

Written Answers.

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

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

Copyright Legislation Review

11. **Deputy Catherine Murphy** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the timeline in which he expects the Government to respond to the report and draft Bill of the copyright review committee; if he will indicate at this stage the further consultations he plans with members of the public and interested parties; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50526/13]

13. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his plans to update copyright legislation to support the development of the digital industry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50553/13]

Minister of State at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Sean Sherlock): I propose to take Questions Nos. 11 and 13 together.

A Report entitled “Modernising Copyright” compiled by the independent Copyright Review Committee comprising Dr. Eoin O’Dell of Trinity College, Professor Steve Hedley of University College Cork and Ms Patricia McGovern of DFMG Solicitors was published on 29 October 2013 last. The Report followed from the establishment in May 2011 of the Copyright Review Committee to examine current Irish copyright legislation to identify any areas that might be perceived as creating barriers to innovation and to make recommendations as to how these barriers might be overcome through changes to legislation.

In Ireland, as in many countries throughout the world, there has been a growing recognition of the need to ensure that copyright legislation remains fit for purpose in the digital age and the specific challenges that it presents. This is also an issue on which the EU is currently deliberating and I understand that the European Commission has announced its intentions to undertake a consultation on copyright later this month in the context also of its review of the copyright acquis.

The Report, published by the Copyright Review Committee, involved an extensive consultation process by the Committee, and contains in excess of 60 recommendations covering a diverse range of copyright issues. My Department is currently engaged in conducting a detailed analysis of the recommendations in the Report which I expect will take until early 2014 to complete. I would hope thereafter, to be in a position at that point to bring the results of our examination to Government with recommendations including in relation to proposed legislative amendments. As part of our initial examination of the Report’s recommendations, I am

very interested in hearing the views of all interested parties so that, as a first step, my Department has arranged for the convening of a public Forum at which the members of the Copyright Review Committee will be present to present on the Report and to respond to issues arising. This Forum is being held in the Royal Irish Academy on 9 December next and registration for the Forum can be completed on my Department's website at www.djei.ie.

Jobs Protection

12. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will ensure that the skilled and profitable Pratt and Whitney Aerospace operation, which employs over 100 workers and has operated successfully for decades in Dublin, continues its maintenance operation here. [50318/13]

32. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the steps he has taken to assist in protecting the 400 jobs under threat at Lufthansa Technik. [50320/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): I propose to take Questions Nos. 12 and 32 together.

Both Pratt and Whitney and Lufthansa have had to undertake a global review of their operations. In Pratt and Whitney's case, a decision was taken by the parent company to transfer dwindling customer requirements to a site in the US. This has resulted in the phasing out of older technologies and products. However, the company still has excess capacity across its engineering/maintenance/repair operations. Indeed 4 other such sites had already been closed by the company. This is the key determinant in their decision to initiate a process which is likely to cease production at the Rathcoole plant and to introduce a redundancy programme there, on a phased basis, over the next eighteen months. 107 jobs will be impacted by the programme.

IDA have engaged regularly with the company over recent years in order to assist them address the challenges they faced in a very fast-changing and competitive marketplace. This involved advice and support towards addressing issues that arose for the company from time to time. IDA arranged that the company became involved in a wider grouping of International Engineering companies, based in Ireland, which IDA established, in order to benefit from shared experiences and facilitate capacity building. In addition IDA met with senior management for Pratt and Whitney in the USA in October 2013 and, also, they have held ongoing engagement with the wider parent group, United Technologies, in the USA.

In the case of Lufthansa, the decision to enter into a consultation process with the workers was taken following an extensive review of operations, in the context of declining revenues and shrinking international market opportunities. The company has pointed out that enhanced quality and efficiencies of the new generations of aircraft engines - with reduced need for overhaul - has impacted on their business with fewer engines becoming available for service. There are also complex changes in the dynamics of aircraft maintenance, including engine refurbishment, worldwide, which have knock-on impacts in facilities such as those in Ireland. As you will appreciate, the ultimate decision in these cases is made by the parent company, on strictly commercial grounds, and on what is seen by the company as being in the best interests of the group as a whole.

I have met senior executives of the company on three occasions since taking office and IDA has been engaged with them very frequently over recent years in an effort to find solutions to the difficult business environment they face. The IDA arranged the intervention of the State's Industrial Relations service at a time of Industrial Relations difficulties and considerable prog-

ress was achieved on that issue at the time. IDA also approved a training grant to train the production workers on a new engine type which enabled the company to take on new business. As various other issues arose there was regular contact between the IDA and company management to provide advice and information. However the current challenges are very significant.

IDA Ireland has met with company management in both cases with a view to creating a profile of the Rathcoole plants, and of the workforces and their skills, for marketing purposes by IDA's global team. IDA will remain in on-going contact with the companies during the next 12-18 months. In addition, I have arranged that Enterprise Ireland will engage with the company to explore whatever other options might be possible, taking into account that Agency's remit and experience in supporting the Irish-owned engineering sector.

I am conscious of the highly-skilled workforces at both companies and have asked IDA to explore the possibility of securing a takeover or buy-out for either company. I want to assure the House that all that can be done by the State's agencies in an effort to secure a positive result for the employees at both companies is being done and will continue to be done, including any appropriate upskilling of the employees affected.

Question No. 13 answered with Question No. 11.

Trade Agreements

14. **Deputy Micheál Martin** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his plans to expand market access in the United States of America. [48807/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): One of the key means to expanding market access in the US will be the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. The decision by the EU Trade Council last June to formally launch negotiations on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the US was the outcome of a key Government objective for Ireland's EU Presidency. Now that the negotiations are underway, we will fully play our part in supporting the EU Commission in getting the best deal possible for Ireland and the EU.

The mandate on the EU side is a broad ranging one, covering virtually all sectors of economic interest. It builds on the outcome of the work of the EU-US High Level Group that recommended that negotiations on a comprehensive trade and investment agreement between the EU and the US should aim to achieve ambitious outcomes in three broad areas, namely market access, regulatory barriers and non-tariff barriers, and rules addressing shared global trade challenges and opportunities. With this wide scope for negotiation, market access opportunities should follow.

I fully intend to ensure that these opportunities can be exploited through the activities of the agencies under my remit. Enterprise Ireland's remit is to maintain and grow jobs in Irish companies by driving the growth of Irish-owned companies in overseas markets. In that context, Enterprise Ireland is working with Irish companies to assist them entering and expanding into the US market. Since taking office, I have undertaken 9 trade and investment missions to the United States. I have also initiated a joint working group between IDA and EI to develop the possibility for global sourcing by Irish companies.

The USA is a key overseas market for Enterprise Ireland's client companies; in 2012 Enterprise Ireland clients' exports to the USA amounted to €1.56 billion (approximately 10% of total client exports), representing a 20% increase over 2011 figures, making the USA a priority market for our clients. Enterprise Ireland has 4 offices in the USA, in New York, Boston, Silicon

Valley and Texas. The Texas office was newly opened this year. All 4 offices are on the ground, working in partnership with Irish enterprises, providing a cohesive set of supports to help them exploit the opportunities of the US market.

Industrial Development

15. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the way Irish pharmaceutical companies will be supported to avail of the opportunities for increased production and employment following the recent increase in new drug approvals by the US Food and Drug Administration; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50550/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The Life Sciences sector is central to the Action Plan for Jobs and in particular for Enterprise Ireland's (EI) strategy to support its indigenous Irish clients to create jobs. As far as EI clients are concerned, the approval of a number of new drugs by the US Food and Drug Administration in 2013 is expected to provide limited opportunity for the indigenous pharmaceutical companies in the short term. The indigenous pharmaceutical manufacturing companies are mainly focussed on over the counter and generic pharmaceutical products and sold mainly in the UK and Europe. Those companies have access to all the full suite of state supports available to indigenous industry. If any opportunities arise for indigenous pharmaceutical companies, Enterprise Ireland will bring all its supports to bear in support of such opportunities. Enterprise Ireland continues to work closely with IDA Ireland to link indigenous companies with their FDI counterparts and this may generate some opportunities in support, services and sub contract manufacturing.

IDA are seeing some positive investment trends from existing and new clients concerning the manufacture of newly approved drugs in Ireland. Many of these new drugs are low volume and can be accommodated in existing Irish sites. However many of the newly approved drugs are biotech drugs and may well require greenfield, expansion investments and new job creation in bio-manufacturing.

Central to the continued success of Irish companies internationally has been their R&D capabilities, leadership and management strengths and collaborative partnerships with some of the world's leading companies in the sector. The indigenous company base has extensive capabilities across the pharmaceutical and biotechnology supply chain including drug discovery, development and drug delivery; the manufacture of active pharmaceutical ingredients; the manufacture of human and veterinary finished products; the provision of pharma services, including clinical trials management, regulation, engineering and construction.

The indigenous bio-pharmaceutical sector plays a key role in this ecosystem and consists of approximately 100 Enterprise Ireland client companies. This sector has been growing at an average of 14% per annum over the last four years. In 2012, the sector had exports of over €450M, and employment of over 2,500 people. The indigenous sector is highly innovative and dynamic with companies competing successfully in international markets throughout the world e.g. Sigmoid, Opsona, Alimentary Health, ICON, Chanelle, TopChem, Barclays, Eirgen, Arran Chemicals etc.

The State has invested heavily through Science Foundation Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland in the development of a World-class Research Infrastructure by funding industry-academic research collaborations, Industry-led research programmes, Technology Centres and the Technology Gateways Programmes through the likes of the National Institute for Bioprocess Research and Training (NIBRT), the Solid State Pharmaceuticals cluster and the Pharma Technology Centre. These centres aim to improve the productivity and competitiveness of the

Irish biopharma industry by investing in research on next generation manufacturing processes and training & education of people to work in this industry.

A key focus for Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and other relevant stakeholder bodies is to promote and build expertise in 'biological' research, development and manufacture such that Ireland continues to develop as a globally recognised 'biopharmaceutical hub'. The NIBRT facility has been effective in bringing training on large molecule manufacturing processes to the sector in Ireland that has successfully attracted and developed globally leading programmes from Allergan, Amgen, Centocor, Eli Lilly, Genzyme, Merck, Biomarin and Pfizer, as examples. Ireland now has a globally leading biopharmaceutical cluster in the next generation of pharmaceutical products.

IDA Ireland, through its overseas network, remains committed to maintaining and growing relationships with key decision makers in the pharmaceutical industry and can offer a wide variety of assistance to companies to support new investment and uplift in technical capability of existing clients.

Trade Agreements

16. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his views on the potential benefits and risks for Ireland from the Mercosur trade talks; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50549/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The EU-Mercosur trade negotiations take place in the context of the EU's common commercial policy. The EU Commission leads the talks for the EU. Negotiations on an EU-Mercosur Association Agreement were launched in 2000, suspended in 2004 due to substantial differences on the trade part of the agreement, and resumed again in May 2010. Since then, nine negotiating rounds were held, the last one in October 2012. These rounds focused on trade rules. At the EU-Mercosur trade ministerial meeting held in Santiago on 26 January 2013, the EU and Mercosur agreed to exchange offers on market access concessions for goods, services and government procurement not later than in the last quarter of 2013. I understand that while the EU Commission is currently preparing the draft EU offer, it is not clear if the EU and Mercosur offers will actually be exchanged before the end of this year.

Brazil, the largest economy by far in Mercosur, is important for Ireland's future export growth. It is identified in the Strategy for Trade, Tourism and Investment as a key priority market for trade and investment. Both Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland have offices in Brazil to attract inward investment and help create new exporting business for Irish firms. Improving export performance in faster growing emerging economic blocs such as Mercosur is important for our economic recovery and for creating new jobs. Access to the EU beef market is a sensitive issue for Ireland in these negotiations. The EU Commission is very well aware of this and I expect this to be reflected in the preparation of the EU's offer. As the Mercosur negotiations develop I will ensure our economic interests in this agreement are both promoted and defended to the fullest extent possible.

Employment Rights

17. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation when the expected workplace relations legislation will be moved in Dáil Éireann; and the steps taken by the Government to enhance and develop workers' rights since coming to power. [50483/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The Government is committed to reform of the State's existing Workplace Relations Services. Shortly after entering office, I committed to a fundamental reform of the workplace relations system. The overall objectives are to promote harmonious and productive employment relationships and to encourage early resolution of disputes, the vindication of employees' rights and minimisation of the costs involved for all parties - employers, employees and Government - in terms of money, time and workplace productivity.

I propose to establish a two-tier Workplace Relations structure which will involve two statutorily independent bodies replacing the current five. We will have a new single body of first instance to be called the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) and a separate appeals body, which will effectively be an expanded Labour Court. A significant amount of work has been completed on the preparation of the Workplace Relations Bill. Enactment of the Bill will necessitate amendments to 22 primary acts, 12 specified parts or sections of acts and 71 statutory instruments. My Department has been engaging with the AG's Office on an on-going basis to progress the drafting of the Bill and I am committed to the publication and enactment of the legislation at an early stage with a view to having the proposed new Workplace Relations structures in place during 2014.

In addition to the progression of the enabling legislation, much work has already been completed or is underway in relation to the enhancement of efficiency, effectiveness, business processes and technology, within the bodies concerned. This Government has also introduced a wide range of measures to establish and protect the employment rights of workers and to provide the policy, legislative and institutional framework within which good industrial relations prosper.

The Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2012, which commenced on 1 August 2012, provides for a radical overhaul of the statutory wage setting mechanisms and reinstates a robust system of protection for low paid and vulnerable workers in the aftermath of the 2011 High Court ruling in the John Grace Fried Chicken case. The 2012 Act provided for reviews of each Joint Labour Committee (JLC) to be carried out by the Labour Court. On 1 October, 2013, I published the Labour Court Report. I have accepted the recommendations contained in the Report and the Ministerial Orders to effect the recommendations are currently being drafted and I hope to be in a position to sign them shortly.

In May 2013, the Supreme Court struck down as unconstitutional the framework for Registered Employment Agreements. This is clearly an important issue for many employers and their employees, particularly in relation to rates of pay and tendering for contracts and I intend to bring forward legislation to address the ruling as soon as possible. The Programme for Government contains a commitment to reform the current law on employees' rights to engage in collective bargaining, so as to ensure compliance by the State with recent judgments of the European Court of Human Rights. Discussions with stakeholders on the issue are on-going and I hope to be in a position to put proposals to Cabinet shortly.

This Government decision in 2011 to reverse the €1 per hour reduction in the National Minimum Wage introduced by the previous Government represents a significant commitment to protect the lowest paid and most vulnerable workers. The Protection of Employees (Temporary Agency Work) Act 2012, provides that equal treatment in terms of basic working and employment conditions must be applied to temporary agency workers in the same way as if they were directly recruited by the hirer to the same or similar job.

Migrant workers are a vulnerable class of people and careful consideration is given to the potential for abuse and many of the criteria in evaluating employment permits applications fo-

cus on the bona-fides of the employer and the protection of the employee. This feature of the employment permits regime will be preserved in the draft Employment Permits Bill which I envisage submitting to Government for approval at the earliest opportunity. The Bill as drafted will also provide, subject to Government approval, for amending legislation in order to provide a defence for the employee, following the result of the High Court Judgement of 31st August 2012 concerning Mr. Younis.

The introduction of these measures demonstrates this Government's commitment to deliver modern, user friendly and world class workplace relations services and to ensure optimum protection for the employment rights of workers.

Trade Agreements

18. **Deputy Mick Wallace** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his views on whether the transatlantic trade and investment partnership might affect Ireland's sovereignty; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50562/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership is a broad ranging economic agreement being negotiated between the EU and the US. This agreement with the U.S. is very significant not only for the EU but also for Ireland given the scale of U.S. investment here and the deep historic ties we have with America. In 2012, U.S. firms had investments worth over \$200 billion in our country and last year we exported over €26 billion in goods and services to U.S. buyers. These facts underline the importance of this Partnership to Ireland, and the tens of thousands that are employed around the country by U.S. firms and indigenous ones that sell into the U.S. market.

With a focus on an export led recovery to stimulate growth and new jobs, this and similar agreements are really important to Ireland because they give our exporters greater access to new markets. With the weight of the EU behind these and other trade agreements we can achieve far greater benefits for our exporters than would be possible otherwise. This is the largest and most comprehensive economic agreement ever contemplated by the EU with another country. I am pleased that the mandate for the first Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership was adopted by the EU Council during the Irish Presidency.

Competence for undertaking trade and investment negotiations flows from the many referenda, including most recently that on the Lisbon Treaty. Accordingly, competence for negotiating the TTIP rests with the EU Commission under the EU's common commercial policy. These negotiations take place on the basis of specific mandates from the EU Council of Ministers to the EU Commission.

Employment Data

19. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the date by which he expects the rate of employment to return to the pre-crisis levels based on current rates of change. [50485/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): My Department does not undertake employment forecasts. However, the Government's Action Plan for Jobs has set the objective of supporting the creation of 100,000 extra jobs in the economy over the period 2012 to 2016 with an overall target of 2 million people in sustainable employment by 2020, through a series of annual measures aimed at improving Ireland's competitiveness and

making it easier for enterprises to do business. Data from the Central Statistics Office show that employment increased by 58,000 in the year to Quarter 3 2013. Employment in the private sector increased by 61,900 when account is taken of a reduction of 3,900 in public sector numbers. This was the fourth consecutive Quarter where an increase in employment was recorded.

We have now moved from a situation where the private sector was losing over 7,000 jobs per month before this Government came to office, to the present situation where it is creating close to 1,200 jobs per month. I am currently preparing the 2014 Action Plan on behalf of the Government and we will continue, through that process, to build on the success of the actions we have taken over the last two years.

Business Regulation

20. **Deputy Joe McHugh** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his views on the importance of reducing the administrative burden on businesses as a means of driving commerce here; if he will refer specifically to tax compliance; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50487/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): My Department and its Agencies continue to focus on reducing administrative burdens on business, with a reduction of 25% already having been achieved; this amounts to annual potential savings for business of over €207 million. Details of all the initiatives making up this total are available on my Department's website. Successful initiatives resulting in significant savings include:

- In Company Law, savings of €82 million per annum have already been realised, more than €33 million of which are due to the work of the Companies Registration Office (CRO), as companies can submit their annual returns online via the CRO website and can now use digital signatures for the B1 Form and Accounts.

- In Health & Safety Law, a total of €124 million in annual administrative savings for business has been delivered by the HSA via two key projects: the BeSMART online tool for preparing the Risk Assessment and Safety Statement (€60m), and the SMP20 Guidelines (€64m), which assist construction firms with fewer than 20 employees in establishing and maintaining an effective safety management system.

- In Employment Law, savings of €1.2 million were realised by simplifying online procedures and forms.

I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that reducing the administration burden on taxpayers and making it as easy as possible for them to be compliant is one of their key corporate objectives. In recent years the Revenue Commissioners have also reduced the administrative burden on business by 25% through a number of initiatives, saving the business community over €85 million per year. I am also advised that in the Revenue Statement of Strategy 2011-2014, one of its core strategic priorities is to make it easier and less costly for taxpayers to comply and Revenue is constantly looking for opportunities to drive down compliance costs for business.

The success of strategies is borne out to some extent when comparing this country against other jurisdictions. One such benchmark study is the World Bank/PWC Report "Ease of Paying Taxes 2014". In this study, out of 189 countries, Ireland ranks in 6th place and 1st in the EU. The level of voluntary compliance is also a valid indicator of the effectiveness of a tax administration. Revenue's strategies include consulting with stakeholders, reducing complexity and providing good quality services to make it as easy as possible to comply. This approach, as

evidenced by the table, has resulted in very high levels of compliance.

Tax	2012	2011
PAYE/PRSI	95%	95%
VAT	91%	91%
Preliminary Income Tax (Non PAYE)	98%	97%
Capital Gains Tax	94%	91%
Corporation Tax	98%	91%
Relevant Contracts Tax	86%	85%

We also need to continue to listen to business, especially SMEs and micro-enterprises, and find out where regulation is most burdensome. The High Level Group on Business Regulation, chaired by Deputy Perry, the Minister for Small Business, acts as a standing dialogue between business and Government, and looks for solutions to specific administrative burden issues brought to its attention by the business members.

A key part of reducing regulatory burdens is better communication; my Department seeks to improve how information on regulation is communicated, for example through its business-regulation.ie portal which I launched in 2012. This website brings together in one place many strands of regulatory and compliance information. A further successful recent initiative was the 'Taking Care of Business' event in Dublin Castle, which brought 500 attendees into direct contact with over 20 Agencies and Departments.

Trade Agreements

21. **Deputy Thomas Pringle** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his views on whether an investor-state dispute settlement process will be part of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership; if he will be in favour of this process; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [48814/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The EU Council of Ministers gave a mandate to the EU Commission to negotiate the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. The scope of that mandate is wide ranging and allows the EU Commission to enter into negotiations with the US on many issues, including Investor-State dispute settlement mechanisms. It is very early days in the negotiations, and far too early to say whether, and if so, in what form, any investor-State dispute settlement mechanism might feature in an eventual TTIP Agreement. I am conscious of the issues arising in relation to Investor-State dispute settlement. It is clear that Member States must retain the right to regulate in key public policy areas, such as public health, environmental and social protection, and this must continue to be the case.

Question No. 22 answered with Question No. 8.

Small and Medium Enterprises Supports

23. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will provide details of the recently announced €125 million Growing Capital Ireland Fund; and the specific industries or sectors which have been earmarked as beneficiaries under the

fund. [50488/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): On 4 November 2013 I announced the establishment of a new fund of €125 million which will be managed by MML Growth Capital Partners Ireland. This Fund was the first announcement under the Development Capital Scheme. The establishment of the Development Capital Scheme is a critical action under the Government's Action Plan for Jobs and has the objective of increasing the availability of risk capital and closing the 'equity gap' experienced by SMEs seeking risk capital in the region of €2 million - €12 million.

The Development Capital Scheme forms part of the suite of new finance measures put in place through the Action Plan for Jobs to increase the availability of funding for SMEs. A total of €75 million in funding has been made available through my Department for the Development Capital Scheme with the aim of leveraging a minimum total of €150 million in additional funding from the private sector. Under the Scheme, commitments were made to 3 funds that will provide equity, quasi-equity or debt of between €2 million and €12 million to established investee companies. A further two funds will be announced in the near term.

Each of the funds established under the Development Capital Scheme is aimed at providing funding for the mid-sized, mostly export-oriented businesses with clear growth and development prospects. The MML fund is a general fund which has no particular sectoral focus. It will target investment opportunities in a wide variety of growth orientated sectors including manufacturing, technology, engineering, food, life sciences, services and electronics. Enterprise Ireland invests in these funds on the same terms as the private sector. The investment managers are responsible for making investment decisions within a clearly defined investment strategy over the life time of the fund. I look forward to seeing investments in Irish companies in the near term.

Employment Data

24. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the net increases in employment in the financial services and manufacturing sectors since the Government came to power; and progress towards the targets set for employment in these sectors. [50484/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The manufacturing sector in Ireland suffered significant job losses in the period 2003 to 2010. Accordingly, I requested Forfás to undertake a study of the sector. The resultant Strategy - *Making it in Ireland: Manufacturing 2020* sets out the actions needed to address various issues, building on the steps already taken by this Government to improve our international competitiveness. Key actions are proposed across a range of areas, including access to new funding, management training and support, costs reduction, technology adoption and the implementation of a *National Step Change* initiative.

Despite the losses in earlier years, there are now 205,700 people directly employed in manufacturing, and a similar number of people employed indirectly: the total supported within the sector is therefore just over 400,000. In the years 2011 and 2012 there was a net increase of 3,700 jobs in the Manufacturing sector. The Forfás Strategy sets a target to create an additional 20,000 jobs in the sector by 2016.

With regard to the International Financial Services Sector, the *Strategy for the International Financial Services Industry in Ireland*, published by the Department of the Taoiseach in 2011,

calculated that there were 33,000 people employed directly in Ireland in international financial services (i.e. excluding banking and related financial services activity in the domestic sector) at that time. The Strategy sets an objective to increase employment in this sector by 10,000 by 2016 and a range of measures are proposed. Implementation of that Strategy is being driven by the IFSC Clearing House Group, which operates under the aegis of the Department of the Taoiseach.

The IDA continues to pursue the attraction of foreign companies in this sector and the recent announcement by *Deutsche Bank* that they will establish 700 new jobs in Dublin is evidence of the success of these efforts. Agency supported firms in this sector increased their employment by 1,803 in the two years up to the end of 2012. The *Action Plan for Jobs 2012* included a series of actions to address both the Manufacturing and International Financial Services Sectors. By implementing the 2012 and 2013 *Action Plans for Jobs* and the new 2014 *Action Plan for Jobs*, to be developed in the New Year, the Government is confident that further growth in employment in both sectors will be achieved.

Jobs Protection

25. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the progress to date on protecting employment at Covidien and Alkermes, Athlone, County Westmeath; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50402/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): Both Covidien and Alkermes are still in the process of implementing redundancy programmes at their facilities in Athlone. While 100 redundancies, to be implemented over a two year period, were announced at their facility in September 2011, Covidien Athlone remains an important part of the Covidien Group in Ireland, with over 600 employees, including a Research and Development group that is solely responsible for the design, development and the resulting new product introduction of a range of products. It has been responsible for a number of key product launches in its area.

In relation to Alkermes Athlone, reductions of approximately 100 to 130 staff, from a workforce of 420, were announced earlier this year, to take place over a two-year period as older product lines are phased out. This process is on-going through a combination of natural attrition, voluntary redundancy and compulsory redundancy. 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 it will continue producing global pharmaceutical products.

It is very unfortunate that these redundancies had to be initiated but you will appreciate that the Pharma sector is going through significant challenges worldwide and parent companies need to make strategic decisions for their future, which can involve reducing job numbers. However, both companies retain very significant operations in Ireland.

New product innovation drives the future of the Life Sciences business, and Ireland continues to provide a very attractive offering to these companies particularly in terms of access to highly-trained medical technology research and development experts and world class third level institutions. Access to highly skilled personnel, with expertise and experience in quality-driven, advanced manufacturing techniques is hugely attractive to companies investing here. In this regard, there have been some significant investment announcements in Ireland by compa-

nies in the Life Sciences area, particularly in the Pharma/Biopharma sector. Examples of these announcements include:

- **Sanofi** (Waterford, Feb. 2013) to invest €44 m in Genzyme's biotechnology campus in Waterford.

- **Novartis** (Dublin, Apr. 2013), the world's second largest pharmaceutical company, is to establish a Business Services Centre in Dublin. The company now has four sites in Ireland.

- **Vistakon Ireland** (Limerick, Jan. 2013), a company which designs, manufactures & makes soft disposable contact lenses, announce plans to invest over €100m in expansion of its manufacturing operations in Limerick, up to 100 new jobs.

In 2012 foreign-owned companies based in Ireland employed 21,641 people in the chemicals sector compared to 21,499 in 2011 (+0.7%) and 24,625 people in the medical devices area compared to 23,627 (+4.2%). Following a decline in growth by foreign-owned companies from 2008 to 2011, there are now positive signs of growth in these areas. Based on this positive trend it is expected that there will continue to be future gains for Ireland in the Life Sciences sector.

Enterprise Support Schemes

26. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will detail any consideration of reviewing the targets for microenterprise loans and credit guarantee schemes in view of the take-up of these programmes to date. [50481/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): I am required by Section 22 of the Microenterprise Loan Fund Act 2012 to commence a review of the operation of this Act not later than 2 years after the date of its passing (July 2014). Notwithstanding this, the Microenterprise Loan Fund Scheme has been kept under constant review by the Executive and Board of Microfinance Ireland, and by my Department, and it improved throughout its first year of operation. Improvements include: applicants can now self-certify informal/verbal bank declines and Microfinance Ireland now accepts applications directly. While recognising that the Scheme is demand-led, Microfinance Ireland is committed to reaching the long term objective for the Scheme which should see, the €10 million Exchequer allocation, supplemented by €15 million bank borrowing in tranches of €5 million over the following years generating €40 million (€8m per annum) in loan expenditure and creating 3,800 jobs over a 5 year period.

I made a commitment to review the Credit Guarantee Scheme after 12 months of operation. However, as take-up continued to be slow, the Scheme was recently independently reviewed to help improve the overall Scheme for all businesses. The independent review has given us a view on what the likely annual take up of the Scheme can be and some changes we can make to the Scheme, to increase participation. My Department has been consulting with the Irish Banking Federation to ascertain the likely level of take-up of any revised scheme. I am awaiting a final assessment from the Review Steering Group, chaired by my Department, and plan to bring my findings and conclusions to Government and the Oireachtas, as soon as possible thereafter. It is likely that the Credit Guarantee Act 2012 and the Credit Guarantee Scheme 2012 will require amendment. This complex work is progressing as quickly as it is practicable.

Job Creation

27. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation

the degree to which job creation prospects remain positive with particular reference to the indigenous and FDI manufacturing and services sectors; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50535/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): Forfás' *Making it in Ireland: Manufacturing 2020* Strategy sets out the actions needed to address various issues affecting the development and competitiveness of the Manufacturing sector in Ireland. Key actions are proposed across a wide range of areas. The Forfás Strategy sets a target to create an additional 20,000 jobs in the sector by 2016. The most up to date figures available for job creation in the manufacturing and services sector are included in the Forfás Employment Survey 2012. There is no data available on a month to month basis for each of these sectors.

Despite the losses in earlier years in manufacturing, there are now 205,700 people directly employed in the sector in Ireland, and a similar number of people employed indirectly: the total supported within the sector is therefore just over 400,000. In the years 2011 and 2012 there was a net increase of 3,700 jobs in the Manufacturing sector. The Services sector accounts for two thirds of total employment within Ireland. While the majority of service firms are not supported by the State, in respect of agency supported companies, the total number of jobs lost in 2012 was 6,950; the number of jobs gained in 2012 was 13,229. Therefore the total net new full-time jobs created in the agency supported service industry for 2012 is 6,279. This is positive growth in both sectors. In addition, the indicators are now looking equally positive in the Private Sector where 3,000 jobs are being created every month as our competitiveness improves and consumer confidence slowly returns.

