

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.

Traveller Community

11. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs what is being done for Traveller children in our society; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3215/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): The Programme for Government commits the Government to promoting greater co-ordination and integration of delivery of services to the Traveller community across Government, using available resources more effectively to deliver on principles of social inclusion, particularly in area of Traveller education through the DEIS programme.

My colleague the Minister for Justice and Equality has primary responsibility for Traveller and Roma policy. The Department of Justice and Equality is currently leading a consultation process to develop a new National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy. This process will result in a new Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2016-2020 and a set of actions to bring about a real improvement in the quality of life for Travellers and Roma, including children.

Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures, our major framework in relation to children and young people, contains a range of commitments to Traveller and Roma children, addressing issues such as health, education, and social inclusion. The State of the Nation's Children Report (2014) includes a specific section on children in the Traveller Community on areas including nutrition, self-esteem, drug and alcohol use, family relationships, and feelings of safeness within community. The *National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making* (2015-2020) contains specific actions to strengthen participation in decision-making by Traveller children and young people.

Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, has a statutory responsibility to ensure each child attends a recognised school or otherwise receives a certain minimum education. Tusla's education welfare service, comprising the statutory Education Welfare Service, the School Completion Programme and the Home School Community Liaison scheme, are key supports for children who are vulnerable to early school-leaving and educational disadvantage including Traveller children.

Children and families from the Traveller Community who require additional support or are identified as vulnerable also avail of other mainstream services within Tusla. Tusla works in partnership with local authorities, the Health Service Executive and schools to ensure an inte-

grated response to the needs of children and families from the Traveller community including public health nursing, disability services and other relevant services. Tusla funds a number of Traveller specific projects and provides counselling grants to organisations serving the Traveller community.

My Department also provides annual funding to support specific projects which are targeted at young Travellers and offer a wide range of programmes and services aimed at young people at risk and who are disadvantaged due to a combination of factors such as social isolation, substance misuse, involvement in crime, homelessness, early school-leaving and unemployment.

Preschool Services

12. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs when he will publish the implementation plan for the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 for children with special needs; and the arrangements in place to support children with disabilities in preschool services, given that the new disability support scheme will not commence until September 2016 at the earliest. [3206/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): I have been conscious for some time of the difficulty experienced by some children with a disability in accessing and benefiting fully from the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. With this in mind, I requested that an Interdepartmental Group, led by this Department, be established with a brief to bring forward recommendations to address this issue.

The Group has concluded its work and its recommendations were fully accepted and funded by Government. I announced, as part of Budget 2016, the necessary funding to implement the new model with costs estimated to be €17.7 m in 2016 and with full year cost estimated to be €33 m from 2017 onwards. This Group has identified a practical, workable model for meeting the needs of children with a disability and the allocation of funding is clear evidence of the Government's commitment to supporting vulnerable children.

When established, the new model will focus on the developmental level of children with disabilities, their functional ability and their needs. It will not focus on diagnosis, recognising that many children may not have a formal diagnosis at the time of presenting to preschool.

The model, when fully operational, will deliver seven levels of support to enable the full inclusion and meaningful participation of children with disabilities in the ECCE Programme. These supports, which move from universal to highly targeted supports based on the needs of the child, include: enhanced continuing professional development for early years practitioners; grants for equipment, appliances and minor alterations, increased capitation for children with very complex needs, as well as access to therapeutic intervention.

Two groups have been established to oversee and implement the new model; a Cross Sectoral Implementation Group will oversee and monitor implementation, and a Project Group, which will implement the model for roll-out by September 2016. Further details in relation to this measure are expected to be available in June this year.

Until the new model is available in September 2016, my Department, the Department of Education and Skills and the HSE will continue to make a range of supports available to children with disabilities in ECCE.

Publication of the EPSEN Act Implementation Plan is a matter for the Minister for Education and Skills.

Child Poverty

13. **Deputy Mick Wallace** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the specific measures he is taking to tackle child poverty; the targets he on his own and in conjunction with other Departments has set for reducing child poverty; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3209/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): In recognition of the higher risks and life-long consequences of child poverty, the Government set a child-specific poverty target in *Better Outcomes, Better Future: the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People* to reduce consistent child poverty by at least two thirds on the 2011 level, a figure of 70,000 children. Based on more recent (2014) data, this target has been updated to 100,000 children.

The Department of Social Protection has the lead role in co-ordinating Government strategies on child poverty and is the Sponsor of Outcome 4 of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* - economic security and opportunity. It also has lead responsibility for the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion, and it has identified child poverty as a key cross-sectoral priority to be addressed in 2015 and 2016 under the *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* structures.

My Department is actively contributing to this multi-dimensional approach to address child poverty. Key to this is the importance accorded to the development of effective and quality focused services and support for children and young people. In this regard my Department, in collaboration with the Department of Social Protection, will hold an EU Peer Review next month to explore innovative responses in prevention and early intervention to improve outcomes for children - in particular those experiencing child poverty and disadvantage. This event will involve ten Member States and the European Commission and a number of key Irish Stakeholders.

Within my Department, there are also a number of specific areas of focus that support our response to child poverty. These include:

- Provision of €260 million annually on early childhood care and education and after-school support programmes which provide care to 100,000 children. This will increase to €345m in 2016.

- Provision of €29.7 million through the Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme (2013-2017) which is co-funded by my Department and The Atlantic Philanthropies.

- Provision of €51 million in the area of youth work services and supports.

Finally, as part of my Department's response, Tusla is responsible for the delivery of a range of services focusing on the welfare, protection and support for children, young people and their families which are key to supporting outcomes which assist in actively reducing the impact of child poverty.

Community Employment Schemes Operation

14. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the discussions and agreement between his Department and the Department of Social Protection on changes and reforms to the community employment programme. [3204/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): Under new qualifica-

tion requirements announced by my Department as part of the Early Years Quality Agenda all staff employed to work directly with children in preschool settings will be required to hold, as a minimum, a Level 5 qualification (or equivalent) in early childhood care and education. This new requirement will apply to all new services registering with the Child and Family Agency after the commencement of new Regulations in this area, and to existing services from 31st December this year. Following the introduction of these changes, only those staff who hold the necessary qualification will be in position to meet the adult:child ratio requirements in early years settings.

Officials from my Department have met with officials from the Department of Social Protection on a number of occasions to consider any impact the qualifications requirement would have on the scheme and on services. We all agree that quality in childcare services is of priority and that the Early Years Quality Agenda must remain the key focus in childcare services. The Community Employment Childcare Programme helps participants to upskill in a supervised environment. Community Childcare Services also benefit from the extra support in the early years setting. However, utilising CE participants as core staff within childcare services adult:child ratios is not best practice for either the Childcare or Community Employment areas.

I am aware that some Community Childcare Services have traditionally relied on Community Employment participants as core staff in their settings and that the new Regulations with the minimum qualification requirement will bring challenges for those services, once commenced. At the request of my Department, City and County Childcare Committees have established a project to examine the impact of these changes on the sustainability of community childcare services that are currently dependent on Community Employment workers to meet the ratio requirements. My Department has advised childcare providers who consider that the sustainability of their service is at risk as a result of this measure to contact their local City or County Childcare Committee immediately to discuss this matter.

There is no issue with Community Employment participants obtaining placement within the childcare services as long as they are not considered core staff members/part of the adult:child ratio.

Children and Family Services

15. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if he has evaluated the psychological impact on young persons arising from the economic downturn; how this is most regularly represented; if he has taken specific measures to offset such issues; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3199/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): The National Longitudinal Study *Growing Up in Ireland* provides us with valuable information on a wide range of issues affecting children, including a better understanding of how they were affected by the economic recession.

A study that used data from *Growing Up in Ireland* examined the impact of economic vulnerability on the socio-emotional development of children. The data indicated a substantial increase in economic vulnerability for children over the period of the recent recession, and demonstrated that it had negative consequences for children's social and emotional development.

Unsurprisingly, the study found higher risks of economic vulnerability among groups such as lone parents, families where the primary caregiver had lower levels of education, and families where the primary caregiver was very young at the time of the child's birth.

The analysis points to the need for a continuing emphasis on education and skills, especially for early school leavers. It also demonstrates the need for the right mix of income support and services such as training and childcare, so that families can be supported through both immediate financial protection and enhanced labour market prospects.

My Department has a key role to play in promoting positive parenting and supporting families in difficulty. It also plays an important role in supporting high quality and affordable childcare, an area for which I secured an increase of €85m, or 33% of our existing investment, in 2016.

For parenting and family support, my Department published the *High Level Policy Statement on Supporting Parents and Families* last April, which provides the context for considerable work being done in this area by Tusla. In addition to its important child protection and welfare functions, Tusla also works to support all families in universal programmes such as *Parenting24seven*.

For families in difficulty, Tusla's *Meitheal* programme is a valuable national practice model for assessing the needs of children and families that come to the attention of practitioners and communities. It focuses on early responses to help prevent family problems from reaching a stage where they might otherwise require more specialised supports.

There is no doubt that the recent recession was an extremely difficult time for all children and families, but particularly those in vulnerable situations. The *Growing up in Ireland* data provide us with an important insight into the nature of the challenges they have faced, and it is vital that all Government policies are appropriately tailored to meet their needs.

Preschool Services

16. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs his negotiations and discussions with the preschool sector regarding the capacity within existing preschools to handle the extension to the preschool year commencing in September 2016, including if there are any gaps in capacity and in what counties these are. [3207/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the considerable support of the childcare sector and the flexibility of childcare providers and staff in ensuring that the range of childcare support programmes administered by my Department are implemented.

At present, the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme covers children who have reached the age of 3 years and 2 months by 1st September of the relevant year. From September 2016, I am expanding this Programme to allow children enrol in free pre-school from the time they are 3 years of age and to remain there until they start primary school.

Following the Budget announcement, I met with senior representatives from the early years sector to discuss the measures that were announced as part of the Budget package. The meeting was positive and constructive, with all parties expressing commitment to work together on the issues of capacity and high quality pre-school provision.

As a result of the Budget extension, the number of children benefiting from the Programme is expected to rise from around 67,000 to 127,000 in a given programme year. For the 2016/17 programme year, it is estimated that 89,500 children will be eligible to enrol in the Programme from September 2016, an additional 22,000 from January 2017 and a further 15,500 from April 2017.

I decided to introduce this new measure from September 2016 in order to provide the early years sector with the time to build capacity to meet the increased demand. As the increased demand for the Programme is not expected to peak until April 2017, this timeframe should allow preschool providers to make any necessary infrastructural or service changes and to put in place extra staff resources to accommodate the additional demand.

I am satisfied that there is already additional capacity in the early years sector to cope with some of the increased demand. The Annual Survey of Early Years Services, which was conducted in December 2014, estimates that there are more than 24,000 vacancies in early years services across the country with almost 13,000 of these vacancies in sessional services.

I am also aware that every year a significant number of new preschool providers apply to participate in this Programme. This increased demand for, and additional investment in, free preschool provision should encourage a greater numbers of applicants.

It is clear that more capacity will be required. Officials in my Department are working closely with the City and County Childcare Committees and the Voluntary Childcare Organisations to identify measures to help increase capacity.

Ombudsman for Children Remit

17. **Deputy Mick Wallace** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if he will extend the mandate of the Office of the Ombudsman for Children in order that it can receive complaints from children in direct provision; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3210/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): The direct provision system is under the remit of my colleague, the Minister for Justice and Equality.

The Minister for Justice and Equality has previously addressed, among other issues, the question of the Ombudsman for Children being given jurisdiction in the direct provision system and for the Health Information Quality Authority (HIQA) to be allowed inspect direct provision hostels. In replying, the Minister made reference to provisions in both the Ombudsman for Children Act 2002 and Ombudsman Act 1980 which excludes either Ombudsman from investigating any action taken by or on behalf of a person in the administration of law relating to asylum.

The Department of Justice and Equality established a working group to review a range of issues pertaining to asylum seekers and direct provision. The Working Group on the Protection Process was chaired by Judge Bryan McMahon and consisted of children's rights advocates, organisations engaged with asylum groups and representatives from a range of relevant Government departments, including a representative from my own Department. The Report of the Working Group on the Protection Process was published in June 2015. It included a recommendation that the remit of the Ombudsman and the Ombudsman for Children should be extended to complaints relating to services to residents of direct provision accommodation centres and to transfer decisions following breach of rules. The report and its recommendations are currently being considered by my colleague the Minister for Justice and Equality, Deputy Frances Fitzgerald.

The Deputy may wish to note that the Ombudsman for Children identified the lengthy period of time that families spend in direct provision as a key concern, and it is one which would help to address many of the problems experienced in the system. The recent enactment of the International Protection Act 2015 greatly simplifies the process for those in direct provision,

and aims to reduce the time spent there significantly.

Early Childhood Care Education

18. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the assurances he will provide that services will be able to extend the provision offered under the early childhood care and education scheme, given the concern expressed by preschool services regarding their unsustainability under the current 38-week capitation system. [3208/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the considerable support of the childcare sector and the flexibility of childcare providers and staff in ensuring that the range of childcare support programmes administered by my Department are implemented.

At present, the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme covers children who have reached the age of 3 years and 2 months by 1st September of the relevant year. From September 2016, I am expanding this Programme to allow children enrol in free preschool from the time they are 3 years of age and to remain there until they start primary school. As a result of this extension, the number of children benefiting from the Programme is expected to rise from around 67,000 to 127,000 in a given programme year, which represents an opportunity for the sector to increase income by 60% on average.

I decided to introduce this new measure from September 2016. As the increased demand for the Programme is not expected to peak until April 2017, this timeframe should allow preschool providers to make any necessary infrastructural or service changes and to put in place extra staff resources to accommodate the additional demand. I am satisfied that there is already additional capacity in the early years sector to cope with some of the increased demand.

I am also aware that every year a significant number of new preschool providers apply to participate in this Programme. This increased demand for, and additional investment in, free preschool provision should encourage a greater numbers of applicants, although clearly additional capacity will be required.

I am restoring capitation rates to pre-2012 levels from September 2016. This increase, which will bring capitation to as much as €2,850 per year for each eligible child, is a guaranteed source of income and a major support for preschool providers. This was particularly evident in the difficult economic climate that prevailed in recent years when many parents would not have been in a position to avail of preschool for their children. Additional capitation for preschool providers, announced as part of the suite of Government-funded supports for children with a disability accessing the ECCE Programme, is another measure that will assist in addressing issues of sustainability for preschool providers.

I met with senior representatives from the early years sector to discuss, among other issues, the measures that were announced as part of the Budget 2016 package. The meeting was positive and constructive, with all parties expressing commitment to work together on the issues of capacity and high quality preschool provision. My Department will be working closely with the early years sector to build capacity in time for the first intake in September 2016, and for subsequent increased availability in January and April 2017.

Child Protection

19. **Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if there are child protection issues for homeless children and children living in emergency accommodation; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3200/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): I am keenly aware that homelessness is very disruptive to normal family life and is a major issue that this Government is intent on tackling. Homelessness can have a negative impact on a child's education and welfare including their sense of security. My colleague, the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, with the local authorities, is working hard to address this problem.

Homelessness as part of a family group is not, in of itself, a basis for receiving a child into care. Parents remain their children's primary carer. Tusla's main role is to provide family support, in the same way as it does for families in the general community, by providing guidance and parenting supports through its locally based services.

Where Tusla identifies underlying problems such as parental mental health, addiction or parenting problems, it can refer the family to the appropriate service or provide the support and oversight needed to ensure the welfare and protection of the children. Tusla has regular meetings with Focus Ireland, the Department of Social Protection and Dublin City Council to identify vulnerable families in order to support them as best they can.

Where there are child protection concerns, these should be reported immediately to Tusla for appropriate response. The reporting of these concerns to Tusla is governed by *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (2011).

Children who are not in the care of their parent/s or guardians and present as out of home to emergency services have their needs assessed and, if appropriate, are received into care under the Child Care Act 1991.

Social Insurance Yield

20. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection the projected increase in the yield from employer's pay related social insurance, further to the increase in the minimum wage; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3467/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The minimum wage was restored to €8.65 per hour shortly after this Government came into office. Employer PRSI was payable at the lower 8.5% rate where, for example, an employee worked a 39 hour week at the minimum wage.

The Low Pay Commission was established by this Government in early 2015 and was a key commitment in the Statement of Priorities agreed by the Taoiseach and myself in 2014. In particular, the Commission makes recommendations to the relevant Minister regarding the level of the national minimum hourly rate of pay without, *inter alia*, creating significant adverse consequences for employment or competitiveness.

The Commission reported last July on this issue and the Government was pleased to implement its recommendation of an increase in the hourly minimum wage to €9.15 with effect from this January. In making this recommendation the Commission was concerned that, without an adjustment in employer PRSI, an increase in the minimum wage rate would have a major impact, particularly on small business costs as the employment of a minimum wage worker for a 39 hour week would now attract the higher Employer PRSI rate of 10.75% (the higher rate

commenced at earnings of €356 per week).

In Budget 2016, it was announced that, from 1 January this year, the upper threshold for paying the 8.5% Class A rate of employer PRSI would be increased from €356 to €376 per week and this was provided for in the Social Welfare and Pensions Act 2015 enacted in December 2015. The increase in this threshold addresses the concerns highlighted by the Low Pay Commission on this issue and ensures that employers with employees benefiting from the increased minimum wage continue to attract the lower 8.5% rate of employer PRSI.

This measure is estimated to cost circa €17 million in a full year and will benefit employers by between €8.01 to €8.46 per week in respect some 88,000 employments. It is important to note that the measure benefits all employers with employees currently earning between €356 and €376 per week including those who are not necessarily on the minimum wage e.g. employees working for less than a full week but at hourly rates in excess of the minimum wage.

It is not possible to estimate the projected increase in the yield from Employers PRSI in respect of those benefiting from the minimum wage as PRSI and earnings data reported by employers does not include the number of hours worked by, or the hourly wage of, an individual employee.

In addition to the above changes to Employer PRSI, the Government also decreased the PRSI liability for employees earning between €352 and €424 per week through the introduction of a new PRSI credit. This can benefit some employees by up to €12 per week.

The employer and employee PRSI changes outlined above were enacted by the Oireachtas in December and came into effect in January.

State Pensions Payments

21. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection the status of State pensions (details supplied); and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3479/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): On Budget Day, I was pleased to announce a €3 weekly rate increase for pensioners aged 66 and over, which represents the first increase in weekly rates in seven years. This increase applied to those on the maximum personal rate of payment e.g. the State Pension Contributory (SPC) rate increased from €230.30 to €233.30 per week, and the State Pension Non Contributory rate increased from €219 to €222 per week.

Proportionate increases applied for qualified adults and for those on reduced rates of pensions. In this regard, qualified adults on SPC aged 66 or over gain €2.70 per week (from €206.30 to €209 per week), while qualified adults aged under 66 in receipt of SPC or SPNC gain by €2 per week. The policy adopted in this regard is the long-standing practice for rate increases.

It should also be noted that the rate of the qualified adult payment payable where the qualified adult is aged 66 or over is equivalent to over 88% of the personal rate of payment or far higher than the proportion which applies to other qualified adult rates of payment (normally around 66%). In addition, all persons aged 66 and over (including those who are qualified adults) are eligible to apply for the means-tested State pension non-contributory and, depending on the means of the couple, may be eligible to receive a rate of this pension higher than the qualified adult weekly rate the State pension contributory.

Budget 2016 contained a number of other welfare measures of benefit to pensioners. A pensioner couple in receipt of the maximum rate of the State Pension Contributory would have received a 75% Christmas Bonus of €327.50 in the first week of December 2015. In addition, pensioners may also have benefited from the increase in Fuel Allowance from €20 to €22.50 per week for the duration of the fuel season.

Invalidity Pension Eligibility

22. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to expedite an application by a person (details supplied) under the invalidity pension scheme. [3497/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): Invalidity pension (IP) is a payment for people who are permanently incapable of work because of illness or incapacity and who satisfy the pay related social insurance (PRSI) contribution conditions.

The Department received a claim for IP for the person concerned on the 16 November 2015. The person concerned was refused IP on the grounds that the medical conditions for the scheme were not satisfied. She was notified on the 26 January 2016 of this decision, the reasons for it and of her right of review and appeal.

Carer's Allowance Applications

23. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to expedite an application by a person (details supplied) under the carer's allowance scheme. [3500/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): Carer's Allowance (CA) is a social assistance payment made to persons who are providing full-time care and attention to a relevant person/persons and whose income falls below certain limits.

The Department informs me that to date, no application by the person concerned for CA has been received.

Accordingly, I have arranged for an application form (CR1) to issue, which the person concerned should complete and return as soon as possible, in order that the Department may determine their entitlement to CA. If the person in question has already submitted an application in the past few days, there is no need to resubmit a new application and the Department will be in touch in relation to the application in due course.

Carer's Allowance Applications

24. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to expedite an application by a person (details supplied) under the carer's allowance scheme. [3501/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): I confirm that the Department received an application for carer's allowance (CA) from the person concerned on 8 July 2015.

The application was referred to a local social welfare inspector (SWI) to assess the level of care being provided, assess means and confirm that all the conditions for receipt of CA are satisfied. The inspector interviewed the person concerned in December 2015 but the investigation

could not be completed as the carer was going on holidays. Once the SWI has reported, a DO will make a decision and the person concerned will be notified directly of the outcome.

Invalidity Pension Eligibility

25. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to expedite an application by a person (details supplied) under the invalidity pension scheme. [3503/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): Invalidity pension (IP) is a payment for people who are permanently incapable of work because of illness or incapacity and who satisfy the pay related social insurance (PRSI) contribution conditions.

The Department received a claim for IP for the person concerned on 9 December 2015. The person concerned was refused IP on the grounds that the medical conditions for the scheme were not satisfied. She was notified on the 25 January 2016 of this decision, the reasons for it and of her right of review and appeal.

Carer's Allowance Applications

26. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to expedite an application by a person (details supplied) under the carer's allowance scheme. [3504/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): I confirm that the Department received an application for carer's allowance from the person concerned on 4 December 2015. The application is currently being examined by a deciding officer and the Department will be in touch with the person concerned in due course.

Carer's Allowance Applications

27. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to expedite an application by a person (details supplied) under the carer's allowance scheme. [3505/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): I confirm that the Department received an application for carer's allowance from the person concerned on 11 November 2015.

Once processed, the person concerned will be notified directly of the outcome.

Carer's Allowance Applications

28. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to expedite an application by a person (details supplied) under the carer's allowance scheme. [3506/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): I confirm that the Department received an application for carer's allowance from the person concerned on 4 November 2015. The application is currently being examined by a deciding officer who will be in contact with the person in question in relation to the application in due course.

Carer's Allowance Applications

29. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to expedite an application by a person (details supplied) under the carer's allowance scheme. [3507/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): I confirm that the Department received an application for carer's allowance from the person concerned on 16 October 2015. Additional information necessary to decide upon eligibility but which was omitted from the application was requested by a deciding officer on 15 January 2016. Once the information is received the application will be processed without delay and the person concerned will be notified directly of the outcome.

Carer's Allowance Appeals

30. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to expedite an application by a person (details supplied) under the carer's allowance scheme. [3508/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): I confirm that the Department received an application for carer's allowance (CA) from the person concerned on 28 July 2015. The person concerned was refused CA on the grounds that she was not providing full-time care and attention as required.

The person concerned was notified on 24 September 2015 of this decision, the reason for it and of her right of review and appeal.

The person concerned requested a review of this decision. Additional information in relation to the person's circumstances has been requested by the deciding officer. Once the information is received the application will be processed and the person concerned will be notified directly of the outcome of the review.

Carer's Allowance Applications

31. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to expedite an application by a person (details supplied) under the carer's allowance scheme. [3509/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The application for carer's allowance in respect of the person concerned was awarded on 18 January 2016 and the first payment is due to issue to the person's nominated post office account on 4 February 2016.

Any arrears of allowance due (less any overlapping social welfare payment and/or outstanding overpayment) will issue shortly.

Social Welfare Appeals

32. **Deputy Noel Harrington** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection when she will submit the file to the social welfare appeals office, as requested on 15 December 2015, in respect of an appeal by a person (details supplied); and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3521/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The person con-

cerned appealed the means decision on 25 November 2015. The letter accompanying the appeal contained information which conflicted with previous information provided. The papers of the person concerned have been forwarded to the Social Welfare Inspector for further investigation.

On completion of the inspector investigation the report will be forwarded to the Deciding Officer for further consideration. The Deciding Officer will revise the decision or refer the matter to the Social Welfare Appeals Office as soon as possible.

Family Income Supplement Eligibility

33. **Deputy Sandra McLellan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection if a person participating in an apprenticeship who has a partner and two children, is eligible to apply under the family income supplement scheme; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3522/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): Family income supplement (FIS) is an in-work support, which provides an income top-up for employees on low earnings with children. The Revised Estimates for 2016 state that in excess of €410 million will be spent on FIS this year. FIS is currently supporting approximately 56,000 recipients.

To qualify for payment of FIS, a person must be engaged in full-time insurable employment, which is expected to last for at least 3 months and be working for a minimum of 38 hours per fortnight or 19 hours per week. A couple may combine their hours of employment to meet the qualification criteria. The applicant must also have at least one qualified child who normally resides with him/her or is supported by him/her. Furthermore, the average family income must be below a specified amount, which varies according to the number of qualified children in the family.

The “full-time” employment condition has been a fundamental part of the FIS payment since its introduction in 1984, although the number of hours worked in order to satisfy this condition has been reduced considerably. The requirement was initially set at 30 hours per week but was progressively lowered to 38 hours per fortnight or 19 hours per week in 1996.

Apprentices during the course of their apprenticeship typically undertake three off-the-job full time education phases. Attendance on a full-time education course is not considered full-time employment and consequently apprentices cannot qualify for FIS during these periods.

However, apprentices can qualify for FIS for the four on-the job apprenticeship phases when they are working for their employer.

Invalidity Pension Applications

34. **Deputy Michael Creed** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection when she will issue a decision on an application by a person (details supplied) in County Cork under the invalidity pension scheme; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3551/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): Invalidity pension (IP) is a payment for people who are permanently incapable of work because of illness or incapacity and who satisfy the pay related social insurance (PRSI) contribution conditions.

The department received a claim for IP for the person concerned on the 28 July 2015. A deciding officer (DO) refused IP to the person concerned on the grounds that the medical con-

ditions for the scheme were not satisfied. She was notified on the 18 September 2015 of this decision, the reasons for it and of her right of review and appeal.

The person concerned requested a review of this decision and submitted further medical evidence in support of her request. Following a review of all the information available the DO is now satisfied that the medical conditions for the scheme are satisfied.

On the 26 January 2016, a DO requested that the person concerned provide details of the preferred payment method which was omitted from the claim form. Upon receipt of same, the IP claim will be finalised and the person in question will be notified directly of the outcome.

Departmental Funding

35. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection the funding she allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituency of Louth-East Meath, by project and initiative, by completion date and by cost, for the past five years; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3567/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The details requested are currently being compiled and a response will issue directly to the Deputy early next week.

Social Welfare Benefits Eligibility

36. **Deputy Michael McNamara** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection the supports available to returned emigrants; if she will waive the habitual residence requirement; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3574/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): Social welfare payments can be broadly divided into two main categories – contributory social insurance payments, which are based on the social insurance contributions paid by the claimant and non-contributory social assistance payments, which are subject to a means test.

The social welfare supports available to returned emigrants will therefore, depend on the person's particular circumstances, including whether the person has previously paid social insurance contributions in Ireland, the length of time spent working in Ireland before emigrating, the length of time spent abroad, whether the person worked in the EU or elsewhere, etc.

For instance, a person who returns to Ireland after having spent a period working in another EU Member State may qualify for certain social insurance benefits from Ireland or from that other Member State, depending on the circumstances. Where a returned emigrant does not qualify for a social insurance payment, he or she may apply for a social assistance payment, such as jobseeker's allowance.

In addition to having to satisfy a means test and other eligibility criteria directly relevant to the specific payment being claimed, applicants for most social assistance payments must also be determined as being habitually resident in the State in order to qualify. The general principles underpinning the application of the habitual residence condition centre on the overall assessment of a person's situation, including consideration of the following factors -

- the length and continuity of residence in Ireland or in any other particular country,
- the length and purpose of any absence from Ireland,

- the nature and pattern of employment,
- the person's main centre of interest, and
- the future intentions of the person as they appear from all of the circumstances.

Returning emigrants who had previously been habitually resident in the State and who moved to live and work in another country and then resume their long-term residence in the State may be determined as habitually resident in the State immediately on their return to the State. In addition, arrangements are in place with Safe-Home Ltd, a registered charity, to assist with the difficulty experienced by a minority of returning emigrants in demonstrating their intention to live in the State permanently for the purposes of satisfying the habitual residence condition.

It is open to anyone who is dissatisfied with a decision on the application of the habitual residence condition in relation to entitlement to a social welfare payment to appeal that decision to the Social Welfare Appeals Office.

While I have no plans to change its operation at this stage, the operation of the habitual residence condition is kept under continual review.

National Internship Scheme Data

37. **Deputy Noel Grealish** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection how many persons have participated in the JobBridge scheme in counties Galway and Mayo, in each year since the scheme was introduced; how many of the participants have been kept on at the same workplace or are in full-time employment elsewhere, since completing the JobBridge placement; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3595/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Social Protection (Deputy Kevin Humphreys): Tables giving the details requested by the Deputy are set out in this reply.

JobBridge, the National Internship Scheme, was introduced in July 2011 in response to the unprecedented collapse in the economy – particularly the sharp increase in unemployment.

The primary aim of the scheme is to give unemployed people the opportunity to secure work experience and prove their competence to prospective employers. To date, JobBridge has attracted the voluntary participation of over 45,300 interns and encouraged over 18,000 Host Organisations to offer them a wide range of work experience opportunities. There are currently almost 4,400 people on internships.

Table 1 below gives the details of the number of participants in Counties Galway and Mayo since the scheme was introduced. Table 2 provides details of the number who progressed into employment immediately on cessation of the internship. The Department does not keep a record of the number of participants who progress into employment at some stage thereafter, but the independent evaluation of the programme by Indecon in 2013 indicated that some 61% of participants progress into employment (either with the host organisation or another employer) within 5 months of completion of an internship.

A further robust external evaluation of JobBridge is currently underway with the aim of assessing the suitability, relevance and effectiveness of the programme. It includes:

- * a detailed counterfactual impact evaluation,

* a robust assessment of deadweight and displacement,

* a comprehensive qualitative assessment of host organisation and participant perspectives on the quality and future of JobBridge, including one-to-one case studies.

Table 1. JobBridge Internships Started in Galway and Mayo by Year

Year	Galway	Mayo
2011	217	73
2012	652	218
2013	721	328
2014	769	356
2015	500	258
2016	20	7
Total	2901	2140

Table 2. Employment Outcomes for Interns in Galway and Mayo Immediately on finishing Internships

Employment Outcomes	Galway	Mayo
Went directly into employment with Host Organisation	598	199
Went directly into employment with another employer	354	126
Total	952	325

Water Conservation Grant

38. **Deputy Noel Grealish** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection the number of persons who have received the water conservation grant in counties Galway and Mayo, by county; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3597/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The Water Conservation Grant is a key element of the Government's drive to promote conservation and more sustainable use of water services in the home. The Department of Social Protection is administering the Water Conservation Grant on behalf of the Department of Environment, Community, and Local Government. A total of 887,973 Water Conservation Grant applications for 2015 have been processed to date. The number of principal private residences in Counties Galway and Mayo for which applications have been processed are given in the following table -

County	Applications Processed
Galway	43,513
Mayo	33,928

Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance Scheme Applications

39. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to ensure a person (details supplied) receives an allowance which the person applied for, but was refused. [3617/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Social Protection (Deputy Kevin Humphreys): The back to school clothing and footwear allowance (BSCFA) scheme is a non-statutory scheme which provides a once-off payment to eligible families to assist with the extra costs when chil-

dren start school each autumn.

In order to qualify for BSCFA, an applicant must satisfy a number of qualifying conditions, one of which requires the applicant's household income to be within the income limits for that year's scheme. While employee PRSI is deductible under the guidelines of the scheme, other deductions from earnings such as PAYE, USC, mortgage payments and household bills are not taken into consideration. Following a review on 18 December 2015 of the application by the person concerned, BSCFA has not been awarded in this case due to means in excess of the appropriate household income limit.

Carer's Allowance Appeals

40. **Deputy Michael McCarthy** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to review an application by a person (details supplied) in County Cork under the carer's allowance scheme; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3618/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): Carer's Allowance (CA) is a social assistance payment made to persons who are providing full-time care and attention to a relevant person/persons and whose income falls below certain limits.

The person concerned is currently in receipt of CA in respect of care of her aunt. Previously, she was in receipt of CA from 8 November 1990 up to 25 March 2015 in respect of her late father, up until the time he passed away. During part of that period, from 1997 to 2004, she was in receipt of CA for a 2nd care recipient, her late mother until she passed away.

The department received an application for CA from the person concerned in respect of her aunt on 16 March 2015. The application was awarded in line with legislation, from 19 March 2015 which is the first Thursday after receipt of the application.

The person concerned sought to have the award backdated to 21 March 2014 on the grounds that she wasn't aware that she could claim payment in respect of a 2nd care recipient. This application for backdating was refused by a deciding officer on the grounds that good cause for a delay in claiming was not demonstrated.

The person concerned appealed the date of award of CA in respect of care of her aunt and the case was submitted to the Social Welfare Appeals Office for determination. An appeals officer (AO), having fully considered all of the available evidence, disallowed the appeal on 30 November 2015. She noted that the appellant had not shown good cause for the delay in applying, particularly as she had previous experience of making a claim for a second care recipient.

The person concerned was notified on 11 December 2015 of the AO's decision and was provided at that time with a detailed explanation of the basis for this decision.

Under Social Welfare legislation, the decision of an AO is final and conclusive and may only be reviewed in the light of relevant additional evidence or new facts.

Domiciliary Care Allowance Applications

41. **Deputy Paul J. Connaughton** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection when she will make a decision on an application by a person (details supplied) in County Galway under the domiciliary care allowance scheme; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3627/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): An application for domiciliary care allowance (DCA) was received from the person concerned on the 24th November 2015. This application has been forwarded to one of the Department's Medical Assessors for their medical opinion. Following receipt of this opinion, a decision will be made by a Deciding Officer and notified to the person concerned. It can currently take 12 weeks to process an application for DCA.

Part-Time Job Incentive Scheme

42. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection if and when Social Protection assistance will issue to a person (details supplied) in County Kildare under the part-time job incentive scheme; if any information remains outstanding; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3635/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The Part-Time Job incentive (PTJI) Scheme allows long-term unemployed people to take up part-time work and get a special weekly allowance instead of their jobseeker's payment. On securing a part time job, they should immediately inform a Social Welfare Intreo office to apply to participate in the PTJI Scheme.

The person concerned commenced part-time work of 20 hours per week over five days from 18 March 2015 onwards and continued to claim Jobseeker's Allowance (JA) at the full rate.

The client applied for the PTJI scheme on 12 July 2015, at which point she advised the Department of her employment, sixteen weeks after commencement, at which point she was no longer eligible for the scheme. Her JA claim is now closed.

Departmental Correspondence

43. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection if a requested statement can be forwarded urgently to a person (details supplied) in County Donegal; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3636/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): I confirm that a statement issued to the person in question on 22 January 2016, as per her request to disability allowance section.

State Pension (Contributory) Eligibility

44. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection if she will review the average contributions currently required to qualify for a State pension; her views that the current system disproportionately impacts women; the way in which the average is determined to take account of periods out of the work force, particularly where such period of time was obligatory or where time out of the workforce was taken to raise a family or return to study; the ways to make the calculation and access to payments more equitable; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3683/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The State pension contributory is a very valuable benefit and is the bedrock of the Irish pension system. Therefore, it is important to ensure that those qualifying have made a sustained contribution to the

Social Insurance Fund over their working lives. To ensure that the individual can maximise their entitlement to a State pension, all contributions paid or credited over their working life from when they first enter insurable employment until pension age are taken into account when assessing their entitlement and the level of that entitlement. Since 1961, when contributory pensions were introduced, the average contributions test has been used in calculating pension entitlement. Once over 16 years of age, the date a person enters into insurable employment is the date used for averaging purposes.

The homemaker's scheme makes qualification for State pension (contributory) easier for those who take time out of the workforce for caring duties. The scheme, which was introduced in and took effect from 1994, allows up to 20 years spent caring for children under 12 years of age (or caring for incapacitated people over that age) to be disregarded when a person's social insurance record is being averaged for pension purposes, subject to the standard qualifying conditions for SPC also being satisfied.

The most recently published Actuarial Review of the Social Insurance Fund confirms that the Fund provides better value to female rather than male contributors. It further confirms that those with lower earnings and those with shorter contribution histories, mostly women, have and will continue to obtain the best value for money from the Fund due to the distributive nature of the Fund.

For those with insufficient contributions to meet the requirements for a State pension (contributory), the State pension system provides alternative methods of support. If their spouse has a contributory pension, they may qualify for an Increase for a Qualified Adult amounting up to 90% of a full rate pension, which by default is paid directly to them. Alternatively, they may qualify for a means-tested State Pension (non-contributory), amounting to 95% of the maximum contributory pension rate.

Work is underway to replace the 'yearly average' system with a 'total contributions approach'. Under this approach, the number of contributions recorded over a working life will be more closely reflected in the rate of pension payment received. It is expected that the total contributions approach to pension qualification will replace the current average contributions test for State pension (contributory) for new pensioners from 2020, although that date is subject to change, as this is a very significant reform with considerable legal, administrative, and technical challenges to be overcome in its implementation. The position of women who were homemakers will be considered very carefully in developing this reform.

Carer's Allowance Applications

45. **Deputy Willie Penrose** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to expedite an application by a person (details supplied) in County Westmeath under the carer's allowance scheme; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3688/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): I confirm that the department received an application for carer's allowance from the person concerned on 17 December 2015.

The application was referred by a deciding officer (DO) to a local social welfare inspector (SWI) on 22 January 2016 to assess the level of care being provided, assess means and confirm that all the conditions for receipt of CA are satisfied. Once the SWI has reported, a DO will make a decision and the person concerned will be notified directly of the outcome.

Services for People with Disabilities

46. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection the number of Intreo offices that are accessible, that are inaccessible, to persons with disabilities; the cost of making all Intreo offices accessible; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3696/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): All public offices opened under the Intreo Programme are accessible to persons with disabilities, and are in compliance with the requirement of the Disability Act 2005.

The Office of Public Works is charged with ensuring that all Intreo Centres comply with building regulations and disability legislation. With regard to access, and in particular access for persons with disabilities, over the past 4 years the OPW refurbished and remodelled 60 Social Welfare Local Offices into Intreo Centres and/or acquired new premises in some locations. In most locations, the buildings would have already complied with the relevant aspect of the Building Regulations. All costs associated with providing disability access to buildings would have been absorbed in the overall costs of refurbishment of Intreo Centres. There may be some older back office areas that are not entirely accessible for all DSP staff, and such areas are addressed then on a needs basis and in consultation with staff who may have a disability and are being assigned to such offices.

Question No. 47 withdrawn.

State Pension (Contributory)

48. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection why the pension of a person (details supplied) in County Kildare to which he had made contributions by working in the Forestry Service, from which the person retired on health grounds, was reduced upon reaching the qualifying age for the State pension; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3699/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The person concerned applied for state pension (contributory) prior to his 66th birthday in June 2011. He was awarded a reduced rate (98% of maximum rate) pension, based on a yearly average of 28 contributions, assessed from the commencement of his insurable employment in 1961 to the end of the tax year immediately preceding his 66th birthday.

His claim has been rechecked. He is in receipt of the correct weekly pension rate. To qualify for a maximum rate pension, a yearly-average of 48 contributions or higher would be required.

Consultancy Contracts Data

49. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by her Department since March 2011. [3773/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The procurement of services is essential to support the Department in providing a 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.

The information requested by the Deputy is set out in the following tables.

Report	Name of Consultants	Commissioned	Publication Date	Cost €
External quality assessment of DSP Internal Audit under the D/PER Internal Audit standards 2012	EisnerAmper Ireland	Nov-2015	Internal Management Report	€5,535
Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Activation Reforms	ESRI	Oct 2015	Q4 2016	€118,315
Evaluation of the Suitability, Effectiveness and Relevance of the JobBridge Activation Programme	Indecon International Economic Consultants	Sept - 2015	June 2016	€134,895
Analysis & Measurement of Poverty & Social Exclusion 2015 Programme: 1. Changes in social risks by life-cycle group 2. Developing a multi-dimensional quality of life indicator	ESRI	Q3 2015	Q1-Q2 2016	€80,000
Jobseeker Customer Satisfaction Survey	W5 Marketing Intelligence Ltd	Aug-2015	Q1 2016	€71,463
Confidential Information Security Report	Deloitte	July-2015	Internal Management Report	€7,749
Social Inclusion Forum – Conference Report	Aidan Lloyd	Mar-2015	Q1 2016	€1,650
Policy and practice report: Key lessons learned from the Ballymun Youth Guarantee Project	NUI Maynooth	Jan-2015	March 2015	€11,135*
Evaluation of the Disability Activation Project	Indecon International Economic Consultants	Feb-2015	November 2015	€29,520
Review of the EmployAbility (Supported Employment) Service	Indecon International Economic Consultants	Jan-2015	Review complete December; Publication date to be decided	€59,280
Confidential Forensic Services	Rits	Mar-2015	Internal Management Report	€11,480
Windows Tablet PC Hardening Review (Limited Scope) Windows Laptop PC Hardening Review (Limited Scope) Windows Phone Device Hardening Review (Limited Scope)	Deloitte	Mar-2015	Internal Management Report	€4,151
Project coordination of Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Work Positive Framework	Sharon Gallagher	Mar- 2015	To be determined following completion of the review	€3,000
Technical review of rent supplement under the Equal Status Acts.	Mel Cousins & Associates	July -2015	Internal Management Report	€18,000
Microfilm Condition Report	Martin Bradley, Archives and Records Management Consultant	Nov -2014	Internal Management Report	€1,691
Report on the effectiveness & efficiency of the guidance model used during Youth Guarantee Pilot	NUI Maynooth	Nov-2014	Internal Management Report	€14,145*
Ex-ante Evaluation to support the preparation of the Operational Programme for the European Fund for the Most Deprived 2014-2020	Mel Cousins & Associates	July-2014	Internal report required by EU Regulation (EU) No 223/2014	€16,000

Report	Name of Consultants	Commissioned	Publication Date	Cost €
Assessment for Application Lifecycle Management	Microsoft Ireland	May-2014	Internal Management Report	€22,586
Confidential Forensic Services	Rits	Apr-2014	Internal Management Report	€2,340
Confidential Forensic Services	Rits	Apr-2014	Internal Management Report	€4,201
Security Partner Services - IT Forensics	Deloitte	Mar-2014	Internal Management Report	€2,398
Identification & containment of malicious software	Deloitte	Apr-2014	Internal Management Report	€15,699
Social Inclusion Forum – Conference Report	Aidan Lloyd	Mar-2014	Dec-2014	€1,650
Analysis & Measurement of Poverty & Social Exclusion 2014 programme: 1. Transitions into and out of household joblessness using CSO SILC data 2. Measuring Irish joblessness: The SILC and LFS data sources	ESRI	Q1-2014	1. Sept-2015 2. May-2015	€80,000
Evaluation Research (Back to Education Allowance)	ESRI	Nov-2013	Internal Management Report	€24,809
Social Welfare Appeals Office – Research into Revising Decisions	Mel Cousins & Associates	Dec -2013	Internal Management Report	€2,400
Evaluation of the Youth Guarantee Pilot	Franklin Research Ltd	Oct- 2013	Jan 2015	€20,000*
Report on Organisation Development	Axiom Consultants	Sept- 2013	Internal Management Report	€122,692
Auto Enrolment & Applicability to Ireland (Pensions)	TOR Financial Consulting Ltd.	Mid-2013	Internal Management Report	€9,900
Advisory report on implementation of European Youth Guarantee in Irish circumstances	Organisation for Economic co-operation & Development (OECD)	Sept- 2013	Jan-2014	€50,000
A Review of In-work Supports for the Advisory Group on Tax and Social Welfare	Mel Cousins & Associates	July-2013	TBC	€10,000
Delivery of Administrative Profiling Models to Identify those at Risk of Labour Market Disadvantage	ESRI	July-2013	June-2014	€33,745
Analysis & Measurement of Poverty & Social Exclusion (AMPSE) 2013 programme: 1. Social Transfers & Poverty in Boom & Recession (for 2013 annual report) 2. Indicators of Economic Strain in the Great Recession (for 2013 technical paper)	ESRI	June-2013	1. Dec-2013 2. Apr-2014	€67,979
Diet Supplement Diet Costing's Update	Irish Nutrition & Dietetic Institute	Apr-2013	Sep-2013	€4,000
Social Inclusion Forum – Conference Report	Aidan Lloyd	Mar-2013	Sep-2013	€1,500
Mobile Applications Opportunity Exploration	Accenture	Feb-2013	Internal Management Report	€33,388
Contracted Employment Service Model	Centre for Economic & Social Inclusion	Nov-2012	Internal Management Report	€140,989
Report on Pension Priority Order	Mercer	Sep-2012	Feb-2013	€18,450
Developing system architecture for the National Employment & Entitlements Service	Compass Point	June-2012	Internal Management Report	€4,600
Evaluation of JobBridge (National Internship Scheme)	Indecon International Economic Consultants	Apr-2012	Apr-2013	€59,555

Questions - Written Answers

Report	Name of Consultants	Commissioned	Publication Date	Cost €
Actuarial Review of the Social Insurance Fund	KPMG	Feb-2012	Jun-2012	€153,750
FÁS IS Applications Systems Review	Accenture	Jan-2012	Internal Management Report	€44,772
Analysis & Measurement of Poverty & Deprivation 2012: 1. Work & Poverty in Ireland: An Analysis of CSO Survey on Income & Living Conditions 2004-2010 (2012 annual report) 2. Technical Paper on Poverty Indicators – [Appendix C of Report of the Review of the National Poverty Target] 3. Implications of Income Pooling & Household Decision-Making for Poverty & Deprivation (2012 technical paper)	ESRI	Jan-2012	1. Dec-2012 2. Oct-2012 3. Oct- 2013	€81,230
Review of Irish Pensions Policy	OECD	Jan-2012	Apr-2013	€130,000
Social Welfare Appeals Office – Research on Insurability Issues & Access to Legal Resources	Mel Cousins & Associates	2011	2011	€7,744
Social Inclusion Forum – Conference Report	Aidan Lloyd	Nov-2011	Aug-2012	€1,500
Report on Pension Charges in Ireland	PWC	Oct-2011	Oct-2012	€61,500
Development & implementation of the National Employment & Entitlements Service	Accenture	June-2011	Aug-2011	€186,563
Report on electronic access to GRO Records for genealogy research	John Grenham	Apr-2011	Internal Management Report	€3,557
Confidential Information Security Reports	Grant Thornton	Dec- 2015	Internal Management Report	Not yet fully determined

* EU Funded Reports

Working Environment Reports

Report	Name of Consultants	Commissioned	Publication Date	Cost €
Survey Air quality in Waterford Intreo	Wright Environmental Services	Dec- 2014	Internal Management Report	€6,863
Survey Air quality in Nutgrove Local Office	Wright Environmental Services	Nov-2013	Internal Management Report	€2,900
Health & Safety Review of DSP premises, Upper Gardiner St, Dublin 1	CPL Training Ltd, trading as Nifast Health & Safety Training	Apr-2013	Internal Management Report	€1,100
Air Quality Investigation, Ballymun Local Office	Wright Environmental Services	Aug-2012	Internal Management Report	€3,644
Air Quality Investigation, Áras Mhic Dhiarmada	Wright Environmental Services	Aug-2012	Internal Management Report	€3,383
Risk assessments regarding reception areas [Arklow, Tallaght, & Kings Inn, Dublin Local Offices]	Nifast	June-2012	Internal Management Report	€1,845
Investigation of odour/smells, DSP Cobh	Employment Health Advisors Ltd	May-2011	Internal Management Report	€2,023
Investigation of odour/smells, Belmullet Local Office	Wright Environmental Services	Apr-2011	Internal Management Report	€1,699

Public Inquiries

50. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which she or her Department have been responsible by name; by terms of reference; by cost including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded; by date including the projected date of conclusion where an inquiry has not been concluded from 1991 to date, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3788/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): Tribunals of inquiry are established by resolution of the Houses of Oireachtas to enquire into matters of urgent public importance. Commissions of investigation can investigate matters of significant public concern and are set up by Government order. Such commissions are currently provided for by the Commissions of Investigation Act 2004.

This Department has not been responsible for any tribunals of inquiry or commissions of investigation since 1991.

Ministerial Allowances

51. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection the expenses claimed, including the amount of mileage and the amount claimed, by her and Ministers of State of her Department, by calendar year, during the current Dáil Éireann, in tabular form. [3816/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): All expenses claimed by Minister of State, Kevin Humphreys and I, including mileage during the current Dáil Éireann are outlined in tables A and B. I have claimed no mileage since my appointment as Tánaiste on 4 July 2014, because I have been provided with a state car and Garda Driver, the cost for which is a matter for my colleague the Minister for Justice and Equality.

Table A

Expenses claimed by An Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection Joan Burton T.D.

Year	Mileage	Other expenses
2011	€5,825.92	€675.75
2012	€7,105.89	€182.00
2013	€8,781.50	€236.50
January 2014 to July 2014	€6,359.75	Nil
July 2014 to December 2014	Nil	Nil
2015	Nil	Nil

Table B

Expenses claimed by Kevin Humphreys T.D., Minister of State, Dept. for Social Protection

Year	Mileage	Other expenses
September 2014 to December 2014	€3,552.73	€300
2015	€4,946.78	€258.02

Departmental Expenditure

52. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection the amount she spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3831/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The Department of Social Protection's media monitoring covers the Department's entire range of schemes and services. Following a Request for Tenders by the Department for the provision of a media monitoring service a new contract was entered into in October 2012. The enhanced media monitoring service under this new contract includes daily notices of 'situation vacant' advertisements in national and local newspapers, which are used by the Department's staff in supporting jobseekers in their efforts to find work.

Employment activation is now a key strategy of the Department of Social Protection. Every effort is being made to ensure that jobseekers are equipped with the skills to get back into the workforce and are enabled to find work suitable to their skills. The officials who work in employment activation can now access all job vacancies in their geographical areas in every Regional as well as National newspaper.

The expenditure by the Department on media clipping and media monitoring services from 2011-2015 is set out in the following chart.

Year	Costs (including VAT)
2011	€22,257.95
2012	€25,968.15
2013	€55,675.95
2014	€44,722.80
2015	€48,708.00

Jobseeker's Allowance Appeals

53. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection the status of an appeal against a disallowance under the jobseeker's allowance scheme submitted on 4 December 2015 by a person (details supplied) in County Kildare who has neither received restoration status of the appeal nor a basic social protection payment. [3862/16]

Tánaiste and 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 4th January 2016. 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 papers 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.

Disability Allowance Eligibility

54. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection if an adult dependent allowance in respect of a child still in full-time education has been restored to a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

[3863/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The person in question is in receipt of disability allowance (DA). An increase in his DA in respect of a child dependant over 18 years old ceased in May 2015 as the department had certification of college attendance up to that date which indicated that the course of study had completed. If the dependant is still in full-time education, the person in question should forward certification from the relevant educational establishment to that effect. Appropriate certification should be returned as soon as possible to the department so that his entitlement to an increase for a qualified child may be reviewed.

Carer's Allowance Applications

55. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection if and when child benefit will be made payable to a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3865/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): I confirm that the department received an application for carer's allowance from the person concerned on 10 November 2015. The application is currently being examined and once completed, the person concerned will be notified directly of the outcome.

Jobseeker's Allowance Payments

56. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection if payments under the jobseeker's allowance scheme or other payments have been paid up to date to a person (details supplied) in County Kildare. [3868/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): The person concerned is in receipt of jobseeker's allowance. She advised her Local Office that she had commenced casual employment in November 2015. Her payment was then suspended pending the receipt of documentation from her employer. When the documentation was provided the payment of the person concerned was reinstated and any arrears owing paid.

Redundancy Payments

57. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to report on the management of the redundancy scheme fund for the period 1967 to 2015, during which time it was known as the Redundancy Fund from 1967 to 1984 and the Redundancy and Employer's Insolvency Fund from 1984 to 1991, after which the Redundancy and Employer's Insolvency Fund merged with other funds within the Social Insurance Fund from 1991 to date; if the fund was in surplus on 31 December 2013; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3874/16]

58. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection to report on the income into the costs borne by the year-end surplus or deficit of the redundancy scheme fund by year; the cumulative reserve built up in the fund; if the cumulative reserves have been used for the purposes set out in the redundancy legislation from 1967 to date and the employer insolvency legislation from 1984 to date; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3875/16]

59. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection if the redundancy scheme fund has been managed at all times in a manner that is accountable, transparent and subject to independent third-party scrutiny; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3876/16]

60. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection if the operation of the redundancy scheme fund is a vital measure to provide mitigation, by way of rebates on the statutory payment made to employees for enterprises, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, as providers of employment, as revenue collectors for the Exchequer, as a vital component of the economy and as creators of wealth; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3877/16]

61. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection her assessment of the redundancy scheme fund as a governance stabilising measure for the employment market, especially in the small and medium-sized enterprise sector here; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3878/16]

62. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection if she has acted effectively as the trustee for the stewardship of the redundancy scheme fund; if she has effectively and prudently managed the fund and its surpluses; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3879/16]

Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton): I propose to take Questions Nos. 57 to 62, inclusive, together.

The purpose of the redundancy payments scheme is to compensate workers, under the Redundancy Payments Acts, for the loss of their jobs by reason of redundancy. Compensation is based on the worker's length of reckonable service and reckonable weekly remuneration, subject to a ceiling of €600 per week.

It is the responsibility of the employer to pay statutory redundancy to its eligible employees. Where an employer can prove to the satisfaction of the Department that it is unable to pay the statutory redundancy to its eligible employees, the Department will make lump sum payments directly to the eligible employees from the Social Insurance Fund (SIF). Amounts paid under such circumstances are sought back from employers. In addition where employers become insolvent, certain other outstanding statutory entitlements (arrears of wages, holiday pay etc.) may be paid from the SIF. The Minister for Social Protection becomes a preferential creditor in the winding-up of companies in respect of monies paid from the SIF.

Under the provisions of Section 24(4) of the Social Welfare Act 1990 all moneys standing to the credit of the Redundancy and Employers' Insolvency Fund on 30 April 1990 were transferred to the SIF on 1 May 1990.

The SIF was established by the Social Welfare Act 1952 (as amended) and operates under the terms of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act (SWCA) 2005. Under section 9 of that Act the SIF comprises a current account which is managed and controlled by the Minister for Social Protection and an investment account which is managed and controlled by the Minister for Finance. The annual statutory accounts of the SIF are prepared in the form and manner approved by the Minister for Finance. There is a separate account prepared for the current account and the investment account. These accounts are audited by the C&AG and are laid on an annual basis before the Houses of the Oireachtas and are subject to PAC examination.

The income of the SIF derives mainly from Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI) contributions. In addition to redundancy payment entitlements, social insurance benefits and occupa-

tional injury benefits are paid out of the SIF.

SWCA 2005 allows for PRSI to be paid into either the investment account or the current account of the SIF. It requires surplus funds in the current account not required for expenditure purposes to be transferred to the investment account for investment purposes. In accordance with section 9 (9) of SWCA 2005, the SIF has received a state subvention since 2010 in order to bridge the gap between its PRSI income and its social insurance related expenditure. As at the 31 December 2013 the SIF had no surplus funds on hand. The table included shows the SIF operating surplus/deficit for the period 2006-2014.

Significant and increasing amounts were paid out in redundancy rebates to employers from the SIF during the economic crisis. While the SIF is constituted primarily from employer contributions, the taxpayers' contribution is also significant. One of the factors which influenced the Government's decision in Budget 2013 to abolish the rebate was the increasing cost of rebates to often profitable companies. I acknowledge the contribution made by these enterprises in the creation of employment. However, the cost of making rebates is too significant to allow for its re-introduction. Therefore, I do not propose to restore the rebate for small or medium enterprises.

SIF Income and Expenditure 2006-2014

-	SIF Income	SIF Expenditure	Operating Surplus/Deficit	Cumulative Surplus at end of year	Exchequer Subvention Requirement
Year	€,000	€,000	€,000	€,000	€,000
2006	6,974,411	6,325,554	648,857	3,049,141	
2007	7,834,147	7,250,990	583,157	3,632,298	
2008	8,144,410	8,399,739	(255,329)	3,376,969	
2009	7,297,601	9,784,225	(2,486,624)	890,345	
2010	6,709,681	9,460,835	(2,751,154)	1,477*	(1,862,286)**
2011	7,543,883	9,004,245	(1,460,362)	1,477	(1,460,362)
2012	6,785,557	8,869,567	(2,084,010)	1,477	(2,084,010)
2013	7,317,505	8,631,635	(1,314,130)	1,477	(1,314,130)
2014	7,891,344	8,433,142	(541,798)	1,477	(541,798)

**The 2010-2014 cumulative surplus represents the book value of the Department's HQ premises vested in the Minister for Social protection on behalf of the Fund.*

*** In this period Vote Subvention commenced in mid-2010.*

2015 figures are not yet available but provisional estimates indicate Exchequer Subvention will be in the order of €130 million.

Disabled Drivers and Passengers Scheme

63. **Deputy Michelle Mulherin** asked the Minister for Finance the status of an application for repayment of excise duty on fuel used in motor vehicles for the transport of drivers with disabilities by a person (details supplied); if he will expedite same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3481/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by Revenue that a repayment will issue to the person concerned for years up to 2014 in the next week. A form on which to make a claim for 2015 has been sent to the person concerned and this will be processed when received by Revenue.

Disabled Drivers and Passengers Scheme

64. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for Finance when disabled drivers will receive their repayment for excise on fuel payments; if these payments are now overdue; the reason for the delay; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3483/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): My Department expects to make the first tranche of payments of the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers Fuel Grant shortly in respect of applications made in the first three weeks of January 2016. My Department then expects to make payments every two weeks from the week beginning 1 February 2016.

Many beneficiaries of the Fuel Grant will have applied online on 1 January of this year, and the intention was to make payments from mid-January. However, some IT issues on the new payment system arose which have delayed payments. These issues are now in the process of being resolved and payments will shortly proceed to be made on a bimonthly basis.

I think it is important to provide the Deputy with some of the background to the introduction of the Fuel Grant.

From 1969 to 2014, the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers (Tax Concessions) Scheme provided for the repayment of excise duty on fuel used by beneficiaries of the Scheme. Following a judgement of the Court of Justice of the European Union of April 2013, the repayment of excise element of the Scheme was found to be incompatible with the Energy Tax Directive. Following negotiations with the European Commission it was agreed that the repayment of excise duty should be discontinued as of 31 December 2014.

As I stated in March 2014, to ensure that no beneficiary of the Scheme lost out as a result of the Court's ruling, I decided to introduce a new fuel grant effective from 1 January 2015. Section 81 of the Finance Act 2015 provided for the making of regulations to govern the operation of the fuel grant, which I subsequently made through the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers Fuel Grant Regulations (S.I. No. 635 of 2015). The Revenue Commissioners are processing Fuel Grant applications and, as I have indicated, my Department is making the payments to beneficiaries.

The Fuel Grant is paid at the same rate as the rates for repayment of excise duty on fuel. Accordingly, I have maintained the rate for petrol at €0.59 per litre, the rate for diesel at €0.48 per litre, and the rate for liquefied petroleum gas at €0.10 per litres. This Fuel Grant maintains the previous practice of paying the sum 12 months in arrears, so that the Revenue Commissions began processing applications on behalf of my Department from 1 January 2016.

With the assistance of the Revenue Commissioners, a number of improvements have been made to the administration of the Scheme. For example, beneficiaries are now able to apply for the fuel grant online on the Revenue website through the 'myAccount' feature, and payments are made directly into beneficiaries' accounts.

Insurance Costs

65. **Deputy Eoghan Murphy** asked the Minister for Finance to address an insurance issue (details supplied). [3511/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): The provision of insurance cover and the price at which it is offered is a commercial matter for insurance companies and is based on an assessment of the risks they are willing to accept and adequate provisioning to meet those risks.

As Minister for Finance, I am responsible for the development of the legal framework governing financial regulation. Neither I, nor the Central Bank of Ireland, may interfere in the provision of insurance products. The EU framework for insurance expressly prohibits Member States from adopting rules which require insurance companies to obtain prior approval of the pricing, or terms and conditions of an insurance product.

Insurance Ireland, which represents the insurance industry in Ireland, has informed me that motor insurers use a combination of rating factors in making their individual decisions on whether to offer cover and what terms to apply. Factors include those such as the age of the driver, the type of car, the claims record, driving experience, the number of drivers, how the car is used, etc.

Insurance Ireland operates a free Insurance Information Service for those who have queries, complaints or difficulties in relation to obtaining insurance. In the event that a person is unable to obtain a quotation for motor insurance or feels that the premium proposed or the terms are so excessive that it amounts to a refusal to give them motor insurance, they should contact Insurance Ireland, 5 Harbourmaster Place, IFSC, Dublin 1, Telephone +353 1 6761820 quoting the Declined Cases Agreement.

Tax Code

66. **Deputy Eoghan Murphy** asked the Minister for Finance if he will amend the inheritance laws, to allow a flat allowance for an individual over a person's lifetime, regardless of the size of the inheritance or the relationship with the donor; and if this would be fairer. [3515/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): Capital Acquisitions Tax (CAT) is the overall title for gift and inheritance tax.

For the purposes of CAT, the relationship between the person who provides the gift or inheritance (i.e. the disponer) and the person who receives the gift or inheritance (i.e. the beneficiary), determines the maximum life-time tax-free threshold known as the "Group threshold" below which gift or inheritance tax does not arise.

There are, in all, three separate Group thresholds based on the relationship of the beneficiary to the disponer.

Group A: tax free threshold €280,000 applies where the beneficiary is a child (including adopted child, stepchild and certain foster children) or minor child of a deceased child of the disponer. Parents also fall within this threshold where they take an inheritance of an absolute interest from a child.

Group B: tax free threshold €30,150 applies where the beneficiary is a brother, sister, a nephew, a niece or lineal ancestor or lineal descendant of the disponer.

Group C: tax free threshold €15,075 applies in all other cases.

Transfers and inheritance between spouses are not subject to CAT.

Where a person receives gifts or inheritances in excess of their relevant tax free threshold, CAT at a rate of 33% applies on the excess over the tax free threshold.

I take it that the Deputy proposes abolishing these different thresholds and applying a single lifetime tax-free threshold to all receipts by gift or inheritance in a person's lifetime regardless of who they are received from. I have no plans to make such a change to the CAT legislation.

