

PUBLIC SECTOR TRENDS 2021

27



STATE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE SERIES

RICHARD BOYLE
DECEMBER 2021

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INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION

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FOREWORD

This report examines trends in public sector development and is the twelfth in our annual series. The intention is to help inform the debate on Ireland's public sector and public administration, and its role in Irish society.

Here we try to bring some evidence to bear on the important debate on the future shape, size and direction of the public sector. Using data gathered from a number of sources, information on the size and cost of the public sector, the quality of public administration, efficiency and performance, and levels of trust and confidence is presented in a simple but rigorous manner.

In the *State of the Public Service* research series, we seek to provide evidence-informed research and commentary on key aspects of contemporary Irish public administration. The authors of these reports bring their considerable expertise and practical knowledge to the topics selected to provide evidence, insights and recommendations to support future development. Our aim is that these reports will not only inform, but also challenge current thinking about how the Irish public service performs. We intend that these short research reports will be of relevance and use not only to public servants, but also to policy makers and the wider public.

Dr Marian O'Sullivan
Director General
Institute of Public Administration

SELECTED FINDINGS

The size, cost and inputs of the public sector

- Average government spending per person was €20,716 per head in 2020. This was up significantly from 2019, reflecting the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The public sector accounts for about 15 per cent of the labour force. This is towards the lower end of European levels.
- Spending on public service pay and pensions has increased each year since 2014. Spending stands at 23.5bn in 2021.
- The proportion of top-level civil service posts filled by applicants from outside the civil service remains low. During 2020, all the top-level appointments were filled from within the civil service.
- The proportion of top-level posts filled by women has increased in recent years.
- Irish central government has a low proportion of both younger workers and older workers compared to other European countries.

The quality and efficiency of public administration

- Nearly two-thirds of the public, and just under half of business users, see the civil service as efficient.
- The provision of public services in Ireland rates less well than in many European countries. Just under half of all people surveyed say that the provision of public services was good.
- Business executives see Irish public services as one of the least bureaucratic in Europe.
- E-government in Ireland overall performs slightly above the European average, with some variances depending on the benchmark used.

Sectoral performance

Education

- Irish students score well in reading with socio-economic background being less of an influence than in many European countries
- Irish students reported a greater ability than the European average to deal with unusual situations and overcome difficulties

Health

- Ireland performs well compared to most European countries with regard to life expectancy at birth (82.8 years) and healthy life expectancy at birth (69.6 years).
- Ireland shows a low level of length of stay in hospitals (5.8 days in 2018), suggestive of a relatively high level of efficiency.

Trust, satisfaction and confidence in public administration

- Trust in public administration in Ireland is a little above the European average. Ireland is one of the few countries where reported levels of trust in public administration did not fall significantly between spring 2020 and spring 2021, a fall largely due to the response to the Covid-19 crisis.
- While citizen satisfaction with the education system is above the European average, satisfaction with healthcare is below the European average.
- The number of freedom of information requests and of complaints to Ombudsman offices fell overall in 2020, reflecting the effect of the Covid-19 crisis. The one office that bucked the trend was the Garda Síochána Ombudsman, who recorded an increase in the number of complaints.

1. INTRODUCTION

There are no clear or agreed definitions for comparative ranking of public administrations. However, there is widespread agreement that a number of elements should be included in any assessment:

- *The size, cost and inputs of the public sector.* While size of the public sector, its cost and its inputs are not the sole or even main determinants of good public administration, nevertheless in terms of value for money in the delivery of public services, keeping check on the size, cost and other inputs of the public sector and public service is an important consideration.
- *The quality and efficiency of public administration.* Public administration includes policy-making, policy legislation and management of the public sector. Such dimensions of public administration are frequently measured by subjective indicators of quality, which give a sense of how good the public administration is. There is also an onus on public administration to deliver services efficiently.
- *Sectoral performance.* The delivery of social and economic outcomes in an efficient manner is central to an effective public administration.
- *Trust, satisfaction and confidence in public administration.* The public ultimately must have trust, satisfaction and confidence in the public administration of a country if it is to be effective.

In this study, we examine indicators for each of these four elements of public administration. Where possible and appropriate, data is included for other European countries, in order to enable comparisons. In addition, where data are available, we have provided trend data going back over the last decade. The intention is to provide a snapshot of trends in public administration performance in Ireland, to highlight where we are doing well, what challenges are present, and where improvements can be made.

In a number of charts, as well as showing Ireland's rating relative to the European Union (EU) plus the UK averages, the top ranked and bottom ranked country as at the time of the most recent data gathering are included for comparative purposes.