The *Action Plan for Jobs 2012* included a series of actions across a wide number of sectors including manufacturing and services. By implementing the 2012 and 2013 *Action Plans for Jobs* and the new 2014 *Action Plan for Jobs*, to be developed in the New Year, the Government is confident that further growth in employment in both sectors will be achieved.

Intellectual Property Management

28. **Deputy Michael Moynihan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his plans to publish new legislation in the area of intellectual property rights; his plans to make Ireland a hub for intellectual property transactions; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [44971/13]

Minister of State at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Sean Sherlock): My Department is currently engaged with the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel on the drafting of an Intellectual Property (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2013 which propose amendments to both the Patents Act 1992 and the Trade Marks Act 1996. It is intended to expand the current research exemption under the Patents Act 1992 to include a wider range of activities in the nature of studies, tests and trials etc. and the consequential practical requirements necessary for the purpose of obtaining marketing authorisation for medicinal or veterinary products. This expanded exemption will cover acts done in this country relating to the acquisition of a marketing authorisation in a non-EEA country. These amendments will bring Ireland's research exemption into line with other competitor countries for investment by pharmaceutical companies.

The proposed amendment to the Trade Marks Act is designed to resolve a technical conflict between the Trade Marks Act and the Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trade Marks which needs to be reconciled before Ireland can accede to the Singapore Treaty. Accession to the Treaty would reinforce Ireland's participation in the Trade Mark Law Treaty of 1994 and enable

Ireland to participate in the future direction of the administration of trade mark law at international level. Moreover, following the publication last month of the report of the independent Copyright Review Committee, *Modernising Copyright*, my Department is currently considering and evaluating the recommendations contained in the Report. I expect, upon completion of this evaluation, to be in a position to bring the results of our examination to Government with recommendations, including in relation to proposed legislative amendments, with a view to stimulating innovation and to ensure that Ireland is well positioned to meet the needs of the digital age.

In order to deliver on a commitment in the Programme for Government which was further articulated in the Action Plan for Jobs 2012, my Department commissioned a Feasibility Study 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, is now being considered by officials in my Department in the context of wider policy developments and economic conditions domestically and globally.

Job Retention

29. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the steps he is taking to secure jobs at the MBNA site in Carrick-on-Shannon, County Leitrim; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50401/13]

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 remains ongoing. The former MBNA Credit Card Processing facility in Carrick-on-Shannon now comprises two operations. Firstly, a new operation called AvantCard was established following the purchase of part of BOA's Credit Card portfolio by Apollo. This operation employs approximately 250 staff who transferred from BOA to AvantCard (Apollo) under TUPE regulations on 13 March 2013. I welcome this positive development. The second operation remains in the ownership of BOA and employs approximately 200 people who take care of the UK credit card business. Apollo has acquired the entire building in Carrick and has leased back office space to BOA. We welcome this investment in Carrick-on-Shannon by Apollo.

BOA continues to look for a buyer for the remainder of the UK credit card book. IDA Ireland is in regular contact with Bank of America management in Dublin and with the parent company in the US to monitor developments. IDA met with senior executives of Apollo in London in September 2013 where the transfer of the Carrick facility and staff to Apollo, and further investment opportunities for the group in Ireland, were discussed. IDA will remain in contact with the company and will continue to highlight the strengths of the Carrick site to a broad range of potential investors.

Employment Rights

30. **Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation when the bill on trade union recognition will be brought forward and the mechanisms that will

be contained in the bill; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50560/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): 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 were subsequently received and a series of initial first step meetings took place between Departmental officials and stakeholders around mid-2013. Discussions with stakeholders are ongoing.

I hope to be in a position to bring the matter to Cabinet soon. 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.

Job Creation

31. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the degree to which specific sectors of the economy are expected to perform best in the area of job creation and competitiveness at home and abroad over the next two years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50536/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The Government's Action Plan for Jobs has set the objective of supporting the creation of 100,000 extra jobs in the economy over the period 2012 to 2016 through a series of annual measures aimed at improving Ireland's competitiveness and making it easier for enterprises to do business. Broadly speaking, the Action Plan for Jobs envisages that an extra 20,000 jobs can be created in manufacturing activities, while 30,000 jobs can be created in internationally traded services. These will support a further 50,000 new indirect jobs in the economy.

As part of the Action Plan for Jobs, we have, with the help of Forfás, assessed the job potential of several sectors. These include manufacturing, agri-food, ICT, tourism, Business Process Outsourcing, international financial services, retail, construction and the Green Economy. There is a strong mix of both multinational companies and indigenous SMEs involved in these sectors. Enterprise Ireland has set a target of supporting 10,500 new jobs on a gross basis in 2013, while IDA Ireland aims to generate 13,000 gross new jobs this year.

Both the Department of Finance and the ESRI have recently produced improved employment forecasts for 2013 and 2014. These improved forecasts are supported by the latest employment statistics published by the Central Statistics Office yesterday (26 November) which show that employment increased by 58,000 in the year to Quarter 3 2013, net of a reduction of 3,900 in public sector numbers. This is the fourth Quarter in succession where employment has grown on an annual basis. Increases in employment have been recorded in eight of the fourteen economic sectors categorised by the CSO, including Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing, Construction, ICT, and Accommodation and Food services which are targeted for attention under the Action Plan for Jobs.

We have now moved from a situation where the private sector was losing over 7,000 jobs per month before this Government came to office, to the present situation where it is creating 5,000 jobs per month. I am currently preparing the 2014 Action Plan on behalf of the Govern-

ment and we will continue, through that process, to build on the success of the actions we have taken over the last two years.

Question No. 32 answered with Question No. 12.

Human Rights Issues

33. **Deputy Maureen O’Sullivan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade further to Parliamentary Question No. 110 of 19 November 2013, if he will address the question as to whether he supports the Asia Floor Wage campaign as established by the Asian Workers for Asian Workers; if he will support and promote a minimum living wage in African countries; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51071/13]

Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore): I have noted with interest the Asia Floor Wage campaign which has been initiated by a civil society and trade union movement alliance. I am aware that there are many countries where labour rights are poor or non-existent. Ireland’s commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights is a fundamental feature of our foreign policy. Under Ireland’s new policy for International Development – One World, One Future, we are committed to ensuring that economic development is compatible with human rights, including the right to decent work. Our engagement in this area will be informed by, among other international standards, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

In this regard, Irish Aid currently provides assistance to the International Labour Organisation’s (ILO) ‘*Decent Work Agenda*’ through a partnership programme that covers the four year period 2012-2015. The development of international labour standards is one of the most important functions of the ILO. The ILO is the only international body that is tripartite, having representatives of governments, employers and workers. The unique tripartite structure of the ILO gives an equal voice to workers, employers and governments to ensure that the views of the social partners are closely reflected in labour standards and in shaping policies and programmes.

The ILO’s ‘Decent Work’ agenda emphasises the central role of work to people’s well-being and in broader social and economic advancement. Irish Aid will continue to support this important agenda through targeted support to the work of the ILO in Irish Aid’s key partner countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and in priority areas agreed by the ILO and Irish Aid. Our partnership with the ILO enjoys the strong support of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) and the Irish Business and Employers’ Confederation.

Property Taxation Application

34. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Finance if it is the buyer or seller who is responsible for payment of the property tax in cases where a house is being sold; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50886/13]

38. **Deputy Eric Byrne** asked the Minister for Finance the position regarding property tax in respect of a person (details supplied) in Dublin 6W. [50947/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I propose to take Questions Nos. 34 and 38 together.

In accordance with the Finance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012 (as amended), liability for Local Property Tax (LPT) will arise where a person owns a residential property on the liability

date, which was 1 May 2013 for 2013 and for subsequent years, 1 November in the preceding year. Section 119 of the Act sets out the dates for payment of the Local Property Tax and clarifies that while the LPT is due by reference to a liability date, it is not payable until a later date. Revenue recently wrote to property owners who paid their 2013 LPT by lump sum or by way of regular cash payments to ask these owners to confirm their method for paying their LPT liability for 2014.

For the year 2014, the liability date is 1 November 2013 and the tax is payable on or before 1 January 2014. Where a liable person sells their residential property between 2 November 2013 and 31 December 2013, provided that they owned the property on 1 November 2013, they will be liable to pay LPT on that property for 2014.

These dates have been in the public domain since December 2012 when the legislation was passed. Questions on the 1 November liability date have been raised and responded to on several occasions, including my reply to Question No. 110 on 27 March this year. In my replies to Questions Nos. 221 (49518/13) and 223 (49556/13) on 19 November 2013 I advised the House that having a liability date before the year commences is preferable as there is certainty about who the liable person is for the coming year, that person has a reasonable amount of time to make the necessary provisions and they have access to the widest possible range of options for paying the tax.

For a tax such as LPT to function properly, legislation must specify a liability date for the tax to have application for a particular year. Whatever date is prescribed, the question of liability when there is a change of ownership has to be managed, and I would expect that the LPT liability involved is likely to be factored in during negotiations between the parties on the sale price and the closing date of a particular contract.

I am advised that the Revenue website includes a dedicated page outlining what property owners are required to do for 2014 and this clearly states that whoever is the liable person for the property on 1 November 2013 will be responsible for paying the tax for 2014. In addition, Revenue spokespeople have also provided clarification on this point when taking part in national and local media interviews recently.

As there are a number of LPT issues to be considered when buying or selling a house, I am advised that detailed guidance on LPT issues arising in the context of the sale or transfer of a residential property was prepared by the Revenue Commissioners in consultation with the Law Society and is available since last August on the Revenue website at <http://www.revenue.ie/en/tax/lpt/sale-transfer-property.html> and on the Law Society's website. Finally, I re-iterate that the liability date for 2014 of 1 November 2013 is settled and has been approved by the Oireachtas in passing the LPT legislation and I have no plans to change the law in question.

Brewery Licensing

35. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for Finance the licensing regime, qualifying criteria and steps to be met in respect of a person wishing to set up a new licence for a craft brewery; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50890/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that a person wishing to set up a craft brewery must first obtain Revenue approval as an authorised manufacturer and warehouse keeper. In addition the Revenue Commissioners must also grant the person concerned a manufacturer's licence. Such a person can apply to the National Excise Licence Office for this authorisation and licence. The current excise duty for

a manufacturer's licence is €500. The applicant is also required to hold a valid Tax Clearance Certificate. Detailed information regarding the requirements for this authorisation and licence is available on the Revenue website at www.revenue.ie. In particular relevant information is contained in the "Revenue's Guide to Excise Licences" document on this website.

Tax Code

36. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for Finance the taxation being applied to microbreweries producing beer; the way his Department differentiates between a microbrewery and a micro-distillery in terms of taxation; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50891/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): Council Directive 92/83/EEC on excise duty for alcohol and alcoholic beverages provides that a reduced rate of excise duty may be applied for beer produced in microbreweries. The reduced rate shall not be set more than 50% below the standard national rate of excise duty for beer. Since 1 January 2005, Ireland applies a relief of 50% on Alcohol Products Tax in respect of qualifying beer produced in microbreweries located within the European Union. The Directive also permits the application of reduced rates of excise duty to spirits produced by small distilleries, where production amounts to not more than 10 hectolitres (1,000 litres) of pure alcohol per annum. However, there are no provisions currently under national legislation for this relief and, consequently, spirits produced in a micro distillery are subject to the standard rate of excise duty.

Property Taxation Administration

37. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance if he will arrange to amend the address details of a person (details supplied) in County Cork on the Revenue Commissioners' records in order that they can arrange to pay the local property tax; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50893/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that the address details of the person in question have now been amended. The person in question can pay their Local Property Tax online using the Property ID and PIN number issued by Revenue, as these relate to the correct property.

Question No. 38 answered with Question No. 34.

NAMA Operations

39. **Deputy Seán Ó Feargháil** asked the Minister for Finance if he will consider the matters raised in correspondence (details supplied); if he will assist in securing the payment owed; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50955/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): As the Deputy will be aware NAMA's role is generally that of a secured lender. Like any bank they own the debt while the debtor or appointed liquidator owns and controls the properties associated with that debt. Any attempt to influence NAMA on this matter, would contravene Section 221 of the NAMA Act, which makes it an offence to communicate with NAMA with the intention of influencing the making of a decision in relation to the performance of its functions. This being the case it would be inappropriate for me or my officials to intervene in a private legal matter. NAMA have set up

info@nama.ie, for individuals to contact them directly on any issues. I can assure the Deputy that this address is actively monitored and is the best way for your constituent to engage in a dialogue directly with NAMA.

Central Bank of Ireland Expenditure

40. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded by the Central Bank to companies (details supplied) in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50979/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I have been provided the following table by the Central Bank which details the total financial cost of contracts awarded by the Central Bank to the specified companies in each of the years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013. I have been informed by the Central Bank that, for commercial reasons, it can only provide the requested information on an aggregate basis. In relation to the total number of contracts awarded by the Central Bank to companies in this period, I have been informed by the Central Bank that this information could not be compiled in the time available. I have been informed by the Central Bank that the “Other” column includes procurements where tenders were not held due to exceptional circumstances (e.g. financial crisis related) or where compliance with procurement legislation cannot be verified in the time available. My officials have requested the outstanding material from the Central Bank and it will be forwarded to the Deputy as soon as it is available.

Year	Publicly Tendered	Compliant with Procurement Legislation, where no public tender required	Other	Total
2008	-	1,442,213	2,867,157	4,309,470
2009	10,125	631,734	4,836,096	5,477,955
2010		751,273	3,700,994	4,452,267
2011	2,873,151	6,293,186	871,644	10,037,981
2012	4,023,504	2,589,052	555,636	7,168,192
2013	4,880,625	2,041,170	2,283,682	9,205,477
	11,787,405	13,748,728	15,115,209	40,651,342

National Treasury Management Agency Expenditure

41. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded by the National Treasury Management Agency to companies (details supplied) in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50980/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): It has not been possible for the National Treasury Management Agency to collate the information requested in the time available. I will write to the Deputy with the information as soon as it becomes available.

Property Taxation Collection

42. **Deputy Michael Ring** asked the Minister for Finance if he will liaise with the Revenue Commissioners to ensure that queries sent to the local property tax section via email are answered to enable homeowners to notify the Revenue Commissioners of their correct liability for 2014 before the online filing date of 27 November; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50987/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by Revenue that the introduction of Local Property Tax (LPT) amounted to the largest extension of the self-assessment system in its history and represents a very great administrative challenge. For example, Revenue has answered in excess of 750,000 telephone calls and replied to in excess of 210,000 letters or emails since March 2013. Revenue has taken LPT from concept to a fully functioning tax in a very short period of time, including the enacting of legislation, the building of a brand new Property Register and the provision of customer service to such a large volume of taxpayers.

I am further advised that while Revenue strives to adhere to normal customer service standards and issue responses to all correspondence within thirty days, exceptional peaks can sometimes extend the response time beyond the normal timeframe. Currently Revenue is experiencing very high volumes of both telephone and written correspondence for LPT, including email, and unfortunately as a consequence the standards are not being met in all circumstances. However, Revenue has confirmed to me that significant extra resources have been deployed to deal with the volumes and it is anticipated that backlogs will be worked in the coming weeks. Revenue has also confirmed that any taxpayers that have submitted genuine queries in respect of their 2014 obligations in advance of the filing date will be treated as having complied with their requirements on time, provided they conclude their filing obligations immediately after their query is dealt with.

Property Taxation Collection

43. **Deputy John McGuinness** asked the Minister for Finance if the queries relating to the payment of property tax have been resolved in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Carlow; if payments for 2013 and 2014 have been properly allocated; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51018/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by Revenue that there was a misallocation of payments for 2013 between two properties connected to the person in question. The misallocation occurred as the person is a joint owner on one property and an executor on the other. Revenue has confirmed that the 2013 payment queries were resolved on 21 August 2013 and the person was informed in that regard. Revenue has also confirmed that the payment notifications for 2014 were successfully filed in early October. Finally if the person in question requires further information or assistance she should contact the LPT Helpline at 1890 200255.

IBRC Loans

44. **Deputy John McGuinness** asked the Minister for Finance if the Irish Bank Resolution Corporation while in State control procured the services of a foreign company or companies to recover assets beneficially held by the Quinn Group; the amount that was paid to these compa-

nies; the way these companies were procured; the projected expenditure on these companies; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51019/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): The Special Liquidators confirm that Irish Bank Resolution Corporation Limited (in Special Liquidation) (“IBRC Limited”) engaged with foreign companies to assist with the recovery of assets beneficially held by the Quinn Group. I have been advised that in High Court proceedings to recover the debts due to IBRC Limited, now in special liquidation, by the Quinns, the Bank has sought the direction of the Courts to proceed with the appointment of the Alfa Group Consortium, to recover the Russian assets and one Ukrainian asset of the Quinn International Property Group. Due to commercial confidentiality and sensitivities the Special Liquidators do not propose to provide details of amounts due and paid by IBRC Limited to these foreign entities.

Property Taxation Application

45. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance if he will reply to concerns raised in correspondence (details supplied) regarding the local property tax. [51026/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): The issues raised in this question are similar to those raised by the Deputy in Question No. 229 on 5 November (46999/13). The Local Property Tax (LPT) is an annual tax and has an annual pay and file season like other annual taxes. Property owners are being asked to indicate a payment method for 2014 and Revenue is only contacting people whose payment option for 2013 does not automatically apply in 2014. The tax is payable on or before 1 January each year, not before and the Revenue Commissioners have provided taxpayers with a range of payment options to choose from. Credit cards and debit card transactions are effected when the transaction is made.

The query about credit unions is not clear but if it is in the context of payment of the LPT, as outlined above an individual does not have to pay the LPT before 1 January and the range of payment options include phased payments and payment single debit authority which will not be collected by Revenue until 21 March. I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that it is not correct that self-assessed taxpayers pay their income tax in June/July; and that LPT provides significantly more flexibility than the payment options available to such taxpayers by facilitating monthly direct debit payments, weekly/monthly deduction at source and cash payment options.

Strategic Investment Bank Establishment

46. **Deputy Willie Penrose** asked the Minister for Finance if in line with the commitment in the programme for Government, he will take steps to introduce the necessary legal and administrative mechanism to enable a strategic investment bank, which would be stand-alone, and along the lines of KfW in Germany and that which prevailed with the former Industrial Credit Corporation Bank, so as to assist in the development of small businesses; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51042/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): As the Deputy will be aware, the Government has decided to establish the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF) which will absorb the National Pensions Reserve Fund (NPRF). Using the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund, we will maximise our resources to enhance growth in the Irish economy and improve key infrastructure to maintain Ireland’s attractiveness as a place to do business and to create employment. Officials of my Department are currently preparing the necessary legislation which

I anticipate will be enacted early next year. Already, in the lifetime of this Government, the NPRF has established funds that support both strategic projects and a number that support SME financing. Further assessment of the need to create a Strategic Investment Bank over and above the contribution expected from the ISIF will be informed by the requirements of the economy once the Government's key immediate objectives for the repair of the banking system have been completed.

As the Deputy will be aware, the Taoiseach mentioned in this House that he had held discussions with Chancellor Merkel and they had agreed that work would be undertaken to find ways to reinforce Ireland's economic recovery by improving funding mechanisms for the real economy, including access to finance for Irish SMEs. The German Government has asked KfW, the German development bank, to work with the German and Irish authorities swiftly, in order to deliver on this initiative at the earliest possible date. Officials of my Department have already exchanged working papers on this subject with KfW and the German Ministry of Finance. Discussions with the German Ministry were held in Berlin last week and there was a meeting between Department of Finance officials and KfW personnel in Frankfurt yesterday. We will be moving forward with this work with KfW and other key stakeholders over the coming weeks both here and abroad.

The Government's intention is to ensure with the support of Chancellor Merkel that an effective and successful initiative emerges from the process. We will therefore be discussing any and all approaches that meet the strategic objectives of both States and ultimately facilitate lending to the real economy, in particular to SMEs in Ireland. Although the precise form and delivery mechanism for any assistance has yet to be agreed, discussion with German colleagues will consider appropriate options for funding the recovery of the Irish Economy in the course of our work with KfW and the German Government.

EU-IMF Programme of Support

47. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Finance if he will advise as to what economic policy changes will result from Ireland's exit from the EU-IMF programme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51049/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): Irish economic policy for the period 2014-2020 will be incorporated in the Medium Term Economic Strategy (MTES), which is being drafted at present. As we approach the conclusion of the Troika programme we are beginning to reap the rewards of our sustained efforts. Economic growth has returned, albeit at a slower pace than was anticipated at the start of the programme. The public finances have been put on a sustainable path and unemployment is declining steadily. Importantly, we have also successfully returned to financial market funding. The financial sector has undergone significant restructuring since the beginning of the crisis and we will continue to progress this agenda. All of this has been achieved by steadfast implementation and delivery of our commitments under the programme. This effort has encompassed the completion of over 260 actions to date.

Looking ahead the Government intends to maintain this momentum and press on with our reform agenda. That is why, together with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, I am preparing a Medium-Term Economic Strategy (MTES) which will set out the macroeconomic strategy and policy actions for achieving sustainable economic and employment growth for the period 2014-2020. Through a strategic, medium-term perspective, the MTES will not duplicate - but will complement - the necessarily more short-term focus of other related policy efforts such as the *Action Plan for Jobs*. A publication date for the Strategy has not been decided by Government as yet, but it is intended to produce at least an outline of the strategy by

mid-December.

Property Taxation Application

48. **Deputy Patrick O'Donovan** asked the Minister for Finance the reason a person (details supplied) in County Wexford has had the liability for the household charge added to the local property tax liability for their properties; if they can make payments for 2014 via a payment service provider; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51051/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by Revenue that Section 156 of the Finance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012 (as amended) provides that where Household Charge (HC) for 2012 remains unpaid at 1 July 2013, the amount outstanding is increased to €200 and classified as arrears of Local Property Tax (LPT). All such arrears will be collected by Revenue in the same manner as LPT. Revenue has confirmed that the process of importing HC data from the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) is currently well underway. A key part of the process involves integrating the LGMA records into Revenue's new Property Register, and while a significant amount of data matching is complete a considerable number of properties are yet to be cross referenced and linked.

In relation to the case to which the Deputy refers, the person in question is the registered owner of two properties. While there is a HC payment on record for one of the properties, there is no record of any payment of HC in respect of the second property. For this reason an additional liability of €200 was added to the overall LPT/HC arrears charge in respect of the second property.

If the person has paid the HC in respect of the second property, he should submit documentary evidence of this to LPT Branch, PO BOX 100, Ennis, Co. Clare. Documentary evidence may be a receipt of payment or some other proof that payment was actually made. As soon as Revenue receives the documentary proof that payment of the HC was made, the LPT Property Register will be updated to reflect this fact. If the person has not yet paid the HC on the second property, he can do so via Revenue's online system, which is the easiest and most secure way to complete the transaction and can be done in tandem with choosing his LPT payment option for 2014.

The Deputy's comments are noted in regard to the person's wish to pay his 2014 LPT/HC arrears (if applicable) liability through a payment service provider. However, Revenue has informed me that this option is not available to the person because he is a multiple property owner and as such is required to meet his LPT and HC arrears obligations online.

Revenue has confirmed that the person paid his 2013 LPT liability by Single Debit Authority through the online system. Should he wish to use this option for 2014 he should complete the online version of the mandate, which will not be activated by Revenue until 21 March 2014. Alternatively, he should select one of the other online payment options such as Direct Debit, Debit/Credit Card, or Deduction-at-Source from payroll, occupational pension, or payments from the Dept of Social Protection.

Revenue has committed to make direct contact with the person in the coming days to discuss the various options available to him in regard to both his 2014 LPT liability and his possible arrears of HC.

Property Taxation Administration

49. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Finance the reason a local property tax letter was issued to a person (details supplied) in Dublin 5 for a property they do not own, despite this person alerting the Revenue Commissioners of this when paying their 2013 liability; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51054/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am informed by Revenue that a key aspect of the work it has undertaken in connection with the administration of Local Property Tax (LPT) has been the development of a register of residential properties in the State. The development of the Property Register required Revenue to extract and consolidate data from multiple Government and non-Government sources and unfortunately some incorrect records were added to the Register in a relatively small number of cases during the process. I am also advised that the introduction of LPT represented a huge administrative challenge for Revenue. For example, Revenue has answered in excess of 750,000 telephone calls and replied to in excess of 210,000 letters or emails since March 2013.

Unfortunately, in the case referred to by the Deputy, the correspondence received from the person in question in April 2013 was overlooked by the LPT team and as a consequence the required amendments to the Property Register were not completed. The Register has now been amended and the incorrect details have been removed. Contact will be made with the person in question to confirm that the details are now correct.

Property Taxation Administration

50. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Finance the reason a local property tax letter was not issued to a person (details supplied) in Dublin 9 who previously paid the LPT in cash; if this may be arranged; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51055/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by Revenue that the vast majority of the 2014 Local Property Tax (LPT) payment notifications issued to taxpayers during October 2013. This included taxpayers who paid their 2013 liability in a single lump sum via a payment service provider. The exceptions in this regard were cases that contained data errors requiring clarifications to ensure the accuracy of the information held on the Property Register. In the case referred to by the Deputy, the 2013 LPT Return, which was filed by the person in question, contained some data errors and as a consequence the Return was listed for verification by LPT Branch. Because the outstanding issues were not finalised, no letter issued to the person in question in respect of 2014 at that time.

However, Revenue has confirmed that direct contact has since been made with the person by a member of the LPT team and the issue has been resolved to his satisfaction. The person's preferred payment option of "payment service provider" has been input on the Property Register for 2014 and he is fully compliant in that regard.

Property Taxation Administration

51. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Finance the reason a local property tax letter was not issued to a person (details supplied) in Dublin 9; if this may be arranged; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51056/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by Revenue that letters to residential property owners regarding 2014 Local Property Tax (LPT) payment methods did not issue in some cases where there was a discrepancy in the property register. In the specific

case mentioned by the Deputy, an error occurred when the 2013 LPT payment instructions were filed on-line on behalf of the liable owner. The individual who filed the return inadvertently replaced the liable owner's name with their own name at the time of filing. This resulted in an unmatched property on the Property Register and therefore correspondence in respect of 2014 did not issue. I can confirm that Revenue is contacting the person concerned to clarify matters and to amend the property register as necessary.

Pensions Levy

52. **Deputy Brendan Ryan** asked the Minister for Finance the reason the pensions fund levy did not make a distinction between those members who were still paying into a scheme and therefore have an opportunity to increase payments into their fund and those who are not; if the levy could be amended in recognition of this distinction; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51066/13]

53. **Deputy Brendan Ryan** asked the Minister for Finance if retired pensioners and holders of personal retirement bonds could be exempt from the pensions fund levy in view of the fact that the levy is being imposed on funds they are no longer paying into; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51067/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I propose to take Questions Nos. 52 and 53 together.

An annual stamp duty levy of 0.6% applies in each of the four years from 2011 to 2014, to the market value on the valuation date (generally 30 June each year) of assets under management in pension funds and pension plans approved under Irish tax legislation. I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that this includes occupational pension schemes, Retirement Annuity Contracts, Personal Retirement Savings Accounts and Personal Retirement Bonds. The levy applies to pension fund assets regardless of whether they relate to active or deferred members of schemes, and to the extent that pensions in payment are being paid directly from a defined benefit pension scheme the assets backing those pensions also come within the levy charge.

The 0.6% levy was introduced to fund the *Jobs Initiative* and will be abolished from the 31st of December 2014. I indicated in my recent Budget speech, however, that I would be introducing an additional levy on pension funds, within the existing legal framework, at 0.15% in 2014 and 2015 to continue to help fund the *Jobs Initiative* and to make provision for potential State liabilities which may emerge from pre-existing or future pension fund difficulties.

I am further advised by the Commissioners that the levy is not imposed on individual pension scheme members whether active, deferred or retired. Rather the chargeable persons for the levy are the trustees or other persons (including insurance companies) with responsibility for the management of the assets of the pension schemes or plans. The payment of the levy is, however, treated as a necessary expense of a pension scheme and the trustees or insurer, as appropriate, are entitled, where they decide to do so, to adjust current or prospective benefits payable under a scheme to take account of the levy. It is up to the trustees to decide whether and how the levy should be passed on and who should be impacted and to what extent, given the particular circumstances of the pension schemes for which they are responsible.

There are very few exemptions from the levy and this, in part, explains why it was possible to introduce it at a relatively low rate of 0.6% in the first place and to keep the rate of the additional levy as low as 0.15%. Narrowing the base of the levy would inevitably result in a greater

imposition on the non-exempt schemes and I am not prepared to consider such a change.

Pension Provisions

54. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Minister for Finance further to Parliamentary Question No. 60 of 14 November 2013, if the measures announced in the 2014 budget differentiate between public sector pensions and those in the private sector. [51079/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I assume that the Deputy is referring to Parliamentary Question No. 60 of 20 November 2013. In that reply I gave information relating to the changes to the Standard Fund Threshold (SFT) regime announced in my 2014 Budget Statement and reflected in the recently published Finance (No. 2) Bill 2013. The changes to the SFT regime outlined in the reply referred to above apply, as appropriate, to all defined benefit (DB) and defined contribution (DC) pension arrangements in both the private and public sectors. As regards DB pension arrangements, it is irrelevant whether an individual is a higher paid public servant or a highly paid member of a private sector DB scheme, the same SFT rules apply to all such arrangements. The only area of difference relates to the reimbursement or recovery of chargeable excess tax by affected public servants to the pension fund administrator where the tax arises and is paid upfront by the administrator. This arises because, unlike affected individuals in the private sector who have the flexibility to take steps (and generally do) to prevent themselves breaching the SFT or Personal Fund Threshold (PFT) if they have one so that a tax charge does not arise, public servants cannot minimise or prevent the breaching of the SFT or PFT by ceasing contributions or benefit accrual.

Where the SFT or PFT is exceeded an immediate tax charge arises on the excess which can be significant. I should stress that this part of the legislation does not remove or reduce the tax liability arising on a chargeable excess in such cases but provides more flexible options for the recoupment to the pension fund administrator of the tax paid. These options involve effectively spreading the recovery of the tax, which has been paid upfront by the public sector pension administrator, from the affected individual over a longer period.

