



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt,
Gnóthaí Baile agus Imirce
Department of Justice,
Home Affairs and Migration

Statement of Strategy

2025-2028



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Foreword from the Minister

As Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, I am pleased to publish this Statement of Strategy 2025-2028. The Strategy sets out the key strategic goals for the period and how the Department will implement my priorities and the commitments contained in the Programme for Government - Securing Ireland's Future.

The Strategy contains important goals on protecting our security and supporting safe communities. To deliver these goals we will prioritise investment in An Garda Síochána, allowing the recruitment of more Gardaí and providing them with the resources and laws needed to do their job effectively, and to keep us safe. Over the next five years, we will support the Irish Prison Service to build almost 1,600 new prison spaces and support the prisons and the Probation Service to ensure that appropriate and effective sanctions are available to the courts.

New legislation will be brought forward to respond to the urgent challenges the justice system faces and to enable necessary reforms. My legislative priorities include the

Recording Devices Amendment Bill, which will give Gardaí the power to retrospectively use facial recognition technology in serious criminal investigations. The new Miscellaneous Provisions Bill will amend procedures for disclosure of counselling records in sexual abuse trials and criminalise sex-for-rent. In line with the EU Migration Pact, the International Protection Bill will allow the resetting of the international protection process, while maintaining the integrity of our immigration framework.

To deliver an effective and accessible justice system, we will work to reduce waiting times for court hearings, reform our systems of legal aid and overhaul our Coroners service to provide compassionate and timely support to those who have been bereaved.

The Strategy also has a focus on immigration, to deliver a rules-based immigration system. As part of this we will develop the first National Migration and Integration Strategy. That strategy will take a balanced approach, recognising the huge value of migrants in our economy and our

society, while also ensuring that our rules are enforced.

I would like to thank the teams throughout my Department for all their work, including in preparing this Strategy as well as all the stakeholders among the general public, across the public service and civil society who contributed to its development. I look forward to implementing the Strategy and the Programme for Government commitments alongside my colleagues, Minister Brophy and Minister Collins and with officials in my Department.

Together we continue to work towards making Ireland safe, fair and inclusive.



Jim O'Callaghan T.D.
Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration



Introduction from the Secretary General

It is a privilege to present this Statement of Strategy 2025 – 2028 to the Minister in accordance with the requirements of the Public Service Management Act 1997.

The Strategy identifies the Department's six strategic goals for the next three years and sets out how we will deliver the Minister's priorities and commitments in the Programme for Government.

Setting out the Department's strategic direction helps to focus our attention on what matters most – delivering on our vision of a safe, fair and inclusive Ireland.

Following the formation of the Government this year, the Department is significantly larger. We have welcomed new colleagues and taken on additional responsibilities for integration, accommodation for international protection applicants and those fleeing the war in Ukraine, and cyber security policy as well as responsibility for the National Cyber Security Centre, a vital element of

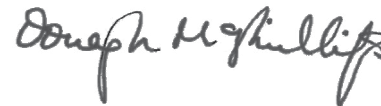
the State's security architecture. This Strategy integrates these new functions into the core of what the Department does.

Looking ahead to the second half of 2026, Ireland will hold the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Leading the Presidency for the Justice sector will be a significant demand on the Department but one that we very much look forward to. It also represents an opportunity to put Ireland at the centre of European decision making and advance our priorities in justice and home affairs. This Strategy's fifth goal recognises this now rare opportunity and the Department's ambition to maximise our impact through cooperation with counterparts across Europe for mutual benefit.

Measuring the Department's performance and progress on priority commitments is essential. For that reason, the Strategy commits the Department to developing a new set of performance metrics. We will also prepare an annual statement of

priorities to ensure delivery of all of the priorities set out in this Strategy.

I want to thank all my talented, dedicated colleagues in the Department and the wider justice sector for the vital work they do each day on behalf of Government and the public we all serve. They work with tireless commitment on some of the biggest challenges facing the State, and with an unrelenting dedication to living our values and striving towards our vision of a safe, fair and inclusive Ireland.