In its style and content, the format for the report, which has remained largely unchanged since 2010, drew on a number of efforts to benchmark and compare public sector efficiency and performance. These include a European Central Bank (ECB) international comparison of public sector efficiency¹, a study by the Netherlands Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP) of comparative public sector performance², the World Bank governance indicators project³, the OECD Government at a Glance project⁴, and an IPA study comparing public administrations⁵.

A word of caution about data limitations

The data presented here should be interpreted with great care. First, there is the issue of whether the indicators used to represent public administration provision and quality really captures what public service is about. Indicators, by their nature, only give a partial picture. Second, much of the international comparative data in this report is qualitative data derived from opinion surveys. Some of this survey data comprises small-scale samples of opinion from academics, managers and experts in the business community. The survey data is thus limited in terms of both its overall reliability and the fact that some surveys represent the views of limited sections of the community. Third, the point scores arrived at on some indicators (for example, on a scale from 1–10 for the IMD data and between –2.5 and +2.5 for the World Bank governance indicators) should not be interpreted too strictly, as there are margins of error associated with these estimates. Fourth, changes over short periods should be viewed cautiously. Many of the indicators assessed represent 'snapshots' at one particular point in time. Small shifts in annual ranking are not particularly meaningful.

In all, when interpreting the findings set out in this paper, these limitations should be borne in mind. In particular, small variations in scores should be interpreted cautiously. These may be no more than random variations to be expected given the data being used. What is of interest is to identify broad patterns and trends emerging from the data.

1 Afonso et al (2003)

2 Social Cultural and Planning Office (2004)

3 See <https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/>

4 See <http://www.oecd.org/governance/govataglance.htm>

5 Boyle (2007)

2. THE SIZE, COST AND INPUTS OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR

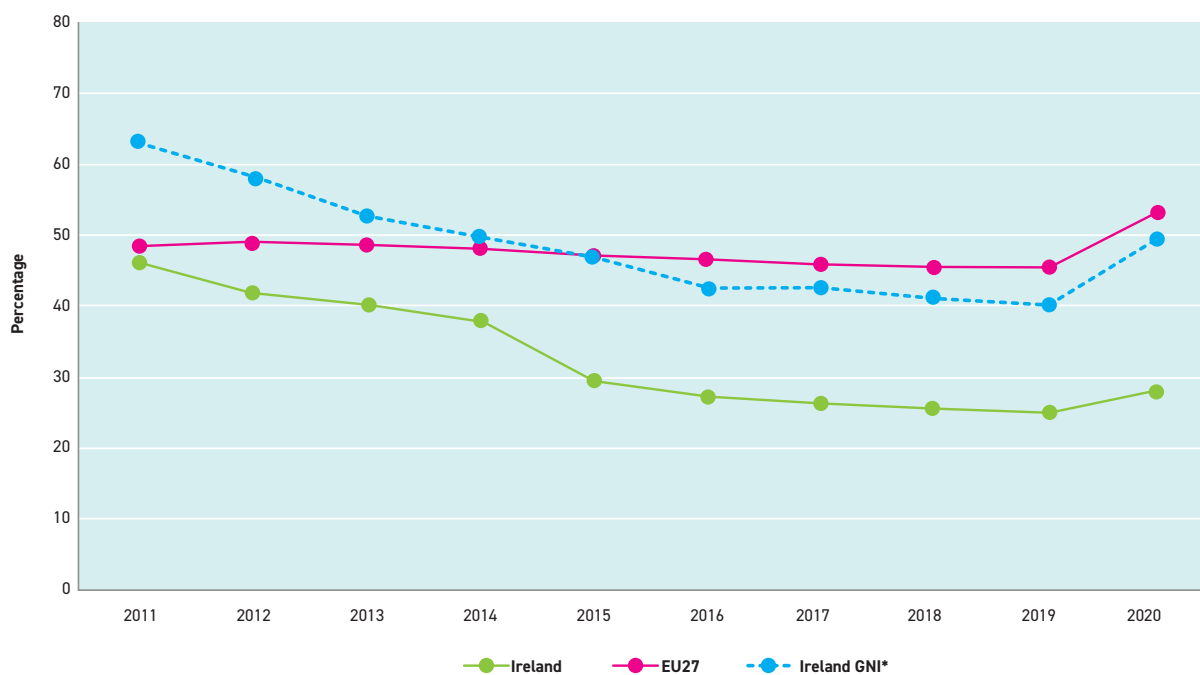
Here we present a range of indicators that show the size, cost and other inputs of the public sector and public service⁶.

⁶ In this study, the public service is defined as the public sector minus the commercial state-sponsored bodies.

Government expenditure as a share of the economy in Ireland is below the EU average but increased in 2020

FIGURE 1 GENERAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE AS SHARE OF GDP/GNI*

Sources: Eurostat and Central Statistics Office.