Property Taxation Application

55. **Deputy Brendan Ryan** asked the Minister for Finance if consideration has been given to rental income being allowable against the local property tax; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51081/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): The Inter-departmental group, chaired by Dr Don Thornhill, to consider the design of a property tax (the “Thornhill Group”) recommended that the Local Property Tax paid in respect of a rented property should be deductible for income tax or corporation tax purposes, in a similar manner to commercial rates. The Government accepted the recommendation of the Thornhill Group in principle, but has not considered the manner or the timing in which this will happen.

IBRC Loans

56. **Deputy Brendan Ryan** asked the Minister for Finance with reference to the former Irish Bank Resolution Corporation loan book, if the same discounts offered to interests willing to buy the loan book in bulk will be offered to the person who has an individual loan with the

former IBRC; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51082/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I have been advised by the Special Liquidators that they have corresponded with all IBRC borrowers, providing them with an opportunity to make written representations on the method of disposal of their loans and the criteria for determining who may bid for loan assets. The Special Liquidators are under instruction to ensure that the valuation of all IBRC assets is completed by 30 November 2013 and that the sale of all IBRC assets is agreed or completed by no later than 31 December 2013 or as soon as practicable thereafter.

The Special Liquidators have engaged specialist advisors who are providing advice as to whether a loan should be sold individually or as part of a portfolio in order to ensure that maximum value is obtained for that asset within the instructed timeframe. The decisions in relation to the disposal of all loans, following receipt of the expert advice, have been made by the Special Liquidators. Borrowers will be kept fully up to date on the sale of their IBRC loans and collateral obligations. The Special Liquidators do not intend on disclosing the discounts being applied to IBRC assets and/or the valuation of IBRC assets as it is commercially sensitive information which could potentially have a detrimental impact on asset recovery from the impending sales process.

Property Taxation Collection

57. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Finance if he will ensure that persons who opted to pay their property tax by visa debit are not penalised and forced to pay 2015 tax in 2014; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51100/13]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): In accordance with the Finance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012 (as amended), Local Property Tax (LPT) for is payable on or before 1 January of that year. For the year 2015, the tax will be payable on or before 1 January 2015. The range of payment options provided by the Revenue Commissioners ensures that nobody is forced to pay LPT before that date. The Revenue Commissioners are facilitating those who wish to exercise a personal choice to pay by debit card. However the consequences are clearly spelled out and there are other easier and arguably more advantageous options to pay the LPT.

The administration of the LPT, including payment of LPT for 2015 by debit card, is a matter for the Revenue Commissioners. I understand that the Chairman of the Revenue Commissioners dealt with this issue comprehensively when she attended a meeting of the Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform on 7 November 2013. The Chairman informed the Committee that in order to provide for a delayed payment of LPT by way of credit/debit card, Revenue would be required to retain taxpayer's credit/debit card data. The Commissioners are concerned about retaining such data from a data protection perspective and other issues, including costs, also arise. Recent well publicised data breaches arising from the retention of such data underline those concerns. The Chairman agreed that the Commissioners would review the payment patterns for 2014 to establish the proportion of owners who choose to pay the tax by credit/debit card and they would also carefully review the issue of retaining debit/credit card data and its potential impact on systems, costs, security and data protection.

Student Grant Scheme Appeals

58. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Education and Skills when a decision can be expected on a student grant appeal (details supplied); and if he will make a

statement on the matter. [50869/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): Officials in my Department have confirmed with Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) that, in the case of the student referred to by the Deputy, her appeal is under consideration by SUSI and the applicant will be advised directly of the outcome. Where an individual applicant has had an appeal turned down, in writing, by SUSI, and remains of the view that SUSI has not interpreted the scheme correctly in his/her case, an appeal form outlining the position may be submitted by the applicant to the Student Grants Appeals Board. The relevant appeal form is available to download from http://www.studentfinance.ie/downloads/1375344221/2013_SGAB_appeal_form.pdf.

Student Grant Scheme Eligibility

59. **Deputy Arthur Spring** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if a student who previously enrolled in third level education, received a student grant and did not complete the first year due to exceptional circumstances is entitled to a student grant for year one when commencing a different third level course five years later. [50872/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): The decision on eligibility for a student is a matter in the first instance for the awarding authority. The Deputy will appreciate that in the absence of all of the relevant details that would be contained in an individual's application in relation to nationality, residency, previous academic attainment and means, it would not be possible for me to say whether or not a student would qualify for a grant.

Article 13(6), is the relevant governing article in the 2013 student grant scheme in relation to second chance students. The intention of this article is to focus resources on second chance and mature students. The five years' break in studies will ensure that the emphasis is, as intended, on facilitating these students to return to education. Article 15(8) of the Student Grant Scheme 2013 provides awarding authorities with discretion to waive the provisions of Article 15(7) (b)(ii) in exceptional circumstances and consider funding for a repeat period of study, in line with guidelines drawn up by the Minister. The guidelines include the nature of the exceptional circumstances as documented by the applicant, when they occurred and the period of time over which they continued, how the circumstances impacted on the applicant's ability to participate in their course of study, take exams or submit projects on time and whether the circumstances happened to the applicant or a third party.

Where an individual applicant considers that he has been unjustly refused a student grant, or that the rate of grant awarded is not the correct one, he may appeal, in the first instance, to the awarding authority. Where an individual applicant has had an appeal turned down, in writing, by the awarding authority, and remains of the view that the awarding authority has not interpreted the scheme correctly in his/her case, an appeal form outlining the position may be submitted by the applicant to the Student Grants Appeals Board. The relevant appeal form is available to download from http://www.studentfinance.ie/downloads/1375344221/2013_SGAB_appeal_form.pdf.

School Transport Scheme

60. **Deputy Charles Flanagan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if his attention has been drawn to allegations of corruption at Bus Éireann in the matter of the €166 million school transport scheme with particular reference to the awarding of contracts to bus and taxi operators; and the steps he will take to have the matter fully examined and investigated.

[50888/13]

Minister of State at the Department of Education and Skills (Deputy Ciarán Cannon):

I am aware of a number of allegations made of wrongdoing by individual employees of Bus Éireann involved in the school transport scheme and have responded to a number of Parliamentary Questions regarding these. Any allegation of wrongdoing by an employee/employees of Bus Éireann is treated as a very serious issue by both Bus Éireann and my Department. It is usual and appropriate that an allegation against any employee is investigated by the employer in question under its internal control procedures. My Department is satisfied that allegations receive attention at the highest level in Bus Éireann. The Company has advised my Department that one investigation is currently ongoing and is expected to conclude in the coming weeks.

School Transport Scheme

61. **Deputy John O'Mahony** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if the EU Commission made a mistake when it wrote on OJEU on 15.9.2007 as part of State Aid Ireland Investigation 31/07 that Bus Éireann operated the school transport services on a cost recovery basis when the value for money review March 2011 did not say that it was on a cost recovery basis and this expression has been removed from the annual report of Bus Éireann and in view of the fact that the Irish authorities have no independent impartial monitoring of actual costs incurred by Bus Éireann or its profits, if any, relating to the school transport scheme since 1975; if he will make a material statement on the implications for his Department and separately for Bus Éireann if it made a profit since 1975; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50910/13]

Minister of State at the Department of Education and Skills (Deputy Ciarán Cannon):

I would like to preface this reply by noting that it is not for the Minister for Education and Skills to speak on behalf of the EU Commission. That said, the agreed document of 1975 provides the basis for payment to Bus Éireann in respect of the arrangements between my Department and Bus Éireann under which the school transport scheme operates. To describe the details contained in this document as providing for payment on a cost recovery basis is a fair and reasonable depiction of the position.

The arrangements between my Department and Bus Éireann as they relate to school transport were the subject of extensive consideration by the High Court in the context of the recent proceedings. The outcome of these proceedings, which found decisively in favour of the Department's position, is available on the Courts Service Website. These proceedings provided full opportunity for all parties to advance the arguments and counter arguments in relation to all aspects of these arrangements including matters such as "cost recovery" and "profit". Any issues or implications in relation to these matters will be fully dealt with by the Department in the context of the Supreme Court Appeal. I refer the Deputy to my earlier reply of 6th November, in which I set out the wider context to the conduct of this case.

Departmental Staff Data

62. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the current operational structure of his Department outlining the management structure but excluding naming of personnel; the responsibilities of each section; the number of persons working in each section; his plans for reforming this structure; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50918/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): An organisation chart for the Department of Education and Skills is set out in the attached Table 1 (interactive version

available on Department's website). A breakdown of the responsibilities and staffing numbers in each area is set out in the attached Table 2. Further more detailed staffing and operational information is available on my Department's website.

The current policy on public sector numbers means that even though this Department has already experienced a significant reduction in staffing numbers we will continue to operate in an environment of diminished resources for the foreseeable future. At the same time demands on the education and training system and on the Department's staff have increased due to increases in numbers attending education and training courses. The ability of the Department to continue to deliver high quality services and advance the reform agenda has only proved possible due to a high degree of collaboration, commitment and flexibility shown by my Department's staff in adopting new work practices and through co-operation with the redeployment of staff around the Department to meet fluctuating demands. This type of working environment is an increasing feature in the Department where staff mobility and flexibility together with the introduction of new ways of working through IT developments and new business processes help the Department respond to the challenges of staffing reductions and diminished resources.

My Department will continue to prioritise areas of activity and processes which can be reviewed/amalgamated/discontinued to ensure a continuation of existing levels of service with reduced resources as well as working within centrally led reform projects such as shared Human Resources and Shared Payroll.

Table 1:

-	-	Management & Organisation	-	-	Secretary General Seán Ó Foghlú	-	Internal Audit Unit	-	-
ESF/Policy and Operations	External HR	Central Policy Unit	Higher Education Equity of Access	Schools Financial and ETB Financial/Administrative Personnel	Corporate Services	Planning Building and PPPs	NEPS	International	Inspectorate
EGF Managing Authority	School Transport	Public Service Reform	Higher Education Policy and Skills	Parents, Learners and Database Unit	Finance Unit	-	RIRU	Qualifications Curriculum and Assessment Policy	-
Further Education	North/South	Early Years Education	Higher Education Research and Funding	Teacher Allocation	I.T.	-	Special Education Incl Special Education Litigation	Teacher Education	-
NDP/EU Structural Funds & FÁS Liaison and Training Estimates	Pensions	Statistics	-	School Governance Policies	Personnel	-	Social Inclusion	ICT Policy	-

-	-	Management & Organisation	-	-	Secretary General Seán Ó Foghlú	-	Internal Audit Unit	-	-
-	-	Legal Services	-	Teachers, SNAs Terms and Conditions	Press and Communications	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	Payroll	-	-	-	-

Table 2:

Area of responsibility/section	RESPONSIBILITIES	Staffing Number (FTE)
Management Advisory Committee (MAC) which includes inter alia the Secretary General as well as the Chief Inspector	Providing strategic direction and overseeing the administration of public education and training in Ireland.	11.00
Secretary General's Office/MAC Support	Secretarial service for the Secretary General and other members of the Management Advisory Committee. The Secretary General's office also deals with Memoranda for Government and Parliamentary Questions.	6.80
Internal Audit and European Social Fund (ESF) Financial Control	The Internal Audit Unit is responsible for establishing that the accounting systems, procedures and controls operated by the Department and relevant other bodies as appropriate, are being complied with and are capable of realising policy objectives in an economic, efficient and effective manner. This includes auditing those parts of the operations co-funded by the European Union and incorporated in the National Development Plan for which the Department has responsibility.	7.50
European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) Managing Authority	The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) Managing Authority is responsible for managing and overseeing the delivery of programmes co-financed by the EGF in Ireland.	10
European Social Fund (ESF) Managing Authority and Skills Development Division (incl.NDP/EU Structural Funds & FÁS Liaison and Training Estimates)	The European Social Fund (ESF) Managing Authority, which is part of the European Social Fund Policy & Operations Unit/Skills Division in the Department, is tasked with the effective administration and implementation of the Fund in Ireland. Skills Development Division, through FÁS, ETBs and Skillnets, funds and monitors the provision of further education and training programmes for individuals who are seeking to avail of further vocational education and training opportunities in order to enhance their employment prospects and to enable them to acquire accredited qualifications. The Structural Funds Unit monitors and reports on the progress	24.80
	of activities in the education sector that are aided by the European Union Structural Funds (ESF-European Social Fund and ERDF-European Regional Development Fund).	
External Staff Relations	The External Staff Relations Unit manages industrial relations for the wider education sector. The Unit's function is to promote good industrial relations practice throughout the education sector and encourage and support the modernisation of the sector.	7.80
School Transport Section	School Transport Section of the Department determines policy relating to school transport and administers the School Transport Schemes.	10.63

Questions - Written Answers

Area of responsibility/section	RESPONSIBILITIES	Staffing Number (FTE)
North/South Co-operation Section	The North/South Co-operation Section co-ordinates and develops co-operation and common action in education between both parts of the island of Ireland and with relevant institutions in the US and EU, in the context of the Good Friday Agreement. The principal function of the Unit is to take forward this co-operation through the North/South Ministerial Council.	3.80
Pensions Unit	The Pension Unit administers pension schemes for teachers, special needs assistants, certain clerical officers and certain caretakers in primary schools. The Unit also provides policy advice and information on pensions to Education and Training Boards (ETBs), third level institutions and other bodies under the aegis of the Department.	49.26
Central Policy/Legal Services Unit	The Central Policy Unit co-ordinates a wide range of cross-departmental policy issues for the Department. The section also coordinates the Department's Public Service Reform Programme and the Department's response to the Organisational Review completed in 2011. The Legal Services Unit advises the Minister and the Department on legal issues and ensures the effective management of litigation in which the Minister is a party. The unit also coordinates the Department's legislation programme.	15.00
Public Service Reform Programme Office	Coordinates the Department's Public Service Reform Programme and the Department's response to the Organisational Review completed in 2011.	3.00
Early Years Education Policy Unit	The Early Years Education Policy Unit in the Department of Education and Skills is co-located with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) to ensure that policy developments in the early childhood sector are developed within an overall strategic policy framework for children.	3.95
Statistics Section	The Statistics Section is responsible for the collection and analysis of statistical data and trends relating to education at a national level. The section is also responsible for the provision of data to international organisations.	9.90
Higher Education - Equity of Access Section	The Higher Education - Equity of Access Section is responsible for the development of national policy on equity of access to higher education for all students and, in particular, for under-represented groups such as disadvantaged students, mature students and students with disabilities.	21.36
Higher Education - Policy and Skills	Higher Education - Policy and Skills has responsibility for ensuring an effective policy framework for higher education that supports delivery of high quality teaching, research and engagement by Irish higher education institutions. This includes development and compliance with the legislation governing the sector. The section also has a key policy remit to ensure the provision of higher education and training relevant to the skills needs of the labour force and to support the up-skilling of unemployed people.	6.60

Area of responsibility/section	RESPONSIBILITIES	Staffing Number (FTE)
Higher Education (Research and Finance)	The Higher Education (Research and Finance) Section is responsible for formulating and reviewing budgetary allocations for the provision of higher education. The funding of the Universities, Institutes of Technology and other Higher Education Authority (HEA) designated institutions is made via the HEA. The HEA deals with the individual budgets of the institutions and makes resources available as required. Other non-designated HEA institutions are funded directly by the Department through a core grant, and in the case of some institutions, the cost of free undergraduate tuition fees is met. This section is also involved in determining the criteria for the free tuition fees scheme which is administered by the third level institutions and for the development and implementation of policy in relation to the development of high quality research and innovation capabilities in higher education institutions.	6.46
Schools Financial and ETB Financial & Administrative Personnel Section and the ETB/SOLAS Project Office	The role of the Schools Financial and ETB Financial & Administrative Personnel Section is to support a high quality inclusive school education system within the primary and post primary sectors. The section discharges a range of operational, resourcing and support functions relating to the payment of grants to first and second level schools and Education and Training Boards (ETBs), and performs a range of personnel and staff relations functions in respect of Community & Comprehensive schools and ETBs.	29.00
Parents, Learners and Database Unit	The Parents, Learners and Database Unit administers appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act, provides advice to parents and students on the operation of schools' complaint procedures and manages the Post Primary Pupil Database.	18.70
Teacher Allocation/School Governance Unit	The role of the Teacher Allocation Unit is to allocate staffing resources to primary, secondary, community and comprehensive schools and Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in accordance with departmental and government policy. School Governance Section support the effective governance, management and operation of schools.	40.43
Teachers and SNA's Terms and Conditions Section	The role of the Terms and Conditions Section of the Department is to regulate the employment terms and conditions governing Teachers and Special Needs Assistants (SNA's) employed in recognised primary and post primary schools.	33.79
Corporate Services	Corporate Services provides a range of supports to enable internal units to carry out their key business functions. It comprises the following Units, Accommodation & Services, Freedom of Information, Records Management and Corporate Development.	68.93
Finance Unit	The Finance Unit provides a financial framework and control system for the Department in accordance with government financial and statutory requirements. The unit operates a system for recording all receipts and payments in conjunction with the Pay Master General and the Central Bank. It coordinates and prepares the Statutory Vote accounts and briefing material for the Appearance of the Secretary General at the Public Accounts Committee.	33.33
IT Unit	The IT Unit supports the achievement of the Department's business objectives through the provision of IT systems and services.	54.23

Questions - Written Answers

Area of responsibility/section	RESPONSIBILITIES	Staffing Number (FTE)
Personnel Unit/Ministerial Offices/Correspondence Unit	The Personnel Unit is responsible for managing the human resources function in the Department in the three main office and local office locations and providing the relevant supports to staff. Ministerial support to one Minister and two Minister's of State.	41.43
Press Office	The Press Office provides a press service to respond to media queries. The unit also provides an information and support service to the Minister and Ministers of State and works to improve communications within the Department.	4.80
Payroll Division	The Payroll Division provides a payroll service to teaching and non-teaching staff in primary, voluntary secondary and community and comprehensive schools. Retired personnel are also paid through this service.	124.49
Planning and Building Unit	The Planning and Building Unit is responsible for identifying the need for school accommodation, setting out the technical specifications for educational buildings, ensuring that standards are maintained, prioritising the allocation of resources and overseeing the delivery of the capital programme.	125.32
National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)	The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) supports the personal, social and educational development of all children through the application of psychological theory and practice in education. The service is organised on a regional basis with psychologists being assigned to a group of schools. Where a school doesn't have an assigned psychologist, it can avail of a service from an independently employed panel of psychologists.	194.52
Residential Institutions Redress Unit	The Residential Institutions Redress Unit manages the Department's response to initiatives for the redress of child abuse in residential institutions.	11.73
Special Education Section	Special Education Section is responsible for the development of policy for children with special educational needs and the development of comprehensive, efficient and effective services for these children. The section maintains close links with the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), the remit of which includes direct delivery of services that will facilitate access to education for children with disabilities. Special Educational Needs Organisers employed by the NCSE are based throughout the country to co-ordinate services at local level. While the NCSE has a research and advisory role, the Department continues to have responsibility for policy.	23.13
Social Inclusion Unit	Social Inclusion Unit is responsible for developing and promoting a co-ordinated Department response to tackling educational disadvantage from pre-school through to second-level education.	13.50
International Section	The International Section manages the Department's engagement with international partners, including the European Union, Council of Europe, OECD and UNESCO, to enhance international policy co-operation in education and training. It also has responsibility for policy development and co-ordination in the promotion of Ireland as a centre for international education.	16.83

Area of responsibility/section	RESPONSIBILITIES	Staffing Number (FTE)
Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit (QCAP)	The Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit (QCAP) is responsible for the support of the development of overall policy relating to assessment, curricula and guidance. It is also responsible for EU Directive 2005/36/EC (Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications) and the National Framework of Qualifications.	9.05
Teacher Education Section (TES) and the Information and Communications Technology) Policy Unit	Teacher Education Section (TES) reflects the Department's view of teacher education as a continuum from initial teacher education to induction and Continuing Professional Development (CPD). TES promotes the quality of teaching and learning through the provision of quality teacher training programmes, CPD and support for principals and teachers. This is done through the teacher education programmes, education centres and support services for teachers at primary and post-primary level. The management of this process is supported through steering committees and provision of policy support, as well as liaison with the Teaching Council, the Inspectorate and other sections of the Department on a range of issues. The ICT (Information and Communications Technology) Policy Unit promotes the integration of ICT in teaching and learning in first and second level	21.63
Inspectorate	The Inspectorate is a division of the Department of Education and Skills. It is a statutory body as our role and functions are defined by Section 13 of the Education Act 1998 and some other pieces of legislation. Broadly, these functions are concerned with the evaluation of the educational system (particularly at primary and second level) and the provision of support and advice to school communities, policy makers and the Minister and the educational system generally.	131.00

Student Grant Scheme Payments

63. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Education and Skills when a person (details supplied) in County Donegal will receive a letter from Student Universal Support Ireland informing them of their application number, provisional eligibility and checklist; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50920/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): Officials in my Department have confirmed with Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) that in the case of the student referred to by the Deputy a document check list issued to the applicant's Donegal address. SUSI also confirmed that the document check list will be re-issued to the student by e-mail. When the requested documentation is returned, the student will be notified directly of the outcome.

Momentum Programme

64. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the details of the prospective cost of providing travel allowances for participants in MOMENTUM courses who reside a considerable distance from the location; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50932/13]

Minister of State at the Department of Education and Skills (Deputy Ciarán Cannon): In the design of the Momentum Programme, consideration was given to the question of ad-

ditional payments/supports but in the current difficult economic circumstances, it was decided that no additional payments, other than the retention of social welfare benefits, was warranted. This approach was discussed between the relevant Government Departments when the Programme was being designed last year. An evaluation of the Momentum Programme is currently underway and this issue will be considered in that context.

National Internship Scheme Places

65. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the reason his Department does not maintain a record of schools who utilise the JobBridge scheme to employ interns; and from whom his Department acquires the information on the numbers of schools who utilise the JobBridge scheme to employ interns. [50933/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): The JobBridge Scheme is administered by the Department of Social Protection. The Department of Social Protection process applications for the scheme, make payments to successful applicants and provide information to my Department regarding the scheme as it affects schools.

Schools Administration

66. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills his plans to introduce a circular for schools regarding the use of tablets or ipads; if he is concerned at the financial impact this will have on families; and his plans to record the number of schools introducing such devices. [50934/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): An advice sheet on the adoption of tablets in schools is available on the PDST-Technology in Education (PDST TIE) website. The PDST TIE (former NCTE) promotes and supports the integration of ICT into learning and teaching for schools. This advice sheet covers areas such as what tablets can offer a school, educational considerations, purchasing considerations and software. Should a school wish to adopt tablet devices it is an operational matter for the Board of Management of the school. I would add that where new technology is being adopted by schools consultation should take place prior to the decision being made. The cost and other implications must be fully considered by the Boards of Management. As it is a matter for school management whether to adopt tablets my Department does not keep statistics in this area. A new digital strategy for teaching and learning in schools is under development at present and the use of new technologies will be considered again in this context.

Teachers' Remuneration

67. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the cost of paying teachers salaries in fee paying schools for each of the past five years. [50935/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): The information requested by the Deputy is detailed in the attached file. The figures do not include employer's PRSI contributions.

ALL FEE PAYING SCHOOLS GROSS SALARY COSTS 2008-2009 SCHOOL YEAR

School No.			School Address	Total Gross Teachers
60030V	Blackrock College	Blackrock	Co Dublin	3,899,336.00
60040B	Willow Park School	Rock Road	Blackrock	723,964.00
60090Q	Rathdown School	Glenageary	Co Dublin	1,327,810.00
60100Q	Castleknock College	Castleknock	Dublin 15	2,333,168.00
60120W	Mount Sackville Secondary School	Chapelizod	Dublin 20	2,291,927.00
60130C	Loreto Abbey Secondary School	Dalkey	Co Dublin	2,607,773.00
60140F	Mount Anville Secondary School	Mount Anville Rd	Dublin 14	2,358,225.00
60160L	Notre Dame Secondary School	Upper Churchtown Road	Dublin 14	760,635.00
60180R	Christian Brothers College	Monkstown Park	Dun Laoghaire	2,302,291.00
60240J	Loreto College Foxrock	Foxrock	Dublin 18	2,343,564.00
60250M	Holy Child Secondary School	Military Road	Killiney	1,156,980.00
60260P	St Joseph Of Cluny	Bellevue Park	Ballinclea Rd	1,472,599.00
60272W	The Kings Hospital	Palmerstown	Dublin 20	2,858,723.00
60320H	St Columba's College	Whitechurch	Dublin 16	1,195,302.00
60321J	Rockbrook Park School	Edmondstown Road	Rathfarnham	657,076.00
60340N	Loreto High School	Beaufort	Grange Rd	2,395,414.00
60381E	Sutton Park School	St Fintans Road	Sutton	1,601,205.00
60520P	Belvedere College S.J	6 Great Denmark Street	Dublin 1	4,123,102.00
60530S	Gonzaga College	Sandford Road	Ranelagh	2,373,391.00
60540V	Catholic University School	89 Lower Leeson Street	Dublin 2	1,739,724.00
60560E	St Marys College	Rathmines	Dublin 6	1,638,512.00
60561G	St Michaels College	Ailesbury Road	Dublin 4	2,653,530.00
60570H	Terenure College	Templeogue Road	Terenure	2,992,277.00
60590N	St Conleths College	28 Clyde Road	Ballsbridge	1,121,895.00
60630W	St Killians Deutsche School	Roebuck Road Clonskeagh	Dublin 14	1,537,526.00
60640C	Sandford Park School Ltd	Sandford Road	Ranelagh	1,311,865.00
60650F	St Andrews College	Boooterstown Ave	Blackrock	4,006,962.00
60660I	St Patricks Cathedral G.S	St Patricks Close	Dublin 8	920,764.00
60670L	The High School	Zion Road	Rathgar	2,818,268.00
60820E	Loreto College	53 St Stephens Green	Dublin 2	2,103,139.00
60892G	The Teresian School	12 Stillorgan Road	Donnybrook	683,280.00
60910F	Alexandra College	Milltown	Dublin 6	2,273,379.00
60930L	Rosemont School	Temple Road	Blackrock	322,616.00
61010U	Wesley College	Ballinteer	Dublin 16	3,548,802.00
61020A	Stratford College	1 Zion Road Rathgar	Dublin 6	936,527.00
61080S	Royal School Cavan	College Street	Cavan	1,273,783.00
61570M	Kilkenny College	Castlecomer Road	Kilkenny	3,442,492.00

Questions - Written Answers

School No.			School Address	Total Gross Teachers
61680T	Newbridge College	Newbridge	Co. Kildare	3,030,499.00
61720F	Clongowes Wood College	Naas	Co Kildare	1,672,862.00
61811I	St Gerard's School	Thornhill Road	Bray	1,646,852.00
62060R	Bandon Grammar School	Bandon	Co Cork	2,223,688.00
62370J	Midleton College	Midleton	Co Cork	1,549,229.00
62520C	Christian Brothers College	Sidney Hill	Wellington Road	3,378,493.00
62570R	Presentation Brothers College	The Mardyke	Cork	2,756,210.00
62690E	Scoil Mhuire	2 Sidney Place	Wellington Road	1,422,421.00
63300Q	Wilson's Hospital School	Multyfarnham	Co Westmeath	2,055,875.00
63870L	Drogheda Grammar School	Mornington Rd	Drogheda	1,655,205.00
63920A	Dundalk Grammar School	Dundalk	Co Louth	2,571,172.00
64150F	Glenstal Abbey School	Murroe	Co Limerick	867,496.00
64310B	Villiers Secondary School	North Circular Road	Limerick	2,466,319.00
64420I	Franciscan College	Gormanstown	Co Meath	1,790,638.00
64830E	Monaghan Collegiate School	Corlatt	Monaghan	1,033,758.00
65010R	Newtown School	Waterford	Co. Waterford	1,362,064.00
65190W	Sligo Grammar School	The Mall	Sligo	1,972,642.00
65410K	Cistercian College	Roscrea	Co. Tipperary	1,194,069.00
68071G	St John Scottus Secondary School	74/76 Morehampton Road Donnybrook	Dublin 4	780,201.00
			Total	109,537,519.00

ALL FEE PAYING SCHOOLS GROSS SALARY COSTS 2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR

School No.			School Address	Total Gross Teachers
60030V	Blackrock College	Blackrock	Co Dublin	3,725,286.00
60040B	Willow Park School	Rock Road	Blackrock	658,837.00
60090Q	Rathdown School	Glenageary	Co Dublin	1,673,077.00
60100Q	Castleknock College	Castleknock	Dublin 15	2,167,839.00
60120W	Mount Sackville Secondary School	Chapelizod	Dublin 20	2,122,472.00
60130C	Loreto Abbey Secondary School	Dalkey	Co Dublin	2,209,201.00
60140F	Mount Anville Secondary School	Mount Anville Rd	Dublin 14	2,417,591.00
60160L	Notre Dame Secondary School	Upper Churchtown Road	Dublin 14	1,092,559.00
60180R	Christian Brothers College	Monkstown Park	Dun Laoghaire	2,103,960.00