The differing treatment of gifts and inheritances depending on the recipient's relationship to the donor has been an element of CAT since its introduction. It reflects a recognition of the legitimate wish of people to be able to provide for those closest to them while at the same time protecting the tax base for capital tax purposes.

Tax Code

67. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Finance the arrangements he made with the Microsoft company in respect of being granted the status of being domiciled here; if that arrangement included a requirement to retain manufacturing here; and if this arrangement is now non-existent given the decision of the Arvato plant in Swords in County Dublin to re-locate its packaging and distribution of Microsoft software to the Czech Republic from July 2016. [3517/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am not clear what arrangement the Question is referring to. The residence of a company is set down in statute and therefore no arrangement would be permitted in relation to any company.

The Finance Bill 2014 amended the company residence rules such that from 01 January 2015 any company incorporated in the State will be Irish tax resident. This amendment brought Ireland's company tax residence rules into line with the majority of EU and OECD member states. The common law "management and control" test also continues to apply to companies that are not incorporated in the State and that are centrally managed and controlled in the State. To ensure that this change did not negatively impact on other related group companies who have real and substantial operations in Ireland, a six year transitioning period was provided for to give these groups a reasonable timeframe to plan and re-organise their business structures to take account of this change.

Property Tax Administration

68. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the reason only two months after being informed that their local property tax liability would be limited to band 1, some residents of Longboat Quay in Dublin 2 have received correspondence from the Revenue Commissioners reversing this decision. [3547/16]

69. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will exempt homes from local property tax, such as those in Longboat Quay in Dublin 2 that are effectively valueless through no fault of the residents; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3548/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I propose to take Questions Nos. 68 and 69 together.

The Finance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012 (as amended) provides that any property that is in use as, or that is suitable for use as, a dwelling house is subject to LPT.

The current valuation period is 1 May 2013 to 31 October 2019. The period was recently extended from 31 October 2016 on foot of legislative amendment (Finance (Local Property Tax) (Amendment) Act 2015) to give property owners certainty in regard to valuations and to remove concerns that LPT liabilities could rise significantly as the property market recovers.

The 1 May 2013 declared valuation is not affected by any repairs or improvements made to a property or by any general increase or decrease in property prices over the course of the

valuation period. Where structural defects are detected after 1 May 2013 they impact on current valuation and are not retrospective to the 'valuation date'. Therefore there is no basis in law to reduce an LPT valuation during the 'valuation period'.

In regard to the specific cases mentioned by the Deputy, Revenue has advised me that the original notifications advising the very small number of persons in question of a reduction in their LPT valuations issued in error and were incorrect. Revenue has also confirmed to me that where mistakes are made or where taxpayers are provided with incorrect information, contact is made with the affected parties as soon as the error comes to light to firstly apologise and to ensure the correct information is quickly provided and clarified as necessary. It was in this context that the correspondence to which the Deputy refers issued.

I have no plans to introduce an exemption from LPT along the lines suggested by the Deputy.

Tax Code

70. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Finance if he will introduce of a tax free allowance for fishermen, similar to the seafarer's allowance; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3550/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): In Budget 2014 I announced that in conjunction with the Marine Co-ordination Group, a review of the financial and taxation supports available to the Marine Sector would be carried out to examine strategic measures that could be introduced to help Ireland as an island nation to fulfil its potential in the marine area.

Phase 1 of this review involved an examination of the taxation supports available for certain sub sectors of marine, namely fishing, ports and shipping. The overall objective of this review was to ensure that there is a supportive financial environment underpinning the marine sector. Following a tender process, Indecon International Economic Consultants were engaged to carry out the review under the aegis of a steering group comprising of representatives from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Department of Tourism, Transport and Sport, the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and the Department of Finance.

This review was published on Budget day, last October, and my officials are working with the relevant departments to consider options arising from the Marine Tax Review. One of the options which is being considered is a tax relief for fishermen similar to the seafarer's allowance. The outcome of this work is expected to be discussed in advance of the Finance Bill later this year, and will be a matter for consideration by the next Government.

Fuel Rebate Scheme

71. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the status of the website of the Revenue Commissioners; and if it will be repaired in order that a person (details supplied) in County Cork can apply for a grant under the fuel rebate scheme. [3553/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by Revenue that the car details for the person concerned have been updated. The person concerned can now proceed to make a claim for the Fuel Grant.

Departmental Funding

72. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Finance the funding he allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituency of Louth-East Meath by project and initiative and by completion date and by cost for the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3561/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): In response to the Deputy's question, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Mr Brendan Howlin, T.D., announced the Government's Capital Plan on 29 September 2015 which outlined Exchequer capital spending of €27 billion over the next six years. My Department does not have responsibility for allocating capital funding. However, as the Deputy will be aware, a range of projects and initiatives in the constituency of Louth East Meath have been funded by the Government through the relevant line departments.

Tax Code

73. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Finance why savings accounts in the name of children are subject to deposit interest retention tax; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3571/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): Under Section 257 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 all deposit takers are obliged to deduct Deposit Interest Retention Tax (DIRT) from payments of interest made to an account unless the account qualifies as an exempt account. There is no specific exemption in the case of interest paid on deposit accounts held by children. Such a provision could be difficult and costly to administer, from the point of view of establishing who the beneficial owner of the account is.

The wider tax code does not provide for an exemption from tax for children. Children could be liable to a range of taxes. Not many children have an income that exceeds the relevant thresholds, but those that do are taxable on it.

There are alternative savings products, offered by the National Treasury Management Agency through An Post, which are tax free, subject to certain conditions.

Tax Data

74. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the total amount raised from motorists in mineral oil tax, vehicle registration tax, value added tax, carbon tax, motor tax and driver licensing in the years 2013 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3575/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that the amounts raised under Mineral Oil Tax (Excise), Carbon Tax, Value Added Tax and Vehicle Registration Tax is as outlined as follows. VAT amounts are estimated as these figures are not recorded separately, and the 2015 data are provisional and subject to revision.

Year	-	Petrol €m	Diesel €m	Auto LPG €m
2013	Excise	850.30	1,133.54	0.14
	Carbon	69.59	137.23	0.07
	Vat (Est)	463.00	75.00	0.31
2014	Excise	799.59	1,181.62	0.23
	Carbon	65.69	144.86	0.11

Year	-	Petrol €m	Diesel €m	Auto LPG €m
	Vat (Est)	423.00	77.00	0.53
2015	Excise	765.80	1,248.37	0.29
	Carbon	62.31	158.14	0.14
	Vat (Est)	364.00	74.00	0.64

Year	VRT €m	Vat (Est) €m
2013	437.3	280.6
2014	542.1	371.3
2015	648.7	489.0

I am informed by my colleague the Minister of Transport, Tourism and Sport that the annual gross receipts from motor tax are as set out in the following table:

-	2013 €bn	2014 €bn	2015 €bn
Motor Tax Receipts	€1.137	€1.159	€1.124

It has not been possible in the time allowed to obtain the Driving Licence Receipts from the Road Safety Authority, however, I will ensure that this information is forwarded directly to the Deputy once it is available.

EU Budget Contribution

75. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the Irish contribution to the European Union budget for the years 2013 to 2015; the projected contribution for 2016; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3576/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): EU Budget payments are published annually by the Department of Finance in the Budget Statistics bulletin. The latest edition from October 2015 contains this data up to 2014.

Member State contributions to the EU Budget are based upon a complex formula which includes Traditional Own Resources (customs duties), a VAT-based payment and a residual balancing component paid in accordance with each Member State's share of EU Gross National Income (GNI). Ireland's contribution for 2013 to 2015, along with a projected contribution for 2016, are set out in the following table. It should be noted that the 2016 estimate has been adjusted to take account of the Commission's annual 'rebalancing' exercise carried out in December 2015. However, the estimate remains subject to change arising from EU legislative and expenditure developments.

Year	EU Budget Payment (€ millions)
2013	1,726
2014	1,686
2015	1,952
2016 (e)	1,875

(e) - Estimate Source - Department of Finance

European Investment Bank Loans

76. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the amount Ireland has drawn down from the European Investment Bank for each year since 2011, by project; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3577/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): The European Investment Bank (EIB) is the long-term financing institution of the European Union. Its mission is to help implement the EU's policy objectives by providing financing to projects that address these objectives. The EIB may lend to Governments, public sector bodies, commercial semi-state bodies or private sector entities.

The Deputy will find below a table with a breakdown of private and public sector (including commercial semi-state) projects in Ireland to which the European Investment Bank (EIB) has provided financing. The table sets out the project name, the sector involved, the date of contract signature and amount for each project for the period 2011-2015.

The Deputy should note that it is not possible to provide the amount "drawn-down" by each project as the schedule of financing drawn down is determined within individual financing contracts and is confidential between the EIB and the project promoter.

The Deputy may also wish to be aware that information on the projects signed between the EIB and project promoters in Ireland is also publicly available on the EIB website. A link to the relevant section of the site is available here: www.eib.org/projects/loans/index.htm

Project	Sector	Signature Date of contract	Amount (€m) Signed
2015			
DCU Campus Development	Education	21-Dec-15	76
Dublin Port	Transport	21-Dec-15	100
Irish Flood Prevention Programme	Water	17-Dec-15	200
Strategic Bank Corporation Ireland (SBCI)	SMEs	22-Oct-15	200
M11 Gorey to Enniscorthy Motorway PPP	Transport	14-Oct-15	109
Trinity College Dublin	Education	25-Jun-15	70
		Total	755

Project	Sector	Signature Date of contract	Amount (€m) Signed
2014			
Open Access (GFI)	Broadband	19-Dec-14	12
HFA - Irish Social Housing Development Programme	Urban Development	18-Dec-14	150
NUI Maynooth	Education	17-Dec-14	76.765
ESB Network - Renewable Connection	Energy	30-Oct-14	100
Irish Water Investment Programme	Water	29-Oct-14	100
Strategic Bank Corporation Ireland (SBCI)	SMEs	28-Oct-14	200
N17-N18 Gort to Tuam PPP Motorway	Transport	30-Apr-14	143.033
Dublin Luas Cross City	Transport	03-Mar-14	150
		Total	931.798

Project	Sector	Signature Date of contract	Amount (€m) Signed
2013			
ESB Renewable Connection	Energy	09-Dec-13	100
Vodafone Mobile Limited	Corporate	27-Nov-13	118
University of Limerick	Education	26-Nov-13	100
Irish School Programme II	Education	19-Jun-13	100

Project	Sector	Signature Date of contract	Amount (€m) Signed
2013			
N11/N7 Motorway PPP	Infrastructure	30-Apr-13	72
AIB Loan for SMEs and Midcaps	SMEs	26-Apr-13	100
Bord Gáis Onshore Wind Programme	Energy	23-Apr-13	90
		Total	680

Project	Sector	Signature Date of contract	Amount (€m) Signed
2012			
AIB Loan for SMEs and Midcaps	SMEs	21-Dec-12	100
Bord Gáis Onshore Wind Programme	Energy	28-Nov-12	155
Irish Water Investment Programme	Energy	28-Nov-12	100
Irish Schools Investment Programme (PPP)	Education	09-Nov-12	50
Irish School Programme	Education	06-Jul-12	100
		Total	505

Project	Sector	Signature Date of contract	Amount (€m) Signed
2011			
AIB Loan for SMEs II	SMEs	21-Dec-11	150
University College Dublin	Education	17-Nov-11	90
ESB Network and E-Cars Infrastructure	Energy	17-Nov-11	235
		Total	475

Tax Data

77. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the total betting duty paid in 2015 and the estimated betting duty for 2016 by licensed betting offices and by online facilities; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3578/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that the betting duty paid in 2015 and the estimated betting duty for 2016 is as follows:

Betting Receipts	Traditional	Online	Commission	Total
Year	€m	€m	€m	€m
2015 (Prov)	27.8	3.0*	0.3*	31.1
2016 (Est)	31.6	18.5	1.8	52.0

* The Betting (Amendment) Act 2015 came into effect on 1st August 2015 providing for the taxation of remote bookmakers and betting exchanges. The returns for remote/online bookmakers and betting exchanges of €3m and €0.3m respectively are for the period 1 August 2015 to 30 September 2015. Returns in respect of 1 October 2015 to 31 December 2015 are payable in January 2016.

The 2016 estimate is derived using the latest available information. As the 2015 data is currently provisional and only contains a small sample of payments received for online facilities,

this estimate may be subject to revision.

Tax Data

78. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the amount of revenue forgone under exemptions granted to organisations which have been granted charitable status for each of the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3579/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that a wide range of statistical information is available on the Commissioners' Statistics webpage: <http://www.revenue.ie/en/about/statistics/index.html>.

In relation to the Deputy's specific question, the latest information on the cost and numbers benefiting from tax relief under Section 848A of the Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997, which provides for a scheme of tax relief on donations to approved bodies including eligible charities, can be found at <http://www.revenue.ie/en/about/statistics/costs-expenditures.html>.

This table also provides information about the cost to the exchequer regarding the exemption of income of charities, colleges, hospitals, schools, friendly societies, etc.

The table contains the latest information which is available. For most reliefs, the latest full year for which information is available is 2013. Further updates will be published in due course.

Revenue Commissioners Investigations

79. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the amount of money the Revenue Commissioners paid as a reward for information received from whistleblowers or other information received and the number of cases involved in each year from 2013 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3583/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that payments of the kind referred to by the Deputy are made only in certain defined and limited circumstances. The approval of such a payment by Revenue is conditional on the provision of new and/or significant information which results in a substantial recovery of taxes and/or duties, controlled drugs and/or prohibited goods. I understand that no such payments were made in the period from 2013 to 2015.

State Claims Agency

80. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the number of Solicitors and Barristers the State Claims Agency directly employs; his views on the legal staffing of the Agency; how this has changed since 2012; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3584/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): The National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA) has advised that it employs 30 solicitors and 3 barristers that are assigned to its State Claims Agency (SCA) function. 16 solicitors are employed as clinical claims managers, being specialists in the management of clinical negligence claims, whilst 11 solicitors are employed as in-house litigation managers. Two solicitors are employed as legal cost accountants in the SCA's Legal Costs Unit. Three barristers and a solicitor are employed as general

claims managers.

The NTMA has advised that the SCA is adequately staffed to meet its claims and litigation management functions and it is also assisted in its litigation management by its external panels of solicitors, located countrywide and an external panel of barristers. Currently, the SCA has 41 solicitors and 170 barristers on its panels for the clinical and general claim portfolios.

In April 2014, the SCA's remit was further extended with the delegation to it by Government of the management of personal injury and third-party property damage claims in respect of an additional 61 public bodies, bringing the total number within the SCA's remit from 56 to 117. Another delegation by Government in June 2015 has further increased the number of public bodies within SCA's remit to 129. Any increase in staffing levels is in line with the additional responsibilities of the SCA.

The Agency constantly keeps its legal staffing under review, having regard to the size and demands of the claims portfolio of the SCA.

Banking Sector Data

81. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance further to Parliamentary Question No. 238 of 18 February 2014, the number of jobs lost in the banking sector since 2011; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3585/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): Since 2011 a number of banks have ceased operating in Ireland or have been merged into another institution (Anglo Irish Bank, Irish National Building Society, ACC, Bank of Ireland Scotland, Postbank, EBS and First Active). That said, a number of new entities have also become regulated providers of financial services in that time.

My Department has the following data available in relation to staff numbers at Irish banks in 2011 and the most recent figures available:

Bank	Full Time Equivalent Staff Dec. 2011	Latest Figures for Full Time Equivalent Staff
Bank of Ireland	13,234	11,384 (30 June 2015)
AIB	14,501	10,204 (Dec. 2015)
PTSB*	2,305 (as of Dec. 2012)	2,449 (June 2015)

* Permanent TSB staff numbers have fluctuated due to its separation from Irish Life in 2012, as a result the employee numbers presented in the 2011 accounts are not representative of the current Bank structure.

In relation to IBRC (in Special Liquidation), there are currently 25 staff remaining in IBRC, all of which are employed in the Republic of Ireland. 1,186 staff were employed by IBRC as at 31/12/2011 including staff in UK, USA and the rest of the world. 895 of these were employed in the Republic of Ireland.

In relation to Ulster Bank, as published in the Ulster Bank Limited Report of the Directors and Financial Statements of 31 December 2014, the number of staff employed by the Group excluding temporary staff was 5,007.

It is worth noting in relation to all the above figures that whilst staff numbers have reduced in certain institutions, some of these jobs have been outsourced and overall numbers employed

have not suffered the full reduction.

The Quarterly National Household Survey shows the seasonally adjusted figures for those in employment in the “Financial, Insurance and Real Estate” sector. In Q4 2011 the figure was 104,100, while in Q3 2015, the figure is 98,800, a decrease of 5,300 in the space of four years.

Revenue Documents Issuance

82. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the number of certificates the Revenue Commissioners issued to sheriffs, the total value of the certificates and the amount of tax and interest collected in each of the past three years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3586/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by Revenue that the total number and value of certificates issued to Sheriffs and the amount of tax/interest collected in each of the years 2013 to 2015 is set out in the following table.

Year	No. of certificates	Value €million	Tax/Interest collected€million
2013	28,795	€312	€150
2014	30,927	€284	€149
2015	28,477	€242	€143

Tax Code

83. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance if he has examined the feasibility of having a specific inheritance tax allowance for the family home; the cost of introducing a €500,000 threshold in respect of the inheritance of family homes; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3587/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I have no plans to introduce a specific allowance for capital acquisitions tax (CAT) purposes in respect of the inheritance of the family home. It is already the case that an individual or individuals who are gifted or inherit the residence which is their home can, subject to conditions, be completely exempt from CAT in respect of that gift or inheritance. Otherwise, the values of assets transferred, including residential properties, are subject to relief from CAT by reference to a number of life-time tax-free thresholds based on the nature of the relationship between the disponent and the beneficiary and below which CAT does not arise.

Broadly, the Group A threshold deals with transfers between parents and their children and currently stands at €280,000, having been increased by me in Budget 2016 from a previous level of €225,000. It is within this category that I would expect that many of the transfers of what is generally being referred to as the family home would arise. The Group B threshold is €30,150 and deals broadly with transfers between other relatives while the Group C threshold deals with transfers in other cases and stands at €15,075. The values of gifts or inheritances received above the various thresholds are subject to CAT at the rate of 33%.

I have already indicated that I see the change to the Group A tax- free threshold in this year’s Budget as the start of a process. Provided, among other factors, that our economic recovery continues, I would intend to examine the scope for further improvements in the tax-free thresholds in the future.

As regards the cost of a specific tax-free threshold for CAT purposes in respect of the family

home, I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that there is no reliable basis on which to provide such a costing using the data available as no distinction is made between a family home and a non-principal private residence in CAT returns. I have been previously informed by Revenue, however, that a further increase in the Group A tax-free threshold to €500,000 would cost about €74 million in a full year.

Property Tax Administration

84. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Finance why local property tax in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kildare is not being deducted from the person's State pension; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3614/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by Revenue that according to its records the person in question opted to pay his 2016 Local Property Tax (LPT) liability using the Payment Service Provider (PSP) method.

On foot of the Deputy's Question, Revenue made direct contact with the person who confirmed that he selected the PSP option in error and wished to meet his 2016 LPT liability via weekly deductions from his Department of Social Protection (DSP) pension payment.

The Revenue official explained to the person that the payment would be deducted in equal amounts over the remaining payment periods available over the course of the year. The person was satisfied with the arrangement and the Revenue official assisted him in setting up the required mandate.

Revenue has confirmed that the issue is now resolved to the person's satisfaction.

Vehicle Registration

85. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Finance to examine the excessive vehicle registration tax charge of €3,256 imposed on persons (details supplied) in County Kerry for the importation of a car; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3615/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by Revenue that the car in question does not appear to have been presented for registration. If the person concerned wishes to query the value they should contact Revenue's Central Vehicle Office at 053-9161200.

Disabled Drivers and Passengers Scheme

86. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Finance to note the report regarding a person (details supplied); to make urgent regulations to allow the person to benefit from the new scheme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3642/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): As the Deputy is aware, the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers (Tax Concessions) Scheme provides relief from VAT and VRT (up to a certain limit) on the purchase of an adapted car for transport of a person with specific severe and permanent physical disabilities, a fuel grant, and an exemption from Motor Tax.

I note the comments in the letter attached by the Deputy. I understand that the Secretary General of my Department has recently received a letter from the Ombudsman for Children

outlining a number of concerns regarding the Scheme.

To qualify for the Scheme, an applicant must have a permanent and severe physical disability within the terms of the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers (Tax Concessions) Regulations (S.I. 353 of 1994) and satisfy one of the six medical criteria outlined in the Regulations. These are that a person must:

- be wholly or almost wholly without the use of both legs;
- be wholly without the use of one leg and almost wholly without the use of the other leg such that the applicant is severely restricted as to movement of the lower limbs;
- be without both hands or without both arms;
- be without one or both legs;
- be wholly or almost wholly without the use of both hands or arms and wholly or almost wholly without the use of one leg;
- have the medical condition of dwarfism and have serious difficulties of movement of the lower limbs.

The Scheme represents a significant tax expenditure. Between the Vehicle Registration Tax and VAT foregone, and the repayment of excise on fuel used by members of the Scheme represented a cost of €50.3 million to the Exchequer in 2015, an increase of 3.5% on the 2014 cost. This figure does not include the revenue foregone to the Local Government Fund in the respect of the relief from Motor Tax provided to members of the Scheme. In terms of the numbers of claims to the Scheme in 2015, there were 5,263 claims for relief from Vehicle Registration Tax and VAT, and 12,107 claims in respect of the repayment of excise on the fuel element of the Scheme.

I recognise the important role that the Scheme plays in expanding the mobility of citizens with disabilities, and I have managed to maintain the relief at current levels throughout the crisis despite the requirement for significant fiscal consolidation.

I frequently receive correspondence from applicants who do not meet the qualifying criteria but feel that they could benefit from the Scheme, such as is the case in the letter attached. While I am sympathetic to those, such as the person concerned, who do not qualify for Scheme, I cannot, at this time, in the still challenging fiscal environment and given the scale and scope of the Scheme, expand the medical criteria beyond the six currently provided for in the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers (Tax Concessions) Regulations 1994.

Credit Unions

87. **Deputy Joan Collins** asked the Minister for Finance if the Government is accepting the €2 billion offer from the Irish League of Credit Unions to build social housing; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3644/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): As I previously advised the Deputy, the credit union sector is aware of the need to consider ways of increasing its income and developing its business model. I am pleased that this topic is being seriously considered and that various options are being explored by the sector. My Department has received a number of proposals in relation to social housing. While the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government is the Department primarily responsible for the formulation and implementation

of policy and for the preparation of legislation in relation to housing, Department of Finance officials are working closely with them. While these proposals are at an early stage of development, a number of meetings were held with officials from both Departments to examine how credit unions can assist in the area of social housing.

I should point out that any such proposals are subject to the approval of the Registrar of Credit Unions at the Central Bank of Ireland who is the independent regulator for the credit union sector.

Section 44 of the Credit Union Act, 1997 provides that a credit union may establish a special fund to be used by the credit union for, social, cultural or charitable purposes by a resolution passed by a majority of its members present and voting at a general meeting. Where individual credit unions intend to establish such a fund the Central Bank would expect the credit union to take account of the need to ensure the protection of the funds of its members.

Commencement of the remaining sections of the Credit Union and Co-operation with Overseas Regulators Act 2012 on 1 January 2016 provides the Registrar of Credit Unions with the power to make regulations in relation to investments in projects of a public nature. This is specifically referenced in legislation and therefore such investments could be facilitated by future regulations, where appropriate, when there are specific proposals put forward by the credit union sector.

Prior to commencement of the legislation, following consultation between the Department of Finance and the Central Bank during the course of discussion on CP88, the Central Bank agreed to a modification in relation to this matter. Regulation 25(2) makes reference to the fact that the Central Bank may prescribe, in accordance with section 43 of the Credit Union Act 1997, further classes of investments for credit unions which may include investments in projects of a public nature. The regulation provides that investment in projects of a public nature include, but are not limited to, investments in social housing projects.

While the Government recognises the important role of credit unions as a volunteer co-operative movement in this country, the Government's priorities remain the protection of members' savings, the financial stability of credit unions and the sector overall and it is absolutely determined to support a strengthened and growing credit union movement.

Tax Collection

88. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Finance if he will review the take-liability for a person (details supplied) in County Cork; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3685/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by Revenue that an appeal has been lodged by the person concerned against assessments raised by Revenue. These assessments were raised in the absence of agreement on the quantum of tax due by the person concerned. The matter will be progressed further in light of the outcome of that appeal.

Living City Initiative

89. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the number of successful applications to date in each relevant area under the living city initiative; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3702/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that, in relation to the Living City Initiative, applications are only required to be made to the relevant local authority under the residential element of the scheme. Applications are not required to be made under the commercial element of the scheme. Based on information received from the City and County Councils to date, the numbers of applications received under the residential element of the Living City Initiative, which meet the conditions of the scheme, per eligible city are as follows:

City	Applications Received
Dublin	12
Cork	2
Limerick	0
Waterford	7
Kilkenny	2
Galway	2

Dublin City Council and Cork City Council have both received, in error, two applications under the commercial element of the scheme, which are not reflected in the above numbers. Details of the numbers participating in the commercial element of the scheme will become available when the tax returns for 2015 are processed.

Liquor Licensing Laws

90. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the licence structure for licensed premises and off-licence premises; if he will link the licence fee paid by off-licence owners to the square footage of their premises; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3703/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that the structure of licences for pubs and off-licences is provided for under the liquor licensing laws. With regard to off-licences, a separate licence is required to sell spirits, wine, beer, cider or sweets for consumption off the premises. The duty for each licence is €500 and is charged on a flat rate basis. Therefore, the annual licensing cost for a retailer selling wine only is €500 and the costs for a typical off-licence selling wine, spirits and beer is €1,500.

A spirit retailer's on-licence, i.e. a pub licence, allows the sale of any type of alcoholic beverage for consumption on or off the premises. As with an off-licence, a pub licence must be renewed annually. Licence duty is based on the annual turnover of the premises, less excluded turnover. Excluded turnover is turnover which is not related to the sale of alcoholic beverages, or turnover arising from the provision of meals. Different rates of licence duty apply depending on the band of turnover applicable to the premises. The following table sets out the pub licence duty rates currently applying to each band of turnover.

Turnover Band	Licence Duty
0-€190,499	€250
€190,500-€380,999	€505
€381,000-€634,999	€1,140
€635,000-€952,499	€1,775
€952,500-€1,269,999	€2,535
€1,270,000 +	€3,805

Approximately half of all pub licences qualify for the €250 rate of duty.

I am not convinced that the Deputy's proposal of linking the licence fee to square footage would be practical to implement and I would have concerns that such a proposal may be open to inconsistent application.

Tax Yield

91. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the amount of money that has been obtained in terms of the Revenue Commissioners' audit and investigation programmes in each of the years 2012 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3704/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that their Headline Results, which they publish each year on their website, provide details of the compliance yield arising from the various compliance programmes conducted by Revenue. These are available on Revenue's website at <http://www.revenue.ie/en/about/publications/annual-reports.html> and are shown on Page 3 of the annual Headline Results reports.

Departmental Reports

92. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the reports, reviews and studies he commissioned or agencies under the aegis of his Department commissioned since 9 March 2011, by date of commission, by date of completion, by date of publication, by cost in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3705/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): In response to the Deputy's question please see in tabular form, the reports, reviews and studies commissioned by my Department (table 1), or agencies under the aegis of my Department (table 2) commissioned, since 9 March 2011, by date of commission, by date of completion, by date of publication and by cost.

Table 1 Department of Finance

Name	External Consultant Report	Cost	Year	Published
Dr Don Thornhill	Review of Local Property Tax	Nil	2015	Published - October 2015
ESRI	Tax breaks and the residential property market	€30,677.43	2015	Published - October 2015
IBFD	Spillover analysis of the effects of the Irish tax system on the economies of developing countries	€94,678.00	2015	Published - October 2015
Indecon	Review of marine taxation	€106,887.00	2015	Published - October 2015
Red C	SME Lending Survey May 2015 - October 2015	€58,979.00	2015	Published September 2015**
John Martin	Assessment of special regeneration areas for the Living City Initiative	€2,500.00	2015	Not published. Used as input to the decisions made on the special regeneration areas. The details of these areas were published when the Living City Initiative was launched

Questions - Written Answers

Name	External Consultant Report	Cost	Year	Published
Antaris Consulting	The provision of a review of the current Health and Safety Arrangements within the Department of Finance and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The final objectives are to update the Health and Safety Management Systems within both Departments in order to build on existing Health and Safety culture and practices within both Departments	€16,113.00	2015	Not published. Internal Health & Safety report only. While the Department of Finance is the client the service is being provided to both the Department of Finance and the Department of Public Sector and Reform
Red C Research & Marketing Ltd	SME Lending Survey November 2014 - April 2015	€58,978.50	2015	Published - April 2015**
Indecon	Cost benefit analysis of Irish Agri-taxation measures and international benchmark against other Agri-taxation incentives	€103,689.00	2014	Published - October 2014
Seamus Coffey	Effective rates of corporation tax in Ireland	€4,900.00	2014	Published - April 2014
ESRI	Importance of tax policy in the location choices of multinationals	€30,750.00	2014	Published - October 2014
ESRI	Research Programme on funding for Small, Medium Enterprises	€122,833.96	2014	Published - October 2014
Ernst & Young	The historical development and international context of the Irish corporate tax system	€6,150.00	2014	Published - October 2014
Red C Research & Marketing Limited	SME Lending Survey April-October 2014	€58,978.50	2014	Published - November 2014**
Red C Research & Marketing Limited	SME Lending Survey October-March 2014	€58,978.50	2014	Published - June 2014**
MKF Property Services	Review of existing facilities management processes	€28,720.50	2014	Published - June 2014
PMCA Economic Consulting	Assistance and Analysis in the Preparation of the Medium-Term Economic Strategy 2014-2020	€49,043.00	2013	Final report submitted to the Department of Finance on 6 December 2013. It was not published because it was commissioned to provide evidence-based economic analysis as an input to the MTES. This analysis is reflected in the text of the MTES.
ESRI	Spatial Development Patterns - Implications for the Medium Term Economic Strategy (MTES)	€4,624	2013	Not published. Used as input to MTES and analysis is reflected there.
Crowe Horwath	Report to Department in respect of a survey of R&D Active Companies 2013	€36,850.80	2013	Published
Indecon	Ex ante cost benefit analysis of proposed Living City Initiative	€28,290.00	2013	Published
Red C Research & Marketing Limited	SME Lending Survey October-March 2013	€59,593.50	2013	Published**
Red C Research & Marketing Limited	SME Lending Survey April-September 2013	€58,978.50	2013	Published**

Name	External Consultant Report	Cost	Year	Published
Mercer (Ireland) Limited	Remuneration Review of Covered Institutions	€146,370.00	2013	Published
Deloitte & Touche	External Review of the Compilation of General Government Debt Statistics	€ 61,553.00	2012	Published
BDO and Amarach	(a) Survey of audio-visual producers (b) Review on international review of audio-visual state supports	€64,575.00	2012	Published
Grant Thornton	Assessment of Credit Review Office	€31,807.80	2012	Published
Mazars	SME Lending Survey October-March 2012	€60,885.00	2012	Published**
Citi	Certain Banking Related Matters	€25,000	2014	Ongoing - Not yet published
Mazars	SME Lending Survey April-September 2011	€52,453.50	2011	Published**
Red C Research & Marketing Limited	SME Lending Survey April-September 2012	€61,438.50	2012	Published**
Charles River Associates	Acquisition by AIB of EBS Building Society	€50,000.00	2011	Published

Note: This list does not include research outputs under the joint Macroeconomy and Taxation research programme between the Department of Finance and the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI).

Note*: Reimbursed by AIB & Bank of Ireland

Table 2 Bodies under the aegis of the Department of Finance

Body	Reports, Reviews, Studies	Date of Commission	Date of Completion	Date of Publication	Cost
Office of the Appeals Commissioners	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
C&AGs ¹			Information will be provided at a later date		
Central Bank ¹			Information will be provided at a later date		
Credit Reviewer	Internal Audit review of control systems	Oct 2014	Jan 2015	n/a	€2,826 ex VAT
Credit Union Advisory Committee	Report by the Credit Union Advisory Committee on Credit Union Shared Branching	Nov 2012	May 2013	June 2013	Nil
	Review of the Implementation of Recommendations in the Commission on Credit Unions Report	27 November 2015	To present the Report of those findings including any recommendations to the Minister for Finance by 30 June 2016	To be published following presenting the report to the Minister for Finance	Nil

Questions - Written Answers

Body	Reports, Reviews, Studies	Date of Commission	Date of Completion	Date of Publication	Cost
Credit Union Restructuring Board (ReBo)	Credit Union Restructuring Board ReBo, Section 43 Review	The Department of Finance carried out this Report at the request of the Minister for Finance to assist in the fulfilment of his obligations under Section 43 of the Credit Union and Co-Operation with Overseas Regulators Act 2012 to assess the extent to which ReBo completed the performance of its functions	October 2015	21 October 2015	Nil
Disabled Drivers Medical Board of Appeal	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Financial Services Ombudsman Bureau	Cold Case Review	Commissioned March 2015	Completion Date August 2015	Date of Publication September 2015	€20,000 (Vat not applicable)
	Strategic and Operational Review	August 2015	December 2015	TBC	€90,290 Including Vat
Financial Services Ombudsman Council	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Investor Compensation Company Limited	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Irish Bank Resolution Corporation	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Irish Financial Services Appeals Tribunal	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Irish Fiscal Advisory Council	Fiscal Rules for Ireland, Hagemann, R.	August 2011	January 2012	January 2012	15,750.07
	Independent Review of IFAC, (Jonung, Begg and Tutty)	December 2014	June 2015	June 2015	13755.62
National Asset Management Agency	Projected Population Change and Housing Demand: A County Level Analysis - Edgar Morgenroth Published as part of the ESRI Quarterly Economic Commentary Summer 2014	June 2013	July 2014	July 2014	Papers were prepared by the ESRI as part of a two year research programme jointly funded by NAMA and the Banking and Payments Federation Ireland (BPFi). NAMA contributed €200,000 towards the research programme

Body	Reports, Reviews, Studies	Date of Commission	Date of Completion	Date of Publication	Cost
	Alternative Scenarios for New Household Formation in Ireland David Duffy, David Byrne, John Fitzgerald Published as part of the ESRI Quarterly Economic Commentary Spring 2014	June 2013	April 2014	April 2014	
	The role of credit in the housing market Petra Gerlach-Kristen and Niall McInerney Working paper No.495 Census 2011 Micro-data (Demographic drivers of the housing market)	June 2013	23rd December 2014	23rd December 2014	
	Household Formation and Tenure Choice David Byrne, David Duffy and John Fitzgerald Published as part of the ESRI Quarterly Economic Commentary Summer 2014	June 2013	7th August 2014	7th August 2014	
	A Review of Housing Supply Policies - Ciara Morley, David Duffy and Kieran McQuinn	July 2014	December 18th 2015	December 18th 2015	
	Housing and Ireland's Older Population Alan Barrett, Elish Kelly and Kieran McQuinn	July 2014	Not yet Finalised	Not Yet Published	
	From Planning to Completion: A County Level Analysis of Housing Supply - Edgar Morgenroth	July 2014	Not Yet Finalised	Not Yet Published	
	Supply response in a turbulent market: A micro-level analysis of the Irish residential construction sector - Ciara Morley, David Duffy and Kieran	July 2014	Not Yet Finalised	Not Yet Published	
National Treasury Management Agency (The Board) 2	Report on Pay Disclosures Practices in Ireland	January 2013	April 2013	N/a	€10,031

Questions - Written Answers

Body	Reports, Reviews, Studies	Date of Commission	Date of Completion	Date of Publication	Cost
	Report on Employee Notice Periods and Post-Termination of Employment Obligations	February 2013	March 2013	N/a	€18,450
	Economic Framework for Ireland Strategic Investment Fund	September 2013	February 2014	N/a	€133,578
	High Level Review of NTMA Management and Organisational Structure	November 2013	January 2014	N/a	€243,540
	NTMA Finance Function Review	December 2013	February 2014	N/a	€43,050
	NTMA IT Function Review	December 2013	February 2014	N/a	€43,050
	Benchmarking Methodologies for National Debt	February 2014	July 2014	N/a	€3000
	Best Practice Corporate Governance Practices from a Shareholder Perspective	February 2015	November 2015	N/a	€19,680
	SCA Resource Review	June 2015	December 2015	N/a	€86,063
	Caps on Indemnity for Private Practice Consultants.	June 2015	December 2015	N/a	€47,355
	Caps on Indemnity for Private Practice Consultants.	October 2015	December 2015	N/a	€10,626
Office of the Revenue Commissioners	Cigarette Survey 2011*	September 2011	June 2012	September 2012	€28,105 (inc VAT)
	Cigarette Survey 2012*	September 2012	April 2013	November 2013	€28,105 (inc VAT)
	Cigarette Survey 2013*	October 2013	April 2014	September 2014	€28,105 (inc VAT)
	Roll Your Own Tobacco Survey 2013	November 2013	April 2014	September 2014	€22,996 (inc VAT)
	Cigarette Survey 2014*	October 2014	March 2014	August 2015	€28,105 (inc VAT)
	Roll Your Own Tobacco Survey 2014	October 2014	March 2014	August 2015	€22,996 (inc VAT)
	Cigarette Survey 2015*	October 2015	In progress		€28,105 (inc VAT)
	Roll Your Own Tobacco Survey 2015	October 2015	In progress		€22,996 (inc VAT)
	Study of valuations of properties to support the introduction of Local Property Tax	January 2013	February 2013	No report produced	€56,653 (inc VAT)

Body	Reports, Reviews, Studies	Date of Commission	Date of Completion	Date of Publication	Cost
	Revenue contribution to Department of Finance and Economic & Social Research Institute joint research programme	January 2015	In progress		€25,000 (to date)
Social Finance Foundation	A research report into a personal microloan scheme in Ireland	May 2013	Oct 2014	May 2015	Total cost of €53,524 shared 50/50 with Central Bank of Ireland
	Mazars' Micro SME Credit Patterns in Ireland' Incurred on behalf of Microfinance Ireland	Feb 2014	April 2014		Total cost of €7,380
Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland	Amárach Research- SME market research	January 2015	February 2015	N/A	€10,762.50
	Amárach Research- SME market research	June 2015	July 2015	N/A	€14,303.36

Note1: Information sought from the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General and the Central Bank of Ireland is currently being collated and will be provided by separate correspondence to the Deputy in due course.

Note 2: Reports/reviews/studies commissioned by the National Treasury Management Agency are listed in table 2. The information recorded is for the period 9 March 2011 to date available at this time. For clarification purposes please note that “reports” in this regard does not include annual reports, reports undertaken pursuant to other statutory obligations or reports undertaken in the ordinary course of the NTMA’s functions e.g. due diligence and similar reports.

note*: Cost of the cigarette surveys are split equally between Revenue and the HSE.

Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland

93. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the investment the German bank KfW has made here through the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland to date; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3706/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): The Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SBCI) was created to ensure increased lending, at a lower cost, to Irish SME’s by channelling lower cost financing from European Investment Bank (EIB) and KfW through lending partners known as on-lenders. The SBCI was launched in February 2015, and commenced lending via its initial on-lending partners, Bank of Ireland and AIB, in March 2015. KfW, the German State promotional bank, provided the SBCI with a funding facility of €150m for the purposes of providing lower-cost longer-term funding to Irish SMEs. The SBCI also has a funding agreement with the EIB for a finance facility of €400m.

The SBCI has made significant progress since its launch and to the end of December 2015 almost €172 million has been lent to c.4,600 SMEs across Ireland. The loans have been taken up by SMEs for a variety of purposes and across a range of sectors in the economy. More than 80% of loans were for investment purposes and the average loan size is approximately €37,000.

Tax Data

94. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the number of taxpayers within the high earner restriction analysed within the €125,000 to €250,000, €250,001 to €500,000, €500,001 to €750,000, €750,001 to €1,000,000, and €1000,000 plus bands, the estimated extra yield arising because of the restrictions in each of the years 2009 to 2012; and the estimated yield because of the restrictions in 2014 and 2015. [3707/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): A comprehensive analysis of the high earners restriction is published on an annual basis. These reports are available at my Department's website, <http://www.finance.gov.ie> and the website of the Revenue Commissioners at <http://www.revenue.ie/en/about/publications/other.html#reports>. At the time of publication, I also sent a copy of the reports to each of the main opposition Finance spokespersons.

The latest full year for which information is available is 2013 and the relevant analysis published is available at: <http://www.revenue.ie/en/about/publications/ror-2013-report.pdf>, or at: <http://www.finance.gov.ie/what-we-do/tax-policy/publications/reports-research/restriction-reliefs/restriction-reliefs-report-3>. Updates for 2014 and 2015 will be published in due course. The annual reports show the estimated yield arising and the distribution of taxpayers affected by income range. However, because of the Revenue Commissioners' obligation to observe confidentiality in relation to the taxation affairs of individual taxpayers and small groups of taxpayers, the specific breakdown by income bands requested by the Deputy is not provided in relation to certain incomes.

I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that they are not in a position to estimate the yield in respect of the 2014 or 2015 tax years.

Quinn Insurance Limited

95. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the fees and costs of the administrators of Quinn Insurance in each year since the firm was placed in administration; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3708/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): In 2010, Joint Administrators were appointed by the High Court, at the request of the Central Bank of Ireland, because of concerns about the solvency position of Quinn Insurance Limited (QIL).

The following table sets out the total fees and costs inclusive of VAT incurred by Grant Thornton as Administrators of QIL for the period 2010 to end-September 2015.

All fees paid to Grant Thornton are submitted to and approved by the President of the High Court.

Fees and costs incurred by the Joint Administrators of QIL from 2010 to end-September 2015

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 Q1-Q3
€'000	5,637	7,533	2,668	2,852	1,105	460

Economic Data

96. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance his estimate of the size of the economy's output gap; the implications of this for the Government's taxation and spending plans; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3709/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): Estimates of the output gap set out in Table 11 of the Budgetary documentation point to a positive output gap in the region of 2-2 ½ percent of potential GDP in 2015-2016, with this gap gradually closing over the forecast horizon to 2021. These estimates are based on the harmonised methodology for calculating output gaps commonly agreed at EU level. It is important to stress that this methodology has several shortcomings when applied to a small open economy and my Department has highlighted these in the past.

Estimates of the output gap are used in the calculation of the structural budget balance.

To comply with the balanced budget rule, the fiscal rules require that Ireland must achieve a 0.6pp improvement in the structural balance until the Medium Term budgetary Objective (MTO) is met. Specifically, the minimum annual improvement in the structural balance must be consistent with what is set out in the Commission's matrix of adjustment based on the cyclical position of the economy. Currently the MTO equates to a 0% of GDP structural balance for Ireland, with the possibility this may shortly be loosened to -0.5% of GDP. Further clarification from the European Commission is expected on this in the coming weeks.

Importantly, estimates of the output gap will vary depending on both the level and composition of budgetary packages pursued by the next government. Changes to the annual estimate of the output gap, which are widely recognised as being particularly volatile in an Irish context, will in turn affect the annual pace of structural budgetary adjustment.

Future taxation and spending plans will need to be framed in the context of achieving a balanced budget in structural terms and accordingly, compliance with spending ceilings imposed by the expenditure benchmark rule.

As set out in Tables A.8-A.9 of the Budget book, compliance with the expenditure benchmark suggests the availability of fiscal space of €10.9 billion in gross terms over 2017 to 2021. A decision by the next government to pursue a less stringent MTO (of up to -0.5% of GDP) would add an estimated €1-€1.5 billion to this gross fiscal space. However, anticipated spending obligations such as the cost of demographics, the Public Capital Programme and the Lansdowne Road Agreement will have to be met from within this gross spending envelope.

Bank Codes of Conduct

97. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the number of customer mobility measures that have been implemented in respect of Irish banks as a result of European Union action; his views on the effectiveness of such measures; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3710/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I presume that the question refers to measures to encourage or assist customers of Irish banks in moving to other banks. The Deputy will be aware that the Central Bank's Code of Conduct on Current Account Switching came into effect on 1 October 2010. This Code is designed to make the process of switching current accounts easier and quicker and to offer protection and support for consumers when switching bank account. The Switching Code places obligations and time limits on both the old and new bank when completing the switching process. This issue is also addressed in the Payment Accounts Directive which was adopted in 2014. My Department is currently working on its

transposition.

The restructuring plans for Bank of Ireland, AIB and PTSB contained certain provisions in relation to customer mobility and public versions of these are available on the EU website. http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/register/. The individual banks' adherence to their commitments are independently assessed by monitoring trustees and reported at least every six months to the Commission. One element of the State Aid approval process is that the Commission has required AIB and PTSB to fund a public awareness campaign to raise awareness and promote customer switching. My Department is currently in the process of preparing a tender competition to meet this commitment.

The Deputy may also be aware that the EU Commission published a green paper on retail financial services in December which is available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2015:630:FIN>. The paper seeks views on how to improve choice, transparency and competition in retail financial services to the benefit of European consumers. The Commission is seeking views from interested parties by 18 March 2016.

As I have previously said, I would strongly encourage prospective borrowers and other consumers of financial services to shop around for the best deal available. In this regard the Competition and Consumer Protection (CCPC) website, www.consumerhelp.ie has very useful information on comparative offerings of financial services.

Film Industry Tax Reliefs

98. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the number of applications for section 481 relief; the amount of tax relief granted and the number of film projects supported in each of the years 2011 to 2015; if he is satisfied with the operation of the scheme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3711/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that a wide range of statistical information is available on the Commissioners' Statistics webpage at: <http://www.revenue.ie/en/about/statistics/index.html>.

The Deputy will be aware that the Income Tax scheme for investment in Film was replaced in 2015 by a new scheme of Corporation Tax relief to Film Producer Companies. The new scheme has been in place since January 2015. The operation of the scheme is monitored by my Department and the Revenue Commissioners, and I believe the scheme is working correctly.

The following table sets out the information in relation to the Income Tax film relief scheme which closed for film applications in December 2014. The information for 2014 and 2015[1] is still provisional.

Year	Cost €m	No. of Investors	No. of films supported
2011	45.7	2,669	55
2012	58.5	3,372	57
2013	73.1	4,217	66
2014	72.6	4,092	61
2015	19.5	1,057	7

[1] In 2015 65 film projects were certified under the new Corporation Tax relief for film Producer Companies. Of these projects 43 claimed relief during 2015 with an associated cost to the Exchequer of €17.5 million.

Bank Codes of Conduct

99. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance if he will place a clause in the code of conduct for mortgage lenders to require them to charge a reduced interest rate on the warehoused section of a split loan; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3712/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): The Deputy will be aware that the Central Bank's Code of Conduct on Mortgage Arrears (CCMA) is a statutory Code issued under Section 117 of the Central Bank Act 1989 and that it applies to all regulated mortgage lenders and credit servicing firms operating in the State when dealing with borrowers facing or in mortgage arrears on their primary residence.

The completion of affordability assessments is a key step in the Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process (MARP). In this regard a lender must examine each case on its individual merits and it must base its assessment on the full circumstances of the borrower, including, inter alia, the overall indebtedness of the borrower.

While the CCMA obliges lenders to explore all of the options for alternative repayment arrangements offered by that lender under step 4 of the MARP, it does not oblige lenders to offer and apply a particular set of options nor does it approve the specific options that a lender does offer.

The Central Bank, including in its role as part of the Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM), remains focused on providing a fair and consistent process for the borrower through the CCMA, the Mortgage Arrears & Resolution Targets (MART) audits and against defined Sustainability Guidelines.

The Deputy will also of course be aware that the Central Bank is an independent organisation in the performance of its supervisory role and it would not be appropriate for me to direct it in how it fulfils its regulatory oversight role in respect of financial institutions.

Fuel Laundering

100. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the number of fuel laundering plants uncovered, by county, in each of the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3713/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that the number of oil laundries detected and closed down in the period from 2011 to 2014 was 31. Details of those detections, by year and by the counties in which they occurred, are set out in the following table.

Year	Cavan	Donegal	Dublin	Laois	Louth	Meath	Monaghan	Offaly	Waterford	Totals
2011	0	1	0	0	1	1	6	0	0	9
2012	1	0	0	0	7	0	3	0	0	11
2013	0	0	1	0	2	1	4	0	1	9
2014	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
Totals	1	1	1	0	11	2	14	0	1	31

There were no detections of laundries during 2015.

I am satisfied that significant progress has been made in tackling fuel laundering, and am assured that action against such activities will continue to be a high priority for Revenue.

Blind Welfare Allowance Eligibility

101. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance if he will extend the €825 per year tax allowance in respect of trained guide dogs for the blind to trained autism-assistance dogs; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3714/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): A blind person who maintains a trained guide dog is allowed a sum of €825 per year in computing the gross eligible health expenses. This is the equivalent of a tax credit of €165 and is only available in respect of fully trained guide dogs. The qualification criteria for granting this additional relief is that the individual must be entitled to the Blind Person's Tax Credit under section 468 Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 (TCA) and must also provide written confirmation from the Irish Guide Dogs Association that he or she is the registered owner of a trained guide dog.

To qualify for the Blind Person's Tax Credit, an individual or the individual's spouse or civil partner must have impaired vision to an extent specified in the legislation and certified by an eye specialist, i.e. a medical practitioner with an additional qualification in Ophthalmic Medicine or Ophthalmic Surgery, or a registered Optometrist. A doctor's certificate is not sufficient.

Relief in respect of health expenses is allowed in accordance with the provisions of section 469 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997. In order to qualify for relief an individual must show that he or she has incurred health expenses for the provision of health care. For the purposes of section 469 "health care" is the prevention, diagnosis, alleviation or treatment of an ailment, injury, infirmity, defect or disability.

Given that there is a requirement for certification by a qualified practitioner in order to obtain the Blind Person's Tax Credit, the use of a fully trained guide dog to alleviate the disability is deemed to constitute a health expense and it is on this basis that this additional relief for health expenses is allowed. Autism assistance dogs are primarily trained to act to improve the behaviour of autistic children by promoting calmness and acting as a safety aid. These dogs act as a constant companion for the child and in certain circumstances can enhance the child's social skills and interaction with their family and peers.

While the companionship, improved calmness and other such benefits are well testified, it is not clear that a medical basis that would bring such effects under the health legislation exists, and to allow relief for health expenses in this context would inevitably lead to calls for similar treatments, therapies or pet companions in other cases to qualify for relief.

Insurance Industry

102. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the status of Setanta Insurance policyholders with outstanding claims; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3715/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): The liquidation of an insurance company is a legally complex process. Setanta is a Maltese incorporated company and, therefore, the Setanta liquidation is being carried out under Maltese law.

Progress in the liquidation of Setanta Insurance has been awaiting the outcome of legal

proceedings in the case of the Law Society of Ireland versus the Motor Insurers' Bureau of Ireland (MIBI). On 4th September 2015, the High Court held that the MIBI is liable in respect of claims against the policy holders of Setanta. This decision was appealed by the MIBI and the appeal was heard between the 12th and 14th of January 2016. We are currently awaiting the outcome.

As this case is *sub judice*, there are certain matters which I am not in a position to comment on at this time. I am responding to the Deputy's question as best as I can within these constraints.

The Liquidator for Setanta has informed me that:

- The number of open claims was 1,696 as at 30th November 2015.
- The claims reserves position stands at between €87.7 million and €95.2 million.
- The Liquidator is continuing to accept new claims up until May 2016, two years after the insurance policies issued by Setanta were cancelled.
- Final settlements can only be paid out after all of the company's liabilities are quantified, including claims.
- The Liquidator reports that it is proving difficult to settle claims in advance of the outcome of the MIBI appeal.

I expect to be in a better position to inform the House further after the legal proceedings are concluded.

Pension Provisions

103. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance if he will review the threshold for so-called trivial pensions; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3716/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that in relation to what are known as "Trivial Pensions" they allow the payment of once off pensions in certain limited circumstances.

If the scheme beneficiary and trustees agree, Revenue will raise no objection to the payment of once off pensions. This may only take place where the total of all funds available for pension benefits, following payment of any lump sum benefit, is less than €20,000 (increased from €15,000 in 2007). The quantum of retirement benefits from all sources must be taken into account for the purposes of calculating the €20,000 limit.

The level at which pensions can be commuted under the "Trivial Pensions" rule is kept under review by Revenue. However, as one of the principal objectives of any pensions policy is to provide a regular income to persons during the course of their retirement it would not be advisable to allow the commutation of large numbers of pensions under the "Trivial Pensions" rule. For this reason, there are no plans at the moment to increase the level from €20,000.

Research and Development Supports

104. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the tax expenditure associated with research and development tax credits in each of the years 2011 to 2015 in tabular

form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3717/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I assume that the Question relates to the annual Exchequer cost of the Research and Development (R&D) tax credit.

I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that the information is as follows:

Year	Exchequer Cost
2011	€261m
2012	€282m
2013	€421m

Published statistics in respect of the R&D tax credit are available on the Revenue Statistics webpage at <http://www.revenue.ie/en/about/statistics/costs-expenditures.html>.

The tax cost for 2014 has not yet been finalised as returns are currently being processed. Figures for 2015 or forecasts for later years are not yet available.

Tax Code

105. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the treatment of the application of VAT on the final price for homes constructed for social housing purposes, including for approved housing bodies; the party that bears the final liability of VAT in this case; and the amount of VAT collected in 2014 and 2015 in respect of such transactions. [3721/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that under the EU VAT Directive (Council Directive 2006/112/EC) and Irish VAT legislation, the full consideration for the supply of all developed residential property is liable to VAT at the rate of 13.5%. Specifically, Article 73 of the Directive provides that the taxable amount shall include everything which constitutes consideration obtained or to be obtained by the supplier, in return for the supply, from the customer or third party.

Property developers, who are registered for VAT, charge VAT on sales of developed residential property but are entitled to recover the VAT incurred in the development of that property. As such, the final customer who purchases a residential property incurs VAT at 13.5% on the consideration paid.

I am further informed by the Revenue Commissioners that it is not possible to furnish precise figures of the amount of VAT collected from this activity. This is due to the fact that the information provided to Revenue on VAT returns does not require the yield from specific transactions or activities to be identified. While Revenue on occasion uses detailed Central Statistics Office consumption or expenditure information for VAT estimates, neither is sufficiently detailed for the purpose requested by the Deputy.

Consultancy Contracts Data

106. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Finance the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [3767/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): The information requested by the Dep-

uty is set out as follows:

Name	External Consultant Report	Cost	Year	Published
Dr Don Thornhill	Review of Local Property Tax	Nil	2015	Published - October 2015
ESRI	Tax breaks and the residential property market	€30,677.43	2015	Published - October 2015
IBFD	Spillover analysis of the effects of the Irish tax system on the economies of developing countries	€94,678.00	2015	Published - October 2015
Indecon	Review of marine taxation	€106,887.00	2015	Published - October 2015
Red C	SME Lending Survey May 2015 - October 2015	€58,979.00	2015	Published September 2015**
John Martin	Assessment of special regeneration areas for the Living City Initiative	€2,500.00	2015	Not published. Used as input to the decisions made on the special regeneration areas. The details of these areas were published when the Living City Initiative was launched.
Antaris Consulting	The provision of a review of the current Health and Safety Arrangements within the Department of Finance and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The final objectives are to update the Health and Safety Management Systems within both Departments in order to build on existing Health and Safety culture and practices within both Departments	€16,113.00	2015	Not published. Internal Health & Safety report only. While the Department of Finance is the client the service is being provided to both the Department of Finance and the Department of Public Sector and Reform.
Red C Research & Marketing Ltd	SME Lending Survey November 2014 - April 2015	€58,978.50	2015	Published - April 2015**
Indecon	Cost benefit analysis of Irish Agri-taxation measures and international benchmark against other Agri-taxation incentives	€103,689.00	2014	Published - October 2014
Seamus Coffey	Effective rates of corporation tax in Ireland	€4,900.00	2014	Published - April 2014
ESRI	Importance of tax policy in the location choices of multi-nationals	€30,750.00	2014	Published - October 2014
ESRI	Research Programme on funding for Small, Medium Enterprises	€122,833.96	2014	Published - October 2014
Ernst & Young	The historical development and international context of the Irish corporate tax system	€6,150.00	2014	Published - October 2014
Red C Research & Marketing Limited	SME Lending Survey April-October 2014	€58,978.50	2014	Published - November 2014**
Red C Research & Marketing Limited	SME Lending Survey October-March 2014	€58,978.50	2014	Published - June 2014**

Questions - Written Answers

Name	External Consultant Report	Cost	Year	Published
MKF Property Services	Review of existing facilities management processes	€28,720.50	2014	Published - June 2014
PMCA Economic Consulting	Assistance and Analysis in the Preparation of the Medium-Term Economic Strategy 2014-2020	€49,043.00	2013	Final report submitted to the Department of Finance on 6 December 2013. It was not published because it was commissioned to provide evidence-based economic analysis as an input to the MTES. This analysis is reflected in the text of the MTES.
ESRI	Spatial Development Patterns - Implications for the Medium Term Economic Strategy (MTES)	€4,624	2013	Not published. Used as input to MTES and analysis is reflected there.
Crowe Horwath	Report to Department in respect of a survey of R&D Active Companies 2013	€36,850.80	2013	Published
Indecon	Ex ante cost benefit analysis of proposed Living City Initiative	€28,290.00	2013	Published
Citibank Europe plc	Reviews into Mortgage Servicing	€30,750.00 (on completion)	2014	Currently being worked on - not published
Red C Research & Marketing Limited	SME Lending Survey October-March 2013	€59,593.50	2013	Published**
Red C Research & Marketing Limited	SME Lending Survey April-September 2013	€58,978.50	2013	Published**
Mercer (Ireland) Limited	Remuneration Review of Covered Institutions	€146,370.00	2013	Published
Deloitte & Touche	External Review of the Compilation of General Government Debt Statistics	€ 61,553.00	2012	Published
BDO and Amarach	(a) Survey of audio-visual producers (b) Review on international review of audio-visual state supports	€64,575.00	2012	Published
Grant Thornton	Assessment of Credit Review Office	€31,807.80	2012	Published
Mazars	SME Lending Survey October-March 2012	€60,885.00	2012	Published**
Mazars	SME Lending Survey April-September 2011	€52,453.50	2011	Published**
Red C Research & Marketing Limited	SME Lending Survey April-September 2012	€61,438.50	2012	Published**
Charles River Associates	Acquisition by AIB of EBS Building Society	€50,000.00	2011	Published

**Reimbursed by AIB & Bank of Ireland

The above list does not include research outputs under the joint Macroeconomy and Taxation research programme between the Department of Finance and the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI).

Public Inquiries

107. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Finance the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which he or his Department has been responsible by name; by terms of reference; by cost including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded; by date including the projected date of conclusion where an inquiry has not been concluded from 1991 to date, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3782/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): It has not been possible in the time available to collate all of the information sought by the Deputy. However, the requested information will be collated and forwarded to the Deputy in writing.

NAMA Operations

108. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance if any direction pursuant to section 14 of the National Asset Management Agency Act has been made to the agency; if any additional statutory function has been given to the agency pursuant to section 11(3) of the Act; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3793/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): A total of six directions, pursuant to Section 14 of the NAMA Act 2009, have been made to the Agency since its inception.

One additional function, pursuant to Section 11(3) of the NAMA Act, has been conferred upon NAMA since inception.

All directions and statutory instruments issued under the NAMA Act are laid before each House of the Oireachtas and are publicly available from the NAMA website via the following link: www.nama.ie/about-us/governance/legislation/.

