

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice

Annual Report 2020



Contents

Foreword by the Minister for Justice	5
Introduction by the Secretary General.....	7
1. Our Operating Environment.....	9
1.1 Responsibilities of the Department	9
1.2 Public Sector Duty	9
2. Department Structure	13
2.1 Overview of the Department	13
2.2 Overview of Pillars and Functions	14
2.3 Functions within Civil Justice and Criminal Justice Pillars	15
2.4 Functions within Central Pillar	17
3. 2020 in Figures	19
4. 2020 in Review.....	20
4.1 January-March	20
4.2 April-June	24
4.3 July-September	28
4.4 October-December	31
5. Policy, Governance and Immigration Service Delivery.....	36
5.1 Criminal Justice Policy Overview	36
5.2 Criminal Justice Governance Overview	39
5.3 Civil Justice Policy Overview	42
5.4 Civil Justice Governance Overview	48
5.5 Immigration Service Delivery Overview	49
6. Legislation	52
Criminal Legislation Bills enacted in 2020	52
Criminal Legislation in progress in 2020	53
European Affairs Legislation	58
Civil Justice Legislation	59
7. Meeting the COVID-19 Challenge.....	60
The Department's Response	60
Contingency Planning within the Department	60
Examination of Occupational risks within the Department	61
Department and Agency Broader Planning & Coordination Structures	61

Legislation	62
Domestic Violence Action Plan and Awareness Campaign	63
Immigration Services	65
Border Management Unit	65
International Protection	66
Temporary Closure of Immigration Office	67
Temporary Extension of Immigration Permissions	67
Visa Services	68
Temporary Suspension of Irish Short Stay Visa Waiver Programme	68
Online Registration Renewal System for Dublin-based non-nationals	69
Citizenship	69
North-South Cooperation	70
An Garda Síochána Response	71
Summary of Contingency Arrangements	72
Policing Authority	73
Courts Service Response	74
Family Law	75
Criminal Justice Efficiencies Working Group	76
Civil Justice Medium Term Planning Group	76
Irish Prison Service Response	77
Summary of Contingency Arrangements	77
Screening and Testing for COVID-19 in Prison	79
Court Attendance	79
Quarantining and Visiting	80
End of Year Position	80
Other Agencies, Offices and Bodies.....	81
Coroners and Pathology Services	81
Criminal Assets Bureau	82
Criminal Injuries Compensation Tribunal	83
Data Protection Commission	83
Forensic Science Ireland	83
Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission	84
Garda Síochána Inspectorate	85
International Protection Office	85
International Protection Appeals Tribunal	86
Insolvency Service of Ireland	86
Irish Film Classification Office	87

Legal Aid Board	87
Legal Services Regulatory Authority	88
Mental Health (Criminal Law) Review Board	88
Office of Inspector of Prisons	89
Property Services Regulatory Authority	90
Office of the State Pathologist	90
Probation Service	90
Policing Authority	91

Appendix 1: Agencies, Offices and Bodies under the aegis of the Department.....	93
Appendix 2: Green Public Procurement Reporting	94
Appendix 3: Sustainable Development Goals.....	95
Appendix 4: Anti-Money Laundering Compliance Competent Authority Activities	100
Appendix 5: Sustainability	101

Foreword by the Minister for Justice



I am honoured to present the 2020 Annual Report for my Department. This report details not just the continued progress of the Department's Transformation programme but also reflects the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the progress made in furthering our policy objectives during this time.

COVID-19 posed massive challenges to the staff and agencies of the Department. Many of my officials were on the frontline in the country's response to the pandemic, both in our agencies and the Department itself, and for that, I extend my most sincere gratitude. I am extremely proud to work alongside the talented and hardworking staff across the Justice sector.

My Department's vision is for a safe, fair and inclusive Ireland, and as the country grappled with the myriad of challenges brought about by

the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus on that vision has never been more important.

The efforts to adapt to and overcome the COVID-19 challenges outlined in this Annual Report demonstrates the willingness of the staff of the Department and its offices, agencies and bodies, to work in every circumstance, to better serve the public good.

The initial responses to the pandemic as it first surfaced in the early part of the year, and the contingency plans developed as the scale of the situation became apparent are detailed in this report. I commend all the teams who worked so hard on these plans to tackle what was a constantly changing challenge, and one which had not been faced for a hundred years.

I am very conscious too, that the plans and procedures designed to keep our country safe required the goodwill and extremely hard work of many people on the ground. At the height of the crisis, An Garda Síochána were the very public face of the State for the many people who encountered them through high visibility checkpoints and local patrols. Their professional yet friendly policy to engage, educate and encourage compliance with

restrictions, brought a real reassurance to our streets when the crisis threatened to overwhelm normality for many people.

All of the agencies, offices and bodies that work with this Department deserve great credit and thanks for their work in such a difficult year. I am especially grateful to all those whose positions meant they could not work from home, all those who worked across our immigration services, on our IT systems and in the face to face worlds of the Courts Service, Irish Prison Service and our probation system.



There are many more agencies and individuals to whom thanks is due and their work is detailed in this report. On my own behalf, and on behalf of the Minister of State, James Browne TD, I would like to thank all the staff of the Department, and the bodies under its remit, for their exemplary service and extraordinary commitment to public service in this difficult year.

*Helen McEntee, TD
Minister for Justice*

Introduction by the Secretary General

In 2020, our work landscape was dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic and our response to it. Within the pages of this report is a real sense of the extraordinary efforts made by so many of our colleagues to ensure that we continued to fulfil our responsibility to the state and its citizens.

Within weeks of the crisis taking hold, this Department had moved hundreds of staff to fully remote working. The logistics of this alone were hugely complicated and made possible only through the hard work and long hours of all the teams involved and I am grateful to you all.

But, at many points throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, colleagues were under great pressure, as 'normal' ways of working were no longer relevant or did not meet our needs. It is testament to the whole organisation really living our values of openness, collaboration and professionalism that vital services continued to be provided.

This is not to ignore the reality that there were some difficulties in certain areas. Public health restrictions impacted those sections which, by their nature, rely on face to face interaction or paper based correspondence. It is worth noting however, that alternative delivery methods and new online systems were developed by these sections in conjunction with our IM&T, Legislation and Operations teams, so that we could continue to do our duty on behalf of the public.

It is also worth highlighting that, on a daily basis, despite the risk from COVID-19, frontline staff continued to work in the Department and in our agencies. This dedication to duty and public service is another aspect of this Department and its staff that I'm very proud of. .

Before the COVID-19 pandemic began, we had just completed our historic Transformation project which allowed us to adapt dynamically to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and we are now in a position to embed the positive practices of flexible working, digitisation and collaboration that have served us during this crisis.



In November 2020 we once again became the Department of Justice as Equality transferred to the newly expanded Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. Our colleagues in these areas were responsible for the development of many of the progressive equality policies and legislative changes that helped to reshape the social fabric of Ireland. Their work in the areas of human rights, accessibility, LGBTI+ rights and combatting racism is a fantastic legacy and certainly contributed to a fairer Ireland. We are committed to sustaining those principles in all the work we do. .

Justice is a people business. Our work has meaning and purpose because it directly impacts on the public, often at times of vulnerability or personal crisis. Increasingly, an important aspect of our organisational culture is creating opportunities to listen to the people most impacted by our work and problem solve with them. Meaningful, authentic collaboration gives us valuable insight, and leads to better informed and sustainable outcomes.

This Annual Report outlines just some of our work in the year 2020, but its scope and breadth evidences the exemplary service the staff of the Department provide to Ministers, the Oireachtas and the public.

I believe we can all take pride in these outputs, which are a tribute to the commitment and skill of all those who work for the Department itself and its agencies across the Justice sector.

Oonagh McPhillips
Secretary General

1. Our Operating Environment

1.1 Responsibilities of the Department

The Department of Justice works to advance community and national security, promote justice and equality, and safeguard human rights, to achieve our vision of a safe, fair and inclusive Ireland.

The Department's remit covers activities as diverse as the security of the State, the protection of life and property, the prevention and detection of crime, overseeing services for the buying and selling of property, managing inward migration to the State, providing a Courts Service, various other regulatory services and updating our criminal and civil laws.

These are crucial to sustaining a democratic society and must be exercised in a manner reflecting the commitment to human rights and equality set out in the Irish Constitution and the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Department plays a key role internationally, particularly in the context of the EU Justice and Home Affairs Council. There is also significant involvement with other international bodies such as the Council of Europe, the United Nations and the International Labour Organisation.

A range of other responsibilities are also exercised on behalf of the Minister by agencies operating on either a statutory or an administrative basis.

1.2 Public Sector Duty

The Public Sector Duty (Section 42 of the *IHREC Act 2014*) is consistent with the core functions and values of the Department of Justice. The Department continues to value and promote equality and human rights through its day to day work, whether in developing policy and legislation, or delivering key public services in an efficient, fair manner with integrity and respect for human dignity.

The Public Sector Duty is equally relevant to the experience of the staff of the Department, which is committed to creating an environment that promotes positive engagement, critical analysis, open and honest communication and embracing diverse perspectives. Throughout 2020 the Department reviewed and revised the organisational Values. A consultation process with staff and senior management resulted in a refreshed set of Values; *Open,*

Collaborative and Professional. The new Values will be formally launched in 2021 with a supporting programme of work to embed the Values and associated behaviours into our future work practices and culture.

The Department of Justice Statement of Strategy 2021-2023 was also developed throughout 2020, and involved extensive consultation and engagement with bodies and partners across the wider justice sector; other government Departments, the Oireachtas Committee on Justice and several Non-Governmental Organisations. A public submission process publicised on the Department's website and social medial platforms generated over 200 submissions which have served to inform and strengthen the development of our Strategy Statement.

EDI Strategy/Equality Diversity Inclusion and Public Sector Duty Committee

During 2020, the Department established an Equality Diversity Inclusion and Public Sector Duty Committee to oversee the public sector Human Rights and Equality Duty and to devise, oversee and promote equality, diversity and inclusion for the Department of Justice. The Committee met three times and held two workshops in 2020.

A key objective for the Committee is the development of the Department's first Equality Diversity Inclusion Strategy. The draft objectives of this strategy will focus on: improving the accessibility and quality of our services; supporting the development of a skilled and diverse workforce; building and embedding a workplace culture which facilitates, supports and encourages contributions from all; the promotion of cultural awareness. The Strategy will also have due regard to our commitments across a number of national strategies, along with our obligations under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

The development of the strategy has commenced and the approach will include a wide ranging consultation phase with our internal stakeholders as well as engagement with external stakeholders. The strategy is due for publication in Q3 2021 and will be central to the Department's mission of working for a safe, fair, inclusive Ireland.

OPS 2020 Action 16 – Maturity Model

An Garda Síochána and the Department of Justice are co-sponsors of Action 16 under the Our Public Service (OPS) 2020 framework– *to promote equality, diversity and inclusion in the public service.* Key products from the work of the Action Team were a

vision statement, which commits Government Departments and other public service bodies to take a proactive approach to Equality Diversity and Inclusion, along with a Maturity Model, designed to assist organisations to reflect and assess their performance across a number of important areas. The Department of Justice will pilot the Maturity Model as a self-assessment tool and the findings will be used to inform the development of its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy.

Learning and Development

Notwithstanding the restraints presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department delivered a number of online induction sessions for new entrants over the course of 2020, which were used to highlight how the Department promotes equality of opportunity and dignity at work and to introduce them to the Department's Disability Liaison Officer, who provided an overview of the resources available to all staff.

As part of our various development initiatives, the Department seeks to support staff in pursuing additional study and continuous professional development along with targeted team based interventions. By way of example, the Department hosted training presented by the National Disability Authority on the topic of disability and the issues for consideration when formulating policy and legislation. Other bespoke modules developed and delivered included: *Disputes and Investigation Managing Dispersed Teams, Self-Care, Creating boundaries, and Managing Challenging Behaviours*.

Despite an initial hiatus due to COVID-19 in early 2020, a number of staff resumed studying for a certificate programme in Immigration Studies with DCU. The programme, which is specifically tailored to the needs of the Department, is aimed at staff working in the immigration related areas of the organisation. In addition, our Annual Refund of Fees Scheme, saw a number of staff apply for and receive funding to pursue post-entry education courses in Human Rights and Equality.

Internships and Work Placements

The Department also collaborates with 'Ahead' on its *Willing Able Mentoring* programme (WAM). This programme aims to promote access to the labour market for graduates with disabilities, and build the capacity of employers to integrate disability into the mainstream workplace. During 2020, one placement commenced under this programme, however due to the pandemic further placements were put on hold.

The Department also facilitates a number of transition year work experience placements. Most recently this was in collaboration with the North East Inner City Placement Scheme. However, the public health restrictions and practical barriers meant that it was not possible to facilitate a TY intake in 2020.

Disability Consultative Committee

The Departmental Consultative Committee (DCC) provides a forum for engagement between Departmental officials, representatives of the National Disability Authority (NDA) and representatives of the Disability Stakeholders Group, particularly in relation to implementation of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy. It also provides an opportunity for the Department to update on current issues of interest and for the groups to raise issues that are of concern to them.

Access Officer

The Department has an Access Officer in accordance with Section 26(2) of the Disability Act. The Access Officer is responsible for providing, arranging or co-ordinating assistance to persons with disabilities who wish to access the services provided by the Department. The Access Officer also acts as a point of contact for persons with disabilities who wish to access such services.

2. Department Structure

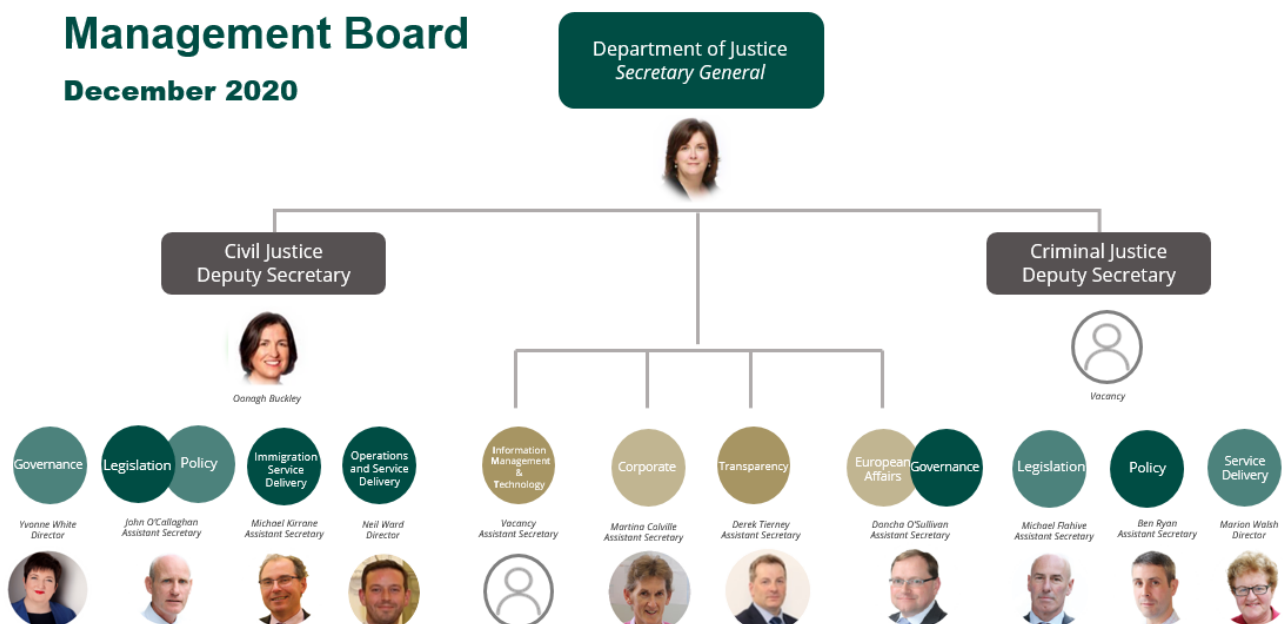
2.1 Overview of the Department

The Department is aligned under two pillars, **Civil Justice** and **Criminal Justice**, each led by a Deputy Secretary General. Each pillar contains the following functions: **Policy**, **Legislation**, **Governance**, and **Operations and Service Delivery**.

Supporting the work of both pillars are the enabling functions of **Corporate**, **Transparency**, and **European Affairs**.

The **Immigration Service Delivery** function located in the Civil Justice pillar manages the delivery of immigration and international protection services for the Department and the State.

This structure is designed to enable more flexibility, better service to our customers, greater transparency and accountability, and evidence-led strategic planning and policy development, while remaining loyal to traditional civil service values of integrity, impartiality and professionalism.



2.2 Overview of Pillars and Functions

Civil Justice Pillar

- Directing a programme of reform and modernisation in civil justice, with the aims of promoting access to justice, taking forward the Government's legislative programme, meeting international obligations, and advising on legislative initiatives in the Justice and Equality field generally.
- Overseeing the development of strategic and legislative measures to promote equality, inclusion and integration in Irish society, and promote a fair and balanced responsive immigration system, working closely with a wide range of Government and civil society actors.
- Assisting the Secretary General to set a clear vision for the Department through the development of strategy, policy, objectives and targets for all aspects of the work of the Department and to deliver on the extensive programme of organisational change being implemented in the Department.

Responsibility for a number of functions in the equality, disability, migrant integration, International Protection Accommodation Services and the Irish Refugee Protection Programme has transferred to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

Criminal Justice Pillar

- Setting a clear vision for the Criminal Justice pillar through the development of strategy with particular focus on effective collaboration across the criminal justice system and with other partners across Government Departments and agencies, while upholding the independence and accountability of individual stakeholder organisations.
- Overseeing the Department's implementation of the radical change set out in the 2018 report of the Commission for the Future of Policing in Ireland.
- National security and North-South/East-West cooperation on criminal and security matters.

- Assisting the Secretary General to set a clear vision for the Department through the development of strategy, policy, objectives and targets for all aspects of the work of the Department and to deliver on the extensive programme of organisational change being implemented in the Department.

Central Pillar

The central pillar functions of Transparency, Corporate and European Affairs support and enable the strategic and operational goals of the Civil Justice and Criminal Justice pillars.

2.3 Functions within Civil Justice and Criminal Justice Pillars

The functions within the pillars are as follows:

Policy

The Policy function develops long term, evidence-based policy through research and analysis of information and data from multiple sources. It takes a proactive and strategic view of justice and equality policy formulation and review, and enables the Department to provide the best possible advice to the Minister and Government in the long-term interest of all citizens. The Policy function is split into two main areas.

The **Strategic Policy, Planning and Research** area establishes the Department's policy agenda, advises on policy priorities and oversees the policy lifecycle. The team is also responsible for policy-related research and evaluation activities and managing project collaborations, policy tracking and administrative requirements of the policy function.

The **Subject Matter Resource and Applied Policy** team leads the development of policy on specific policy themes. The team drafts, consults on and manages the approval of EU/International and applied policies. Subject Matter Resource within this team works collaboratively across the Policy function and across the Department, providing knowledge on specific policies and represents the Department externally and at EU/International level.

Legislation

The legislation function is responsible for drafting both primary and secondary legislation and creating and moving Bills through the Attorney General's Office and the Oireachtas.

Through consultation with relevant stakeholders, the legislation function deals with both Irish law and the transposition of EU and International law.

It advises and works closely with other functions to ensure that relevant implications are considered at all stages of the legislative process

Governance

The Governance function is the oversight function for the agencies under the aegis of the Department. Working collaboratively, the function ensures that agencies have a clear strategy, meet agreed standards of performance, transparency and governance, and manage their resources appropriately. The Governance function supports independent Agencies to perform effectively and adopt a consistent approach based on recognised standards, which can be tailored to each Body as appropriate to ensure clarity, fairness and accountability.

A list of the statutory and non-statutory Bodies under the Department's aegis is at Appendix 1

Operations and Service Delivery

Operations and Service Delivery is a core function which delivers frontline services for the Department, as well as enabling all other functions to operate effectively within a fast-paced and changing world. The **Operations** teams (located in the Civil Justice pillar) are responsible for all planning, risk management, project and change management. The Operations teams also focus on continuous improvement within the Department by setting and tracking key performance indicators and goals, as well as outside the Department by ensuring all customers experience consistent customer service. The **Service Delivery** teams manage the delivery of efficient, robust and customer-centric frontline services for the Department, consulting with relevant stakeholders, and identifying opportunities for continuous improvement.

Immigration Service Delivery (Civil Justice Pillar only)

The purpose of the Immigration Service Delivery function in the Civil Justice and Equality Pillar is to manage the delivery of efficient, robust and customer-centric frontline immigration services for the Department and the State, whilst maintaining an ongoing focus on the identification of opportunities for continuous improvement of immigration services to customers.

The function enables staff to focus on enhancing outputs and outcomes for customers, while ongoing collaboration with other functions ensures that service design and customer experience improvements are at the heart of immigration services.

2.4 Functions within Central Pillar

Corporate

The Corporate pillar drives and manages organisation-wide activities to enable the Department to achieve its strategic goals and deliver effective, responsive Department processes and services. The Corporate pillar develops and implements the approach, solutions and infrastructure across a number of diverse areas: technology, financial and people planning, procurement, legal, corporate governance, data and records, compliance and audit controls, research and analytics.

Transparency

The Transparency function is responsible for sourcing, assessing and communicating all information required by the Minister and the senior management of the Department, as well as ensuring consistent standards of internal and external communications. The function integrates information, analysis and communications from across the Department to create coherent narratives on Justice themes. It proactively determines where there is a need for information to be communicated or published, as well as responding in an agile way to incoming requests.

The Transparency function uses a variety of channels, leveraging technology and real-time information, to ensure the Minister upholds their commitment of democratic accountability to citizens, the Oireachtas, the media and other stakeholders.

European Affairs

European Affairs is responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring the Department's European and some international business, particularly cross-cutting issues which may involve a number of functions and departments. It supports the Minister at JHA Council of Ministers meetings. In addition, the function works with other areas of Government to shape Ireland's strategic approach to the Future of Europe and the EU Leader Agenda, and plays an active role in encouraging greater engagement and collaboration with European counterparts on relevant Justice and Equality issues. While the team are based in Dublin, they work closely with staff in Brussels and Strasbourg seconded to Ireland's Permanent

Representation to the EU. The function also supports both the Minister and the Department in discharging the Department's EU and Council of Europe responsibilities and in communicating and representing Ireland's interests internationally.

3. 2020 in Figures

In 2020, the Justice Vote Group consisted of 7 votes: the Department of Justice and Equality, An Garda Síochána, the Policing Authority, the Irish Prison Service, the Courts Service, the Data Protection Commissioner and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. The Department employs over 2,700 staff, including those staff working for bodies operating under its aegis. Of these, 1,513 people are employed in the core Department. The Department also has an international reach, with almost 40 officers posted in 11 Irish embassies and missions across 4 continents, working on a broad range of European and international justice matters.

2,952



Parliamentary Questions Responded to
in 2020

50,000+



Emails and letters received in 2020

797



Freedom of Information Requests
Processed in 2020

429



Subject Access Requests received
in 2020

2,700



Staff employed by the Department
in 2020

€2.99 billion



Total gross expenditure for
the Justice Vote group in 2020

4. 2020 in Review

4.1 January-March

Statement by the Department of Justice Re: Coronavirus Outbreak in China

A statement released by the Department of Justice on 31 January 2020 regarding the immigration position of Chinese nationals in Ireland gave a foretaste of the issue that would come to dominate the year. The Department noted 'the ever-evolving situation in China' and stated that it was liaising closely with the HSE.

First ever meeting of the Judicial Council

On 7 February 2020, the Judicial Council held its first plenary meeting in the Honorable Society of King's Inns. All the members of the judiciary, from the District Court to the Supreme Court, are members of the Judicial Council.

The Council will be responsible for a number of very important judicial functions, including providing for the continuing education of judges through the Judicial Studies Committee, the creation of Guidelines for awards in personal injuries cases through the Personal Injuries Guidelines Committee, and, importantly, the creation of sentencing guidelines through the Sentencing Guidelines Committee.



Minister Flanagan welcomes 201 new members to An Garda Síochána

The Minister welcomed 201 new members to An Garda Síochána on 21 February 2020, following their attestation at the Garda Training College, Templemore.

Minister Flanagan congratulated the new recruits and also welcomed the increasing diversity of the organisation.



The ceremony brought to 3,200 the number of new Gardaí that have attested and been assigned to frontline policing duties since the reopening of the Garda Training College in 2014. The re-organisation of Garda structures, through the new operating model, is also assisting in freeing up additional resources for frontline Gardaí.

Launch of New Victims' Charter

In advance of European Victims of Crime Day (22 February, 2020), the Minister published a new and expanded Victims Charter. The Charter was updated by the Department of Justice and Equality through a consultative process involving all relevant State Agencies, as well as non-governmental organisations working with and supporting victims.

5,000 People Conferred with Irish Citizenship in Killarney

In six separate ceremonies held over two days at the INEC in Killarney, successful applicants from 135 countries received certificates of naturalisation, and took the oath of fidelity to the Irish State.

The ceremonies were held following the decision of the Court of Appeal in November 2019, which clarified the law in relation to residency requirements for citizenship candidates.



Addressing the new citizens on 3 March 2020, Minister of State Stanton, noted: “Today as you leave here, as proud new citizens of this Republic and constitutional democracy, our history is your history and, in turn, the narrative of your life is now part of our history.”

Minister Flanagan joins European colleagues in COVID-19 Video Conference

On 16 March 2020 the Minister participated in a video conference with Interior and Health Ministers from across the EU to discuss the rapid evolution of the situation in Europe, and how to work together to tackle the spread of COVID-19.



The Minister was joined by senior Justice and Health officials at the meeting, the primary purpose of which was to discuss border management and health issues and the new Commission guidelines on this topic.

Significant increase in Direct Provision accommodation as part of emergency response to COVID-19 pandemic

Minister Flanagan and Minister of State Stanton announced that more than 650 new beds had been procured to support international protection applicants during the COVID-19 crisis.



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
agus Comhionannais
Department of Justice
and Equality

650
additional beds for the International Protection System means we can

1. Support measures required for the vulnerable
2. Provide offsite self-isolation facilities
3. Help social distancing by reducing the number of people in some centres

The Ministers thanked the staff working in centres for providing essential frontline services away from their own homes and families during this uncertain time.

Temporary Extension of Immigration Permissions

As part of the Department's response to COVID-19, Minister Flanagan announced on 20 March 2020, that renewals of immigration permissions were to be temporarily extended with immediate effect. The measure preserved the legal status of people with permissions which were about to expire and was the first of several such measures taken through the year.

4.2 April-June

Major new TV, Radio and Social Media Campaign reaching out to Victims of Domestic Abuse



A major new TV, Radio and Social Media Campaign tackling the serious issue of domestic violence in the context of COVID-19 measures was launched on 15 April 2020. The campaign aimed to reassure victims that services were 'still here', and that victims were being prioritised. The advertisements were developed by the Department of Justice and Equality in conjunction with frontline services.

Minister Flanagan welcomes Supreme Court's first remote hearing

On 20 April, for the first time ever, the Supreme Court held a sitting with all parties attending via remote video technology. The Minister welcomed the announcement by the Courts Service saying, "As demonstrated across the globe, the COVID-19 crisis is changing day to day life in unprecedented ways, however, the business of the courts is of fundamental importance and therefore today's hearing is a very welcome development".

Minister Stanton publishes Draft Youth Justice Strategy for Consultation

On 1 May, Minister of State with special responsibility for Youth Justice David Stanton T.D. launched an online consultation on how State Agencies, including the Justice system, should engage with young people who are at risk of becoming involved in crime. Views were sought from the general public, including young people as part of a wider consultation process to inform the development of a new Youth Justice Strategy to cover the period up to 2026.

International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia

Minister of State with responsibility for Equality, Immigration and Integration, David Stanton TD, joined the international community in sharing the vision of 'Breaking the Silence' on International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia on 17 May. Noting that during the COVID-19 pandemic, many LGBTI+ people feel more at risk due to isolation, Minister Stanton said "we come together globally to ensure that LGBTI+ persons all over the world, who cannot speak up, will hear the sound of hope and solidarity".

Expansion of Overseas Garda Liaison Officer Network.

Minister Flanagan announced the expansion of the Garda Liaison Officer Network. At the request of the Garda Commissioner, and following Government approval, new Garda positions will be created in Washington DC, United States of America and in Bogota, Colombia. The overseas liaison officer network is a key element of An Garda Síochána's approach to combatting international criminal and terrorist organisations.

Consultation on the Setting of the Discount Rate in Personal Injury Cases

On 10 June the manner in which the discount rate in personal injuries should be set was the subject of a public consultation launched by Minister Flanagan. The consultation was one of the recommendations of the Cost of Insurance Working Group (CIWG), following its examination of the setting of the discount rate.

Action Plan Against Racism for Ireland to be drawn up

Membership of the independent Anti-Racism Committee was jointly announced by Minister Flanagan and Minister of State Stanton on 19 June. The Committee is to draw up a new Action Plan Against Racism for Ireland.

The new Committee will consult broadly in developing new ideas for fighting racism in Ireland. It will recommend an action plan to Government at the end of its work, which is expected to take approximately one year. The Committee comprises people from diverse backgrounds, including those with lived experience of racism, and held its inaugural meeting via Zoom, on Thursday 18 June 2020.

New online Registration Renewal System for Dublin-based non-EEA students

A new online Registration Renewal System for non-EEA students based in Dublin was launched on 22 June. Students seeking to renew their permission will now complete the application form online, upload copies of supporting documents online, pay the applicable fee and then submit their passport and current IRP card via registered post. Documents will be checked and, if approved, the passport will be stamped and returned by registered post and an IRP card will be issued by express post

Official opening of Portlaoise Prison Staff Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden recognises the service and contribution made by the staff of Portlaoise Prison and in particular their role in helping preserve the nation's security during The Troubles. Officially opening the garden on 23 June, Minister Flanagan also took the opportunity to thank all Irish Prison Service staff and prisoners for their exemplary work to prevent the spread of COVID-19.



Pride Week with a difference.



On 26 June the Minister and Minister of State wished everyone participating in Pride events an enjoyable week as many events moved online.

The Ministers also noted that it was fitting that the inaugural meeting of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021 Steering Committee had recently taken

place. The Inclusion Strategy was launched by the Department of Justice and Equality in November 2019 to promote inclusion, protect rights and improve quality of life and wellbeing for LGBTI+ people.

New Minister and Minister of State appointed

The Department welcomed a new Minister for Justice and Equality, Helen McEntee, TD. First elected to Dáil Éireann in a By-Election in March 2013, she was re-elected in the February 2016 general election. Deputy McEntee, who served as Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People at the Department of Health in May 2016 and was appointed to the position of Minister of State for EU Affairs in June 2017.



On 1 July, Charlie McConalogue, T.D., was appointed to the position of Minister of State with responsibility for Law Reform.

4.3 July-September

Public consultation on Developing a Strategy for the Criminal Justice System

The Department launched a public consultation inviting communities and members of the public to contribute to the development of a Strategy for the Criminal Justice System. The purpose of the strategy is to set out a shared vision for a joined up criminal justice system, to embed and sustain collaborative work, to drive innovation leading to more effective solutions and sanctions, with better outcomes for the public.



Virtual Citizenship Ceremony

The Minister hosted one of the world's first virtual citizenship ceremonies on 10 July 2020. This pilot event was attended by 21 applicants who had opted not to attend the in-person ceremonies that took place in March in the INEC in Killarney Co. Kerry, due to COVID-19 concerns. Presiding Officer, retired High Court Judge Bryan McMahon, was also in attendance and addressed the candidates, before administering the Oath of Fidelity to the Nation.



LGBTI+ Community Services Funding Call

The Minister and the Minister for Children, Disability, Equality, Integration and Youth announced that €700,000 was being made available to applicant groups, operating at national, regional and local level, to support community services and promote visibility and inclusion of LGBTI+ people.

The 2020 LGBTI+ Community Services Funding Call is an important element in supporting the implementation of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy, which was published on 28 November 2019.

Marking World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, 30 July

Minister McEntee marked the day by saying “World Day Against Trafficking in Persons is an important reminder of the terrible reality that too many people worldwide continue to suffer at the hands of traffickers. But this is also a call to action for us all, to take the time to learn the signs of human trafficking.”

Later in the year on 12 October, in conjunction with the UN’s International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Minister launched the #Anyone campaign; a public awareness initiative on Human Trafficking. This initiative included awareness raising measures on social media and in key transport hubs, to convey the messages that human trafficking is a crime and that anyone can be exploited. The campaign aims to empower the public to recognise the signs of human trafficking.

Publication of O’Malley Review of Protections for Vulnerable Witnesses in the Investigation and Prosecution of Sexual Offences

The O’Malley Review was prompted by widely shared concerns about the experiences of vulnerable witnesses in criminal proceedings and the Review Group included representatives from the main agencies involved in the investigation, prosecution and trial of sexual offences. The Report published on 6 August contains over 50 recommendations, with four overarching recommendations: better awareness of victims’ rights legislation; education about the meaning and importance of consent; improving inter-agency co-operation and exchange of information, especially in relation to services for victims and ensuring consistency in service delivery.

Launch of National Integration Fund 2020

On August 11, the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee TD, announced that the National Integration Fund would see €749,600 per annum over a maximum of three years being made available for projects that help migrants integrate into Irish society. The National Integration Fund 2020 is a key element of the Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020.

The Strategy was developed to enable migrants, or persons of migrant origin, to participate on an equal basis with those of Irish heritage.

New Minister of State Appointed

James Browne TD was appointed Minister of State at the Department of Justice and Equality with responsibility for Law Reform on 2 September 2020 replacing Minister McConalogue who was promoted to Minister for Agriculture.



National Services Day Celebrated

Minister McEntee commended the dedication and professionalism of frontline services on National Services Day, 5 September. In previous years, the event was marked by a major parade through Dublin city as well as other forms of public engagement. In 2020, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, no parade took place.

Marking the day Minister McEntee said, “It is my deep privilege to work closely with some of our frontline emergency services. I have seen at first hand their tremendous professionalism and dedication, in what can be very challenging circumstances. I am delighted to have the opportunity to publicly thank them and all our emergency services for the quiet heroism of their chosen career.”

Appointment of new Secretary General

September 8, Minister Helen McEntee TD, announced the appointment of Oonagh McPhillips as Secretary General of the Department of Justice and Equality following a competition undertaken by the Public Appointments Service on behalf of the Top Level Appointments Commission.

Completion of rollout of Garda Divisional Protective Services Units

On 29 September the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee TD, welcomed the completion of the rollout of Garda Divisional Protective Services Units (DPSUs) across the country following the launch of the Meath/Westmeath unit. The DPSUs will support the delivery of a consistent and professional approach to the investigation of sexual and domestic crime.

4.4 October-December

Minister launches public consultation process on spent convictions policy

The Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee TD, launched a public consultation on spent convictions policy on 6 October. Views were sought from general and specialised audiences alike, and the consultation remained open for one month.

The consultation is one element in a wider suite of measures across several areas of Government, which are designed to promote rehabilitation and reduce the chances of people returning to criminality.

Record €3 billion budget announced for Justice Sector



Minister and Minister of State welcomed the highest ever budgetary allocation for the Justice Sector on 13 October. The record €3 billion allocation for 2021 will go towards funding the recruitment of extra Gardaí and Garda staff, the reform and upgrade of digital infrastructure across the Justice Sector, the Courts Service modernisation programme, as well as wider changes across the sector.

Citizenship Applicants to sign Declaration of Loyalty

The Minister announced on 22 October that citizenship ceremonies would be temporarily replaced during COVID-19, with a requirement for citizenship applicants to sign a statutory declaration declaring loyalty to the State.

Minister McEntee also announced the introduction of eTax-clearance and eVetting for citizenship applicants, in line with the move towards an online citizenship application process. The introduction of eVetting will speed up the application process and free up valuable Garda resources that are used as part of a manual vetting process.

Departmental Name Change

On 14 October, the Government approved the transfer of functions, with effect from that date, which moved responsibility for international protection accommodation, integration and equality to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).

The areas that transferred to DCEDIY covered a wide range of policy, legislative and operational responsibilities. The transfer involved exchequer funding of approximately €120m and responsibility for over 220 civil and public servants. The transfer included responsibility for the National Disability Authority and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission.

The Department's name changed on 1 November when a statutory instrument was signed by the Minister. S.I no. 452/2020 altered the name from the Department of Justice and Equality, to the Department of Justice, An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt.

Garda Trainees and Instructors released to Frontline Policing

On November 2, the Minister for Justice thanked the 260 Garda trainees and instructors being deployed from the Garda College in Templemore as part of the national policing plan to support the public health guidelines to suppress the spread of COVID-19.

This was in addition to the 45 Gardaí who temporarily transferred from the Garda College to the frontline at the start of the pandemic, and who were still on frontline duty.

New Local Partnership Projects to Strengthen Community Safety

On 13 November, the Department announced the locations for the establishment of three new Local Community Safety Partnerships, on a pilot basis.

The pilots, which will run for two years, will be located in the Dublin North Inner City, Waterford City and County Council, and Longford. The Partnerships will bring together residents, community representatives, business interests, councillors, local authorities and State services such as An Garda Síochána, Tusla and the HSE, to devise and implement the Local Community Safety Plans. The plans will detail how best the community wants to prevent crime and will reflect community priorities and local safety issues. The goal is to make communities safer for families, residents and businesses.

Cabinet Approves Amendments to Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Bill

Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee T.D. secured Cabinet approval on 24 November, to bring forward amendments to the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Bill to provide for two new offences to deal with the non-consensual distribution of intimate images.

The first offence deals with the taking, distribution, publication or threat to distribute intimate images without consent, and with intent to cause harm to the victim. The second offence deals with the taking, distribution or publication of intimate images without consent without a requirement that the person intended to cause harm to the victim.

The Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Bill, also known as 'Coco's Law', was signed into law by the President on 28 December.

Virtual Meeting to Discuss Operational Cross-border Cooperation

The Minister and the Northern Ireland Justice Minister, Naomi Long, MLA, met on 2 December, 2020 along with Garda Commissioner, Drew Harris, and PSNI Chief Constable, Simon Byrne. The meeting, which was held virtually, discussed ongoing and future cross-border police cooperation.

The meeting took place in advance of the annual Cross-Border Conference on Organised Crime which is organised jointly by the two Justice Departments and involves the two Police Services, Revenue, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, and the National Crime Agency.

Greentown Project Recognised at European Crime Prevention Awards

The European Crime Prevention Award (ECPA) and Best Practice Conference (BPC) took place on 3-4 December 2020, with the theme of family-based crime. Throughout the two days there were a number of detailed presentations on how member states have taken steps to tackle family-based crime.

The Greentown Project, a research project and pilot initiative aimed at disrupting the recruitment of children by criminal gangs, presented by Ireland, was awarded first place.

This initiative was developed by the REPPP project team (Research Evidence into Policy Programmes and Practice), which is a strategic partnership between the Department of Justice and the University of Limerick on the design, implementation and evaluation of youth justice interventions.

Government approval for the ratification of the Lanzarote Convention

The Minister announced on 16 December 2020, that the Government had approved the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (The Lanzarote Convention). The Convention is a

significant, international, legal instrument in protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Launch of findings of public consultation on Hate Speech and Hate Crime

On 17 December Minister McEntee launched the findings from the public consultation on Hate Speech and Hate Crime. She also announced her intention to bring forward new legislation to combat incitement to hatred and hate crime in Ireland in 2021

These plans follow a thorough consideration of over 3,600 submissions (more than 175 of which were detailed written submissions) to a public consultation, and in-depth consultation with various civil society and community groups, academics and experts. The purpose of the consultation was to ensure the Department could identify how Ireland's law in this area could be improved, based on a clear understanding of the experiences of those impacted by hate speech and hate crime.



5. Policy, Governance and Immigration Service Delivery

5.1 Criminal Justice Policy Overview

Action on Drogheda

On Friday 21 August 2020, the Minister appointed former Director of the Probation Service, Mr. Vivian Geiran, to carry out a scoping exercise to assess the impact that criminal activity in Drogheda has on the community, and to make recommendations for action going forward. Mr. Geiran engaged with residents and service providers including An Garda Síochána, as well as businesses and other members of the community to draw on their local knowledge and understanding of the problems, to identify key opportunities for action. [The scoping report was published on 26 March 2021].

Youth Justice Initiatives

Pilot applications of the Greentown programme, developed by the Research Evidence into Policy Programmes and Practice project at the University of Limerick, commenced in two locations in 2020 and will run for three years. The learning from these pilots will be incorporated into mainstream Garda Youth Diversion practice. This specially designed intervention programme was developed with international expert advice, to tackle coercive control of children by criminal groups which entraps them in offending situations. Funding is available for the initial pilots from the Dormant Accounts Funds, with a total of €4.2m allocated over three years.

Spent Convictions

In certain situations an individual may be required to disclose previous convictions which can have a negative effect on employment prospects and other aspects of life. This can impair their chance to rehabilitate and can increase the prospect of reoffending.

A spent conviction is one that an individual no longer has to disclose, provided they meet the relevant criteria. In October 2020, Minister McEntee launched a public consultation on Spent Convictions policy. Views were sought from general and specialised audiences during the month-long consultation period.

Also in October the Department of Justice published two research papers in the area of spent convictions. These reports will assist in the development of the most balanced spent convictions policy in Ireland, in line with international best practice. The first paper summarises legislative and policy approaches in several common and civil law jurisdictions, specifically New Zealand, Australia, England and Wales, Sweden and the Netherlands. The second paper is based on a rapid evidence review of academic literature on the theme of spent convictions.

Community Safety

In November 2020, the Minister announced three locations for the establishment of new Local Community Safety Partnerships on a pilot basis as a first step to strengthening community policing nationwide.

The pilots, which will run for two years, will be located in the Dublin North Inner City Local Electoral Area, Waterford City and County Council and Longford. The locations of the pilots were chosen based on factors including population density, crime rates and deprivation. Each Local Community Safety Partnership has an independent chairperson and will develop a Local Community Safety Plan. The Partnerships will bring together residents, community representatives, business interests, councillors, local authorities and State services such as An Garda Síochána, Tusla and the HSE to devise and implement the Local Community Safety Plans.

Hamilton Review

The report of the Hamilton Review Group, the Review of Structures and Strategies to Prevent, Investigate and Penalise Economic Crime and Corruption, was published in December 2020. It contains a number of recommendations focusing primarily on legislative, structural and resourcing measures to enhance the capacity of agency and multi-agency enforcement and the prevention of corruption and white collar crime offences.

Awareness campaigns on victims' rights and societal behaviour

An important function of the Department of Justice is ensuring that victims are informed of their rights and of the supports available to them. A new and expanded Victims Charter was published in February 2020 and is available on victimscharter.ie. Increasing public awareness of both the Victims' Charter and the rights of victims under the Victims of Crime Act 2017 is a priority for the Department of Justice.

The Department is aware that not everyone has access to online facilities and so work continues on the creation of other assets to help victims of crime know what their rights are and how to access relevant supports.

In April the Department launched the 'Still Here' campaign, to reassure victims of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence that help remains available, regardless of what restrictions are in place around COVID-19.

As part of ongoing efforts to raise awareness, a six-year, national campaign to tackle domestic and sexual violence called 'No Excuses' is ongoing. This campaign is designed to help people identify instances or signs of domestic and sexual violence, and to create awareness around the acceptance of unacceptable behaviours and attitudes.

Publication and implementation of 'Supporting a Victim's Journey'

Supporting a Victim's Journey - A plan to help victims and vulnerable witnesses in sexual violence cases is a detailed roadmap for the introduction of the recommendations contained in the O'Malley review.

The O'Malley review was an independently chaired, in-depth review of how the criminal justice system treats vulnerable victims. The review made 52 recommendations to improve the system for victims during the investigation and prosecution of sexual offences

The implementation plan was published in October. When implemented, the plan will create a victim-centred approach that protects and supports vulnerable witnesses during the investigation and prosecution of sexual offences.

Judicial Training

One of the key recommendations of the O'Malley review is the development and rollout of training for all personnel a victim may come into contact with as they navigate the justice system. This includes An Garda Síochána, the Director of Public Prosecutions, the legal profession and the judiciary.

In the courtroom setting, it is recommended that all judges presiding over criminal trials for sexual offences and all lawyers appearing in such trials should have specialist training.

The Judicial Council has agreed that this training is a priority and it is anticipated it will be completed in 2021. Separately, the Bar of Ireland's existing Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme incorporates training for barristers dealing with vulnerable witnesses.

5.2 Criminal Justice Governance Overview

Oversight Agreements

During 2020, the Department of Justice agreed and concluded oversight agreements with the criminal justice agencies under its aegis. These agreements set out the broad governance and accountability framework within which the relevant agency operates and define the key roles and responsibilities that underpin the relationship between the agency and the Department, the Minister and the Government.

- An oversight agreement with an Garda Síochána for 2020 to 2022 was signed on 14 May 2020
- An oversight agreement with the Criminal Assets Bureau for 2020 to 2022 was signed on 29 January 2020
- An oversight agreement with Forensic Science Ireland for 2020 to 2022 was signed on 16 June 2020
- An oversight agreement with the Garda Inspectorate for 2020 to 2021 was signed on 11 March 2020.
- An oversight agreement with the Policing Authority for 2020 to 2021 was signed on 31 July 2020

Performance Delivery Agreements

In addition, the Department concluded Performance Delivery Agreements for 2020 with Criminal Justice Agencies. The purpose of Performance Delivery Agreements is to formalise the process through which the principal outputs and outcomes required from agencies in 2020 can be defined and measured.

- A performance delivery agreement for 2020 with the Criminal Assets Bureau was signed on 29 January 2020.

- A performance delivery agreement for 2020 with Forensic Science Ireland was signed on 16 June 2020.
- A performance delivery agreement for 2020 with the Garda Inspectorate was signed on 11 March 2020.
- A performance delivery agreement for 2020 with the Policing Authority was signed on 31 July 2020.

Implications of Brexit on police cooperation in 2020

Regardless of the political outcome of Brexit in 2020, the excellent ongoing cooperation between An Garda Síochána (AGS) and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) continued to combat the threat posed by criminals seeking to exploit the policing challenges posed by the border.

A joint Cross-Border Policing Strategy is operated between the two services. The Strategy covers the range of policing activities and contains a series of initiatives in which both police services are actively engaged.

Both An Garda Síochána and the PSNI are involved in the Joint Agency Task Force, established under the Fresh Start Agreement, which is comprised of both police services, and other law enforcement agencies from both sides of the border. The Joint Agency Task Force has made strong progress in tackling cross-border criminal activity across a range of crime areas, not just the traditional smuggling activities, but also rural and farm crimes, organised burglary and drug crime.

Furthermore, measures were put in place to ensure that a viable extradition system with the UK and that the continuing exchange of law enforcement data was maintained in a manner compatible with EU instruments on data protection.

In December 2020, the Minister addressed the 18th Annual Cross Border Conference on Organised Crime. The event focused on understanding and preparing for evolving cross border risks and threats around organised crime, post the UK's exit from the EU, and took place by webinar due to the restrictions on in-person attendance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Minister McEntee was joined by the Northern Ireland Justice Minister, Naomi Long, Chief Constable of the PSNI, Simon Byrne, and Garda Commissioner Drew Harris to address representatives of law enforcement agencies on both sides of the border. The annual Cross Border Organised Crime conference enhances cooperation between the law enforcement

agencies, particularly in relation to cross border criminality and related issues. It also provides an opportunity to assess and address changing trends in crime and to build upon and enhance the operational actions already undertaken in this area. This 2020 online conference was arranged to support a collaborative law enforcement agency response as the EU Exit transition period comes to an end.

Data Sharing on Law Enforcement

At the end of 2020, the EU Council approved Ireland's connection to the Schengen Information System (SIS II). The SIS II is the largest and most widely used IT system for public security in Europe. The system enables law enforcement agencies to share and check data on wanted persons, missing persons, persons who may not have the right to enter or stay in the EU, and objects/vehicles that may have been stolen, misappropriated, or lost.

SIS II allows the automated, simultaneous, and immediate exchange of information across all other participating countries. Garda members add data to SIS II in the form of alerts. An alert contains three elements as follows:

- Identifying information on the person or object/vehicle sought
- A statement on why the person or object is sought
- The action to be taken when the person or object is found.

If the person or object is discovered in another country using SIS II (for example at a border check), a hit will be recorded on SIS II and law enforcement in that country will contact An Garda Síochána to discuss the relevant next steps. In this way, all missing person records and lost or stolen object and vehicle records created by An Garda Síochána will be immediately available to those other countries using SIS II. During 2019 alone, there were 120,000 missing person records shared on SIS II.

National Missing Persons Day 2020

In December 2020, Minister McEntee hosted an online commemorative ceremony to mark the eighth annual National Missing Persons Day. National Missing Persons Day is an all-Ireland event and offers an opportunity for family members and friends to talk about their missing loved ones, and to appeal to the public for any information that might help to resolve their cases. To mark the occasion, an intimate ceremony is usually held, featuring family testimonials, speeches from the Minister and Garda Commissioner, live music, a picture slideshow of Ireland's missing persons

and a rose-laying ceremony or the release of homing pigeons. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Missing Persons Day 2020 was marked by an online commemorative ceremony rather than the usual in-person event.

The 2020 ceremony featured contributions from Minister McEntee, the Garda Commissioner Drew Harris, the Director General of Forensic Science Ireland, Chris Enright, and Forensic Anthropologist, Dr. René Gapert. Family members of missing persons recorded interviews for the event and there were musical performances at Farnleigh.

5.3 Civil Justice Policy Overview

Family Justice Oversight Group

The Family Justice Oversight Group was established in September 2020, with terms of reference including to agree a high-level vision, and key medium and longer-term objectives, for the development of a national family justice system having regard to international best practice, in parallel with the establishment of a dedicated family court structure. The Group is chaired by Deputy Secretary General Oonagh Buckley and comprises members from different areas for the Department of Justice, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, the Courts Service, the Legal Aid Board, as well as members of the Judiciary from the District, Circuit and High Court.

The Group first of all will conduct a three phase consultation process engaging with stakeholders such as advocacy groups/NGOs, academics/researchers and practitioners. The second phase of the consultation is focussed on gathering the views of the general public. Phase three is specifically with children and young people, and is being designed in conjunction with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. It is envisaged that insights gained from the consultation process will feed into the work of the Group in late 2021 and 2022 in developing its high-level vision.

Cost of Insurance

The Judicial Council Act 2019 provides for a number of committees to be set up to deal with specific areas of work. One of these, the Personal Injuries Guidelines Committee was mandated to draft guidelines for awards in personal injuries cases. Chaired by Justice Mary Irvine, the Committee was formally established on 28 April and held its first meeting on 7 May. It submitted its first draft guidelines to the Judicial Council on 9 December.

At the request of the Minister, the Law Reform Commission examined the possibility of developing constitutionally sound legislation to delimit or cap the amounts of damages which a court may award in respect of some or all categories of personal injuries. Submissions were sought from interested parties on the matter. The report 'Capping Damages in Personal Injuries Actions' was published on 30 September 2020 and recommended that the legislative model based on the Judicial Council Act should be given time to be implemented. It also recommended that a model based on Australian and English legislation could also be constitutionally permissible.

The Department has been an active participant in the Cost of Insurance Working Group (CIWG). The objective of the CIWG is to identify and examine factors influencing the cost of insurance, and to recommend short, medium and longer term measures to address the issue.