School No.			School Address	Total Gross Teachers
60240J	Loreto College Foxrock	Foxrock	Dublin 18	2,271,460.00
60250M	Holy Child Secondary School	Military Road	Killiney	1,072,877.00
60260P	St Joseph Of Cluny	Bellevue Park	Ballinclea Rd	1,609,055.00
60272W	The Kings Hospital	Palmerstown	Dublin 20	2,707,942.00
60320H	St Columba's College	Whitechurch	Dublin 16	1,180,725.00
60321J	Rockbrook Park School	Edmondstown Road	Rathfarnham	550,208.00
60340N	Loreto High School	Beaufort	Grange Rd	2,553,628.00
60381E	Sutton Park School	St Fintans Road	Sutton	1,906,316.00
60520P	Belvedere College S.J	6 Great Denmark Street	Dublin 1	3,767,182.00
60530S	Gonzaga College	Sandford Road	Ranelagh	2,433,989.00
60540V	Catholic University School	89 Lower Leeson Street	Dublin 2	1,860,187.00
60560E	St Marys College	Rathmines	Dublin 6	1,794,786.00
60561G	St Michaels College	Ailesbury Road	Dublin 4	2,047,334.00
60570H	Terenure College	Templeogue Road	Terenure	3,212,454.00
60590N	St Conleths College	28 Clyde Road	Ballsbridge	1,065,488.00
60630W	St Killians Deutsche School	Roebuck Road Clonskeagh	Dublin 14	1,591,628.00
60640C	Sandford Park School Ltd	Sandford Road	Ranelagh	1,098,309.00
60650F	St Andrews College	Boosterstown Ave	Blackrock	3,964,820.00
60660I	St Patricks Cathedral G.S	St Patricks Close	Dublin 8	551,195.00
60670L	The High School	Zion Road	Rathgar	3,010,056.00
60820E	Loreto College	53 St Stephens Green	Dublin 2	2,167,643.00
60892G	The Teresian School	12 Stillorgan Road	Donnybrook	759,349.00
60910F	Alexandra College	Milltown	Dublin 6	2,251,027.00
60930L	Rosemont School	Temple Road	Blackrock	429,723.00
61010U	Wesley College	Ballinteer	Dublin 16	3,256,848.00
61020A	Stratford College	1 Zion Road Rathgar	Dublin 6	806,677.00
61080S	Royal School Cavan	College Street	Cavan	1,177,581.00
61570M	Kilkenny College	Castlecomer Road	Kilkenny	3,223,984.00
61680T	Newbridge College	Newbridge	Co. Kildare	3,078,601.00
61720F	Clongowes Wood College	Naas	Co Kildare	1,701,254.00
61811I	St Gerard's School	Thornhill Road	Bray	1,597,234.00
62060R	Bandon Grammar School	Bandon	Co Cork	2,563,140.00
62370J	Midleton College	Midleton	Co Cork	1,358,415.00
62520C	Christian Brothers College	Sidney Hill	Wellington Road	3,247,047.00
62570R	Presentation Brothers College	The Mardyke	Cork	2,748,322.00
62690E	Scoil Mhuire	2 Sidney Place	Wellington Road	1,617,659.00

Questions - Written Answers

School No.			School Address	Total Gross Teachers
63300Q	Wilson's Hospital School	Multyfarnham	Co Westmeath	1,754,164.00
63870L	Drogheda Grammar School	Mornington Rd	Drogheda	1,531,236.00
63920A	Dundalk Grammar School	Dundalk	Co Louth	2,551,058.00
64150F	Glenstal Abbey School	Murroe	Co Limerick	746,596.00
64310B	Villiers Secondary School	North Circular Road	Limerick	2,519,792.00
64420I	Franciscan College	Gormanstown	Co Meath	1,790,066.00
64830E	Monaghan Collegiate School	Corlatt	Monaghan	1,292,271.00
65010R	Newtown School	Waterford	Co. Waterford	1,339,441.00
65190W	Sligo Grammar School	The Mall	Sligo	1,803,897.00
65410K	Cistercian College	Roscrea	Co. Tipperary	1,335,054.00
68071G	St John Scottus Secondary School	74/76 Morehampton Road Donnybrook	Dublin 4	792,766.00
			Total	107,861,306.00

ALL FEE PAYING SCHOOLS GROSS SALARY COSTS 2010-2011 SCHOOL YEAR

School No.			School Address	Total Gross Teachers
60030V	Blackrock College	Blackrock	Co Dublin	3,642,890.00
60040B	Willow Park School	Rock Road	Blackrock	694,016.00
60090Q	Rathdown School	Glenageary	Co Dublin	1,453,090.00
60100Q	Castleknock College	Castleknock	Dublin 15	2,001,778.00
60120W	Mount Sackville Secondary School	Chapelizod	Dublin 20	2,456,494.00
60130C	Loreto Abbey Secondary School	Dalkey	Co Dublin	2,185,046.00
60140F	Mount Anville Secondary School	Mount Anville Rd	Dublin 14	2,386,526.00
60160L	Notre Dame Secondary School	Upper Churchtown Road	Dublin 14	1,051,253.00
60180R	Christian Brothers College	Monkstown Park	Dun Laoghaire	2,111,816.00
60240J	Loreto College Foxrock	Foxrock	Dublin 18	2,197,514.00
60250M	Holy Child Secondary School	Military Road	Killiney	1,400,298.00
60260P	St Joseph Of Cluny	Bellevue Park	Ballinlea Rd	1,353,976.00
60272W	The Kings Hospital	Palmerstown	Dublin 20	2,839,828.00
60320H	St Columba's College	Whitechurch	Dublin 16	1,222,868.00
60321J	Rockbrook Park School	Edmondstown Road	Rathfarnham	464,571.00
60340N	Loreto High School	Beaufort	Grange Rd	2,147,262.00
60381E	Sutton Park School	St Fintans Road	Sutton	1,738,233.00
60520P	Belvedere College S.J	6 Great Denmark Street	Dublin 1	3,739,093.00
60530S	Gonzaga College	Sandford Road	Ranelagh	2,222,214.00

School No.			School Address	Total Gross Teachers
60540V	Catholic University School	89 Lower Leeson Street	Dublin 2	1,706,010.00
60560E	St Marys College	Rathmines	Dublin 6	1,578,355.00
60561G	St Michaels College	Ailesbury Road	Dublin 4	2,040,260.00
60570H	Terenure College	Templeogue Road	Terenure	2,931,407.00
60590N	St Conleths College	28 Clyde Road	Ballsbridge	1,064,581.00
60630W	St Killians Deutsche School	Roebuck Road Clonskeagh	Dublin 14	1,640,787.00
60640C	Sandford Park School Ltd	Sandford Road	Ranelagh	1,170,392.00
60650F	St Andrews College	Boosterstown Ave	Blackrock	3,789,612.00
60660I	St Patricks Cathedral G.S	St Patricks Close	Dublin 8	588,814.00
60670L	The High School	Zion Road	Rathgar	3,170,717.00
60820E	Loreto College	53 St Stephens Green	Dublin 2	1,912,625.00
60892G	The Teresian School	12 Stillorgan Road	Donnybrook	763,132.00
60910F	Alexandra College	Milltown	Dublin 6	1,893,896.00
60930L	Rosemont School	Temple Road	Blackrock	349,540.00
61010U	Wesley College	Ballinteer	Dublin 16	3,251,277.00
61020A	Stratford College	1 Zion Road Rathgar	Dublin 6	1,010,022.00
61080S	Royal School Cavan	College Street	Cavan	1,033,232.00
61570M	Kilkenny College	Castlecomer Road	Kilkenny	3,104,946.00
61680T	Newbridge College	Newbridge	Co. Kildare	3,286,722.00
61720F	Clongowes Wood College	Naas	Co Kildare	1,747,940.00
61811I	St Gerard's School	Thornhill Road	Bray	1,768,269.00
62060R	Bandon Grammar School	Bandon	Co Cork	2,249,480.00
62370J	Midleton College	Midleton	Co Cork	1,470,038.00
62520C	Christian Brothers College	Sidney Hill	Wellington Road	3,301,735.00
62570R	Presentation Brothers College	The Mardyke	Cork	2,690,131.00
62690E	Scoil Mhuire	2 Sidney Place	Wellington Road	1,510,900.00
63300Q	Wilson's Hospital School	Multyfarnham	Co Westmeath	1,632,878.00
63870L	Drogheda Grammar School	Mornington Rd	Drogheda	1,490,922.00
63920A	Dundalk Grammar School	Dundalk	Co Louth	2,253,019.00
64150F	Glenstal Abbey School	Murroe	Co Limerick	939,133.00
64310B	Villiers Secondary School	North Circular Road	Limerick	2,249,798.00
64420I	Franciscan College	Gormanstown	Co Meath	1,796,503.00
64830E	Monaghan Collegiate School	Corlatt	Monaghan	1,172,997.00
65010R	Newtown School	Waterford	Co. Waterford	1,454,801.00
65190W	Sligo Grammar School	The Mall	Sligo	1,945,440.00
65410K	Cistercian College	Roscrea	Co. Tipperary	1,232,375.00

Questions - Written Answers

School No.			School Address	Total Gross Teachers
68071G	St John Scottus Secondary School	74/76 Morehampton Road Donnybrook	Dublin 4	683,249.00
			Total	105,184,701.00

ALL FEE PAYING SCHOOLS GROSS SALARY COSTS 2011-2012 SCHOOL YEAR

School No.			School Address	Total Gross Teachers
60030V	Blackrock College	Blackrock	Co Dublin	3,609,626
60040B	Willow Park School	Rock Road	Blackrock	719,082
60090Q	Rathdown School	Glenageary	Co Dublin	1,215,893
60100Q	Castleknock College	Castleknock	Dublin 15	2,030,911
60120W	Mount Sackville Secondary School	Chapelizod	Dublin 20	2,164,592
60130C	Loreto Abbey Secondary School	Dalkey	Co Dublin	2,253,333
60140F	Mount Anville Secondary School	Mount Anville Rd	Dublin 14	2,185,699
60160L	Notre Dame Secondary School	Upper Churchtown Road	Dublin 14	881,003
60180R	Christian Brothers College	Monkstown Park	Dun Laoghaire	1,875,882
60240J	Loreto College Foxrock	Foxrock	Dublin 18	2,316,373
60250M	Holy Child Secondary School	Military Road	Killiney	1,160,710
60260P	St Joseph Of Cluny	Bellevue Park	Ballinlea Rd	1,585,224
60272W	The Kings Hospital	Palmerstown	Dublin 20	2,764,880
60320H	St Columba's College	Whitechurch	Dublin 16	1,141,795
60321J	Rockbrook Park School	Edmondstown Road	Rathfarnham	517,587
60340N	Loreto High School	Beaufort	Grange Rd	2,270,912
60381E	Sutton Park School	St Fintans Road	Sutton	1,274,097
60520P	Belvedere College S.J	6 Great Denmark Street	Dublin 1	3,582,705
60530S	Gonzaga College	Sandford Road	Ranelagh	2,123,784
60540V	Catholic University School	89 Lower Leeson Street	Dublin 2	1,559,083
60560E	St Marys College	Rathmines	Dublin 6	1,603,798
60561G	St Michaels College	Ailesbury Road	Dublin 4	2,150,542
60570H	Terenure College	Templeogue Road	Terenure	2,652,641
60590N	St Conleths College	28 Clyde Road	Ballsbridge	985,050
60630W	St Killians Deutsche School	Roebuck Road Clonskeagh	Dublin 14	1,326,042
60640C	Sandford Park School Ltd	Sandford Road	Ranelagh	984,064
60650F	St Andrews College	Boosterstown Ave	Blackrock	4,080,264
60660I	St Patricks Cathedral G.S	St Patricks Close	Dublin 8	688,574
60670L	The High School	Zion Road	Rathgar	2,794,519
60820E	Loreto College	53 St Stephens Green	Dublin 2	2,078,547

School No.			School Address	Total Gross Teachers
60892G	The Teresian School	12 Stillorgan Road	Donnybrook	793,129
60910F	Alexandra College	Milltown	Dublin 6	2,127,316
60930L	Rosemont School	Temple Road	Blackrock	357,498
61010U	Wesley College	Ballinteer	Dublin 16	3,326,240
61020A	Stratford College	1 Zion Road Rathgar	Dublin 6	817,642
61080S	Royal School Cavan	College Street	Cavan	1,116,738
61570M	Kilkenny College	Castlecomer Road	Kilkenny	3,072,585
61680T	Newbridge College	Newbridge	Co. Kildare	3,019,459
61720F	Clongowes Wood College	Naas	Co Kildare	1,675,236
61811I	St Gerard's School	Thornhill Road	Bray	1,783,208
62060R	Bandon Grammar School	Bandon	Co Cork	2,304,577
62370J	Midleton College	Midleton	Co Cork	1,396,450
62520C	Christian Brothers College	Sidney Hill	Wellington Road	2,830,443
62570R	Presentation Brothers College	The Mardyke	Cork	2,501,965
62690E	Scoil Mhuire	2 Sidney Place	Wellington Road	1,593,748
63870L	Drogheda Grammar School	Mornington Rd	Drogheda	1,188,149
63920A	Dundalk Grammar School	Dundalk	Co Louth	2,138,903
64150F	Glenstal Abbey School	Murroe	Co Limerick	773,569
64310B	Villiers Secondary School	North Circular Road	Limerick	2,299,758
64420I	Franciscan College	Gormanstown	Co Meath	1,360,870
64830E	Monaghan Collegiate School	Corlatt	Monaghan	1,139,692
65010R	Newtown School	Waterford	Co. Waterford	1,299,574
65190W	Sligo Grammar School	The Mall	Sligo	1,747,202
65410K	Cistercian College	Roscrea	Co. Tipperary	968,886
68071G	St John Scottus Secondary School	74/76 Morehampton Road Donnybrook	Dublin 4	699,878
			Total	98,909,927.00

ALL FEE PAYING SCHOOLS GROSS SALARY COSTS 2012 / 2013

School No.			School Address	Total Gross Teachers
60030V	Blackrock College	Blackrock	Co Dublin	3,574,169.48
60040B	Willow Park School	Rock Road	Blackrock	723,923.78
60090Q	Rathdown School	Glenageary	Co Dublin	1,250,169.64
60100Q	Castleknock College	Castleknock	Dublin 15	2,036,988.13
60120W	Mount Sackville Secondary School	Chapelizod	Dublin 20	2,038,983.40
60130C	Loreto Abbey Secondary School	Dalkey	Co Dublin	2,258,299.33

Questions - Written Answers

School No.			School Address	Total Gross Teachers
60140F	Mount Anville Secondary School	Mount Anville Rd	Dublin 14	2,065,783.08
60160L	Notre Dame Secondary School	Upper Churchtown Road	Dublin 14	780,649.62
60180R	Christian Brothers College	Monkstown Park	Dun Laoghaire	1,849,371.62
60240J	Loreto College Foxrock	Foxrock	Dublin 18	2,274,246.84
60250M	Holy Child Secondary School	Military Road	Killiney	1,124,671.18
60260P	St Joseph Of Cluny	Bellevue Park	Ballinlea Rd	1,446,498.60
60272W	The Kings Hospital	Palmerstown	Dublin 20	2,576,095.07
60320H	St Columba's College	Whitechurch	Dublin 16	1,127,676.67
60321J	Rockbrook Park School	Edmondstown Road	Rathfarnham	552,371.30
60340N	Loreto High School	Beaufort	Grange Rd	2,127,386.96
60381E	Sutton Park School	St Fintans Road	Sutton	1,239,000.99
60520P	Belvedere College S.J	6 Great Denmark Street	Dublin 1	3,490,248.71
60530S	Gonzaga College	Sandford Road	Ranelagh	1,961,975.07
60540V	Catholic University School	89 Lower Leeson Street	Dublin 2	1,478,285.39
60560E	St Marys College	Rathmines	Dublin 6	1,563,173.90
60561G	St Michaels College	Ailesbury Road	Dublin 4	2,077,708.25
60570H	Terenure College	Templeogue Road	Terenure	2,488,796.29
60590N	St Conleths College	28 Clyde Road	Ballsbridge	985,324.36
60630W	St Killians Deutsche School	Roebuck Road Clonskeagh	Dublin 14	1,296,240.71
60640C	Sandford Park School Ltd	Sandford Road	Ranelagh	982,432.43
60650F	St Andrews College	Boooterstown Ave	Blackrock	3,852,325.26
60660I	St Patricks Cathedral G.S	St Patricks Close	Dublin 8	701,184.48
60670L	The High School	Zion Road	Rathgar	2,727,525.73
60820E	Loreto College	53 St Stephens Green	Dublin 2	1,902,046.85
60892G	The Teresian School	12 Stillorgan Road	Donnybrook	767,014.46
60910F	Alexandra College	Milltown	Dublin 6	2,001,064.71
60930L	Rosemont School	Temple Road	Blackrock	372,903.91
61010U	Wesley College	Ballinteer	Dublin 16	3,299,870.39
61020A	Stratford College	1 Zion Road Rathgar	Dublin 6	766,603.75
61080S	Royal School Cavan	College Street	Cavan	1,029,706.94
61570M	Kilkenny College	Castlecomer Road	Kilkenny	2,930,146.95
61680T	Newbridge College	Newbridge	Co. Kildare	2,883,297.44
61720F	Clongowes Wood College	Naas	Co Kildare	1,657,281.63
61811I	St Gerard's School	Thornhill Road	Bray	1,737,140.91
62060R	Bandon Grammar School	Bandon	Co Cork	2,263,307.09
62370J	Midleton College	Midleton	Co Cork	1,409,949.26
62520C	Christian Brothers College	Sidney Hill	Wellington Road	2,733,981.78
62570R	Presentation Brothers College	The Mardyke	Cork	2,428,365.12
62690E	Scoil Mhuire	2 Sidney Place	Wellington Road	1,504,404.83
63300Q	Wilson's Hospital School	Multyfarnham	Co Westmeath	1,728,289.45

School No.			School Address	Total Gross Teachers
63870L	Drogheda Grammar School	Mornington Rd	Drogheda	1,094,271.51
63920A	Dundalk Grammar School	Dundalk	Co Louth	2,111,271.40
64150F	Glenstal Abbey School	Murroe	Co Limerick	745,543.17
64310B	Villiers Secondary School	North Circular Road	Limerick	2,143,828.10
64420I	Franciscan College	Gormanstown	Co Meath	1,307,723.87
64830E	Monaghan Collegiate School	Corlatt	Monaghan	1,007,132.67
65010R	Newtown School	Waterford	Co. Waterford	1,200,912.53
65190W	Sligo Grammar School	The Mall	Sligo	1,640,048.18
65410K	Cistercian College	Roscrea	Co. Tipperary	926,824.16
68071G	St John Scottus Secondary School	74/76 Morehampton Road Donnybrook	Dublin 4	736,738.87
			Total	96,981,176.20

Student Grant Scheme Delays

68. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the number of students who have not yet received Student Universal Support Ireland grants for this academic term despite having been awarded same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50936/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): I am informed by Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) that when an applicant is awarded a grant the applicant gets paid as soon as possible after they submit their bank accounts details and their institutions confirm their attendance. While most applicants have provided SUSI with their bank details a number of applicants have not done so. SUSI is in regular e-mail/social media contact with these applicants to get this information.

As at close of business on 24 November, 2013 for the 2013/14 academic year 68,073 new applications and 23,495 renewal applications had been received by SUSI. Of these 31,931 new applications have been awarded or provisionally awarded and 20,017 renewal applications have been awarded. 25,594 new applicants and 19,190 renewals have been paid maintenance or have been awarded a “fees only” grant. Payments to students awarded a “fees only” grant (either the student contribution or fees) are made directly to the relevant institution on receipt of an appropriate invoice from the institute.

Ministerial Advisers Remuneration

69. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide details of his special advisers and their salaries. [50937/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): The following table gives details of the special advisers I have engaged at my Department since I was appointed to office. As provided for under the terms of the Ethics in Public Office Acts, copies of the appointees' contracts of employment together with details of their qualifications were laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas.

Questions - Written Answers

Name	Grade	Start Date	End Date	Salary
John Walshe	Special Adviser	05/07/2011	Current	€87,258
Deirdre Grant	Special Adviser	05/07/2011	Current	€81,676
*Siobhan Creaton	Temp Special Adviser	30/04/2013	18/11/2013	€75,645

Ms Creaton was appointed in a temporary capacity to cover the duration of Ms. Grant's maternity leave.

Departmental Staff Remuneration

70. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the number of persons in his Department earning between €80,000 and €90,000 per annum; between €90,000 and €100,000 per annum; between €100,000 and €110,000 per annum; more than €110,000; and the amount and the job title of each person. [50938/13]

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

€	No. of persons	Job Title
Over €110,000	10	SECRETARY GENERAL DEPUTY SECRETARY CHIEF INSPECTOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY
€100,000 to €110,000	3	DEPUTY CHIEF INSPECTOR DIRECTOR
€90,000 to €100,000	41	PRINCIPAL OFFICER APPEALS OFFICER MANAGER EDUCATION ASSISTANT CHIEF INSPECTOR PRIMARY ASSISTANT CHIEF INSPECTOR POST PRIMARY SENIOR STATISTICIAN SENIOR EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST
€80,000 to €90,000	126	ASSISTANT CHIEF INSPECTOR PRIMARY PRINCIPAL OFFICER SPECIAL ADVISORS SENIOR EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST SENIOR INSPECTOR POST PRIMARY DIVISIONAL INSPECTOR PRIMARY EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST DISTRICT INSPECTOR PRIMARY DISTRICT INSPECTOR POST PRIMARY POST PRIMARY INSPECTOR SENIOR ARCHITECT CIVIL ENGINEER GRADE 1 PROF ACCOUNTANT GRADE 1 ADVISORY COUNSEL GRADE 111 PROJECT PLANNER QUANTITY SURVEYOR
Total	180	

School Enrolments

71. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the circumstances and legislation under which a school may be compelled to admit a student. [50939/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): Section 29 of the Education

Act, 1998 provides for an appeal by a parent or guardian to the Secretary General of my Department, or in the case of an Education and Training Board (ETB) school to the ETB in the first instance, where a Board of Management of a school, or a person acting on behalf of the Board, refuses to enrol a student in a school, expels a student or suspends a student for 20 or more days in any school year. The Department has no authority to compel a school to admit a pupil, except in the case of an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 being upheld.

Student Grant Scheme Applications

72. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the position regarding Student Universal Support Ireland grants in respect of persons (details supplied). [50953/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): Officials in my Department have confirmed with Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) that in the case of the students referred to by the Deputy their applications for a grant were refused as the reckonable income exceeded the specified threshold for the academic year 2013/14. In order for eligibility to be reassessed under a change of circumstances the awarding authority must be satisfied that the fall in income is likely to obtain for the duration of the approved course or the foreseeable future. The decision on eligibility for a student is a matter in the first instance for the awarding authority.

The Deputy will appreciate that in the absence of all of the relevant details that would be contained in an individual's application in relation to nationality, residency, previous academic attainment and means, it would not be possible for me to say whether or not a student would qualify for a grant under a change in circumstances. Illness Benefit is considered to be a short-term social welfare payment and, therefore, receipt of same may not constitute a permanent change of circumstances.

Where an individual applicant considers that he has been unjustly refused a student grant, or that the rate of grant awarded is not the correct one, he may appeal, in the first instance, to SUSI. Where an individual applicant has had an appeal turned down, in writing, by SUSI, and remains of the view that SUSI has not interpreted the scheme correctly in his/her case, an appeal form outlining the position may be submitted by the applicant to the Student Grants Appeals Board. The relevant appeal form is available to download from http://www.studentfinance.ie/downloads/1375344221/2013_SGAB_appeal_form.pdf.

Departmental Contracts

73. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by his Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50959/13]

74. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by his Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50962/13]

75. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by his Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50965/13]

76. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by his Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50968/13]

77. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by his Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50971/13]

78. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by his Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50974/13]

79. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by his Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50977/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): I propose to take Questions Nos. 73 to 79, inclusive, together.

The information requested is currently being compiled and will be forwarded to the Deputy shortly.

Student Grant Scheme Appeals

80. **Deputy Patrick O'Donovan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the reason a person (details supplied) in County Mayo has yet to receive a decision based on their application for a fee-only grant for the academic year 2012-13; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50984/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): Officials in my Department have confirmed with Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) that following an appeal from the student referred to by the Deputy her application was reviewed and she will be notified directly of the outcome. Where an individual applicant has had an appeal turned down, in writing, by SUSI, and remains of the view that SUSI has not interpreted the scheme correctly in his/her case, an appeal form outlining the position may be submitted by the applicant to the Student Grants Appeals Board. The relevant appeal form is available to download from http://www.studentfinance.ie/downloads/1375344221/2013_SGAB_appeal_form.pdf.

Student Grant Scheme Appeals

81. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Education and Skills when the student grant appeals board will confirm a grant in respect of a person (details supplied); when same will be awarded; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51002/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): Officials in my Department have confirmed with Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) that following an appeal from the student referred to by the Deputy a grant has been awarded and that SUSI issued an award letter on 26 November 2013.

School Transport Provision

82. **Deputy John McGuinness** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will acknowledge the statement of account as published on the Department's website does not give complete information to enable persons to determine whether Bus Éireann makes a profit on the school transport scheme; and if he will clarify the matter. [51020/13]

Minister of State at the Department of Education and Skills (Deputy Ciarán Cannon): The agreed document of 1975 provides the basis for payment to Bus Éireann in respect of the arrangements between my Department and Bus Éireann under which the school transport scheme operates. The Department receives a copy of the Statement of Account for School Transport, prepared by the CIE Group auditors, each year which confirms that, in the opinion of the auditors, the Statement of Account has been prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the Summary of Accounting Arrangements relating to the Transport Scheme for Primary and Post-Primary School children dated 1 January 1975 and with the bases and assumptions disclosed therein. This Statement of Account is not required to contain any statement to the effect that Bus Éireann do not make a profit from school transport and the account is completed in all of the respects set out in the agreed document. Bus Éireann has confirmed to the Department that they do not make a profit on School Transport and my Department accepts this confirmation.

Student Support Schemes

83. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if there are any other financial supports open to a person (details supplied) in County Cork who does not qualify for back-to-education allowance. [51025/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): The main financial support available to students attending further and higher education is my Department's Student Grant Scheme. Under the student grant scheme, eligible candidates may receive funding provided they are attending an approved course at an approved institution and meet the prescribed conditions of funding, including those which relate 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 in relation to nationality, residency, previous academic attainment and means, it would not be possible for me to say whether or not a student would qualify for a grant. The grant application process is now closed for the current academic year but a student may submit an online application for 2014/15 at www.susi.ie when the process reopens. However, if an individual has a change of circumstance which occurred after 20 November 2013 and is likely to be permanent e.g. parent made redundant, they should

contact the SUSI helpdesk at 0761-08-7874 or email support@susi.ie for advice. Eligibility for the Back to Education Allowance (BTEA) and associated payments is determined and administered by the Department of Social Protection. Students in third-level institutions experiencing exceptional financial need can apply for support under the Student Assistance Fund. This Fund assists students, in a sensitive and compassionate manner, who might otherwise be unable to continue their third level studies due to their financial circumstances. Information on the fund is available through the Access Officer in the third level institution attended. The fund is administered on a confidential, discretionary basis. In addition to the student grant, 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.

Student Grant Scheme Applications

84. **Deputy Willie Penrose** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the position regarding an application for a student grant in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Westmeath. [51030/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): Officials in my Department have confirmed with Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) that additional information has been requested from the student referred to by the Deputy. When the requested documentation is returned, the student will be notified directly of the outcome. Where an individual applicant considers that he has been unjustly refused a student grant, or that the rate of grant awarded is not the correct one, he may appeal, in the first instance, to SUSI. Where an individual applicant has had an appeal turned down, in writing, by SUSI, and remains of the view that SUSI has not interpreted the scheme correctly in his/her case, an appeal form outlining the position may be submitted by the applicant to the Student Grants Appeals Board. The relevant appeal form is available to download from http://www.studentfinance.ie/downloads/1375344221/2013_SGAB_appeal_form.pdf.

Student Grant Scheme Applications

85. **Deputy Willie Penrose** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the position regarding an application for a student grant in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Longford; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51031/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): Officials in my Department have confirmed with Student Universal Support Ireland that in the case of the student referred to by the Deputy assessment of his application has been finalised and a grant has been awarded.

Student Grant Scheme Applications

86. **Deputy Willie Penrose** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the position regarding an application for a student grant in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Westmeath; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51032/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): Officials in my Department have confirmed with Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) that additional information has been requested from the student referred to by the Deputy following notification of a change of

circumstances. When this information is received and considered, the student will be notified directly of the outcome.

School Costs

87. **Deputy Seán Crowe** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the amount it cost to produce and deliver the eight page booklet that was sent to every parent of children of school-going age regarding school uniforms. [51046/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): I wish to advise the Deputy that no booklet has been sent to parents. It is my intention to publish a circular on the issue in question to all recognised schools on my Department's website.

Equality Issues

88. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if the advertisement and recruitment procedures for a recent position filled in the professional development services for teachers run by the Dublin West Education Centre, which recently advertised for the position of deputy director organisational affairs (PDST), complied with equality legislation; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51048/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): Dublin West Education Centre is part of a network of twenty one full time and nine part time centres. In accordance with the Education Act, 1998, these centres are bodies corporate and each centre has a management committee which governs its day to day business. As the Deputy may be aware, all organisations that act as employers must comply with the requirements of Irish and EC laws, standards and regulations, including those relating to equality and employment. The Equality Tribunal is an independent statutory office which investigates or mediates complaints of unlawful discrimination and is available to any employee where disputes or grievances arise. Accordingly, enquiries in relation to this competition should be raised with the Centre and/or the Tribunal as appropriate.

Student Grant Scheme Application Numbers

89. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Education and Skills further to the total of some 40,000 student grants awarded by Student Universal Support Ireland up to end October 2013, the number of those that were renewals; the number that were first-time applications; of the remaining applications to be processed, the number that are renewed; the number that are first time applications; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51052/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): I am informed by Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) that SUSI had awarded some 43,000 students up to the end of October. Of these 23,000 were first-time applicants and 20,000 were renewal students. The remaining students with outstanding documentation are being requested to return their documentation as soon as possible so that assessment of their applications can be completed. As at close of business on 24 November 2013, for the 2013/14 academic year 68,073 new applications and 23,495 renewal application had been received by SUSI. Of these 31,931 new applications have been awarded or provisionally awarded and 20,017 renewal applications have been awarded. SUSI is awaiting supporting documentation from 16,413 new applicants and 701

renewal applicants.

School Patronage

90. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will clarify the position with regard to the ethos of a particular school (details supplied) in County Kildare. [51068/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): The school to which the Deputy refers is a non-designated community college under the Patronage of the local Education and Training Board. Non-designated community colleges have a multi-denominational ethos and cater for pupils of all faiths and belief systems. I understand that while the school in question historically had the services of a Catholic chaplain provided by the Archdiocese of Dublin that this has not been the case in recent years.