Oonagh McPhillips
Secretary General



Overview

Our Vision

A safe, fair, inclusive Ireland

Our Values

Open, Collaborative, Professional

OPEN



COLLABORATIVE



PROFESSIONAL



How this Strategy was developed

Research

- Programme for Government
- UN Sustainable Development Goals
- National and Department Strategies
- Public Sector Duties

Consultation

- Government Departments and Agencies
- Public survey
- Staff survey
- Stakeholder forum and submissions

Implementation, Monitoring and Review

The Strategy will guide the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration for the next three years. Delivery will be planned and monitored through annual statements of priorities that will be published and will inform business planning across the organisation and monitored in the Department's annual report. Key indicators will be developed and published to measure against outcomes.

Public Sector Duties & Sustainability

All public bodies in Ireland have a responsibility to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans. The Department will publish an updated Public Sector Duty assessment and action plan in 2025, building on the EDI strategy which is being implemented since 2022 with progress monitored by a dedicated sub-committee of the Management Board and reported on annually. All public bodies are required to perform their functions in a manner consistent with national climate ambitions, and the Department will continue to publish an updated Climate Action Roadmap each year.

High Level Goals

- Protecting our security
- Safe communities
- An effective and accessible justice system
- A fair and firm immigration system
- Increasing our influence in Europe
- People, systems and technology to deliver excellence

Goal 1: Protecting our security



Protecting the State and its people and developing our national capabilities against challenges to the security of the State, cyber resilience and terrorism.

Objectives

- Modernisation of security legislation, including effective powers to enable access to data.
- Strengthening the capacity and capability of An Garda Síochána's security services including its operating structures, facilities, systems, people and skills.
- Advancing work to replace the Offences Against the State Acts, including to establish a new non-jury court to try serious criminal offences where the ordinary courts are inadequate to secure the effective administration of justice.
- Putting in place a strong and effective statutory National Cyber Security Centre, with updated mechanisms for the supervision and enforcement of network and information security enshrined in law.
- Progressing the establishment of a statutory National Security Authority with the legal authority and capability to provide the full spectrum of security clearances.
- A strong and effective Office of the Independent Examiner of Security Legislation reviewing the operation and effectiveness of security legislation and services.
- Effective border controls in place, underpinned by the development of a new border security strategy.
- Effectively supporting a whole-of-Government approach to national security, supporting the work of the Ministerial Council on National Security.



Outcomes

- Strengthened capacity and capability to counter threats to the security of the State and its people.
- Robust, independent oversight of security powers and legislation.
- Border security strategy published, with safe and effective border controls maintained.
- National Cyber Security Centre established on a statutory basis.

Goal 2: Safe communities



Support safe communities by strengthening law enforcement capabilities, providing for effective sanctions, and tackling the causes of crime.

Objectives

- An efficient criminal justice system that works together to prevent and reduce crime, prosecute and sanction offenders and reduce reoffending.
- A well-resourced policing service, with the tools, powers and technology needed to keep people safe, supported by effective governance and accountability through the further implementation of the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act.
- Safe, vibrant and inclusive communities developed through Local Community Safety Partnerships, in collaboration with government bodies, businesses, and community and voluntary organisations.
- Zero tolerance for domestic, sexual and gender-based violence and the attitudes that underpin it in Ireland.
- Supporting and empowering victims of crime and reforming our system of compensation for victims.
- Driving youth justice interventions to divert young people from crime and anti-social activities, and to divert people with mental health and addiction challenges from the criminal justice system.
- A comprehensive response to ensuring adequate, humane space in our prisons, with alternative sanctions and a strong focus on rehabilitation in place.



Outcomes

- Reduced levels of crime.
- High levels of trust and confidence in a well-resourced policing service.
- Reduced recidivism arising from effective reintegration of offenders into society, and greater levels of diversion from criminal and anti-social activities.
- Victims of crime supported by the criminal justice system, and understanding their rights.
- Increased use and public understanding of effective community sanctions.
- Reduced prevalence of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence, greater confidence in reporting offences and effective prosecutions.

Goal 3: An effective and accessible justice system



An efficient justice system that is fair, effective and responsive to the needs of those seeking justice.

Objectives

- Dispute resolution systems including the Courts that are efficient and accessible for all those who need them.
- A family justice system that supports, safeguards and values the voices of children and families.
- Reformed systems of criminal and civil legal aid that support access to justice.
- A Coroners service that provides compassionate and timely supports.
- Reformed defamation laws that balance freedom of expression with protections for individuals' good name and reputation.
- Greater efficiency in the interactions between criminal and civil justice agencies.
- Effective use of data to improve insights in relation to the functioning of the civil and criminal justice systems.
- Improve efficiency in the criminal justice system through focused review of the indictable offence process within the Circuit and Central Criminal Courts.