Two further actions proposed by the CIWG are also being progressed by the Department.

1. Introduction of Pre Action Protocols for clinical negligence cases

The Legal Services Regulation Act 2015 provides for the introduction by Ministerial Regulation of pre-action protocols in clinical negligence actions. The Regulations will provide for requirements that must be complied with by the parties to clinical negligence actions before such actions are brought.

2. Office of the Legal Costs Adjudicator

The Office of the Legal Costs Adjudicator (OLCA) has replaced and taken over the functions of the former Office of the Taxing Master as provided in Part 10 of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015. The OLCA came into operation with effect from 7 October 2019. The new Chief Legal Costs Adjudicator and a Legal Costs

Adjudicator were appointed with effect from that date. The Office has also taken on the residual caseload of the old Office of the Taxing-Master which it replaced and modernised under statute.

Response to the Review of the Administration of Civil Justice

In March 2017, it was announced that a Group to be chaired by the President of the High Court, Mr. Justice Peter Kelly, would be established to review and reform the administration of civil justice in the State.

The Group was requested to report to the Minister and make recommendations for changes with a view to improving access to civil justice in the State, promoting early resolution of disputes, reducing the cost of litigation, creating a more responsive and proportionate system and ensuring better outcomes for court users.

The review was published on 7 December 2020 and is being analysed with a view to evaluating priority measures for which a policy response will be necessary.

This review will be complemented by a series of other policy measures, including undertaking a review of courts of limited and local jurisdiction to see how they can operate more effectively and efficiently.

Catherine Day Report published

In 2019, Dr Catherine Day was asked to bring together an expert group with representation from asylum seekers and NGOs to examine best practice in other European States in the provision of services to international protection applicants. The report was also to examine likely longer term trends and to set out recommendations and solutions.

The Report of the Advisory Group on the Provision of Support including Accommodation to Persons in the International Protection Process was published in October 2020. The report will form the basis for any new system for the provision of accommodation and additional supports to international protection applicants.

Review of Access to the Labour Market for Persons Seeking International Protection

At the end of 2019 the Department commenced work on a review of access to the labour market for international protections applicants with a view to providing informed recommendations to the Minister.

The review involved consultation with key external stakeholders such as IBEC, as well as a review of submissions made to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice and Equality in connection with its report on Direct Provision and the International Protection Process published in December 2019. Material is also included on the comparative position on access to work by international protection applicants in other EU Member States and the UK.

Following the review the Minister announced new measures to enable applicants for international protection to seek work six months after making their application. The duration of a 'labour market access permission' also increased from 6 to 12 months

Anti-Racism Policy – Establishment of Anti-Racism Committee

Professor Caroline Fennell, UCC Professor of Law and Commissioner with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, was appointed Chair of the Anti-Racism Committee in December 2019. In June 2020, the Minister appointed the ordinary members of the Committee, which held its inaugural meeting on Thursday 18 June.

The Committee is mandated to review current evidence and practice and make recommendations to Government on how best to strengthen its approach to tackling racism. The purpose of the Committee is to develop an understanding of the nature and prevalence of racism in Ireland and to work towards achieving a social consensus on actions required, by State and non-State actors.

This Committee will conduct dialogue with stakeholders from a range of sectors, including the public sector; members of the Oireachtas; employment and the workplace; civil society (including local communities; voluntary sector and sporting organisations); media (including online); education sector; and organised religion.

National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017-2020

The National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017-2020 (NSWG) provides a whole-of-Government framework through which women's empowerment continues to be advanced.

The overall goal for the Strategy in 2020 was "to change attitudes and practices preventing women's and girls' full participation in education, employment and public life, at all levels, and to improve services for women and girls, with priority given to the needs of those experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, the poorest outcomes".

Key achievements to date under the Strategy include the ratification of the Istanbul Convention on domestic violence, the repeal of the Eighth Amendment, the introduction of two weeks of paid paternity leave for fathers and the launch of the Women in Sport Policy. As of May 2020, work had begun on 133 of the initial 139 actions, of which 37 had been completed. An independent evaluation of the Strategy will be carried out in 2021.

Responsibility for the strategy was transferred to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth in October 2020.

National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021

Ireland's first National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021 was published on 28 November 2019 and complements the National LGBTI Youth Strategy published in June 2018. The Strategy pursues objectives under four thematic pillars providing a vision of an Ireland where LGBTI+ people are visible and included, treated equally, healthy and feel safe and supported. With a view to making progress towards these high-level objectives, 108 actions were agreed.

Of the 108 actions contained in the Strategy, 67 were in progress at year-end 2020. An additional six actions had been completed, including the provision of funding to 29 projects around the country under the 2020 LGBTI+ Communities Services Fund. A total of €700,000 in grant funding has been provided under the scheme, which will support LGBTI+ community services and the promotion of LGBTI+ visibility and inclusion.

Some of the actions contained in the Strategy will be ongoing over its lifetime, such as those under outcome 26 which relate to the ongoing supports being provided to ensure that LGBTI+ people can travel in safety and confidence.

Responsibility for the strategy was transferred to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth in October 2020.

National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017 - 2021

The Government published the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021 in June 2017.

The Strategy brings Government Departments and Agencies together along with representatives of both Traveller and Roma communities to bring a focus to the issues that affect them most in a structured way.

The Department provided funding to support a range of activities linked to the actions under the NTRIS including core funding to Traveller and Roma organisations and funding to promote Traveller culture to the wider community

School attendance is a specific challenge for some members of the Traveller and Roma communities and the Department provided funding for a two-year pilot programme to target attendance, participation and retention/school completion. Pilots began in Galway, Wexford and Dublin and Cork.

In response to the emergent needs in the Traveller and Roma communities, the Department provided additional funding and other supports to partner Traveller and Roma organisations for the continued provision of necessary services during the COVID-19 crisis. This included short-term funding immediate needs for Roma without means of support, funding for interpretation services for Roma healthcare providers on an ongoing basis, and funding for the production of public health information materials in appropriate languages or format for the Traveller and Roma communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the extent of the needs of the Roma community in Ireland and the unique challenges in providing services to this community. In response, the Department convened a Roma subgroup of the NTRIS to bring together relevant Government Departments and Agencies, organisations working with Roma and representatives of the Roma communities under the existing framework of the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021.

Responsibility for the strategy was transferred to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth in October 2020.

National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017 – 2021

The NDIS is aimed at creating the best possible opportunities for people with disabilities to fulfil their potential and takes a whole of Government approach to improving the lives of people with disabilities.

The Strategy is a 'living document,' with scope for the addition of revised and more ambitious actions in the light of ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

The mid-term review of the Strategy involved consultation with disability stakeholders, relevant departments and agencies and was published in March 2020. The review found that stakeholders wanted the emphasis to be on implementing existing commitments within the Strategy and on fulfilling obligations that arise from Ireland's ratification (in 2018) of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). In response, the focus for 2021 will be structured around the following strands:

- Raising awareness of the lived experience of people with disabilities
- Strengthening rights
- Expanding into new areas
- Implementing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Improving services through better implementation and collaboration

Responsibility for the strategy was transferred to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth in October 2020.

5.4 Civil Justice Governance Overview

Oversight Agreements

During 2020, the Department of Justice agreed and concluded oversight agreements with the civil justice agencies under its aegis. These agreements set out the broad governance and accountability framework within which the relevant agency operates and define the key roles and responsibilities that underpin the relationship between the agency and the Department, the Minister and the Government.

- Insolvency Service Ireland - Oversight Agreement 2019-2021 and Performance Delivery Agreement 2020

- Irish Film Classification Office - Oversight Agreement 2020-2022 and Performance Delivery Agreement 2020
- Legal Aid Board - Oversight Agreement 2020-2022 and Performance Delivery Agreement 2020
- Property Services Regulatory Authority - Oversight Agreement 2020-2022 and Performance Delivery Agreement 2020
- National Disability Authority - Oversight Agreement 2020-2022 and Performance Delivery Agreement 2020

5.5 Immigration Service Delivery Overview

New online registration systems

Significant demand from people seeking to renew their immigration registration accumulated during the four months that the Registration Office in Dublin was closed during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To assist in addressing this demand, a new online registration renewal system for non-EEA students based in Dublin was announced in June, enabling applicants to safely engage with the Registration Office without the need to attend in person at Burgh Quay. The new system meant that all applicants could complete a form online, upload supporting documents and pay the fee. Documents were then checked and, if approved, the Irish Residence Permit (IRP) card was issued by express post.

Initially the new Online Registration Renewal System was only for non-EEA students based in Dublin but was later expanded to include all Dublin-based non-EEA nationals.

Since the launch of the new online renewal system, the Department received over 38,000 applications from people who would otherwise have had to attend the Registration Office in person.

Passport Project

Since 2 December 2020, people renewing the registration of their immigration permission no longer need to submit their passport to have an immigration stamp added by their Registration Office.

It is expected that this development will significantly improve the time taken to renew immigration permissions and will also allow the person to use their passport for other purposes while their application is being processed.

In 2020, Immigration Service Delivery and An Garda Síochána issued over 157,000 new or renewed registrations of permission to remain in the State, a reduction of just 7% on pre-pandemic levels.

Post Brexit Visa Scheme

On 23 December 2020, the Minister announced a new post Brexit Visa Scheme for non-EEA family members of UK Nationals moving to Ireland after 31 December 2020. Before travelling to Ireland, eligible non-EEA citizens can apply for permission to live in the State and once secured, they will be able to travel and live in Ireland with their UK National family member.

Atypical Workers Scheme

The Atypical Worker Scheme (AWS) provides a streamlined mechanism to deal with atypical, short term employment situations, including those where skill shortages have been identified or where there is a critical need to provide specialised high skills to an industry, business or academic institution.

In April 2020, as part of its COVID-19 response, the Department introduced some temporary measures which meant that:

- Applications for frontline medical personnel were prioritised
- The requirements relating to proofs of contractual status for locum General Practitioners were temporarily dispensed with
- The granting of permission as a result of these exceptional circumstances was undertaken without prejudice to any future application by or on behalf of that individual.

On 4 September 2020, an online AWS application process was launched for short-term workers seeking permission to work in the State. The Department prioritised the processing of applications for frontline medical staff. Over 2,000 medical applications were received in 2020 and 1,800 of these were for nurses with over 95% approved.

Citizenship

COVID-19 regrettably resulted in significant challenges to the delivery of normal services. Applicants 18 years and older were required to attend at a citizenship ceremony in order to make a declaration of fealty to the State, administered by a Presiding Officer. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the ceremony scheduled for 3 July was cancelled and no other attended ceremonies were possible during the year.

Further information on Citizenship is outlined in the COVID-19 response later in this document.

International Protection

The number of people seeking international protection fell in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the International Protection Office (IPO) remained open, to offer applicants a service in line with our international obligations to allow those who wish to claim international protection the opportunity to do so. The provision of the facility to allow people claim international protection is considered an essential service at all times, including during the COVID-19 crisis.

1,566 applications for international protection were made in 2020.

An end-to-end process review of all international protection processes began in 2020. That work, overseen by a high-level Programme Board in the Department, has now been completed. The White Paper proposes that the new system should be phased in and operational by 2024 and that the intervening period should provide an opportunity to progress improvements in the overall processing times for international protection. A number of initiatives have already been introduced, including additional investment in IT; the relocation of the Ministerial Decisions Unit to the IPO premises to improve work processes; the designation of the International Protection Appeals Tribunal as a body authorised to hold remote hearings; and the holding of virtual interviews with some applicants living outside of Dublin.

6. Legislation

Criminal Legislation Bills enacted in 2020

Criminal Justice (Enforcement Powers) (COVID-19) Act 2020

The Criminal Justice (Enforcement Powers) (COVID-19) Act 2020 inserts provisions into the Health Act, 1947, authorising the Minister for Health to prescribe certain penal provisions of regulations made under the Health Act, 1947 as “relevant provisions” for the purposes of the Criminal Justice (Enforcement Powers)(COVID-19) Act 2020. The Act provides An Garda Síochána with enforcement powers for the penal COVID-19 regulations relating to licenced premises and registered clubs. The Act was signed into law by the President on 11 September 2020. It was published as a Bill on 1 September 2020 and was passed by both Houses of the Oireachtas without amendment. The Act was due to expire on 9 November 2020. Further debates were held in the Oireachtas on the provisions of the Act before the expiry date in November and it was agreed by resolution to extend the provisions into 2021.

Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020

This Act makes provision for the assignment and appointment of temporary coroners in certain exceptional circumstances and for this and other purposes to amend the Coroners Act 1962. The act also provides for the admissibility, in certain circumstances, of business records in civil proceedings and makes provision for remote hearings and the use of electronic means in civil proceedings. It also allows for certain applications in certain proceedings to be made, using live video link and for remote hearing of certain proceedings in the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court. The act also makes provision for the holding of meetings of State bodies by remote meeting and to amend the Courts of Justice Act 1953 and to provide for related matters.

Criminal Justice (Mutual Recognition of Decisions on Supervision Measures) Act 2020

This Act gives effect to Council Framework Decision 2009/829/JHA of 23 October 2009 on the application, between Member States of the European Union, of the principle of mutual recognition to decisions on supervision measures as an alternative to provisional detention; and to provide for related matters.

Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020

The Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020, also known as Coco's Law, was introduced on foot of recommendations by the Law Reform Commission to modernise the criminal law in relation to harmful communications, to ensure that the law is up to date with emerging behaviours. It is aimed at tackling various forms of harm and abuse that can take place online, as well as offline. The Act amended the law relating to harassment. It provides for offences relating to the recording, distribution or publication of intimate images and provides for the anonymity of victims of those offences. It created an offence involving the distribution, publication or sending of threatening or grossly offensive communication.

Criminal Legislation in progress in 2020

Perjury and Related Offences Bill

The Bill provides for a statutory offence of perjury and provides for statutory perjury-related offences including false statements on oath, false statutory declarations, fabrication of evidence and subornation of perjury. The Bill also consolidates other relevant legislation in this area of perjury and knowingly making false statements in formal legal proceedings.

Criminal Justice (Amendment) Bill

The Criminal Justice (Amendment) Bill removing provisions for mandatory sentences for second or subsequent sentences held to be unconstitutional is awaiting 2nd stage in the Dáil. Sentencing in such cases cannot proceed until the legislation has been enacted.

Criminal Justice (Theft and Fraud Offences) (Amendment) Bill

This Bill will complete the transposition of the EU Directive on Fraud against the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law (known as the PIF directive). The Bill was published on 1 January 2020 and passed by Seanad Éireann on 25 November 2020, following which it moved to Dáil Éireann for consideration.

Garda Síochána (Digital Recording) Bill

A general scheme of a Bill is currently being prepared to provide for the use of body-worn cameras by An Garda Síochána, as recommended by the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland. The Bill will also provide for the expanded use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology and Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), as well as live feed access by An Garda Síochána to cameras operated by other organisations with a large network of CCTV/ANPR cameras in strategic locations for An Garda Síochána.

Garda Síochána (Powers) Bill

Work continued in 2020 on preparing the general scheme of a Bill to codify police powers of search, arrest and detention, codify the procedural rights of suspects subject to those powers and provide for statutory codes of practice. This legislation was proposed in the report of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland to bring clarity and transparency to the complex system of powers currently in place.

New legislation to deal with hate crime and incitement to hatred

A ‘Legislating for Hate Speech and Hate Crime’ report was published in December 2020. It includes the outcome of the public consultation on reform of the 1989 Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act, Ireland’s only existing legislation in the area of hate speech or hate crime and it highlights key conclusions which will inform the new legislative approach.

Once the General Scheme is published, it will be referred to the Justice Committee for pre-legislative scrutiny.

Criminal Procedure Bill

This is a Bill to provide for preliminary trial hearings, amend the law on admission of evidence by written statement and make other adjustments to the law on criminal procedure. The General Scheme of a wider Bill was approved in 2015.

Garda Síochána (Compensation) Bill

The general scheme of a new Garda Síochána (Compensation) Bill was published in May 2017. Under the proposed new Scheme, a Garda who claims to have been maliciously injured in the course of duty must submit an application to the Garda Commissioner within

six months. Where the injury is found to be malicious, he or she is entitled to compensation. Accepted applications will then be sent to the PIAB, which will process it and make an assessment of quantum. The State Claims Agency will be notified of the assessment and will have an opportunity to accept or reject it on behalf of the Commissioner. Following approval by Government, the General Scheme was submitted to the Office of the Attorney General for drafting. Officials from the Department further engaged with relevant stakeholders and the Garda Síochána Compensation Bill 2021 was presented to the Seanad in April 2021.

European Convention on Human Rights (Delay in Court Proceedings) Bill

This Bill will provide a remedy where an individual's ECHR Article 6 and Article 13 rights are infringed. Article 6 provides for a right to a fair trial within a reasonable time period. Article 13 provides a right to a remedy at national level where an individual's rights under the European Convention have been violated. Legislation is required to put in place a remedy to respond to the *McFarlane v. Ireland* judgment of the European Court of Human Rights from 2010. The legislation will provide for a right to apply for compensation where a finding has been made that a person's legal proceedings have been unduly delayed.

Sex Offenders Amendment Bill

This Bill makes changes to the monitoring arrangements for convicted sex offenders. It reduces the period within which they must notify a change of address, provides for electronic monitoring and retention of photographs and fingerprints, and also provides for disclosure of information relating to a sex offender where necessary to avoid a serious risk to public safety.

Criminal Justice (Exploitation of children in the commission of offences) Bill

This is a new Bill to criminalise adults who induce or groom children into committing crimes. While an adult who incites a child to commit a crime, or uses them as their innocent agent, is already committing an offence as if they had committed the crime themselves, they cannot currently be prosecuted for the harm done to the child. This Bill introduces new offences to deal with the harm to the child caused by bringing them into this form of activity. The General Scheme was approved for publication by Government on 15 December 2020.

Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT)

The current Programme for Government includes a commitment to ratify OPCAT within 18 months of the formation of the Government. OPCAT is an international human rights treaty which assists States in preventing torture and other forms of ill-treatment in places of detention. The objective of the Protocol is to establish a system of regular visits undertaken by independent international and national bodies to places where people are deprived of their liberty. As the majority of such persons in the State are held within the Prisons system, this Department is preparing the necessary legislation – The Inspection of Places of Detention Bill – with a view to enabling the ratification of OPCAT as soon as possible.

Criminal Justice (Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing) (Amendment) Bill

This Bill transposes both the criminal justice and several non-criminal justice elements of the EU's Fifth Anti-Money Laundering Directive. This Directive builds upon the Fourth Anti-Money Laundering Directive to better equip the Union to prevent the financial system from being used for money laundering and terrorist financing. While the Act transposes many of the elements of the Fifth Anti-Money Laundering Directive, the Department of Finance is also engaged in giving effect to other provisions of the Directive through secondary legislation. The deadline for transposition of the Fifth Anti-Money Laundering Directive was 10th January, 2020, with a letter of formal notice issued 20 May 2020 and a response issued in September 2020.

Criminal Justice (Counterfeiting) Bill 2020

The Bill will transpose a number of outstanding elements of the Counterfeiting Directive 2014/62/EU, as well as the ECB euro bank note decision ECB/2010/14, the euro coin regulation 1210/2010 and the euro counterfeiting regulation 1338/2001. The Bill was published on 16 December 2020. A Reasoned Opinion was received on 3 December 2020 and it is anticipated that a response will issue in February 2021.

Criminal Justice (Mutual Recognition of Custodial Sentences) Bill

This Bill will transpose the 2008 Council Framework Decision on the application of the principle of mutual recognition of judgments in criminal matters imposing custodial sentences or measures involving deprivation of liberty. It will provide for the transfer of sentenced persons between Member States where the affected person has not given consent. The Bill is currently in drafting with the OPC and is expected to be published in

May and is linked to Ireland's access to the Schengen Information System (SIS II). Referred to CJEU 3 December 2020.

Criminal Justice (Smuggling of Persons) Bill

The Bill will provide for the implementation of three international instruments, including Council Directive 2002/90/EC on facilitating unauthorised entry, transit and residence, Framework Decision 2002/946/JHA on the related penal framework and the UN Protocol against smuggling of migrants. The Bill is linked to Ireland's access to the Schengen Information System (SIS II).

Children (Amendment) Bill

The Children (Amendment) Bill will allow deceased children who are the victims of crime to be publically identified. At December 2020, it had passed all stages in the Seanad.

Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) Bill

The Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) Bill will give effect to EU Directive 2017/541 on combating terrorism. The Directive is focussed on the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon and includes offences of travelling to commit a terrorist offence, facilitating travel to commit a terrorist offence and receiving training for terrorism.

The Government approved the Bill for drafting on 15 September 2020.

Criminal Justice (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill

The Bill provides for a number of miscellaneous matters which have been brought to the attention of the Department by An Garda Síochána, the DPP and the Attorney General's Office. These include provision for an increase in the penalty for conspiracy to murder from 10 years to life imprisonment. Approved for drafting in September 2020.

Criminal Justice (Community Sanctions) Bill

This Bill will provide a modern statement of the law governing community sanctions and the role of the Probation Service in the Criminal Justice system. The general scheme of a Bill was approved by Government in 2014. A review of the Heads of the Scheme is currently underway by Criminal Justice Policy and the Probation Service.

Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020.

An Act to make provision for the assignment and appointment of temporary coroners in certain exceptional circumstances and for this and other purposes to amend the Coroners Act 1962. The act also provides for the admissibility, in certain circumstances, of business records in civil proceedings and makes provision for remote hearings and the use of electronic means in civil proceedings. It also allows for the making of certain applications in certain proceedings using live video link and for remote hearing of certain proceedings in the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court.

The act also makes provision for the holding of meetings of State bodies by remote meeting and to amend the Courts of Justice Act 1953 and to provide for related matters.

European Affairs Legislation

BREXIT / EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement

Secondary Legislation signed on 31 December 2020

As part of preparations made for the end of the transition period it was necessary for the Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs to sign a number of pieces of secondary legislation on 31 December 2020 – relevant to the activities of the Department of Justice. These are a combination of readiness measures required notwithstanding the TCA, and others which formed part of the implementation of the Agreement.

Orders signed by the Minister for Justice

- i. International Protection Act 2015 (Safe Third Country) Order 2020
- ii. International Protection Act 2015 (Return Order) Regulations 2020
- iii. International Protection Act 2015 (Section 51B) (Places of Detention) Regulations 2020
- iv. Solicitors Act 1954 (Section 44) (England and Wales) Order 2020
- v. Solicitors Act 1954 (Section 44) (Scotland) Order 2020
- vi. Solicitors Act 1954 (Section 44) (Northern Ireland) Order 2020
- vii. European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) (Citizens' Rights) Regulations 2020
- viii. Immigration Act 2004 (Visas) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 2020

Civil Justice Legislation

The Programme for Government provides that the Government will introduce legislation to replace the Judicial Appointments Advisory Board (JAAB) with a new Judicial Appointments Commission with Chief Justice as Chairperson.

The Government approved the General Scheme of a Judicial Appointments Commission Bill on 15 December 2020 to provide for the establishment of a new Commission to replace the Judicial Appointments Advisory Board.

The Bill is currently being drafted by the Office of Parliamentary Council (OPC).

Court and Civil Law Miscellaneous Provision Bill

A General Scheme of the Courts and Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2020 was approved for drafting by the Government on 09 January 2020. Due to the current pandemic this was overtaken by other priorities. In the early Summer the Government approved the Memorandum for Government (S180/20/10/2182) seeking the early drafting of the Courts and Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill along the lines of the revised General Scheme. The Office of Parliamentary Counsel is currently progressing the drafting of the Bill and the Department have contacted Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice regarding pre-legislative scrutiny;

Family Court Bill

In September 2020, the Government approved the drafting of a Family Courts Bill to provide for the establishment of a District Family Court, a Circuit Family Court and a Family High Court as divisions within the existing court structures.

The Family Courts Bill will be a key element of the development of a more efficient and user-friendly family court system that puts families at the centre of its activities, provides access to specialist supports and encourages the use of alternative dispute resolution in family law proceedings.

Personal Insolvency (Amendment) (No.1)

The Personal Insolvency (Amendment) Bill 2020 ('No. 1 Bill') received Government approval for priority drafting in October 2020, was exempted from pre-legislative scrutiny due to its urgency, and was published on 16 December 2020.

7. Meeting the COVID-19 Challenge

This section of the Report highlights key areas of the Department's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Department was centrally involved in key areas of the legislative and security response to COVID-19 and many of our agencies and their staff were on the frontline tackling one of the most challenging public health crises Ireland has ever faced.

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE

In response to the potential threat posed by COVID-19 an internal group was established in February across the Justice Sector, led by senior management within the Department. This group was tasked with coordinating the response to potential COVID-19 challenges across the Department, and examining particular areas where the threat and impact of a full-scale pandemic would be most severe, such as Immigration Services, the Court Service, the Irish Prison Service and An Garda Síochána.

The Department was also represented on the Senior Officials Group who were supporting the Cabinet Committee, and coordinated briefings and communications across the Justice Sector. The Department's Health and Safety manager attended Health Threat Coordination Group meetings at the National Emergency Coordination Centre, and weekly Corporate Coronavirus Update Meetings were scheduled.

When the outbreak of the virus centred in China, Department Staff based in China were supported by HR, and control measures were adopted at the Visa Office in Beijing. Some members of staff were facilitated in returning home to Ireland.

Risk assessments were carried out for all areas of the Department, and signage, protocols and other control measures were developed.

Contingency Planning within the Department

Broader contingency planning work was framed in the first instance on identification of critical tasks and personnel, and in anticipation of the possibility of significant reduction in available personnel, and/or the need to close buildings.

A senior official supported by an internal working group comprising key business continuity functions was responsible for this planning. The Department already had substantial remote working capacity at senior level and began to quickly expand that capacity as part of its contingency planning.

Examination of Occupational risks within the Department

Four areas of Immigration Service Delivery (ISD) were identified as having potential occupational risk for COVID-19, i.e. staff could be exposed due to the nature of their work. These were:

- Registration Office Burgh Quay
- IPO Mount Street (including IPAS counter staff)
- BMU Dublin Airport
- IPAS, Timberlay House

Coronavirus Risk Assessments were issued to these areas from 3 February and were reviewed, updated and issued on a daily basis.

Regular contact with FORSA on the control measures was maintained between HR and H&S units

Department and Agency Broader Planning & Coordination Structures

A cross-functional COVID-19 response team was established comprising senior officials from within the Department and from agencies including An Garda Síochána, the Courts Service, Irish Prison Service, and the Probation Service. The Office of DPP also attended these meetings. This team, in turn, inputted to national structures established to manage the risk of COVID-19.

These structures allowed the Department to work closely, with all relevant criminal justice and public health agencies (the Department of Health, Chief Medical Officer and the HSE) and to adopt measures in line with public policy and the evolving situation.

Legislation

At the start of the pandemic the Department reviewed the legal issues arising in the context of the COVID-19 response, and was represented on a Legislation subgroup of the NPHET chaired by the Department of Health.

The Department worked with the Department of Health on amendments to the Health Act 1947 and on regulations to give legal effect to Government restrictions on movement, especially in the context of Garda powers.

In close consultation with the Office of the Attorney General, the Department of an Taoiseach and the Department of Health, the Department also drafted the Criminal Justice (Enforcement Provisions)(COVID-19) Bill 2020 to ensure that members of An Garda Síochána had the powers they needed to act swiftly to deal with breach of COVID-19 related regulations.

The Bill provided that where a person failed to comply with a direction by a Garda under the 1947 Act, a Superintendent could issue an immediate closure order (oral or written) directing the person to close the relevant premises immediately for the remainder of the day. Following a failure to comply with a Garda direction on more than one occasion, An Garda Síochána could apply to the District Court for an emergency closure order, for a period of up to 7 days. This Bill was signed into law by the President on 11 September.

The Department also undertook a legislative analysis to identify any time-sensitive provisions within its remit which could require legislative adjustment in the event of continued COVID-19 related restrictions.

This resulted in the passage, through both Houses of the Oireachtas, of the Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2020. The Bill provided for a range of important reforms to respond to new challenges and legal issues arising in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The changes related, in particular, to procedures in the civil and criminal courts (and to the transport of prisoners to court and between prisons), increased use of technology, including video-links, for the criminal and civil courts, and to the capacity of the coroner service.

Domestic Violence Action Plan and Awareness Campaign

Recognising the particular risks the pandemic presented for victims of domestic violence/abuse, the Department established a cross-sectoral group comprising AGS, Courts Service and Legal Aid officials, linking directly with TUSLA representatives. An action plan was developed to respond to the increased risk and incidence of domestic violence as a consequence of the COVID-19 measures taken and the resulting enforced proximity of abusers and their victims.

The action plan was divided into three strands of work:

1. Maintaining and prioritising services for those who need to access them
2. Ensuring that victims could access the courts and seek protection from perpetrators
3. Raising awareness that services and supports were available throughout the COVID-19 emergency for those experiencing domestic abuse

An Garda Síochána established Operation Faoiseamh to specifically address this issue. Gardaí undertook to respond quickly and robustly with a pro-arrest intervention policy to any report of domestic abuse despite the COVID-19 emergency. Victims of incidents recorded in 2018-2020 were contacted by phone which led to a positive response from victims. Those at high risk were visited.

In addition, the risk assessment criteria applied by the Irish Prison Service in deciding temporary release took account of convictions relating to domestic abuse, breach of barring orders, and other similar factors.

The Department also engaged at an early stage with NGOs to assist with a coordinated approach to maintaining helplines and other supports for victims. Within a few weeks the Department started to provide additional funding of €337,598 to community and voluntary groups to support their response to COVID-19. This included:

- Women's Aid: €63,017 for additional resources to extend the Support and Referral Service and the High Risk Support project;

- Rape Crisis Centre Network Ireland: €50,000 to support the work of local centres in relation to the provision of a confidential, data compliant service, and to manage information flows on advice and guidance to and from frontline trauma support workers;
- Ruhama: €19,680 for additional support packs for women seeking to exit prostitution;
- Men's Development Network: up to €76,590 for an extension of the Male Advice line, extra telephone support for the Men Ending Domestic Violence programme, and to deliver a promotional campaign; and
- Safe Ireland: €36,000 for additional personnel capacity and communicating with their service users.
- Move Ireland: €33,000 for additional helpline and counselling support for perpetrators.
- Rape Crisis Centre Forum: €50,000 for local awareness-raising campaigns and for development of a package of revised service processes, standards and procedures.
- Meath Women's Refuge €9,311.00

The Legal Aid Board prioritised domestic violence and childcare cases. The Board's office at the Dublin District Family Court in Dolphin House remained open and applications for legal aid for domestic violence cases could be made there. While the Board's law centres were largely closed to personal callers, each centre was contactable by phone or by email and contact details were available on the Board's website.

The Courts Service also gave priority to domestic violence. Each district continued to have a court open to hear applications for protection, interim barring orders and emergency barring orders. Court offices were open for essential business by appointment only and domestic violence applicants were facilitated.

Offices were contactable by telephone or email with contact details available on the website. Out-of-hours procedures continued as normal and learning from this also informed contingency planning. A list of experienced Court Registrars available to travel to attend Courts where and when required was compiled. A step-by-step guide for Court Registrars with domestic violence procedures and forms was made available on the Courts Service intranet for all staff, supported by a basic registrar training programme which allowed for rapid upskilling in the event of significant staff shortages.

In order to ensure victims were aware of services, the Minister launched a public awareness campaign. The 'Still Here' campaign featured examples of domestic violence occurring in the context of the public health restrictions. Further information was also available on the Department's website for the campaign.

Immigration Services

Initial EU advice was for borders to remain open and for persons to follow the travel advice issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade which was upgraded as the global situation evolved.

Contingency planning was developed to ensure that priority immigration services continued to be provided, should circumstances change.

Priority Business Areas were identified as

- Border Management Unit at Dublin Airport
- Management of Accommodation and other Services for persons in the Direct Provision (DP) system, including processing of new applications for International Protection (IP)
- Immigration registration function (public office processes 500 applicants per day)

Border Management Unit

The Border Management Unit (BMU) has responsibility for securing Ireland's border at Dublin Airport, in accordance with the provisions of the Immigration Acts and Orders as they relate to entry and refusal of entry to the State.

Between January 1 and 31 December 2020 almost 7.4 million passengers arrived in Dublin Airport. More than half of those arrived in the first two months of the year, before COVID-19 had impacted on international travel. The figure was down 78% on the previous year.

A very close working relationship exists between frontline Border Management Unit staff at Dublin Airport, the Dublin Airport Authority (DAA) and the HSE. Immigration personnel closely followed all advice from the HSE and, in the event that a suspected case arose, protocols in place were carefully followed.

From Thursday 28 May it became a legal requirement for passengers arriving in Ireland from overseas to complete a COVID-19 Passenger Locator Form (PLF). The PLF was used to facilitate a system of follow-up checks to ensure that arriving passengers stayed at the address provided by them. The PLF also aided with contact tracing, in the event of a suspected or confirmed case arrive on a flight or ferry coming into Ireland.

Between 28 April and 25 August 2020, the collection of PLFs and the system of spot check follow-up calls was carried out by officials from the Border Management Unit on behalf of the health authorities. This follow-up function transferred to the Department of Health on 26 August 2020.

The BMU continued to collect and check the passenger locator forms at Dublin Airport. Any passenger refusing to complete the mandatory form at Dublin Airport was referred to the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB).

International Protection

The International Protection System was examined closely as the threat of COVID-19 began to emerge and plans/mitigations for the provision of accommodation services for people in the system were developed. IPAS initiated a number of measures to ensure that the safety of residents and operational capacity could be maintained.

- Additional emergency accommodation was sought to help provide contingency beds in accommodation centres.
- The opening of new centres in Tullamore and Rosslare Harbour was prioritised.
- Dispersal of residents from emergency accommodation into accommodation centres was temporarily stopped to generate capacity within the centres themselves.
- All international protection applicants living in emergency accommodation were contacted to ensure they had appropriate understanding of HSE guidelines and knew who to call if they had concerns.
- Centre Managers were also contacted and provided with information in relation to contingency planning. Material from the HSE was also circulated to centres.

The Department arranged a briefing for key NGO groups with an interest in International Protection Applications including children. IPAS also liaised with the NGO community to identify the supports they could provide in the case of a COVID-19 outbreak.

The latest information on Immigration and International Protection during the COVID-19 pandemic was made available in a dedicated 'COVID-19 Updates and Announcements' area on the INIS website. Notices on the various arrangements to address issues brought about by the pandemic, as well as links to health advice, including information on self-isolation requirements on arrival in Ireland, were published in this dedicated area.

Temporary Closure of Immigration Office

Responding to the nationwide lockdown announced in March 2020, the Registration Office, Immigration Service Delivery at Burgh Quay, Dublin, initially closed from Monday 23 March. The office re-opened on 20 July. Offices outside Dublin were also closed from 23 March and re-opened on a phased basis from 20 July.

Further to the Government announcement on updated measures in October, the Registration Office at Burgh Quay temporarily closed to the public for first-time registration appointments with effect from Wednesday 21. The office was re-opened on 2 December for appointment holders only and remained open until 23 December, when it was closed in line with public health advice. Offices outside Dublin remained open subject to operational requirements until 23 December when they also closed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Temporary Extension of Immigration Permissions

Throughout the year, the Minister announced a series of temporary extensions to Immigration and International Protection permissions to reside in the state. The first such extension was issued on 20 March.

The renewal of permission was on the same basis as the existing permission and the same conditions were attached. In relation to persons with existing permission under Directive 2004/38/EC (Free Movement Directive) the automatic renewal was subject to compliance with the requirements of the Directive.

Throughout the year, Immigration Service Delivery issued regular updates to particular cohorts regarding their status, and moved many services online.

Visa Services

A limited resumption of visa services was announced on Monday 22 June. During the initial resumption phase, only Long Stay “D” visa applications, including Study, as well as those identified as Emergency/Priority visas, were accepted. The issuance of non-Emergency/Priority visas was not recommended until such time as public health advice allowed.

Later in the year decisions were recommenced on certain long-stay visas which included categories such as third level study at primary degree and postgraduate level, Employment and Join Family. Decisions on applications for English Languages studies remained on hold in light of moves to Level 5 COVID-19 restrictions, and pending further consideration by the relevant authorities.

Short stay visa applications were not generally accepted, except for cases that fell under the Emergency/Priority criteria. However the list of exemptions which fall under Emergency/Priority was expanded to include those specific categories of travellers, identified as having an essential function or need in the EU Council Recommendation (EU) 2020/912 of 30 June 2020.

Restrictions were relaxed and imposed in various countries throughout the year, and so the resumption of visa application processing was predicated on health and safety advice in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Temporary Suspension of Irish Short Stay Visa Waiver Programme

On 10 July 2020, Minister McEntee announced the temporary suspension of the Irish Short Stay Visa Waiver Programme (SSVWP) as part of COVID-19 measures to restrict travel and protect public health. The Programme had allowed people visiting the United Kingdom on short stay visas to travel to Ireland. Under the agreement, the visa holders had to leave Ireland before their permission to stay in the UK ended.

The suspension of the Programme was implemented because of a divergence in approach between Ireland and the UK in travel measures to combat the pandemic. Nationals of the affected countries were no longer in a position to use their UK short stay visa for a visit to Ireland, but could apply separately for an Irish visa, which would only be accepted if it was a critical case. This was a temporary measure, which did not

affect the Common Travel Area rights of British and Irish citizens or the operation of the CTA.

Online Registration Renewal System for Dublin-based non-nationals

On 22 June, Minister Flanagan announced an online Registration Renewal System for non-EEA students based in Dublin. On 7 July, Minister McEntee announced that this online renewal system was being expanded to all Dublin based non-nationals seeking to renew their immigration registration.

The new online system allowed applicants to complete renewals online without having to book an appointment and attend in person to the registration office. Previously, such applicants were required to book an appointment prior to attending in person at the registration office, and these appointments were in high demand.

Those seeking to renew their permission could now complete the application form online, upload copies of supporting documents online, pay the applicable fee and submit their passport and current IRP card via registered post.

Citizenship

Due to the traditional reliance of the Citizenship section on the processing of physical documentation, the restrictions brought about by COVID-19 had a significant impact on this area.

Ceremonies took place on 2 and 3 March although candidates or guests from several countries who had been in close contact to a COVID-19 case, or who were displaying symptoms, were asked not to attend. The ceremonies scheduled for July and for other months of the year were cancelled as the level of infections and the overall impact of the virus became clear. A pilot virtual ceremony was held on 15 July. While the virtual ceremony was a success, a review found that it was not scalable to support the level of demand, as to progress virtual ceremonies on the scale required would result in diverting excessive resources away from case processing.

It was decided that these ceremonies would be replaced during COVID-19 with a requirement for citizenship applicants to sign a statutory declaration of loyalty to the State. Upon the return of a fully completed declaration, the Department of Justice

could issue a certificate of naturalisation. In lieu of a citizenship ceremony, a virtual celebration event would be held for anyone receiving a certificate of naturalisation.

In order to further develop the online aspect to its services, the Citizenship website was redesigned to make it more user friendly. As part of this process, an online conversation application or 'chatbot', referred to as Tara was introduced in December. This provided users with an instant response to frequently asked questions in order to further assist with queries and processing.

Notwithstanding these measures, there were in excess of 23,000 citizenship applications on hand at year end including approximately 4,000 that were ceremony ready. Waiting until large in-person citizenship ceremonies could take place was not seen as an option as many applicants would have their opportunity to be made Irish citizens postponed for an indefinite period of time through no fault of their own.

The temporary system for granting citizenship was opened on 18 January 2021.

North-South Cooperation

The Garda Commissioner and PSNI Chief Constable were in regular contact and this ongoing close cooperation between An Garda Síochána and the PSNI was a key element of policing the response to the pandemic.

- There was extensive cooperation to deliver the many coordinated checkpoints which were put in place at key locations along the border¹.
- Joint checkpoints were also put in place during some bank holiday weekends in each jurisdiction.
- These actions and initiatives were highlighted on social media, to assist in developing public awareness that Gardaí and the PSNI were working together closely to ensure compliance with public health restrictions on both sides of the border.

¹ The Health Regulations, insofar as they relate to the restrictions on movement from one's residence, could not be applied to restrict the movement of persons residing in Northern Ireland.

There was good political cooperation in this field too through productive discussions with the Northern Ireland Minister for Justice, Naomi Long MLA. Minister Flanagan had a teleconference with Minister Long on 30 April followed by a joint Press Release on 7 May where the two Ministers made a joint call to bring public attention to police enforcement action on both sides of the border. They also urged people to continue to respect public health guidelines. Minister McEntee had a teleconference with Minister Long on 21 July. They discussed a range of issues of mutual interest, including COVID-19 matters.

AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA RESPONSE

An Garda Síochána is one of three principal Response Agencies under Ireland's Strategic Emergency Management structures and framework. As such, it is fully involved in the planning and protocols for the management of major emergencies at national, regional and local levels.

Each Garda Division has an emergency plan in place, and these plans are reviewed on an ongoing basis as well as in response to particular crisis events.

Garda operational contingencies around staff availability are locally based. Inter-agency emergency plans are in place at critical infrastructure around the country, including ports and airports. Inter-agency emergency management working groups and steering groups were in place in each of the 8 Major Emergency Management (MEM) regions. The Health Service Executive led in the activation and implementation of these plans in the context of a health emergency.

Initial Preparations

An Garda Síochána, created its own full time COVID-19 unit to coordinate a preparedness response for COVID-19 issues from a national level. While any response to an incident or potential emergency around COVID-19 would be dealt with on a

local/regional level, the COVID-19 unit had national oversight to ensure consistency and coordination of approach.

The Garda Commissioner set out to implement a range of measures ensuring that An Garda Síochána had maximum capacity to maintain service delivery and support to other agencies as required:

- Rosters/Annual Leave – An emergency roster was drawn up to meet peak demand and enable higher visibility policing. All annual leave for Garda members and Garda Staff was restricted to no more than 10% of the workforce at any time.
- Severance Package – Retirements of 18 senior ranks which had been due on the 1 April, under the severance package, were deferred.
- Garda College – All Probation Gardaí in training in the Garda College (c. 320) were sworn into AGS on 27 March 2020 and allocated to stations.
- All Garda members working in the Garda College were reallocated to operational policing duties or essential training while Garda staff working in the college were allocated to administrative duties.

Summary of Contingency Arrangements

In supporting the COVID-19 public health guidelines, An Garda Síochána adopted a graduated policing response based on its tradition of policing by consent. This saw Garda members engage, educate, encourage and, as a last resort, enforce. High visibility patrolling was carried out by Garda members across the country in line with



the public health measures announced by the Government. The focus of this activity was on encouraging people to adhere to the public health measures.

In this, as in all its work, AGS continued to implement its ethos of community policing, seeking out those who were vulnerable to provide assistance and ensure sure they didn't feel alone. Throughout the pandemic, normal policing operations to prevent and detect crime continued. These measures were communicated to the Garda representative associations, who all appreciated the extremely grave situation facing the country and the need to seek to have maximum capacity available to maintain service delivery and support the public as required.

Following the commencement of Government restrictions under COVID-19, there was a general decrease in many categories of crime. However, some categories increased as follows:

- Domestic Abuse (necessitating the introduction of Operation Faoiseamh in support of victims of domestic abuse)
- Controlled Drugs (simple possession)
- Weapons and Explosives Offences (possession of offensive weapons)
- Cybercrime/online fraud

Policing Authority

In view of ongoing Garda operations and the nature of the temporary powers, independent oversight of policing and human rights was viewed as essential to maintain the public's faith in and support for policing.



To that end the Minister requested that the Policing Authority report on a regular basis on its actions in the oversight of policing of COVID-19, with particular reference to the Garda implementation of the Regulations made by the Minister for Health.

The Minister also suggested to the Policing Authority that it engage with relevant statutory bodies and NGOs operating in the area of civil and human rights.

The tenth report of the Policing Authority on Policing Performance by the Garda Síochána in Relation to COVID-19 Regulations was published on 18 December 2020. The full report can be accessed at the following link:

[Tenth Report of the Policing Authority in relation to COVID-19 Regulations](#)

The Policing Authority was also involved in working with the Commissioner to revise the objectives set out in the Policing Plan 2020 in view of the diversion of resources to COVID-19, while also ensuring progress on other key areas of work as far as possible.

COURTS SERVICE RESPONSE

The Courts Service worked closely with the presidents of all court jurisdictions to develop appropriate contingency plans to allow courts to deal with urgent family, criminal and civil matters. Each area and each situation was different in terms of the response required, such as cancelling courts, transferring cases, using video technology, closing offices, working remotely, and supporting Courts Services in the event of any closure.

The Courts Service had multiple video enabled courtrooms which could facilitate custody hearings to take place directly with prisons, thus minimising the need for the mass movement of prisoners to and from courts.

Early in the pandemic the Courts Service doubled its remote working capacity for judges and staff and began developing plans to ensure that the system of family law maintenance payments and other vulnerable users, could continue to be provided.

On Friday 8 May, the Chief Justice, the Court Presidents and the Courts Service outlined the steps to be taken to create a pathway to opening some courts in line with the

Government's Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business. The Courts Service had also established a consultative user group to ensure that court users were involved in informing their decisions.

Building upon the experience obtained from the initial pilot of remote courts in the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal, remote courts were held in the High Court, the Circuit Court and the District Court.

The Courts Service contingency planning group also reviewed and updated plans on a daily basis, in consultation with key stakeholders. The latest arrangements in respect for each court jurisdiction were published on the Courts Service website.

Family Law

Family law, by its very nature, is stressful for couples whose relationship has broken down. This stress was exacerbated exponentially through the impact of COVID-19.

Court Orders in relation to access remained in place and, in general, parties were obliged to keep to them. However, acknowledging that there might be some issues or concerns about travelling for visits, on 27 March, the President of the District Court clarified that parents could come to mutually agreed arrangements for alternative contact, which could involve phone calls, or skype etc. If parties could not agree on an alternative arrangement, mediation services were available and at all times the welfare and best interests of the child was paramount.

Regulations made by the Minister for Health, which came into effect on 8 April, recognised the right of a parent, guardian, or person having a right of access to a child to leave their home in order to give effect to arrangements for access by that person or for another parent, guardian or person having such right of access and explicitly provided for an exception to the travel restrictions.

In cooperation with the Department and its Agencies, a UCC Family law COVID-19 information hub was launched as a resource for people seeking guidance on family law. The Family and Child Law Committee of the Law Society also prepared guidelines for practitioners and parents on family law matters during COVID-19. The Law Society

made arrangements to send the guidelines electronically to every practising solicitor on 26 March 2020.

Criminal Justice Efficiencies Working Group

The primary focus in the context of COVID-19 was on the needs of all criminal courts with a view to maximising the operation of these courts both in the immediate and medium term. A group chaired by the Department and comprising judges of the District, Circuit and High Courts, as well as senior management from the Courts Service, an Garda Síochána, Irish Prison Service, Probation Service and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions worked collectively and bilaterally to identify and implement measures to support the conduct of all criminal work, in particular the holding of jury trials in line with social distancing guidelines.

Measures were pursued to reduce the need for attendance in court through ICT solutions such as the use of video technology for a range of court applications including bail applications. Legislative proposals to further extend the use of video technology to other types of hearings including arraignments, entry of pleas, sentencing hearings and call over lists have been developed. In addition, alternative sanctions such as increased use of the adult caution scheme for certain low level offences were explored to assist in alleviating the pressure on the criminal courts.

A number of other legislative and non-legislative proposals to introduce further efficiencies were also considered for detailed submissions to the Minister.

Civil Justice Medium Term Planning Group

In parallel with the Court Efficiencies Group on the criminal side, a medium-term planning group was established on the civil side.

The civil group considered the impacts of COVID-19 on the current and future management of civil cases in the courts system and examined a sustainable structured recovery plan. It will make recommendations for the future management of civil cases in the courts that might improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the civil justice system, and will look, in consultation with the Legal Aid Board and the Insolvency Service, at other measures to minimise pressures on the court system in a socially distanced environment.

The Group will also take into consideration the ongoing work being undertaken, and recommendations of, other relevant working groups focused on the courts system.

IRISH PRISON SERVICE RESPONSE

A contingency planning meeting was convened by IPS Operations Directorate at the end of February 2020 to discuss contingency arrangements in the context of the COVID-19 threat. This included maintaining safe prisons with all essential services including inter alia staffing, healthcare, catering provision and the maintenance of plant and equipment.

As part of planning for the pandemic, a COVID-19 preparedness team was established with a dedicated executive Clinical Lead, infection control manager, and an additional full time nurse.

An educational module on COVID-19 was rolled out (including instruction on the correct procedures for using Personal Protective Equipment [PPE]) initially to staff in the most at-risk prisons (Cloverhill and Dóchas) and from 2 March, training commenced for staff in all other prisons.

Summary of Contingency Arrangements

COVID-19 provides unique challenges to custodial institutions in terms of controlling the spread of the virus amongst staff and prisoners, and the provision of appropriate medical treatment to affected persons. Recognising these challenges, the Director General of the Irish Prison Service, at an early stage, established an Emergency Response Planning Team (ERPT) consisting of senior staff with skills and experience in areas including operational; healthcare; and infection control.

The Irish Prison Service was internationally recognised for its work in controlling the spread of the virus. The IPS shared its experience with other countries through a paper co-authored with the World Health Organisation and Prison Health Collaborating Centre which was published in the international Public Health Journal.



As the nature of the pandemic became apparent, Minister Flanagan approved a number of actions on 13 March 2020 to reduce the numbers in prisons and allow for greater physical distancing and cocooning of highly vulnerable people in prison. These included:

- The granting of temporary release (TR) to low risk prisoners on a case-by-case basis. As always TR was conditional on good behaviour and each prisoner was subject to re-arrest in the event of a breach.
- To reduce footfall in and out of the prisons, and to free up administrative staff, to mitigate any depletion in prison officer numbers, longer intervals were allowed between sign-ins with IPS for prisoners on temporary release.

It is important to note that a number of key safeguards were in place. The primary concern was public safety - no prisoner who posed an undue risk to public safety, especially people with a domestic abuse conviction, was released in this way and no one remanded for trial could be released. Factors such as housing and health status were also taken into account and the IPS coordinated with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and the HSE.

In order to prevent cross-contamination in prisons, some activities, such as work and training, were curtailed to reduce cross-prison movements and interactions, and prison schools were closed. In conjunction with the Government's *Roadmap for Reopening Society & Business* and with infection control in mind, IPS implemented a risk based programme to maintain or modify contingencies and protocols or lift restrictions at prison level as appropriate.

Screening and Testing for COVID-19 in Prison

The Irish Prison Service took a proactive approach to ensure the early detection of any possible case of COVID-19 and operated a robust system of contact tracing. In line with the WHO advice and in consultation with the NPHET, point of entry screening commenced from 30 March 2020.

The IPS opened a specific unit in Cloverhill to allow for the isolation of any confirmed cases. Prisoners were isolated in this unit until cleared from isolation through the COVID-19 testing process. Staff working in this unit were provided with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to ensure their safety.

Court Attendance

The Irish Prison Service worked closely with the Courts Service, the Law Society and An Garda Síochána and where possible court cases were facilitated by video link.

- The increased use of video link for court sittings as a measure to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the prison system has proven very effective. At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic the Irish Prison Service, in conjunction with the Courts, accelerated the roll out of technology to enable video link court sittings throughout the Prison Estate.
- This has led to a substantial increase in the use of video link for court appearances from 10% in 2019 to 50% at end 2020.