School Patronage

91. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will clarify the process by which a new school was established as a community college rather than as a junior/senior model school; if he will report on the type of school recommended by parents and by an independent report; and the reason a decision was made in advance of publication of this report (details supplied). [51069/13]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn): I wish to clarify that the report referred to by the Deputy does not make recommendations regarding the configuration of the schools in question. The report outlines opinions expressed at a series of meetings and also identifies issues for consideration by the schools' patron body. I met with local representatives and parents' representatives from the area concerned earlier this year to hear their views in relation to their suggestion that the schools might be configured on a junior school/senior school basis as opposed to the planned two fully vertical post-primary schools.

I fully considered the views presented to me at the meeting and I also examined all of the factors relevant to the matter. I am confident that the schools can operate successfully as two vertical schools. I consider this to be the optimum configuration for the two schools concerned and indeed the best provision that can be made for the pupils in the area in question.

The existing school in the area, under the patronage of the local Education and Training Board, is very highly regarded locally. The intention of the Education and Training Board is that the new community college would replicate and achieve the high standards and success attained in the existing school. The synergies generated by the new campus environment should be a significant benefit to both schools towards building on the success of the existing school and should assist them both in attaining high standards. The management and governance structures for the Education Campus that have been developed by the Education and Training Board, seek to ensure that the necessary appropriate relationships and close co-operation will exist between the two schools at all levels, from the Principals and the Boards of Management through to the pupils and the staff.

Employment Rights

92. **Deputy Gerald Nash** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation when he

intends to bring legislation forward on collective bargaining rights; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50870/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): 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 were subsequently received and a series of initial first step meetings took place between Departmental officials and stakeholders around mid-2013. Discussions with stakeholders are ongoing. I hope to be in a position to bring the matter to Cabinet soon. 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.

Departmental Staff Data

93. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the current operational structure of his Department outlining the management structure but excluding naming of personnel; the responsibilities of each section; the number of persons working in each section; his plans for reforming this structure; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50917/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The Organisation Chart circulated with this Reply identifies the operational and management structure of my Department together with the areas of responsibility and the number of staff (in full-time equivalent posts) within each Division of my Department.

The current structure of the Department was put in place after the formation of the Government in 2011. A revised structure will be implemented in 2014 consequent on the integration of Forfás into the Department once the legislation providing for same is enacted.

-	-	-	Secretary General	-	-
Assistant Secretary	Assistant Secretary	Assistant Secretary		Assistant Secretary	Assistant Secretary
Corporate Services, EU Affairs & Trade Policy Staff: 222.18*	Competitiveness & Jobs Staff: 37.58	Labour Affairs Staff: 290.67**		Innovation & Investment Staff: 83.63***	Commerce, Consumers & Competition Staff: 168.61
Personnel/ Learning & Dev/Org Units	Competitiveness & Climate Change	Internal Audit		Cross Governmental Science, Technology & Innovation Policy	Competition & Consumer Policy
Management Support/Business Services Unit	Enterprise Development Unit/ Micro Enterprise Policy	Labour Market/Chemicals Policy Health & Safety Liaison		Science Foundation Ireland, EU and International STI & PRTL	Company Law Policy & Administration and Business Regulation Unit

-	-	-	Secretary General	-	-
Assistant Secretary	Assistant Secretary	Assistant Secretary		Assistant Secretary	Assistant Secretary
ICT Unit	SME Policy and State Aid Unit	Employment Rights Policy		Inward Investment & North/South Unit	Company Law Development & Modernisation
Finance Unit		Industrial Relations Workplace Relations Liaison		Intellectual Property Unit	Cooperative Law & PIAB Liaison
EU Affairs Internal Market		Employment Permits		Patents Office	Companies Bill Unit
Trade Policy Unit Licensing Unit Bilateral Trade		Workplace Relations Reform Project			Companies Registration Office (CRO)
-	-	-		-	Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement

*Includes 3 staff assigned to the Irish Mission in Geneva

**Includes staff assigned to the National Employment Rights Authority, Labour Court and Labour Relations Commission, Employment Appeals Tribunal and the Equality Tribunal, which are separate to the above organisational structure, but operate under the aegis of the Department.

***Includes staff assigned to the Patents Office.

Jobs Protection

94. **Deputy Seán Ó Fearghail** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the steps that he and his Department have taken to secure the employment of persons at a company (details supplied) in County Dublin; if he has or has had discussions with senior executives of the company; the level of engagement the industrial development agency has had with the company; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50983/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The decision by the company to commence a process which may lead to the closure of the Lufthansa plant at Rathcoole with the loss of 408 jobs was taken following an extensive review of operations, in the context of declining revenues and shrinking international market opportunities. The company has pointed out that enhanced quality and efficiencies of the new generations of aircraft engines – with reduced need for overhaul - has impacted on their business with fewer engines becoming available for service. There are also complex changes in the dynamics of aircraft maintenance worldwide, which have knock-on impacts in facilities such as those in Ireland.

Lufthansa are fully aware of the productive nature of the Rathcoole site and of its skilled workforce, but the decisions taken - while devastating for the employees and families of those affected - if closure proceeds, are purely commercial and based on wider market conditions. As you will appreciate, the ultimate decision in these cases is made by the parent company, on strictly commercial grounds, and on what is seen by the company as being in the best interests

of the group as a whole.

I have met senior executives of the company on three occasions since taking office and IDA have been engaged with them over recent years in an effort to find solutions to the difficult business environment they face. Unfortunately the challenges are very significant. Since the announcement, IDA Ireland has met with company management with a view to creating a profile of the Rathcoole plant, and of the workforce and their skills, for marketing purposes by IDA's global team. IDA will remain in on-going contact with the companies during the coming months. In addition, I have arranged that Enterprise Ireland will engage with the company to explore whatever other options might be possible, taking into account that Agency's remit and experience in supporting the Irish-owned engineering sector.

I am conscious of the highly-skilled workforces and have asked IDA to explore the possibility of securing a takeover or buy-out for either company. I want to assure the Deputy that all that can be done by the State's agencies in an effort to secure a positive result for the employees at both companies is being done and will continue to be done, including any appropriate up-skilling of the employees affected.

Job Creation

95. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his plans to create employment to assist the 1,841 long-term unemployed persons in Coolock Dublin 17. [50999/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): Enterprise Ireland is focussed on job creation and export growth and offers a broad range of supports for entrepreneurs, start-ups and business growth in addition to supporting the work of the CEB/LEOs and other players, public and private, in stimulating job creation at local and national levels. Enterprise Ireland also provides a broad range of supports available to all qualifying applicants – these include Enterprise Start, New Frontiers and Female Entrepreneurs in the entrepreneurship space; Enterprise Ireland Commercialisation Fund support, Competence Centre Programme and Innovation Vouchers in the Innovation Support space; along with the full range of EI supports to industry to support growth in jobs and exports.

With specific reference to the Coolock area, Enterprise Ireland has funded the development of the Coolock Enterprise Centre (Northside Partnership) to the amount of €1,225,012 and has recently funded the appointment of a Business Manager within the Centre, to maximise engagement with local start-up companies.

The County Enterprise Boards (CEBs) throughout the country provide supports, both financial and non-financial or “soft” supports, to all micro-enterprises in the start-up or expansion phase in manufacturing and services, subject to certain conditions. The soft supports include the provision of business advice, mentoring and training to all clients. The aim is to develop indigenous enterprise potential, stimulate economic activity at local level and promote the establishment of micro-enterprises within their administrative area.

Anyone interested in starting or expanding their own business should in the first instance contact their local County and City Enterprise Board (CEB). Contact details for the CEB with responsibility for the Coolock area are available on info@dceb.ie. In Budget 2014, the Government has provided a total of €18.5m for CEBs to support enterprise development, an increase of €3.5m on the Budget 2013 Estimate.

EU Funding

96. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which enterprises here have been in a position to obtain grant aid from the research, innovation and science Commission in the EU in each of the past three years to date; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51084/13]

97. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of enterprises here deemed to fall within the category for aid from the EU Commission for research, innovation and science; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51085/13]

Minister of State at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Sean Sherlock): I propose to take Questions Nos. 96 and 97 together.

The primary EU supports for research and innovation are delivered under the EU Seventh Framework Programme (2007-2013), which has a budget of €55 billion over its 7 year time-frame. This programme offers valuable opportunities to researchers and companies based in Ireland to participate in high-quality research collaborations with their European counterparts, with the support of EU funding. All companies, micro, small, medium, large, profit/non-profit making, public-private partnerships and service providers can participate in almost all Framework Programme 7 activities and are actively encouraged to do so.

Enterprise Ireland is the Irish agency responsible for helping Irish companies and researchers to participate in FP7. Due to the nature of the ongoing application, evaluation, award and contract negotiation stages of the FP7 process it is not practicable to give an annual breakdown of the number of enterprises receiving support. In the period from commencement of FP7 in January 2007 to July 2013, over 2000 applications from Irish-based companies took part in FP7 proposals requesting European funding. From these submissions, and through Enterprise Ireland's facilitation and financial support, over 500 applications have been successful with awards amounting to €149 million accounting for 26% of all funding to Irish researchers from FP7. Ireland's total drawdown in FP7 (as of July this year for which latest figures are available) currently stands at €572m and we are on course to achieve our national target of €600m from this important source of non-Exchequer funding. It should be noted that funding under FP7 is awarded on a competitive basis.

Job Creation

98. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which efforts continue to be made to encourage indigenous job creation with particular reference to high areas of unemployment in the country; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51086/13]

99. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which areas of high unemployment and youth unemployment are being specifically targeted in the context of job creation in both the manufacturing and service sectors and in respect of foreign direct investment and indigenous enterprises; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51087/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): I propose to take Questions Nos. 98 and 99 together.

The latest data from the CSO shows that in the year to September 2013, there was an in-

crease of 3.2%, or 58,000 people, in employment. Unemployment has fallen from 13.6% to 12.8%, and youth unemployment has decreased from 31.1% to 26.5% over the year to September 2013.

In terms of indigenous industry, Enterprise Ireland recognises the significant unemployment challenge facing communities throughout Ireland. Enterprise Ireland works with its clients throughout the country to help to drive employment creation. Enterprise Ireland employs a holistic, developmental approach and engages client companies across all aspects of the value chain. Enterprise Ireland works with clients on business development, sales and marketing capabilities, innovation and R&D activity, technology development, continuous competitiveness and lean improvements, on-going leadership and management development, and access to finance.

In 2012, total employment in Enterprise Ireland's client companies increased to 169,451, made up of 145,460 in full time jobs and 23,991 in part-time positions. This positive performance by Irish companies was achieved notwithstanding the continuing economic challenges at home and abroad. The total direct and indirect employment impact associated with Enterprise Ireland client companies is estimated to total more than 300,000 jobs.

The companies that Enterprise Ireland works with are a vital source of employment in every county in Ireland; in 2012 almost two-thirds of jobs in Enterprise Ireland assisted companies were outside of Dublin. In December 2011 Forfás published the South East Employment Action Plan to help address the high unemployment rate facing that region. This was followed by the development of an action plan for the Mid-West region following the decision to restructure the tourism and enterprise support agencies in the region. Enterprise Ireland is targeting the creation of 12,000 new jobs in 2014.

The Foreign Direct Investment sector is a major contributor to the Irish economy, with 1,000+ companies, employing over 150,000 people and generating €122bn in exports per annum. In addition, because Ireland's FDI focus and competitive advantage is concentrated on high technology sectors requiring high education and skill levels, a high proportion of FDI employment and new employee take up is from young people with third level education qualifications.

In addition to the direct employment impact of FDI, it also generates a substantial downstream spill over employment impact, via employment in construction, facility maintenance, services suppliers, and the spending of wages/salaries and tax revenues in the economy. A study by Indecon consultants in 2010 for Forfas estimated this indirect employment impact to be about 70% of the direct employment impact. Again a significant amount of this indirect employment contributes to reducing youth unemployment in the economy.

The FDI sector also impacts very positively on the Irish economy via the large amount of R&D being carried out by IDA Ireland client companies, with wide ranging positive effects on employment across the economy, much of it highly qualified young people. IDA Ireland is targeting the creation of 12,000 new jobs in 2014.

Despite the significant job losses in manufacturing up to 2010, there are now 205,700 people directly employed in the sector in Ireland, and a similar number of people employed indirectly: the total supported within the sector is therefore just over 400,000. In 2012, in order to build on the potential for this sector I asked Forfás to undertake an analysis of Manufacturing in Ireland and the resultant Strategy, which I launched earlier this year, sets a comprehensive suite of recommendations to develop the sector, which are now being progressed. The Strategy identifies that an additional 20,000 jobs can be created in Manufacturing by 2016. The tide is already turning, as in the years 2011 and 2012 there was a net increase of 3,700 jobs in the

Manufacturing sector. Some of the other more detailed statistics requested by the Deputy are not readily available.

A particularly attractive feature of manufacturing in Ireland is the fact that many of the present jobs are not in the main urban areas, but dispersed into regional locations, thereby providing a valuable employment focus in areas where alternative jobs are scarce. The further development of the sector will, of course, build on this key feature. In addition, the wider economic indicators are now looking quite positive. The Private Sector is creating an overall 3,000 jobs every month as our competitiveness improves and consumer confidence slowly returns. This is a dramatic recovery from the position of a few years ago.

The role of the County Enterprise Boards is to promote entrepreneurship, company start-ups and expansion, and job creation at local level. In 2012 the 35 County and City Enterprise Boards created 4,858 new full time jobs, and are expecting to create a similar number in 2013 and 2014.

The Department of Jobs Enterprise and Innovation, together with the Enterprise Ireland, is also examining options for CEB-led initiatives aimed at promoting youth entrepreneurship, including a mix of financial supports for business start-ups, feasibility studies and mentoring.

Background Information

Programmes aimed at youth & regional entrepreneurship

Enterprise Ireland Graduate Programmes

Enterprise Ireland currently has two graduate development programmes which are primarily focussed at the under 25 age group (less than 2 years post graduation) - The Innovate Programme delivered by WIT and the Graduates 4 International Growth Programme (G4IG). These posts are targeted at graduates with a 2.2 or higher grade average and less than 2 years post graduation experience. The programmes provide a company with a capable graduate to work in their business (International Markets or R&D) while getting a graduate development post grad qualification at the IMI/NUIC or WIT. The graduate's employment costs are subsidised for up to 18 months.

- To date 119 companies have hired 127 graduates with support from Enterprise Ireland in identifying, employing and training graduates in Internationalisation.

- The G4IG 2013 programme is currently open for recruitment. Approximately 300 recent graduates are currently registered for the programme which has 35 companies approved with 46 positions.

- Eight companies employing eight graduates are taking part in the pilot technovation graduate programme in Waterford IT.

Other programmes with a youth focus

Nurturing tomorrow's entrepreneurs Sowing the seeds of entrepreneurship and exposing students to the fundamentals of business is an integral part of promoting an entrepreneurial culture. Enterprise Ireland coordinated and supported a number of the initiatives in 2012 to promote youth entrepreneurship and engagement in the world of hi-tech. These included Coder-Dojo, an Irish-led movement that is teaching kids globally to code, and our annual Think Outside the Box awards, which aim to foster a spirit of entrepreneurship among third level students.

Competitive Start Fund

The purpose of the Competitive Start Fund is to accelerate the growth of start-up companies that have the capability to succeed in global markets. The fund is designed to enable those companies reach key commercial and technical milestones, for example:

- Evaluate overseas market opportunities and reach firm conclusions regarding the viability of the proposed business.
- Build a prototype.
- Secure a reference site.
- Develop a market entry plan for exploiting international opportunities.
- Secure partnership deal or strategic alliance.
- Identify suitable channels to international markets.
- Secure third party investment e.g. business angel, Venture Capital.

The CSF is open to entrepreneurs establishing early-stage businesses in the manufacturing and internationally traded services sectors. As with all EI supports, there are no set age limits, and there is a modest level of investment from the promoter required to avail of EI funding. As such, the CSF can represent an opportunity for youth entrepreneurs to avail of seed funding where the proposed project has international potential.

Think Outside The Box Awards

The Think Outside the Box Awards is aimed at third level students with a novel idea for a new business. Focusing on the development of business ideas with real commercial potential the provides cash prizes and the opportunity to avail of €30,000 worth of specialist advice and assistance to potentially help turn the enterprise idea into a business reality. The awards are sponsored by Enterprise Ireland, Invest Northern Ireland, Intel, Cruickshank Intellectual Property Attorneys and Grant Thornton. The Think Outside The Box Awards have an exclusive focus on third level students, from all academic disciplines and courses of study, and offer the opportunity to realise entrepreneurial ambitions.

Be part of Ireland getting back on its feet and help to drive the economy by commercialising your business ideas and considering starting your own business as a viable career option. Submissions for the awards are accepted all year round and both Enterprise Ireland and Invest NI business mentors are available to help to develop the business idea.

Given the focus of the Awards (3rd level), a significant number of the participants are in the youth entrepreneur cohort. Former winners have gone on to participate in business start-ups, and have availed of EI support.

New Frontiers

New Frontiers is Ireland's national entrepreneur development programme that is delivered at a local level by the Institutes of Technology. For those with an innovative business idea and planning to establish and run your own company, the New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programme can provide a package of supports to help accelerate business development and to equip entrepreneurs with the skills and contacts needed to successfully start and grow your company.

New Frontiers provides Entrepreneurs with:

- Training in all areas of business including financial management, market research & validation, business process, patenting, product development, sales training.
- Mentoring from experienced business advisers and practitioners.
- Office and other business incubation facilities.
- €15,000 scholarship to cover full-time participation in the six month course.
- Networking with other entrepreneurs and business development agencies.
- Introductions to seed and early stage capital investment networks.
- Access to entrepreneurship best practice, both national and international.
- Peer-group learning from participants in the region and across the country.
- Access to the expertise in Enterprise Ireland through our Market Research Centre.
- Expertise from the Institutes of Technology and the supportive environment of their business incubation centres.

Launched in February 2012, the New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programme aims to support the creation of 100 high value, knowledge based, Irish owned businesses, each year. The programme can represent a good avenue for youth entrepreneurs with an innovative business idea to develop and hone their plans and develop an investor ready proposition.

FoodWorks

Bord Bia, Enterprise Ireland and Teagasc are working together on a food sector entrepreneurship programme which offers access to a range of supports including assistance in developing the business proposition, market research, and advice on business financing and supplier development.

The County Enterprise Boards (CEBs) throughout the country provide supports, both financial and non-financial or “soft” supports, to all micro-enterprises in the start-up or expansion phase in manufacturing and services, subject to certain conditions. The soft supports include the provision of business advice, training and mentoring to all clients. The aim is to develop indigenous enterprise potential, stimulate economic activity at local level and promote the establishment of micro-enterprises within their administrative area. These supports are available to everyone, regardless of age.

IDA Ireland is also actively supporting the recent Pathways to Work initiative and in this regard:

- Has recently agreed a protocol with DSP to enhance cooperation on increasing the possibilities for unemployed persons to take up job opportunities in FDI companies
- Is actively using the DSP unemployment databases for marketing to clients in relation to specific projects. Over the last four months IDA Ireland has requested DSP data in relation to five individual projects.
- Is liaising closely with FAS/Solas on putting in place focused training initiatives that can effectively and quickly bridge any skills gaps remaining among unemployed persons identified using DSP data bases.
- Is actively marketing JobBridge internships and the recently introduced JobsPlus incen-

tives to client companies.

Job Creation Data

100. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which the manufacturing sector continues to create employment; the extent to which efforts continue to be made to ensure the retention of the maximum number of manufacturing jobs throughout the country; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51088/13]

101. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent if any to which the number of jobs created in the services sectors as compared with manufacturing have been recorded in each of the past five years to date; the future prospects in this regard; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51089/13]

103. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the total number of jobs created or lost in the manufacturing, service or IT sectors in each of the past five years to date; the extent to which trends have been identified over this period; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51091/13]

104. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which emphasis is being placed on job creation in the manufacturing sectors over the past five years to date; the extent to which areas of high unemployment/social/economic deprivation are specifically targeted in this regard; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51092/13]

105. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which this country remains competitive in attracting investment and job creation in the manufacturing and service sectors; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51093/13]

106. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which his Department continues to identify areas where manufacturing or service jobs might be threatened by relocation of specific enterprises to low wage economies affecting either this jurisdiction or Europe as a whole; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51094/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): I propose to take Questions Nos. 100, 101 and 103 to 106, inclusive, together.

Despite the significant job losses in manufacturing up to 2010, there are now 205,700 people directly employed in the sector in Ireland, and a similar number of people employed indirectly: the total supported within the sector is therefore just over 400,000. Last year, in order to build on the potential for this sector I asked Forfás to undertake an analysis of Manufacturing in Ireland and the resultant Strategy, which I launched earlier this year, sets a comprehensive suite of recommendations to develop the sector, which are now being progressed. The Strategy identifies that an additional 20,000 jobs can be created in Manufacturing by 2016. The tide is already turning, as in the years 2011 and 2012 there was a net increase of 3,700 jobs in the Manufacturing sector. Some of the other more detailed statistics requested by the Deputy are not readily available.

A particularly attractive feature of manufacturing in Ireland is the fact that many of the present jobs are not in the main urban areas, but dispersed into regional locations, thereby providing a valuable employment focus in areas where alternative jobs are scarce. The further development of the sector will, of course, build on this key feature. The Services sector accounts for

two thirds of total employment within Ireland. While the majority of service firms are not supported by the State, in respect of agency supported companies, the total number of jobs lost in 2012 was 7,815; the number of jobs gained in 2012 was 14,187. Therefore the total net new full-time jobs created in the agency supported service industry for 2012 is 6,372. This is very positive growth. The *Action Plan for Jobs 2012* included a series of actions across a wide number of sectors including manufacturing and services. By implementing the 2012 and 2013 *Action Plans for Jobs* and the new 2014 *Action Plan for Jobs*, to be developed in the New Year, the Government is confident that further growth in employment in both sectors will be achieved.

It is, of course, self-evident that with greater globalisation, reduction of tariff barriers and with the ease of transporting goods, that patterns will be changing and there will an inevitable movement of production of lower cost, less specialised goods towards cheaper labour countries, especially in Asia. This is part of a wider global pattern. Although it is very challenging in an internationally competitive environment, there is considerable potential for the manufacturing and services sectors in Ireland, as we are strongly placed to create opportunities and employment in many higher skilled, higher-value sub sectors, where we have a competitive advantage and it is important we concentrate on these areas and maintain our natural advantages. This will assist in our work of attracting Foreign Direct Investment.

In addition, the wider economic indicators are now looking quite positive. The Private Sector is creating an overall 3,000 jobs every month as our competitiveness improves and consumer confidence slowly returns. This is a dramatic recovery from the position of a few years ago.

The *Action Plan for Jobs* includes a series of actions across a wide number of sectors including manufacturing and services. By implementing the 2012 and 2013 *Action Plans for Jobs* and the new 2014 *Action Plan for Jobs*, to be developed in the New Year, the Government is confident that further growth in employment in both sectors will be achieved. Forfás produce an Annual Employment Survey which includes yearly figures for jobs created in Agency-supported companies in certain sectors and relevant data for the past five years for both *Business, Financial and Other Services* and also for *Information, Communication and Computer Services* are shown in the table on the next page. As you will see, recovery in both these sectors is well underway.

-	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Business, Financial and other Services,	47,017	44,041	43,468	45,917	47,555
Information, Communication and Computer Services	65,426	59,940	62,034	66,852	71,586

Foreign Direct Investment

102. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which foreign direct investment has taken place on an annual basis from 2007 to date; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51090/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): Details of employment data relating to FDI performance from the year 2007 and up to 2012 are set out in the attached tabular statements. I am pleased to inform the Deputy that IDA Ireland's mid-year results, announced in July last, showed that foreign direct investment into Ireland was very strong in the first half of this year. During this period, there was an increased number of investments, with approximately 7,000 associated jobs to be created as companies implement and complete their investment plants. This trend represents a continuation on the strong performance an-

nounced by IDA Ireland at the end of 2012, during which year, in excess of 12,000 jobs were created by multinational companies. The 2012 results represented the third consecutive year of growth in net employment in IDA Ireland client companies.

Work in winning new investments has been continuing steadily in the second half of 2013 and, on the basis of the trends so far, I am confident that the targets set out for IDA Ireland in the Action Plan for Jobs 2013, of winning more than 130 new investments, securing €500m in R&D and creating 13,000 jobs in IDA client companies, will be achieved. Among the companies who announced job creation plans or fresh investment plans to date in 2013, were: Ebay, EMC, McAfee, Pfizer, Sanofi, Symantec, Zurich, Huawei, Yahoo, Facebook, Vistakon, GuideWire, Squarespace, Groupon, Qualcomm, Novartis, Nypro, AOL FireEye, and Deutsche Bank.

IDA Ireland is nearing completion of the fourth of its five year Horizon 2020 strategy and the latest results put the organisation ahead of target in meeting its goal of creating 62,000 direct jobs by 2014 from 640 new investments. Over the course of the first three years (2010-2012) IDA has secured 419 investments and has delivered gross job gains of over 36,000.

Table showing data relating to FDI performance from 2007 to 2012

Employment Data	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Permanent Employment	140,369	139,457	126,866	126,305	130,867	136,505
Other Jobs	15,939	13,453	11,788	13,976	15,348	16,280
Total Number Employed	156,308	152,910	138,654	140,281	146,215	152,785

Questions Nos. 103 to 106, inclusive, answered with Question No. 100.

Upward Only Rent Reviews

107. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which upward-only rent reviews continue to present problems in the retail and commercial sectors; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51095/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): I am acutely aware of the difficulties that upward only rent reviews cause for some businesses who had signed their leases before such clauses were abolished on 28 February 2010. The Forfás report “Costs of Doing Business in Ireland 2012”, which was published on 8 April 2013 last, indicates that business costs 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 dramatic reductions in property related costs (in terms of purchase and rent levels) and falling prices across a range of professional and business services.

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. NAMA has published its policy guidance which will inform the approach to be taken where relevant tenants are experiencing difficulties in paying rents. Under the Guidance Note, which NAMA published in December 2011, it has to date approved rent abatements proposed by its debtors and receivers with an aggregate annual value of in excess of €17m. NAMA has refused only 10 of the 312 applications received to date.

The 2013 Action Plan for Jobs also includes a number of specific actions to support a sustainable commercial property market, including ensuring that the commercial leases database

is established and fully operational in 2013. The Commercial Leases Database was published by the Property Services Regulatory Authority on 31 October, 2013. The total number of leases entered into since 1 January 2010 to 31 October 2013 is 24,747.

The Commercial Leases Database is available on the Property Services Regulatory Authority website: www.psr.ie. It will bring much-needed transparency to the commercial property market and will empower both landlords and tenants to reach a commercially informed decision when negotiating new leases, dealing with rent reviews, and lease restructuring and renewals.

In relation to the rent review issue in historic leases, the Government has repeatedly urged that maximum flexibility be shown during the course of rent negotiations and has called upon all parties to act responsibly and in a way which takes full account of the broader national interest.

The Action Plan for Jobs recognises the importance of the retail sector to the economy and the 2013 Action Plan contains a number of measures aimed at supporting that sector. These include an initiative to increase the number of small businesses trading on-line and an initiative to streamline business licence application procedures. Employers in the retail sector can also avail of the JobsPlus initiative which provides financial assistance to employers who recruit people who have been out of work for 12 months or more. The Government has also established an Interdepartmental Group to consider further possible measures to assist the retail sector, which are currently being considered for inclusion in the 2014 Action Plan for Jobs.

The Government attaches great importance to a thriving retail and commercial sector, and is committed to supporting these sectors wherever support is feasible. Continuing action is being taken across Government to reduce the costs of doing business, which is intended to have a positive impact on areas such as energy, local authority rates, and the administrative burden involved in companies complying with Government regulations and tax systems.

Job Creation

108. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the extent to which job creation throughout County Kildare tends to be specifically targeted at areas of higher than average unemployment and youth unemployment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51096/13]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): I believe that the policies being pursued by my Department are making a positive impact in supporting enterprises and job creation. Despite international and domestic difficulties, there has been an annual increase of 3.2% in employment of 58,000 people. Unemployment has fallen from 13.6% to 12.8%, and youth unemployment has decreased from 31.1% to 26.5% over the year to September 2013.

The Government is committed to addressing the problem of employment, and in particular, youth unemployment. Our primary strategy is to create the environment for economic recovery through competitiveness, enterprise and job creation through the Action Plan for Jobs. In addition, the Government recognises the need for measures to support the unemployed and keep jobseekers close to the labour market. In this context, the major elements of the Government's response are set out in Pathways to Work, which is aimed at ensuring that as many as possible of the job vacancies that are created as the economy recovers are filled by people from the Live Register - with a particular focus on those who are long-term unemployed or at risk of long-term unemployment.

Pathways to Work programmes such as JobBridge, Springboard, Momentum, JobsPlus and the ICT Action Plan, are delivered by the Departments of Social Protection and Education and Skills. The Department of Social Protection is also working with relevant Departments, including my own, to produce a concrete plan for implementation of the Youth Guarantee in Ireland, for consideration by the Government before being transmitted to the European Commission by the end of the year.

My Department is also keen to support young entrepreneurs and, in this context, current initiatives such as Enterprise Ireland's Competitive Start Fund and New Frontiers Programme, along with the Microenterprise Loan Fund, all contribute to supporting young entrepreneurs. In 2014, the CEBs will also place a focus on supporting entrepreneurship among young people.

More than 48,000 jobs will be created in 2014 through supports from my Department as a result of the measures announced in Budget 2014. Some of the specific measures announced include:

- A package of new initiatives to support start-ups and growing businesses, including Start Your Own Business Scheme – a 2-year income tax exemption for long-term unemployed people who start their own business,

- A total of €18.5m for CEBs to support enterprise development, an increase of €3.5m on the Budget 2013 Estimate.

- Continued provision for a total of over €2billion in non-bank credit schemes for business.

In 2012, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and the County Enterprise Boards companies had their best performance in many years, with the agencies' clients creating just over 30,000 new jobs between them last year. The services and supports of these Agencies are available to both indigenous and FDI companies throughout County Kildare.

The County Enterprise Boards (CEBs) throughout the country provide supports, both financial and non-financial or "soft" supports, to all micro-enterprises in the start-up or expansion phase in manufacturing and services, subject to certain conditions. The soft supports include the provision of business advice, mentoring and training to all clients. The aim is to develop indigenous enterprise potential, stimulate economic activity at local level and promote the establishment of micro-enterprises within their administrative area.