Revenue Commissioners Resources

109. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the amount spent by the Revenue Commissioners on press-clipping services and broadcast monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3797/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that expenditure on press-clippings and broadcast monitoring services for each year during the period in question was as follows:

Year	Expenditure
2011	€53,963
2012	€50,928
2013	€51,855
2014	€54,111
2015	€55,095

Ministerial Allowances

110. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the expenses claimed, in-

cluding the amount of mileage and the amount claimed, by him and Ministers of State of his Department, by calendar year, during the current Dáil Éireann, in tabular form. [3810/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2011					
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	289.33	12-May-2011
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	MISCELLANEOUS DEDUCTIONS	-27.00	12-May-2011
Eurogroup	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	10 HOUR RATE	72.33	12-May-2011
Informal ECOFIN	IRELAND	HUNGARY Budapest	OVERNIGHT RATE	202.75	12-May-2011
Month 1	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	3353.40	20-Jul-2011
Month 2	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1621.18	20-Jul-2011
Month 3	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1889.74	14-Sep-2011
August 2011	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1929.30	14-Sep-2011
Informal ECOFIN	IRELAND	POLAND E/Where	OVERNIGHT RATE	315.14	12-Oct-2011
IMF/World Bank Meetings	IRELAND	USA New York	OVERNIGHT RATE	635.78	12-Oct-2011
IMF/World Bank Meetings	IRELAND	USA New York	MISCELLANEOUS DEDUCTIONS	-80.68	12-Oct-2011
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Luxembourg	OVERNIGHT RATE	190.00	12-Oct-2011
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Luxembourg	5 HOUR RATE	53.83	12-Oct-11
September 2011	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1688.25	19-Oct-2011
October 2011	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	1485.90	09-Nov-2011
Eurogroup & ECOFIN Meetings	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	16-Nov-2011
Eurogroup & ECOFIN Meetings	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	10 HOUR RATE	72.33	16-Nov-2011
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	16-Nov-2011
November 2011	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	1497.00	21-Dec-2011
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	21-Dec-2011
Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2012					
December 2011	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	1670.60	18-Jan-2012
Meeting with German Minister for Finance	IRELAND	GERMANY Berlin	10 HOUR RATE	73.67	01-Feb-2012

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2012					
Meeting with German Minister for Finance	IRELAND	GERMANY Berlin	MISCELLANEOUS DEDUCTIONS	-16.81	01-Feb-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	01-Feb-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	01-Feb-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	10 HOUR RATE	72.33	01-Feb-2012
Meeting hosted by Minister Noonan			MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES	200.00	01-Feb-2012
January 2012	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	2775.70	08-Feb-2012
February 2012	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	2546.66	14-Mar-2012
Eurogroup	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	10 HOUR RATE	72.33	21-Mar-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	21-Mar-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	5 HOUR RATE	36.17	21-Mar-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	21-Mar-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	21-Mar-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	21-Mar-2012
St. Patricks Day Programme	IRELAND	FRANCE Paris	OVERNIGHT RATE	389.32	28-Mar-2012
St. Patricks Day Programme	IRELAND	FRANCE Paris	MISCELLANEOUS DEDUCTIONS	-4.92	28-Mar-2012
Informal ECOFIN	IRELAND	DENMARK Copenhagen	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-21.36	23-May-2012
Informal ECOFIN	IRELAND	DENMARK Copenhagen	OVERNIGHT RATE	170.87	23-May-2012
Informal ECOFIN	IRELAND	DENMARK Copenhagen	10 HOUR RATE	85.44	23-May-2012
Informal ECOFIN	IRELAND	DENMARK Copenhagen	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-42.98	23-May-2012
March 2012	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	2015.25	23-May-2012
ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	06-Jun-2012
ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	06-Jun-2012
April 2012	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1958.90	06-Jun-2012
Meeting with Polish Minister for Finance	IRELAND	POLAND Warsaw	OVERNIGHT RATE	164.61	06-Jun-2012
Meeting with Polish Minister for Finance	IRELAND	POLAND Warsaw	LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-82.31	06-Jun-2012

Questions - Written Answers

Expense De- scription	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2012					
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	06-Jun-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	5 HOUR RATE	36.17	06-Jun-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	06-Jun-2012
Bilderberg Con- ference	IRELAND	USA Washing- ton DC	10 HOUR RATE	65.19	20-Jun-2012
Bilderberg Con- ference	IRELAND	USA Washing- ton DC	OVERNIGHT RATE	293.38	20-Jun-2012
Bilderberg Con- ference	IRELAND	USA Washing- ton DC	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-32.60	20-Jun-2012
Bilderberg Con- ference	IRELAND	USA Washing- ton DC	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-65.20	20-Jun-2012
ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEM- BOURG Lux- embourg	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-26.92	04-Jul-2012
ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEM- BOURG Lux- embourg	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-53.83	04-Jul-2012
ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEM- BOURG Lux- embourg	OVERNIGHT RATE	190.00	04-Jul-2012
ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEM- BOURG Lux- embourg	5 HOUR RATE	53.83	04-Jul-2012
June 2012	Limerick	dublin	MILEAGE*	1225.49	19-Jul-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	19-Jul-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	19-Jul-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	5 HOUR RATE	36.17	19-Jul-2012
July 2012	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	1584.37	26-Sep-2012
August 2012	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	1732.93	26-Sep-2012
September 2012	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	1204.14	17-Oct-2012
Bilateral Meet- ings & Informal ECOFIN	IRELAND	FRANCE Paris	OVERNIGHT RATE	194.66	24-Oct-2012
Bilateral Meet- ings & Informal ECOFIN	FRANCE Paris	GERMANY Berlin	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.42	24-Oct-2012
Bilateral Meet- ings & Informal ECOFIN	FRANCE Paris	GERMANY Berlin	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-36.83	24-Oct-2012
Bilateral Meet- ings & Informal ECOFIN	FRANCE Paris	GERMANY Berlin	OVERNIGHT RATE	147.33	24-Oct-2012
Bilateral Meet- ings & Informal ECOFIN	GERMANY Berlin	ITALY Naples Rome	10 HOUR RATE	78.67	24-Oct-2012

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2012					
Bilateral Meetings & Informal ECOFIN	IRELAND	CYPRUS Nicosia	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-30.33	24-Oct-2012
Bilateral Meetings & Informal ECOFIN	IRELAND	CYPRUS Nicosia	OVERNIGHT RATE	242.67	24-Oct-2012
Bilateral Meetings & Informal ECOFIN	IRELAND	CYPRUS Nicosia	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-121.32	24-Oct-2012
ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Luxembourg	OVERNIGHT RATE	190.00	17-Oct-2012
ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Luxembourg	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-26.92	17-Oct-2012
ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Luxembourg	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-53.83	17-Oct-2012
IMF / World Bank Meetings	IRELAND	JAPAN Tokyo	OVERNIGHT RATE	571.37	17-Oct-2012
IMF / World Bank Meetings	IRELAND	JAPAN Tokyo	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-190.46	17-Oct-2012
IMF / World Bank Meetings	IRELAND	JAPAN Tokyo	MISCELLANEOUS DEDUCTIONS	-26.24	17-Oct-2012
October 2012	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1443.49	07-Nov-2012
November 2012	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1243.42	12-Dec-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN meetings	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	19-Dec-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN meetings	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	10 HOUR RATE	72.33	19-Dec-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN meetings	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	19-Dec-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN meetings	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.17	19-Dec-2012
Eurogroup	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	19-Dec-2012
Eurogroup	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	19-Dec-2012
Eurogroup	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.17	19-Dec-2012
Eurogroup	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	10 HOUR RATE	72.33	19-Dec-2012
Eurogroup	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.17	19-Dec-2012

Questions - Written Answers

Expense De- scription	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2012					
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	19-Dec-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	19-Dec-2012
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-36.17	19-Dec-2012
Expense De- scription	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2013					
December 2012	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1776.47	16-Jan-2013
January 2013	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	3912.74	13-Mar-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-36.17	06-Mar-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-36.17	06-Mar-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	289.33	06-Mar-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-36.17	06-Mar-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-36.17	06-Mar-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	289.33	06-Mar-2013
G20 Meetings	IRELAND	RUSSIAN FED Moscow US \$	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-53.24	06-Mar-2013
G20 Meetings	IRELAND	RUSSIAN FED Moscow US \$	OVERNIGHT RATE	425.90	06-Mar-2013
G20 Meetings	IRELAND	RUSSIAN FED Moscow US \$	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-212.96	06-Mar-2013
Meeting with Chancellor of the Exchequer	IRELAND	BRITAIN LONDON	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-32.29	06-Mar-2013
Meeting with Chancellor of the Exchequer	IRELAND	BRITAIN LONDON	OVERNIGHT RATE	254.29	06-Mar-2013
Meeting with Chancellor of the Exchequer	IRELAND	BRITAIN LONDON	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-96.87	06-Mar-2013
February 2013	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	1294.93	13-Mar-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-36.17	27-Mar-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	289.33	27-Mar-2013
Eurogroup	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	24-Apr-2013
Eurogroup	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	24-Apr-2013

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2013					
Eurogroup	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.17	24-Apr-2013
Government Representative at the inauguration of Pope Francis	IRELAND	ITALY Naples Rome	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-59.00	24-Apr-2013
Government Representative at the inauguration of Pope Francis	IRELAND	ITALY Naples Rome	OVERNIGHT RATE	471.99	24-Apr-2013
Government Representative at the inauguration of Pope Francis	IRELAND	ITALY Naples Rome	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-235.98	24-Apr-2013
IMF / World Bank Meetings	IRELAND	USA Washington DC	5 HOUR RATE	30.63	24-Apr-2013
IMF / World Bank Meetings	IRELAND	USA Washington DC	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-61.26	24-Apr-13
IMF / World Bank Meetings	IRELAND	USA Washington DC	OVERNIGHT RATE	551.28	24-Apr-2013
March 2013	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	1002.08	15-May-2013
April 2013	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	1053.87	15-May-2013
Eurogroup and ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-36.17	05-Jun-2013
Eurogroup and ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	289.33	05-Jun-2013
May 2013	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1251.67	12-Jun-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Luxembourg	10 HOUR RATE	107.67	03-Jul-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Luxembourg	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-53.83	03-Jul-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Luxembourg	OVERNIGHT RATE	379.99	03-Jul-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Luxembourg	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-80.75	03-Jul-2013
ECOFIN (Special Meeting)	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	24-Jul-2013
ECOFIN (Special Meeting)	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	24-Jul-2013
ECOFIN (Special Meeting)	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.17	24-Jul-2013
ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	24-Jul-2013

Questions - Written Answers

Expense De- scription	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2013					
ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	24-Jul-2013
ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-36.17	24-Jul-2013
June 2013	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1457.15	07-Aug-2013
July 2013	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1805.22	28-Aug-13
August 2013	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	1066.68	09-Oct-2013
September 2013	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1791.84	09-Oct-2013
October 2013	Limerick	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1270.17	20-Nov-2013
Post-Budget 2014 Meetings	IRELAND	FRANCE Strasbourg	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-14.50	20-Nov-2013
Post-Budget 2014 Meetings	IRELAND	FRANCE Strasbourg	OVERNIGHT RATE	116.00	20-Nov-2013
Post-Budget 2014 Meetings	IRELAND	FRANCE Strasbourg	MISCELLA- NEOUS DE- DUCTIONS	-24.00	20-Nov-2013
Meeting with IMF	IRELAND	USA Washing- ton DC	OVERNIGHT RATE	393.39	20-Nov-13
Meeting with IMF	IRELAND	USA Washing- ton DC	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-43.72	20-Nov-2013
Meeting with IMF	IRELAND	USA Washing- ton DC	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-87.43	20-Nov-2013
Meeting with President of Eurogroup	IRELAND	NETHER- LANDS The Hague	5 HOUR RATE	42.50	20-Nov-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	72.33	30-Dec-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	30-Dec-2013
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-36.17	30-Dec-2013
November 2013	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1187.92	18-Dec-2013
Meeting with EBRD	IRELAND	BRITAIN LONDON	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-33.35	30-Dec-2013
Meeting with EBRD	IRELAND	BRITAIN LONDON	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-33.35	30-Dec-2013
Meeting with EBRD	IRELAND	BRITAIN LONDON	OVERNIGHT RATE	200.12	30-Dec-2013
ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	30-Dec-2013
ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	72.33	30-Dec-2013
ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	10 HOUR RATE	72.33	30-Dec-2013

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2014					
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	29-Jan-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.17	29-Jan-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	29-Jan-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	5 HOUR RATE	36.17	29-Jan-2014
December 2013	Limerick	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1416.74	05-Feb-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN - Underpayment of Conference Rate	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES	72.33	29-Jan-2014
ECOFIN - Underpayment of Conference Rate	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES	72.33	29-Jan-2014
January 2014	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	2502.80	05-Feb-2014
Investor Meetings	IRELAND	USA New York	OVERNIGHT RATE	622.27	05-Mar-2014
Investor Meetings	IRELAND	USA New York	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-86.43	05-Mar-2014
Investor Meetings	IRELAND	USA New York	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-209.96	05-Mar-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.17	05-Mar-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-36.17	05-Mar-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	289.33	05-Mar-2014
February 2014	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	2035.49	12-Mar-2014
March 2014	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	924.38	09-Apr-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	14-May-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	14-May-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	5 HOUR RATE	36.17	14-May-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.17	14-May-2014
St. Patricks Day Programme 2014	IRELAND	CANADA - Montreal	10 HOUR RATE	70.16	14-May-2014
St. Patricks Day Programme 2014	IRELAND	CANADA - Montreal	OVERNIGHT RATE	631.46	14-May-2014

Questions - Written Answers

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2014					
St. Patricks Day Programme 2014	IRELAND	CANADA - Montreal	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-280.65	14-May-2014
April 2014	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1218.94	14-May-2014
May 2014	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1632.75	18-Jun-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	02-Jul-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	02-Jul-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.17	02-Jul-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Luxembourg	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-26.92	02-Jul-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Luxembourg	OVERNIGHT RATE	190.00	02-Jul-2014
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Luxembourg	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-53.83	02-Jul-2014
June 2014	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1263.62	30-Jul-2014
July 2014	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1649.26	17-Oct-2014
August 2014	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1095.43	17-Oct-2014
September 2014	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1817.74	07-Nov-2014
ECOFIN	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	21-Nov-2014
ECOFIN	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.17	21-Nov-2014
ECOFIN	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	21-Nov-2014
Meetings related to repayments of IMF loans			BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-6.85	21-Nov-2014
Meetings related to repayments of IMF loans			LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-13.71	21-Nov-2014
Meetings related to repayments of IMF loans	Ireland	Luxembourg Luxembourg	OVERNIGHT RATE	190.00	21-Nov-2014
Informal ECOFIN	Ireland	Italy- Bol/Flo/Gen/Mil/Tur/Ven	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-49.33	21-Nov-2014
Informal ECOFIN	Ireland	Italy- Bol/Flo/Gen/Mil/Tur/Ven	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-98.66	21-Nov-2014

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2014					
Informal ECO-FIN	Ireland	Italy- Bol/Flo/Gen/Mil/Tur/Ven	OVERNIGHT RATE	387.99	21-Nov-2014
October 2014	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1442.64	21-Nov-2014
November 2014	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1399.09	12-Dec-2014
Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2015					
Member of Delegation for Presidential Visit to China	Ireland	China - Beijing (Aka Peking)	OVERNIGHT RATE	840.42	30-Jan-2015
Member of Delegation for Presidential Visit to China			LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-268.88	30-Jan-2015
Member of Delegation for Presidential Visit to China			BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-61.65	30-Jan-2015
Member of Delegation for Presidential Visit to China	Ireland	China Shanghai	OVERNIGHT RATE	870.93	30-Jan-2015
December 2014	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1275.29	16-Jan-2015
January 2015	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	2524.06	13-Feb-2015
February 2015	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	2059.22	13-Mar-2015
Eurogroup			LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-33.61	27-Mar-2015
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	10 HOUR RATE	72.33	27-Mar-2015
Investor Meetings	Ireland	Britain London	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-38.40	27-Mar-2015
Investor Meetings	Ireland	Britain London	OVERNIGHT RATE	302.38	27-Mar-2015
Investor Meetings	Ireland	Britain London	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-115.20	27-Mar-2015
Ecofin Meeting	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	27-Mar-2015
Ecofin Meeting	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	27-Mar-2015
Eurogroup Meeting	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	5 HOUR RATE	36.17	27-Mar-2015
ECOFIN	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	27-Mar-2015
ECOFIN	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	27-Mar-2015
ECOFIN	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	27-Mar-2015

Questions - Written Answers

Expense De- scription	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2015					
ECOFIN	Ireland	Belgium Brus- sels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	27-Mar-2015
March 2015	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1279.85	17-Apr-2015
April 2015	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1365.23	22-May-2015
May 2015	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1135.27	10-Jul-2015
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	Dublin	Belgium Brus- sels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-6.85	31-Jul-2015
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	Dublin	Belgium Brus- sels	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-13.71	31-Jul-2015
Eurogroup & ECOFIN	Ireland	Belgium Brus- sels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	31-Jul-2015
June 2015	Limerick	Dublin	MILEAGE*	1460.85	31-Jul-2015
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brus- sels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	31-Jul-2015
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brus- sels	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-36.17	31-Jul-2015
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brus- sels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	31-Jul-2015
Eurogroup/ ECOFIN	Ireland	Luxembourg Luxembourg	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-26.92	31-Jul-2015
Eurogroup/ ECOFIN	Ireland	Luxembourg Luxembourg	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-53.83	31-Jul-2015
Eurogroup/ ECOFIN	Ireland	Luxembourg Luxembourg	OVERNIGHT RATE	190.00	31-Jul-2015
Annual Eco- nomic Confer- ence	Ireland	France Mar- seilles	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-43.67	31-Jul-2015
Annual Eco- nomic Confer- ence	Ireland	France Mar- seilles	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-87.34	31-Jul-2015
Annual Eco- nomic Confer- ence	Ireland	France Mar- seilles	OVERNIGHT RATE	262.00	31-Jul-2015
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brus- sels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	31-Jul-2015
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brus- sels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	31-Jul-2015
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brus- sels	10 HOUR RATE	72.33	31-Jul-2015
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brus- sels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-54.26	31-Jul-2015
Expense De- scription	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2015 continued					
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brus- sels	LUNCH OR DINNER PRO- VIDED	-108.51	31-Jul-2015

28 January 2016

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2015 continued					
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	433.99	31-Jul-2015
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	31-Jul-2015
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	31-Jul-2015
August 2015	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1291.23	02-Oct-2015
July 2015	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1669.75	02-Oct-2015
September 2015	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1414.18	30-Oct-2015
October 2015	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1671.74	20-Nov-2015
Eurogroup & Ecofin Meetings	Ireland	Luxembourg Luxembourg	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-26.92	04-Dec-2015
Eurogroup & Ecofin Meetings	Ireland	Luxembourg Luxembourg	OVERNIGHT RATE	190.00	04-Dec-2015
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	04-Dec-2015
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	04-Dec-2015
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	04-Dec-2015
Eurogroup	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	04-Dec-2015

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
October 2015	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1253.38	08-Jan 2016
December 2015	Dublin	Limerick	MILEAGE*	1327.66	22-Jan 2016

*Note that mileage expense are a monthly total and reflect business related travel across Ireland during the respective month, and incorporate deductions for any personal related travel.

Minister of State Hayes

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2011					
Attend Ecofin meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	12-Oct-2011
Attend Ecofin meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.17	12-Oct-2011
Attend Ecofin meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	12-Oct-2011
Attend Ecofin meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	5 HOUR RATE	36.17	12-Oct-2011
Attend OECD Tax Conference	IRELAND	FRANCE Paris	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-6.85	12-Oct-2011
Attend OECD Tax Conference	IRELAND	FRANCE Paris	OVERNIGHT RATE	194.66	12-Oct-2011
Attend OECD Tax Conference	IRELAND	FRANCE Paris	10 HOUR RATE	97.33	12-Oct-2011

Questions - Written Answers

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
Attend OECD Tax Conference	IRELAND	FRANCE Paris	MISCELLANEOUS DEDUCTIONS	-114.82	12-Oct-2011
Speak at Glenties	Kilkenny	Galway	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-6.85	12-Oct-2011
Speak at Glenties	Kilkenny	Galway	OVERNIGHT RATE	72.66	12-Oct-2011

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2012					
Speech at Eurozone Conference	IRELAND	GERMANY Berlin	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.42	11-Jan-2012
Speech at Eurozone Conference	IRELAND	GERMANY Berlin	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-73.66	11-Jan-2012
Speech at Eurozone Conference	IRELAND	GERMANY Berlin	OVERNIGHT RATE	147.33	11-Jan-2012
Speech at Eurozone Conference	IRELAND	GERMANY Berlin	5 HOUR RATE	36.83	11-Jan-2012
Attend Eurogroup meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-6.85	28-Mar-2012
Attend Eurogroup meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	28-Mar-2012
Attend Eurogroup meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	MISCELLANEOUS DEDUCTIONS	-47.40	28-Mar-2012
Attend OSCE Conference	IRELAND	AUSTRIA K'furt/Linz/Sburg/Vien	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-15.75	28-Mar-2012
Attend OSCE Conference	IRELAND	AUSTRIA K'furt/Linz/Sburg/Vien	BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-78.75	28-Mar-2012
Attend OSCE Conference	IRELAND	AUSTRIA K'furt/Linz/Sburg/Vien	OVERNIGHT RATE	124.00	28-Mar-2012
Attend OSCE Conference	IRELAND	AUSTRIA K'furt/Linz/Sburg/Vien	MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES	63.00	28-Mar-2012
Attend OSCE Conference	IRELAND	AUSTRIA K'furt/Linz/Sburg/Vien	MISCELLANEOUS DEDUCTIONS	-15.75	28-Mar-2012
Attend meeting with Ukrainian Minister for Finance	IRELAND	TURKEY Istanbul	LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-55.74	25-Jul-2012

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2012					
Attend meeting with Ukrainian Minister for Finance	IRELAND	TURKEY Istanbul	OVERNIGHT RATE	222.95	25-Jul-2012
Attend OSCE Conference	IRELAND	CZECH REPUBLIC - Prague	5 HOUR RATE	24.57	07-Nov-2012
Attend OSCE Conference	IRELAND	CZECH REPUBLIC - Prague	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-24.57	07-Nov-2012
Attend OSCE Conference	IRELAND	CZECH REPUBLIC - Prague	OVERNIGHT RATE	196.54	07-Nov-2012
Attend OSCE Conference	IRELAND	CZECH REPUBLIC - Prague	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-122.84	07-Nov-2012
Attend Ecofin meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	05-Dec-2012
Attend Ecofin meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	05-Dec-2012
Attend Ecofin meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	5 HOUR RATE	36.17	05-Dec-2012
Attend advanced EU Presidency meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	10 HOUR RATE	72.33	05-Dec-2012

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2013					
Attend Euro-group meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-36.17	27-Feb-2013
Attend Euro-group meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	289.33	27-Feb-2013
Attend Ecofin meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	20-Mar-2013
Attend Ecofin meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	20-Mar-2013
Attend EU Council Discharge Meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	20-Mar-2013
Attend EU Council Discharge Meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	20-Mar-2013
Attend Ecofin meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	01-May-2013
Attend Ecofin meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	01-May-2013
Attend Ecofin meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	5 HOUR RATE	36.17	01-May-2013
Attend EU Budget Trilogue 2014	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	10 HOUR RATE	72.33	01-May-2013

Questions - Written Answers

Expense De- scription	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2013					
Signing of taxation agreement with Ukraine	IRELAND	UKRAINE Kiev	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-10.32	05-Jun-2013
Signing of taxation agreement with Ukraine	IRELAND	UKRAINE Kiev	OVERNIGHT RATE	78.08	05-Jun-2013
EP plenary session	GERMANY E/ Where	FRANCE Strasbourg	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-14.50	05-Jun-2013
EP plenary session	GERMANY E/ Where	FRANCE Strasbourg	OVERNIGHT RATE	116.00	05-Jun-2013
Visiting Michael Theurer MEP for a series of meetings	IRELAND	GERMANY E/ Where	MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES	10.00	05-Jun-2013
Attend Ecofin meeting	ISRAEL E/ Where	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	12-Jun-2013
Attend Ecofin meeting	ISRAEL E/ Where	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	12-Jun-2013
Attend MFA Georgia Conciliation meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-36.17	12-Jun-2013
Attend MFA Georgia Conciliation meeting	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	289.33	12-Jun-2013
Attend meeting with Financial Institutions and Ecofin	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Lux- embourg	LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-107.67	17-Jul-2013
Attend meeting with Financial Institutions and Ecofin	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Lux- embourg	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-53.83	17-Jul-2013
Attend meeting with Financial Institutions and Ecofin	IRELAND	LUXEMBOURG Lux- embourg	OVERNIGHT RATE	569.99	17-Jul-2013
Attend Ecofin	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.09	17-Jul-2013
Attend Ecofin	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	17-Jul-2013
MoS Hayes London itinerary (PPP conf etc)	IRELAND	BRITAIN LONDON	OVERNIGHT RATE	207.91	23-Oct-2013
MoS Hayes London itinerary (PPP conf etc)	IRELAND	BRITAIN LONDON	10 HOUR RATE	69.31	23-Oct-2013
Ecofin Informal Vilnius	IRELAND	LITHUANIA Vilnius	LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-67.54	23-Oct-2013
Ecofin Informal Vilnius	IRELAND	LITHUANIA Vilnius	10 HOUR RATE	67.54	23-Oct-2013

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2013					
Ecofin Informal Vilnius	IRELAND	LITHUANIA Vilnius	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-33.77	23-Oct-2013
Ecofin Informal Vilnius	IRELAND	LITHUANIA Vilnius	OVERNIGHT RATE	135.07	23-Oct-2013
Friends of Europe Round-table	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-6.85	23-Oct-2013
Friends of Europe Round-table	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.17	23-Oct-2013
Friends of Europe Round-table	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	108.50	23-Oct-2013
Friends of Europe Round-table	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	10 HOUR RATE	72.33	23-Oct-2013
Speak at Glenties	Dublin	Glenties	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-6.85	06-Nov-2013
Speak at Glenties	Dublin	Glenties	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-13.71	06-Nov-2013
Speak at Glenties	Dublin	Glenties	OVERNIGHT RATE	108.99	06-Nov-2013
Speak at Glenties	Dublin	Glenties	MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES	5.80	06-Nov-2013
Attend Ecofin Budget Council, BRUX	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	217.00	27-Nov-2013
EP Plenary hi-level engagement, Strasbourg	IRELAND	FRANCE Strasbourg	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-29.00	27-Nov-2013
EP Plenary hi-level engagement, Strasbourg	IRELAND	FRANCE Strasbourg	OVERNIGHT RATE	174.00	27-Nov-2013
Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2014					
DE Itinerary (Labour Mkt, SME financing, IDA)	IRELAND	GERMANY Dusseldorf	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-13.50	05-Feb-2014
DE Itinerary (Labour Mkt, SME financing, IDA)	IRELAND	GERMANY Dusseldorf	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-27.00	05-Feb-2014
DE Itinerary (Labour Mkt, SME financing, IDA)	IRELAND	GERMANY Dusseldorf	LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-54.00	05-Feb-2014

Questions - Written Answers

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2014					
DE Itinerary (Labour Mkt, SME financing, IDA)	IRELAND	GERMANY Dusseldorf	10 HOUR RATE	54.00	05-Feb-2014
DE Itinerary (Labour Mkt, SME financing, IDA)	IRELAND	GERMANY Dusseldorf	OVERNIGHT RATE	162.00	05-Feb-2014
Keynote speaker at Jornal Negocias Economic Conf, Lisbon	IRELAND	PORTUGAL Lisbon	OVERNIGHT RATE	83.00	09-Apr-2014
Keynote speaker at Jornal Negocias Economic Conf, Lisbon	IRELAND	PORTUGAL Lisbon	10 HOUR RATE	55.33	09-Apr-2014
Attended Informal Ecofin (on behalf of M/FIN)	IRELAND	GREECE Athens	LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-33.61	30-Apr-2014
Attended Informal Ecofin (on behalf of M/FIN)	IRELAND	GREECE Athens	OVERNIGHT RATE	217.98	30-Apr-2014
Attended Informal Ecofin (on behalf of M/FIN)	IRELAND	GREECE Athens	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-33.17	30-Apr-2014

Minister of State Harris:

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2014					
Travel to BXL for D/FIN PermRep Event	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	24-Oct-2014
Travel to BXL for D/FIN PermRep Event	Belgium Brussels	Ireland	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-6.85	24-Oct-2014
Travel to BXL for D/FIN PermRep Event	Belgium Brussels	Ireland	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-13.71	24-Oct-2014
Travel to BXL for D/FIN PermRep Event	Belgium Brussels	Ireland	10 HOUR RATE	33.61	24-Oct-2014
Official business in London & Brussels	Ireland	Britain London	OVERNIGHT RATE	281.81	21-Nov-2014

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2014					
Official business in London & Brussels	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.17	21-Nov-2014
Official business in London & Brussels	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-72.33	21-Nov-2014
Official business in London & Brussels	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-36.17	21-Nov-2014
Official business in London & Brussels	Britain London	Belgium Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	144.66	21-Nov-2014
MoS travel to Ecofin	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-36.17	19-Dec-2014
MoS travel to Ecofin	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-72.34	19-Dec-2014
MoS travel to Ecofin	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	289.33	19-Dec-2014
MoS travel to Ecofin	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	10 HOUR RATE	72.33	19-Dec-2014

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2015					
MoS/Harris travel to HK/Macau on IFS business	Ireland	China Hong Kong	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-89.91	30-Jan-2015
MoS/Harris travel to HK/Macau on IFS business	Ireland	China Hong Kong	LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-359.64	30-Jan-2015
MoS/Harris travel to HK/Macau on IFS business	Ireland	China Hong Kong	OVERNIGHT RATE	539.46	30-Jan-2015
MoS/FIN SPD travel to Germany	Ireland	Germany Munich	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-34.83	10-Apr-2015
MoS/FIN SPD travel to Germany	Ireland	Germany Munich	OVERNIGHT RATE	209.00	10-Apr-2015
MoS/FIN SPD travel to Germany			LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-33.61	10-Apr-2015
MoS/FIN SPD travel to Germany			LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-33.61	10-Apr-2015
MoS/FIN SPD travel to Germany	Ireland	Germany Stuttgart	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-16.09	10-Apr-2015

Questions - Written Answers

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2015					
MoS/FIN SPD travel to Germany	Ireland	Germany Stuttgart	OVERNIGHT RATE	96.50	10-Apr-2015
MoS/FIN SPD travel to Germany	Ireland	Germany Berlin	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-18.42	10-Apr-2015
MoS/FIN SPD travel to Germany	Ireland	Germany Berlin	OVERNIGHT RATE	110.50	10-Apr-2015
MoS/FIN SPD travel to Germany	Ireland	Germany Dusseldorf	10 HOUR RATE	54.00	10-Apr-2015
MoS/FIN IFS2020 travel (London/Paris)	Ireland	Britain London	OVERNIGHT RATE	231.24	10-Apr-2015
MoS/FIN IFS2020 travel (London/Paris)	Ireland	France Paris	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-48.67	10-Apr-2015
MoS/FIN IFS2020 travel (London/Paris)	Ireland	France Paris	10 HOUR RATE	97.33	10-Apr-2015
MoS travel to BXL & FRA on IFS Business	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	217.00	26-Jun-2015
MoS travel to BXL & FRA on IFS Business	Belgium Brussels	Germany Frankfurt	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.50	26-Jun-2015
MoS travel to BXL & FRA on IFS Business	Germany Frankfurt*	Ireland	5 HOUR RATE	13.71	26-Jun-2015
MoS travel to BXL & FRA on IFS Business	Belgium Brussels	Germany Frankfurt	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-36.50	26-Jun-2015
Attend Extraordinary Eurogroup Brussels	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	10 HOUR RATE	72.33	25-Sep-2015
MoS Harris on IFS business in Frankfurt	Ireland	Germany Frankfurt	10 HOUR RATE	73.00	25-Sep-2015
MoS Harris on IFS business in Frankfurt	Ireland	Germany Frankfurt	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.50	25-Sep-2015
Attend Ecofin/E'Grp Informal	Ireland	Luxembourg Luxembourg	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-53.83	25-Sep-2015
Attend Ecofin/E'Grp Informal	Ireland	Luxembourg Luxembourg	LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-215.34	25-Sep-2015
Attend Ecofin/E'Grp Informal	Ireland	Luxembourg Luxembourg	OVERNIGHT RATE	323.00	25-Sep-2015
Attend Ecofin/E'Grp Informal	Ireland	Luxembourg Luxembourg	10 HOUR RATE	107.67	25-Sep-15

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Type	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2015					
Mos Harris On Ifs Business In Boston, Ny	Ireland	USA New York	OVERNIGHT RATE	252.10	02-Oct-2015
Mos Harris On Ifs Business In Boston, Ny	Ireland	USA New York	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-84.03	02-Oct-2015
Mos Harris On Ifs Business In Boston, Ny	Ireland	USA New York	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-168.07	02-Oct-2015
Mos Harris On Ifs Business In Boston, Ny	Ireland	USA Boston	OVERNIGHT RATE	371.39	02-Oct-2015
MOS on IFS2020 business in London	Ireland	Britain London	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-19.88	13-Nov-2015
MOS on IFS2020 business in London	Ireland	Britain London	LUNCH & DINNER PROVIDED	-79.52	13-Nov-2015
MOS on IFS2020 business in London	Ireland	Britain London	OVERNIGHT RATE	238.54	13-Nov-2015
Travel to Ecofin Budget Council	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-36.17	20-Nov-2015
Travel to Ecofin Budget Council	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-36.17	20-Nov-2015
Travel to Ecofin Budget Council	Ireland	Belgium Brussels	OVERNIGHT RATE	217.00	20-Nov-2015
Travel to Cork on IFS business	Dublin	Cork	BREAKFAST PROVIDED	-7.00	04-Dec-2015
Travel to Cork on IFS business	Dublin	Cork	LUNCH OR DINNER PROVIDED	-14.01	04-Dec-2015
Travel to Cork on IFS business	Dublin	Cork	OVERNIGHT RATE	125.00	04-Dec-2015

Departmental Expenditure

111. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance the amount he spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3825/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): My Department avails of a service which provides a “pay as you go” facility for the delivery of full text transcripts from a variety of broadcast sources.

The information sought by the Deputy is set out in the following table:

Year	Media clipping and media monitoring services	Cost
2011	Provision of transcripts and monitoring licence Zenark Ltd.	€6597.50

Year	Media clipping and media monitoring services	Cost
2012	Provision of transcripts and monitoring licence Zenark Ltd.	€3567.00
2013	Monitoring licence Zenark Ltd.	€1845.00
2014	Provision of transcripts and monitoring licence Zenark Ltd.	€5289.00
2015	Provision of transcripts and monitoring licence Zenark Ltd.	€6150.00

Multi-annual Budget Plans

112. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Finance if he has carried out a risk analysis for the Irish economy and the public finances in 2016 regarding the impact of the slowdown and volatility of the global economy; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3851/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): My Department's latest forecasts, which underpin Budget 2016, are set out in the Economic and Fiscal Outlook, published as part of the Budget 2016 documentation. They project GDP growth of 6.2 per cent in 2015 and 4.3 per cent in 2016, with an average growth rate of around 3 per cent for subsequent years.

The text in the Budget documentation explicitly recognises that outside of Ireland's main export markets the pace of economic expansion has slowed and the outlook has become increasingly uncertain. The text also notes that while the spillover effects to Ireland's main trading partners appear to have been limited to date, a more pronounced impact cannot be ruled out.

The Budget documentation also included a comprehensive quantitative risk analysis on the impact on the Irish economy and public finances for a range of economic shocks using outputs from the ESRI HERMES macroeconomic model. One of the shocks estimated the impact of a 1 per cent downturn in global output. The results, published in Table 14 of the Economic and Fiscal Outlook chapter, indicate that a permanent one per cent decrease in global output levels would reduce Irish GDP by one per cent relative to the Department's baseline forecasts, primarily through a reduction in Irish export growth, with an upward impact on the deficit of one quarter per cent of GDP.

The Deputy will already be aware that my Department's forecasts were endorsed by the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council and also, that in its recent Fiscal Assessment Report, the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council welcomed the Department's analysis of risks and noted that it represented an important input into discussions around the macroeconomic and fiscal outlook.

Overall I am confident that these forecasts are realistic, and take due account of risks which are explicitly recognised.

Tax Rebates

113. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Finance if and when a refund of income tax paid will be made to a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3867/16]

Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan): I have been advised by Revenue that the person concerned has been written to requesting the necessary information to review her tax affairs for 2015. The matter will be considered further by Revenue on receipt of the requested information.

Flood Prevention Measures

114. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the status of funding for sluice gates on an embankment to protect the homes and properties of the residents at Incherea, Glenbeigh, in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3466/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Simon Harris): The embankments at Incherea are old Land Commission embankments and the Office of Public Works (OPW) is not responsible for the upkeep of these embankments.

It is a matter for Kerry County Council (KCC) in the first instance to investigate and address issues of coastal protection and flooding at the location indicated. It is open to KCC to undertake any required remedial works using its own resources. Alternatively, if, following assessment, KCC can identify any economically and environmentally viable measures to address the flooding problem at this location, it may apply for funding to carry out proposed works under the OPW Minor Flood Mitigation Works and Coastal Protection Scheme. Any application received will be assessed under the scheme's eligibility criteria. Application forms and related guidelines are available on the OPW website under Flood Risk Management. <http://www.opw.ie/en/floodriskmanagement/operations/minorfloodworkscoastalprotectionscheme/>.

In accordance with the scheme criteria funding of €80,000 for this location was granted to KCC in 2012. No further application for funding has been submitted by KCC to date in respect of this location.

While KCC requested funding for strengthening works at Incherea following the coastal storms which affected the western seaboard in December 2013 and January 2014 the works were outside of the scope of the Government Decision allocating funding for storm damage repairs.

Departmental Properties

115. **Deputy Timmy Dooley** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if the Garda station in Broadford, County Clare, is up for sale by the Office of Public Works; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3526/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Simon Harris): The policy of the Office of Public Works (OPW) with regard to non-operational (vacant) Garda stations is to:

1. Identify if the property is required/suitable for alternate State use by both Government departments and the wider public sector.

2. If there is no other State use identified for a property, the OPW will then consider disposing of the property on the open market if and when conditions prevail, in order to generate revenue for the Exchequer.

3. If no State requirement is identified or if a decision is taken not to dispose of a particular property the OPW may consider community involvement (subject to detailed written submission which would indicate that the community/voluntary group has the means to insure, maintain and manage the property and that there are no ongoing costs for the Exchequer.)

I am advised by the Commissioners of Public Works that they are currently assessing the

options for the former Garda station at Broadford in line with the above policy. On completion of this process a decision will be taken as to whether the property will be placed on the market for sale.

Flood Relief Schemes Status

116. **Deputy Pat Breen** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the status of a project (details supplied) in County Clare; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3529/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Simon Harris): As you may be aware, the Ennis South Flood Relief Scheme is being progressed by Clare County Council (CCC) as the contracting authority under its powers, and with funding and advice as appropriate from the Office of Public Works (OPW).

CCC and the OPW are working together to ensure that all possible options are examined to ensure maximum protection for properties along with maximum value for State funding. In light of ongoing correspondence between CCC and the OPW on the proposed scheme, some technical issues have been referred by CCC to its consultants for assessment. It is hoped that a response on these issues will be received shortly which will allow the scheme to progress quickly thereafter.

The OPW remains committed to the progression of the works, and provision has been included in its multi-annual capital funding programme to this end.

Departmental Funding

117. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the funding he allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituency of Louth East Meath, by project and initiative, by completion date and by cost, for the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3566/16]

Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin): In response to the Deputy's question I announced the Government's Capital Plan on 20 September 2015 which outlined exchequer capital spending of €27 billion over the next six years.

As the Deputy may be aware the funding allocations and spending on capital projects and other initiatives over the last five years in the constituency of Louth East Meath are available through the relevant line departments.

Lansdowne Road Agreement

118. **Deputy Seán Kyne** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform further to the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2015, if a non-union public servant working in a sector, where the relevant union has voted against the Lansdowne Road agreement, will be negatively impacted and will not be awarded an increment, and that the operation of the pay scale that applies to such a non-union public servant shall stand suspended until 1 July 2018. [3605/16]

119. **Deputy Seán Kyne** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform further to

the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2015, if a public servant working in a sector where the relevant trade union has voted against the Lansdowne Road agreement, and who is not a member of the trade union, or who resigns from the union, is outside the agreement. [3606/16]

Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin): I propose to take Questions Nos. 118 and 119 together.

Following the acceptance of the Lansdowne Road Agreement by the Public Services Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, I brought forward the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2015. That Act made provision for the implementation of the terms of the Agreement for all public servants regardless of whether some public servants have voted against the terms of the Agreement, or are not members of a union.

The 2015 Act shows that the Government is committed to honouring the terms of the Lansdowne Road Agreement which extended the Public Service Stability Agreement (Haddington Road Agreement) out to September 2018. I remain hopeful that those Unions or Associations who have to date not been in a position to subscribe to the terms of the Lansdowne Road Agreement will do so to enable their members avail of the full benefits of that Agreement.

Lansdowne Road Agreement

120. **Deputy Seán Kyne** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform further to the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2015, if a public servant of pensionable age, working in a sector where the relevant union has voted against the Lansdowne Road agreement, who will reach the 25th point of the salary scale on 7 August 2016, and who will resign on 31 August 2016, will have their retirement lump sum and annual pension calculated as if their final salary was at the 25th point of the salary scale. [3607/16]

Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin): Statutory Instrument 547/2015 made under Section 9 of the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act (FEMPI) 2013 extends the ‘grace period’ to April 2019. Under the ‘grace period’, all affected public servants who retire before April 2019 will have their superannuation benefits calculated with reference to pay rates which disregard the effect of the pay reductions and the effect of any suspension of the operation of a pay scale (increment freeze or delay) under that Act.

Flood Prevention Measures

121. **Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform his proposals for dealing with the ongoing flooding issues in south County Mayo, with particular reference to the Hollymount, Neale and Cong areas, with the flooding issue at the Neale cross-roads, where road raising has not solved the issue, improving the canal linking Lough Mask and Lough Corrib, with particular reference to alleviating the ongoing flooding problem in Cong village, for de-silting the Robe and Bulkawn rivers near Ballinrobe in County Galway; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3613/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Simon Harris): A meeting is scheduled for, today, Thursday 28 January, between Office of Public Works (OPW) West Region engineering staff and the Director of Services and engineering staff of Mayo County Council to discuss flooding issues across Mayo generally, including the

locations referred to by the Deputy. Investigation of flooding, in the first instance, is a matter for each local authority to investigate and address. Mayo County Council may carry out flood mitigation works using its own resources. The Council may also apply to the Office of Public Works (OPW) for funding of flood mitigation works under the Minor Flood Mitigation Works and Coastal Protection Scheme. The purpose of this scheme is to provide funding to local authorities to undertake minor works to address localised flooding and coastal protection problems within their administrative areas. Funding of up to 90% of the cost is available for approved projects that are estimated to cost no more than €500,000. Details of the Schemes eligibility criteria are published on the OPW website <http://www.opw.ie/en/floodriskmanagement/operations/minorfloodworkscostalprotectionscheme/>.

The OPW has responsibility for the maintenance of a number of rivers and channels in this area, including at the Robe and Bulkaun Rivers, in accordance with its statutory obligations under the Arterial Drainage Act, 1945. Maintenance is ongoing both as required and also as part of the rolling annual arterial maintenance programme. Repairs to scheme structures and vegetation management in Ballinrobe town have been scheduled for 2016.

Consultancy Contracts Data

122. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [3772/16]

Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin): In response to the Deputy's question the following table outlines the total amount spent on external consultancy reports commissioned by my Department since 2011.

Name of External Report	Costs	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Name of External Consultant
2011			
Independent verification of savings arising under the Public Service Agreement	€35,819	June 2011	MKO Partners Ltd
2012			
Report on Reasons Behind Voter Behaviour in the Oireachtas Inquiry Referendum 2011	€41,043	January 2012	Red C Research and Marketing Ltd.
Independent verification of savings arising under the Public Service Agreement	€31,586	June 2012	Grant Thornton
Capacity and Capability Review of Central Procurement Function	€30,750	September 2012	Accenture
ICT-MF Executive Assessment	€30,750	November 2012	Innovation Value Institute, NUIM
2013			
Independent verification of savings arising under the Public Service Agreement	€24,206	July 2013	Grant Thornton

2013			
Report of a Consultation with Civil Society Representatives and Citizens on Ireland's Participation in the Open Government Partnership	Funding of €25,735.25 was provided to Transparency International Ireland in 2013 following a competitive tender process to support a public consultation with civil society and the preparation of a report of their recommendations and proposals for potential inclusion in Ireland's Open Government Partnership National Action Plan.	October 2013	Transparency International, Ireland
2014			
Debt Management Final Report	€135,514	July 2014	BearingPoint
Capacity & Capability Review of the Estate Portfolio function of the Office of Public Works (excluding Heritage Services)	€130,000.00	Report has been received by the Office of Public Works and circulated to staff	Concerto Partners LLP
Open Data project: - Best Practice Handbook - Data Audit Report- Roadmap for Open Data - Evaluation Framework - Open Data Publication Handbook	€19,188	July 2014	Insight Centre for Data Analytics, NUI Galway
Development of Training and Organisation Development	€22,900	July 2014	Baker Tilly Ryan Glennon. Trinity House, Charleston Road, Ranelagh, Dublin 6
Value for Money Report of Dublin Castle's Conference Facilities	€4,674	Qtr 3, 2014	Newmarket Consulting
Fund Structuring Services Agreement for Social Housing and Energy Efficiency in Ireland	€26,767	November 2014	European Investment Bank
Baseline Report Single Pension Scheme	€24,900	December 2014	Mr Seamus O'Dwyer
2015			
DEEF Report, analysis of business processes for European structural and investment funds and development of a detailed specification for EU structural funds 2014-2020	€46,371	Not published for internal use only	Dovetail Technologies
2015			
Civil Service Disciplinary Code Review (action identified under Civil Service Renewal Plan)	€23,985	June 2015	Clarion Consulting
Debt Management Final Report	€135,514	July 2015	BearingPoint
Recommendations to DPER for Clare River (Claregalway) Flood Relief Scheme	€23,917	November 2015	JBA Consulting
An examination of Shared Services in the Irish Public Service and Internationally	€10,000	December 2015	Deloitte Consulting

2015			
Comparative Report on European National Identification Numbers	€37,500	Publication pending the completion of the work of the PPSN review Group	Hans Graux of time. lex CVBA, Brussels, Belgium
Analysis of Business Processes for European Structural and Investment Funds and Development of a Detailed Specification for EU Structural Funds 2014-2020	€46,371	Publication pending the completion of the work of the Dovetail Group	Dovetail Technologies
Business case to deliver a new shared service model to deliver learning and development for the Civil Service external expert advice sought to assess the costs, benefits, risks and implications associated to the components elements of the new model	€106,063	Report is not published yet	Knowledge Pool as part of CAPITA Consulting
Public Service Spend and Tendering Analysis Report for 2014	€98,400	2016	Accenture

I understand the Office of Public Works will contact you directly regarding this matter.

Public Inquiries

123. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which he or his Department have been responsible by name; by terms of reference; by cost including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded; by date including the projected date of conclusion where an inquiry has not been concluded from 1991 to date, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3787/16]

Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin): My Department has not been responsible for the setting up of any Tribunal of Inquiry, Commission of Inquiry or Commission of Investigation since its establishment.

Ministerial Allowances

124. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the expenses claimed, including the amount of mileage and the amount claimed, by him and Ministers of State of his Department, by calendar year, during the current Dáil Éireann, in tabular form. [3815/16]

Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin): In response to the Deputy's question the table below outlines my expenses claimed since 2011. Details of all my mileage claims since 2011 are available on the Department's website at the following link <http://www.per.gov.ie/en/ministerial-expenses/>.

The Minister for State in my Department is also Minister for State with responsibilities in

the Department of Finance and the Office of Public Works. Information relating to expenses claimed will be contained in the Department of Finance reply and the OPW will respond directly to the Deputy on this matter.

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2013				
Committee of the Regions 22-24 January 2013	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	144.66	11-Sep-13
Meeting Commissioner Hahn	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	72.33	11-Sep-13
Committee of the Regions Brussels 12 -13 May 2013	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	72.33	11-Sep-13
Seminar on Public Service Innovation	IRELAND	BELGIUM Brussels	72.33	11-Sep-13
St Patrick's Day Official Visit: Indonesia/Singapore/ the Philippines	IRELAND	INDONESIA Jakarta	126.37	11-Sep-13
St Patrick's Day Official Visit: Indonesia/Singapore/ the Philippines	INDONESIA Jakarta	SINGAPORE Singapore	552.73	11-Sep-13
St Patrick's Day Official Visit: Indonesia/Singapore/ the Philippines	SINGAPORE Singapore	PHILIPPINES Manila	453.95	11-Sep-13
Attend the World Economic Forum; China 7-15 September 2013	IRELAND	CHINA - Beijing aka Peking	408.04	18-Dec-13
Attend the World Economic Forum; China 7-15 September 2013	CHINA - Beijing aka Peking	CHINA EWhere Renminbi	189.82	18-Dec-13
Attend the World Economic Forum; China 7-15 September 2013	CHINA - ELSE-WHERE	CHINA - Beijing aka Peking	272.03	18-Dec-13
Informal Ministerial Meeting on Cohesion Policy 25-27 November Vilnius	IRELAND	LITHUANIA Vilnius	134.96	30-Dec-13
Open Government Partnership 30 October - 2 November 2013	IRELAND	BRITAIN LONDON	403.38	30-Dec-13
Expense Description	From	To	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2014				
10-20 March 2014: Government St Patrick's Day Programme 2014 Shanghai - Hong Kong - Beijing	IRELAND	CHINA Shanghai	28.72	05-Dec-14

Questions - Written Answers

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2014				
10-20 March 2014: Government St Patrick's Day Programme 2014 Shanghai - Hong Kong - Beijing	IRELAND	CHINA Shanghai	517.62	05-Dec-14
10-20 March 2014: Government St Patrick's Day Programme 2014 Shanghai - Hong Kong - Beijing	CHINA Shanghai	CHINA Hong Kong	523.81	05-Dec-14
10-20 March 2014: Government St Patrick's Day Programme 2014 Shanghai - Hong Kong - Beijing	CHINA Hong Kong	CHINA - Beijing (Aka Peking)	665.98	05-Dec-14
11 April 2014: Meeting With The Welsh Government	IRELAND	BRITAIN E/Where	93.26	05-Dec-14
23 - 25 April 2014: Paris & Athens. Paris: Open Data Conference. Athens: Informal Meeting Of Cohesion Ministers	IRELAND	FRANCE Paris	194.66	05-Dec-14
23 - 25 April 2014: Paris & Athens. Paris: Open Data Conference. Athens: Informal Meeting Of Cohesion Ministers	FRANCE Paris	GREECE Athens	132.66	05-Dec-14
23 - 25 April 2014: Paris & Athens. Paris: Open Data Conference. Athens: Informal Meeting Of Cohesion Ministers	FRANCE Paris	GREECE Athens	66.33	05-Dec-14
21 - 28 June 2014: United Nations Public Service Forum And Awards Ceremony, Seoul	IRELAND	KOREA-South Seoul	1593.16	05-Dec-14
11-12 September 2014: Meeting With OECD, Paris	IRELAND	FRANCE Paris	194.66	05-Dec-14
11-12 September 2014: Meeting With OECD, Paris	IRELAND	FRANCE Paris	97.33	05-Dec-14

Expense Description	From	To	Expense Amount (€)	Date Paid
2014				
31 October - 4 November 2014: Attending The Jordanian Leaders Forum And Meeting With The Jordanian Government	IRELAND	JORDAN Amman	543.49	05-Dec-14
European Public Administration Network, Rome 2-4 December 2014	IRELAND	ITALY Naples Rome	314.66	19-Dec-14

Departmental Expenditure

125. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the amount he spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3830/16]

Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin): In response to the Deputy's question the following table outlines the amount spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in 2013 and 2015 the only years in which such expenditure arose.

Year	Amount
2013	€1,722
2015	€6,303.75

Foreign Direct Investment

126. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the arrangements he made with the Microsoft company in relation to being granted the status of being domiciled in Ireland; if that arrangement included a requirement to retain manufacturing here; and if this arrangement is now non-existent, given the decision of the Arvato plant in Swords in County Dublin to relocate its packaging and distribution of Microsoft software to the Czech Republic from July 2016. [3518/16]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The issue of a company's domicile for tax reasons does not come within the remit of my Department. It would therefore not be possible for me to make any specific arrangements with Microsoft and I obviously have not done so. The IDA's engagement with this company does not include a condition that they utilise a specific packaging supplier based in Ireland. Moreover, it would not be appropriate or realistic for the IDA to include such conditions in their agreements with foreign companies locating here. Companies require the freedom to place contracts and develop their operations on a commercial basis, subject of course to Irish and EU legislation.

The Development Agencies under my remit work closely with their client companies to maximise the wider added value to the Irish economy. This includes encouraging multinational companies to embed their operations in Ireland and to develop contracts and outsourcing arrangements with other companies located here.

This policy has been very successful, especially in terms of job creation. Unfortunately, on

occasion, companies may change their arrangements with a consequent negative impact on the Irish economy and to employment. While these decisions are regrettable, the overwhelming impact of Foreign Direct Investment in Ireland remains positive, as reflected by the record job growth in 2015.

IDA Site Visits

127. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of industrial visits organised by the Industrial Development Agency Ireland and by Enterprise Ireland for the past five years by location in constituencies (details supplied) by potential investors; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3532/16]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): IDA Ireland maintains statistics of site visits by potential investors on a county-by-county basis only. From 2011 to 2015 there were a total of 94 visits – as set out in the following table – by potential investors to Counties Louth, Meath, Cavan and Monaghan.

As Enterprise Ireland's core focus is supporting the internationalisation of indigenous companies, it does not arrange site visits of a type similar to IDA Ireland.

It is important to note that data on site visits is not an accurate measure of the level of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) activity in a region or county. That is partly because approximately 70% of all FDI investment won by IDA Ireland comes from its existing client base, rather than new companies.

The Agency is continuing to work with both stakeholders and existing clients in order to attract increased investment in regional locations across the country. While IDA Ireland does attempt to influence the choice of location – and the Agency is committed to significantly increasing the number of investments outside Dublin – the final decision as to where to visit and ultimately locate is taken in all cases by the client company.

The true measure of FDI is reflected in IDA Ireland's record 2015 results. IDA Ireland client companies created just under 19,000 (18,983) jobs on the ground during the year across a range of sectors, with every region of Ireland posting net gains in jobs.

Table shows the number of IDA Ireland sponsored site visits by potential investors to Counties Cavan, Louth, Meath and Monaghan from 2011 to 2015.

County	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Cavan	0	3	2	1	0
Louth	26	12	4	10	20
Meath	2	0	1	2	7
Monaghan	1	0	1	0	2

National Minimum Wage

128. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation further to Parliamentary Question No. 248 of 17 November 2015, if he will investigate a matter (details supplied) regarding a wage increase; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3540/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Ger-

ald Nash): At all times the Governments policy choices are considered in the context of the impact on jobs. This is at the heart of the Action Plan for Jobs process and has been a central feature of successive Budgets and The Pathways to Work programme. This level of policy focus has helped create an environment where 135,000 extra people are at work compared to when the first Action Plan for Jobs was launched, all regions are increasing employment and our economy is the fastest growing in the EU. In the context of the above enterprise and jobs performance it should be noted that one of the first decisions this Government made was to reverse the €1 cut in the national minimum wage implemented by the previous Government. In the context of the minimum wage, the report from the Low Pay Commission which supported the Commission's recommendations regarding the appropriate rate for the National Minimum Wage (NMW) stated that research indicates that moderate increases in the NMW are unlikely to have a significantly adverse effect on employment.

The Commission recommended that anomalies in relation to PRSI which could adversely affect employer costs should be addressed, and I believe that the adjustments to PRSI which have been provided for by my colleague, Minister Noonan, in the recent Budget, will assist employers in reducing costs, thus ensuring a continuing positive climate for job creation.

Budget Documentation available at the following link www.budget.gov.ie/Budgets/2016/Documents/Budget%20Book%202016%20-%20full%20document.pdf gives the example (Example 6 page B.22) of an individual earning the minimum wage of €8.65 for a 39 hour week in 2015. The minimum wage increase will mean an additional €1,014 per annum for this person, taking their gross income to €18,556 in 2016. Their income tax liability will increase from €208 per annum to €411 per annum due to their additional earnings. They will have a PRSI liability of €160. USC liability reduces from €374 to €317. The net gain for this person is €708 per annum or 4.2%.

Due to the budget changes introduced the employer will pay PRSI at 8.5% and not move to the previously higher rate of 10.75% when paying the additional €1,014 per annum. This reduces the additional PRSI paid by an employer to €86.19 per annum.

PRSI changes (New PRSI relief of €12 per week for employees and increase in employer threshold).

Application where someone earns the new NMW of €9.15 per hour (39 hour week = €18,556 per annum).

The maximum PRSI relief is €12 a week, applied on wages of €352 a week. So instead of paying €14.08 a week PRSI the person will pay €2.08 a week.

The PRSI relief is gradually reduced as wages rise to €424 a week - for every €12 rise in weekly wage the relief is reduced by €2.

Weekly wage - €	Hourly rate - €	Old PRSI - €	Relief	New PRSI - €	Old Annual PRSI - €	New Annual PRSI - €	
352.00	9.03	14.08	12.00	2.08	732.16	108.16	
356.85	9.15	14.27	11.19	3.08	742.04	160.16	NMW
364.00	9.33	14.56	10.00	4.56	757.12	237.12	
376.00	9.64	15.04	8.00	7.04	782.08	366.08	
388.00	9.95	15.52	6.00	9.52	807.04	495.04	
400.00	10.26	16.00	4.00	12.00	832.00	624.00	
412.00	10.56	16.48	2.00	14.48	856.96	752.96	
424.00	10.87	16.96	-	16.96	881.92	881.92	

Annual PRSI Cost to Employee on new NMW (working 39 hours p.w.) without the proposed change would be €742.04 (€18,556 * 4%), giving a saving of €581.88 even with the new payment of €160.

Employer impact - increase in threshold for change of rate from 8.5% to 10.75% from €356.01 to €376.01.

	Weekly NMW €	PRSI rate	Weekly cost €	No of weeks	Annual Cost €
Increase of rate to €376 before 10.75% applies	356.85	8.50%	30.33	52	1,577.28
Cost to employer prior to Budget change	356.85	10.75%	38.36	52	1,994.79
Difference			8.03	52	417.51

Annual PRSI Cost to Employer without the proposed change would be €1,994.79, giving a saving of €417.51. *(There is an additional saving to Employer also for employees earning up to €9.64 per hour/€376 p.w., who previously would have invoked the 10.75% rate - annual saving to the employer of €439.92 for an employee earning €376 per week).*

Departmental Funding

129. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the funding he allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituencies of Louth and Meath East by project and initiative, by completion date and by cost for the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3564/16]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): Under the IDA Ireland Strategy entitled “Winning” announced on 25 February 2015, it was proposed that one of the new planned Advanced Building Solutions would be on the IDA Dundalk Business and Technology Park. The design and planning process commenced in Quarter 4 2015 and the building is due for completion Quarter 1 2017. The total amounts of payments made by IDA Ireland to its client companies in Counties Louth and Meath over the 5 year period 2010-2014 were €10,253,765 for Louth and €2,604,501 for Meath.

The total amounts of Capital payments made by IDA Ireland to its client companies in Counties Louth and Meath for the same period were €3,058,074 for Louth and €63,362 for Meath.

Enterprise Ireland (EI) makes payments to companies and ‘infrastructural clients’. For the period 2011-2015, the total amounts of payments made by Enterprise Ireland (EI) to its client companies were:

County	Amount
Louth	€10,893,863
Meath	€9,207,145

Total EI payments to its infrastructural clients for the same period (2011-2015) were:

County	Amount
Louth	€911,724
Meath	€50,000

Summaries of payments made by IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland (including EI infrastructure payments) are set out in the following tables. Please note that information is provided by the agencies on a county and not a constituency basis.

Each year, Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) allocates in the region of €150-€160 million to €160 million of research funding to researchers across Ireland's higher education system based on open, internationally peer-reviewed calls for proposals. SFI research awards are typically multi-annual awards (i.e. drawn down over a period of 2 to 5 years depending on the nature of the Call). The total grants awarded to Dundalk IT to 31 December 2015 is €1,695,000.

IDA Ireland Payments to Clients per County Summary 2010-2014

County	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Louth	€347,207	€489,051	€2,809,400	€2,935,800	€3,672,307	€10,253,765
Meath	€524,671	€386,670	€152,240	€1,540,920	€0	€2,604,501

Enterprise Ireland Payments to Clients per County Summary 2011-2015

County	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Louth	€2,233,945.69	€2,558,167.19	€2,146,404.61	€1,595,940.06	€2,359,406.23	€10,893,863.78
Meath	€1,710,047.55	€1,092,748.70	€1,453,726.89	€2,673,731.24	€2,276,891.58	€9,207,145.96
Grand Total	€3,946,004	€3,652,927	€3,602,144	€4,271,685	€4,638,312	€20,101,009.74

Source: *Enterprise Ireland Cognos System ran 27th January 2016. Note the above payments exclude payments to infrastructural clients, Shannon Free Zone Transfer Clients, Incubation Centres and Employment Subsidy Scheme recipients.*

Enterprise Ireland Infrastructure Summary 2011-2015

County	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Louth	€170,040.21	€375,959.79	€271,268.15	€67,907.87	€26,547.98	€911,724.00
Meath	€0.00	€25,000.00	€0.00	€25,000.00	€0.00	€50,000.00
Grand Total	€170,040.21	€400,959.79	€271,268.15	€92,907.87	€26,547.98	€961,724.00

IDA Site Visits

130. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of IDA Ireland site visits to a town (details supplied) in County Galway; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3684/16]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): IDA Ireland maintains statistics of site visits by potential investors on a county-by-county basis only. From 2011 to 2015, there were a total of 128 visits by potential investors to County Galway. The year-by-year breakdown is set out in the following table. It is important to note that data on site visits is not an accurate measure of the level of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) activity in a region or county. That is partly because approximately 70% of all FDI investment won by IDA Ireland comes from its existing client base, rather than new companies.

IDA Ireland is committed to significantly increasing the number of investments outside Dublin and the agency continues to work with both stakeholders and existing clients with that goal in mind. While IDA Ireland does attempt to influence the choice of location, the final decision as to where to visit and ultimately locate is taken in all cases by the client company.

The true measure of FDI is reflected in IDA Ireland's record 2015 results. IDA Ireland client companies created 18,983 jobs on the ground during the year across a range of sectors, with every region of Ireland posting net gains in jobs. Overall, there were 14,297 people employed in IDA Ireland client-companies in Galway in 2015, reflecting a net increase of 482 on 2014.

Site Visits to County Galway 2011-2015

Year	Site Visits
2011	35
2012	18
2013	15
2014	19
2015	41
Total	128

IDA Site Visits

131. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of client visits hosted by IDA Ireland by county for each year since 2011 in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3754/16]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): IDA Ireland maintains statistics of site visits by potential investors on a county-by-county basis only. Since 2011 there were a total of 1,969 IDA Ireland sponsored site visits by potential investors to various locations throughout the country. The following table sets out, on a county-by-county basis, the number of IDA Ireland sponsored site visits for each year from 2011 to 2015. It is important to note that data on site visits is not an accurate measure of the level of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) activity in a region or county. That is partly because approximately 70% of all FDI investment won by IDA Ireland comes from its existing client base, rather than new companies.

The Agency is continuing to work with both stakeholders and existing clients in order to attract increased investment in regional locations across the country. While IDA Ireland does attempt to influence the choice of location – and the Agency is committed to significantly increasing the number of investments outside Dublin – the final decision as to where to visit and ultimately locate is taken in all cases by the client company.

The true measure of FDI is reflected in IDA Ireland's record 2015 results. IDA Ireland client companies created just under 19,000 (18,983) jobs on the ground during the year across a range of sectors, with every region of Ireland posting net gains in jobs.

The table shows the number of IDA Ireland sponsored site visits, on a county by county basis for 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015

County	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Carlow	2	4	1	2	1
Cavan	0	3	2	1	0
Clare	15	14	5	9	12

County	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Cork	27	38	31	30	48
Donegal	2	1	7	6	5
Dublin	150	196	180	205	242
Galway	35	18	15	19	41
Kerry	2	1	1	3	6
Kildare	3	1	1	1	7
Kilkenny	0	3	3	4	10
Laois	2	0	2	0	4
Leitrim	0	0	1	2	8
Limerick	40	30	23	22	40
Longford	0	0	0	0	2
Louth	26	12	4	10	20
Mayo	0	1	3	4	3
Meath	2	0	1	2	7
Monaghan	1	0	1	0	2
Offaly	1	3	1	1	8
Roscommon	0	0	4	0	2
Sligo	3	6	10	7	15
Tipperary	1	5	4	3	12
Waterford	11	26	14	11	31
Westmeath	15	7	9	12	28
Wexford	0	3	2	1	4
Wicklow	3	6	1	4	7

Local Enterprise Offices Data

132. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of local enterprise office supported jobs by county in 2014 and 2015 in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3757/16]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) are the ‘first-stop-shop’ State support service for micro and small businesses in each local area. They provide advice and direction, covering all government supports and requirements, to anyone who wishes to start a new business or expand an existing one.

The LEOs provide funding for projects primarily in the manufacturing and internationally traded services sector which over time have the potential to develop into strong export entities. There are three main categories of grant under which direct financial assistance is provided – Priming, Feasibility and Business Expansion. They also provide soft supports such as training and mentoring and the LEO staff can advise as to which supports would be most appropriate.