The video link facility is also being utilised for visits, solicitor consultations and to facilitate the delivering of services such as psychiatric, psychological and other counselling services

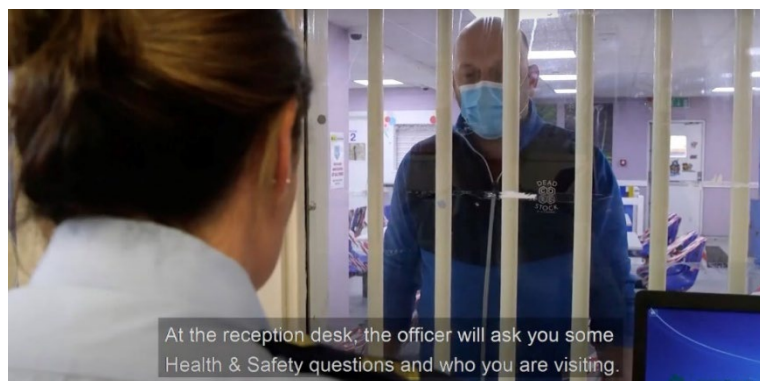
Prisoners who were in isolation as possible COVID-19 cases or who were isolated for precautionary reasons as possible close contacts, were not required to attend for court

appearances in line with public health guidelines. The Prison Service made every effort to advise solicitors and courts if a prisoner was in isolation and in the case of a bail hearing agreement, leave could be sought to have the case dealt with in the prisoner's absence.

Quarantining and Visiting

All prisoners newly committed to prison were quarantined for up to 14 days, in order to reduce the risk that a new committal, incubating the virus, could spread COVID-19 to the general prison population. Prisoners aged 70 years or more or those deemed medically vulnerable were advised to minimise interactions with other prisoners or staff, in line with Government advice.

Following restriction on movements announced by the Government to curtail the spread of COVID-19, physical family visits to prisons were suspended on 27 March 2020 and replaced with a new system of virtual or video visits. To ameliorate the effects of the curtailment on prisoner wellbeing, the number of television channels available to prisoners was increased. The Prison Service also introduced a method which allowed family members to lodge money online for prisoners to avail of items in the prison tuck shop.



In line with the Government Roadmap, and with infection control in mind, the Irish Prison Service completed a comprehensive risk assessment on the return of physical prison visits. Necessary measures were identified and progressed, to ensure that family members and friends could return to physical visits in a safe manner.

End of Year Position

11 March 2020 – 4,235 in custody, 343 on temporary release, 784 solely on remand

31 December 2020 – 3,650 in Custody, 321 on temporary release, 661 solely on remand. Reduction – 585 (12.6%)

Around 22 cases of COVID-19 had been confirmed in the prison system to 23 December, 2020. The majority of these cases involved people becoming infected in the community before entering prison. There were no COVID-19 related deaths or hospitalisations in the Irish Prison System through 2020.

OTHER AGENCIES, OFFICES AND BODIES

Coroners and Pathology Services

The National Mortality Oversight Group, which was a standing contingency for mass casualty events, increased their operational tempo in response to the onset of the pandemic.

A sub-group of Coroners was also created to coordinate their responses to COVID-19 along with Department of Justice and Equality, An Garda Síochána, and the State Pathologist, with support from the Department of Health and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government as required.

As the Department of Justice and Equality had responsibility for the Dublin Coroners Court, the Department appointed two additional deputy coroners and increased the number of administrative staff to support with an increased workload of recording notifiable deaths.

The Coroners also worked with the HSE, PHECC, the National Ambulance Service and an Garda Síochána to revise the rules relating to pronouncement of death to reduce pressure on GPs to attend at all deaths.

Following engagement between the Department and the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) and also the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, confirmation was received that Local Authorities would, on request, support Coroners with administrative staff during and after the pandemic.

Part 2 of the Civil and Criminal (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2020, dealing with Coroners was commenced with effect from 21 August, 2020. The Act provides for additional

capacity to the Coroner service, by the written request of the Coroner for the district, seeking Ministerial authorisation, for one or more of the following actions:

- assign as a temporary additional Coroner for that district, for a period not exceeding six months (which may be renewed), a person who already stands appointed as a Coroner or deputy Coroner for another district,
- appointment of a temporary additional Coroner for that district, for a period not exceeding six months (which may be renewed) of a person who may previously have been a Coroner or deputy Coroner to be appointed as a Coroner. An upper age limit of 75 years will apply; and
- appointment of a temporary additional Coroner for that district, for a period not exceeding six months (which may be renewed) of a person not previously appointed as a Coroner or deputy Coroner but who has the necessary qualifications under the Act to be appointed as a Coroner. An upper age limit of 75 years applies.

Criminal Assets Bureau

Despite the challenges of COVID-19 the Bureau reacted quickly and adopted new work practices ensuring the work of the Bureau continued whilst ensuring the safety of Bureau Officers and staff.

The Bureau brought 31 new proceeds of crime cases before the High Court. Due to the public health restrictions in place throughout the year, court hearings were held both remotely and in person to facilitate the Bureau reaching this figure.

During 2020, due to the large volume of luxury assets over which a section 4 or 4a order of the Proceeds of Crime Act had been granted, the Bureau engaged the services of an Auction House who, on behalf of the Bureau, held online bespoke timed auctions, the first of which was held in October 2020. To comply with COVID-19 restrictions, this auction was held online to discourage the unnecessary travelling to view or inspect the assets.

In September 2020 the Bureau, in conjunction with the University of Limerick, successfully launched the Post Graduate Diploma in Proceeds of Crime and Asset Investigation (POCAI) course. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the course, which consisted of five modules, was delivered online.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Tribunal

The Tribunal held 18 appeal hearings during 2020. Of these appeal hearings, 12 involved Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme cases and 6 of the hearings involved Prison Officer Scheme cases.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, from April 2020 onwards, appeal hearings took place by teleconference, with the agreement of applicants. Of the 18 appeal hearings held during 2020, 13 hearings were conducted by teleconference and the remaining 5 were conducted in person early in the year.

Data Protection Commission

The Data Protection Commission (DPC) had an increase of 8.8% in cases logged during 2020 which came to a total of 10,156 cases. In spite of this post, email and telephone contacts received was down by 27.4%. Queries relating to COVID-19 specific data matters were to the fore from March to August. These included queries on pandemic unemployment payment, airport checks, the COVID-19 tracker app and remote working, but these reduced later in the year.

The DPC experienced a year-on-year decrease in complaints of 34% with 4,660 in 2020 compared to 7,049 in 2019. Statutory inquiries opened in 2019 were down to 13 from 20 the year before, a 35% decrease. At the same time the rate of complaints concluded in 2020 was only down 1.7%, year on year, standing at 4,476 for 2020.

Like other bodies, DPC was able to make use of the COVID-19 watershed to deliver a 166% increase in formal decisions made under the Data Acts, issuing 77 in 2020 as compared to 29 in 2019. It also saw a 50% increase in prosecutions but a 9.7% decrease in investigations.

Forensic Science Ireland

As an essential service, Forensic Science Ireland remained open throughout all stages of COVID-19 restrictions, to support the justice system.

The design and nature of facilities as well as occupancy limitations presented some unique challenges in 2020 but it also led to new ways of working and enduring changes. For the first time, FSI scientists presented expert testimony remotely through video-conferencing

technology. Considering that FSI staff present in courts around the country, this is a significant leap forward in efficiency for FSI staff.

FSI reported on close to 22,000 investigations in 2020, including almost 6,000 from Fingerprints and Documents & Handwriting. This represents an increase of 36% in reported cases compared to 2019.

FSI developed a Memorandum of Understanding with Forensic Science Northern Ireland for mutual cooperation. A programme of collaborative work has been developed, under the Intergovernmental Agreement on Co-Operation on Criminal Justice Matters and this work is well underway.

FSI has also proposed a number of legislative changes to the Department of Justice to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the services it provides and the efficiency of the sector as a whole.

Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission

On the advice of the health authorities GSOC closed its public office in March 2020 and 110 of GSOC's 125 staff were equipped and set up to work remotely with laptops. The remaining 15 were equipped to work remotely within weeks.

The closure did not adversely affect GSOC's ability to receive complaints, in fact the number of complaints received in 2020 was 11% higher than in 2019.

With the lifting of the first lockdown, measures were put in place to facilitate a phased return of staff to the office in line with public health advice, through blended working. These arrangements also allowed for the resumption of GSOC's phone lines, however, the public office remained closed. Members of the public were still able to make complaints to GSOC in a number of ways including by email, written correspondence and online.

COVID-19-Related Complaints

The Ombudsman Commission decided that it would be beneficial to An Garda Síochána to share real-time information about how the public was experiencing or perceiving policing at this time, thus helping to inform decision-making by An Garda Síochána in relation to additional policing duties with regard to COVID-19.

Between March and year end, a total of 295 complaints to GSOC mentioned COVID-19. As with all complaints to GSOC, these complaints were assessed to see if they met the criteria for admissibility.

Sixty eight (68) were found to be inadmissible, 50 were admitted for investigation, 24 were still open at year end and the majority of the remainder did not proceed past the 'query' stage, that is, complainants failed to provide sufficient detail to allow the complaint be considered for admissibility.

Garda Síochána Inspectorate

In response to the ongoing public health crisis, the Garda Inspectorate put in place a COVID-19 Response Plan to mitigate any risks to the health and wellbeing of staff, key stakeholders and the wider public; while continuing to deliver core functions.

As a result of a number of significant changes to the environment in which the Inspectorate operates, including; the COVID -19 crisis, the Inspectorate conducted a formal review of its Work Plan. The Inspectorate engaged with a number of key stakeholders to assist in identifying any new or emerging policing issues and to ensure that future inspections are focused on the areas of highest harm and risk.

All future inspections will take account of the most up to date public health advice and measures necessary to mitigate any risks to staff and any persons who engage with the Inspectorate during the inspection process.

International Protection Office

The number of people seeking international protection fell due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Notwithstanding significant challenges, the International Protection Office (IPO) remained open in line with its international obligations to allow those who wish to claim international protection the opportunity to do so. The provision of the facility to allow people claim international protection is considered an essential service at all times, including during the COVID-19 crisis.

Efforts to improve processing times were seriously impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which reduced the output of decisions considerably and impacted on the target set by the IPO to make first instance decisions in the vast majority of cases within 9 months.

The IPO's main focus was to continue to keep its processing system functioning as effectively and efficiently as possible, while adhering to all measures in place to combat the spread of COVID-19. However, it must be acknowledged that the processing of applications is complex and that each application deserves and receives an individual assessment.

IPO Cases pending at the end of 2020

First instance: There were 5,279 applications on hand at the International Protection Office at 31 December 2020. .

Permission to Remain Review: There were 505 Permission to Remain Review cases on hand at 31 December 2020.

Ministerial Decisions Unit: There were 538 cases pending a ministerial decision in MDU at the end of 2020.

International Protection Appeals Tribunal

Initial 2020 trends indicated that the Tribunal was on target to meet its key performance targets for the year. Overall, however, the output of the Tribunal in 2020 when compared with 2019 decreased in the order of 46% due to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting measures.

The highest decline was in appeals heard which fell by 70% from 1536 in 2019 to just 465 in 2020. The number of appeals completed fell by 47%.

The disruption of business is largely attributed by the Tribunal, as one part of the end to end immigration framework, to COVID-19 restrictions for both clients and practitioners and to remote hearing gaps in relation to direct provision centres at various locations and to logistical issues around documentation.

Insolvency Service of Ireland

While applications fell 6% to 3,800 during 2020, within that figure Personal Insolvency Arrangement applications actually increased 12.5%. New section 115A cases fell by 7%.

There were 30% fewer Protective Certificates approved in 2020 (1402 as opposed to 1986) and a 15% fall in arrangements approved.

There was a significant increase in both Protection Certificates and Arrangements approved through the Courts for the first two months of 2020 before the significant decline in the second quarter due to the Pandemic and subsequent closure of the Courts.

Quarter 3, 2020, saw some recovery as the courts reopened and PIPs could meet clients virtually and Quarter 4 continued this trend. However, the net effect was a decline in approvals for both PC's and Arrangements for the full year although within this arrangements figure, Personal Insolvency Arrangements (the solution that deals with secured debt) declined only marginally.

The number of bankruptcies adjudicated in 2020 was down by 50% compared to 2019 due to courts being unable to sit because of COVID-19 restrictions and in a context of general decline in such cases. In January 2021 the Court moved to remote hearings for cases to ensure no backlog develops and will deal with any pent up demand.

Irish Film Classification Office

In 2020, film submissions up to 17 March were in line with the previous year but in the period from 17 March to 31 December the figures were dramatically different. This meant that there were just 279 submissions in 2020 in comparison with 948 the year before. This represents a drop of 70% and this was even more pronounced in Q3 and Q4. DVD submissions were in line with 2019.

Classifications given in 2020 amounted to 2,454, as compared with 3,111 in 2019, which was a 21% decrease. There was also a 39% fall-off in IFCO website traffic during 2020 which had been at 140,000 hits in 2019.

Just four film applications were received in January 2020 compared to 107 in January 2019. These figures reflect the impacts of COVID-19 on cinema openings and movie releases at this time.

Legal Aid Board

There was a 20% decline in Legal Aid Certificates issued by LAB, just 11,623 in 2020 as opposed to 14,531 in 2019. Private Practitioner Scheme cases were down 25% to 7,893 in 2020 as against 10,532 in 2019. These were limited mainly by COVID-19 restrictions at District Court level.

The biggest fall, as reflected in the related courts data, was that of 53% in terms of International Protection cases; 1,227 in 2020 compared to 2,593 in 2019.

LAB judicial separation and divorce cases were down 14% in 2020 from the previous year. However, domestic violence casework went up 8% from 3,249 in 2019 to 3,494 in 2020. The number on the LAB waiting list at year end 2020 was 1,491; down 24% from 1,963 in 2019.

2,431 people used the new *Legal Aid and Mediation Helpline* introduced in response to COVID-19 by the LAB during 2020. In terms of criminal legal aid schemes operated by LAB there was a 14% increase in the Garda Station Legal Advice Revised Scheme (up to 4,534); a 49% increase in the Custody Issues Scheme which reached 266 cases in 2020 but a 13% decline in CAB Scheme claims which stood at 7.

Legal Services Regulatory Authority

The LSRA received 1,422 complaints during 2020 but its new functions were only coming on stream so there are no earlier trends to compare against in this area. The LSRA maintained functionality with remote working supports but there were some impacts from COVID-19 restrictions.

Work on informal resolution of complaints was somewhat complicated due to the inability to offer face-to-face meetings to resolve complaints. A planned staff move to the new premises in April was delayed due to the onset of the pandemic and the Government's work from home advice. The office officially opened on 31 August for a small number of staff. However, the majority of LSRA staff were working remotely up to the end of the year and beyond.

Collection of the Statutory Levy is continuing with over 99% compliance and the Roll of Practising Barristers is being effectively maintained. While a new Legal Practitioners' Disciplinary Tribunal is at an advanced stage of establishment the conduct of hearings is likely be disrupted by COVID-19 measures.

Mental Health (Criminal Law) Review Board

In March 2020, the Minister gave consent for the Review board to amend its procedures to allow for hearings to be conducted via tele-conferencing. The Review Board was also

designated by the Minister under sections 29 and 31 of the Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020, to provide that meetings and hearings of the Board could be conducted remotely.

During 2020, there was a slight increase in the number of review hearings held by the Board, with 203 review hearings into the detention of patients in the Central Mental Hospital compared with 198 the previous year.

Office of Inspector of Prisons

The COVID-19 pandemic presented a challenging environment in which to inspect treatment and conditions in prisons. Given the restrictions imposed in prisons to prevent transmission of COVID-19, including restricted regimes and limitations on external visitors to prisons, oversight of prisons was of the utmost importance over the course of the year. The Inspectorate remained committed to its oversight function in 2020, despite the challenges posed by COVID-19.

The Inspectorate's COVID-19 related activities between March and December 2020 were as follows:

- Short visits carried out to all 12 prisons between 26 March and 5 May 2020, which were followed by telephone calls made to prison Governors between April and July 2020.
- Ongoing communications with the IPS, including daily and weekly prison reports from the IPS Director General.
- Development of a report in collaboration with Maynooth University on the impact of cocooning on persons in custody.

With the onset of COVID-19, IPS Headquarters provided the Inspectorate with updates on the emerging situation across the prison estate. Communications included fortnightly calls with the Director General of the IPS, provision of all information newsletters distributed to staff and prisoners and provision of daily COVID-19 transmission figures.

Property Services Regulatory Authority

Business levels were essentially maintained with just a 4.4% decline in licences issued during 2020 but the clearance of complaint arrears with 197 complaints concluded in 2020 up 61% on the previous year.

Similarly, compliance audits were up 79% to a total of 281 in 2020. 77 Compensation Fund cases were completed, an increase of 61 on 2019.

There was a 237% increase in email queries which reached 6,608 for the 2020 period. Overall PSRA email traffic was up 220%.

Office of the State Pathologist

The unique position of the OSP as liaison between the Coroners, An Garda Síochána, the Faculty of Pathology (Royal College of Physicians Ireland, RCPI) and mortuaries around the country meant that it played a pivotal role in the development of guidelines and autopsy practice at a national level.

The State Pathologist arranged to phase staffing to limit the risk as much as possible. All pathologists were encouraged to work remotely when possible and remote access to files and databases was established for all staff.

The Office of the State Pathologist adhered to all HSE, public health and Government guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic. State pathologists always wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when carrying out their work and continued to attend at scenes of death when such attendance was requested or necessary.

Probation Service

The Probation Service convened a contingency planning group covering key functions and working with the Senior Management Team regarding co-ordination of activities around COVID-19. All implications for service delivery decisions were referred centrally to facilitate co-ordinated responses as issues arose. In the event of offenders choosing to self-isolate, for example, not attending community service, probation staff followed usual procedures i.e. seeking medical documentation/verification etc.

The Probation Service ceased face to face contact from 6pm, 12 March, closing all community service sites, suspending home visits and maintaining contact with offenders by phone. High priority offenders were identified and focused contact was maintained with them. The Probation Service remained in contact with IPS to ensure that none of their actions would exacerbate the IPS risks. It also introduced a staggered work pattern for HQ staff to reduce risk.

From May 2020 staff returned to work on a phased and rostered basis, to facilitate client interviews and other essential work. Staff adapted their practice, working with offenders using telephone contact and linking with key partner organisations to support community safety

Work by Probation Service teams based in prisons continued. Working in partnership with the Irish Prison Service, children detention centres and the Courts Service, the Probation Service also prioritised the preparation of remand-in-custody reports for the Courts, in cases that were ongoing. Video link interviews from designated Probation Service Offices were facilitated in each prison.

Due to public health restrictions, International Restorative Justice Week was marked by a webinar, organised by members of the Irish group of the Restorative Justice: Strategies for Change European project in collaboration with the Department.

Despite the challenging environment, work continued within the Probation Service on developing the Social Enterprise model of employment for people with convictions. In November 2020, the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee T.D., launched the Department of Justice's 'Working to Change – Social Enterprise and Employment Strategy 2021-2023'. This strategy sets out ambitious targets to increase the employment options for people who have criminal records, and builds on a strong foundation of supports already in existence.

Policing Authority

The Authority, in common with so many other public bodies, adapted its work practices to the new realities and when the country went into lock-down in mid-March, the Authority's work and oversight continued unabated, despite much of it moving to remote working. The Authority recognised that it must maintain and, where possible, strengthen its work of oversight of the Garda Síochána in the new circumstances brought by the COVID-19

pandemic. The exceptional powers given to Gardai in the emergency legislation required a proportionate response in oversight terms.

Timely, persistent and transparent oversight was and continues to be important in giving assurance that those powers are used proportionately and in a manner consistent with the expectations of the community. As requested by the Minister for Justice, the Authority provided additional oversight of policing during 2020 and produced and published ten reports on COVID-19 policing performance.

Appendix 1: Agencies, Offices and Bodies under the aegis of the Department

We work in partnership with all Agencies, Offices and Bodies under the aegis of the Department of Justice.

A comprehensive list, including all of the Boards/Tribunals under the aegis of the Department can be found on the Department's website.

Criminal Justice

 An Garda Síochána	 Criminal Assets Bureau	 Garda Síochána Inspectorate	 Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission
 AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA POLICING AUTHORITY	 An Bord Athbhreithnithe Meabhais-Sláinte (An Dli Coiriúil) Mental Health (Criminal Law) Review Board	 An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh The Probation Service	 The Parole Board An Bord Paróil
 Oifig an Chigire Prisoín Office of the Inspector of Prisons	 Criminal Injuries Compensation Tribunal	 fsi forensic science Ireland	 Office of the State Pathologist
 Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann Irish Prison Service	 The Private Security Authority An tÚdarás Stáindála Príobháidí	 Private Security Appeals Board	

Civil Justice

 Censorship of Publications Board	 Censorship of Publications Appeal Board	 An tSeirbhís Chúirteanna Courts Service
 Oifig Chóirínéara Dúiche Bhaile Átha Cliath Dublin District Coroner's Court	 Seirbhís Díochainníochta na hÉireann Insolvency Service of Ireland	 The International Protection Appeals Tribunal An Bord um Athbhreithnithe / An Bord Coirteal Éireannach
 Comhairle na nUachtarána The Judicial Council	 Legal Aid Board An Bord Um Chúnaimh Dílthúil	 An tÚdarás Rialála Seirbhísí Dli Legal Services Regulatory Authority
 An Coimisiún um Chosaint Sonraí Data Protection Commission	 IFCO Irish Film Classification Office	 Property Services Appeal Board
 Judicial Appointments Advisory Board An Bord Comhairleach um Chosaint Éireannach	 Údarás Rialála Seirbhísí Maoine Property Services Regulatory Authority	

Appendix 2: Green Public Procurement Reporting

Reference year 2020	A. Total number of contracts issued over €25,000 by priority sector	B. Total value of contracts issued over €25,000 by priority sector	C. Total number of contracts issued over €25,000 by priority sector which have incorporated GPP	D. Total value of contracts issued over €25,000 by priority sector which have incorporated GPP
Priority Sector				
Transport	3	Not recorded	0	0
Office Premises Exps	2	Not recorded	0	0
Cleaning Products & Services	2	Not recorded	0	0
Lab Equipment	19	Not recorded	0	0
IT	19	Not recorded	0	0
Accommodation	2	Not recorded	0	0
Asylum Seeker Accommodation	2	Not recorded	0	0
Professional Services	9	Not recorded	0	0
Totals	58	Not recorded	0	0

Appendix 3: Sustainable Development Goals

In September 2015, UN Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development ("Transforming our World"). The 2030 Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity and applies to both developed and developing countries. The focus of the 2030 Agenda is the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their respective 169 sub-targets.

The SDGs cover ambitions such as:

- an end to poverty
- sustainable economic development
- protection of the environment
- access to health and education services
- gender equality
- peaceful societies
- decent work

Department of Justice actions are noted at

- 8.7 Anti human trafficking measures

Addressing human trafficking in a holistic manner requires the engagement of various stakeholders and a number of key actions undertaken recently or due to be completed soon in the near future, include:

- The designation of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) as Ireland's independent National Rapporteur for Anti-Human Trafficking under article 19 of the EU Human Trafficking Directive.
- The commencement of a review of the Criminal Justice (Sexual Offences) Act 2017, which criminalised the purchase of sex as part of a wider approach to protection of persons trafficked into prostitution,
- Engagement by the Department with NGOs to identify solutions to the provision of accommodation to victims of trafficking, particularly female victims of sexual exploitation
- The establishment of a forum for victims and stakeholders in relation to human trafficking, which has met twice to date, and which will examine the need to update the existing National Action Plan on Human Trafficking, including to respond to the

commitment in the Programme for Government to adopt and implement a comprehensive strategy to combat trafficking of women and girls;

- working with the Forum in a review of the National Referral Mechanism in Ireland, learning from best practice models in other EU Member States;
- Drafting legislation to strengthen the penal framework on people smuggling, thereby implementing three international legal instruments in the area and;
- The launch of a joint multimedia campaign between the Department of Justice and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to raise public awareness about Human Trafficking. The awareness campaign has two primary objectives;

1. Raising Public Awareness around the existence of Human Trafficking in Ireland and educate them to recognise the signs of trafficking;

2. Raising Awareness of Victim Supports. The campaign aims to highlight for victims that help is available and how to seek it.

An Garda Síochána has committed significant resources to the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking in Ireland. A specialised Garda Unit, the Human Trafficking Investigation and Co-ordination Unit (HTICU), has been in place since 2009 to conduct investigations into human trafficking and provide advice, support and where necessary, operational assistance to investigations at district level. An Garda Síochána is also active in relation to trafficking gangs through work targeting organised crime - targeting their finances, their use of the internet and by working closely with other jurisdictions.

The Department is closely studying the report and recommendations included in the US State Department 'Trafficking in Persons' (TiPs) Report 2020. Ireland maintains close ongoing contact with the United States on this issue and the report will feed into the Department's ongoing work on the National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking.

- 10.7 Migration policies

The Pact on Migration and Asylum was published on Wednesday 23 September 2020 and consists of a Communication put forward by the EU Commission and a package of nine instruments. The Pact sets out EU priorities in the years ahead which will strengthen the EU's capacity to respond to challenges that migration poses, and will pose, for the EU over the next decade.

The Department fully supports EU efforts to deal with the migration issue in a comprehensive and holistic manner including:

- increased opportunities for legal pathways for admission, including resettlement;
- the establishment and implementation of the Partnership Agreements with key third countries;
- addressing the root causes of migration and functioning return and readmission agreements.

The Programme for Government contains a commitment to create new pathways for long-term undocumented people and their dependents meeting specified criteria to regularise their status within 18 months of the formation of the Government, bearing in mind European Union and Common Travel Area commitments.

- Ireland along with other Member States of the EU, has committed, under the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum (2008), to a case-by-case approach as opposed to mass regularisation.
- A policy paper on the matter is being drafted by the Department, which will include an assessment of international best practices. Previous regularisation schemes, such as the 2018 Student Scheme and earlier such schemes, will also be considered in any future policy.

To address the matter of **Undocumented Migrants**, the Department is developing an immigration scheme which will provide residence status – subject to defined criteria – to undocumented minors and their accompanying family members in the State. Consideration is also being given to the scheme covering the regularisation of certain undocumented migrants who are resident long-term in the State and who can be seen to have provided valuable service to the State in areas such as the social care sector. The latter proposal is still a policy option being considered.

A draft policy paper is being developed and research has also been carried out to ascertain best practice in relation to the regularisation of undocumented migrants in other EU jurisdictions. In addition to this research, detailed engagement will also be needed with key stakeholders. Legal advice will be required from the Attorney General's Office. A consideration paper for the Minister will be provided in the near future.

- 16.1-16.5 measures to reduce violence, trafficking, recovery of assets, rule of law and anti-corruption measures

In recognition of the global challenges associated with financial crime, Ireland is a party to a number of international anti-corruption instruments which include the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions, and the Council of Europe's Conventions on Corruption (monitored by the Group of States against Corruption body (GRECO)). These shared agreements build collective resistance to corruption and international financial crime.

A new cross-government plan to tackle economic crime and corruption is to be spearheaded by the Minister following the publication of the Review of Structures and Strategies to Prevent, Investigate and Penalise Economic Crime and Corruption. The review was led by Mr. James Hamilton, the former Director of Public Prosecutions.

Minister McEntee has received Cabinet approval to bring forward an implementation action plan for the Review's recommendations with set timelines. The plan will identify priorities that can be implemented in the short term, such as the enactment of the Criminal Procedure Bill, which is on the current legislative programme for enactment.

This initiative will be complimented by other anti-corruption initiatives such as the forthcoming report of the Garda Síochána Inspectorate on Countering the Threat of Internal Corruption.

Among the recommendations to be actioned in the new plan are:

- Establishment of an Advisory Council against Economic Crime and Corruption to make proposals to Government on strategies and policies to tackle economic crime and corruption;
- A permanent forum of senior representatives from State agencies to facilitate greater collaboration and information sharing;
- Continuous training for investigators of economic crime and corruption;
- Engagement with the judiciary on the development of training for economic crime/corruption cases and the potential for judicial specialisation in the area;

- Provide for the Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement and the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission in their investigations to obtain evidence using covert means, in line with An Garda Síochána and the Revenue Commissioners;
- Amend Criminal Justice legislation to allow for standalone search warrants that will allow An Garda Síochána to require persons subject to arrest warrants to provide the passwords to electronic devices owned or controlled by them.

The Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB) is the body charged with identifying and investigating the proceeds of criminal conduct and the taking of actions under the law to deny and deprive persons of the benefits of assets that are the proceeds of criminal conduct by freezing, preserving and confiscating these assets.

CAB's methods have evolved to tackle new methods of criminality. In recent years CAB has dealt with a number of cases relating to cryptocurrencies. In February 2020, the Minister welcomed a High Court ruling on foot of an application by CAB which approved the seizure of a sum in excess of €52 million worth of Bitcoin. This particular case represents one of the largest single-value assets ever seized by CAB.

The CAB has continued its extensive cooperation with law enforcement agencies in Northern Ireland, including the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the National Crime Agency (NCA).

Internationally, the Bureau continues to liaise and conduct investigations with law enforcement and judicial authorities throughout Europe and worldwide and is effective at international level as the designated Asset Recovery Office (ARO) in Ireland.

The Bureau also returned €5.4 million to the Nigerian Government following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Ireland and the Federal Republic of Nigeria in October 2020. This was the first time Ireland had taken such an action and demonstrates the continuation of Ireland's commitment to international cooperation in the fight against corruption and to assisting countries which have been adversely affected by corruption in the past.

As part of its commitment as an Asset Recovery Office, CAB cooperates with its counterparts globally. During 2020, the Bureau received 121 requests for assistance and was able to provide information in respect of all these requests. The requests were received from 29 countries worldwide.

Appendix 4: Anti-Money Laundering Compliance Competent Authority Activities

Anti-Money Laundering Compliance Competent Authority Activities - report under section 65 of the Criminal Justice (Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing) Act 2010 as amended.

The Minister for Justice as a competent authority under the Criminal Justice (Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing) Act 2010 as amended, has under section 108 of the Act delegated the Minister's competent authority functions to the Anti-Money Laundering Compliance Unit (AMLCU) in the Department. The AMLCU website, www.amlcompliance.ie, is a key information tool used by the AMLCU to disseminate information and raise awareness and contains links to the full AMLCU annual report for 2020.

In 2020, regulatory investigators of the AMLCU carried out a total of 215 onsite inspections of designated persons it supervises. Inspections were interrupted for several months from March 2020 due to the pandemic.

2020 inspections comprised 141 inspections of High Value Goods Dealers (HVGDs); 62 inspections of Trust or Company Service Providers (TCSPs); 1 inspection of a Private Members Club (PMC) and 11 inspections of Tax Advisors/External Accountants.

The AMLCU also authorises Trust or Company Service Providers (TCSPs.) It processed 181 TCSP authorisation renewals, new applications and revocations in 2020. In June 2020, the AMLCU presented to 476 global participants at a Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Supervisors Forum for Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Professionals, while in October 2020, the AMLCU hosted a webinar on the theme of suspicious transaction reporting which was attended by more than 370 participants.

Appendix 5: Sustainability

1. Energy

The Department of Justice, in common with all public bodies, was obliged by statute to achieve a 33% reduction in energy used, over a 2009 baseline, by end 2020. Progress is monitored and reported on annually by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

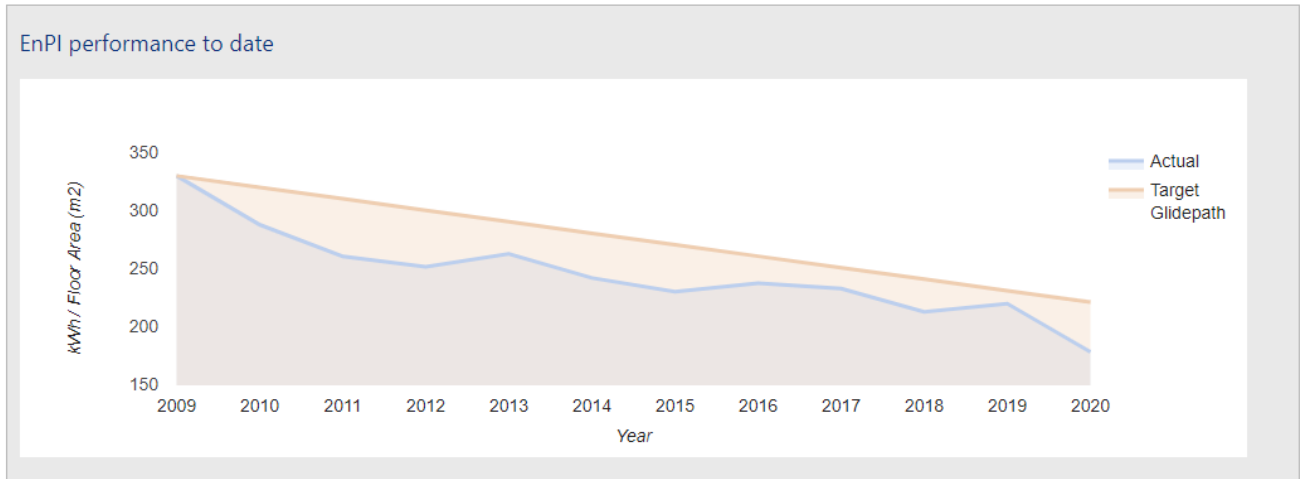
Provisional data for 2020 indicates that energy savings of 46% were achieved.

2020 results, however, must be regarded as anomalous. The most significant impact on the Department's energy consumption during 2020 was obviously the COVID-19 pandemic. Direct consequences of the response to the pandemic resulted in the temporary closure of public offices, and the majority of our staff pivoting to working from home, wherever possible.

This resulted in direct energy savings as computers, monitors, lights, etc. were not being used. However, savings were not as high as originally anticipated, as, for example, even where a building had reduced occupancy, the whole building still needed to be heated.

While our Green Team members were not able to meet in person, training for the team commenced, and the Department continues to participate in the OPW's Optimising Power @ Work awareness scheme.



The "33%-by-2020" target for energy reduction has now been replaced by new targets – 50% reductions in both energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, to be achieved by 2030.



Total Energy Consumption

Grid Electricity: 2,710,319 kWh TFC	Fossil: 6,589,815 kWh TFC	Renewable: 400,967 kWh TFC
-------------------------------------	---------------------------	----------------------------

Energy Savings

EnPI: 18.9% better than 2019		Consumption (TPER): 16.6% less than 2019
EnPI: 46.0% better than baseline		Consumption (TPER): 43.7% less than baseline

(Source: SEAI)

2. Carbon offsets

Under DPER circular DPE 019-001-2020, beginning in 2020, the Department of Justice is required to record the carbon emissions associated with all official flights made within a calendar year, and to pay a corresponding amount into the Climate Action Fund, based on the prevailing rate of carbon tax (€26 per tonne in 2020). The Department has made the required payment for 2020.

The number of flights, carbon total and resulting carbon offset for the Department, for 2020, is shown in our chart.

Month	Number of Flights	Carbon total in kg	Carbon offset at €0.026/kg
<i>Jan</i>	103	26781.96	696.33
<i>Feb</i>	99	20733.28	539.07
<i>Mar</i>	41	14564.08	378.67
<i>Apr</i>	0	0	0.00
<i>May</i>	1	62.5	1.63
<i>Jun</i>	1	86.9	2.26
<i>Jul</i>	3	890.6	23.16
<i>Aug</i>	8	1255.64	32.65
<i>Sep</i>	1	62.2	1.62
<i>Oct</i>	4	1239.1	32.22
<i>Nov</i>	15	4570.1	118.82
<i>Dec</i>	8	4554	118.40
Total	284	74800.36	1944.81

From 2021, carbon offsets for flights will be published on the Department's website, on a quarterly basis.

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice

Tuarascáil Bhliantúil 2020



Clár

Brollach ón Aire Dlí agus Cirt	109
Réamhrá ón Ard-Rúnaí.....	111
1. Timpeallacht Oibriúcháin na Roinne	113
1.1 Freagrachtaí na Roinne	113
1.2 Dualgas na hEarnála Poiblí	113
2. Struchtúr na Roinne	117
2.1 Forléargas ar an Roinn	117
2.2 Forléargas ar Cholúin agus ar Fheidhmeanna	118
2.3 Feidhmeanna laistigh de na Colúin Ceartais Shibhialta agus Ceartais Choiriúil	119
2.4 Feidhmeanna laistigh den Cholún Láir	121
3. An bhliain 2020 i bhfigiúirí	123
4. Súil siar ar an mbliain 2020	124
4.1 Eanáir-Márta	124
4.2 Aibreán-Meitheamh	128
4.3 Iúil-Meán Fómhair	132
4.4 Deireadh Fómhair-Nollaig	135
5. Beartas, Rialachas agus Soláthar Seirbhíse Inimirce.....	140
5.1 Léargas Ginearálta ar an mBeartas Ceartais Choiriúil	140
5.2 Léargas Ginearálta ar Rialachas an Cheartais Choiriúil	143
5.3 Léargas Ginearálta ar an mBeartas Ceartais Shibhialta	147
5.4 Léargas Ginearálta ar Rialachas an Cheartais Shibhialta	153
5.5 Léargas Ginearálta ar Sholáthar Seirbhíse Inimirce	154
6. Reachtaíocht	157
Billí Reachtaíochta Coiriúla aachtaithe i 2020	157
Reachtaíocht Choiriúil idir lámha i 2020	158
Reachtaíocht Gnóthaí Eorpacha	164
Reachtaíocht Ceartais Shibhialta	164
7. Aghaidh á tabhairt ar Dhúshlán COVID-19	166
Freagairt na Roinne.....	166
Pleanáil Theagmhasach laistigh den Roinn	167
Scrúdú ar Rioscaí Ceirde laistigh den Roinn	167

Struchtúir Phleanála agus Chomhordaithe Leathana na Roinne agus na nGníomhaireachtaí	167
Reachtaíocht	168
Plean Gníomhaíochta agus Feachtas Feasachta um Fhoréigean Baile	169
Seirbhísí Inimirce	171
An tAonad Bainistithe Teorann	172
Cosaint Idirnáisiúnta	172
Dúnadh Sealadach na hOifige Inimirce	173
Síneadh Sealadach ar Cheadanna Inimirce	174
Seirbhísí Víosa	174
Clár Tarscaoilte Víosa Gearrfhanachta Éireannaí ar fionraí go Sealadach	175
Córas Athnuachana Clárúcháin ar Líne do neamhnáisiúnaigh a bhí lonnaithe i mBaile Átha Cliath	175
Saoránacht	176
Comhoibriú Thuaidh-Theas	177
Freagairt an Gharda Síochána.....	178
Achoimre ar Shocruithe Teagmhais	179
An tÚdarás Póilíneachta	180
Freagairt na Seirbhíse Cúirteanna.....	181
An Dlí Teaghlaigh	182
An Grúpa Oibre ar Éifeachtúlachtaí Ceartais Choiriúil	183
An Grúpa Pleanála Meántearma maidir le Ceartas Sibhialta	183
Freagairt Sheirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann	184
Achoimre ar Shocruithe Teagmhais	184
Scagthástáil agus Tástáil do COVID-19 sa Phríosún	186
Freastal ar Chúirteanna	186
Coraintín agus Cuirteanna	187
Staid ag deireadh na bliana	188
Gníomhaireachtaí, Oifigí agus Comhlachtaí Eile	188
Seirbhísí Cróinéirí agus Paiteolaíochta	188
An Biúró um Shócmhainní Coiriúla	189
An Binse Cúitimh i leith Díobhálacha Coiriúla	190
An Coimisiún um Chosaint Sonraí	190
Eolaíocht Fhóirínseach Éireann	191
Coimisiún Ombudsman an Gharda Síochána	191
Cigireacht an Gharda Síochána	192
An Oifig um Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta	193

An Binse Achomhairc um Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta	193
Seirbhís Dócmhainneachta na hÉireann	194
Oifig Aicmithe Scannán na hÉireann	194
An Bord um Chúnamh Dlíthiúil	195
An tÚdarás Rialála Seirbhísí Dlí	195
An Bord Athbhreithnithe Meabhair-Shláinte (An Dlí Coiriúil)	196
Oifig Chigire na bPríosún	196
An tÚdarás Rialála Seirbhísí Maoine	197
Oifig an Phaiteolaí Stáit	197
An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh	198
An tÚdarás Póilíneachta	199
Aguisín 1: Gníomhaireachtaí, Oifigí agus Comhlachtaí faoi choimirce na Roinne	200
Aguisín 2: Tuairisciú ar Sholáthar Poiblí Glas.....	201
Aguisín 3: Spriocanna Forbartha Inbhuanaithe	202
Aguisín 4: Gníomhaíochtaí na nÚdarás Inniúil um Chomhlíonadh Frith-Sciúrtha Airgid ..	208
Aguisín 5: Inbhuanaitheacht	209

Brollach ón Aire Dlí agus Cirt



Is mór an onóir dom Tuarascáil Bhliantúil 2020 mo Roinne a chur i láthair. Tugann an tuarascáil seo sonraí ní hamháin ar dhul chun cinn leanúnach chlár Bunathraithe na Roinne, ach léiríonn sí freisin tionchar phaindéim COVID-19 agus an dul chun cinn atá déanta maidir lenár gcuaspóirí beartais a chur chun cinn le linn an ama seo.

Chruthaigh COVID-19 dúshlán ollmhóra d'fhoireann agus do ghníomhaireachtaí na Roinne. Bhí go leor de m'oifigh ar an líne thosaigh i bhfreagairt na tíre ar an bpaindéim, inár ngníomhaireachtaí agus sa Roinn féin, agus as sin, gabhaim buíochas ó chroí leo. Is cúis mhór bhróid dom a bheith ag obair in éineacht le foireann chumasach dhícheallach san earnáil Dlí agus Cirt.

Is é fíis mo Roinne Éire atá sábháilte, cóir agus uilechuimsitheach a chur chun cinn, agus de réir

mar a sháraigh an tír an t-iliomad dúshlán a chruthaigh paindéim COVID-19, bhí an fócas ar an bhfíis sin níos tábhachtaí ná riamh.

Léiríonn na hiarrachtaí chun dul i dtaithe ar na dúshlán a bhain le COVID-19 a leagtar amach sa Tuarascáil Bhliantúil seo, agus na dúshlán sin a shárú, go bhfuil foireann na Roinne agus a hoifigí, a ghníomhaireachtaí agus a comhlachtaí toilteanach oibriú i ngach uile chúinse ar mhaithe le freastal níos fearr a dhéanamh ar leas an phobail.

Sonraítear sa tuarascáil seo na freagairtí tosaigh ar an bpaindéim nuair a tháinig sí chun cinn den chéad uair ag tús na bliana, agus na pleananna teagmhais a forbraíodh de réir mar a bhí scála an scéil le feiceáil. Molaim na foirne ar fad a d'oibrigh chomh crua ar na pleananna sin chun dul i ngleic le dúshlán a bhí ag athrú i gcónaí, agus ceann nach bhfacthas le céad bliain roimhe sin.

Tuigim go maith freisin gur theastaigh dea-thoil agus obair an-chrua ó go leor daoine ar an talamh de bharr na bpleananna agus na nósanna imeachta a ceapadh chun ár dtír a choinneáil slán.

Nuair a bhí an ghéarchéim ina neart, ba iad baill an Gharda Síochána aghaidh fhíorphoiblí an Stáit don iliomad daoine ar casadh orthu iad ag seicphointí fíorfheiceálacha agus ag patróil áitiúla. Mar gheall ar a bpolasaí gairmiúil ach cairdiúil chun daoine a mhealladh, iad a chur ar an eolas agus iad a spreagadh chun na srianta a chomhlíonadh, bhí na daoine ar na sráideanna ar a suaimhneas nuair a bhí an ghéarchéim ag cur gnáthshaol go leor daoine i mbaol.

Tá moladh agus buíochas mór tuillte ag na gníomhaireachtaí, oifigí agus comhlachtaí ar fad a oibríonn leis an Roinn seo as a gcuid oibre i mbliain an-deacair. Tá mé thar a bheith buíoch díobhsan ar fad nach raibh in ann oibriú ón mbaile mar gheall ar an bpost a bhí acu, díobhsan ar fad a d'oibrigh ar fud ár seirbhísí inimirce, ar ár gcórais TF agus i ndomhan aghaidh ar aghaidh na Seirbhíse Cúirteanna, Sheirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann agus ár gcórais promhaidh.



Tá mórán gníomhaireachtaí agus daoine aonair eile ann a bhfuil buíochas ag dul dóibh agus tá a gcuid oibre mionsonraithe sa tuarascáil seo. Thar mo cheann féin, agus thar ceann an Aire Stáit, Séamus de Brúin TD, ba mhaith liom buíochas a ghabháil le foireann uile na Roinne, agus leis na comhlachtaí atá faoina cúram, as a seirbhís eiseamláireach agus as a dtiomantas as cuimse don tseirbhís phoiblí sa bhliain dheacair seo.

Eiléana Nic an tSaoi, TD
Aire Dlí agus Cirt

Réamhrá ón Ard-Rúnaí

In 2020, ba iad paindéim COVID-19 agus ár bhfreagairt uirthi ba mhó a bhí chun tosaigh inár gcuid oibre. Laistigh de leathanaigh na tuarascála seo tugtar tuiscint cheart ar na hiarrachtaí éachtacha a rinne an oiread sin dár gcomhghleacaithe chun a chinntiú go leanfadh muid lenár bhfreagracht don stát agus do shaoránaigh an stáit a chomhlíonadh.

Laistigh de sheachtainí ó thús na géarchéime, bhí na céadta ball foirne bogtha ag an Roinn seo go cianobair iomlán. Bhí an lóistíocht a bhain leis sin ann féin an-chasta agus bhíothas ábalta í a chur i gcrích mar gheall ar an obair chrua agus na huaireanta fada a chuir na baill foirne ar fad a bhí bainteach leis isteach, agus táim buíoch díbh ar fad.



Ach, ag go leor pointí le linn phaindéim COVID-19, bhí comhghleacaithe faoi bhrú mór, mar nach raibh na 'gnáthbhealaí' iomchuí a thuilleadh nó nár fhreastail siad ar ár riachtanais. Is léiriú é ar an eagraíocht ar fad a bheith ag cur ár luachanna maidir le hoscailteacht, comhoibriú agus gairmiúlacht i bhfeidhm i ndáiríre go raibh seirbhísí ríthábhachtacha á soláthar i gcónaí.

Níl neamhaird á déanamh ach an oiread againn ar an bhfírinne go raibh roinnt deacrachtaí i réimsí áirithe. Bhí tionchar ag srianta sláinte poiblí ar na rannóga sin a bhraitheann, de réir a nádúir, ar idirghníomhaíocht duine le duine nó ar chomhfhreagras páipéarbhunaithe. Is fiú a thabhairt faoi deara, áfach, gur fhorbair na rannóga seo modhanna soláthair malartacha agus córais nua ar líne i gcomhar lenár bhfoirne Bainistithe agus Teicneolaíochta Faisnéise, Reachtaíochta agus Oibríochtaí, ionas go raibh muid ábalta leanúint ar aghaidh lenár ndualgais a dhéanamh ar son an phobail.

Is fiú a thabhairt chun suntais freisin, in ainneoin an riosca ó COVID-19, gur lean an fhoireann líne tosaigh ag obair sa Roinn agus inár ngníomhaireachtaí ar bhonn laethúil. Gné eile den Roinn seo agus dá foireann is ea an díograis seo i leith dualgais agus seirbhíse poiblí agus tá mé an-bhródúil as sin.

Sular thosaigh paindéim COVID-19, bhí ár dtionscadal Bunathraithe stairiúil díreach críochnaithe againn, rud a cheadaigh dúinn oiriúnú go dinimiciúil do dhúshláin phaindéim COVID-19 agus tá muid ábalta anois cleachtas dhearfacha na hoibre solúbtha, an digitithe agus an chomhoibrithe, a d'oibrigh go maith dúinn le linn na géarchéime seo, a dhaingniú sa Roinn.

Ba muid an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt arís i mí na Samhna nuair a aistríodh Comhionannas chuig an Roinn nua mhéadaithe Leanaí, Comhionannais, Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige. Bhí ár gcomhghleacaithe sna réimsí seo freagrach as go leor de na beartais fhorásacha chomhionannais agus na hathruithe reachtacha a chuidigh le hathchóiriú a dhéanamh ar chreat sóisialta na hÉireann. Is oidhreacht iontach í a gcuid oibre i réimsí chearta an duine, in-rochtaineacht, cearta Leispiacha, Aeracha, Déghnéasacha, Trasinscneacha, Idirghnéasacha agus dul i ngleic le ciníochas, agus is cinnte gur chuidigh sé le hÉirinn atá níos córa a bhaint amach. Tá muid tiomanta do na prionsabail sin a chothú san obair ar fad a dhéanann muid.

Is gnó a bhaineann le daoine é an ceartas. Tá brí agus cuspóir lenár gcuid oibre mar go mbíonn tionchar díreach aici ar an bpobal, go minic ag amanna leochaileachta nó géarchéime pearsanta. De réir a chéile, is gné thábhachtach dár gcultúr eagraíochtúil deiseanna a chruthú chun éisteacht leis na daoine is mó a dtéann ár gcuid oibre i bhfeidhm orthu agus chun fadhbanna a réiteach leo. Tugann comhoibriú bríoch iontaofa léargas luachmhar dúinn, agus bíonn torthaí a mbíonn bonn eolais níos fearr fúthu agus níos inbhuanaithe mar thoradh air.

Sa Tuarascáil Bhliantúil seo tugtar breac-chuntas ar chuid dár gcuid oibre sa bhliain 2020, ach léiríonn a raon agus a leithead an tseirbhís eiseamláireach a chuireann foireann na Roinne ar fáil d’Airí, don Oireachtas agus don phobal.

Creidim gur féidir linn ar fad a bheith bródúil as na haschuir seo, atá mar theist ar thiomantas agus ar scil gach duine a oibríonn don Roinn féin agus dá gníomhaireachtaí ar fud earnáil an Cheartais.

Oonagh McPhillips
Ard-Rúnaí

4. Timpeallacht Oibriúcháin na Roinne

1.1 Freagrachtaí na Roinne

Oibríonn an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt chun slándáil an phobail agus an tslándáil náisiúnta a chur ar aghaidh, ceartas agus comhionannas a chur chun cinn, agus cearta an duine a chosaint, chun an fhís atá againn d'Éirinn atá sábháilte, cóir agus uilechuimsitheach a thabhairt chun fáil.

Clúdaíonn sainchúram na Roinne gníomhaíochtaí chomh héagsúil le slándáil an Stáit, cosaint beatha agus maoine, cosc agus brath na coireachta, maoirsiú ar sheirbhísí chun maoin a cheannach agus a dhíol, imirce isteach chuig an Stát a bhainistiú, Seirbhís Cúirteanna a chur ar fáil, seirbhísí rialála éagsúla eile a sholáthar agus ár ndlíthe coiriúla agus sibhialta a nua-shonrú.

