



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

Annual Report 2022

An Rionn Lanaí, Comhionannais, Míchumas, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
www.equality@gov.ie
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Foreword by the Minister

I am very pleased to present the Department of Children Equality Disability Integration and Youth's 2022 Annual Report.

This Report provides a detailed account of the Department's activities, outputs and achievements in 2022. This was the second year of its Statement of Strategy 2021 - 2023 which outlines how the Department aims to support the delivery of a fair, equal and inclusive society where rights are respected, and where everyone can reach their potential.

Throughout 2022 the work of the Department its agencies and funded bodies continued to enhance the lives of children, young people, adults, families and communities, recognise diversity and promote equality of opportunity across the range of areas. In promoting a progressive, respectful and equal society, we show that we are learning from the experiences of past generations and are seeking to respond to the needs of survivors.

A feature of our work during 2022 was the implementation of a variety of national strategies for which the Department had lead responsibility.

The Department's strategic priorities are set out in its Statement of Strategy 2021-2023. This provides a clear roadmap and focusses efforts on:

- Ensuring that we have the right policies, legislation, resources and systems in place to meet the particular needs of children, young people, adults, families and communities within a diverse and equal society.
- Supporting children and young people in active learning and participation.
- Looking at policies across Government through the lens of children, young people, families, communities and diverse groups.
- Working effectively across Government to promote the well-being of Irish society and developing policies that are responsive to its changing nature.

- Ensuring that we address inequalities and barriers which prevent women, migrants, refugees, applicants for international protection, LGBTI+ individuals, Travellers, Roma and disabled people from participating fully in Irish society.
- Promoting the values of equality, respect for human rights and freedom from racism, xenophobia and discrimination.
- Critically evaluating our performance, making necessary improvements and taking decisions informed by the best available evidence and research.

Outside of activity linked to our Statement of Strategy, the Department played a central role in accommodating 55,000 Ukrainian Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection fleeing the war and who arrived in Ireland between February and December. Staff in the Department recognise the horror and tragedy visited upon the people of Ukraine by Russia's illegal invasion and have responded resolutely and with compassion to those seeking refuge here. The Department continues to work in a collegial manner with partners across Government, Local Authorities, Communities, NGOs, and Agencies so that Ireland meets its international obligations.

In addition to finding accommodation for Ukrainian Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection, there was an unanticipated substantial increase in the numbers of people arriving in Ireland from other countries seeking International Protection. We encountered significant challenges in undertaking this work in the main due to the simultaneous requirement to accommodate such high volumes of people fleeing as a consequence of the war in Ukraine.

I want to take the opportunity to convey my thanks to the Secretary General, the staff of the Department and all stakeholders who have worked collectively to deliver the Department's strategic goals, and for their continued efforts for the significant work undertaken in 2022.

Roderic O'Gorman T.D.

Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth



Introduction by the Secretary General

I am pleased to introduce the Department's Annual Report for 2022. It is published in accordance with section 4 of the Public Service Management Act 1997.

The Annual Report takes a look back at 2022 and at the impact we, as a Department, have made in the lives of children, young people, members of diverse groups across our communities and vulnerable members of society.

Legislation and policy initiatives were advanced across all areas of our wide-ranging remit, from early learning and childcare supports, to child protection and welfare, to youth services, to prevention and early intervention, to direct provision, to equality, to disability, to integration and to the difficult legacy issues from the country's past.

On top of an ambitious programme of work set out in our Statement of Strategy, the Department took on the significant task of sourcing temporary and emergency accommodation for those – mostly women and children - fleeing the war in Ukraine and a significant increase in numbers seeking international protection. Staff in the Department are quick to acknowledge the terrible circumstances that gives rise to so many people seeking refuge in Ireland as well as the triumph of human spirit shown while finding sanctuary here. I must acknowledge the excellence of the staff in the Department as well as the cross-Government support we received so that we could quickly acquire and put to good use the facilities, systems, resources and skills needed to rise to the unanticipated challenges.

A large number of staff in the Department have directly supported our efforts to find accommodation for those seeking protection Ireland either on a part-time or full time basis. Most if not all other teams have had to progress objectives set out in our Statement of Strategy with reduced staff complements.

I want to express my appreciation of the commitment to public service values demonstrated by staff in the Department as well as their professionalism, dedication, flexibility in their approach to the broad ranging work of this Department.

I am grateful to Minister O’Gorman, Minister of State Anne Rabbitte and Minister of State Joe O’Brien, for their continuing leadership and to the Department’s agencies and funded bodies for their commitment and support as we build on the progress set out in this 2022 annual report to continue to deliver for everyone we serve.

Kevin McCarthy
Secretary General

The Vision, Mission and Values set out in Department's Statement of Strategy 2021–2023 are as follows:

Our Vision

A fair, equal and inclusive society where rights are respected, and where everyone can reach their potential.

Our Mission Statement

Enhancing the lives of children, young people, adults, families and communities, recognising diversity and promoting equality of opportunity.

Our Values

We place people, both children and adults, at the heart of what we do.

We listen to children, young people and adults, realising their right to have a voice in decisions that affect their lives.

We act to protect those most vulnerable and disadvantaged, and to champion their needs.

We recognise the role and importance of all families in our society.

We integrate the principles of equality and respect for human rights into our work.

We respect the rights of all people to participate fully in society and we acknowledge the State's role in supporting positive integration.

We value and support our staff and we encourage new ideas and new ways of working in the delivery of our vision and mission.

We deal respectfully with each other and with all of our stakeholders.

We act with integrity and impartiality at all times and are accountable for our actions.

Part 1 – An Overview

Our Strategic Goals

DCEDIY's work in 2022 was underpinned by its Statement of Strategy 2021-2023, which includes six strategic goals as follows:

1. We will develop, implement and influence evidence informed policies and legislation that improve the outcomes for those we serve.

The following legislation was enacted during 2022:

- The Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022;
- The Child Care (Amendment) Act 2022;
- The Institutional Burials Act 2022;
- The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Act 2022.

2. We will ensure the provision of a range of quality and sustainable services, underpinned by strategic investment, that meet the needs of individuals, families and communities.

- Budget 2022 saw the introduction of additional funding of €811 million.
- The actual gross expenditure incurred by DCEDIY and its agencies was €2.730 billion. The expenditure in 2022 enabled a significant level of services to be delivered across five programme areas and, in addition, enabled DCEDIY manage its significant role in the humanitarian response to the conflict in Ukraine.
- The National Childcare Scheme, helping families access subsidised early learning and childcare for children, had substantial investment made to providers for Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School-Age Childcare (SAC) in return for a fee freeze for parents. Changes in Regulations allowed for a more streamlined re-registration process for these services and improved information on services for parents.
- €72m in continued funding was secured by DCEDIY to support the delivery of youth services. Eight new services were established nationally under the UBU Your Place Your Space Scheme.

3. We will help those who are vulnerable, including children, young people and at risk individuals, to overcome adverse circumstances and to achieve their full potential.

- In 2022 the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) supported over 6,000 children with disabilities to access and participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education programme (ECCE) programme across ELC services.
- The National Action Plan Against Racism was completed and signed off by the independent Anti-Racism Committee, with the support of DCEDIY.

4. We will promote the development of a progressive, respectful and equal society, informed by the experiences of past generations and seek to respond to the needs of survivors.

The Special Rapporteur's report on illegal birth registration was published. Minister O'Gorman offered a formal apology on behalf of the Government for the deep hurt and anguish experienced by people whose births were illegally registered.

5. We will work in partnership with individuals, families and communities, and across Government Departments, public bodies and civil society to achieve better outcomes.

- Ireland's National Action Plan for Implementation of the EU Child Guarantee was published.
- The Child Care (Amendment) Act 2022 was signed into law. Guardians ad litem convey the child's views to the court and advise on the child's best interests. The Act provides that where a child is capable of forming their own views, the court must determine how to facilitate the child in expressing those views.

6. We will maintain high standards of performance and corporate governance with engaged, motivated and supported staff.

- There was significant movement of staff in DCEDIY during 2022. Staff numbers at end 2022 stood at 621, compared to a complement of 486 staff at end 2021, a year on year increase of 135 staff.
- 149 staff left DCEDIY during 2022. They left for a variety of reasons such as retirement, resignation, transfer on promotion, through the mobility scheme and contract ends.
- DCEDIY recruited 228 new staff in 2022, accounting for around 37% of employees in DCEDIY. A number of specialist external recruitment competitions were also carried out to increase DCEDIY's skillset
- DCEDIY reviewed and amended its Risk Management Policy in 2022.

In addition to its responsibility for the areas of child protection and welfare, prevention and early intervention, adoption, family supports, early learning and childcare, youth services and youth justice, legacy issues in relation to Mother and Baby Institutions, areas of equality, integration, international protection and disability policy, DCEDIY was tasked by Government with the very significant role of providing and co-ordinating the provision of emergency short-term accommodation and assistance for Ukrainian Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTPs).

Finance Overview in 2022

The gross funding provision for DCEDIY under Vote 40 in 2022 was €2.813 billion (€1.919 billion in 2021).

- €2.745 billion (current expenditure) and €68 million (capital expenditure)

In addition to this, €3.2 million of unspent 2021 capital funds were carried forward to 2022, for use in the following areas:

- A3 Child and Family Agency €1.00m
- A4 Youth Justice – Oberstown Children Detention Campus €0.25m
- B5 Childcare Programmes, Delivery Supports and Other Initiative €0.75m
- B6 Youth Organisations and Services €1.20m

The 2022 gross provision represented an increase of €895 million (47%) on the 2021 Revised Estimates and an increase of €993 million, or 54%, over the 2021 outturn. The actual gross expenditure incurred by DCEDIY and its agencies was €2.730 billion. The expenditure in 2022 enabled a significant level of services to be delivered across five programme areas and, in addition, enabled DCEDIY manage its significant role in the humanitarian response to the conflict in Ukraine.

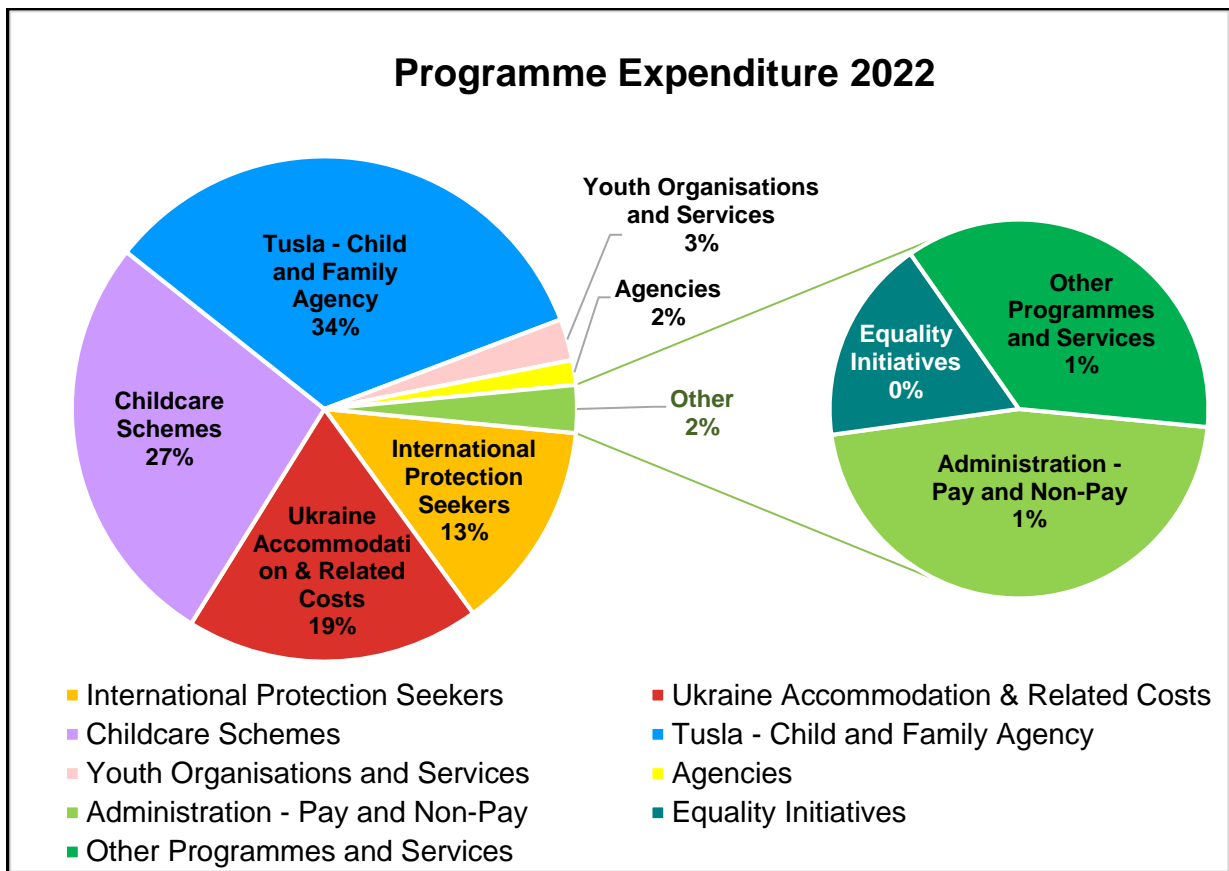
The spending across the five programme areas was as follows:

Table 1.1 - Programme Expenditure 2022

Programme Expenditure ¹		Outturn
		€000
A	Children and Family Support Programme	948,894
B	Sectoral Programmes for Children and Young People	824,919
C	Policy and Legislation Programme	33,597
D	An Equal and Inclusive Society	29,580
E	A Fair and Efficient Support System for International Protection Seekers	892,975
Gross expenditure		2,729,964
Deduct		
F	Appropriations-in-aid	(35,053)
Net expenditure		2,694,911

¹ Please note, the values per the 2022 Appropriation Accounts are draft (i.e. until the date of publication - 30 September 2023) and consequently are subject to change.