In 2014, based on the Annual Employment Survey of LEO clients, total direct employment among the 6,058 LEO client companies stood at 31,326 (full- and part-time), an increase of 4,012 jobs in the year. Details of LEO supported jobs by county in 2014 are shown in the following table.

Statistics in relation to the number of jobs created last year through support provided by the LEOs are currently being compiled as part of the 2015 Survey of client companies. Figures for 2015, including on an individual LEO basis, will be announced as soon as the results are available.

As well as existing businesses, the LEOs support entrepreneurs to start a new business; in 2015, 500 start-up companies were supported through the LEOs.

In addition, any business can use the LEOs to help them to access finance from Micro Finance Ireland (MFI). The LEOs can support enterprises through the MFI application, review and approval processes. In 2015, 207 applications with a total value of €3.2m and with 477 associated jobs, made via the LEOs, were approved by MFI.

In 2015, the Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) competition, which was run by the LEOs, attracted applications from 1,400 young entrepreneurs. The financial support provided to the 92 winners will lead to job creation in the future. Furthermore, by November 2015, some 1,500 businesses had completed, or were in the process of completing, their trading online projects under the Trading Online Voucher Scheme, which is also run by the LEOs.

LEO Employment 2014 - by NUTS III Region

	LEO	No of Clients	Total Jobs 2014	Total Jobs Growth 2014
	Cavan	195	1,049	108
	Donegal	159	1,223	45
	Leitrim	126	388	117
	Louth	197	656	66
	Monaghan	170	904	61
	Sligo	202	1,103	73
Border	Border Total	1,049	5,323	470
	Kildare	103	683	63
	Meath	180	806	154
	Wicklow	97	572	137
Mid-East	Mid-East Total	380	2,061	354
	Clare	161	1,346	202
	Tipperary North	130	482	107
	Limerick	216	1,292	198
Mid-West	Mid-West Total	507	3,120	507
	Laois	85	384	35
	Longford	222	899	75
	Offaly	194	931	115
	WestMeath	242	1,284	38
Midlands	Midlands Total	743	3,498	263
	Carlow	206	1,152	207
	Kilkenny	243	1,154	196
	Tipperary South	148	895	62
	Waterford	300	1,515	152
	Wexford	170	1,070	210
South-East	South-East Total	1,067	5,786	827
	Cork City	96	656	191
	Cork South	155	785	171
	Cork West/North	215	1,277	187
	Kerry	444	1,794	85
South West	South-West Total	910	4,512	634
	Galway County/ City	239	882	105

	LEO	No of Clients	Total Jobs 2014	Total Jobs Growth 2014
	Mayo	182	1,060	53
	Roscommon	141	641	6
West	West Total	562	2,583	164
	Dublin City	258	1,431	453
	Dun Laoghaire/ Rathdown	211	1,304	156
	Dublin Fingal	142	562	126
	Dublin South	229	1,146	58
Dublin	Dublin Total	840	4,443	793
	Grand Total	6,058	31,326	4,012

Consultancy Contracts Data

133. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication, and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [3770/16]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The names of external reports commissioned by my Department and Offices of my Department, the costs, the date of commission, the date or expected date of publication and the name of the external consultants are set out below for the years 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and to 26 January 2016.

The data in respect of 2014 includes research and analysis which was commissioned by Forfás prior to the date of its integration into my Department in August 2014, and for which my Department held the 2014 budget. This research and analysis has subsequently been carried out in the Strategic Policy Division in my Department.

1st January – 26th January 2016

Name of external Consultant/Organisation	Report Title	Date of Commission	Status/Date Published/Ongoing	Cost of Report** - €
Sabeo	Health check on email archive system	December 2015	Awaiting final report, Internal ICT assessment – not for publication	1,750.00
Gas Package Solutions (GPS) Ltd.,	Assessment of application for recognised third party recognition status under EU Pressure Equipment Directive 97/23/EC	22 June 2015	Technical assessment report - not for publication	6,685.00
Capita Business Services Ltd	Review of Science and Technology Development Programme – Draft Audit Report	October 2015	Operational report not for publication	8,250.00

1st January – 31st December 2015

Questions - Written Answers

Name of external Consultant/Organisation	Report Title	Date of Commission	Status/Date Published/Ongoing	Cost of Report** - €
Technopolis	Evaluation of Ireland's Participation in FP7 and Horizon 2020	December 2015	Ongoing	97,237.65 (29,171.30 paid in 2015)
University of Limerick	Study on the prevalence of zero hour and low hour contracts and their impact on employees	February 2015	Published 3 November 2015	96,670.00
Planet21 Communications Ltd.	Strategic Review of Network	January 2015	Internal ICT network assessment – not for publication	9,932.25
Ward Solutions	ICT security review	Various Dates	Internal ICT security assessments – not for publication	43,572.75
Version 1 Software	Oracle eBusiness Suite Release 12 Upgrade Assessment	November 2014	Internal ICT system assessment – not for publication	8,079.92
Copenhagen Economics	TTIP Impact in Ireland	December 2013	Published on 27th March 2015	84,896.04
Insight Statistical Consulting	Annual Business Survey of Economic Impact (ABSEI)	December 2014	ABSEI 2014 – Report due to be published March 2016	48,564.14
Insight Statistical Consulting	Annual Employment Survey 2015	November 2015	Survey Completed – Report due in Feb 2016	5,965.50
Technopolis	Enterprise demand survey and analysis for report on Strengthening Ireland's Market-Focussed Research Centre Capacity	February 2015	Technical input to development of successor to SSTI - Complete	30,750.00
Mazars LLP	Not in public domain.	September 2014	This report forms part of the evidence in a criminal prosecution by the DPP and will be detailed in court when the case is heard.	177,545.80
Mason Hayes Curran	Tables of Destinations and Origins to Companies Act 2014	April 2015	15th June 2015	123,000.00
Crowley's DFK	Audit of funds transfer as part of Forfás restructuring	December 2014	Operational report not for publication	7,000.00
Capita Business Services Ltd	Review of Agency case	January 2015	Not for publication.	9,809.25

Name of external Consultant/Organisation	Report Title	Date of Commission	Status/Date Published/Ongoing	Cost of Report** - €
CMI	A study on the role and importance of Design in Irish-based firms in Non-Design Intensive Sectors	June 2015	Complete to be published shortly (underpinned the publication “Policy Framework for Design in Enterprise in Ireland” – published 26th of January	48,454.65
Dr Christian Kettles	Review of Competitiveness Frameworks	July 2015	Ongoing	34,045.00
ESRI Research Programme with DJEI & EI	Review of Expansion & Diversification of Irish Exports	November 2015	Ongoing	30,000.00 (DJEI) 30,000.00 (EI)

January – December 2014

Name of external Consultant/Organisation	Report Title	Date of Commission	Status/Date Published/Ongoing	Cost of Report** - €
Technopolis	Ireland's Future Infrastructure Needs	Q2 2015	Published as part of Innovation 2020 in December 2015	47,203.17
Ward Solutions	ICT security reviews	Various dates	Internal ICT security assessments – not for publication	35,178.00
Rits	Mobile Device Policy Assessment	September 2014	Internal ICT security assessments – not for publication	2,236.00
Version 1	Oracle eBusiness Suite R12 Upgrade Assessment	November 2014	Internal ICT assessment – not for publication	4,174.13
Clarion Consulting Limited	Employment Permits Administration Section Business Process Improvement Project Report	July 2014	Not for publication	52,275.00
CIRCA Group Europe Limited	Review of Ireland's membership of international research organisations	Q1 2015	Published as part of Innovation 2020 in December 2015	61,131.00
CM International	Assessment of Public Funded RD&I Supports for Innovation in Services and Business Processes	January 2014– commissioned by Forfás	Input to Forfás report on Services Innovation published April 2014	6,000.00
Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government	Ireland's Competitiveness Scorecard 2014	Q1 2014 – Commissioned by Forfás	Input on economic complexity to competitiveness analysis.	2,600.00
Insight Statistical Consulting / Fitzpatrick Associates	Evaluation of IDA Training Grants	November 2013 – commissioned by Forfás	Input to programme of evaluations - publication Q1 2015	29,250.00(19,188.00 paid by DJEI in 2014: balance paid by Forfás)
DCU/Fitzsimons Consulting	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2014 (GEM)	Q4 - 2013	Ongoing - GEM 2014 report will be published	20,000.00

Questions - Written Answers

Name of external Consultant/Organisation	Report Title	Date of Commission	Status/Date Published/Ongoing	Cost of Report** - €
Insight Statistical Consulting	Annual Employment Survey 2014 (AES)	November 2014	Published Feb 2015	5,882.60
Indecon Economic Consultants	Analysis of direct & indirect economic impacts on an export-led growth enterprise policy	December 2014	Complete – input to Enterprise 2025	48,275.00(14,482.00 paid in 2014; balance paid in 2015)
IDC	Harnessing Big Data for innovation led growth: an assessment of Ireland's progress and further policy requirements	July 2014– commissioned by Forfás	Complete – publication Q2 2015	56,690.00
CM International	Optimising Policy Intervention to Strengthen the Impacts of Enterprise RD&I in Ireland	August 2014	Complete – input to development of successor to SSTI analysisPublished 8th December 2015	36,469.00
Fitzpatrick Associates	Econometric analysis of effectiveness & impacts of agency supports	December 2014	Input to DJEI Evaluations of agency programmes. Published Q2 2015	47,970.00 (14,391.00 paid in 2014; balance paid in 2015)
Insight Statistical Consulting	Annual Business Survey of Economic Impact (ABSEI)	December 2013	ABSEI 2013 report published January 2015	44,034.00
PWC	Role of Intellectual Property	Q4 2013	Input to competitiveness analysis	15,612.00
PWC	Review of Insurance Costs	Q2 2014	Input to Costs of Doing Business 2015 and published 2015	34,440.00
PWC	Review of Public Procurement	Q4 2013	Input to competitiveness analysis	28,911.00
Technopolis	Strengthening Ireland's Market-Focussed Research Centre Capacity	July 2014– commissioned by Forfás	Complete – input to development of successor to SSTI analysis	84,255.00
Tom Martin and Associates	Higher Education Engagement by EGFSN	October 2014	Completed for EGFSN – not for publication	€11,931.00
AECOM	Assessing the Demand for Skills in the Freight Transport, Distribution and Logistics Sector in Ireland over the period 2014-2020	May 2014 – commissioned by Forfás	Input to EGFSN review - publication Q1 2015	€78,702.00(National Training Fund contribution €60,601.00)
DKM RPS	Water Services & Environmental waste Issues & Priorities for Enterprise	Commissioned by Forfás in early 2014	Ongoing - input to Forfás/DJEI submissions to regulator and competitiveness reports	50,353.00
Technopolis	A Mapping of Smart Ageing activity in Ireland and an assessment of the potential smart ageing opportunity areas	July 2014– commissioned by Forfás	Input to DJEI analysis – published Q2 2015	89,605.00

Name of external Consultant/Organisation	Report Title	Date of Commission	Status/Date Published/Ongoing	Cost of Report** - €
Cambridge IP	An Analysis of Intellectual Property Activity in Ireland based on the existing data Phase 1	April 2014– commissioned by Forfás	Input to DJEI analysis - publication Q1 2015	40,966.38
Technopolis	A Study on enhancing the Intellectual Property activities in the firm base in Ireland	September 2014	Input to DJEI analysis – publication Q2 2015	49,138.00
E&Y	Analysis of Sectoral Ecosystems - Input to Enterprise Policy 2025	Q2 2014 – Commissioned by Forfás	Enterprise 2025 Published November 2015	61,461.00
RSM McClure Waters	Study of the Current and Future skills requirements of the Marine/Maritime Economy to 2020	June 2014 - commissioned by Forfás	Input to EGFSN review – published Q1 2015	€82,502.25 (National Training Fund contribution €63,527)
Indecon Economic Consultants	Hospitality Sector - Hotels, Tourism and Catering	November 2014	Input to EGFSN review – published Q4 2015	€78,289.50 (€39,145.00 paid in 2014, balance payable 2015) National Training Fund Contribution €60,282.92

January – December 2013

Name of external Consultant/Organisation	Report Title	Date of Commission	Status Date Published/Ongoing	Cost of Report** €
Ward Solutions	ICT security reviews	Various dates	Internal ICT security assessments – not for publication	24,627.00
Fitzpatrick Associates	Export Licensing Administration Process Review	July 2012	Complete	47,417.00
Tom Martin & Associates/TMA	Youth Unemployment A review of wage costs and other factors which may affect the employment of young people in Ireland.	Q4 2013	Not for publication - Presented to the Troika in line with the terms of the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policy which is a component of the Memorandum of Understanding, September 2013, as part of which the Irish Government undertook to present a report in December 2013.	5,547.30
Janet Hughes	Labour Court Review of Joint labour Committees	February 2013	Published	17,835.00
RSM McClure Waters	The evaluation of the Workplace Relations Pilot Early Resolution Service	February 2013	Published September 2013	35,498.00

Questions - Written Answers

Name of external Consultant/Organisation	Report Title	Date of Commission	Status Date Published/Ongoing	Cost of Report** €
First Choice Financial Services Ltd and AJS Financial Advice Ltd	Credit Guarantee Scheme “Findings and Recommendations”	July 2013	September 2013	24,600.00

January – December 2012

Name of external Consultant/Organisation	Report Title	Date of Commission	Status/Date Published/Ongoing	Cost of Report** - €
Ward Solutions	Security reviews of ICT systems	Various dates	Internal ICT security assessments – not for publication	39,095.00
Version 1	ICT systems review – Patents Office	November 2011	Internal technology review – not for publication	29,667.00
Achilles Procurement Services Ltd.	Recommended Procurement Strategy for a Customer Relationship Management System (CRMS) from the Workplace Relations Commission and the Labour Court	July 2012	Published internally August 2012	2,560.00
Deloitte	Feasibility Study: Making Ireland an International Centre for Intellectual Property		Ongoing	102,872.62

March – December 2011

Name of external Consultant/Organisation	Report Title	Date of Commission	Status/Date Published/Ongoing	Cost of Report** - €
Rits	IT Security assessment of new hosting site in Revenue Hosting Centre	May 2011	Internal ICT security assessment – not for publication	7,093.00
Maxima Ireland	Computer Server Virtualisation Strategy Review	June 2011	Internal technology review – not for publication	8,276.00
UCD (Dr Frank Walsh)	Review of ERO and REA Wage Setting Mechanisms	Q1 - 2011	Published May 2011	15,000.00
Greater Heights Ltd	Learning Need Analysis (NERA Staff)	October 2010	Published	15,645.00
Capital for Enterprise Ltd.	Design of Temporary Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme	August 2011	Not for publication	59,565.00

Public Inquiries

134. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which he or his Department have been responsible by name, by terms of reference, by cost, including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded, by date including the projected date of conclusion where an inquiry has not been concluded from 1991 to date in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3785/16]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): No tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations have been established under the aegis of my Department since 1991 to date.

Departmental Agencies Expenditure

135. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the amount spent by Enterprise Ireland on promotional items in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015, inclusive; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3800/16]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The purchasing of promotional items by Enterprise Ireland is undertaken through a procurement framework in line with public sector procurement policies. This central procurement process is used to ensure value for money and centralised procurement. The variety of promotional items purchased is very wide and includes indoor and outdoor flags, pens, gifts for speakers at events, trade mission gifts, flag ropes, lapel pins/badges, branded clothing, e.g. shirts, etc. and notebooks for specific events. The procured items are for organisational promotion use at domestic and international events, trade missions and in Enterprise Ireland offices here and internationally.

Table 1 outlines the amount spent by Enterprise Ireland on promotional items in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015.

Table 1 - Expenditure on Promotional Items 2011 - 2015

Expenditure on Promotional items	2011 - €	2012 - €	2013 - €	2014 - €	2015 - €
	135,918	69,735	145,867	50,435	140,477

Departmental Agencies Expenditure

136. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the amount spent by the Personal Injuries Assessment Board on public relations and communications consultancy in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015, inclusive; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3801/16]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The payment for public relations and communications consultancy is a day-to-day matter for the Personal Injuries Assessment Board (PIAB), for which I have no direct function.

Departmental Agencies

137. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation

the respondent fee income and the respondent fee income per award accepted by the Personal Injuries Assessment Board for the calendar year 2015; if he has assessed if the level of respondent fees is justified, given the operating costs and net assets of the board; if he has assessed the direct and indirect contribution of the board's respondent fees to insurance costs; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3802/16]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The Personal Injuries Assessment Board (PIAB) operates as a self-funding State Agency through income generated from the fees charged to claimants and respondents. The amount of fees received by the PIAB during 2015 from claimants was €1,474,842 and from respondents was €10,281,622. Respondents' fees are levied when the respondent consents to an assessment being made by the PIAB. Where both parties accept the assessment, the matter is resolved without recourse to litigation, resulting in legally enforceable awards on a par with the Courts but with a lower administration cost arising. Section 22 of the Personal Injuries Assessment Board Act 2003 provides me as Minister with the power to impose charges in respect of applications made under the Act. Steps have been taken to reduce the level of fees for claimants and respondents and the level of fees are kept under review. In late 2010, PIAB recommended a reduction in the fees and this was accepted by the then Minister, and a reduction from €1,050 to €850 for respondents, and from €50 to €45 for claimants, was applied with effect from 1 February 2011.

In December 2012, I further reduced the fee to the respondent from €850 to €600 with effect from 1 January 2013, representing a 29% reduction on 2012 levels.

With the exception of motor insurance which falls under the remit of the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, the Minister for Finance has policy responsibility for insurance. The sector is regulated by the Central Bank. I have no direct policy responsibility for insurance.

The provision of insurance cover and the price at which it is offered is a commercial matter for insurance companies and is based on an assessment of the risks they are willing to accept and adequate provisioning to meet those risks. As a matter of course, insurance companies carry out reviews of the risks against which they are prepared to provide insurance and they consider these risks when determining their policies, including insurance premiums. There are many factors that influence the cost of insurance and some of the more significant factors include the frequency and scale of claims, the cost of claims and the operation of the insurance market.

I am aware that my colleague Minister Noonan has asked his Departmental officials to examine the factors which contribute to the increasing costs of insurance and this work is part of an overall review of the insurance sector which the Department of Finance are undertaking in consultation with the Central Bank and other Departments and agencies.

Ministerial Allowances

138. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the expenses claimed, including the amount of mileage and the amount claimed by him and Ministers of State of his Department, by calendar year during the current Dáil in tabular form. [3813/16]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): I have set out details of the travel related expenses claimed by me and the Ministers of State in my Department since the formation of the current Government in the following tables. The tables cover the period 2011 to 2015 and also include the annual kilometres travelled by car in undertaking

official business. There have been no travel claims processed for January 2016 yet. The payments made for kilometres travelled were paid in accordance with the rules and applicable rates sanctioned by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. The claims were made based on monthly odometer readings from the personal cars of each Minister.

Minister Damien English's responsibilities as Minister for Research, Innovation and Skills span this Department and the Department of Education and Skills. It was agreed in July 2014 that the Department of Education and Skills would administer and bear the cost of Minister English's travel claims except for foreign travel costs incurred undertaking duties directly falling under the remit of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

2011	Kilometres undertaken for official business (i.e travel by car)	Related Payment for kms travelled inc. tolls	Hotel Accommodation costs (National and International)	Subsistence/ Costs (Home)	Foreign Subsistence
Minister Bruton	13,555	€5,294.50	€280	0	0
Minister Perry	65,555	€22,537.70	0	0	€1,439.47
Minister Sherlock	48,540	€14,410.23	0	€125.11	€1,074.69
2012	Kilometres undertaken for official business (i.e travel by car)	Related Payment for kms travelled inc. tolls	Hotel Accommodation costs (National and International)	Subsistence/ Costs (Home)	Foreign Subsistence
Minister Bruton	17,396	€6,526.38	€940.46	0	0
Minister Perry	75,723	€28,721.59	€288.24	0	€373.79
Minister Sherlock	67,356	€20,710.70	0	0	€1,538.22
2013	Kilometres undertaken for official business (i.e travel by car)	Related Payment for kms travelled inc. tolls	Hotel Accommodation costs (National and International)	Subsistence Costs (Home)	Foreign Subsistence
Minister Bruton	12,900	€5,759.83	€130	0	0
Minister Perry	71,651	€26,833.43	0	0	0
Minister Sherlock	69,062	€21,977.75	0	0	€650.06
2014	Kilometres undertaken for official business (i.e travel by car)	Related Payment for kms travelled inc. tolls	Hotel Accommodation costs (National and International)	Subsistence Costs (Home)	Foreign Subsistence
Minister Bruton	16,638	€7,376.97	€919.08	0	0
Minister Perry	39,671	€17,630.01		€108.99	€1,323.02
Minister Sherlock	38,111	€14,268.23	0	0	0
Minister Nash	16,049	€6,489.25	0	0	€208.84
Minister English	0	0	€157.58	0	€198.91
2015	Kilometres undertaken for official business (i.e travel by car)	Related Payment for kms travelled inc. tolls	Hotel Accommodation costs (National and International)	Subsistence Costs (Home)	Foreign Subsistence
Minister Bruton	22,105	€7,682.75	€909.88	0	0
Minister Nash	36,247	€12,053.47	€154.60	0	€90.40

2015	Kilometres undertaken for official business (i.e travel by car)	Related Payment for kms travelled inc. tolls	Hotel Accommodation costs (National and International)	Subsistence Costs (Home)	Foreign Subsistence
Minister English	0	0	€630.65	0	€1,332,56

Departmental Expenditure

139. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the amount he spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015, inclusive; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3828/16]

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton): The total expenditure incurred by my Department on media monitoring services in each of the years 2011 to 2015 is set out in the following table.

In late 2012 my Department put in place a new arrangement for delivery of a press cuttings service which uses centralised technologies and has resulted in significant cost savings.

Expenditure Incurred by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and

Innovation on Media Monitoring Services over the period 2011 to 2015

Year	Total Expenditure Incurred on Media Monitoring Services
2011	€55,569
2012	€49,354
2013	€11,992
2014	€11,992
2015	€11,992
Total	€140,899

Animal Welfare

140. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he is aware of animal abuse suffered by greyhounds in the racing industry which includes lenient sanctions for persons who have committed grave abuses; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3539/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): Bord na gCon is the statutory body responsible for the regulation of greyhound racing under the Greyhound Industry Act 1958. It has specific powers conferred on it by the Greyhound Industry (Racing) Regulations 2007, S.I. 302 of 2007, which set out the detailed rules under which greyhound racing is conducted. The Irish Coursing Club (ICC) is the controlling authority for the breeding and coursing of greyhounds. The ICC is subject to the general control and direction of Bord na gCon under Section 26(2) of the Greyhound Industry Act, 1958.

The Welfare of Greyhounds Act 2011 specifies standards for greyhound welfare, establishes a register of Greyhound Breeding Establishments and regulates their operation. A code of Practice in the care and welfare of the greyhound has been established and published by Bord na gCon as per the requirements of the Welfare of Greyhounds Act 2011. The primary objective

of the Code of Practice is to set standards and clearly define what is expected of all individuals engaged in the care and management of registered greyhounds. Greyhound welfare at Bord na gCon is managed by the Welfare Manager.

I am assured that cases of cruelty and/or neglect which are reported to Bord na gCon are fully investigated and that sanctions under the Welfare of Greyhounds Act 2011 are imposed on persons who have been identified as being in breach of the Act. Persons found to have committed offences under the Welfare of Greyhounds Act 2011 are liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding €5000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both. Persons may also be prosecuted under the Animal Health & Welfare Act 2013. The Act makes it an offence to do, or fail to do anything or cause or permit anything to be done to an animal that causes unnecessary suffering to, or endanger the health or welfare of an animal. The Act provides for increased levels of penalties - summary conviction up to €5,000 and on indictment €250,000 and/or imprisonment up to 5 years with fixed penalty payments for lesser offences. In addition, both of these Acts contain provisions permitting the imposition of fixed notice administrative sanctions in cases of less serious breaches of the legislation. The number of monthly Welfare and Kennel Inspections carried out by Bord na gCon Welfare Officers may be viewed on Bord na gCon's website and information on the sanctions which have been imposed on persons who, following Bord na gCon investigations, have been identified as being in breach of the of the Welfare of Greyhounds Act 2011 is also published on Bord na gCon's website.

Areas of Natural Constraint Scheme Payments

141. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will review a payment under the areas of natural constraint scheme for a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3472/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The person named submitted a 2015 Basic Payment/Areas of Natural Constraint Scheme application on 28 May 2015. EU Regulations governing the administration of these schemes require that full and comprehensive administrative checks, including in some cases on farm inspections, be completed before any payments issue. The 2015 Basic Payment Scheme/Areas of Natural Constraint application of the person named was selected for a remote sensing inspection. This inspection resulted in a reduction in the area claimed 19.62HA to a found area of 14.34HA. As the amount of entitlements held by the person named is lower than the amount of area claimed, there was no monetary reduction under the Basic Payment Scheme and payments due issued to the nominated bank account on 17 December 2015. This inspection resulted in findings of an over-declaration in area of greater than 20% in respect of the Areas of Natural Constraint scheme. Based on the terms and conditions of the scheme this resulted in no payment in respect of that scheme. The person named was informed of this outcome on 18 December 2015. The person named has appealed this decision and this request is currently being examined. The person named will be notified of the outcome as soon as possible.

In the event that the person named is dissatisfied with the outcome of this review, the decision can be appealed to the independent Agriculture Appeals Office, within 3 months.

Agriculture Scheme Payments

142. **Deputy Noel Harrington** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if all farm payments for 2015 have been paid to a person (details supplied) in County Cork; and

if he will make a statement on the matter. [3490/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): An application under the 2015 Basic Payment/Areas of Natural Constraints (ANC) Scheme was received from the person named on 13 May 2015. Processing of the Areas of Natural Constraints application has been finalised. However, payment has not yet issued due to outstanding information required. An official from my Department has been in direct contact with the person named and is currently awaiting Grant of Probate documentation. On receipt of this outstanding documentation, the ANC application will be further processed with a view to payment at the earliest possible date.

Processing of the Basic Payment Scheme application has been completed. Advance payment has issued. However, the Balancing Payment due cannot be made pending clarification of Grant of Probate position.

A representative from the Inheritance Inquiry Unit, which deals with all Department related issues relating to inheritance will be in contact with the person named in the coming days.

Agriculture Scheme Payments

143. **Deputy Timmy Dooley** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine when a person (details supplied) in County Clare will receive farm payments; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3513/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): An application under the 2015 Basic Payment/Areas of Natural Constraints (ANC) Scheme was received from the person named on 22 May 2015. Payment under the ANC scheme has issued to the nominated bank account of the person named on 2 November 2015. The person named submitted a 2015 Transfer of Allocation Right and Reference Value application to my Department seeking the transfer of allocation rights and values by change of registration details to a Company. This application was fully processed and the person named received the first instalment of 70% of his Basic Payment Scheme payment on 28 October and the second instalment of 27% on 7 December 2015. The final 3% instalment will be issued in April 2016.

The person named also submitted a 2015 Private Contract Clause application to my Department seeking the transfer of land and entitlements by lease to the Company as transferee. An official from my Department has been in touch with the transferor and transferee in this application regarding an issue in relation to a land parcel listed as part of the transfer. Once this issue is resolved the application can be further processed with a view to payment on the entitlements that are the subject of this application issuing as soon as possible.

Grant Aid

144. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the status of grant aid for a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3519/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The person-named applied and was approved for grant aid for creep feeders under the Sheep Handling Scheme in June 2014. All such works had to be completed and any claims for payment submitted before end-August 2015. No such claim was received from the person named. My Depart-

ment did attempt to ring him using the mobile number supplied by him with his application to remind him of the closing date but the number supplied appears to be incorrect. However, a text message from the Department's central SMS facility was successfully delivered to a second number registered to the person named, advising of the impending closing date for the scheme.

Rural Environment Protection Scheme Payments

145. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the status of a payment to a person (details supplied) in County Kerry under the rural environment protection scheme 2012; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3524/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The person name joined REPS4 on 1 May 2008. He continued his participation in REPS4 for a period of 5 years and 8 months and his participation under the Scheme ended on 31 December 2013. He received his final REPS4 payment for the 2013 Scheme Year in February 2014.

On further examination, however, it was found that the person named was no longer farming the full contract area under his REPS4 application on which he had initially entered the Scheme. As a result, a clawback was applied to his payments, which included retrospective clawback to payments made for previous years, as set out in the Terms and Conditions of the Scheme. The person named was notified of the clawback amount and the reason for the clawback by Department letter dated 17 October 2013.

The case was reviewed by the Regional Inspector at the applicant's request but the review found that there was no reason for reducing the clawback amount. The person named was notified of outcome of the review by letter dated 12 November 2015. He was also informed that if he was not satisfied with the decision of the Regional Inspector he could appeal that decision directly to the independent Agriculture Appeals Office within 3 months of the date of the review letter.

Agriculture Scheme Payments

146. **Deputy Timmy Dooley** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine when a person (details supplied) in County Clare will receive farm payments; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3525/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): Department records indicate that the second person named is deceased. At present the Department do not have any legal documents in relation to the estate of the deceased. The Inheritance Enquiry Unit of the Department will be in touch with the legal representative of the estate to obtain the legal documentation required to release outstanding payments due to the estate.

Fishing Industry Development

147. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine his views on correspondence (details supplied) regarding fishing; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3530/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): My Department's Operational Programme under the European Fisheries Fund provided funding for the

development of the seafood sector over the period 2008 to 2015. The Programme was funded through an EU allocation of approximately €42 million and €24 million in Exchequer funding, bringing total funds to approximately €66 million. The Programme ended in December 2015 and funding for the seafood sector is now provided through my Department's new €240 million EMFF Seafood Development Operational Programme, which I formally launched on 14 January 2016.

The accounts for the EFF Programme are not yet finalised, so I cannot provide the Deputy with a final figure on how much in EU or Exchequer funds were invested and how much was unused at the end of the Programme. Present estimates from my Department suggest that in the region of €2 million in EU funds were unused, giving a drawdown rate of 95%. This would be a very successful outcome for any EU funding programme and will compare very favourably with other Member States. It is worth noting that all of the funds available were awarded to investment projects, but inevitably some do not proceed, while others do not avail of the full amount of funds offered to them. When this happens in the final year of the Programme there is no scope to re-allocate funds to other projects.

In July 2015, the Irish Salmon Growers Association published its report '*Potential for Land Based Salmon Growout in Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS) in Ireland*'. The report describes in detail all technical aspects of RAS production and system design and operations. It also covers important biological aspects of land based salmon production. The Report states that its main aim is to assess the viability of land based salmon production in RAS under Irish conditions. This includes detailed information of capital expenditure and operational costs as well as the market situation for salmon. The core conclusions of the report are that RAS is a proven technology and has a role to play in the freshwater part of the life cycle of salmon; It is technically possible to produce market size salmon in an RAS system but based on the assumptions in the report, in Ireland, the capital cost of setting up a large scale commercial unit is very high; There are also still technical difficulties to be overcome to achieve reliability in the production of saltwater salmon in land based facilities.

I understand that the production of this Report cost €8,600 and that this was 100% funded by Bord Iascaigh Mhara through a 2014 call for projects under the Aquaculture Knowledge, Innovation and Technology Scheme.

I am advised by BIM that it has carefully considered the Report and is not aware of any inaccuracies in the report. Based on BIM's own knowledge of the topic and informed from a number of sources, BIM considers the report to be thorough and that its findings are reasonable.

I was delighted to publish in December 2015 Ireland's National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development. That Plan proposes 24 actions to drive the sustainable development of the aquaculture sector and grow production in the sector by 45,000 tonnes by 2023. The Plan targets a 30% increase in production derived from recirculating aquaculture systems. Considerable international developmental effort is being put into determining the commercial viability of land based RAS systems for the large scale production of salmon. There appears to be a market niche for such a product if the current technological challenges associated with an economically viable production system can be overcome. On 14 January 2016, I launched a new Aquaculture '*Knowledge Gateway Scheme*' as part of my Department's '*EMFF Seafood Development Operational Programme*'. I have provided BIM with a budget of €8.2 million for that Scheme. In close collaboration with aquaculture enterprises and researchers, the Scheme aims to develop knowledge, innovation and technology in the aquaculture sector to ensure its sustainable development. An important part of the focus of the Scheme will be the applied research and development required into RAS, identified on page 66 of the National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development.

Basic Payment Scheme Payments

148. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will expedite an application by a person (details supplied) in County Donegal under the basic payment scheme 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3544/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The person named submitted an application under the 2015 Basic Payment Scheme which was received in the Department on 18 May 2015. Final processing of this application has been completed and the balancing payment will issue shortly to the nominated bank account of the person named.

Departmental Funding

149. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the funding he allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituency of Louth-East Meath, by project and initiative, by completion date and by cost, for the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3554/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): It is not possible to provide this information in the required time. I will forward it to the Deputy as soon as it is available.

Agriculture Scheme Payments

150. **Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine when payment will issue to a person (details supplied) in County Galway under the 2015 basic payment scheme and the areas of natural constraint scheme; the reason for the delay; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3588/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): An application under the Basic Payment/Areas of Natural Constraint Scheme was received from the person named on 28 May, 2015. Processing of the application and associated documentation (including commonage evidence) is currently in progress. On completion of this process, the application will be further reviewed with a view to payment issuing directly to the nominated bank account of the person named at the earliest possible date.

Basic Payment Scheme Eligibility

151. **Deputy Noel Grealish** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine further to Parliamentary Question No. 226 of 19 January 2016, how many persons in counties Galway and Mayo had reductions in their agriculture grants as a result of previously eligible land being reviewed and removed as a result of that land being part of a special area of conservation, by county, in each of the years 2013 to 2015; if he will assist persons in this situation, given that this was not addressed in his answer; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3602/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The act of designating land as a Special Area of Conservation does not deem land ineligible under the Basic Payment Scheme. Officials in my Department are in direct contact with the Deputy to clarify the position on the matter raised in the question.

GLAS Data

152. **Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the number of applications received for tranche 2 of green low-carbon agri-environment scheme; the number of applicants from each tier who have been informed of their acceptance into the scheme, with contracts commencing on 1 January 2016; the average annual payment approved for these applicants; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3612/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): GLAS 2, the second tranche of the Green Low-carbon Agri-Environment Scheme, closed for submission of applications in mid December. A total of 14,041 applications were successfully submitted before the deadline.

My Department has completed its assessment of all applications in line with the requirements set out in the scheme Terms and Conditions and, as I announced earlier today, I am very pleased to say that a further 11,500 farmers will be approved to join GLAS under this tranche. All will have a 1 January commencement date. This brings the total number of farmers in the Scheme to some 38,000 - a record number of entrants to an agri-environment scheme in a single year. The unprecedented level of interest represents a huge endorsement of the new Scheme by Irish farmers and delivers on this Government's commitment to implementing an accessible agri-environment scheme which recognises the critical role played by Irish farmers in protecting and enhancing our natural resources. Formal letters of approval are issuing to successful applicants this week.

The very high demand for the new Scheme means that priority is being given to what are called Tier 1 and Tier 2 candidates, as required under the Rural Development Programme. Tier 1 and Tier 2 candidates are those who either manage key environmental assets like endangered birds, protected habitats or high-quality water courses, or who have committed to undertake particularly valuable environmental actions like growing feed-crops for wild birds, adopting low-impact tillage techniques or using low-emission slurry spreading methods. Farmers had been urged to present the highest standard environmental plans under GLAS 2, and to adopt actions that would promote them to Tier 2 or even Tier 1 status and I am delighted that so many have opted to do so. Applications from 7,097 Tier 1 candidates were received and 6,746 of these are being approved immediately, with the balance under review. For Tier 2, a total of 4,198 applications were received and 3,975 of these are being approved immediately, with the balance similarly under review.

I can also confirm that all GLAS 2 applications from new entrants to farming in 2015, and from new farm partnerships, are being granted priority access under this round, including applications by Tier 3 candidates. These are applicants who had been unable to apply under GLAS 1, for technical reasons, and I am very happy to be able to accommodate these farmers under this round. In terms of the average value of contracts, it is not possible to establish this accurately until payment claims are submitted as part of the 2016 Basic Payment Scheme process, and pre-payment validations are completed.

A further tranche of the Scheme will be launched in the Autumn, and those who were unsuccessful this time round will be free to apply again, or indeed to upgrade their applications to increase their chance of success. The progress to date on GLAS leaves me in no doubt that our total target of 50,000 participants will be met in this third tranche of the Scheme.

Forestry Grants

153. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if grant aid is available to replant forestry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3622/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): There is no grant aid available to replant a forest after it has been harvested. Forestry is a sustainable commercial venture, enabling the landowner to sustain his investment and hence, replanting operations do not attract subsidies.

Agriculture Scheme Payments

154. **Deputy Paul J. Connaughton** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine why payments in respect of two calves disposed of as a result of bovine viral diarrhoea were not made to a person (details supplied) in County Galway. [3623/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The person named submitted an application for compensation under the 2013 BVD Compensation Programme for Beef Breed Animals born in 2013 on the 25 November 2013. The person named had one calf persistently infected (PI) with BVD born in 2013. The scheme provided that payment would be made in respect of the second and subsequent PIs removed to the knackery within a specified timeframe. As the person named had only one PI in 2013 he is not eligible for payment under the Scheme.

The person named also had a PI positive animal born in 2011. However there was no BVD Compensation Programme for farmers who had persistently infected calves born in their herds in 2011.

Basic Payment Scheme Payments

155. **Deputy Paul J. Connaughton** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine when he will issue payment to a person (details supplied) in County Galway under the young farmer scheme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3624/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The person named is not an applicant under the Young Farmer Scheme. The person named submitted a 2015 Private Contract Clause application to my Department seeking the transfer of land and entitlements by lease as transferee. She has also submitted an application for an allocation of Basic Payment Scheme entitlements under the Scottish Derogation measure. Outstanding issues with the transferor in the Private Contract Clause application are currently preventing the processing of these applications.

Agriculture Scheme Payments

156. **Deputy Paul J. Connaughton** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine when he will issue payment to a person (details supplied) in County Galway under the young farmer scheme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3625/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The person named submitted applications under the 2015 National Reserve and the Young Farmers Scheme to my Department under the above herd number. This herd number had transferred into the name of the person named in January 2015. Outstanding issues in relation to the person who

previously held the herd number are currently preventing the processing of the applications submitted by the person named.

Agri-Environment Options Scheme Payments

157. **Deputy Paul J. Connaughton** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine when he will issue payment to a person (details supplied) in County Galway under the agri-environment options scheme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3626/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The person named was approved for participation in the Agri Environment Options Scheme (AEOS 2) with effect from 1 September 2011.

Under the EU Regulations governing the Scheme and other area-based payment schemes, a comprehensive administrative check, including cross-checks with the Land Parcel Identification System, must be completed before any payment can issue. The application of the person named was selected for an on-farm inspection in 2015, during which non-compliances with the Terms and Conditions of the Scheme were noted in relation to the Planting New Hedgerow and Traditional Stone Wall Maintenance actions. The person named was notified of the inspection finding on the 16 November 2015.

The application will now be processed on the basis of the inspection findings and payment in respect of the 2015 Scheme year, less penalty, will issue at the earliest opportunity.

Agri-Environment Options Scheme Payments

158. **Deputy Paul J. Connaughton** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine when he will issue payment to a person (details supplied) in County Galway under the agri-environment options scheme; the reason for the delay; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3628/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The person named commenced their AEOS 1 contract on 1 September 2010 and has been paid for the 2010-2014 scheme years.

Under the EU Regulations governing the Scheme and other area-based payment schemes, a comprehensive administrative check, including cross-checks with the Land Parcel Identification System must take place. As it is their final scheme year, re-checks on payments made for all scheme years must be completed before final payment can be processed. It is expected that these checks will be completed shortly.

Agriculture Scheme Payments

159. **Deputy Brendan Smith** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the total payments made to persons in County Cavan under the 2015 single farm payment, disadvantaged areas, rural environment protection and agri-environment options schemes; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3629/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The information required is outlined in the following table.

Scheme	Beneficiaries	Amount paid
BPS	4,619	€31,696,392.40
ANC	4,548	€9,276,643.78
AEOS	431	€1,452,824.91
REPS 4	125	€570,513

Agriculture Scheme Payments

160. **Deputy Brendan Smith** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the total payments made to persons in County Monaghan under the 2015 single farm payment, disadvantaged areas, rural environment protection and agri-environment options schemes; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3630/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The information required is outlined in the following table.

Scheme	Beneficiaries	Amount paid
BPS	3,929	€26,824,146.00
ANC	3,823	€7,194,721.33
AEOS	317	€1,003,429.51
REPS 4	111	€504,299.00

European Fisheries Fund

161. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine to confirm if the Government has handed back €5 million or any other amount to the European Fisheries Fund; and if so, the reason why. [3631/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): My Department's Operational Programme under the European Fisheries Fund provided funding for the development of the seafood sector over the period 2008 to 2015. The Programme was funded through an EU allocation of approximately €42 million and €24 million in Exchequer funding, bringing total funds to approximately €66 million. The Programme ended in December 2015 and funding for the seafood sector is now provided through my Department's new €240 million EMFF Seafood Development Operational Programme, which I formally launched on 14 January 2016.

The accounts for the EFF Programme are not yet finalised, so I cannot provide the Deputy with a final figure on how much in EU or Exchequer funds were invested and how much was unused at the end of the Programme. Present estimates from my Department suggest that in the region of €2 million in EU funds were unused, giving a drawdown rate of 95%. This would be a very successful outcome for any EU funding programme and will compare very favourably with other Member States. It is worth noting that all of the funds available were awarded to investment projects, but inevitably some do not proceed, while others do not avail of the full amount of funds offered to them. When this happens in the final year of the Programme there is no scope to re-allocate funds to other projects.

Fish Farming

162. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he

is aware of inaccuracies in a recent report entitled potential for land based salmon grow out in recirculating aquaculture systems, RAS, in Ireland, which concludes that salmon farming in land-based RAS facilities here is unviable, and this may have influenced Ireland's funding policy for land-based aquaculture. [3632/16]

163. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if Bord Iascaigh Mhara has assessed the accuracy and validity of the contents of a report (details supplied) and the conclusions reached in the report; and if Bord Iascaigh Mhara concurs with its findings. [3633/16]

164. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine did Bord Iascaigh Mhara or any other agency or body under his control, grant aid a report (details supplied); the cost of the report; the percentage of grant aid that was approved for it; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3634/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): I propose to take Questions Nos. 162 to 164, inclusive, together.

In July 2015, the Irish Salmon Growers Association published its report '*Potential for Land Based Salmon Growout in Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS) in Ireland*'. The report describes in detail all technical aspects of RAS production and system design and operations. It also covers important biological aspects of land based salmon production. The Report states that its main aim is to assess the viability of land based salmon production in RAS under Irish conditions. This includes detailed information of capital expenditure and operational costs as well as the market situation for salmon. The core conclusions of the report are that RAS is a proven technology and has a role to play in the freshwater part of the life cycle of salmon. It is technically possible to produce market size salmon in an RAS system but based on the assumptions in the report, in Ireland, the capital cost of setting up a large scale commercial unit is very high. There are also still technical difficulties to be overcome to achieve reliability in the production of saltwater salmon in land based facilities. I understand that the production of this Report cost €8,600 and that this was 100% funded by Bord Iascaigh Mhara through a 2014 call for projects under the Aquaculture Knowledge, Innovation and Technology Scheme.

I am advised by BIM that it has carefully considered the Report and is not aware of any inaccuracies in the report. Based on BIM's own knowledge of the topic and informed from a number of sources, BIM considers the report to be thorough and that its findings are reasonable.

I was delighted to publish in December 2015 Ireland's National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development. That Plan proposes 24 actions to drive the sustainable development of the aquaculture sector and grow production in the sector by 45,000 tonnes by 2023. The Plan targets a 30% increase in production derived from recirculating aquaculture systems. Considerable international developmental effort is being put into determining the commercial viability of land based RAS systems for the large scale production of salmon. There appears to be a market niche for such a product if the current technological challenges associated with an economically viable production system can be overcome. On 14 January 2016, I launched a new Aquaculture '*Knowledge Gateway Scheme*' as part of my Department's '*EMFF Seafood Development Operational Programme*'. I have provided BIM with a budget of €8.2 million for that Scheme. In close collaboration with aquaculture enterprises and researchers, the Scheme aims to develop knowledge, innovation and technology in the aquaculture sector to ensure its sustainable development. An important part of the focus of the Scheme will be the applied research and development required into RAS, identified on page 66 of the National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development.

Departmental Properties

165. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the properties and sites owned by his Department in Killybegs, County Donegal, in tabular form; the current status of each, including the date on which each unit was acquired; the duration for which each vacant property has remained unoccupied; the efforts he has made to offer such properties for lease or sale to interested parties for various uses; the number of expressions of interest received with respect to each; where properties were offered but no agreement was reached, the reason why these offers were rejected; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3656/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The property portfolio in Killybegs Fishery Harbour Centre, one of the six designated Fishery Harbour Centres which are owned, managed and maintained by my Department under Statute, encompasses a range of diverse properties reflecting its remit as a working fishery harbour and its unique features which facilitate a broad range of other diverse activities which are important from both an economic and social perspective. Killybegs Fishery Harbour Centre (including all properties contained therein) was vested in the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries by virtue of Statutory Instrument number 210 of 1969 (as amended).

My Department manages the property portfolio, working within the Government Framework for the management of State property and other relevant legal frameworks. It is conscious of balancing the need to generate an economic return with fostering a diverse range of maritime activities and delivering on its public service remit. In this context my Department reviews the portfolio of properties on an ongoing basis.

There are 33 properties/sites on the Killybegs Fishery Harbour Centre portfolio which are managed by my Department. Of these 9 are occupied by commercial entities, 10 are occupied by State/Public Bodies to support the fishing industry, 5 are used by my Department for operational reasons and a further 3 are used for the provision of utilities. I am not in a position to provide details of individual property arrangements for confidentiality reasons.

The level of vacant properties/sites within the FHCs can vary from time to time due to changes in tenancies, expiration of leases etc and also for operational reasons. At present there are 6 vacant properties/sites in Killybegs. Two of these sites are about to be made available by public tender competition by my Department with the announcements planned for the end of this week. These same sites were last tendered in 2013 and the competition did not attract any interested parties. The remaining 4 vacant sites are not currently available for tender due to legal, planning or operational considerations.

Common Fisheries Policy

166. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine further to Parliamentary Question No. 414 of 13 January 2016, to address the specific issues posed in the question. [3670/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): I must apologise to the Deputy for an administrative error which saw the following reply to her original question misallocated.

Under Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 (the new Common Fisheries Policy basic regulation), changes to fisheries policy involving access or restriction to fishing opportunities or fish-

ing areas come within the sole competency of the EU. Only the EU Commission may propose changes and any such proposal must be adopted under the co-decision process by the EU Parliament and EU Council. Member States, in consultation with the Commission, Member States affected and stakeholders are only permitted to introduce non-discriminatory measures for the conservation and management of fish stocks within the 12 mile zone subject to compliance with policy and procedures set down in CFP Regulation.

The monitoring and control of fishing vessels within Ireland's Exclusive Fisheries Zone are matters for the Irish control authorities. Under the Sea Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act, 2006, all operational issues of this nature concerning sea fisheries control are, as a matter of law, exclusively for the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) and the Naval Service. As Minister, I am precluded from getting involved in operational matters including in relation to law enforcement.

In relation to the overall framework for fisheries control in the EU, in October 2009 a new regulation dealing with fisheries controls was adopted. Council Regulation 1224/2009 establishes a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy. Control and inspection is now focused where it is most effective through an approach based on systematic risk analysis. Inspection procedures are standardised and harmonised for all stages in the market chain, including transport and marketing. The Control Regulations were introduced so that there is a common EU level playing field and to provide for an effective range of controls across EU waters.

The SFPA and the Naval Service through the Fisheries Monitoring Centre have monitored the movements of these vessels when in our Exclusive Fisheries Zone, using the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), Automatic Identification System (AIS) and declared catches through Electronic Reporting System (ERS).

The SFPA is reliant on the seagoing fishery patrol activity of the Naval Service to verify compliance of vessels not landing into Ireland. The Sea Fisheries Protection Authority has advised that pelagic freezer trawler activity in the Irish Exclusive Fisheries Zone decreased significantly over the Christmas period with most of the vessels returning to port in the Netherlands in late December. It advises that several vessels have returned and despite problematic weather conditions the Irish Navy conducted two inspections within this group of vessels late in 2015, and three further inspections this month. It advises that additional inspections will be undertaken as appropriate and practicable.

Basic Payment Scheme Payments

167. Deputy Charlie McConalogue asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the reason for the delay in payment being issued to persons (details supplied) in County Donegal under the 2015 basic payment scheme and areas of natural constraint scheme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3677/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): An application under the 2015 Basic Payment/Areas of Natural Constraints (ANC) Scheme was received from the persons named on 13 May 2015. Payment under the ANC scheme has issued to the nominated bank account of the person named. The persons named submitted 2015 Transfer of Allocation Right and Reference Value and Private Contract Clause applications to my Department. As the herd number is now held jointly by both persons named it was necessary to have the Private Contract Clause application signed by both persons on the herd number. The amended application was received by my Department and is currently being processed with a

view to payment under the Basic Payment Scheme issuing as soon as possible.

The second person named has also submitted applications under the National Reserve and the Young Farmers Scheme to my Department. Once payment under the Basic Payment Scheme has been made, the applications submitted by the second person named will be finalised with a view to payment as soon as possible thereafter.

Sheepmeat Sector

168. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide a ewe premium of €20 to encourage the increase in sheep numbers; if he will provide a targeted agricultural environmental scheme for uplands; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3693/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The sheep sector is an important component of our agriculture sector and the third largest farming sector in Ireland with over 34,000 producers. 2015 proved to be another good year for the sheep sector. A combination of higher carcase weight (up 1.9%) and higher factory prices (up 1.5%) meant that output value of the sector increased by over 3%. Total sheepmeat exports increased by an estimated 5% to €230 million between 2014 and 2015. At farm level, prices reached highs not seen in five years and thankfully these strong prices have continued into this year.

Sheep farmers will continue to benefit under the same wide range of schemes and supports that are available to farmers in other sectors. This includes, inter alia, the Basic Payments Scheme, which itself took into account payments under the former Grassland Sheep Scheme, and various schemes under the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014 -2020 that have been designed to support the sheep sector. Many sheep farmers continue to be significant beneficiaries from the Areas of Natural Constraints (ANC) scheme. The ANC Scheme is worth €195 million annually to some 100,000 farmers and in excess of €1.3 billion over the life time of the RDP. The GLAS scheme in the RDP will also benefit sheep farmers, many of whom qualify for priority Tier 1 access to GLAS as a result of their Priority Environmental Assets, which include Natura land and Commonage.

Increased provision has been made for improving efficiency and profitability in sheep production under Knowledge Transfer Groups. It is expected that the sheep Knowledge Transfer Groups will commence in the first quarter of 2016. A range of capital supports for sheep farmers is also available under the TAMS II scheme including grant aided support for sheep housing and both mobile and fixed handling equipment for sheep.

In relation to a further direct payment per ewe, such a coupled payment would generally come from the CAP Pillar 1 direct payments funded by the EU. This would involve cuts in other farm payments as the overall Pillar 1 funding envelope is strictly defined. A nationally-funded payment would raise issues of exchequer funding availability and would also have to pass a strict EU state aid test. Finally, under CAP Pillar 2/RDP, funding is already being provided as outlined already. Any consideration of further funding for the sheep sector under the RDP could only be considered within an overall review of RDP implementation when a full examination is undertaken of the performance of all existing measures and any emerging priorities.

Growth in the sheep and hill farming sector will come from an increase in consumer demand and export market opportunities as well as from improved technical efficiencies. My Department continues to search for new markets in cooperation with Bord Bia, Irish Embassies abroad and the meat industry. Last year Commissioner Hogan set up the Sheepmeat Reflections

Group to examine the sheep sector and the support it needs going forward in order to continue to make an important contribution to agricultural output and to fragile economic areas. Ireland is participating fully in the new group and it is hoped that their deliberations will contribute to ensuring the sustainability of the sector into the future.

Turning to the possibility of a targeted agri-environmental scheme for the uplands, the possibility of introducing such a scheme or schemes is being considered as part of the proposed new Locally-Led Measure of my Department, which is being discussed at present with the European Commission. The first of the Locally-Led schemes to be rolled out will be the Burren Programme, for which applications have already been received and work is progressing on other schemes which will be included under the Locally-Led umbrella later in 2016 and 2017. Freshwater pearl mussel catchments, hen harrier habitats and peat uplands have all been identified as candidates for support. Other candidates will emerge from a competitive process which will be announced towards the end of 2016. However, it should be noted that for the most part, the Locally-Led approach provides for relatively small-scale interventions targeting quite specific environmental challenges. A much broader-based approach to supporting effective management of the uplands already exists in the form of the Commonages measure under GLAS, which offers farmers payment of €120 per hectare per annum, with a maximum of €5,000 a year over five years.

Consultancy Contracts Data

169. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [3760/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The information requested by the Deputy is provided in the table. Some of the reports outlined are mandatory in the context of EU obligations.

2011: March- December

Company	Title of Report	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Costs - €
University College Dublin	Evaluation of the EU School Fruit Scheme/Food Dude Programme in Ireland 2011 - Commission Regulation 288 of 2009	10 January 2012	4,500
University College Dublin	EU School Fruit Scheme/Food Dude Programme in Ireland – A review of evaluations completed to date - Commission Regulation 288 of 2009	6 February 2012	6,388
Drima Marketing Ltd	Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JSFO) 2010 Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE) 2010 Market Report for Ireland for the Timber Committee 2010	May 2011 January 2012 Sept 2011	12,792
Rockwell Automation	Hazard and Operability Study	13 December 2011	3,740
Fitzpatrick Associates	Interim Evaluation, of 2007-2013 SDP	3 June 2011	39,325

Company	Title of Report	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Costs - €
Brendan Riordan, Research Economist	The Net Contribution of the Agri-Food Sector to the Inflow of Funds into Ireland: a New Estimate	23 July 2012	6,000
Accenture	An analysis of an internal review of procurement.	Not for external publication.	Work done on a pro-bono basis
Accenture	An examination of the opportunities and capacity for further shared services between the Department and its non-commercial state agencies.	Not for external publication.	Work done on a pro-bono basis
Accenture	A review of the Department's role in regulating meat plants	Not for external publication.	Work done on a pro-bono basis
KPMG	An examination of the administration of the Single Payment Scheme.	13 October 2011	Work done on a pro-bono basis
Fitzmaurice Tingle Ltd.	Refrigeration Consultancy on 6 Fishery Harbour Centre Sites	Not for external Publication	3,505
Brian Scott	Port Security Assessment- Castleownbere Fishery Harbour Centre	Not for external Publication	4,680
Deloitte Ireland	To examine recommendations of the Report of the Review Group on State Assets and Liabilities as applicable to be this Department to value the assets referred to and to make a series of recommendations. For internal Departmental information	Not for external publication	Work done on a pro-bono basis
Michael Dowling	Beef 2020 Activation Group: Growing the Beef Sector	June 2011 – for input into FH 2020 Committee	10,000
Stiofan Nutty	Report on the Development of Ireland's Organic Industry and an Organic and an Irish Organic Trade Board.	For internal Departmental information Not for external publication	29,040
Briggs Environmental Services	Oil Spill Contingency Plans	Not for external Publication	4,424
Deloitte Ireland	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine – Annual Accounts Certification. Required by EU Legislation.	Not for external publication.	509,830

2012: January- December

Company	Title of Report	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Costs - €
Drima Marketing Ltd	Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JSFO) 2011 Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE) 2011 Market Report for Ireland for the Timber Committee 2011)	May 2012, 3 July 2012 Sept 2012	12,792
Irish Equine Centre	Demographic study on the unwanted horse population in Ireland	March 2012	10,000
Indecon	Review of certain aspects of the Irish Horse Racing Industry	20 July 2012	59,225
CMG Crime Management Ltd	ISPS Port Security Plan- Castleownbere Fishery Harbour Centre	Not for external Publication	3,198

Questions - Written Answers

Company	Title of Report	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Costs - €
Philip Farrelly & Co. Ltd	Food Harvest 2020 – Environmental Analysis Report	January 2014	229,610
Team BDS	Lean Review of the Meat Inspection Service	16 December 2013	98,597
Compass Informatics Ltd	Independent specialist review of all Geographical Information based computer systems in the Department, carried out as part of the effective and efficient administration of the Department's EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) based payment schemes.	Not for external publication.	16,254
Deloitte Ireland	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine – Annual Accounts Certification. Requirement of EU Legislation.	Not for external publication	514,169

2013: January- December

Company	Title of Report	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Costs - €
Norfolk Marine	Survey works report to Killybegs Fishery Harbour Centre	Not for external Publication	10,828
Brian Scott	Port Facility Review, Killybegs	Not for external Publication	1,200
Drima Marketing Ltd	Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JSFO) 2012 Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE) 2012 Market Report for Ireland for the UNECE Timber Committee 2012)	May 2013 July 2013 October 2013	11,400
Fitzpatrick Associates Economic Consultants	Ex Ante Evaluation, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment of the 2014 – 2020 Rural Development Programme	July 2015	48,401
Judith A Annett Country-side Consultancy	Irish Deer Management Policy Vision	Not for external publication	2,500
Forest Solutions	NPV and IRR analysis for New afforestation scheme	Not for external publication	1,968
Deloitte Ireland	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Annual Accounts Certification. Requirement of EU legislation	Not for external publication	468,277

2014: January- December

Company	Title of Report	Date or expected Date of Publication	Cost - €
Indecon	Review of certain matters relating to Bord na gCon	7 July 2014	60,885
Deloitte	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine -Annual Accounts Certification as required by EU legislation	Not for external publication	452,699

Company	Title of Report	Date or expected Date of Publication	Cost - €
RSM McClure Watters	Ex Ante Evaluation, SEA and AA of Seafood Development Programme 2014-2020	24 June 2015	64,083
NTA Monitor Ltd	Independent assessments of the Department's IT security measures and security review of the Department's infrastructure. Required for EU accreditation purposes.	Not for external publication.	18,382
Drima Marketing Ltd	Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JSFO) 2013 Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE) 2013 Market Report for Ireland for the Timber Committee 2013	Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire- completed May 2014 and submitted to the EUROSTAT/FAO Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE) 2013- published as part of CO-FORD Woodflow 2013 in July 2014 UNECE report - was completed September/October 2014 for submission to the UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest industry.	11,780
RSM McClure Watters (Consulting)	Ex Ante Evaluation Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment of 2014-2020 Forestry	Published in 2014 as part of the consultative process on the new Forestry programme	97,508
Forest Solutions	NPV and IRR analysis for new forestry for Fibre scheme	Was not specifically published but formed part of the deliberative and consultative process on the new Forestry programme	2,214
Forest Solutions	Cost Benefit Analysis- Forest Roads Programme 2014-2020	Was not specifically published but formed part of the deliberative and consultative process on the new Forestry programme	2,952
Freshwater Bivalve Investigations Freshwater Bivalve Investigations	Site Assessment of the River Lickey Site Assessment of the River Lickey	Not for external publication Not for external publication	5,040 2,769
Occupational Physiotherapy Solutions	To conduct an ergonomic assessment of tasks in Cork Blood Testing Laboratory. Internal use only.	Not for external publication	1,347
Crime Management Services Ltd	ISPS Port Security Assessment: Castletownbere FHC	Not for external Publication	4,735
Crime Management Services Ltd	ISPS Port Security Assessment: Killybegs FHC	Not for external Publication	4,735
Fitzpatrick Associates	RDP 2014-2020 Ex Ante. Evaluation Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment	June 2014	48,401

2015: January- to Date

Questions - Written Answers

Company	Title of Report	Date or expected Date of Publication	Cost - € To date
Philip Farrelly and Co	Agri-Food Strategy 2025. Environmental Analysis Report (Provisional Title)	December 2015	89,790
Deloitte	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine - Annual Accounts Certification as required by EU legislation	Not for external publication	137,111
BDO	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine - Annual Accounts Certification.	Not for publication. Report is a requirement of EU Legislation.	381,743
NTA Monitor Ltd	Independent assessments of the Department's IT security measures and security review of the Department's infrastructure. Required for EU accreditation purposes	Not for external publication.	16,279
Fitzpatrick Associates	RDP 2014-2020 Ex Ante. Evaluation Strategic Environmental Assessment & Appropriate Assessment	July 2015	50,130
Drima Marketing Ltd	Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JSFO) 2014 Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE) 2014 Market Report for Ireland for the Timber Committee 2013	May 2015 Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE) 2014- published as part of COFORD Woodflow note. Sept/Oct 2015	12,398
Bearing Point	Technical code review of the Animal Health and Welfare System	Q1 2016 Not for external publication.	216,198
Deloitte	Technical code review of the Integrated Fisheries System	Q1 2016 Not for external publication.	79,827
NTA Monitor Ltd	Independent assessments of the Department's IT security measures and security review of the Department's infrastructure. Required for EU accreditation purposes	Not for external publication.	35,611
Capt. Alan Coghlan	Draft Report on the use of Tugs and Associated Pilotage at Killybegs Fishery Harbour Centre	Not for external publication	4,800
CMG Crime Management Ltd	ISPS Port Security Plan: Killybegs FHC	Not for external Publication	4,245
CMG Crime Management Ltd	Port Security Plan: Killybegs FHC	Not for external Publication	4,362
Martin Heraghty	Confidential Report to Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine. Commercial Mushroom Producers (CMP) participation as a Producer Organisation in the Fruit and Vegetable Producer Organisation Scheme	21 September 2015	2,000
Dr. Claire Sansford, Independent Plant Health Consultant, York, UK.	Revised assessment of the risk of spread of <i>Hymenoscyphus fraxineus</i> on untreated wood of ash (<i>Fraxinus</i> spp., particularly <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>).	4 September 2015 (no immediate plans to publish)	18,691
McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan	Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) of Freshwater Pearl Mussel Plan for Ireland	27 May 2016	54,710
ADAS UK ITD	An Evaluation of the Green Low –Carbon Agri-Environment Scheme (GLAS)	2021	1, 500,000
Smith Carter	Structural Report on Amelioration Works	Commissioned in December 2015. Not for Publication	27,060
Presidion	Aim Calf Survival Herd of Origin Deliverables Report	Commissioned in December 2015. Completion February 2016	4,500
Gavin and Doherty Geosolutions Ltd	Longford Slope Stability Appraisal	Not for external Publication	29,446

Company	Title of Report	Date or expected Date of Publication	Cost - € To date
Clare Mulligan Consulting	DAFM Culture and Gender Review	4 November 2015	18,000

Public Inquiries

170. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which he or his Department have been responsible by name; by terms of reference; by cost including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded; by date including the projected date of conclusion where an inquiry has not been concluded from 1991 to date in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3775/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): There has been one judicial inquiry since 1991 and the details are below.