Tá siad seo ríthábhachtach chun sochaí dhaonlathach a chothú agus ní mór iad a fheidhmiú ar bhealach a léiríonn an tiomantas do chearta an duine agus don chomhionannas atá leagtha amach i mBunrecht na hÉireann agus sa Choinbhinsiún Eorpach um Chearta an Duine.

Tá ról tábhachtach ag an Roinn go hidirnáisiúnta, go háirithe i gcomhthéacs na Comhairle AE um Cheartas agus um Ghnóthaí Baile. Tá baint shuntasach ag an Roinn freisin le comhlachtaí idirnáisiúnta eile amhail Comhairle na hEorpa, na Náisiúin Aontaithe agus an Eagraíocht Idirnáisiúnta Saothair.

Déanann gníomhaireachtaí a fheidhmíonn ar bhonn reachtúil nó ar bhonn riaracháin réimse freagrachtaí eile a fheidhmiú freisin thar ceann an Aire.

1.2 Dualgas na hEarnála Poiblí

Tá Dualgas na hEarnála Poiblí (Alt 42 den Acht fá Choimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta an Duine agus Comhionannas, 2014) ag teacht le feidhmeanna agus luachanna lárnacha na Roinne Dlí agus Cirt. Is mór ag an Roinn i gcónaí an comhionannas agus cearta an duine agus leanann sí uirthi á gcur chun cinn trína cuid oibre ó lá go lá, bíodh sin ag forbairt beartas agus reachtaíochta, nó ag cur príomhsheirbhísí poiblí ar fáil ar bhealach éifeachtúil cóir agus le hionracas agus meas ar dhínit an duine.

Tá Dualgas na hEarnála Poiblí chomh hábhartha céanna le taithí fhoireann na Roinne, atá tiomanta do thimpeallacht a chruthú a chothaíonn rannpháirtíocht dhearfach, anailís chriticiúil, cumarsáid oscailte macánta agus a chuimsíonn peirspictíochtaí éagsúla. Le linn 2020, rinne an Roinn athbhreithniú agus leasú ar na Luachanna eagrúcháin. Bhí sraith Luachanna athnuaithe mar thoradh ar phróiseas comhairliúcháin leis an bhfoireann agus leis an mbainistíocht shinsearach; *Oscailte, Comhoibríoch* agus *Gairmiúil*. Seolfar na Luachanna nua go foirmiúil in 2021 le clár tacaíochta oibre chun na Luachanna agus na hiompraíochtaí gaolmhara a dhaingniú inár gcleachtais oibre agus inár gcultúr amach anseo.

Forbraíodh Ráiteas Straitéise 2021-2023 na Roinne Dlí agus Cirt freisin le linn 2020, agus bhí comhairliúchán agus rannpháirtíocht fhairsing i gceist le comhlachtaí agus le comhpháirtithe ar fud na hearnála dlí agus cirt i gcoitinne; Ranna eile rialtais, an Coiste Oireachtais um Cheartas agus roinnt Eagraíochtaí Neamhrialtasacha. Chruthaigh próiseas aighneachtaí poiblí a poiblíodh ar láithreán gréasáin agus ar ardáin meán sóisialta na Roinne os cionn 200 aighneacht a bhí mar bhonn eolais agus mar thaca ag forbairt ár Ráitis Straitéise.

Straitéis CÉC/An Coiste um Chomhionannas, Éagsúlacht, Cuimsiú agus Dualgas na hEarnála Poiblí

I rith 2020, bhunaigh an Roinn an Coiste um Chomhionannas, Éagsúlacht, Cuimsiú agus Dualgas na hEarnála Poiblí chun maoirseacht a dhéanamh ar Dhualgas Ceart Daonna agus Comhionannais na hearnála poiblí agus chun comhionannas, éagsúlacht agus cuimsiú a cheapadh, a mhaoirsiú agus a chur chun cinn don Roinn Dlí agus Cirt. Tháinig an Coiste le chéile trí huaire agus reáchtáil siad dhá cheardlann in 2020.

Príomhchuspóir atá ag an gCoiste is ea an chéad Straitéis de chuid na Roinne maidir le Comhionannas, Éagsúlacht agus Cuimsiú a fhorbairt. Díreoidh dréachtchuspóirí na straitéise seo ar: feabhas a chur ar inrochtaineacht agus ar chaighdeán ár seirbhísí; tacú le lucht saothair oilte agus éagsúil a fhorbairt; cultúr a éascaíonn, a thacaíonn agus a spreagann rannpháirtíocht ó gach duine san ionad oibre a thógáil agus a dhaingniú; feasacht chultúir a chur chun cinn. Tabharfar aird chuí sa Straitéis freisin ar ár ngealltanais ar fud roinnt straitéisí náisiúnta, chomh maith lenár n-oibleagáidí faoi Alt 42 den Acht fá Choimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta an Duine agus Comhionannas, 2014.

Tá tús curtha le forbairt na straitéise agus cuimseoidh an cur chuige céim chomhairliúcháin fhairsing lenár bpáirtithe leasmhara inmheánacha chomh maith le teagmháil le páirtithe leasmhara seachtracha. Tá an straitéis le foilsiú i Ráithe 3, 2021, agus beidh sí lárnach do mhisean na Roinne oibriú chun Éire a bheith sábháilte, cóir, uilechuimsitheach.

ÁSP 2020 Gníomh 16 – Samhail Aibíochta

Tá an Garda Síochána agus an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt ina gcomhthionscnóirí ar Ghníomh 16 faoin gcreat Ár Seirbhís Phoiblí (ÁSP) 2020– *chun comhionannas, éagsúlacht agus cuimsiú a chur chun cinn sa tseirbhís poiblí*. I measc na bpríomhtháirgí ó obair na Foirne Gníomhaíochta bhí ráiteas físe, a cheanglaíonn ar Ranna Rialtais agus ar chomhlachtaí seirbhíse poiblí eile cur chuige réamhghníomhach a ghlacadh i leith an Chomhionannais, na hÉagsúlachta agus an Chuimsithe, mar aon le Samhail Aibíochta, a ceapadh chun cabhrú le heagraíochtaí a bhfeidhmíocht a léiriú agus a mheas ar fud roinnt réimsí tábhachtacha. Déanfaidh an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt an tSamhail Aibíochta a phíolótú mar uirlis féinmheasúnaithe agus úsáidfear na torthaí chun bonn eolais a chur faoi fhorbairt a straitéise Comhionannais, Éagsúlachta agus Cuimsithe (CÉC).

Foghlaim agus Forbairt

In ainneoin na srianta a bhain le paidéim COVID-19, chuir an Roinn roinnt seisiún ionductaithe ar líne ar fáil d'iontrálaithe nua le linn 2020. Úsáideadh na seisiúin sin chun aird a dhíriú ar an mbealach a gcuireann an Roinn comhionannas deiseanna agus dínit san ionad oibre chun cinn agus chun Oifigeach Idirchaidrimh Míchumais na Roinne a chur in aithne do na hiontrálaithe nua. Chuir an tOifigeach léargas ginearálta ar fáil ar na hacmhainní atá ar fáil don fhoireann ar fad.

Mar chuid dár dtionscnaimh forbartha éagsúla, féachann an Roinn le tacú le baill foirne staidéar breise agus forbairt ghairmiúil leanúnach a dhéanamh mar aon le hidirghabhálacha spriocdhírith foireann-bhunaithe. Mar shampla, d'óstáil an Roinn oiliúint a chuir an tÚdarás Náisiúnta Míchumais i láthair ar ábhar an mhíchumais agus na saincheist-eanna atá le breithniú nuair atá beartas agus reachtaíocht á gceapadh. Ar na modúil shaincheaptha eile a forbraíodh agus a cuireadh ar fáil bhí: *Aighnis agus Imscrúdú Foirne Scaipthe a Bhainistiú, Féinchúram, Teorainneacha a Chruthú, agus Iompraíochtaí Dúshlánacha a Bhainistiú*.

In ainneoin sos i dtosach báire mar gheall ar COVID-19 ag tús 2020, lean roinnt ball foirne ar aghaidh arís ag déanamh staidéir ar chlár teastais i Staidéar Inimirce le hOllscoil Chathair Átha Cliath. Tá an clár, atá in oiriúint go sonrach do riachtanais na Roinne, dírithe ar bhaill foirne atá ag obair i réimsí inimirce na heagraíochta. Ina theannta sin, rinne roinnt ball foirne iarratas ar mhaoiniú ar ár Scéim Bhliantúil Aisíochta Táillí agus fuair siad maoiniú chun tabhairt faoi chúrsaí oideachais iariontrála i gCearta an Duine agus Comhionannas.

Intéirneachtaí agus Socrúcháin Oibre

Comhoibríonn an Roinn freisin le *Ahead* ar a chlár *Willing Able Mentoring* (WAM). Tá sé mar aidhm ag an gclár seo rochtain ar an margadh saothair a chur chun cinn do chéimithe faoi mhíchumas, agus cumas fostóirí a fhorbairt chun míchumas a chomhtháthú san ionad oibre príomhshrutha. I rith 2020, cuireadh tús le socrúchán amháin faoin gclár seo, ach mar gheall ar an bpaindéim cuireadh socrúcháin eile ar fionraí.

Éascaíonn an Roinn roinnt socrúchán taithí oibre idirbhliana freisin. Le déanaí, tharla sé seo i gcomhar le Scéim Socrúcháin Lár na Cathrach Thoir Thuaidh. É sin ráite, de dheasca srianta sláinte poiblí agus bacainní praiticiúla, níorbh fhéidir scoláirí Idirbhliana a thabhairt isteach in 2020.

An Coiste Comhairleach um Míchumas

Cuireann Coiste Comhairleach na Roinne fóram ar fáil le haghaidh rannpháirtíochta idir oifigigh de chuid na Roinne, ionadaithe de chuid an Údaráis Náisiúnta Míchumais agus ionadaithe de chuid an Ghrúpa Páirtithe Leasmhara um Míchumas, go háirithe i ndáil le cur i bhfeidhm na Straitéise Náisiúnta um Chuimsiú Daoine faoi Mhíchumais. Chomh maith leis sin, tugann sé deis don Roinn nuashonrú a dhéanamh ar shaincheisteanna reatha atá ina n-ábhar spéise agus tugann sé deis do na grúpaí saincheisteanna atá ina n-ábhar inní dóibh a chur in iúl.

Oifigeach Rochtana

Tá Oifigeach Rochtana ag an Roinn de réir Alt 26(2) den Acht um Míchumas. Tá an tOifigeach Rochtana freagrach as cúnamh a sholáthar, a shocrú nó a chomhordú do dhaoine faoi mhíchumas ar mian leo rochtain a fháil ar na seirbhísí a sholáthraíonn an Roinn. Feidhmíonn an tOifigeach Rochtana freisin mar phointe teagmhála do dhaoine faoi mhíchumas ar mian leo rochtain a fháil ar sheirbhísí den sórt sin.

5. Struchtúr na Roinne

2.1 Forléargas ar an Roinn

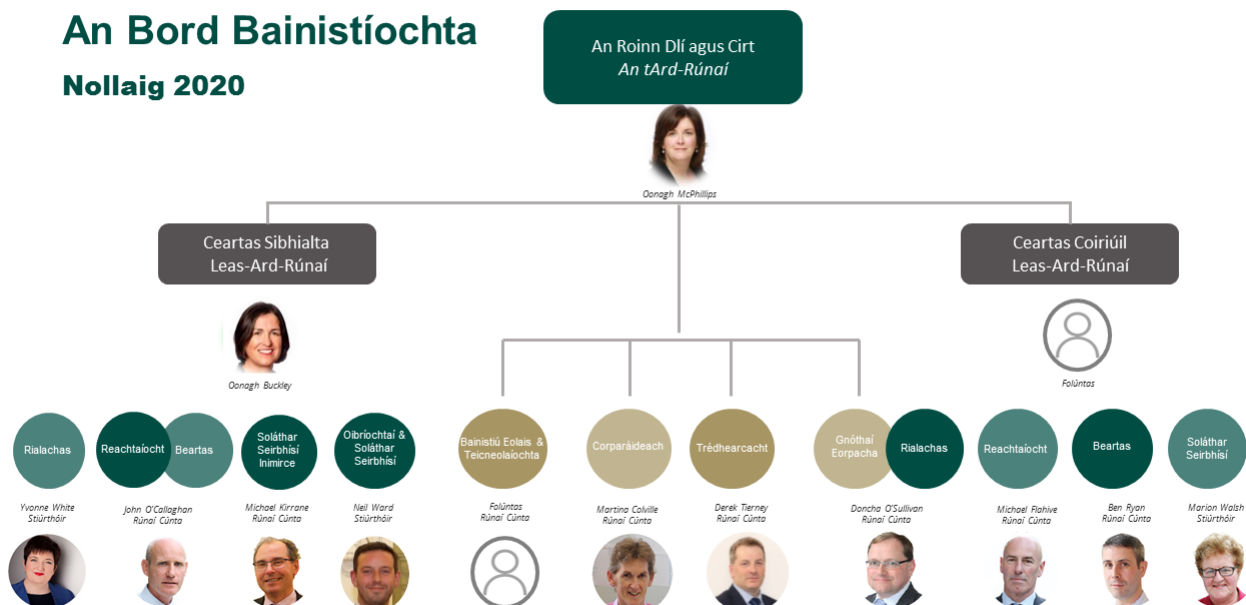
Tá an Roinn ailínithe faoi dhá cholún, **Ceartas Sibhialta** agus **Ceartas Coiriúil**, gach colún díobh faoi stiúir Leas-Rúnaí. Tá na feidhmeanna seo a leanas i gceist faoin dá cholún: **Beartas**, **Reachtaíocht**, **Rialachas**, agus **Oibríochtaí agus Soláthar Seirbhíse**.

Trí thacú le hobair an dá cholún déantar feidhmeanna na **Trédhearcachta**, **Gnóthaí Corp-aráideacha** agus **Gnóthaí Eorpacha** a chumasú.

Bainistíonn an fheidhm **Soláthar Seirbhísí Inimirce** atá lonnaithe i gcolún an Cheartais Sibhialta seirbhísí inimirce agus cosanta idirnáisiúnta don Roinn agus don Stát.

Tá an struchtúr seo leagtha amach chun níos mó solúbthachta, chomh maith le seirbhís níos fearr dár gcustaiméirí, breis trédhearcachta agus cuntasachta, agus pleanáil straitéiseach agus forbairt beartas bunaithe ar fhianaise a chumasú, agus muid ag fanacht dílis do luachanna traidisiúnta na státseirbhíse amhail ionracas, neamhchlaontacht agus gairmiúlacht.

An Bord Bainistíochta Nollaig 2020



2.2 Forléargas ar Cholúin agus ar Fheidhmeanna

An Colún Ceartais Sibhialta

- Clár athchóirithe agus nuachóirithe sa cheartas sibhialta a stiúradh, leis na haidhmeanna rochtain ar cheartas a chur chun cinn, clár reachtaíochta an Rialtais a thabhairt ar aghaidh, oibleagáidí idirnáisiúnta a chomhlíonadh, agus comhairle a thabhairt ar thionscnaimh reachtaíochta i réimse an Cheartais agus an Chomhionannais go ginearálta.
- Maoirseacht a dhéanamh ar fhorbairt beart straitéiseach agus reachtach chun an comhionannas, cuimsiú agus comhtháthú a chur chun cinn i sochaí na hÉireann, agus córas inimirce freagrúil atá cóir cothrom a chur chun cinn, ag obair go dlúth le raon leathan gníomhaithe Rialtais agus sochaí sibhialta.
- Cabhrú leis an Ard-Rúnaí fís shoiléir a leagan síos don Roinn trí straitéis, beartas, cuspóirí agus spriocanna a fhorbairt do gach gné d'obair na Roinne agus an clár leathan d'athrú eagraíochtúil atá á chur i bhfeidhm sa Roinn a chur i gcrích.

Aistríodh an fhreagracht as roinnt feidhmeanna maidir le comhionannas, míchumas, lánpháirtíú imirceach, Seirbhísí Cóiríochta Cosanta Idirnáisiúnta agus Clár Cosanta Dídeanaithe na hÉireann chuig an Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais, Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige.

An Colún Ceartais Choiriúil

- Fís shoiléir a leagan síos don cholún Ceartais Choiriúil trí straitéis a fhorbairt le fócas ar leith ar chomhoibriú éifeachtach ar fud an chórais ceartais choiriúil agus le comhpháirtithe eile ar fud Ranna agus gníomhaireachtaí Rialtais, agus ag an am céanna ag seasamh le neamhspleáchas agus cuntasacht eagraíochtaí na bpáirtithe leasmhara aonair.
- Maoirseacht a dhéanamh ar chur i bhfeidhm an athraithe ó bhonn atá leagtha amach i dtuarascáil 2018 an Choimisiúin um Thodhchaí na Póilíneachta in Éirinn.
- Slándáil náisiúnta agus comhoibriú Thuaidh-Theas/Thoir-Thiar ar chúrsaí coiriúla agus slándála.

- Cabhrú leis an Ard-Rúnaí fíís shoiléir a leagan síos don Roinn trí straitéis, beartas, cuspóirí agus spriocanna a fhorbairt do gach gné d'obair na Roinne agus an clár leathan d'athrú eagraíochtúil atá á chur i bhfeidhm sa Roinn a chur i gcrích.

An Colún Láir

Tacaíonn feidhmeanna an cholúin láir – Trédhearcacht, Gnóthaí Corparáideacha agus Eorpacha – le spriocanna straitéiseacha agus oibríochtúla an cholúin Ceartais Shibhialta agus an cholúin Ceartais Choiriúil, agus cumasaíonn sé iad.

2.3 Feidhmeanna laistigh de na Colúin Ceartais Shibhialta agus Ceartais Choiriúil

Is iad seo a leanas na feidhmeanna laistigh de na colúin:

Beartas

Forbraíonn an fheidhm Beartais beartas fadtéarmach bunaithe ar fhianaise trí thaighde agus anailís a dhéanamh ar eolas agus ar shonraí ó fhoinsí éagsúla. Glacann sé dearcadh réamh-ghníomhach agus straitéiseach ar cheapadh agus ar athbhreithniú beartais ceartais agus comhionannais, agus cuireann sé ar chumas na Roinne an chomhairle is fearr agus is féidir a chur ar fáil don Aire agus don Rialtas ar mhaithe le leas fadtéarmach gach saoránach. Tá feidhm an Bheartais roinnte in dhá phríomhréimse.

Bunaíonn an réimse **Beartas Straitéiseach, Pleanála agus Taighde** clár beartais na Roinne, tugann sé comhairle maidir le tosaíochtaí beartais agus déanann sé maoirseacht ar shaolré an bheartais. Tá an fhoireann freagrach freisin as gníomhaíochtaí taighde agus meastóir-eachta a bhaineann le beartas agus as bainistiú a dhéanamh ar chomhoibrithe tionscadail, rianú beartais agus riachtanais riaracháin na feidhme beartais.

Tá an fhoireann um **Acmhainn Ábhair agus Beartas Feidhmeach** i gceannas ar fhorbairt beartais ar théamaí beartais ar leith. Déanann an fhoireann beartais AE/Idirnáisiúnta agus beartais fheidhmeacha a dhréachtú, chomh maith le dul i gcomhairle orthu agus iad a bhainistiú. Oibríonn Acmhainn Ábhair laistigh den fhoireann seo go comhoibríoch ar fud na feidhme Beartais agus ar fud na Roinne, ag soláthar eolais ar bheartais ar leith agus déanann siad ionadaíocht thar ceann na Roinne go seachtrach agus ag leibhéal an AE/Idirnáisiúnta.

Reachtaíocht

Tá an fheidhm reachtaíochta freagrach as reachtaíocht phríomha agus reachtaíocht thánaisteach a dhréachtú agus as Billí a cheapadh agus a chur trí Oifig an Ard-Aighne agus tríd an Oireachtas. Trí dhul i gcomhairle leis na páirtithe leasmhara cuí, pléitear faoin bhfeidhm reachtaíochta le dlí na hÉireann, agus le dlí an AE agus dlí Idirnáisiúnta a thrasú i ndlí na hÉireann.

Cuireann sí comhairle ar fheidhmeanna eile agus oibríonn go dlúth leo lena chinntiú go mbreithnítear gach impleacht iomchuí ag gach céim den phróiseas reachtaíochta.

Rialachas

Is í an fheidhm Rialachais an fheidhm formhaoirseachta do na gníomhaireachtaí atá faoi choimirce na Roinne. Ag obair i gcomhar, cinntíonn an fheidhm seo go bhfuil straitéis shoiléir ag gníomhaireachtaí, go mbaineann siad na caighdeáin atá aontaithe amach ó thaobh feidhmíochta, trédhearcachta agus rialachais, agus go ndéanann siad a gcuid acmhainní a bhainistiú mar is cuí. Tacaíonn an fheidhm Rialachais le Gníomhaireachtaí neamhspleácha feidhmiú go héifeachtach agus cur chuige leanúnach a ghlacadh bunaithe ar chaighdeáin aitheanta, ar féidir iad a shaincheapadh de réir gach Comhlachta mar is cuí, d'fhonn soiléireacht, cothrom na Féinne agus cuntasacht a chinntiú.

Tá liosta de na Comhlachtaí reachtúla agus neamhreachtúla atá faoi choimirce na Roinne in Aguisín 1.

Soláthar Oibríochtaí agus Seirbhísí

Tá Soláthar Seirbhísí agus Oibríochtaí ar cheann de na príomhfheidhmeanna a chuireann seirbhísí líne tosaigh ar fáil don Roinn, chomh maith le gach feidhm eile a chumasú chun feidhmiú go héifeachtach i saol a ghluaiseann agus a athraíonn go tapa. Tá na foirne **Oibríochtaí** (atá lonnaithe sa cholún Ceartais Shibhialta) freagrach as an bpleanáil, an bhainistíocht riosca agus an bhainistíocht tionscadail agus athruithe ar fad. Díríonn na foirne Oibríochtaí freisin ar fheabhas leanúnach laistigh den Roinn, trí phríomhtháscairí feidhmíochta agus spriocanna a leagan amach agus a rianú, chomh maith le taobh amuigh den Roinn, trína chinntiú go bhfaigheann gach custaiméir seirbhís custaiméara atá comhleanúnach. Déanann na foirne **Soláthar Seirbhísí** soláthar seirbhísí líne tosaigh atá

éifeachtach, láidir agus dírithe ar an gcustaiméir a bhainistiú don Roinn agus téann i gcomhairle leis na páirtithe leasmhara cuí chun deiseanna d'fheabhas leanúnach a aithint.

Soláthar Seirbhísí Inimirce (Colún an Cheartais Shibhialta amháin)

Is é cuspóir na feidhme Soláthar Seirbhísí Inimirce seirbhísí inimirce líne tosaigh atá éifeachtach, láidir agus dírithe ar an gcustaiméir a bhainistiú don Roinn agus don Stát agus, ag an am céanna, a bheith dírithe go leanúnach ar dheiseanna a aithint le feabhas leanúnach a chur ar sheirbhísí inimirce do chustaiméirí.

Cuireann an fheidhm ar chumas na foirne díriú ar aschuir agus ar thorthaí do chustaiméirí a fheabhsú fad a chinntíonn obair i gcomhar le feidhmeanna eile go bhfuil leagan amach na seirbhísí agus feabhas ar thaithí an chustaiméara i gcoilár na seirbhísí inimirce.

2.4 Feidhmeanna laistigh den Cholún Láir

Cúrsaí Corparáide

Déanann an colún Corparáide gníomhaíochtaí a chur ar aghaidh agus a bhainistiú ar fud na heagraíochta chun cur ar chumas na Roinne a cuid spriocanna straitéiseacha a bhaint amach agus seirbhísí agus próisis Roinne atá éifeachtach agus freagrúil a sholáthar. Déanann an colún Corparáide an cur chuige, na réitigh agus an t-infreastruchtúr a fhorbairt agus a chur i bhfeidhm ar fud roinnt réimsí éagsúla: teicneolaíocht, planáil airgeadais agus daoine, soláthar, dlí, rialachas corparáideach, sonraí agus taifid, comhlíonadh agus rialuithe iniúch-óireachta, taighde agus anailísíocht.

Trédhearacht

Tá freagracht ar an bhfeidhm Trédhearcachta as an bhfaisnéis ar fad a éilíonn an tAire agus ardbhainistíocht na Roinne a fhoinsiú, a mheas agus a chur in iúl, maille le caighdeán chomhsheasmhacha cumarsáide inmheánaí agus seachtraí a chinntiú. Lánpháirtíonn an fheidhm seo faisnéis, anailís agus cumarsáid ó ar fud na Roinne chun insintí comh-leanúnacha a thabhairt ar théamaí an Cheartais. Cinneann sí, ar bhonn forghníomhach, cá bhfuil gá le faisnéis a chur in iúl nó a fhoilsiú, chomh maith le freagairt ar bhealach so-fhreagúil d'arrataí a thagann isteach.

Baineann an fheidhm Trédhearcachta úsáid as bealaí éagsúla chun sin a dhéanamh, ag baint leas as an teicneolaíocht agus as faisnéis fíor-ama lena chinntiú go gcomhlíonann an tAire an gheallúint a bheith daonlathach agus freagrach do gach saoránach, don Oireachtas, do na meáin chumarsáide agus páirtithe leasmhara eile.

Gnóthaí Eorpacha

Tá Gnóthaí Eorpacha freagrach as gnó Eorpach na Roinne agus roinnt gnó idirnáisiúnta dá cuid a chomhordú agus monatóireacht a dhéanamh air, go háirithe saincheisteanna leathana a mbeadh roinnt feidhmeanna agus ranna páirteach iontu. Tacaíonn an fheidhm leis an Aire ag cruinnithe de Chomhairle na nAirí Ceartais agus Gnóthaí Baile. Ina theannta sin, oibríonn an fheidhm le réimsí eile den Rialtas chun cur chuige straitéiseach na hÉireann a mhúnlú i leith Thodhchaí na hEorpa agus Chlár Cheannairí an AE, agus imríonn ról gníomhach chun rannpháirtíocht agus comhoibriú níos mó a spreagadh le comhghleacaithe san Eoraip ar shaincheisteanna ábhartha Dlí agus Cirt agus Comhionannais. Cé go bhfuil an fhoireann lonnaithe i mBaile Átha Cliath, oibríonn siad go dlúth le baill foirne sa Bhruiséil agus i Strasbourg atá ar iasacht ag Buanionadaíocht na hÉireann chuig an AE. Tacaíonn an fheidhm freisin leis an Aire agus leis an Roinn araon chun freagrachtaí na Roinne i leith an Aontais Eorpaigh agus Chomhairle na hEorpa a chomhlíonadh agus chun leasanna na hÉireann go hidirnáisiúnta a chur in iúl agus ionadaíocht a dhéanamh orthu.

6. An bhliain 2020 i bhfigiúirí

Bhí Grúpa an Vóta Dlí agus Cirt comhdhéanta de 7 vóta sa bhliain 2020: an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt agus Comhionannais, an Garda Síochána, an tÚdarás Póilíneachta, Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann, an tSeirbhís Chúirteanna, an Coimisinéir Cosanta Sonraí agus Coimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta an Duine agus Comhionannas. Fostaíonn an Roinn breis agus 2,700 ball foirne, lena n-áirítear an fhoireann sin a oibríonn do chomhlachtaí a oibríonn faoina coimirce. Díobh sin, tá 1,513 duine fostaithe sa chroí-Roinn. Tá gné idirnáisiúnta ag an Roinn freisin, le beagnach 40 oifigeach fostaithe in 11 ambasáid agus misean Éireannach ar fud 4 mhór-roinn, ag obair ar raon leathan ábhar a bhaineann le cúrsaí ceartais Eorpaigh agus idirnáisiúnta.

2,952



Ceist Pharlaiminte freagartha in 2020

50,000+



Ríomhphost agus litir a fuarthas in 2020

797



Iarraidh Saorála Faisnéise a
próiseáil in 2020

429



Iarraidh ar Rochtain ó Ábhair Sonraí a
fuarthas
in 2020

2,700



Ball foirne a bhí fostaithe ag an Roinn
in 2020

€2.99 billiún



Ollchaiteachas iomlán do ghrúpa an
Vóta Dlí agus Cirt in 2020

4. Súil siar ar an mbliain 2020

4.1 Eanáir-Márta

Ráiteas ón Roinn Dlí agus Cirt maidir leis an ráig den Choróinvíreas sa tSín

Thug ráiteas a d'eisigh an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt ar an 31 Eanáir, 2020, maidir le seasamh inimirce náisiúnach Síneach in Éirinn réamhbhlaiseadh den tsaincheist a bheadh chun tosaigh sa bhliain. Thug an Roinn faoi deara 'an staid atá ag síorathrú sa tSín' agus dúirt sí go raibh sí i ndlúth-theagmháil le Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte.

An chéad chruinniú riamh den Chomhairle Bhreithiúnach

Ar an 7 Feabhra, 2020, bhí a céad chruinniú iomlánach ag an gComhairle Bhreithiúnach i gCumann Onórach Óstaí an Rí. Is baill den Chomhairle Bhreithiúnach iad comhaltaí uile den bhreithiúnacht, ón gCúirt Dúiche go dtí an Chúirt Uachtarach.

Beidh an Chomhairle freagrach as roinnt feidhmeanna breithiúnacha fiorthábhachtacha, lena n-áirítear socrú a dhéanamh maidir le hoideachas leanúnach na mbreithiúna tríd an gCoiste um Staidéar Breithiúnach, cruthú Treoirlínte do dhámhachtainí i gcásanna díobhálacha pearsanta tríd an gCoiste um Threoirlínte maidir le Díobhálacha Pearsanta, agus, go háirithe, cruthú treoirlínte pianbhreithe tríd an gCoiste um Threoirlínte maidir le Pianbhreitheanna a Ghearradh.



Fáiltíonn an tAire Ó Flannagáin roimh 201 comhalta nua sa Gharda Síochána

Chuir an tAire fáilte roimh 201 comhalta nua chuig an nGarda Síochána ar an 21 Feabhra, 2020, i ndiaidh dóibh fianú i gColáiste Oiliúna an Gharda Síochána, an Teampall Mór.

Rinne an tAire Ó Flannagáin comhghairdeas leis na hearcaigh nua agus chuir sé fáilte freisin roimh an méadú atá ag teacht ar éagsúlacht na heagraíochta.



D'fhág an searmanas gur 3,200 líon na nGardaí nua a d'fhianaigh agus a sannadh do dhualgais póilíneachta líne tosaigh ó athosclaíodh Coláiste Oiliúna an Gharda Síochána in 2014. Tá atheagrú struchtúr na nGardaí, tríd an tsamhail oibriúcháin nua, ag cabhrú freisin le hacmhainní breise a shaoradh do Ghardaí líne tosaigh.

Seoladh Chairt Nua na nÍospartach

Roimh Lá Eorpach Íospartaigh na Coireachta (22 Feabhra, 2020), d'fhoilsigh an tAire Cairt nua mhéadaithe d'Íospartaigh. Rinne an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt agus Comhionannais an Chairt a nuashonrú trí phróiseas comhairliúcháin ina raibh na Gníomhaireachtaí Stáit iomchuí ar fad, chomh maith le heagraíochtaí neamhrialtasacha a bhí ag obair agus ag tacú le hÍospartaigh.

Bronnadh Saoránacht Éireann ar 5,000 duine i gCill Airne

I sé shearmanas ar leith a reáchtáladh thar dhá lá san INEC i gCill Airne, fuair iarratasóirí rathúla ó 135 tír deimhniú eadóirseachta, agus ghlac siad mionn dílseachta do Stát na hÉireann.

Tionóladh na searmanais tar éis chinneadh na Cúirte Achomhairc i mí na Samhna, 2019, a shoiléirigh an dlí maidir le ceanglais chónaitheachta d'iarrthóirí ar shaoránacht.



Ag labhairt leis na saoránaigh nua ar an 3 Márta, 2020, dúirt an tAire Stáit Standúin: “Inniu agus sibh ag fágáil na háite seo, mar shaoránaigh bhródúla nua an Phoblachta agus an daonlathais bhunreachtúil seo, is í ár stair bhur stair agus, ar a seal, tá scéal bhur saoil ina chuid dár stairne anois.”

An tAire Ó Flannagáin ag bualadh le comhghleacaithe Eorpacha i bhFís-chomhdháil COVID-19

Ar an 16 Márta, 2020, ghlac an tAire páirt i bhfís-chomhdháil le hAirí Gnóthaí Baile agus le hAirí Sláinte ó gach cearn den AE chun plé a dhéanamh ar fhorbairt thapa na staide san Eoraip, agus conas oibriú le chéile chun dul i ngleic le scaipeadh COVID-19.



Bhí oifigigh shinsearacha Dhlí agus Chirt agus Shláinte i dteannta an Aire ag an gcruinniú, a raibh sé mar phríomhchuspóir aige saincheistanna maidir le bainistiú teorann agus sláinte a phlé, chomh maith le treoirlínte nua an Choimisiúin ar an ábhar sin.

Méadú suntasach ar chóiríocht Soláthair Dhíriú mar chuid den fhreagairt éigeandála ar phaindeim COVID-19

D'fhógair an tAire Ó Flannagáin agus an tAire Stáit Standúin go raibh breis is 650 leaba nua curtha ar fáil chun tacú le hiarratasóirí ar chosaint idirnáisiúnta le linn na géarchéime COVID-19.



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
agus Comhionannais
Department of Justice
and Equality

650
leaba bhreise don
Chóras Cosanta Idirnáisiúnta chun

1. Tacú le bearta do dhaoine leochaileacha
2. Saoráidí aonraithe seachtracha a sholáthar
3. Cuidiú le scaradh sóisialta trí líon na ndaoine in ionaid áirithe a laghdú

Ghabh na hAirí buíochas leis an bhfoireann a bhí ag obair sna hionaid as seirbhísí riachtanacha líne tosaigh a chur ar fáil agus iad imithe óna dtithe agus óna dteaghlach féin le linn na tréimhse éiginnte sin.

Síneadh Sealadach ar Cheadanna Inimirce

Mar chuid de fhreagairt na Roinne do COVID-19, d'fhógair an tAire Ó Flannagáin ar an 20 Márta, 2020, go raibh síneadh sealadach le cur ar athnuachan ar cheadanna inimirce le héifeacht láithreach. Chaomhnaigh an beart stádas dlíthiúil daoine a raibh cead acu a bhí ar tí dul in éag agus bhí sé ar cheann de na chéad bhearta dá leithéid a glacadh i rith na bliana.

4.2 Aibreán-Meitheamh

Mórfheachtas nua Teilifíse, Raidió agus Meán Sóisialta chun freastal ar Íospartaigh an Fhoréigin Baile



Seoladh mórfheachtas nua teilifíse, raidió agus meán sóisialta ar an 15 Aibreán, 2020, chun dul i ngleic le ceist thromchúiseach an fhoréigin baile i gcomhthéacs bhearta COVID-19. Bhí sé mar aidhm ag an bhfeachtas íospartaigh a chur ar a suaimhneas go raibh seirbhísí 'fós anseo', agus go raibh tosaíocht á tabhairt d'íospartaigh. D'fhorbair an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt agus Comhionannais na fógraí i gcomhar le seirbhísí líne tosaigh.

Fáiltíonn an tAire Ó Flannagáin roimh chéad-éisteacht chianda na Cúirte Uachtaraí

Ar an 20 Aibreán, den chéad uair riamh, thionóil an Chúirt Uachtarach suí le gach páirtí a bhí i láthair trí theicneolaíocht físeáin chianda. D'fháiltigh an tAire roimh fhógra na Seirbhíse Cúirteanna ag rá, "Mar a léiríodh ar fud na cruinne, tá géarchéim COVID-19 ag athrú an tsaoil ó lá go lá ar bhealaí nach bhfacthas riamh cheana. Ach, mar sin féin, tá gnó na gcúirteanna fíorthábhachtach agus, dá réir, is maith ann éisteacht an lae inniu".

Foilsíonn an tAire Standúin Dréacht-Straitéis um Cheartas i leith an Aosa Óig le haghaidh Comhairliúcháin

Ar an 1 Bealtaine, sheol an tAire Stáit a bhfuil freagracht speisialta air maidir le Ceartas Óige, Dáithí Standúin T.D., comhairliúchán ar líne ar an gcaoi ar cheart do Ghníomhaireachtaí Stáit, lena n-áirítear an córas Dlí agus Cirt, a bheith i dteagmháil le daoine óga a bhfuil an baol ann go mbeidh siad páirteach i gcoiriúlacht. Lorgaíodh tuairimí ón bpobal i gcoitinne, lena n-áirítear daoine óga, mar chuid de phróiseas comhairliúcháin níos leithne chun bonn eolais a chur faoi fhorbairt Straitéise nua um Cheartas i leith an Aosa Óig a chlúdóidh an tréimhse suas go dtí 2026.

Lá Idirnáisiúnta in aghaidh na Homafóibe, na Trasfóibe agus na Défhóibe

Chuaigh an tAire Stáit le freagracht as Comhionannas, Inimirce agus Comhtháthú, Dáithí Standúin TD, i bpáirt leis an bpobal idirnáisiúnta chun an fhís ‘Briseadh an Tosta’ a roinnt ar an Lá Idirnáisiúnta i gcoinne Homafóibe, Trasfóibe agus Défhóibe ar an 17 Bealtaine. Ag nótáil le linn phaindéim COVID-19 go mbraitheann go leor daoine LADTI+ níos mó i mbaol mar gheall ar uaigneas, dúirt an tAire Standúin: “tagann muid le chéile ar fud an domhain chun a chinntiú go gcloisfidh daoine LADTI+ ar fud na cruinne, nach féidir leo labhairt amach, fuaim an dóchais agus na dlúthpháirtíochta”.

Leathnú Líonra Oifigigh Idirchaidrimh an Gharda Síochána thar Lear

D’fhógair an tAire Ó Flannagáin go leathnófaí Líonra Oifigigh Idirchaidrimh an Gharda Síochána. Ar iarratas ó Choimisinéir an Gharda Síochána, agus tar éis cead a fháil ón Rialtas, cruthófar poist nua do Ghardaí i Washington DC, Stáit Aontaithe Mheiriceá, agus i mBogotá, an Cholóim. Is príomhghné de chur chuige an Gharda Síochána é líonra na n-oifigeach idirchaidrimh thar lear chun dul i ngleic le heagraíochtaí idirnáisiúnta coiriúlachta agus sceimhlitheoireachta.

Comhairliúchán maidir le socrú an Ráta Lascaine i gCásanna Díobhála Pearsanta

Ar an 10 Meitheamh, bhí an modh inar ceart an ráta lascaine i leith díobhálacha pearsanta a shocrú ina ábhar do chomhairliúchán poiblí a sheol an tAire Ó Flannagáin. Bhí an comhairliúchán ar cheann de mholtaí an Ghrúpa Oibre um Chostas Árachais (GOCÁ), tar éis dó scrúdú a dhéanamh ar shocrú an ráta lascaine.

Plean Gníomhaíochta i gcoinne an Chiníochais d’Éirinn le dréachtú

D'fhógair an tAire Ó Flannagáin agus an tAire Stáit Standúin in éineacht ballraíocht ar an gCoiste Frithchiníochais neamhspleách ar an 19 Meitheamh. Tá an Coiste chun Plean Gníomhaíochta nua in aghaidh an Chiníochais a dhréachtú d'Éirinn.

Rachaidh an Coiste i gcomhairle le réimse leathan daoine chun smaointe nua a fhorbairt chun ciníochas a throid in Éirinn. Molfaidh sé plean gníomhaíochta don Rialtas ag deireadh a chuid oibre, agus meastar go dtógfaidh sé tuairim is bliain. Cuimsíonn an Coiste daoine ó chúlraí éagsúla, lena n-áirítear iad siúd a bhfuil taithí bheo acu ar chiníochas, agus thionóil an coiste a chéad chruinniú trí Zúm, ar an Déardaoin 18 Meitheamh, 2020.

Córas Athnuachana Clárúcháin nua ar líne do mhic léinn atá lonnaithe i mBaile Átha Cliath, ach nach ó Limistéar Eacnamaíoch na hEorpa iad

Seoladh Córas Athnuachana Clárúcháin nua ar líne ar an 22 Meitheamh do mhic léinn atá lonnaithe i mBaile Átha Cliath, ach nach ó Limistéar Eacnamaíoch na hEorpa iad. Déanfaidh mic léinn ar mian leo a gcead a athnuachan an fhoirm iarratais a chomhlánú ar líne anois, cóipeanna de dhoiciméid tacaíochta a uaslódáil ar líne, an táille chuí a íoc agus ansin a bpas agus a gcárta Ceada Cónaithe in Éirinn (CCÉ) reatha a chur isteach tríd an bpost cláraithe. Déanfar doiciméid a sheiceáil agus, má fhorhmeastar é, déanfar an pas a stampáil agus a sheoladh ar ais tríd an bpost cláraithe agus eiseofar cárta CCÉ tríd an mearphost.

Oscailt oifigiúil Ghairdín Cuimhneacháin Fhoireann Phríosún Phort Laoise

Aithníonn an Gairdín Cuimhneacháin an tseirbhís agus an rannchuidiú a thug foireann Phríosún Phort Laoise, agus go háirithe an ról a bhí acu chun cabhrú le slándáil an náisiúin a chaomhnú le linn na dTrioblóidí. Agus an gairdín á oscailt go hoifigiúil aige ar an 23 Meitheamh, thapaigh an tAire Ó Flannagáin an deis freisin chun buíochas a ghabháil le foireann uile Sheirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann agus le príosúnaigh as a gcuid oibre eiseamláirí chun stop a chur le scaipeadh COVID-19.



Ceiliúradh neamhghnách ar Sheachtain an Bhróid



Ar an 26 Meitheamh, ghuigh an tAire agus an tAire Stáit gach rath ar gach duine a bhí ag glacadh páirt in imeachtaí Sheachtain an Bhróid agus go leor imeachtaí ag bogadh ar líne.

Nótáil na hAiri freisin go raibh sé oiriúnach go raibh céadchruinniú Choiste Stiúrtha na Straitéise Náisiúnta um Chuimsiú LADTI+

2019-2021 tar éis bheith ar siúl ar na mallaibh. Sheol an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt agus Comhionannais an Straitéis um Chuimsiú i mí na Samhna, 2019, chun cuimsiú a chur chun cinn, cearta a chosaint agus caighdeán saoil agus folláine daoine LADTI+ a fheabhsú.

Aire nua agus Aire Stáit nua ceaptha

D'fháiltigh an Roinn roimh Aire nua Dlí agus Cirt, Eiléana Nic an tSaoi, TD. Toghadh chuig Dáil Éireann í den chéad uair i bhfothoghchán i mí an Mhárta, 2013, agus atoghadh í in olltoghchán i mí Feabhra, 2016. Ceapadh an Teachta Nic an tSaoi, a bhí tar éis fónamh mar Aire Stáit le freagracht as Meabhairshláinte agus Daoine Scothaosta sa Roinn Sláinte i mí na Bealtaine, 2016, sa phost mar Aire Stáit le freagracht as Gnóthaí AE i mí an Mheithimh, 2017.



Ar an 1 Iúil, ceapadh Cathal Mac Conall Óg, T.D., sa phost mar Aire Stáit le freagracht as Athchóiriú an Dlí.

4.3 Iúil-Meán Fómhair

Comhairliúchán poiblí ar Straitéis a Fhorbairt don Chóras Ceartais Choiriúil

Sheol an Roinn comhairliúchán poiblí ag tabhairt cuireadh do phobail agus do dhaoine den phobal cur le forbairt Straitéise don Chóras Ceartais Choiriúil. Is é cuspóir na straitéise fíis chomhroinnte a leagan amach le haghaidh córas ceartais choiriúil comhcheangailte, obair chomhoibritheach a dhaingniú agus a chothú, nuálaíocht a stiúradh as a dtiocfaidh réitigh agus smachtbhannaí níos éifeachtaí, a mbeidh torthaí níos fearr ag an bpobal mar thoradh orthu.



Searmanas Fíorúil Saoránachta

D'óstáil an tAire ceann de na chéad searmanais fhíorúla saoránachta ar domhan ar an 10 Iúil, 2020. D'fhreastail 21 iarratasóir ar an ócáid phíolótach sin. Iarratasóirí ba ea iad sin a roghnaigh gan freastal ar na searmanais a reáchtáladh i mí an Mhárta san INEC i gCill Airne, Co. Chiarraí, mar gheall ar imní a bhí orthu faoi COVID-19. Bhí an tOifigeach Ceannais, an Breitheamh Ard-Chúirte ar scor, Brian Mac Mathúna, i láthair freisin agus labhair sé leis na hiarrthóirí, sular chuir sé faoi Mhionn Dílseachta don Náisiún iad.



Gairm ar Mhaoiniú do Sheirbhísí Pobail LADTI+

D'fhógair an tAire agus an tAire Leanaí, Míchumais, Comhionannais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige go raibh €700,000 á chur ar fáil do ghrúpaí iarrthacha, atá ag feidhmiú ag leibhéal náisiúnta, réigiúnach agus áitiúil, chun tacú le seirbhísí pobail agus chun infheictheacht agus cuimsiú lucht LADTI+ a chur chun cinn.

Is gné thábhachtach í Gairm ar Mhaoiniú 2020 do Sheirbhísí Pobail LADTI+ i dtacú le cur i bhfeidhm na Straitéise Náisiúnta um Chuimsiú LADTI+, a foilsíodh ar an 28 Samhain, 2019.

Comóradh ar an Lá Domhanda in aghaidh Gáinneáil ar Dhaoine, 30 Iúil

Rinne an tAire Nic an tSaoi comóradh ar an lá agus í ag rá “Is meabhrúchán tábhachtach é an Lá Domhanda in aghaidh Gáinneáil ar Dhaoine i dtaca leis an réaltacht uafásach go bhfuil an iomarca daoine ar fud an domhain fós ag fulaingt i lámha gáinneálaithe. Ach is glao chun gnímh é seo freisin dúinn ar fad, chun an t-am a thógáil chun na comharthaí a bhaineann le gáinneáil ar dhaoine a fhoghlaim.”

Níos déanaí sa bhliain, ar an 12 Deireadh Fómhair, i gcomhar le hEagraíocht Idirnáisiúnta na Náisiún Aontaithe um Imirce (EII), sheol an tAire an feachtas *#Anyone*; tionscnamh feasachta poiblí ar Gháinneáil ar Dhaoine. Áiríodh sa tionscnamh sin bearta chun feasacht a mhúscailt ar na meáin shóisialta agus i bpríomh-mhoil iompair, chun na teachtaireachtaí gur coir atá sa gháinneáil ar dhaoine a chur in iúl agus gur féidir dúshaothrú a dhéanamh ar dhuine ar bith. Tá sé mar aidhm ag an bhfeachtas cumhacht a thabhairt don phobal na comharthaí maidir le gáinneáil ar dhaoine a aithint.

Foilsiú Athbhreithniú Uí Mháille ar Chosaintí d'Fhinnéithe Leochaileacha in Imscrúdú agus in Ionchúiseamh Cionta Gnéasacha

Spreag an imní fhorleathan faoi eispéiris fhinnéithe leochaileacha in imeachtaí coiriúla Athbhreithniú Uí Mháille agus chuimsigh an Grúpa Athbhreithnithe ionadaithe ó na príomhghníomhaireachtaí a mbíonn baint acu le cionta gnéasacha a imscrúdú, a ionchúiseamh agus a thriail. Tá breis agus 50 moladh sa Tuarascáil a foilsíodh ar an 6 Lúnasa, le ceithre mholadh uileghabhálacha: feasacht níos fearr ar reachtaíocht chearta na n-íospartach; oideachas faoi bhrí agus faoi thábhacht an toilithe; comhoibriú idir-

ghníomhaireachta agus malartú eolais a fheabhsú, go háirithe maidir le seirbhísí d'íospartaigh, agus comhsheasmhacht i soláthar seirbhísí a chinntiú.

Seoladh an Chiste Náisiúnta Lánpháirtíochta, 2020

Ar an 11 Lúnasa, d'fhógair an tAire Dlí agus Cirt, Eiléana Nic an tSaoi TD, go gcuirfí €749,600 in aghaidh na bliana ar fáil don Chiste Náisiúnta Lánpháirtíochta thar uas-tréimhse trí bliana do thionscadail a chuidíonn le himircigh lánpháirtiú i sochaí na hÉireann. Tá an Ciste Náisiúnta Lánpháirtíochta, 2020, ina phríomhghné den Straitéis do Lánpháirtiú Imirceach, 2017-2020.

Forbraíodh an Straitéis chun cur ar chumas imirceach, nó daoine de bhunadh imirceach, páirt a ghlacadh ar an mbonn céanna leo siúd arbh as Éirinn iad ó dhúchas.

Aire Stáit nua ceaptha

Ceapadh Séamus de Brúin TD ina Aire Stáit sa Roinn Dlí agus Cirt agus Comhionannais, le freagracht as Athchóiriú an Dlí, ar an 2 Meán Fómhair, 2020, in ionad an Aire Mac Conall Óg, a fuair ardú céime go hAire Talmhaíochta.



Ceiliúradh ar Lá Náisiúnta na Seirbhísí

Mhol an tAire Nic an tSaoi tiomantas agus gairmiúlacht na seirbhísí líne tosaigh ar Lá Náisiúnta na Seirbhísí, ar an 5 Meán Fómhair. Sna blianta roimhe seo, reáchtáladh mórpharáid trí chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath chomh maith le cineálacha eile rannpháirtíochta poiblí chun an ócáid a chomóradh. In 2020, i bhfianaise phaindéim COVID-19, ní raibh aon pharáid ann.

Agus í ag comóradh an lae, dúirt an tAire Nic an tSaoi, “Is mór an phribhléid dom a bheith ag obair go dlúth le roinnt dár seirbhísí éigeandála líne tosaigh. Tá a ngairmiúlacht agus a dtiomantas iontach, i gcúinsí a d'fhéadfadh a bheith an-dúshlánach, feicthe agam féin. Tá lúcháir orm an deis a bheith agam buíochas a ghabháil go poiblí leo agus lenár seirbhísí éigeandála ar fad as gaisce ciúin na gairme atá roghnaithe acu.”

Ard-Rúnaí nua ceaptha

D'fhógair an tAire Eiléana Nic an tSaoi TD ar an 8 Meán Fómhair go raibh Oonagh McPhillips ceaptha ina hArd-Rúnaí ag an Rialtas, i ndiaidh don tSeirbhís um Cheapacháin Phoiblí comórtas a réachtáil thar ceann an Choimisiúin um Cheapacháin Ardleibhéil.

Críoch curtha le rolladh amach Aonaid Seirbhísí Cosanta Roinne an Gharda Síochána

Ar an 29 Meán Fómhair, chuir an tAire Dlí agus Cirt, Eiléana Nic an tSaoi TD, fáilte roimh chur i gcrích rolladh amach Aonaid Seirbhísí Cosanta Roinne an Gharda Síochána ar fud na tíre i ndiaidh sheoladh aonad na Mí/na hIarmhí. Tacóidh na hAonaid le cur chuige comhsheasmhach gairmiúil a sholáthar maidir le himscrúdú ar choireanna gnéasacha agus baile.

