lone parents and the unemployed depending on the needs of the individuals involved. The exact nature of the education and training interventions required depend on the requirements of the individual concerned as well as the nature of the referral from the Department of Social Protection.

### **Schools Numbers**

132. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will detail in

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tabular form the names of each one-teacher school, two-teacher school, three-teacher school, four teacher school and all other national schools in County Limerick; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33599/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The information requested is presented in the following table.

**Schools in Limerick classified by teacher size, 2011/2012**

**The data contained in this table is sourced from the 2011/2012 Census of Primary Schools and refers to pupils in mainstream classes only.**

COUNTY	Roll No	SCHOOL NAME	ADDRESS LINE 1	ADDRESS LINE 2	Total Pupils	Teacher size
LIMERICK COUNTY	07117J	S N LOCH GUIR	HOLY CROSS	KILLMALLOCK	44	2
LIMERICK COUNTY	07900B	BALLYSTEEN N S	ASKEATON	CO LIMERICK	29	2
LIMERICK COUNTY	08342V	BOHERMORE N S	BALLYSIMON	CO LIMERICK	25	2
LIMERICK COUNTY	09915B	MARTINSTOWN N S	KILLMALLOCK	CO LIMERICK	52	2
LIMERICK COUNTY	10929T	RATHKEALE N S 2	RATHKEALE	CO LIMERICK	24	2
LIMERICK COUNTY	10991B	GARRYDOOLIS N S	PALLASAGREEN	CO LIMERICK	35	2
LIMERICK COUNTY	11955C	COOLCAPPA N S	ARDAGH	CO LIMERICK	30	2
LIMERICK COUNTY	12368P	S N NAOMH PADRAIG	ABBEYFEALE	CO LIMERICK	32	2
LIMERICK COUNTY	14067L	FEDAMORE N S	FEDAMORE	KILLMALLOCK	36	2
LIMERICK COUNTY	17298W	KILBEHENNY N S	KILBEHENNY	MITCHELSTOWN	42	2.5
LIMERICK COUNTY	08926B	ST NICHOLAS CHURCH OF IRELAND SCHOOL	ADARE	CO LIMERICK	54	3
LIMERICK COUNTY	11809O	S N CNOCH A DEAGA	BALLYLANDERS	CO LIMERICK	19	3
LIMERICK COUNTY	13790G	BULGADEN N S	BULGADEN	KILLMALLOCK	57	3
LIMERICK COUNTY	15700M	CLOVERFIELD N S	CLOVERFIELD	DROMCHAIOIN	51	3
LIMERICK COUNTY	16764U	KILMEEDY N S	KILMEEDY	CO LIMERICK	31	3
LIMERICK COUNTY	16896O	SCOIL NAOMH IDE	ATH NA FUINNSEOIGE	BEALACH CO LUIMNI	23	3
LIMERICK COUNTY	17076E	SCOIL MHUIRE	GLEANN RUADH	KILLMALLOCK	16	3
LIMERICK COUNTY	17138A	SCOIL CILL COLMAIN	ARD ACHADH	CO LUIMNI	75	3
LIMERICK COUNTY	17593B	SCOIL NAOMH MHUIRE	CNOC UI COILE-AIN	ABBEYFEALE	28	3
LIMERICK COUNTY	17814O	GEAROID UI GHRI-OBHTHA	LOUGHILL	MOUN-TRENCHARD	58	3
LIMERICK COUNTY	17981K	S N GLEANN NA GCRE-ABHAR	GLEANN NA GCREABHAR	CILL MOCHEAL-LOG	50	3
LIMERICK COUNTY	18717V	S N CIARAIN	CILLFIOBHNAI	ATH DARA	56	3
LIMERICK CITY	16715H	ST JOHN THE BAPTIST BOYS N S	DOWNEY STREET	PENNYWELL	39	4
LIMERICK COUNTY	04466T	BALLYMARTIN N S	CROOM	KILLMALLOCK	84	4
LIMERICK COUNTY	04469C	S N FIODHNACH	KILLMALLOCK	CO LIMERICK	78	4
LIMERICK COUNTY	07317R	GLENGURT N S	TOORNAFULLA	CO LIMERICK	67	4
LIMERICK COUNTY	08419H	ARDPATRICK N S	KILLMALLOCK	CO LIMERICK	70	4
LIMERICK COUNTY	09927I	GRANAGH NATIONAL SCHOOL	GRANAGH	KILLMALLOCK	71	4
LIMERICK COUNTY	11280T	CARRICKERRY N S	ATHEA	CO LIMERICK	52	4
LIMERICK COUNTY	11307N	BALLYGILTENANE N S	GLIN	CO LIMERICK	47	4
LIMERICK COUNTY	12613C	GLENBROHANE N S	GARRYSPELL-ANE	KILLMALLOCK	77	4
LIMERICK COUNTY	14005M	KILTEELY N S	KILTEELY	CO LIMERICK	28	4
LIMERICK COUNTY	16239B	MEENKILLY N S	ABBEYFEALE	CO LIMERICK	67	4
LIMERICK COUNTY	16713D	SCOIL NA MBRAITHRE	DOON	CO LIMERICK	58	4
LIMERICK COUNTY	17871D	SCOIL CILL CHURNAIN	KILCORNAN	CO LIMERICK	83	4.5
LIMERICK COUNTY	18236F	SCOIL NAOMH MUIRE	BEAL ATHA DA THUILLE	CO LUIMNI	38	4
LIMERICK CITY	17445J	SCOIL LILE NAOFA	KILEELY	LIMERICK	56	5
LIMERICK COUNTY	09132P	CARNANE MXD N S	FEDAMORE	KILLMALLOCK	81	5
LIMERICK COUNTY	09702H	ST JAMES N S	CAPPAGH	ASKEATON	106	5
LIMERICK COUNTY	15692Q	BILBOA N SCHOOL	BILBOA	CAPPAGHAMORE	116	5.5
LIMERICK COUNTY	16439J	SCOIL NA MBEARAN	PALLASAGREEN	CO LIMERICK	60	5

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COUNTY	Roll No	SCHOOL NAME	ADDRESS LINE 1	ADDRESS LINE 2	Total Pupils	Teacher size
LIMERICK COUNTY	17155A	ATHLACCA N S	ATHLACCA	KILMALLOCK	85	5
LIMERICK COUNTY	17212J	SCOIL NAIS CNOC AINE	CNOC AINE	OSPUIDEAL	106	5
LIMERICK COUNTY	17364J	SCOIL BAILE AN AIRD	BAILE AN AIRD	KILMALLOCK	82	5
LIMERICK COUNTY	18426K	SCOIL IDE NAOFA	RAITHINEACH	BEALACH	90	5
LIMERICK COUNTY	18612H	SCOIL MHUIRE	ACHADH LIN	BALLINGARRY	110	5
LIMERICK COUNTY	18708U	S N CILL LACHTAIN	NEWCASTLEWEST	CO LIMERICK	101	5
LIMERICK COUNTY	20233L	SCOIL CHAISTRÍONA	CAPPAMORE	CO LIMERICK	81	5.5
LIMERICK COUNTY	02007A	CROAGH NATIONAL SCHOOL	RATHKEALE	CO LIMERICK	86	6
LIMERICK COUNTY	02358G	TEMPLEGLANTINE N S	TEMPLEGLANTINE	CO LIMERICK	93	6
LIMERICK COUNTY	08572P	BRUREE NATIONAL SCHOOL	BRUREE	CO LIMERICK	135	6
LIMERICK COUNTY	09296W	OUR LADYS ABBEY	SCOIL NA GCAILINI	ADARE	129	6
LIMERICK COUNTY	09401Q	MONOGAY NATIONAL SCHOOL	NEWCASTLEWEST	CO LIMERICK	126	6
LIMERICK COUNTY	14231V	NICKER N S	NICKER	OLDPALLAS	98	6.5
LIMERICK COUNTY	14305B	BALLYLANDERS N S	KILMALLOCK	CO LIMERICK	113	6
LIMERICK COUNTY	16913L	SCOIL NA NAOINEAN	EAS GEIPHTINE	CO LUIMNI	126	6
LIMERICK COUNTY	17184H	OOLA NATIONAL SCHOOL	OOLA	TIPPERARY	92	6
LIMERICK COUNTY	17299B	SCOIL MHUIRE	EFFIN	KILLMALLOCK	104	6
LIMERICK COUNTY	17487C	SCOIL NAIS CATHAIR CHINN LIS	CATHAIRCINN-LIS	CAHERCONLISH	94	6
LIMERICK COUNTY	18260C	SCOIL MHUIRE	BEAL AN ATHA	RATHLUIRC	121	6
LIMERICK COUNTY	18367U	S N TOINN AN TAIRBH	CAPPAMORE	CO LIMERICK	133	6
LIMERICK COUNTY	18530F	ASKEATON SENIOR NS	ASKEATON	CO LIMERICK	98	6
LIMERICK COUNTY	19966B	ST JOSEPHS	DRUMCOLLOGHER	CHARLEVILLE	101	6
LIMERICK COUNTY	02813E	S N SHEANAIN	FOYNES	CO LIMERICK	125	7
LIMERICK COUNTY	13026P	KILFINANE CONVENT PRIMARY SCHOOL	KILFINANE	CO LIMERICK	141	7
LIMERICK COUNTY	13459A	S N GALLBHAILE	GALBALLY	CO TIPPERARY	140	7
LIMERICK COUNTY	14075K	S N MOLUA B	ARDAGH	CO LIMERICK	137	7
LIMERICK COUNTY	14625T	DOON CONVENT N S	DOON	CO LIMERICK	145	7
LIMERICK COUNTY	15226K	CAHERLINE N S	CAHERLINE	CAHERCONLISH	146	7
LIMERICK COUNTY	16237U	DROMTRASNA N S	ABBAYFEALE	CO LIMERICK	137	7
LIMERICK COUNTY	16508C	SCOIL ATHAIN	LISNAGRY	CO LIMERICK	152	7.5
LIMERICK COUNTY	16712B	SCOIL NAOMH IOSAF	ADARE	CO LIMERICK	117	7.5
LIMERICK COUNTY	17438M	SHANAGOLDEN N S	SHANAGOLDEN	CO LIMERICK	142	7
LIMERICK COUNTY	18030I	SCOIL AILBHE	CATHAIR AILBHE	BALLYBRICKEN GRANGE	117	7
LIMERICK COUNTY	18142T	SCOIL CNOC LOINGE B	KNOCKLONG	CO LIMERICK	124	7.5
LIMERICK COUNTY	19323F	S N BEAL ATHA GREAN	KILMALLOCK	CO LIMERICK	104	7
LIMERICK COUNTY	20102T	ST FERGUS PRIMARY SCHOOL	GLIN	CO LIMERICK	108	7
LIMERICK CITY	12834S	ST MICHAELS	11 BARRINGTON ST	LIMERICK	134	8
LIMERICK CITY	19931F	GAELSCOIL SHEOIRSE	CLANCY	AN CNOC THEAS	98	8
LIMERICK COUNTY	06516S	KILDIMO NATIONAL SCHOOL	KILDIMO	CO LIMERICK	160	8
LIMERICK COUNTY	07857D	S N AILBHE	KILLINURE	LIMERICK	129	8
LIMERICK COUNTY	09306W	CROOM NATIONAL SCHOOL	CROOM	CO LIMERICK	147	8
LIMERICK COUNTY	16264A	ABBAYFEALE B N S 1	ABBAYFEALE	CO LIMERICK	145	8
LIMERICK COUNTY	17068F	SCOIL SEAN TSRAIDE	ATH DARA	CO LUIMNI	154	8
LIMERICK COUNTY	18600A	S N MA RUA	MA RUA	CO LUIMNI	170	8
LIMERICK COUNTY	18653V	SCOIL NAOMH IOSEF	RATHKEALE	CO LIMERICK	66	8
LIMERICK CITY	00570R	MHUIRE NAOFA CAILINI	BISHOP STREET	LIMERICK	74	9
LIMERICK CITY	15320C	ST MICHAELS NS	CBS GROUNDS	SEXTON STREET	55	9
LIMERICK CITY	17942A	SCOIL MHAINCHIN BUACH	BOTHAR SIOL-BROIN	LIMERICK	75	9

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COUNTY	Roll No	SCHOOL NAME	ADDRESS LINE 1	ADDRESS LINE 2	Total Pupils	Teacher size
LIMERICK COUNTY	07222G	BANOGUE NATIONAL SCHOOL	CROOM	CO LIMERICK	67	9
LIMERICK COUNTY	11422N	MAHOONAGH N S	CASTLEMAHON	LIMERICK	156	9
LIMERICK COUNTY	12631E	PALLASKENRY N S	PALLASKENRY N S	CO LIMERICK	166	9
LIMERICK COUNTY	17060M	CONVENT OF MERCY N S	ABBEEFEALE	CO LIMERICK	165	9
LIMERICK COUNTY	17738B	SCOIL TOBAR PADRAIG	TOBAR PHAD-RAIG	LUIMNEACH	179	9
LIMERICK COUNTY	20175A	LIMERICK CITY EAST EDUCATE TOGETHER	Mungret College	Mungret	124	9
LIMERICK CITY	19372S	SOUTH HILL N S	SOUTH HILL	LIMERICK	64	10
LIMERICK COUNTY	20094A	SCOIL CHRIOST AN SLANAITHEOIR	BAILE AN GHAR-RAI	CO LUIMNIGH	159	10
LIMERICK CITY	16444C	SCOIL PADRAIG NAOFA C	DUBLIN ROAD	LIMERICK	225	11
LIMERICK COUNTY	06539H	KNOCKEA NATIONAL SCHOOL	BALLYNEETY	CO LIMERICK	205	11
LIMERICK COUNTY	19952N	HOSPITAL NS	HOSPITAL	CO LIMERICK	179	11
LIMERICK COUNTY	20148U	GAELSCOIL CHALADH AN TREOIGH	CHALADH AN TREOIGH	LUIMNEACH	229	11
LIMERICK CITY	16443A	SCOIL PADRAIG NAOFA B	DUBLIN ROAD	LIMERICK	211	12
LIMERICK CITY	17671S	MARIA AUXILIATRIX N S	FERNBANK	LIMERICK	209	12
LIMERICK CITY	19934L	LIMERICK SCHOOL PROJECT	O'CONNELL AVENUE	LIMERICK	218	12
LIMERICK CITY	20181S	GAELSCOIL AN RAITHIN	DOORADOYLE ROAD	LIMERICK CITY	250	12
LIMERICK CITY	20185D	ST MARYS BOYS NS	ISLAND ROAD	LIMERICK	73	12
LIMERICK COUNTY	15685T	ATHEA N SCHOOL	ATHEA	CO LIMERICK	149	12
LIMERICK COUNTY	16118M	DONOUGHMORE N S	DONOUGHMORE	LIMERICK	208	12
LIMERICK COUNTY	17101A	SCOIL CRE CUMHRA	PATRICKS WELL	CO LIMERICK	180	12
LIMERICK COUNTY	18161A	CASTLECONNELL N S	CASTLECONNEL	CO LIMERICK	216	12
LIMERICK CITY	19956V	GAELSCOIL SAIRSEAL	SRAID AN DROI-CHID	LUIMNEACH	243	13
LIMERICK COUNTY	12975N	ST JOSEPHS CONVENT	NEWCASTLE WEST	CO LIMERICK	226	13
LIMERICK COUNTY	15680J	SCOIL AN SPIORAID NAOMH	ROXBOROUGH	BALLYSHEEDY	280	13
LIMERICK CITY	18677M	SCOIL MATHAIR DE	CUAR BOTHAR THEAS	LUIMNEACH	245	14
LIMERICK CITY	18991S	J F K MEMORIAL SCHOOL	ENNIS RD	LIMERICK	237	14
LIMERICK CITY	19204U	CROI RO NAOFA IOSA	FERNBANK	LIMERICK	227	14
LIMERICK CITY	20184B	GALVONE NS	KENNEDY PARK	LIMERICK CITY	119	14
LIMERICK COUNTY	18516L	S N LIOS NA GROI	LISNAGRY	CO LIMERICK	269	14
LIMERICK COUNTY	19272O	SN NAOMH IOSEF	BALLYBROWN	CLARINA	243	14
LIMERICK COUNTY	19883U	GAELSCOIL O DOGHAIR	CAISLEAN NUA THIAR	CO LUIMNIGH	232	14
LIMERICK COUNTY	20133H	SCOIL DEAN CUSSEN	BRU NA NDEISE	CO LUIMNIGH	301	14
LIMERICK CITY	19332G	S N MUIRE NA HEIRE-ANN	CAHERDAVIN	LIMERICK City	294	15
LIMERICK COUNTY	17951B	SCOIL O CURAIN B	NEWCASTLEWEST	CO LIMERICK	223	15
LIMERICK CITY	19331E	SCOIL CHRIOST RI B	CAHERDAVIN	LIMERICK City	253	16
LIMERICK COUNTY	18177P	SCOIL AINE NAOFA	RATH CAOLA	CO LUIMNI	151	16
LIMERICK CITY	17737W	OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE SCHOOL	JANESBORO	LIMERICK	210	17
LIMERICK CITY	17941V	ST MUNCHINS G N S	BALLYNANTY	LIMERICK	190	17
LIMERICK CITY	19830W	CORPUS CHRISTI N S	MOYROSS	LIMERICK	167	18
LIMERICK COUNTY	20193C	SCOIL MOCHEALLÓG	KILMALLOCK	CO LIMERICK	281	18
LIMERICK CITY	19667O	OUR LADY OF LOURDES N S	ROSBRIEN	LIMERICK	165	20
LIMERICK CITY	16910F	SCOIL IOSAGAIN	SRAID SEAS-NAIN	LIMERICK	231	21
LIMERICK CITY	20018H	MARIA KING PRESENTATION PRIMARY	SEXTON STREET	LIMERICK	221	21
LIMERICK CITY	06936R	ST JOHNS CONVENT	CATHEDRAL PLACE	LIMERICK CITY	291	22

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COUNTY	Roll No	SCHOOL NAME	ADDRESS LINE 1	ADDRESS LINE 2	Total Pupils	Teacher size
LIMERICK CITY	19475F	ST BRIGIDS NS	SINGLAND	LIMERICK	418	23
LIMERICK COUNTY	19800N	MILFORD GRANGE N SCHOOL	MILFORD	CASTLETROY	503	24
LIMERICK CITY	19894C	AN MHODH SCOIL	ASCAIL UI CHONAILL	LUIMNEACH	553	27
LIMERICK COUNTY	17937H	SCOIL MOIN A LIN	CASTLEROY	LIMERICK	590	27
LIMERICK COUNTY	19336O	SCOIL PHOIL NAOFA	DOORADOYLE	LIMERICK	662	34
LIMERICK CITY	18872K	SCOIL IDE	CORBALLY	LIMERICK	772	38
LIMERICK COUNTY	14409N	SCOIL NEASSAIN	MUNGRET	LIMERICK	723	38

### **Schools Complaints Procedures**

133. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if it is the case that complaints regarding staff members in a secondary or primary school can be fully and wholly investigated under the complaints procedure if the concerned student has already left or finished in that school. [33637/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I wish to advise the Deputy that the 1998 Education Act provides the legal framework for the delivery of education to children through recognised schools. All recognised schools are legally owned by the school patrons or trustees and managed by a school's Board of Management which is also the employer of teachers in a school. While the Minister for Education and Skills provides funding and policy direction for schools, neither I nor officials of my Department have powers to investigate individual complaints, except where the complaint involves a refused enrolment, expulsion or suspension, in accordance with Section 29 of the 1998 Education Act.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint against a teacher or school they should contact the relevant school authorities. The complaint procedures adopted by most schools are those that have been agreed between the teacher unions and school management bodies. If a parent has a complaint about a teacher or about the school, the first step is to speak to the class teacher. If the complaint is not resolved, the parent should then speak to the school principal. If the complaint is not resolved at this stage, the parent can lodge the complaint in writing with the chairperson of the school's Board of Management/Single Manager/VEC.