Date	Name	Terms of Reference	Costs
31 May 1991	Beef Tribunal	To inquire into the following definite matters of urgent public importance: (i) allegations regarding illegal activities, fraud and malpractice in and in connection with the beef processing industry made or referred to: (a) in Dáil Éireann, and (b) on a television programme transmitted by ITV on 13 May 1991; (ii) any matters connected with or relevant to the matters aforesaid which the Tribunal considers it necessary to investigate in connection with its inquiries into the matters mentioned at (i) above; and 2. making such recommendations (if any) as the Tribunal, having regard to its findings, thinks proper	€27.2m

Ministerial Allowances

171. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the expenses claimed, including the amount of mileage and the amount claimed by him and Ministers of State of his Department by calendar year during the current Dáil Éireann in tabular form. [3803/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The information regarding my expenses and those of the Ministers of State in my Department is set out in the following table. Minister of State Ann Phelan also holds ministerial responsibilities in the Departments of Environment Community and Local Government and also Transport Tourism and Sport, and consequently one third of the expenses claimed by Minister Phelan are reimbursed by these Departments.

Year	Minister/Minister of State	Number of Kilometres claimed	Kilometre Expenses	Subsistence and Overnight Expenses within Ireland	Foreign Travel related Expenses
2011	Minister Coveney	41,806	€13,868.40	€615.12	€2,728.17
2011	Minister of State- Late Shane Mc Entee	42,305	€14,010.52	€1,369.72	€1,318.80
2012	Minister Coveney	57,617	€18,368.16	€962.70	€9,318.61
2012	Minister of State – Late Shane Mc Entee	53,309	€17,142.05	€1,987.18	€880.58
2013	Minister Coveney	61,126	€19,366.84	€1,101.21	€9,988.91

2013	Minister of State Tom Hayes	47,484	€15,484.32	€0.00	€1,156.52
2014	Minister Coveney	63,707	€20,101.38	€1,074.88	€9,203.45
2014	Minister of State Tom Hayes	54,255	€17,411.33	€155.90	€1,455.81
2014	Minister of State Ann Phelan	30,546	€12,796.41	€0.00	€1,648.75
2015	Minister Coveney	64,798	€20,411.88	€1,188.57	€7,004.26
2015	Minister of State Tom Hayes	69,022	€21,614.03	€228.41	€3,015.28
2015	Minister of State Ann Phelan	71,125	€26,654.15	€4,072.58	€1,432.74

Departmental Expenditure

172. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the amount he spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3818/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): The staff of the Press Office of my Department provide the media monitoring and media clipping services for the Department. No additional costs have been incurred for the period in question.

Harbours and Piers Maintenance

173. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he has the promised report to hand on the urgently needed dredging of Howth Harbour, County Dublin; when detailed planning and dredging will commence; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3848/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): Howth Fishery Harbour Centre is one of the six designated Fishery Harbour Centres which are owned, managed and maintained by my Department under Statute. While first and foremost a working fishery harbour, Howth similar to the other five Fishery Harbour Centres, has its own unique features which is home to a broad range of diverse economic and social activities.

My Department is conscious of the importance of both fishing and non fishing activities in Howth and endeavours to facilitate and develop both. This involves day to day operational support by Harbour staff and management and development and repair of infrastructure subject to available financial resources.

I am happy to advise the Deputy that, notwithstanding the prevailing economic environment in which we operate, in excess of €5.9 million has been invested in maintenance, development and upgrading works at Howth FHC as part of my Department's Fishery Harbour and Coastal Infrastructure Development Programme from 2011 to 2015.

On the 11 of January I announced funding of €1.45 million for the maintenance and development of Howth Fishery Harbour Centre during 2016, in addition I have set aside €420,000 for safety and maintenance, disability access and contractual commitments accruing from 2015. Significant works in this years programme include the continued upgrading of the electrical system, provision of pontoons to west pier for ferry landings and traffic management works.

Of importance in the context of a possible future dredging project at Howth is the allocation of €100,000 for the preparation of a Dumping at Sea Licence which will be required before any dredging project could commence.

The Deputy refers to the report from a €150,000 site investigation project, commissioned in 2015. This report is due shortly and will include vital information on the nature of the material to be dredged in any future dredging project. This information is necessary for the preparation of the Dumping at Sea licence. The groundwork is being undertaken to facilitate a dredging project at Howth, subject to funding being available.

As the Deputy is aware, all developments in the six Fishery Harbour Centres, including a possible future dredging project at Howth Fishery Harbour Centre will be considered under future Capital Programmes on the basis of available exchequer funding and competing priorities.

Veterinary Qualifications

174. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the procedures to be followed to enable a person (details supplied) to practice in this jurisdiction; if further studies are required; if the person is entitled to practice on foot of a present qualification or otherwise; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3884/16]

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney): In accordance with the Veterinary Practice Act 2005, the Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI) is the competent authority for the recognition of qualifications of veterinary practitioners from the EU or third countries. The Veterinary Practice Act provides for the mutual recognition of qualifications in veterinary medicine within the EU and for mutual recognition agreements between the VCI and relevant bodies in non-EU States. The VCI has mutual recognition agreements in place for Australasia and American Veterinary Medicine Association (AVMA) accredited colleges in North America.

For those whose qualification is not recognised under EU legislation or mutual recognition agreements the Council provides a registration examination.

The person concerned should contact the Veterinary Council at info@vci.ie.

Departmental Funding

175. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Defence the funding he allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituencies of Louth and Meath-East, by project and initiative, by completion date and by cost, for the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3558/16]

Minister for Defence (Deputy Simon Coveney): The Department is engaged in an ongoing building programme designed to modernise and enhance the training, operational and accommodation facilities available to members of the Defence Forces.

Projects for completion under the programme are identified on an ongoing basis by the military and these projects are prioritised for inclusion as part of the annual programme.

The capital element of the programme focuses mainly on infrastructural projects comprising the construction of new buildings and the refurbishment of existing buildings and facilities. The cost of design team services required in order to complete these projects are also charged to the

capital building programme.

The following table shows the cost of projects committed to in the constituencies of Louth and Meath-East under the Department's capital building programme in each of the years 2011 to 2015.

Works Commenced	Project	Cost to date
2011	Dundalk - Locker Block refurbishment	€ 920,567
2012	Nil	-
2013	Gormanston - Officers Mess heating system upgrade	€ 76,054
2013	Dundalk - CCTV upgrade	€ 107,133
2014	Nil	-
2015	Gormanston – Upgrade of Sewage Treatment Plant to provide tertiary treatment *	€ 81,720

*Project not yet complete

In addition to the major capital projects as outlined above, there are ongoing works required to ensure the upkeep and repair of buildings and provide facilities generally for personnel. These works are charged as current expenditure under the programme. The main works which were committed to over the above period were as follows.

Works Commenced	Project	Cost to date
2011	Nil	-
2012	Dundalk - Officers' Mess, Gate Bldg & Boiler house - reroof	€ 53,646
2012	Dundalk - Ration Stores, walkway repair	€ 28,665
2012	Dundalk - Roads and squares resurfacing	€ 101,455
2013	Dundalk - Billet block upgrade	€ 321,592
2013	Gormanston - repairs to waste water plant*	€ 20,430
2014	Nil	-
2015	2 Bde - Redbarns Range - sundry resurfacing*	€ 66,567

*Project not yet complete

Defence Forces Equipment

176. **Deputy Seán Crowe** asked the Minister for Defence if he is aware that members of the Reserve Defence Force are being told they have to wear a separate badge on their uniform to single them out as reservists; if this undermines the single force concept; and if he has discussed the issue with the Reserve Defence Forces representative association. [3619/16]

Minister for Defence (Deputy Simon Coveney): I am advised by the Military Authorities, whilst acknowledging the concerns expressed by RDFRA in relation to Cultaca Flash, of the need to take cognizance of all concerns, representations and sensitivities in relation to identity, tradition and custom. The Cultaca Flash provides a method of ensuring that the proud heritage of Reserve Defence Force is preserved under the Single Force Concept and should not be regarded as a badge of separation.

I am advised that the issue of the Cultaca Flash was raised at recent High Level Implementation Group (HLIG) meetings and the minutes of same were forwarded to RDFRA. The issue was also (informally) discussed with the General Secretary of RDFRA on 30 September 2015 at a meeting of the RDFRA Forum.

Defence Force Regulations clearly distinguish between the Permanent Defence Force and the Reserve Defence Force. The Defence Force Regulations define both entities and therefore, it is prudent to identify both in regard to Dress Code. The dress code, including Flashes serve to avoid ambiguity or misunderstanding and support the single force concept.

It is also worthy of mention that Naval Service Reserve (NSR) has been using a similar Flash for a number of years and the adoption of the Cultaca Flash for the Army Reserve (AR) element of the RDF will bring the AR into line with their NSR colleagues.

Defence Forces Records

177. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Defence the date and duration, the number of persons recruited, by gender, the number with a second level qualification only, the number with a third-level qualification, the number of recruits related to serving or former members of the Defence Forces, and the details of this for each of the past five recruitment campaigns for the Defence Forces, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3659/16]

Minister for Defence (Deputy Simon Coveney): It is not possible to provide the information requested by the Deputy in the time available. My Department is currently in the process of compiling as much of the information as is reasonably accessible from the personnel systems in the Defence Forces. Some of the information requested is not available from the personnel system and would require an examination of individual files which is not feasible given the extensive resources which would be required to compile the information. I will provide such information as is reasonably accessible directly to the Deputy as soon as possible.

Consultancy Contracts Data

178. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Defence the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [3764/16]

Minister for Defence (Deputy Simon Coveney): The information requested by the Deputy in relation to external consultant reports commissioned by my Department since March 2011 is set out in the table below.

Report	Cost	Company	Commission Date	Publication Date
An independent review of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) fatalities in 1989	€51,660	Mr. Frank Callanan, S.C.	19 April 2011	19 September 2011
Review of the Air Corps' Safety Management System	€20,000	Jacques Michaud	August 2013	14 November 2013
Third Report of the Independent Monitoring Group (IMG)	€22,500	Dr. Eileen Doyle	September 2013	3 September 2014
Consultancy report to assess the impact of an upgrade of Departments financial application software	€24,870.60	Fujitsu Ltd	25 November 2014	30 January 2015
Review of the civil Defence Branch	€7,200	Mr. Jim Blighe	25 March 2015	N/A

Report	Cost	Company	Commission Date	Publication Date
Independent Review of the investigation of the death of Pte Hugh Doherty and the disappearance of Pte Kevin Joyce (Caomhán Seoighe) on 27 April 1981 while serving with IRISHBATT in the United Nations Interim Force in the Lebanon (UNIFIL)	Review ongoing	Mr. Roderick Murphy	6 January 2015	Review ongoing. Publication due early 2016.

Public Inquiries

179. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Defence the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which he or his Department have been responsible by name; by terms of reference; by cost including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded; by date including the projected date of conclusion where an inquiry has not been concluded from 1991 to date, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3779/16]

Minister for Defence (Deputy Simon Coveney): My Department has not established or operated any Tribunal of Inquiry or Commission of Inquiry or investigations in the period since 1991. The Department has, when requested, responded to requests from a number of external investigations including the Commission of Inquiry into the Dublin and Monaghan Bombings, the Smithwick Inquiry and from the Garda Síochána. A number of internal investigations have been carried out during that period in relation to matters pertaining to the Defence Forces including Courts of Inquiry arising from accidents/incidents involving members of the Defence Forces.

Ministerial Allowances

180. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Defence the expenses claimed, including the amount of mileage and the amount claimed, by him and Ministers of State of his Department, by calendar year, during the current Dáil Éireann, in tabular form. [3807/16]

Minister for Defence (Deputy Simon Coveney): The table below sets out the expenses, other than mileage, claimed by Mr. Alan Shatter T.D., during his time as Minister for Defence from March 2011 to July 2014 and those that I have claimed in the period in my capacity as Minister for Defence since I was appointed to the role in July 2014. The table also sets out the expenses, again other than mileage, claimed by Mr. Paul Kehoe T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Defence, in that capacity in the period since March 2011.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Former Minister Alan Shatter, T.D.	€100	€214.80	€162	Nil	Nil	-
Minister Simon Coveney, T.D.	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	€1,036.37	Nil
Minister of State Paul Kehoe, T.D.	€69	€172.50	€104.95	€807.85	Nil	Nil

As Deputy Shatter also served as Minister for Justice and Equality during his period as Minister for Defence all costs associated with his transportation were met from the Vote of An Garda Síochána.

All mileage costs which I incur in my capacity as a Minister are currently paid from the Vote of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Mileage expenses incurred by Minister of State Kehoe are paid from the Vote of the Department of the Taoiseach.

Departmental Expenditure

181. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Defence the amount he spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3822/16]

Minister for Defence (Deputy Simon Coveney): The amount spent on media clipping and media monitoring services for the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015 is outlined in the following table:

YEAR	AMOUNT
2011	€47,451.72
2012	€36,706.33
2013	€28,765.40
2014	€29,050.14
2015	€28,896.39

The media clipping and monitoring service is used to provide timely awareness for my officials on a broad range of matters raised through media channels.

Schengen Agreement

182. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality her views on the status of the Dublin Protocol and the Schengen Agreement; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3853/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I understand the Deputy is referring to Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 which establishes the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States and which is commonly referred to as the Dublin III Regulation.

I consider a well functioning Dublin System to be essential to the efficient and effective functioning of a Common European Asylum System and to addressing the phenomenon of ‘asylum shopping’ whereby applicants for international protection transit to other, more attractive States rather than remaining in the first safe State that they reach. I look forward to receiving the results of the European Commission’s review of the Dublin Regulation in March which will assist us in planning how we wish to move forward in relation to a possible revision of the Dublin Regulation.

In response to the migration crisis and the escalating security situation, there has been an increased focus at European Level in recent months on integrated border management and the reinforcement of Schengen’s external borders. This has followed the reintroduction of internal border controls by a number of Schengen Member States facing unprecedented migratory pres-

asures. In December 2015, the European Commission presented their third package of measures since May 2015. This latest package has a clear Schengen focus and includes proposals for a European Border and Coast Guard (building on the existing Schengen border agency FRONTEX) and Systematic Checks at Schengen's External Borders.

It is important to stress that in accordance with Council Decision 2002/192/EC that Ireland does not take part in the border related aspects of Schengen. In the circumstances it would be inappropriate for me to comment further on such matters. Ireland is, however, participating in certain police cooperation and information sharing aspects of Schengen and the Government is determined to press ahead with the necessary steps for Ireland to connect with the Schengen Information System (SIS II) and recently announced the allocation of €4 million for this purpose.

Garda Misconduct Allegations

183. Deputy Pádraig Mac Lochlainn asked the Minister for Justice and Equality given the serious allegations concerning misconduct by An Garda Síochána and inadequacies surrounding a case (details supplied), and given the need for the probity and independence of the Independent Review Mechanism, if she will authorise publication of the report prepared in 2007; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3478/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): The particular case to which the Deputy refers is amongst those considered under the mechanism established for the independent review of certain allegations of Garda misconduct, or inadequacies in the investigation of certain allegations, which have been made to me as Minister for Justice and Equality, or the Taoiseach with a view to determining to what extent and in what manner further action may be required in each case. A panel consisting of two senior and five junior counsel was established for that purpose.

I wish to stress the independence of this process. The cases have all been considered by independent barristers, all selected, on the basis of their experience of the criminal justice system to form the Panel to conduct this review. Following their reviews of the papers in each complaint, counsel made recommendations to me, as to whether or not further action should be carried out by me, and if so the nature of that action.

Furthermore, I have previously assured Deputies that where further investigation has been recommended by the review then that will occur. However, I have also pointed out that in a large proportion of cases, counsel would be likely to recommend that no further action could reasonably be taken, particularly in cases where the complainant has received due process but remains dissatisfied with the outcome. The crucial point, however, is that every case has been reviewed by independent counsel, who have made an objective recommendation.

I also appointed a retired judge, Mr Justice Roderick Murphy, to advise on the preparation of letters notifying individuals as to the outcome of the review in their particular cases. I was concerned that these letters should not only set out the recommendation of counsel, but also outline as far as possible the reasons for the recommendation, subject to any legal constraints there may be. I made this appointment in order to provide complete reassurance on the probity and independence of this entire process, from start to finish.

I do not see how the publication of the report that the Deputy is referring to, could be seen as having any bearing on the probity and independence of the independent review mechanism. Following the receipt of the report by the then Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Mr. Brian Lenihan, the legal advisors of the person concerned were given access to the report

and, following consultation with them, it was decided not to publish the report. In my view, the circumstances have not altered in the interim and I do not propose to publish the report. I can, however, inform the Deputy that the Panel, in considering this particular case, was provided with a copy of the report.

Immigration Policy

184. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality to respond to issues raised by a person (details supplied) regarding the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service regulations; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3531/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I am advised by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of my Department that the notification placed on the INIS website www.inis.gov.ie in March of 2015 was aimed at clarifying and standardising the terms and conditions in respect of applications from retired foreign nationals seeking to come and live in Ireland. Prior to that more ad hoc arrangements were applied in this area.

Persons who were granted permission prior to the changes, however, are not affected and their permission can be renewed on the same terms as before provided they continue to comply with the terms of the permission and remain law abiding.

The relevant immigration stamp for retirees has been changed from Stamp 3 to Stamp 0 for new cases an immigration permission which is not intended to be reckonable for naturalisation or long term residence. This is consistent with the permission granted to the elderly dependent relatives of Irish citizens or others already entitled to live here. The key financial consideration in respect of a retiree is that the person must have sufficient and sustainable resources to ensure that they will not now or in the future become a burden on the State. In the case of retirees this was set at an income of €50,000 per person. They were also expected to have a lump sum sufficient to cater for unforeseen circumstances and sufficient otherwise to purchase some form of dwelling.

All States operate immigration controls for well established reasons of public policy, including considerations of an economic nature. To this end policies regarding all non-nationals wishing to enter the State are kept under review and revised from time to time. I have in this context asked my officials to review current practices and requirements as applied to retirees wishing to come here. This will have regard to the situation in comparable jurisdictions and in particular the opportunities open to Irish retirees seeking residence overseas. The wider points made in the Deputy's correspondence will be considered as part of that process.

I have also asked the relevant official, to contact the persons in question to discuss the issues in their case.

Departmental Funding

185. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the funding she allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituencies of Louth and Meath-East, by project and initiative, by completion date and by cost, for the past five years; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3565/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I can inform the Deputy that a contract for a Courts Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Project was signed recently in De-

cember 2015 which will see the construction or redevelopment of seven regional Courthouses at a total project cost of around €135 million. This Courts PPP Bundle includes a courthouse to be built in Drogheda.

The intention is that construction will start early in 2016 with a view to completing the new and refurbished buildings within the next 24 months (December 2017). The Drogheda project entails a new courthouse consisting of two courtrooms and associated facilities being constructed on a landmark town centre site adjacent to the river Boyne. I am informed that construction has already begun in Drogheda and the expectation is that it will be the first project to be completed next year.

Other initiatives funded by my Department in Louth and Meath-East over the past 5 years are as follows.

Initiative	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Cosc Awareness Raising Scheme relating to domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.	€9,000	€11,000	€7,200	€5,000	€4,000
Cosc allocation for the provision of domestic violence perpetrator programme in North East	€20,000	€18,000	€20,400	€22,682	23,000
Funding under the Victims of Crime Funding Scheme toward support services for victims of crime	€44,300	€42,300	€45,060	€52,500	€52,500
European Fund for the Integration of Third-County Nationals (EIF)	€79,590	€74,697	€66,681	€99,858	€37,091
Equality for Women ESF Measure	€54,040	€40,053	€32,549		
Grant Funding to Meath County Council for Promotion of the Integration of Immigrants	€66,995	€6,000	€60,000	€66,000	€32,660

Additionally funds have been allocated to extend a Garda Youth Diversion Project (GYDP) service to the Laytown and Ashbourne areas, via the existing GYDP in Navan. The service commenced in late 2015. The 2016 annual allocation for providing this service is over €100,000.

Direct Provision System

186. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if she is aware that asylum seekers living in Direct Provision in Richmond Court in County Longford, are unable to open bank accounts, because they are asked to provide utility bills, that they live in a building that is poorly heated with no recreational rooms, that they are often unable to receive letters or items from post offices, because they have no identification; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3570/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): The Reception & Integration Agency (RIA) of my Department is responsible for the provision of accommodation and related services for asylum seekers who avail of those services while their protection application is being processed. On 17/01/2016, there were 4,650 persons accommodated by RIA in accommodation centres located in 17 counties throughout the State.

The contract for the provision of accommodation at Richmond Court (and indeed at all other centres) requires that the contractor will provide an adequate means of heating. I am advised by RIA that it has received no complaints in relation to heating in that centre but if the Deputy has any specific information, RIA will be happy to take it up with the contractor.

The contract also includes a requirement for an internal post delivery/collection system. Any letters or items addressed to an individual in the centre are made available for collection by that person in the centre. If ongoing issues arise in relation to the collection of items at a Post Office, there are arrangements in place for resolving these where this is possible. On the question of bank accounts, I'm not in a position to comment on this except to say that all persons who apply for asylum in the State are issued with a Temporary Residence Card by the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner which is not an identity card and are also assigned a Public Services Card by the Department of Social Protection.

Richmond Court has two recreational rooms available for residents. In these rooms the management provides a futsal table, Sky TV with movies and sports channels, board games and books. Each bedroom has its own TV with over one hundred channels. There is a badminton court outside which is popular with residents. There is wifi provided in all public areas and the management plans to provide a small gym at the centre in the near future.

Prisoner Data

187. **Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of life-sentence prisoners released and the number recalled to prison in 2015; the average length of time, life-sentence prisoners served prior to release in 2015; the reason for revoking temporary release, by case; the number of life-sentence prisoners in custody and the number on release in the community at the end of 2015; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3573/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I can inform the Deputy that a total of 6 life sentenced prisoners were released into the community in 2015. The average length of sentence served in custody by these six prisoners prior to release was approximately 17 and a half years. No life sentenced prisoner was recalled to prison in 2015.

Life sentenced prisoners who are released into the community continue to serve their sentences and are subject to a number of stringent conditions. While in the community, a life sentenced prisoner will be on reviewable temporary release under the supervision of the Probation Service. Reviewable temporary release is where a prisoner is granted a specific period of temporary release from prison. This can be at varying intervals, for example, weekly, monthly or annually. The period of release is reviewed when the prisoner reports to prison and a decision is made whether to refuse or grant a further period of reviewable temporary release.

The Probation Service provide progress reports to the Irish Prison Service outlining resettlement and reintegration progress and will report on any risk management concerns a life sentenced prisoner may present. Where it is reported to the Irish Prison Service that the prisoner in the community is failing to abide by the conditions of their release, that person may be refused a further period of temporary release and be taken back into custody.

An Garda Síochána may return a prisoner to prison where they are of the view that the prisoner is in breach of their temporary release conditions. When this happens, the Governor will conduct an oral hearing. If the Governor is satisfied, taking into account evidence presented and comments made, that a breach of temporary release conditions has occurred the prisoner should be notified accordingly. The reviewable temporary release is then revoked and the prisoner is taken back into custody.

On 31 December 2015 there were 331 prisoners in custody serving life sentences. There were a further 80 prisoners serving life sentences in the community on reviewable temporary release under the supervision of the Probation Service.

Questions - Written Answers
Citizenship Applications

188. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the status of an application for Citizenship by a person (details supplied) in Dublin 7; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3639/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I am advised by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of my Department that the processing of the application for a certificate of naturalisation from the person referred to by the Deputy is ongoing and the case will be submitted to me for decision as expeditiously as possible.

As the Deputy will appreciate, the granting of Irish citizenship through naturalisation is a privilege and an honour which confers certain rights and entitlements not only within the State but also at European Union level and it is important that appropriate procedures are in place to preserve the integrity of the process.

It is recognised that all applicants for citizenship would wish to have a decision on their application without delay. While most cases are now generally processed within six months, the nature of the naturalisation process is such that, for a broad range of reasons, some cases will take longer than others to process. In some instances, completing the necessary checks can take a considerable period of time.

The Deputy may wish to note that queries in relation to the status of individual immigration cases may be made directly to INIS by e-mail using the Oireachtas Mail facility which has been established specifically 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.

Residency Permits

189. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the current and expected Residency Status of a person (details supplied) in Dublin 22 and the person's family; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3641/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I am informed by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of my Department that the persons referred to are the subject of Deportation Orders and therefore have no entitlement to residency in the State.

Representations were received from the persons concerned pursuant to Section 3 (11) of the Immigration Act 1999 (as amended), to revoke the Deportation Orders. The Deputy might wish to note that any such decision will be to 'affirm' or to 'revoke' the existing Deportation Orders. In the mean-time, the Deportation Orders remain valid and in place.

Queries in relation to the status of individual immigration cases may be made directly to the INIS of my Department 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 the INIS is, in the Deputy's view, inadequate or too long awaited.

Garda Station Closures

190. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality her plans for the Garda Síochána station in Santry in County Dublin including any plans to further change its status; if a further change in status will affect the ability of An Garda Síochána to effectively police Santry and Whitehall given the previous cut to the station in 2013 and the closure of the Whitehall station; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3695/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I am advised by the Commissioner that the Garda Station in Santry is a fully functional station which is in use and there are no plans to alter its status.

The formulation of proposals in relation to the opening and closing of Garda Stations is a matter, in the first instance, for the Garda Commissioner in conjunction with the newly established Policing Authority, in the context of annual policing plans, as provided for in section 20 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005, as amended.

The Garda District and Station Rationalisation Programme implemented in An Garda Síochána during 2012 and 2013 resulted in the closure of 39 Garda stations in 2012 and 100 Garda stations in 2013. The Garda Station in Whitehall was closed in 2012 and in accordance with the Rationalisation Programme, was returned to the control of the Office of Public Works (OPW). The use of such returned properties is, accordingly, a matter for the OPW which agreed to make the former station available for the relocation of the Office of the State Pathologist and the Dublin City Mortuary, and to carry out the necessary refurbishment work.

The primary objective of the Programme was to identify opportunities to introduce strategic reforms to enhance service delivery, increase efficiency and streamline practices within An Garda Síochána.

The Programme was based on a review of the Garda Station Network by Garda management which concluded in relation to certain stations, many of which were only open part-time and manned by a single Garda, that resources could be better deployed and more effectively used on the front line if those stations no longer had to be staffed and maintained. In reaching these conclusions, Garda management reviewed all aspects of the Garda Síochána policing model, including the deployment of personnel, the utilisation of modern technologies and the overall operation of Garda stations. The Programme supports the provision of a modern 21st century policing service for both urban and rural areas and allows front line Gardaí to be managed and deployed with greater mobility, greater flexibility, and in a more focused fashion, particularly with regard to various targeted police operations. As a result of the Programme, communities have benefitted from increased Garda visibility and increased patrolling hours which has enabled An Garda Síochána to deliver an improved policing service to the public.

It is understood from discussions with the Garda Commissioner that the current consolidation process is largely completed. There are no proposals to either re-open or close any Garda stations in the Policing Plan for 2016.

The Garda Station Building and Refurbishment Programme 2016-2021, which I announced in late October with my colleague: the Minister of State at the OPW; is based on agreed priorities which are established by An Garda Síochána. Over thirty locations around the country will benefit from the Programme which includes major refurbishment of stations/facilities including facilities for meeting victims of crime; essential remedial works to existing stations; development of large scale property and exhibit management stores and the upgrade of cells and provision of improved custody management facilities. The Programme will be delivered by the

Garda Authorities in cooperation with the OPW which has responsibility for capital expenditure in this area.

In this context, the Building and Refurbishment Programme includes the provision of a Property Exhibit Management Store at the Santry Garda Station complex.

Crime Data

191. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality given her recent public comments on the matter, the number of recorded burglary offences, by Garda Síochána division, during the last quarter of 2015 in tabular form. [3728/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I might clarify that the figures for trends in burglary crime to which I referred recently, including in response to Parliamentary Question No. 8 of yesterday's date, were provided to me on a provisional basis by the Garda authorities, in the context of an overall update on the progress being made under Operation Thor.

As the Deputy is aware the Central Statistics Office (CSO), as the national statistical agency, is responsible for the publication of recorded crime statistics. I am advised that the full Divisional breakdown of recorded crime, including burglary offences, for the last quarter of 2015 will be published in due course in the next CSO quarterly crime statistics release.

Residency Permits

192. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the current and expected residency status and eligibility for naturalisation of a person (details supplied) in Dublin 7; if she will urgently examine the case; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3734/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I am advised by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of my Department that, the person concerned has not made contact with INIS and that the last contact was during 2012. However, INIS will now contact the person in question at the address supplied by the Deputy to assess the up-to-date position on their circumstances in the State.

Queries in relation to the status of individual immigration cases may be made directly to the INIS of my Department 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 the INIS is, in the Deputy's view, inadequate or too long awaited.

Asylum Applications

193. **Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the details of applicants for asylum by country of origin, by successful and unsuccessful applications by country of origin for all applicants for 2014 and 2015; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3744/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I am advised by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of my Department that detailed annual statistics in respect of the information requested by the Deputy for 2014 is published in the annual report of the Office of the Refugee Information Commissioner (ORAC). This information is available on the ORAC website www.orac.ie. While the data for 2015 is not yet finalised, similar information up to the end of November 2015 is also available on the website.

There was a 126% increase in asylum applications in 2015 compared to 2014.

There has been a marked increase in the number of applications from countries in southern Asia, in particular from Pakistan and Bangladesh over the 2 year period. I am concerned about this trend and potential abuses of the Common Travel Area.

Deportation Orders Data

194. **Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the details of deportation orders issued, by country of origin, by country of deportation to; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3745/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I am advised by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of my Department that a Deportation Order requires a person to remove themselves from the State and it is only where they fail to do so that the State is forced to remove them and enforce the rule of law. The process leading to deportation is extensive with many avenues of appeal, including judicial review in the High Court, open to persons subject to Deportation Orders. Therefore not all Deportation Orders issued will have been enforced and so there is no corresponding figure for ‘country of deportation to’ in the table below for 2015 in respect of those Orders not yet enforced. In addition, many of the people concerned will claim to be from a particular country of origin and be classified as such on our system but will ultimately be determined to originate from another country.

In determining whether to make a Deportation Order, I must have regard to the factors set out in Section 3 (6) of the Immigration Act, 1999, as amended, and Section 5 (Prohibition of Refoulement) of the Refugee Act, 1996, as amended, as well as any other relevant statutory provisions, Constitutional or international human rights arising.

This essentially means that the safety of returning a person, or refoulement as it is commonly referred to, is fully considered in every case when deciding whether or not to make a Deportation Order i.e. that a person shall not be expelled from the State or returned in any manner whatsoever to a State where the life or freedom of that person would be threatened on account of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

It should be noted that although a Deportation Order may be issued to a person of a certain nationality, that person will have been given the option of leaving the State in advance of the Deportation Order being made Order and moving to another Member State or country other than their country of origin. Such persons are required to notify INIS when they take this course of action but many fail to do so. There are no reliable statistics to indicate how regularly this occurs.

With regard to the information in the table, a further disaggregation of the numbers by nationality is not provided because I do not wish to risk potential identification of any individuals involved.

Deportations Signed in 2015 by Nationality

Nationality	Number
China (Including Hong Kong)	109
Pakistan	95
Nigeria	49
Sudan	36
Brazil	33
Afghanistan	28
Albania	23
Mauritius	26
Congo, The Democratic Republic Of The	26
Somalia	26
Zimbabwe	20
Algeria	20
Georgia	19
Iran (Islamic Republic Of)	18
Ukraine	15
Bangladesh	12
India	15
Malaysia	13
Moldova, Republic Of	14
Viet Nam	12
Iraq	11
Palestinian Territory, Occupied	10
Turkey	10
Egypt	9
Mongolia	9
Philippines	9
South Africa	7
Malawi	7
Benin	6
Ghana	5
Kosovo / UNSCR 1244	6
Nepal	5
Others	63
Total	766

Immigration Policy

195. **Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the procedure by which English language schools which have no external accreditation are permitted on the interim list of education programmes even though external accreditation is one of the main requirements of being listed on the register; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3752/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): As the Deputy may be aware, the original policy intention announced in September 2014 by the Minister for Education and Skills and myself was to confine the granting of immigration permission to those English language students who were attending schools which had been recognised through the

process known as the Accreditation and Coordination of English Language Services (ACELS), operated by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). However this approach was successfully challenged in the High Court in a case taken by two institutions that did not hold ACELS recognition. The essential points of the court decision were that QQI lacked the vires to operate ACELS for such a purpose and that restricting immigration permission to the ACELS sector only involved a fettering of Ministerial discretion, particularly given that ACELS was then and remains closed to new applications.

When the ILEP was opened for applications, following a revised Government policy statement in May 2015, it was envisaged that colleges could find alternative external quality assurance but such proved to be unavailable. Since ACELS is closed to new applications, the result is that those providers without ACELS recognition had no means of obtaining quality assurance. Imposing a condition in respect of external quality assurance, which would be impossible for some providers to satisfy, irrespective of any actions they might take as regards enhancing the quality of their institution, would appear to run counter to the law. The only way of assessing providers therefore was a combination of desktop examination of applications supplemented by inspections in certain cases.

The fact that a provider and courses are listed on the ILEP means that in accordance with Ireland's student immigration policy, attendance at that college in respect of one of their listed full time courses on the ILEP is an eligible purpose for a non-EEA national coming to Ireland. That is of course subject to the normal immigration controls and case by case consideration of individual immigration applications. The ILEP does not guarantee the quality of the institution but if a provider is listed on the ILEP in respect of courses they will have met certain criteria including the mandatory provision of learner protection in respect of enrolled non-EEA students. For the English language sector a maximum class size of 15 students applies to all ILEP listed providers and they must also have demonstrated that their teaching staff are properly qualified.

By its name and nature the Interim List of Eligible Programmes is a short term solution to address a gap in the lead up to the introduction of the International Education Mark which will provide a full quality framework in the future. It is nevertheless an ongoing process providers and must continue to comply with the stricter conditions now applicable to the sector in order to retain their listings. This will be the subject of ongoing monitoring.

The International Education Mark is a matter for my colleague, the Minister for Education and Skills. Our respective Departments continue to cooperate closely in the international student area.

Tribunals of Inquiry Reports

196. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality further to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 396 and 397 of 14 January 2015, Parliamentary Question No. 491 of 24 March 2015, Parliamentary Question No. 385 of 13 May 2015, Parliamentary Question No. 17 of 7 July 2015, if she will provide a further update; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3753/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I am informed by the Garda authorities that the investigation of certain matters arising from the report of the Moriarty Tribunal and Mahon Tribunal, referred to the Garda Commissioner, is continuing at this time. I trust the Deputy will appreciate that as this process is ongoing it would not be appropriate for me to comment further at this time.

Commissions of Investigation

197. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality further to Parliamentary Question No. 601 of 9 June 2015, if the commission of investigation into matters relative to the Cavan and Monaghan Garda Síochána division will report in February 2016; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3759/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): Mr Justice Kevin O'Higgins is the Sole Member of the Commission of Investigation which was established to investigate and report on certain matters relative to the Cavan/Monaghan Division of the Garda Síochána.

The Commission arose from the report of Mr Sean Guerin, SC, to An Taoiseach concerning allegations made by Sergeant Maurice McCabe. The Government accepted Mr Guerin's recommendation that a Commission of Investigation was desirable in the public interest in order to ensure continuing confidence in the institution of the Garda Síochána and the criminal justice system.

Mr Justice O'Higgins submitted an interim report on 14 December 2015 requesting an extension to 29 April 2016 for the Commission to submit its report. I have granted this extension and the Committee's Interim Report is available on my Department's website, www.justice.ie.

Consultancy Contracts Data

198. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by her Department since March 2011. [3771/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I wish to advise the Deputy that it has not been possible to provide the information sought in the time available for reply. I will arrange for the requested information to be forwarded to the Deputy in the near future.

Public Inquiries

199. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which she or her Department have been responsible by name; by terms of reference; by cost including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded; by date including the projected date of conclusion where an inquiry has not been concluded from 1991 to date, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3786/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I wish to advise the Deputy that it has not been possible to provide the information sought in the time available for reply. I will arrange for the requested information to be forwarded to the Deputy in the near future.

Personal Insolvency Act

200. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of

applications pursuant to section 115A of the Personal Insolvency Act for a court review of a proposed personal insolvency arrangement that have been made to date; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3790/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I can inform the Deputy that the number of applications under Section 115A of the Personal Insolvency Act for a court review of a proposed Personal Insolvency Arrangement that have been made to date is 18.

Two applications were subsequently withdrawn following further engagement with creditors. To date, eight applications have had initial hearings before the insolvency courts, and they have been adjourned to allow for the lodging of affidavits by the relevant parties. The remaining applications lodged will be listed for hearing in the coming weeks.

Commencement of Legislation

201. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality why section 21 of the Personal Insolvency (Amendment) Act 2015 was not commenced until 20 November 2015; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3791/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): Section 21 of the Personal Insolvency (Amendment) Act 2015 provides for a new type of application to Court. Accordingly, it required changes to be made to the relevant Circuit Court Rules and Rules of the Superior Courts: for example, to set out the form of application or proceedings to be used by a person wishing to make an application to Court under Section 21, or to reply to such an application.

As the Deputy is aware, due to the independence of the Courts, Rules of Court and any amendments of those Rules are prepared and decided by the appropriate Court bodies, before they are received for drawing up an appropriate Statutory Instrument and for the concurrence of the Minister concerned.

In the case of the Personal Insolvency (Amendment) Act 2015, after consultation on the need for changes to Court Rules, I signed a Commencement Order commencing with effect from 29 September 2015 all provisions of the Act which did not require changes to the Court Rules.

As regards the provisions of the Act which did require changes to the relevant Court Rules, the Court Rules Committees signed their agreement on the changes on 20th October and 29th October respectively. On 13 November, I concurred in two Court Rules Statutory Instruments, making the necessary Rules changes with effect from 20 November.

On 18 November, I signed the Personal Insolvency (Amendment) Act 2015 (Commencement) (No.2) Order 2015 which commenced all the remaining provisions of the Act, including section 21, with effect from 20 November.

Personal Insolvency Act

202. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the process through which a judgment can be removed from or marked as satisfied in the High Court register of judgments in circumstances where the debt has been discharged through an insolvency service debt settlement arrangement or a personal insolvency arrangement; the equivalent process if the judgment creditor does not co-operate; if she will simplify the process; and if she will

make a statement on the matter. [3795/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I can inform the Deputy that where a judgment has been registered in the High Court the process for marking it satisfied in the register is that the debtor lodges in the Central Office a satisfaction piece which has been signed by the creditor in the presence of an attesting witness. The proper officer of the High Court Central Office will then update the register accordingly and sign a certificate of satisfaction.

If a judgment creditor does not cooperate it is open to the judgment debtor to apply to the court for an order directing another person to sign the satisfaction piece.

If the judgment was obtained in the District or the Circuit Court, the satisfaction piece is lodged in the office of that court, and the memorandum of satisfaction is signed in that court and then lodged in the High Court Central Office.

Sections 86 and 125 of the Personal Insolvency Acts 2012-2015 provide that a debtor who has successfully completed a Debt Settlement Arrangement or a Personal Insolvency Arrangement stands discharged from all unsecured debts specified in that arrangement, and stands discharged from any secured debts to the extent specified in that arrangement. The Acts also provide a simple procedure for confirming successful completion and for registering it on the Insolvency Service register.

I can further inform the Deputy that my Department is examining the possibility of providing for a streamlined process to register satisfaction of judgment debts via the Personal Insolvency Acts in the appropriate Court register, to facilitate both debtors and creditors.

Ministerial Allowances

203. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the expenses claimed, including the amount of mileage and the amount claimed, by her and Ministers of State of her Department, by calendar year, during the current Dáil Éireann, in tabular form. [3814/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): The following expenses have been claimed to date in accordance with the relevant procedures:

Minister Frances Fitzgerald: in the period from May 2014 (€1,066.36) and 2015 (€1,512.67). The expenses in question do not include any mileage related costs.

Minister of State Aodhán Ó Ríordáin: in the period September 2014 to December 2015 (covering mileage only) as follows:

2014: €944.89, 2015: €7,915.49, 2016: €2,879.99.

Departmental Expenditure

204. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the amount she spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3829/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): The amount spent by my Department on media monitoring and media clipping services for the years 2011 - 2015 is set

out in the table below.

Year	Cost
2011	€20,127
2012	€25,347
2013	€28,501
2014	€25,872
2015	€23,890

Road Traffic Offences

205. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality further to Parliamentary Question No. 135 of 19 November 2015, regarding the implementation of section 22 of the Road Traffic Act 2002, if this information is now to hand; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3855/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I am advised by the Courts Service that, since 16 May 2012, all summonses issued to which Section 22 of the Road Traffic Act 2002 applies, have included the additional requirement that a person must also produce to the Court a legible copy of their driving licence or learner permit. Issues surrounding the implementation of this Section, including the question of the wording of summonses, is continuing to receive attention, in consultation with the relevant agencies.

I am further informed by the Courts Service that a total of 83 prosecutions have been listed before the District Court arising from the non-production of driving licences in court in accordance with Section 22 of the Road Traffic Act, 2002.

Garda Data

206. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality further to Parliamentary Question No. 108 of 18 November 2015, regarding the number of knives recovered by An Garda Síochána in 2014 and 2015, if she will provide an update on this matter; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3856/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I am informed by the Garda authorities that on 4 January 2016 the number of knives recorded as seized on PULSE in 2014 and 2015 were 1,326 and 1,322, respectively. I am further advised that these figures are provisional, operational and subject to change.

Naturalisation Applications

207. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality when an update of Stamp 3 to Stamp 4 residency status might be offered as a prelude to naturalisation for a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3857/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I am advised by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of my Department that the persons mentioned by the Deputy did have their case for Stamp 4 examined and letters issued with our decision on 29 July 2015. These persons are on the appropriate Stamps for their immigration status in

the State. If they wish to take up employment in the State they must be the holders of Work Permits. There is a clear obligation on anyone coming to live and work in the State to respect our laws. In this regard it remains the responsibility of all non-EEA nationals who are resident in the State to ensure that they have an appropriate immigration permission from the Minister for Justice and Equality and the great majority of migrants fully comply with this condition. The issuing of Work Permits is a matter for the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

Queries in relation to the status of individual immigration cases may be made directly to the INIS of my Department 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 the INIS is, in the Deputy's view, inadequate or too long awaited.

Deportation Orders

208. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if a review of the circumstances and proposals to deport might be undertaken in the respective cases of persons (details supplied) all of whom have lived in this jurisdiction for several years; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3860/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I am advised by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of my Department that the above named person along with their spouse and one child are the subject of Deportation Orders signed on 8 November 2011.

Representations were received from the persons concerned, to request the Minister to use her discretion, pursuant to Section 3 (11) of the Immigration Act 1999 (as amended), to revoke the Deportation Orders. The Deputy might wish to note that any such decision will be to 'affirm' or to 'revoke' the existing Deportation Orders. In the mean-time, the Deportation Orders remain valid and in place.

In relation to the remainder of the family, no Deportation Orders are in place.

Queries in relation to the status of individual immigration cases may be made directly to the INIS of my Department 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 the INIS is, in the Deputy's view, inadequate or too long awaited.

Naturalisation Applications

209. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the status of an application for stamp 4 and naturalisation the case of a person (details supplied) in Dublin 24; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3861/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I am informed by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of my Department that the person concerned currently holds an immigration permission which expires on 14 June, 2017.

I am also advised by the INIS that the processing of the application for a certificate of naturalisation from the person concerned is ongoing and the case will be submitted to me for decision as expeditiously as possible.

Queries in relation to the status of individual immigration cases may be made directly to the INIS of my Department 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 the INIS is, in the Deputy's view, inadequate or too long awaited.

Leave to Remain

210. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will expedite a matter (details supplied); and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3866/16]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): I am informed by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of my Department that an amended decision letter issued to the person concerned, including the correct name of the child, on 26 January, 2016 in respect of their permission to reside in the State under the Free Movement provisions.

Queries in relation to the status of individual immigration cases may be made directly to the INIS of my Department 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 the INIS is, in the Deputy's view, inadequate or too long awaited.

Child and Family Agency Remit

211. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if he will extend statutory remit and responsibilities over service provision of Tusla, the Child and Family Agency; and the discussions he has had with other Departments in this regard. [3469/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): Tusla - the Child and Family Agency was established on 1 January, 2014 in accordance with the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013 and has service responsibility for:

- Child welfare and protection services formerly operated by the Health Service Executive (HSE), including family support and alternative care services;
- Child and family-related services for which the HSE formerly had responsibility, including pre-school inspections and domestic, sexual and gender-based violence services;
- Certain services relating to the psychological welfare of children and their families currently provided by the HSE; and
- Services provided by the Family Support Agency and the National Educational Welfare Board which formerly operated as separate bodies under the aegis of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, and which were merged into the new Agency.

The Task Force on the Child and Family Support Agency made recommendations on a

range of other services relevant to children and families, including:

- public health nursing;
- speech and language therapy;
- child and adolescent mental health; and
- children's detention.

The practical implications of the scale of the ongoing organisational change are such as to require the consideration of the Task Force on the Child and Family Support Agency's wider recommendations and, should it be considered appropriate, their implementation take place according to a less immediate timescale. This will allow for more careful review and consideration in conjunction with relevant Departments, principally the Department of Health, in due course.

The Child and Family Agency, in conjunction with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, is adopting a cross-Government approach to ensure delivery of a comprehensive and integrated service to vulnerable children and families. This will require the support and input of various Departments and agencies. It will also support transition to new arrangements in any future expansion of the Agency's services.

Under its statutory functions, the Agency is currently engaged in rolling out its Strategy of Prevention, Partnership and Family Support. This approach will aim to bring together, and give single coherent direction to, all of the strands of service for families most in need, including prevention and early intervention programmes, both universal and targeted. This strategy represents a significant ongoing change in service orientation.

Preschool Services

212. **Deputy Dan Neville** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the entitlement of a child (details supplied) in County Tipperary to free preschool; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3477/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme is implemented by my Department and provides free pre-school for all children before they commence primary school.

Children born between 2 February 2011 and 30 June 2012 are eligible to avail of the free pre-school provision in the current school year which commenced in September 2015. In Budget 2016 I announced the expansion of the ECCE programme which means that from September 2016 children can access the ECCE Programme from the time they are 3 years of age until they start primary school (once the child is not older than 5½ years at the end of the relevant pre-school year i.e. end June). Children born between 1 January 2012 and 31 August 2013 will be eligible to enrol for the programme in September 2016.

Based on the information provided by the Deputy, the child in question is eligible to avail of the free pre-school provision in the current school year and also to enrol for an additional 38 weeks free pre-school in the school year commencing in September 2016.

Departmental Funding

213. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the funding he allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituency of Louth, by project and initiative, by completion date and by cost, for the past five years. [3556/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): In the first instance I would state that records relating to capital projects and spend are not maintained on a constituency basis. However, for indicative purposes, the following table sets out projects supported in the Meath and Louth areas. These projects were funded through the National Lottery Scheme administered by my Department, through youth capital grant schemes and through schemes administered by Tusla. Further details relating to projects supported through the Early Years area in my Department are being compiled and will be forwarded once available.

I would note that completion date details are not available for these projects.

YEAR	PROJECT TITLE	AMOUNT
2011	Meath Youth Federation (Summer camps for disadvantaged youths), National Lottery Funding 2011	3,000
2011	Apple Tree Foundation (now Dundalk Youth Centre), Young People's Facilities & Services Fund (2) Capital Funding 2011	8100
2011	Apple Tree Foundation (now Dundalk Youth Centre) Young People's Facilities & Services Fund (2) Capital Funding 2011	32,684
2011	Ballivor Community Childcare Limited (Youth Café Navan), Youth Café Funding Scheme 2011/2012	75,300.00
2011	The Meath Youth Federation Limited ("Meet & Eat" Youth Café), Youth Café Funding Scheme 2011/2012	10,000.00
2011	Drogheda Youth Development (Youth Café Drogheda) Youth Café Funding Scheme 2011/2012	58,000.00
2011	Apple Tree Foundation (Dundalk Youth Café) Youth Café Funding Scheme 2011/2012	10,000.00
2012	St. Oliver's Scout Group Drogheda, Co. Louth, National Lottery Funding 2012	3,500.00
2012	Daughters of Charity Child & Family Service Meath, National Lottery Funding 2012	2,000.00
2012	Foróige /Ballinabreackery GAA Club Meath, National Lottery Funding 2012	5,000.00
2012	RAY Youth Café, Trim Co. Meath (Youth Café Funding Scheme 2011/2012)	4,000.00
2013	Autism Support Louth & Meath, National Lottery Funding 2013	5,000.00
2013	Foróige Junior Youth Club Meath, National Lottery Funding 2013	1,500.00
2013	The Kilberry School of Montessori Meath, National Lottery Funding 2013	9,950.00
2013	Ashbourne Playspace Network Meath, National Lottery Funding 2013	4,000.00
2013	Moylagh Community Centre Club Ltd Meath, National Lottery Funding 2013	2,000.00
2013	Meath Community Drug & Alcohol Response, National Lottery Funding 2013	1,950.00
2013	Navan Springboard Family Support Services, National Lottery Funding 2013	2,500.00
2013	House at Glenwood Estate Dundalk (for the then Child & Family Service)	21,672.00
2013	Foróige Slane Co. Meath, Youth Café Funding Scheme 2013	50,000.00
2013	Provision of a Playground, Trim, Co. Meath	€20,000.00
2013	St. Helena's Park, Dundalk- Regeneration and purchase of new equipment	€10,000.00
2013	Omeath District Development Company Limited, Youth Café Funding Scheme 2013	€50,000.00
2013	Drogheda Youth Development Limited, Youth Café Funding Scheme 2013	€50,000.00
2014	New build capital project Dundalk (funded by the Child & Family Agency, Tusla)	€1,400,000.00

YEAR	PROJECT TITLE	AMOUNT
2014	Youth Work Ireland Coxes -small to medium equipment & upgrade projects, 2014 Youth Capital Funding Scheme	€3,020.00
2014	Dundalk Youth Cafe -small to medium equipment & upgrade projects 2014 Youth Capital Funding Scheme	€9,520.00
2014	Involve County Meath -small to medium equipment & upgrade projects 2014 Youth Capital Funding Scheme	€12,142.62
2014	Women's Aid Dundalk, National Lottery Funding 2014	€7,000.00
2014	10th Louth Cu-Chulainn Scout Troup, National Lottery Funding 2014	€2,500.00
2014	Rape Crisis North East Louth, National Lottery Funding 2014	€2,400.00
2014	Dundalk Counselling Centre Louth, National Lottery Funding 2014.	€2,300.00
2014	Trim FRC, Meath. National Lottery Funding 2014	€4,000.00
2014	Coder Dojo Navan, Meath. National Lottery Funding 2014	€2,500.00
2014	SMART Project Meath, National Lottery Funding 2014	€600.00
2015	Kells playground regeneration & provision of new playground Enfield	€20,000.00
2015	Dundalk Youth Centre - Provision of dedicated music room & emergency exit -2015 Youth Capital Funding Scheme	€17,932.00
2015	Minor Capital Works Louth & Meath (funded by Child & Family Agency, Tusla)	28,000.00

Child and Family Agency Staff

214. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if administrative staff employed on behalf of Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, through an agency (details supplied) and other agencies undertaking similar work to their colleagues, who are employed through the public service, are entitled to incremental pay increases, occupational pensions, sick leave and certified sick leave; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3637/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): The Protection of Employees (Temporary Agency Work) Act 2012 provides for equal treatment in terms of basic working and employment conditions for temporary agency workers as if they were recruited directly by the hirer to the same job.

Accordingly, administrative staff assigned through the agency specified by the Deputy, or any other agency, to work for Tusla receive equal treatment of basic working conditions such as pay (including increments), working time and annual leave. The Act does not cover entitlement to paid or unpaid sick leave or access to a pension scheme.

Child and Family Agency Staff

215. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, plans to hire, on a permanent basis, staff currently employed on its behalf, through an agency; if this applies to social workers and administrative staff; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3638/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): Tusla has no plans to hire, on a permanent basis, staff currently employed on the organisation's behalf through an agency.

Tusla is currently recruiting social workers and other staff through normal recruitment chan-

nels and agency workers assigned to Tusla are eligible to apply for such positions, where suitably qualified. Tusla should be contacted directly by any agency worker interested in such positions for further information and qualifying conditions.

Children and Family Services

216. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the availability of adequate resources to respond to and provide for the needs of children at risk; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3660/16]

223. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if the number of children deemed to be at risk for whatever reason continues to be monitored; if adequate resources by way of follow-up and early response are in place; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3667/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs(Deputy James Reilly): I propose to take Questions Nos. 216 and 223 together.

I am pleased to inform the Deputy that significant extra resources have been allocated to Tusla, the Child and Family Agency for 2016. The overall funding allocation for Tusla in 2016 is €676 million, representing an increase of €38 million over the 2015 allocation. This includes €662.4 million in current expenditure and €13.6 million in capital expenditure.

The overall level of funding that I have provided significantly strengthens Tusla's base funding level and provides the Agency with the necessary investment to increase staffing levels to meet identified risks and anticipated demand. The additional resources are intended to alleviate service pressures in child welfare and protection services, in particular pressures being faced in the areas of unallocated cases, private residential and foster care and domestic, sexual and gender based violence services.

I wish to assure the Deputy that Tusla deals immediately with emergency cases, including for instance, if a child has been abandoned or is in immediate physical danger or at immediate risk of sexual abuse. Social work duty teams keep high priority cases under review by regularly checking to ascertain risk to the child, and where necessary will reprioritise the case.

My Department has a range of systems in place to ensure it is informed of risk to children and families. Tusla, within its national office, has a dedicated Quality Assurance Team. This team produces monthly, quarterly and annual reports in respect of Tusla's functions, and includes detailed reporting on key performance indicators. These reports give a good indication of the number of children and families in receipt of or requiring intervention. The reports also provide statistical evidence of improvements to child welfare and protection services and highlights challenges and areas where further improvement is required. The reports show the number of child welfare and protection referrals in the period, the numbers that have been screened and assessed and those cases that are awaiting an allocated social worker.

Tusla also provides me with information on children in care, their placement type, care status and allocation of social workers. Within my Department there is a Unit which scrutinises these reports and briefs me and senior officials on issues of note. This Unit also reviews and analyses HIQA and Tusla inspection reports of children's residential centres, special care centres, fostering and child protection services. The overview from these reports provides me with a level of assurance on the overall capacity of Tusla to identify and provide services to families and children at risk. Additional information is gleaned from the National Review Panel reports on individual cases, and investigations conducted by the Ombudsman for Children.

Additionally, my officials frequently meet with Tusla to review the overall level of service provision, including areas in need of improvement. I also meet with Tusla on a quarterly basis in this regard. There are protocols in place for the Agency to inform my Department of specific issues where risks are identified and to ensure that robust management responses are put in place.

The Government, since its establishment, has attached particular priority to supporting vulnerable children and families and the significant increase in funding being made available to Tusla this year represents further evidence of our delivery on this ambition.

Child Care Services Provision

217. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if child care facilities will expand to meet the growing need; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3661/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): A number of childcare programmes are implemented by my Department which support parents with the cost of childcare. The most significant programme in terms of State investment is the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme which currently provides free pre-school care and education for children who have reached the age of 3 years and 2 months by 1 September of the relevant year. From September 2016, I am expanding this Programme to allow children enrol in free pre-school from the time they are 3 years of age and to remain there until they start primary school.

As a result of the Budget extension, the number of children benefitting from the Programme is expected to rise from around 67,000 to 127,000 in a given programme year. For the 2016/17 programme year, it is estimated that 89,500 children will be eligible to enrol in the Programme from September 2016, an additional 22,000 from January 2017 and a further 15,500 from April 2017.

I decided to introduce this new measure from September 2016 in order to provide the early years sector with the time to build capacity to meet the increased demand. As the increased demand for the Programme is not expected to peak until April 2017, this timeframe should allow pre-school providers to make any necessary infrastructural or service changes and to put in place extra staff resources to accommodate the additional demand.

I am satisfied that there is already some additional capacity in the early years sector to cope with some of the increased demand. The Annual Survey of Early Years Services, which was conducted in December 2014, estimates that there are more than 24,000 vacancies in early years services across the country with almost 13,000 of these vacancies in sessional services.

I am also aware that every year a significant number of new pre-school providers apply to participate in this Programme. This increased demand for, and additional investment in, free pre-school provision should encourage a greater numbers of applicants.

It is clear that more capacity will be required to cater for the expanded free pre-school year programme. Officials in my Department are working closely with the City and County Childcare Committees and the Voluntary Childcare Organisations to identify measures to help increase capacity.

Child Care Services Funding

218. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if he continues to fund voluntary agencies involved in providing child care; if he will provide further resources; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3662/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): My Department provides significant funding to a number of Voluntary Childcare Organisations (VCOs) which provide quality support within the childcare sector. Details of the funding provided to these Organisations in 2015 is provided in the following table.

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs recently introduced the Better Start Initiative with the objective of applying an integrated national approach to the development of quality in early years education and care for children aged from birth to six years in Ireland. This initiative is designed to co-ordinate and to extend the choice of supports and services already provided through all of the stakeholders in the quality process, including the VCOs.

In 2016 the Department will be commencing the preparation of a Better Start Strategy, which will involve consideration of the roles of all the stakeholders, including the Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Pobal, the Early Years Specialist Service, the Department of Education and Skills Early Years Inspectorate, the City and County Childcare Committees, and the VCOs.

Organisation	€
Barnardos	€553,000
National Childhood Network	€240,000
Childminding Ireland	€340,000
Early Childhood Ireland	€1,190,000
Irish Steiner Kindergarten Assoc.	€50,000
St Nicholas Montessori	€69,000
Total	€2,442,000

Children in Care

219. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if sufficient emergency child care and intervention facilities exist; if augmentation is required; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3663/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): Under section 12 of the Child Care Act 1991, an Garda Síochána has the power to remove a child from the care of their parents/guardians, into the care of Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, where there is an immediate and serious risk to the health or welfare of the child. Tusla will then seek an Emergency Care Order or return the child to their parents or a person acting in *loco parentis*. Children who are not in the care of their parent/s or guardians and present as out of home to emergency services have their needs assessed and, if appropriate, are received into care under the Child Care Act 1991. Tusla has in place a range of foster and residential care facilities for children in care and to provide for emergency placements that may arise.

During office hours the local Tusla duty office is the first point of contact for the emergency services. Where emergency situations in the area of child welfare and protection arise out of hours, a system has been in place for a number of years and this has been enhanced recently. The new service allows An Garda Síochána to contact a national emergency social work out-of-hours phone service for general advice or consultation. I am pleased to inform the Deputy that Tusla commenced the new Emergency Out-of-Hours Social Work Service last November.

Youth Services Funding

220. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if he will meet the resource requests of youth support organisations; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3664/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): My Department administers a range of funding schemes and programmes to support the provision of youth services to young people throughout the country including those from disadvantaged communities. The funding schemes support national and local youth work provision to some 380,000 young people. I am pleased to advise the Deputy that Budget 2016 has provided an additional €1.1 million in current youth funding to my Department bringing the total allocation for the youth services to €51 million in 2016. This additional funding will be used for programmes that target disadvantaged young people and to assist national youth organisations in their work to support local voluntary youth services.

Some €2.75 million in capital funding, also provided in Budget 2016, will be used to support small scale projects, including refurbishment, health and safety fit-outs and accessibility improvements in local youth services.

Last October, I announced a new €600,000 Youth Employability Initiative, funded under the Dormant Account Funding Scheme. The initiative will provide grants to youth services for innovative programmes that target young people who are not in education, employment or training to improve their employability skills.

Last December, I was pleased to allocate €1.17 million in ‘once-off’ funding to assist youth projects that are experiencing budgetary difficulties as they approach the end of the year. The youth projects came to my Department’s attention through engagement with the national youth organisations, youth officers in the Education and Training Boards, through representations and submissions received and through regular meetings with youth services in the course of the year.

These additional investments in the voluntary youth services in 2015 and 2016 have been widely welcomed by youth sector interests.

Children in Care

221. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the number of children now in State care and in foster care; the duration of their stay; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3665/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, has a statutory duty under the Child Care Act 1991 to promote the welfare of children who are not receiving adequate care and protection and, if necessary, to receive a child into the care of the State. As of 31 October 2015, there were 6,331 children in the care of the State. Of these 93% were in foster care, with 4,047 in a general foster care and 1,818 in foster care with relatives.

As the majority of children in care are in foster care family settings in the community, indicators of stability of the placement and participation in education are useful in monitoring the performance of Tusla in relation to overall welfare. Provisional figures from Tusla show that at the end of December 2014, 14% of children had been in care less than a year, with 48% in care

for between 1 to 5 years and 38% had been in care for longer than 5 years.

Children in Care

222. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs how many children in care normally progress to adoption or fosterage or return to their families; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3666/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): A child may be received into care under a voluntary basis or by order of the Courts. A significant amount of work takes place between social workers and parents/guardians to create a situation where a child can return home with a focus on their welfare and safety. Provisional figures from Tusla show that of the 1,360 children discharged from care in 2014, 83.2% returned home to their families, with the remainder opting for independent living, supported lodgings or remaining with their carers. Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, has a duty to ensure that returning a child to their parent or guardians is both safe and in their best interests. Sadly, this is not always possible.

Ireland has a high rate of children in care placed in a family setting, with 93% of children in general or relative foster care at the end of October 2015 (5,865/6,331). This is the preferred option for children who cannot live with their parents. According to the Adoption Authority of Ireland Annual Report 2014, there were 24 adoption orders made for children in long term foster care in that year.

Question No. 223 answered with Question No. 216.

Children and Family Services

224. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if sufficient resources continue to be available to provide medical, psychiatric and counselling services for children at risk; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3668/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, in discharging its functions, is placing a strong emphasis on prevention, early intervention, family support, therapeutic and care interventions, all of which are key to the provision of integrated, multi-disciplinary services for vulnerable children and families.

Tusla has specific responsibility for psychology services for children as set out in Section 8 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013. These services for children are currently provided by arrangement with the HSE.

The provision of resources for medical services is a matter for the Health Service Executive (HSE).

Children in the care of the State can access publicly funded child and adolescent mental health teams and primary care psychology services provided by the HSE.

Clinical psychology services are directly provided by Tusla within multi-disciplinary teams deployed by the Assessment, Consultation and Therapy Service (ACTS). Services provided include assessment and focused interventions for children and young people with complex clinical needs and high risk behaviours. The service also provides support to other professionals in order to guide interventions for children and families.