Figure 1.1 - Programme Expenditure 2022



Review of the Year 2022

Among the highlights in 2022 were:

In January:

- The Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Roderic O’Gorman, T.D. published Birth Information and Tracing Bill. The purpose of this legislation is to enshrine in law a clear right to full birth, early life, care and medical information for all those with questions on their origins.
- The Minister of State at the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth with special responsibility for Disability, Anne Rabbitte, T.D. reconvened the Transport Working Group under the National Disability Inclusion Strategy which examines the issues of accessible transport for persons with disabilities and to progress a review of the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers Scheme.
- Minister O’Gorman announced consultation on next national policy framework for children & young people, which sought the public’s views on the next national policy framework for children and young people.

In February:

- The Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee, T.D. and Minister O’Gorman welcomed publication of review of accommodation for victims of domestic violence.
- Minister O’Gorman published the Institutional Burials Bill. The purpose of this legislation is to provide a legal basis to allow the recovery and identification of children so inappropriately interred at the site of the former Mother and Baby Home in Tuam.

In March:

- Minister O’Gorman convened the National Youth Assembly of Ireland for the first time as the Youth Assembly on Climate. Assembly delegates discussed climate issues and were able to make recommendations to the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan, T.D. for inclusion in the Government’s Climate Action Plan.
- DCEDIY and Irish Red Cross launched an accommodation pledge register to allow people to register accommodation and other services to assist Ukrainian refugees.
- Minister O’Gorman announced the introduction of gender pay gap reporting in 2022.

In April:

- Minister of State Rabbitte, marked World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) and World Autism Month. She also launched the Autism Innovation Strategy - a public consultation to inform the design and development of the Autism Innovation Strategy.
- Minister O’Gorman announced substantial investment for Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School-Age Childcare (SAC) providers in return for a fee freeze for parents. This involved changes to the National Childcare Scheme, which provides financial support to help families access subsidised early learning and childcare for children.

In May:

- Minister O’Gorman offered a formal apology on behalf of the Government for the deep hurt and anguish experienced by people whose births were illegally registered. He placed the apology on the record of the Houses of the Oireachtas at the commencement of the Birth Information and Tracing Bill's passage through Seanad Éireann.
- Minister O’Gorman welcomed that 92% of Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School-Age Childcare (SAC) providers had agreed to introduce a fee freeze for parents. He also announced €325,000 funding for the Parent and Toddler Group Grants Initiative 2022.
- Minister O’Gorman announced additional funding to support European Year of Youth 2022 initiatives and addressed the Child and Youth Participation for Europe conference at University College Cork.
- Minister O’Gorman and the Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys, T.D. announced a Recognition Payment of €400 per property for people in Ireland who provide accommodation to those fleeing the war in Ukraine.

In June:

- The Government approved a licence agreement for the use of the Citywest Hotel and Conference Centre to assist in the whole of government response to the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis. They also approved the provision of 500 modular homes to house those fleeing Ukraine, which should accommodate 2,000 people across 20 sites across the country.
- Minister O’Gorman published Ireland’s EU Child Guarantee National Action Plan. The EU Child Guarantee aims to ensure that every child in Europe at risk of poverty or social exclusion has access to the most basic of rights like healthcare and education.
- Minister O’Gorman received Government approval for the establishment of a new Growing Up in Ireland birth cohort. This will track the lives of a new generation of Irish children who are yet to be born and will be 9 months old in 2024.

In July:

- The Institutional Burials Act 2022 was passed by the Oireachtas on 6th July 2022 and was signed into law by the President on Wednesday 13th July.
- The Government approved a proposal by Minister O’Gorman to establish an Office to oversee excavation at the site of the former Mother and Baby Institution in Tuam.
- Minister O’Gorman announced that research into conversion therapy that will inform ban on the practice is being carried out by the School of Nursing and Midwifery in Trinity College Dublin.
- The Child Care (Amendment) Act 2022 was signed into law by the President on 19th July 2022 to strengthen the voice of children in child-care proceedings.
- Minister O’Gorman opened applications for the ‘Accommodation Recognition Payment’ for hosts accommodating people from Ukraine. This funding was initially set at €400 per month and later increased to €800 per month.

In August:

- Minister O’Gorman allocated over €400,000 through the What Works ‘Sharing Knowledge’ Fund to Prevention and Early Intervention Services.
- Minister O’Gorman launched the ‘Voices of Syrians-Resettled Refugees in Ireland’ Report.
- Minister O’Gorman awarded contract for independent review of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. This review will assess whether the ECCE programme is meeting its core objectives.

In September:

- Minister O’Gorman launched ‘Together for Better’, a new funding model for Early Learning and Care and School Age Childcare as Core Funding contracts began for 4,000 services.
- Minister O’Gorman announced the introduction of paid leave for victims of domestic violence.
- Minister O’Gorman announced a landmark €1 billion investment in early learning and childcare under Budget 2023.

In October:

- Government approved the Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme Bill.
- Minister O’Gorman published the results emerging from a recent survey on childcare.
- Minister O’Gorman opened Council of Europe Roundtable on the “Right to life, security and protection from violence”.

In November:

- Minister O’Gorman announced 67 projects to be funded under the International Protection Integration Fund 2022.
- The Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan T.D. and Minister O’Gorman published the Report of the National Youth Assembly on Climate.
- Minister O’Gorman announced a new scheme to pilot the provision of hot meals to children in early learning and childcare settings.

In December:

- Minister O’Gorman published the First 5 spotlight report.
- Minister of State Rabbitte convened the first meeting of the Autism Innovation Strategy.
- Minister O’Gorman published the State of the Nation’s Children 2022 report.

In summary, despite the challenging operating environment in 2022, the work of DCEDIY continued at a pace. Numerous policy and legislative initiatives were advanced with the objective of improving the lives of children and young people, and ensuring that the vulnerable, and marginalised at the very centre of its work. Extending equality to all our citizens has also been a key theme of these policy achievements in 2022.

The work of DCEDIY also required staff to discharge the full range of responsibilities of a Government Department in supporting the work of Minister O’Gorman and the Government, and in discharging financial and other accountability objectives to the Oireachtas.

Part 2 of our Annual Report summarises the progress achieved during 2022 in respect of each of the **six strategic goals** as set out in DCEDIY's Statement of Strategy 2021-2023. It also includes the key strategic enablers that DCEDIY had in place that ensured their successful implementation. Relevant goals and strategic actions are reflected in the annual Business Plans of each Unit of the Department.

1. We will develop, implement and influence evidence informed policies and legislation that improve the outcomes for those we serve.
2. We will ensure the provision of a range of quality and sustainable services, underpinned by strategic investment, that meet the needs of individuals, families and communities.
3. We will help those who are vulnerable, including children, young people and at risk individuals, to overcome adverse circumstances and to achieve their full potential.
4. We will promote the development of a progressive, respectful and equal society, informed by the experiences of past generations and seek to respond to the needs of survivors.
5. We will work in partnership with individuals, families and communities, and across Government Departments, public bodies and civil society to achieve better outcomes.
6. We will maintain high standards of performance and corporate governance with engaged, motivated and supported staff.

Statement of Strategy 2021-2023

Part 2: Progress Achieved in 2022

Strategic Goal 1

We will develop, implement and influence evidence informed policies and legislation that improve the outcomes for those we serve.

The passage below sets out progress made by DCEDIY in 2022 in its action plans for its 1st Strategic Goal:-

Strategic Action 1.1 *We will ensure that delivery of the Strategy is underpinned by a comprehensive programme of legislation and reflective of the Programme for Government.*

The Child Care (Amendment) Act 2022

The Child Care (Amendment) Act 2022, which provides for the regulation of Guardians ad litem in childcare proceedings, was enacted on 19th July 2022.

DCEDIY continued to progress developments of the Heads and General Scheme of a further Bill to amend the Child Care Act 1991. It was intended that these legislative proposals would revise and update the 1991 Act to better reflect changes in child welfare and protection services in Ireland in the 30 years since enactment of the 1991 Act, as well as capture current legislative, policy and practice developments.

The Institutional Burials Act 2022

The Institutional Burials Act 2022 was published in February 2022 and enacted in July 2022.

In October 2022 the Government made an Order under the 2022 Institutional Burials Act to direct the establishment of an independent Office to lead an intervention at the site of the former Mother and Baby institution in Tuam, Co. Galway. The making of the Order followed on from Resolutions in the Dáil and Seanad in September 2022 approving the draft Order that was agreed by Government in July.

The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Act 2022

The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Act 2022 was signed into law on 17th December 2022, paving the way for the commencement of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015. The 2022 Act is predominantly technical in nature and was developed to improve processes and increase safeguards for those relying on the 2015 Act.

The full commencement of this Act will bring about an end to wardship in Ireland. This will change the existing law on capacity from the status approach of the wardship system to a flexible functional approach, where capacity is assessed on an issue and time-specific basis.

The Act also includes measures to further Ireland's commitments under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), including legislating for the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission's (IHREC) position as the national monitoring body for UNCRPD. The Act also provides for an increase in the employment of persons with disabilities from 3% to 6% by 2025.

The Decision Support Service (DSS), which is the organisation that will operate the progressive provisions of the 2015 Act, will respond to the complex decision-making needs of people with capacity difficulties.

Domestic Violence Leave

Legislative provisions were added to the Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Bill 2022 at Committee Stage in the Dáil to provide for 5 days paid domestic violence leave in November 2022.

Strategic Action 1.2 *We will build on the success of Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures (BOBF), and its implementation infrastructure, by developing a successor strategy that is integrated, action-focused and whole of society oriented in its input and application.*

National policy framework for children and young people 2023-2028

Consultations on the next national policy framework for children and young people 2023-2028 began in January 2022 with an online public consultation. Further targeted consultations were carried out on behalf of the DCEDIY by the Children's Rights Alliance, DCEDIY also carried out consultations with specific groups of seldom heard young people. A cross government reference panel was convened in October 2022 to develop cross departmental actions to achieve improved outcomes for children and young people over the lifetime of the framework. A Blueprint, outlining the aims and approach of the Framework, was published in August 2022.

Strategic Action 1.3 *We will continue to develop and implement high quality, evidence based policy to improve access to high quality and affordable Early Learning and Care and School Age Childcare (ELC and SAC) that will deliver better outcomes for children, families, the economy and society.*

Nurturing Skill

2022 was the first year of implementation of Nurturing Skills: The Workforce Plan for ELC and SAC, 2022-2028. A Monitoring Committee was established in 2022 to monitor implementation of the actions.

Joint Labour Committee

The Joint Labour Committee (JLC) for Early Years Services continued to meet during the first half of 2022. These negotiations resulted in the introduction of two Employment Regulation Orders, which came into effect on 15th September 2022, providing for minimum rates of pay for various roles in ELC and SAC services. This was supported by Core Funding, which commenced on the same day. It is estimated that the EROs resulted in improved pay for approximately 70% of workers in the sector.

Inspection System

Following on from the OECD Country Policy Review published in December 2021, DCEDIY has been working with Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate and the Department of Education Inspectorate to ensure a more streamlined and coordinated approach to inspection of ELC and SAC services. An Inspection Streamlining and Coordination Working Group was established in January 2022 to support this through deepening collaboration, encouraging alignment and complementarity, and enhancing mutual understanding between the two inspectorates. The Working Group continued to meet through the year in order to progress a number of key deliverables.

National Action Plan for Childminding (NAPC)

The progress on the implementation of Phase 1 of the National Action Plan for Childminding 2021–2028 continued during 2022. Advisory Groups were established on Funding and Financial Supports and on Regulation and Inspection, fulfilling the advisory structures as set out in the NAPC. The number of Childminding Development Officers employed by City/County Childcare Committees (CCCs) increased from 6 to 12 to provide additional supports to the CCCs, in their work with childminders at local level and to support the NAPC. Work continued to progress the development of a childminder-specific pre-registration training programme.

Arts in Early Learning and Care

As part of the DCEDIY's work within the Creative Ireland Programme, draft Principles for Engaging with the Arts in Early Learning and Care were published in October 2022. A consultation process will commence and further research was planned for early 2023. This will be in collaboration with The Arts Council, which would examine the use of the principles in a number of ELC and SAC settings.

Irish language provision in ELC and SAC

In line with commitments in the 5-Year Action Plan for the Irish Language, work commenced in 2022 to support the development of a Comprehensive Plan to further the development of Irish language provision in the ELC and SAC sector. A survey of Irish medium ELC settings including Childminders began in Q4 2022, to obtain a baseline of the current level of provision and support needs, to inform a Comprehensive Plan. It was intended that a report of findings would be completed in 2023.

Review of the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE)

In 2022, a review of the ECCE programme commenced as a precursor to putting the ECCE programme on a statutory footing, as committed to in “First 5”. The review will assess whether the ECCE Programme is meeting its core objectives and will identify any changes or improvements that can be made to the Programme, based on international evidence and experience to date.

Together for Better

In September 2022, Together for Better, the new funding model for early learning and childcare was launched. This new funding model supports the delivery of ELC and SAC for the public good, for quality and affordability for children, parents and families as well as stability and sustainability for providers. Together for Better brings together three major programmes, the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme, including the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM), the National Childcare Scheme (NCS) and the new Core Funding scheme – with a fourth strand – the Equal Participation Model (EPM) under development.

Strategic Action 1.4 We will develop quality, evidence informed youth policy, including through the establishment of a new National Youth Sector Engagement Structure and the production of a renewed Youth Strategy.

DCEDIY engaged with the stakeholders in the youth sector through a number of structures: biannual meetings with the national youth organisations, quarterly meetings with Education and Training Boards Ireland and on-going engagement with young people through the various participation mechanisms.

DCEDIY began work on the development of a new strategy for youth services, the Action Plan for Youth Services. Desk based research and initial stakeholder consultations on the Action Plan commenced in 2022.

A Youth Sector Specialist was recruited to join the Youth Affairs Unit, to help DCEDIY to deliver an evidence based approach to youth policy development.

Strategic Action 1.5 We will lead on the development of family and parenting support policy. This will include clear policy guidance for, and oversight of, the provision and commissioning of family and parenting support services by Tusla and other relevant services

Review of the Operating Mode

On 29th March 2022, the Government accepted the recommendations of the Review of the ELC and SAC Operating Model in Ireland to create a new dedicated statutory agency under the remit of the Minister responsible for functions currently undertaken by Pobal, Early Years, Better Start, and the City/County Childcare Committees as well as operational functions currently undertaken by DCEDIY. A project team was tasked to undertake further

detailed analysis, planning, consultation and stakeholder engagement. Following completion of this analysis, a further memorandum will be brought to Government seeking approval for next steps in line with the outcome of that assessment.