If the parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedure and the complaint has not been resolved, the parent can make an appeal to the Ombudsman for Children. The Office of the Ombudsman for Children may independently investigate complaints about schools recognised with the Department of Education and Skills, provided the parent has firstly and fully followed the school's complaints procedures. The key criterion for any intervention by the Ombudsman for Children is that the action of the School has had a negative affect on a child. Further guidance to parents on progressing a concern in relation their child's school is available on my Department's website at [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie).

### **Special Educational Needs Staffing**

134. **Deputy Heather Humphreys** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the position regarding supplementary assignment arrangements for the 2013/2014 school year (details supplied); the reason only special needs assistants made redundant after the 1 May 2013 may become members of a supplementary assignment panel until June 2014; the options available to SNAs made redundant prior to May 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33676/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** As the Deputy will be aware, a new set of proposals for a public service agreement were put forward by the Labour Relations Commission which now form the Public Service Stability Agreement 2013-2016 (the Haddington Road Agreement, a copy of which has been forwarded to the Deputy). One aspect of this Agreement relates to supplementary assignment arrangements for Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) and as both Unions that represent SNAs namely, SIPTU and IMPACT, have signed up to the Haddington Road Agreement, the Department has now implemented supplementary assignment arrangements for SNAs for the 2013/2014 school year. The detailed arrangements are set out in Departmental Circular 0037/2013 which issued on 1 July 2013, a copy of which has been forwarded to the Deputy.

The first part of the LRC proposals for supplementary assignment arrangements for SNAs outlines that the supplementary assignment arrangements only apply to current SNAs who are notified that they are to be made redundant. Accordingly, with effect from 1 May 2013 once an SNA with a minimum of one year's service is notified by his/her employer that he/she is to be made redundant then he/she shall be deemed to be a member of a Supplementary Assignment Panel for SNAs. SNAs who were made redundant prior to 1 May 2013 are free to apply for SNA positions however, the revised rules on SNA recruitment are as set out in Departmental Circular 37/2013, the purpose of which is to facilitate those SNAs who are notified that they are to be made redundant in filling SNA vacancies which become available in other schools/ETBs. Accordingly, those SNAs who are members of the SNA Supplementary Assignment Panel are afforded preferential treatment in the filling of SNA vacancies. As the LRC proposals are part of a wider public-sector pay agreement that represent compromises by both employers and unions, I do not have the ability to alter the terms of that agreement.

### **Third Level Participation**

135. **Deputy Pádraig Mac Lochlainn** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the reason a person's (details supplied) application to higher education access route, HEAR, did not meet the correct criteria to be considered for a placement, one of which is that they are not from a disadvantaged area. [33677/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) is a college and university admissions scheme which offers places on reduced points and extra college support to school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The scheme is operated by a number of higher education institutions and not by my Department. Admissions to the institutions are regulated by the institutions themselves. The Deputy may wish to contact the Irish Universities Association in this instance. Further details in relation to the HEAR scheme are also available at [www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie).

### **Psychological Assessments**

136. **Deputy Joan Collins** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will investigate the fact that a school (details supplied) in County Dublin has requested assessment for eight students for special needs assistant support and only one student has been assessed by the National Educational Psychological Service, NEPS, and they have yet to receive the report from NEPS. [33686/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I wish to advise the Deputy that all primary and post primary schools have access to psychological assessments either di-

rectly through the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), or through the Scheme for Commissioning Psychological Assessments (SCPA), full details of which are on the Department's website. Where a NEPS psychologist is not assigned to a school, authorities therein may access psychological assessments through SCPA. Under this scheme schools can have an assessment carried out by a member of the panel of private psychologists approved by NEPS, and NEPS will pay the psychologist the fees for this assessment directly.

It should be noted that in common with many other psychological services, NEPS encourages a staged assessment process, whereby each school takes responsibility for a pupil's initial assessment, educational planning and remedial intervention. Only if there is a failure to make reasonable progress in spite of the school's best efforts will a child be referred for individual psychological assessment. In relation to assessment for special needs resourcing, I might add that NEPS psychologists would normally only have input into the process in relation to pupils with General Learning Difficulties (GLD) and Emotional Disturbance/ Behavioural Disorders (EDBD) with other types of special needs, such as for example, Autism being referred to clinicians for diagnosis. It is the responsibility of the school Principal in the first instance to identify and prioritise pupils for assessment under the process described above and advise that the school in question may raise individual pupils with the NEPS service if they have concerns in this regard.

I wish to advise the Deputy also that the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), through its network of local Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs), is responsible for processing applications from schools for special educational needs supports, including the allocation of resource teachers and Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) to schools. The NCSE operates within my Department's established criteria for the allocation of Special Education supports and the staffing resources available to my Department. The responsibility for deciding on the quantum of educational resources to be allocated to pupils with special educational needs resides with the NCSE through the SENO.

Assessment reports carried out by relevant professionals are provided by schools to the SENOs as part of the application process for support. The consideration of these reports is an integral part of determining the extent of supports to be provided for pupils with special educational needs. Whereas health reports provide valuable assistance to education providers in identifying a diagnosis or identifying appropriate interventions, health staff are asked not to include references to the specific quantum of educational resources in their reports, but should state the outcome of tests carried out and the range of needs of the child as clearly as possible. The NCSE circular 03/08 clarifies the respective roles and functions of the NCSE and the HSE and their respective personnel in carrying out assessments and sanctioning resources to support children with special educational needs.

### **School Closures**

137. **Deputy Jim Daly** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide the requested information in relation to a former school (details supplied) in County Cork; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33713/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The information requested by the Deputy is not readily available in my Department. As soon as any available data is compiled, it will be forwarded to the Deputy directly.

### **Teaching Qualifications**

138. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the total number of teachers, both primary and post-primary, on the payroll of his Department; the breakdown of

this figure, in tabular form; the total number of full-time primary and post-primary teachers on the payroll of his Department who have ordinary degrees (Level 8), Masters degrees (Level 9) and PhDs (Level 10); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33751/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The total number of teachers at 31st March 2013 are: 32,276 Primary; 16,823 Voluntary Secondary, Community and Comprehensive; and 10,699 Education and Training Boards (ETBs). It is a matter for the Teaching Council to determine the education, training and qualifications required for a person to be registered as a teacher. Therefore, my Department does not now record details of individual teacher qualifications. Allowances are payable in respect of various qualifications and the number of teachers on the payroll of my Department in receipt of allowances in respect of the qualifications referred to by the Deputy are contained in the following table.

Education and Training Boards (ETBs) employ and pay their own staff and, accordingly, my Department does not have available to it a breakdown of the numbers of ETB teaching staff in the categories requested by the Deputy. The Deputy should note that this information does not represent the total number of teachers that hold Level 8, 9 and 10 qualifications. Additional qualification allowances are not payable to existing teachers from the 5th December 2011 apart from those who were undertaking an approved course of study on that date. The value of the allowance payable was capped at the value of the Honours Primary Degree allowance from that date also. Qualification allowances are not payable to teachers appointed with effect from 1st February 2012. Therefore, there may be teachers on my Department's payroll who hold the qualifications referred to by the Deputy but who are not in receipt of an allowance in respect of same.

**NUMBER OF PRIMARY, VOLUNTARY SECONDARY, COMMUNITY AND COMPREHENSIVE TEACHERS IN RECEIPT OF THE FOLLOWING ALLOWANCES:**

-	PRIMARY	POST PRIMARY (EXCLUDING ETBs)
Primary Honours	19,818	8,949
Masters Degree	3,089	3,078
Doctorate	44	124

**Points to note**

**1. The table above provides the number of teachers in receipt of various Qualification Allowances at the date the information was retrieved from the Departments Payroll records. This is subject to change as teachers submit up to date information regarding their qualifications**

**2. Teachers in receipt of Level 7 (Pass Degree) Allowances are not included in the table above**

**Student Support Schemes Issues**

139. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the reason the student grant scheme 2013 (S.I. No. 159/2013) is implemented as a statutory instrument as opposed to an Act of the Oireachtas; if, given its extensive scope and comprehensiveness, he intends in the future to put such law into an initial Act of the Oireachtas as part of the overall package of political reform for better legislative oversight; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33754/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The Student Support Act 2011 is the primary legislation introduced by the Oireachtas to underpin the programme of legislative and administrative reform of the student grants system. The Act provides that certain areas may be prescribed by way of regulation subject to principles and policies laid down by the Oireachtas in the primary legislation. Section 16 of the Act provides for the making of a scheme or schemes of grants. The power to make a scheme of grants by way of regulation facilitates the annual updating of the Student Grant Scheme in order to reflect budgetary and other technical changes from year to year.

### **Student Grant Scheme Eligibility**

140. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the funding options available to a person (details supplied) in County Westmeath who wishes to pursue a third level course in social care in Athlone Institute of Technology; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33835/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The main financial support available to students attending higher education is the Student Grant Scheme administered by Student Universal Support Ireland. Under the terms of the scheme, grant assistance is awarded to students who meet the prescribed conditions of funding including those relating to nationality, residency, previous academic attainment and means. The Deputy will appreciate that in the absence of all of the relevant details that would be contained in an individual's application, it would not be possible to say if the student would qualify for a student grant. To determine eligibility for the 2013/14 academic year the student should submit an online grant application to Student Universal Support Ireland via [www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie).

### **Special Educational Needs Services Provision**

141. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if the maximum 40 hours of home-based July provision will be provided to each person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33839/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The Deputy will be aware that the July Education Programme is available to all special schools and mainstream primary schools with special classes catering for children with autism that choose to extend their education services through the month of July. My Department also provides for a July Programme for pupils with a severe/profound general learning disability. Where school based provision is not feasible, home based provision may be grant aided. The allocation of home based provision to siblings for July Provision is reflective of the school grouping principle. This is where one teacher is allocated to a class of six pupils at the appropriate educational level, primary or post primary. Accordingly it is considered appropriate, as in a school situation, that a tutor can provide tuition at the appropriate educational level to more than one sibling at that level simultaneously in the home.

The school grouping principle does not purport to replicate or mirror all aspects of school based provision. The age or ability of siblings is reflected in their education level as determined by education and health professionals. In general where a child is receiving their education in a class setting with other children of mixed age and ability, this should carry through to their July Provision. However in recognition of the differing needs of some siblings, including the sisters referred to by the Deputy, separate allocations can be considered on a case by case ba-

sis. Applications in this regard will require supporting documentation including professional reports from a psychologist or a letter from the principal of the school detailing the existing arrangements currently in place for the respective children and providing reasons why they cannot be tutored together in the home. No appeal has been made in respect of the allocation for the pupils in question.

### **Schools Building Projects Status**

142. **Deputy Noel Coonan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the position regarding a building project for a school (details supplied) in County Tipperary; the timeframe for completion of works; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33850/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The major building project for the school referred to by the Deputy is at an advanced stage of architectural planning, stage 2b. This stage includes the applications for Planning Permission, Fire Safety Certificate, Disability Access Certificate and the preparation of tender documents. Due to competing demands on my Department's capital budget, imposed by the need to prioritise the limited funding available for the provision of additional school accommodation to meet increasing demographic requirements, it was not possible to include this project in the construction programme. School building projects, including this project, which have not been included in the construction programme, but which were previously initiated will continue to be progressed to final planning stages in anticipation of the possibility of further funds being available to the Department in the future.

### **Special Educational Needs Services Provision**

143. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Education and Skills his views on correspondence (details supplied). [33920/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I wish to advise the Deputy that pupils with Down Syndrome attending mainstream schools may receive additional teaching support in primary schools, either under the terms of the General Allocation Model (GAM) of teaching supports, if the pupil's educational psychological assessment places the pupil in the mild general learning disability/high incidence disability category, or through an allocation of individual additional resource teaching hours which are allocated by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), if the child is assessed as being within the low incidence category of special need, as defined by my Department's Circular Sp Ed 02/05. Pupils with Down Syndrome may be allocated resources under the category of mild general learning disability, or under the categories of moderate general learning difficulty or Assessed Syndrome, in conjunction with another Low Incidence disability.

I wish to explain also that the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) has a formal role under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act, 2004 in advising me in relation to any matter relating to the education of children and others with disabilities. My Department requested that the NCSE consider the issue of whether Down Syndrome should be reclassified as a low incidence disability in all instances, regardless of assessed cognitive ability, in the context of its preparation of comprehensive advice on how the educational system supports children with special educational needs in schools.

The NCSE report on Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs in Schools has now been published and is available on the NCSE website [www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie). The report recommends that under the new resource allocation model proposed by the NCSE in its report, children should be allocated additional resources in line with their level of need, rather than by disability category. The NCSE has recommended that in the short-term, pupils with Down Syn-

drome who are in the Mild General Learning Disability (Mild GLD) category should continue to be supported by schools' Learning Support allocation in the same way as other pupils with a Mild GLD. The NCSE policy advice did not recommend that an exception should be made for children with Down Syndrome who are in the Mild GLD range, over other children who are in the mild range and who also may have other co-morbid conditions. However, the NCSE report states that it is confident that the introduction of a new allocation model will overcome the difficulty posed by all children with mild general learning disabilities, including children with Down Syndrome, who have additional difficulties and who can be supported according to their level of need and in line with their learning plan process.

In the meantime, schools are reminded that they can differentiate the level of learning support granted to ensure that available resources are used to support children in line with their needs. I have requested the NCSE to immediately proceed to establish a Working Group in order to develop a proposal for consideration for a new Tailored Allocation Model, which is set out as one of the principal recommendations of the report.

### **Student Grant Scheme Eligibility**

144. **Deputy Anthony Lawlor** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if the nationality requirements for the student support regulations and student grant scheme for the 2013/14 academic year will include students who have permission to remain here because they are the dependent child of a person who has achieved Irish citizenship; if not, the reason and if he will outline that such students should be included rather than only those who are the dependent child of someone who has permission to remain because of marriage or civil partnership with an Irish national; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33927/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** Under the terms of the student grant scheme, grant assistance is awarded to students who meet the prescribed conditions of funding including those which relate to nationality, residency, previous academic attainment and means. The nationality requirements for the student grant scheme are set out in section 14 of the Student Support Act 2011 and regulation 5 of the Student Support Regulations 2013.

In all cases, to qualify for a student grant, it is the grant applicant and not his/her parents that must meet the nationality or prescribed immigration status requirements in their own right. The onus is on the grant applicant to provide the necessary documentary evidence as proof of their nationality or immigration status to the relevant grant awarding authority.

Article 32 of the Student Grant Scheme 2013 provides for the review of eligibility for the award of a grant in the event of changes of circumstances in the academic year, including a change in relation to a students' nationality or immigration status. This means that where a student acquires Irish citizenship by naturalisation or acquires a prescribed immigration status during the course of their studies they may make an application in the academic year for a student grant.

I have asked my Department to examine the overall issue of the entitlement of non-EU families to third level fees and grants generally and I am currently considering the matter to ensure that there is clarity as to precise entitlements in this complex area. Any decision in relation to changes to the Student Grant Scheme including changes to eligibility criteria will need to be considered in the context of availability of resources.