4.4 Deireadh Fómhair-Nollaig

Seolann an tAire próiseas comhairliúcháin phoiblí ar an mbeartas ciontuithe spíonta

Sheol an tAire Dlí agus Cirt, Eiléana Nic an tSaoi TD, comhairliúchán poiblí ar an mbeartas ciontuithe spíonta ar an 6 Deireadh Fómhair. Lorgaíodh tuairimí ó lucht spéise ginearálta agus speisialaithe araon, agus d'fhan an comhairliúchán ar oscailt ar feadh míosa.

Is gné amháin é an comhairliúchán i sraith níos leithne beart ar fud roinnt réimsí den Rialtas, atá leagtha amach chun athshlánú a chur chun cinn agus an seans go bhfillfidh daoine ar choiriúlacht a laghdú.

An buiséad is airde riamh de €3 billiún fógartha don Earnáil Dlí agus Cirt

D'fháiltigh an tAire agus an tAire Stáit roimh an leithdháileadh buiséid is airde riamh don Earnáil Dlí agus Cirt ar an 13 Deireadh Fómhair. Rachaidh an leithdháileadh is airde riamh de €3 bhilliún do 2021 i dtreo maoiniú a chur ar fáil d'earcú Gardaí breise agus baill foirne breise don Gharda Síochána, athchóiriú agus uasghrádú an infreastruchtúir dhigitigh ar fud na hEarnála Ceartais, clár nuachóirithe na Seirbhíse Cúirteanna, chomh maith le hathruithe níos leithne ar fud na hearnála.



Iarratasóirí ar Shaoránacht chun Dearbhú Dílseachta a shíniú

D'fhógair an tAire, ar an 22 Deireadh Fómhair, go gcuirfí ceanglas ar iarratasóirí ar shaoránacht dearbhú reachtúil a shíniú ag dearbhú dílseachta don Stát, ar bhonn sealadach, le linn COVID-19, in ionad na searmanas saoránachta.

D'fhógair an tAire Nic an tSaoi, freisin, go dtabharfaí isteach ríomh-imréiteach Cánach agus ríomh-Ghrinnfhiosrúcháin d'iarratasóirí ar shaoránacht, ar aon dul leis an aistriú i dtreo próiseas iarratais ar líne ar shaoránacht. Cuirfidh ríomh-Ghrinnfhiosrúchán dlús leis an bpróiseas iarratais agus saorfaidh sé acmhainní luachmhara an Gharda Síochána a úsáidtear mar chuid de phróiseas grinnfhiosrúcháin de láimh.

Athrú ar Ainm na Roinne

Ar an 14 Deireadh Fómhair, cheadaigh an Rialtas aistriú feidhmeanna, le héifeacht ón dáta sin, a bhog an fhreagracht as cóiríocht cosanta idirnáisiúnta, lánpháirtiú agus comhionannas go dtí an Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais, Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige (RLCMLÓ).

Chlúdaigh na réimsí a aistríodh chuig an RLCMLÓ raon leathan freagrachtaí beartais, reachtaíochta agus oibríochta. Bhain maoiniú stáitchiste thart ar €120m agus freagracht as níos mó ná 220 státseirbhíseach agus seirbhíseach poiblí leis an aistriú. Áiríodh leis an aistriú freagracht as an Údarás Náisiúnta Míchumais agus Coimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta an Duine agus Comhionannas.

Athraíodh ainm na Roinne ar an 1 Samhain nuair a shínigh an tAire ionstraim reachtúil. Athraíodh ainm na Roinne le I.R. Uimh. 452/2020 ón Roinn Dlí agus Cirt agus Comh-ionannais go dtí an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt.

Oiliúnaithe agus Teagascóirí an Gharda Síochána ligthe amach chuig Póilíneacht Líne Tosaigh

Ar an 2 Samhain, ghabh an tAire Dlí agus Cirt buíochas leis an 260 oiliúnaí agus teagascóir de chuid an Gharda Síochána a bhí á n-implonú ó Choláiste an Gharda Síochána sa Teampall Mór mar chuid den phlean náisiúnta póilíneachta chun tacú leis na treoirlínte sláinte poiblí chun stop a chur le scaipeadh COVID-19.

Bhí sé sin anuas ar an 45 Garda a d'aistrigh go sealadach ó Choláiste an Gharda Síochána go dtí an líne thosaigh ag tús na paindéime, agus a bhí fós ar dualgas líne tosaigh.

Tionscadail Chomhpháirtíochta Áitiúla nua chun Sábháilteacht Pobail a Neartú

Ar an 13 Samhain, d'fhógair an Roinn na háiteanna ina mbunófaí trí (3) Chomhpháirtíocht Sábháilteachta Pobail Áitiúla nua ar bhonn píolótach.

Beidh na Comhpháirtíochtaí píolótacha, a mhairfidh ar feadh dhá bhliain, lonnaithe i Lárchathair Thuaidh Bhaile Átha Cliath, i gComhairle Cathrach agus Contae Phort Láirge, agus sa Longfort. Tabharfaidh na Comhpháirtíochtaí le chéile cónaitheoirí, ionadaithe pobail, leasanna gnó, comhairleoirí, údaráis áitiúla agus seirbhísí Stáit amhail an Garda Síochána, Tusla agus Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte, chun na Pleananna Sábháilteachta Pobail Áitiúla a cheapadh agus a chur i bhfeidhm. Sonrófar sna pleananna an bealach is fearr is mian leis an bpobal an choireacht a chosc agus léireofar tosaíochtaí pobail agus saincheisteanna sábháilteachta áitiúla. Is é an aidhm ná pobail a dhéanamh níos sábháilte do theaghlaigh, do chónaitheoirí agus do ghnólachtaí.

Ceadaíonn Airí Rialtais Leasuithe ar an mBille um Chiapadh, Cumarsáid Dhochrach agus Cionta Gaolmhara

Fuair an tAire Dlí agus Cirt, Eiléana Nic an tSaoi T.D., faomhadh ón Rialtas ar an 24 Samhain, chun leasuithe a thabhairt ar aghaidh ar an mBille um Chiapadh, Cumarsáid Dhochrach agus Cionta Gaolmhara chun socrú a dhéanamh maidir le dhá chion nua chun déileáil le dáileadh neamh-chomhthola íomhánna fórphearsanta.

Baineann an chéad chion le glacadh, dáileadh, foilsiú nó bagairt íomhánna fíor-phearsanta a dháileadh gan toiliú, agus le rún díobháil a dhéanamh don íospartach. Baineann an dara cion le híomhánna fíorpearsanta a ghlacadh, a dháileadh nó a fhoilsiú gan toiliú, gan ceanglas go raibh rún ag an duine díobháil a dhéanamh don íospartach.

Shínigh an tUachtarán an Bille um Chiapadh, Cumarsáid Dhochrach agus Cionta Gaolmhara, ar a dtugtar 'Dlí Coco' freisin, ina dhlí ar an 28 Nollaig.

Cruinniú Fíorúil chun Comhoibriú Oibríochtúil Trasteorann a phlé

Bhuail an tAire agus Aire Dlí agus Cirt Thuaisceart Éireann, Naomi Long, CTR, le chéile ar an 2 Nollaig, 2020, in éineacht le Coimisinéir an Gharda Síochána, Drew Harris, agus Príomh-Chonstábla Sheirbhís Póilíneachta Thuaisceart Éireann, Simon Byrne. Ag an gcruinniú, a reáchtáladh go fíorúil, pléadh comhoibriú póilíneachta trasteorann atá ar siúl faoi láthair agus a bheidh ann amach anseo.

Bhí an cruinniú ar siúl roimh an gComhdháil Trasteorann bhliantúil ar Choireacht Eagraithe a eagraíonn an dá Roinn Dlí agus Cirt i gcomhpháirt le chéile agus a mbíonn baint ag an dá Sheirbhís Póilíneachta, na Coimisinéirí Ioncaim, Coimisinéirí Ioncaim agus Custaim na Banríona, agus an Ghníomhaireacht Náisiúnta Coireachta léi, freisin.

Aitheantas tugtha do Thionscadal an Bhaile Ghlais ag Gradaim na hEorpa um Chosc na Coireachta

Reáchtáladh an Gradam Eorpach um Chosc na Coireachta (GECC) agus an Chomhdháil Dea-Chleachtais (CDC) ar an 3-4 Nollaig, 2020, agus bhí coireacht theaghlach-bhunaithe mar théama aici. Le linn an dá lá rinneadh roinnt cur i láthair mionsonraithe ar an gcaoi a bhfuil céimeanna glactha ag na Ballstáit chun dul i ngleic le coireacht theaghlach-bhunaithe.

Bronnadh an chéad áit ar Thionscadal an Bhaile Ghlais, a chuir Éire i láthair, togra taighde agus tionscnamh píolótach atá dírithe ar chur isteach ar bhuíonta coiriúla a bheidh ag earcú leanaí.

D'fhorbair foireann tionscadail FTCBC (Fianaise Taighde ar Chláir Bheartais agus ar Chleachtas) an tionscnamh seo, ar comhpháirtíocht straitéiseach é idir an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt agus Ollscoil Luimnigh ar dhearadh, cur i bhfeidhm agus meastóireacht ar idirghabhálacha ceartais i leith an aosa óig.

Ceadú an Rialtais chun Coinbhinsiún Lanzarote a dhaingniú

D'fhógair an tAire ar an 16 Nollaig, 2020, gur cheadaigh an Rialtas daingniú Choinbhinsiún Chomhairle na hEorpa um Chosaint Leanaí ar Dhúshaothrú Gnéasach agus Mí-Úsáid Ghnéasach (Coinbhinsiún Lanzarote). Is uirlis shuntasach idirnáisiúnta dlí é an Coinbhinsiún chun leanaí a chosaint ar dhúshaothrú gnéasach agus ar mhí-úsáid ghnéasach.

Seoladh thorthaí an chomhairliúcháin phoiblí ar an bhFuathchaint agus ar an bhFuathchoireacht

Ar an 17 Nollaig, sheol an tAire Nic an tSaoi torthaí an chomhairliúcháin phoiblí ar Fhuathchaint agus ar Fhuathchoireacht. D'fhógair sí, freisin, go raibh sé ar intinn aici reachtaíocht nua a thabhairt chun cinn chun le dul i ngleic le gríosú fuatha agus le fuathchoireacht in Éirinn in 2021.

Rinneadh breithniú cuimsitheach ar os cionn 3,600 aighneacht (arbh aighneachtaí mionsonraithe i scríbhinn níos mó ná 175 díobh) chuig comhairliúchán poiblí, agus rinneadh comhairliúchán domhain le grúpaí éagsúla den tsochaí shibhialta agus den phobal, le lucht acadúil agus le saineolaithe. Ba é cuspóir an chomhairliúcháin a chinntiú go bhféadfadh an Roinn a aithint cén chaoi a bhféadfaí dlí na hÉireann sa réimse seo a fheabhsú, bunaithe ar thuiscint shoiléir ar eispéiris na ndaoine a mbíonn tionchar ag fuathchaint agus fuathchoireacht orthu.



5. Beartas, Rialachas agus Soláthar Seirbhíse Inimirce

5.1 Léargas Ginearálta ar an mBeartas Ceartais Choiriúil

Gníomhaíocht maidir le Droichead Átha

Dé hAoine, 21 Lúnasa, 2020, cheap an tAire iar-Stiúrthóir na Seirbhíse Promhaidh, an tUasal Vivian Geiran, chun cleachtadh scóipe a dhéanamh chun an tionchar a bhíonn ag gníomhaíocht choiriúil i nDroichead Átha ar an bpobal a mheas, agus chun moltaí a dhéanamh le haghaidh gníomhaíochta amach anseo. Chuaigh an tUasal Geiran i dteagmháil le cónaitheoirí agus le soláthraithe seirbhíse lena n-áirítear an Garda Síochána, chomh maith le gnólachtaí agus daoine eile den phobal chun leas a bhaint as an eolas agus tuiscint áitiúil atá acu ar na fadhbanna, chun príomhdheiseanna ar ghníomhaíocht a aithint. [Foilsíodh an tuarascáil scóipe ar an 26 Márta, 2021].

Tionscnaimh Cheartais i leith an Aosa Óig

Cuireadh tús le feidhmiúcháin phíolótacha chlár an Bhaile Ghlais, a d'fhorbair an tionscadal Fianaise Taighde ar Chláir Bheartais agus ar Chleachtas in Ollscoil Luimnigh, in dhá shuíomh in 2020 agus beidh siad ar siúl ar feadh trí bliana. Déanfar an fhoghlaim ó na tionscadail píolótacha seo a chuimsiú i gcleachtas príomhshrutha an Gharda Síochána maidir le hAthstíúradh an Aosa Óig. Forbraíodh an clár idirghabhála seo, a dearadh go speisialta le sainchomhairle idirnáisiúnta, chun dul i ngleic le smacht comhéigineach leanaí ag grúpaí coiriúla a mheallann isteach iad i gcásanna ciontaithe. Tá maoiniú ar fáil do na cláir píolótacha thosaigh ó Chistí na gCuntas Díomhaoin, le leithdháileadh €4.2m san iomlán thar thrí bliana.

Ciontuithe Spíonta

I gcásanna áirithe d'fhéadfadh go n-iarrfaí ar dhuine ciontuithe roimhe sin a nochtadh a d'fhéadfadh tionchar diúltach a bheith acu ar ionchais fostaíochta agus ar ghnéithe eile den saol. D'fhéadfadh sin dochar a dhéanamh dá ndeis athshlánú a dhéanamh agus féadann sé cur leis an ionchas athchiontaithe.

Is éard is ciontú spíonta ann ná cion nach gá do dhuine aonair a nochtadh a thuilleadh, ar an gcoinníoll go gcomhlíonann siad na critéir iomchuí. I mí Dheireadh

Fómhair, 2020, sheol an tAire Nic an tSaoi comhairliúchán poiblí ar an mbeartas Cion-tuithe Spíonta. Lorgaíodh tuairimí ó lucht spéise ginearálta agus speisialaithe le linn thréimhse an chomhairliúcháin a mhair ar feadh míosa.

I mí Dheireadh Fómhair freisin d'fhoilsigh an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt dhá pháipéar taighde i réimse na gciontuithe spíonta. Cuideoidh na tuarascálacha sin leis an mbeartas ciontuithe spíonta is cothroime a fhorbairt in Éirinn, ar aon dul leis an gcleachtas idirnáisiúnta is fearr. Déantar achoimre sa chéad pháipéar ar bhealaí cuir chuige reachtacha agus beartais i roinnt dlínsí dlí choitinn agus dlí shibhialta, go sonrach an Nua-Shéalainn, an Astráil, Sasana agus an Bhreatain Bheag, an tSualainn agus an Ísiltír. Tá an dara páipéar bunaithe ar mhear-athbhreithniú ar fhianaise ar litríocht acadúil ar théama na gciontuithe spíonta.

Sábháilteacht Pobail

I mí na Samhna, 2020, d'fhógair an tAire trí shuíomh chun Comhpháirtíochtaí Áitiúla Sábháilteachta Pobail nua a bhunú ar bhonn píolótach mar chéim thosaigh chun póilíneacht phobail a neartú ar fud na tíre.

Beidh na Comhpháirtíochtaí píolótacha, a mhairfidh ar feadh dhá bhliain, lonnaithe i dToghcheantar Áitiúil Lárchathair Thuaidh Bhaile Átha Cliath, i gComhairle Cathrach agus Contae Phort Láirge, agus sa Longfort. Roghnaíodh láithreacha na gComhpháirtíochtaí píolótacha bunaithe ar thosca lena n-áirítear dlús daonra, rátaí coir-eachta agus díothacht. Tá cathaoirleach neamhspleách ag gach Comhpháirtíocht Sábháilteachta Pobail Áitiúil agus forbróidh siad Plean Sábháilteachta Pobail Áitiúil. Déanfaidh na Comhpháirtíochtaí cónaitheoirí, ionadaithe pobail, leasanna gnó, comhairleoirí, údaráis áitiúla agus seirbhísí Stáit amhail an Garda Síochána, Tusla agus Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte a thabhairt le chéile chun na Pleananna Sábháilteachta Pobail Áitiúla a cheapadh agus a chur i bhfeidhm.

Athbhreithniú an Hamaltúnaigh

Foilsíodh tuarascáil Ghrúpa Athbhreithnithe an Hamaltúnaigh, an tAthbhreithniú ar Struchtúir agus Straitéisí chun Coiriúlacht agus Éilliú Eacnamaíoch a Chosc, a Im-scrúdú agus a Phionósú, i mí na Nollag, 2020. Tá roinnt moltaí inti a dhíríonn go príomha ar bhearta reachtacha, struchtúracha agus acmhainní chun cumas for-ghníomhú gníomhaireachta agus ilghníomhaireachta a fheabhsú agus chun éilliú agus cionta choireacht an bhóna bháin a chosc.

Feachtais feasachta ar chearta íospartach agus iompar sochaíoch

Is feidhm thábhachtach de chuid na Roinne Dlí agus Cirt é a chinntiú go gcuirtear íospartaigh ar an eolas faoina gcearta agus faoi na tacaíochtaí atá ar fáil dóibh. Foilsíodh Cairt Íospartach nua leathnaithe i mí Feabhra, 2020, agus tá sí ar fáil ar victimcharter.ie. Tá sé mar thosaíocht ag an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt cur le feasacht an phobail ar Chairt na nÍospartach agus ar chearta íospartach faoin Acht um Íospartaigh na Coireachta, 2017.

Tá a fhios ag an Roinn nach bhfuil rochtain ag gach duine ar áiseanna ar líne agus mar sin leanann an obair ar aghaidh ar shócmhainní eile a chruthú chun cabhrú le híospartaigh na coireachta na cearta atá acu a fháil amach agus an chaoi le rochtain a fháil ar thacaíochtaí iomchuí.

I mí Aibreáin sheol an Roinn an feachtas ‘Anseo Fós’, chun íospartaigh an fhoréigin baile, ghnéasaigh agus inscnebhunaithe a chur ar a suaimhneas maidir le cabhair a bheith ar fáil fós, beag beann ar shrianta a bheith i bhfeidhm maidir le COVID-19.

Mar chuid d’iarrachtaí leanúnacha feasacht a ardú, tá feachtas náisiúnta sé bliana chun dul i ngleic le foréigean baile agus gnéasach ar a dtugtar ‘Leithscéal ar Bith’ ar siúl i gcónaí. Tá an feachtas seo deartha chun cabhrú le daoine cásanna nó comharthaí d’fhoréigean baile agus gnéasach a aithint, agus feasacht a chruthú maidir leis an nglacadh atá le hiompraíochtaí agus dearcthaí do-ghlactha.

Foilsíú agus cur i bhfeidhm ‘Ag Tacú le Turas Íospartaigh’

Is treochlár mionsonraithe é ‘Ag Tacú le Turas Íospartaigh – Plean chun cuidiú le híospartaigh agus finnétithe leochaileacha i gcásanna foréigin ghnéasaigh’ chun na moltaí atá in athbhreithniú Uí Mháille a thabhairt isteach.

Athbhreithniú domhain, faoi chathaoirleacht neamhspleách, a bhí in athbhreithniú Uí Mháille ar an gcaoi a gcaitheann an córas ceartais choiriúil le híospartaigh leochail-eacha. Rinneadh 52 moladh san athbhreithniú chun an córas d’íospartaigh a fheabhsú le linn cionta gnéasacha a imscrúdú agus a ionchúiseamh.

Foilsíodh an plan forfheidhmithe i mí Dheireadh Fómhair. Nuair a chuirfear i bhfeidhm é, cruthóidh an plan cur chuige dírithe ar an íospartach a chosnóidh agus a thacóidh le finnétithe leochaileacha le linn cionta gnéasacha a bheith á n-imscrúdú agus á n-ionchúiseamh.

Oiliúint Bhreithiúnach

Ar cheann de phríomh-mholtaí athbhreithniú Uí Mháille tá forbairt agus rolladh amach na hoiliúna don phearsanra ar fad a bhféadfadh íospartach dul i dteagmháil leo agus iad ag dul tríd an gcóras ceartais. Áirítear orthusan an Garda Síochána, an Stiúrthóir Ionchúiseamh Poiblí, gairm an dlí agus na breithiúna.

Sa seomra cúirte, moltar go mbeadh sainoiliúint curtha ar gach breitheamh a bheadh i gceannas ar thrialacha coiriúla maidir le cionta gnéasacha agus ar gach dlíodóir a bheadh i láthair i dtrialacha den sórt sin.

D'aontaigh an Chomhairle Bhreithiúnach gur tosaíocht í an oiliúint sin agus meastar go gcuirfear i gcrích í in 2021. Ina theannta sin, cuimsíonn clár reatha um Fhorbairt Ghairmiúil Leanúnach (FGL) Bharra na hÉireann oiliúint a chur ar abhcóidí a bhíonn ag déileáil le finnéithe leochaileacha.

5.2 Léargas Ginearálta ar Rialachas an Cheartais Choiriúil

Comhaontuithe Formhaoirseachta

I rith 2020, d'aontaigh agus rinne an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt comhaontuithe maoirseachta leis na gníomhaireachtaí ceartais choiriúil faoina coimirce. Leagtar amach sna comhaontuithe sin an creat leathan rialachais agus cuntasachta a n-oibríonn an ghníomhaireacht iomchuí laistigh de agus sainítear iontu na príomhróil agus na príomhchúraimí atá mar bhonn faoin gcaidreamh idir an ghníomhaireacht agus an Roinn, an tAire agus an Rialtas.

- Síníodh comhaontú formhaoirseachta leis an nGarda Síochána do 2020 go 2022 ar an 14 Bealtaine, 2020
- Síníodh comhaontú formhaoirseachta leis an mBiúró um Shócmhainní Coiriúla do 2020 go 2022 ar an 29 Eanáir, 2020
- Síníodh comhaontú formhaoirseachta le hEolaíocht Fhóiréinseach Éireann do 2020 go 2022 ar an 16 Meitheamh, 2020
- Síníodh comhaontú formhaoirseachta le Cigireacht an Gharda Síochána do 2020 go 2021 ar an 11 Márta, 2020
- Síníodh comhaontú formhaoirseachta leis an Údarás Póilíneachta do 2020 go 2021 ar an 31 Iúil, 2020.

Comhaontuithe Soláthair Feidhmíochta

Ina theannta sin, thug an Roinn Comhaontuithe Soláthair Feidhmíochta don bhliain 2020 i gcrích le Gníomhaireachtaí Ceartais Choiriúil. Is é cuspóir na gComhaontuithe Soláthair Feidhmíochta ná an próiseas a chur ar bhonn foirmiúil trínar féidir na príomh-aschuir agus na príomhthorthaí atá ag teastáil ó ghníomhaireachtaí i 2020 a shainiú agus a thomhas.

- Síníodh comhaontú soláthair feidhmíochta don bhliain 2020 leis an mBiúró um Shócmhainní Coiriúla ar an 29 Eanáir, 2020.
- Síníodh comhaontú soláthair feidhmíochta don bhliain 2020 le hEolaíocht Fhóiréinseach Éireann ar an 16 Meitheamh, 2020.
- Síníodh comhaontú soláthair feidhmíochta don bhliain 2020 le Cigireacht an Gharda Síochána ar an 11 Márta, 2020.
- Síníodh comhaontú soláthair feidhmíochta do 2020 leis an Údarás Póilíneachta ar an 31 Iúil, 2020.

Impleachtaí an Bhreathimeachta ar chomhoibriú póilíneachta in 2020

Ar neamhcheist le toradh polaitiúil an Bhreathimeachta in 2020, lean an sár-chomhoibriú leanúnach idir an Garda Síochána agus Seirbhís Póilíneachta Thuaisceart Éireann (SPTÉ) le dul i ngleic leis an mbagairt a bhaineann le coirpigh agus iad ag iarraidh teacht i dtír ar na dúshláin póilíneachta a bhaineann leis an teorainn.

Tá Comhstraitéis Póilíneachta Trasteorann i bhfeidhm idir an dá sheirbhís. Clúdaíonn an Straitéis an réimse de ghníomhaíochtaí póilíneachta agus tá sraith tionscnamh inti ina bhfuil an dá sheirbhís póilíneachta rannpháirteach go gníomhach.

Tá an Garda Síochána agus SPTÉ araon páirteach sa Tascfhórsa Comhghníomhaireachta, a bunaíodh faoin gComhaontú um Thús Nua, atá comhdhéanta den dá sheirbhís póilíneachta agus gníomhaireachtaí forfheidhmithe dlí eile ón dá thaobh den teorainn. Tá dul chun cinn láidir déanta ag an Tascfhórsa Comhghníomhaireachta maidir le dul i ngleic le gníomhaíocht choiriúil trasteorann ar fud raon réimsí coireachta, ní hamháin na gníomhaíochtaí traidisiúnta smuigleála, ach coireanna tuaithe agus feirme, buirgléireacht eagraithe agus coireacht drugaí chomh maith.

Ina theannta sin, cuireadh bearta i bhfeidhm chun a chinntiú go mbeadh córas inmharthana eiseachadta ann leis an Ríocht Aontaithe agus go gcoinneofaí malartú leanúnach sonraí forfheidhmithe dlí ar bhealach a bheadh comhoiriúnach le hionstraimí an AE maidir le cosaint sonraí.

I mí na Nollag, 2020, thug an tAire aitheasc don 18ú Comhdháil Bhliantúil ar Choireacht Eagraithe Trasteorann. Dhírigh an t-imeacht ar rioscaí agus ar bhagairtí trasteorann maidir le coireacht eagraithe tar éis imeacht na Ríochta Aontaithe ón AE a thuiscint agus ullmhú lena n-aghaidh. Reáchtáladh an t-imeacht mar sheimineár gréasáin mar gheall ar na srianta ar fhreastal pearsanta le linn phaindéim COVID-19. Bhí Aire Dlí agus Cirt Thuaisceart Éireann, Naomi Long, Príomh-Chonstábla SPTÉ, Simon Byrne, agus Coimisinéir an Gharda Síochána, Drew Harris, in éineacht leis an Aire Nic an tSaoi chun labhairt le hionadaithe ó ghníomhaireachtaí forfheidhmithe dlí ar an dá thaobh den teorainn. Cuireann an chomhdháil bhliantúil ar Choireacht Eagraithe Trasteorann le comhoibriú idir na gníomhaireachtaí forfheidhmithe dlí, go háirithe maidir le coiriúlacht trasteorann agus saincheistanna gaolmhara. Soláthraíonn sí deis freisin chun treochothaí athraitheacha sa choireacht a mheas agus aghaidh a thabhairt orthu agus tógáil ar na gníomhaíochtaí oibríochtúla atá déanta cheana féin sa réimse seo agus iad a fheabhsú. Socraíodh comhdháil 2020 ar líne chun tacú le freagairt chomhoibrítheach gníomhaireachtaí forfheidhmithe dlí agus deireadh ag teacht leis an idirthréimhse Imeachta as an AE.

Comhroinnt Sonraí ar Fhorfheidhmiú an Dlí

Ag deireadh 2020, cheadaigh Comhairle an AE nasc na hÉireann le Córas Faisnéise Schengen (CFS II). Is é an CFS II an córas Teicneolaíochta Faisnéise is mó agus is forleithne a úsáidtear don tslándáil phoiblí san Eoraip. Cuireann an córas ar chumas gníomhaireachtaí forfheidhmithe dlí sonraí a roinnt agus a sheiceáil maidir le daoine a bhfuiltear sa tóir orthu, daoine atá ar iarraidh, daoine a bhféadfaidh sé nach bhfuil ceart acu chun dul isteach san AE nó fanacht ann, agus nithe/feithicil a d'fhéadfadh a bheith goidte, míleithreasaithe nó cailte.

Ceadaíonn an CFS II faisnéis a mhalartú go huathoibríoch, comhuaineach agus láithreach ar fud na dtíortha rannpháirteacha eile ar fad. Cuireann comhaltaí an Gharda Síochána sonraí leis an CFS II i bhfoirm foláirimh. Tá trí ghné san fholáireamh mar seo a leanas:

- Faisnéis aitheantais ar an duine nó an ní/an fheithicil atá á lorg

- Ráiteas faoin údar a bhfuil an duine nó an ní á lorg
- An beart atá le déanamh nuair a aimsítear an duine nó an ní.

Má aimsítear an duine nó an ní i dtír eile ag baint úsáid as an CFS II (mar shampla ag seiceáil teorann), déanfar amas a thaifeadadh ar an SIS II agus déanfaidh an tseirbhís forfheidhmithe dlí sa tír sin teagmháil leis an nGarda Síochána chun na chéad chéim-eanna eile a phlé. Ar an mbealach sin, beidh gach taifead maidir le duine atá ar iarraidh agus taifid ar ní agus ar fheithicil atá cailte nó goidte atá cruthaithe ag an nGarda Síochána ar fáil láithreach do na tíortha eile sin a úsáideann an SIS II. I rith 2019 amháin, roinneadh 120,000 taifead maidir le daoine a bhí ar iarraidh ar an CFS II.

Lá Náisiúnta na nDaoine ar Iarraidh, 2020

I mí na Nollag, 2020, d'óstáil an tAire Nic an tSaoi searmanas cuimhneacháin ar líne chun an t-ochtú Lá Náisiúnta bliantúil do Dhaoine ar Iarraidh a chomóradh. Is imeacht uile-Éireann é Lá Náisiúnta na nDaoine ar Iarraidh a thugann deis do bhaill teaghlaigh agus dá gcairde labhairt faoina muintir atá ar iarraidh, agus achainí a dhéanamh ar an bpobal le haghaidh aon eolas a d'fhéadfadh cabhrú lena gcásanna a réiteach. Chun an ócáid a chomóradh, réachtáiltear searmanas pearsanta de ghnáth, ina mbíonn teistiméireachtaí teaghlaigh, óráidí ón Aire agus ó Choimisinéir an Gharda Síochána, ceol beo, taispeántas sleamhnán pictiúr de na daoine atá ar iarraidh in Éirinn agus searmanas leagtha rósanna nó scaoiltear colúir fhrithinge. Mar thoradh ar an bpaindéim COVID-19, rinneadh Lá na nDaoine ar Iarraidh, 2020, a chomóradh le searmanas comórtha ar líne seachas an ghnáthócáid ina mbíonn daoine i láthair go pearsanta.

Labhair an tAire Nic an tSaoi, Coimisinéir an Gharda Síochána, Drew Harris, Ard-Stiúrthóir Eolaíocht Fhóirínseach Éireann, Chris Enright, agus an tAntraipeolaí Fóirínseach, an Dr René Gapert, ag searmanas 2020. Thaifead daoine muinteartha na ndaoine ar iarraidh agallaimh don ócáid agus casadh ceol ag Farmleigh.

5.3 Léargas Ginearálta ar an mBeartas Ceartais Shibhialta

An Grúpa Formhaoirseachta Ceartais Teaghlaigh

Bunaíodh an Grúpa Formhaoirseachta Ceartais Teaghlaigh i mí Mheán Fómhair, 2020, agus áirítear sna téarmaí tagartha fíis ardleibhéil, agus príomhchuspóirí meán-téarmacha agus fadtéarmacha, a aontú chun córas náisiúnta ceartais teaghlaigh a fhorbairt ag féachaint do dhea-chleachtas idirnáisiúnta, comhthreomhar le bunú struchtúr tiomnaithe cúirte teaghlaigh. Tá an Grúpa faoi chathaoirleacht an Leas-Ard-Rúnaí Oonagh Buckley agus cuimsíonn sé comhaltaí ó réimsí éagsúla thar ceann na Roinne Dlí agus Cirt, na Roinne Leanaí, Comhionannais, Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige, na Seirbhíse Cúirteanna, an Bhoird um Chúnaimh Dlíthiúil, chomh maith le comhaltaí de na Breithiúna ón gCúirt Dúiche, ón gCúirt Chuarda agus ón Ard-Chúirt.

Ar an gcéad dul síos, tabharfaidh an Grúpa faoi phróiseas comhairliúcháin a mbeidh trí chéim ann agus ina rachfar i dteagmháil le páirtithe leasmhara amhail grúpaí abhcóideachta/eagraíochtaí neamhrialtasacha, lucht acadúil/taighdeoirí agus cleachtóirí. Tá an dara céim den chomhairliúchán dírithe ar thuairimí an phobail i gcoitinne a bhailiú. Baineann céim a trí go sonrach le leanaí agus daoine óga, agus tá sí á dearadh i gcomhar leis an Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais, Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige. Meastar go gcuirfeadh léargas a gheofar ón bpróiseas comhairliúcháin le hobair an Ghrúpa i ndeireadh 2021 agus in 2022 agus a fhís ardleibhéil á forbairt aige.

Costas Árachais

Déantar socrú leis an Acht um Chomhairle na mBreithiúna, 2019, chun roinnt coistí a chur ar bun chun déileáil le réimsí oibre ar leith. Tugadh sainordú do cheann acu sin, Coiste na dTreoirlínite maidir le Díobhálacha Pearsanta, treoirlínite a dhréachtú le haghaidh dámhachtainí i gcásanna díobhálacha pearsanta. Faoi chathaoirleacht an Bhreithimh Mary Irvine, bunaíodh an Coiste go foirmiúil ar an 28 Aibreán agus tionóladh an chéad chruinniú ar an 7 Bealtaine. Chuir sé a chéad dréacht de na treoirlínite faoi bhráid Chomhairle na mBreithiúna ar an 9 Nollaig.

Ar iarraidh ón Aire, scrúdaigh an Coimisiún um Athchóiriú an Dlí an bhféadfaí reacht-áocht bhunreachtúil a bheadh slán a fhorbairt chun teorainn nó srian a chur le méideanna na ndamáistí a fhéadfaidh cúirt a dhámhachtain i leith roinnt catagóirí nó catagóirí uile díobhálacha pearsanta. Lorgaíodh aighneachtaí ó pháirtithe leasmhara

ar an ábhar. Foilsíodh an tuarascáil 'Uasteorainn a chur le Damáistí i gCaingne Díobhálacha Pearsanta' ar an 30 Meán Fómhair, 2020, agus moladh inti gur ceart am a thabhairt chun an tsamhail reachtach atá bunaithe ar an Acht um Chomhairle na mBreithiúna a chur i bhfeidhm. Moladh inti freisin go bhféadfaí múnla bunaithe ar reachtaíocht Astrálach agus Shasanach a cheadú ó thaobh an Bhunreachta de freisin.

Bhí an Roinn ina rannpháirtí gníomhach sa Ghrúpa Oibre maidir le Costas Árachais (GOCÁ). Is é cuspóir an GOCÁ tosca a mbíonn tionchar acu ar chostas an árachais a aithint agus a scrúdú, agus bearta gearrthéarmacha, meántéarmacha agus fad-téarmacha a mholadh chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar an ábhar.

Tá dhá ghníomh eile atá molta ag an GOCÁ á gcur chun cinn ag an Roinn freisin.

3. Prótacail Réamhghníomhaíochta a thabhairt isteach i leith cásanna faillí cliniciúla

Déantar socrú leis an Acht um Rialáil Seirbhísí Dlí, 2015, maidir leis an Aire do thabhairt isteach prótacal réamhghníomhaíochta i gcaingne faillí cliniciúla. Déanfar socrú leis na Rialacháin maidir le ceanglais nach mór do na páirtithe i gcaingne faillí cliniciúla a chomhlíonadh sula dtabharfar caingne den sórt sin.

4. Oifig an Bhreithneora Costas Dlíthiúil

Tá Oifig an Bhreithneora Costas Dlíthiúil (OBCD) tar éis teacht in áit iar-Oifig an Mháistir Fómhais mar a fhoráiltear i gCuid 10 den Acht um Rialáil Seirbhísí Dlí, 2015, agus tar éis feidhmeanna na hOifige sin a thógáil ar láimh. Tháinig an OBCD i bhfeidhm le héifeacht ón 7 Deireadh Fómhair, 2019. Ceapadh an Príomh-Bhreithneoir Costas Dlíthiúil nua agus Breithneoir Costas Dlíthiúil le héifeacht ón dáta sin. Ghlac an Oifig freisin leis an líon cásanna a bhí fágtha i sean-Oifig an Mháistir Fómhais, an oifig ar cuireadh ina hionad í agus a nua-chóirigh sí de réir reachta.

Freagairt ar an Athbhreithniú ar Riar an Cheartais Shibhialta

I mí an Mhárta, 2017, fógraíodh go mbunófaí Grúpa faoi chathaoirleacht Uachtarán na hArd-Chúirte, an Breitheamh Peter Kelly Uasal, chun riarachán an cheartais shibhialta sa Stát a athbhreithniú agus a athchóiriú.

Iarradh ar an nGrúpa tuairisc a thabhairt don Aire agus moltaí a dhéanamh maidir le hathruithe ar mhaithe le rochtain ar cheartas sibhialta sa Stát a fheabhsú, réiteach luath ar dhíospóidí a chur chun cinn, costas na dlíthíochta a laghdú, córas níos freagraí agus níos comhréirí a chruthú agus torthaí níos fearr a chinntiú d'úsáideoirí na cúirte.

Foilsíodh an t-athbhreithniú ar an 7 Nollaig, 2020, agus tá anailís á déanamh air ar mhaithe le measúnú a dhéanamh ar bhearta tosaíochta a mbeidh gá le freagra beartais ina leith.

Comhlánófar an t-athbhreithniú sin le sraith beart beartais eile, lena n-áirítear athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar chúirteanna dlínse teoranta agus áitiúla chun a fháil amach cén chaoi ar féidir leo feidhmiú ar bhealach níos éifeachtaí agus níos éifeachtúla.

Tuarascáil Catherine Day foilsithe

In 2019, iarradh ar an Dr Catherine Day sainghrúpa a thabhairt le chéile le hionadaíocht ó iarrthóirí tearmainn agus ó eagraíochtaí neamhrialtasacha chun scrúdú a dhéanamh ar dhea-chleachtas i Stáit Eorpacha eile maidir le soláthar seirbhísí d'iarratasóirí ar chosaint idirnáisiúnta. Bhí an tuarascáil le scrúdú a dhéanamh freisin ar threochtaí dóchúla fadtéarmacha agus moltaí agus réitigh a leagan amach.

Foilsíodh Tuarascáil ón nGrúpa Comhairleach maidir le Soláthar Tacaíochta lena n-áirítear Cóiríocht do Dhaoine sa Phróiseas Cosanta Idirnáisiúnta i mí Dheireadh Fómhair, 2020. Beidh an tuarascáil mar bhonn d'aon chóras nua chun cóiríocht agus tacaíochtaí breise a sholáthar d'iarratasóirí ar chosaint idirnáisiúnta.

Athbhreithniú ar Rochtain ar an Margadh Saothair do Dhaoine a bhfuil Cosaint Idirnáisiúnta á lorg acu

Ag deireadh na bliana 2019 chuir an Roinn tús le hobair ar athbhreithniú ar an rochtain atá ag iarratasóirí ar chosaint idirnáisiúnta ar an margadh saothair le súil moltaí feasacha a chur faoi bhráid an Aire.

Chuimsigh an t-athbhreithniú comhairliúchán le príomhpháirtithe leasmhara seacht-racha ar nós Chónaidhm Ghnólachtaí agus Fhostóirí na hÉireann, chomh maith le hathbhreithniú ar aighneachtaí a rinneadh chuig Comhchoiste an Oireachtais um Dhlí agus Ceart agus Comhionannas i ndáil lena thuarascáil ar Sholáthar Díreach agus an Próiseas Cosanta Idirnáisiúnta a foilsíodh i mí na Nollag, 2019. Tá ábhar san áireamh

freisin ar an seasamh comparáideach maidir le rochtain ar obair ag iarratasóirí ar chosaint idirnáisiúnta i mBallstáit eile an AE agus sa Ríocht Aontaithe.

Tar éis an athbhreithnithe d'fhógair an tAire bearta nua le cur ar chumas iarratasóirí ar chosaint idirnáisiúnta obair a lorg sé mhí tar éis dóibh a n-iarratas a dhéanamh. Mhéadaigh fad thréimhse 'cead rochtana ar an margadh saothair' ó 6 mhí go 12 mhí, freisin.

An Beartas Frithchiníochais – Bunú an Choiste Frithchiníochais

Ceapadh an tOllamh Caroline Fennell, Ollamh le Dlí i gColáiste na hOllscoile, Corcaigh, agus Coimisinéir le Coimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta an Duine agus Comhionannas, ina Cathaoirleach ar an gCoiste Frithchiníochais i mí na Nollag, 2019. I mí an Mheithimh, 2020, cheap an tAire gnáthchomhaltaí an Choiste, a thionóil a chéad chruinniú ar an Déardaoin 18 Meitheamh.

Tugadh sainordú don Choiste athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar fhianaise agus ar chleachtas reatha agus moltaí a dhéanamh don Rialtas maidir leis an mbealach is fearr lena chur chuige chun dul i ngleic le ciníochas a neartú. Is é cuspóir an Choiste tuiscint a fhorbairt ar chineál agus ar leitheadúlacht an chiníochais in Éirinn agus oibriú i dtreo comhaontú sóisialta a bhaint amach ar ghníomhartha a theastaíonn ó ghníomhaithe Stáit agus neamh-Stáit.

Déanfaidh an Coiste seo plé le páirtithe leasmhara ó réimse earnálacha, lena n-áirítear an earnáil phoiblí; baill den Oireachtas; fostaíocht agus an t-ionad oibre; an tsochaí shibhialta (lena n-áirítear pobail áitiúla; an earnáil dheonach agus eagraíochtaí spóirt); na meáin (lena n-áirítear ar líne); an earnáil oideachais; agus reiligiún eagraithe.

Straitéis Náisiúnta na mBan agus na gCailíní, 2017-2020

Soláthraíonn Straitéis Náisiúnta na mBan agus na gCailíní, 2017-2020, creat uile-Rialtais trína leantar de chumhachtú na mban a chur chun cinn.

Ba é sprioc fhoriomlán na Straitéise in 2020 “athrú a dhéanamh ar dhearcadh agus ar chleachtais a choisceann ar mhná agus ar chailíní páirt iomlán a ghlacadh san oid-eachas, san fhostaíocht agus sa saol poiblí ar gach leibhéal agus feabhas a chur ar sheirbhísí do mhná agus do chailíní, agus tús áite á thabhairt do riachtanais na ndaoine sin a fhaigheann na torthaí is laige nó ar baol dóibh na torthaí is laige a fháil”.

I measc na bpríomhnithe a baineadh amach go dtí seo faoin Straitéis tá daingniú Choinbhinsiún Iostanbúl ar fhoréigean baile, aisghairm an Ochtú Leasú, tabhairt isteach dhá sheachtain de shaoire íoctha atharthachta d'aithreacha agus seoladh an Bheartais do Mhná sa Spórt. Ó mhí na Bealtaine, 2020, tá tús curtha le hobair ar 133 de na 139 gníomh tosaigh, a bhfuil 37 díobh curtha i gcrích. Déanfar meastóireacht neamhspleách ar an Straitéis in 2021.

Aistríodh freagracht as an straitéis chuig an Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais, Mí-chumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige i mí Dheireadh Fómhair, 2020.

An Straitéis Náisiúnta um Chuimsiú LADTI+, 2019-2021

Foilsíodh an chéad Straitéis Náisiúnta um Chuimsiú LADTI+, 2019-2021, in Éirinn ar an 28 Samhain, 2019, agus comhlánaíonn sí an Straitéis Óige Náisiúnta LADTI a foilsíodh i mí an Mheithimh, 2018. Sa Straitéis tugtar faoi chuspóirí faoi cheithre cholún théamacha lena soláthraítear fíis d'Éirinn ina bhfuil daoine LADTI+ infheicthe agus cuimsithe, ina gcaitear go cothrom leo, ina bhfuil siad sláintiúil agus ina mothaíonn siad sábháilte agus ina dtacaítear leo. Chun dul chun cinn a dhéanamh i dtreo na gculpóirí ardleibhéil sin, comhaontaíodh 108 gníomh.

As na 108 gníomh atá sa Straitéis, bhí 67 díobh idir lámha ag deireadh na bliana 2020. Cuireadh sé ghníomh breise i gcrích, lena n-áirítear maoiniú a sholáthar do 29 dtionscadal ar fud na tíre faoi Chiste Seirbhísí do Phobail LADTI+, 2020. Tá €700,000 san iomlán de mhaoiniú deontais curtha ar fáil faoin scéim, a thacóidh le seirbhísí pobail LADTI+ agus le hinfeictheacht agus cuimsiú LADTI+ a chur chun cinn.

Beidh cuid de na gníomhartha atá sa Straitéis ar siúl i rith a saolré, ar nós iad siúd faoi thoradh 26 a bhaineann leis na tacaíochtaí leanúnacha atá á gcur ar fáil chun a chinntiú gur féidir le daoine LADTI+ taisteal go sábháilte agus go muiníneach.

Aistríodh freagracht as an straitéis chuig an Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais, Mí-chumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige i mí Dheireadh Fómhair, 2020.

An Straitéis Náisiúnta um Chuimsiú an Lucht Siúil agus na Romach (SNCLSR), 2017-2021

D'fhoilsigh an Rialtas an Straitéis Náisiúnta um Chuimsiú an Lucht Siúil agus na Romach, 2017-2021, i mí an Mheithimh, 2017.

Tugann an Straitéis Ranna agus Gníomhaireachtaí Rialtais le chéile mar aon le hionadaithe ón Lucht Siúil agus ó phobail na Romach araon chun fócas a dhíriú ar na saincheisteanna is mó a mbíonn tionchar acu orthu ar bhealach struchtúrach.

Chuir an Roinn maoiniú ar fáil chun tacú le raon gníomhaíochtaí atá nasctha leis na gníomhartha faoi SNCLSR lena n-áirítear bunmhaoiniú d'eagraíochtaí Lucht Siúil agus Romach agus maoiniú chun cultúr an Lucht Siúil a chur chun cinn don phobal i gcoitinne.

Is dúshlán ar leith é freastal scoile do roinnt ball den Lucht Siúil agus de phobal na Romach agus chuir an Roinn maoiniú ar fáil do chlár píolótach dhá bhliain chun díriú ar fhreastal, rannpháirtíocht agus coinneáil/críochnú scoile. Cuireadh tús le cláir phiolótacha i nGaillimh, Loch Garman agus Baile Átha Cliath agus Corcaigh.

Mar fhreagairt ar na riachtanais atá ag teacht chun cinn i measc an Lucht Siúil agus na Romach, chuir an Roinn maoiniú breise agus tacaíochtaí eile ar fáil d'eagraíochtaí comhpháirtíochta den Lucht Siúil agus de na Romaigh go leanfaí ar aghaidh ag soláthar na seirbhísí riachtanacha le linn ghéarchéim COVID-19. Áiríodh air sin maoiniú gearrthéarmach a chur ar fáil le haghaidh riachtanas láithreach do na Romaigh nach raibh modhanna tacaíochta acu, maoiniú le haghaidh seirbhísí ateangaireachta do sholáthraithe cúraim sláinte na Romach ar bhonn leanúnach, agus maoiniú le haghaidh soláthar ábhar faisnéise sláinte poiblí i dteangacha cuí nó i bhformáid chuí don Lucht Siúil agus do phobail na Romach.

Leag paindéim COVID-19 béim ar chomh mór is atá riachtanais phobal na Romach in Éirinn agus ar na dúshláin uathúla a bhaineann le seirbhísí a sholáthar don phobal sin. Mar fhreagairt air sin, thionóil an Roinn foghrúpa na Romach den SNCLSR chun Ranna agus Gníomhaireachtaí iomchuí Rialtais, eagraíochtaí a oibríonn leis na Romaigh agus ionadaithe phobail na Romach a thabhairt le chéile faoi chreat reatha na Straitéise Náisiúnta um Chuimsiú an Lucht Siúil agus na Romach, 2017-2021.

Aistríodh freagracht as an straitéis chuig an Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais, Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige i mí Dheireadh Fómhair, 2020.

An Straitéis Náisiúnta um Chuimsiú Daoine faoi Mhíchumas, 2017-2021 (SNCDM)

Tá an SNCDM dírithe ar na deiseanna is fearr is féidir a chruthú do dhaoine faoi mhíchumas chun a gcumas a bhaint amach, agus glacann an straitéis cur chuige Rialtais iomláin chun saol daoine faoi mhíchumas a fheabhsú.

Is ‘cáipéis bheo’ í an Straitéis, a bhfuil scóip inti do bhearta athbhreithnithe breise agus bearta níos uailmhianaí i bhfianaise dhaingniú an Choinbhinsiúin ar Chearta Daoine faoi Mhíchumas (CCDMNA).

Chuimsigh an t-athbhreithniú meántearma ar an Straitéis comhairliúchán le páirtithe leasmhara míchumais, ranna agus gníomhaireachtaí iomchuí agus foilsíodh í i mí an Mhárta, 2020. Fuarthas amach san athbhreithniú gur theastaigh ó pháirtithe leasmhara go gcuirfí an bhéim ar chur i bhfeidhm na ngealltanais atá sa straitéis cheana féin agus ar chomhlíonadh na n-oibleagáidí a eascraíonn as Éire do dhaingniú (in 2018) Choinbhinsiún na NA ar Chearta Daoine faoi Mhíchumas. Mar fhreagairt, déanfar fócas 2021 a struchtúró thart ar na snáitheanna seo a leanas:

- Feasacht a ardú ar eispéireas saoil daoine faoi mhíchumas
- Cearta a neartú
- Leathnú isteach i réimsí nua
- An Coinbhinsiún ar Chearta Daoine faoi Mhíchumas a chur i bhfeidhm
- Seirbhísí a fheabhsú trí chur i bhfeidhm agus comhoibriú níos fearr

Aistríodh freagracht as an straitéis chuig an Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais, Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige i mí Dheireadh Fómhair, 2020.

5.4 Léargas Ginearálta ar Rialachas an Cheartais Shibhialta

Comhaontuithe Formhaoirseachta

I rith 2020, d’aontaigh an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt comhaontuithe formhaoirseachta leis na gníomhaireachtaí ceartais shibhialta faoina coimirce agus thug siad chun críche iad. Leagtar amach sna comhaontuithe sin an creat leathan rialachais agus cuntasachta a n-oibríonn an ghníomhaireacht iomchuí laistigh de agus sainítear iontu na príomhróil agus na príomhchúraimí atá mar bhonn faoin gcaidreamh idir an ghníomhaireacht agus an Roinn, an tAire agus an Rialtas.

- Seirbhís Dócmhainneachta na hÉireann – Comhaontú Formhaoirseachta 2019-2021 agus Comhaontú Soláthair Feidhmíochta 2020
- Oifig Aicmithe Scannán na hÉireann – Comhaontú Formhaoirseachta 2020-2022 agus Comhaontú Soláthair Feidhmíochta 2020
- An Bord um Chúnamh Dlíthiúil – Comhaontú Formhaoirseachta 2020-2022 agus Comhaontú Soláthair Feidhmíochta 2020

- An tÚdarás Rialála Seirbhísí Maoine – Comhaontú Formhaoirseachta 2020-2022 agus Comhaontú Soláthair Feidhmíochta 2020
- An tÚdarás Náisiúnta Míchumais – Comhaontú Formhaoirseachta 2020-2022 agus Comhaontú Soláthair Feidhmíochta 2020

5.5 Léargas Ginearálta ar Sholáthar Seirbhíse Inimirce

Córais nua clárúcháin ar líne

Tháinig méadú mór ar éileamh ó dhaoine a bhí ag iarraidh a gclárúchán inimirce a athnuachan le linn na gceithre mhí a raibh an Oifig Chlárúcháin i mBaile Átha Cliath dúnta le linn na chéad tréimhse de phaindéim COVID-19.