Supporting Parents

Following a public consultation on parenting supports, Supporting Parents, a National Model of Parenting Support Services, was launched in April 2022. The vision of Supporting Parents is for all parents to be confident and capable in their parenting role, helping to achieve the best outcomes for children and families.

Supporting Parents was developed in accordance with a commitment in First 5, a whole of government strategy for babies, young children and their families 2018-2019, to improve and guide the development of parenting support services. The model was developed by a collaborative working group led by (DCEDIY), with input from a wide range of stakeholders from across Government Departments, agencies and community and voluntary organisations.

A DPER / DCEDIY Spending Review on Tusla funded Community and Voluntary Family Support Services was published on 16th December 2022. It describes the types of services provided and commissioned, and by tracking resource allocation to these services over time. The primary focus of the spending review is to understand the commissioning of Community and Voluntary (C&V) provided family support services. DCEDIY and Tusla commenced the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Review.

Main actions in 2022

- Launch of the National Model in April 2022.
- National Parenting Support Steering Group and National Model Implementation Advisory Groups established and meetings held.
- Cross-Government Parenting Support Network established with one network event held in Oct 2022.
- Tusla and HSE National Parenting Representatives on Supporting Parents Steering Group to facilitate collaborative working for designated national parenting support leads.
- Annual Parent Peer Support Fund Pilot launched and 107 applications received.
- A cross-sectoral programme of research established. Home Visiting Services Review, Research on supporting parents of LGBTI+ children.
- A review of parenting support services was initiated. A review of Home Visiting Services for families with babies and young children in Ireland is being undertaken by a team at Maynooth University's Centre for Mental Health and Community Research (Department of Psychology and Social Sciences Institute) and the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education. This study will inform the development of an agreed national approach to home visiting services, having regard to the international and national evidence on the implementation and effectiveness of

prevention and early intervention initiatives. Home visiting programmes seek to positively influence health and wellbeing outcomes for parents and young children; they also seek to be inclusive and accessible by providing effective universal and targeted interventions to further support children most at risk. First 5, a Whole-of - Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028, recognises the importance of the home environment and parenting supports in ensuring that all children have positive early experiences and get the best start in life.

Strategic Action 1.6 *We will provide for reform of the Guardian ad litem service in child care proceedings through publication and enactment of a new Child Care (Amendment) Bill, preparations for commencement of the Act and the establishment a new national Guardian ad litem service.*

The Child Care (Amendment) Act 2022

As described under Strategic Action 1.1 above, the Child Care (Amendment) Act 2022 was signed into law on 19th July 2022. This provides for reform of the guardian *ad litem* (GAL) system, The Act enabled the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, to establish a new national GAL service. It creates a presumption in favour of appointment of a GAL in proceedings before the District Court, specifies the role and status of a GAL and allows for regulations to be made on the qualifications and experience required to act as a GAL. A small number of sections commenced with effect from 21st September 2022. The remaining provisions of the Act will commence alongside the opening and operation of the planned GAL office. Preparatory work to establish the Office is ongoing.

Strategic Action 1.7 *We will develop and implement detailed proposals for the legislative, policy and operational modernisation of the Child Care Act, 1991 to ensure that the best interests of children are upheld.*

Review of legislation and regulations for ELC services

A full review of the enforcement powers of the Tusla Early Years Inspectorate was paused due to Covid-19 but recommenced in late 2021 and continued throughout 2022. To inform this review a comprehensive public consultation took place between March and October 2022.

In April 2022, Minister O’Gorman signed an amending Regulation to allow for the streamlining of the process of re-registration for ELC and SAC services, resulting in a significant reduction in administration and benefitting approximately 4,000 ELC services in 2022. Instead of a full application, providers can now sign a declaration and submit proof of insurance and evidence of Garda Vetting.

Proposed Amendment Bill to Child Care Act 1991

Government approval was granted in July 2021 for the drafting of a General Scheme of an Amendment Bill to the Child Care Act 1991, to revise and update the existing legislation. Drafting of the Heads of Bill continued throughout 2022. This included policy refinement informed by legal advice where necessary, discussions with relevant departments on related matters, including cooperation with the Department of Justice (DoJ) on Family Court reform and a review of Vetting legislation. A joint submission was made to the DoJ Vetting Review Group proposing an amendment to the existing vetting legislation, which would provide for a responsive system of re-vetting, in line with a recommendation of the Special Rapporteur on Child Protection. Bilateral engagement with DoJ continued to ensure the progress of this proposal.

Strategic Action 1.8 *We will oversee an effective adoption framework, with the best interests of children at its centre, and drive policy and legislative reform in the area of adoption services, with a priority focus on expanding access to birth information.*

Adoption Orders

The Adoption Authority granted 102 adoption orders in 2022 including step parent adoptions, infant adoptions and adoptions from long term foster care. In addition, 170 entries were made on the Register of Intercountry Adoptions.

DCEDIY worked with both the Adoption Authority and the Child and Family Agency, Tusla, on the development of domestic adoption guidelines. This work will continue into 2023.

The Birth Information and Tracing Act was signed into law on 30th June 2022, all services established under the Act are open to applications since 3rd October 2022. Under the Act, persons who were adopted, boarded out or nursed out, resided in a mother and baby home or county home as a child, or were subject to an illegal birth registration, have a clear right of access to their birth, early life, care, and medical information where it exists. By the end of 2022, Tusla and AAI had received 6,051 applications for information, with 980 cases being closed. They also received 2,693 applications for tracing. A total of 2,947 entries were made to the Contact Preference Register, with 198 matches being made, and 50 pairs of relatives having been placed in contact with one another.

Strategic Action 1.9 *We will plan and deliver a new model of delivery for “Growing up in Ireland, the national longitudinal study of children and young people.*

Transfer of ESRI staff

External HR successfully led the transfer of nine ‘Growing up in Ireland’ (GUI) staff from the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) to DCEDIY and the Central Statistics Office (CSO), to secure a long-term sustainable future for GUI and to provide a stable operational model for the study.

Transfer of the GUI team

Learning & Development (L&D) proactively engaged with the ESRI team ahead of the transfer of the GUI team to DCEDIY. This involved discussing learning needs and to aid in the run up to the transfer sharing information on the L&D offering including the monthly newsletter. In addition, following discussion with the Research & Evaluation Unit (REU), L&D invited some ESRI colleagues on DCEDIY training offerings so they could get an insight into the service before the transition, aiding staff engagement.

Strategic Action 1.10 *We will develop and implement gender equality and wider equality policies, which address the under-representation of women in leadership and decision-making and the needs of working families. We will do this through the provision of family leave and other initiatives.*

Gender Pay Gap

Regulations to give effect to the Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021 were published in May 2022, requiring organisations having greater than 250 employees on a chosen snapshot date in June to calculate and publish information on their gender pay gaps by December 2022.

The Work-Life Balance (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2022, published in October, provides for new forms of leave for medical care purposes and for victims of domestic violence, the right to request flexible working arrangements for caring purposes and an extension of the entitlement to breastfeeding breaks to 104 weeks. By December, the Bill was at Seanad Committee stage.

Strategic Action 1.11 *We will develop and implement policies which facilitate the integration of migrant populations, promote the inclusion and participation of Travellers, Roma and people with disabilities, and which address racism.*

National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy

DCEDIY has oversight responsibility for the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (NTRIS). There were 3 meetings of the National Traveller and Roma Steering Committee in 2022. Work continued on a number of the objectives in the Strategy including:

- Increased funding (€5.6m) for core allocations to Traveller and Roma representative bodies, and to progress NTRIS actions across areas such as employment, culture and heritage, inclusion, education, gender equality, mental health and mediation. A further €880,000 was secured from Dormant Account Funding to support Traveller and Roma initiatives. This represented a total increase of €914,000 over the 2021 budgetary allocation.
- The funding of Traveller Pride Week in July 2022, which enabled the roll-out of national and local events to promote and celebrate Traveller culture and heritage.

- Facilitating the visit of the Council of Europe’s Committee of Experts on Traveller and Roma issues, as part of the University of Galway’s celebration of Traveller history over the last 100 years.
- Undertaking the role as the National Roma Contact Point for the purpose of the EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation.
- Undertaking the necessary preparatory work for the development of the successor NTRIS, including:
 - undertaking an initial consultation exercise with the NTRIS Steering Committee;
 - facilitating Steering Committee discussion of progress on key thematic areas under NTRIS (accommodation; education; employment);
 - supporting the independent evaluation of 3 of DCEDIY’s equality strategies (i.e. the Migrant Integration Strategy, the National Strategy for Women and Girls, and NTRIS), which will contribute to the development of the successor equality strategies.

In June 2022, the National Action Plan Against Racism was completed and signed off by the independent Anti-Racism Committee, with the support of DCEDIY. The plan contains five over-arching objectives, under which a total of thirty-seven priority actions and fifty-four recommendations are proposed. The Plan was developed on the basis of an intensive consultation process with civil society and public sector organisations.

Supports for Ukrainian children in Early Learning and School Age Childcare

To support Ukrainian children and families gaining access to and participating in ELC and SAC settings, a number of practice resources were developed and a series of well-being webinars were commissioned and placed on the First 5 website. These supported ELC and SAC settings, Early Years educators, School-Age practitioners, children and families in many different circumstances across all communities. They are intended to support the well-being and inclusion of refugee children both from Ukraine and from other conflict zones.

National Disability Inclusion Strategy

Implementation of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy was coordinated and monitored by DCEDIY, which saw progress reports discussed at 4 meetings of the National Steering Group, chaired by Minister Rabbitte, along with a range of Departmental Consultative Committees and meetings of the Disability Stakeholder Group. The Transport Working Group met and finalised its analysis of transport supports for disabled people. Actions under the Comprehensive Employment Strategy were progressed as discussions continued on the development of the Third Phase Action Plan. A public consultation was held to inform the development of an Autism Innovation Strategy.

Strategic Action 1.12 *Working across sectors, we will lead implementation of Ireland’s LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy and National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy,*

2019-2021 to ensure that LGBTI+ adults and young people are visible, valued and included.

National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy

DCEDIY has oversight responsibility for the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy. There were three meetings of the National LGBTI+ Steering Committee and two meetings of the Research Subcommittee in 2022.

A number of (DCEDIY) objectives in the LGBTI+ strategies were achieved in 2022:

- Following a successful LGBTI+ Community Services Funding Call in 2022, 26 projects received funding totalling over €1.2 million.
- DCEDIY commissioned research into conversion therapy in Ireland to provide an evidence base to support the development of legislation.
- Under the LGBTI+ research programme, research was commissioned on a number of areas including on the support needs of parents of LGBTI+ children, LGBTI+ people living in IPAS accommodation and legal gender recognition for under 16s.

Strategic Goal 2

We will ensure the provision of a range of quality and sustainable services, underpinned by strategic investment, that meet the needs of individuals, families and communities.

The passage below sets out progress made by DCEDIY in 2022 in its action plans for its 2nd Strategic Goal:-

Strategic Action 2.1 We will ensure that delivery of all of our priorities is underpinned by strategic investment and robust financial planning. This will include a strong focus on workforce planning with a view to ensuring that the delivery system has both the capacity and supply to respond to identified need.

Finance Unit

The Finance Unit continued to work with Minister O’Gorman and the Management Board and budget holders on budget allocations, profiling and the dynamic management of the expenditure on the Vote throughout the year.

Staff Developments

There was significant movement of staff in DCEDIY during 2022 with a headcount of 618 at the end of 2022.

The following key achievements align with strategic action 2.1

- The successful on boarding of 228 staff;
- The urgent resourcing of the new Ukraine Division;
- The successful roll out of the DCEDIY Blended Working Policy;
- Monthly Wellbeing Newsletter and 19 wellbeing events including social and wellbeing seminars were held;
- 151 staff and managers were supported during the probation process;
- Health checks and free flu vaccines were offered to staff;
- Tailored specialised supports were offered to staff;
- 1st Gender Pay Gap report was prepared;
- Establishment of grade specific networks.

Strategic Action 2.2 *We will develop and enhance youth service provision in Ireland, including through reform of youth funding programmes and strengthening of youth quality initiatives.*

DCEDIY secured continued funding of €72m to support the delivery of youth services.

Eight new services were established nationally under the UBU Your Place Your Space Scheme.

A Targeted Youth Employability Initiative was completed with a total of €1.9m delivered in 2022 and a review planned for 2023.

€800,000 was distributed under the Resilience and Effectiveness Fund.

A Cross-border agreement of youth sector investment areas was reached under new EU co-funded PEACE PLUS programme.

Strategic Action 2.3 *We will deliver a range of schemes and initiatives to ensure that children and families can access high quality and affordable Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). We will ensure that Government investment is utilised to best effect through monitoring of delivery, a robust programme of evaluation, and continuous quality improvement including feedback from service users.*

National Childcare Scheme (NCS)

122,814 individual children successfully claimed NCS in 2022, compared to 75,744 in 2021, an increase of 62%.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme

107,782 children were registered on the ECCE programme in 2021/22, a 3% increase from 2020/21.

Core Funding

Core Funding, the new funding scheme worth €259 million in full year costs for year 1 of the programme (September 2022-August 2023), was launched on 15th September 2022 with 94% of services signing up to the Scheme. Core Funding is designed to meet the combined objectives of:

- Improved affordability for parents by ensuring that fees do not increase;
- Improved quality through better pay and conditions for the workforce by supporting agreement on an Employment Regulation Order through the Joint Labour Committee;
- Supporting the employment of graduate staff; and
- Improved sustainability and stability for services.

Building Blocks Improvement Grant

Applications for the €9m for The Building Blocks - Improvement Grant for ELC and School Aged Childcare (SAC) services opened in 2022 – with grants ranging from €35,000 to €75,000 across two separate strands: Green Energy and Retrofit. This Grant is part of a wider €70m Building Blocks Capital Programme (2023-2025) funded under the National Development Plan

Parent and Toddler Grants

Funding of €325,000 was allocated to Parent and Toddler Groups through local City/County Childcare Committees in 2022.