### **Office of the Ombudsman Staff**

145. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the ar-

rangements in place to seek a replacement for Ms Emily O'Reilly as the Ombudsman after she takes up her new role as the European Ombudsman; the process for an Acting Ombudsman until a new Ombudsman is appointed by the Government; the anticipated timeframe before the new Ombudsman is in situ; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33745/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** The Government has under consideration the appointment of a successor to the present Ombudsman to take up duty when the latter relinquishes her office. The appointment of an interim Ombudsman is not envisaged.

### **Garda Stations Closures**

146. **Deputy Catherine Murphy** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the implications for telecommunications masts at some of the 40 Garda stations which the State proposes to sell; if such masts form part of the sale; if planning permission will be required for the masts if they are sold; if the State will incur any charge in respect of the masts as a direct result of the sales; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33698/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brian Hayes):** There are no implications for telecommunications masts at the 40 stations, recently announced, that the Commissioners of Public Works have identified for potential disposal.

### **Job Creation Issues**

147. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which science and innovation has assisted in job creation in respect of both the manufacturing and service sectors, including the domestic economy, in each of the past three years and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33654/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Sean Sherlock):** As innovation and science are aspects of employment across most sectors it is not possible to disaggregate the information as sought by the Deputy. My Department and its agencies are focused on the development and support of internationally trading manufacturing and services firms in Ireland, and have a clear and steady focus on the potential and opportunities that exist and can be created by prioritising innovation and science as a key driver of success. Enterprise development agencies, Enterprise Ireland (EI), IDA Ireland and Science Foundation Ireland, provide a spectrum of innovation and science/technology development programmes that deliver financial, technical and experiential support to help companies become more innovative, encourage and support competitiveness, and help them grow their sales and exports in order to create a climate in which sustainable employment will grow and expand.

The importance of innovation to Ireland has been well recognised by the Government as being crucial to growth in both our indigenous and FDI sectors. It was most encouraging to see that the recent European Commission's Innovation Union Scoreboard, published in spring 2013, shows Ireland retaining its position among those EU Member States with above average performance in their research and innovation systems. In addition, improvements have taken place in Ireland's cost competitiveness, reflected in the fact that, in 2013, Ireland's international competitiveness ranking improved three places from 20th in 2011, to 17th in the IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook for 2013 published in May. Ireland is 6th out of the 25 EU countries featured. In addition IBM's Global Location Trends Report of 2012 places Ireland:

- 1st in the world for inward investment by quality and value;

- 1st in Europe for jobs created in Research and Development;
- 1st in Europe for investment in the pharmaceutical sector; and,
- 2nd in Europe and 4th globally for the number of investment jobs per capita.

These indicators correspond well with the stated ambition of our Taoiseach to make Ireland the best small country in the world in which to do business by 2016.

### **Foreign Direct Investment**

148. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which this country remains an attractive location for foreign direct investment, notwithstanding the unhelpful allegations that this jurisdiction was being used as a tax haven; the initiatives taken to counter such allegations; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33655/13]

151. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which he continues to counter allegations of existence of a tax haven here with a view to ensuring that such allegations are not allowed to undermine international confidence and impede foreign direct investment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33658/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 148 and 151 together.

The Government, in response to the allegations that Ireland is being used as a tax haven, has continued to refute these allegations and to outline how, since the 1950s, successive Governments have consistently agreed a competitive corporation tax rate as a means to attract investment and jobs to Ireland.

IDA Ireland is the agency with statutory responsibility for the attraction of foreign direct investment (FDI) to Ireland and its regions. In executing its mandate, IDA Ireland engages with corporate entities, as the primary decision makers around FDI investment. IDA Ireland markets Ireland as a location for FDI on the basis of a number of selling points, including an attractive corporate tax rate. IDA Ireland recently undertook a media road-show in New York to counter claims that Ireland is a tax haven and to explain how the Irish corporate tax system operates. The media road-show involved a prime time speaking opportunity on CNBC, the most watched business news network in the United States. The resulting interview was subsequently recycled through various social media channels. The Chief Executive of IDA, Mr Barry O'Leary, also held briefings with correspondents from influential outlets including the New York Times and Bloomberg on the issue of Corporate Tax and FDI. IDA Ireland has indicated that it continues to seek opportunities to relay Ireland's message on corporate tax to key media.

Over 152,000 people are employed directly by 1,000 IDA client companies in Ireland. IDA Ireland has established strong and credible links with its client companies through direct meetings which are supported by overseas missions led by the Taoiseach and Ministers. These meetings provide IDA with the opportunity to reassure its clients about Ireland's continued commitment to the 12.5% Corporation Tax rate and the actions taken by the Irish Government in the context of work undertaken by the OECD with regard to Base Erosion and Profit Shifting work and the progress made during Ireland's Presidency of EU to address failings in the international tax system. In regard to the latter, considerable progress was made:

- Throughout the course of the Irish Presidency, Ireland prioritised files that will deliver on

“Stability, Jobs and Growth” and outlined how an open, transparent and fair international taxation system is an essential prerequisite to this goal;

- In May, Ireland brokered an ECOFIN agreement on aggressive tax planning and good governance, which was acknowledged by Member States as a significant achievement;

- Ireland secured agreement that such international tax issues cannot be solved by unilateral action by individual countries and stressed the importance of coordination with the OCED;

- A Roadmap for action against aggressive tax planning was outlined in Ireland’s Presidency conclusions;

- The OECD’s Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) project represents that response and BEPS will be the main toolkit of the global effort to tackle these issues;

- The OECD’s report on BEPS will be presented to the G20 in July.

It should also be noted that the OECD acknowledged that Ireland had given “smart and constructive assistance” to developing an international plan for preventing multinationals escaping paying corporation tax altogether. A proposal for addressing the issue is expected to be published shortly and it is envisaged that the measures involved will be implemented over the following two years.

### **EU Funding**

149. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which foreign direct and indigenous investors creating employment in the manufacturing, services and/or domestic/retail economy have been able to avail of European grant aid under the heading of Research, Innovation and Science; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33656/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Seventh EU Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP7), with a budget of €55 billion for the period 2007 to 2013, is currently the EU’s main instrument for funding research and development in Europe. FP7 offers Ireland’s SMEs, multinationals, and research institutions valuable opportunities to participate in high-calibre research collaborations with our European counterparts.

Job creation and, equally important, job maintenance is increasingly underpinned by science, technology and innovation including, for example, in the pharmaceutical, ICT, agri-food, medical devices, engineering and even financial services sectors which are developing innovative products and services. FP7 enables companies to work with academic research groups and other industry players across Europe and derive the benefits associated with collaborative research. This enables them to gain benefits such as access to knowledge networks, access to specialist equipment, sharing of costs and risks and, in particular for industry, the possibility of opening up commercial opportunities.

Ireland’s researchers and companies have been involved in more than 1,500 successful applications obtaining European Commission funding of approximately €485 million (2007-2012) under FP7. The overall Irish success rate at 22.7%, is above the European Member State average of 22.1%, and a very positive indication of the prospects for Irish participation over the lifetime of FP7, and broadly in line with our national target of obtaining a funding total of approximately €600 million when the programme ends in 2013.

Negotiations on the successor to FP7, Horizon 2020 covering the period 2014 – 2020, have

recently been concluded under the Irish Presidency and we are currently putting in place a system of national support structures with a view to maximising our return from Horizon 2020 and building on the success of our participation levels under FP7.

### **Economic Competitiveness**

150. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which he continues to monitor any inhibitive inflation in the economy which might impede or discourage indigenous or foreign direct investment in employment-generating projects; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33657/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Inflation in Ireland as measured by the EU Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices has consistently been well below the EU and Euro Area average in the period 2008 -2012. This has played a major part in helping to restore a significant proportion of our competitiveness losses in the preceding years. Latest available data for the 12 month period to April 2013 indicates that Ireland continues to outperform most of our European counterparts.

The recently published Forfas report “Costs of Doing Business in Ireland 2012” is an important report in the context of our need to continue to build an export-led recovery. It looks at the relative importance of different areas of cost for different sectors.

The report indicates that business costs in Ireland have reduced significantly in recent years, with overall price levels in the economy falling back to levels last experienced in 2002. The improvement in business cost competitiveness has been driven by significant reductions in property related costs (in terms of purchase and rent levels) and falling prices across a range of professional and business services. There have also been relative improvements in labour costs in Ireland which fell on average by 0.9% per annum in the period 2008-2011, while labour costs increased in the euro area by 4.6% per annum on average in the same period.

However, while these improvements are very welcome and indicate that the economy is moving in the right direction, we must continue to focus on actions to promote further cost reductions across the economy. The Forfás report advises that over half of recent cost competitiveness gains are attributable to favourable exchange rate movements. The report also indicates that upward price pressure is beginning to emerge in some areas.

The Forfás report makes a number of recommendations aimed at further improving our cost competitiveness position in relation to labour, property, transport, utility and professional services costs. Part of the objective of the Action Plan for Jobs has been the development of proposals each year that can improve our competitiveness. The 2013 Action Plan includes a number of specific actions in this regard which address some of the areas highlighted in the Forfas report.

Action 126 of the Action Plan requires that Forfás will, this year, compare consumer price levels and consumer price inflation in Ireland with prices in our key competitors. They will identify the primary drivers of price and inflation differentials and assess the impacts of cost of living in Ireland on labour costs and other business costs.

The implementation of these Action Plan measures, combined with the Government’s broader agenda to enhance productivity, will play a key role in improving our competitiveness and realising our ambition of making Ireland the best small country in which to do business.

*Question No. 151 answered with Question No. 148.*

## **Economic Competitiveness**

152. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which he continuously monitors this country's economic competitiveness; if any particular issues have been identified as disincentives in this regard; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33659/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The National Competitiveness Council (NCC) reports to me on key competitiveness issues facing the Irish economy and offers recommendations on policy actions required to enhance Ireland's competitive position. The Council is supported in its work by Forfas, who monitor Ireland's competitiveness on an on-going basis. The NCC has recently been reconfigured to provide greater synergy between the Council's recommendations and the development and implementation of the Government's Action Plan for Jobs. Six leading industrial figures who have been assigned to assist with the implementation of the seven "Disruptive Reforms" as part of the Action Plan for Jobs were appointed to the NCC in May of this year.

Ireland is already rated highly internationally as one of the best countries in the world in which to do business, and we have built a strong competitive basis on which to compete on global markets. Ireland has moved up three places to 17th place in the IMD's World Competitiveness Yearbook 2013 having being ranked 24th only 2 years ago, while Ireland is ranked 15th in the World Bank's Doing Business 2012 Report.

There are a number of key areas where Ireland tops global competitiveness rankings, including:

- business impact of rules on foreign direct investment;
- inflation;
- FDI and technology transfer;
- availability of skilled labour;
- flexibility and adaptability of the labour force; and
- investment incentives.

While Ireland's competitiveness has improved in recent years, we must continue to do more, through the Action Plan for Jobs, to ensure that these competitiveness gains are not eroded as the economy begins to recover. The 2013 Action Plan for Jobs includes a range of concrete measures to address issues which impact negatively on our competitiveness position. The implementation of these actions, combined with the Government's broader agenda to enhance productivity, will play a key role in improving our competitiveness and realising our ambition of making Ireland the best small country in which to do business.

## **Employment Support Services**

153. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the total number of incentives currently available to employers to increase their workforce in the short and medium term, with particular reference to alleviation of the numbers of long-term unemployed and youth unemployed; if he will indicate the number of such positions taken up to date; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33660/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Supports to employers to increase their workforce are primarily provided through the Department of Social Protection. The Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton, T.D., has been rolling out a new streamlined service, known as Intreo, which offers practical, tailored employment services and supports for jobseekers and employers alike. The new service includes the provision of recruitment and job-matching services for employers, to facilitate the hiring of workers from the Live Register. Along with the Taoiseach, Tanaiste and Minister Burton, I launched the new JobsPlus Incentive on 8 July. JobsPlus is a new initiative which encourages employers to offer employment opportunities to the long term unemployed.

The Incentive will provide two levels of payment: a payment of €7,500 over two years to an employer for each person recruited who has been unemployed for more than 12 months, but less than 24 months, and a payment of €10,000 over two years for each person recruited who has been unemployed for more than 24 months. The new Incentive will be payable monthly in arrears. In order to qualify, an employer must offer full time employment of at least 30 hours per week, spanning at least four days per week, to eligible recruits.

Details of the full range of services available to employers through Intreo, and of the JobsPlus initiative are available on the Department of Social Protection's website, [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie).

### **Retail Sector Issues**

154. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which he continues to monitor the various contributing factors in the closure of retail outlets with consequent job losses; if high rents/rates has emerged as a contributing factor; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33661/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** In the current economic climate, a range of factors are impacting on closures of retail outlets, including changing patterns of consumer behaviour through on-line trading.

I am aware that many retail companies are concerned about the impact which rates and rents - particularly upward only rent reviews - are having on their cost base. When the Government came into office, it gave extensive consideration to abolishing upward-only rent reviews in leases signed before 28th February 2010. The advice received by the Government was that it was not possible to develop a scheme to tackle this issue that would not be vulnerable to a Constitutional challenge or compensation claims from landlords. On the basis of this advice, the Government concluded that it was not feasible to legislate to abolish upward only rent reviews.

However, the Government has taken steps to address the issue where possible. In the Action Plan for Jobs 2012, the Government undertook to place downward pressure on commercial rents where the National Asset Management Agency (NAMA) had acquired the loan on the underlying property.

The 2013 Action Plan includes a number of specific commitments to support the retail sector, including an initiative to increase the number of businesses trading on-line and a project to develop a single business licence application portal for the sector. My Department is also chairing an Interdepartmental Group to undertake a short examination of further possible measures to assist the retail sector, which could, for example, be considered in the context of the Budget or the 2014 Action Plan for Jobs. The Group comprises key Government Departments and has already met with the main representative bodies for the retail sector. The Group will hold a further series of meetings with other stakeholders this week.

## Employment Rights Issues

155. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will examine the situation whereby workers from non-EU countries who have been in full-time employment, paid their taxes and were of the understanding that their works permits had been updated and in order and who now find that they were/are illegally employed, obviously through no fault of their own, with a view to ensuring that they can regularise their position without discrimination; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33662/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Deputy is referring to foreign nationals as defined under the Employment Permits Acts 2003 and 2006 as foreign nationals other than nationals of member states of the EEA and Switzerland, often referred to as 3rd country nationals. The law is clear on the matter of employment of 3rd country nationals - it is illegal for such a 3rd country national to be employed without the State's permission and it is an offence for both the 3rd country national and the employer concerned. Illegal employment of 3rd country nationals creates a serious problem for the employees concerned in that they do not have a legally binding contract of employment and cannot therefore rely on such a contract in asserting their rights under the contract and under the wide spectrum of employment rights legislation.

Following the result of this in the High Court judgement concerning Mr. Younis, I committed to amending the legislation in order to provide a defence for the employee which will then give the courts some discretion on the matter. Also, subject to Government approval, I intend to introduce new safeguards in the legislation that will ensure that the situation which arose in the Younis case will be prevented in future in a manner which does not undermine legal principles and ensures that an employer cannot benefit from the fact that a contract of employment is illegal and therefore not legally binding.

Another key feature of the new Bill, subject to Government approval, will be the establishment on a statutory footing of an Employment Permit for dealing with 3rd country nationals who have, to use a parlance, "fallen out of" the Employment Permits regime. I recognise that there can be situations where such a 3rd country national can find themselves falling out of the Employment Permits' regime through circumstances beyond their control or even as a result of their omission to keep their Employment Permit up to date. Such people may have established roots in Ireland and it can be in the public interest to facilitate a reactivation of their inclusion within a legal employment framework through the granting of an Employment Permit.

There will be three overriding principles concerning an application for an Employment Permit of this type. Firstly, the application process and administration must be clear and approachable from the perspective of an applicant. Secondly, the employee concerned must have originally entered the labour market legally through the Employment Permits system. I do not want to create a mechanism capable of abuse or considered as an alternative to the normal Employment Permit process. Also, it is logical that an Employment Permits Bill deals only with Employment Permits matters. The third principle will be that the employee must not currently be in employment illegally – it would be nonsensical for an applicant to apply for a permit under one section of the Act whilst at the same time potentially committing an offence under another section of the Act.

I should also point out that it continues to be the case that an employer can be prosecuted for breaches of employment law including the Employment Permits Acts and it is the National Employment Rights Authority's policy to pursue such breaches.

Finally, in terms of the current status of the Employment Permits Bill, the drafting process

is almost concluded. I am expecting a further draft of the Bill this week and subject to it fully meeting policy objectives I envisage submitting it to Government for approval at the earliest opportunity.

### Job Creation Numbers

156. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the total number of jobs created and jobs lost in County Kildare in each of the past three years to date; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33663/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Forfás Annual Employment Survey reports on job gains and losses in companies that are supported by the enterprise development agencies. Details of the number of new jobs created and lost in IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland client companies in County Kildare in each year from 2010 to 2012 are set out in the following tabular statement. The jobs gained and lost in Kildare County Enterprise Board assisted companies for the years 2010, 2011 and 2012 are also outlined in the following tabular statement.

Supporting new and existing indigenous and foreign-owned businesses, is central to our plans for recovery, growth and jobs. When the first in a series of annual Action Plans for Jobs was launched in 2012, I said that the transformation needed for our economy would come through deliberate and determined action across all areas of Government and the private sector. This year's Action Plan for Jobs 2013 continues that process. It includes 333 actions for delivery across all Government Departments and 46 Agencies or Offices. The Enterprise Development agencies and the County and City Enterprise Boards are at the forefront of implementing the Action Plan for Jobs and continue to ensure that enterprises can maximise their contribution to economic recovery and jobs growth.