Chun cabhrú le dul i ngleic leis an éileamh sin, fógraíodh córas nua athnuachana clárúcháin ar líne i mí an Mheithimh do mhic léinn a bhí lonnaithe i mBaile Átha Cliath ach nár ó Limistéar Eacnamaíoch na hEorpa iad, rud a chuir ar chumas iarratasóirí teagmháil shábháilte a dhéanamh leis an Oifig Clárúcháin gan gá dóibh freastal go pearsanta ar Ché an Bhúrcaigh. D'fhág an córas nua go bhféadfadh gach iarratasóir foirm a chomhlánú ar líne, doiciméid tacaíochta a uaslódáil agus an táille a íoc. Rinneadh doiciméid a sheiceáil ansin agus, má formheasadh iad, eisíodh an cárta Ceada Cónaithe Éireannaigh (CCÉ) tríd an luasphost.

Ar dtús ní raibh an Córas nua Athnuachana Clárúcháin ar Líne ar fáil ach do mhic léinn, a bhí lonnaithe i mBaile Átha Cliath ach nár ó Limistéar Eacnamaíoch na hEorpa iad, ach leathnaíodh é níos déanaí chun náisiúnaigh uile, a bhí lonnaithe i mBaile Átha Cliath ach nár ó Limistéar Eacnamaíoch na hEorpa iad, a chuimsiú.

Ó seoladh an córas nua athnuachana ar líne, fuair an Roinn breis agus 38,000 iarratas ó dhaoine a mbeadh orthu freastal go pearsanta ar an Oifig Clárúcháin murach é.

Tionscald Pas

Ón 2 Nollaig, 2020, ní gá do dhaoine a bhfuil athnuachan á déanamh acu ar chlárúchán a gcead inimirce a bpas a chur isteach a thuilleadh chun go gcuirfeadh a nOifig Clárúcháin stampa inimirce leis.

Táthar ag súil go gcuirfidh an fhorbairt seo feabhas suntasach ar an tréimhse ama a ghlacann sé ceadanna inimirce a athnuachan agus go ligfidh sé do dhaoine a bpas a úsáid chun críoch eile agus a n-iarratas á phróiseáil.

In 2020, d'eisigh Soláthar Seirbhísí Inimirce agus an Garda Síochána os cionn 157,000 clárúchán nua nó athnuaithe ar chead chun fanacht sa Stát, laghdú 7% ar na leibhéil roimh an bpaindéim.

Scéim Víosa Iar-Bhreatimeachta

Ar an 23 Nollaig, 2020, d'fhógair an tAire Scéim Víosa nua Iar-Bhreatimeachta do bhaill teaghlaigh Náisiúnach den Ríocht Aontaithe, nach ó Limistéar Eacnamaíoch na hEorpa iad, a bheidh ag bogadh go hÉirinn tar éis an 31 Nollaig, 2020. Sula dtaistealaíonn siad go hÉirinn, is féidir le saoránaigh incháilithe, nach ó Limistéar Eacnamaíoch na hEorpa iad, iarratas a dhéanamh ar chead chun cónaí sa Stát agus nuair a bheidh an cead sin faighte, beidh siad in ann taisteal agus cónaí in Éirinn lena mball teaghlaigh is náisiúnach den RA.

Scéim na nOibrithe Neamhthipiciúla

Soláthraíonn Scéim na nOibrithe Neamhthipiciúla (SON) meicníocht chuíchóirithe chun déileáil le cásanna fostaíochta gearrthéarmacha neamhghnácha, lena n-áirítear iad siúd inar aithníodh ganntanas scileanna nó ina bhfuil géarghá le hardscileanna speisialaithe a sholáthar do thionscal, gnó nó institiúid acadúil.

In Aibreán, 2020, mar chuid dá fhreagairt ar COVID-19, thug an Roinn isteach roinnt beart sealadach a chiallaigh:

- Gur tugadh tús áite d'iarratais ar phearsanra liachta líne tosaigh
- Go bhfuarthas réidh go sealadach leis na ceanglais maidir le cruthúnais ar stádas conartha do Dhochtúirí Ginearálta ionaid
- Gur gan dochar d'aon iarratas sa todhchaí ón duine aonair sin, nó thar ceann an duine aonair sin, a deonaíodh cead mar gheall ar na cúinsí eisceachtúla sin.

Ar an 4 Meán Fómhair, 2020, seoladh próiseas iarratais SON ar líne d'oibrithe gearrthéarmacha a bhí ag lorg cead chun oibriú sa Stát. Thug an Roinn tús áite d'iarratais a phróiseáil don fhoireann leighis líne tosaigh. Fuarthas os cionn 2,000 iarratas leighis in 2020; bhain 1,800 díobh sin le haltraí agus ceadaíodh os cionn 95% díobh.

Saoránacht

Bhain dúshláin shuntasacha, faraor, le soláthar gnáthsheirbhísí mar thoradh ar COVID-19. Ceanglaíodh ar iarratasóirí a bhí 18 mbliana d'aois agus níos sine freastal ar shearmanas saoránachta chun dearbhú dílseachta a dhéanamh don Stát, arna riar ag Oifigeach Ceannais. Mar gheall ar shrianta COVID-19, cuireadh an searmanas a bhí sceidealaithe don 3 Iúil ar ceal agus níor reáchtáladh aon searmanais eile a mbeadh daoine i láthair acu i rith na bliana.

Tá tuilleadh eolais faoi Shaoránacht leagtha amach sa fhreagairt ar COVID-19 níos faide amach sa doiciméad seo.

Cosaint Idirnáisiúnta

Thit líon na ndaoine a bhí ag lorg cosaint idirnáisiúnta in 2020 mar gheall ar phaindéim COVID-19. Mar sin féin, d'fhan an Oifig um Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta (OCI) ar oscailt, chun seirbhís a thairiscint d'iarratasóirí de réir ár n-oibleagáidí idirnáisiúnta deis a thabhairt dóibh siúd ar mian leo cosaint idirnáisiúnta a éileamh é sin a dhéanamh. Meastar gur seirbhís riachtanach i gcónaí é soláthar na saoráide le ligean do dhaoine cosaint idirnáisiúnta a éileamh, lena n-áirítear le linn ghéarchéim COVID-19.

Rinneadh 1,566 iarratas ar chosaint idirnáisiúnta in 2020.

Cuireadh tús in 2020 le hathbhreithniú próisis ó cheann go ceann ar gach próiseas cosanta idirnáisiúnta. Tá an obair sin, a ndearna Bord Cláir ardleibhéil sa Roinn maoirsiú uirthi, curtha i gcrích anois. Moltar sa Pháipéar Bán go ndéanfaí an córas nua a chéimniú isteach agus a bheith i bhfeidhm faoi 2024 agus go dtabharfadh an tréimhse san idirlinn deis chun feabhsuithe a chur chun cinn maidir leis na tréimhsí ama próiseála foriomlána do chosaint idirnáisiúnta. Tá roinnt tionscnamh tugtha isteach cheana féin, lena n-áirítear infheistíocht bhreise i dTeicneolaíocht na Faisnéise; athlonnú an Aonaid Cinntí Airí chuig áitreabh na hOifige um Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta chun próisis oibre a fheabhsú; ainmniú an Bhinse Achomhairc um Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta mar chomhlacht atá údaraithe chun cian-éisteachtaí a reáchtáil; agus agallaimh fhíorúla a reáchtáil le roinnt iarratasóirí atá ina gcónaí lasmuigh de Bhaile Átha Cliath.

6. Reachtaíocht

Billí Reachtaíochta Coiriúla a chaithe i 2020

An tAcht um Cheartas Coiriúil (Cumhachtaí Forfheidhmiúcháin) (COVID-19), 2020

Cuireann an tAcht um Cheartas Coiriúil (Cumhachtaí Forfheidhmiúcháin) (COVID-19), 2020, forálacha isteach san Acht Sláinte, 1947, ag údarú don Aire Sláinte forálacha pionósacha áirithe de rialacháin a rinneadh faoin Acht Sláinte, 1947, a fhorordú mar “forálacha iomchuí” chun críocha an Achta um Cheartas Coiriúil (Cumhachtaí Forfheidhmiúcháin) (COVID-19), 2020. Faoin Acht, tugtar cumhachtaí forfheidhmiúcháin don Gharda Síochána maidir leis na rialacháin phionósacha COVID-19 a bhaineann le háitribh cheadúnaithe agus clubanna cláraithe. Shínigh an tUachtarán an tAcht ina dhlí ar an 11 Meán Fómhair, 2020. Foilsíodh ina Bhille é ar an 1 Meán Fómhair, 2020, agus rith dhá Theach an Oireachtais é gan leasú. Bhí an tAcht le dul in éag ar an 9 Samhain, 2020. Tionóladh tuilleadh díospóireachtaí san Oireachtas ar fhorálacha an Achta roimh an dáta éaga i mí na Samhna agus comhaontaíodh le rún na forálacha a shíneadh go 2021.

An tAcht um an Dlí Sibhialta agus an Dlí Coiriúil (Forálacha Ilghnéitheacha), 2020

Déantar socrú leis an Acht seo maidir le sannadh agus ceapadh cróinéirí sealadacha i gcúinsí eisceachtúla áirithe agus chun na críocha sin agus críocha eile do leasú an Achta Cróinéirí, 1962. Déantar socrú leis an Acht, freisin, maidir le hinghlacthacht, i gcúinsí áirithe, taifead gnó in imeachtaí sibhialta agus déantar socrú leis maidir le cian-éisteachtaí agus le modhanna leictreonacha a úsáid in imeachtaí sibhialta. Ceadaítear leis, freisin, iarratais áirithe a dhéanamh in imeachtaí áirithe, ag baint úsáid as nasc físe beo agus cian-éisteacht imeachtaí áirithe sa Chúirt Achomhairc agus sa Chúirt Uachtarach. Déantar socrú leis an Acht, freisin, maidir le cruinnithe de chomhlachtaí Stáit a thionól go cianda agus chun an tAcht Cúirt-eanna Breithiúnais, 1953, a leasú, agus maidir le nithe gaolmhara.

An tAcht um Cheartas Coiriúil (Aitheantas Frithpháirteach do Chinntí ar Bhearta Maoirseachta), 2020

Tugann an tAcht seo éifeacht do Chreat-Chinneadh 2009/829/CGB ón gComhairle ar an 23 Deireadh Fómhair, 2009, maidir le prionsabal an aitheantais fhrithpháirtigh a chur i bhfeidhm idir Bhallstáit an Aontais Eorpaigh i leith cinntí ar bhearta maoirseachta mar mhalairt ar choinneáil shealadach; agus chun socrú a dhéanamh maidir le nithe gaolmhara.

An tAcht um Chiapadh, Cumarsáid Dhochrach agus Cionta Gaolmhara, 2020

Tugadh an tAcht um Chiapadh, Cumarsáid Dhochrach agus Cionta Gaolmhara, 2020, ar a dtugtar Dlí Coco freisin, isteach de bhun moltaí ón gCoimisiún um Athchóiriú an Dlí chun an dlí coiriúil a nuachóiriú maidir le cumarsáid dhochrach, chun a chinntiú go bhfuil an dlí cothrom le dáta le hiompraíochtaí atá ag teacht chun cinn. Tá sé dírithe ar dhul i ngleic le cineálacha éagsúla díobhála agus mí-úsáide a d'fhéadfadh tarlú ar líne, chomh maith lena dtarlú as líne. Leasaigh an tAcht an dlí a bhaineann le ciapadh. Déantar socrú leis maidir le cionta a bhaineann le taifeadadh, dáileadh nó foilsiú íomhánna an-phearsanta agus déantar socrú leis maidir le hanaithnideacht íospartaigh na gcionta sin. Chruthaigh sé cion lena mbaineann cumarsáid bhagrach, nó thar a bheith maslach, a dháileadh, a fhoilsiú nó a sheoladh.

Reachtaíocht Choiriúil idir lámha i 2020

An Bille um Mionnú Éithigh agus Cionta Gaolmhara

Déantar socrú leis an mBille maidir le cion reachtúil mionnú éithigh agus déantar socrú leis maidir le cionta reachtúla a bhaineann le mionnú éithigh lena n-áirítear ráitis bhréagacha faoi mhionn, dearbhuithe reachtúla bréagacha, fianaise a chumadh agus mionnú éithigh a éilliú. Chomh maith leis sin, comhdhlúthaíonn an Bille reachtaíocht iomchuí eile i réimse seo an mhionnaithe éithigh agus ráitis bhréagacha a dhéanamh go feasach in imeachtaí foirm-iúla dlíthiúla.

An Bille um Cheartas Coiriúil (Leasú)

Tá an Bille um Cheartas Coiriúil (Leasú), lena mbaintear forálacha maidir le pianbhreitheanna sainordaitheacha don dara pianbhreith nó do phianbhreitheanna ina dhiaidh sin, a nglactar leis iad a bheith míbhunreachtúil, ag fanacht leis an dara céim sa Dáil. Ní féidir leanúint le pianbhreith a ghearradh i gcásanna den chineál sin go dtí go mbeidh an reachtaíocht a chaithe.

An Bille um Cheartas Coiriúil (Cionta Gadaíochta agus Calaoise) (Leasú)

Déanfaidh an Bille seo trasú Threoir an AE maidir le Calaois i gcoinne leasanna airgeadais an Aontais trí bhíthin an dlí choiriúil (ar a dtugtar an treoir um an gComhad Faisnéise faoi Tháirge) a chur i gcrích. Foilsíodh an Bille ar an 1 Eanáir, 2020, agus rith Seanad Éireann é ar an 25 Samhain, 2020, agus ina dhiaidh sin aistríodh go Dáil Éireann é lena bhreithniú.

Bille an Gharda Síochána (Taifeadadh Digiteach)

Tá scéim ghinearálta Bille á hullmhú faoi láthair chun socrú a dhéanamh maidir le húsáid ceamaraí éide ag an nGarda Síochána, mar atá molta ag an gCoimisiún um Thodhchaí na Póilíneachta in Éirinn. Déanfar socrú leis an mBille, freisin, maidir le húsáid leathnaithe theicneolaíocht Uathaitheanta Uimhirphlátaí (UU) agus Theilifís Ciorcaid Iata (TCI), chomh maith le rochtain ag an nGarda Síochána ar cheamaraí beo a bhíonn á n-oibriú ag eagraíochtaí eile a bhfuil gréasán mór ceamaraí TCI/UU acu in ionaid straitéiseacha don Gharda Síochána.

Bille an Gharda Síochána (Cumhachtaí)

Leanadh den obair in 2020 ar scéim ghinearálta Bille a ullmhú chun cumhachtaí cuardaigh, gabhála agus coinneála na bpóilíní a chódú, chun cearta nós imeachta daoine a bhfuil amhras fúthu faoi réir na gcumhachtaí sin a chódú agus chun socrú a dhéanamh maidir le cóid chleachtais reachtúla. Moladh an reachtaíocht sin i dtuarascáil ón gCoimisiún um Thodhchaí na Póilíneachta in Éirinn chun soiléireacht agus trédhearcacht a thabhairt chuig an gcóras casta cumhachtaí atá i bhfeidhm faoi láthair.

Reachtaíocht nua chun déileáil le fuathchoireacht agus gríosú fuatha

Foilsíodh an tuarascáil 'Reachtaíocht á Rith maidir le Fuathchaint agus Fuathchoireacht' i mí na Nollag, 2020. Áirítear inti toradh an chomhairliúcháin phoiblí ar athchóiriú an Achta um Thoirmeasc ar Ghríosú chun Fuatha, 1989, an t-aon reachtaíocht atá ag Éirinn faoi láthair i réimse na fuathchainte nó na fuathchoireachta, agus leagtar béim inti ar phríomhchonclúidí a bheidh mar bhonn eolais don chur chuige reachtaíochta nua.

A luaithe a bheidh an Scéim Ghinearálta foilsithe, cuirfear faoi bhráid an Choiste Dlí agus Cirt í le haghaidh grinnscrúdú réamhrechtach.

An Bille um Nós Imeachta Coiriúil

Is Bille é seo chun socrú a dhéanamh maidir le héisteachtaí réamhthrialach, chun an dlí a leasú maidir le fianaise a ghlacadh trí ráiteas scríofa agus chun athruithe eile a dhéanamh ar an dlí maidir le nós imeachta coiriúil. Faomhadh Scéim Ghinearálta maidir le Bille níos leithne in 2015.

Bille an Gharda Síochána (Cúiteamh)

Foilsíodh scéim ghinearálta Bhille nua an Gharda Síochána (Cúiteamh) i mBealtaine, 2017. Faoin Scéim nua atá beartaithe, ní mór do Gharda a mhaíonn go ndearnadh díobháil dó nó di go mailíseach agus é nó í i mbun dualgais iarratas a chur faoi bhráid Choimisinéir an Gharda Síochána laistigh de shé mhí. I gcás go bhfaightear an gortú a bheith ina ghortú mailíseach, beidh sé nó sí i dteideal cúitimh. Ansin seolfar iarratas a mbeidh nglactha leis chuig an mBord Measúnaithe Díobhálacha Pearsanta, a dhéanfaidh é a phróiseáil agus a dhéanfaidh measúnú ar chandam. Cuirfear an Ghníomhaireacht um Éilimh ar an Stát ar an eolas faoin measúnú agus beidh deis aici glacadh leis nó diúltú dó thar ceann an Choimisinéara. Tar éis don Rialtas í a fhaomhadh, cuireadh an Scéim Ghinearálta faoi bhráid Oifig an Ard-Aighne lena dréachtú. Chuaigh oifigigh ón Roinn i mbun tuilleadh plé le páirtithe leasmhara iomchuí agus cuireadh Bille Cúitimh an Gharda Síochána, 2021, faoi bhráid an tSeanaid i mí Aibreáin, 2021.

An Bille fán gCoinbhinsiún Eorpach um Chearta an Duine (Moill in Imeachtaí Cúirte)

Soláthróidh an Bille seo leigheas i gcás ina sáraítear cearta Airteagal 6 agus Airteagal 13 an duine aonair den Choinbhinsiún Eorpach um Chearta an Duine. Déantar socrú in Airteagal 6 maidir le ceart chun trialach córa laistigh de thréimhse réasúnach ama. Déantar socrú le hAirteagal 13 maidir le ceart chun leighis ag leibhéal náisiúnta i gcás inar sáraíodh cearta duine faoin gCoinbhinsiún Eorpach. Ceanglaítear ar an reachtaíocht leigheas a chur i bhfeidhm chun freagairt do bhreithiúnas McFarlane v. Éire ón gCúirt Eorpach um Chearta an Duine ó 2010. Déanfar socrú leis an reachtaíocht maidir le ceart chun iarratas a dhéanamh ar chúiteamh i gcás ina ndearnadh cinneadh gur cuireadh moill mhíchuí ar imeachtaí dlí duine.

An Bille um Chiontóirí Gnéis (Leasú)

Déantar athruithe leis an mBille seo ar na socruithe monatóireachta i leith ciontóirí gnéis arna gciontú. Laghdaítear leis an tréimhse nach mór dóibh fógra a thabhairt faoi athrú ar a seoladh; déantar socrú leis maidir le monatóireacht leictreonach agus maidir le grianghraif agus méarloirg a choinneáil, agus déantar socrú leis, freisin, maidir le heolas a bhaineann le ciontóir gnéis a nochtadh nuair is gá chun baol tromaí do shábháilteacht an phobail a sheachaint.

An Bille um Cheartas Coiriúil (Teacht i dtír ar leanaí i gcionta a dhéanamh)

Is Bille nua é seo chun daoine fásta, a aslaíonn nó a ghrúmáilann leanaí chun coireanna a dhéanamh, a choiriúlú. Cé go bhfuil cion á dhéanamh cheana féin amhail is dá mbeadh an choir déanta acu féin ag daoine fásta a ghríosáíonn leanbh chun coir a dhéanamh, nó a úsáideann iad mar a ngníomhaire neamhchiontach, ní féidir iad a ionchúiseamh faoi láthair as an dochar a dhéantar don leanbh. Tugtar cionta nua isteach leis an mBille chun déileáil leis an dochar a dhéantar don leanbh as iad a thabhairt isteach sa chineál sin gníomhaíochta. Ceadaíodh an Scéim Ghinearálta lena foilsíú ag an Rialtas ar an 15 Nollaig, 2020.

Prótacal Roghnach a ghabhann leis an gCoinbhinsiún in aghaidh na Céastóireachta (PRCC)

Sa Chlár Rialtais reatha áirítear gealltanais PRCC a dhaingníú laistigh de 18 mí ó bhunú an Rialtais. Is Conradh idirnáisiúnta um chearta an duine é an PRCC a chuidíonn le Stáit céastóireacht agus cineálacha eile drochíde a chosc in áiteanna coinneála. Is é cuspóir an Phrótacail córas cuairteanna rialta arna ndéanamh ag comhlachtaí neamhspleách idirnáisiúnta agus náisiúnta ar áiteanna a bhfuil a sairse á mbaint astu a bhunú. Ós rud é go gcoinnítear formhór na ndaoine sin sa Stát laistigh de chóras na bPríosún, tá an Roinn seo ag ullmhú na reachtaíochta is gá – An Bille um Chigireacht ar Áiteanna Coinneála – chun daingníú an PRCC a chumasú a luaithe is féidir.

An Bille um Cheartas Coiriúil (Sciúradh Airgid agus Maoiniú na Sceimhlitheoireachta) (Leasú).

Leis an mBille seo, déantar na gnéithe ceartais choiriúil agus roinnt gnéithe ceartais neamhchoiriúil den Chúigiú Treoir ón AE maidir le Sciúradh Airgid a thrasú. Cuireann an Treoir seo leis an gCeathrú Treoir um Fhrith-Sciúradh Airgid chun an tAontas a chumasú níos fearr chun an córas airgeadais a chosc ó bheith á úsáid le haghaidh sciúradh airgid agus chun sceimhlitheoirí a mhaoiniú. Cé go dtrasúíonn an tAcht go leor de ghnéithe an Chúigiú Treoir maidir le Sciúradh Airgid, tá an Roinn Airgeadais i mbun éifeacht a thabhairt d'fhorálacha eile na Treorach trí reachtaíocht thánaisteach. Ba é an 10 Eanáir, 2020, an spriocdháta chun an Cúigiú Treoir maidir le Sciúradh Airgid a thrasú, agus eisíodh litir le fógra foirmiúil ar an 20 Bealtaine, 2020, agus eisíodh freagra i Meán Fómhair, 2020.

An Bille um Cheartas Coiriúil (Góchumadh), 2020

Déanfaidh an Bille roinnt gnéithe atá fós gan réiteach den Treoir um Ghóchumadh 2014/62/AE a thrasúiomh, chomh maith le cinneadh an BCE maidir le nóta bainc euro BCE/

2010/14, an rialachán maidir le bonn an euro 1210/2010 agus an rialachán um ghó-chumadh an euro 1338/2001. Foilsíodh an Bille ar an 16 Nollaig, 2020. Fuarthas Tuairim Réasúnaithe ar an 3 Nollaig, 2020, agus meastar go n-eiseofar freagra i mí Feabhra, 2021.

An Bille um Cheartas Coiriúil (Aitheantas Frithpháirteach do Phianbhreitheanna Coimeádta)

Trasuífidh an Bille seo Creatchinneadh 2008 ón gComhairle ar fheidhmiú phrionsabal an aitheantais fhrithpháirtigh do bhreithiúnais in ábhair choiriúla lena ngearrtar pianbhreitheanna coimeádta nó bearta a bhaineann le cailleadh saoirse. Déanfar socrú leis maidir le daoine ar cuireadh pianbhreith orthu a aistriú idir Bhallstáit i gcás nach mbeidh toiliú tugtha ag an duine lena mbainfidh. Tá an Bille á dhréachtú faoi láthair ag Oifig na nDréachtóirí Parlaiminte agus táthar ag súil go bhfoilseofar é i mí na Bealtaine agus tá sé nasctha le rochtain na hÉireann ar Chóras Faisnéise Schengen (CFS II). Tarchurtha chuig Cúirt Bhreithiúnais an AE ar an 3 Nollaig, 2020.

An Bille um Cheartas Coiriúil (Daoine a Smuigleáil)

Déanfar socrú leis an mBille maidir le trí ionstraim idirnáisiúnta a chur i bhfeidhm, lena n-áirítear Treoir 2002/90/CE ón gComhairle maidir le teacht isteach, idirthuras agus cónaí neamhúdaraite a éascú, Creat-Chinneadh 2002/946/CGB maidir leis an gcreat pionósach gaolmhar agus Prótacal na Náisiún Aontaithe i gcoinne imircigh a smuigleáil. Tá an Bille nasctha le rochtain na hÉireann ar Chóras Faisnéise Schengen (CFS II).

Bille na Leanaí (Leasú)

Le Bille na Leanaí (Leasú) ceadófar do leanaí éagtha ar íospartaigh na coireachta iad a ainmniú go poiblí. I mí na Nollag, 2020, bhí gach céim sa Seanad rite aige.

An Bille um Cheartas Coiriúil (Cionta Sceimhlitheoireachta)

Tabharfaidh an Bille um Cheartas Coiriúil (Cionta Sceimhlitheoireachta) éifeacht do Threoir 2017/541 an AE maidir leis an sceimhlitheoireacht a chomhrac. Tá an Treoir dírithe ar fheiniméan an trodaí eachtraigh sceimhlitheoireachta agus cuimsíonn sí cionta maidir le taisteal chun cion sceimhlitheoireachta a dhéanamh, taisteal a éascú chun cion sceimhlitheoireachta a dhéanamh agus oiliúint a fháil don sceimhlitheoireacht.

Cheadaigh an Rialtas an Bille lena dhréachtú ar an 15 Meán Fómhair, 2020.

An Bille um Cheartas Coiriúil (Forálacha Ilghnéitheacha)

Déantar socrú leis an mBille maidir le roinnt nithe ilghnéitheacha a bhfuil an Garda Síochána, an Stiúrthóir Ionchúiseamh Poiblí agus Oifig an Ard-Aighne tar éis aird na Roinne a tharraingt orthu. Ina measc sin tá socrú a dhéanamh maidir le méadú ar an bpiónós as comhcheilg chun dúnmharú a dhéanamh ó 10 mbliana go príosúnacht saoil. Faofa lena dhréachtú i Meán Fómhair, 2020.

An Bille um Cheartas Coiriúil (Smachtbhannaí Pobail)

Soláthróidh an Bille seo ráiteas nua-aimseartha ar an dlí a rialaíonn smachtbhannaí pobail agus ar ról na Seirbhíse Promhaidh sa chóras Ceartais Choiriúil. Cheadaigh an Rialtas scéim ghinearálta Bille in 2014. Tá athbhreithniú ar Chinn na Scéime ar siúl faoi láthair ag oifigigh a bhaineann leis an mBeartas um Cheartas Coiriúil agus ag an tSeirbhís Phromhaidh.

An tAcht um an Dlí Sibhialta agus an Dlí Coiriúil (Forálacha Ilghnéitheacha), 2020

Acht chun socrú a dhéanamh maidir le sannadh agus ceapadh cróinéirí sealadacha i gcúinsí eisceachtúla áirithe agus chun na críocha sin agus críocha eile do leasú an Achta Cróinéirí, 1962. Déantar socrú leis an Acht, freisin, maidir le hinghlacthacht, i gcúinsí áirithe, taifead gnó in imeachtaí sibhialta agus déantar socrú leis maidir le cian-éisteachtaí agus le húsáid modhanna leictreonacha in imeachtaí sibhialta. Ceadáítear leis, freisin, iarratais áirithe a dhéanamh in imeachtaí áirithe, ag baint úsáid as nasc físe beo, agus cian-éisteacht imeachtaí áirithe sa Chúirt Achomhairc agus sa Chúirt Uachtarach.

Déantar socrú leis an Acht, freisin, maidir le cruinnithe comhlachtaí Stáit a thionól go cianda agus chun an tAcht Cúirteanna Breithiúnais, 1953, a leasú, agus maidir le nithe gaolmhara.

Reachtaíocht Gnóthaí Eorpacha

AN BREATIMEACHT / Comhaontú Trádála agus Comhoibrithe an AE - na RA

Reachtaíocht Thánaisteach a síníodh ar an 31 Nollaig, 2020

Mar chuid den ullmhúchán a rinneadh i gcomhair dheireadh na hidirthréimhse, ba ghá don Aire agus don Aire Gnóthaí Eachtracha roinnt píosáí reachtaíochta tánaisteacha a shíniú ar an 31 Nollaig, 2020 – a bhain le gníomhaíochtaí na Roinne Dlí agus Cirt. Is meascán iad seo de bhearta ullmhachta a theastaíonn d’ainneoin an Chomhaontaithe Trádála agus Comhoibrithe, agus bearta eile a bhí mar chuid de chur i bhfeidhm an Chomhaontaithe.

Orduithe a shínigh an tAire Dlí agus Cirt

- ix. An tOrdú fán Acht um Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta, 2015 (Tríú Tír Shábháilte), 2020
- x. Na Rialacháin fán Acht um Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta, 2015 (Ordú Fillte), 2020
- xi. Na Rialacháin fán Acht um Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta, 2015 (Alt 51B) (Áiteanna Coinneála), 2020
- xii. An tOrdú um an Acht Aturnaethe, 1954 (Alt 44) (Sasana agus an Bhreatain Bheag), 2020
- xiii. An tOrdú um an Acht Aturnaethe, 1954 (Alt 44) (Albain), 2020
- xiv. An tOrdú um an Acht Aturnaethe, 1954 (Alt 44) (Tuaisceart Éireann), 2020
- xv. Rialacháin an Aontais Eorpaigh (Comhaontú Aistarraingthe) (Cearta na Saoránach), 2020
- xvi. An tOrdú fán Acht Inimirce, 2004 (Víosáí) (Leasú) (Uimh. 2), 2020

Reachtaíocht Ceartais Shibhialta

Déantar socrú leis an gClár Rialtais maidir leis an Rialtas do thabhairt reachtaíocht isteach chun Coimisiún nua um Cheapacháin Bhreithiúnacha a chur in ionad an Bhoird Chomhairligh um Cheapacháin Bhreithiúnacha (BCCB) agus go mbeidh an Príomh-Bhreitheamh ina Chathaoirleach air.

Cheadaigh an Rialtas Scéim Ghinearálta Bille um an gCoimisiún um Cheapacháin Bhreithiúnacha ar an 15 Nollaig, 2020, chun socrú a dhéanamh chun Coimisiún nua a bhunú in ionad an Bhoird Chomhairligh um Cheapacháin Bhreithiúnacha.

Tá an Bille á dhréachtú faoi láthair ag Oifig na nDréachtóirí Parlaiminte.

Bille na gCúirteanna agus an Dlí Shibhialta (Forálacha Ilghnéitheacha)

Cheadaigh an Rialtas dréachtú Scéim Ghinearálta Bhille na gCúirteanna agus an Dlí Shibhialta (Forálacha Ilghnéitheacha), 2020, ar an 09 Eanáir, 2020. Mar gheall ar an bpaindéim reatha, tháinig tosaíochtaí eile ina áit. Ag tús an tsamhraidh cheadaigh an Rialtas an Meabhrán don Rialtas (S180/20/10/2182) ag iarraidh go ndéanfaí Bille na gCúirteanna agus an Dlí Shibhialta (Forálacha Ilghnéitheacha) a dhréachtú go luath ar aon dul leis an Scéim Ghinearálta athbhreithnithe. Tá Oifig na nDréachtóirí Parlaiminte ag déanamh dul chun cinn ar dhréachtú an Bhille faoi láthair agus tá teagmháil déanta ag an Roinn leis an gComhchoiste Oireachtais um Dhlí agus Ceart maidir le grinnscrúdú réamhrechtach.

An Bille Cúirteanna Teaghlaigh

I mí Mheán Fómhair, 2020, cheadaigh an Rialtas dréachtú Bille Cúirteanna Teaghlaigh chun socrú a dhéanamh maidir le bunú Cúirte Dúiche Teaghlaigh, Cúirte Cuarda Teaghlaigh agus Ard-Chúirte Teaghlaigh mar rannáin laistigh de na struchtúir chúirte atá ann cheana fein.

Beidh an Bille Cúirteanna Teaghlaigh ina phríomhghné d'fhorbairt córas cúirte teaghlaigh níos éifeachtaí agus níos so-úsáidte a chuireann teaghlaigh i gceartlár a ghníomhaíochtaí, a sholáthraíonn rochtain ar thacaíochtaí speisialtóra agus a spreagann úsáid réitigh mhalartaigh díospóide in imeachtaí dlí teaghlaigh.

Dócmhainneacht Phearsanta (Leasú) (Uimh.1)

Fuair an Bille um Dhócmhainneacht Phearsanta (Leasú), 2020 ('Bille Uimh. 1'), faomhadh an Rialtais le haghaidh dréachtú tosaíochta i mí Dheireadh Fómhair, 2020; díolmhaíodh é ó ghrinnscrúdú réamhrechtach mar gheall ar an bpráinn a bhain leis, agus foilsíodh é ar an 16 Nollaig, 2020.

7. Aghaidh á tabhairt ar Dhúshlán COVID-19

Sa chuid seo den tuarascáil leagtar béim ar phríomhréimsí fhreagairt na Roinne ar phaindéim COVID-19.

Bhí baint lárnach ag an Roinn le príomhréimsí na freagartha reachtaíochta agus slándála ar COVID-19 agus bhí go leor dár ngníomhaireachtaí agus a bhfoireann ar an líne thosaigh ag dul i ngleic le ceann de na géarchéimeanna sláinte poiblí ba dhúshlánaí a bhí le sárú ag Éirinn riamh.

FREAGAIRT NA ROINNE

Mar fhreagairt ar an mbagairt fhéideartha ó COVID-19 bunaíodh grúpa inmheánach i mí Feabhra ar fud na hEarnála Dlí agus Cirt, faoi stiúir na bainistíochta sinsearaí laistigh den Roinn. Cuireadh de chúram ar an ngrúpa sin an fhreagairt ar dhúshlán fhéideartha COVID-19 a chomhordú ar fud na Roinne, agus scrúdú a dhéanamh ar réimsí ar leith ba mhó d'fhulaingeodh bagairt agus tionchar paindéime lánsála, amhail Seirbhísí Inimirce, an tSeirbhís Chúirteanna, Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann agus an Garda Síochána.

Lena chois sin bhí ionadaíocht ag an Roinn ar Ghrúpa na nOifigeach Sinsearach a bhí ag tacú leis an gCoiste Rialtais, agus chomhordaigh sí seisiúin faisnéise agus cumarsáide ar fud na hEarnála Dlí agus Cirt. D'fhreastail bainisteoir Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta na Roinne ar chruinnithe an Ghrúpa Comhordaithe Bagairtí Sláinte san Ionad Náisiúnta Comhordaithe Éigeandála, agus reáchtáladh Cruinnithe Corparáideacha Nuashonrúcháin seachtainiúla faoin gCoróinvíreas.

Nuair a bhí ráig an víris láraithe sa tSín, thacaigh Acmhainní Daonna le baill foirne na Roinne a bhí lonnaithe sa tSín, agus glacadh bearta rialaithe ag Oifig na Víosáí i mBéising. Rinneadh éascaíocht do roinnt ball foirne filleadh abhaile ar Éirinn.

Rinneadh measúnuithe riosca do gach réimse den Roinn, agus forbraíodh comharthaíocht, prótacail agus bearta rialaithe eile.

Pleanáil Theagmhach laistigh den Roinn

Leagadh amach obair pleanála teagmhais níos leithne ar an gcéad dul síos maidir le tascanna criticiúla agus pearsanra criticiúil a aithint, agus in oirchill go bhféadfadh laghdú suntasach teacht ar an bpearsanra a bheadh ar fáil, agus/nó an gá a bheadh ann foirgnimh a dhúnadh.

Bhí oifigeach sinsearach, le tacaíocht ó ghrúpa oibre inmheánach, comhdhéanta de phríomh-fheidhmeanna leanúnachais gnó, freagrach as an bpleanáil sin. Bhí cumas suntasach cian-oibre ag an Roinn cheana féin ag leibhéal sinsearach agus thosaigh sí ag leathnú na hacmhainne sin go tapa mar chuid dá pleanáil theagmhach.

Scrúdú ar Rioscaí Ceirde laistigh den Roinn

Aithníodh go raibh riosca ceirde féideartha ann i leith COVID-19 ag ceithre réimse de Sholáthar Seirbhísí Inimirce (SSI), i.e. d'fhéadfadh baill foirne a bheith faoi riteacht mar gheall ar nádúr a gcuid oibre. Ba iad sin:

- Oifig Clárúcháin Ché an Bhúrcaigh
- An Oifig um Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta, Sráid an Mhóta (lena n-áirítear foireann chuntair Seirbhísí Cóiríochta Cosanta Idirnáisiúnta)
- An tAonad Bainistithe Teorann, Aerfort Bhaile Átha Cliath
- Seirbhísí Cóiríochta Cosanta Idirnáisiúnta, Teach Timberlay

Eisíodh Measúnuithe Riosca Coróinvíris chuig na réimsí seo ón 3 Feabhra agus rinneadh iad a athbhreithniú, a nuashonrú agus a eisiúint ar bhonn laethúil.

Coinníodh teagmháil rialta le FORSA maidir leis na bearta rialaithe idir aonaid Acmhainní Daonna agus Sláinte & Sábháilteachta

Struchtúir Phleanála agus Chomhordaithe Leathana na Roinne agus na nGníomhaireachtaí

Bunaíodh foireann freagartha thrasfheidhmiúil COVID-19 ina raibh oifigh shinsearacha ón Roinn agus ó ghníomhaireachtaí lena n-áirítear an Garda Síochána, an tSeirbhís Chúirt-eanna, Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann agus an tSeirbhís Phromhaidh. D'fhreastail Oifig an

Stiúrthóra Ionchúiseamh Poiblí ar na cruinnithe sin freisin. Bhí ionchur ag an bhfoireann sin, ar a seal, i struchtúir náisiúnta a bunaíodh chun riosca COVID-19 a bhainistiú.

Mar thoradh ar na struchtúir sin bhí an Roinn in ann oibriú go dlúth leis na gníomhaireachtaí ceartais choiriúil agus sláinte poiblí iomchuí ar fad (an Roinn Sláinte, an Príomhoifigeach Leighis agus Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte) agus bearta a ghlacadh de réir beartas poiblí agus na staide athraithe.

Reachtaíocht

Ag tús na paindéime rinne an Roinn athbhreithniú ar na saincheistanna dlí a tháinig chun cinn i gcomhthéacs na freagartha ar COVID-19, agus bhí ionadaíocht aici ar fho-ghrúpa Reachtaíochta na Foirne Náisiúnta Éigeandála Sláinte Poiblí a raibh an Roinn Sláinte ina cathaoirleach air.

D'oibrigh an Roinn leis an Roinn Sláinte ar leasuithe ar an Acht Sláinte, 1947, agus ar rialacháin chun éifeacht dhlíthiúil a thabhairt do shrianta an Rialtais ar ghluaiseacht, go háirithe i gcomhthéacs chumhachtaí an Gharda Síochána.

I ndlúthchomhairle le hOifig an Ard-Aighne, le Roinn an Taoisigh agus leis an Roinn Sláinte, dhréachtaigh an Roinn an Bille um Cheartas Coiriúil (Forálacha Forfheidhm-iúcháin) (COVID-19), 2020, freisin chun a chinntiú go raibh na cumhachtaí ag comhaltai den Gharda Síochána a bhí ag teastáil uathu chun gníomhú go tapa chun déileáil le sárú rialachán a bhain le COVID-19.

Foráladh sa Bhille go bhféadfadh Ceannfort, sa chás nár chomhlíon duine treoir ó Gharda faoi Acht 1947, ordú dúnta láithreach a eisiúint (ó bhéal nó i scríbhinn) ag tabhairt ordaithe don duine an t-áitreabh iomchuí a dhúnadh láithreach don chuid eile den lá. Tar éis mainneachtana treoir ón nGarda Síochána a chomhlíonadh ar níos mó ná ócáid amháin, d'fhéadfadh an Garda Síochána iarratas a dhéanamh chuig an gCúirt Dúiche ar ordú dúnta éigeandála, ar feadh tréimhse suas le 7 lá. Shínigh an tUachtarán an Bille seo ina dhlí ar an 11 Meán Fómhair.

Rinne an Roinn anailís reachtach freisin chun aon fhorálacha am-íogair laistigh dá sainchúram a shainiú a bhféadfadh coigeartú reachtach a bheith ag teastáil ina leith i gcás srianta leanúnacha a bhain le COVID-19 .

Mar thoradh air sin ritheadh, trí dhá Theach an Oireachtais, an Bille um an Dlí Sibhialta agus an Dlí Coiriúil (Forálacha Ilghnéitheacha), 2020. Rinneadh socrú leis an mBille maidir le raon leasuithe tábhachtacha chun dul i ngleic le dúshláin nua agus le saincheisteanna dlí a tháinig chun cinn i gcomhthéacs phaindéim COVID-19. Bhain na hathruithe, go háirithe, le nósanna imeachta sna cúirteanna sibhialta agus coiriúla (agus le hiompar príosúnach chun na cúirte agus idir phríosúin), le méadú ar úsáid na teicneolaíochta, lena n-áirítear naisc físe, do na cúirteanna coiriúla agus sibhialta, agus le cumas na seirbhíse cróinéara.

Plean Gníomhaíochta agus Feachtas Feasachta um Fhoréigean Baile

Ag aithint na rioscaí ar leith a chothaigh an phaindéim d'íospartaigh an fhoréigin baile / drochíde baile, bhunaigh an Roinn grúpa trasearnála comhdhéanta d'oifigigh AGS, oifigigh na Seirbhísí Cúirte agus oifigigh Cúnaimh Dhlíthiúil, agus é ag nasc, go díreach le hionadaithe TUSLA. Forbraíodh plean gníomhaíochta chun freagairt don riosca méadaithe agus do mhinicíocht mhéadaithe an fhoréigin baile mar thoradh ar bhearta COVID-19 a glacadh agus a chóngaraí ab éigean do mhí-úsáideoirí agus a n-íospartaigh a bheith le chéile mar thoradh ar na bearta sin.

Roinneadh an plean gníomhaíochta i dtrí shnáithe oibre:

4. Seirbhísí a chothabháil agus a chur in ord tosaíochta dóibh siúd ar ghá dóibh rochtain a fháil orthu
5. A chinntiú go bhféadfadh íospartaigh rochtain a fháil ar na cúirteanna agus cosaint a lorg ó lucht déanta na coire
6. Feasacht a mhéadú go raibh seirbhísí agus tacaíochtaí ar fáil le linn éigeandáil COVID-19 dóibh siúd a bhí ag fulaingt drochíde sa bhaile

Bhunaigh an Garda Síochána an Oibríocht 'Faoiseamh' chun aghaidh a thabhairt go sonrach ar an tsaincheist sin. Gheall an Garda Síochána go bhfreagróidís go tapa agus go láidir le beartas idirghabhála ar son gabhála i leith aon tuairisce ar dhrochíde sa bhaile, in ainneoin éigeandáil COVID-19. Chuathas i dteagmháil ar an nguthán le híospartaigh eachtraí a taifeadadh i 2018-2020, agus bhí freagra dearfach ó íospartaigh mar thoradh air sin. Tugadh cuairt orthu siúd a bhí go mór i mbaol.

Ina theannta sin, cuireadh ciontuith a bhain le drochíde sa bhaile, sárú ar orduithe urchoisc agus cúinsí eile dá samhail san áireamh sna critéir mheasúnaithe riosca a chuir Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann i bhfeidhm agus cinneadh á dhéanamh maidir le scaoileadh sealadach.

Lena chois sin, chuaigh an Roinn i dteagmháil go luath sa phróiseas le heagraíochtaí neamhrialtasacha chun cabhrú le cur chuige comhordaithe chun línte cabhrach agus tacaíochtaí eile a choinneáil ag imeacht d'íospartaigh. Laistigh de chúpla seachtain thosaigh an Roinn ar mhaoiniú breise €337,598 a sholáthar do ghrúpaí pobail agus deonacha chun tacú lena bhfreagairt ar COVID-19. Áiríodh iontu sin:

- Cúnamh do Mhná: €63,017 le haghaidh acmhainní breise chun an tSeirbhís Tacaíochta agus Atreoraithe agus an tionscadal Tacaíochta Ardriosca a leathnú;
- Líonra Ionaid Tarrthála Iaréignithe na hÉireann: €50,000 chun tacú le hobair na n-ionad áitiúil i ndáil le seirbhís rúnda a sholáthar a chomhlíonfadh ceanglais chosanta sonraí, agus chun sreabhadh faisnéise ar chomhairle agus treoir chuig agus ó oibrithe tacaíochta tráma líne tosaigh a bhainistiú;
- Ruhama: €19,680 le haghaidh pacáistí tacaíochta breise do mhná atá ag féachaint le héirí as an striapachas;
- Líonra Forbartha na bhFear: suas le €76,590 chun síneadh a chur le líne Chomhairle na bhFear, tacaíocht bhreise teileafóin don chlár 'Fir ag Cur Deireadh le Foréigean Baile', agus chun feachtas bolscaireachta a chur ar fáil; agus
- Slán Sábháilte in Éirinn: €36,000 le haghaidh acmhainn phearsanra bhreise agus le cumarsáid a dhéanamh le húsáideoirí na seirbhíse.
- *Move Ireland*: €33,000 le haghaidh líne chabhrach bhreise agus tacaíocht chomhairleoireachta do lucht déanta foréigin baile.
- Fóram Ionaid Tarrthála Iaréignithe: €50,000 le haghaidh feachtas mhúscailte feasachta áitiúla agus chun pacáiste próiseas, caighdeán agus nósanna imeachta seirbhíse athbhreithnithe a fhorbairt.
- Tearmann do Mhná na Mí €9,311.00

Thug an Bord um Chúnamh Dlíthiúil tosaíocht do chásanna foréigin baile agus cúraim leanaí. D'fhan oifig an Bhoird ag Cúirt Teaghligh Dúiche Bhaile Átha Cliath i dTeach an Charnáin ar oscailt agus bhíodhas in ann iarratais ar chúnamh dlíthiúil le haghaidh cásanna foréigin baile a dhéanamh ann. Cé go raibh ionaid dlí an Bhoird dúnta den chuid ba mhó do ghlaiteoirí pearsanta, bhíodhas in ann teagmháil a dhéanamh le gach ionad ar an nguthán nó leis an ríomhphost agus bhí sonraí teagmhála ar fáil ar láithreán gréasáin an Bhoird.

Thug an tSeirbhís Chúirteanna tosaíocht, freisin, d'fhoréigean baile. Bhí cúirt oscailte i gcónaí ag gach dúiche chun iarratais ar chosaint, orduithe urchoisc eatramhacha agus orduithe urchoisc éigeandála a éisteacht. Ní raibh oifigí cúirte ar oscailt ach le haghaidh gnó riachtanach trí choinne, agus éascaíodh iarratasóirí ar fhoréigean baile.

Bhíothas in ann teagmháil a dhéanamh le hoifigí ar an teileafón nó leis an ríomhphost le sonraí teagmhála ar fáil ar an láithreán gréasáin. Lean nósanna imeachta lasmuigh de ghnáthuaireanta oibre mar ba ghnách agus chuir ar foghlaimíodh uaidh sin bonn eolais faoi phleanáil teagmhais. Cuireadh le chéile liosta de Chláraitheoirí Cúirte, a raibh taithí acu, le taisteal chun freastal ar Chúirteanna nuair ba ghá. Cuireadh treoir céim ar chéim do Chláraitheoirí Cúirte maidir le nósanna imeachta foréigin baile agus foirmeacha ar fáil ar inlín na Seirbhíse Cúirteanna don fhoireann ar fad, le tacaíocht ó bhunchlár oiliúna cláraitheoirí a cheadaigh breisoiliúint thapa i gcás ganntanas suntasach foirne.

Chun a chinntiú go raibh íospartaigh ar an eolas faoi sheirbhísí, sheol an tAire feachtas feasachta poiblí. Chuimsigh an feachtas 'Anseo i gCónaí' samplaí d'fhoréigean baile ag tarlú i gcomhthéacs na srianta sláinte poiblí. Bhí tuilleadh eolais ar fáil, freisin, ar láithreán gréasáin na Roinne don fheachtas.

Seirbhísí Inimirce

Ba í comhairle thosaigh an AE go bhfanfadh teorainneacha ar oscailt agus go leanfadh daoine an chomhairle taistil a d'eisigh an Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála a uasghrádaíodh de réir mar a d'fhorbair cúrsaí ar fud an domhain.

Forbraíodh pleanáil theagmhasach chun a chinntiú go leanfaí ar aghaidh ag soláthar seirbhísí inimirce tosaíochta, dá n-athródh cúinsí.

Sainaithníodh Réimsí Tosaíochta Gnó mar a leanas:

- An tAonad Bainistithe Teorann ag Aerfort Bhaile Átha Cliath
- Bainistiú Cóiríochta agus Seirbhísí eile do dhaoine sa chóras Soláthair Dhíreach (SD), lena n-áirítear próiseáil iarratas nua ar Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta (CI).
- An fheidhm clárúcháin inimirce (próiseálann an oifig phoiblí 500 iarratasóir in aghaidh an lae)

An tAonad Bainistithe Teorann

Tá an tAonad Bainistithe Teorann (ABT) freagrach as teorainn na hÉireann ag Aerfort Bhaile Átha Cliath a dhaingniú, de réir fhorálacha na nAchtanna agus na nOrduithe Inimirce mar a bhaineann siad le teacht isteach sa Stát agus teacht isteach sa Stát a dhiúltú.

Idir an 1 Eanáir agus an 31 Nollaig, 2020, tháinig beagnach 7.4 milliún paisinéir isteach go hAerfort Bhaile Átha Cliath. Tháinig níos mó ná leath díobh sin isteach sa chéad dá mhí den bhliain, sula raibh tionchar ag COVID-19 ar thaisteal idirnáisiúnta. Bhí an figiúr sin síos 78% i gcomparáid leis an mbliain roimhe sin.

Tá caidreamh oibre an-dlúth idir foireann líne tosaigh an Aonaid Bainistithe Teorann ag Aerfort Bhaile Átha Cliath, Údarás Aerfort Bhaile Átha Cliath agus Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte. Lean pearsanra inimirce go dlúth gach comhairle ó FSS agus, sa chás gur tharla cás amhrasta, cloíodh go cúramach leis na prótacail a bhí i bhfeidhm.

Ón Déardaoin an 28 Bealtaine bhí sé ina cheanglas dlíthiúil ar phaisinéirí a tháinig go hÉirinn ó thar lear Foirm Aimsithe Paisinéirí COVID-19 (FAP) a chomhlánú. Baineadh úsáid as an FAP chun córas seiceálacha leantacha a éascú chun a chinntiú gur fhan paisinéirí a bhí ag teacht isteach sa tír ag an seoladh a chuir siad ar fáil. Chabhraigh an FAP, freisin, le rianú teagmhálaithe, sa chás go raibh amhras nó cás deimhnithe ar eitilt nó ar bhád farantóireachta a tháinig go hÉirinn.

Idir an 28 Aibreán agus an 25 Lúnasa, 2020, bhailigh oifigigh ón ABT na Foirmeacha Aimsithe Paisinéirí agus d'fheidhmigh siad an córas glaonna leantacha spotseiceála thar ceann na n-údarás sláinte. Aistríodh an fheidhm leantach sin chuig an Roinn Sláinte ar an 26 Lúnasa, 2020.