Outcomes

- Reduced waiting times for court hearings, and increased judicial numbers.
- Increased use of alternative dispute mechanisms.
- Vulnerable users can access services with the support and knowledge they need.
- Improved ability to coordinate and target resources and process cases across the justice sector.
- A unique identifier in place in the criminal justice system providing for greater research and statistics on how the system operates on an anonymised basis.
- Faster and more efficient prosecution of serious criminal offences, while maintaining integrity, respect and fairness at all stages of the process.

Goal 4: A fair and firm immigration system



An immigration system that attracts the people Ireland needs, is fair on applicants, and is firm on the enforcement of our laws.

Objectives

- A strategic and planned, cross-Government approach to migration that meets the needs of Ireland's society and economy.
- Efficient, digital-first, professional immigration and international protection services.
- A fully implemented EU Migration and Asylum Pact that provides a coherent approach to the management of migration and asylum across the EU.
- Reforming the range of returns mechanisms available to increase the number of people returned to their home countries.
- Effective integration and community engagement mechanisms to support social cohesion and combat all forms of racism in society.
- Sustainable accommodation for people seeking protection.
- A coherent and sustainable response to the ending of the Temporary Protection Directive.



Outcomes

- Publication of a national migration and integration strategy.
- An immigration system more responsive to the needs of its users and reduced timeframes for consistently high-quality, professional decisions.
- Public confidence in our systems for immigration, international protection and integration.
- Effective enforcement of our immigration laws that include the removal of people unlawfully present in the State.
- Increased capacity in State-owned accommodation and reduced reliance on commercial providers.
- Effective pathways in place for Ukrainian people who were granted temporary protection in Ireland.

Goal 5: Increasing our influence in Europe



Build effective relationships within the EU, United Kingdom and internationally to advance Ireland's interests

Objectives

- Positive leadership and engagement in Ireland's interests with the United Kingdom and in the EU and with international partners.
- The protection of the Common Travel Area with the United Kingdom.
- Expanding structures for international cooperation, including a new statutory International Cooperation Office to enable electronic evidence for criminal investigations to be shared across borders.
- A successful EU Presidency that delivers on Ireland's priorities in the justice and home affairs council.
- Working with international partners to combat effectively the shared threats of organised crime and cybercrime.
- Deliver on our obligations under the UN Sustainable Development Goals relating to public safety, access to justice, corruption and exploitation.



Outcomes

- Ensuring Ireland's policy positions are reflected in EU legislation to the maximum extent possible, with relevant EU law incorporated into Irish law within required timeframes, and increasing the number of EU measures into which Ireland has opted.
- Efficient transfers of electronic evidence to and from Ireland to support criminal investigations.
- Justice and Home Affairs objectives for Ireland's EU Presidency achieved.
- Consistent improvements in the relevant UN Sustainable Development Goal indicators.
- Reducing infringement proceedings arising from delayed transposition of EU measures.

Goal 6: People, systems and technology to deliver excellence



Investing in our people, systems and technology to deliver excellent services, sustaining and strengthening how we work in partnership, and increasing public understanding of our work.

Objectives

- Complete the transfers of responsibility for cyber security, international protection and integration, and Ukraine accommodation, successfully integrating the people working in these areas into all Department structures.
- Department attracting, developing and supporting our people, to ensure that they can thrive at work.
- Modernise and transform our service delivery areas, including through online portals, digital customer service tools and integrated case management systems.
- Effective tools and technologies in place to support our people to work collaboratively within the Department and with our partners.
- Strong and effective governance mechanisms, including ensuring value for money in all areas, with dedicated processes overseeing investment in major IT and capital projects.
- Communicating the work of the Department more effectively, allowing people to understand the breadth and quality of the work we do.
- High quality data and analysis, the use of existing evidence and the generation of new research, supported by a research strategy and strong relationships with research partners.



Outcomes

- Improved staff engagement across a range of key indicators.
- The elimination of paper-based processing, the replacement of legacy systems, enhanced customer service and processing efficiencies.
- Increasing levels of engagement both internally and with all key stakeholders.
- Robust financial controls and governance in place, including regular updates to the Department's corporate governance framework.
- A new communications strategy for the Department identifying a measurable set of key indicators.
- Evidence informed approach to decision making and policy development, and increasing transparency through the development of open data and other publications.



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