Enterprise Ireland's mission is to partner with entrepreneurs, businesses, and the research and investment communities to develop Ireland's international trade, innovation, leadership, and competitiveness. The ultimate objective is increased employment and prosperity in Ireland. IDA Ireland continues to work with its existing client base in County Kildare to expand their presence and to progress the development of a knowledge economy in order that the County can compete both nationally and internationally for foreign direct investment. The Kildare County Enterprise Board is working to develop indigenous potential and stimulate economic activity at a local level primarily through the provision of financial and technical support for the development of small and micro-enterprises.

#### Full-Time job gains and losses in Enterprise Ireland client companies in County Kildare

Year	2010	2011	2012
Job Gains	295	1082	534
Job Losses	543	372	244

#### Full-Time job gains and losses in IDA Ireland client companies in County Kildare

Year	2010	2011	2012
Job Gains	1,228	398	176
Job Losses	418	507	489

### Job gained and Job losses in Kildare County Enterprise Board assisted companies

Year	2010	2011	2012
Job Gained WTE*	223	173.5	171.5
Job Losses WTE*	167	252	214

\*Whole Time Equivalent (WTE)

### Social Insurance Issues

157. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total amount of revenue that will be raised by the Exchequer through pay-related social insurance for the year 2013 and 2014 if there were no changes to its current rates; if she will provide a tabular breakdown of the revenue by class of worker; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33851/13]

158. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide a tabular breakdown of the revenue generated by pay-related social insurance for income brackets of €5,000 beginning with the €0 to €5,000 bracket for 2013 and the expected revenue for 2014 if there were no changes to the current rates; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33852/13]

159. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide a tabular breakdown of the revenue generated by pay-related social insurance by age group in brackets of 5 years beginning with 15 to 20 year olds for 2013 and the expected revenue for 2014 if there were no changes made to the current rates; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33853/13]

160. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide a breakdown of revenue generated by pay-related social insurance by gender for 2013 and the expected revenue for 2014 if there were no changes to the current rates; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33854/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 157 to 160, inclusive, together.

The Revised estimate for SIF income for 2013 is €7.1 billion and the estimate for 2014 is €7.5 billion. The estimate for 2014 is subject to review pending receipt of details of actual receipts for 2013. The additional breakdown of information requested by the Deputy is not available. The Deputy may wish to consult “Statistical Information on Social Welfare Services 2011” which contains a range of statistical information and sets out comprehensive data relating to services provided by the Department.

### Employment Support Services

161. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Social Protection the facilities that are in place to assist family carers to avail of education and employment opportunities during their caring years and help them re enter the workforce when their caring role ends. [34031/13]

163. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Social Protection the measures in

place to support family carers so that they can avail of training and employment opportunities during their caring years to help them prepare to re-enter the workforce when their caring role ends; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33606/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 161 and 163 together.

The contribution that people provide in caring for members of their own family is critical for society and it was for that reason that the Government last year adopted the National Carers' Strategy – with a view to giving greater public recognition to carers and their work. In recognition of supporting carers to maintain a link to the workforce, carers can work or engage in training for up to 15 hours a week outside the home. When the carer's caring responsibilities come to an end, staff in the department's local offices is available to discuss options such as further education and training opportunities.

### **Family Income Supplement Appeals**

162. **Deputy Heather Humphreys** asked the Minister for Social Protection the position regarding a family income supplement appeal in respect of a person (details supplied); and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33587/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that there is no record of any appeal by the person concerned having been registered by that office. The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

*Question No. 163 answered with Question No. 161.*

### **Disability Allowance Appeals**

164. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will examine a disability allowance appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33613/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 27 March 2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant papers and comments by or on behalf of the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought from the Department of Social Protection. These papers were received in the Social Welfare Appeals Office on 4 July 2013 and the case will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral hearing. The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Domiciliary Care Allowance Appeals**

165. **Deputy John McGuinness** asked the Minister for Social Protection the position regarding an appeal for domiciliary care allowance in respect of a person (details supplied) in

County Kilkenny; and when a decision will be made. [33623/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I am advised by the Social Welfare Appeals Office that an Appeals Officer, having fully considered all of the available evidence, has decided to allow the appeal of the person concerned by way of a summary decision. The person concerned has been notified of the Appeals Officer's decision. The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Disability Allowance Appeals**

166. **Deputy Pat Deering** asked the Minister for Social Protection when a person (details supplied) in County Carlow will have a final decision on their application for disability allowance; and if she will expedite the matter. [33627/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was referred to an Appeals Officer on 24 June 2013, who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral hearing. The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

*Questions Nos. 167 and 168 withdrawn.*

### **Invalidity Pension Appeals**

169. **Deputy Michael Creed** asked the Minister for Social Protection when a decision will be made on an invalidity pension appeal by a person (details supplied) in County Cork; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33696/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I am advised by the Social Welfare Appeals Office that an Appeals Officer, having fully considered all of the available evidence, has decided to allow the appeal of the person concerned by way of a summary decision. The person concerned has been notified of the Appeals Officer's decision. The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Social Insurance Issues**

170. **Deputy Arthur Spring** asked the Minister for Social Protection if a person who paid class S stamps while self-employed is entitled to pay PRSI contributions on unearned income derived from letting of farm land, having retired on the early retirement scheme; the benefits the PRSI payments will provide the person; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33702/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** A farmer who retired on the early retirement scheme and has reckonable income (including income from the letting of the farm land) over €5,000 is liable for Class S PRSI contributions on that income, provided the person is

under pensionable age (currently 66) and no tax exemptions apply to the rental income from the farm. Where tax exemptions apply to the rental income from the farm then the income threshold at which Class S PRSI contributions are due may be higher. The Office of the Revenue Commissioners applies tax exemptions where exemptions are due.

The benefits of Class S PRSI payments are Maternity Benefit, Adoptive Benefit, Bereavement Grant and long-term benefits such as State Pension (Contributory) and Widow's, Widower's or Surviving Civil Partner's Pension (Contributory). Compulsory PRSI deductions are not made from payments under the Early Retirement Scheme. A farmer who retired on the early retirement scheme and is not liable for Class S PRSI contributions on unearned income could, subject to certain conditions, opt to pay voluntary contributions up to age 66, in order to qualify for the State Pension (Contributory).

### **Social Insurance Issues**

171. **Deputy Arthur Spring** asked the Minister for Social Protection if a person who previously had paid class S stamps while self employed is entitled to receive full PRSI credits towards a contributory pension when reclassified to class M due to a reduction in income; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33703/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Class M PRSI relates to people with a nil contribution liability (such as employees under age 16, people aged 66 or over (including those previously liable for Class S), persons in receipt of occupational pensions or lump-sum termination payments and public office holders with a weekly income of less than €100 a week). PRSI credited contributions are an integral part of the social insurance system. For the most part they are linked to having an underlying entitlement to a social welfare payment while temporarily detached from the labour force or having entitlement to statutory leave e.g. parental or maternity leave. The primary purpose of PRSI credits is to secure social welfare benefits and pensions of employees by covering gaps in insurance where they are not in a position to pay PRSI such as during periods of unemployment, illness, etc.

The class at which a contributor paid his or her last PRSI contribution determines entitlement to credited contributions. Credits are usually awarded at the same rate as your last paid PRSI contribution. For example, Class A PRSI contributions may entitle a person to all insured DSP benefits, provided they satisfy the qualifying conditions. Credits are not available to a person who has only Class S contributions.

People who cease to be covered by compulsory social insurance, may opt to protect their existing long-term social insurance pension entitlements by becoming insured on a voluntary basis and paying voluntary contributions. Payment of voluntary contributions does not provide social insurance cover for short term benefits such as jobseeker's benefit. A person who wishes to become a voluntary contributor must satisfy certain contribution conditions and must apply to become a voluntary contributor within 12 months after the end of the contribution year in which he/she was last compulsorily insured. A person cannot be a voluntary contributor while also an employed contributor or in receipt of credited employment contributions.

### **Carer's Allowance Eligibility**

172. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Social Protection if a person in receipt of carer's allowance must declare to the Department, for means purposes, the receipt of a rebate for past medical expenses incurred; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33708/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** To qualify for carer's allowance the applicant must satisfy a means test. The income which is taken into account for the means test is set out in legislation and regulations and described in the information material produced for the scheme. Money received as a rebate of past medical expenses, say under a scheme of medical insurance, is not assessable. However, money received as compensation arising from an accident or injury may be assessable and should be declared. In general, if a person on a means-tested scheme is unsure of any aspect relating to their income or means and how it might affect their social welfare payment, they should provide full details to the Department and they will receive clarification.

### **Domiciliary Care Allowance Applications**

173. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Social Protection if domiciliary care allowance will be granted to a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33746/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** An application for domiciliary care allowance was received from the person concerned on the 11th April 2013. This application was referred to one of the Department's Medical Assessors who considered that the child was not medically eligible for the allowance. A letter issued on the 13th June 2013 advising of the decision. The person concerned subsequently requested a review of the decision. The case was reviewed by another Medical Assessor on the 5th July 2013, who having examined all the information supplied, confirmed the opinion that the child was not medically eligible for the allowance. A letter issued on the 8th July 2013 advising of the decision. The person concerned has been advised of her right to appeal the decision to the Social Welfare Appeals Office within twenty one days.

### **Carer's Allowance Appeals**

174. **Deputy Seán Conlan** asked the Minister for Social Protection the reason there has been a delay in the appeal of a decision to refuse a carer's allowance to a person (details supplied); and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33838/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 6 February 2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant Departmental papers and comments by the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought. These papers were received in the Social Welfare Appeals Office on 28 May 2013 and the case was referred to an Appeals Officer on 21 June 2013 who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral hearing. The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

*Question No. 175 withdrawn.*

### **Budget 2014 Issues**

176. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Social Protection the names of the vol-

untary groups and organisations she has met to date in advance of the budget 2014 negotiations; the rationale for the selection of the groups she has met; the dates on which she met them; if she will state if other groups contact her between now and October that she will agree to have discussions with them; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33847/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I hosted a Pre-Budget forum in Dublin Castle on Friday, 5 July last. It was attended by 37 voluntary and community groups, including Active Retirement Ireland, Age Action Ireland, Alone, Barnardos, Care Alliance Ireland, Carers Association, Centre for Independent Living, Children's Rights Alliance, Congress Centres Network, CROSSCARE, Cúram, Disability Federation of Ireland, End Child Poverty Coalition, European Anti Poverty Network, FLAC, Focus Ireland, Healthy Food for All, Inclusion Ireland, Irish Council for Social Housing, Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed, Irish Senior Citizens Parliament, National Association of Widows in Ireland, National Federation of Pensioners' Associations, National Women's Council of Ireland, One Family, OPEN, Pavee Point, Retired Workers Committee, Saint Vincent de Paul, Simon Community, Social Justice Ireland, The Wheel, Threshold, TREOIR, Trustus We Care, Unmarried and Separated Families of Ireland and the Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice.

The purpose of the annual Forum is to provide a very wide range of welfare representative and advocacy organisations with an opportunity to have an input into the Budget process. The Forum enables the organisations to discuss their views on the Budget with the Minister and senior Departmental officials. This year's Forum included a number of workshops on specific themes, such as children and families, illness and disability, and poverty and social inclusion. I also met with twenty of the organisations mentioned above at separate meetings, including joint meetings with a number of groups, over the period from April to date. Representative groups may, at any stage, contact my office if they wish to meet with me to discuss the forthcoming Budget and all such requests will be considered.

### Inland Waterways Development

177. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht the recommendations of the Waterways Ireland consultation process on utilising Dublin's waterways and the reason recommendations for the development of spaces for houseboats were not implemented; and his plans for same. [33612/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** I wish to advise the Deputy that Waterways Ireland is committed to utilising Ireland's waterways to the greatest extent possible. In relation to the Deputy's query regarding utilising Dublin's waterways for the development for spaces for houseboats, I am informed that Waterways Ireland has plans to develop provision for houseboats in the Dublin City area on the existing floating moorings at Grand Canal Dock in Ringsend.

The Deputy should be aware that when Waterways Ireland applied to the Dublin Docklands Development Authority for permission to install floating moorings around the Waterways Ireland Visitor Centre to provide approximately 55 berths for boats/vessels back in 2003, the Authority issued a Certificate of approval under Section 25 of the Dublin Docklands Development Authority Act, 1997 which included the condition that *'This Certificate permits the use of the 55 berths for boats/vessels used solely for amenity on the waterways and not as permanent residential or commercial units'*. Waterways Ireland is currently in discussion with the Dublin Docklands Development Authority with the aim of having 25 berths designated for permanent residential or commercial use at Grand Canal Dock.

## Seirbhísí Eitilte

178. D'fhiafraigh **Deputy Dara Calleary** den Aire Ealaíon, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta cad é an staid reatha i dtaca le hAerstráice Thoraí, Dún na nGall. [33620/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Dinny McGinley):** Bhí pleananna ann tamall de bhlianta ó shin aeradróm a fhorbairt ar Thoraigh ach ní dheachaigh an fhorbairt ar aghaidh ar chúiseanna éagsúla. Níl sé i gceist ag mo Roinn filleadh ar an fhorbairt sin faoi láthair. Mar eolas don Teachta, tá mo Roinn tiomanta héileapad a fhorbairt ar Thoraigh sa bhliain atá romhainn.

### Departmental Funding

179. **Deputy Joan Collins** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if grants are available for Irish dancing groups to assist them in attending world championships; and if he will list those grants and the way to apply for them. [33700/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** The Culture Ireland Division of the Department supports and promotes Irish arts worldwide. The aim of the programme is to create career opportunities for Irish artists and to develop new audiences for Irish arts. The Culture Ireland programme does not however fund participation in events of a competitive nature, including dancing championships. The programme's funding covers professional artists/companies and includes traditional arts where they have opportunities to present in key international venues to open audiences.

### Electricity Generation

180. **Deputy Seamus Kirk** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources his plans to make investments in on-farm micro-energy installation; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33913/13]

186. **Deputy Seamus Kirk** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources his plans to review and change the micro-energy generation strategy in view of its unfavourable comparison to EU norms; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33911/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 180 and 186 together.

Electric Ireland has been offering a 9c/kwh feed in tariff, on a commercial basis, to domestic microgenerators since February 2009. No other electricity supply company has to date chosen to enter the domestic market and to offer a microgeneration feed-in-tariff on a commercial basis, although the Commission for Energy Regulation invited them to do so. In addition, no company has opted to offer, on a commercial basis, a feed-in-tariff for microgeneration to the commercial and industrial sectors.

Previously, a joint ESB/Electric Ireland microgeneration support scheme for the domestic sector offering a total of 19c/kwh (comprising €10c/kwh from ESB Networks combined with the 9c/kwh from ESB Customer Supply (now Electric Ireland)) ran for 3 years from February 2009 to February 2012, and had a take up of between 500 and 600 installations.

In view of falling technology costs, my Department has recently asked the Sustainable En-

ergy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to update analysis on the costs of varying levels of support for microgeneration technologies, with a view to considering how the sector, including on-farm microgeneration, could be supported in the future. This analysis will also cover non-tariff support mechanisms, the cost of which is not funded from the Public Service Obligation.

### **Broadband Services Provision**

181. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide an update on the achievement of the targets set out in the national broadband plan; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33600/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** The Government's National Broadband Plan, which I published in August last, aims to radically change the broadband landscape in Ireland by ensuring that high speed services of 30Mbps are available to all of our citizens and businesses, in advance of the EU's target date of 2020, and that significantly higher speeds are available to as many homes and businesses as possible. The Plan aims to deliver high speed broadband to all parts of Ireland through two principal means:

- by providing a policy and regulatory framework that assists in accelerating and incentivising commercial investment, and

- by providing a State-led investment for areas where it is not commercial for the market to invest.

Since the publication of the Plan, investments by the commercial sector are underway in both fixed line and wireless high speed broadband services, particularly in urban and semi-urban areas. ComReg has put in place a new regulatory regime for fixed line Next Generation Access and for service bundles, both of which are designed to incentivise the rollout of services by service providers. ComReg's multiband spectrum auction, completed in 2012, is also enabling the rollout of advanced mobile broadband services.

There is evidence that industry is investing beyond the targets to which they committed in the Plan with investments of up to €1bn underway. Some of the key developments in the short and medium term are as follows:

- eircom launched its next generation broadband services on 16th May last, with speeds of up to 70Mbps, immediately available to over 300,000 premises. By the end of this year, eircom aims to reach more than 600,000 homes and businesses. It has a target to pass 1.2m premises by June 2015.

- UPC is continuing with its investment in the cable network, which should see 750,000 homes able to access services at data speeds of at least 150 Mbps by 2015.

- Other fixed operators also continue to invest in Local Loop Unbundling (LLU). BT Ireland now supplies broadband access to both Vodafone and Sky Ireland, and along with other operators, is also investing in fixed infrastructure.

- Mobile wireless operators are making plans for the rollout of 4G services later this year. The operators are obliged, under the terms of the licences, to cover 70% of the population.

- ESB is currently considering the prospect of utilising its distribution network to rollout fibre broadband services.

In tandem with these commercial developments, intensive work is underway in my Depart-

ment to progress a State-led investment to secure the countrywide introduction of next generation broadband access.

In order to progress the State-led investment, a full procurement process must be designed and EU State Aids approval must be obtained. My officials have just commenced a comprehensive mapping exercise of the current and anticipated investment by the commercial sector to identify where the market is expected to succeed and fail in the delivery of high speed broadband services over the coming years. The results of this mapping exercise will inform the level of Government interaction that may be required and the areas that need to be targeted in the State-led investment so as to deliver on the targets for high speed broadband contained in the National Broadband Plan. Intensive technical, financial and legal preparations including stakeholder engagement will be ongoing throughout 2013 with a view to the launch of a procurement process in 2014.