Lean an ABT ag bailiú agus ag seiceáil na bhfoirmeacha aimsithe paisinéirí ag Aerfort Bhaile Átha Cliath. Atreoraíodh aon phaisinéir a dhiúltaigh an fhoirm éigeantach a chomhlánú ag Aerfort Bhaile Átha Cliath chuig Biúró Náisiúnta an Gharda Síochána um Inimirce.

Cosaint Idirnáisiúnta

Rinneadh mionscrúdú ar an gCóras Cosanta Idirnáisiúnta de réir mar a thosaigh bagairt COVID-19 ag teacht chun cinn agus forbraíodh pleananna/maoluithe chun seirbhísí cóiríochta a sholáthar do dhaoine sa chóras. Thionscain Seirbhísí Cóiríochta Cosanta

Idirnáisiúnta roinnt beart chun a chinntiú go bhféadfaí sábháilteacht cónaitheoirí agus acmhainn oibríochtúil a choinneáil.

- Lorgaíodh cóiríocht éigeandála bhreise chun cabhrú le leapacha teagmhais a chur ar fáil in ionaid chóiríochta.
- Tugadh tús áite d'oscailt ionad nua i dTulach Mhór agus i gCuan Ros Láir.
- Cuireadh stop sealadach le scaipeadh cónaitheoirí ó chóiríocht éigeandála isteach in ionaid chóiríochta chun acmhainn a chruthú laistigh de na hionaid iad féin.
- Chuathas i dteagmháil leis na hiarratasóirí uile ar chosaint idirnáisiúnta a raibh cónaí orthu i gcóiríocht éigeandála chun a chinntiú go raibh tuiscint chuí acu ar threoirínte FSS agus go raibh a fhios acu cé air nó uirthi ar cheart dóibh gaoch má bhí imní orthu.
- Chuathas i dteagmháil le Bainisteoirí Ionaid freisin agus cuireadh eolas ar fáil dóibh maidir le planáil theagmhasach. Scaipeadh ábhar ón FSS ar na hionaid freisin.

D'eagraigh an Roinn seisiún eolais do ghrúpaí tábhachtacha neamhrialtasacha a raibh spéis acu in Iarratais ar Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta, lena n-áirítear leanaí. Chuaigh Seirbhís Cóiríochta Cosanta Idirnáisiúnta i dteagmháil freisin le pobal na nEagraíochtaí Neamhrialtasacha chun na tacaíochtaí a d'fhéadfaidís a sholáthar i gcás ráig de COVID-19 a shainaithint.

Cuireadh an t-eolas ba dhéanaí maidir le hInimirce agus Cosaint Idirnáisiúnta le linn phaindéim COVID-19 ar fáil i réimse ar leith 'Uasdátuithe agus Fógraí COVID-19' ar láithreán gréasáin Seirbhís Eadóirseachta agus Inimirce na hÉireann. Foilsíodh fógraí faoi na socruithe éagsúla chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar shaincheisteanna a d'eascair as an bpaindéim, chomh maith le naisc le comhairle sláinte, lena n-áirítear eolas faoi cheanglais féin-aonraithe ar theacht go hÉirinn, sa réimse ar leith sin den suíomh.

Dúnadh Sealadach na hOifige Inimirce

Ag freagairt don dianghlasáil ar fud na tíre a fógraíodh i mí an Mhárta, 2020, dhún an Oifig Clárúcháin, Soláthar Seirbhísí Inimirce, ag Cé an Bhúrcaigh, Baile Átha Cliath, i dtosach báire ón Luan, 23 Márta. Osclaíodh an oifig arís ar an 20 Iúil. Dúnadh oifigí lasmuigh de Bhaile Átha Cliath, freisin, ón 23 Márta agus athosclaíodh iad ar bhonn céimneach ón 20 Iúil.

Mar gheall ar fhógra an Rialtais maidir le bearta nuashonraithe i mí Dheireadh Fómhair, dhún an Oifig Clárúcháin ag Cé an Bhúrcaigh go sealadach don phobal le haghaidh coinní clárúcháin céaduaire le héifeacht ón gCéadaoin, 21 Deireadh Fómhair. Ath-osclaíodh an oifig ar an 2 Nollaig dóibh siúd a raibh coinní acu amháin agus d'fhan sí ar oscailt go dtí an 23 Nollaig, nuair a dúnadh í ag teacht le comhairle sláinte poiblí. D'fhan oifigí lasmuigh de Bhaile Átha Cliath ar oscailt faoi réir ag ceanglais oibriúcháin go dtí an 23 Nollaig nuair a dúnadh iad, freisin, de dheasca shrianta COVID-19.

Síneadh Sealadach ar Cheadanna Inimirce

I rith na bliana, d'fhógair an tAire sraith síntí sealadacha ar cheadanna Inimirce agus Cosanta Idirnáisiúnta chun cónaí sa Stát. Eisíodh an chéad síneadh den sórt sin ar an 20 Márta.

Bhí athnuachan an cheada ar an mbonn céanna leis an gcead a bhí ann cheana agus cuireadh na coinníollacha céanna leis. Maidir le daoine a raibh cead acu cheana faoi Threoir 2004/38/CE (Treoir um Shaorghluaiseacht) bhí an athnuachan uathoibríoch faoi réir chomhlíonadh cheanglais na Treorach.

I rith na bliana, d'eisigh Soláthar Seirbhísí Inimirce nuashonruithe rialta do chohóirt ar leith maidir lena stádas, agus bhog siad go leor seirbhísí ar líne.

Seirbhísí Víosa

Fógraíodh atosú teoranta ar sheirbhísí víosa ar an Luan, 22 Meitheamh. Le linn na céime tosaigh den atosú, níor glacadh ach le hiarratais ar víosa Fadfhanachta "D", lena n-áirítear víosaí Staidéir, chomh maith le víosaí a sainithníodh mar víosaí Éigeandála / Tosaíochta. Níor moladh víosaí neamh-Éigeandála/Tosaíochta a eisiúint go dtí go mbeadh a leithéid ceadaithe ag comhairle sláinte poiblí.

Níos déanaí sa bhliain atosáíodh cinntí ar víosaí áirithe fadfhanachta a chuimsigh catagóirí amhail staidéar tríú leibhéal ag leibhéal bunchéime agus iarchéime, Fostaíocht agus Teacht le Chéile le Teaghlaigh. Bhí cinntí ar iarratais ar staidéar ar an mBéarla fós curtha siar i bhfianaise na n-aistrithe go srianta Leibhéal 5 COVID-19 agus go dtí go mbeadh tuilleadh breithnithe déanta ag na húdaráis iomchuí.

Níor glacadh go ginearálta le hiarratais ar víosa ghearrfhanachta, ach amháin i gcásanna a tháinig faoi na critéir Éigeandála/Tosaíochta. Mar sin féin, leathnaíodh liosta na

ndíolúintí a tháinig faoi Éigeandáil/Tosaíocht chun na catagóirí sonracha sin de thaistealaithe a sainaithníodh mar thaistealaithe le feidhm nó riachtanas riachtanach i Moladh 2020/912 an 30 Meitheamh, 2020, ó Chomhairle an AE, a áireamh.

Rinneadh srianta a mhaolú agus a chur i bhfeidhm i dtíortha éagsúla i rith na bliana agus, mar sin, bhí an t-atosú ar phróiseáil iarratas ar víosa ag brath ar chomhairle shláinte agus shábháilteachta maidir le paidéim COVID-19.

Clár Tarscaoilte Víosa Gearrghanachta Éireannaí ar fionraí go Sealadach

Ar an 10 Iúil, 2020, d'fhógair an tAire Nic an tSaoi go raibh an Clár Tarscaoilte Víosa Gearrghanachta Éireannaí ar fionraí go sealadach mar chuid de bhearta COVID-19 chun srian a chur le taisteal agus sláinte an phobail a chosaint. Cheadaigh an Clár do dhaoine a bhí ar cuairt sa Ríocht Aontaithe ar víosaí gearrghanachta taisteal go hÉirinn. Faoin gcomhaontú, bhí ar na sealbhóirí víosa Éire a fhágáil sula raibh deireadh tagtha lena gcead fanacht sa RA.

Cuireadh fionraí an Chláir i bhfeidhm mar gheall ar éagsúlacht sa chur chuige idir Éirinn agus an RA maidir le bearta taistil chun dul i ngleic leis an bpaidéim. Ní raibh náisiún-aigh na dtíortha lena mbaineann in ann a víosa ghearrghanachta RA a úsáid a thuilleadh chun cuairt a thabhairt ar Éirinn, ach d'fhéadfaidís iarratas ar leith a dhéanamh ar víosa Éireannach, nach nglacfaí leis ach amháin i gcás criticiúil. Beart sealadach a bhí ann, nach raibh tionchar aige ar chearta Chomhlimistéar Taistil (CT) shaoránaigh na Breataine agus na hÉireann ná ar oibriú an CT.

Córas Athnuachana Clárúcháin ar Líne do neamhnáisiúnaigh a bhí lonnaithe i mBaile Átha Cliath

Ar an 22 Meitheamh, d'fhógair an tAire Ó Flannagáin Córas Athnuachana Clárúcháin ar líne do mhic léinn neamh-LEE a bhí lonnaithe i mBaile Átha Cliath. Ar an 7 Iúil, d'fhógair an tAire Nic an tSaoi go raibh an córas athnuachana ar líne sin á leathnú amach do gach neamhnáisiúnach i mBaile Átha Cliath a bhí ag iarraidh a gclárúchán inimirce a athnuachan.

Thug an córas nua ar líne deis d'iarratasóirí athnuachan a dhéanamh ar líne gan coinne a dhéanamh agus freastal go pearsanta ar an oifig clárúcháin. Roimhe sin, bhí ar iarr-

atasóirí den sórt sin coinne a chur in áirithe sula bhfreastalóidís go pearsanta ar an oifig clárúcháin, agus bhí éileamh mór ar na coinní sin.

Bhí siad siúd ar mhian leo a gcead a athnuachan in ann an fhoirm iarratais a chomhlánú ar líne anois, cóipeanna de dhoiciméid tacaíochta a uaslódáil ar líne, an táille chuí a íoc agus a bpas agus a gcárta reatha Ceada Cónaithe in Éirinn a chur isteach tríd an bpost cláraithe.

Saoránacht

Mar gheall go mbíonn an rannóg Saoránachta ag brath go traidisiúnta ar phróiseáil doiciméad fisiceach, bhí tionchar suntasach ag na srianta a chruthaigh COVID-19 ar an réimse sin.

Bhí searmanais ar siúl ar an 2 agus 3 Márta cé gur iarradh ar iarrthóirí nó aíonna ó go leor tíortha a bhí i ndlúth-theagmháil le cás COVID-19, nó a raibh comharthaí á léiriú acu, gan freastal. Cuireadh na searmanais a bhí sceidealta do mhí Iúil agus do mhíonna eile den bhliain ar ceal de réir mar a tháinig leibhéal na n-ionfhabhtuithe agus tionchar foriomlán an víris chun solais. Tionóladh searmanas fíorúil píolótach ar an 15 Iúil. Cé gur éirigh go maith leis an searmanas fíorúil, fuarthas amach in athbhreithniú nach raibh sé inscálaithe chun tacú leis an leibhéal éilimh, mar go ndéanfaí an iomarca acmhainní a atreorú ó phróiseáil cásanna dá gcuirfí searmanais fhíorúla chun cinn ar an scála a theastaigh.

Socraíodh go gcuirfí ceanglas go ndéanfadh iarratasóirí ar shaoránacht dearbhú reachtúil dílseachta don Stát a shíniú in ionad na searmanas sin le linn COVID-19. Tar éis dearbhú lán-chomhlánaithe a fháil ar ais, bhí an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt in ann deimhniú eadóirseachta a eisiúint. In ionad searmanas saoránachta, reáchtálfai ócáid cheiliúrtha fhíorúil d'aon duine a fuair deimhniú eadóirseachta.

Chun an ghné ar líne dá sheirbhísí a fhorbairt tuilleadh, athdhearadh láithreán gréasáin na Saoránachta chun é a dhéanamh níos éasca le húsáid. Mar chuid den phróiseas sin, tugadh isteach feidhmchlár comhrá ar líne nó 'bota comhrá', ar tugadh Tara uirthi, i mí na Nollag. Thug sé seo freagra láithreach d'úsáideoirí ar cheisteanna coitianta chun tuilleadh cabhrach a thabhairt maidir le ceisteanna agus próiseáil.

In ainneoin na mbeart sin, bhí breis agus 23,000 iarratas ar shaoránacht idir lámha ag deireadh na bliana, lena n-áirítear timpeall 4,000 a bhí réidh le haghaidh searmanais.

Níor measadh gur rogha é fanacht go dtí go bhféadfaí searmanais mhóra phearsanta saoránachta a reáchtáil mar go mbeadh ar go leor iarratasóirí a ndeis ar bheith ina saoránaigh Éireannacha a chur ar athló ar feadh tréimhse éiginnte ama gan aon locht orthu féin.

Osclaíodh an córas sealadach chun saoránacht a dheonú ar an 18 Eanáir, 2021.

Comhoibriú Thuaidh-Theas

Bhí Coimisinéir an Gharda Síochána agus Príomhchonstábla Sheirbhís Póilíneachta Thuaisceart Éireann i dteagmháil rialta agus bhí an dlúth-chomhoibriú leanúnach sin idir an Garda Síochána agus SPTÉ ina phríomhghné de phóilíníú na freagartha don phaindéim.

- Bhí comhoibriú fairsing ann chun an t-iliomad seicphointí comhordaithe, a cuir-eadh i bhfeidhm ag láithreacha tábhachtacha feadh na teorann, a chur ar fáil².
- Cuireadh seicphointí comhpháirteacha i bhfeidhm freisin le linn roinnt deireadh seachtaine saoire bainc i ngach dlínse.
- Cuireadh béim ar na gníomhartha agus na tionscnaimh sin ar na meáin shóisialta, chun cabhrú le feacht an phobail a fhorbairt maidir leis na Gardaí agus SPTÉ a bheith ag obair go dlúth le chéile chun a chinntiú go raibh srianta sláinte poiblí á gcomhlíonadh ar an dá thaobh den teorainn.

Bhí comhoibriú maith polaitiúil sa réimse seo freisin trí phlé táirgiúil le hAire Dlí agus Cirt Thuaisceart Éireann, Naomi Long, Comhalta den Tionól Reachtach. Bhí teileachomhdháil ag an Aire Ó Flannagáin leis an Aire Long ar an 30 Aibreán agus ina dhiaidh sin eisíodh Comh-Phreasráiteas ar an 7 Bealtaine nuair a rinne an bheirt Airí comhghlao chun aird an phobail a tharraingt ar ghníomh forfheidhmiúcháin póilíneachta ar an dá thaobh den teorainn. D'áitigh siad freisin ar dhaoine leanúint de threoirlínte sláinte poiblí a chomhlíonadh. Bhí teileachomhdháil ag an Aire Nic an tSaoi leis an Aire Long ar an 21 Iúil. Phléigh siad réimse saincheistanna comhleasa, lena áiríodh cúrsaí COVID-19.

² Ní fhéadfaí na Rialacháin Sláinte, a mhéid a bhain siad leis na srianta ar ghluaiseacht ó áit chónaithe duine, a chur i bhfeidhm chun srian a chur le gluaiseacht daoine a bhí ina gcónaí i dTuaisceart Éireann.

FREAGAIRT AN GHARDA SÍOCHÁNA

Tá an Garda Síochána ar cheann de thrí phríomhghníomhaireacht freagartha faoi struchtúir agus creat Bhainistiú Straitéiseach Éigeandála na hÉireann. Dá réir sin, tá siad bainteach go hiomlán leis an bpleanáil agus na prótacail maidir le bainistiú móréigeandálaí ag leibhéal náisiúnta, réigiúnacha agus áitiúla.

Tá plean éigeandála i bhfeidhm ag gach Rannán den Gharda Síochána, agus déantar athbhreithniú ar na pleananna sin ar bhonn leanúnach agus mar fhreagairt ar ócáidí géarchéime ar leith.

Tá teagmhais oibriúcháin an Gharda Síochána maidir le foireann a bheith ar fáil bunaithe go háitiúil. Tá pleananna éigeandála idirghníomhaireachta i bhfeidhm ag infreastruchtúr rí-thábhachtach ar fud na tíre, lena n-áirítear calafoirt agus aerfoirt. Bhí grúpaí oibre bainistithe éigeandála idirghníomhaireachta agus grúpaí stiúrtha bunaithe i ngach ceann de na 8 réigiún Bainistithe Móréigeandála. Bhí Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte i gceannas ar ghníomhachtú agus ar chur i bhfeidhm na bpleananna sin i gcomhthéacs éigeandála sláinte.

Ullmhúcháin Tosaigh

Chruthaigh an Garda Síochána a aonad lánaimseartha COVID-19 féin chun freagairt ullmhachta do shaincheistean COVID-19 a chomhordú ó leibhéal náisiúnta. Cé go ndéileálfai le haon fhreagairt do theagmhas nó d'éigeandáil fhéideartha maidir le COVID-19 ag leibhéal áitiúil/réigiúnach, bhí formhaoirseacht náisiúnta ag aonad COVID-19 chun comhsheasmhacht agus comhordú an chuir chuige a chinntiú.

Bhí sé mar aidhm ag Coimisinéir an Gharda Síochána réimse beart a chur i bhfeidhm a chinnteodh go mbeadh an acmhainn ba mhó ab fhéidir ag an nGarda Síochána chun soláthar seirbhíse a choinneáil agus tacaíocht a choinneáil do ghníomhaireachtaí eile de réir mar ba gha:

- Uainchláir/Saoire Bhliantúil – Dréachtaíodh uainchlár éigeandála chun freastal ar bhuaic-éileamh agus chun póilíneacht níos feiceálaí a chumasú. Bhí gach saoire bhliantúil do chomhaltaí an Gharda Síochána agus d'fhoireann an Gharda Síochána teoranta do 10% ar a mhéad den fhórsa saothair ag am ar bith.

- Pacáiste Scoir – Cuireadh siar scor 18 nGarda ag gráid shinsearacha a bhí le bheith ann ar an 1 Aibreán faoin bpacáiste scoir.
- Coláiste an Gharda Síochána – Ghlac gach Garda Promhaidh a bhí faoi oiliúint i gColáiste an Gharda Síochána (c.320) mionn an Gharda Síochána ar an 27 Márta, 2020, agus cuireadh chuig stáisiúin iad.
- Rinneadh gach comhalta den Gharda Síochána a bhí ag obair i gColáiste an Gharda Síochána a athshannadh chuig dualgais phóilíneachta oibríochta nó chuig oiliúint riachtanach agus athshannadh baill foirne an Gharda Síochána a bhí ag obair sa choláiste chuig dualgais riaracháin.

Achoimre ar Shocruithe Teagmhais

Agus é ag tacú le treoirínte sláinte poiblí COVID-19, ghlac an Garda Síochána le freagairt phóilíneachta chéimnithe bunaithe ar thraidisiún an Gharda Síochána den phóilíneacht le toiliú. Mar thoradh air sin bhí comhaltaí den Gharda Síochána i mbun teagmhála, oiliúna, spreagtha agus, mar rogha dheireanach, forfheidhmithe.

Rinne comhaltaí den Gharda Síochána ar fud na tíre patrólú ardfheictheachta de réir na mbeart sláinte poiblí a d'fhógair an Rialtas. Ba é aidhm na gníomhaíochta sin daoine a spreagadh chun cloí leis na bearta sláinte poiblí.



Maidir leis sin, agus mar a tharlaíonn ina chuid oibre ar fad, lean AGS ar aghaidh lena héiteas póilíneachta pobail a chur i bhfeidhm, ag lorg daoine a bhí leochaileach chun cúnaimh a chur ar fáil dóibh agus a chinntiú nár mhothaigh siad ina n-aonar. Le linn na paindéime, leanadh ar aghaidh le gnáthoibríochtaí póilíneachta chun coireacht a chosc

agus a bhrath. Cuireadh na bearta sin in iúl do chomhlachais ionadaíocha an Gharda Síochána, a raibh meas acu ar fad ar an gcás fíor-thromchúiseach a bhí le sárú ag an tír agus ar an ngá a bhí le huaschumas a lorg chun soláthar seirbhíse a chinntiú agus chun tacú leis an bpobal de réir mar ba ghá.

Tar éis thosach feidhme shrianta an Rialtais faoi COVID-19, bhí laghdú ginearálta i go leor catagóirí coireachta. Mar sin féin, tháinig méadú ar roinnt catagóirí, mar a leanas:

- Drochíde sa Bhaile (ba mar gheall air sin a tugadh isteach an Oibríocht 'Faoiseamh' chun tacú le híospartaigh drochíde sa bhaile)
- Drugaí Rialaithe (seilbh shimplí)
- Cionta Arm agus Pléascán (seilbh arm ionsaitheach)
- Cibearchoireacht/calaois ar líne

An tÚdarás Póilíneachta

I bhfianaise oibríochtaí leanúnacha an Gharda Síochána agus cineál na gcumhachtaí sealadacha, measadh go raibh formhaoirseacht neamhspleách ar phóilíneacht agus ar chearta an duine riachtanach chun muintín agus tacaíocht an phobail sa phóilíneacht a choinneáil. Chuige sin, d'iarr an tAire ar an Údarás Póilíneachta tuairisc a thabhairt ar bhonn rialta ar a ghníomhartha maidir le formhaoirseacht a dhéanamh ar phóilíneacht COVID-19, le tagairt ar leith don tslí a raibh an Garda Síochána tar éis na Rialacháin a bhí déanta ag an Aire Sláinte a chur i ngníomh.



Mhol an tAire freisin don Údarás Póilíneachta go rachadh sé i dteagmháil le comhlachtaí reachtúla iomchuí agus le heagraíochtaí neamhrialtasacha a bhí ag feidhmiú i réimse na gceart sibhialta agus daonna.

Foilsíodh an deichiú tuarascáil ón Údarás Póilíneachta ar Fheidhmíocht Póilíneachta an Gharda Síochána i ndáil le Rialacháin COVID-19 ar an 18 Nollaig, 2020. Is féidir teacht ar an tuarascáil iomlán ag an nasc seo a leanas:

[An Deichiú Tuarascáil ón Údarás Póilíneachta maidir le Rialacháin COVID-19](#)

Bhí baint ag an Údarás Póilíneachta freisin le hobair a dhéanamh leis an gCoimisinéir chun na cuspóirí a bhí leagtha amach i bPlean Póilíneachta 2020 a athbhreithniú i bhfianaise acmhainní a bheith atreoraithe chuig COVID-19, agus dul chun cinn á chinntiú ag an am céanna ar phríomhréimsí oibre eile chomh fada agus ab fhéidir.

FREAGAIRT NA SEIRBHÍSE CÚIRTEANNA

D'oibrigh an tSeirbhís Chúirteanna go dlúth le huachtaráin na ndlínsí cúirte ar fad chun pleananna teagmhais cuí a fhorbairt chun ligean do chúirteanna déileáil le ceisteanna práinneacha teaghlaigh, coiriúla agus sibhialta. Bhí gach réimse agus gach cás difriúil ó thaobh na freagartha a theastaigh, amhail cúirteanna a chur ar ceal, cásanna a aistriú, úsáid a bhaint as fíis-teicneolaíocht, oifigí a dhúnadh, oibriú go cianda, agus tacú leis na Seirbhísí Cúirteanna i gcás dúnadh ar bith.

Bhí iliomad seomraí cúirte ag an tSeirbhís Chúirteanna a raibh fíis-teicneolaíocht iontu, a d'fhéadfadh seoladh éisteachtaí coimeáda go díreach le príosúin a éascú, rud a laghdaigh an gá le hollghluaiseacht príosúnach chuig na cúirteanna agus ó na cúirteanna.

Go luath sa phaindéim mhéadaigh an tSeirbhís Chúirteanna a cumas cianoibre faoi dhó do bhreithiúna agus don fhoireann agus thosaigh sí ag forbairt pleananna chun a chinntiú go bhféadfaí leanúint le soláthar an chórais íocaíochtaí cothabhála dlí teaghlaigh.

Dé hAoine, an 8 Bealtaine, thug an Príomh-Bhreitheimh, Uachtaráin na gCúirteanna agus an tSeirbhís Chúirteanna breac-chuntas ar na céimeanna a bhí le glacadh chun bealach a chruthú chun roinnt cúirteanna a oscailt de réir Threochlár an Rialtais chun Sochaí agus Gnó a Athoscailt. Bhí grúpa úsáideoirí comhairleach bunaithe ag an tSeirbhís Chúirteanna freisin chun a chinntiú go raibh baint ag úsáideoirí cúirte le bonn eolais a chur faoina gcinntí.

Ag tógáil ar an taithí a fuarthas ó na chéad chúirteanna cianda píolótacha sa Chúirt Uachtarach agus sa Chúirt Achomhairc, tionóladh cúirteanna cianda san Ard-Chúirt, sa Chúirt Chuarda agus sa Chúirt Dúiche.

Rinne grúpa pleanála teagmhais na Seirbhíse Cúirteanna athbhreithniú agus nuashonrú ar phleananna freisin ar bhonn laethúil, i gcomhairle le príomhpháirtithe leasmhara. Foilsíodh na socrúithe ba dhéanaí maidir le gach dlínse cúirte ar láithreán gréasáin na Seirbhíse Cúirteanna.

An Dlí Teaghlaigh

Is dual don dlí teaghlaigh go mbíonn go leor struis ag baint léi do lánúineacha a bhfuil a gcaidreamh briste síos. Tháinig méadú as cuimse ar an strus sin mar gheall ar thionchar COVID-19.

D'fhan Orduithe Cúirte maidir le rochtain i bhfeidhm i gcónaí agus, go ginearálta, bhí ar pháirtithe cloí leo. Mar sin féin, ag aithint dó go bhféadfadh roinnt fadhbanna nó imní a bheith ann maidir le taisteal i gcomhair cuairteanna, ar an 27 Márta, shoiléirigh Uachtarán na Cúirte Dúiche go bhféadfadh tuismitheoirí teacht ar shocrúithe comhaontaithe le haghaidh teagmhála eile, lena n-áirítear glaonna gutháin, nó scaidhpeáil, etc. Mura raibh na páirtithe in ann teacht ar chomhaontú maidir le socrú malartach, bhí seirbhísí idirghabhála ar fáil agus bhí leas an linbh ríthábhachtach i gcónaí.

D'aithin rialacháin a rinne an tAire Sláinte, agus a tháinig i bhfeidhm ar an 8 Aibreán, an ceart atá ag tuismitheoir, caomhnóir, nó duine ag a bhfuil ceart rochtana ar leanbh a dteach a fhágáil chun éifeacht a thabhairt do shocrúithe maidir le rochtain ag an duine sin nó ag tuismitheoir, caomhnóir nó duine eile ag a bhfuil an ceart rochtana sin agus rinne siad socrú sainráite maidir le heisceacht ar na srianta taistil.

I gcomhar leis an Roinn agus a Gníomhaireachtaí, seoladh mol faisnéise dlí teaghlaigh COVID-19 de chuid Choláiste na hOllscoile, Corcaigh, mar acmhainn do dhaoine a bhí ag lorg treorach ar an dlí teaghlaigh. D'ullmhaigh Coiste Dlí an Teaghlaigh agus Leanaí de Dhlí-Chumann na hÉireann treoirínite, freisin, do chleachtóirí agus do thuismitheoirí ar chúrsaí an dlí teaghlaigh le linn COVID-19. Rinne an Dlí-Chumann socrúithe chun na treoirínite a sheoladh go leictreonach chuig gach aturnae cleachtach ar an 26 Márta, 2020.

An Grúpa Oibre ar Éifeachtúlachtaí Ceartais Choiriúil

Bhí an príomhfhócas i gcomhthéacs COVID-19 ar riachtanais na gcúirteanna coiriúla ar fad ar mhaithe le hoibriú na gcúirteanna sin a uasmhéadú sa ghearrthearma agus sa mheántearma araon. D'oibrigh grúpa ar a raibh an Roinn ina cathaoirleach, agus ar a raibh breithiúna den Chúirt Dúiche, den Chúirt Chuarda agus den Ard-Chúirt, chomh maith le bainistíocht shinsearach ón tSeirbhís Chúirteanna, an Garda Síochána, Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann, an tSeirbhís Phromhaidh agus Oifig an Stiúrthóra Ionchúiseamh Poiblí, i dteannta a chéile agus go déthaobhach chun bearta a shainaitheint agus a chur i bhfeidhm chun tacú le stiúradh na hoibre coiriúla ar fad, go háirithe trialacha giúiré a reáchtáil i gcomhréir le treoirlínte scaradh sóisialta.

Leanadh le bearta chun an gá le freastal ar an gcúirt a laghdú trí réitigh teicneolaíochta faisnéise agus cumarsáide amhail úsáid na fíis-teicneolaíochta le haghaidh réimse iarratas cúirte lena n-áirítear iarratais ar bhannaí. Forbraíodh tograí reachtacha chun úsáid na teicneolaíochta físe a leathnú tuilleadh chuig cineálacha eile éisteachtaí lena n-áirítear díotchúiseamh, iontráil pléadálacha, éisteachtaí pianbhreithe agus liostaí glaoite rollaí. Ina theannta sin, scrúdaíodh smachtbhannaí malartacha ar nós úsáid mhéadaithe na scéime rabhaidh aosaigh le haghaidh cionta áirithe de leibhéal íseal chun cabhrú leis an mbrú ar na cúirteanna coiriúla a mhaolú.

Breithníodh, freisin, roinnt tograí reachtacha agus neamhreachtacha eile chun éifeachtúlachtaí breise a thabhairt isteach le haghaidh aighneachtaí mionsonraithe chuig an Aire.

An Grúpa Pleanála Meántearma maidir le Ceartas Sibhialta

Comhthreomhar leis an nGrúpa Éifeachtúlachta Cúirte ar an taobh coiriúil, bunaíodh grúpa pleanála meántearmach ar an taobh sibhialta.

Bhreithnigh an grúpa sibhialta tionchair COVID-19 ar bhainistiú reatha cásanna sibhialta agus ar a mbainistiú sa todhchaí sa chóras cúirteanna agus scrúdaigh siad plean struchtúrtha inbhuanaithe téarnaimh. Déanfaidh sé moltaí maidir le bainistiú cásanna sibhialta sna cúirteanna amach anseo a d'fhéadfadh feabhas a chur ar éifeachtúlacht agus éifeachtacht an chórais ceartais sibhialta, agus féachfaidh sé, i gcomhairle leis an mBord um Chúnamh Dlíthiúil agus leis an tSeirbhís Dócmhainneachta, ar bhearta eile chun brúnna ar chóras na gcúirteanna a laghdú chomh mór agus is féidir i dtimpeallacht atá scartha go sóisialta.

Cuirfidh an Grúpa san áireamh freisin an obair leanúnach atá á déanamh ag grúpaí oibre iomchuí eile atá dírithe ar chóras na gcúirteanna, agus moltaí uathu.

FREAGAIRT SHEIRBHÍS PHRÍOSÚIN NA hÉIREANN

Thionóil Stiúrthóireacht Oibríochtaí SPÉ cruinniú pleanála teagmhais ag deireadh mhí Feabhra, 2020, chun socruithe teagmhais a phlé i gcomhthéacs bhagairt COVID-19. Áiríodh sa mhéid sin príosúin shábháilte a chothabháil leis na seirbhísí riachtanacha ar fad lena n-áirítear, *inter alia*, soláthar foirne, cúram sláinte, soláthar lónadóireachta agus cothabháil fearais agus trealaimh.

Mar chuid den phleanáil don phaindéim, bunaíodh foireann ullmhachta COVID-19 le Ceannaire Cliniciúil feidhmeannach ar leith, bainisteoir rialaithe ionfhabhtaithe, agus altra lánaimseartha breise.

Cuireadh modúl oideachais ar COVID-19 i bhfeidhm (lena n-áirítear treoir maidir leis na nósanna imeachta cearta chun Trealamh Cosanta Pearsanta [TCP] a úsáid) d'fhoireann na bpríosún ba mhó a bhí i mbaol i dtosach báire (Cnoc na Seamar agus Dóchas) agus, ón 2 Márta, cuireadh tús le hoiliúint don fhoireann i ngach príosún eile.

Achoimre ar Shocruithe Teagmhais

Cuireann COVID-19 dúshlán uathúla roimh institiúidí coimeádta ó thaobh smacht a choinneáil ar leathadh an víris i measc na foirne agus na bpríosúnach, agus maidir le cóireáil leighis chuí a chur ar fáil do dhaoine atá buailte. Agus na dúshlán sin á n-aithint aici, bhunaigh Ard-Stiúrthóir Sheirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann, ag céim luath, Foireann Pleanála Práinnfhreagartha (FPP) ar a raibh foireann shinsearach a bhfuil scileanna agus taithí acu i réimsí lena n-áirítear réimse oibríochtúil; cúram sláinte; agus rialú ionfhabhtaithe.

Tugadh aitheantas idirnáisiúnta do Sheirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann as a cuid oibre chun scaipeadh an víris a choinneáil faoi smacht. Roinn an SPÉ a taithí le tíortha eile trí pháipéar a bhí comhscríofa ag an Eagraíocht Dhomhanda Sláinte agus ag an Ionad Comhoibrithe um Shláinte Príosúin agus a foilsíodh san *Iris Idirnáisiúnta Sláinte Poiblí*.



De réir mar a tháinig cineál na paidéime chun solais, cheadaigh an tAire Ó Flannagáin roinnt gníomhartha ar an 13 Márta, 2020, chun líon na ndaoine sa phríosún a laghdú agus chun scaradh fisiciúil níos mó agus clútharú daoine ard-leochaileacha sa phríosún a chinntiú. Ina measc sin bhí:

- Saoradh sealadach (SS) a dheonú do phríosúnaigh ísealriosca ar bhonn cáis ar chás. Mar is iondúil bhí SS ag brath ar dhea-iompar agus bhí gach príosúnach faoi réir a athghabhála nó a hathghabhála i gcás sáraithe.
- Chun líon na ndaoine a bhí ag dul isteach agus ag teacht amach as na príosúin a laghdú, agus chun baill foirne riaracháin a shaoradh, chun aon ídiú ar líon na n-oifigeach príosúin a mhaolú, ceadáíodh eatrainmh níos faide idir sínithe isteach le SPÉ do phríosúnaigh a bhí scaoilte amach go sealadach.

Tá sé tábhachtach a nótáil go raibh roinnt cosaintí tábhachtacha i bhfeidhm. Ba é sábháilteacht an phobail an príomhchúram – níor scaoileadh saor ar an gcaoi sin aon phríosúnaigh ar bhain baol míchuí leo do shábháilteacht an phobail, go háirithe daoine a bhí ciontaithe i ndrochíde sa bhaile, agus ní fhéadfaí aon duine a bhí coinnithe chun trialach a scaoileadh saor. Cuireadh tosca amhail tithíocht agus stádas sláinte san áireamh freisin agus chomhordaigh SPÉ leis an Roinn Tithíochta, Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil agus le FSS.

Chun cosc a chur ar thras-éilliú i bpríosúin, rinneadh roinnt gníomhaíochtaí, amhail obair agus oiliúint, a chiorrú chun gluaiseachtaí agus idirghníomhaíochtaí trasphríosúin a laghdú, agus dúnadh scoileanna príosúin. I gcomhar le *Treochlár an Rialtais chun Sochaí & Gnó a Athoscailt* agus le rialú ionfhabhtaithe san áireamh, chuir SPÉ clár riosca-bhunaithe i bhfeidhm chun teagmhais agus prótacail a choinneáil nó a mhodhnú nó chun srianta a bhaint ag leibhéal an phríosúin de réir mar ba chúfí.

Scagthástáil agus Tástáil do COVID-19 sa Phríosún

Ghlac Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann cur chuige réamhghníomhach lena chinntiú go mbraithfí go luath aon chás féideartha de COVID-19 agus d'fheidhmigh sí córas láidir rianaithe teagmhálaithe. I gcomhréir le comhairle na hEagraíochta Domhanda Sláinte agus i gcomhairle leis an bhFoireann Náisiúnta Éigeandála Sláinte Poiblí, cuireadh tús le scagthástáil pointe iontrála ón 30 Márta, 2020.

D'oscail SPÉ aonad ar leith i gCnoc na Seamar chun aonrú aon chásanna deimhnithe a cheadú. Bhí na príosúnaigh scoite amach san aonad sin go dtí gur ceadaíodh dóibh imeacht ón aonrú trí phróiseas tástála COVID-19. Cuireadh Trealamh Cosanta Pearsanta (TCP) cuí ar fáil don fhoireann a bhí ag obair san aonad sin chun a sábháilteacht a chinntiú.

Freastal ar Chúirteanna

D'oibrigh Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann go dlúth leis an tSeirbhís Chúirteanna, leis an Dlí-Chumann agus leis an nGarda Síochána agus nuair ab fhéidir éascaíodh cásanna cúirte trí nasc físe.

- Bhí an úsáid mhéadaithe a baineadh as nasc físe do shuíonna cúirte mar bheart chun scaipeadh COVID-19 sa chóras príosúin a laghdú an-éifeachtach. Ag tús phaindéim COVID-19 chuir Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann, i gcomhar leis na Cúirteanna, dlús le rolladh amach na teicneolaíochta chun suíonna cúirte le nasc físe a chumasú ar fud Eastát na bPríosún.
- Mar thoradh air sin tháinig méadú suntasach ar úsáid naisc físe le haghaidh láithrithe sa chúirt, ó 10% i 2019 go 50% ag deireadh 2020.

Tá saoráid naisc físe á húsáid freisin le haghaidh cuairteanna, comhairliúcháin le haturnaetha agus chun seirbhísí ar nós seirbhísí síciatracha, síceolaíochta agus comhairleoireachta eile a chur ar fáil.

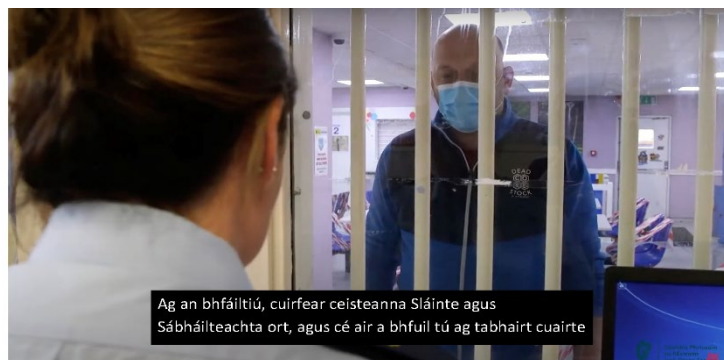
Níor ceanglaíodh ar phríosúnaigh a bhí aonraithe mar chásanna féideartha COVID-19, nó a bhí scoite amach ar chúiseanna réamhchúraim mar dhlúth-theagmhálacha féideartha, freastal le haghaidh láithrithe sa chúirt de réir threoirlínte sláinte poiblí. Rinne an tSeirbhís Phríosúin gach iarracht aturnaetha agus cúirteanna a chur ar an eolas dá mba rud é go raibh príosúnach aonraithe agus i gcás comhaontú éisteachta

bannaí, d'fhéadfaí cead a lorg go ndéileálfai leis an gcás le linn don phríosúnach a bheith as láthair.

Coraintín agus Cuairteanna

Cuireadh gach príosúnach a cimíodh chun príosúin as an nua ar coraintín ar feadh suas le 14 lá, chun an baol a laghdú go bhféadfadh príosúnach nua, a raibh an víreas ar gor ann, COVID-19 a scaipeadh ar an bpobal ginearálta príosúin. Moladh do phríosúnaigh a bhí 70 bliain d'aois nó níos sine, nó dóibh siúd a measadh a bheith leochaileach ó thaobh sláinte de, a n-idirghníomhú le príosúnaigh eile nó le baill foirne a laghdú, de réir chomhairle an Rialtais.

Tar éis na srianta a d'fhógair an Rialtas ar ghluaiseachtaí chun srian a chur le scaipeadh COVID-19, cuireadh cuairteanna fisiceacha teaghlaigh ar phríosúin ar fionraí ar an 27 Márta, 2020, agus cuireadh córas nua cuairteanna fíorúla nó físe ina n-áit. Chun éifeachtaí an chiorraithe ar fholláine príosúnach a mhaolú, méadaíodh líon na gcainéal teilifíse a bhí ar fáil do phríosúnaigh. Thug an tSeirbhís Phríosúin modh isteach freisin lenar ceadaíodh do bhaill teaghlaigh airgead a lóisteáil ar líne ionas go mbeadh príosúnaigh in ann leas a bhaint as earraí i siopa milseán an phríosúin.



Ag teacht le Treochlár an Rialtais, agus rialú ar ionfhabhtú á chur san áireamh, chuir Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann measúnú riosca cuimsitheach i gcrích maidir le cuairteanna fisiceacha príosúin a thabhairt ar ais. Aithníodh agus cuireadh bearta riachtanacha chun cinn, chun a chinntiú go bhféadfadh baill teaghlaigh agus cairde fillleadh ar chuairteanna fisiciúla ar bhealach sábháilte.

Staid ag deireadh na bliana

11 Márta, 2020 – 4,235 i gcoimeád, **343** ar scaoileadh sealadach, **784** ar athchur amháin

31 Nollaig, 2020 – 3,650 i gcoimeád, **321** ar scaoileadh sealadach, **661** ar athchur amháin. Laghdú – 585 (12.6%)

Deimhníodh thart ar 22 cás de COVID-19 sa chóras príosúin suas go dtí an 23 Nollaig, 2020. Bhain formhór na gcásanna sin le daoine a bheith ionfhabhtaithe sa phobal sula ndeachaigh siad isteach sa phríosún. Níor bhásaigh aon duine ná níor cuireadh aon duine san ospidéal de dheasca COVID-19 i gCóras Phríosúin na hÉireann le linn 2020.

GNÍOMHAIREACHTAÍ, OIFIGÍ AGUS COMHLACHTAÍ EILE

Seirbhísí Cróinéirí agus Paiteolaíochta

Mhéadaigh Grúpa Formhaoirseachta na Mortlaíochta Náisiúnta, a bhí ina theagmhas seasta i leith imeachtaí olltaimeach, a luas oibríochta mar fhreagairt ar theacht na paindéime.

Cruthaíodh foghrúpa Cróinéirí freisin chun a bhfreagairtí ar COVID-19 a chomhordú in éineacht leis an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt agus Comhionannais, an Garda Síochána, agus an Pait-eolaí Stáit, le tacaíocht ón Roinn Sláinte agus ón Roinn Tithíochta, Pleanála agus Rialtas Áitiúil de réir mar ba ghá.

Ó tharla go raibh an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt agus Comhionannais freagrach as Cúirt Chróinéara Bhaile Átha Cliath, cheap an Roinn beirt leas-chróinéirí breise agus mhéadaigh sí líon na foirne riaracháin chun tacú le hualach oibre méadaithe chun básanna infhógartha a thaifeadadh.

D'oibrigh na Cróinéirí freisin le Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte, an Chomhairle um Chúram Práinne Réamh-Ospidéil, an tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Otharcharranna agus an Garda Síochána chun athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar na rialacha a bhain le bás a fhógairt chun brú a laghdú ar dhochtúirí teaghlaigh freastal ar gach bás.

Tar éis rannpháirtíocht idir an Roinn agus an Ghníomhaireacht Bainistíochta Rialtais Áitiúil agus an Roinn Tithíochta, Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil freisin, fuarthas deimhniú go dtacódh Údarás Áitiúla, ar iarratas, le Cróinéirí le foireann riaracháin le linn na paidéime agus ina diaidh.

Cuireadh tús le Cuid 2 den Acht um an Dlí Sibhialta agus an Dlí Coiriúil (Forálacha Il-ghnéitheacha), 2020, a dhéileáil le Cróinéirí le héifeacht ón 21 Lúnasa, 2020. Déantar socrú leis an Acht maidir le hacmhainn bhreise don tseirbhís Chróinéara, trí iarratas i scríbhinn ón gCróinéir don cheantar, ag lorg údarú ón Aire, do cheann amháin nó níos mó de na gníomhartha seo a leanas:

- duine, atá ceaptha cheana féin ina Chróinéir/Cróinéir nó ina Leas-Chróinéir do cheantar eile, a shannadh mar Chróinéir breise sealadach don cheantar sin, ar feadh tréimhse nach faide ná sé mhí (a fhéadfar a athnuachan),
- duine a d'fhéadfadh a bheith ina Chróinéir/Cróinéir nó ina Leas-Chróinéir roimhe sin a cheapadh ina Chróinéir/Cróinéir breise sealadach don cheantar sin, ar feadh tréimhse nach faide ná sé mhí (a fhéadfar a athnuachan). Beidh uasteorainn aoise 75 bliana i bhfeidhm; agus
- duine nár cheapadh roimhe sin ina Chróinéir/Cróinéir nó Leas-Chróinéir ach a bhfuil na cáilíochtaí riachtanacha aige/aici faoin Acht chun a cheaptha/ceaptha ina Chróinéir/Cróinéir a cheapadh ina Chróinéir/Cróinéir breise sealadach don cheantar sin, ar feadh tréimhse nach faide ná sé mhí (a fhéadfar a athnuachan). Tá uasteorainn aoise 75 bliana i bhfeidhm.

An Biúró um Shócmhainní Coiriúla

In ainneoin na ndúshlán a bhain le COVID-19, ghníomhaigh an Biúró go tapa agus ghlac sé cleachtais oibre nua a chinntigh gur leanadh le hobair an Bhiúró agus ag an am céanna gur cinntíodh sábháilteacht Oifigigh agus fhoireann an Bhiúró.

Thug an Biúró 31 cás maidir le fáltas ó choireacht os comhair na hArd-Chúirte. Mar gheall ar na srianta sláinte poiblí a bhí i bhfeidhm i rith na bliana, réachtáladh éisteachtaí cúirte go cianda agus ar an láthair chun cuidiú leis an mBiúró an figiúr sin a bhaint amach.

I rith 2020, mar gheall ar an líon mór sócmhainní sómasacha ar deonaíodh ordú alt 4 nó 4a den Acht um Fháiltas ó Choireacht ina leith, d'fhostaigh an Biúró seirbhísí Tí Ceantála a réachtáil, thar ceann an Bhiúró, ceantanna saincheaptha ar líne a raibh teorainn ama leo, ar réachtáladh an chéad cheann acu i mí Dheireadh Fómhair, 2020. Chun cloí le srianta

COVID-19, reáchtáladh an ceant sin ar líne chun daoine a dhíspreagadh ó thaisteal gan ghá chun na sócmhainní a fheiceáil nó a iniúchadh.

I mí Mheán Fómhair, 2020, d'éirigh leis an mBiúró, i gcomhar le hOllscoil Luimnigh, an cúrsa Diplóma Iarchéime i bhFáltais ó Choireacht agus Imscrúdú Sócmhainní a sheoladh. Mar thoradh ar shrianta phaindéim COVID-19, cuireadh an cúrsa, ina raibh cúig mhodúl, ar fáil ar líne.

An Binse Cúitimh i leith Díobhálacha Coiriúla

Reáchtáil an Binse 18 n-éisteacht achomhairc le linn 2020. As na héisteachtaí achomhairc sin, bhain 12 cinn le cásanna Scéime Cúitimh i leith Díobhálacha Coiriúla agus bhain 6 cinn le cásanna Scéim na nOifigeach Príosúin.

Mar gheall ar phaindéim COVID-19, ó Aibreán 2020 ar aghaidh, tharla éisteachtaí achomhairc trí theileachomhdháil, le comhaontú na n-iarratasóirí. As na 18 n-éisteacht achomhairc a reáchtáladh le linn 2020, reáchtáladh 13 éisteacht trí theileachomhdháil agus reáchtáladh na 5 éisteacht eile ar an láthair go luath sa bhliain.

An Coimisiún um Chosaint Sonraí

Bhí méadú 8.8% ag an gCoimisiún um Chosaint Sonraí (CCS) ar chásanna a logáladh le linn 2020, rud a d'fhág 10,156 cás san iomlán. Ina ainneoin sin, tháinig laghdú 27.4% ar na teagmhálacha poist, ríomhphoist agus teileafóin a fuarthas. Bhí ceisteanna maidir le cúrsaí sonraí a bhain go sonrach le COVID-19 chun tosaigh ó Mhárta go Lúnasa. Ina measc sin bhí ceisteanna faoin íocaíocht dífhostaíochta phaindéime, seiceálacha aerfoirt, an aip rianaithe COVID-19 agus cianobair, ach laghdaigh siad sin níos déanaí sa bhliain.

Tháinig laghdú 34% bliain ar bhliain ar líon na ngearán chuig an CCS le 4,660 i 2020 i gcomparáid le 7,049 i 2019. Bhí laghdú 35% ar fhiosrúcháin reachtúla a osclaíodh i 2019 go 13, ó 20 an bhliain roimhe sin. Ag an am céanna ní raibh ráta na ngearán a tugadh chun críche i 2020 laghdaithe ach 1.7%, bliain ar bhliain, ag seasamh ag 4,476 do 2020.

Cosúil le comhlachtaí eile, bhí an CSS in ann úsáid a bhaint as tairseach COVID-19 chun méadú 166% a sholáthar ar chinntí foirmiúla a rinneadh faoi na hAchtanna Sonraí, ag eisiúint 77 i 2020 i gcomparáid le 29 i 2019. Tháinig méadú 50% ar ionchúisimh freisin, ach tháinig laghdú 9.7% ar imscrúduithe.

Eolaíocht Fhóirínseach Éireann

Mar sheirbhís riachtanach, d'fhan Eolaíocht Fhóirínseach Éireann ar oscailt ag gach céim de shrianta COVID-19, chun tacú leis an gcóras ceartais.

Bhí roinnt dúshlán ar leith ag baint le dearadh agus nádúr na n-áiseanna chomh maith le teorainneacha áitíochta i 2020, ach bhí bealaí nua oibre agus athruithe seasmhacha mar thoradh air sin freisin. Den chéad uair, chuir eolaithe EFÉ teistiméireacht shaineolach i láthair go cianda trí theicneolaíocht físchomhdhála. Ag cur san áireamh go mbíonn foireann EFÉ i láthair i gcúirteanna ar fud na tíre, is céim chun cinn suntasach é sin d'fhoireann EFÉ ó thaobh éifeachtúlachta de.

Thuairiscigh EFÉ ar bheagnach 22,000 imscrúdú i 2020, lena n-áirítear beagnach 6,000 ó Mhéarloing agus Doiciméid & Lámhscríbhneoireacht. Is ionann é sin agus méadú 36% ar na cásanna a tuairiscíodh i gcomparáid le 2019.

D'fhorbair EFÉ Meabhrán Tuisceana le hEolaíocht Fhóirínseach Thuaisceart Éireann maidir le comhoibriú frithpháirteach. Tá clár oibre comhoibríche forbartha, faoin gComhaontú Idir-Rialtasach ar Chomhoibriú maidir le Cúrsaí Ceartais Choiriúil, agus tá an obair sin faoi lánseol.

Tá EFÉ tar éis roinnt athruithe reachtacha a mholadh don Roinn Dlí agus Cirt freisin chun éifeachtúlacht agus éifeachtacht na seirbhísí a sholáthraíonn sí a fheabhsú agus chun éifeachtúlacht na hearnála ina hiomláine a fheabhsú.

