



The Role and Functions of the Parliamentary Budget Office

PBO Publication 6 of 2019

The Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) has been established on a statutory basis by the [Houses of the Oireachtas Commission \(Amendment\) Act 2018](#).

The objective of the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) is to **support the Houses of the Oireachtas and its Committees in relation to fiscal issues and the management of the public finances**. The office is independent and impartial, staffed by specialist civil servants, and provides expert advice and analysis to the Houses.

The PBO is an independent unit within the Houses of the Oireachtas. The establishment of the PBO on a statutory basis follows recommendations made in the OECD report *Review of Budget Oversight: Ireland* (November 2015) and by the Sub-Committee on Dáil Reform to improve Dáil Éireann's engagement with and oversight of the budget process.

Functions

The function of the PBO is to provide the Houses of the Oireachtas and its Committees with fiscal and economic information, analysis and advice that is independent and impartial relating to:

1. The particular macroeconomic conditions in the State;
2. Developments affecting public finances;
3. The management of public finances; and,
4. The financial implications of proposals affecting the public finances.

In addition, the Secretary General of the Houses of the Oireachtas may assign additional functions to the Director.

The PBO fulfils its functions in two ways, through **Committee Engagement** and via **Analysis and Research**. The PBO will continually review and develop its approach to fulfilling these functions over time.

Committee Engagement

The PBO will continue to strengthen its engagement with Oireachtas Committees. This includes **briefing Members** on matters of economic, budgetary and fiscal importance. In addition, and at the discretion of the Director, the PBO will undertake **research** on relevant issues at the request of a Committee, and assist the Committee Secretariat with the preparation of relevant material.

Analysis and Research

The PBO is **the authoritative unit** within the Houses of the Oireachtas Service charged with providing analysis on fiscal and budgetary matters. It conducts **pro-active analysis and research** on areas under its remit, producing publications on pertinent fiscal and budgetary issues. PBO publications are made publically available on the Oireachtas website. In addition, the PBO will develop a confidential **costings function** throughout 2019. Furthermore, the PBO can, on request, and at the discretion of the Director, provide clarification and/or guidance to Members and their staff on fiscal policy and budgetary issues.

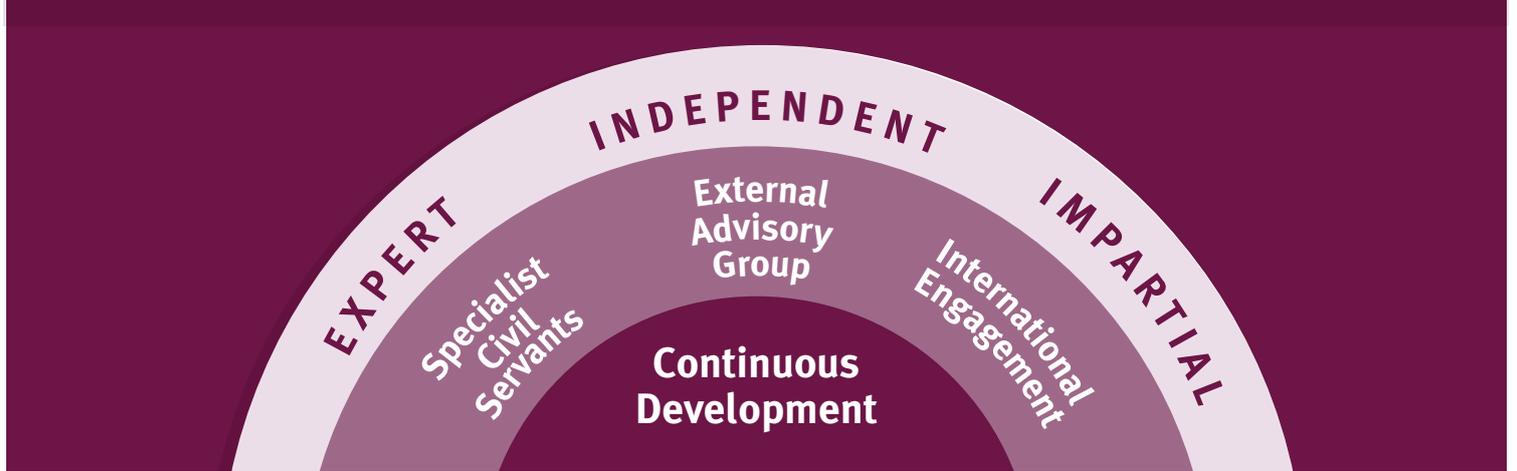
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Go to our webpage: www.Oireachtas.ie/PBO

Publication Date: 25 January 2019

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Research and Analysis

Committee Engagement

Cyclical
Research tied to the economic and budgetary cycles e.g. the PBO's *Quarterly Economic and Fiscal Commentary*

Proactive
Pro-active research on economic and fiscal issues identified as relevant by the Director

Advice
Available to clarify issues or provide guidance on fiscal policy and budgetary issues

Costings
Development of a confidential costings service

Committee Briefings
Briefing Committees on request on economic, fiscal and budgetary matters

Research Requests
Bespoke fiscal or budget related research at committee request e.g. Briefing Paper *An Approach to Better Incorporate Climate Related Considerations into the Budget Process*

Workshops /Advice
Hosting workshops for and providing advice to the committees' secretariat on the budget and estimates