Through the implementation of the National Broadband Plan, we are committed to increasing the availability of next generation speeds significantly, with a view to ensuring that all citizens and businesses can participate fully in a digitally enabled society. Implementation of the National Broadband Plan will be complemented by the National Digital Strategy. The first phase of the National Digital Strategy, which I will launch on 11 July next, will target specific segments of society, aiming to improve digital adoption and to realise the economic and social benefits that digital technologies can bring.

### **Energy Resources**

182. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the rationale behind the National Oil Reserve Agency duty; if this duty acts as a competitive disadvantage to Irish producers of firelighters or firelogs as compared with companies which have firelighters or firelogs produced in Britain which can thus avoid NORA duty; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33638/13]

184. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he has received representations from a company (details supplied) in County Louth in relation to the possibility of granting an exemption from the NORA levy pursuant to sections 38 of the NORA Act 2007; if such representations have been considered; if a decision has been made; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33687/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 182 and 184 together.

It is a condition of EU and International Energy Agency (IEA) membership that all Member States maintain certain levels of strategic oil reserves to maintain security of oil supply. The National Oil Reserves Agency (NORA) is responsible for maintaining Ireland's 90 days of strategic oil stocks for use in the event of an oil supply disruption. It is a matter for each Member State to decide on the manner in which they fund this security of supply obligation and this will vary from Member State to Member State. NORA receives no Exchequer funding and is funded by way of a levy on disposals of petroleum products and by bank borrowings. I do not believe that the NORA levy creates competition issues between EU Member States. All Member States have to bear the cost of the strategic oil stocks requirement and ultimately this requirement will be transferred by way of price inclusion to consumers.

The NORA levy is not imposed directly on firelighters or fire logs as such, although oil may be a constituent element of such products and the levy would be payable on that constitu-

ent part. The NORA Act 2007 provides that the levy must be paid by all companies on the oil products specified in the legislation. An exemption is provided for in the case of companies that maintain 55 days of oil stocks, on the basis of their previous year's oil consumption.

My Department received an application from the company concerned for an exemption from NORA levy duty under Section 38 of the NORA Act, 2007 in 2011 but that application was unsuccessful because it did not satisfy the requirements of Section 38 and Section 62 of the NORA Act. Officials of my Department met with representatives of the company to outline the position.

I understand that whilst a revised proposal was subsequently put to my Department by the company that my Department had no contact from the company since June 2012. My officials have contacted the company and are seeking to clarify the position as soon as possible.

### **Mobile Telephony**

183. **Deputy Eoghan Murphy** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources his plans to introduce legislation that would require all purchasers of mobile phones to produce a valid ID and proof of residence. [33683/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** A proposal to register all customers of mobile phone services was considered previously by my Department which identified many complex legal, technical, data protection and practical issues to be considered. It was concluded at the time that the proposal would not solve the illegal and inappropriate use of mobile phones and was not practical. There are no current proposals to compel mobile telephone service providers to register all customers.

*Question No. 184 answered with Question No. 182.*

### **Energy Resources**

185. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide a breakdown of the percentage of Ireland's strategic reserves of oil under the auspices of the National Oil Reserves Agency that are held here; the percentage held in other EU states; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33688/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** At the end of December 2008, the National Oil Reserves Agency (NORA) held 46% of their stockholding obligation as physical stocks on the island of Ireland, 38% as physical stocks abroad and 16% as stock tickets. By the end of April 2013, the situation has dramatically improved and the split is now 74% as physical stocks on the island of Ireland and 26% as physical stocks in other EU Member States.

In 2007, NORA held approximately 75 of Ireland's total 90 day strategic stockholding obligation. Today NORA holds 88 of Ireland's total 90 day obligation. This increase has come about largely due to the implementation of the new EU Oil Stocks Directive (Directive 2009/119/EC), which came into effect on 1 January 2013, whereby commercial stocks may no longer be counted towards a country's strategic stockholding.

As an island nation with limited refining capacity and no indigenous oil production, the physical availability of already refined strategic oil product stocks on the island, as part of our strategic oil stocks, improves our security of supply position, particularly in the event of

prolonged weather disruption which might make imports difficult. It was considered that the over-reliance on stock tickets (short term contracts for the supply of oil in the event of an emergency), created a vulnerability in the event of supply disruption and this has now been eliminated. There are also benefits to the national economy of holding the strategic stocks on the island of Ireland. In this context, a policy has been pursued since 2007 of rebalancing the wholly owned strategic stocks onto the island of Ireland.

The lack of physical infrastructure on the island available for oil storage required NORA to develop its own new storage facilities which took time as well as additional funding and staffing resources. NORA pursued all options for increasing storage capacity in Ireland, including maximising its use of existing commercial storage and refurbishing existing storage facilities for its own use. In the last 3 years, NORA has refurbished and commissioned three new oil storage facilities on the island – in Dublin, Kerry and Antrim, providing a total of an additional 320,000 tonnes of storage. NORA will continue to seek out new storage facilities and opportunities subject to value for money in line with Government policy. Stocks held in other EU Member States are held in Spain, Netherlands, United Kingdom and Denmark. These stocks are held under Member State to Member State bilateral agreements.

*Question No. 186 answered with Question No. 180.*

### **Non-Principal Private Residence Charge Administration**

187. **Deputy Martin Heydon** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if his attention has been drawn to the fact that certain final reminder notices sent in relation to the payment of the non-principal private residence charge due on 30 June 2013 were not received until after the closing date as in the case of a person (details supplied); if he will outline the procedures that are in place to ensure this does not happen; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33678/13]

188. **Deputy Noel Coonan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will outline the way the penalties for late payment of the non-principal private residence charge were calculated; the methodology behind the penalties being charged; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33843/13]

203. **Deputy Noel Coonan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the way in which the penalties for late payment of the local property tax were calculated; the methodology behind the penalties being charged; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33842/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 187, 188 and 203 together.

I understand that Question No. 203 concerns the non-principal private residence charge. The Local Government (Charges) Act 2009, as amended, broadened the revenue base of local authorities by introducing a charge on non-principal private residences. The charge is set at €200 and liability for it falls, in the main, on owners of rental, holiday and vacant properties. Section 6 of the 2009 Act, as amended, provides that the owner of a liable property who fails to pay the charge, in addition to his or her being liable to pay the charge, is liable to pay to the relevant local authority a €20 late payment fee in respect of each month or part of a month in which the charge, any late payment fee, or any part of such charge or fee, remains unpaid.

Under the Act, it is a function of a local authority to collect non-principal private residence charges and late payment fees due to it and all charges and late payment fees imposed and payable to a local authority are under the care and management of the local authority concerned. I have issued guidelines to local authorities in relation to the operation of the “care and management” provisions of the legislation in instances in which genuine hardship in having to discharge a liability in a single payment can be demonstrated. Queries concerning non-principal private residence charge operational matters, such as the issuing of reminder letters, should be directed to the relevant local authority or authorities.

### **Motor Tax Exemptions**

189. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the cost to the Exchequer of the exemption for diplomatic vehicles from motor tax for 2013 and the expected cost for 2014 if there is no change to the rates of motor tax and there are no changes to the eligibility criteria for this exemption; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33878/13]

190. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the cost to the Exchequer of the exemption for vehicles under the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers (Tax Concessions) Regulations, 1994 (S.I. No. 353 of 1994) from motor tax for 2013 and the expected cost for 2014 if there is no change to the rates of motor tax and there are no changes to the eligibility criteria for this exemption; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33879/13]

191. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the cost to the Exchequer of the exemption for vehicles, including any cycle with an attachment for propelling it by mechanical power, not exceeding 400 kilograms in weight unladen, adapted and used for invalids, from motor tax for 2013 and the expected cost for 2014 if there is no change to the rates of motor tax and there are no changes to the eligibility criteria for this exemption; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33880/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 189 to 191, inclusive, together.

The information requested is currently being compiled and will be forwarded to the Deputy as soon as possible.

### **Voluntary Sector Funding**

192. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government his plans to establish a grant scheme to assist voluntary organisations with the costs associated with complying with Government generated regulatory requirements, such as mandatory training and vetting; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33605/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** My Department provides funding to national organisations towards core costs (salary and related overheads) associated with the provision of services through the Scheme to Support National Organisations in the Community & Voluntary Sector. There are no plans, at present, to establish a grant scheme to assist voluntary organisations, or any other organisations funded by my Department, with the costs associated with complying with Government generated regulatory requirements, such as mandatory training and vetting.

## Local Government Reform

193. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he has received submissions on the proposal for an elected mayor of Dublin for the four Dublin local authorities. [29130/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The specific question of introducing an office of directly elected mayor for the Dublin Metropolitan Area is considered in the Government's Action Programme for Effective Local Government in the context of other governance issues. A key conclusion in that regard is that such an office should not be simply inserted as a further layer of governance and administration in addition to the current local government structures.

The establishment of an office with more far-reaching powers, functions and budgetary capacity would be likely to require significant changes in existing local government arrangements. The implications in this regard and the changes required at local government level would need to be considered carefully and include issues in regard to the powers, structures and functions of such an office and consequential changes in the powers, structures and functions of local authorities and other relevant bodies, budgetary matters, strategic co-ordination, an elected assembly with oversight and accountability functions, avoidance of duplication, maximisation of efficiency in local government arrangements, avoidance of cost increases and achievement of savings. The Action Programme indicated that a special forum or colloquium of the elected members of Dún Laoghaire – Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils and Dublin City Council would be convened by the Lord Mayor of Dublin to consider the options for local governance in Dublin, including the potential for a directly elected Mayor for a Dublin Metropolitan Area. It is intended that proposals arising from the colloquium will be put for decision through a plebiscite in 2014, which I envisage will be held alongside the local elections. This will provide for suitable democratic debate and consultation on all dimensions of the issue.

The Lord Mayor of Dublin wrote to me recently on the matter and I replied, setting out matters which I consider would need to be addressed by the elected members of the four local authorities, when developing proposals to be put before the electorate in the plebiscite. It will be open to the forum or colloquium to assess the various options for local governance in the Dublin metropolitan area as part of its deliberations. I have asked for a response by the end of the year, in order to allow Government make appropriate decisions on the next steps in the preparation of the plebiscite. I have received no other written submissions in the matter.

## Renewable Energy Projects

194. **Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the number of submissions received in the foreshore unit in relation to Dublin Arrays proposal for a wind farm in Dublin Bay; and when a decision will issue on this respect. [33646/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** My Department received 169 submissions following publication of the Dublin Array Environmental Impact Statement. All submissions are available on my Department's website. No assessment of the application will take place pending publication of the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan.

## Mortgage Arrears Proposals

195. **Deputy John McGuinness** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the arrangements in place in each local authority to assist those that have

fallen into arrears with their mortgage or other loans; if interest-only or deferred payments or other options are offered to borrowers; the number of repossessions obtained or being considered by local authorities in the past three years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33691/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** The Government is acutely conscious of the difficulties many households are facing in terms of mortgage arrears. Where any borrower, either from a local authority or from a private financial institution, is facing difficulties in meeting mortgage repayments, they should engage proactively and constructively with the lender to seek to achieve an agreed solution. The services of the Money Advice and Budgeting Service are also available to such borrowers and support is available through the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme. Local authorities have long been the lenders of last resort servicing the housing loans needs of less affluent members of society. In the present economic circumstances it is to be anticipated that the ability of some borrowers to service housing loans may become restricted and that a number of loans may fall into arrears.

Section 34 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 provides local authorities with powers to deal flexibly with distressed borrowers, and they have demonstrated sensitivity over the years in dealing with such cases. In March 2010 my Department issued guidelines to local authorities, based upon the Central Bank’s first Code of Conduct on Mortgage Arrears, which continued the tradition of handling arrears in a manner that is sympathetic to the needs of the particular household, while also protecting the position of the local authority concerned. To reflect the content of the Central Bank’s revised Code of Conduct – which replaced the previous code from 1 January 2011 and was informed by the deliberations of the Expert Group on Mortgage Arrears and Personal Debt – my Department issued updated guidance in June 2012 to local authorities in consultation with the County and City Managers Association. This will further enable local authorities to provide a range of flexible repayment options for households in difficulty.

In particular, the introduction of a Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process (MARP), which closely mirrors the suite of options available in the commercial sector, presents borrowers in difficulty with a range of alternative payment agreements, including those referred to, which can be accessed to ease the particular circumstances of each case. This process features a standard set of options including, in cases of certain unsustainable mortgages, the facility of mortgage-to-rent. Local authorities have been restructuring loans for some time using their own internal practices. The introduction of these revised guidelines standardises the approach across the whole sector, introduces a systematic structure to this area and provides borrowers with a transparent and accessible model for arrears resolution. My Department is currently preparing updated guidance in line with the Central Bank’s latest Code of Conduct on Mortgage Arrears.

### **Local Government Elections**

196. **Deputy Jim Daly** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will address the prospect of supporting towns who wish to continue with some form of representative group by way of assistance with such elections; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33704/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Policy in relation to democratic representation in local government is clearly set out in the Government’s Action Programme for Effective Local Government. I have no proposals in relation to the matter referred to in the question.

## Registration of Architects

197. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will consider reducing the cost involved for practically trained persons who wish to be included on the register of architects; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33715/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** In accordance with section 62(4) of the Building Control Act 2007 the amount of a fee specified for the purposes of the Act is not in any case to exceed the total of the costs of providing the service to which the fee relates together with reasonable costs incurred by the registration body in collecting, accounting for and administering the fee. On this basis the fee for technical assessment has been set at €4,500. This amount represents a significant reduction on the figure originally proposed due to a concession given by the registration body at its own expense. My Department understands that the registration body has negotiated a loan facility with the Bank of Ireland to provide support to those undergoing Technical Assessment. Section 17(3) of the Act enables the registration body to waive or reduce a specified fee in cases of verified hardship.

While the above sets out the current factual position in relation to the fee, I have recently asked Mr. Garrett Fennell, Solicitor, who is currently serving as the Chairperson of the Admissions Board relevant to the register of Architects, to carry out an independent review of the experience to date in relation to the operation of the register with a view to identifying any further improvements that can be made at this point. The terms of reference for the review specifically address the matter of how the registration of practically trained architects can be further encouraged and I look forward to any recommendations and views the review report may offer in this regard in the coming months.

## Housing Adaptation Grant Applications

198. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government his plans to commission a strategic review of the housing adaptation grant scheme to examine current and projected demand; if he will examine the feasibility of centralising the application process and make recommendations on the way the scheme can better meet the needs of older people, people with disabilities and carers; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33717/13]

199. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the position in relation to funding for housing departments in local authorities (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33723/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 198 and 199 together.

On 22 February 2013 I announced capital allocations to local authorities under the suite of Grants for Older People and People with a Disability amounting to €42.750 million. This year I allocated local authorities the full amount of their contractual commitments and the balance of the available funding was allocated on the basis of each authority's share of the new applications on hand in January 2013.

A small capital reserve was set aside to deal with any acute or particular difficulty which might arise in the operation of the schemes over the course of the year. Following requests from

13 local authorities for supplementary funding, I subsequently approved additional allocations totalling €1.2 million. I am continuing to keep the position in relation to funding under review. My Department is currently reviewing the operation of the grant schemes in consultation with the local authorities and groups representing older people and people with disabilities with the objective of targeting those in most need and ensuring that the maximum numbers of households can benefit from these schemes. My Department will continue to explore all opportunities to stretch the available resources, including through co-operation with the Health Service Executive and other agencies. I intend to announce revised terms and conditions for the grant schemes later this year.

### **Waste Disposal**

200. **Deputy Joanna Tuffy** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the position regarding increases in landfill charges; if his attention has been drawn to the fact that waste collectors are passing this charge on to households; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33743/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The Programme for Government commits to the development of a coherent national waste policy, adhering to the waste hierarchy, which will aim to minimise waste disposal in landfill and maximise recovery. In addition, Ireland must comply with strict limits under the Landfill Directive for the volumes of material which are landfilled. I published A Resource Opportunity - Waste Management Policy in Ireland in July 2012 which clearly signalled my intention to raise the landfill levy in July 2013 in order to provide certainty, in the form of both policy and legislation, so that the necessary actions and investments are progressed to achieve the policy's objectives.

The National Waste Report for 2011 reported the quantity of biodegradable municipal waste disposed at landfill in 2011 as 771,551 tonnes. This is 161,551 tonnes in excess of the July 2013 EU Landfill Directive limit and 344,551 tonnes in excess of the 2016 limit. Therefore, effective economic instruments, such as the landfill levy, are key to encouraging more sustainable management of our waste.

Charges applied by waste management companies are a matter between those companies and their customers, subject to compliance with all applicable environmental and other relevant legislation, particularly the conditions attached to each waste collection permit issued under the Waste Management (Collection Permit) Regulations 2007 as amended. The increase in the landfill levy is €10 per tonne of leviabale waste disposed of to landfill and in that context, the National Waste Report for 2011, published by the Environmental Protection Agency records a figure of 0.163 tonnes of residual household waste per person being disposed of to landfill in that year.

### **Cross-Border Co-operation**

201. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the recent developments made on extending the ban on smoky coal across the country over the next three years; the discussions both he and his officials have had on this recently with the Department of the Environment in Northern Ireland regarding extending the ban on all all-island basis; when he expects to receive the joint North-South study commissioned on 6 May this year; when he expects to bring forward legislation in this regard; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33747/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** On 6 May 2013, I announced a joint North-South study on all-island air quality to ex-

amine air pollution from residential solid fuel, in particular 'smoky' coal, and to consider the potential policy options to reduce such emissions with consequential environmental and human health benefits.