Programme Support Payments

€19.4 million was provided to ELC and SAC services in June 2022 to contribute to administrative costs over the 2021/22 programme year.

Learner Fund for Early Learning and Care (ELC)

In 2022, 469 bursaries were awarded to graduates of degree programmes in ELC. 35% of early years educators now have a Level 7 or higher qualification in ELC.

ELC workforce qualifications

The DCEDIY maintains a list of qualification that meet regulatory and contractual requirements for ELC. The DCEDIY is assisted by Better Start in its ongoing assessment of applications for qualification recognition. Approximately 1,100 applications were processed in 2022.

Evaluation of Better Start

The DCEDIY commenced an evaluation of Better Start with a particular focus on the Better Start National Early Years Quality Development Service (QDS). This evaluation began in 2022 and a final report on this evaluation is expected in Q4 2023. As part of the Evaluation, information which reflects the experiences of early years educators and ELC settings shall be gathered alongside information from key stakeholders involved in designing and delivering the QDS and wider State-funded quality supports for the early learning and care sector.

What Works and Dormant Accounts Funding - Educational Champions for Children in Care

In 2022, DCEDIY secured €750,000 to continue to provide Educational Supports for Children in Care. Following the receipt of Dormant Accounts Funding in 2021, three schemes, supporting the educational achievement and ambition of children and young people in care and those who are care experienced, are being instigated across the four Tusla regions:

- A bursary scheme for care experienced young people aged between 18 and 30 to provide funding for this cohort of children and young people to access further education and support their career development. For example, a third level course or a grant to purchase necessary materials or hardware.
- Seed funding to all 17 Tusla areas, including the Social Work Team for Separated Children Seeking International Protection (SWTSCSIP), to fund the procurement of educational supports such as educational assessments, grinds, therapeutic supports and driving lessons.
- Commissioning Way to Work, a not for profit organisation, to provide mentorship, practical training courses and certifications to young people seeking employment.

Strategic Action 2.4 *We will manage the latest phase of the Irish Refugee Protection Programme to bring 2,900 refugees to Ireland and to resettle them in communities across the country.*

Resettlement Programme

The Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) continued its resettlement programme in 2022, welcoming 368 programme refugees. This included Syrian refugees, selected through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) led resettlement process and humanitarian admissions from Afghanistan. A selection mission to Beirut was led by the IRPP in December 2022 with 96 Syrian families being interviewed for possible selection to be admitted to the programme in 2023. Reception Orientation Centres at Clonea, Ballaghaderreen, and Mosney welcomed the majority of arriving refugees, providing a range of services including: access to medical appointments, orientation programmes, social welfare payments and education as well as support through local initiatives. Programme refugees were subsequently re-settled with the support of specified local authorities which had received funding from DCEDIY. Refugees were also identified as being suitable for resettlement with Community Sponsorship Groups. Community Sponsorship Groups are members of the local community who form groups to support refugees with accommodation and help them to integrate into Irish society.

Strategic Action 2.5 *We will develop and implement a new model of accommodation and related supports for persons in the International Protection process, centred on a not-for-profit approach, and delivery of ongoing services to such persons.*

Accommodation and Related Supports

Due to the increases of International Protection Applicants in 2022, a review of the White Paper objectives, scope and capacity was commenced in late 2022. The review has included inputs from the White Paper Programme Board and further recommendations were received from the External Advisory Group.

Advancement of accommodation strand Phase Two was prioritised in 2022, which included an Expression of Interest being issued by the Housing Agency seeking Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) to support with the management. 37 properties were procured in 2022.

Integration work was advanced on the establishment of an International Integration Fund and of a permanent model whereby integration workers are employed in each Local Authority with funding from DCEDIY.

A funding framework was developed for 2023 to provide funding to the Children and Young People Services Committee (CYPSC) to further develop, enhance and expand the provision of their support services to families in the International Protection system.

Strategic Action 2.6 *We will support Tusla in their commitment to continued improvements in service provision and performance to optimise outcomes for children, young people and their families.*

Tusla Budget

In the 2022 Budget process, DCEDIY secured total funding of over €1bn for Tusla in 2023 which is an effective increase of €73m or almost 8% over the equivalent allocation in 2022. This will allow Tusla to improve services for children and families in 2023. This amount included €31.4m funding which was specifically for Tusla's response to the war in Ukraine.

Aftercare Support for Separated Children Seeking International Protection

In 2022, DCEDIY secured a further €800,000 for the continuation of provision of aftercare support to separated children seeking international protection who reach the age of 18 and require ongoing support to establish independent lives.

Traveller and Roma Foster Carer Project

This project was initially provided with funding at the end of 2020 and across 2021 under 'What Works' programme. The requirement for compliance with public health restrictions arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, the community's strongly expressed preference for in-person events, with virtual events being inaccessible to large segments of the community and the recent cyber attack's impact on Tusla services, have all hampered full-scale engagement with this important work. Use of funding throughout 2022 gave this project the opportunity to properly establish itself.

Parenting Services

DCEDIY engaged with Tusla regularly on specific parenting services and Tusla funded projects including:

- progressing actions in Supporting Parents: A National Model of Parenting Support Services;
- membership of Tusla's Parenting Steering Group;
- The Parenting Support IPAS Working Group;
- The Teen Support Parenting Programme Steering Group;

- The Family Support Sub Group.

The Parenting Support Policy Unit worked closely with Tusla in preparation to fund and support two Tusla projects, co-financed by Ireland's ESF+ Programme for 2021-27: Employment, Inclusion, Skills and Training (EIST).

These are the expansion of the Young Parent Support Programme (YPSP) and the provision of Family Support Practitioners (FSP) for families living in IPAS accommodation. The Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) submitted the above projects to the European Commission in July 2022, as part of a wider EIST programme, which was approved in October 2022.

Strategic Action 2.7 *We will ensure that the Departments and its aegis bodies have well-planned and resourced responses in place to address the current and potential impact of COVID-19.*

Return to Office Working

DCEDIY successfully facilitated the safe return to the office of all staff and implemented the *Transitional Protocol: Good Practice Guidance for Continuing to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19*, in conjunction with supporting blended working within DCEDIY.

Oberstown and Covid-19

There was ongoing, close monitoring of the impact of Covid-19 on Oberstown operations and it was discussed by senior management at the bilateral monthly meetings between Oberstown and CDSU.

Strategic Goal 3

We will help those who are vulnerable, including children, young people and at risk individuals, to overcome adverse circumstances and to achieve their full potential.

The passage below sets out progress made by DCEDIY in 2022 in its action plans for its 3rd Strategic Goal:-

Strategic Action 3.1 We will further develop Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) programmes and schemes to ensure that children and families who need services most can access them. This will include children living with economic disadvantage, children with additional needs and parents seeking to engage in or return to work.

National Childcare Scheme Access

In addition to enhancements to the National Childcare Scheme (NCS) in Budgets 2022 and the universal and income-assessed NCS subsidies, the NCS makes provision for vulnerable children through Section 14 of the Childcare Support Act, 2018. The NCS received 5,746 applications for sponsorship in respect of 5,195 children. Moreover, the Childcare Support Act 2018 was amended to grant beneficiaries of temporary international protection eligibility to the NCS.

Tackling Disadvantage Funding

Arising from a commitment in First 5 and recommendations from the Expert Group and in Partnership for the Public Good, the DCEDIY are currently developing a tailored policy response for Tackling Disadvantage - the Equal Participation Model. Through this work, services will be provided with a proportionate mix of universal and targeted supports to support children and families accessing their services who are experiencing disadvantage. Following on from a detailed scoping phase, consultations were launched on 14th December 2022.

Access and Inclusion Model (AIM)

AIM has supported 6,558 children with disabilities to access and meaningfully participate in the ECCE programme across ELC services in 2022.

The Leadership in Inclusion (LINC) training programme - one of several AIM supports - had 557 students graduate in October 2022. Most of these graduates were appointed to the role of Inclusion Co-ordinators in ELC service.

An evaluation of AIM was progressed during 2022. The report of this evaluation, which will be published in 2023, will inform further enhancements to, or expansion of AIM.

Strategic Action 3.2 *We will strengthen the safeguarding and protection of children through leadership across Government, strong direction and support to Tusla and engagement with other stakeholders to enhance child welfare and protection.*

Children First Inter-Departmental Implementation Group (CFIDIG)

The CFIDIG includes representatives from every Government Department, the HSE, Tusla and An Garda Síochána. The Group met twice in 2022 and continued to focus on monitoring implementation of the Children First Act 2015 and promoting compliance in the preparation of Sectoral Implementation Plans (SIPs). The annual report of the CFIDIG for 2021 was published in June 2022. The report included contributions from Departments and Agencies outlining initiatives and actions to promote Children First and child protection and welfare in their sectors.

Tusla Education Support Service

DCEDIY engaged with the Department of Education to ensure the smooth transfer of functions in respect of the Tusla Education Support Service (TESS) and Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service (AEARS).

Strategic Action 3.3 *We will further develop the policy and strategic approach to children in care (Residential, Foster and Special Care) and work with stakeholders to enhance outcomes and ensure that the rights of children in care to access required services are upheld.*

Care Leavers Support Inclusion

In 2022, the Alternative Care Policy unit secured €358,225 from Dormant Account Funding for a range of supports for vulnerable care leavers, under the Care Leavers Support Inclusion measure. This funding will seek to support care leavers in 2023 through various projects such as a Therapeutic and Health Advocate, IT Educational and laptop support packs, and Aftercare Forum for hard to reach care leavers and a Dedicated Career Guidance Counsellor.

Payment to Foster Carers

In 2022 the Alternative Care Policy secured a single additional once off cost of living payment to foster carers in respect of each child in foster care. This payment, which was the equivalent of an additional weekly payment, was made to foster carers in November 2022. This once off payment sought to alleviate some of the financial pressures foster carers are currently facing.

Strategic Action 3.4 *We will conduct formal assessments of international protection applicants to determine any special reception needs for vulnerable persons, including children.*

Vulnerability Assessments

Learning & Development (L&D) provided bespoke training for the IPAS staff undertaking vulnerability assessments

With the advent of the Ukraine crisis, L&D provided bespoke online supports to the Ukraine response team in a quick and timely manner, remaining available throughout the year to provide further supports.

Strategic Action 3.5 *We will oversee safe and secure care for young people sentenced or remanded by the Courts in a way which meets their health and education needs, supports them to move away from offending, and prepares them to return to their families and communities.*

Oberstown Governance

There was ongoing and close oversight of governance and performance of Oberstown Children Detention Campus in 2022 with regular monitoring of daily occupancy vis a vis remand and detention orders, representation on the Board of Management and Board Sub-Committees, management of appointments to the Board and monthly senior management meetings with Oberstown. Remission requests and transfer authorisations to the Irish Prison Service were managed in a timely fashion. There was oversight to ensure that the Policies and Procedures outlined in the Children's Rights Framework are adhered to. Representation at the Criminal Justice Hub and HIQA National Standards Advisory Group ensured the needs of young people in detention were taken into account and there is ongoing work with the Department of Education to develop the Curriculum for Children in Detention and in Special Care.

Strategic Action 3.6 *We will continue to lead on innovations in prevention and early intervention to optimise outcomes for children, young people, their families and communities.*

Festival of Learning

DCEDIY hosted series of virtual events under the *What Works* Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative in November 2022 under the 'Festival of Learning' banner. The series discussed prevention and early intervention for children, young people and families and included international policymakers, practitioners and academics in the field.

DCEDIY funded several programmes under *What Works* which promoted evidence informed approaches to prevention and early intervention services. A total of €408,710 awarded to Community and Voluntary organisations under the Sharing Knowledge Fund.

DCEIDY collaborated with the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) on the ongoing development of the *What Works Ireland Evidence Hub* - an online tool to increase access to effective prevention and early intervention programmes by making the best evidence on what works available. This included an open call for submission for prevention and early intervention programmes delivered in Ireland to be evaluated and included on the Evidence Hub.

Children and Young People's Services Committees

Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC) are a key structure identified by Government to plan and co-ordinate services for children in every county in Ireland. DCEDIY provided funding of €2.405 million towards the initiative with funding also allocated by Tusla and the Department of Health under the Healthy Ireland Initiative. CYPSC projects in 2022 included mental health and well-being supports, parenting supports, health, nutrition, activities, play, children and young people's participation, LGBTI+ supports and resources, anti-racism supports, and homelessness supports. CYPSC also responded to the arrival of children, young people and their families from Ukraine. See www.cypsc.ie for more details.

Work on the implementation of CYPSC Shared Vision, Next Steps 2019–2024 continued in 2022.

Government approval was granted in July 2021 for the drafting of a General Scheme of an Amendment Bill to the Child Care Act 1991, to revise and update the existing legislation. This followed extensive consultation with stakeholders. Drafting of the General Scheme is underway.

Strategic Goal 4

We will promote the development of a progressive, respectful and equal society, informed by the experiences of past generations and seek to respond to the needs of survivors.

The passage below sets out progress made by DCEDIY in 2022 in its action plans for its 4th Strategic Goal:-

Strategic Action 4.1 *We will support the State's response to the Report of the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes.*

Access to Individual Records

DCEDIY continued to meet its obligation to provide access to records for individuals. It provided responses to subject access requests to 339 individuals and 40 responses to FOI requests. It also worked closely with colleagues in the Department of Health in making new Regulations to improve access to health data. This had a hugely positive impact for former residents seeking access to their health data.

Data Migration

DCEDIY commenced work on Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation data migration projects to support business and archival needs.

Strategic Action 4.2 *We will develop policies and legislation to promote gender equality and wider equality and to address barriers preventing individuals from full participation in Irish society.*

Learning Updates

In line with Action 20 of the National Disability and Inclusion Strategy, Learning & Development (L&D) launched the *on-demand* disability awareness module to ensure DCEDIY's compliance with the strategy.

L&D provided learning and development offerings on policy and legislation creation to support, enable and inform staff in DCEDIY.

Additionally, L&D provided information sessions and training on gender equality and wider equality issues.

L&D also ran ad hoc practical information sessions (e.g. on the Irish Sign Language Act) to further aid colleagues in a practical and pro-active manner.