Anyone interested in starting or expanding their own business should in the first instance contact their local County and City Enterprise Board (CEB). Contact details for Kildare CEB are available on <http://www.kildareceb.ie/>.

Tables 1 to 3 below provide information in relation to County Kildare on IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and Kildare CEB activities.

Table 1: IDA Ireland – Jobs created

County	Employment Data	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Kildare	Jobs Created	113	30	1,228	398	176

Table 2: Enterprise Ireland Jobs created

County	Job Data	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Kildare	Jobs Created	351	476	295	1,082	534

Table 3: CEB Employment Statistics 2011 and 2012

-	-	2012	-	2011
CEB	Full Time Gains	Other Time Gains	Full Time Gains	Other Time Gains
Kildare	133	77	106	135

Social Welfare Code

109. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for Social Protection her views on the claims by Focus Ireland and other housing organisations that recent cuts to rent supplement have contributed to making a number of families homeless. [50899/13]

Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): There are currently approximately 81,000 persons in receipt of rent supplement for which the Government has provided €403 million in 2013. The aim of rent supplement is to provide short term income assistance, and not to act as an alternative to the other social housing schemes operated by the Exchequer. Revised rent limits under the rent supplement scheme have come into force with effect from Monday 17 June 2013 and will be in place until 31 December 2014. The new rent limits have been determined following an extensive review of the private rental market based on the most up-to-date data available. The Department currently funds approximately 30% of the private rented sector so it is essential that the rent limits are kept under review. The new rent limits have been set using the 35th percentile to ensure that sufficient housing is available for recipients of the scheme.

There have been increases in the maximum rent limits in Dublin and Galway while there have been some reductions across a number of counties, reflecting the conditions in the rental markets in those counties. Officials continue to monitor rent levels throughout the country. Department officials dealing with rent supplement tenants will continue to ensure that rent supplement tenants' accommodation needs are met and that the residence is reasonably suited to their residential and other needs.

Carer's Allowance Appeals

110. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will expedite a carer's allowance overpayment appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [50901/13]

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 2 September 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. When these have been received from the Department, the case in question will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral appeal 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.

Departmental Functions

111. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for Social Protection the current operational structure of her Department outlining the management structure but excluding naming of personnel; the responsibilities of each section; the number of persons working in each section; her plans for reforming this structure; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [50919/13]

Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The Department's Management Board consists of the Secretary General, the Deputy Secretary, ten Assistant Secretaries, the Chief Appeals Officer and the Chief Medical Adviser. An organisational chart to Principal level is attached showing total staff reporting to each Assistant Secretary. There are some 6500 people in the Department. The Department has undergone considerable transformation in recent years with the integration of the employment and community services of FÁS and the community welfare service from the HSE. The transformation and reorganisation of the Department is now well advanced but will take some years to complete. If the Deputy would like additional details or to discuss further the Secretary General is happy to meet the Deputy.

Structure of Department of Social Protection at November 2013

Niamh O'Donoghue Secretary General						
Anne Vaughan Deputy Secretary General						
Internal Audit *Seamus Quinn	Chief Appeals Officer Geraldine Gleeson	Chief Medical Advisor Dr. Clement Leech	Assistant Secretary John Conlon	Assistant Secretary Orlaigh Quinn	Assistant Secretary Tim Duggan	Assistant Secretary Niall Barry
	Deputy CAO Cathy Barron	Deputy CMA Dr. Devesh Singh	Finance Sean Reilly	HR Policy & Service Celine Moore Lucy Fallon- Byrne Ciaran Lawler	Payments Strategy Siobhan Lawlor	Enterprise Architect Sean Fay
			Budget/IMF Reporting Denis Moynihan	Pensions/ Household Benefits Policy Patricia Murphy	Client Identity Services Richard Shine	Software Engineer John Bohan
			Legislation/ Planning Sec- retariat Helen McDon- ald	Contributory Pensions/CIB/ MABS/Infor- mation Anne Marie Cassidy		Infrastructure Kevin Coady
			Facilities Man- agement Eoghan Ryan	Non Contribu- tory Pensions/ Household Benefits Miriam Finnegan		Service De- livery Victor Galvin
			Corporate Services Vacancy	EU Interna- tional Mary O'Sullivan		DRIM/Pub- lic Service Reform/ICT Project Plan- ning Daragh O'Connor

*Internal Audit reports directly to Secretary General.

Structure of Department of Social Protection at November 2013

Niamh O'Donoghue Secretary General					
Anne Vaughan Deputy Secretary General					
Assistant Secretary Kathleen Stack	Assistant Secretary Helen Faughnan	Assistant Secretary Oliver Egan	Assistant Secretary John McKeon	Assistant Secretary Simonetta Ryan	Assistant Secretary Teresa Leonard
Control Deirdre Shanley	Operational Policy/Regional Support Unit Bernard Tonge Marie O'Neill Barry Kennedy	Work/CE Schemes/Employ- ment Support TJ Fleming Mary Donnelly	Activation & Em- ployment Policy Terry Corcoran	Working Age Policy/General Register Policy Padraig O'Conaill	Benefits/Medical Review & Assess- ment Alan Flynn
Special Investiga- tion Unit Philip Cox	Decisions Advisory Office/ Freedom of Infor- mation Anne Mc Manus	Dublin North Division Paul Carroll	Transformation/ IR/Intreo Pilot Offices Anne Tynan	Jobseekers/OPFP Reform Equality Niall Egan	Disability Al- lowance/Carers Allowance/ Family Income Supplement Catherine Kel- laghan
North West Divi- sion Kieran O'Dwyer	South West Divi- sion Neil Kelly	Dublin South Division Fiona Ward	Employer Rela- tions Joan Gordon	PRSI/Scope/ Redundancy & Insolvency Mary Kennedy	Disability/Carers Policy Liam Walsh
North East Divi- sion Joe Mc Guinness	Cork Central Division Maria Hurley	Dublin Central Division David Dillon	External Service Delivery Brendan Friel	General Register Office Kieran Feely	Child Benefit/ Domiciliary Care Allowance/Clie- nt Eligibility Service/Maternity Benefit Tony Kieran
Western Division Eoin Brown	South East Divi- sion Liam Daly	Mid-Leinster Division Donal Spellman	Business Intel- ligence Paul Morrin	Social Inclusion & Child Income Policy Jim Walsh	
Midlands North Division Des Henry	Midlands South Division Veronica O'Brien		Regional Process Modernisation Philip O'Donohoe		
Mid-West Divi- sion Jim Lynch	Supplementary Welfare Allow- ance Jackie Harrington				

State Pension (Non-Contributory) Appeals

112. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Protection the progress to date in determination of an appeal for State pension non-contributory in the case of a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [50930/13]

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 20 November 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. When these have been received from the Department, the case in question will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral appeal 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.

Departmental Contracts

113. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by her Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if she will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50960/13]

114. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by her Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if she will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50963/13]

115. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by her Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if she will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50966/13]

116. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by her Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if she will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50969/13]

117. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by her Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if she will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50972/13]

118. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by her Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if she will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50975/13]

119. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by her Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if she will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50978/13]

Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): I propose to take Questions Nos. 113 to 119, inclusive, together.

The procurement of services is essential to support the Department in providing high quality service to the public in a cost effective and efficient manner and is governed by a comprehensive regulatory, legal and procedural framework.

The Department engages consultants (individuals or organisations) to provide intellectual or knowledge based services (e.g. expert analysis and advice) including the delivery of reports, studies, assessments, recommendations and proposals that contribute to decision making or policy making.

In accordance with Department of Public Expenditure and Reform procedures, procure-

ments of goods and services in excess of €25,000 ex. VAT are advertised on etenders and all IT procurements in excess of €10,000 ex. VAT.

Details of contracts agreed from 2008 to date with consultants to whom the questions refer are set out in the following table.

Selected Consultants Contracted by DSP 2008- 2013 (as at 27 November)

2009

Consultants	Purpose	Public Tender (Y/N)	Contract Value
Ernst & Young	Information Security Support	Yes	€300,000
Deloitte	External Training	No	€5,000
McCann FitzGerald	Legal Services	No	€4,126
Grant Thornton	Consultancy Services	No	€1,000

2010

Consultants	Purpose	Public Tender (Y/N)	Contract Value
Arthur Cox	Legal Services	No	€6,598
McCann FitzGerald	Legal Services	No	€1,671

2011

Consultants	Purpose	Public Tender (Y/N)	Contract Value
Deloitte	Information Systems Audit	Yes	€170,478
PwC	Review of Pension Charges	Yes	€61,500
PwC	External Training	No	€10,573

2012

Consultants	Purpose	Public Tender (Y/N)	Contract Value
Deloitte	Information Security Support	Yes	€83,025
KPMG	Actuarial Review of Social Insurance Fund	Yes	€153,750
Arthur Cox	Legal Services	No	€3,703

2013 (as at 27 November)

Consultants	Purpose	Public Tender (Y/N)	Contract Value
Deloitte	IT Support for Business Object Modelling Development	Yes	€826,560
Deloitte	IT Support for Regional Development	Yes	€1,564,560
PwC	Financial Assessment	No	€7,380

Fuel Allowance Eligibility

120. **Deputy Áine Collins** asked the Minister for Social Protection further to Parliamentary Question No. 326 of 19 November 2013, the reason she classified a person's income as employment when it has been clearly shown that they are on a community employment scheme, which entitles them to jobseeker's allowance plus €20. [50982/13]

Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): Community Employment (CE) participants are legally under contracts of employment with the CE Sponsoring organisation. CE Participants have all the same legal protections as any other person under a contract of employment (with the exception of they cannot be employed on contracts of indefinite duration). CE Participants pay PRSI and PAYE (where applicable). The wages they receive on CE are paid by the employer who in turn claims the cost of the wages from the Department every 4 weeks. If the Deputy has a query further to the answer already provided to PQ No. 326 referred to above, perhaps she would furnish the details to my office and I will have the matter reviewed.

Domiciliary Care Allowance Appeals

121. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Social Protection the position regarding the case of a person (details supplied) in Dublin 11 regarding an appeal for domiciliary care allowance. [50988/13]

Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): I am advised by the Social Welfare Appeals Office that an oral hearing of the appeal of the person concerned took place on 21 November 2013 and that the Appeals Officer is now considering the appeal in the light of all of the evidence submitted, including that adduced at the oral hearing. The person concerned will be notified of the Appeals Officer's decision when the appeal has been determined. 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.

Jobseeker's Allowance Appeals

122. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will examine a jobseeker's allowance appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry. [51011/13]

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 8 November 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 14 November 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.

National Internship Scheme Placements

123. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Minister for Social Protection the reason a person (details supplied) in Dublin 15 is being paid only €114.40 on a JobBridge placement scheme in view of the fact they are working 30 hours per week; and her views on whether this is exploitation of a worker. [51013/13]

Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The person to whom the Deputy refers is in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance, which was means tested resulting in a weekly rate of €64.60. Under the scheme, JobBridge interns continue to receive their Social Welfare payment at its current rate together with the weekly €50 top-up. The Department is not in a position to make exceptions to this rule.

Carer's Allowance Payments

124. **Deputy John McGuinness** asked the Minister for Social Protection if a person (details supplied) in County Kilkenny is now in full payment of carer's allowance; the amount of arrears due; and when payment will issue. [51016/13]

Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): I can confirm that my Department received an application for carer's allowance from the person concerned on the 24 July 2013. This application was approved with effect from 31 October 2013, with the first payment being made on this date. The person concerned was notified of this decision in writing on 1 October 2013. There are no arrears due to the person concerned as he was in receipt of a jobseeker's payment at a higher rate than that payable on the carer's allowance.

Question No. 125 withdrawn.

Child Care Services Provision

126. **Deputy Joan Collins** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will report on the Scandinavian style child care that has been implemented since the announcement of Budget 2013 and future plans; the number of extra children that have child care access compared to 2011/12 in pre school and day child care. [51045/13]

Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The provision of all child care services and any future plans in this regard is a matter for my colleague the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Francis Fitzgerald T.D. The Scandinavian child care model, while being a very comprehensive model, is also a very expensive model. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (D/CYA) estimates that the cost of universal child care provision in Ireland could reach around €1 billion per annum. In light of the current fiscal environment, this level of funding is not available.

The early childhood care and education (ECCE) programme is a universal programme implemented by the D/CYA and provides a free pre-school year for all eligible children before they commence primary school. Approximately €175 million is provided annually to support the programme. In the school year 2012/2013 approximately 68,000 children availed of the free pre-school provision. The community child care subvention scheme is operated by D/CYA and supports in excess of 25,000 children, across some 1,000 community/not-for-profit child care providers. Under this scheme child care providers charge reduced fees to disadvantaged and low-income parents. Access to affordable child care is one of the key supports required by customers of the Department of Social Protection when entering employment. Customers of the Department can access the ECCE programme, the CCS programme, the child care education and training scheme (CETS) and the after school child care (ASCC) scheme.

The purpose of the After-school Child Care scheme (ASCC) is to help offset some of the after-school child care costs that are associated with availing of an employment opportunity. The scheme supports those who are unemployed as well as OFP recipients and is funded from the transfer of savings from my Department to the D/CYA.

The ASCC scheme was piloted during 2013 and following a review of the pilot, I have the agreed with Minister Fitzgerald to re-focus the funding for 2014. This will allow for a new strand of child care support for customers of my Department who are participating in the community employment (CE) scheme. This new child care support will provide an additional 1,800 places on top of the existing 2,800 places, which are currently available under the child care education and training support (CETS) scheme that is administered by the D/CYA. The CETS provides subsidised child care places to clients of my Department participating in education, training and now community employment programmes.

In addition the ASCC scheme is now available nationally and will provide 800 subsidised after-school child care places in 2014. The allocation of places, funding for the scheme, and the design of the scheme itself will be monitored and reviewed - as appropriate - during 2014.

Youth Unemployment Measures

127. **Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin** asked the Minister for Social Protection what will happen if Ireland's youth unemployment rate drops below 25% in terms of eligibility for EU funding under the youth guarantee scheme. [51050/13]

Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): Eligibility for EU funding through the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) for the period 2014-2018, which is being front-loaded in the two years 2014 and 2015, will be based on 2012 regional youth unemployment rates. Hence, any change in Ireland's regional youth unemployment rates, which were above 25% in 2012 for both the Border, Midlands & Western region and the Southern & Eastern region, will not change our eligibility for this funding.

Invalidity Pension Appeals

128. **Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will confirm that an appeal has been lodged in respect of the decision of her Department to refuse an invalidity pension application in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Monaghan; the current status of that appeal. [51073/13]

Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that there is no record of an Invalidity Pension appeal by the person concerned having been received by that office. I understand from the Social Welfare Appeals Office that a Disability Allowance appeal was registered in respect of the person concerned in that office on 17 July 2013. However, this appeal was closed on 16 August 2013; it was withdrawn as a result of a favourable decision being made for the person concerned by Disability Allowance Section. 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.

Employment Support Services

129. **Deputy Brendan Ryan** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline the employment schemes that are directed at persons who are over 55 years of age; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [51083/13]

Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The Department of Social Protection funds and manages a number of employment schemes with the objectives for providing a mix of policy responses and opportunities for person who are unemployed. All programmes are open and accessible to person aged 55 years and over. No specific actions are undertaken or targeted at unemployed persons in this age group.

Wind Energy Generation

130. **Deputy Michael Colreavy** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources his views on whether the bulk of the projected wind energy exports to Britain will be supplied by offshore or onshore installations. [50908/13]

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte): In January of this year the United Kingdom Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, Mr. Edward Davey MP, and I signed a Memorandum of Understanding on energy cooperation. That Memorandum sent a strong signal of our shared interest in developing the opportunity to export green electricity from Ireland to Britain and will result in completion of consideration of how Irish renewable energy resources, onshore and offshore, might be developed to the mutual benefit of both countries. The amount of energy to be procured by the United Kingdom and the mechanisms for sharing the resultant economic benefits, including an appropriate return to the Exchequer, are among the matters to be addressed ahead of signing any Inter-Governmental Agreement.

Projects of a significant scale specifically for export will have to await (i) the signing of an Inter-Governmental Agreement, (ii) the Renewable Energy Export Policy and Development Framework which is being developed by my Department over the coming year or so, and (iii) the obtaining of planning permission, informed by this policy, from An Bord Pleanála. Given the relative maturity of wind technology and the abundant resource available to Ireland, wind generation is likely to contribute a large component of any potential export to the United Kingdom. In this regard, both onshore and offshore developers will be free to bring forward proposed developments in due course.

Wind Energy Generation

131. **Deputy Michael Colreavy** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources his views on whether it is good policy to develop wind farms in this State to generate electricity for export; and when that electricity will be taken into the national grid and assist in attaining targets. [50957/13]

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte): Ireland has the capability to achieve its national targets for renewable electricity from onshore renewable generation alone, with capacity to spare. This means that, under the co-operation mechanisms outlined in Directive 2009/28/EC, there is potential for projects of scale both onshore and offshore that are aimed at export markets. It is in this context that the United Kingdom Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, Mr. Edward Davey MP, and I signed a Memorandum of Understanding on energy cooperation. That Memorandum sent a strong signal of our shared interest in developing the opportunity to export green electricity from Ireland to

Britain and will result in completion of consideration of how Irish renewable energy resources, onshore and offshore, might be developed to the mutual benefit of both countries.

The amount of energy to be procured by the United Kingdom and the mechanisms for sharing the resultant economic benefits, including an appropriate return to the Exchequer, are among the matters to be addressed ahead of signing any Inter-Governmental Agreement. Furthermore, the Renewable Energy Export Policy and Development Framework that my Department is currently developing will ensure that any export of renewable energy must take account of Ireland's energy needs and long term strategic energy requirements. Projects of a significant scale specifically for export will have to await the signing of an Inter-Governmental Agreement, the putting in place of the policy framework, and the obtaining of planning permission, informed by this policy, from An Bord Pleanála.

Broadcasting Sector Regulation

132. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the measures in place to ensure that broadcasters do not undermine the validity of the compliance procedure of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51038/13]

133. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if the podcast of a radio show that the compliance committee of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland has upheld a complaint about should still be made available on a radio station website; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51039/13]

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte): I propose to take Questions Nos. 132 and 133 together.

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) is the statutory independent body responsible for regulation of the broadcasting sector, which includes oversight of compliance in relation to broadcast content. The monitoring and enforcement of compliance by broadcasters with the various codes and standards established by the Authority is a matter for the Compliance Committee of the BAI, which is also independent in its functions. The Committee is charged, inter alia, with accepting complaints from the general public in relation to a range of issues relating to broadcasting content. The grounds and procedures for making complaints are set out in Section 48 of the Broadcasting Act 2009.

If a member of the public has concerns regarding on-air content subsequent to a determination of the Compliance Committee being read out by the broadcaster, and they believe that the content is in breach of the BAI's Code of Fairness, Objectivity and Impartiality or any other codes or statutory provisions, they can make a complaint, in the first instance, to the broadcaster. If they are dissatisfied with the decision of the broadcaster, they can refer the matter to the BAI. Details relating to the complaints process are available on the BAI web-site at www.bai.ie. With regard to podcasts of radio programmes, the position is that the BAI does not have any regulatory power in respect of on-line content, including on-line content provided by broadcasters. I have asked my officials to discuss this matter further with the BAI to see, if possible, how it might be addressed.

Departmental Expenditure

134. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural

Resources the amount that has been spent on legal costs, that is, fees, expenses and so on by his Department and any agencies under his remit; if he will provide a breakdown of the individual agencies and costs incurred by them for the years 2009 to 2012, inclusive. [51075/13]

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte): My Department administers a very diverse and complex brief. Its remit includes oversight of very complex policy areas and direct procurement of major services where protection of the State's interest must be paramount. This situation necessarily requires my Department to procure specialist external professional advice in legal areas to enable it to discharge its responsibility to deliver quality services and protect the interests of the State and the taxpayer. In procuring specialised legal services, my Department always seeks to ensure value for money and the keeping of expenditure to the minimum necessary. The table below sets out the total legal costs incurred by my Department in the years 2009 to 2012.

2009	2010	2011	2012
€494,683.64	€568,601.48	€335,335.74	€102,228.88

The information sought regarding the agencies under the aegis of my Department is an operational matter for each Agency. I have notified the relevant agencies of the Question and have requested them to respond directly to the Deputy on the matter.

Motor Tax Exemptions

135. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if an extension will be granted to a person (details supplied) in Dublin 11 who missed the 1 October 2013 deadline to declare their car off the road, but is permanently unable to drive their car due to physical disabilities resulting from a serious accident. [51060/13]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan): Motor tax is payable in respect of vehicles used in a public place, and is not payable where the vehicle owner does not intend so to use it. It is open to the owner of a vehicle to declare it will be kept off the road, either during the final month of validity of an existing vehicle licence or off-road declaration, or upon payment of outstanding arrears plus a minimum of three months motor tax.

The new arrangements as provided for in the Non-Use of Motor Vehicles Act 2013, only allowing for the making of future declarations, are fully in force since 1 October 2013. Exemptions are not provided for in individual cases, given that there was a well-publicised transition period of 3 months from 1 July 2013 to allow vehicle owners to bring their motor tax status up to date by making both a retrospective and prospective off-road declaration, including a specific procedure to allow those who were incapacitated to put their motor tax affairs in order by nominating a friend or relative to attend at a Garda Station on their behalf to have the required form stamped in respect of a past period of non-use. Vehicle owners generally who did not avail of the transition arrangements must now pay arrears in motor tax where these arise.

Motor Tax Exemptions

136. **Deputy Brendan Ryan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if any provisions are in place for a car that is not in use but is not off the road as the owner does not have sufficient space to store a car (details supplied) and can this car remain

untaxed as it is not in use; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51080/13]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan): Vehicles are required to be taxed if they are in use in a public place. Motor tax legislation provides that reference to the use of a vehicle includes keeping or leaving a vehicle stationary. The Non-Use of Motor Vehicles Act 2013 did not change the law in this regard and accordingly, making a declaration of non-use in respect of a vehicle kept in a public place does not affect the requirement for such a vehicle to be taxed.

Alternative Energy Projects

137. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government his plans to develop a national strategy to assist the processing of food waste in the production of biogas for biofuel. [50879/13]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan): I introduced the European Union (Household Food Waste and Bio-waste) Regulations 2013 in April 2013. These Regulations, which build on the commercial food waste regulations introduced in 2009, are designed to promote the segregation and recovery of household food waste, in line with the national policy and the Waste Framework Directive objectives of maximising the resource which can be extracted from waste and minimising the disposal of waste. They will increase the amount of food waste that is recovered through the production of energy, compost and digestate, thereby creating opportunities for added jobs and value. The Regulations will also facilitate the achievement of the targets set out in the Landfill Directive (Directive 99/31/EC) for the diversion of biodegradable municipal waste from landfill sites, by directing source-segregated household food waste to composting and to other forms of treatment.

The Regulations impose obligations on both householders and waste collectors. Householders are obliged to segregate their food waste, and make it available for separate collection. Alternatively householders may compost the food waste at home; or bring it themselves to authorised treatment facilities (such as civic amenity sites or anaerobic digestion sites).

In respect of the end-product from the treatment of food waste as it relates to the purpose of energy production, policy measures and strategy in relation to the production of biogas for bio-fuel are matters for my colleague, the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources. However, I understand that academic and industry research suggest there is a potentially significant role for biogas and biomethane in meeting our renewable energy requirements, particularly in the challenging heat and transport sectors and biogas can be utilised to generate electricity, heat or as a transport fuel.

There are already a number of supports in place for the use of biogas. Electricity production using anaerobic digestion of biodegradable feedstock, including food waste, is supported under the REFIT 3 scheme, with 50MW of the 310MW dedicated to this technology. REFIT 3 in its support for combined heat and power also supports the generation of renewable heat from such feedstock. In the transport sector, biogas may also be used to meet the obligations set under the Biofuels Obligation Scheme.

Given the relatively early stage of technology development and cost, detailed economic analysis is required before any additional supports for biogas and biomethane appropriate to Ireland can be considered. This analysis will be carried forward in the context of implementing the forthcoming Bioenergy Strategy which is currently being finalised by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

Dog Breeding Establishments

138. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will publish the number and size of dog breeding establishments that have registered in 2010, 2011 and 2012 by county under the Dog Breeding Establishments Bill 2010. [50881/13]

139. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he has reviewed the enforcement of welfare standards in each county since the implementation of the Dog Breeding Establishment Bill 2010. [50892/13]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan): I propose to take Questions Nos. 138 and 139 together.

It is the responsibility of each local authority to maintain the register of dog breeding establishments in their functional area. However, some data concerning the dog control functions of local authorities are available on my Department's website at <http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/StatisticsandRegularPublications/DogControl/>. This includes, inter alia, information on the number of dog breeding establishments registered by each local authority in 2012. The Dog Breeding Establishments Act, 2010 came into operation on 1 January 2012, so there were no registrations in 2010 or 2011. The information published by my Department does not include the size of the establishments, but this information can be examined in the registers which are available for inspection at each local authority.

Welfare standards regarding dog breeding establishments have been provided for through the guidelines issued when I commenced the Act. Each local authority is responsible for the monitoring of these standards with regard to the registration of such establishments.

More generally, the enforcement of welfare standards regarding all animals is a matter for the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the local authorities and one in which my Department has no direct role.

Private Residential Tenancies Board Remit

140. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment; Community and Local Government if he will provide on an authority basis the amount of money transferred to local authorities by the Private Residential Tenancies Board in 2013 for the carrying out of inspections of rental accommodation; and the amount of money that was used by local authorities in that time. [50894/13]

141. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment; Community and Local Government if he will provide a breakdown by each local authority of the number of private rental properties inspected in 2011, 2012, and to date in 2013, respectively, including the number that failed to meet minimum standards or had serious breaches of standards. [50895/13]

Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan): I propose to take Questions Nos. 140 and 141 together.

My Department collates a wide range of housing statistics that inform the preparation and evaluation of policy and this information, including details of the funding provided to local authorities for inspections of rental accommodation carried out, is published on my Department's website www.environ.ie. Data on local authorities' minimum standards inspection activity, including data on non-compliance, are also published up to 2012. Local authorities are currently

compiling their 2013 inspection data which will be available for publication in 2014. Payments to local authorities for inspections carried out in 2013 will be made in 2014 on receipt of these data.

Litter Pollution

142. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if his attention has been drawn to the problem of car-dealers erecting large numbers of advertising posters in residential areas offering cash for cars; if his attention has been drawn to the considerable resources which local authorities have to devote to the removal of such posters and the difficulty in prosecuting those responsible as the mobile phone numbers are untraceable; if he will review the penalties for this practice in order to ensure that they act as a more effective deterrent. [50896/13]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan): The Litter Pollution Acts 1997 to 2009 provide the statutory framework to combat litter problems. Under the Acts, the primary management and enforcement response to littering is a matter for the relevant local authority. Section 19 of the Litter Pollution Act (Prohibition of articles and advertisements on and defacement of certain structures, etc.) applies in regard to the display of advertisements on perimeter railings or street lamps. This Section states that:

“Where any structure or other land, door, gate, window, tree, pole or post is in or is visible from a public place, a person who is not the owner, occupier or person in charge thereof shall not—

- (a) exhibit or cause to be exhibited thereon any article or advertisement, or
- (b) carry out or cause to be carried out any defacement thereof by writing or other marks,

unless the person is authorised in advance to do so in writing by such owner, occupier or person in charge or by or under any enactment.”

Any breach of the above section is liable to a €150 on-the-spot fine in the first instance and considerably more punitive measures on prosecution by the relevant local authority. I am satisfied that there are appropriate deterrents in place to deal with this issue.

Housing Issues

143. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if Limerick City Council has submitted a request for funding to demolish houses at Garryglass Avenue and Rathbane Road, Limerick; if he intends to respond favourably; if he will confirm when Limerick City Council may expect a response; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50903/13]

Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): In response to a request from my Department in 2012 for proposals for the construction of new social housing units to meet urgent housing need, Limerick City Council submitted a proposal for the demolition of a number of vacant housing units at Sycamore Drive and Elm Place, Rathbane and the construction of 9 replacement units on the cleared site. On 25 November, my Department approved a budget cost of €1.486 million for this project. It is now a matter for Limerick City Council to progress the project, subject to the

requirements set out in the letter of approval. There are no proposals with my Department in respect of the demolition of houses at Garryglass Avenue.

Water and Sewerage Schemes Provision

144. **Deputy Michael Moynihan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government his plans to build a sewerage treatment plant in Kilcummin, County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50921/13]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan): I refer to the reply to Question No. 121 of 14 November 2013, which sets out the position in this matter.

Irish Water Remit

145. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the role and powers he intends to prescribe to Irish Water in the planning process; if he intends to provide Irish Water with similar powers to those of the National Roads Authority in terms of the planning process; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50944/13]

Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Fergus O'Dowd): The Water Services Act 2013 provides for the establishment of Irish Water as an independent subsidiary under the Companies Acts within the Bord Gáis Éireann Group. The Water Services (No. 2) Bill 2013 is currently in preparation, and will provide for the transfer of responsibility for the delivery of water services from the water services authorities to Irish Water. Irish Water will be given the necessary powers to carry out their functions in this Bill which will be published shortly. This will include a requirement in preparing water services strategic plans to have regard to proper planning and sustainable development. No functions of local authorities as planning authorities will be transferred to Irish Water.

Commercial Rates

146. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government his plans to provide county councils with the ability to waive or reduce rates in specific areas such as community initiatives and not-for-profit organisations (details supplied); if not, if he will consider such provisions; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50952/13]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan): Local authorities are under a statutory obligation to levy rates on any property used for commercial purposes, in accordance with the details entered in the valuation lists prepared by the independent Commissioner of Valuation under the Valuation Act 2001. The Commissioner for Valuation has sole responsibility for all valuation matters, including determination under the Act of relevant property for the purposes of rates. The Valuation Act 2001 comes under the aegis of my colleague, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

Under the provisions of the Local Government (Rates) Act 1970, a rating authority may make and carry out a scheme providing for the waiver by the authority of all or a portion of commercial rates due by ratepayers in respect of a specified class or classes of property. The making of such a scheme is subject to the consent of the Minister for the Environment, Com-

munity and Local Government.