The joint North-South study was agreed with Alex Attwood M.L.A, Environment Minister for Northern Ireland, at a North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) Environment Meeting following the Informal Council of EU Environment Ministers in Dublin on 22-23 April 2013, which Minister Attwood also attended. Among the issues discussed at the Informal Council was the future development of EU policy on air quality, which is currently under review and which is expected to be published by the European Commission later this year.

My Department has since met with the Department of the Environment, Northern Ireland, to agree terms of reference for the study and prepare tender documentation. The request for tender will issue later in July and the successful bidder to undertake the study will be appointed as soon as possible. It is expected that the contract will be completed within six months.

Notwithstanding recent regulatory improvements and extension of the smoky coal ban, I recognise that having different standards applying to coal between larger urban and smaller urban/rural locations is not ideal, as it results in different levels of environmental protection and clean air benefits for people across these different locations. For this reason I have set the challenging target of introducing a ban on smoky coal across the State within the next three years. However, I fully recognise the cross-border enforcement difficulties arising, if a national ban is introduced unilaterally in the South rather than on an all-island basis. A closer alignment of solid fuel policy and legislation on an all-island basis will allow the benefits derived from the ban potentially to be further extended. In this regard, the policy options identified following the conclusion of the joint study will steer further legislative development in this area.

### **Referendum Campaigns**

202. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government when the Referendum Commission will be established for the referendum on the abolition of Seanad Éireann. [28688/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** On 6 June 2013 I signed the Referendum Commission (Establishment) Order 2013 which established a Referendum Commission for the referendum on the proposal in the Thirty-second Amendment of the Constitution (Abolition of Seanad Éireann) Bill 2013.

*Question No. 203 answered with Question No. 187.*

### **Unfinished Housing Developments**

204. **Deputy Seamus Kirk** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if the scheme for taking in charge of private housing estates needs to be revised to take in the circumstances where the developer is deceased or is no longer in business, in effect leaving the local authority with no recourse for the snag list; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33910/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 applies to estates which have been granted planning permission and includes the construction of

two or more houses (which as defined in the Act includes apartments) and the provision of new roads, open spaces, car parks, sewers, watermains or drains. In relation to estates which have been completed to the satisfaction of the planning authority in accordance with the permission, section 180 provides that the planning authority must, if requested to do so by the developer or by the majority of the qualified electors who are owners of the houses involved, initiate the procedures in section 11 of the Roads Act 1993 for declaring the road(s) to be public roads, for whose maintenance the local authority will then be responsible.

Section 11 of the Roads Act empowers a local authority, by order, to declare any road over which a public right of way exists to be a public road. Before making an order the local authority must be satisfied the road is of general public utility, consider the financial implications of taking the road in charge and consult with the public/consider any objections received. The consideration of the objections and the making of the order declaring the road to be a public road is a reserved function, so that the decision whether to take the road in charge is ultimately one for the discretion of the elected members.

In relation to estates which have not been completed to the satisfaction of the planning authority and enforcement proceedings have not been commenced within the relevant period section 180 also provides that the planning authority must, if requested to do so by the majority of the owners, initiate the procedures in section 11 of the Roads Act. However, in this case the section provides that the provision in section 11 of the Roads Act requiring the authority to consider the financial implications of taking the road in charge is to be disregarded.

Section 180 also provides that where a planning authority, in complying with section 180, makes an order under section 11 of the Roads Act, it must also take in charge any open spaces, car parks, sewers, watermains, or drains within the attendant grounds of the development. Section 180 was amended in the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 to provide that a planning authority may take in charge an unfinished estate, at the request of the owners of the housing units, at any time after the expiration of the planning permission, in situations where enforcement actions have commenced or where the planning authority consider that enforcement action will not result in the satisfactory completion of the estate by the developer. Planning authorities have also been empowered to take in charge part of an estate or some, but not all, of the facilities in an estate.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour**

205. **Deputy Martin Heydon** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality his plans to tackle the issue of boy racers and modified cars which are causing difficulties for residents in certain areas (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33635/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I can assure the Deputy that I share the concern about incidents of anti-social driving behaviour and the impact it has on local communities. Effective roads policing is central to the Garda Policing Plan 2013 and road traffic enforcement is high throughout the country.

Garda enforcement activities are focused on the main causes of deaths and serious injuries on our roads and An Garda Síochána conducts specific operations to improve the compliance culture particularly among young male drivers. The Garda authorities work with the Road Safety Authority and other road safety stakeholders to promote road safety among target groups and conduct Garda Road Safety Awareness Programmes in schools and third level institutions.

I am advised that Garda authorities conduct ongoing strategic local enforcement operations targeting anti-social driving. These enforcement operations are intelligence-led, targeting areas in particular where young male drivers congregate. Regular Garda mobile patrols and checkpoints are also conducted in these areas and websites are monitored to assist in establishing where events are taking place and to implement the necessary operational Garda response. Such operations have resulted in a significant number of young drivers being prosecuted or for driving without a learner permit, driving unaccompanied while on a learner permit and driving a vehicle with prohibited modifications. Where breaches of road traffic legislation are detected, the Garda authorities make full use of the fixed charge notice, penalty point system, court prosecutions and Juvenile Diversion Programme where appropriate.

### Garda Investigations

206. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the dates on which the Garda bureau of fraud investigation seized tapes from AIB and Bank of Ireland and/or other banks; and if a court order or court warrant was needed to access these tapes. [33671/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The Deputy will appreciate that I have no role in relation to the detailed management of any criminal investigations and that it would not be appropriate for me to comment on the specifics of any criminal investigation or on the evidence obtained by the Gardaí in connection with any investigations which they may be conducting.

### Prisoner Numbers

207. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide in tabular form a breakdown of the number of convicted persons imprisoned for six months, for five months, for four months, for three months, for two months and for one month in 2012; if he will further provide a breakdown of the categories of crime these persons were imprisoned for and a gender breakdown of same. [33680/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** In 2012, 11,202 or 83% of all committals under sentence were for sentences of 6 months or less. This category also includes those committed (8,304) as a consequence of the non-payment of a court ordered fine.

A full breakdown of the number of convicted persons imprisoned for six months, for five months, for four months, for three months, for two months and for one month in 2012 is set out in the following table. In cases where a person is serving multiple sentences, they are categorised on the basis of their most serious offence.

Female

Group Name	1 month	1 to 2 months	2 to 3 months	3 to 4 months	4 to 5 months	5 to 6 months
Sexual Offences	0	0	2	0	0	0
Attempts/Threat to Murder, Assaults and Related Offences	15	2	7	3	7	6
Dangerous or Negligent Acts	113	6	4	1	1	1
Robbery, Extortion and Hijacking Offences	1	0	0	0	0	0

Questions - Written Answers

Group Name	1 month	1 to 2 months	2 to 3 months	3 to 4 months	4 to 5 months	5 to 6 months
Burglary and Related Offences	0	0	1	2	2	1
Theft and Related Offences	99	22	24	20	10	29
Fraud, Deception and Related Offences	16	4	10	3	0	5
Controlled Drug Offences	34	1	3	1	1	0
Weapons and Explosives Offences	1	0	0	0	0	0
Damage to Property and the Environment	52	3	4	1	0	4
Public Order and Social Code Offences	152	19	16	3	0	3
Road and Traffic Offences	712	62	24	7	2	4
Offences re Government, Justice Procedures and Organisation of Crime	229	6	7	4	1	5
Offences Not Elsewhere Classified	181	3	2	2	0	2
Total	1,476	128	104	47	24	60

Male

Group Name	1 month	1 to 2 months	2 to 3 months	3 to 4 months	4 to 5 months	5 to 6 months
Sexual Offences	2	0	2	4	1	5
Attempts/Threat to Murder, Assaults and Related Offences	59	27	44	53	22	48
Dangerous or Negligent Acts	634	66	66	57	47	44
Robbery, Extortion and Hijacking Offences	0	0	0	0	0	5
Burglary and Related Offences	19	8	27	27	21	46

Group Name	1 month	1 to 2 months	2 to 3 months	3 to 4 months	4 to 5 months	5 to 6 months
Theft and Related Offences	226	61	82	77	58	130
Fraud, Deception and Related Offences	151	35	36	19	7	20
Controlled Drug Offences	342	33	48	25	14	48
Weapons and Explosives Offences	37	4	14	19	3	32
Damage to Property and the Environment	123	28	37	33	15	47
Public Order and Social Code Offences	1,145	252	140	32	16	31
Road and Traffic Offences	2,375	246	200	102	100	68
Offences re Government, Justice Procedures and Organisation of Crime	785	41	45	38	12	35
Offences Not Elsewhere Classified	343	36	26	12	4	13
Total	6,241	837	767	498	320	572

### Proposed Legislation

208. **Deputy Eoghan Murphy** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality his plans to introduce legislation that would prohibit pawnbrokers from purchasing gold or jewellery off potential customers without proof of ownership; his further plans to introduce legislation that would reprimand pawnbrokers found in possession of stolen property, that is, gold or jewellery for which they do not know the identity of the seller or hold proof that the seller was the owner

at the time of sale to the pawnbroker. [33682/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** While I have no function in relation to the regulation of pawnbrokers regarding the specific matters raised by the Deputy, I will arrange to have these queries referred to the appropriate authority. In relation to the more general issue of cash for gold, I am at present examining the response of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice, Equality and Defence to the report concerning this matter which was published by my Department last year.

### **Garda Investigations**

209. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if there are charges pending against executives from Anglo Irish Bank; the nature and number of those charges. [33710/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The Deputy will be aware that a number of Garda investigation files have been submitted to the Director of Public Prosecutions as have several files from the parallel investigation taking place under the Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement. The Deputy will appreciate that I have no function in relation to the preferment of charges which is a matter for the Director of Public Prosecutions. However, I understand that three persons are currently charged with offences under section 60 of the Companies Act 1963 and that one of those persons is also charged with offences under section 197 of the Companies Act 1990. A number of files remain with the DPP awaiting her independent directions and there continues to be close contact between An Garda Síochána and the DPP in relation to all matters arising from these cases.

### **Road Traffic Offences**

210. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the different blood-alcohol levels and concentrations for drinking under the influence of alcohol in Ireland that are provided for in the Road Traffic Acts, that is policed by An Garda Síochána, as a measure to reduce fatalities and improve safety on our roads; the differences for public service vehicle drivers and normal drivers of vehicles; the measurements and limits that are in place when a person driving a private vehicle who is stopped at an authorised mandatory alcohol testing checkpoint and does not have a driving licence on their person; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33748/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The Deputy will appreciate that road traffic legislation, including the relevant provisions for the prohibition of driving while under the influence of an intoxicant or of exceeding alcohol limits, is the responsibility of my colleague the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport. All members of An Garda Síochána are tasked with the enforcement of relevant legislation, including the Road Traffic and Road Transport Acts. As part of this enforcement policy members of An Garda Síochána carry out planned and 'ad hoc' checkpoints as required, including mandatory alcohol testing (MAT) checkpoints. I am informed that this policy will continue with the overall objective of reducing the number of drink driving incidents and reducing the number of fatal and serious injuries on our roads.

### **Prison Service Strategies**

211. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide details regarding the development of a dignity at work charter in the Irish Prison Service; if a prison wide dignity and respect campaign has been launched; and if he will make a statement

on the matter. [33906/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** As the Deputy is aware the Irish Prison Service launched a new three year Strategy in April 2012. The Strategy is underpinned by a vision of providing ‘A safer community through excellence in a prison service built on respect for human dignity’. To underpin this strategy the Irish Prison Service intends to introduce a Dignity at Work Charter and a prison wide dignity and respect campaign with the aim of creating a positive and caring environment for staff and prisoners. Everyone in the Irish Prison service should be committed to treating everyone fairly, with courtesy, respecting personal dignity at all times. These principles will be at the heart of what the Irish Prison Service sets out to achieve in the coming years and into the future in all strategic actions.

I am informed by the Director General that a Working Group, comprising of representatives from Human Resources and Corporate Affairs Directorates, the Prison Officers’ Association, the Legal and Professional Standards Unit, the Employee Assistance Service and the Psychology Service, was established to deliver on this commitment. Work on phase 1 of the dignity at work programme finished in the past few weeks. This phase comprised of significant staff consultation which was undertaken through the holding of 19 focus groups at prison level. A number of subgroups have been established to identify the common issues raised and work in this regard will continue over the coming months. It is hoped that by addressing these issues we will be able to implement what is needed to make and create a working environment which is based on co-operation, openness, equality and respect.

### **Prisoner Rehabilitation Programmes**

212. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of additional spaces in work, training, exercise, and education facilities that have been made available in Midlands Prison since the opening of the new block in 2012; the number of prisoners currently engaged in work, training and education programmes in Midlands Prison; the number of prisoners engaged in work training and education programmes in Midlands Prison prior to the opening of the new block; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33907/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The Irish Prison Service provides a wide range of rehabilitative programmes that include education, vocational training, healthcare, psychiatric, psychological, counselling, welfare and spiritual services. These programmes are available in all prisons and all prisoners are eligible to use the services. On committal, all prisoners are interviewed by the Governor and are informed of the services available in the prison. At this point prisoners may be referred to services or they can self refer at a later date. Where Governors consider, on the information available, that a prisoner needs a particular intervention they will initiate a referral.

The development of prisoner programmes forms a central part of the new Irish Prison Service Three Year Strategic Plan 2012 - 2015. There is a clear commitment in the Strategy to enhance sentence planning, including Integrated Sentence Management, and the delivery of prison based rehabilitative programmes such as education, work training and resettlement programmes.

In relation to participation in education programmes, the aim of the Prison Service places a strong emphasis on improving prisoners’ employability prospects through Work Training activities and accredited vocational training courses. Over 100 workshops and service activities operate across the prison estate and the number of accredited courses and activities has increased in recent years. There are now over 100 qualifications available across 20 skill sets.

1,459 prisoners participated in accredited vocational training courses in 2012 - up from 314 in 2007 - and 1,030 prisoners received certificates in the last year.

A wide range of training workshops and service activities are operating in the Midlands Prison. These include carpentry, metalwork, computers, laundry, waste management, horticulture, industrial cleaning and catering. Prisoners housed in the new accommodation block in the Midlands have access to the existing Work Training and Education activities alongside other constructive activities such as gyms, paint parties, cleaning, and reception work. In addition to a recently opened 'bag and Tag' Tuckshop facility, the new block will also include workshop activities in printing/computers, catering training and light industry/craftwork. Soft skills programmes will also be facilitated in the new block.

In November, 2012, prior to the opening of the new block, an average of 108 inmates were engaged in work training activities in Midlands Prison compared with an average of 123 inmates in May, 2013. It is envisaged that the additional activities will come on stream in the near future once vacancies in the Work Training Officer (WTO) grade are filled through a competition which will be held in the coming weeks.

The aim of the Education Service is to deliver a high quality, broad, flexible programme of education that helps prisoners cope with their sentence, achieve personal development, prepare for life after release and establish an appetite and capacity for life-long learning. The Department of Education and Skills provides an allocation of whole-time teacher equivalents to the prisons through the VECs (220 in the academic year 2012/13).

Ten general purpose rooms have been re-designated in the new block for education purposes, this equates to approximately 70 additional places. Prior to the opening of the new block 280 students attended classes per week. During the week ending 3 May 2013, 348 students attended classes. At present the formal academic year is complete and the summer programme is running with limited resources - 150 students attended classes during week ending 5 July 2013.

### Prisoner Numbers

213. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of prisoners currently housed in each wing of Mountjoy Prison, Dublin; the number of prisoners in each wing currently housed in single occupancy cells; the number of prisoners in each wing currently housed in cells with one other prisoner; the number of prisoners in each wing currently housed in cells with more than one other prisoner; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33908/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I am advised by my officials in the Irish Prison Service that on Monday, 8th July, 2013, the number of prisoners currently housed in each wing of Mountjoy Prison was as follows:

Wing	No.
B Division:-	119
C Division:-	92
C - Base:-	11
D Division	211
Medical Unit	53
Separation Unit	62

Wing	Number in Single Occupancy Cells	Number in Double Occupancy Cells	Number housed with more than 1 other
B- Division	119	0	0
C- Division	92	0	0
C-Base	11	0	0
D - Division	33	130	48
Medical Unit	46	0	7
Separation Unit	7	42	13
Total	308	172	68

Once the current refurbishment project has been completed in September 2013, all prisoners in Mountjoy prison will be accommodated in a single cell with a wash hand basin and toilet. As the Deputy can see from the table there are 308 prisoners in Mountjoy accommodated in single cell accommodation, or 56% of the prison's population.

Given the current number of prisoners in custody - 4,203 on 8 July 2013 - the Irish Prison Service is not in a position to provide single cell accommodation to all prisoners. Single cell occupancy across the system would result in a bed capacity of less than 3,000 (only 308 in the case of Mountjoy) and would not be possible to achieve without releasing sizeable numbers of prisoners considered to represent a threat to public safety.

In addition it should be borne in mind that in some cases prisoners are housed together for reasons other than lack of capacity. Family members, friends and co-accused prisoners often elect or are assigned a shared cell. Shared cell accommodation can be very beneficial from a management point of view particularly for those who are vulnerable and at risk of self-harm. There will always be a need for certain prisoners to be accommodated together.

As outlined in the Irish Prison Service Three Year Strategic Plan, it is intended to align prison capacity with the guidelines laid down by the Inspector of Prisons by 2014, in so far as this is compatible with public safety and the integrity of the criminal justice system.