Review of Equality Acts

Submissions to the public consultation on the Review of the Equality Acts were analysed and summarised during 2022 in preparation for a report which will outline the key issues raised in the public consultation.

Gender Pay Gap

DCEDIY commenced preliminary work on the development of a system for reporting on the gender pay gap framework.

Strategic Goal 5

We will work in partnership with individuals, families, and communities across Government Departments, Public Bodies and Civil Society to achieve better outcomes.

The passage below sets out progress made by DCEDIY in 2022 in its action plans for its 5th Strategic Goal:-

Strategic Action 5.1 We will lead Ireland's effort to realise the right of children and young people to have a voice in decisions that affect their individual and collective lives through effective legislation, policy and service provision.

Child Care Act 2022

As outlined under Section 1.6 above, the Child Care (Amendment) Act 2022 was signed into law in July 2022. Guardians ad litem convey the child's views to the court and advise on the child's best interests.

The Act provides that where a child is capable of forming their own views, the court must determine how to facilitate the child in expressing those views. The court will be required to give any views that the child wishes to express due weight, having regard to the child's age and maturity.

Further proposals to enhance the voice of the child also have arisen from the review of the Child Care Act and these include:

- Modifying section 25 to facilitate more children being made party to proceedings;
- Introducing a guiding principle that the child should participate in the decision-making process for decisions being made under the Act.

“Hear our Voices”

In partnership with the Council of Europe, DCEDIY hosted a three-day event in Farmleigh House from 3rd to 5th October 2022. The three days included a one-day conference entitled “Hear Our Voices: The Rights and Determination of the best interests of the Child in Parental Separation and in Care Proceedings” and was followed by a hearing of selected stakeholders on the work of the Committee of Experts on the Rights and the Best interests of the Child in Parental Separation and in Care Proceedings.

Strategic Action 5.2 *We will continue to oversee the implementation of First 5 and continue to contribute to the development of cross Government policy, taking shared ownership for delivery.*

DCEDIY used its comprehensive stakeholder engagement framework to consult with children, families, the Early Learning and School-Age Childcare providers and staff and other stakeholders in developing policy and overseeing implementation.

First 5

DCEDIY oversaw First 5 implementation including the preparation of the 2020 and 2021/2022 Implementation Reports. Updates were presented to the First 5 Inter-Departmental Group, Better Outcomes Brighter Futures Advisory Council and Early Learning and Care Stakeholder Forum.

Stakeholder Engagement

Together for Better, the new funding model delivered under First 5 was designed with extensive stakeholder consultation and engagement, reports of which are published. Throughout 2022, the DCEDIY hosted numerous meetings of the Early Learning and Childcare Stakeholder Forum (ELCSF), and several specifically on the new funding model, including Core Funding, with the ELCSF and provider representatives. This engagement continues as the new funding model is rolled out.

First 5 Little Library Initiative 2022

The First 5 Little Library Initiative 2022 built upon the 2021 Initiative to further strengthen the links between ELC, SAC, and registered childminders with their local library. Book-bags were offered in local libraries to every 4 and 5-year moving from pre-school to school in September 2022. The Initiative has resulted in an estimated 20,000 new library memberships and 10,000 renewals. DCEDIY completed a tender process for an independent consultant to undertake an evaluation. The evaluation is due to be completed in Q3 2023.

Little Baby Bundle

DCEDIY convened an expert group to advise on the First 5 Little Baby Bundle Initiative in 2022. Also in 2022 the pilot sites were identified (i.e. the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin and University Hospital Waterford) and a tender process was completed for a managing agent to deliver the pilot and an independent consultant to undertake an evaluation. The evaluation is due to be completed in Q3 2023.

Strategic Action 5.3 *We will develop successor equality strategies through proactive partnership with key stakeholders, including through cross Government collaboration.*

Progress on the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (NTRIS) – the main area of achievement under this action – has already been described under Action 1.11 above. A

consultation process on the successor strategy was undertaken in 2022 with the NTRIS Strategy Committee.

Successor Strategy to National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS)

Work progressed over the course of 2022 on the development of a successor Strategy to the NDIS. This was progressed through engagement with the wider public sector and advanced through the closing meetings of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy's Steering Group, where the principles of a successor strategy were discussed, and options for consultation in line with CRPD obligations were considered. A public consultation was held on the development of an Autism Innovation Strategy, and a majority neurodiverse Oversight & Implementation Group was appointed.

Strategic Action 5.4 *We will engage with EU institutions, and lead and coordinate Ireland's reporting process to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on our implementation of the UNCRC, and Ireland's response to the Committee's Concluding Observations*

FREMP Negotiations

In 2022, DCEDIY continued to provide policy direction for ongoing Fundamental Rights, Citizens Rights and Free Movement of Persons (FREMP) negotiations on EU Accession to the ECHR. It also engaged in the mid-term review of the EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020 - 2025.

UNCRC Committee

Briefing material and reports were provided for Ireland's attendance at the 2023 UNCRC Committee in 2023.

EU Engagement

DCEDIY engaged in EU wide negotiations on issues of equality, gender equality and anti-racism. It also engaged at an EU level to support those fleeing Ukraine, sharing data and insights through EU mechanisms like the Blueprint and Solidarity Platform.

DCEDIY launched Ireland's National Action Plan for the European Child Guarantee, Ireland's contribution to ensure that every child in Ireland at risk of poverty or social exclusion has access to rights like healthcare and education.

Strategic Action 5.5 *We will review how we communicate with our stakeholders, and develop and implement a comprehensive Communications Strategy to support delivery of DCEDIY's strategic objectives.*

Stakeholder Engagement: Review of the Operating Model

Following publication of the Review of the ELC and SAC Operating Model, briefing sessions were held with the affected stakeholder organisations to allow them to set out their views on

the Review and its outcome. It also allowed for DCEDIY to set out the next steps in this reform project. Stakeholders were given an assurance that consultation will be a key element of this project as it progresses. A full Communications and Consultation Plan was developed to ensure all stakeholders are and will be kept informed of developments throughout the design and implementation of the new Agency.

Disability Participation and Consultation Network

Grant funding was provided for the Disability Participation and Consultation Network, to support the direct input of disability stakeholders in the policy development and monitoring process, and to build capacity within the disability sector.

Strategic Goal 6

We will maintain high standards of performance and corporate governance with engaged, motivated and supported staff.

The passage below sets out progress made by DCEDIY in 2022 in its action plans for its 6th Strategic Goal:-

Strategic Action 6.1 *We will ensure that there is a strong and effective corporate governance framework operating within the Department, including structured governance and performance oversight, led by senior management, of aegis bodies and funding intermediaries.*

Corporate Governance Framework

DCEDIY maintains and adheres to an overarching governance framework that sets out the structures, policies and processes in place to efficiently and effectively manage DCEDIY. It provides a solid basis for ensuring that DCEDIY discharges its legal, policy and service obligations in a way that delivers on our objectives, as set by Government.

The following are among the notable provisions in the framework

(i) Representation of Aegis Bodies

DCEDIY continued to present representations in 2022 on behalf of aegis bodies and their needs (Terms & Conditions, Grade Structure, Industrial Relations), to the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (DPENDR), in line with overall staffing policies as set out by their oversight units and in line with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

(ii) Reporting to the Department of Expenditure and NDP Delivery and Reform

There is a system of internal financial control which assigns a financial allocation and responsibility to budget holders at an appropriate level (Principal Officer) in regard to the implementation of their programmes/projects. Each year, the Finance Unit oversees and monitors vote expenditure at an overall level across the Vote. The Finance Unit is the point of contact with DPENDR and ongoing financial reporting to DPENDR takes place on financial performance on a monthly basis, with regular engagement also taking place in regard to overall Vote management and governance requirements. The Finance Unit continued to meet the reporting obligations to DPENDR throughout 2022 and to manage the Vote allocation across subheads and programmes.

Staff Training

Learning & Development worked with Corporate Governance Unit in providing training for the staff department in Risk Management and Business Planning. It also continuously engaged with Information Management Unit on General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) training.

Public Procurement

As part of engagement, support and oversight of public procurement within DCEDIY, the procurement unit advised staff on routine and complex public procurement issues.

The Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) Governance Board continued to oversee ICT and digital projects including project governance and expenditure.

Digital governance reports were made to the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer as required.

Tusla Corporate Plan and Oversight Agreement:

DCEDIY engaged with Tusla in relation to the priorities contained in Tusla's 3rd Corporate Plan (2021-2023) and worked with Tusla under the revised Oversight Agreement.

Tusla Board:

In 2021, DCEDIY worked with Tusla to increase membership of the Board to 11 and fill a vacancy arising at the end of 2021. These additional three Board members were appointed by Minister O'Gorman on 10th January 2022.

Performance Statement 2022:

DCEDIY developed a Performance Statement for 2023 which issued from Minister O'Gorman to Tusla in November 2022, following the Budget. This will inform the development of Tusla's 2023 Business Plan.

Research and data project examining the lives of children in care and adults who were in care as children

This research and data project was developed to address Action 65 of the Ryan Report Implementation Plan (2009), which states: the HSE will, with their consent, conduct a longitudinal study to follow young people who leave care for 10 years, to map their transition to adulthood'.

In December 2021, following the work of a DCEDIY / Tusla, joint Working Group, recommendations were provided to Minister O'Gorman on how best to respond to the Ryan Report Recommendation. On 25th January 2022, Minister O'Gorman secured Government approval for the recommended approach. The Research and Data project examining the lives of children in care, and adults who were in care as children, was officially launched. The launch of the project received significant media attention and overwhelming support from key stakeholders, academics and service users.

The project is led by DCEDIY, in partnership with Tusla, and comprised of four separate but interrelated elements, which would be implemented and delivered on a phased basis over

time. The project is iterative with each element building on the previous one. It takes account of and builds on a range of developments currently being advanced to support children in care and young people in aftercare. It is the intention of the project to yield learning in a timely way to inform policy development and service provision.

Governance of Oberstown

Comprehensive governance activities were undertaken and an oversight agreement was in place to ensure close monitoring of Oberstown's activities. There was daily monitoring of Oberstown's occupancy in relation to the current Certificate issued by the Minister O'Gorman under the Children Act 2001.

Transfer of disability services from the Department of Health

In relation to the transfer of disability services from the Department of Health, significant progress was made in developing a high level agreement between the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, T.D. and Minister O'Gorman, with a supporting Memorandum of Understanding and suite of formal operational agreements which recognised the need for continuing joint working, consultation and close cooperation between the two Departments on areas of shared interest.

Preparations were advanced for the establishment and resourcing of a new Disability Division, including plans for a dedicated Disability Governance and Performance Unit and a separate Disability Finance and Reform Unit, to work alongside policy/service units to ensure robust governance structures were in place post-transfer.

Strategic Action 6.3 *We will ensure that there are strong and effective Vote management arrangements in place within the Department to account to Government, the Oireachtas and the public for all expenditure incurred.*

Financial Oversight

The Finance Unit continued to oversee and manage the Vote through the Estimates process, including supporting Minister O'Gorman in his appearance before Select Committee on the Revised Estimates Volume (REV) for 2022 for Vote 40, Supplementary Estimate for 2022. The Secretary General was also supported on two occasions before the Public Accounts Committee. Through the publication of the REV and the DPENDR Public Service Performance Report, an overview of DCEDIY service delivery for funding provided is demonstrated, both in terms of outcomes and impacts. The Finance Unit worked closely with line units on the management of their budgets within approved allocations throughout the year. As part of this process, the Finance Unit supported Minister O'Gorman to secure additional funding of almost €720m in 2022. During 2022, as part of the Estimates process, the Finance Unit helped secure an additional €403m in Budget 2023 and a further €810m as part of the REV 2023 process. The Finance Unit worked closely with DPENDR on vote

finances and has deepened this relationship as the scale and complexity of the vote has increased.

Strategic Action 6.4 *We will ensure that appropriate governance arrangements are in place for the Early Learning and Care and School Age Childcare budget in order to achieve optimal outcomes and ensure value for money.*

Compliance

The Compliance Function for DCEDIY is administered by Pobal who conduct unannounced inspections of Early Learning & Care and School Age Care services to confirm that they are adhering to key programme rules pertaining to relevant programmes/schemes (Early Childhood Care and Education, Community Childcare Subvention Plus, National Childcare Scheme and the Access & Inclusion Model). Compliance resources are administered in the most efficient manner possible to ensure maximum coverage of c. 1,100 services per annum. Pobal also undertake verifications of grant schemes such as the Fire Safety Grant Capital Grant and any ineligible expenditure found during verification is recouped by the DCEDIY.

Review of the Operating Model

A governance framework has been approved for the design and planning phase for a new state agency for ELC and SAC. A Programme Board comprising inter-departmental representatives and external experts with experience at senior level in change management and large-scale reform, leadership, governance, public policy and a knowledge of the sector has been appointed to oversee this phase. An internal Design Authority comprised of DCEDIY officials has also been appointed to act in an advisory capacity to assist the Programme Board.

Oversight of Funded Organisations

The DCEDIY continued to ensure oversight of Pobal, City/County Childcare Committees and funded National Voluntary Childcare Organisations through 2022.

Strategic Action 6.5. *We will continue to operate systems which procure accommodation for persons seeking international protection which comply with National Standards, and ensure that inspections system effectively monitor that compliance.*

International Protection Accommodation Service

At the end of 2022 the International Protection Accommodation Service was accommodating a total of 19,104 (compared to 7,244 for 2021) individuals across its portfolio of IPAS Accommodation Centres and Emergency Accommodation Centres. Of this total, 3,734 were children. The total number of arrivals in 2022 seeking IPAS accommodation was 14,954. The

IPAS Resident Welfare Team conducted a total of 1,097 vulnerability assessments during 2022.

This represents a significant increase over the previous year. Over the period 2017-2019 an average of 3,500 people applied for protection each year. In addition, there were circa 60 emergency accommodation locations brought into use in the twelve months of 2022.

The tables below outline the scale of the challenges faced by IPAS in 2022.