Any application received for a rate waiver scheme is carefully considered. However, in considering any such application, it has to be borne in mind that a waiver of rates for one class of ratepayer could unfairly impact on existing businesses in the area by giving a competitive advantage to a certain group through a reduction in costs. In addition, the introduction of a waiver scheme could further increase costs on the part of businesses who are not part of the scheme, as it is likely that they would be required to make up the cost of the waiver scheme through the payment of additional rates. This could impose an additional burden on such ratepayers in what are already difficult economic circumstances.

Planning Issues

147. **Deputy Regina Doherty** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the difference in planning terms between agricultural activities and horticultural activities; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51040/13]

Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): Section 2 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 provides that “agriculture” includes horticulture, fruit growing, seed growing, dairy farming, the breeding and keeping of livestock (including any creature kept for the production of food, wool, skins or fur, or for the purpose of its use in the farming of land), the training of horses and the rearing of bloodstock, the use of land as grazing land, meadow land, osier land, market gardens and nursery grounds, and “agricultural” shall be construed accordingly.”

Departmental Programmes

148. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if his attention has been drawn to concerns among workers in the LCDP and Leader programmes about the lack of information provided to them in respect of the future of these programmes; if he will undertake to open a formal dialogue or create a national structure where workers in the sector can engage with his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51059/13]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan): There are 50 Local Development Companies (LDCs) contracted on my Department’s behalf to deliver the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP), with 35 of those also delivering the LEADER elements of the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 (RDP) throughout the country. These independent companies also deliver a range of other programmes and interventions on behalf of other Government Departments and other funders.

The Irish Local Development Network, which represents the LDCs, is represented on an Alignment Working Group that has discussed implementation arrangements in respect of the alignment recommendations. The Working Group also comprises representatives of the City and County Managers Association and Pobal, and it is chaired and supported by my Department. It is the responsibility of the representatives from each sector to consult with their nominating bodies, staff and other relevant stakeholders as part of this process and I would encourage such dialogue by all parties.

Waste Disposal

149. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government further to Parliamentary Question No. 474 of 19 November 2013, if he is concerned about reported increases in the prices of waste collection services offered by private waste collectors in the Dublin area; if he will provide details on the number and nature of enforcement proceedings that have been taken against waste collectors which have failed to comply with the conditions attached to their waste permits in the years 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013. [51062/13]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan): As set out in the Government's policy on waste, A Resource Opportunity, an effective system of household waste collection is critical to the economy and the well-being of society. I will shortly be publishing a consultation document on the regulation of household waste collection to guide the development of a new regulatory regime to strengthen and improve the regulation of household waste collection. Our approach to pricing structures will be a significant focus in the consultation paper. I want to ensure that waste management companies operate pricing structures that incentivise environmentally sustainable behaviour in terms of waste reduction and segregation. Ultimately, however, 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.

With regard to the number and nature of enforcement proceedings taken against waste collectors, my Department does not collect the information sought. A wide range of data on the Office of Environmental Enforcement's audits and other enforcement activities in relation to such facilities are publicly available on the EPA's website, at <http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/enforcement/>.

Planning Issues

150. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if there have been any tree preservation orders granted; if so, the number and where the applications were made; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51070/13]

Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan): Details of the numbers of Tree Preservation Orders in force by area for the 2007-2012 period are available on the planning statistics section of my Department's website at <http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/StatisticsandRegularPublications/PlanningStatistics/>. It is a function of the relevant planning authority to make tree preservation orders, where deemed necessary, under section 205 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

Property Taxation Administration

151. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the reasons behind the change in decision to now redistribute revenue from the local property tax through the Central Government Fund despite recommendations from the commission to have approximately 80% of taxes raised distributed through local authorities; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51072/13]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan): The local government funding model will change considerably in 2014. Under the Finance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012, commencing in 2014, the Minister for Finance will pay

into the Local Government Fund an amount equivalent to the Local Property Tax paid into the Central Fund during that year; this revenue will be allocated to local authorities from the Fund. In addition, the establishment of Irish Water and its financial relationship with the local government sector will have a considerable impact on local authority financing.

The Government has indicated an intention to move to 80% retention of all Local Property Tax receipts within the local authority area where the Tax is raised. The establishment of Irish Water presents local government with significant organisational and financial challenges in 2014. Service provision responsibilities will shift from the local authorities to Irish Water, infrastructure will be transferred, financing arrangements will alter and local authorities will operate on behalf of Irish Water under Service Level Agreements. These changes must be managed.

In this context, it has been necessary to defer defining a certain proportion of the proceeds of the Local Property Tax to be retained in each local authority until 2015. This approach allows maximum flexibility in allocating Local Property Tax in 2014 in the form of General Purpose Grants, with the priority to support those local authorities with weaker funding bases. This decision has been taken in the context of Budget 2014. The 2014 Local Government Fund General Purpose Grants will be announced in due course.

I expect the Local Property Tax to have multiple benefits, including a more sustainable and resilient system of funding for local authorities and therefore a sounder financial footing for the provision of essential local services; greater local scope for financial decision-making concerning service provision - in particular, the inclusion of the local variation mechanism from 2015 will further increase the autonomy of local authorities; and a strengthening of democracy at local level with a more active relationship between local authorities and local electorates. A stronger democratic relationship and clearer lines of accountability can only have a beneficial impact on service provision from the perspective of the service user.

Departmental Legal Costs

152. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the amount that has been spent on legal costs, that is, fees, expenses and so on by his Department and any agencies under his remit; if he will provide a breakdown of the individual agencies and costs incurred by them for the years 2009 to 2012, inclusive. [51077/13]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan): The information is currently being compiled and will be forwarded to the Deputy as soon as possible.

Local Authorities Management

153. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the criteria used by the assistant secretary of his Department in selecting a person (details supplied) to fill the post of Sligo county manager in a temporary capacity from 4 November 2013 until a permanent appointment is made; if recommendations were received or references sought regarding this person's ability to carry out their duties as temporary county manager; if other candidates were considered for the temporary position; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51101/13]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan): Under Section 145(4) of the Local Government Act 2001 where a position of manager

becomes vacant it is necessary to make a temporary appointment until a permanent appointment is made. In relation to Sligo County Council the manager retired in November 2013 and a temporary appointment was made under Section 145 on foot of a recommendation from the outgoing manager. The recruitment of managers is carried out by the Public Appointments Service. Following an open competition a new Sligo County Manager has been selected and will take up duty in January 2014.

Firearms Licences

154. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the total number of restricted handguns currently licensed to sports persons here; the total number of non-restricted handguns currently licensed to sports persons; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50882/13]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter): As of 20 November 2013, the number of non restricted firearm certificates for handguns is 949 and the number of restricted firearm certificates for handguns is 549. Since 1 August 2009, applicants seeking to license handguns in the State must first satisfy the issuing person of his/her membership of an authorised rifle or pistol club. I am keeping firearms legislation under review, with the issue of public safety as paramount.

Prison Accommodation Provision

155. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the action he will take to address the problem of overcrowding in women's prisons following reports that prisons are being forced to release prisoners to relieve overcrowding as a consequence of having to accept prisoners from the courts; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50883/13]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter): The Deputy will be aware that the primary role of the Irish Prison Service is to provide safe and secure custody for prisoners. The Deputy will also be aware that the Prison Service must accept all persons committed by the courts into custody and does not have the option of refusing committals.

On Monday, 22 November 2013, there were 30 women in custody in Limerick Female Prison, which has a bed capacity of 28. On the same day, there were 121 women in custody in the Dóchas Centre, which has a bed capacity for 105. In April 2012, I published the Irish Prison Service 3 year Strategic Plan. This strategy sets out the overall high level objectives and key strategic actions the Irish Prison Service intends to take during the period 2012 to 2015. One of the commitments given in the Strategy is that the Irish Prison Service will work in partnership with the Probation Service and other stakeholders in the statutory, community and voluntary sectors in order to develop a strategy for dealing with women offenders.

In this regard, I can advise the Deputy that the Irish Prison Service and Probation Service published a joint Strategic Plan for 2013-2015. Both agencies are working together to develop a strategy which ensures a more targeted response to women offenders including:

- identifying and diverting women at risk of a custodial sentence through greater use of community sanctions, supports and inter-agency co-operation;
- strengthening early intervention measures in the community through adopting a co-ordinated multi-agency approach;

- improving outcomes for women currently in custody;
- exploring the potentials of women centric alternatives to custody;
- development of a suitable step down facility for women offenders;
- enhanced co-operation with the community and voluntary sector.

In September 2012, I announced the establishment of a Working Group to conduct a Strategic Review of Penal Policy. In line with a recommendation of the Thornton Hall Review Group which reported in 2012, the Working Group has been asked to carry out an all encompassing strategic review of penal policy incorporating an examination and analysis of all aspects of penal policy including the issue of female prisoners. This Review is ongoing and the Working Group is expected to report early next year.

Domestic Violence Policy

156. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality his plans to introduce a 24-7 on-call system for emergency barring orders in order that victims of domestic abuse can be protected by the courts; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50884/13]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter): The Government is committed to introduce consolidated and reformed domestic violence legislation to address all aspects of domestic violence, threatened violence and intimidation, in a way that provides protection to victims. My Department has received a range of proposals in relation to this commitment, including a proposal to allow for a barring order application to be made outside normal court hours in emergency situations. It is my intention to examine a package of workable and effective proposals for the reform of the domestic violence legislation as soon as possible. In this regard I also intend to consider the recommendations from the examination of domestic and sexual violence by the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality when it reports.

Alcohol Sales Legislation

157. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if his attention has been drawn to the increasingly common problem of off-licences delivering alcohol to homes and public places, and accepting cash on delivery; if he will confirm that this is an offence; if he will provide details of the number of prosecutions that have taken place in each of the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50897/13]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter): Provisions relating to the sale and supply of intoxicating liquor are set out in the Licensing Acts 1833 to 2011. Under section 17(3) of the Intoxicating Liquor Act 2003 it is an offence for a licensee, with intent to evade the conditions of the licence, to take intoxicating liquor from the licensed premises for the purposes of its being sold on the account or for the benefit or profit of the licensee, or to permit any other person to do so.

The Government Alcohol Advisory Group considered specific issues relating to distance sales of alcohol in its 2008 Report. The Group drew attention to the requirement that payment must be made as part of the telephone or on-line transaction in such cases and not later on delivery of the product. It considered that the sales of alcohol products involving payment by the consumer on delivery do not comply with the existing statutory provisions and are, therefore,

illegal.

Any complaints relating to the sale or delivery of alcohol received by An Garda Síochána are the subject of investigation and offenders dealt with in accordance with the law. The Garda Síochána Act 2005 makes provision for the compilation and publication of crime statistics by the Central Statistics Office (CSO), as the national statistical agency, and the CSO has established a dedicated unit for this purpose. I have requested the CSO to provide statistics directly to the Deputy.

Garda Remuneration

158. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will ensure that gardaí are paid all outstanding allowances in December for hours worked in November this year, rather than in January, as has been the case in previous years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50905/13]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter): I have been informed by the Garda Commissioner that overtime and unsocial hours payments are paid to members of An Garda Síochána up to and including the rank of Inspector. Members are paid these allowances on a 28 day roster basis, in arrears, with the payment process commencing at the beginning of each pay roster period in respect of work carried out during the previous period. There are 13 such periods in each year and there are 13 payments made each year to members of An Garda Síochána based on individual claims submitted by members. There are no plans at present to change this arrangement.

The majority of members receive this payment on the third Thursday after the end of a particular roster period. In the case of the period which ends on 8 December, this would be due to be paid on 26 December. However, the year-end payrolls are brought forward due to such matters as extra bank holidays which occur during the Christmas and New Year periods, the testing of new computer software to cater for any budgetary changes, inputting of payroll reference data changes for 2014 and the high volume of payroll administration required at the Financial Year End. This in turn means that the payroll date of 26 December has to be brought forward to 19 December. The payroll data for that pay date must be submitted by 6 December 2013.

The practice outlined above has always been the case and is not a new development. Garda members always have received and will continue to receive 13 payments each year for 13 four week periods. It must also be remembered that with regard to normal salary payments, Gardaí are paid on a weekly basis and will receive their pay up to and including the pay day of 26 December before the end of the year. In fact, they will receive their salary payment for the paydays of 19 and 26 December in advance of Christmas on 17 and 19 December respectively.

Garda Vetting Applications

159. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the position regarding Garda clearance in respect of a person (details supplied); the length of time it will take for the backlog of applications to be assessed; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50909/13]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter): I am informed by the Garda authorities that a vetting application on behalf of the individual referred to by the Deputy was received by the Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU) on 4 November, 2013. The application is

currently being processed and once completed will be returned to the registered organisation concerned.

I am informed by the Garda authorities that the current average processing time for applications is now approximately 7 weeks from date of receipt. However, seasonal fluctuations and the necessity to seek additional information on particular applications can result in this processing time being exceeded on occasion. Nonetheless, this is a significant improvement on the processing time of 14 weeks which existed in July this year. This improvement reflects the fact that I have given this matter particular priority as it is essential that the GCVU has the resources required to perform this most critical of roles effectively and efficiently.

In that context, I have been actively engaged on this issue with my colleague the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. As a result of that engagement, I am pleased to say that the Garda Commissioner has confirmed to me that there are now 136 whole time equivalent staff assigned to the GCVU, some 41 of whom have been redeployed from elsewhere in the public service since the end of March 2013. Some of these redeployed staff have only recently completed their training in the vetting process, and the full impact of their work will be seen in the coming weeks. Furthermore, I have also received sanction for the redeployment of 40 additional staff to the GCVU. This brings the total number of staff in that service to over 170, more than double that of the average allocation of 78 staff at the Unit over the past two and a half years.

The Deputy may also wish to note that the development of an e-Vetting solution is underway. This will facilitate the processing of all applications in an e-format, thus removing the time-consuming current process of manually managing all applications received. When this is achieved, this system will streamline the overall vetting process in this jurisdiction, and further contribute to reductions in processing times for all vetting applications.

Courts Service

160. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality his views on correspondence (details supplied) regarding the closure of courts; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50912/13]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter): As the Deputy may be aware, under the provisions of the Courts Service Act 1998 management of the courts is the responsibility of the Courts Service which is independent in exercising its functions, which include the provision of accommodation for court sittings.

However, in order to be of assistance to the Deputy, I have had enquiries made and have been informed that the Courts Service has been reviewing all aspects of its organisational and operational structures throughout the country with the specific objective of ensuring that the Service can continue to maintain the delivery of front line court services and an appropriate level of service to court users. I understand that no court venue has been singled out for or indeed exempted from the review process. There are significant costs in operating and maintaining an extensive estate of properties around the country, both in terms of the staff who must attend these locations and the cost of maintaining the buildings themselves and providing appropriate facilities in them. In allocating resources the Courts Service must prioritise venues which are regularly used and which have the highest workload.

During the course of 2012 the Courts Service completed a comprehensive review of all venues throughout the country. The purpose of this review was to establish a framework within

which venues could be considered for closure taking account of a range of criteria such as case-load, proximity to an alternative venue, physical condition of the building, availability of cells etc. This review identified a range of venues nationwide which based on the criteria applied could be considered for closure subject to a detailed assessment and the preparation of a business case in respect of each identified venue. In this regard, the Courts Service has indicated that the identification of venues as part of the review process will not necessarily mean that the identified venues will close.

I am informed that the Courts Service in considering any venue for closure undertakes an analysis of the costs associated with the holding of court sittings in a venue. This includes an assessment of both operational costs, such as courthouse maintenance and lighting & heating, and travel and subsistence costs in respect of the judiciary, courts staff and Gardaí. The Courts Service has assured me no decision in relation to the future of any court venue will be taken without prior consultation with local interested parties and court users. This consultation process has commenced and the views expressed in that process will be taken into account in the decision making process which will be a matter for the Courts Service Board.

Prison Committals

161. **Deputy Maureen O’Sullivan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the length of time those in prison for subversive-related crime have spent on remand in the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50941/13]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter): It is not possible to provide the information requested by the Deputy regarding the length of time that prisoners in custody for subversive related crime have spent on remand in the past five years, as this would necessitate a manual search of each record to determine when the period of remand commenced, as this may not actually be their committal date, and the nature of the offence. This would require a disproportionate and inordinate amount of staff time and effort and could not be justified where there are other significant demands on resources.

I can however advise that on the 31 October 2013 there were 53 prisoners in custody for subversive related crime that have spent a period of time on remand. Of this 19 prisoners are still currently held on remand. A breakdown of the length of time these prisoners have spent on remand is set out in the following table.

Length of time on remand	Total number of prisoners
Less than 1 Month	11
1 Month to less than 3 Months	6
3 Months to less than 6 Months	18
6 Months to less than 12 Months	17
1 Year to less than 2 Years	0
2 Years to less than 3 Years	1
Total	53

Visa Applications

162. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the procedure to be followed to obtain a visa to come here and study in the case of a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50945/13]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter): It is open to a visa required National to make a visa application, for any purpose, the onus resting with the applicant to satisfy the Visa Officer as to why the visa should be granted. All information that the applicant wishes to have taken into consideration should be included where a visa application is submitted.

Comprehensive information on the visa application process is available on the website of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (www.inis.gov.ie). It should be borne in mind however that the information contained on the website is intended to act as a guideline only. It does not limit the discretion of the Visa Officer in dealing with individual applications. If a visa application has not been submitted by the person concerned, it is open to them to make a visa application on-line through the following link: <https://www.visas.inis.gov.ie>.

Queries in relation to general immigration matters may be made directly to INIS by e-mail using the Oireachtas Mail facility which has been specifically established for this purpose. This service enables up to date information on such cases to be obtained without the need to seek information by way of the Parliamentary Questions process. The Deputy may consider using the e-mail service except in cases where the response from INIS is, in the Deputy's view, inadequate or too long awaited.

Visa Applications

163. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the procedure to be followed in the case of a person (details supplied) in County Kildare to have their child visit them in this jurisdiction; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50948/13]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter): It is open to a visa required National to make a visa application, for any purpose, the onus resting with the applicant to satisfy the Visa Officer as to why the visa should be granted. All information that the applicant wishes to have taken into consideration should be included where a visa application is submitted.

Comprehensive information on the visa application process is available on the website of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (www.inis.gov.ie). It should be borne in mind however that the information contained on the website is intended to act as a guideline only. It does not limit the discretion of the Visa Officer in dealing with individual applications. If a visa application has not been submitted by the person concerned, it is open to them to make a visa application on-line through the following link: <https://www.visas.inis.gov.ie>.

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Agriculture Schemes Data

164. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine to provide the figures from the start of 2013 on the number of farmers in County Kerry who have been written to and informed they are claiming for what is classified as ineligible ground,

that is, ground supposedly covered by trees, furze, bushes, rocks, water, roads, sheds and so on; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50911/13]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The number of letters issued to farmers in Kerry is an ongoing process.

Agriculture Schemes Payments

165. **Deputy Heather Humphreys** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine when a person (details supplied) in County Monaghan will receive their disadvantaged areas payment and their single farm payment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50949/13]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): As processing of the application of the person named under the 2013 Disadvantaged Area Scheme is now completed, payment is due to issue shortly, directly to the nominated bank account of the person named. With regard to the Single Payment Scheme, as no Single Payment entitlements are held by the person named, no payment is due.

Animal Welfare Bodies

166. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if there is any support available that may be given to address the issues raised by Dogs Aid. [50950/13]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): Dogs Aid Animal Sanctuary has been recipients of ex-gratia funding from my Department for a number of years. An application for funding has been received for 2013 and while my Department cannot intervene in the operational matters raised, I have asked my officials to take into account the current issues facing Dogs Aid in context of processing this year's exgratia application.

Single Payment Scheme Payments

167. **Deputy Heather Humphreys** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine when a person (details supplied) in County Cavan will receive their single farm payment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50951/13]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): Processing of the application of the person named under the 2013 Single Payment Scheme has recently been finalised. Payment will shortly issue directly to the nominated bank account of the person named.

Rural Development Programme Funding

168. **Deputy Michael Creed** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide information regarding the level of co-funding provided under Pillar 2 Rural Development Programme for the period 2007-13; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51012/13]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The table below sets out the measures funded under the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 [RDP], including EAFRD funding and the corresponding national funding. The expenditure information is based on my Department's quarterly returns to the European Commission and the table reflects the provisional estimates up to November 2013. The table does not include funds already committed but not as yet claimed.

Axis/Measure	Current RDP Allocation €	EAFRD Allocation €	Total Exchequer Allocation €	EAFRD and Exchequer Expenditure 2007 - November 2013 [Provisional] €	Of which EAFRD Spend €	Of which Exchequer Spend €
AXIS 1 – Competitiveness						
Vocational training (REPS)	5,675,440	3,458,613	2,216,827	7,264,686	4,152,199	3,112,487
Installation Aid	12,261,081	7,471,903	4,789,178	12,892,430	6,504,938	6,387,792
Early Retirement	219,188,239	133,592,630	85,595,609	223,057,575	121,552,701	101,504,874
Farm Modernisation	154,570,446	92,992,230	61,578,216	86,100,160	52,390,925	33,709,235
TOTAL AXIS 1	391,695,206	237,515,376	154,179,830	329,314,851	184,600,763	144,714,388
Axis 2 – Environment and land management						
Less Favoured Areas	1,617,984,198	634,141,309	983,842,889	1,439,685,535	791,827,045	647,858,490
Natura 2000	528,582,998	308,720,649	219,862,349	93,100,734	52,293,562	40,807,172
Agri-environment	1,922,493,570	1,058,314,930	864,178,640	1,951,417,512	1,090,070,162	861,347,350
TOTAL AXIS 2	4,069,060,766	2,001,176,888	2,067,883,878	3,484,203,781	1,934,190,769	1,550,013,012
Axis 3						
Broadband	17,884,000	13,413,000	4,471,000	0	0	0
TOTAL AXIS 3	17,884,000	13,413,000	4,471,000	0	0	0
Axis 4						
Competitiveness – Food Projects.	5,000,000	4,250,000	750,000	248,620	211,327	37,293
Implementing Local Development Strategies – Quality of Life	265,470,511	182,632,819	82,837,692	153,249,782	108,750,578	44,499,204
Co-operation Projects	7,878,000	5,885,653	1,992,347	2,822,480	2,098,624	723,856
Running of LAGS	62,464,000	46,666,854	15,797,146	59,851,088	39,989,886	19,861,202
TOTAL AXIS 4	340,812,511	239,435,326	101,377,185	216,171,970	151,050,415	65,121,555
Axis 5 – Technical Assistance						
Technical Assistance	6,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	1,651,155	825,578	825,577
OVERALL RDP	4,825,452,483	2,494,540,590	2,330,911,893	4,031,341,757	2,270,667,525	1,760,674,232

Agriculture Schemes Payments

169. **Deputy Heather Humphreys** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine when a person (details supplied) in County Cavan will receive their disadvantaged areas and single farm payment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51024/13]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): As processing of the application of the person named under the 2013 Single Payment Scheme/Disadvantaged Area Scheme is now completed, payments under both Schemes are due to issue shortly, directly to the nominated bank account of the person named.

Agriculture Schemes Payments

170. **Deputy Seán Conlan** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the reason a person (details supplied) in County Monaghan has still not received their area aid payments; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51033/13]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): As processing of the application of the person named under the 2013 Single Payment Scheme/Disadvantaged Area Scheme is now completed, payments under both Schemes are due to issue shortly, directly to the nominated bank account of the person named.

Feirmeoireacht Éisc

171. D'fhiafraigh **Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív** den Aire Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara ag éirí as an bhfreagra a thug sé dom ar cheist 46509/13 an 5 Samhain 2013, an bhfuil cead ag aon chomhlacht bradáin a chur i gcliabhán éisc i gCuan Chill Chiaráin faoi láthair; agus mura bhfuil, an bhfuil sé i gceist aige stop a chur leis an obair atá ar bun le seachtain anuas ag cur éisc i gcliabhán sa gcuan [51035/13]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): Tuigtear do mo Roinn go bhfuil an ghníomhaíocht dhobharshaothraithe a tharla le déanaí i gCuan Chill Chiaráin dá dtagraíonn an Teachta ag cloí le toilithe do Bharshaothraithe i seilbh oibrítheoir ceadúnaithe. Más mian leis an Teachta faisnéis níos mionsonraithe a chur ar fáil beidh mo Roinn sásta an t-ábhar a scrúdú tuilleadh.

Departmental Legal Costs

172. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the amount that has been spent on legal costs, that is, fees, expenses and so on by his Department and agencies under his remit; if he will provide a breakdown of the individual agencies and costs incurred by them for the years 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012. [51076/13]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): My Department generally avails of the legal services of the Chief State Solicitor's Office, however, occasionally engages private Solicitor firms and Junior and Senior Counsel. Details of such engagements are provided in the table below.

With regards to the State Bodies under my Department's remit, any legal costs are an operational matter for the State Bodies concerned.

Year	Name of Firm	Reason for procurement	Amount paid (€)
2009	PP Ryan & Co. Solicitor	Legal Advice	185
-	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Legal advice on foreshore issues	125,790

Year	Name of Firm	Reason for procurement	Amount paid (€)
-	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Professional Fees for advising DAFF on the release of restrictive covenants as to use of property located in Killybegs FHC	30,414
-	Martin E Marren Solicitors	Professional Fees re: Exchange of land at Rough Point.	3,645
-	Donnchadh McCarthy	Advice, Consultations, and Negotiations.	15,175
-	Dowling Kilpatrick	Swearing a variety of affidavits	246
-	Ted Harding	Advice, Consultations and Representation	12,393
-	Marjorie Farrelly	Advices, Consultation and Representation	4,084
-		Total for 2009	191,932
2010	PP Ryan & CO. Solicitor	Legal Advice	82,041
-	Martin E Marren Solicitors	Professional Fees re: Exchange of land at Rough Point.	24,612
-	D P Barry & Co	Professional Fees re Exchange of land at Rough Point.	3,600
-	Noel Whelan	Advices, Consultations and Representations	33,148
-	Dowling Kilpatrick	Swearing a variety of affidavits	262
-	Kennedy Fitzgerald Solicitor	Drafting summonses and attendance at Court	1,200
-		Total for 2010	144,863
2011	Rita Kilroy, S.C.	Attendance at a court case	150
-	Dowling Kilpatrick	Swearing affidavit	42
-	M.G. Ryan & Co. Solicitors	Legal fees	185,855
-	Colm Ó hOisín S.C.	Legal fees	43,560
-		Total for 2011	229,607
2012	Michael D Murray & Co, Solrs	Legal Fees: District Court Case Dept v Shannon Side Foods Ltd	4,674
-	Dowling Kilpatrick	Swearing a variety of affidavits	220
-		Total for 2012	4,894

Fishery Harbour Centres

173. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the position regarding the introduction of pay parking in Howth, County Dublin; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51078/13]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The House will be aware that I have been considering introducing a charge for parking facilities within Howth Fishery Harbour Centre for some time. There are a broad range of factors and viewpoints to consider in coming to a decision, and I am reviewing all aspects of the matter at present.

Beef Technology Adoption Programme Payments

174. **Deputy Michael Ring** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the reason a person (details supplied) in County Mayo received payment under the BTAP 2012 when they had not met the terms and conditions of the programme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51099/13]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The Terms and Conditions of the 2012 Beef Technology Adoption Programme required participants to

select two Tasks from the menu of eight Tasks with provision for participants to notify a subsequent change of a selected Task. The person named was initially found to be ineligible for payment under the 2012 Programme as it was established that he had failed to complete one of the two selected Tasks. However, upon review he was deemed eligible, as it transpired that he had satisfactorily completed a third Task. While the substitution of this third Task had not been notified to my Department beforehand, credit was allowed for its successful completion and, accordingly, payment under the 2012 Programme was made on that basis as all other requirements of the Programme were successfully completed.

Foreign Adoptions

175. **Deputy Michael Lowry** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will provide an assurance that the families seeking to adopt in Russia, who have been affected by the conflict in Irish and Russian law as a result of section 63 of the Adoption Act, will be provided for prior to the Christmas recess; if a response has been received from the Attorney General on this matter; if not, when a reply is expected; if she will bring forward legislation immediately to tackle this issue in view of the very short timeframe open to these families; if she will provide an update on progress to date; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [50906/13]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): The Adoption Act, 2010, provides for adoptions from countries that have ratified the Hague Convention on adoption and from countries where there is a bilateral agreement in place. During the drafting of the Act a considered and detailed transitional process to deal with the change from previous legislation to the new Act was put in place. The transitional measure contained in Section 63 of the Adoption Act, 2010, allows those who held a valid declaration of eligibility and suitability to adopt before the commencement of the Act to continue with an adoption, from a non-Hague, non-bilateral country for a maximum period of three years. Such applicants were thus afforded an additional three year period to complete these particular adoptions from non-Hague countries, and must have completed the process by the 31 October 2013.

One particular concern that has coincided with the expiry of the transitional provisions provided for in Section 63 of the Adoption Act 2010, is the position of a small number of applicants who were at a late stage in adopting from Russia when changes to Russian legislation were enacted which meant that they were unable to complete the adoption of identified children before 31 October, 2013. It is my understanding that in order to adopt from Russia it is necessary to have a valid declaration of eligibility and suitability to adopt on the date of the court hearing to finalise the adoption, and for a specified period thereafter before the Court order takes effect. In order that these adoptions, which were stopped by this change in Russian law, could continue an amendment to the Adoption Act, 2010, would be necessary to extend the validity of the declarations of eligibility and suitability.

The advice of the Attorney General was sought and my Department is currently examining legislative options that might assist, possibly through the retrospective extension of the declarations of eligibility and suitability concerned. As the Adoption Act, 2010, is drafted on the basis of the incorporation of the Hague Convention, and the minimum set of standards outlined therein, the implications of amending the Act must be carefully examined before the Government is in a position to consider any proposed amendment of the legislation. My Department, in conjunction with the Office of the Attorney General, is examining if it is possible to address this situation within the parameters of Irish law and our obligations under the Hague Convention. I have already met and spoken with some of those prospective adoptive parents affected by the changes in Russian legislation and have undertaken to keep them informed of any de-

velopments.