### Irish Prison Service

214. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide details regarding the development of a specific strategy to deal with prisoners requiring protection, in view of the inspector of prisons findings; the way the IPS intends to deal with prisoners requiring protection going forward; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33909/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I wish to advise the Deputy that at the end of June 2013, there were 608 prisoners on protection, of which 155 were on a restricted regime. Those not on a restricted regime can associate with other protection prisoners and have normal out of cell time during the day.

The Deputy will be aware that protection prisoners are those who are considered to be under threat or at risk in the general population. The Irish Prison Service must ensure in so far as possible the safety of prisoners, which is why those seeking protection are immediately separated from the general prison population or from specific prisoners identified as presenting a threat.

It is at the committal stage that the majority of prisoners are identified as being in need of protection. In many instances, the prisoner will request protection and in other instances, either

intelligence or the assessment of the Governor will identify a prisoner as requiring protection. Allowing prisoners to be accommodated in protective custody clearly demonstrates prison management's commitment to ensure safe and secure custody for offenders.

The Deputy will be aware that I published the Irish Prison Service Strategic Plan 2012-2015 in April last year. The Strategic Plan includes a number of Strategic Actions one of which is a commitment to develop a specific strategy for prisoners requiring protection. The Strategy also commits the Prison Service to introducing appropriate assessment procedures to inform their prisoner placement policy, to ensure that prisoners are accommodated appropriate to their security status. I am advised by my officials that the concerns regarding protection prisoners outlined in the Inspector of Prisons Annual Report 2012 will be addressed in the development of this strategy and that the target of completion by 2015 will be met.

### **Garda Investigations**

215. **Deputy Marcella Corcoran Kennedy** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if the Garda Commissioner has presented a report from the serious crime review team in relation to the death of a person (details supplied); if the SCRT has found evidence of criminal wrongdoing resulting in the death of this person; if An Garda Síochána has submitted a file to the Director of Public Prosecutions; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33934/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I am informed by the Garda authorities that the findings of the examination by the Serious Crime Review in relation to the case referred to by the Deputy have been forwarded to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. I am sure that the Deputy will appreciate that, in the circumstances, it would not be appropriate for me to make any further comment at present.

### **Military Archives**

216. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Defence the position in regard to the military service pensions archive project; when he expects that the public might have access to these records; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33636/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The Military Service Pensions Archive project is part of the Government Centenary Commemorative Programme. Approximately 300,000 files relating to the period from Easter Week 1916 through the War of Independence and Civil War comprise this collection. The files relate mainly to the applications by individuals and/or their dependants for the award of pension and gratuities for veterans who served as members of the Irish Volunteers, the Irish Citizen Army, the Hibernian Rifles, the Irish Republican Army, Cumann na mBan, Na Fianna Éireann, the National Army on active service or who were casualties or wounded while on duty during the period from April and May 1916 through to 30 September 1923. The membership records of these organisations (less that of the National Army) as on 11 July 1921 and 1 July 1922 will also be released along with selected administration files and material to put the entire collection in context. This is a significant element of the collection.

No date has been set yet for the launch of the inaugural release, which is web-based and concentrated on 1916 participants. However, arrangements for the launch are under active consideration. The first release contains files relating to in excess of 3,000 individuals (2,397 of these individuals are veterans of Easter Week 1916) and comprising some 452,000 scanned images giving background and context to the individual applications. Databasing and digitising of these files is complete. Testing of the website is nearing completion.

A phased release of material into the public domain is planned with regular releases relating

to the War of Independence and Civil War occurring in the run up to 2016. Subsequent releases will have a web element but it is important to note that not all files will be available online. Physical visits to the Military Archives will be required to see the full material. It is envisaged that the provision of accommodation for people wishing to access the Military Archives records and for the storage of the archives will be progressed further under the Government Centenary Commemoration programme.

### **Agri-Environment Options Scheme Conditions**

217. **Deputy Patrick O'Donovan** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the position regarding an appeal regarding on overclaim for a single farm payment in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Limerick; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33624/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The inspection process identified an over claim of 0.86 hectares in this case. The governing EU Regulations require that where an over claim of greater than 3%, but less than 20%, is identified, as was the case here, a penalty of twice the difference between the area claimed and that found must be applied. The person named appealed the penalty applied. The initial internal appeal process resulted in no change to the original findings and the appellant has been advised of this and of the right of appeal to the independent Agriculture Appeals Office.

### **Harbour Fees**

218. **Deputy Thomas Pringle** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he has had any contact with cruise ship operators in relation to the cost of visiting Killybegs Fishery Harbour, County Donegal; if concerns have been expressed to him that the cost could be a factor in whether they continue to use the harbour; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33639/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Cruise ship operators availing of the facilities at Killybegs Fishery Harbour Centre generally book the various harbour facilities through a shipping agent of their choice. The Harbour Master at the harbour makes every effort to accommodate the specific requirements of the visiting cruise liners. A revised Fishery Harbour Centres (Rates and Charges) Order was issued in 2012 and I am happy to advise that there has been no increase in the level of charges levied in respect of visiting cruise liners from the level set in 2003. Indeed it is worth noting that the number of visiting cruise ships in the year ended 31 December 2012 represented a 100% increase on the figures for the previous year.

### **Genetically Modified Organisms**

219. **Deputy Eoghan Murphy** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if there are genetically modified crop trials taking place here; if his attention has been drawn to Round Up, a freely available pesticide which contains a hormone disrupter called glyphosate, which is highly prevalent in cases of breast cancer. [33681/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Responsibility for the approval for the undertaking of field trials of genetically modified (GM) crops in the

State rests with my colleague the Minister for Environment and Local Government, Mr. Phil Hogan TD, in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency. In July 2012, the EPA granted consent to Teagasc to carry out a field trial with GM blight resistant potatoes in Carlow over a four year period from 2012 to 2016 inclusive. The field trial was granted subject to conditions and will be subject to ongoing inspections and reporting requirements. Apart from this GM potato trial, there are currently no other GM crops cultivated in Ireland either for field trial or commercial purposes.

Round Up and variants of Round Up (each containing the active ingredient glyphosate) have been available on the European market since the mid 1970's. Glyphosate has been scientifically reviewed previously by the EU and a number of OECD countries, including the United States, Canada, Australia etc. Reviews in each of these countries have established that products containing glyphosate can be used safely and without deleterious health effects on humans or the environment. Glyphosate is currently being reviewed again to determine its continued use in the EU in light of the most up-to-date evidence and analysis techniques. This review will encompass and involve all data currently available on the chemical and will involve all EU Member States and the European Food Safety Authority.

### **Agri-Environment Options Scheme Conditions**

220. **Deputy Ciara Conway** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will allow hay to be cut a week earlier this year under the agri-environment options scheme due to the recent fodder difficulties, in view of the current good weather spell; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33712/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Participants in AEOS 2 and AEOS 3 who selected traditional hay meadow action, with the exception of Corncrake sites in the Shannon Callows, may commence cutting the meadow for hay immediately for the 2013 cutting season only. Where this earlier cutting date is availed of the conserving of the meadow as silage is not permitted.

### **International Bodies Membership**

221. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine his views on future reform of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations and the World Food Programme; his views on the possibility of a merger between the two UN organisations given their ability to conduct joint reports, such as that in 2012 when they completed a joint rapid food security needs assessment mission in Syria, and that both the organisations are based in Rome, Italy; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33845/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The FAO is one of the largest technical bodies of the UN. A large-scale reform began several years ago that included changes to the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), and decentralisation. Ireland and our EU colleagues have been instrumental in ensuring a more focussed strategy and increased budgetary control within the FAO in recent years. A new Programme of Work and Budget was agreed at the recent conference in Rome, attended by the Minister of State, Mr. Tom Hayes, TD. This is available to download at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/027/mf490e.pdf>. The programme outlines the five strategic objectives and the main work to be undertaken by the organization in the coming years.

The World Food Programme (WFP) is mainly involved in alleviating hunger worldwide. It

is the world's largest humanitarian agency. The FAO is more involved with setting standards (e.g. via the Codex Alimentarius and the various expert committees on genetic resources and animal health) and evaluating global policy for agricultural production. Their work is complementary and they are encouraged to cooperate wherever possible. While such cooperation is to be welcomed it is unlikely that there will be a merger between the two organizations in the immediate future, given their different roles.

### **Rural Environment Protection Scheme Appeals**

222. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the outcome of a REPS appeal for a person (details supplied) in County Donegal; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33848/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** A request for a review of the decision to reduce the eligible area, following an inspection under the 2012 Single Payment Scheme, is currently being examined. The person named will be notified of the outcome of this initial review as soon as possible, which can be appealed to the independent Agriculture Appeals Office within 3 months.

#### Agriculture Schemes Administration

223. **Deputy Patrick O'Donovan** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the position regarding a matter (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33914/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Officials in my Department have commenced reissuing notifications of the outcome of applications to all farmers in Limerick.

### **Agri-Environment Options Scheme Appeals**

224. **Deputy Dan Neville** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will undertake a review of an application under agri-environment option scheme on appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Limerick; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33924/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** An application under the Agri-Environment Options Scheme from the person named was received in my Department on 22 November 2012. The process of ranking and selecting all AEOS applicants was clearly set out in the scheme documentation. Acceptance into the scheme was established using the pre-determined selection criteria as follows: 1. farmers in the Boora region of Co. Offaly who chose Wild Bird Cover Option B (Grey Partridge) as one of their selected options, 2. farmers with a minimum of 0.5 hectares of designated land, 3. farm partnerships, 4. farmers who previously participated in REPS commencing with smallest farms. and 5. others based on farm size (again favouring smaller holdings).

The person named was a previous participant in REPS. Based on the funding available farmers in category 4 with 22.06 hectares of utilisable agricultural area and below were successful. As the farm size of the person named is 53.16, the application was unsuccessful. On 27 May 2013, a letter issued to the person named informing him that he was not successful and setting out the reasons. The person was also informed of his right of appeal to AEOS Section. An appeal was received from the person named and it is currently being considered. The person named will be notified in writing of the outcome of this appeal once a decision has been made.

## **Rural Environment Protection Scheme Appeals**

225. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if a decision has been made on a review of a decision on a penalty on a REP scheme payment in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33932/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Officials in my Department are examining the issues involved and are currently conducting a review of the penalty imposed on Mr O'Connor's REPS payment. They will contact Mr O'Connor directly once the review is complete.

## **Agri-Environment Options Scheme Eligibility**

226. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the position regarding an agri-environment options scheme 3 application in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Donegal; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33933/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** An application under the Agri-Environment Options Scheme from the person named was received in my Department on 28 November 2012. The process of ranking and selecting all AEOS applicants was clearly set out in the scheme documentation. Acceptance into the scheme was established using the pre-determined selection criteria as follows: 1. farmers in the Boora region of Co. Offaly who chose Wild Bird Cover Option B (Grey Partridge) as one of their selected options, 2. farmers with a minimum of 0.5 hectares of designated land, 3. farm partnerships, 4. farmers who previously participated in REPS commencing with smallest farms. and 5. others based on farm size (again favouring smaller holdings).

The person named was a previous participant in REPS. Based on the funding available farmers in category 4 with 22.06 hectares of utilisable agricultural area and below were successful. As the farm size of the person named is 29.13, the application was unsuccessful. On 27 May 2013, a letter issued to the person named informing her that she was not successful and setting out the reasons. The person was also informed of her right of appeal to AEOS Section. An appeal was received from the person named and it is currently being considered. The person named will be notified in writing of the outcome of this appeal once a decision has been made.

## **Children's Rights Referendum**

227. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will provide an update regarding the implementation of the recommendations outlined in the Study of Young Carers in the Irish Population, which was funded by her Department in 2010 and the recommendations outlined in the national carers' strategy which specifically support young carers; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [33604/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** The Study of Young Carers in the Irish Population, published by my Department in 2010, highlights the importance of creating a better understanding of children as carers in Ireland. It found that it is very difficult to identify young carers in the population.

In order to learn more about children that undertake caring roles, my Department requested the Central Statistics Office to include a question in the Census of Population 2011. People of all ages were asked whether they provide any unpaid personal help for a friend or family mem-

ber with a long term-term illness, health problem or disability. The Census of Population 2011 found that 6,449 children provided regular unpaid personal help for a friend or family member with a long-term illness, health problems or disability. Overall, 5.6 per 1,000 children provided regular unpaid personal help for a friend or family member with a long-term illness, health problem or disability. Rates ranged from 4.3 per 1,000 in Co. Louth to 8.2 per 1000 in Co. Leitrim. It is further planned, under the National Strategy for Research and Data on Children's Lives published by my Department in November 2011, that a detailed analysis of those children who report in the 2011 Census that they undertake caring roles, will be carried out by the end of 2013. It is anticipated that the analysis will inform future policy as to how best to address the support needs of children and young people who undertake caring roles.

In 2012 the Department of Health published The National Carers' Strategy – Recognised, Supported, Empowered. The strategy recognizes that although the needs of young carers can be similar to carers of any age, they may have additional needs, which include support in education to help them to achieve their full potential.

My Department has been supporting the implementation of this strategy by ensuring that the children strategies which it is developing are cognisant of the necessity to make them as 'carer friendly' as possible. However, given the young age that the Childcare Directorate is dealing with, the number of cases where children might be carers is very small.

In preparation for the establishment of the new Child and Family Agency (CFA) the following actions have been taken that are relevant to the Carers Strategy: - Child care staff have been alerted to the strategy and its relevance to children with carer responsibilities; - Strategy disseminated to key children and family services staff; - Linkages between carer responsibilities and child protection issues have been highlighted to staff.

The National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) is developing national guidelines as a practical support for schools in the preparation of School Attendance Strategies as outlined in Section 22 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. The guidelines will assist schools to implement effective measures to support children at risk of poor attendance and participation, including those with caring responsibilities.

The NEWB has made significant progress towards delivering an integrated school support service based on the principle of "One Child, One Team, One Plan". This streamlined national approach will enhance education support services and enable the NEWB to respond appropriately to the circumstances in which children and families need help from NEWB. Consultation on the practice model started in October 2012 and concluded early in 2013. The model is also being developed to complement and link with models of practice and methods of working proposed by the new Child and Family Agency (CFA) within its proposed National Service Delivery Framework.

### **School Completion Programme**

228. **Deputy Joan Collins** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs her views on the proposals put forward by the co-ordinator of the Dominican Campus school completion programme with the support of the three primary schools (details supplied); if she has considered the proposals; and if she will respond to same. [33690/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** My Department has not received a proposal from the co-ordinator of the Dominican Campus school completion programme. Following receipt of the Deputy's question, my officials have established that the programme is seeking funding of €35,044.88 to create a new post of Traveller Education Support Worker to serve the primary schools in the project. I am also aware that this proposal

was submitted to my colleague, the Minister for Education and Skills, for his consideration. The National Educational Welfare Board, which operates under the remit of my Department, is responsible for the operational management of the School Completion Programme and the Home School Community Liaison Scheme. In delivering on this role, the board works closely with management committees, schools and local Home School Community Liaison Scheme and School Completion Programme co-ordinators to ensure student supports and interventions are tailored to meet local needs. As the services of the National Educational Welfare Board are central to this proposal, I will ask it to engage directly with the schools and the Department of Education and Skills to facilitate consideration of the proposal in the appropriate context.

It should be recognised that the Dominican Campus School Completion Programme operates under the direction of a Local Management Committee. This Committee assesses local needs to devise a programme of student supports and interventions, known as the Retention Plan, to support identified young people at risk of educational disadvantage in their school, home and community life. Funding is provided by my Department following approval of annual plans by the National Educational Welfare Board. The Deputy may wish to note that the Dominican Campus School Completion Programme received funding of €193,754 in the current academic year. The project model approach enables creative and innovative local strategies to be developed. Therefore, it is open to the Dominican Campus School Completion Programme to consider its priority requirements, including the present proposal, within the existing planning and funding cycle. Furthermore, within its targeting process, the schools involved should identify and prioritise at-risk children, including those from within the Traveller community, for available supports.

In planning its programme of supports, the Local Management Committee must have regard to the full extent of DEIS resources provided to its schools. Given the need to achieve saving in the School Completion Programme in 2013 and 2014, a coherent approach in the use of all school resources will ensure available funds are committed to those services which provide the greatest contribution to children's educational outcomes. Projects are finalising proposals for the next academic year. The National Educational Welfare Board will work with the Local Management Committee to examine this proposal in the context of its suite of supports and interventions.

### **Genetically Modified Organisms**

229. **Deputy Eoghan Murphy** asked the Minister for Health his policy in relation on the labelling of GMO ingredients in foods. [33681/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** Ireland adopts a “positive but precautionary” stance on GMO food and feed matters, considers the advice of EFSA with regard to authorisations, and votes with the European Commission once assured of the safety of the product. The only GM food ingredients that are authorised in the EU and that may, as a consequence, be marketed in Ireland are soya bean, maize, oilseed rape, cotton, sugar beet and starch potato. Under current EU legislation, if more than 0.9% of a food or a food ingredient is derived from a GM source, then it must be labelled accordingly. Even if the GM ingredient is present in a food but below the 0.9% threshold level, operators must be in a position to demonstrate that they tried to obtain the food or ingredient from a non-GM source and that its presence is due to cross contamination. Non-authorised GMOs are not allowed at any level.

### **Care of the Elderly**

230. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Health his policy in relation to supporting older people and those with care needs to remain at home; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33607/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** Government policy is to support older people to live in dignity and independence in their own homes and communities for as long as possible and to support access to quality long-term residential care where this is appropriate. The Health Service Executive has responsibility for the delivery of services such as mainstream home help, enhanced home care packages, meals-on-wheels and day or respite care. The budget for these community services for older people in 2013 is €392 million. The HSE has committed to maintaining community supports at the levels planned for in 2012. This means that 10,870 people will be in receipt of home care packages, and that 10.3 million hours of home help service will be provided with 50,000 people receiving this service.