Table 2.1 – Monthly IPAS Arrivals in 2022

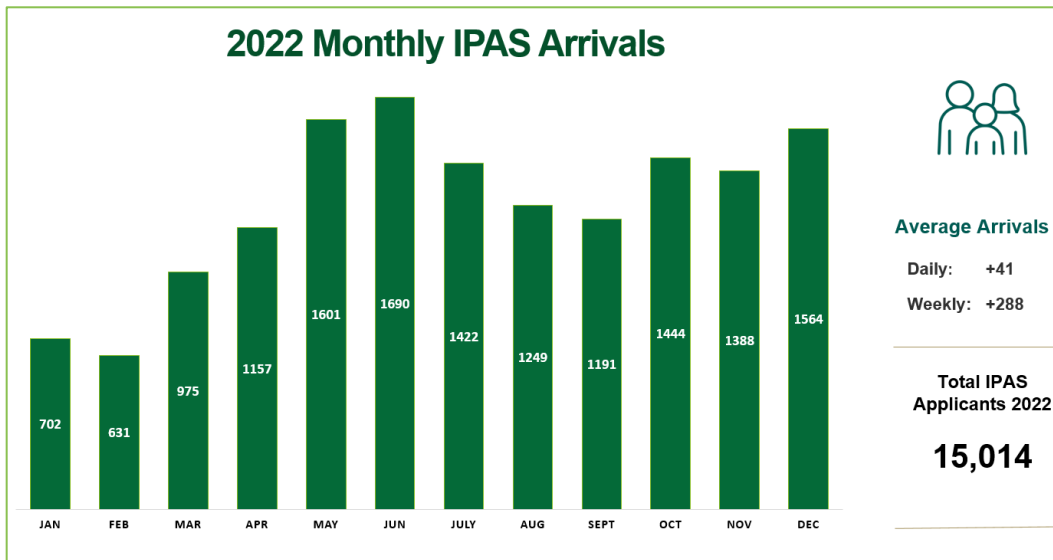
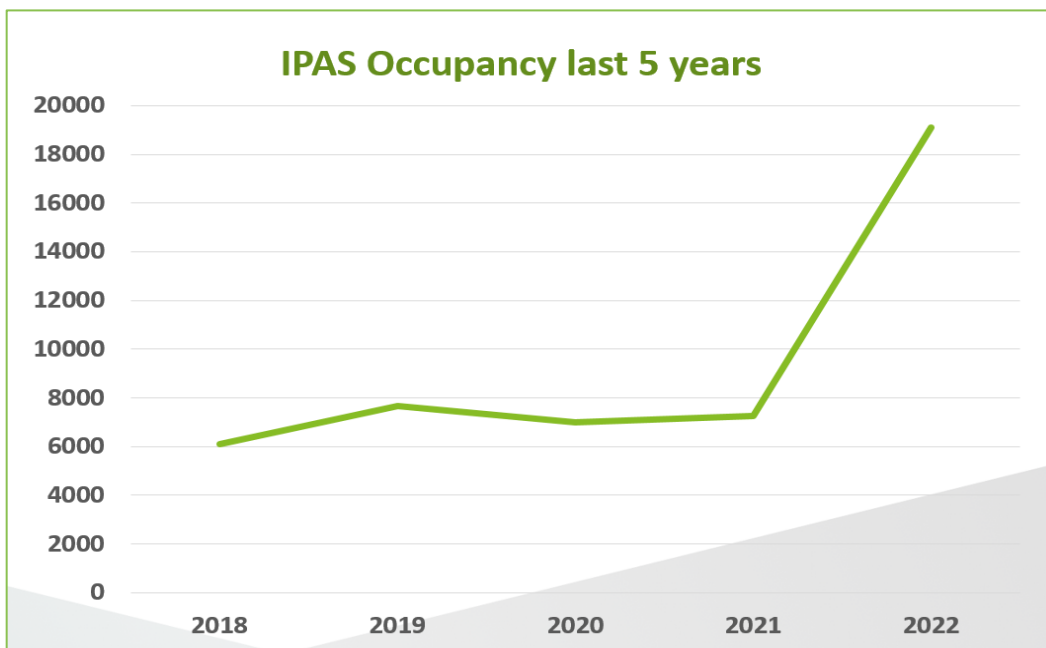


Table 2.2 – IPAS Occupancy since 2018



Strategic Action 6.6 *We will ensure that funding programmes are delivered according to stated objectives and requirements.*

Financial Governance

The aim of DCEDIY is to ensure that spending across programmes and projects are managed with efficiency and effectiveness so that the objectives and purpose of the expenditure in question are being met and are on target and stay within budget across all programme areas on the Vote. While responsibility rest with line units implementing the policies and programmes, within budget, in regard to oversight and governance, the Finance Unit has a monitoring and oversight role for the Vote as a whole. As above, the Finance Unit continued to effectively manage oversight of the Vote and meets its obligations in regard to reporting to DPENDR, on financial performance of the Vote each month.

Funds Management

National funds managed by Funds Administration Unit:

- Communities Integration Fund open call 2022 – 124 organisations awarded a total of €566k;
- National Integration Fund 2020 – funding continued for the 18 National Integration Fund 2020 projects, totalling €569k;
- LGBTI+ Community Services Fund open call 2022 – 27 organisations awarded a total of €1.21m;
- Gender Equality Core Funding – National Women’s Council of Ireland received a total of €611k;
- Women’s Collective of Ireland received a total of €1.73m to distribute among 17 member organisations;
- Equality Core Funding – 48 organisations/projects were supported with funding totalling €5.93m.

Strategic Action 6.7 *We will ensure delivery of the Departments obligations under the National Climate Action Plan and any future initiatives in this area. This will include a focus on Aegis Bodies.*

National Climate Action Plan

DCEDIY took the steps necessary to meet its obligations under the National Climate Action Plan. Aegis Bodies were informed of their obligations under the Climate Action Plan. The Management Board nominated the Head of the Corporate Governance Unit as DCEDIY’s Climate Action and Sustainability Champion. The Green Team was established and held its first meeting. DCEDIY’s Climate Action Mandate was prepared. These structures will be incorporated into DCEDIY’s Governance Framework.

Oberstown Energy Projects

Energy efficient capital projects were undertaken by Oberstown to ensure delivery of DCEDIY's obligations under the National Climate Action Plan and improve energy efficiency across the Campus.

Strategic Enablers

There are some key strategic enablers that DCEDIY must have in place to ensure their successful implementation of our Strategic Actions.

Please refer to DCEDIY's **Statement of Strategy 2021-2023**.

A strong performance culture:

DCEDIY:

- Co-ordinated submissions for DCEDIY and Aegis bodies in accordance with Circular 14 of 2021 Arrangements for Oversight of Digital and ICT-related Initiatives in the Civil and Public Service.
- Established individual Business System Project Boards to oversee projects approved by ICT Governance Board.
- Provided practical project management training to ICT Applications teams and various business unit project teams.
- Embedded value management and business process optimisation as part of our ICT project delivery process.
- Arranged the installation of ICT infrastructure in the Citywest Transit Hub to support the accommodation of Ukrainian beneficiaries of temporary protection. /
- Delivered an Accommodation Management System to support the Ukraine response.
- Delivered an annual training plan in 2022 which was reflective of the developmental and support needs of staff, and included the use of innovative e-learning resources to support and enable colleagues, enhancing their knowledge and skills, supporting the delivery of DCEDIY's goals and objectives even when working remotely.
- Provided a learning and development offering in 2022 which contributed to creating a strong performance culture, empowering colleagues to work towards delivering DCEDIYs goals.

Collaboration & Evidence Informed policy:

- DCEDIY utilised the Social Work Education Group to agree with Tusla, in consultation with DFHERIS, a draft list of joint actions to support the supply of social workers. In late 2022, as the first action, this Department commissioned a market research project to establish the barriers perceived by potential social workers to studying for, and pursuing, a career in social work.
- Minister O'Gorman announced that Ireland will participate in the OECD Starting Strong Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS Starting Strong), in partnership with the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in 2024. Ireland, along with 16 other countries,

is taking part in the survey, which is the first international survey of the early learning and care workforce.

- DCEDIY monitored the implementation of the 2022-6 Oberstown Strategy Statement. There was representation on the Youth Justice Oversight and Youth Justice Governance and Strategy Groups.
- The 15th annual report of the Special Rapporteur was presented to Government in December 2022 and published. The report was circulated to all relevant Government Departments for appropriate action. It was the final annual report to be submitted by the outgoing Special Rapporteur, Professor Conor O'Mahony. The Public Appointment Service (PAS) open competition to select the nominee for the role for the next three-year term was nearing completion by year-end.
- DCEDIY continued to promote North/South cooperation in relation to child protection under the health sectoral area of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC). During 2022, DCEDIY serviced two NSMC Sectoral meetings. A new work programme for the child protection agenda, which covers a three year period to 2024, was approved and commenced in 2021. The agenda for the cross-border officials meetings covers the preparation of relevant briefing for the Sectoral meetings, progressing the Work Programme and discussion of areas of mutual interest.

Information Management:

- L&D increased use of the *OneLearning* subdomain for registration by staff of DCEDIY training, which further enabled colleagues across DCEDIY to develop their skills and knowledge to work towards DCEDIY achieving its mission while also allowing for further improved data collection and analysis for the L&D team, reducing administration.
- L&D collaborated with other civil service bodies to create learning and development content on diversity and equality initiatives to support other Departments as well as DCEDIY colleagues (e.g. Equality, Diversity and Integration *OneLearning* courses)
- L&D created and launched the first DCEDIY own brand digital learning on disability, meeting its obligations action 20 of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy.
- DCEDIY undertook extensive engagement with the Department of Health to make provision for the transfer of records relating to the transfer of responsibility for specialist disability services.

Financial and operational forecasting, capital planning:

- DCEDIY supported the significant growth of DCEDIY's whole time equivalent (WTE) with a Desk Strategy that optimises the use of core desk accommodation, aligned with DCEDIY's Blended Working strategy.
- Through the payment system, the Finance Unit facilitates and manages all expenditure for the Vote. Through Issues reporting, the Finance Unit forecasted the funding requirement for the Vote each month to the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (DPENDR) and in addition the Unit undertook ongoing financial forecasting of end year expenditure position for the Vote. This enabled DCEDIY to secure the additional funding needed for the Vote in 2022 and meet its obligation in regard to oversight and monitoring of the Vote.
- The Finance Unit provided advices to line units on their budgets and on wider governance issues. The Finance Unit acted as liaison point with DPENDR on all Vote matters, which enabled DCEDIY to deliver across all strategic goals.
- The Learning and Development Unit continued to adhere to finance procedures and value for money principles, ensuring consistently high levels of compliance with financial as well as procurement.

Public Sector Duty:

- DCEDIY ensured that policy on quality, regulation and accessibility of ELC and SAC provision was developed based on equality and non-discrimination, supports children's rights, and in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Department officials began work on tailoring a response to progress the development of a new strand of funding - Tackling Disadvantage: the Equal Participation Model. Services will be provided with a mix of universal and targeted supports to support children and families accessing services who are experiencing disadvantage.
- Further Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) programmes and schemes are in development to ensure that children and families who need services most can access them, including children living with economic disadvantage, children with additional needs and parents seeking to engage in or return to work.
- The Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) supported 6,558 children with additional needs to access and meaningfully participate in the ECCE programme 2022.
- The Leadership in Inclusion (LINC) training programme - one of several AIM supports - had 557 students graduate in October 2022.
- A communications strategy, website and e-learning modules for implementing the "Universal Design Guidelines for ELC Settings" for childcare service providers and built environment professionals in Ireland are currently in development and in the final contracting stage.

- DCEDIY provided ongoing oversight of implementation of First 5 and progressed a number of key First 5 Projects.
- First 5 Little Library Initiative 2022: A free book bag with storybooks and resources was offered to every 4 and 5-year-old who started school in September 2022. Over 24,000 children in the target age group have joined the library since the initiative started.
- The Little Baby Bundle Pilot Initiative: 500 expectant parents are participating.
- First 5 were active on a number of campaigns: Let's Play Ireland, National Play Day, and Let's Get Ready.
- First 5 engaged with stakeholders through various channels: First 5 Twitter account & the Supporting Parent's Platform for example. Consultation on the Primary Curriculum Framework, updating Aistear, reviewing the Early Years Services Regulations 2016 was complete in 2022.

Equality & Human Rights:

- DCEDIY continues to act as the coordination and focal point under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In doing so, through the development and implementation of legislation and policy, DCEDIY has driven and coordinated efforts at a whole of government level to continually advance rights in a manner consistent with the UNCRPD and the public sector duty.

Remote Working:

- Learning and Development - L&D continued to actively collaborate with Facilities Management Unit on COVID response work providing access to ergonomics training to support remote working.
- L&D additionally provided statistics on training compliance to aid the Facilities Management team in both management of workforce with regards to COVID restrictions as well as blended working as the year progressed.
- ICT and Procurement Unit supplied ICT equipment including laptops to all staff to facilitate blended working and completion of Hot Desk set up in DCEDIY offices. All staff can operate transparently within DCEDIY's office or from remote locations.
- Conferencing systems within the office and desktop conferencing systems were provided to enable hybrid working between office work and remote work.
- Risks associated with remote working by staff were mitigated through ergonomic assessments and the provision of appropriate equipment to ensure health and safety compliance and the safety of all staff.

Transfer of functions:

- The Government approved the transfer of functions of specialist community-based disability services from the Department of Health to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth with effect from 1st March 2023. S.I. No. 688 of 2022 Specialist Community-Based Disability Services (Transfer of Departmental Administration and Ministerial Functions) Order 2022 was signed by the Taoiseach Micheál Martin, T.D. on 13th December 2022.
- In addition, the Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2022, signed into law by the President on 12th April 2022, provides for the overarching legislative framework for the transfer of functions, including important changes in how the Health Service Executive is governed. In December, Minister Donnelly signed the Order for the Act to commence on 1st March 2023 in parallel to the specific Transfer of Functions Order.
- The robust governance and operational enablers necessary to facilitate an effective transfer of functions were also significantly progressed during 2022 under the guidance of a Senior Officials Group.
- The transfer will provide new opportunities to enhance work on strategic policy development, driving investment and reform in services and the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). External Human Resources (HR) agreed with the Department of Health (DoH) an operational agreement for HR governance of HSE Disability functions and appropriate tripartite engagement between HSE, DoH and this Department on HR governance matters.
- Ahead of the transfer of functions of Disability colleagues from the Department of Health, the Learning and Development Unit proactively engaged with the Department of Health to ensure the smooth transition and on-boarding of new colleagues with regards to learning and development supports (including but not limited to refund of fees).
- ICT and Procurement Unit provided ICT support on the transfer of staff, assets and records from the Department of Health and from the Department of Justice enabling the integration of new functions in DCEDIY. There is ongoing work to replace or provide new systems to support the work of the transferring functions.