Where children have suffered sexual abuse, therapy services are available in a variety of settings. There are specialist sexual abuse Centres at Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin and Temple Street Children's University Hospital. Therapy services are also provided by HSE community based psychologists and HSE Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) for children who have moderate to severe mental health problems. If a child is taken into care as a result of sexual abuse the allocated social worker will provide counselling and support.

Tusla, also provides funding to voluntary organisations offering a range of counselling and support services to children and families. In 2015, Tusla provided funding of €5.8 million to support counselling services. The funding provided by Tusla focuses on the development of support services in the community for families to enhance stability in family life and to assist children and families and their members in dealing with difficult periods in their lives.

As the Deputy will be aware, I announced a significant increase in the funding allocation to Tusla for this year. Tusla has available to it some €676 million in funding, representing an increase of €38 million over 2015.

The Government, since its establishment, has attached particular priority to supporting vulnerable children and families and the significant increase in funding being made available to Tusla this year represents further evidence of our delivery on this ambition.

Children in Care

225. Deputy Bernard J. Durkan asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the number of children who died or were injured while in care in each of the past ten years to date; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3669/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): The death of any child or young person is a tragedy, and a profound loss for their families and carers and I deeply sympathise with all those affected. In order to identify learning about how to better address the needs of vulnerable children and families, the National Review Panel (NRP) was established in 2010 to review serious incidents and deaths of children in care, in aftercare, and those known to Child Welfare and Protection Services. It is an independent body chaired by Dr Helen Buckley of Trinity College and its reports are published on the Tusla website.

As the National Review Panel was only established in March 2010, data for the years prior to this is unavailable in the format requested by the Deputy. Further information on the cases and the work of the Panel is published in the National Review Panel annual reports, which are available on the Tusla website.

The following table is a summary of the deaths of children and young people in care over the period 2010 to 2014.

Table 1: Number of Deaths notified for children and young people in care (National Review Panel Annual Report 2014)

Year	Cause of Death				Total
	Natural Causes	Homicide	Suicide	Drug Overdose	
2010	1	1	0	0	2
2011	2	0	0	0	2
2012	2	0	1	0	3
2013	2	0	0	1	3

Year	Cause of Death				Total
	Natural Causes	Homicide	Suicide	Drug Overdose	
2014	0	0	3	0	3
Totals	7	1	4	1	13

For the information of the Deputy, I am also including the following table that sets out the deaths and serious incidents for children and young people who were in care, in an aftercare programme or were known to the Child Welfare and Protection Services.

Table 2: Number of Deaths and Serious Incidents notified for children and young people in care, aftercare or were known to the Child Welfare and Protection Services (National Review Panel Annual Report 2014)

Causes of Death, as notified to the National Review Panel	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Natural Causes	6	8	7	7	8
Suicide	4	3	9	4	8
Road Traffic Accident	4	1	2	0	5
Other – Accidental	2	1	4	1	1
Drug Overdose	4	2	0	1	1
Homicide	2	0	1	0	2
Cause of Death to be Verified	0	0	0	4	1
Total	22	15	23	17	26
Number of Serious Incidents	8	1	1	3	3

For completeness, I would note that the Report of the Independent Child Death Review Group gives data on deaths of 196 children during the period of 1 January 2000 to 30 April 2010 who were in care (18%), known to social services (65%) or in aftercare (16%). This report is available on www.dcyd.gov.ie.

Consultancy Contracts Data

226. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [3762/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): In order to deliver key commitments in relation to children and young people and to put in place a unified framework of policy, legislation and provision across Government in respect of children and young people, it is at times necessary to commission reports and utilise expertise from a range of expert individuals and bodies. My Department ensures that all reports commissioned are of direct relevance to the operational and policy commitments of my Department.

I have set out as follows the full range of external consultant reports commissioned by my Department. Costs may include, where applicable, copy editing, design and other costs relating to publication. Separate material is provided in respect of the Growing Up in Ireland study.

Questions - Written Answers

Name of External Report	Date of Commission	Date/expected date of Publication	Name of External Consultant	Cost of Report
Audit of Children and Young people's Participation in decision making in Ireland	November 2009	November 2011	Cnag ar an Doras and Sandra Roe (joint contract)	€19,890.42
National Consultation with Children Living in the Care of the State	November 2010	July 2011	Cnag ar an Doras	€25,610.00
Body Image Survey Report	March 2011	October 2011	Anam Cara	€6,800.00
Youth Work: A Systematic Map of the Research Literature	September 2011	June 2013	Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of (EPPI-Centre) London.	€67,000.00
Valuation report	November 2011	Internal use only	Elliott Fitzgerald Ltd.	€1,230.00
Needs Assessment for the Redevelopment of www.childrensdata-base.ie	December 2011	Internal use only	Centre for Effective Services	€18,400.00
Every Child a Home: A Review of the Implementation of the Youth Homelessness Strategy	December 2011	July 2013	Centre for Effective Services Penhouse Design Intacta Print Carole Devaney for proofing of report and of briefing note	€6,000.00 €5,522.70 €4,706.57 €1,360.00 Total: €17,589.27
Comhairle na nÓg and Garda Síochána survey on the Attitudes of Gardaí to Young People. Questionnaire for Gardaí and Young People	July 2012	Publication date to be finalised	Anam Cara	€7,650.00
Public Knowledge and Attitudes Relating to Children's Rights, Welfare, Protection and Services	July 2012	Publication date to be finalised	Behaviour and Attitudes Qualitative Research – Group Facilitation Quantitative Research – Interviews Barometer Research	€42,864.98 €59,040.00 €1,107.00 Total: €103,011.98
Ireland's Consolidated 3rd and 4th Report to the United Nations Committee in the Rights of the Child	July 2012	July 2013	Ms. Carmel Corrigan – Drafting of Report Ms. Carol Devaney – Editing, Formatting and Indexing	€12,600.00 €4,760.00 Total: €17,360.00
Strategic Human Resources	December 2012	April 2013	Mazars	€20,602.50
Internal Audit Report: Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme Internal Audit Report: ICT Shared Services Arrangements	December 2012 December 2012	Internal Use Only Internal Use Only	Capita Business Services Ltd Capita Business Services Ltd	Combined for both reports €23,803.00
Summary Report for Young Voices Have Your Say- Structured Dialogue	January 2013	March 2013	Cnag ar an Doras	€4,918.00
Care Issues Review	March 2013	Internal use only	Victor McElfrick	€3,556.56

Name of External Report	Date of Commission	Date/expected date of Publication	Name of External Consultant	Cost of Report
Report on Structural Damage	March 2013	Internal use only	Frontier Engineering Group Ltd.	€7,668.74
Staff Roster Review	April 2013	Internal use only	McGuinness Killen Partnership	€6,715.80
Role Review for Child & Family Agency	May 2013	November 2013	Mazars	€16,512.75
Care Issues Review	September 2013	Internal use only	Conal Devine & Associates	€13,636.21
Internal Audit Report: Community Child-care Subvention / Childcare Education and Training Supports Programmes	January 2014	Internal Use Only	Capita Business Services Ltd	€8,200.00
Care Issues Review	February 2014	Internal use only	Kieran McGrath	€13,500.00
Policy Analysis and Development on Remission of Sentence	March 2014	Internal use only	Bramell Lane Ltd	€29,151.00
Land Valuation Report	August 2014	Internal use only	Lisney Chartered Surveyors	€2,152.50
Internal Audit Report: National Children's Detention Facility	October 2014	Internal use only	Capita Business Services	€12,623.00
Internal Audit Report: Programme Integration Platform (June 2015)	November 2014	Internal Use Only	Capita Business Services	€15,675.00
Internal Audit Report: Transactions Audit	November 2014	Internal use – Not yet complete	Capita Business Services	€16,858.00
Report on Ireland's Implementation of EU Youth Strategy	November 2014	Late 2015	Carmel Corrigan	€6,300.00
"Becoming an Active Player" - Report on meeting of Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures Advisory Council	December 2014	Internal use only	The Change Exploratory Ltd.	€1,600.00
Internal Audit Report: Programme Integration Platform (January 2015)	January 2015	Internal use only	Capita Business Services	€16,858.00
Internal Audit Report: DCYA Governance of Child and Family Agency (Tusla) (Working Title)	February 2015	Internal use – Not yet complete	Capita Business Services	€12,100 (to date)
Report of the involvement of children and young people in the recruitment of the Ombudsman for Children	March 2015	December 2015	Sandra Roe	€6,000.00
A report of consultations with children and young people for Ireland 2016	May 2015	March 2016	Ursula Kelly - UCC	€9,827.70

Questions - Written Answers

Name of External Report	Date of Commission	Date/expected date of Publication	Name of External Consultant	Cost of Report
Review of Public Spending Code Return (Quality Assurance)	June 2015	Internal use only	Capita Business Services	€4,125.00
Report of the process of consulting children and young people living in Direct Provision	July 2015	January 2016	Ursula Kelly - UCC	€9,948.00
Audit of education and training on children's rights and children's and young people's participation in decision-making in all third level and further education programmes and continuing professional development programmes in Ireland	September 2015	March 2016	Ursula Kelly - UCC	€19,978.00
Report of the workshop discussions at Dáil na nÓg 2015	October 2015	January 2016	Sandra Roe	€4,000.00
Updating the Comhairle na nÓg Toolkit	November 2015	June 2016	Cnag ar an Doras	Per diem rate –number of days to be determined
Provision of Services Pursuant to A National Consultation with Children (aged 3-5) on the National Early Years Strategy	December 2015	For internal use to inform the Early Years Strategy.	Imelda Coyne Trinity College, Dublin	€23,865.00
Scoping Report on the Development of Data Relating to Children	December 2015	February 2016	Research Matters Ltd	€20,726.55

Growing Up in Ireland

In 2006 a contract to carry out the first phase the National Longitudinal Study of Children in Ireland was awarded by the Department of Health and Children (through the Office of the Minister For Children & Youth Affairs) to a consortium comprising of the ESRI and the Children's Research Centre at TCD. Since then the Study has adopted the working title of 'Growing Up in Ireland'. Following another public procurement competition a contract was awarded to the ESRI/TCD consortium to carry out the second phase of the study over the period 2015-2019. As part of the overall contracts the ESRI/TCD are required to prepare and publish reports from time to time. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs meets the costs of printing these reports and since this Department was established in June 2011 the total cost of printing is €31,967.14.

Public Inquiries

227. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which he or his Department have been responsible by name; by terms of reference; by cost, including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded; by date including the projected date of conclu-

sion where an inquiry has not been concluded from 1991 to date, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3777/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): My Department was established on 2 June, 2011. There is one body of the type referred to in the question.

Commissions of Investigation	Name:	Terms of Reference:	Cost to Date: (to 26/01/2016)	Projected Date of Conclusion
1	Commission of Investigation - Mother and Baby Homes and Certain Related Matters	Set out in the schedule to S.I. No. 57 of 2015	€1.78 million. This includes set-up costs and costs incurred by DCYA in supporting the Commission	The Commission is required to complete a final report not later than February 2018

Ministerial Allowances

228. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the expenses claimed, including the amount of mileage and the amount claimed, by him and Ministers of State of his Department, by calendar year, during the current Dáil Éireann, in tabular form. [3805/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): The information requested by the Deputy is set out in the following table:

Minister	Year	Total Distance in Miles	Amount Claimed	Subsistence	Accommodation	Total Cost
Frances Fitzgerald TD	2011	18214	€10,565.65	-	-	€10,565.65
	2012	22145	€12,131.65	-	-	€12,131.65
	2013	20328	€11,457.63	-	-	€11,457.63
	2014	5752	€4,974.68	€2,254.95	-	€7,229.63
Charles Flanagan TD	2014	4327	€4,196.73	-	€862.00	€5,058.73
James Reilly TD	2014	10824	€4,956.30	-	-	€4,956.30
	2015	17927	€10,179.17			€10,179.17

There are no Ministers of State in my Department.

Departmental Expenditure

229. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the amount he spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3820/16]

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy James Reilly): The costs of these services are set out in the following tables.

Supplier - MediaWorld

Year	Total
2011	€ 3,611.85
2012	€25,555.12
2013	€17,109.30

Year	Total
2014	€15,012.15
2015	€ 1223.85 (for Dec 2014)

Supplier - NewsAccess

Year	Total
2015	€21,282.81

Alcohol Pricing

230. **Deputy Brendan Smith** asked the Minister for Health if he will introduce a ban on the low-cost selling of alcohol products; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3681/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): The Government approved the publication of the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill and the introduction of the Bill in the Houses of the Oireachtas on the 8th December 2015. The Bill completed Second Stage in the Seanad on the 17th December 2015.

The Public Health (Alcohol) Bill will make it illegal to sell or advertise for sale alcohol at a price below a set minimum price. Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP) sets a minimum price per gram of alcohol. The minimum price of an alcohol product would be based on the number of grams of alcohol in the product. MUP is a targeted measure, aimed at those who drink in a harmful and hazardous manner, and designed to prevent the sale of alcohol at very cheap prices. MUP is able to target cheaper alcohol relative to its strength because the minimum price is determined by and is directly proportional to the amount of pure alcohol in the drink. The MUP is set in the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill at 10c per gram of alcohol, which equates to a minimum price of €1 per standard drink.

The University of Sheffield study reported that the alcohol products most affected by this policy are those that are currently being sold very cheaply, often below cost prices, in the off-trade, i.e. supermarkets and off-licences. On the other hand, the study found that a ban on below-cost selling (implemented as a ban on selling alcohol for below the cost of duty and Value Added Tax) would have a negligible impact on alcohol consumption or related harms.

Hospital Accommodation Provision

231. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Health when he will give approval to enable the project in respect of the extension to Naas General Hospital, County Kildare, if the project is compliant with the guidelines; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3870/16]

288. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Health when the project in respect of the extension at Naas General Hospital, County Kildare will go to tender; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3869/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): I propose to take Questions Nos. 231 and 288 together.

As I stated in my reply of 13 January 2016 it is expected that the project will be offered for tender in early 2016. The position has not changed.

The HSE has submitted its draft Capital Plan for the multi-annual period 2016-2021. This is being reviewed. It requires my approval together with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. When approved the HSE will publish the schedule of projects on its website.

Tobacco Control Measures

232. **Deputy Maureen O’Sullivan** asked the Minister for Health if further stakeholder engagement, particularly with the independently owned companies in the vape product sector, is planned as the transposition of the tobacco product directive progresses; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3463/16]

234. **Deputy Maureen O’Sullivan** asked the Minister for Health to acknowledge the harmful nature of tobacco smoking, and to keep an open mind to vape products, as a means to counter tobacco smoking; to acknowledge that vape products are providing a non-carbon monoxide, non-tobacco and non-tar alternative to cigarette smoking, and therefore regulation should be carefully examined, and the scientific evidence of international experts utilised before making blanket decisions; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3465/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): I propose to take Questions Nos. 232 and 234 together.

Member states must transpose the mandatory requirements under the Tobacco Products Directive (2014/40/EU) into national legislation by 20 May 2016. Within a number of those mandatory requirements, Member States may determine certain discretionary elements. The Department recently undertook a public consultation seeking views on those discretionary elements. Interested parties, including those from the e-cigarette industry, provided their views through this process. The submissions from the consultation are being analysed and will inform policy decisions. The Department is working to transpose the Directive into national legislation by the May 2016 deadline and the e-cigarette industry will be informed of their obligations under the Directive.

In relation to e-cigarettes and refill containers, the Directive will:

- set mandatory safety and quality requirements e.g. on nicotine content, ingredients and devices, as well as refill mechanisms etc., for e-cigarettes;
- make health warnings and information leaflets obligatory;
- introduce notification requirements for manufacturers and importers of e-cigarettes; and
- impose stricter rules on advertising and monitoring of market developments.

While e-cigarettes do not contain tobacco, they do contain nicotine, a highly addictive substance which is the driver for cigarette smoking. Because they are a relatively recent product, there is limited scientific information available to balance the potential harms and benefits that might arise from more widespread public use. Hence, there are legitimate concerns about the public health benefits of allowing such products to exist without regulation. The Department will continue to monitor evidence on the potential harms and benefits of these products so as to inform decisions around any future additional regulation in this area.

Tobacco Control Measures

233. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Minister for Health if members of the Health Information and Quality Authority report group examining the implication of vape products will be made public by his Department. [3464/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): The Department of Health, in pursuing the recommendations of Tobacco Free Ireland requested the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) to carry out a health technology assessment (HTA) of smoking cessation interventions. By conducting this HTA, HIQA will be in a position to provide impartial, expert advice on the value (clinical and economic) of a range of smoking cessation therapies to ensure the best outcome for the public and a prudent use of resources. The results of this health technology assessment will inform health policy decisions about potential improvements to the provision of smoking cessation services within Ireland's public health service.

The HIQA HTA evaluation team will be advised by an expert advisory group during the course of this assessment, who will also review the team's outputs. Once the expert advisory group has been constituted, HIQA will make the membership of the group publicly available on the HIQA website.

Interested parties will be invited to submit feedback via a public consultation on a draft HTA report before it is finalised and submitted as advice to the Minister for Health.

Question No. 234 answered with Question No. 232.

Hospital Appointment Status

235. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Health the assistance available to a person (details supplied) in County Kildare for an appointment for treatment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3468/16]

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 to the Deputy. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Hospital Appointment Status

236. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Health the status of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry who is waiting for an operation; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3470/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): Under the Health Act 2004, the Health Service Executive (HSE) is required to manage and deliver, or arrange to be delivered on its behalf, health and personal social services. Section 6 of the HSE Governance Act 2013 bars the Minister for Health from directing the HSE to provide a treatment or a personal service to any individual or to confer eligibility on any individual.

The National Waiting List Management Policy, *A standardised approach to managing scheduled care treatment for in-patient, day case and planned procedures, January 2014*, has been developed to ensure that all administrative, managerial and clinical staff follow an agreed national minimum standard for the management and administration of waiting lists for scheduled care. This policy, which has been adopted by the Health Service Executive, sets out the processes that hospitals are to implement to manage waiting lists.

In relation to the particular query raised, as this is a service matter, I have asked the HSE to respond to the Deputy directly. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and my officials will follow up the matter.

Hospital Appointment Status

237. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Health the status of an appointment for surgery and physiotherapy for a person (details supplied) in County Cork. [3475/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): Under the Health Act 2004, the Health Service Executive (HSE) is required to manage and deliver, or arrange to be delivered on its behalf, health and personal social services. Section 6 of the HSE Governance Act 2013 bars the Minister for Health from directing the HSE to provide a treatment or a personal service to any individual or to confer eligibility on any individual.

The National Waiting List Management Policy, *A standardised approach to managing scheduled care treatment for in-patient, day case and planned procedures, January 2014*, has been developed to ensure that all administrative, managerial and clinical staff follow an agreed national minimum standard for the management and administration of waiting lists for scheduled care. This policy, which has been adopted by the Health Service Executive, sets out the processes that hospitals are to implement to manage waiting lists.

In relation to the particular query raised, as this is a service matter, I have asked the HSE to respond to the Deputy directly. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and my officials will follow up the matter.

Cancer Screening Programmes

238. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 319 of 19 January 2016 (details supplied), the number of the 500 women in the 65 to 69 age cohort who were screened in 2015 who were aged 69. [3480/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): The BreastCheck extension began in Quarter 4 of 2015. The first cohort of 1,000 women involved those aged 65 being invited for a repeat mammogram. Over 640 of these women aged 65 were screened. The process will continue with women being invited for routine screening every two years until they are 69 years of age.

Thus none of the women in the 65 to 69 age cohort who were screened in 2015 were aged 69.

Hospital Accommodation Provision

239. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Health the status of upstairs beds in Kenmare Community Hospital in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3491/16]

240. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Health the status of opening extra beds in the community hospital in Daingean Uí Chúis in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3492/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): I propose to take Questions Nos. 239 and 240 together.

As these are service matters they have been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply. If the Deputy has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

HIQA Reports

241. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Health if he will urge the Health Information and Quality Authority to report on the community hospital in Daingean Uí Chúis in County Kerry in order to allow the additional beds to be opened there; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3493/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): The Health Information and Quality Authority is the independent authority established under the Health Act 2007 to drive continuous improvement and to monitor safety and quality in Ireland's health and personal social care services. Since 2009 all nursing homes - public, voluntary and private have been registered and inspected by HIQA.

The functions of the Minister for Health in relation to HIQA, and the Chief Inspector of Social Services are prescribed in the Act, and in this respect the Chief Inspector is independent in the exercise of these functions.

Home Help Service

242. **Deputy Regina Doherty** asked the Minister for Health the cost of every million home help hours provided; the number of home help hours provided in the Health Service Executive's plan for 2016; the cost of these; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3495/16]

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. If the Deputy has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Hospital Procedures

243. **Deputy Regina Doherty** asked the Minister for Health the approximate number of operations, per million euro, that can take place by the Health Service Executive; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3496/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): As this is a service matter, I have asked the Health Service Executive to respond to the Deputy directly. If she has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Nursing Home Beds

244. **Deputy Eoghan Murphy** asked the Minister for Health the number of nursing homes

and beds in Dublin that are currently lying idle. [3514/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): All designated centres for older people (nursing homes) whether public, private or voluntary are required to be registered and inspected by the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA). HIQA's Chief Inspector of Social Services must establish and maintain a register of designated centres. Details entered into the register include the name and address of the centre, date of registration and the number of people that can be accommodated. This information is available on a county basis and can be accessed at the Authority's website www.hiqa.ie.

Under the Nursing Homes Support Scheme, a person may select a nursing home of their choice which qualifies for the Scheme. The Department of Health does not keep a record of vacant beds in nursing homes. However, the number of vacant beds in public nursing homes is a service matter for the Health Service Executive and has been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply. If the Deputy has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Accident and Emergency Departments

245. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health why the emergency department in the Mater hospital in Dublin 1 has been asking sick and injured persons to stay away; if he is aware that it is less than three years since the new emergency department opened, and that persons were promised that this would lead to an end to chaos and waiting times for procedures; the reason for the closure and restrictions; the immediate actions that will be taken to ensure that it is fully open and when it will open. [3527/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): Hospital Emergency Departments, including the Mater Hospital Emergency Department, have been exceptionally busy over recent days. This has led to significant delays for patients attending the Emergency Department and for those waiting for admission to a hospital bed. The hospital requested that the public, where possible, would attend their GP in the first instance, or the Rapid Injury Clinic in Smithfield for minor injuries. Those that did attend the Emergency Department at the Hospital would be managed according to their medical priority.

In line with the agreed ED escalation procedures, the Mater Hospital also postponed a number of non-urgent (elective) procedures to help alleviate pressures in the Emergency Department.

With regard to the specific issue raised by the Deputy, this is a matter for the Health Service Executive; therefore I have asked the HSE to respond to the Deputy directly. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and my officials will follow up the matter.

Hospital Appointment Status

246. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Health the status of a medical procedure for a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3535/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): Under the Health Act 2004, the Health Service Executive (HSE) is required to manage and deliver, or arrange to be delivered on its be-

half, health and personal social services. Section 6 of the HSE Governance Act 2013 bars the Minister for Health from directing the HSE to provide a treatment or a personal service to any individual or to confer eligibility on any individual.

The National Waiting List Management Policy, *A standardised approach to managing scheduled care treatment for in-patient, day case and planned procedures, January 2014*, has been developed to ensure that all administrative, managerial and clinical staff follow an agreed national minimum standard for the management and administration of waiting lists for scheduled care. This policy, which has been adopted by the Health Service Executive, sets out the processes that hospitals are to implement to manage waiting lists.

In relation to the particular query raised, as this is a service matter, I have asked the HSE to respond to the Deputy directly. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and my officials will follow up the matter.

Hospital Services

247. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Health the status of Kerry General Hospital (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3536/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): As this is a service matter, I have asked the HSE to respond to the Deputy directly. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and my officials will follow up the matter.

Dental Services

248. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Health when he will lift the moratorium on the employment of dental hygienists, particularly within the north west; the process an interested party should follow in declaring an interest in advance of any upcoming vacancy, or the lifting of the moratorium; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3543/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): I have asked the HSE to respond to the Deputy directly on this matter. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up on the matter with them.

Hospital Appointment Status

249. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Health the status of surgery at Crumlin hospital in County Dublin for a person (details supplied) in County Cork; and when the procedure will be scheduled. [3549/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin is the largest provider of scoliosis surgery for children and young people. Funding was allocated in 2015 for additional consultant posts including two consultant orthopaedic surgeons, anaesthetist and support staff at Crumlin while capital funding was also provided for a new theatre on site to expand theatre capacity further. The 2016 Service Plan specifically provides for support for the new theatre capacity and the continued development of paediatric scoliosis services to address ongoing capacity deficits.

In order to address waiting times in the interim, patients from Crumlin have been transferred

to other hospitals where capacity is available and where that is clinically appropriate. These include Temple Street, Cappagh, Tallaght and the Blackrock Clinic. External capacity has also been identified at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital at Stanmore in the UK. The HSE is continuing to work with the Children's Hospital Group and the individual hospitals to identify all options to increase capacity further to improve access times for surgery.

As the specific issues raised are a service matter, I have asked the HSE to respond to the Deputy directly. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and my officials will follow up the matter.

Departmental Funding

250. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Health the funding he allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituencies of Louth and East-Meath, by project and initiative, by completion date and by cost, for the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3563/16]

267. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Health the improvements made to the Louth County Hospital in Dundalk and to Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda in County Louth and the capital costs involved in the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3674/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): I propose to take Questions Nos. 250 and 267 together.

The HSE has been requested to reply directly to you on this matter as it is responsible for the delivery of health care infrastructure projects. If the Deputy has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office who will follow up on the matter.

Orthodontic Service Waiting Lists

251. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the number of persons waiting for orthodontic treatment at the end of September 2015, by local health office area, by those under 16 years of age, by those 16 years of age and older, in tabular form. [3589/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): The HSE provides orthodontic treatment to those who have been assessed and referred for treatment before their 16th birthday. It should be noted that the nature of orthodontic care means that immediate treatment is not always desirable. It is estimated that in up to 5% of cases it is necessary to wait for further growth to take place, until after 16-18 years of age, before treatment commences. Patients are assessed by the HSE Orthodontic Service under the modified Index of Treatment Need. Patients with the greatest level of need i.e. Grade 5 or Grade 4 are provided with treatment by the HSE.

Information on waiting times is collated by the HSE by region and for the intervals as shown in the following table. The information is not collated by age. In general, those waiting over 4 years would be expected to be 16 years or over since they are usually referred at 12-13 years of age approximately. The information on waiting times for treatment for Quarter 3 of 2015 is as follows:

Questions - Written Answers

Waiting time from assessment to commencement of treatment	1 - 6 months	7 - 12 months	13 - 24 months	25-48 months	Over 48 months	TOTAL
HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster	729	974	1,513	1,585	334	5,135
HSE Dublin North East	309	577	1,035	1,515	726	4,162
HSE South	662	802	994	1,449	306	4,213
HSE West	450	793	2,021	1,304	28	4,596
Total	2,150	3,146	5,563	5,853	1,394	18,106

Home Help Service Provision

252. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the number of home help hours provided in 2015; and the projected number to be provided in 2016, by local health office, in tabular form. [3590/16]

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. If the Deputy has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Hospital Staff Data

253. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the number of non-consultant hospital doctors employed, by public hospital, by voluntary hospital, in each of the years 2011 to 2015, in tabular form. [3591/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): I have asked the HSE to respond to the Deputy directly on this matter. If the Deputy has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up on the matter with them.

HSE Reports

254. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the reason for the delay in publishing the October 2015 Health Service Executive performance report; and when he expects it to be published. [3592/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): The October 2015 Health Service Executive Performance Report was due to be published over the Christmas period 2015. Given the time of year, it was decided to publish both the October and the November Performance Reports together at the first available opportunity this year. Both reports were published yesterday Wednesday, 27 January and are available on the HSE's website.

Hospital Procedures

255. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the number of operations and procedures that were cancelled and postponed, by public hospital in 2015, in tabular form. [3593/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): As this is a service matter, I have asked the

HSE to respond to the Deputy directly. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and my officials will follow up the matter.

Hospital Procedures

256. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the number of operations and procedures that were cancelled and postponed, by voluntary hospital in 2015, in tabular form. [3594/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): As this is a service matter, I have asked the HSE to respond to the Deputy directly. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and my officials will follow up the matter.

Accident and Emergency Departments

257. **Deputy Noel Grealish** asked the Minister for Health when it is intended to publish the external review into the operation of the emergency department at University Hospital Galway; the reason for the delay; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3600/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): As this is a service matter, I have asked the HSE to respond to the Deputy directly. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and my officials will follow up the matter.

Health Services

258. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Health the status of a medical appointment for a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3621/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): As the particular issue raised by the Deputy relates to an individual case, this is a service matter for the Health Service Executive. Accordingly, I have arranged for the question to be referred to the HSE for direct reply to the Deputy. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Hospital Waiting Lists

259. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Health if he will examine the referral of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry to Kerry General Hospital for a diagnosis; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3640/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): Under the Health Act 2004, the Health Service Executive (HSE) is required to manage and deliver, or arrange to be delivered on its behalf, health and personal social services. Section 6 of the HSE Governance Act 2013 bars the Minister for Health from directing the HSE to provide a treatment or a personal service to any individual or to confer eligibility on any individual.

The scheduling of appointments for patients is a matter for the hospital to which the patient has been referred. Should a patient's general practitioner consider that the patient's condition

warrants an earlier appointment, he or she should take the matter up with the consultant and the hospital involved. In relation to the specific case raised, I have asked the HSE to respond to you directly. If you have not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and my officials will follow the matter up.

Medical Card Applications

260. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Health the status of an application for a medical card for a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; the information received to date, the information outstanding; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3643/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): 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. If the Deputy has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days, please contact my Private Office who will follow up the matter with them.

Medical Card Applications

261. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Health the status of an application for a medical card by a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3645/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): 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. If the Deputy has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days, please contact my Private Office who will follow up the matter with them.

Mental Health Services Provision

262. **Deputy Michael McCarthy** asked the Minister for Health his views on a matter (detail supplied) regarding the diagnosis of mental illness; the progress on implementing this approach; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3646/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): Where a person is referred to an appropriate health professional, and has been assessed and diagnosed as having a mental health condition, the diagnosis will inform the treatment plan for each individual. A range of interventions may be indicated in line with the agreed care plan and can include counselling, psychotherapeutic interventions, occupational therapy, social work input, or behavioural therapies. Other forms of support and intervention, including medication, are also

designed to address identified biological, psychological or social needs and improve a person's mental health.

West Cork Mental Health Services provide a range of therapeutic programmes including the Open Dialogue Approach which offers a series of meetings between service users, their support network & mental health professionals which promotes shared communication, reflection on current issues & developing collaborative solutions.

As this is a service issue this question has been referred to the HSE for direct reply. If the Deputy has not received a letter within 15 working days, please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Hospital Waiting Lists

263. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health if he is aware of extended waiting times for discectomies and his views on the provision and availability of such procedures for patients in Dublin Central; if he is aware that a person (details supplied) in Dublin 7 has been waiting for almost two years for a discectomy and that the delay in having the procedure is severely impacting on the person's quality of life; how he will ensure such procedures are made available more quickly; if he will provide the details of each hospital that provides discectomies, and the number of persons waiting up to three, from three plus to six, six plus to nine, nine plus to 12, 12 plus to 15, and 18 months plus, in tabular form. [3652/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): Under the Health Act 2004, the Health Service Executive (HSE) is required to manage and deliver, or arrange to be delivered on its behalf, health and personal social services. Section 6 of the HSE Governance Act 2013 bars the Minister for Health from directing the HSE to provide a treatment or a personal service to any individual or to confer eligibility on any individual.

The National Waiting List Management Policy, *A standardised approach to managing scheduled care treatment for in-patient, day case and planned procedures, January 2014*, has been developed to ensure that all administrative, managerial and clinical staff follow an agreed national minimum standard for the management and administration of waiting lists for scheduled care. This policy, which has been adopted by the Health Service Executive, sets out the processes that hospitals are to implement to manage waiting lists.

In relation to the particular query raised, as this is a service matter, I have asked the HSE to respond to the Deputy directly. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and my officials will follow up the matter.

Orthodontic Service Waiting Lists

264. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health if he is aware of the extended waiting times for children in need of orthodontic treatment and the provision and availability of orthodontic treatment for children and adults in Dublin Central, by the length and time of waiting lists in the local health area; if he is aware that a person (details supplied) has been advised of having to wait six years for essential orthodontic treatment and if it is acceptable that the person should have to spend the entire secondary school experience waiting for orthodontic treatment [3653/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): The HSE pro-

vides orthodontic treatment to those who have been assessed and referred for treatment before their 16th birthday. It should be noted that the nature of orthodontic care means that immediate treatment is not always desirable. It is estimated that in up to 5% of cases it is necessary to wait for further growth to take place, until after 16-18 years of age, before treatment commences. Patients are assessed by the HSE Orthodontic Service under the modified Index of Treatment Need. Patients with the greatest level of need are provided with treatment by the HSE.

Following a national procurement process, a panel of independent practitioners will be contracted by the HSE in the coming weeks to provide treatment for certain categories of misalignment. The practitioners will be under contract over the next three years, with consideration of an extension to four years. This initiative will especially focus on those waiting for four years or longer who are generally 16 years and over. The majority of patients to be treated will come from the Dublin area. It is expected that this initiative will have a positive impact on waiting times.

In addition, a pilot scheme in the Dublin North East area (DNE), which involves up-skilling staff to work as orthodontic therapists is currently underway. A dental hygienist and a dental nurse qualified as orthodontic therapists in September 2015 and are now working in the HSE under the supervision of specialist orthodontists. The scheme is currently undergoing an evaluation, which includes consideration of how the scheme is affecting waiting lists. Figures are currently being collated and early indications are positive. It is planned to extend the scheme nationally after the evaluation has been completed.

The case (details supplied) is a service matter and it has been referred to the HSE for direct reply to the Deputy. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Medical Card Data

265. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health if he is aware of the number of senior citizens in Dublin Central who have been denied a medical card or had their medical card renewals refused, and the number of applications, refusals and rejections for medical cards in the relevant local health offices for Dublin Central for persons over 65 years of age in the past five years; why a person in (details supplied) in Dublin 7 was refused a medical card; and if the application will be reviewed. [3654/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): 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. If the Deputy has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days, please contact my Private Office who will follow up the matter with them.

Medical Card Data

266. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Health the number of medical card holders resident in County Donegal; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3657/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): 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. If the Deputy has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days, please contact my Private Office who will follow up the matter with them.

Question No. 267 answered with Question No. 250.

Primary Care Centre Provision

268. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Health the status of the provision of a primary care centre for Laytown and Bettystown in east County Meath; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3675/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): The Health Service Executive has responsibility for the provision, maintenance and operation of Primary Care centres. Therefore, I have asked the HSE to respond directly to the Deputy on this issue. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Primary Care Centre Provision

269. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Health the status of the provision of a primary care centre for Drogheda in County Louth; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3676/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): The Health Service Executive has responsibility for the provision, maintenance and operation of Primary Care Centres. Therefore, I have asked the HSE to respond directly to the Deputy on this issue. If he has not received a reply within 15 working days, please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

HSE Properties

270. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Health the status of the sale of a former health facility (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3678/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): The Health Service Executive (HSE) operates a protocol for the disposal of surplus property assets. This protocol sets out three options.

- Does a State Agency require the property?
- Open market sale, subject to favourable market conditions.
- Community / voluntary use will be considered only if points 1 and 2 above do not mate-

rialise.

The Health Service Executive is required to obtain value for money when disposing of surplus property assets. These proceeds will be re-invested in delivering much needed health care infrastructure.

As it is responsible for the management of the health care estate the HSE has been requested to reply directly to the Deputy on this matter. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office who will follow up the matter with them.

General Practitioner Training

271. **Deputy Thomas Pringle** asked the Minister for Health the number of students who have graduated from general practitioner schemes in the years 2014 and 2015 and the percentage of those students who have remained in the locality of the training scheme from which they have graduated, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3692/16]

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 to the Deputy. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days, please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Accident and Emergency Departments

272. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Minister for Health the steps he will take to improve the conditions at the accident and emergency department at St. Vincent's hospital in County Dublin; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3694/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): A range of initiatives have been implemented to address ED overcrowding and waiting times in Emergency Departments over the last number of months. Significant additional resources, €117m, additional beds and staffing have been put in place to address these problems consisting of measures to reduce numbers coming into hospital, measures to expand capacity and change work practices in hospitals and measures to support timely patient discharge from hospital. Work on these initiatives will continue to be a priority for the rest of 2016.

In relation to the Deputy's specific query in relation to St. Vincent's Hospital, as this is a service matter, I have asked the HSE to respond to the Deputy directly. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and my officials will follow up the matter.

Orthodontic Service Waiting Lists

273. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide additional funding in 2016 to reduce orthodontic waiting lists on the north side of Dublin given that the waiting times are several years long as against a matter of months in other parts of County Dublin; and if he will contract out this work in order to tackle the unacceptably long waiting times. [3722/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): The HSE pro-

vides orthodontic treatment to those who have been assessed and referred for treatment before their 16th birthday. It should be noted that the nature of orthodontic care means that immediate treatment is not always desirable. It is estimated that in up to 5% of cases it is necessary to wait for further growth to take place, until after 16-18 years of age, before treatment commences. Patients are assessed by the HSE Orthodontic Service under the modified Index of Treatment Need. Patients with the greatest level of need are provided with treatment by the HSE.

Following a national procurement process, a panel of independent practitioners will be contracted by the HSE in the coming weeks to provide treatment for certain categories of misalignment. The practitioners will be under contract over the next three years, with consideration of an extension to four years. This initiative will especially focus on those waiting for four years or longer. The majority of patients to be treated will come from the Dublin area. It is expected that this initiative will have a positive impact on waiting times.

In addition, a pilot scheme in the Dublin North East area (DNE), which involves up-skilling staff to work as orthodontic therapists is currently underway. A dental hygienist and a dental nurse qualified as orthodontic therapists in September 2015 and are now working in the HSE under the supervision of specialist orthodontists. The scheme is currently undergoing an evaluation, which includes consideration of how the scheme is affecting waiting lists. Figures are currently being collated and early indications are positive. It is planned to extend the scheme nationally after the evaluation has been completed.

Patient Safety Agency Establishment

274. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Health the reason for the failure to establish a patient safety authority as promised in the programme for Government. [3723/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): Informed by the published HIQA investigation reports on various hospital services and based on analysis and discussions on patient safety priorities, I came to the conclusion that providing a national focus for patient safety is best achieved by strengthening the priority attached to patient safety and complaints handling within the delivery system, concentrating HIQA's regulatory efforts on key patient safety challenges and developing independent patient advocacy supports. In order to lead and direct these efforts, Government has approved a programme of patient safety measures. These include the strengthening of my Department's patient safety role and functions through the establishment of a National Patient Safety Office (NPSO) within the Department. This would mean that the NPSO would have a broader mandate than envisaged for the Patient Safety Authority in the Programme for Government and would be firmly linked to the existing systems of accountability and performance oversight. My Department is continuing to work towards finalising the design, structure and work plan for the NPSO in 2016.

Medicinal Products Expenditure

275. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the amount spent on medicines, by public hospital, in each of the years 2010 to 2015 in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3725/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): The Deputy's question has been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office who will follow up on the matter.

General Medical Services Scheme Data

276. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the number and list of general practitioners, GPs, who have signed up to the proposed scheme of free GP care for children under six years of age, by county, in tabular form. [3726/16]

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 to the Deputy. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days, please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Medical Aids and Appliances Provision

277. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Health when a new medical device for a person (details supplied) in County Kerry will be provided; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3733/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): As the particular issue raised relates to an individual case, I have arranged for the question to be referred to the HSE for direct reply. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Consultancy Contracts Data

278. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Health the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [3769/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): The information requested by the Deputy is presented in the following table. Data refers to reports commissioned from March 2011 to December 2015.

Year	Organisation/ Consultants	Name of Report	Current status	Cost December 2015
2015	Amarach Research	Alcohol Labelling Research	Report being drafted.	€86,138
2015	NUIG	Suite of Literature Reviews to support National Clinical Guidelines	Work commenced	€159,645
2015	UCC	Systematic literature review National Early Warning Score update	Ongoing	€22,743
2015	ICF Consulting Services/DKM Economic Consultants	An assessment of the economic costs of smoking in Ireland	Ongoing	€12,449
2015	Prospectus	Code of Conduct for Health and Social Service Providers	Extracts will be published within clinical guidelines	€86,138
2015	UCD	Clinical Handover Guideline	Work ongoing	€86,292
2015	DCU	Management of the Acute Adult Asthma Patient – provision of research	Extracts to be published within clinical guideline	€9,973
2015	DCU	Paediatric Early Warning Score – Pre-implementation research	Extracts to be published within clinical guideline	€24,000

Year	Organisation/ Consultants	Name of Report	Current status	Cost December 2015
2015	INDECON Economic Consultants	Analysis of potential measures to encourage the provision of Primary Care facilities	Work ongoing	€0
2015	DKM Economic Consultants	Analysis of potential measures to encourage the provision of Nursing Homes and Community Nursing Unit facilities	Work ongoing	€40,221
2014	DCU School of Nursing	Report to support the Taskforce on Staffing and Skill mix for nursing	Will be used to inform the final Report on the Taskforce on Staffing and Skill Mix	€7,418
2014	DCU School of Nursing	Literature Review and Nursing Workforce Evaluation to Support the Taskforce on Staffing and Skill Mix	Will be used to inform the Report of the Taskforce on Staffing and Skill Mix	€19,845
2014	Crowe Horwath	Thematic Analysis of Submissions in response to a Public Consultation on the White Paper for Universal Health Insurance	Published on Department's website	€39,176
2014	NUI Galway	Systematic literature review Maternity Early Warning Score	Extracts published within clinical guideline	€23,935
2014	DCU	Systematic literature review Paediatric Early Warning Score	Extracts will be published within clinical guideline	€20,095
2014	UCC	Systematic literature review Clinical Practice Guidance	Published on Department's website	€20,712
2014	Sinéad Shannon	Review of the international evidence and literature on selection criteria for the Outcomes Framework (Whilst this piece of research which was commissioned in December and approved in January, no payments have been made to date)	Ongoing	€5,000
2013	Prospectus Strategy Consultants	Review of Staffing Resources and Organisational Structure of the Department of Health	Report completed but not published, for Department's use only	€72,940
2013	Deloitte and Touche Consultants Ltd	Review of the Nursing Homes Support Scheme	Ongoing	€36,900
2013	Matheson Ormsby Prentice	Legal Research and advisory services on the design and implementation of an insurance based health system providing universal coverage in Ireland	Not Published	€123,000
2013	Prof Oonagh Walsh	Report on symphysiotomy in Ireland, 1944-1984	Not published	€49,500
2013	Ernst & Young	Reports relating to the development of the Programme Management Office (cost includes a range of consultancy services)	Ongoing – internal reports	€79,212
2013	Dr Sinead Hanafin & Associates	Review of the Traveller Health Advisory Committee	Finalised	€6,150
2013	Prospectus	Overview of the development of the Health & Wellbeing Programme	Finalised	€15,156
2013	Research Matters	Provision of Research Management Services	Ongoing	€74,490

Questions - Written Answers

Year	Organisation/ Consultants	Name of Report	Current status	Cost December 2015
2013	Institute of Public Health	Analysis re Consultation (Tobacco Products Directive)	Completed - not yet published	€5,000
2013	Professor Hammond	Research on Standardised Packaging- Irish Context	Ongoing	€5,000
2013	CJP Consultants	Preparation of report on the efficacy of minimum pricing and other public policies for alcohol.	Published on website	€31,488
2013	Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland	Annual Report of the Alcohol Marketing Communications Monitoring Body (AMCMB)	Published	€21,115
2012	McGee Pharma International	Labelling of Medicinal Products in both Irish and English	Completed	€13,644
2012	Goodbody Stockbrokers and Matheson Ormsby Prentice Solicitors	Further Analysis of Options in relation to the restructuring of the Irish Private Health Insurance Market	Report completed	€62,349
2012	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform with the assistance of PwC	Review of the Department of Health's Parliamentary and Legislative Processes	Report completed but not published - for Department's use only	€18,020
2012	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	A survey of experience and qualifications in the Department of Health	Report completed but not published - for Department's use only	None
2012	Michael Collins Associates	Supplementary Report and Addendum on Cost Comparison for the Dolphin Review Group	Completed not published, commercially sensitive	€12,423
2012	John Martin	Further assessment of planning issues in relation to proposed sites for the Dolphin Review Group	Published	€6,000
2012	Simon Clear	Further assessment of planning issues in relation to proposed sites for the Dolphin Review Group	Published	€9,475
2012	The Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, UCC, in conjunction with the Centre for Health Policy and Management, TCD.	The Efficiency Review of the BreastCheck Screening Programme	Published	€71,270
2012	Mr Gerard Mullaly	Reforming Chronic Care: Financing and Delivering Integrated Chronic Care	Not published	€5,227
2012	Mr Gerard Mullaly	The Integrated Continuing Care System (ICCS): Reforming Elderly Care in Ireland	Not published	€7,558
2012	Matheson Ormsby Prentice	Options Appraisal of multi-payer universal health insurance models: Preliminary advice	Not Published	€6,150
2012	Department of Health/ SIRA Consulting	Report on the baseline measurement of the administrative burden from the Department of Health (as part of a cross Departmental project coordinated by Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)	Published 2013	€14,000

Year	Organisation/ Consultants	Name of Report	Current status	Cost December 2015
2011	Goodbody Stockbrokers and Matteson Ormsby Prentice Solicitors	Commissioned to undertake a review of the Irish Private Health Insurance Market in Relation to the options which may exist for re-balancing	Report completed	€300,000

Public Inquiries

279. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Health the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which he or his Department have been responsible by name; by terms of reference; by cost including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded; by date including the projected date of conclusion where an inquiry has not been concluded from 1991 to date, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3784/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): The detailed information requested by the Deputy is not immediately available. Data will be collated and forwarded to the Deputy as soon as possible.

Departmental Expenditure

280. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Health the amount spent by the Health Service Executive on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3798/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): I have referred this matter to the HSE for attention and direct reply to the Deputy. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Public Relations Contracts Expenditure

281. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Health the amount spent by the Health Service Executive on public relations services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3799/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): I have referred this matter to the HSE for attention and direct reply to the Deputy. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Ministerial Allowances

282. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Health the expenses claimed, including the amount of mileage and the amount claimed, by him and Ministers of State of his Department, by calendar year, during the current Dáil Éireann, in tabular form. [3812/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): The information requested by the Deputy in respect of expenses paid to me is set out in the following table. All payments in respect of travel and subsistence are based on rates approved by the Department of Public Expenditure

and Reform.

Paid in Year	Mileage Paid	Other Expenses	Total
2014	€6,328	€558	€6,886
2015	€14,065	€835	€14,900
2016	€1,095	€0	€1,095
Total	€21,488	€1,393	€22,881

The information requested in respect of Minister of State Kathleen Lynch is set out in the following table.

Paid in Year	Mileage Paid	Other Expenses	Total
2011	€11,430	€951	€12,381
2012	€15,973	€3,349	€19,322
2013	€15,068	€4,011	€19,079
2014	€14,354	€2,438	€16,792
2015	€16,376	€2,708	€19,084
Total	€73,201	€13,457	€86,658

The information requested in respect of former Minister of State Alex White is set out in the following table.

Paid in Year	Mileage Paid	Other Expenses	Total
2013	€13,248	€3,096	€16,344
2014	€8,334	€1,914	€10,248
2015	€0	€371	€371
Total	€21,582	€5,381	€26,963

The information requested in respect of former Minister of State Róisín Shortall is set out in the following table.

Paid in Year	Mileage Paid	Other Expenses	Total
2011	€0	€547	€547
2012	€7,286	€315	€7,601
Total	€7,286	€862	€8,148

Departmental Expenditure

283. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Health the amount he spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3827/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): The information sought by the Deputy is set out as follows:

2015 - €28,179

2014 - €20,135

2013 - €17,993

2012 - €19,807

2011 - €18,709.

Services for People with Disabilities

284. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Health if he has provided key additional funding and resources for disability services in 2016; if he has estimated the cost of the additional essential resources requested by disability advocacy groups in the run up to budget 2016; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3845/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): In the run up to Budget 2016, the Department of Health received a number of submissions from various organisations representing people with disabilities for additional funding.

Arising from the budgetary process, funding of €1.56 billion was allocated to the Disability Services Programme in 2016. The quantum of service to be provided with that funding, and the key service deliverables and priorities for the Disability Services Programme, are outlined in the HSE's National Service Plan for 2016.

The HSE is committed to protecting frontline services for people with disabilities to the greatest possible extent, and to maintaining a consistent level of service to that provided in 2015.

Accident and Emergency Services Provision

285. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Health when detailed planning and construction for the proposed new accident and emergency department at Beaumont Hospital, Dublin 9 will commence; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3846/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): Future investment at Beaumont Hospital must be considered within the overall acute hospital sector infrastructure programme, and also within the overall capital envelope available to the health service. Future development at the Beaumont site must also be considered in the context of the establishment of hospital groups. Each hospital group will be required to develop a strategic plan to describe how it will provide more efficient and effective patient services and reorganise its services to provide optimal care to the populations it serves. The HSE is concentrating on applying the funding available for infrastructure development in the most effective way possible to meet current and future needs.

As part of its 2015 - 2016 winter capacity planning, Beaumont is extending the Day Hospital at St. Joseph's, Raheny from a 2 day to a 5 day service. The Day Hospital provides a multi-disciplinary team for frail older people, thus providing an alternative care pathway for these patients, helping them to avoid ED admission. Rehabilitation and transitional care services are also provided in St. Joseph's, which facilitates earlier discharge from Beaumont and assists in avoiding re-admissions.

As the specific question raised by the Deputy are matters for the Health Service Executive, I have therefore asked the HSE to respond to the Deputy directly. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and my officials will follow up the matter.

Health Services

286. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Health if he will introduce a licensing system for all health and care facilities; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3847/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): I am adopting a phased approach to the regulation of healthcare. My Department continues to progress the Patient Safety Licensing Bill and has established a Working Group to engage with the Health Service Executive, the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) and the independent healthcare sector to inform the finalisation of the General Scheme of the Bill prior to its consideration by Government. As an interim step and in advance of a formal licensing regime for public and private hospitals, I propose to bring the private/independent healthcare sector within the remit of the Health Act 2007. In November 2015, Government gave approval to the drafting of the Health Information and Patient Safety Bill which will include the necessary provisions to extend HIQA's powers to set and monitor standards, and undertake investigations, where necessary, in the private healthcare sector. Work on drafting the Health Information and Patient Safety Bill will continue throughout 2016.

Medical Card Applications

287. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Health if and when a medical card will issue to a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3859/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch): 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.

If the Deputy has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days, please contact my Private Office who will follow up the matter with them.

Question No. 288 answered with Question No. 231.

Health Services Data

289. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the number of persons who have been issued with a unique health identifier since the Health Identifiers Act 2014 was passed, by local health office, in tabular form. [3880/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): The Health Identifiers Act 2014 provides for the establishment of systems of identifiers for clients and for healthcare providers, both professionals and organisations. The relevant provisions to establish the Individual Health Identifier Register were commenced in September 2015 to allow for Individual Health Identifiers to be assigned to individuals and to establish the related governance structure. Operational

responsibility for the identifier system has been delegated to the HSE as provided for in the Act. The data to establish the register will leverage the work that is ongoing in supporting the Public Services Card initiative by the Department of Social Protection.

The HSE are about to launch a public consultation on the privacy impact of the proposed approach to assigning the identifiers. A Privacy Impact Assessment or PIA involves examining the privacy implications of a project to ensure that personal information is protected and that the project complies with all relevant legislation. It is envisaged that where the PIA identifies privacy risks it proposes safeguards that should reduce these risks without impacting on what the project is aiming to achieve. Late last year HSE successfully developed a technical *proof of concept* for the assigning of the individual health identifiers to its clients and building the register. The technical and operational environment for managing the identifier system is currently being finalised. Following the proof of concept it is envisaged that the system will migrate to a full production environment by the end of Q2 2016. When the system is fully operational it will allow the health services to positively identify patients and clients thus underpinning better patient safety.

It is important to point out that the roll out of a system of health identifiers for patients, professionals and organisations has no linkage with any eligibility for any type of health service or benefit. It is primarily a patient safety initiative and a fundamental building block for eHealth and ICT developments into the future.

Hospital Charges

290. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide in tabular form and by public and voluntary hospital between 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2015 the revenue raised from charges for private patients in public beds; the same details for 2014 and 2013; if he will provide in tabular form and by public and voluntary hospital the number of procedures from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015 in each hospital that has treated private patients in public beds and the equivalent figures for 2014 and 2013; and the number of applications for payment by the insurer that were submitted by each hospital for such procedures carried out between 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2015, and the same figures for 2013 and 2014. [3881/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): The Deputy's question regarding revenue raised from charges for private patients in public beds and the number of procedures has been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply.

If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office who will follow up the matter with them.

Health Services Staff Data

291. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the number of staff at national director level, assistant national director level, general manager level and grade VIII level in the Health Service Executive and in section 38 organisations funded by the executive on 1 January in each of the years from 2012 to 2016. [3882/16]

Minister for Health (Deputy Leo Varadkar): I have asked the HSE to respond to the Deputy directly on this matter. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up on the matter with them.

Home Care Packages

292. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the number of home care packages provided and the number of persons benefiting from these by local health office in 2015 and the estimate for 2016, in tabular form. [3883/16]

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. If he has not received a reply from the HSE within 15 working days please contact my Private Office and they will follow up the matter with them.

Departmental Funding

293. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the funding he allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituencies of Louth and Meath-East, by project and initiative, by completion date and by cost, for the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3562/16]

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Charles Flanagan): My Department has not spent any funding on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituencies of Louth and Meath-East in the last 5 years.

Passport Applications Fees

294. **Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív** asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade why persons of over 80 years of age pay the full €89 for a passport; and if he will reduce the cost for them. [3651/16]

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Charles Flanagan): In 2011 the Government decided in light of the budgetary situation to discontinue the arrangement whereby persons over the age of 65 could avail of a reduced passport fee.

The annualised fee for a standard ten year Irish passport compares favourably with many other jurisdictions. At €8 per year, the Irish passport fee compares with approximately €8.60 for a French passport, €9.50 per year for a British passport, €10 per year for an American passport and €16.40 per year for an Australian passport.

Given that the shortfall in revenue would have to be met by the taxpayer I do not have any plans to reduce the fee charged to older applicants at this time.

Middle East Issues

295. **Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett** asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will ask the Israeli authorities why approximately 350 acres of crops, all less than the regulation 40 cm in height and newly planted by Palestinian farmers in Gaza, have been destroyed by Israeli crop sprayers operating in the access-restricted areas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3746/16]

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Charles Flanagan): I am aware of two recent reports of crop spraying in the restricted area on the Gaza side of the border fence. This

practice is now said to have been going on for some years, but to have just come to wider attention.

The Israeli NGO *Gisha*, which is supported by Ireland, has put a series of questions to the Israeli authorities about the reasoning for the action and what chemicals have been used. The spraying of any kind of toxin onto crops intended for consumption is a matter of concern, and an issue on which people anywhere tend to be very sensitive. It is important therefore that Israel discloses fully what it has been doing, and I would urge them to do so. It would seem likely that any agent sprayed may also have drifted onto fields on the Israeli side of the fence.

The broader issue of the restrictions on Gaza, including the restricted zone along the fence, remain a significant concern at EU level, and were addressed in the Conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council on 15 January.

Middle East Issues

296. **Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett** asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he regards the Israeli confiscation of land and forced transfer of Palestinian Bedouins from the E1 area of the West Bank as contrary to international law; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3747/16]

297. **Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett** asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he has requested Israel to unequivocally clarify that it will not forcibly transfer Palestinian Bedouin from the E1 area of the West Bank or seize any land in this area for settlement expansion; if he discussed this during his December 2015 visit to Tel Aviv, Israel; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3748/16]

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Charles Flanagan): I propose to answer Questions Nos. 296 and 297 together.

I have consistently made very clear my opposition to and condemnation of the whole process of settlement expansion in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the related policies of land seizures and forced transfer of population which are an inherent element of the settlement programme. These processes are clearly contrary to international law, and work directly contrary to efforts to secure a lasting peace in the area.

These views have been expressed in statements at national and EU level, in interventions at UN and other international fora, and directly to the Israeli authorities at all appropriate opportunities, at both political and diplomatic level. Both Ireland and the EU have asked Israel not to proceed with its planned forcible transfer of Bedouins from the E1 and other nearby areas.

The Foreign Affairs Council adopted Conclusions on the Middle East at its meeting on 15 January, including expressing the EU's clear opposition to evictions and forced transfers of Bedouins, and the need for a fundamental change of policy by Israel in relation to Area C. Ireland was instrumental in the adoption of this language.

I did not visit Israel in December 2015.

Middle East Issues

298. **Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett** asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he has an assessment of Israel's treatment of minority groups, given the Israeli Supreme Court's

decision to allow the demolition of the Bedouin village of Umm al-Hiran inside Israel and the removal of its inhabitants against their will; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3749/16]

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Charles Flanagan): Ireland consistently expresses strong and forthright criticisms of Israeli policies in the occupied territory, and its treatment of Palestinians there.

There are also concerns about some issues relating to minorities in Israel, be they Bedouin or other Arab Israelis, which indeed have been the subject of considerable debate in Israel itself.

These concerns have been discussed at EU level. They have been expressed directly to the Israeli authorities in the same way that human rights concerns are raised with many other countries, commensurate with the issues at stake.

Tragically, there are religious, ethnic and other minorities in very many areas in the Middle East, and elsewhere, who are under much greater and more acute threats than in Israel.

Consultancy Contracts Data

299. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant associated with all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [3768/16]

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Charles Flanagan): The Department is responsible for two Votes – Vote 28 (Foreign Affairs and Trade) and Vote 27 (International Cooperation).

My Department commissions external expertise where highly specialised skills are not available within the Department and in particular where ongoing independent evaluation of programmes and projects is required. During the course of their engagements, these consultants/experts may prepare reports and other documentation for the Department.

In-depth analysis of issues by external experts has informed - and continues to inform - my Department's policies, allowing for a more targeted use of resources and greater accountability in the allocation of budgets.

These services are procured by open competitive tendering processes in accordance with EU and national rules and comply with the overall value for money objective of the Department.

Separately, a low number of consultancies are occasionally engaged directly by our Missions abroad from time to time.

The following table sets out the requested details of external reports commissioned by the Department since March 2011.

Commission	Experts/Consultants	Report/Subject	Cost (€)	Date of publication
2011	Kevin Moore	Support to the Governments of Zambia and South Africa to develop Special Economic Zones for the promotion of inward investment and employment	17,861	Not Applicable – see footnote*

Commission	Experts/Consultants	Report/Subject	Cost (€)	Date of publication
2011	Paul Sheane	Support to the Governments of Zambia and South Africa to develop Special Economic Zones for the promotion of inward investment and employment	9,965	*
2011	Stefanie Meredith	Review of Irish Aid Support for Product Development Partnerships in developing countries	10,100	*
2011	Samia Saad	Review of Irish Aid Support for Product Development Partnerships in developing countries	9,198	*

Commission	Experts/Consultants	Report/Subject	Cost (€)	Date of publication
2011	Paud Murphy	Development Education Reviews - to examine the current funding support and engagement in each of the priority areas identified in the Development Education strategy (primary, post primary, third level, adult, community and youth work)	9,064	*
2011	80:20	Development Education Reviews - to examine the current funding support and engagement in each of the priority areas identified in the Development Education strategy (primary, post primary, third level, adult, community and youth work)	9,870	*
2011	Eilis Murray	Development Education Reviews - to examine the current funding support and engagement in each of the priority areas identified in the Development Education strategy (primary, post primary, third level, adult, community and youth work)	6,068	*
2011	ISOS	Development Education Reviews - to examine the current funding support and engagement in each of the priority areas identified in the Development Education strategy (primary, post primary, third level, adult, community and youth work)	42,247	*
2011	Bernard McLoughlin	Review of the Irish Aid Centre, Dublin	6,143	*
2011	Cathal Higgins	Preparation of a report on the programme of education sector budget support towards school infrastructural development in Karamoja region and skills development in the oil sector (Uganda)	5,000	*
2011	Mike Williams	Review of Humanitarian Programme Plan for Irish Aid	18,742	*
2011	Humanitarian Policy Ltd	Review of Security Policy & Practice among Irish Aid Humanitarian Partners	33,930	*
2012	Mike Williams	Evaluation of the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation	12,247	July 2013

Questions - Written Answers

Commission	Experts/Consultants	Report/Subject	Cost (€)	Date of publication
2012	PA Consulting Group	Evaluating the value of the economic relationship between the United Kingdom and Ireland	73,083	July 2013
2012	Cathy Roche	Review of the Our World Awards 2005-2011	6,300	*
2012	Everywhere Consulting	Feasibility Study on the Establishment of a Humanitarian Hub at Shannon Airport	40,584	*
2012	Fintan Farrelly	Review of the Irish Aid Strategic Environmental Partnership Programme	6,000	*
2012	Mike Williams	Review of Misean Cara	15,099	*
2012	Pham Quang Hoa	Local consultancy contract 'Review of P135 infrastructure projects funded by Irish Aid'	5,453	*
2012	IOD Parc	South Africa Country Strategy Programme 2008-2012 Final Report	73,256	January 2013
2012	Itad	Evaluation of the Irish Aid Ethiopia Country Strategy Programme 2008-2012	143,886	May 2013
2013	Peter McEvoy	Evaluation of a number of Organisations funded by the Emigrant Support Programme(ESP)	13,075	July 2013
2013	Wright Consultancy Ltd	Gender Equality Audit	14,000	*
2013	Mary Jennings	Review of HRD (Human Rights and Democratisation) Scheme Irish Aid Palestine	15,500	*
2013	Bronagh Hinds and Karen McMinn Consultants	Report on the implementation of Ireland's National Action Plan on UNSCR (United Nations Security Council Resolution) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security	20,811	June 2013
2013	ASTEC Global Consultancy Ltd	Review of Irish Aid Financial Policies and Procedures	44,493	*
Commission	Experts/Consultants	Report/Subject	Cost (€)	Date of publication
2013	Gareth Williams	Review of Financial and Programme of the Camara Education Programme	20,000	*
2013	John Geraghty	Review of University College Cork's Programme of Technical Support Internships for Food Security	7,568	*
2013	Natural Research Institute	Review of Irish Aid Support to Fair and Ethical Trade Initiatives	19,292	*
2013	Pham Quang Hoa	Review Programme 135 (for Ethnic Minorities) of Irish Aid funded infrastructure projects	5,588	*
2013	IOD Parc	Evaluation of Irish Aid's Sierra Leone Strategy Paper, 2011-2013	77,907	August 2014
2013	Mokoro	Evaluation of Ireland's Support to Timor Leste, 2001-2014	85,203	August 2014

Commission	Experts/Consultants	Report/Subject	Cost (€)	Date of publication
2014	Tierney and Associates, Risk and Governance Consultants	Audit of grants awarded under Emigrant Support Programme	19,934	*
Commission	Experts/Consultants	Report/Subject	Cost (€)	Date of publication
2014	Hogan Lovells, Washington	Review of tax, social insurance and health obligations and other conditions of service in respect of locally-recruited staff members at our missions in the United States	57,756	*
2014	Gallup Korea (Korea Gallup Poll Co. LTD)	Working Holiday Agreement Report	7,217	March 2015
2014	Andy Pollak	Review of Irish Aid support for Initial Teacher Education	11,564	*
2014	ADETEF	OECD DAC EVALNET Study on Collaborative Partner- Donor Evaluation Work	25,000	*
2014	Tran Thi Ngoc Diep	Local input into Review of Irish Aid scholarship programmes	1,502	*
2014	Tom Collins	Feasibility Study - Celebrating and Sustaining Ireland's relationship with Africa	5,000	*
2014	ITAD Limited	Mid Term Review of the Civil Society Support Programme	68,135	*
2014	David Goodman Payne	Review of Irish Aid Civil Society Facility in Vietnam	8,589	On-going
2014	Cathy Gaynor/ Niamh O'Grady/ Gill Roe	Evaluability Assessment of the Programme of Strategic Cooperation	43,200	*
2014	Willis Risk Services (Ireland) Limited	Consultancy for insurance policy report and tender documentation for the Rapid Response Corps	5,000	*
2014	Mekong Dev Research Institute	Impact assessment of Irish Aid funded infrastructure projects under P135 in 2011 & 2012	43,912	*
2014	Karen McMin	Report and final review on the implementation of Ireland's National Action Plan on UNSCR (United Nations Security Council Resolution) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security	9,750	2015
2014	Mokoro	Evaluation of Irish Aid's Uganda Country Strategy Paper 2010-2014	113,739	Not published yet
	ASM (B) Ltd	Payroll System Audit	11,636	*
2015	ASM	Audit of grants awarded under Emigrant Support Programme	€9,800	*
2015	Peter McEvoy	Professional Services for the appraisal of Irish Aid fellowship Training Programme	16,560	*
2015	Coffey International Development Ltd	Review of the Irish Aid Programme Grant Mechanism	23,588	*

Commission	Experts/Consultants	Report/Subject	Cost (€)	Date of publication
2015	Tran Thi Ngoc Diep	Local input into scoping study to explore Ireland's cooperation in the agriculture & agribusiness sector under the IDEAS programme	4,442	*
2015	Johnny O'Regan	Organisational Assessment of Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice	4,400	*
2015	ASM	provision of audit services to examine grants awarded under the ESP	14,356	*
2015	Mazars	ICT Audit	27,552	*
2015	Crowleys DFK	Payment System Audit	19,004	*

*This report commissioned by the Department is an internal management report and not for publication.