Gaisce Awards

176. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the number of young persons who have completed the Gaisce President's Award in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013. [51014/13]

177. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the number of young persons from Northern Ireland who have completed the Gaisce President's Award in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013. [51028/13]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I propose to take Questions Nos. 176 and 177 together.

The number of young people who have completed Gaisce - the President's Award in each of the years 2011-2013 to date is set out in the table below.

As previously advised to the Deputy, an agreement is in place whereby young people in Northern Ireland, who wish to avail of Gaisce - the President's Award may register with the Duke of Edinburgh Award in Northern Ireland for the Joint Award Programme but may choose, on completion of the programme, to have the Gaisce award presented.

Details of the number of young people in Northern Ireland who have requested to receive the Gaisce Award in each of the years are also included in the table.

-	2011	2012	2013 - To date
Gaisce Completions	12,126	11,123	9,667
NI requests for Gaisce Certificate	247	230	155

Departmental Funding

178. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if her Department will support financially and in other ways the strategic plan for the Artane School of Music 2013-16; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [51041/13]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): The Department of Children and Youth Affairs supports the provision of a range of services for children and young people. An amount of €434m has been made available to my Department in 2013 for these services which include, for example, the free pre school year in the Early Childhood Care and Education and other childcare programmes, the family support services currently provided by the Family Support Agency, the School Completion Programme and supports to the youth sector for youth services throughout the country including those for young people who are in disadvantaged communities.

The activities of the Artane School of Music do not come within the scope of the funding schemes administered by my Department and appear to be more appropriate to the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Child Care Services Provision

179. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs further to Parliamentary Question No. 180 of 20 November 2013, the total number of children detained under special care orders outside of the State since January 2013; if she will provide a breakdown on the basis of the number, age and gender of the children placed in each of the institutions referred to in her previous reply (details supplied). [51063/13]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): The information sought by the Deputy will be forwarded to him this week.

Health Services Staff Recruitment

180. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs further to Parliamentary Question No. 181 of 20 November 2013, when it is anticipated that the positions of principal social worker, two speech and language therapists and an addiction counsellor will be recruited for the assessment, consultation and therapy service. [51064/13]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): Last week I was advised by the HSE that further recruitment would be necessary to fill the principal social work position, two speech and language therapists and an addiction counsellor. The HSE has advised that there is now just one vacancy for a speech and language therapist. Interviews for the post of addiction counsellor will be held in December 2013. The HSE is to revert to me with additional information on recruitment for the other two posts as soon as possible and I will arrange for this information to be forwarded to the Deputy when it is available.

Ombudsman for Children Remit

181. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if the Ombudsman for Children will be given additional powers to conduct statutory reviews once the death of a child known to the Health Service Executive's children and family services, soon to become the Child and Family Agency, has occurred. [51065/13]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): It is my view that the powers of investigation currently held by the Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO) as they relate to HSE Children and Family Services should extend to the Child and Family Agency following its establishment. In this connection my Department will be consulting with the OCO in accordance with Section 10(7)(a) of the Ombudsman for Children Act, 2002. This will be with a view to the making of an order to amend Schedule 1 of the Act to include the Child and Family Agency as a public body which will be subject to the OCO powers of investigation.

I should point out that there currently exists a very effective mechanism to investigate deaths and serious incidents involving children in care and known to the HSE. That is the National Review Panel, which is chaired by Dr. Helen Buckley and which has over the past number of years published a series of important, comprehensive reports. I recently indicated my intention to strengthen the operation of the National Review Panel by asking HIQA to undertake an audit/oversight role in relation to the processes of the Panel and discussions are ongoing in relation to the detail of this role.

Hospital Consultants Contract Issues

182. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health if public hospitals currently have

in place any arrangements allowing Category A consultants to carry out private work within public hospitals, or any arrangements to allow Category B consultants to carry out private work outside of the public hospital; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50871/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): A key objective of the consultant contract 2008 is to improve access for public patients to public hospital care. The contract sets out clear rules on the level of private practice that may be undertaken by consultants, depending on the individual contract held, and the arrangements for measurement and management of the public/private mix.

Consultants holding a Type A contract are not permitted to engage in privately remunerated professional practice. Consultants holding a Type B contract may undertake private practice on-site, up to a limit of 20% of activity on a casemix-adjusted basis, and limited off-site private practice in cases where the individual consultant held a category I or Category II contract under Consultant Contract 1997.

It is incumbent on publicly-funded hospitals to ensure compliance with the terms of the contract, including the provisions in relation to private practice. In particular, my Department has requested that the HSE satisfy itself that no consultant with a Type B Contract is engaged, or will be permitted to engage, in off-site private practice beyond the level, if any, provided for in their contract.

HSE Investigations

183. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Health if the Health Service Executive investigation into the death of a person (details supplied) under the national incident protocol addressed in its recommendations the fact, established during the inquest, that a previous abortion was a significant factor in her death; if these recommendations included measures to ensure that women are warned of the serious physical risks to themselves of undergoing an abortion; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50878/13]

184. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Health his views on the Health Service Executive investigation into the death of a person (details supplied) under the national incident protocol; if he will list its full recommendations; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50880/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): I propose to take Questions Nos. 183 and 184 together.

As I have said in previous replies to Parliamentary Questions on this issue I have been advised that the circumstances surrounding this very unfortunate case were investigated by the Health Service Executive (HSE) under the National Incident Protocol following which 11 actions were recommended. The recommendations are as follows:

1. The need to identify clinical pathways relating to management of women with an intra-uterine death in third trimester to complement existing medical management policy.
2. The Guidelines for Medical Management of Intrauterine Death should be revised in line with a review of the medical literature.
3. Details of all patients for Induction of Labour, regardless of place of induction should be centrally documented.

4. This recommendation cannot be disclosed as it contains personal, private, sensitive and confidential information relating to the individual patient.

5. Develop a brief operational outline of the Gynaecology Department to assist staff who are sent there on an occasional/intermittent basis.

6. Due to the complexity of work, there is a need for an updated training needs analysis of all midwifery and nursing staff on the gynaecology ward.

7. There should be a designated individual with responsibility for coordinating, monitoring and auditing the Basic Life Support attendance and Advanced Life Support Skills attendance, ideally a designated Resuscitation Training Officer.

8. An Obstetric Early Warning System should be introduced and evaluated.

9. Install additional phone lines in the ward.

10. A review of the possibility of emergency call bells or designated phones for emergencies in each room should be carried out and measures taken to address this.

11. Hospital wide analysis of all doorways in clinical areas to establish the feasibility of moving a bed in a critical event.

I have been informed by the HSE that the Rotunda Hospital has implemented all 11 recommendations.

It is my expectation that patients should be informed of all the risks to themselves arising from any medical procedure to which they give informed consent.

Health Promotion

185. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Health if his Department will be investing more in prevention measures in an attempt to cut our high levels of smoking and drinking following publication of the latest figures from the OECD in the report *Health at a Glance*, which shows that Ireland is among the top global smokers and drinkers; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50885/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): My Department has received Government approval for policy actions aimed at reducing the levels of smoking and drinking in Ireland. I would like to note at the outset that the figure of 29% of the population smoking, quoted by the OECD in their report, was sourced from the 2007 SLAN study. However, the latest figures from the National Tobacco Control Office in the HSE (collected in June 2012), show that 22% of the Irish population now smoke.

Tobacco Free Ireland, which I launched on 3 October 2013, sets a target for Ireland to be tobacco free (i.e. with a prevalence rate of less than 5%) by 2025. *Tobacco Free Ireland* sets out over 60 recommendations with the overall aims of denormalising smoking in our society, protecting children from the harms of tobacco, enforcing, regulating and legislating for tobacco activities and products, educating about the dangers of tobacco and assisting those who smoke in stopping.

An extensive package of measures to deal with alcohol misuse to be incorporated in a Public Health (Alcohol) Bill was approved by Government on the 24th October 2013. The aim is to reduce our per capita consumption of alcohol to the OECD average (9.1 litres of pure alcohol

per capita) by 2020. These measures are based on the recommendations contained in the National Substance Misuse Strategy report 2012. The package of measures to be implemented will include provision for:

- minimum unit pricing for alcohol products;
- the regulation of advertising and marketing of alcohol;
- structural separation of alcohol from other products in mixed trading outlets;
- health labelling of alcohol products; and
- regulation of sports sponsorship.

Work is continuing in my Department on the implementation of the recommendations in *Tobacco Free Ireland* and the drafting of the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill. These measures have been developed under the Healthy Ireland framework. *Healthy Ireland* is a government framework, which sets out a vision that will improve the health and wellbeing of all the population of Ireland over the next 12 years. It puts forward a “whole of society” approach and new arrangements to ensure more effective co-operation to achieve better outcomes for all.

Prescriptions Data

186. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Health if he has concerns regarding the new study undertaken by NUI Maynooth that shows there has been a 60% increase in the prescription of drugs for children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in the past six years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50887/13]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): I am aware of the study referred to by the Deputy concerning children with Attention Deficit Hypertension Disorder (ADHD), recently undertaken by NUI Maynooth and launched by the children’s charity Archways. This report, including the specific issue highlighted by the Deputy, will be considered in detail by my Department and the HSE, in the context of developing policies and services on ADHD.

Health Strategies

187. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Health if he will report on the status of the national AIDS strategy committee; the dates on which it has met in the past 18 months; the role it has had in the drawing up of the sexual health strategy; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50898/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): The National AIDS Strategy Committee last met on the 29 May 2012. The majority of the members/representative bodies of the National AIDS Strategy Committee were also members of the Steering Group and working Groups established to develop the Sexual Health Strategy. The development of a National Sexual Health Strategy is nearing completion. I intend to submit the Strategy to Government for approval as soon as possible.

Orthodontic Service Waiting Lists

188. **Deputy Gerald Nash** asked the Minister for Health when an appointment will be made in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Louth for orthodontic service; if an exact date cannot be provided the length of time this person may expect to wait for an appointment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50902/13]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White): The HSE provides orthodontic treatment to patients based on their level of clinical need. An individual's access to orthodontic treatment is determined against a set of clinical guidelines and priority is given to patients with greatest needs. The HSE has been asked to examine the specific query raised by the Deputy and to reply to him as soon as possible.

Disease Awareness

189. **Deputy Seán Kenny** asked the Minister for Health if he will set up a Lyme disease task force as requested by a group of Lyme disease sufferers who made a presentation to the Joint Committee on Health and Children on 21 November 2013. [50904/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): Lyme disease is an uncommon disease in Ireland. However, there is a need to increase awareness of the condition among clinicians and the general public. To this end, the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Health Protection Surveillance Centre of the HSE intends to establish a group to review awareness of Lyme disease. It is intended that this group would be established in the New Year.

Medical Card Data

190. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Health the number of medical cards that have been taken from persons in County Kerry from January 2013 to November 2013 to include full medical cards and general practitioner visit cards; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50913/13]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White): The information sought by the Deputy is not readily available. However, I have asked the Health Service Executive to supply this information to me and I will forward it to the Deputy as soon as possible.

EU Directives

191. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Health in view of the fact that Ireland has been referred to the European Court of Justice for breaching the working time directive (details supplied) his response to this new development; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50914/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): The achievement of compliance with the European Working Time Directive for non-consultant hospital doctors has been and will continue to be a priority of the Government, in order to improve patient safety as well as the working conditions of doctors. At my request, the HSE has established a senior-level team which, in the course of 2013, has been working intensively with every acute hospital to ensure implementation of the measures necessary to achieve EWTD compliance.

Under a set of proposals agreed under the auspices of the Labour Relations Commission in October 2013, the Irish Medical Organisation is now jointly involved with health service na-

tional management in an ongoing process to assess the position in each hospital site and agree focused and timebound requirements to resolve outstanding issues. Data for the third quarter of 2013 indicates that 97% of NCHDs now work fewer than 68 hours per week and that 53% are working shifts not exceeding 24 hours. These figures represent a significant improvement on the position at the beginning of the year. I am determined to continue the steady progress being made in addressing this long standing problem. The establishment of Hospital Groups over the coming months will also assist in this regard.

Medical Card Appeals

192. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Health if he will expedite a medical card appeal in respect of persons (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50940/13]

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.

Cancer Screening Programmes

193. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Health if patients within the cervical check system are covered for all appointments and procedures at a colposcopy clinic; if he will confirm that there are no grounds for patients being requested to provide details of private health insurance; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50942/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): CervicalCheck, the National Cervical Screening Programme, is a Government funded screening programme which is provided free of charge to recipients. CervicalCheck is available to over 1.1 million eligible women aged from 25 to 60 years and it aims to reduce the incidence of, and mortality from, cervical cancer by detecting changes in the cells of the cervix before they become cancerous.

Approximately 5%-6% of women who attend for a smear test will be called to a colposcopy service for follow-on observation and treatment. No fees are payable by women in relation to screening programme colposcopy clinics. However, some women may opt to pursue treatment privately for these services.

Medical Card Reviews

194. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Health if he will expedite a medical card review application and award full medical cards in respect of persons (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50943/13]

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.

Nursing Homes Support Scheme Applications

195. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Health if he will examine a fair deal contribution in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50956/13]

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.

Departmental Contracts

196. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Health the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by his Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50958/13]

197. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Health the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by his Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50961/13]

198. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Health the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by his Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50964/13]

199. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Health the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by his Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50967/13]

200. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Health the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by his Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50970/13]

201. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Health the total number of contracts and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by his Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50973/13]

202. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Health the total number of contracts

and their total financial cost awarded to a company (details supplied) by his Department in each of the years 2008 to 2012, inclusive, and to date in 2013 or whatever years practicable; if all the contracts were winning public tenders; and if he will provide a breakdown of the contracts by date, purpose and individual value. [50976/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): I propose to take Questions Nos. 196 to 202, inclusive, together.

The complete details requested are not readily available - the information is currently being compiled and will be forwarded to the Deputy as soon as possible. The element of the question relating to the financial cost awarded to specific organisations is listed below.

Year	Organisation	Amount €	Description
2013	Ernst & Young	15,842	Project Work
2013	Ernst & Young	15,842	Professional Services
2012	PriceWaterhouseCoopers	18,020	April - May 2012 review of certain business processes within the Department
2011	KPMG	4,235	Rochford Pharmacy v HSE
2010	Arthur Cox	30,000	BHSF v Minister for Health & Children
2009	McCann Fitzgerald Solicitors	4,359	Leas Cross: Dr Barry Moodley
2009	Grant Thornton	5,813	Prep Finance Statements for Women's Health Council
2009	Grant Thornton	409	Prof. Service/Payroll for Women's Health Council
2009	KPMG	21,263	J&J Haire v Minister injunction hearing
2009	KPMG	115,425	J&J Haire v Minister injunction hearing
2008	KPMG	17,285	Irish Pharmacy Union v Minister
2008	Grant Thornton	14,314	Accountancy support for Independent Body Pharmacy Contract Pricing
2008	Grant Thornton	12,663	Accountancy support for Independent Body Pharmacy Contract Pricing
	Total	275,470	

Health Services Staff Training

203. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Health if any extra medical training will be provided to medical professionals in order to ensure the correct implementation of the Protection of Life during Pregnancy Act; and if so, the type of training involved; the cost of same; the numbers undergoing this training; if this training will be conducted here or abroad; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51000/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): The main purpose of the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act 2013 is to restate the general prohibition on abortion in Ireland while

regulating access to lawful termination of pregnancy in accordance with the *X* case and the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the *A, B and C v Ireland* case. Its purpose is to confer procedural rights on a woman who believes she has a life-threatening condition, so that she can have certainty as to whether she requires this treatment or not. The Act provides for existing rights, i.e. within the Constitutional provisions and the Supreme Court judgment in the *X* case, and it **does not** confer any **new** substantive rights to a termination of pregnancy.

One of the requirements for a medical procedure to be lawful under the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act 2013 in non-emergency circumstances is that, following certification, it must be carried out by an obstetrician on the Specialist Division of the Medical Council Register at an appropriate location. In this context, it is not considered that additional training is required.

Hospital Appointment Delays

204. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Health when a person (details supplied) in County Kildare will receive an appointment date at Tallaght Hospital; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51001/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): For 2013, a maximum waiting time target of 12 months has been set for a first time consultant-led outpatient appointment and this is reflected in the HSE Service Plan. The SDU and the NTPF are working closely with hospitals towards achievement of the maximum waiting time. Should a patient's general practitioner consider that the patient's condition warrants an earlier appointment, he or she would be in the best position to take the matter up with the consultant and hospital involved. In relation to the specific hospital appointment query raised by the Deputy, as this is a service matter it has been referred to the HSE for direct reply.

Patient Transport Provision

205. **Deputy John McGuinness** asked the Minister for Health the reason the transport arrangements which were in place for a person (details supplied) in County Kilkenny have now been ended by the Health Service Executive; if he will insist on this service for the patient being restored; if he will expedite a reply [51022/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): As this is a service matter, I have asked the HSE to respond directly to the Deputy.

Health Insurance Cover

206. **Deputy Dominic Hannigan** asked the Minister for Health his Department's definition of a standard private health insurance policy; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51037/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): My Department oversees the maintenance of a competitive and sustainable private health insurance market, under the provisions of the Health Insurance Acts 1994 to 2012, and monitors developments on an ongoing basis, to ensure that the market is regulated appropriately in the transition to a market-based Universal Health Insurance system. As of 1 October, there are 258 health insurance products on the market, of which 34 provided non advanced cover. The proliferation of plans available on the market and

the increasing segmentation of the market, due to strategies adopted by the commercial providers, is of growing concern to me.

In this context, there are a number of options under consideration to help address the increasing number of plans on the market and the decreasing membership of the private health insurance market. One such measure is the possible introduction of a standard plan, supported by an effective Risk Equalisation Scheme and optional risk-rated additions. It is envisaged that a standard plan would provide an appropriate, defined level of health insurance cover, beyond which Risk Equalisation would not apply, and would be intended to provide greater clarity to consumers seeking to easily identify and purchase a health insurance product which provides a suitable level of cover. There is considerable work required to assess the impact of such a measure, including a thorough examination of the specific appropriate benefits and content that should appropriately be covered by a standard plan. These and other regulatory issues will be examined further by my Department in the coming months, to ascertain their merits and potential benefit to the private health insurance market.

Symphysiotomy Reports

207. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Health further to replies to parliamentary questions in which he said that he expected to bring forward proposals on symphysiotomy to the Government, when these proposals will be brought forward; if the Government has decided how best to proceed in relation to this issue; when he will release the name of the judge he will appoint to meet with the women concerned to facilitate decisions on how best to bring closure to the issue; and the length of time he expects the mediation process to take. [51047/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): I received the approval of the Government yesterday to appoint Judge Yvonne Murphy to assist in finding closure for women who have been affected by a symphysiotomy procedure. The Judge will work with key parties; including representatives of the women, the State Claims Agency and insurance companies in proposing a just outcome. Judge Murphy's work will take around eight weeks, at which time she will submit her independent report to me. I will then revert to Government with detailed proposals so that a decision can be taken as early as possible in the New Year. At that stage Prof Oonagh Walsh's Report will be published.

The Terms of Reference for the work of Judge Yvonne Murphy are:

1. To examine all relevant reports and information relating to symphysiotomy.
2. To meet women who have undergone surgical symphysiotomy procedures to assess what, in their opinion, would bring closure for them.
3. To assess, in conjunction with the State Claims Agency (SCA) and other relevant bodies, the relative liabilities of insurers, indemnifiers and/or other parties in relation to cases pending, or which may arise linked to surgical symphysiotomy procedures.
4. To meet insurers, indemnifiers and/or other parties in relation to such liabilities and to explore and negotiate a quantum representing a fair contribution towards a fund which would form part of an ex-gratia scheme to which Government would also contribute in order to establish an ex-gratia scheme and put closure on the issue for the women involved.
5. To assess the merits and cost to the State of proceeding with an ex-gratia scheme relative to allowing the court process to proceed.

6. To report to the Minister within a period of 8 working weeks on the outcome of these deliberations, with recommendations on the next steps.

I met representatives of the women yesterday with Judge Murphy to assure everyone that she will consult with all relevant parties in an environment where there are no preconceived ideas of what her conclusions might be. In this way her work will be truly independent.

My priority continues to be to ensure that the women who have had this procedure have their health needs comprehensively and professionally met. In this regard, the HSE provides a range of services to women who may be experiencing any adverse effects as a result of undergoing this procedure. These services include the provision of medical cards for the women, the availability of independent clinical advice and the organisation of individual pathways of care and the arrangement of appropriate follow-up. All these services are available on request by the women from the HSE nominated Symphysiotomy Liaison Officers.

Primary Care Centre Provision

208. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Health in respect of the list of primary care centres to be delivered by public private partnership, if he will confirm that it is still the intention that these would be design, build, maintain contracts and that these projects will be delivered in two bundles; his views on the promised second phase of the programme which was due to be announced before the end of 2012. [51053/13]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White): In relation to the potential Primary Care Centres to be delivered under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) Programme, the National Development Finance Agency (NDFA) published a Prior Information Notice (PIN) on Friday 15 November 2013 in the Official Journal of the European Union (“OJEU”) through the eTenders Public Procurement portal which can be viewed on the www.etenders.gov.ie website. It is anticipated that the potential Primary Care Centres identified as suitable for the PPP model will be delivered as part of a single PPP contract in this competition with the remaining centres to be procured by the HSE using other procurement means.

The NDFA states that, for and on behalf of the HSE, it intends to procure a PPP for Primary Care Centres to design, build, finance and provide services for the Primary Care Centres concerned. In June this year the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform announced Government’s intention to roll out a Phase 2 PPP pipeline as a continuation of the Phase 1 Programme, to be announced by the end of 2013.

Medical Aids and Appliances Provision

209. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Health if assistance will be provided to a person (details supplied) in Dublin 9 who has been in touch with his Department on several occasions and who requires medical treatment to address problems with a sacral nerve stimulator; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51057/13]

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.

Drug Treatment Programmes Policy

210. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Health the reason for the delay in notifying the drugs task forces of their budget allocation for 2014; if he will expedite this matter to enable all the drugs task forces to make the necessary arrangements with their various projects. [51058/13]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White): Decisions in relation to the allocations for Drugs Task Forces for 2014 will be notified within the next few days.

EU Directives

211. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Health if he intends to transpose EU Directive 2011/24 on patients' rights in cross border health care, if he will provide a time frame for its introduction; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51061/13]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White): The Directive on Patients' Rights in Cross Border Healthcare provides rules for the reimbursement to patients' of the cost of receiving treatment abroad, where the patient would be entitled to such treatment in their home Member State (Member State of Affiliation) and supplements the rights that patients already have at EU level through the legislation on the coordination of social security schemes (regulation 883/04).

The Directive seeks to ensure a clear and transparent framework for the provision of cross-border healthcare within the EU, for those occasions where the care patients seek is provided in another Member State rather than in their home country. However, it should be emphasised that the vast majority of EU patients receive healthcare in their own country and prefer to do so.

The Department of Health is continuing to work on the necessary statutory provisions to fully implement the Directive. Nevertheless, there are arrangements in place in respect of the key provision of the Directive in relation to a national contact point (NCP), which has been set up within the HSE - the email address is crossborderdirective@hse.ie.

The principle function of the NCP is to facilitate exchange of information for patients concerning their rights and entitlements relating to receiving healthcare in another Member State, in particular the terms and conditions for reimbursement of cost, the procedures for accessing and determining those entitlements. The NCP also has a responsibility to ensure that all enquirers are informed of the rights, if any, that they may have through the legislation on the coordination of social security schemes (regulation 883/04) and which may be more beneficial to them. The NCP will be able to inform patients what the cost of their treatments would be in Ireland to allow them make a comparison with the costs they are being quoted for comparable treatment in another Member State.

While it has been possible to have these aspects of the NCP up and running by the 25th October on an administrative basis, it has not been possible to have prior authorisation or reimbursement operating on a statutory basis. The Department is working on the legal arrangements to put in place the statutory provisions for these systems and will be implementing them as soon

as possible.

Further information on the Ireland's implementation of the Directive is available on the NCP's webpage: <http://hse.ie/eng/services/list/1/schemes/cbd/CBD.html>.

Hospital Appointment Status

212. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Health the position regarding a hospital appointment in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Longford. [51074/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): Should a patient's general practitioner consider that the patient's condition warrants an earlier appointment, he or she would be in the best position to take the matter up with the consultant and hospital involved. In relation to the specific hospital appointment query raised by the Deputy, as this is a service matter it has been referred to the HSE for direct reply.

Hospital Appointment Status

213. **Deputy Sean Fleming** asked the Minister for Health when a hospital appointment will issue to a person (details supplied) in County Laois; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [51097/13]

Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly): For 2013, a maximum waiting time target of 12 months has been set for a first time consultant-led outpatient appointment and this is reflected in the HSE Service Plan. The SDU and the NTPF are working closely with hospitals towards achievement of the maximum waiting time. Should a patient's general practitioner consider that the patient's condition warrants an earlier appointment, he or she would be in the best position to take the matter up with the consultant and hospital involved. In relation to the specific hospital appointment query raised by the Deputy, as this is a service matter it has been referred to the HSE for direct reply.

Road Tolls

214. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will lobby the British Government to exempt the N2/A5 routes and other essential cross-Border connections from the newly proposed HGV levy which would damage the haulage industry North and South. [50900/13]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar): Since 1999 various EU directives have set common rules on distance-related tolls and time-based user charges (vignettes) for HGVs for the use of certain infrastructure. It is open to any Member State to introduce road use charges if it wishes. Road charging is an important revenue source option in relation to funding of roads infrastructure, particularly in the context of ensuring that out of state hauliers contribute to the costs of a country's road infrastructure.

In respect of the United Kingdom's introduction of road charging, I have been in contact with my counterpart there, in response to the initial public consultation and more recently, to point out the difficulties this will create for Republic of Ireland hauliers, especially those in the border area. Furthermore, I asked that the contribution made to date, and planned future contributions, by the Government to road infrastructure costs in Northern Ireland (namely to

the A5 in Northern Ireland) should be taken into account and some provision be made for Irish-registered HGVs. The UK Minister has responded, indicating a willingness to consider certain regional cross-border specified roads in Northern Ireland. He has not proposed inclusion of the A5. However I have yet to receive a formal proposal from him in this regard.

My officials continue to liaise with their UK counterparts on this issue. Any influence that the Deputy can bring to bear on the UK authorities through his party colleagues in the Northern Ireland Executive or those elected to the House of Commons would of course be welcome.

Road Network

215. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he has discussed the provision of funding for the Narrow Water Bridge project with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in view of the hundreds of jobs that this project would create; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50923/13]

216. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he discussed the decision by the SEUPB to withdraw its letter of offer from the Narrow Water Bridge project with that body; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50924/13]

217. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he has discussed the decision by the SEUPB to withdraw its letter of offer from the Narrow Water Bridge project with Louth County Council; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50925/13]

218. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he has discussed the decision by the SEUPB to withdraw its letter of offer from the Narrow Water Bridge project with the Taoiseach; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50926/13]

219. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he has discussed the decision by the SEUPB to withdraw its letter of offer from the Narrow Water Bridge project with the Executive; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50927/13]

220. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport further to Parliamentary Question No 723, in which he states that the Government would not have been in a position to provide a further €10 million towards this project, if he will indicate where he got this figure from; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50928/13]

221. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the amount of funding the Government is prepared to release to help address the shortfall in funding for the Narrow Water Bridge; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [50929/13]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar): I propose to take Questions Nos. 215 to 221, inclusive, together.

The improvement and maintenance of regional and local roads is the statutory responsibility of each local authority, in accordance with the provisions of Section 13 of the Roads Act 1993. Works on those roads are funded from local authorities own resources supplemented by State road grants. The initial selection and prioritisation of works to be funded is also a matter for each local authority.

The Irish Government supported the original decision by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) to approve the allocation of EU funding to the Narrow Water bridge project and

committed an upfront funding contribution of €3.9 million in January this year. The funding which was to be provided by my Department for the Narrow Water Bridge Project represented a significant commitment given the current financial circumstances. This funding contribution was due to be matched with a contribution from the Northern Ireland authorities in line with the agreed funding ratios for the Programme.

The Government was disappointed that the tender process resulted in a doubling of the initial estimated cost budgeted for by the project partners for the construction of the bridge. The Government has indicated on many occasions that it would be willing to help to address the shortfall in funding for the Narrow Water Bridge, but this depended entirely on matching contributions from the other parties, including the Northern Ireland Executive. Also, we could not agree to be solely responsible for any further overruns.

As the Deputy will be aware, as part of the recovery programme that this Government has had to pursue to put the country back on its feet, unfortunately, there will be a further reduction in regional and local roads spending in 2014 of over €60 million. Ultimately it is from this budget that any additional funding from this State would have had to come and we would not have been in a position to provide a further €10 million towards this project as well as to underwrite any potential further overspend. The estimated figure of a requirement from my Department of €10 million was based on correspondence received from SEUPB and Louth County Council. Given the significant difference between the initial estimates and the returned tender prices, the Deputy will appreciate the need to take a conservative approach to the funding requests.

The progression and importance of this project has been discussed with my government colleagues and on a number of occasions at the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) most recently on the 8th of November. The priority is to avoid the loss of the EU funding involved. As the Deputy will be aware, members of the party that he leads are members of the Northern Ireland Executive and of the NSMC.

It is important to note that there are time constraints with regard to the INTERREG funding. It has to be spent by 2015. SEUPB has now decided to withdraw the letter of offer and has indicated that it proposes to re-allocate the funding to eligible projects capable of being delivered before the end of 2015. I know that officials in my Department and the Department for Regional Development have identified possible replacement projects, that will benefit cross-border communication in the transport sector and will be working up proposals for consideration by SEUPB.

Taxi Licences Renewals

222. **Deputy Dan Neville** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the position regarding a tax renewal fine in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Limerick. [50954/13]

Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Alan Kelly): The National Transport Authority (NTA) has responsibility for the regulation of the taxi industry under the provisions of the Public Transport Regulation Act, 2009, including responsibility for SPSV vehicle licensing. I have referred the Deputy's question to the NTA for direct reply. If you do not receive a response within ten working days please notify my private office.