Legislation

- Work was ongoing in relation to the granting of remission to children detained in Oberstown.
- A schedule of legal cases relating to Oberstown was monitored.
- Work started in relation to advising on technical amendments to the Children Act 2001.
- CDSU was represented on the Article 40 working group to oversee compliance in relation to legal warrants and orders.

- The enactment of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Act 2022 ensures Ireland's further compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which was ratified by the State in 2018.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

- In preparation for a **Transfer of Functions** relating to Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence supports and services, during 2022 DCEDIY and Tusla began preparations with the Department of Justice and all three parties drafted and signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** on how operations would continue during the transition phase.

Part 3 - Humanitarian Response to the War in Ukraine

Introduction and Background:

On 24th February 2022, Russia launched a military aggression against Ukraine. DCEDIY's response to the war in Ukraine is first and foremost humanitarian. Ireland is resolute in its solidarity and support for Ukraine and its people. Since then millions of people have fled the war seeking refuge in the EU including Ireland.

As of end December 2022, over 70,000 people fleeing the war in Ukraine had arrived in Ireland with the Ukraine Crisis Temporary Accommodation Team (UCTAT) in DCEDIY accommodating over 53,000 persons.

The arrival of such high numbers of people is unprecedented and DCEDIY has worked intensively in leading the whole of Government humanitarian response to the crisis. The scale and challenge confronting both the State from a humanitarian and administrative standpoint was and continues to be significant. The scale and standard of the response to date has been truly remarkable and is testament to the collective efforts of individuals, volunteers, communities, local authorities, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and various state agencies that together have succeeded in welcoming and supporting those fleeing war in their hour of need.

DCEDIY is proud to represent the State as the lead Department in coordinating the humanitarian response and will continue to work and engage with the many stakeholders in continuing to help those seeking shelter and security as best it can.

Early Developments – Activating the EU Temporary Protection Directive:

The invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has had profound impacts, including triggering the fastest refugee flow in Europe since the end of the Second World War. The invasion has forced millions of people to leave their homes, with approximately three million people fleeing Ukraine in the first three weeks alone following the invasion.

In response to this escalating situation, on 4th March 2022, the European Union (EU) activated the Temporary Protection Directive. Originally adopted in 2001, Temporary Protection is an EU emergency mechanism which is activated in exceptional circumstances of mass influx to (i) provide collective protection to displaced persons and (ii) reduce pressure on the national asylum systems of EU countries.

The Temporary Protection Scheme allows displaced persons enjoy harmonised rights across the EU including:

- Residency rights;
- Access to the labour market;
- Access to housing;
- Social welfare assistance;
- Medical assistance.

In addition, Temporary Protection contains provision for unaccompanied children and teenagers relating to legal guardianship and access to education. At the end of 2022, close to four million displaced people from Ukraine were benefitting from temporary protection in the EU.

Ireland's Emergency Response led by Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth (DCEDIY):

The invasion and subsequent outflow of migration necessitated an emergency and fast-paced response. DCEDIY established a Ukraine unit within DCEDIY comprising more than 80 staff, the vast majority of whom were from DCEDIY but there were also a number of individuals seconded from other Departments and agencies. The unit undertook a significant amount of work in providing accommodation for so many people in a very short period of time.

Critical to the initial rapid response was the leveraging of DCEDIY's expertise in International Protection and pivoting of these resources from this team without delay. DCEDIY utilised the expertise and knowledge within the team in accessing serviced accommodation in the first instance so the needs of beneficiaries of temporary protection could be met without delay.

The early work also laid the foundation for the infrastructure and systems in place that remain central components of the overall humanitarian response including the Situational Centre report, the infrastructure involved in welcoming and administering arrivals initially at Dublin Airport and later at the Citywest Transit Hub, and the various branches and divisions across DCEDIY established to support the overall humanitarian response.

Much of this work involved staff volunteering in their own time, at night and on weekends, to work in the airport and the Citywest Transit Hub to provide that immediate welcome to displaced persons as they arrived into Ireland.

Provision of Emergency Accommodation – DCEDIY's Main Objective

The central focus of DCEDIY throughout 2022 has been the provision of accommodation to those fleeing the war in Ukraine. Overseeing provision of accommodation on this scale during this timeframe for all those who require it was immensely challenging.

Citywest Transit Hub:

Since March 2022, the Citywest Transit Hub has operated as the main welcome and transit centre for those fleeing Ukraine. Later in 2022, it was used to help to respond to the increased numbers of International Protection applicants arriving in Ireland.

Upon arrival, those fleeing the war in Ukraine are transported to the Citywest Transit Hub. A number of key government administrative functions are carried out at the Citywest Transit Hub. Firstly, the Department of Justice (DoJ) processes all arrivals and grants the status of Beneficiary of Temporary Protection (BOTP) to those eligible for protection. The Department of Social Protection (DSP) then assigns Personal Public Service (PPS) numbers and gives advice on available benefits. Medical declaration forms are completed and all those in need are triaged by the Health Service Executive (HSE). At that point, anyone who requires State accommodation is directed to staff from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY). DCEDIY staff assign accommodation based on availability at that given point-in-time and transport BOTPs to that accommodation via a series of buses and taxis. Some 95% of arrivals were processed and transported to their new temporary accommodation on the same day as they arrived at Citywest.

Respect for fundamental rights and child safety principles are embedded into the design of the Citywest Transit Hub. A formal Child Safeguarding Statement was signed into operation in the Citywest transit hub. This statement was adopted to ensure best practice was followed in line with the provisions of the Children First Act 2015 and the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children. Tusla also had a full time on-site officer who worked hand in hand with DCEDIY to implement the Statement.

Medical /Disability:

In partnership with the Health Service Executive (HSE), DCEDIY also assisted in providing specific accommodation to meet the needs of vulnerable beneficiaries of temporary protection including those with complex medical requirements and disabilities. DCEDIY sourced accommodation for more than 150 cases ranging from medical evacuations to those requiring proximity to hospitals for complex medical treatment and ongoing supervision and after treatment care.

Serviced Accommodation

In sourcing and securing accommodation, the central consideration has been the safety and security of the displaced people fleeing war in Ukraine. DCEDIY successfully provided accommodation to over 53,000 people from Ukraine within the space of 10 months.

Securing such shelter has been extremely challenging and has involved DCEDIY contracting in excess of 35,000 beds with over 650 providers in hotels, guesthouses, Bed & Breakfasts (B&Bs), hostels, self-catering accommodation and certain other repurposed settings. The accommodation stream is multi-faceted with many critical links contributing to the strength of the overall chain. The Procurement and Relocations Teams' work,

alongside many other support function units in the Division, has been pivotal in all efforts to provide shelter and security to those in most need.

Local Authorities/Emergency Accommodation

From the very outset, Local Authorities stood up emergency accommodation locations throughout the country on request. These accommodation centres have been central in receiving displaced persons, as DCEDIY concentrated on sourcing and procuring suitable temporary accommodation throughout the country. At various critical junctures and in extremely challenging times, this engagement between DCEDIY and the Local Authorities has facilitated arrivals to be accommodated.

Pledged Accommodation

DCEDIY also actively contributed to the efforts to procure pledge type accommodation in 2022. DCEDIY partnered with the Irish Red Cross (IRC) to address what supports were necessary. A Memorandum of Agreement committed to providing over €1.2 million to the IRC for the operational and staffing costs associated with the pledge project. Support was provided by DCEDIY across a range of areas, including project management, operational, coordination, data management and (Information Technology) IT development. DCEDIY acted as a centralised point of information to all stakeholders and linked the IRC and other supporting Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to Local Authorities, for the assessment and matching of beneficiaries to shared properties.

Throughout 2022, DCEDIY worked closely with both the Local Government Managers' Association (LGMA) and the City and County Managers' Association (CCMA), to ensure that Local Authorities could work effectively with NGO Implementing Partners to maximise the potential of pledged accommodation for beneficiaries. This included developing a process for distributing information and reporting progress on pledged accommodation in each Local Authority, inspection criteria, and contact with pledgers to confirm the viability and availability of properties. DCEDIY funded support of NGO Implementing Partners to assist Local Authorities, if needed, to match beneficiaries of temporary protection to pledges.

By end 2022, more than 5,800 beneficiaries of temporary protection had been accommodated in private hosting arrangements.

Student Accommodation

At the height of arrivals and with serviced accommodation at capacity or unavailable due to the tourist season, DCEDIY managed to secure an additional 6,000 beds to accommodate approximately 5,200 beneficiaries throughout the summer months of 2022. The project involved large scale procurement, allocation and logistical management operations in accommodating the increasing number of arrivals with significant capacity constraints. The reallocations unit were fundamental in both assigning student accommodation and the subsequent demands placed on DCEDIY in ensuring that the

student accommodation settings were available in time for the resumption of the academic calendar in September.

Engagement with D/Defence and the Defence Forces

Throughout 2022, DCEDIY also engaged and collaborated with both colleagues in the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces. This partnership proved critical in identifying potential alternative accommodation solutions at particular acute times of accommodation scarcity. Gormanston and Kilbride Camps were just two instances where partnership between both parties led to the increased accommodation provision to circa. 500 persons fleeing the war in 2022. DCEDIY greatly appreciates the efforts of the Department and the Defence Forces in providing assistance as part of the humanitarian response.

DCEDIY Supports provided to Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection:

Early Years Education and Care

As well as meeting the accommodation needs of 53,000 people in 2022, DCEDIY also provided a number of specific supports to BOTPs. DCEDIY introduced targeted measures to expand early learning and childcare capacities leading to over 500 Stay and Play sessions for parents and young children taking place in accommodation centres and other venues including local libraries and community centres across the country. DCEDIY developed additional Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) places including providing free access to the ECCE programme and access to the National Childcare Scheme.

DCEDIY developed a range of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses and resources for early years including supports for trauma informed practice which was a collaboration with Barnardos Ireland and a number of focused webinars were also developed for educators. The **Parent and Toddler Grant** scheme was extended to include Buggy Walking Groups and an additional €75,000 to support local community groups to engage with Ukrainian families.

Unaccompanied and Separated Children

Unaccompanied and separated children fleeing war in Ukraine or seeking international protection in Ireland for any reason receive supports and services through the child protection system. Under the equity of care principle, it is their status as a child that is the primary consideration. The provisions of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child; the EU Charter on Human Rights and the Child Care Act 1991 and Children First Act 2017 in our national legislation require that the best interests of the child are paramount. Tusla has a specialist team, the Separated Children Seeking International Protection (SCSIP) that responds to referrals of unaccompanied children arriving in Ireland or identified as such following their arrival.

Tusla (the Child & Family Agency) has seconded a principal social worker to the Ukrainian arrivals centre in City West whose duties include receiving referrals of separated children to confirm the planned care arrangements for those children while in Ireland. All children arriving from the Ukraine since February 2022 are beneficiaries of temporary protection and are entitled to the supports and services made available to those beneficiaries.

By the end of 2022, 263 Ukrainian unaccompanied children had been referred to Tusla. There were 71 Ukrainian unaccompanied children in care.

Incidents and Relocations Team

Between May 2022 and year end 2022 the Critical Incident Team dealt with 637 incidents. The majority of incidents were responded to within 24-48 hours of receipt. Tickets were received from various sources including accommodation providers, agencies such as the HSE and Tusla and NGOs engaging with BOTPS, as well as BOTPs themselves.

The themes which presented frequently in the tickets included domestic violence, issues between accommodation providers and BOTPs and child protection and welfare concerns. Another area of significant concern accounting for a large proportion of team resources was the issues raised by BOTPs and accommodation providers regarding mental health matters.

The Critical Incidents Team works with the HSE Social Inclusion team to highlight these cases and also supports BOTPs to continue to access accommodation, despite the difficulties that they may be encountering. Among the more serious issues that the Critical Incident Team responded to was a case of attempted murder and, in this case, liaised with other government agencies including Tusla, HSE, the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) and An Garda Síochána to support those involved.

The Critical Incident Team continues to engage with accommodation providers and BOTPs to assist them with navigating department policies and ensuring that BOTPs are offered support and clear guidance in regard to issues raised.

Some of the activities undertaken and managed by the Relocations Team throughout the course of 2022 are outlined in the table below:

Table 3.1 - Reallocations, Incidents & Contingency

<p>Reallocations, Incidents & Contingency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing challenge to recalibrate portfolio of accommodation where circumstances change (that is, incidents occur, accommodation contracts end, from rest centre, etc.) • Requirement to identify, access and determine appropriate pathways for individual issue resolution where critical incidents arise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 4,000+ BOTPs successfully relocated from students accommodation throughout Summer 2022 ✓ 45,000 (approximately) relocations managed ✓ 915 (approximately) critical incidents managed ✓ Gormanston & Kilbride emergency accommodation provision mobilised.
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Engagement and Cooperation with NGOs – The NGOs Stakeholder Forum on Ukraine

DCEDIY acknowledges the key role and contribution of the NGOs Stakeholder Forum on Ukraine in 2022. Initially focused on the Dublin Airport and Citywest operations, the forum’s remit was extended to include all the relevant Departments and NGOs with an interest in the Ukraine response. The primary purpose of the NGO Stakeholder Forum has been to brief civil society on the actions being taken by a range of Government Departments as part of the overall humanitarian response. The forum includes representatives of the Departments of An Taoiseach; Housing; Health; Social Protection; Justice; Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; and Rural and Community Affairs (which briefs on supports for communities and on the Community Response fora). The forum met regularly throughout 2022 to brief and provide updates on key developments.