Public Inquiries

300. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which he or his Department has been responsible, by name, by terms of reference, by cost, including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded, and by date, including the projected date of conclusion where an inquiry has not been concluded from 1991 to date, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3783/16]

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Charles Flanagan): There are currently no tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations underway. The only investigation for which my Department had responsibility during the period in question was the investigation by Mr. Justice Peter Cory, a retired judge of the Canadian Supreme Court, of allegations of collusion in the murders of Chief Superintendent Harry Breen and Superintendent Bob Buchanan, Patrick Finucane, Lord Justice and Lady Gibson, Robert Hamill, Rosemary Nelson, and Billy Wright. Judge Cory was appointed to undertake this investigation by the British and Irish Governments on 28 May 2002. The terms of reference of the investigation were to:

- review all the relevant papers in each case, including the records of earlier investigations;
- interview anyone Judge Cory thought could assist in his examination;
- establish the facts so far as practicable and subject to the law of the respective jurisdictions;
- keep, in reasonable manner, the relevant Governments informed of progress;
- submit reports as soon as practicable, including in circumstance where there was not sufficient basis to establish the facts in a particular case; the reports to include any recommendation(s) for further action, including, if considered necessary, the holding of a public inquiry.

Judge Cory was also requested to hear the views of the victims' families and to keep them informed of progress, if that was their wish. Judge Cory submitted his final reports to the two Governments on 7 October 2003.

The costs of the Inquiry were shared between the two Governments. It was agreed that there would be a 50:50 split for the following items: salaries of the judge and assistants, travel and allowances. In addition, each Government directly covered the costs that arose in its jurisdiction.

tion such as legal advice, secretarial support, accommodation and travel. Some costs were also paid in respect of legal representation for the families. The total cost to the Irish exchequer of the investigation was €341,168.90.

Ministerial Allowances

301. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the expenses claimed, including the amount of mileage and the amount claimed, by him and Ministers of State of his Department, by calendar year, during the current Dáil Éireann, in tabular form. [3811/16]

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Charles Flanagan): Listed below are the details of expenses paid, including the amount of mileage and the amount claimed by the Minister of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and each of the Ministers of State at my Department over the period 2011-2015.

Tánaiste Gilmore was provided with a State car and Garda drivers.

Year	IN OFFICE	MILEAGE	SUBSISTENCE	HOTEL Costs	OTHER EXPENSES
2011					
					€
Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore T.D.	March to Dec	Nil~	Nil	Nil	Nil
MOS Lucinda Creighton T.D. - European Affairs	March to Dec	€4,834.02	Nil	Nil	89.40
MOS Jan O'Sullivan T.D. - Irish Aid	March to Dec	€9,169.20	€1,529.63	Nil	7.50
2012					€
Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore T.D.	Jan to Dec	Nil~	Nil	Nil	Nil
MOS Lucinda Creighton T.D. - European Affairs	Jan to Dec	€9,597.43	€106.25	Nil	Nil
MOS Jan O'Sullivan T.D. - Irish Aid	January	€819.65	Nil	Nil	Nil
MOS Joe Costello T.D. - Irish Aid	Jan to Dec	€1,549.38	€5,335.83	Nil	28.00
2013					€
Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore T.D.	Jan to Dec	Nil~	Nil	Nil	Nil
MOS Lucinda Creighton T.D. - European Affairs	Jan to July	€6,130.36	€33.61	Nil	Nil
MOS Pascal Donohoe T.D. - European Affairs	July to Dec	€2,653.37	Nil	Nil	Nil
MOS Joe Costello T.D. - Irish Aid	Jan to Dec	Nil	€6,134.60	Nil	357.80
2014					€
Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore T.D.	Jan to July	Nil~	Nil	Nil	Nil
Minister Charles Flanagan T.D.	July to Dec	€6,573.40	Nil	Nil	€300.00
MOS Pascal Donohoe T.D. - European Affairs	Jan to July	€4,759.95	Nil	Nil	Nil
MOS Dara Murphy - European Affairs/Data Protection	July to Dec	€9,791.89	Nil	Nil	Nil
MOS Joe Costello T.D. - Irish Aid	Jan to July	€12,773.01	€3,252.87	€175.79	235.80

2014					
					€
MOS Seán Sherlock T.D. - Irish Aid, Trade Promotion and North-South Cooperation	July to Dec	€9,028.50	€1,238.40	€6.00	418.00
MOS Jimmy Deenihan T.D. - The Diaspora	July to Dec	€11,201.87	Nil	Nil	Nil
2015					
					€
Minister Charles Flanagan T.D.	Jan-Dec	€17,444.64	€4,957.92	€196.96	
MOS Dara Murphy - European Affairs/Data Protection	Jan-Dec	€27,686.84	€4,436.52	€315.58	
MOS Seán Sherlock T.D. - Irish Aid, Trade Promotion and North-South Cooperation	Jan-Dec	€22,116.24	€4,664.05		
MOS Jimmy Deenihan T.D. -The Diaspora	Jan-Dec	€26,270.98	€3,324.79		

Departmental Expenditure

302. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the amount he spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3826/16]

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Charles Flanagan): My Department has not subscribed to external media clipping or media monitoring services during the period to which the Deputy refers. My Department and Ireland's network of 80 Diplomatic, Consular and other offices overseas perform a wide range of functions in pursuit of Ireland's foreign policy interests. These include representing and advancing government policies internationally, in particular at EU and UN levels; economic, trade and cultural promotion; frontline consular services; engaging with Irish diaspora communities; and programme management, particularly in Irish Aid priority countries.

This work necessitates electronic access to the most up to date international and national news. My Department has used online news aggregation in order to be able to search for and access relevant current and past online news.

The total amounts spent on online news aggregation services over the 2011-2015 period were:

Year	Amount
2011	€10,890
2012	€9,840
2013	€24,909
2014	€33,210

Middle East Issues

303. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the steps he has taken to protect Christian and other minority communities in the Middle East; if he has taken any initiatives in this regard; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3852/16]

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Charles Flanagan): I have repeatedly condemned the crimes committed against religious and ethnic minorities across the Middle

East, including Christians, who have been the victims of appalling crimes, including murder, sexual violence, enslavement and forced conversions.

Ireland, in conjunction with 57 other States, sponsored a resolution calling for the Security Council of the United Nations to refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court in 2014, a resolution which was vetoed by two permanent members of the Security Council.

Ireland has provided over €43M in recent years in humanitarian support to the victims of the Syrian and Iraqi crises and will make a further commitment at the forthcoming London conference on the Syrian crisis at the beginning of February.

The only means of securing the protection of Christian communities and other minorities across the Middle East, is through the promotion of sustainable political solutions to the conflicts which have destabilised the region and have been the key factor in the promotion of radical and extremist ideologies. Ireland has been a key supporter of the UN's efforts to achieve an end to the conflicts in Syria and Iraq.

Middle East Issues

304. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will report on relations with the autonomous provinces of Kurdistan in Iraq and on Ireland's stance on the long struggle of Kurdistan for national independence; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3854/16]

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Charles Flanagan): Ireland continues to support the territorial integrity of Iraq and does not propose to intervene in internal constitutional matters of Iraq, which are for decision by the Iraqi people and their democratically elected leaders.

School Transport Provision

305. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if transport by taxi or another system will be offered to a person (details supplied) to transport a child who has special needs to school; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3701/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Education and Skills (Deputy Damien English): Under the terms of my Department's School Transport Scheme for Children with Special Educational Needs, children are eligible for transport where they are attending the nearest recognised school that is or can be resourced to meet their special educational needs.

In this regard, the family should liaise with the school authorities and the Special Educational Needs Organiser.

Residential Institutions Redress Scheme

306. **Deputy Sandra McLellan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if a person who did not directly receive money through the redress scheme but subsequently won a case against a solicitor for not filling out the application on time can apply to Caranua; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3471/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): The Residential Institutions Statutory Fund Act 2012 provides that those former residents who received awards from the Residential Institutions Redress Board or equivalent Court awards or settlements are eligible to apply to Caranua. This approach was taken having regard to the maximum funds available of €110 million and a potential pool of some 15,000 applicants.

Decisions regarding individual applications, including decisions regarding the eligibility of applicants, are a matter for Caranua and neither I nor my Department have any role in the process. Accordingly, I would suggest that this person contacts Caranua to clarify exactly what their eligibility status is.

Former residents who are not eligible for assistance from Caranua may be entitled to avail of services provided by other statutory bodies. Survivors can, for example, avail of the National Counselling Service operated by the Health Service Executive which offers counselling and psychotherapy services to those who have experienced trauma and abuse in childhood with priority given to survivors of institutional abuse.

Home Tuition Scheme Provision

307. **Deputy Noel Harrington** asked the Minister for Education and Skills to provide adequate resource supports to a person (details supplied) in County Cork; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3474/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): I wish to advise the Deputy that, at present the child to whom the Deputy has referred is in receipt of Home Tuition under the Department’s Home tuition scheme. This provision has been approved on the basis that the child currently does not have a school placement. I am advised that a placement will be available from September 2016.

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) is the statutory body with particular functions including planning and co-ordinating the provision of education and support services to children with special educational needs.

The NCSE, through its network of local Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs), is also responsible for processing applications from schools for special educational needs supports, including the establishment of special classes as required. All schools have the contact details of their local SENO. The parents may also contact their local SENO directly to discuss their child’s special educational needs, using the contact details available on www.ncse.ie.

Schools Data

308. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the number of one, two, three and four-teacher schools that have lost a teacher, by county and in each year since 2011. [3482/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): The Statistics Section of my Department’s website contains extensive data relating to schools, including data relating to teaching posts on an individual school basis. The most recent published information relates to the 2014/15 school year. Data in relation to the 2015/16 school year will be published later in the current school year.

School Funding

309. **Deputy Michael Moynihan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the funding that has been allocated to a school (details supplied) in County Cork over the past five years; if she will facilitate the increasing number of students attending this school; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3486/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan)(Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): The amount of grant paid to an individual primary school for capitation, book grant and ancillary services is determined by the school’s enrolment.

The amount of funding provided by my Department to the school referred to by the Deputy from 2011 to 2015 is as follows:

Year	Amount
2011	€36,588
2012	€33,950
2013	€40,545
2014	€44,498
2015	€43,871

These amounts do not include the salaries of Teachers and Special Needs Assistants who are paid on a payroll operated by my Department.

State Examinations

310. **Deputy Maureen O’Sullivan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if she will introduce standardised reading texts to determine the need for readers for leaving certificate examinations to ensure equality; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3489/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): The State Examinations Commission has statutory responsibility for operational matters relating to the certificate examinations.

The State Examinations Commission operates a scheme of Reasonable Accommodations in the Certificate Examinations (RACE).

In view of this I have forwarded your query to the State Examinations Commission for direct reply to the Deputy.

Schools Building Projects Status

311. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the reason a major extension for a school (details supplied) in County Galway has not gone to tender; when it will go to tender; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3523/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): The project for the School to which the Deputy refers is one of the research strands in the programme for the introduction of Nearly Zero Energy School Buildings. Nearly zero-energy means a building that has a very high energy performance. The research and design stages for this school are substantially complete and the tender documentation is currently being finalised.

School Accommodation

312. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the status of an application for additional accommodation by a school (details supplied) in County Donegal; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3528/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): I can confirm that the school referred to by the Deputy has submitted an application to my Department for capital funding for additional school accommodation.

Further details relevant to the application were requested from the school. On receipt of that information the application can be considered further with a decision conveyed to the school authority in due course.

Third Level Courses Availability

313. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if and when she will provide the required funding to the appropriate third level institutions in County Dublin willing to proceed with the bachelor of engineering technology (Ord) fire engineering, level 8 programme; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3538/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): Universities and Institutes of Technology are autonomous institutions within the meaning of the Universities Act 1997 and the Institutes of Technology Acts 1992 to 2006. The management of their academic affairs, including the selection and delivery of courses are matters for individual institutions. All universities and institutes of technology receive a block grant from the Higher Education Authority and it is a matter for each institution to determine how it is allocated internally. Accordingly, I have no function in relation to the issue raised by the Deputy.

Special Educational Needs Service Provision

314. **Deputy Pat Deering** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the status of the new unit for a school (details supplied) in County Carlow, including the reason one special education needs officer will sign the National Council for Special Education’s forms for placement and another needs officer attached to the school will not to do so and is awaiting a directive from the council. [3541/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): The National Council for Special Education (NCSE), through its network of local Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOS) will be engaging with schools for 2016/17 school year in order to plan for, and to open, new special classes, in order to ensure there are sufficient placements available to meet demand in an area.

Although a SENO has been assigned to the school in question the responsibility for the staffing of the school remains currently with my Department.

The SENO will collaborate with my Department on the staffing requirements for the school.

If the requirement for a new class is identified by the SENO my Department has capacity to establish a new class, if necessary, subject to the readiness of the school to open an additional class.

Summer Works Scheme Applications

315. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if an application by a school (details supplied) in County Kerry under the summer works scheme will be successful; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3542/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): I wish to confirm to the Deputy that my Department is in receipt of an application from the school, in question, under the Summer Works Scheme for the works referred to. Commensurate with the level of funding available for the Scheme, applications including that from the school concerned will be assessed on a top down basis in accordance with the prioritisation criteria outlined in the governing Circular Letter for the Scheme. This Circular Letter (0055/2015), is available on my Department’s website, *www.education.ie*.

I expect to be in a position to announce successful applicants at the end of February/early March 2016

Emergency Works Scheme Applications

316. **Deputy Ciarán Lynch** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if she will provide funding to complete emergency works required for a national school (details supplied) in County Cork; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3546/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): The school to which the Deputy refers applied for funding under my Department’s Emergency Works Scheme (EWG) for repairs to a retaining wall.

As the scope of works was considered to be outside the terms of this scheme, the application was refused.

The school submitted an appeal and this is currently under consideration. The Board of Management will be notified as soon as a decision has been made.

Departmental Funding

317. **Deputy Fergus O’Dowd** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the funding she allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituencies of Louth and Meath-East, by project and initiative, completion date and cost, for the past five years; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3559/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): Total capital funding expended in County Louth and County Meath in primary and post primary schools for the years 2010 to 2015 are provided in the following table. Details of expenditure on a constituency basis are only available on receipt of school names and roll numbers.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Louth	€20,728,749	€20,490,346	€16,003,027	€12,285,573	€15,740,325	€25,345,106
Meath	€22,845,324	€21,993,042	€19,922,823	€41,258,814	€24,072,252	€31,951,876

Schools Building Projects Status

318. **Deputy Brendan Smith** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the status of the proposed building project for the Holy Family School, Cootehill, County Cavan, including when it will proceed to the next stage; when the tendering process will commence and be completed; when construction will commence; the funding to be allocated; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3603/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): On 8th December 2015 my Department officials met with the school authority and their design team to determine what issues, including the decant requirements, remain to be addressed in the design stages and the most effective means of addressing those issues. The BoM and their Design Team are required to revert to the Department with proposals for consideration.

This project was included in the six year programme announced on 17th November and is scheduled to proceed to construction in 2016. Information in relation to the estimated cost of projects is not released prior to tender stage as this is considered commercially sensitive information.

Schools Building Projects Status

319. **Deputy Brendan Smith** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the status of an application for new permanent accommodation by a school (details supplied) in County Cavan; when this project will proceed to the next stage; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3604/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): The major building project for the school referred to by the Deputy is at an early stage of architectural planning, Stage 2a - Developed Design Stage.

The Stage 2a Report has recently been received and is currently being reviewed by my Department. Following this review, and subject to no issues arising, the project will be authorised to progress to Stage 2b – Detailed Design Stage, which includes the applications for Fire Cert and Disability Access Cert and the preparation of Tender Documents and prequalification of contractors.

This project was included in the six year programme announced on 17th November and is scheduled to proceed to construction in 2016.

Special Educational Needs Staffing

320. **Deputy Peadar Tóibín** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the increase or decrease in the number of special needs assistants employed in the State since 2011. [3647/16]

321. **Deputy Peadar Tóibín** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the increase or decrease in the number of special needs assistants employed in County Meath from 2011 to the present. [3648/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): I propose to take Questions Nos. 320 and 321 together. Arising from the economic downturn, the number of SNAs available for allocation was capped in September 2011 at 10,575. In December 2013, this cap was revised to 10,745 posts and was revised again in December 2014 to 10,965 posts.

In Budget 2015, a further 365 SNA posts were provided to the end of 2015, bringing the

total number of SNA posts to 11,330. This was again increased by 610 posts in July 2015 bringing the total number of posts available to the NCSE for allocation for the current school year to 11,940.

Budget 2016 provided an additional 100 posts to meet additional demand arising from January to June 2016, bringing the total number of SNAs available for allocation to the end of this school year to 12,040.

This is the highest level of Special Needs Assistant (SNA) support than ever before, which will ensure that children with special educational needs can continue to participate in education and be supported in a manner appropriate to their needs.

Information requested by the Deputy in relation to the number of Special Needs Assistants allocated in Co Meath from 2012/13 school year to date is available at <http://ncse.ie/statistics>. I have arranged for NCSE to provide information in respect of the 2011/12 school year directly to the Deputy.

School Patronage

322. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if she accepts the results of the survey she carried out with the Forum on Patronage and Pluralism in 2012 which clearly demonstrates the parental demand for a multid denominational school in Dublin 6W and further details on the engagement with existing school patrons in the area; if she is aware that schools in the area have commenced offering places for September 2016 and parents are receiving rejection letters on religious grounds; the assurances she will provide to these parents that suitable school places will be provided for their children in time for the commencement of the new school year; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3671/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan): The Government is committed to ensure greater diversity of choice in school provision. Since 2013, 8 new primary schools have opened under the patronage divesting process. My officials are continuing to work intensively with the main stakeholders to ensure delivery of choice in the other identified areas for 2016 and beyond. I have stated previously that this process needs to be re-examined to better accommodate parental demand for diversity. To that end, I have undertaken a round of consultations with most of the principal patron bodies over the last number of weeks with the aim of reinvigorating the process.

Regarding the Dublin 6W area, my Department officials are engaged with existing school patrons regarding the possibility of school divestment which may impact on the Dublin 6W area. My officials are working closely with the current patrons on the practicalities of the property issues involved and work is well advanced in this regard.

Separately, I announced the establishment of 4 new primary schools and 9 new post-primary schools to open in 2017 and 2018, including a new primary school which will open in September 2018 to serve the Dublin South City Centre areas of Dublin 2, 4 and 6, which is adjacent to the Dublin 6W area and which will provide additional capacity. I also indicated that my Department will keep the demographic data under ongoing review taking into account updated enrolment data and the impact of ongoing and planned expansion of capacity.

In relation to the schools in the area having commenced offering places for September 2016, the selection and enrolment of pupils in schools is the responsibility of the authorities of the individual school. My Department's main responsibility is to ensure that schools in an area can, between them, cater for all pupils seeking school places in an area. As schools may not have a

place for every applicant, a selection process may be necessary. This selection process and the enrolment policy on which it is based must be non-discriminatory and must be applied fairly in respect of all applicants.

My 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. 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 Educational Welfare Service of the Child and Family Agency (EWS) is the statutory agency which can assist parents who are experiencing difficulty in securing a school place for their child. The EWS may be able to offer assistance and advice on securing a school placement within the pupil's area. The contact details for the EWS is Educational Welfare Service of the Child and Family Agency, Floors 2-5 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Dublin 8 phone 01 7718500.

School Accommodation

323. Deputy Willie Penrose asked the Minister for Education and Skills to ensure an emergency application for toileting facilities by a school (details supplied) in County Westmeath is immediately granted given that the occupational therapist has indicated that this is a priority-one issue and needs urgent attention and is essential for the safety of the students; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3689/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan): The school to which the Deputy refers recently submitted additional information relating to an application for funding for works at the school. This information is currently being examined and the school will be notified of the outcome as soon as a decision has been made.

Veterinary Qualifications

324. Deputy Bernard J. Durkan asked the Minister for Education and Skills to outline the procedures to be followed to enable a person (details supplied) to practise in this jurisdiction; if further studies are required; if the person is entitled to practise on foot of a current qualification or otherwise; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3700/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan): The Veterinary Council is the relevant Competent Authority in Ireland for Veterinary Surgeons and will be able to advise the person in question on the recognition of their professional qualifications and their ability to practice in the State. Further details are available from the Authority's website <http://www.vci.ie/>.

Labour Court Recommendations

325. Deputy Michael McGrath asked the Minister for Education and Skills to outline the steps she is taking to ensure that the Labour Court Recommendation LCR20577 in respect of a Labour Court hearing on 29 May 2013, relating to the pay of four workers at University College

Cork Tyndall Institute, is fully implemented; if she will provide an update on the issue; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3727/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): As the Deputy will be aware, in the context of measures necessary to restore order to the public finances, Government pay policy has been consistent in its approach to the processing of cost-increasing pay claims. Accordingly, non-binding Labour Court Recommendations which will result in a pay increase, such as those referred to by the Deputy, are precluded from implementation. This was provided for in the Haddington Road Agreement and continues to be provided for in the Public Service Stability Agreement (Lansdowne Road) 2013-2018. Following lengthy discussions facilitated by the Labour Relations Commission (LRC) in August 2013 and February 2014, terms of reference were agreed for an internal job evaluation exercise to establish the correct rate of pay for the employees of all grades within the Tyndall National Institute. The terms of reference covered all staff in the Institute comprehended by the unions’ parity claim, including those staff who were the subject of a previous Labour Court recommendation (LCR20577). The terms of reference provided for an Oversight Committee comprised of management and union representatives to monitor progress and prevent delays. An appeals process was also agreed between the parties which could be invoked following the conclusion of the evaluation exercise.

Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC) were appointed to conduct the exercise following a tender process. The selection was made by a joint panel made up of representatives of the employer and both unions.

It was also agreed that, following completion of the internal job evaluation exercise, the parties would engage in discussions to seek agreement on the implementation of PwC’s recommendations and the outcome of the appeals process. In the event that agreement could not be reached the matter would be referred to the Labour Court and the parties would be bound by the outcome.

The PwC job evaluation report was presented to the parties in December 2014 and as part of the appeals process, an independent appeal officer has recently heard and reported on 10 appeals by Tyndall staff. The parties have also recently met under the auspices of the Workplace Relations Commission and are due to meet again on the 8th February 2016.

School Accommodation

326. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Education and Skills to set down the number of classes that are taught in prefabricated accommodation by county and the year in which prefabricated accommodation will be phased out. [3730/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): My Department does not hold information on the numbers of pupils in individual schools who currently occupy prefabs as this depends on the organisation of class groups by schools within available accommodation and may vary from year to year.

As the Deputy will appreciate, the overall policy goal of my Department is to ensure the highest standard of permanent accommodation for all schools. In the context of a rapidly increasing school population, my Department’s priority is to ensure that every child will have access to a physical school place and in this regard, it is sometimes necessary to make use of temporary accommodation in order to meet the accommodation needs of schools.

However, under the Department’s Prefab Replacement Initiatives, in recent years approval was given to 209 primary and 8 post primary schools nationally to replace their rented prefab

accommodation (614 units) with permanent accommodation. In excess of €57m has been allocated for these initiatives of which €52.2m has been paid to date.

In addition to this, as I recently announced, it is my intention to replace all purchased pre-fabs with permanent accommodation over the lifetime of my Departments new six-year capital programme (2016-2021).

School Management

327. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if she will introduce a pilot programme to devolve to the annual capital budget to schools to allow them schools to plan for capital projects; and the reasons for not progressing this proposal further, as per the programme for Government. [3731/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): As the Deputy will be aware in more recent years there has been a greater devolution of autonomy for smaller scale projects to individual schools. The autonomy already given to schools to manage small scale capital works should be continued. However, it does not appear feasible to extend to schools autonomy over the management of large scale capital works. Given the limited budget available, the need to prioritise spending, the complexity of major multi-million capital projects, and the limited technical expertise of school boards and the need to adhere to public procurement guidelines, it is not clear whether school boards or principals would have the capacity to engage any further with planning and managing capital projects.

The option of giving schools a capital grant as suggested by the Deputy is not feasible. It would not allow capital spending to be targeted to those schools most in need of capital investment and, in effect, the Government would end up borrowing capital sums that would be held as funds on deposit in many schools where capital expenditure is not required.

English Language Training Organisations

328. **Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett** asked the Minister for Education and Skills to specify why English language schools with no external quality assurance system were allowed to be part of the interim list of education programmes; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3750/16]

329. **Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett** asked the Minister for Education and Skills how allowing English language schools to have an unspecified quality assurance system or external validation furthers the stated Government policy of Ireland becoming a quality destination of choice for international students; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3751/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): I propose to take Questions Nos. 328 and 329 together.

As the Deputy may be aware, the first full iteration of the ILEP (the Interim List of Eligible Programmes - the list of education programmes considered to justify the granting of permission to students to live and work in Ireland) was published by the Department of Justice and Equality on 20th January 2016.

In order to be listed on the ILEP, all English language providers have to comply with new requirements including full disclosure of ownership, and to demonstrate that they have reached an acceptable standard.

All English language providers who submitted an application for inclusion on the ILEP were assessed against a number of criteria including attendance rates, compulsory exam registration policies, maximum class size, curriculum content and teacher qualifications. A listing on the ILEP also requires providers to have mandatory protection for enrolled learner policies in place and to operate a separate account facility to safeguard student advance payments. A number of providers were also subject to an on-site inspection by inspection teams comprised of INIS (Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service) officials and education experts as part of the ILEP application process.

For all providers their listing on the ILEP is contingent on their ongoing compliance with immigration rules and continuing to meet the other conditions required. Providers will continue to be subject to unannounced inspections, spot checks and other monitoring of compliance. The implementation of these reforms will help to improve the overall quality of Ireland's offering to international students, promote protection for learners and enhance Ireland's reputation, strongly in line with the goals of Ireland's international education strategy.

School Funding

330. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Education and Skills to set down in tabular form by county the funding received for primary schools and post-primary schools for additional accommodation, new buildings or new schools for each year since 2011. [3756/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan): Total capital funding expended on a county basis in the primary and post-primary sectors from 2011 to 2015 are provided in the following table.

I would further advise the Deputy that information on the Large Scale Projects Programme, the Additional Accommodation Scheme, the Prefab Replacement Initiative, the Summer Works Scheme and the Emergency Works Scheme is available on my Department's Website.

County	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Carlow	€7,851,722	€9,236,218	€8,556,151	€7,745,688	€8,750,519
Cavan	€9,637,296	€8,805,051	€4,598,345	€7,340,508	€8,589,538
Clare	€4,768,766	€3,476,383	€8,965,676	€4,772,962	€4,022,866
Cork	€43,180,095	€33,082,812	€46,103,814	€55,129,277	€59,955,550
Donegal	€16,492,774	€11,576,361	€7,642,181	€6,788,241	€13,249,762
Dublin	€154,662,388	€109,058,345	€141,760,911	€186,492,018	€148,655,685
Galway	€23,864,949	€14,050,542	€26,705,915	€25,292,952	€42,320,599
Kerry	€13,161,467	€11,701,174	€5,036,738	€12,692,997	€19,924,299
Kildare	€57,077,216	€24,907,784	€15,604,674	€32,010,086	€25,802,089
Kilkenny	€6,607,897	€4,410,479	€10,990,557	€7,097,002	€8,869,558
Laois	€8,700,760	€6,309,361	€12,347,910	€3,176,236	€6,682,818
Leitrim	€1,968,343	€447,646	€1,405,262	€1,339,936	€1,662,818
Limerick	€21,167,503	€16,385,730	€13,755,589	€17,729,358	€14,158,977
Longford	€2,627,937	€1,213,458	€3,330,841	€4,895,857	€6,063,232
Louth	€20,490,346	€16,003,027	€12,285,573	€15,740,325	€25,345,106
Mayo	€9,701,652	€5,801,870	€6,271,087	€9,429,339	€9,045,046
Meath	€21,993,042	€19,922,823	€41,258,814	€24,072,252	€31,951,876
Monaghan	€6,600,930	€34,310,401	€3,288,818	€5,368,025	€8,088,547
Offaly	€12,535,612	€5,658,856	€3,547,400	€11,564,167	€12,975,821
Roscommon	€3,950,776	€1,894,500	€1,450,105	€2,413,621	€2,322,732

County	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Sligo	€9,225,691	€11,645,356	€4,803,302	€2,910,402	€4,551,215
Tipperary	€15,103,060	€18,615,492	€10,555,075	€13,113,050	€13,793,015
Waterford	€15,297,540	€4,734,452	€11,777,616	€13,771,966	€13,502,010
Westmeath	€12,742,714	€10,115,409	€5,974,303	€7,837,918	€10,155,188
Wexford	€16,304,484	€11,448,403	€8,803,577	€11,724,895	€19,298,294
Wicklow	€14,155,430	€5,415,803	€12,019,396	€14,235,093	€35,869,469

Consultancy Contracts Data

331. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Education and Skills to set down the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by her Department since March 2011. [3765/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): Details of all consultancy payments by the Department for 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 are available on my Department’s website at <http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Corporate-Reports/Financial-Reports/Expenditure-on-Consultancy>. Details for the year 2015 are currently being collated and will be published as soon as available.

Public Inquiries

332. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Education and Skills to set down in tabular form the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which she or her Department have been responsible, by name, by terms of reference, by cost, including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded and by date, including the projected date of conclusion where an inquiry has not been concluded from 1991 to date; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3780/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): Details of statutory inquiries for which my Department has been responsible since 1991 are included in the following table. In the time available, it was not possible to include full details to cover the Deputy’s question for the time period in question. I will arrange to forward the outstanding information to the Deputy as soon as possible.

Name	Terms of Reference	Cost	Completion Date
Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse	The Terms of Reference are set out in the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse Act, 2000, as amended by the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (Amendment) Act, 2005. The main functions were to listen to those who suffered abuse as children in institutions, to inquire into abuse of children in institutions and to report and made recommendations.	€79,936,615.60 from Exchequer funds to date	The Commission is expected to conclude its work in 2016.

Name	Terms of Reference	Cost	Completion Date
Statutory Inspection of companies providing services to Waterford Institute of Technology.	The terms of reference of the statutory inquiry, pursuant to Section 20 of the Institutes of Technology Acts, 1992-2006, were: (a) to inquire into the following matters and their possible impact on the governance, operations and financial position of Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT): (i) the relationship, including the financial relationship, between the Institute and the range of companies providing campus services in WIT; (ii) the financial position of these companies including the nature and extent of their assets and liabilities as they relate to operations in WIT; (iii) utilisation of resources of the companies including the extent to which they were applied for the purposes of the Institute; (iv) options for addressing changes that may be considered desirable in the relationship between the Institute and the companies in line with best practice; (v) any and all other matters which the Inspector considers to be necessary or expedient to the carrying out of the terms of reference at paragraphs (i) to (iv) above. and (b) to provide an interim report to the Minister within one month and a final report as soon as possible thereafter on his inquiries and in that report to make such findings and recommendations as he considers appropriate.	€1316.46	June 2013
Statutory Inspection into certain matters relating to the operation and management of Tralee Institute of Technology	The terms of reference of the statutory inquiry, pursuant to Section 20 of the Regional Technical Colleges Act (1992) were: (a) to inquire into the following matters, in respect of the Institute of Technology, Tralee:- (i) the working relationship between the Governing Body and the Director; (ii) how the respective roles of Governing Body, Chairman of the Governing Body and Director are being carried out and whether the manner in which the roles are carried out is consistent with effective management and operation of the Institute; (iii) the implementation by the Institute and the Governing Body of directions and guidelines on the operation of the Institute, issued by me or my Department, with particular regard to directions and guidelines relating to staff appointments and courses of study; (iv) any and all other matters which the Inspector considers to be necessary or expedient to the carrying out of the terms of reference at paragraphs (i) to (iii) and which relate to the efficiency of instruction given in the Institute or the efficient operation of the institute. and (b) to report to me on his inquiries and in that report to make such findings and recommendations as he considers appropriate	Not Available	March 2001

Questions - Written Answers

Name	Terms of Reference	Cost	Completion Date
Statutory Inspection – Letterkenny Regional Technical College	The terms of reference of the statutory inquiry, pursuant to Section 20 of the Regional Technical Colleges Act (1992) were: (i) the manner in which the College and the Governing Body implement the instructions and guidelines on the operation of the College issued by me or by my Department, particularly in the areas of staff appointments and courses; (ii) whether the respective roles of the Chairman of the Governing Body and Director are being carried out in a manner consistent with the letter and spirit of the Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1992; (iii) the effectiveness of financial controls set by the Department and their implementation in the College; (iv) the disbursement of monies by the College and in particular, of monies received from students as capitation sums; (v) the current difficulties being experienced in the working relationships between the Governing Body and the Officers of the Students' Union, in so far as these difficulties affect the operation and good management of the College; (vi) the selection procedures for student representatives on the Governing Body; (vii) any and all other matters which the Inspector in the course of her enquiries considers to be relevant to the satisfactory completion of her inspection and report and which relate to the efficiency of instruction given in the College or to the efficient operation of the College.	Not available.	July 1994

Ministerial Allowances

333. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Education and Skills to set down in tabular form by calendar year the expenses claimed, including the amount of mileage and the amount claimed, by her and Ministers of State at her Department, during the current Dáil Éireann. [3808/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan): The information requested by the Deputy is contained in the following tabular statements.

Minister's Office	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Former Minister Ruairi Quinn						
Mileage						
KM'S	26850	35681	55999	32269		
Amount Paid	€9,611.88	€12,125.18	€17,907.68	€11,154.12		
Tolls	€910.03		€403.51	€389.75		
Phone Bills						
Mobile	€426.67	€604.13	€1,674.07	€1,489.28		
Constituency Office		€0.00	€492.00	€455.43		
Home Travel						
Subsistence	203.61					
Taxi	24.3					
Train	68.5					
Insurance	187.5					
Foreign Travel						
Total Subsistence Costs	€1,340.37	€617.91	1,766.29	0		

28 January 2016

Minister's Office	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Incidental/Misc Expenses including Medical, IT & Business Centre costs	€39.98	0	0	0		
Overall Costs	€1,380.35	€617.91	€1,766.29	0		
Credit Card						
Minister Ruairi Quinn	319.14	1234.13	2847.1	294.99		
Overall Costs	€13,131.98	€14,581.35	€25,090.65	€13,783.57		€66,587.55

Ministers Office	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Minister Jan O'Sullivan						
Mileage						
KM'S				18010	35966	
Amount Paid				€5,125.65	€12,206.30	
Tolls				€200	€360	
Phone Bills						
Mobile				€123.50	€529.24	
Constituency Office				€722.78	€3,074.83	
Home Travel						
Subsistence					€409.57	
Foreign Travel						
Total Subsistence Costs				€554.75	€1,170.96	
Incidental/Misc Expenses including Medical, IT & Business Centre costs				0	0	
Overall Costs				€554.75	€1,170.96	
Credit Card						
Minister Jan O'Sullivan						
Overall Costs				€7,836.18	€20,447.46	€28,283.64

Minister of State's office	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Former Minister of State Ciarán Cannon					
Mileage					
KM's	50,434	57,057	56,784	36,930	
Amount Paid	16,323.87	18,208.78	18,131.09	12,480.64	
Phone Bills					
Mobile	375.24	902.38	692.39	194.43	
Constituency Offices		*2,617.51	2,842.25	1,695.62	
Foreign Travel					
Total Subsistence Costs	1,075.35	1,021.12	923.92	940.71	
Incidental/Misc Expenses including Medical, IT & Business Centre costs	32.45	160.00	9.84	0	
Overall Costs	17,806.91	22,909.79	22,599.49	15,311.40	

* 2011 and 2012 constituency office phone bills paid in 2012

Minister of State Damien English	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Mileage					
KM's				25,549	55,880
Amount Paid				9,241.61	17,873.80
Phone Bills					
Mobile				838.43	1,670.13
Foreign Travel					
Total Subsistence Costs				73.55	

Minister of State Damien English	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Incidental/Misc Expenses including Medical, IT & Business centre costs				172.5	
Overall Costs				10,326.09	19,543.93

Departmental Expenditure

334. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Education and Skills to set down the amount she spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3823/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): The information requested by the Deputy is contained in the following tabular statement. The following tabular statement outlines the expenditure of the Department of Education and Skills on media monitoring services from 2011 to 2015.

YEAR	AMOUNT
2015	€25,864.44
2014	€24,280.20
2013	€28,617.42
2012	€46,804.15
2011	€42,668.23

Student Grant Scheme Appeals

335. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if the case of a person (details supplied) in Dublin 6 in respect of grant repayment requirement might be reviewed given the likelihood of severe hardship. [3858/16]

Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan): The student referred to by the Deputy was awarded the 100% adjacent rate of Maintenance Grant for the 2012/13 academic year.

Subsequent to a review, it was determined that the student was in receipt of Back to Education Allowance during the 2012/13 academic year and therefore not eligible to receive a maintenance grant. SUSI has sought to recover the amount of €1,215, this being the total amount of maintenance paid.

Any overpayment of a grant is required to be repaid by the student in accordance with the Student Support Act 2011 and the Student Grant Scheme. SUSI implements a repayment policy under which students are asked to agree a repayment plan that is appropriate to their circumstances. SUSI deals with such repayments carefully and sensitively having regard to the ability of students to make repayments.

Departmental Funding

336. **Deputy Fergus O’Dowd** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government to set out by project and initiative, by completion date and by cost the funding he allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituency of Louth for the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3560/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): My Department has a wide and diverse business agenda, including providing necessary housing supports, fostering community and rural development in partnership with local government and other local development bodies, and protecting the environment. In order to deliver on this broad business agenda, my Department allocates significant resources to a wide range of organisations, including local authorities, dedicated agencies and non-statutory bodies, as well as to individuals. The information requested on the funding allocated and expended on capital projects and other initiatives is not readily available in my Department; such information is not routinely collated on the basis of constituency boundaries. The compilation of this information would involve a disproportionate amount of time and work. If a more specific question is tabled relating to a particular area of funding from my Department, I will endeavour to provide the information sought.

Housing Data

337. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the number of housing adaptation grants distributed by county in the years 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3580/16]

338. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the number of mobility aid grants distributed, by county in the years 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3581/16]

339. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the number of housing aid for older people scheme grants distributed by county in the years 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3582/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): I propose to take Questions Nos. 337 to 339, inclusive, together.

My Department provides funding under the Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with a Disability. There are three separate grants available and local authorities receive an overall allocation, with the responsibility for the apportionment between the three grants being a matter for each authority.

The Exchequer funding provided to each local authority for these grants up to 2014 is available on my Department's website at the following link; <http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/StatisticsandRegularPublications/HousingStatistics/>, by selecting 'Social and Affordable Housing', 'Housing Adaptation Grants by Area 2008 to date'. Details of the 2015 figures are being finalised and will be available on my Department's website shortly.

Water Charges Administration

340. **Deputy Noel Grealish** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the number of households in counties Galway and Mayo who have paid their water charges; those who have not paid their charges, by the amount owed; the number who have availed of the water conservation grant; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3596/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): With effect from 1 January 2014, Irish Water is responsible for public water services. Irish

Water customer billing is a matter for the utility and one in which I have no function. Irish Water has established a dedicated team to deal with representations and queries from public representatives. They may be contacted via email at oireachtasmembers@water.ie or by telephone on 1890 578 578.

The number of Water Conservation Grant applications processed for Principal Private Residences in County Galway is 42,513 and in County Mayo is 33,928.

Wastewater Treatment

341. **Deputy Noel Grealish** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the number of households in counties Galway and Mayo who have completed septic tank registration and paid the charge, the number of inspections carried out, how many availed of the grant in each year since it was introduced, and the number of households who would have been expected to have been required to register, but who have not done so; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3599/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): The numbers of domestic waste water treatment systems in Counties Galway and Mayo, as indicated under the Central Statistics Office's Census 2011 report, were 43,506 and 26,659, respectively. The Local Government Management Agency, which administers the central registration bureau on a shared service basis on behalf of the local authorities, has advised that, as of 26 January 2016, the numbers of registered treatment systems for Counties Galway and Mayo are 40,330 and 28,030 respectively.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the supervisory body for the purposes of the National Inspection Plan 2015 - 2017: Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems, which is managed and implemented by the local authorities.

My Department does not have any direct role in monitoring the implementation of the EPA's Plan by the local authorities. The EPA has published a report regarding inspections carried out in the period 1st July 2013 to 31st December 2014. The report can be downloaded from:

http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/water/wastewater/NIP%20Review%20Jul%202013-Dec%202014_web.pdf.

Responsibility for the administration of my Department's Rural Water Programme, under which funding is provided to recoup local authorities the grants they pay in respect of domestic waste water treatment systems, is devolved to the local authorities. Information is not, therefore, held by my Department on grant applications approved or paid by local authorities. However, details of the grant amounts recouped by my Department to local authorities since the scheme was introduced in 2013 are published on my Department's website at:

<http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/Environment/Water/FileDownload,44097,en.xlsx>.

Water Charges Administration

342. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the amount charged by Irish Water for connecting a new home to the public water supply; if local authorities have reduced their development charges by the corresponding amount; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3719/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): With effect from 1 January 2014, Irish Water is responsible for public water services. The Water Services (No. 2) Act 2013 provides that Irish Water shall collect charges from its customers in receipt of water services provided by it in accordance with a water charges plan to be approved by the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER). Section 22(5) of the Act provides that a water charges plan may provide for charges in respect of the provision of a service connection (within the meaning of the Water Services Act 2007) to, or in respect of, a premises. In its decision on Irish Water's Water Charges Plan, published in October 2014, the CER stated that, until it made a decision on Irish Water's new connection charges, Irish Water should continue to apply the rates which were charged by the local authorities at 31 December 2013. The CER published, in its Water Charges Plan Decision Paper of 5 March 2015, the areas that it would be progressing, which includes the development of Connection Charging Policy.

Planning authorities were requested in Circular PS 21/2013 issued by my Department on 30 December 2013 to operate revised procedures in relation to the application of development contribution levies. In respect of planning permissions granted prior to 1 January 2014, planning authorities were advised that the full development contribution charge (where such was attached as a condition of the planning permission), including, where relevant, the portion in respect of water services infrastructure, must be paid to the planning authority in accordance with the terms of the permission.

In respect of planning permissions granted after 1 January 2014, planning authorities were advised that when granting planning permission, they should no longer include a portion in respect of water services infrastructure in any development contribution applied and that such charges would instead be levied by Irish Water. Planning authorities were further advised that new development schemes made after that date should not contain charges in respect of water services infrastructure.

I am not aware of any non-compliance by planning authorities with the terms of Circular PS 21/ 2013. It is intended to issue further guidance on development contributions in due course, to assist local authorities in the implementation of changes to the development contribution regime as provided for in the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015.

Development Contributions

343. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the amount of development contributions collected in respect of private house building in each of the years 2012 to 2015 by local authority; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3720/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): Development contributions are a key part of securing investment in enabling infrastructure required to facilitate future development. A planning authority may, when granting a permission under section 34 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), include conditions requiring the payment of a contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the planning authority. Local authorities are obliged to include data on current and long-term development contribution levy debtors in their Annual Financial Statements, and such data were set out for the Deputy in reply to Question 734 of 16 July 2015. However, the information requested by the Deputy on development contributions collected specifically in respect of private house building is not available in my Department.

Planning Issues

344. **Deputy Barry Cowen** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government when he will provide for educational impact assessments as per the programme for Government; and the progress in implementing this proposal. [3729/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): In light of the Programme for Government commitment regarding educational impact assessment on residential zoning to identify potential need for schools, the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Local Area Plans, published on 25 June 2013, highlight the importance of local authority engagement and co-operation with the Department of Education and Skills, and recommend that local area plans provide a realistic phasing timetable to ensure that the provision of school facilities is delivered in conjunction with the phased construction of housing. In addition, prior to that, my Department jointly published with the Department of Education, The Provision of Schools and the Planning System - A Code of Practice in August 2008. The Code sets out co-ordinated actions to be taken in relation to forecasting future demand for school places by the Department of Education and Skills and planning for the provision of school sites within the planning system, as well as the efficient handling of planning applications and associated consultations by the relevant planning authorities to expedite school delivery.

With regard to assessing the implications of local authority development planning on the issue of schools and school provision in a given area, local authorities are obliged under the Code of Practice to take this matter into account in preparing and finalising their plans, working in conjunction with the relevant forward planning and new school sections of the Department of Education and Skills.

Furthermore, section 10(2)(l) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 requires a development plan to include objectives for “the provision, or facilitation of the provision, of services for the community including, in particular, schools, crèches and other education and childcare facilities”. This requirement is restated in my Department’s 2007 Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities which, together with the Code of Practice, are available on my Department’s website at the following links:

<http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/DevelopmentandHousing/Planning/FileDownload,14468,en.pdf>

<http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/DevelopmentandHousing/Planning/FileDownload,17998,en.pdf>

Both I and the Minister for Education and Skills are statutory consultees for the purposes of local authority development plans. My Department will continue to work pro-actively with the Department of Education and Skills in ensuring the issue of schools provision is properly addressed both in local authority plans and in assisting the Department of Education and Skills in ensuring that new schools are delivered in a timely and cost-effective manner and in line with the proper planning and sustainable development of the areas in which they are needed.

In addition, a new Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed between the Department of Education and Skills, the City and County Management Association and my Department in relation to the acquisition of sites for schools by local authorities.

The Code of Practice is being implemented by local authorities, working in conjunction with the Department of Education and Skills. I believe that the Code is working satisfactorily as evidenced by the many development plans and local area plans that have addressed the schools issue more comprehensively than in the past and as facilitated by detailed forecasting on school

requirements now available from the Department of Education and Skills.

Consultancy Contracts Data

345. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [3766/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): The information requested is set out in the following table.

Date of Commission	Consultant/Author etc.	Name/Description of Report/Review/Study	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Amount Spent Since March 2011
March 2011	Building Research Establishment Ltd	Retrofitting Code of Practice.	Published March 2014.	(1) €21,190
March 2011	Malachy Walsh & Partners	EIS Screening Report for site at Valentia.	The report is not intended to be published as it is a technical report relating to a site on Valentia Island where Met Éireann are building an Air Monitoring Facility.	€6,336
March 2011	White Young Green	Annual Dust Impact Assessment Report (2011) at the Former Irish Steelworks Site, Haulbowline, Cobh, Co. Cork.	Published March 2012.	(2) See footnote
April 2011	Housing & Sustainable Communities Ltd.	Toolkit for Local Authorities on regeneration.	Not intended for publication. This was a report intended to provide assistance to Local Authorities in drawing up proposals for the regeneration of their areas.	€12,300
May 2011	Indecon	Regulatory Impact Analysis of proposed regulations for household food waste.	Published June 2012.	€24,725
June 2011	Barrow Archaeological Services	Archaeological reports on Met Éireann site at Valentia.	The report is not intended to be published as it is a technical report relating to a site on Valentia Island where Met Éireann are building an Air Monitoring Facility.	€1,210
June 2011	National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI)	Audit reports for ISO9001:2008 in 2011 and 2012.	Not intended for publication.	€6,699
June 2011	Price Waterhouse Coopers	Independent assessment on establishment of National Water Utility.	Irish Water - Phase 1 report and appendices published January 2012. Implementation Strategy published December 2012.	€179,584
June 2011	Tobin Consulting Engineers	National Litter Pollution Monitoring System - 2011 Report.	Published April 2012.	€61,077
July 2011	Murtagh & Partners	Review of Dublin Region Homelessness Services and Funding in 2011.	Published October 2011.	€27,800
August 2011	Certification Europe Ltd.	Compost Quality Assurance Scheme.	Published October 2012.	€139,142

Questions - Written Answers

Date of Commission	Consultant/Author etc.	Name/Description of Report/Review/Study	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Amount Spent Since March 2011
September 2011	Dr. Eoin O'Sullivan, Trinity College Dublin	Review of the Homeless Strategy 2008-2013.	Published November 2012.	€6,000
September 2011	Marine Institute	Marine Strategy Framework Directive (1) Initial Assessment; (2) Development of a Monitoring Programme; and (3) Development of a Programme of Measures necessary to achieve Good Environmental Status in Irish Marine Waters.	(1) Initial Assessment - the technical report was published on the Department's website in Q2 2013 and the summary report was published in Q4 2013. (2) Monitoring Programme – sent to the EU Commission in April 2015. (3) Drawing up of programme of Measures to be completed Q1 2016.	(3) €2,676,479
September 2011	Pyrite Panel	Report of the Pyrite Panel - Independent report to provide options for the Minister to deal with the pyrite problem.	Published July 2012.	€22,719
October 2011	Pembroke Communications	Advise on, and assist tendering process for, Tidy Towns sponsorship.	No formal report due for publication.	€4,560
October 2011	SKM Enviro	Irish Recycled Plastic Waste Arisings Study.	Published September 2011.	€37,566
November 2011	ARUP Consulting Engineers	Study in respect of provision of fire detection and alarms systems in dwellings.	Not intended for publication. It is a technical report, to inform work in the Department.	€29,935
December 2011	RPS Group	Provision of expertise concerning Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment techniques for the evaluation and revision of Regional Waste Management Plans.	No formal document due for publication. The work comprises principally advice, guidance documents and technical expertise.	€45,223
December 2011	Secretariat to the National Economic and Social Council of Ireland	Analysis on national climate policy.	Interim report released October 2012; final report released in February 2013.	Nil
2011	Mr. David Lovegrove	2011 Report of the Dormant Accounts Board.	Published July 2012.	€9,689
January 2012	Fehilly Timoney & Company	Bulky Waste Reuse Best Practice - Feasibility Study.	Published July 2013.	€55,289
January 2012	Inter-Departmental Group	Design of a Local Property Tax – Report of the Inter-Departmental Group.	Published December 2012.	Nil
January 2012	Mr. Seamus Woulfe SC	Review of the management by the Department of an application by Wicklow County Council for loan approval in respect of the compulsory purchase of land at Charlesland, Co. Wicklow - Phase 1.	Published March 2012.	€19,680
February 2012	Version 1	Evaluation of ICT Disaster Recovery configuration and capability.	Not intended for publication.	€9,363
March 2012	Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)	Analysis of Property Tax Options - a report to the Inter-departmental Expert Group on Property Tax.	Published December 2012.	€60,280
March 2012	Housing and Sustainable Communities Agency	Review of leasing model.	Date of publication to be decided.	€1,937
March 2012	RPS Group	All Island Used Tyre Survey.	Published March 2013.	(4) €17,673

Date of Commission	Consultant/Author etc.	Name/Description of Report/ Review/Study	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Amount Spent Since March 2011
April 2012	Glas Ecology	Environment Management Plan (Breeding Chough and Peregrine Survey, Valentia Island, Co. Kerry).	The report is not intended to be published as it is a technical report relating to a site on Valentia Island where Met Éireann are building an Air Monitoring Facility.	€4,920
April 2012	Munster Archaeology	Report on archaeological investigation/survey of Met Éireann site at Valentia.	Not Intended for publication. Report for internal use only.	€47,289
April 2012	Padraic Thornton Planning & Environmental Consultancy	Preparation of EIA Guidelines.	Published March 2013.	€7,200
May 2012	DKM Economic Consultants	Review of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000.	Published July 2013.	€39,690
May 2012	Indecon	Feasibility study on a Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme.	Published November 2012.	(5) €42,706
May 2012	Tobin Consulting Engineers	National Litter Pollution Monitoring System - 2012 Report.	Published April 2013.	€58,271
June 2012	Mr. Seamus Woulfe SC	Review of the compulsory acquisition of land by Wicklow County Council at Charlesland, Co. Wicklow - Phase 2.	Published April 2013.	€49,200
June 2012	RPS Group	Review of the Producer Responsibility Model in Ireland.	Final report published in July 2014.	€292,306
September 2012	Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA)	Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas report on how to support the economic development of rural Ireland.	Published April 2014.	(6) €20,702
October 2012	Mr. Hendrik W van der Kamp	Independent Evaluation of the Planning Review Report 2012.	Published January 2013.	€12,096
November 2012	AECOM	Cost optimal study for non-domestic buildings.	Published March 2013.	€53,517
November 2012	Flynn Furney Consultants Ltd.	Environmental Management Services re: review of CEMP at Valentia Site (Method Statement).	The report is not intended to be published as it is a technical report relating to a site on Valentia Island where Met Éireann are building an Air Monitoring Facility.	€3,167
2012	Mr. David Lovegrove	2012 Report of the Dormant Accounts Board.	Published March 2013.	€1,120
January 2013	Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)	Affordability aspects of the provision of water services in Ireland and subsequent analysis.	Published in May 2014 as Appendix 2 and Appendix 5 of the "Report of the Inter-Departmental Working Group on Affordability Measures".	€57,655
January 2013	Userneeds	Usage survey on the Met Éireann website.	Not intended for publication - this was a report volunteered to Met Éireann by the survey company on a 'sample' basis.	Nil - provided as a 'free sample'
April 2013	KW Research & Associates	NTACC Research into why Travellers leave Traveller-specific accommodation.	Published on the Department's website April 2014.	€11,938
May 2013	Garrett Fennell Solicitor	Independent Review of the registration arrangements for Architects under the Building Control Act 2007.	Published on the Department's website.	Nil (report produced on a pro-bono basis)

Questions - Written Answers

Date of Commission	Consultant/Author etc.	Name/Description of Report/ Review/Study	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Amount Spent Since March 2011
May 2013	Tobin Consulting Engineers	National Litter Pollution Monitoring System - 2013 Report.	Published June 2014.	€52,014
June 2013	Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) & University College Cork (UCC)	Technical support on developing low carbon sector roadmaps for Ireland.	The project relates to technical support, with no formal document due for publication.	€107,552
June 2013	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Article 29(2) Report on Progress on Implementation of the EC (Good Agriculture Practices for the Protection of Waters) Regulations 2010.	Published April 2014.	Nil
June 2013	Housing and Sustainable Communities Agency	Business Process Design of the Housing Assistance Payment.	Date of publication to be decided.	€54,938
July 2013	Housing and Sustainable Communities Agency	Review of CALF assessment process.	Date of publication to be decided.	€11,675
July 2013	Indecon	Assessment of Potential Merits of New Initiative re Purchase of Local Authority Houses by Existing Tenants.	Not intended for publication.	Nil (report produced on a pro-bono basis)
July 2013	SLR Environmental Consulting (Ireland) Ltd/National Economic and Social Council (NESC)	Wind Energy in Ireland: Building Community Engagement and Social Support.	Published July 2014.	€50,451
September 2013	RPS Group	Public consultation process on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and producing a report.	Published November 2013.	€9,000
November 2013	AP Env Econ Limited/National Economic and Social Council (NESC)	Ireland's Environmental Data: Inventory, Assessment and Next Steps.	Published April 2014.	€35,178
December 2013	Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) & University College Cork (UCC)	Technical support for the purposes of advising Government on the proposed 2030 EU Framework for Climate and Energy Policies.	This report was published in June 2015 as part of the consultation on the National Mitigation Plan to transition Ireland to a low carbon economy by 2050.	€67,768
February 2014	MacCabe, Durney Barnes	Independent Planning Review.	Published December 2015.	€94,521
February 2014	Ricardo-AEA	NSMC Residential Solid Fuel Study.	Expected to be published in February 2016.	(7) €16,475
May 2014	Glas Ecology	Environment Management follow up Report (Breeding Chough and Peregrine Survey, Valentia Island, Co. Kerry).	The report is not intended to be published as it is a technical report relating to a site on Valentia Island where Met Éireann are building an Air Monitoring Facility.	€1,599
May 2014	Padraic Thornton Planning & Environmental Consultancy	Independent Review of Draft S31 Directions in Westmeath.	Published May 2014.	€5,000
May 2014	Tobin Consulting Engineers	National Litter Pollution Monitoring System - 2014 Report.	Published July 2015.	€52,014
June 2014	Institute of Public Administration (IPA)	Peer review of Met Éireann's Operational and Strategic Review.	This report is not intended for publication.	€4,920

Date of Commission	Consultant/Author etc.	Name/Description of Report/ Review/Study	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Amount Spent Since March 2011
July 2014	Patricia Thornton Tom Phillips Associates	Independent Review of Draft S31 Directions in Limerick.	Published August 2014.	€4,151
July 2014	University College Cork (UCC)/National Economic and Social Council (NESC)	Review of Environmental Social Policy Literature.	Published July 2015.	€4,305
October 2014	National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG)/National Economic and Social Council (NESC)	Environmental Policy Integration: Case Studies Research.	Report is being considered by NESC Council.	€38,222
October 2014	National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG)/National Economic and Social Council (NESC)	Sustainable Urban Development.	Published July 2015.	€20,303
December 2014	Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)	Socio-Economic Impact of a nuclear accident in the UK.	The intention is that the report will be published, but the specific date is not yet known.	79,950
December 2014	National Institute for Public Health and the Environment - Netherlands (RIVM)	Electromagnetic Fields in the Irish Context.	Expected to be published in Q1 of 2016.	(8) See footnote
January 2015	AECOM	Additional cost optimal calculations for domestic and non-domestic buildings.	Published February 2015	€33,683
February 2015	Dr. Dagmar Stengel	Best practice in relation to the sustainable exploitation and management of intertidal seaweed resources.	Not intended for publication.	€14,391
March 2015	ILC Sports and Recreation	Review of Comhairle na Tuaithe and the implementation of the National Countryside Recreation Strategy.	Publication to be considered.	€15,341
April 2015	Deloitte	Business Case Review for the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP).	Date of publication to be decided.	€28,939
May 2015	Tobin Consulting Engineers	National Litter Pollution Monitoring System - 2015 Report.	Expected to be published July 2016.	€24,539
July 2015	Independent Review Group	An Bord Pleanála - Organisational Review.	Expected to be published in February 2016.	€5,000
July 2015	RPS Group	Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) services on the National Mitigation Plan.	November 2016.	(9) €23,192
September 2015	Behaviour & Attitudes Ltd.	Market Survey to determine weather forecast consumption behaviour of the Irish public.	Not intended for publication. Extracts may be published in the future.	€19,865
September 2015	IT Executive Focus	Review of the Structure and Delivery Model of the ICT Services for the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.	Not intended for publication.	€33,173
September 2015	Rory Mulcahy, Senior Counsel	Review Report in relation to Certain Planning Matters in respect of Donegal County Council	Issue of publication to be considered following completion of report.	€0
September 2015	Steering Group on Fire Safety Review (Chaired by Martin Riordan)	Review of Fire Safety arrangements in multi-unit developments where concerns arise regarding non-compliance with statutory requirements.	Date of publication to be decided.	€25,000

Questions - Written Answers

Date of Commission	Consultant/Author etc.	Name/Description of Report/ Review/Study	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Amount Spent Since March 2011
October 2015	Mazars Consulting	Independent Review of Homeless Services (2015).	Expected to be published on the Department's website in early 2016.	€27,075
November 2015	DKM Economic Consultants	Household Waste Management Costs in Ireland.	Q1 2016	€10,763
November 2015	MartinPlan Consulting	To consider the implications of the C-50 judgment in the context of waste water discharge licensing and to make any necessary recommendations.	Not expected to be published	€1,750
January 2016	Des Johnson	Independent Review of Draft S31 Direction in Louth.	Expected to be published in February 2016.	€0

(1) The contract was in conjunction with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland. Total cost of the study is €169,302 (inclusive of VAT). My Department's contribution was €21,190 (inclusive of VAT) with the balance met by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (i.e. €148,112 inclusive of VAT).