Following on from the special allocation of €35 million for mental health in Budget 2012, a further €35 million was provided in Budget 2013 for the continued development of community mental health teams for, *inter alia*, older persons and for mental health intellectual disability. In addition, funding is being provided to further advance suicide prevention initiatives and forensic services. Approximately 900 additional staff are being recruited to implement these measures. The vision for the Disability Services Programme set out in the Value for Money and Policy Review is to contribute to the realisation of a society where people with disabilities are supported as far as possible to live in the community, to participate to their full potential in the economic and social life of the community and to have access to a range of quality personal social supports and services to enhance their quality of life and well-being. In this context, support for community living means providing the range and type of individualised supports needed to enable each person to live in the home of their choice and be included in their community. The range of individualised supports provided by the health services to enable people with a disability to live in their own homes covers a diverse area, such as the provision of care, therapeutic supports and training.

### **Primary Care Strategy**

231. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide an update on the primary health strategy's commitment to have 400 to 600 fully functioning primary care teams by the end of 2014; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33608/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The implementation of the Primary Care Strategy is a priority for this Government. The objective is to develop services in the community which will give people direct access to integrated multi-disciplinary teams of general practitioners, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and others. At the end of May 2013, some 418 primary care teams were in operation, holding clinical team meetings involving general practitioners and HSE staff. The 418 teams provide services for almost 4 million of the population with 2,472 HSE staff members and over 1,567 general practitioners participating. The HSE's 2013 National Service Plan commits to having 484 operational teams in place by the end of this year.

### **Community Care Issues**

232. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Health his plans to publish eligibility criteria for home help and home care packages to provide for greater transparency in the allocation of community care services; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33610/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** As this is a service matter it has been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply.

### **Respite Care Services**

233. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Health his plans to undertake an

audit of residential, in-home and emergency respite services to identify gaps in existing service levels and to assess current and future need for these services; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33611/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** As the Deputy's question relates to service matters, I have arranged for the question to be referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply to the Deputy.

### **Medical Card Eligibility**

234. **Deputy John McGuinness** asked the Minister for Health if a medical card issued to a person (details supplied) in County Kilkenny is still listed as valid up to March 2014. [33621/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Health Service Executive has been asked to examine this matter and to reply to the Deputy as soon as possible. The Health Service Executive operates the General Medical Services scheme, which includes medical cards and GP visit cards, under the Health Act 1970, as amended. It has established a dedicated contact service for Members of the Oireachtas specifically for queries relating to medical cards and GP visit cards, which the Deputy may wish to use for an earlier response. Contact information has issued to Oireachtas Members.

### **Medical Card Appeals**

235. **Deputy John McGuinness** asked the Minister for Health if an application for a medical card now under appeal will be expedited and approved in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Carlow. [33622/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Health Service Executive has been asked to examine this matter and to reply to the Deputy as soon as possible. The Health Service Executive operates the General Medical Services scheme, which includes medical cards and GP visit cards, under the Health Act 1970, as amended. It has established a dedicated contact service for members of the Oireachtas specifically for queries relating to medical cards and GP visit cards, which the Deputy may wish to use for an earlier response. Contact information has issued to Oireachtas members.

### **Air Ambulance Service Provision**

236. **Deputy Jim Daly** asked the Minister for Health the number of health centres of excellence that are in the country; the number of these that have operating helipads for delivery of patients by air ambulance; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33625/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** In relation to the particular query raised by the Deputy, as this is a service issue, I have asked the Health Service Executive to respond directly to the Deputy in this matter.

### **Medical Card Appeals**

237. **Deputy John McGuinness** asked the Minister for Health if an application for a medical card now under appeal will be expedited and approved in respect of a person (details sup-

plied) in County Carlow. [33642/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Health Service Executive has been asked to examine this matter and to reply to the Deputy as soon as possible. The Health Service Executive operates the General Medical Services scheme, which includes medical cards and GP visit cards, under the Health Act 1970, as amended. It has established a dedicated contact service for members of the Oireachtas specifically for queries relating to medical cards and GP visit cards, which the Deputy may wish to use for an earlier response. Contact information has issued to Oireachtas members.

### **National Treatment Purchase Fund Issues**

238. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Health his plans for the role and function of the National Treatment Purchase Fund; if the NTPF is in a direct relationship with the Health Service Executive; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33667/13]

239. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Health if the chief executive officer of the National Treatment Purchase Fund has recently resigned; if he has plans to replace the CEO; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33668/13]

240. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Health if management of the National Treatment Purchase Fund has been in consultation with staff at the NTPF about their future role within the organisation or the public service; if staff have been offered redeployment opportunities; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33669/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 238 to 240, inclusive, together.

The National Treatment Purchase Fund Board was established in 2004 (S.I. No. 179 of 2004). Membership of the Board of the NTPF, as well as accountability and reporting arrangements are set out in its Establishment Order; the SI provides for a Board of nine members which reports to the Minister.

In July 2011, I announced changes to the remit of the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF), namely that its role would be changed to support the mission of the Special Delivery Unit (SDU), which aims to unblock access to acute services by improving the flow of patients through the system. The NTPF is now fully aligned with the SDU and is targeting waiting lists strategically and assisting in the performance management of hospitals to reduce waiting times for patients. The NTPF capability is a core part of the SDU's performance improvement role.

The NTPF has been working to rationalise its internal structures and to establish new functional areas that reflect its evolving role. These include data and analytics reporting, data audit and quality assurance and performance improvement. Where appropriate, redeployment opportunities in other agencies have also been identified and I understand that a number of staff have taken these up.

The Acting CEO of the NTPF resigned with effect from 5 July last and the HSE National Director designate of Acute Hospitals has been appointed as Acting CEO of NTPF. The NTPF's future will be considered further in the context of the structural reforms set out in *Future Health - A Strategic Framework for Reform of the Health Service 2012-2015*.

### **Diabetes Strategy**

241. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 220 of 23 May 2013, the reason the Health Service Executive has not contacted me

to outline the specific locations of staff recruited under the national integrated care diabetes programme in the mid-west region; if the HSE will do so as a matter of urgency; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33675/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** I understand that the Health Service Executive responded to the Deputy in relation to this matter on 2nd July 2013.

### **Medical Aids and Appliances Provision**

242. **Deputy Timmy Dooley** asked the Minister for Health his plans regarding funding for the provision of art assist devices for persons with peripheral arterial disease in view of the fact that this type of therapy is currently not covered by the Health Service Executive; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33689/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) conducted a Health Technology Assessment (HTA) of intermittent pneumatic compression (IPC) for severe peripheral arterial disease at the request of the Health Service Executive (HSE). This HTA was published on the 26th of June 2013. Arising from the findings of the HTA, HIQA's advice to the HSE was that, despite some promising results on the effect of IPC in people with severe peripheral vascular disease (who are not suitable for revascularisation), further high quality studies are required to reliably demonstrate its effectiveness. They also advised that until such evidence is generated in the context of well designed research studies, the efficacy of this treatment remains unproven.

Within the Irish healthcare system there has been limited use of IPC to treat patients with critical limb ischaemia. Following the publication of this HTA report there will be engagement and discussion with prescribing clinicians regarding its findings.

### **Speech and Language Therapy**

243. **Deputy Pat Deering** asked the Minister for Health the reason there is an extra long waiting period for access to speech therapy in the County Carlow area more so than any other area; if there is an appropriate level of resources in place to tackle the waiting list in County Carlow; and when additional staff will be taken on to tackle this problem [33695/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** As the Deputy's question relates to service matters, I have arranged for the question to be referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply to the Deputy.

### **Symphysiotomy Report**

244. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Health the reason he has been involved in meetings with so-called representative groups of symphysiotomy victims but has failed to meet with Survivors of Symphysiotomy; if the Walsh report has been furnished to these groups; and when it will be furnished to others and made public. [33699/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** As the Deputy is aware, my Department has commissioned an independent research report in relation to the practice of symphysiotomy in Ireland. It is my intention to brief the Government on the report prior to its publication and I also intend to meet with representatives from all of the symphysiotomy support groups prior to

the release of the report. The independent research report has not been forwarded to any group.

### **Care of the Elderly**

245. **Deputy Jim Daly** asked the Minister for Health his plans to establish a forum on long-term residential care to plan for the ongoing and future requirements of Ireland's aging population; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33711/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** I refer the Deputy to my reply to Parliamentary Question Number 674 of 28 May 2013.

### **Medical Aids and Appliances Provision**

246. **Deputy Martin Ferris** asked the Minister for Health when a person (details supplied) in County Kerry will receive a hearing aid. [33720/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Health Service Executive Community Audiology service administers and monitors hearing tests for adults who are at risk for hearing loss. Appointments for the audiology service are sent in a strict chronology according to clinical priorities and date of receipt of referral. The HSE has been asked to examine this matter and to reply to the Deputy as soon as possible.

### **Respite Care Services**

247. **Deputy Michael Colreavy** asked the Minister for Health if there is flexibility within the respite care programme to offer domiciliary respite to those caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's disease; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33755/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** As this is a service matter it has been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply.

### **Patient Files**

248. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Health if he will ensure that all relevant patient files are released from the now closed surgery (details supplied) in County Westmeath in view of the fact that patients are now finding it difficult to renew/review their medical cards as their new GPs do not have their files from their previous GPs. [33834/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** As this is a service matter, I have arranged for the question to be referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply to the Deputy.

### **Health Services Staff Data**

249. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 603 of 25 June 2013, if he will provide a breakdown of where the vacancies identified are located and at what grade; the number of posts currently vacant that are to be filled; his plans to fill these vacancies; and the number of these posts that are not being filled as a result of the recruitment embargo. [33836/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** As this is a service matter this question has been referred to the HSE for direct reply.

## Health Services Provision

250. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 508 of 18 June 2013, in regard to the long waiting times for occupational therapy in the Dublin 15 area, if his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Health Service Executive has stated that there are currently 170 children on the clinic waiting list with the longest waiting time of 40 weeks; if he is aware that since February of this year, the staffing numbers in the paediatric team have been reduced by four staff and as a result it is not possible to offer appointments to children; if he is further aware that this may also result in a child being seen in a clinic but not being seen for further assessment for possibly 18 months afterwards and that only children who have been accepted into the service and children seen through an assessment of need are being seen; if he will take steps as a matter of acute urgency to lift the recruitment moratorium in this case to ensure that cover will immediately be provided while the service is awaiting staff to return from maternity leave; if he will also take steps as a matter of acute urgency to lift the recruitment moratorium in this regard to ensure that other vacancies in the occupational therapy department can be immediately recruited; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33837/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** The particular issue raised by the Deputy is a service matter for the Health Service Executive. Accordingly I have arranged for the question to be referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply to the Deputy.

## Health Services Issues

251. **Deputy John Browne** asked the Minister for Health the number of legal cases dealt with in 2012 by the Health Service Executive in 2012; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33844/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** As this is an operational matter for the Health Service Executive I have referred the Deputy's question to the Parliamentary Affairs Division of the Executive for attention and direct reply to him.

## Accident and Emergency Services Provision

252. **Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide an update on plans for the emergency department at St. Columcille's Hospital, Loughlinstown, County Dublin; if he will confirm that it is now the case that this department will remain open for an extended period; if he will provide details of same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33849/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** I published the Framework for Smaller Hospitals - *Securing the Future of Smaller Hospitals: A Framework for Development*, and the Hospital Groups Report on 14 May 2013. This Framework offers clear information about the role of our smaller hospitals, including St Colmcille's Hospital, and what they will do in the future. Hospital groups will be required to submit a strategic plan within one year of establishment which will outline its plans for future services within the group area, including those to be delivered in each smaller hospital. In relation to the particular query raised by the Deputy, regarding an update on plans for the emergency Department at St. Colmcille's Hospital, as this is a service issue, I have asked the Health Service Executive to respond directly to the Deputy in this matter.

### Health Services Issues

253. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Health his views on a matter (details supplied). [33922/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** As this is a service matter this question has been referred to the HSE for direct reply.

### HSE Reports

254. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the reason the Health Service Executive has yet to publish a report into the death in 2006 of a person (details supplied) at a hospital in County Cork; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33929/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** As this is a service matter it has been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply.

### Health Services Issues

255. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Health his views on correspondence (details supplied) regarding those suffering from mitochondrial disease; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33930/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** In relation to the particular query raised by the Deputy, as this is a service issue, I have asked the Health Service Executive to respond directly to the Deputy in this matter.

### Driving Licence Issues

256. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the position regarding a driving licence in respect of a person (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33679/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The operation of the driver licensing system is a matter for the Road Safety Authority (RSA), and I cannot comment on individual cases. As far as the law is concerned, car drivers in the age range 60 to 67 may apply for a licence which expires at 70. From 67-69 they may apply for a three-year licence. In neither case is a medical report required. The legislation requires a medical report if the applicant will be 70 or more on the day of commencement of the licence. However, in circumstances where there is a condition or a history of conditions which the legislation requires be notified in a licence application, a medical report would be required from an applicant who is under 70.

The circumstances described by the Deputy should not therefore arise. A person of 66 at the time of the commencement of the licence should receive a licence valid until they turn 70, and should not be asked for a medical report unless they have a condition, or a history of a condition, which requires notification. In the latter case their existing licence should have a code 101 on it, indicating that renewal is subject to a medical report.

## **Tourism Revenue**

257. **Deputy Ciarán Lynch** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the value to Ireland of fishing tourism under the headings of game, sea and coarse fishing; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33706/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The matter raised is an operational matter for Fáilte Ireland. I have referred the Deputy's Question to Fáilte Ireland for direct reply. Please advise my private office if you do not receive a reply within ten working days.

## **Irish Coast Guard Issues**

258. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the position regarding the provision of a new Irish Coast Guard building and premises at a particular location (details supplied) in County Wicklow; his plans to draw funding for this project; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33722/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The Deputy is inquiring about the plans for the proposed new Coast Guard Volunteer Station House in Greystones, Co. Wicklow. At present, the Office of Public Works are finalising the design of the Station House and are engaged in ongoing negotiations with the Local Authority. Should these negotiations be successful I intend to move forward to the build phase in 2014.

## **International Bodies Membership**

259. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport further to Parliamentary Question No. 279 on 4 July 2013, the position regarding each international organisation, international agency or international body that Ireland is a member of; that his Department or a State body or agency under the aegis of his Department is a member of; if he will provide the full list as per all other Government Departments responding to a similar parliamentary question on that date; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33744/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The information requested by the Deputy, in respect of international organisations, agencies and bodies of which Ireland is a member through my Department is set out below. In cases where an Agency under the remit of my Department is a member of an international organisation, agency or body, this is a matter for the agency themselves. I have referred the Deputy's question to the agencies for direct reply on this. If you do not receive a response within ten working days please contact my private office.

### **Membership of International Organisations, Agencies & Bodies**

ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organisation)

ISASI (International Society of Air Safety Investigators)

ECAC/ACC (European Civil Aviation Conference - Group of Experts on Air Accident Investigation)

ESASI (European Society of Air Safety Investigators)

ERTICO (the network of Intelligent Transport Systems and Services stakeholders in Europe)

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ROADEX (The Network is an EU funded trans-national collaboration of northern European roads organisations whose aim is to share roads information and research)

International Maritime Rescue Federation

Agreement for Co-operation in Dealing with Pollution of the North Sea by Oil (Bonn Agreement)

International Civil Aviation Organisation

Eurocontrol

European Civil Aviation Conference

European Aviation Safety Agency

International Hydrographic Organisation

International Maritime Organisation

Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control

International Association of Light House Authorities (Commissioners of Irish Lights is a member)

### **Air Accident Investigations**

260. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport further to Parliamentary Question No. 731 of 14 May 2013 if he will provide an update of his Department's air accident investigation unit's investigation of an incident involving aircraft (details supplied) in County Wicklow on 13 July 2012; when he expects the unit in his Department to issue the draft report to interested parties; when he expects to be in a position to publish the final report into the incident; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33752/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** I have been advised by the Air Accident Investigation Unit (AAIU) of my Department that they expect to issue a draft final report to interested parties by the end of July. The Regulation provides a period of 28 days for comment following which the comments will be considered and the Final Report issued and published on the AAIU website. As the AAIU is independent in the conduct of its Investigations, I do not propose to make comment on individual investigations.

### **Road Signage**

261. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the purpose and intention of the Road Traffic (Signs) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 (SI 187 of 2013); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33753/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** As outlined in the Explanatory Note to Statutory Instrument No. 187 of 2013, these Regulations prescribe an alternative design that may be used for traffic sign number RUS 013 (no turn left) and the Second Schedule to the Road Traffic (Signs) Regulations 1997 (S.I. No. 181 of 1997) is amended accordingly.

### **Sports Capital Programme Eligibility**

262. **Deputy Heather Humphreys** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the funding opportunities for a project (details supplied) in County Cavan; and if he will make a

statement on the matter. [33917/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Michael Ring):** The allocations under the 2012 Sports Capital Programme were announced last December and there are no more grants available at this time. No decision has been taken on the timing of the next round of the Sports Capital Programme. Any future rounds will be advertised in that national press. It will be open to any club to apply under any future round of the Sports Capital Programme, subject to the terms and conditions that will apply at that time.

It may be possible for the club to raise funds via the ‘Tax Relief for Donations to Certain Sports Bodies’ scheme (section 847A of the Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997). This is a Revenue operated scheme which offers tax benefits to individuals or companies who make donations to the club. Further details on this scheme and how it operates can be found on the Revenue Commissioners website.