Engagement and Partnerships in 2022

Throughout 2022, DCEDIY engaged with a number of partners in supporting those fleeing the war in Ukraine. In partnership with a number of organisations and bodies, the humanitarian response was strengthened in terms of service provision and capacity. The scale and standard of the response is due in large part to these successful partnerships

and cooperation between the multiple bodies and agencies. DCEDIY appreciates the assistance and supports offered throughout 2022 by the many organisations including:

- Fáilte Ireland
- The Association of Missionaries and Religious in Ireland (AMRI)
- Scouting Ireland
- Vincent de Paul
- B&B Ireland
- International Organisation for Migration (IOM)
- Peter McVerry Trust
- Merchant Quay Ireland

Whole of Government Response/Wider Accommodation Strategy (Government Decision of October 2022)

DCEDIY began work in 2022 on policy to transition from an emergency response situation to a more mainstreamed approach for accommodating Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection. In line with the Government Decision of 22nd October 2022, DCEDIY actively contributed to an ambitious programme of work aimed at implementing a more sustainable accommodation pathway. This included participating on an Accommodation working to support this Department; the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the OPW in the agile delivery of accommodation required.

Rapid Build Homes Programme

In 2022, the Government approved the construction of **700** rapid build homes with the potential to house up to **2,800** individuals in family units. The rapid build homes will be constructed on state owned land.

The OPW is leading the development of this accommodation in conjunction with DCEDIY.

All the sites will have roads, footpaths, street lighting and community facilities, including green spaces fully in line with Local Authority planning guidance. The rapid build homes will be highly energy efficient, durable units with a 60-year lifespan and the development of the sites will be conducted in an environmentally sustainable way to ensure that, post development, the site will enhance the local area.

Department's Commitment to Continuous Improvement

DCEDIY is committed to continuous review and improvement of how our objectives are delivered. With this principle at the core of how the Ukraine Division works, Ukraine Division colleagues, supported by collaborative engagement with teams and functions across the wider Department, continue to refine and improve core processes.

DCEDIY began work in 2022 on improving the offer process to assist in streamlining the triage and accommodation offers received by DCEDIY into the future. Work also commenced in 2022 on a transformation project to streamline the payments process as much as possible including availing of technological solutions. It is anticipated that these measures will assist in undertaking of key service deliverables in 2023.

Table 3.2 - Infographic of Ukraine arrivals and accommodation overview 2022

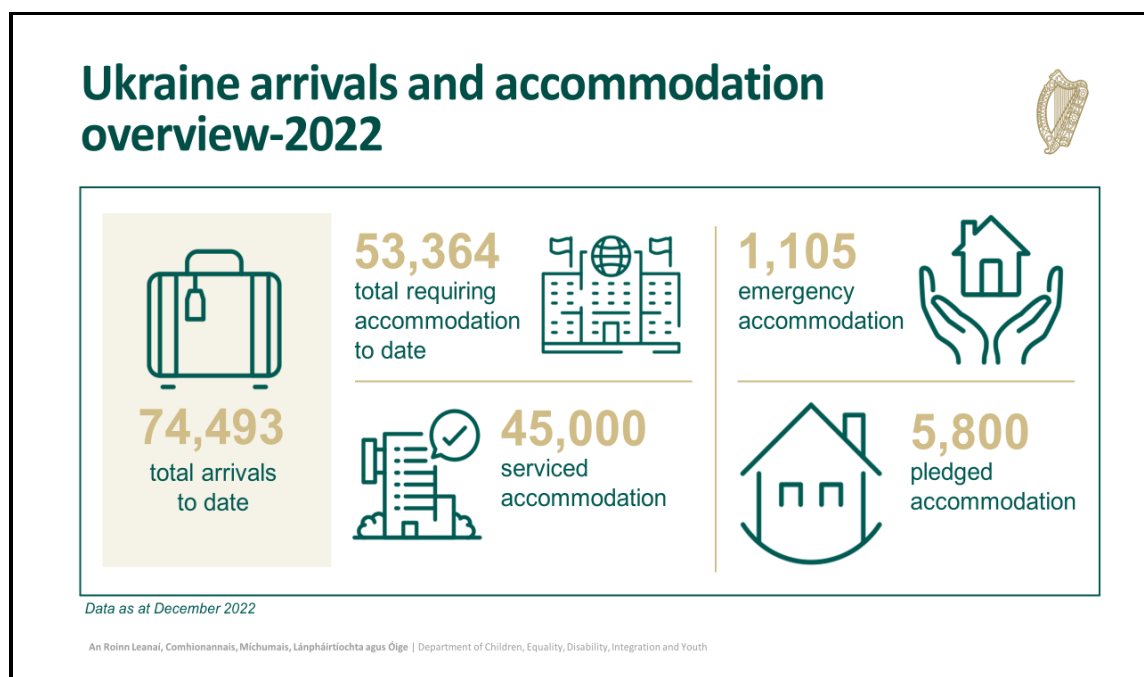


Table 3.3 - Infographic of key services provided to those fleeing Ukraine 2022



Conclusion:

Ireland can be proud in the manner in which it has responded to the greatest humanitarian crisis in Europe since the Second World War. The efforts and contributions of individuals, volunteers, communities, local authorities, NGOs and State agencies across the country have been truly remarkable. The scale and standard of the humanitarian response is testament to the collective national effort by so many.

People have not just opened their doors, they have also opened their hearts in welcoming and supporting those fleeing war and seeking shelter at their hour of need. DCEDIY is proud to have contributed to the overall humanitarian response in 2022. Challenges persist but the continued engagement and efforts in planning, implementing and resolving issues means that DCEDIY is confronting those challenges and committed to continuing to assist those fleeing the war in Ukraine as best it can.

Appendices

Appendix I: Public Sector Duty

DCEDIY's [Public Sector Duty Assessment and Action Plan](#) was published in March 2021. A separate report on the implementation of its actions 2022 is available on the [Department's website](#).

DCEDIY acknowledges the positive duty imposed on it by Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 to have regard to human rights

Under Section 42 a public body shall, in the performance of its functions, have regard to the need to — and equality in the performance of its functions

- (a) eliminate discrimination,
- (b) promote equality of opportunity and treatment of its staff and the persons to whom it provides services, and
- (c) protect the human rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides services.

Our work embodies proactive consideration of equality and the human rights of all individuals in the development of policy and legislation.

DCEDIY is also committed to protecting the dignity and respect of staff working for DCEDIY.

DCEDIY endorses and implements the [Civil Service Dignity at Work Policy](#), which aims to promote respect, dignity, safety, and equality in the workplace. Every member of staff is aware that all forms of bullying, harassment, and sexual harassment are unacceptable and that every member of staff has a duty to behave in an acceptable and respectful manner.

In our [Customer Service Action Plan and Charter](#) we state our commitments to our customers.

We meet same by -

- giving our customers the best possible service and advice;
- treating customers in a proper, fair, impartial and courteous manner;
- aiming to ensure that rights to equal treatment set out by equality legislation are upheld in the delivery of our services; and
- aiming, where possible, to meet any special needs our customers may have.

Appendix II: Overview of Energy Usage in 2022

DCEDIY's energy consumption is reported to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) on an annual basis. It's tracked against the Climate Action Plan (2021) targets to achieve a 50% improvement in energy efficiency and a 51% reduction in energy related CO₂ emissions by 2030.

DCEDIY has achieved a 61% improvement in energy efficiency per staff member to date relative to the 2012 baseline per staff member following the formation of DCEDIY in 2011. This improvement significantly exceeds the 2030 target and is due to a number of factors including moving our headquarters to a newly redeveloped LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum accredited building in 2018 and also through the introduction of remote working arrangements to accommodate a growing workforce without a commensurate increase in office accommodation.

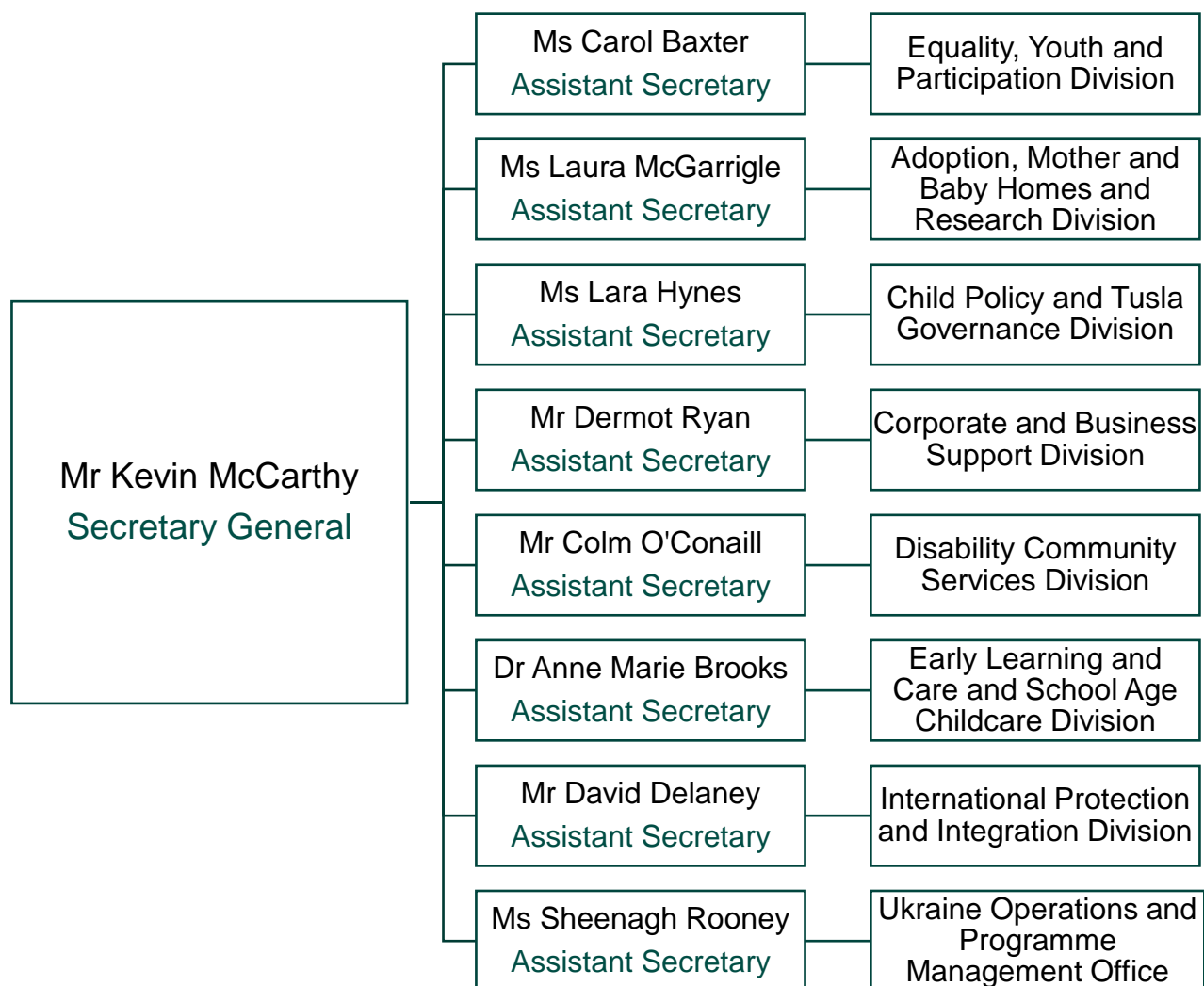
Energy related CO₂ emissions have increased by 255% relative to the 2016 baseline established for the new emissions target that was introduced in the Climate Action Plan. The large increase in CO₂ emissions is due to the addition of the Citywest Convention Centre in 2022, as a result this was due to the Governments response to the European Union directive to accommodate incoming Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection from the Ukraine crisis. The 2016 baseline for DCEDIY was 262,095 kgCO₂ and the 2022 energy related CO₂ emissions for DCEDIY was 930,451 kgCO₂.²

DCEDIY is engaged in a range of initiatives in working towards the 2030 energy targets. This includes energy auditing, Green Public Procurement, participation in the OPW's Optimising Power @ Work scheme, implementing an annual Resource Efficiency Action Plan including Energy Actions and through working with the SEAI and other Departments. Agencies under the aegis of DCEDIY report their energy consumption directly to the SEAI, and as a result their energy usage is not covered by this overview.

² Energy related CO₂ emissions data is current at the time of publication, however it should be noted that this data is subject to revision if the SEAI receive new or updated information from their sources.

Appendix III: Management Board 2023

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.



Appendix IV: Bodies under the aegis of DCEDIY in 2022

<p>National Disability Authority</p>  <p>Údarás Náisiúnta Míchumais National Disability Authority</p> <p>25 Clyde Road Dublin 4</p> <p>www.nda.ie</p>	<p>Tusla, Child and Family Agency</p>  <p>An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach Child and Family Agency</p> <p>The Brunel Building Heuston South Quarter St. John's Road West Kilmainham, Dublin 8</p> <p>www.tusla.ie</p>	<p>Oberstown Children Detention Campus</p>  <p>Oberstown Lusk, Co. Dublin</p> <p>www.oberstown.com</p>
<p>The Adoption Authority of Ireland</p>  <p>ÚDARÁS UCHTÁLA na hÉIREANN THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY of IRELAND</p> <p>Shelbourne House Shelbourne Road, Dublin 4</p> <p>www.aai.gov.ie</p>	<p>Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission³</p>  <p>Coimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta an Duine agus Comhionannas Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission</p> <p>16-22 Green Street, Dublin 7</p> <p>www.ihrec.ie</p>	
<p>The Ombudsman for Children's Office⁴</p>  <p>ombudsman do leanaí for children</p> <p>Millennium House 52-56 Great Strand Street, Dublin 1</p> <p>www.oco.ie</p>	<p>Gaisce, the President's Award</p>  <p>GAISCE THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD</p> <p>Ratra House North Road, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8</p> <p>www.gaisce.ie</p>	

³ The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission is independent in its functions and reports directly to the Oireachtas, in accordance with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act, 2014.

⁴ The Ombudsman for Children's Office is independent in its functions and reports directly to the Oireachtas, in accordance with the Ombudsman for Children Act, 2002.