Coimisiún Ombudsman an Gharda Síochána

Ar chomhairle na n-údarás sláinte dhún COGS a oifig phoiblí i mí an Mhárta, 2020, agus cuireadh trealamh ar fáil do 110 ball foirne den 125 ball foirne de chuid COGS chun go bhféadfaidís oibriú go cianda le ríomhairí glúine. Bhí an 15 eile feistithe chun oibriú go cianda laistigh de roinnt seachtainí.

Níor chuir an dúnadh isteach ar chumas COGS gearáin a fháil – go deimhin, bhí líon na ngearán a fuarthas i 2020 11% níos airde ná mar a bhí i 2019.

Nuair a cuireadh deireadh leis an gcéad dianghlásáil, cuireadh bearta i bhfeidhm chun filleadh ball foirne ar an oifig a éascú de réir a chéile i gcomhréir le comhairle sláinte poiblí, trí obair chumaisc. D'fhág na socruithe sin gurbh fhéidir línte teileafóin COGS a atosú, ach

d'fhan an oifig phoiblí dúnta. Bhí daoine den phobal fós in ann gearáin a dhéanamh le COGS ar roinnt bealaí, lena n-áirítear trí ríomhphost, comhfhreagras i scríbhinn agus ar líne.

Gearáin a bhain le COVID-19

Chinn Coimisiún an Ombudsman go mbeadh sé tairbheach don Gharda Síochána faisnéis fíor-ama a roinnt faoin eispéireas a bhí ag an bpobal ar an bpóilíneacht, nó an dearcadh a bhí acu ar an bpóilíneacht ag an am sin, rud a chuidigh le bonn eolais a chur faoi chinnteoireacht an Gharda Síochána maidir le dualgais bhreise phóilíneachta i dtaca le COVID-19.

Idir Márta agus deireadh na bliana, luadh COVID-19 i 295 gearán le COGS. Mar a dhéantar le gach gearán chuig COGS, rinneadh measúnú ar na gearáin sin chun a fháil amach ar chomhlíon siad na critéir maidir le hinghlacthacht.

Cinneadh go raibh seasca a hocht (68) neamh-inghlactha; ligeadh 50 ar aghaidh lena n-imscrúdú; bhí 24 fós oscailte ag deireadh na bliana agus níor lean an chuid ba mhó den chuid eile ar aghaidh go dtí an chéim 'fiosrúcháin', is é sin, níor thug gearánaigh dóthain sonraí chun go bhféadfaí an gearán a mheas féachaint an bhféadfaí glacadh leis.

Cigireacht an Gharda Síochána

Mar fhreagairt ar an ngéarchéim leanúnach sláinte poiblí, chuir Cigireacht an Gharda Síochána Plean Freagartha COVID-19 i bhfeidhm chun aon rioscaí do shláinte agus folláine na foirne, na bpríomhpháirtithe leasmhara agus an phobail i gcoitinne a mhaolú; agus ag an am céanna leanúint ar aghaidh ag soláthar príomhfheidhmeanna.

Mar thoradh ar roinnt athruithe suntasacha ar an timpeallacht ina bhfeidhmíonn an Chigireacht, lena n-áirítear géarchéim COVID-19, rinne an Chigireacht athbhreithniú foirmiúil ar a Plean Oibre. Chuaigh an Chigireacht i dteagmháil le roinnt príomhpháirtithe leasmhara chun cabhrú le haon saincheistanna póilíneachta nua, nó cinn a bhí ag teacht chun cinn, a aithint agus chun a chinntiú go ndíreofaí iniúchtaí amach anseo ar na réimsí ba mhó dochar agus riosca.

Cuirfear san áireamh i ngach cigireacht amach anseo an chomhairle agus na bearta sláinte poiblí is déanaí atá riachtanach chun aon rioscaí don fhoireann agus d'aon duine a théann i dteagmháil leis an gCigireacht le linn an phróisis cigireachta a mhaolú.

An Oifig um Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta

Thit líon na ndaoine a bhí ag lorg cosaint idirnáisiúnta mar gheall ar phaindéim COVID-19. D'ainneoin dúshlán suntasach, d'fhan an Oifig um Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta (OCI) ar oscailt i gcomhréir lena hoibleagáidí idirnáisiúnta chun deis a thabhairt dóibh siúd ar mhian leo cosaint idirnáisiúnta a éileamh é sin a dhéanamh. Meastar gur seirbhís riachtanach i gcónaí í soláthar na saoráide chun ligean do dhaoine cosaint idirnáisiúnta a éileamh, lena n-áirítear le linn na géarchéime COVID-19.

Bhí tionchar tromchúiseach ag paindéim COVID-19 ar iarrachtaí chun tréimhsí ama próiseála a fheabhsú, rud a laghdaigh go mór aschur na gcinntí agus a raibh tionchar aige ar an sprioc a leag an OCI síos cinntí céadchéime a dhéanamh i bhformhór mór na gcásanna laistigh de 9 mí.

Ba é príomhfhócas na hOCI a córas próiseála a choinneáil ag feidhmiú chomh héifeachtach agus chomh héifeachtúil agus ab fhéidir, agus ag an am céanna cloí leis na bearta ar fad a bhí i bhfeidhm chun scaipeadh COVID-19 a chomhrac. Ní mór a admháil, áfach, go bhfuil próiseáil na n-iarratas casta agus go bhfuil measúnú aonair tuillte ag gach iarratas agus go ndéantar sin air.

Cásanna OCI ar feitheamh ag deireadh 2020

An chéad chéim: Bhí 5,279 iarratas idir lámha ag an Oifig um Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta ar an 31 Nollaig, 2020.

Athbhreithniú ar Chead Fanachta: Bhí 505 cás Athbhreithnithe ar Chead Fanachta idir lámha ar an 31 Nollaig, 2020.

Aonad Cinntí an Aire: Bhí 538 cás ag fanacht ar chinneadh ón Aire in ACA ag deireadh 2020.

An Binse Achomhairc um Chosaint Idirnáisiúnta

Thug treochtaí tosaigh 2020 le fios go raibh an Binse díreach ar an sprioc chun a phríomhspriocanna feidhmíochta don bhliain a bhaint amach. Ar an iomlán, áfach, tháinig laghdú 46% ar aschur an Bhinse i 2020 i gcomparáid le 2019 mar gheall ar phaindéim COVID-19 agus na bearta mar thoradh air sin.

Ba é an laghdú ba mhó ná 70% ar achomhairc a éisteadh, titim ó 1536 i 2019 go 465 i 2020. Tháinig laghdú 47% ar líon na n-achomharc a cuireadh i gcrích.

Dar leis an mBinse, tharla an cur isteach ar ghnó den chuid ba mhó, mar chuid amháin den chreat inimirce pointe go pointe, mar gheall ar shrianta COVID-19 ar chliaint agus ar chleachtóirí araon, chomh maith le bearnaí cianéisteachta i ndáil le hionaid soláthair dhíriú ag láithreacha éagsúla agus le saincheisteanna lóistíochta maidir le doiciméadú.

Seirbhís Dócmhainneachta na hÉireann

Cé gur thit iarratais 6% go 3,800 le linn 2020, laistigh den fhiigiúr sin tháinig méadú 12.5% ar iarratais ar Shocrú Dócmhainneachta Pearsanta. Tháinig laghdú 7% ar chásanna nua alt 115A.

Ceadaíodh 30% níos lú Deimhnithe Cosanta i 2020 (1402 i gcomparáid le 1986) agus bhí titim 15% i socruithe a ceadaíodh.

Bhí méadú suntasach ar Dheimhnithe Cosanta agus ar Shocruithe araon a formheasadh trí na Cúirteanna sa chéad dá mhí de 2020, roimh an laghdú suntasach sa dara ráithe mar gheall ar an bPaindéim agus dúnadh na gCúirteanna ina dhiaidh sin.

Chonacthas roinnt téarnaimh i Ráithe 3, 2020, de réir mar a athosclaíodh na cúirteanna agus bhí cleachtóirí dócmhainneachta pearsanta in ann bualadh le cliaint go fíorúil, agus lean an treocht sin i Ráithe 4. Mar sin féin, ba é an ghlanéifeacht ná laghdú ar fhorheasanna le haghaidh Deimhnithe Cosanta agus Socruithe don bhliain iomlán cé nár tháinig ach laghdú beag ar Shocruithe Dócmhainneachta Pearsanta (an réiteach a dhéileáil le fiacha urraithe) laistigh den fhiigiúr socruithe sin.

Tháinig laghdú 50% ar líon na bhféimheachtaí a breithníodh i 2020 i gcomparáid le 2019 toisc nach raibh na cúirteanna in ann suí mar gheall ar shrianta COVID-19 agus i gcomhthéacs laghdaithe ghinearálta i gcásanna den sórt sin. I mí Eanáir, 2021, bhog an Chúirt go cian-éisteachtaí le haghaidh cásanna lena chinntiú nach dtarlódh aon riaráiste agus déileáil-faidh sí le haon éileamh borrrtha.

Oifig Aicmithe Scannán na hÉireann

I 2020, bhí líon na scannán a cuireadh isteach suas go dtí an 17 Márta ar aon dul leis an mbliain roimhe sin, ach sa tréimhse ón 17 Márta go dtí an 31 Nollaig bhí na figiúirí an-difriúil. Chiollaigh sé sin nach raibh ach 279 scannán curtha isteach i 2020 i gcomparáid le 948 sa bhliain roimhe sin. Léiríonn sé sin titim 70% agus bhí sé sin níos suntasaí i R3 agus R4. Bhí líon na nDVDanna a cuireadh isteach ar aon dul le líon 2019.

Tugadh 2,454 aicmiú san iomlán i 2020, i gcomparáid le 3,111 i 2019, ar laghdú 21% a bhí ann. Tháinig laghdú 39% freisin ar thrácht ar láithreán gréasáin Oifig Aicmithe Scannán na hÉireann le linn 2020 – 140,000 amas a bhí ann i 2019.

Ní bhfuarthas ach ceithre iarratas ar scannáin i mí Eanáir, 2020, i gcomparáid le 107 in Eanáir, 2020. Léiríonn na figiúirí sin an tionchar a bhí ag COVID-19 ar oscailtí pictiúrlann agus cur amach scannán ag an tráth sin.

An Bord um Chúnamh Dlíthiúil

Tháinig laghdú 20% ar Dheimhnithe um Chúnamh Dlíthiúil a d'eisigh an Bord – 11,623 i 2020 i gcomparáid le 14,531 i 2019. Bhí cásanna Scéim na gCleachtóirí Príobháideacha síos 25% go 7,893 i 2020 i gcomparáid le 10,532 i 2019. Chuir srianta COVID-19 go príomha teorainn leosan ag leibhéal na Cúirte Dúiche.

Ba é an titim ba mhó, mar a léirítear i sonraí gaolmhara na gcúirteanna, 53% i dtéarmaí cásanna Cosanta Idirnáisiúnta; 1,227 i 2020 i gcomparáid le 2,593 i 2019.

Tháinig laghdú 14% ar chásanna idirscartha bhreithiúnaigh agus colscartha an Bhoird i 2020 i gcomparáid leis an mbliain roimhe sin. Tháinig méadú 8% ar an gcásobair a bhain le for-éigean baile, ó 3,249 i 2019 go 3,494 i 2020, áfach. Bhí 1,491 ar liosta feithimh an Bhoird ag deireadh na bliana 2020 – laghdú 24% ó 1,963 i 2019.

Bhain 2,431 duine úsáid as an *Líne Chabhrach Cúnaimh Dhlíthiúil agus Idirghabhála* nua a thug an Bord isteach mar fhreagairt ar COVID-19 le linn 2020. I dtéarmaí scéimeanna cúnaimh dhlíthiúil choiriúil a oibríonn an Bord, bhí méadú 14% ar an Scéim Athbhreithnithe um Chomhairle Dlí i Stáisiún an Gharda Síochána (suas go dtí 4,534); méadú 49% ar an Scéim um Shaincheisteanna Coimeádta – 266 cás san iomlán i 2020 – ach laghdú 13% ar éilimh faoi Scéim an Bhiúró um Shócmhainní Coiriúla, a sheas ag 7.

An tÚdarás Rialála Seirbhísí Dlí

Fuair an tÚRSD 1,422 gearán le linn 2020 ach ní raibh a fheidhmeanna nua ach ag teacht i bhfeidhm agus mar sin níl aon treochtaí níos luaithe ann le cur i gcomparáid leo sa réimse seo. Choinnigh an tÚRSD a bhfeidhmeanna ag imeacht le tacaíochtaí cianoibre, ach bhí roinnt tionchair ag srianta COVID-19 orthu.

Bhí an obair ar ghearáin a réiteach go neamhfhoirmiúil beagán casta toisc nárbh fhéidir cruinnithe duine le duine a thairiscint chun gearáin a réiteach. Cuireadh moill ar an aistriú pleanáilte foirne go dtí an t-áitreabh nua i mí Aibreáin mar gheall ar theacht na paidéime agus chomhairle an Rialtais maidir le hoibriú ón mbaile. Osclaíodh an oifig go hoifigiúil ar an 31 Lúnasa do líon beag foirne. Mar sin féin, bhí formhór fhoireann an ÚRSD ag obair go cianda suas go dtí deireadh na bliana agus ina dhiaidh sin.

Tá bailiú an Tobhaigh Reachtúil ag leanúint ar aghaidh le comhlíonadh de bhreis is 99% agus tá Rolla na nAbhcóidí Cleachtacha á chothabháil go héifeachtach. Cé go bhfuil Binse nua Araíonachta Cleachtóirí Dlí nach mór bunaithe, is dóigh go gcuirfidh bearta COVID-19 isteach ar stiúradh éisteachtaí.

An Bord Athbhreithnithe Meabhair-Shláinte (An Dlí Coiriúil)

I mí an Mhárta, 2020, thug an tAire toiliú don Bhord Athbhreithnithe a nósanna imeachta a leasú chun go bhféadfaí éisteachtaí a reáchtáil trí theileachomhdháil. D'ainmnigh an tAire an Bord Athbhreithnithe freisin faoi ailt 29 agus 31 den Acht um an Dlí Sibhialta agus um an Dlí Coiriúil (Forálacha Ilghnéitheacha), 2020, chun socrú a dhéanamh go bhféadfaí cruinnithe agus éisteachtaí an Bhoird a reáchtáil go cianda.

I rith 2020, bhí méadú beag ar líon na n-éisteachtaí athbhreithnithe a reáchtáil an Bord, le 203 éisteacht athbhreithnithe ar choinneáil othar sa Phríomh-Ospidéal Meabhair-Ghalar i gcomparáid le 198 an bhliain roimhe sin.

Oifig Chigire na bPríosún

Chuir paidéim COVID-19 timpeallacht dhúshlánach i láthair maidir le cóireáil agus coinníollacha sna príosúin a iniúchadh. I bhfianaise na srianta a cuireadh i bhfeidhm i bpríosúin chun scaipeadh COVID-19 a chosc, lena n-áirítear córais shrianta agus teorainneacha ar chuirteoirí seachtracha chuig príosúin, bhí an fhormhaoirseacht ar phríosúin thar a bheith tábhachtach i rith na bliana. D'fhan an Chigireacht tiomanta dá feidhm formhaoirseachta i 2020, in ainneoin na ndúshlán a chruthaigh COVID-19.

Ba iad seo a leanas gníomhaíochtaí na Cigireachta a bhain le COVID-19 idir Márta agus Nollaig, 2020:

- Tugadh cuairteanna gairide ar na 12 phríosún ar fad idir 26 Márta agus 5 Bealtaine, 2020, agus ina dhiaidh sin rinneadh glaonna teileafóin ar Rialtóirí na bpríosún idir Aibreán agus Iúil, 2020.
- Cumarsáid leanúnach le Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann, lena n-áirítear tuarascálacha laethúla agus seachtainiúla príosúin ó Ard-Stiúrthóir SPÉ.
- Forbairt tuarascála i gcomhar le hOllscoil Mhá Nuad ar thionchar an chlutharaithe ar dhaoine faoi choimeád.

Le tosú COVID-19, thug Ceannteathrú SPÉ nuashonruithe don Chigireacht ar an staid a bhí ag teacht chun cinn ar fud eastát na bpríosún. I measc na cumarsáide bhí glaonna gach coicís le hArd-Stiúrthóir SPÉ, na nuachtlitreacha faisnéise ar fad a dáileadh ar bhaill foirne agus ar phríosúnaigh a chur ar fáil agus figiúirí laethúla i dtaca le scaipeadh COVID-19 a chur ar fáil.

An tÚdarás Rialála Seirbhísí Maoine

Coinníodh leibhéil ghnó tríd is tríd, agus níor tháinig ach laghdú 4.4% ar cheadúnais a eisíodh i rith 2020. Tháinig méadú 61% ar an mbliain roimhe ar imréiteach riaráistí gearán, le 197 gearán curtha i gcrích i 2020.

Ar an gcaoi chéanna, bhí méadú 79% ar iniúchtaí comhlíonta go 281 san iomlán i 2020. Cuireadh 77 gcás Ciste Cúitimh i gcrích, méadú 61 ar 2019.

Tháinig méadú 237% ar fhiosruithe ríomhphoist, le 6,608 díobh ann san iomlán don tréimhse 2020. Ar an iomlán bhí méadú 220% ar thrácht ríomhphoist an ÚRSM.

Oifig an Phaiteolaí Stáit

Bhí ról ríthábhachtach ag Oifig an Phaiteolaí Stáit, mar gheall ar an ról ar leith atá ag an Oifig ina hidirghabhálaí idir na Cróinéirí, an Garda Síochána, Dámh na Paiteolaíochta (Coláiste Ríoga Lianna na hÉireann) agus marbhlananna ar fud na tíre, chun treoirínite agus cleachtas i leith scrúduithe iarbháis a fhorbairt ar leibhéal náisiúnta.

Shocraigh an Phaiteolaí Stáit soláthar foirne a chéimniú chun an riosca a theorannú oiread agus ab fhéidir. Spreagadh gach paiteolaí chun oibriú go cianda nuair ab fhéidir agus bunaíodh cianrochtain ar chomhaid agus ar bhunachair shonraí don fhoireann ar fad.

Chloígh Oifig an Phaiteolaí Stáit le gach treoir ó Fheidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte, agus le gach treoir sláinte poiblí agus Rialtais, le linn phaindéim COVID-19. Caitheann paiteolaíthe Stáit Trealamh Cosanta Pearsanta i gcónaí nuair a bhíonn siad i mbun a gcuid oibre agus lean siad orthu ag freastal ar láithreacha báis nuair a iarradh an freastal sin nó nuair a bhí gá leis.

An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh

Thionóil an tSeirbhís Phromhaidh grúpa pleanála teagmhasaí a chlúdaigh príomhfheidhmeanna agus a d'oibrigh leis an bhFoireann Bhainistíochta Shinsearach maidir le comhordú gníomhaíochtaí timpeall ar COVID-19. Tarchuireadh na himpleachtaí ar fad maidir le cinntí soláthair seirbhíse go lárnach chun freagairtí comhordaithe a éascú de réir mar a tháinig saincheisteanna chun cinn. Sa chás gur roghnaigh ciontóirí iad féin a aonrú, mar shampla, gan freastal ar sheirbhís phobail, lean an fhoireann phromhaidh na gnáthnósanna imeachta i.e. doiciméid/deimhniú leighis a lorg etc.

Chuir an tSeirbhís Phromhaidh deireadh le teagmháil duine le duine ó 6pm, 12 Márta, nuair a dhún an tSeirbhís gach suíomh seirbhíse pobail, ag cur cuairteanna baile ar fionraí agus ag coinneáil teagmhála le ciontóirí ar an nguthán. Aithníodh ciontóirí ardtosaíochta agus coinníodh teagmháil dhírithé leo. D'fhan an tSeirbhís Phromhaidh i dteagmháil le Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann chun a chinntiú nach ngéaródh aon cheann dá gcuid gníomhartha ar rioscaí SPÉ. Thug an tSeirbhís patrún oibre céimnithe isteach freisin d'fhoireann na Ceanncheathrún, chun riosca a laghdú.

Ó Bhealtaine, 2020, d'fhill an fhoireann ar an obair ar bhonn céimnithe agus uainchláir, chun agallaimh chliaint agus obair riachtanach eile a éascú. Chuir baill foirne a gcleachtas in oiriúint, ag obair le ciontóirí ag baint úsáid as teagmháil teileafóin agus ag nascadh le príomheagraíochtaí comhpháirtíochta chun tacú le sábháilteacht phobail.

Leanadh den obair a rinne foirne na Seirbhíse Promhaidh a bhí lonnaithe i bpríosúin. Agus í ag obair i gcomhpháirtíocht le Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann, le hionaid choinneála leanaí agus leis an tSeirbhís Chúirteanna, thug an tSeirbhís Phromhaidh tús áite freisin d'ullmhú tuarascálacha faoi athchur i gcoimeád do na Cúirteanna, i gcásanna a bhí fós ar siúl. Éascaíodh agallaimh naisc físe ó Oifigí ainmnithe den tSeirbhís Phromhaidh i ngach príosún.

Mar gheall ar shrianta sláinte poiblí, reáchtáladh an tSeachtain Idirnáisiúnta don Cheartas Aisiríoch le seimineár gréasáin, a d'eagraigh baill de ghrúpa na hÉireann den tionscadal Eorpach Ceartas Aisiríoch: Straitéisí d'Athrú, i gcomhar leis an Roinn.

In ainneoin na timpeallachta dúshlánaí, leanadh den obair laistigh den tSeirbhís Phromhaidh ar mhúnla fostaíochta na Fiontraíochta Sóisialta a fhorbairt do dhaoine le ciontuíthe. I mí na Samhna, 2020, sheol an tAire Dlí agus Cirt, Eiléana Nic an tSaoi TD, ‘Ag Obair chun Athrú a Dhéanamh’ – Straitéis Fiontar Sóisialta agus Fostaíochta, 2021-2023, ón Roinn Dlí agus Cirt. Leagtar amach sa straitéis sin spriocanna uailmhianacha chun cur leis na roghanna fostaíochta do dhaoine a bhfuil taifid choiriúla acu, agus tógann sí ar bhunús láidir tac-aíochtaí atá ann cheana féin.

An tÚdarás Póilíneachta

Mar aon leis an oiread sin comhlachtaí poiblí eile, chuir an tÚdarás a chleachtais oibre in oiriúint don saol nua mar a bhí agus nuair a chuaigh an tír faoi dhianghlasáil i lár mhí an Mhárta, leanadh le hobair agus le formhaoirseacht an Údaráis gan laghdú, in ainneoin go ndeachaigh cuid mhór den obair go cianobair. D’aithin an tÚdarás go gcaithfeadh sé a chuid oibre formhaoirseachta ar an nGarda Síochána a choinneáil ar bun agus, nuair ab fhéidir, í a neartú sna cúinsí nua a tháinig chun cinn mar gheall ar Phaindéim COVID-19. Bhí gá le freagairt chomhréireach i dtéarmaí formhaoirseachta de bharr na gcumhachtaí eisceachtúla a tugadh do Ghardaí sa reachtaíocht éigeandála.
















Bhí formhaoirseacht thráthúil, leanúnach agus thrédhearcach tábhachtach agus tá sí fós tábhachtach chun dearbhú a thabhairt go n-úsáidtear na cumhachtaí sin go comhréireach agus ar bhealach atá comhsheasmhach le hionchais an phobail. Mar a d’iarr an tAire Dlí agus Cirt, sholáthair an tÚdarás formhaoirseacht bhreise ar phóilíneacht le linn 2020 agus chuir deich dtuarascáil ar fheidhmíocht phóilíneachta COVID-19 i dtoll a chéile agus d’fhoilsigh iad.

Aguisín 1: Gníomhaireachtaí, Oifigí agus Comhlachtaí faoi choimirce na Roinne

Oibríonn muid i gcomhpháirtíocht le gach Gníomhaireacht, Oifig agus Comhlacht atá faoi choimirce na Roinne Dlí agus Cirt.

Is féidir liosta cuimsitheach, lena n-áirítear na Boird/na Binsí ar fad atá faoi choimirce na Roinne, a fháil ar láithreán gréasáin na Roinne.

Ceartas Coiriúil

 An Garda Síochána	 An Biúro um Shócmhainní Coiriúla	 Cigireacht an Gharda Síochána	 Coimisiún Ombudsman an Gharda Síochána
 An tÚdarás Póilíneachta	 An Bord Athbhreithnithe Meabhair-Shláinte (An Dlí Coiriúil) Review Board	 An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh The Probation Service	 An Bord Parúil
 Oifig an Chigire Príosún Office of the Inspector of Prisons	 An Binse Cúitimh i leith Diobhála Coiriúla	 Eolaíocht Fhóirínseach Éireann	 Oifig an Phaiteolaí Stáit
 Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann	 An tÚdarás Slándála Príobháidí	 An Bord Achomhairc um Shláindáil Phríobháideach	

Ceartas Sibhialta

 An Bord um Chinsireacht Foilseachán	 An Bord Achomhairc um Chinsireacht Foilseachán	 An tSeirbhís Chúirteanna
 Oifig Chróinéara Dúiche Bhaile Átha Cliath	 Seirbhís Dócmhainneachta na hÉireann	 An Binse um Achomhairc i dtaobh Cosaint Idirnáisiúnta
 Comhairle na mBreithiúna	 An Bord um Chúnannh Dílthiúil	 An tÚdarás Rialála Seirbhísí Dlí Legal Services Regulatory Authority
 An Coimisiún um Chosaint Sonraí	 Oifig Aicmithe Scannán na hÉireann	 An Bord Achomhairc um Sheirbhísí Maoine
 An Bord Comhairleach um Cheapacháin Bheithiúnacha	 An tÚdarás Rialála Seirbhísí Maoine	

Aguisín 2: Tuairisciú ar Sholáthar Poiblí Glas

Bliain tagartha 2020	A. Líon iomlán na gconarthaí a eisíodh a bhí os cionn €25,000 de réir earnála tosaíochta	B. Luach iomlán na gconarthaí a eisíodh a bhí os cionn €25,000 de réir earnála tosaíochta	C. Líon iomlán na gconarthaí a eisíodh a bhí os cionn €25,000 de réir earnála tosaíochta agus a bhfuil SPG curtha san áireamh acu	D. Luach iomlán na gconarthaí a eisíodh a bhí os cionn €25,000 de réir earnála tosaíochta agus a bhfuil SPG curtha san áireamh acu
Earnáil Tosaíochta				
Iompar	3	Níl sé taifeadta	0	0
Caiteachais ar Áitreabh Oifige	2	Níl sé taifeadta	0	0
Táirgí & Seirbhísí Glantacháin	2	Níl sé taifeadta	0	0
Trealamh Saotharlainne	19	Níl sé taifeadta	0	0
Teicneolaíocht na Faisnéise	19	Níl sé taifeadta	0	0
Lóistín	2	Níl sé taifeadta	0	0
Cóiríocht d'Iarrthóirí Tearmainn	2	Níl sé taifeadta	0	0
Seirbhísí Gairmiúla	9	Níl sé taifeadta	0	0
Méideanna Iomlána	58	Níl sé taifeadta	0	0

Aguisín 3: Spriocanna Forbartha Inbhuanaithe

I mí Mheán Fómhair, 2015, ghlac Ballstáit na Náisiún Aontaithe Clár Oibre 2030 don Fhorbairt Inbhuanaithe (“Ár nDomhan a Athrú ó Bhonn”). Is plean gníomhaíochta é Clár Oibre 2030 do dhaoine, pláinéad agus rathúnas agus tá feidhm aige maidir le tíortha forbartha agus tíortha atá i mbéal forbartha araon. Is é fócas Chlár Oibre 2030 na 17 Sprioc Forbartha Inbhuanaithe (SFI) agus a 169 bhfo-sprioc faoi seach.

Cumhdaíonn na SFI uailmhianta amhail:

- deireadh a chur leis an mbochtaineacht
- forbairt eacnamaíoch inbhuanaithe
- cosaint an chomhshaoil
- rochtain ar sheirbhísí sláinte agus oideachais
- comhionannas inscne
- sochaithe síochánta
- obair fhiúntach

Nótáiltear gníomhartha na Roinne Dlí agus Cirt ag

- 8.7 Frithbhearta maidir le gáinneáil ar dhaoine

Chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar gháinneáil ar dhaoine ar bhealach iomlánaíoch tá gá le rann-pháirtíocht páirtithe leasmhara éagsúla agus i measc na bpríomhghníomhaíochtaí a rinneadh le déanaí, nó atá le cur i gcrích go luath amach anseo, tá:

- Ainmniú Choimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta an Duine agus Comhionannas (CÉCDC) mar Rapóirtéir Náisiúnta neamhspleách na hÉireann um Gháinneáil ar Dhaoine faoi airteagal 19 de Threoir an AE maidir le Gáinneáil ar Dhaoine;
- Tús le hathbheithniú ar an Acht um Cheartas Coiriúil (Cionta Gnéasacha), 2017, a rinne coir de cheannach gnéis mar chuid de chur chuige níos leithne maidir le daoine a ndéantar gáinneáil orthu isteach sa striapachas a chosaint;
- An Roinn do dhul i mbun pléití le heagraíochtaí neamhrialtasacha chun réitigh ar sholáthar cóiríochta d’íospartaigh na gáinneála a shainaitheint, go háirithe mná ar íospartaigh den dúshaothrú gnéis iad;
- Bunú fóraim d’íospartaigh agus do pháirtithe leasmhara maidir le gáinneáil ar dhaoine, a tháinig le chéile faoi dhó go dtí seo, agus a scrúdóidh an gá leis an bPlean Gníomhaíochta Náisiúnta maidir le Gáinneáil ar Dhaoine atá ann cheana a nua-shonrú, lena n-áirítear freagairt don ghealltanas i gClár an Rialtais straitéis

chuimsitheach a ghlacadh agus a chur i bhfeidhm chun gáinneáil ar mhná agus ar chailíní a chomhrac;

- Oibriú leis an bhFóram in athbhreithniú ar an Meicníocht Atreoraithe Náisiúnta in Éirinn, ag foghlaim ó mhúnláí dea-chleachtais i mBallstáit eile an AE;
- Dréachtú reachtaíochta chun an creat pionósach ar smuigléireacht daoine a neartú, agus ar an mbealach sin trí (3) ionstraim dlí idirnáisiúnta a chur i bhfeidhm sa réimse; agus
- Seoladh comhfheachtais ilmheán idir an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt agus an Eagraíocht Idirnáisiúnta um Imirce (EII) chun feasacht an phobail ar Gháinneáil ar Dhaoine a mhéadú. Tá dhá phríomhchuspóir leis an bhfeachtas feasachta:

1. Feasacht an Phobail a Mhéadú maidir le Gáinneáil ar Dhaoine in Éirinn agus iad a oiliúint chun comharthaí gáinneála a aithint;

2. Feasacht ar Thacaíochtaí d'Íospartaigh a Mhéadú. Tá sé mar aidhm ag an bhfeachtas a chur in iúl d'Íospartaigh go bhfuil cabhair ar fáil agus conas í a lorg.

Tá acmhainní suntasacha geallta ag an nGarda Síochána chun gáinneáil ar dhaoine in Éirinn a imscrúdú agus a ionchúiseamh. Tá Aonad Garda speisialaithe, an tAonad um Imscrúdú agus Comhordú um Gháinneáil ar Dhaoine (AICGD), i bhfeidhm ó 2009 chun imscrúduithe a dhéanamh ar gháinneáil ar dhaoine agus chun comhairle, tacaíocht agus, nuair is gá, cúnamh oibríochtúil a sholáthar d'imscrúduithe ag leibhéal an cheantair. Tá an Garda Síochána gníomhach freisin maidir le buíonta gáinneála trí obair a dhíríonn ar choireacht eagraithe – ag díriú ar a gcuid airgid, an úsáid a bhaineann siad as an idirlíon agus trí bheith ag obair go dlúth le dlínsí eile.

Tá an Roinn ag déanamh dianstaidéir ar an tuarascáil agus ar na moltaí atá san áireamh i dTuarascáil 2020 'Gáinneáil ar Dhaoine' ó Roinn Stáit na Stát Aontaithe. Coinníonn Éire dlúth-theagmháil leanúnach leis na Stáit Aontaithe ar an gceist sin agus cuirfidh an tuarascáil le hobair leanúnach na Roinne ar an bPlean Gníomhaíochta Náisiúnta chun Gáinneáil ar Dhaoine a Chosc agus a Chomhrac.

- 10.7 Polasaithe imirce

Foilsíodh an **Comhaontú um Imirce agus Tearmann Dé Céadaoin** an 23 Meán Fómhair, 2020, agus cuimsítear ann Teachtaireacht a chuir Coimisiún an AE ar aghaidh agus pacáiste naoi n-ionstraim. Leagtar amach sa Chomhaontú tosaíochtaí an AE sna blianta amach

romhainn a neartóidh cumas an AE freagairt do dhúshláin a chruthaíonn an imirce, agus a chruthóidh an imirce, don AE sna deich mbliana atá romhainn.

Tacaíonn an Roinn go hiomlán le hiarrachtaí an AE chun déileáil le ceist na himirce ar bhealach cuimsitheach iomlánaíoch lena n-áirítear:

- deiseanna méadaithe do chonairí dlíthiúla maidir le ligean isteach, lena n-áirítear athlonnú;
- bunú agus cur i bhfeidhm na gComhaontuithe Comhpháirtíochta le tríú tíortha tábhachtacha;
- aghaidh a thabhairt ar bhunchúiseanna na himirce, agus comhaontuithe um fhilleadh agus athiontráil a fheidhmiú.

Tá gealltanas i gClár an Rialtais bealaí nua a chruthú do dhaoine atá gan doiciméid le fada, agus dá gcleithiúnaithe, a chomhlíonann critéir shonraithe chun a stádas a thabhairt chun rialtacht laistigh de 18 mí ó bhunú an Rialtais, ag tabhairt aird ar thiomantais an Aontais Eorpaigh agus an Chomhlíonáir Taistil.

- Tá Éire, mar aon le Ballstáit eile den AE, tiomanta, faoin gComhaontú Eorpach um Inimirce agus um Thearmann (2008), do chur chuige cás ar chás seachas ollriailú.
- Tá páipéar beartais ar an ábhar á dhréachtú ag an Roinn, lena n-áireofar measúnú ar dhea-chleachtais idirnáisiúnta. Breathnófar ar scéimeanna rialtacht roimhe seo, amhail Scéim na Mac Léinn, 2018, agus scéimeanna dá leithéid níos luaithe, in aon bheartas amach anseo.

Chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar cheist na **nImirceach gan Doiciméid**, tá scéim inimirce á forbairt ag an Roinn a thabharfaidh stádas cónaithe – faoi réir critéar sainithe – do mhion-aoisigh gan doiciméid agus do dhaoine dá dteaghlach a bheidh in éineacht leo sa Stát. Táthar ag féachaint freisin ar an scéim a chlúdaíonn tabhairt chun rialtacht imirceach áirithe gan doiciméid a chónaíonn go fadtéarmach sa Stát agus ar féidir a mheas gur chuir siad seirbhís luachmhar ar fáil don Stát i réimsí amhail an earnáil cúraim shóisialta. Tá an dara togra sin fós ina rogha beartais atá á breithniú.

Tá dréachtpháipéar beartais á fhorbairt agus tá taighde déanta freisin chun an cleachtas is fearr a fháil amach maidir le himircigh gan doiciméid a thabhairt chun rialtacht i ndlínsí eile an AE. Chomh maith leis an taighde sin, beidh gá freisin le rannpháirtíocht mhionsonraithe

le príomhpháirtithe leasmhara. Beidh comhairle dlí ag teastáil ó Oifig an Ard-Aighne. Cuirfear páipéar breithnithe le haghaidh an Aire ar fáil go luath.

- 16.1-16.5 bearta chun foréigean, gáinneáil, aisghabháil sócmhainní, riail an dlí agus bearta frithéillithe a laghdú

Agus na dúshlán dhomhanda a bhaineann leis an gcoireacht airgeadais á n-aithint aici, tá Éire ina páirtí i roinnt ionstraimí idirnáisiúnta frithéillithe lena n-áirítear Coinbhinsiún na Náisiún Aontaithe i gcoinne an Éillithe (CNAÉ), Coinbhinsiún na hEagraíochta um Chomhar agus Fhorbairt Eacnamaíochta (ECFE) maidir le Cur i gcoinne Breabaireacht a Dhéanamh ar Oifigigh Phoiblí Choigríche in Idirbhearta Gnó Idirnáisiúnta, agus Coinbhinsiúin Chomhairle na hEorpa maidir le hÉilliú (a ndéanann comhlacht an Ghrúpa Stát in aghaidh an Éillithe (GSÉ) monatóireacht orthu). Leis na comhaontuithe comhroinnte sin cothaítear frithsheasmhacht in aghaidh an éillithe agus na coireachta airgeadais idirnáisiúnta.

Tá plean nua trasrialtais chun dul i ngleic le coireacht eacnamaíoch agus le héilliú le bheith faoi stiúir an Aire tar éis fhoilsiú an Athbhreithnithe ar Struchtúir agus ar Straitéisí chun Coireacht Eacnamaíoch agus Éilliú a Chosc, a Imscrúdú agus a Phionósú. Ba é an tUasal James Hamilton, iar-Stiúrthóir na nIonchúiseamh Poiblí, a bhí i gceannas ar an athbhreithniú.

Tá faomhadh na Comh-aireachta faighte ag an Aire Nic an tSaoi chun plean gníomhaíochta forfheidhmithe a thabhairt ar aghaidh i leith mholtaí an Athbhreithnithe, le hamlínte socraithe. Aithneofar sa phlean tosaíochtaí is féidir a chur i bhfeidhm sa ghearrthearma, amhail achtú an Bhille um Nós Imeachta Coiriúil, atá ar an gclár reachtach reatha lena achtú.

Comhlánóidh tionscnaimh frithéillithe eile, amhail an tuarascáil atá le teacht ó Chigireacht an Gharda Síochána ar Bhagairt na Caimiléireachta Inmheánaí a Chomhrac, an tionscnamh sin.

I measc na moltaí atá le cur san áireamh sa phlean nua tá:

- Comhairle Chomhairleach i gcoinne Coireacht agus Éilliú Eacnamaíoch a bhunú chun moltaí a chur faoi bhráid an Rialtais ar straitéisí agus beartais chun dul i ngleic le coireacht agus éilliú eacnamaíoch;
- Fóram buan d'ionadaithe sinsearacha ó ghníomhaireachtaí Stáit chun comhoibriú níos fearr agus comhroinnt faisnéise a éascú;
- Oiliúint leanúnach d'imscrúdaitheoirí coireachta eacnamaíche agus éillithe eacnamaíoch;
- Dul i mbun pleití leis na breithiúna maidir le forbairt oiliúna do chásanna coireachta eacnamaíche / éillithe eacnamaíoch agus an fhéidearthacht maidir le speisialtóireacht bhreithiúnach sa réimse;
- Socrú a dhéanamh maidir le hOifig an Stiúrthóra um Fhorfheidhmiú Corparáideach agus leis an gCoimisiún um Iomaíocht agus Cosaint Tomhaltóirí ina n-imscrúduithe chun fianaise a fháil trí úsáid a bhaint as modhanna ceilte, ar aon dul leis an nGarda Síochána agus leis na Coimisinéirí Ioncaim;
- An reachtaíocht Ceartais Choiriúil a leasú chun barántais chuardaigh neamhspleácha a cheadú a cheadóidh don Gharda Síochána a cheangal ar dhaoine atá faoi réir barántais ghabhála pasfhocail a sholáthar do ghairis leictreonacha a bhfuil úinéireacht acu orthu nó atá faoina rialú.

Is é an Biúró um Shócmhainní Coiriúla (BSC) an comhlacht a bhfuil sé de chúram air fáltais ó iompar coiriúil a aithint agus a imscrúdú agus gníomhaíochtaí a dhéanamh faoin dlí chun na tairbhí a bhaineann le sócmhainní, ar fáltais as iompar coiriúil iad, a dhiúltú agus a bhaint de dhaoine trí na sócmhainní sin a reo, a choinneáil agus seilbh a ghabháil orthu.

Tá modhanna an BSC tar éis teacht chun cinn chun dul i ngleic le modhanna nua coiriúlachta. Le blianta beaga anuas tá an BSC tar éis déileáil le roinnt cásanna a bhaineann le criptea-airgeadra. I mí Feabhra, 2020, chuir an tAire fáilte roimh rialú na hArd-Chúirte de bhun iarratais ón BSC a cheadaigh suim níos mó ná luach €52 milliún de *Bitcoin* a ghabháil. Is ionann an cás áirithe sin agus ceann de na sócmhainní aonluacha is mó a ghabh an BSC riamh.

Lean an BSC lena chomhoibriú fairsing le gníomhaireachtaí forfheidhmithe dlí i dTuaisceart Éireann, lena n-áirítear Seirbhís Póilíneachta Thuaisceart Éireann (SPTÉ), Coimisinéirí Ioncaim agus Custaim na Banríona (CICB) agus an Gníomhaireacht Náisiúnta Coireachta (GNC).

Go hidirnáisiúnta, leanann an Biúró ag déanamh idirchaidrimh agus imscrúduithe le húdaráis forghníomhaithe dlí agus bhreithiúnacha ar fud na hEorpa agus ar fud an domhain agus tá sé éifeachtach ag an leibhéal idirnáisiúnta mar an Oifig um Aisghabháil Sócmhainní (OAS) ainmnithe in Éirinn.

Thug an Biúró €5.4 milliún ar ais do Rialtas na Nigéire freisin tar éis Meabhrán Tuisc-eana idir Éirinn agus Poblacht Chónaidhme na Nigéire a shíniú i mí Dheireadh Fómhair, 2020. Ba é seo an chéad uair a rinne Éire gníomh den sórt sin agus léiríonn sé go leantar de thiomantas na hÉireann do chomhoibriú idirnáisiúnta sa troid i gcoinne an éillithe agus do chuidiú le tíortha a ndearna an t-éilliú dochar dóibh roimhe seo.

Mar chuid dá thiomantas mar Oifig um Aisghabháil Sócmhainní, comhoibríonn an BSC lena chomhghleacaithe ar fud an domhain. Le linn 2020, fuair an Biúró 121 iarratas ar chúnamh agus bhí sé in ann faisnéis a sholáthar maidir leis na hiarratais sin ar fad. Fuarthas na hiarratais ó 29 tír ar fud an domhain.

Aguisín 4: Gníomhaíochtaí na nÚdarás Inniúil um Chomhlíonadh Frith-Sciúrtha Airgid

Gníomhaíochtaí na nÚdarás Inniúil um Chomhlíonadh Frith-Sciúrtha Airgid – tuarascáil faoi alt 65 den Acht um Cheartas Coiriúil (Sciúradh Airgid agus Maoiniú Sceimhlitheoireachta), 2010, arna leasú

Le halt 108 den Acht um Cheartas Coiriúil (Sciúradh Airgid agus Maoiniú Sceimhlitheoireachta), 2010, rinne an tAire Dlí agus Cirt, mar údarás inniúil faoin Acht arna leasú, feidhmeanna údarás inniúil an Aire a tharmligean chuig an Aonad Comhlíontachta um Fhrith-Sciúradh Airgid (ACFSA) sa Roinn. Is uirlis thábhachtach faisnéise é láithreán gréasáin an ACFSA, www.amlcompliance.ie, a úsáideann an tACFSA chun faisnéis a scaipeadh agus feacht a ardú, agus tá naisc air chuig tuarascáil bhliantúil iomlán an ACFSA don bhliain 2020.

I 2020, rinne imscrúdaitheoirí rialála an ACFSA 215 chigireacht ar an láthair ar an iomlán ar na daoine ainmnithe a ndéanann sé formhaoirseacht orthu. Cuireadh isteach ar chigireachtaí ar feadh roinnt míonna ó mhí an Mhárta, 2020, de dheasca na paindéime.

I gcigireachtaí 2020 bhí 141 chigireacht ar Dhíoltóirí Earraí a bhfuil Luach Ard acu; 62 chigireacht ar Sholáthraithe Seirbhíse Iontaobhais nó Cuideachta (SSICanna); cigireacht amháin ar Chlub Chomhaltaí Príobháideacha agus 11 chigireacht ar Chomhairleoirí Cánach/Cuntasóirí Seachtracha.

Déanann an tACFSA Soláthraithe Seirbhíse Iontaobhais nó Cuideachta a údarú, freisin. Rinne sé 181 athnuachan ar údarú SSIC, iarratas nua ar SSIC agus cúlghairm SSIC a phróiseáil i 2021. I mí an Mheithimh, 2020, rinne an tACFSA cur i láthair do 476 rannpháirtí domhanda ag Fóram Maoirseoirí an Tascfhórsa um Ghníomhaíocht Airgeadais do Ghnóthaí agus Gairmithe Neamhairgeadais Ainmnithe, agus i mí Dheireadh Fómhair, 2020, réachtáil an tACFSA seimineár gréasáin ar an téama 'idirbheart amhrasach a thuairisciú' ar ar fhreastail breis agus 370 rannpháirtí.

Aguisín 5: Inbhuanaitheacht

1. Fuinneamh

Bhí dualgas ar an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt, dála gach comhlachta phoiblí, de réir reachta, laghdú 33% a bhaint amach ar fhuinneamh a úsáideadh, thar bhonnlíne 2009, faoi dheireadh 2020. Déanann Údarás Fuinnimh Inmharthana na hÉireann monatóireacht ar an dul chun cinn agus tuairiscíonn siad air gach bliain.

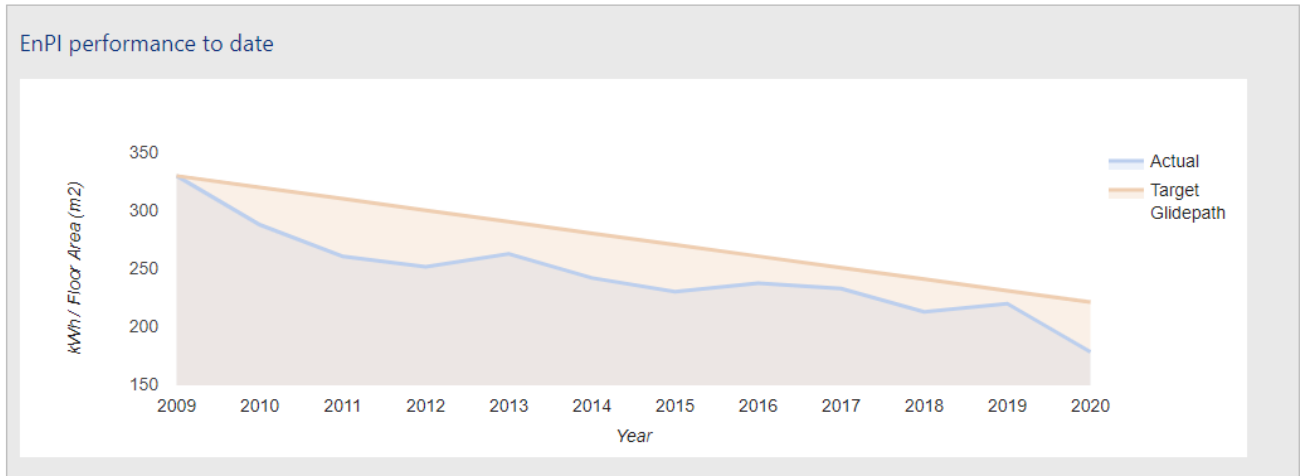
Léiríonn sonraí sealadacha do 2020 gur baineadh amach coigilteas fuinnimh 46%.

Ní mór breathnú ar thorthaí 2020, áfach, mar thorthaí aimhrialta. Is léir gurbh é paindéim COVID 19 an tionchar ba shuntasáí a bhí ar ídiú fuinnimh na Roinne le linn 2020. Mar thoradh ar iarmhairtí díreacha na freagartha ar an bpaindéim dúnadh oifigí poiblí go sealadach, agus bhí an chuid ba mhó dár bhfoireann ag obair ón mbaile, nuair ab fhéidir.

Ba é an toradh a bhí air sin ná coigilteas díreach fuinnimh toisc nach raibh ríomhairí, monatóirí, soilse, etc. á n-úsáid. Mar sin féin, ní raibh coigilteas chomh hard agus a bhíodhas ag súil leis ar dtús, mar, mar shampla, fiú nuair a bhí áitíocht laghdaithe ag foirgneamh, bhí gá fós leis an bhfoirgneamh iomlán a théamh.

Cé nach raibh baill ár bhFoirne Glas in ann teacht le chéile go pearsanta, cuireadh tús le hoiliúint don fhoireann, agus leanann an Roinn de bheith rannpháirteach i scéim feasachta Oifig na nOibreacha Poiblí, Fuinneamh a Bharrfheabhsú @ an Obair.



Tá spriocanna nua do laghdú fuinnimh tagtha in áit na sprice “33% faoi 2020” anois – laghduithe 50% in ídiú fuinnimh agus in astaíochtaí gás ceaptha teasa le bheith bainte amach faoi 2030.



Total Energy Consumption

Grid Electricity: 2,710,319 kWh TFC	Fossil: 6,589,815 kWh TFC	Renewable: 400,967 kWh TFC
-------------------------------------	---------------------------	----------------------------

Energy Savings

EnPI: 18.9% better than 2019		Consumption (TPER): 16.6% less than 2019
EnPI: 46.0% better than baseline		Consumption (TPER): 43.7% less than baseline

(Foinse: Údarás Fuinnimh Inmharthana na hÉireann)

2. Fritháirimh charbóin

Faoi chiorclán RCP 019-001-2020 ón Roinn Cosanta Poiblí agus Athchóirithe, ag tosú in 2020, ceanglaítear ar an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt na hastaíochtaí carbóin a bhaineann le gach eitilt oifigiúil a dhéantar laistigh de bhliain féilire a thaifeadadh, agus méid comhfhreagrach a íoc isteach sa Chiste um Ghníomhú ar son na hAeráide, bunaithe ar an ráta cánach carbóin a bhí i reim (€26 in aghaidh an tonna i 2020). Tá an íocaíocht a ceanglaíodh don bhliain 2020 déanta ag an Roinn.

Tá líon na n-eitiltí, iomlán an charbóin agus an fritháireamh carbóin dá dheasca sin don Roinn, do 2020, léirithe inár gcairt.

Mí	Líon na nEitiltí	Iomlán carbóin in cg	Fritháireamh carbóin ag €0.026/cg
<i>Ean</i>	103	26781.96	696.33
<i>Feabh</i>	99	20733.28	539.07
<i>Már</i>	41	14564.08	378.67
<i>Aib</i>	0	0	0.00
<i>Beal</i>	1	62.5	1.63
<i>Meith</i>	1	86.9	2.26
<i>Iúil</i>	3	890.6	23.16
<i>Lún</i>	8	1255.64	32.65
<i>MF</i>	1	62.2	1.62
<i>DF</i>	4	1239.1	32.22
<i>Samh</i>	15	4570.1	118.82
<i>Noll</i>	8	4554	118.40
Iomlán	284	74800.36	1944.81

Ó 2021 ar aghaidh, foilseofar fritháirimh charbóin d'eitiltí ar láithreán gréasáin na Roinne, ar bhonn ráithiúil.