Fewer Primary School Pupils will affect Teacher Numbers and Paybill – 2020-2036 projections

This infographic is based on current projections, pupil teacher ratio (15:1) and costs – it’s aim is to illustrate and analyse broad trends and implications as they currently present.

**Figure 1**
Annual Projected Cost of Teachers v. Projected Pupil Enrolment (primary level)

The number of pupils enrolled in primary schools is projected to decline (especially up to 2030) from 560,000 in 2020 to 434,000 in 2036. Projections are based on a single set of migration and fertility assumptions. In a ‘no policy change’ scenario this will affect the demand for teachers.

Salary and related costs of primary school teachers could decrease over the period, from €2.5 billion to less than €2 billion per annum (based on Subhead A.3 (Vote 26) of the Revised Estimates for Public Services 2020). No provision has been made for pay increases or increments. This also assumes that teachers could be redeployed between schools.

**Figure 2**
Total Projected Teachers v. Supply and Demand (primary level)

While the decreased demographic demand for primary school education could lead to a decreasing demand for teachers, ongoing retirements and resignations will outnumber that natural decrease.

The estimated supply of teachers is 1,750 per annum out to 2036 – assuming no change in the supply or demand of initial teacher education college places. The estimated supply outstrips demand each year until at least 2036. There is a peak in excess supply in 2026 when very few new entrant teachers (57) would be required to maintain the current 15:1 ratio. From 2027 onwards, the demand will start to rise closer to supply – by 2036 over 1,300 new teachers could be required in that year.

**Key takeaways**

- The number of pupils enrolled in primary schools is projected to decline (especially up to 2030) from 560,000 in 2020 to 434,000 in 2036. Projections are based on a single set of migration and fertility assumptions. In a ‘no policy change’ scenario this will affect the demand for teachers.

- Salary and related costs of primary school teachers could decrease over the period, from €2.5 billion to less than €2 billion per annum (based on Subhead A.3 (Vote 26) of the Revised Estimates for Public Services 2020). No provision has been made for pay increases or increments. This also assumes that teachers could be redeployed between schools.