(2) My Department previously provided funding to Cork County Council to support the production of an annual Dust Impact Assessment Report at the former Irish Steel site at Haulbowline Island. Following a Government Decision in June 2011, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine assumed the lead role in relation to the remedial works necessary to be undertaken on the site. Accordingly, funding provided to Cork County Council for the annual Dust Impact Assessment Report 2011 and subsequent years is a matter for the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

(3) The Initial Assessment report, monitoring programme and programme of measures each arise from a broader process connected with Ireland's obligation to implement the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). The work primarily consists of a determination of the status of Ireland's marine waters, the measures necessary to achieve, or maintain, the required Good Environmental Status by 2020 and a programme to monitor this. The preparation of a draft Initial Assessment (under Art. 8 of the MSFD) including proposals for Good Environmental Status (Art. 9) and for draft Environmental Targets (Art.10) is underpinned by a suite of monitoring measures to measure the maritime environment against these targets (Art. 11). Where human activities are preventing these targets from being met, a Programme of Measures is in the process of being drawn up to mitigate the effect of these activities, or halt them as appropriate (Art.13). A draft Programme of Measures document is currently available on the Department's Website for public consultation.

(4) Survey jointly commissioned and funded by Department of the Environment in Northern Ireland and my Department.

(5) This report was co-funded by my Department and the Private Residential Tenancies Board. The cost to my Department of €42,706 represents 50% of the total cost.

(6) This report has been co-funded by my Department, Teagasc and the Western Development Commission. The cost to my Department of €20,702 represents 40% of the overall expenditure.

(7) This report has been commissioned by my Department under the auspices of the North South Ministerial Council and in conjunction with the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland. The cost is being evenly split and the final charge to my Department is estimated at €40,000.

(8) The cost of this project, which is estimated at €66,950, will be met by the Department

of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

(9) The Report will cost €90,440 in total (including 23% VAT) and is being co-funded on an equal share basis by the Departments of Transport, Energy and Agriculture.

Public Inquiries

346. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which he or his Department have been responsible by name; by terms of reference; by cost including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded; by date including the projected date of conclusion where an inquiry has not been concluded from 1991 to date, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3781/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): The Tribunal of Inquiry into Certain Planning Matters and Payments (the Mahon Tribunal) was established by order of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government to inquire into and report on various planning matters, set out in resolutions passed by Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann on 7 and 8 October, 1997 respectively. The final report of the Tribunal was published in March 2012.

The Tribunal estimated in 2014 that the total costs of its deliberations would amount to approximately €159m once all costs have been agreed and paid. The total cost of the Tribunal as at end 2015 amounted to €116m. It is expected that the majority of the remaining expenditure in respect of the Mahon Tribunal will be settled by end 2017.

Ministerial Allowances

347. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the expenses claimed, including the amount of mileage and the amount claimed, by him and Ministers of State of his Department, by calendar year, during the current Dáil Éireann, in tabular form. [3809/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): Travel expenses claimed and paid to date, including the amount of kilometres travelled and the amounts claimed, by Ministers and Ministers of State of my Department, by calendar year, during the current Dáil are as follows:

Minister Kelly	-			
Year	2014		2015	
Foreign Subsistence	€865		€5,232	
Domestic Subsistence	€211		€818	
No. of Kilometres	28,694		65,420	
Travel Expenses Paid	€8,166		€20,589	

Minister Hogan				
Year	2011	2012	2013	2014
Foreign Subsistence	€2,365	€3,893	€3,213	€1,122
Domestic Subsistence	€772	€683	€544	€290
No. of Kilometres	31,103	58,638	65,511	44,428
Travel Expenses Paid	€10,822	€18,659	€20,615	€14,615

Minister of State O'Dowd			
Year	2011	2012	2013
Foreign Subsistence	€380	€2,047	€1,303
Domestic Subsistence	€0	€73	€0
No. of Kilometres	0	0	0
Travel Expenses Paid	€0	€0	€0

Minister of State O'Sullivan				
Year	2011	2012	2013	2014
Foreign Subsistence	€0	€671	€666	€390
Domestic Subsistence	€0	€179	€294	€210
No. of Kilometres	1,368	29,782	33,152	17,210
Travel Expenses Paid	€632	€10,208	€11,405	€6,868

Furthermore, my Department has reimbursed the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in respect of certain expenses claimed by my colleague Minister of State Phelan in her capacity as Minister of State with responsibility for rural economic development issues, details of which are as follows:

Minister of State Phelan	
Year	2015
Foreign Subsistence	€478
Domestic Subsistence	€1,274
No. of Kilometres	Not Available
Travel Expenses Paid	€8,225

Departmental Expenditure

348. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the amount he spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3824/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): The amount spent by my Department on media monitoring and clippings for the years requested is as follows:

Year	Amount
2011	€14,305.94
2012	€15,689.27
2013	€17,507.02
2014	€16,116.82
2015	€15,816.77

Social and Affordable Housing Provision

349. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he has given any directive or guidelines on social housing provision for 2016 to Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council; if he has taken such action in relation to the number of apartments and houses which will be provided and allocated to citizens

and families on homeless lists in housing area B of Dublin City Council and in the Howth Malahide housing area of Fingal County Council in 2016; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3833/16]

350. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he has given any directive or guidelines on social housing provision for 2016 to Dublin City Council and to Fingal County Council; if he has taken such action in relation to the number of apartments and houses which will be provided and allocated to citizens and families on housing and transfer lists in housing area B of Dublin City Council and in the Howth Malahide housing area of Fingal County Council in 2016; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3834/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): I propose to take Questions Nos. 349 and 350 together.

Local authorities are responsible for the detailed planning of social housing provision based on the households needs in their respective areas. In this case, it is a matter for Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council to identify the appropriate initiatives to respond to the housing need. This includes consideration by them of options to acquire available properties, as well as building, leasing and the provision of housing supports through the private rental sector.

The allocation of social housing support to qualified households is, in the first instance, a matter for the local authority concerned, in accordance with its allocation scheme made in accordance with section 22 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 and associated Regulations.

However, I did issue a Ministerial Direction, under Section 22(17)(a) of the 2009 Act, which applies until 31 January 2016, requiring key local authorities to prioritise homeless and other vulnerable households in the allocation of tenancies under their control. The four Dublin local authorities have been directed to allocate 50% of all available dwellings to such households. I am currently reviewing the operation of the Direction.

The Social Housing Strategy 2020 sets out a strategic framework for meeting the State's social housing needs to the end of the decade. The Strategy sets out clear, measurable actions and targets to increase the supply of social housing, reform delivery arrangements and meet the housing needs of all households on the social housing list.

Housing Provision

351. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will declare a national housing emergency before he leaves office to address the totally unacceptable living conditions of the tens of thousands of citizens and families on homeless and housing lists; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3835/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): A shortage of supply is at the heart of the current challenges in the housing sector and the Government has put in place a comprehensive set of responses to increase the supply of all forms of housing while also taking action to stabilise the rental market while that supply increases. The Social Housing Strategy 2020 sets out clear, measurable actions and targets to increase the supply of social housing, reform delivery arrangements and meet the housing needs of all households on the housing list with flexibility to meet future demand. In total, 110,000 new social housing units are targeted for delivery with 35,000 new units to be delivered and 75,000 households to be supported mainly through the Housing Assistance Payment Scheme.

The Strategy has been supported by two successive budgets with €1.7 billion allocated to housing. Given the pressing need to recommence a house building programme almost €3 billion in capital funding will be provided in support of the Social Housing Strategy through the Government's Capital Plan - Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016-2021.

Evidence that the Strategy is delivering can be found in the report, Social Housing Output in 2015, which I published on 26 January 2016 and which is available on my Department's website at <http://www.environ.ie/en/DevelopmentHousing/Housing/News/MainBody,44105,en.htm>.

As a result of our focused approach in 2015, 13,000 social housing units were provided, representing an 86% increase on the 7,000 units delivered in 2014. I am committed to maintaining the momentum achieved in 2015 and to that end an ambitious target of a further 17,000 units has been set for delivery in 2016.

The Government's Construction 2020 Strategy is aimed at addressing issues in the property and construction sectors and ensuring that any bottlenecks that might impede the sector in meeting residential and non-residential demand are addressed. A number of important measures have been taken aimed at improving housing delivery viability and increasing supply.

The measures include the introduction of a vacant site levy; reductions in development contributions and a targeted development contribution rebate scheme in Dublin and Cork to encourage large scale developments at affordable prices; revised Part V provisions; initiatives to improve financing; implementation of new apartment guidelines; and legislative amendments to introduce greater flexibility and streamlining to the Strategic Development Zone provisions of the Planning and Development Acts. In addition, NAMA is aiming to deliver 20,000 residential units before the end of 2020, with 90% of these units to be in the greater Dublin area.

The Government strategy to address housing supply is comprehensive in terms of policy, legislation and funding. The focus for the period ahead will be on securing full implementation.

Planning Issues

352. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the contacts he has had with the Dublin city manager in relation to the new north east arterial water main, the Sutton to Sandycove cycleway, the final resolution of concerns expressed by the local community in relation to the sea wall being erected west of the causeway on James Larkin Road, Dublin 5; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3836/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): I understand that this project comprising a cycleway proposal as well as flood alleviation works to address higher tides and sea levels was originally approved by An Bord Pleanála in 2011 under section 226 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, relating to foreshore developments.

Dublin City Council subsequently made some alterations to the cycleway aspects of their proposals which were progressed under the Part VIII requirements of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, relating to local authority own developments. Planning approval for the revised proposals was granted by Dublin City Council in May 2013.

I have had no contact with the Dublin City Chief Executive in relation to the matter concerned.

Under section 30 of the Act, I am specifically precluded from exercising any power or control in relation to any particular planning case with which a planning authority, including An Bord Pleanála, is or may be concerned.

Planning Issues

353. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he has met the Dublin city manager to discuss the restoration and enhancement of O'Connell Street, Dublin 1 during this important centenary year, given the failure of various Dublin city managers over nearly two decades to progress enhanced planning for this premier and historic street; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3837/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): Under section 30 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) I am precluded from exercising any power or control in relation to any particular case with which a planning authority or the Board is or may be concerned. Therefore, any questions regarding progressing particular planning projects should be directed to the relevant planning authority, in this case Dublin City Council.

Planning Issues

354. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he and Kildare County Council continue to be satisfied with the progress of the completion of the development, in accordance with planning conditions and other statutory requirements, at the Waterways in Sallins, County Kildare; when all outstanding matters will be resolved; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3871/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): The finalisation of any outstanding planning-related matters affecting the development concerned is a matter for Kildare County Council and one in which I have no function. Under section 30 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, I am specifically precluded from exercising any power or control in relation to any particular planning case with which a planning authority, including An Bord Pleanála, is or may be concerned.

Planning Issues

355. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government further to Parliamentary Question No. 877 of 13 January 2016, when the arbitration process in respect of the stalled development of the town centre in Naas, County Kildare will conclude, with a view to resumption of the development works; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3872/16]

Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Alan Kelly): I am informed by Kildare County Council that the arbitration process in respect of the stalled development at Naas Town Centre has not yet concluded, and that both sides are still putting their cases to the Arbitrator. When the cases have been heard, the Arbitrator will then consider all of the information before making a final determination on the matter.

As indicated in the reply to Question No. 877 of 13 January 2016, the management of the development concerned is primarily a matter for Kildare County Council in the first instance,

and I have no function in the matter.

Departmental Funding

356. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the funding he allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituencies of Louth and Meath-East over the past five years, by project and initiative, and by completion date and by cost; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3557/16]

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Alex White): Total capital expenditure by my Department was €486m in the period 2011 to end 2015. This expenditure is not broken down by county. The most significant component of my Department's capital expenditure is in respect of the Better Energy Homes and Better Energy Warmer Homes schemes which are administered on behalf of my Department by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) under the Better Energy Programme.

The Better Energy Homes (BEH) scheme provides grant aid to private homeowners who wish to improve the energy performance of their home. Fixed grants are provided towards the cost of a range of measures including attic insulation, wall insulation, heating systems upgrades, solar thermal panels and accompanying Building Energy Rating (BER)

The following tables illustrate the number of homes grant-aided per year in respect of Louth and Meath.

BEH	Louth		Meath	
Year	Number of houses completed	Grants Paid	Number of houses completed	Grants Paid
2011	1,095	€2,893,838	1,216	€355,723
2012	721	€1,066,900	678	€344,955
2013	543	€358,260	537	€159,170
2014	317	€220,670	350	€114,560
2015	387	€349,500	459	€489,610
Total	3,063	€4,889,168	3,240	€1,464,018

The Better Energy Warmer Homes (BEWH) scheme delivers a range of energy efficiency measures free of charge to low income households vulnerable to energy poverty, who meet the eligibility criteria. It should be noted that under this scheme the full cost of the works is met, therefore the figures given relate to average spend per home. The measures available include draught proofing, attic insulation, lagging jackets for hot water tanks, low energy light bulbs and cavity wall insulation.

BEWH	Louth		Meath	
Year	Number of houses completed	Value of Service Provided	Number of houses completed	Value of Service Provided
2011	360	€718	310	€618
2012	157	€313	241	€481
2013	151	€301	146	€291
2014	230	€459	318	€634
2015	159	€393	233	€485
Total	1,057	€2,185	1,248	€2,510

Information in relation to other capital projects in the Louth East Meath area is set out in the table below.

Name of Project/ Grant Scheme	Overview of Scheme	County	Value of Project/Grant	Completion date
TELLUS Border	InterReg IVA Project of environmental baseline surveying of 6 Border Counties in RoI	Louth	c.€250,000 spent on Louth between airborne geophysics, geochemistry and grant support for Dundalk IT	Spring 2013
100Mbps Schools Project	Delivery of 100Mbps and associated services to all post primary schools in the Country	Louth – 14 Post Primary Schools	€1.86m Capital Costs in 2012 – overall spend across 14 counties	December 2012
100Mbps Schools Project	Delivery of 100Mbps and associated services to all post primary schools in the Country	Meath – 21 Post Primary Schools	€1.36m Capital Costs in 2013 – Overall spend across 3 counties.	December 2013
National Broadband Scheme (NBS)	Delivery of basic, affordable broadband services in 1,028 Electoral Divisions(ED) across 25 counties where broadband services were deemed to be insufficient.	Louth – 1 Electoral Division	Payments made under the contract with the NBS Service Provider for the delivery of the Scheme amounted to €8.69m within the specified timeframe.	August 2014
National Broadband Scheme (NBS)	Delivery of basic, affordable broadband services to 1,028 EDs across 25 counties where broadband services were deemed to be insufficient.	Meath – 18 Electoral Divisions	Payments made under the contract with the NBS Service Provider for the delivery of the Scheme amounted to €8.69m within the specified timeframe.	August 2014
TELLUS, Airborne Geophysical and Ground Geochemistry Programme (GSI)	Surveyed as part of TELLUS North Midlands Phase	Louth and East Meath	c.€159,752 (8,612 line kilometres)	Spring 2015
INFOMAR Programme (DCENR funded/Implemented by GSI & MI)	National Seabed Mapping programme	Offshore Louth and Meath	c.€1,820,000 (c.260 days of vessel activity)	October 2015
Trading Online Voucher Scheme	Assist small businesses to develop/enhance their trading online capacity, for details see www.localenterprise.ie/Louth/	Louth	€54,580.25 (July 2014 to date)	Scheme is ongoing
Trading Online Voucher Scheme	Assist small businesses to develop/enhance their trading online capacity, for details see www.localenterprise.ie/Meath/	Meath	€14,730.00 (July 2014 to date)	Scheme is ongoing

	Estimate	Outturn
	€000s	€000s
2011	158,000	123,446
2012	119,800	90,222
2013	95,400	74,750
2014	118,500	113,100

	Estimate	Outturn
	€000s	€000s
2015	93,600	84,510

Renewable Energy Generation Targets

357. **Deputy Seán Kyne** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he is aware of the grave concerns about the possibility of Ireland missing the 2020 16% renewable energy targets by 4%, which would cost Ireland an estimated €600 million per year in fines; and the steps he is taking to meet these targets. [3608/16]

358. **Deputy Seán Kyne** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he is aware of concerns that his Department requires additional resources, particularly human resources, to ensure the successful adoption of renewable energy into our economy, which is without doubt a substantial but necessary task for environmental reasons and for the avoidance of fines, the financial resources for which could be much better directed elsewhere. [3609/16]

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Alex White): I propose to take Questions Nos. 357 and 358 together.

While the precise cost of any shortfall in Ireland's target of 16% has yet to be established, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) has estimated that the cost to Ireland may be in the range of €100 million to €150 million for each percentage point Ireland falls short of the overall 16% renewable energy target.

The 2009 EU Renewable Energy Directive set Ireland a legally binding target of meeting 16% of our energy requirements from renewable sources by 2020 and in order to meet this target, Ireland is committed to meeting 40% of electricity demand from renewable sources, 12% renewables in the heating sector and 10% in transport. The Government has adopted a range of support measures designed to meet our binding target, and although good progress towards our target has been made to date, meeting the 16% target remains challenging.

In the electricity sector, the primary support mechanisms introduced for renewable electricity are the Alternative Energy Requirement (AER) schemes and the Renewable Energy Feed-In-Tariff (REFIT) schemes. These schemes have proved successful at incentivising the development of the renewable electricity generation capacity necessary to meet our 40% renewable electricity target, and in 2014 SEAI has calculated that 22.7% of electricity demand was met by renewable sources.

In the heating sector, my Department is working on the introduction of a new Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) to support the deployment of renewable energy in the sector. The primary aim of the RHI is to build on the progress already made in heating and to help reach our 12% target by 2020. In 2014 it is estimated that 6.6% of heat was derived from renewable sources.

In the transport sector Ireland aims to meet our renewable target mainly through the increased use of sustainable biofuels, with electric vehicles also making a small contribution. In 2014, 5.2% of our energy needs in the transport sector were met from renewable sources.

The Energy White Paper, *Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future*, published in December last, sets out a vision for transforming Ireland's fossil-fuel based energy sector into a clean, low carbon system by 2050. Over the coming period the increasing focus of my Department will be on implementation of the range of actions set out in the White Paper that are aimed

at meeting our energy and climate change targets.

Gas Networks Ireland

359. **Deputy Brendan Smith** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the proposals to extend the natural gas supply to Cavan town; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3679/16]

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Alex White): The development and expansion of the natural gas network is a commercial matter for Gas Networks Ireland (GNI), the successor of Gaslink, which is mandated under Section 8 of the Gas Act 1976, as amended, to develop and maintain a national system for the supply of natural gas that is both economical and efficient.

The Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) is statutorily responsible for all aspects of the assessment and licensing of prospective operators who wish to develop and/or operate a gas distribution system within the State. I have no statutory function in relation to the connection of towns to the gas pipeline network.

In 2006, the CER approved a Gas Connections Policy which enabled assessment of the feasibility of connecting new towns to the gas network. In order for any town to be connected to the gas network, certain economic criteria need to be satisfied.

The policy provides that the construction and operating costs of connecting a town, or group of towns, to the network are recovered through the consumption of gas and the associated network charges. The distance of a town from the gas network is the major factor determining the costs of building a gas pipeline. The anticipated industrial or commercial gas usage in the town largely determines the revenue from gas network charges which must balance the connection costs. Uneconomic gas pipeline projects would unfairly increase energy costs for all gas consumers.

Under the 2006 network connections policy Gaslink has completed three comprehensive studies to assess nearly 80 towns for connections to the gas network with the result that more than twenty new towns have been connected in recent years, including Cootehill in Co. Cavan.

As the successor to Gaslink, GNI will continue to review the towns which did not qualify for connection in 2010 as well as other towns. The key factor which would qualify a town or group of towns in any future review would be a significant increase in demand for natural gas, usually as a result of the addition of a new large industrial or commercial facility.

In 2015 the CER hosted a consultation on a submission received by it from GNI proposing revisions to the existing gas connections policy, as mentioned above. The CER published its decision (CER/15/227) on 30th September 2015 and this is available on its website.

Telecommunications Services Provision

360. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources his views on correspondence (details supplied) regarding foreign investment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3686/16]

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Alex White): UPC Ireland has been rebranded as Virgin Media Ireland. This does not constitute a takeover

as, throughout the process, the ultimate owner of the service has continued to be Liberty Global.

Concurrent with this rebranding, the MMDS (Multipoint Microwave Distribution Systems) service now operated by Virgin Media, which was introduced in Ireland in the early 1990s to provide multi-channel television services on a nationwide basis, is being prepared to be switched off. This switch off is entirely unrelated to the rebranding of UPC Ireland as Virgin Media, but rather results from a Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) decision (D06/13). In accordance with this decision, the spectrum licence granted by ComReg to the MMDS service will no longer be available from 18 April 2016 as the spectrum associated with the MMDS service (in the 2600MHz band) is being reallocated for mobile broadband usage.

In preparation for the closure of the service, I understand that Virgin Media has been implementing a specific communications programme and, earlier this month, the company wrote directly to all affected MMDS customers advising them of the situation.

Ultimately, existing MMDS users will need to switch to another television service provider available in their area and, as part of its communications programme, I understand that Virgin Media has provided guidance for their customers in this regard. I also understand that the company has put in place a dedicated customer service team to respond to any queries, as well as an online help facility at www.virginmedia.ie/mmms.

I would urge all those affected to engage early with Virgin Media and with the relevant alternative service providers in order to manage this transition in a smooth manner.

National Broadband Plan Implementation

361. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the number of premises forecast to be covered by the national broadband plan's intervention by commercial high-speed broadband services by county by the end of 2016, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3758/16]

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Alex White): The information requested by the Deputy is set out in the following table. The information contained in the table is derived from the data provided by commercial operators to my Department in the course of the National Broadband Plan mapping exercise. This exercise was conducted by the Department in the period from July 2013 - December 2015.

The target areas identified for State intervention are based upon these figures. The High Speed Broadband Map, which is available on www.broadband.gov.ie, shows the extent of industry commitments to end 2016, indicating that 70% of addresses in Ireland will have access to high speed broadband within that timescale, with the remaining 30% representing the target for the proposed State intervention. The areas marked in BLUE on the map indicate where commercial providers are either currently delivering or have plans to deliver high speed broadband services by end 2016. The areas marked AMBER on the map represent the target areas for State intervention. Members of the public can see whether their individual premise is in the BLUE or AMBER area by inserting their Eircode, and-or address, or scrolling through the map.

On 22nd December 2015, I launched the formal procurement process for the State intervention. There is a process in place to update the map as appropriate during the procurement process. Consequently, the balance between premises served commercially and those served through the State intervention may change.

Existing and planned Commercial High Speed Broadband premises covered: this is

the number of premises listed by county that commercial operators have indicated would be able to receive high speed broadband by end 2016.

Number of Premises covered by State Intervention: This is the number of premises listed by county that are currently expected to be covered by the proposed State led Intervention. It is envisaged that 60% of these premises will have access to services by 2018 with 100% having access by 2020.

County	Total number of premises	Existing and planned Commercial High Speed broadband	Number of premises currently expected to be covered by State intervention under the National Broadband Plan
CARLOW	27,406	16,851	10,555
CAVAN	42,372	18,175	24,197
CLARE	68,158	33,657	34,501
CORK	267,754	181,782	85,972
DONEGAL	100,518	48,514	52,004
DUBLIN	580,348	572,053	8,295
GALWAY	133,815	71,275	62,540
KERRY	90,004	38,824	51,180
KILDARE	88,327	67,791	20,536
KILKENNY	47,772	25,317	22,455
LAOIS	38,761	22,560	16,201
LEITRIM	22,316	8,990	13,326
LIMERICK	97,661	63,698	33,963
LONGFORD	22,582	10,891	11,691
LOUTH	60,144	45,015	15,129
MAYO	84,167	33,336	50,831
MEATH	82,555	51,384	31,171
MONAGHAN	33,465	13,914	19,551
OFFALY	36,717	19,587	17,130
ROSCOMMON	39,125	14,269	24,856
SLIGO	39,886	21,281	18,605
TIPPERARY	84,575	43,368	41,207
WATERFORD	60,995	43,098	17,897
WESTMEATH	44,377	26,563	17,814
WEXFORD	79,510	40,202	39,308
WICKLOW	62,824	46,250	16,574
Grand Totals	2,336,134	1,578,645	757,489

Consultancy Contracts Data

362. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the name, cost, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [3763/16]

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Alex White): My Department administers a very diverse, complex and technical brief across critical and strategic sectors of the Irish economy. While it has a total complement of around 250 full time equivalent staff of whom a number are technical personnel, the technical, commercial,

legal complexity and evolving nature of sectors with which the Department deals requires access to external professional expertise to assist in discharging its functions. In procuring these specialised services, my Department always seeks to ensure value for money and that these services contribute to project delivery and informed, robust and evidence based policy making.

The bulk of the studies are technical and specialist in nature and were necessary to address specific issues as they arose and enable the Department to discharge its policy and project responsibilities in the areas concerned.

Details of the external reports commissioned by my Department are set out in the following table:

Consultancy Name	Title	Cost	Date of commission	Date or expected date of publication
Environ UK Limited	Corrib gasfield project – monitoring compliance with the Conditions of the Department's Letter of Consent dated 25 February 2011	€890,448*(to date)	June 2011	On-going
Dr Michael Johnson	Silvermines Vegetation Study	€5,848	August 2011	This Report will not be published until completion of land purchase
Camp Dresser McKee CDM	Sampling of Gortmore and Silvermines Vegetation	€13,890	July 2011	This Report will not be published until completion of land purchase
Purvin & Gertz	Strategic Case for Oil Refining requirements	€193,997	August 2011	July 2013
PA Consulting Group	National Digital Research Centre	€29,040	July 2011	This report was not published. The report is commercially sensitive as it is a Strategic Review of the NDRC to inform decisions about the future of the NDRC after the Concession Agreement expires in 2013.
OHH Energy Ltd	Independent Commission on Meath Tyrone Power Line	€41,120	July 2011	17/1/2012
Elimark	Independent Commission on Meath Tyrone Power Line	€38,786	July 2011	17/1/2012
2B Energy	Independent Commission on Meath Tyrone Power Line	€32,284	July 2011	17/1/2012
SLR Consulting	Core Library Holdings Review	€39,688	Sept 2011 – Dec 2011	Jan 2012
Jenny Deakin	Preparation for the Graigue Group Water Scheme Report	€1,750	April 2011 – Sept 2011	Sept 2011

Consultancy Name	Title	Cost	Date of commission	Date or expected date of publication
Indecon Economic Consultants	Economic/Socio-Economic Analysis of options for rollout of next generation broadband	€28,167	May 2012	This Report will not be published as it is commercially sensitive and may impact on Government procurement in Broadband provision.
Analysys Mason	Analysis of options for potential State intervention in the rollout of next generation broadband	€30,522	May 2012	This Report will not be published as it is commercially sensitive and may impact on Government procurement in Broadband provision.
Thornton's Chartered Surveyors	Provision of land valuation and negotiation services	€3,690	July 2012	This Report will not be published until completion of land purchase.
Indecon International Economic Consultants	Assessment of Economic Contribution of Mineral Exploration and Mining in Ireland	€53,690	October 2012	Published September 2013.
Indecon (Ireland)	Provision of a Macroeconomic Research Exercise under the National Digital Strategy to Determine the Value of Internet/Digital to the Irish Economy	€72,474	November 2012	Published July 2013
CDM Smith Ireland Limited	Environmental Monitoring at former mining areas of Silvermines, Co. Tipperary and Avoca, Co. Wicklow	€435,399	December 2012	On completion of scheduled reports
AMEC Earth & Environmental (UK) Ltd	Expert Services to Monitor Mining Activities and Compliance with terms of State Mining Leases/Licences.	€108,864	December 2012	This Report will not be published as it is commercially sensitive
Pricewaterhouse Coopers Ltd	Scheduled review of INFOMAR Project	€59,505	Dec 2012 – May 2013	Published September 2013
BEC consultants	Assistance with statutory assessment of Environmental Statements and Natura Impact Statements accompanying applications for (1) a 2D regional seismic survey and (2) an off-shore exploration well (Dunquin) (2 reports received)	€11,211	February 2013	Reports published on the Department's website

Questions - Written Answers

Consultancy Name	Title	Cost	Date of commission	Date or expected date of publication
Det Norske Veritas	Expert technical advice to the Department in connection with offshore drilling	€52,088	March 2013	Not published. Commercially sensitive
Neary Marketing & Communications	Review of Irish Geoscience Sector	€10,000	March 2013 – June 2013	This Report will not be published as it is commercially sensitive.
BEC consultants	Assistance with statutory assessment of Environmental Statements and Natura Impact Statements accompanying applications for geophysical surveys including 2D/3D offshore Seismic Surveys and exploration drilling applications (six reports completed in 2013)	€18,266 (€3,044 fee payable for each report received)	April 2013	Reports published on the Department's website
Norcontel (Ireland) Ltd	Market analysis of backhaul infrastructure in Mayo and Galway	€10,500	May 2013	Published June 2013
Selgovia Limited	Offshore exploration well technical assessment	€4,429	July 2013	Not published. Commercially sensitive
Doyle Kent Planning Partnership Ltd.	To provide draft Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report for the Renewable Energy Policy and Development Framework	€95,940	September 2013	This report has not been published but is expected to be published shortly.
Environ UK Ltd	Establishment of an Administrative Framework for the Conduct of an Irish Offshore Strategic Environmental Assessment	€23,247	November 2013	Not published. Commercially sensitive
Environ UK Ltd	Establishment of an Administrative Framework for the Acquisition of Baseline Information on Marine Species	€21,973	November 2013	Not published. Commercially sensitive
AECOM Ltd.	Economics and Financial Consultancy	€52, 988	November 2013	This Report will not be published as it remains confidential.
Indecon (Ireland)	Economic Analysis of the Advertising Market in Ireland	€71,438	December 2013	Report published on the Department's website

Consultancy Name	Title	Cost	Date of commission	Date or expected date of publication
BEC consultants	Assistance with statutory assessment of Environmental Statements and Natura Impact Statements accompanying applications for geophysical surveys including 2D/3D offshore Seismic Surveys and exploration drilling applications.	€66,124 (€3,653 fee payable for each report received)	February 2014	Reports published on the Department's website
Wood Mackenzie	Review of Ireland's Oil and Gas Fiscal System	€212,873	12/03/2014	Published June 2014
Neary Marketing & Communications	Review of Geoscience Ireland Business Cluster	€5,000	March 2014 – July 2014	This Report will not be published as it is commercially sensitive.
PA Consulting	Post Project Evaluation of the Tellus Border project	€24,750	March 2014-July 2014	Published July 2014
Perspective Associates Ltd	The provision of independent expert advice relating to the identification of an appropriate framework for determining whether a compilation of programme material offered by a contractor under s. 71 of the Broadcasting Act 2009 has the 'character of a public service'.	€5,000	18/07/2014	Report published on the Department's website
Environ UK Ltd	Assistance with the Production of the Irish Offshore Strategic Environmental Assessment (IOSEA) 5	€289,438 (to date)	October 2014	Ongoing
KN Network Services	To provide a due diligence assessment on the current status of the Galway-Mayo telecoms duct.	€62,500	2014	The report will not be published, it will be used to assist with the appointment of a Management Services Entity for the duct.
Gemserv	To provide an interim privacy impact assessment on the implementation of the National Postcode System	€59,340	August 2014	Final report – Executive Summary published.
Ricardo - AEA	REFIT 3 Review	€4,500	2014	This document remains part of the deliberative process and contains commercially sensitive information.

Consultancy Name	Title	Cost	Date of commission	Date or expected date of publication
Doyle Kent Planning Partnership Ltd.	Assistance with the screening of the National Broadband Intervention Strategy for Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment.	€4,500	25/08/2014	This report will be published on completion of the consideration of the SEA/AA assessments.
Ramboll Environ UK Ltd	Environmental Consultancy Services for Gap Assessment on Application for Corrib Pipeline Consent to Operate.	€70,000	August 2015	Ongoing
RPS Group Limited	To undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment/Appropriate Assessment on the Draft Bioenergy Plan	€54,930	September 2015	March 2016
Indecon International Economic Consultants	Review of Designated Events of Major Importance to Society under the Broadcasting Act 2009.	€37,223.43 (to date)	23 October 2015	January 2016
Tekenable	Provision of TV Licence Database and System Review.	€13,177.13(to date)	29 October 2015	January 2016
Compass Informatics	Scoping Study for a National Geological Data Centre	€29,625	October 2015	February 2016
SLR Consulting	Review of Issues around social acceptance of Geoscience activities and Earth Resources	€25,830	December 2015	March 2016
RiskSolutions	High level Strategic Study on phase 1 & phase 2 of the INFO-MAR project	€24,989	December 2015	March 2016

Public Inquiries

363. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which he or his Department have been responsible by name, by terms of reference, by cost, including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded, by date, including the projected date of conclusion where an inquiry has not been concluded, from 1991 to date, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3778/16]

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Alex White): There have been no Tribunals of Inquiry, Commissions of Inquiry or Investigations established by my Department since this Government came to office on 9th March 2011 to date.

Ministerial Allowances

364. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the expenses, including the amount of mileage, claimed by him and Ministers of State at his Department, by calendar year, during the current Dáil, in tabular form. [3806/16]

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Alex White): Details on expenses claimed by me, my predecessor Pat Rabbitte, T.D and by the previous Minister of State at my Department, Fergus O'Dowd T.D. for each of the years from 2011 to date is set out in the table below. Payments made are in accordance with the relevant Department of Public Expenditure and Reform rules and guidelines. Minister of State Joe McHugh has responsibilities within my Department and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. All expenses claimed are paid to him by that Department.

Minister Alex White, T.D. July 2014 to date

	2014 €	2015 €
Travel and Subsistence	939	4,343
Kilometres	2,939	13,209
Publications	0	1,237

Former Minister, Pat Rabbitte T.D. March 2011 to July 2014

	2011 €	2012 €	2013 €	2014 €
Travel and Subsistence	955	2,223	2,119	956
Kilometres	8,810	10,192	13,732	11,383

Former Minister of State, Fergus O Dowd, T.D. March 2011 to July 2014

	2011 €	2012 €	2013 €	2014 €
Travel and Subsistence	608	1,864	2,064	2,267
Kilometres	11,101	15,580	18,815	10,125
Constituency office phone bill	1,133	0	0	195

Departmental Expenditure

365. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the amount he spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3821/16]

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Alex White): The amount spent on media clipping and media monitoring services by my Department for each of the years from 2011 to 2015 is set out in the following table.

Year	Amount
2011	€49,911
2012	€24,084
2013	€29,622
2014	€26,331
2015	€27,719

Year	Amount
Total	€157,667

Natural Resources

366. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the activity he expects in new oil and gas exploration in Irish territorial waters and in Ireland's economic zone during 2016; the impact of the new exploration tax regime; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3849/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Joe McHugh): Ireland's strategy for the exploitation of indigenous oil and gas resources aims to maximise the level of exploration activity and increase the level of production activity, while ensuring a fair return to the State. In recent years efforts to reposition the industry through an intensive promotional campaign, data acquisition projects and the reworking and modernising of the regulatory and fiscal frameworks have resulted in the highest level ever of extant authorisations with 44 extant licensing options and exploration licences at the beginning of 2016.

In response to the 2015 Atlantic Margin Licensing Round, 17 companies submitted 43 applications, by far the largest number of applications received in any round held in the Irish offshore. This very positive response is an indication of the building momentum in oil and gas exploration offshore Ireland. While at this stage I cannot comment on the number of Licensing Options that will be granted as a result of the Round, I expect that the first phase of awards resulting from the Round will be made in mid February.

The tax terms that would apply to any new commercial discoveries are set out in the 2015 Finance Act and the resulting income would be a matter for the Revenue Commissioners.

Sports Capital Programme Administration

367. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide sports capital funding in 2016; when he will announce details of same; when the process will open and close; and the amount money that will be allocated in 2016. [3488/16]

Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Michael Ring): No decision has been made on the timing of any future rounds of the Sports Capital Programme.

Public Transport Fares

368. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport his views on the cost of public transport to commuters given the dramatic drop in the cost of fuel; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3494/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): Fare determinations are a matter for the National Transport Authority (NTA) in conjunction with the transport operators. I have referred the Deputy's question to the NTA for direct reply. Please advise my private office if he does not receive a response within ten working days.

National Transport Authority

369. **Deputy Eoghan Murphy** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if the National Transport Authority will respond to residents of Wilfield Road in Dublin 4, regarding the issues that the residents raised, regarding its report on partial footpath parking. [3510/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): I am aware of the Dublin Residential Parking Study to which you refer. However, as this report was commissioned by the National Transport Authority (NTA) I have forwarded the Deputy's question to the NTA for direct reply. Please advise my private office if he does not receive a reply within ten working days.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland

370. **Deputy Patrick O'Donovan** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport to revert to this Deputy on a matter (details supplied) regarding a decision by Transport Infrastructure Ireland; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3537/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): As Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport, I have responsibility for overall policy and funding in relation to the national roads programme. The planning, design and implementation of individual road projects (including at Wards Cross, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick) is a matter for the Transport Infrastructure Ireland (formerly known as the NRA) under the Roads Acts 1993-2015 in conjunction with the local authorities concerned. Within its capital budget, the assessment and prioritisation of individual projects is a matter in the first instance for TII in accordance with Section 19 of the Roads Act. Noting the above position, I have referred the Deputy's question to TII for direct reply. Please advise my private office if he does not receive a reply within 10 working days.

Departmental Funding

371. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the funding he allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituency of Louth-east Meath, by project and initiative, by completion date and by cost, for the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3568/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): Funding and investment programmes are not based on constituency boundaries, therefore my Department does not collate information along the lines requested.

Penalty Points System Data

372. **Deputy Noel Grealish** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the number of drivers in counties Galway and Mayo who have had penalty points applied, the main categories of offence, and the numbers of penalty points such drivers have accrued, in each of the past three years, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3598/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): The following tabular statements provide the breakdown in respect of the number of Penalty Points applied to

drivers in Counties Galway (Table 1) and Mayo (Table 2) in the years 2013, 2014 and 2015 by category of offence. Table 1: Galway

		2013		2014		2015
Penalty Point Offence	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied
22-35mcg of alcohol per 100ml of breath	21	63	23	72	25	75
50-80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood			2	6	4	12
67-107mg of alcohol per 100ml of urine	2	6	1	3	3	15
Adult Failing to wear Safety Belt cat. M1 Vehicle	360	800	562	1,465	544	1,813
Adult Failing to wear Safety Belt cat. M2 Vehicle	5	10	7	17	3	9
Adult Failing to wear Safety Belt cat. M3 Vehicle	3	6	2	6	3	9
Adult Failing to wear Safety Belt cat. N1 Vehicle	52	116	116	312	137	466
Adult Failing to wear Safety Belt cat. N2 Vehicle	4	8	11	26	23	81
Adult Failing to wear Safety Belt cat. N3 Vehicle	10	22	11	25	9	31
Breach of duties on occurrence of an accident	9	45	9	45	10	50
Breach of motorway outside lane driving rule	1	3			1	1
Careless Driving contrary to section 52(1)	35	175	36	180	34	170
Contravention of requirements at junctions			1	1		
Cross continuous white line/broken white line	49	106	59	131	88	261
Crossing 'No Entry' sign					1	1
Dangerous Driving Reduced to Careless Driving	19	95	20	100	27	135
Driver (Owner) Exceeding Maximum Load	2	2			2	2
Driver (Owner) Exceeding Maximum Weight					1	1
Driver Exceeding Design Gross Vehicle Weight	1	1	2	4	4	5
Driver Exceeding Maximum Weight			1	1	4	4
Driver Fail ensure Passenger U/17 wear Safety Belt	24	50	32	84	52	120
Driver Fail Restrain Child O/3 in Child Restraint	33	80	68	176	87	208
Driver Fail Restrain Child U/3 in Child Restraint	27	60	37	92	37	95

		2013		2014		2015
Penalty Point Offence	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied
Driver Owner Exceeding Design Gross Vehicle Weight					1	2
Driving a vehicle while holding a mobile phone	1,594	3,506	2,437	5,914	2,561	8,363
Driving along/across median strip	6	6	15	19	8	15
Driving dangerously defective vehicle	1	5	2	10	1	5
Driving on/across footway	1	1	1	1	2	2
Driving past a red light. Contrary to sec 35(5)RTA					3	9
Driving without reasonable consideration	223	478	334	733	336	755
Entry to hatched marked area	19	21	23	25	28	31
Fail to act in accordance with Garda signal					1	1
Fail to comply with Keep to Right/Left signs			1	1	1	1
Fail to comply with mandatory traffic signs	4	4	1	1	3	6
Fail to comply with No Entry traffic sign	3	3	8	8	2	4
Fail to comply with prohibitory traffic signs	20	24	16	16	26	29
Fail to comply with traffic lane markings	3	3	6	6	8	10
Fail to Deactivate Airbag Child Restraint in use	1	2				
Fail to drive on the left hand side	1	1	1	1		
Fail to obey rules at railway level crossing			2	4	2	4
Fail to obey traffic lights	176	387	188	436	241	730
Fail to stop before stop sign/stop line	15	36	8	18	20	63
Fail to stop for Garda	5	22	7	32	3	9
Fail to turn left onto a roundabout	3	3			2	2
Fail to yield right of way	4	8	4	8	3	6
Fail to yield right of way at sign/line	2	4	1	2	4	12
Learner driver unaccompanied by a qualified driver					89	213
No cert of road worthiness user	17	85	26	130	19	95
No child restraint front seat - child	1	4				
No child restraint rear seat - child	2	8				
No insurance - (user)	139	695	168	840	180	900
No safety belt - driver	36	144				

Questions - Written Answers

		2013		2014		2015
Penalty Point Offence	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied
No safety belt front seat - child	1	4				
No safety belt rear seat - child	7	28				
Non-Display of L Plate (Learner Driver)					35	74
Non-Display of N plate (Novice driver)					13	36
Non-Display of yellow 'L' tabard on motorcycle					1	2
Offence relating to Over-taking	42	93	35	95	46	149
Parking a vehicle in a dangerous position					3	9
Proceeding beyond maximum vehicle width sign					1	1
Reduced to Driving without reasonable consideration	8	32	15	60	8	32
Speed limit device not conforming					1	3
Speeding Combination of vehicles					1	6
Speeding	7,375	16,024	10,699	27,089	11,855	38,859
Use vehicle without NCT certificate	69	345	169	929	480	1,874
Using vehicle without authorisation plate passenge					1	3
Total	10,435	23,624	15,167	39,124	17,088	55,879

Table 2: Mayo

		2013		2014		2015
Penalty Point Offence	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied
22-35mcg of alcohol per 100ml of breath	10	30	10	32	7	21
50-80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood	3	9	5	15	3	9
67-107mg of alcohol per 100ml of urine	1	3	1	3	1	3
Adult Failing to wear Safety Belt cat. M1 Vehicle	83	184	119	275	85	271
Adult Failing to wear Safety Belt cat. M2 Vehicle	2	4	6	13	3	10
Adult Failing to wear Safety Belt cat. M3 Vehicle			1	2	2	6
Adult Failing to wear Safety Belt cat. N1 Vehicle	6	12	15	42	19	62
Adult Failing to wear Safety Belt cat. N2 Vehicle			3	6	6	20

		2013		2014		2015
Penalty Point Of- fence	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied
Adult Failing to wear Safety Belt cat. N3 Vehicle	2	4	1	2	2	6
Breach of duties on occurrence of an accident			1	5	1	5
Careless Driving	14	70	21	105	13	65
Cross continuous white line/broken white line	46	97	57	119	59	171
Crossing 'No Entry' sign					1	1
Dangerous Driving Reduced to Careless Driving	17	85	15	75	11	55
Drive on hardshoul- der/non carriageway - motorway			1	1	1	1
Driver (Owner) Ex- ceeding Maximum Load	2	2			1	1
Driver Exceed- ing Design Gross Vehicle Weight	2	2	1	1		
Driver Exceeding Maximum Weight					3	3
Driver Fail ensure Passenger U/17 wear Safety Belt	7	14	16	34	18	40
Driver Fail Restrain Child O/3 in Child Restraint	11	26	5	10	9	21
Driver Fail Restrain Child U/3 in Child Restraint	8	16	5	12	9	22
Driving a vehicle while holding a mo- bile phone	493	1,066	629	1,498	746	2,371
Driving along/across median strip	5	5	6	6	8	16
Driving dangerously defective vehicle			3	15		
Driving past a red light.Contrary to sec 35(5)RTA					1	3
Driving without reasonable consid- eration	74	166	65	136	91	192
Entry to hatched marked area	2	4	4	4	4	4
Fail to act in ac- cordance with Garda signal			1	1		
Fail to comply with Keep to Right/Left signs			1	1		

Questions - Written Answers

		2013		2014		2015
Penalty Point Offence	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied
Fail to comply with mandatory traffic signs			3	3	2	4
Fail to comply with No Entry traffic sign	1	1	2	2	1	1
Fail to comply with prohibitory traffic signs	11	11	6	6	13	16
Fail to comply with traffic lane markings	4	4	3	3		
Fail to drive on the left hand side			1	1		
Fail to obey traffic lights	41	93	40	89	46	138
Fail to stop before stop sign/stop line	7	16	3	6	7	22
Fail to stop for Garda			3	12	1	5
Fail to turn left onto a roundabout			1	1		
Fail to yield right of way					1	2
Fail to yield right of way at sign/line	1	2	1	2	1	3
Learner driver unaccompanied by a qualified driver					24	58
No cert of road worthiness user	7	35	5	25	7	35
No insurance - (user)	33	165	33	165	32	160
No safety belt - driver	2	8				
No safety belt front seat - child	1	4				
Non-Display of L Plate (Learner Driver)					30	66
Non-Display of N plate (Novice driver)					3	6
Non-Display of yellow 'L' tabard on motorcycle					4	8
Offence relating to Overtaking	4	11	14	31	20	60
Parking a vehicle in a dangerous position					1	3
Reduced to Driving without reasonable consideration	2	8	1	4		
Speed limit device not in use					1	3
Speeding Combination of vehicles	1	2			1	3
Speeding	4,216	8,976	4,804	11,765	4,260	13,512
Use vehicle without NCT certificate	30	150	34	170	101	386

		2013		2014		2015
Penalty Point Offence	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied	Number of Drivers	Penalty Points Applied
U-Turn on dual carriageway/central reserve/traffic					1	5
Total	5,149	11,285	5,946	14,698	5,661	17,875

Transport Infrastructure Ireland Remit

373. **Deputy Patrick O'Donovan** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will revert to this Deputy on a matter (details supplied) regarding lighting at a road traffic junction; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3650/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): As Minister for Transport, I have responsibility for overall policy and funding in relation to the national roads programme. The construction, improvement and maintenance (including lighting) of individual national roads, is a matter for Transport Infrastructure Ireland under the Roads Acts 1993 to 2007 in conjunction with the local authorities concerned. Within its capital budget, the assessment and prioritisation of individual projects is a matter in the first instance for the NRA in accordance with Section 19 of the Roads Act.

Noting this I have referred the Deputy's question to the TII for direct reply. Please advise my private office if he does not receive a reply within 10 working days.

Regional Airports

374. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the number of service disruptions, including cancellations and delays, which have affected public service obligation supported flights operating into and out of Donegal Airport at Carrickfinn, including the reasons for these disruptions, by instance, by month, for the years 2014 and 2015 in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3655/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): Following a public tender process, Stobart Air was selected as the air carrier to operate the Donegal-Dublin and Kerry-Dublin PSO routes under a new contract that commenced in February last year. Prior to that, the Donegal-Dublin service was operated by Loganair. The new contract with Stobart will operate for two years initially and, subject to a satisfactory review after 18 months, it may be extended for an additional year.

The contract contains certain performance requirements in relation to cancellations and delays. The number of flights cancelled for reasons directly attributable to the air carrier shall not exceed 2% on an annual basis and the number delayed by more than 30 minutes, again for reasons attributable to the carrier, shall not be more than 20%. Financial penalties are provided for in the contract for unsatisfactory performance. Stobart's overall performance on the Donegal route last year was well within these thresholds albeit that weather, which is outside their control, was a factor in a number of cancellations.

In accordance with the terms of the contract, the airline submits monthly reports to my Department on the operation of both services, including details of any flights which have been delayed or cancelled and these details in respect of the Donegal-Dublin service for 2014 and 2015 are tabulated as follows.

My Department continues to monitor the performance of the airline in conjunction with the airport and is engaging with both parties to ensure that the contract terms are being complied with.

Donegal/Dublin PSO Air Service 2014

DELAYS

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Number	6	4	5	9	4	1	8	7	4	6	6	20
Reason	4T 2W	2T 2W	4T 1W	7T 2W	4T	1W	8T	6T 1Ø	2T 2Ø	6T	4T 2W	14T 3W 3Ø

CANCELLATIONS

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Number	6	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	8
Reason	2T 4W	1T 2W	0	1T	0	0	0	0	1W	1Ø	1W	7W 1Ø

Donegal/Dublin PSO Air Services 2015

DELAYS

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Number	21	10	16	12	13	18	12	7	9	7	15	9
Reason	9T 12W	3T 4W 3Ø	2T 13W 1Ø	4T 3W 5Ø	13Ø	2T 16Ø	1T 1W 10Ø	2T 5Ø	1T 1W 7Ø	2T 5Ø	4T 10W 1Ø	3T 1W 5Ø

CANCELLATIONS

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Number	23	11	11	2	1	1	2	0	0	0	5	18
Reason	23W	11W	1T 10W	1T 1W	1W	1W	2W	0	0	0	5W	18W

*W = Weather

T = Technical

Ø = Other

Tourism Promotion

375. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the amount of money spent in marketing in south Galway by Fáilte Ireland in 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3680/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): The matter raised is an operational matter for the tourism agencies. Accordingly, I have referred the Deputy's question to Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland for direct reply. Please contact my private office if a reply is not received within ten working days.

376. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the status of a junction (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3687/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): As Minister for Transport, I have responsibility for overall policy and funding in relation to the national roads programme. The construction, improvement and maintenance of individual national roads, is a matter for Transport Infrastructure Ireland under the Roads Acts 1993 to 2007 in conjunction with the local authorities concerned. Within its capital budget, the assessment and prioritisation of individual projects is a matter in the first instance for the TII in accordance with Section 19 of the Roads Act.

Noting this I have referred the Deputy's question to TII for direct reply. Please advise my private office if he does not receive a reply within 10 working days.

Regional Road Network

377. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide funding to fix the Cliff Road at Rossbeigh, County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3732/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): The improvement and maintenance of regional and local roads in Kerry is the statutory responsibility of Kerry County Council, in accordance with the provisions of Section 13 of the Roads Act 1993. Works on those roads are funded from the Council's own resources supplemented by State road grants. The initial selection and prioritisation of works to be funded is also a matter for the Council.

Kerry County Council has forwarded proposals regarding road access at Rossbeigh and my Department will be in further contact with the Council in relation to its proposals.

Consultancy Contracts Data

378. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [3774/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): Details of expenditure on external services, including consultancies as requested by the Deputy, are available from my Department's website at the following link <http://www.dttas.ie/corporate/english/expenditure-external-services>.

Public Inquiries

379. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which he or his Department have been responsible by name; by terms of reference; by cost including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded; by date including the projected date of conclusion where an inquiry has not been concluded from 1991 to date, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3789/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): My Department has not had responsibility for tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations in the stated timeframe.

Ministerial Allowances

380. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the expenses claimed, including the amount of mileage and the amount claimed, by him and Ministers of State of his Department, by calendar year, during the current Dáil Éireann, in tabular form. [3817/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): The information sought by the Deputy is available on my Department's website at the following link: <http://www.dttas.ie/about-us/2013/ministerial-expenses>.

Departmental Expenditure

381. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the amount he spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3832/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): The costs incurred on external media monitoring services in the period 2011 to 2015 are as follows.

2011 - 2013 Nil

2014 - €1,348.76

2015 - € 2,855.33.

Regional Road Network

382. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will contact the Dublin city manager in relation to the urgently needed upgrading of the road surface, road markings and traffic management systems on the N32-R139 in Dublin Bay North; if Dublin City Council has requested funding for these works; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3839/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): The improvement and maintenance of regional and local roads, in its area, is a statutory function of each road authority in accordance with the provisions of section 13 of the Roads Act, 1993. Works on such roads are a matter for the relevant local authority to be funded from its own resources supplemented by State road grants, where applicable. In addition traffic management measures are also the responsibility of the relevant local authority.

Arising from the introduction of the Local Property Tax and the Government commitment that local authorities will retain 80% of the tax revenues, the four Dublin Councils became self funding for regional and local roads under the main road grant categories from 2015.

Local Authority Services

383. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he has issued any directives or guidelines on the luminescence of street lighting to local authorities including Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council; if he has carried out any road safety audits on street and road public lighting; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3840/16]

384. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he is aware from road safety or other audits if the luminescence of street lighting in any local authority, including Dublin City and Fingal County has been reduced in brightness on cost grounds; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3841/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): I propose to take Questions Nos. 383 and 384 together.

As road authorities, it is a matter for local authorities, in conjunction with TII in respect of national roads, to manage the maintenance of roads within their functional areas. Within their roads budget, it is also a matter for local authorities to prioritise maintenance works which have safety implications.

The Department has not issued directives or guidelines in respect of the luminance of street lighting.

Local Authority Services

385. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will ensure, and, on road safety grounds, provide funding so that road markings on key urban, regional, national and motorway routes are luminescent, given the tendency of the existing painted markings to disappear during bad weather at night; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3842/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): As road authorities, it is a matter for local authorities, in conjunction with TII in respect of national roads, to manage the maintenance of roads within their functional areas. Within their roads budget, it is also a matter for local authorities to prioritise maintenance works which have safety implications.

Motor Industry

386. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he or the Road Safety Authority have met the key importers and manufacturers of vehicles in relation to improving safety systems in cars and other vehicles and in particular the development of high technical solutions to monitor and regulate the speed and safe driving of vehicles; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3843/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): Improvements in vehicle design and the incorporation of new technologies afford greater safety for motorists and other road users and is a fundamental element of the more holistic 'safe systems approach' to road safety as outlined in the Government's 2013-2020 Road Safety Strategy.

Actions in the Strategy relating to the ongoing research of emerging 'in-road' and 'in-vehicle' road safety technologies by the Road Safety Authority (RSA) and the implementation of measures to ensure the timely implementation of the eCall service in line with EU regulations,

is testament to the Government's commitment to implementing improved vehicle engineering safety standards.

In terms of vehicle engineering expertise and the provision of advice in relation to such, under the *Road Safety Authority Act 2006 (Conferral of Functions) Order 2006 – S.I. No. 477 of 2006*, the RSA has responsibility for the oversight and development of standards for motor vehicles and the making of recommendations in relation to the regulation of such.

In view of the RSA's technical expertise in this area and their corresponding statutory function in this regard, I have referred the Deputy's query to the RSA for direct reply. If a reply has not been received within ten days, please contact my private office.

Light Rail Projects Status

387. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will report to Dáil Éireann on developments in the scoping and planning for Metro North; if he or agencies of his Department have formed a planning unit in this regard; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [3844/16]

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Paschal Donohoe): The 'New Metro North' scheme was chosen as the most appropriate public transport solution to address the future transport needs of the Swords/Airport/City Centre Corridor under the Fingal/North Dublin Transport Study carried out by the NTA. The scheme has been included in the Government's new Capital Plan '*Building on Recovery Infrastructure & Capital Investment 2016-2021*'. It is expected that construction commence in 2021 with a view to delivery by 2026/27.

I understand that the National Transport Authority (NTA) has commenced initial work on the design and planning stages of the scheme in collaboration with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), and in line with their Project Management Guidelines. The key objective of this first phase will be to determine the Route alignment. This will be informed by a number of key work streams and studies.

Thereafter, the NTA, in its role as Sanctioning Authority, will prepare a detailed business case for the project based on more detailed design and cost estimates of the route prior to lodging the Railway Order for the proposed scheme. The comprehensive appraisal will be conducted in accordance with the Government's Public Spending Code.

Boat Permits

388. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht the status of an application for a permit by a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3487/16]

Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Heather Humphreys): Private boats on the lakes in the Park are regulated by way of mooring discs or pegs. In a scheme introduced in 1991, following lengthy consultation with interested parties, mooring discs were issued to all boat owners having a recognised traditional mooring right on the lakes, subject to an overall limit on the number of discs issued. It is considered that a limit is necessary so as to balance recreational use with the conservation imperative of flora and fauna of the lakes and surrounding areas, and also taking account of obligations under the EU Birds and Habitats Directives. My Department does not permit the casual placing of boats on the lakes on a daily

basis, as boats and engines coming from outside the Park carry the risk of spreading invasive alien species such as zebra mussels and various pond weeds.

To facilitate others, persons applying for mooring pegs are placed on a waiting list and any pegs becoming available are allocated to those on the list. In order to facilitate the short-term accommodation of some of those on the waiting list, they are entered into a lottery each year for one of 22 temporary mooring pegs to use the lakes for one year. My Department receives numerous requests for mooring spaces but, unfortunately, the demand far exceeds the number of spaces available.

The 2015 lottery took place last year under the supervision of my officials and local angling club members. Offers of discs have issued to those persons drawn from the lottery but it is not my Department's policy at the moment to issue letters to unsuccessful applicants. I am advised that the person referred to by the Deputy was unsuccessful in 2015 and has been automatically entered into this year's draw as a result.

Departmental Funding

389. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht the funding she allocated and the funding spent on capital projects and other initiatives in the constituencies of Louth and Meath-East, by project and initiative, by completion date and by cost, for the past five years; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3555/16]

Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Heather Humphreys): Details of the annual funding allocation to my Department at subhead level are published in the annual Revised Estimates Volume. Through these subheads, my Department administers and delivers a wide range of programmes and measures, descriptions of which are available on its website at <http://www.ahg.gov.ie/>.

Expenditure under these programme areas is recorded and accounted for on a national basis and it is not possible to give a regional, county-by-county or constituency breakdown of that expenditure. For example, a number of my Department's programmes are delivered through agencies and other intermediary bodies that operate across county boundaries and in respect of which there is no detailed breakdown on a county basis or constituency basis held by my Department. Groups and organisations that receive grants directly from my Department are not typically constituted on a single-county basis or constituency basis.

In view of this and because of the wide range of my Department's schemes and programmes, and the large volumes of payments and grants involved, it is not possible to provide the information sought. However, if the Deputy has specific queries relating to a particular programme or grant, I will endeavour to provide him with relevant information in that regard.

National Parks Closures

390. **Deputy Noel Grealish** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht the situation in relation to Diamond Hill, Letterfrack in County Galway, the upper trail of which is currently closed due to maintenance, when it was closed, and when it will reopen; what maintenance works are being carried out; the reasons for the works; the cost of such works; who is carrying them out; how many persons visited Diamond Hill in 2015; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3601/16]

Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Heather Humphreys): In 2015 approximately 200,000 people visited Connemara National Park and most of these would have visited at least part of the Diamond Walk. The Upper Diamond Walk has been closed intermittently since December to facilitate essential health and safety maintenance work. The Lower Diamond is unaffected by the works.

This restorative work includes remediating subsidence and the general maintenance works necessary to make the walkway safe for the general public. Stone slabs and gravel are being used and due to the location, these were transported to the site by helicopter. The work has been carried out at intervals depending on prevailing weather conditions.

The work cost approximately €49,000 and is being carried out by Walsh Stoneworks. It is expected that works will be completed in the coming days and the walkway will reopen as soon it is safe to do so.

Consultancy Contracts Data

391. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by her Department since March 2011. [3761/16]

Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Heather Humphreys): The details requested by the Deputy in respect of reports commissioned by my Department since its establishment in June 2011 are set out in the following table.

The Deputy may wish to note that the University of Birmingham was commissioned in 2010 by the then Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, prior to the establishment of my Department, to undertake a review relating to peatlands. The resulting report, “*Review of Archaeological Survey and Mitigation Policy relating to Bord na Móna Peatlands*” was published in June 2013 and the associated costs of €34,337 were met by my Department.

For completeness, I would point out that my Department commissions engineering or environmental experts from time to time to provide technical reports on specific issues, as required. While the providers of these services are consultant engineers, environmental consultants or may describe themselves in other such terms, their work is not classified as consultancy services and is not funded from my Department’s Administrative Budget. Similarly, contracts for the provision of services are not classified as consultancy services and any reports produced by the contractors in the course of such contracts are not included.

Year Report Commissioned	Company	Report	Amount paid from 2 June 2011 to date
2011	Avia Solutions	Review of financial submissions relating to the PSO Air Service for the Aran Islands (not for publication)	€6,300
2012	Bonnar Keenlyside	Review of Dublin Contemporary 2011 (not for publication)	€10,959
2013	Dorgan Associates	Cost Benefit Analysis of National Archives Development Plan (not for publication at this time)	€12,669
2013	Dorgan Associates	Cost Benefit Analysis of National Gallery Redevelopment Project (published April 2015)	€12,731
2013/14	Dorgan Associates	Examination of capital incentives to promote investment in film studio infrastructure (not for publication)	€6,765

Year Report Commissioned	Company	Report	Amount paid from 2 June 2011 to date
2014	EY	Review of PSO Air Service for the Aran Islands(published May 2014)	€41,795
2014	Fitzpatrick Associates	Updated Business Case on restoring the Ulster Canal from Lough Erne to Clones(published February 2015)	€15,190.50
2015	Public Affairs Ireland	Review of structure and grading of senior management posts within Údarás na Gaeltachta (to be published when signed off)	€17,617
2015	Acadamh na hOllscoilaíochta Gaeilge, NUIG	Summary report on consultative process and Open Policy Debate regarding the 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030 (in preparation; to be published in due course)	€7,123 (estimated)

Public Inquiries

392. **Deputy Lucinda Creighton** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht the number of tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations for which she or her Department have been responsible by name; by terms of reference; by cost including the cost to date where an inquiry has not been concluded; by date including the projected date of conclusion where an inquiry has not been concluded from 1991 to date, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [3776/16]

Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Heather Humphreys): Since its establishment in 2011, my Department has not been responsible for any for tribunals of inquiry, commissions of inquiry or investigations as described by the Deputy.

Ministerial Allowances

393. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht the expenses claimed, including the amount of mileage and the amount claimed, by her and Ministers of State of her Department, by calendar year, during the current Dáil Éireann, in tabular form. [3804/16]

Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Heather Humphreys): The information sought by the Deputy, which relates to my own expenses and those of my predecessor, as well as the expenses claimed by the Minister of State for the Gaeltacht and his predecessor, is set out below in tabular format.

Year	Total mileage for Ministers and Ministers of State	Total expenses (including mileage) for Ministers and Ministers of State
2011	€29,530	€32,681
2012	€46,004	€53,226
2013	€41,095	€47,097
2014	€37,547	€42,474
2015	€39,826	€51,555
2016 to date	€2,580	€2,580

All expenditure related exclusively to official business on behalf of my Department or the Government, and has been incurred in full conformity with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform guidance on such matters.

Departmental Expenditure

394. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht the amount she spent on media clipping and media monitoring services in each calendar year from 2011 to 2015. [3819/16]

Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Heather Humphreys): The information requested by the Deputy in respect of annual expenditure by my Department's Press Office in relation to media clipping and monitoring services since its establishment in June 2011 is as set out as follows:

Year	Expenditure
2011	€9,197
2012	€17,836
2013	€18,596
2014	€32,976
2015	€26,092