- Internationally, a commonly used indicator of public spending in the economy is government expenditure as a percentage of GDP (gross domestic product).
- From 2011 to 2019, as spending reductions introduced by the government came into effect, and the economy recovered from the effects of the global financial crisis, expenditure as a percentage of GDP fell considerably below the European average.
- In recent years, the reliability of GDP data for Ireland for comparative purposes is open to question, due to the effects of the large scale of multinational company activity in Ireland⁷. In 2017, the Central Statistics Office developed a new indicator, GNI*, or modified GNI (gross national income). Using this indicator, general government expenditure as a share of the economy is still below the European average.
- The effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on government spending and the economy is evident in the figures for 2020. Government expenditure as a percentage of GDP/GNI* increased both in Ireland and across Europe.

⁷ John Fitzgerald (2016), Problems with the Irish National Accounts and Possible Solutions, Dublin: Central Statistics Office.

Government expenditure per head of population is increasing

FIGURE 2 GENERAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE PER HEAD OF POPULATION

Source: Eurostat



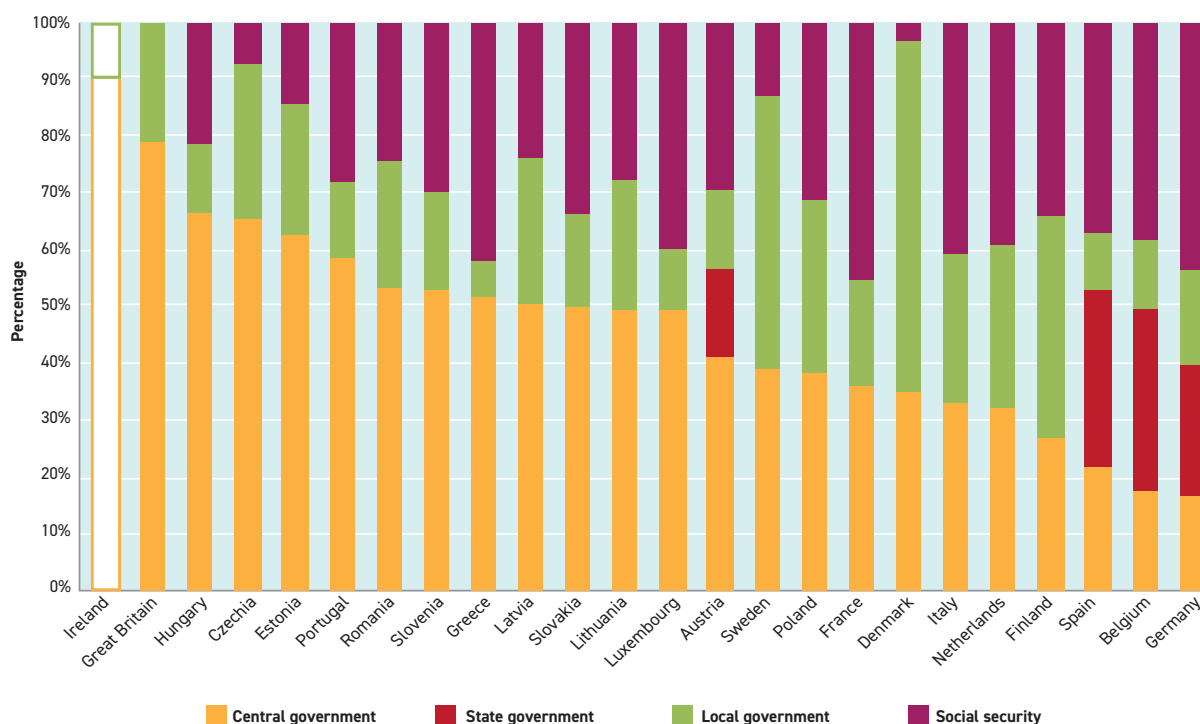
- Expenditure per head of population grew faster in Ireland than the EU average up to 2010 and then fell back somewhat.
- From 2013 to 2017 government expenditure per head remained relatively constant. It has been increasing gradually in recent years. The notable increase in 2020, to spending €20,716 per person, primarily shows the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Government expenditure per person in Ireland in 2020 was the eighth highest in the EU27. Denmark, shown on the chart, is one of the highest spenders on this indicator, while Bulgaria has the lowest level of government expenditure per head of population in the EU⁸.

⁸ Luxembourg has by far the highest level of general government expenditure per head of population, at €48,624 in 2020, but is atypical. Denmark is more representative of countries that have a high level of government spending per head of population.

Irish government expenditure is the most centralised in Europe

FIGURE 3 DISTRIBUTION OF GENERAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ACROSS LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT 2020

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

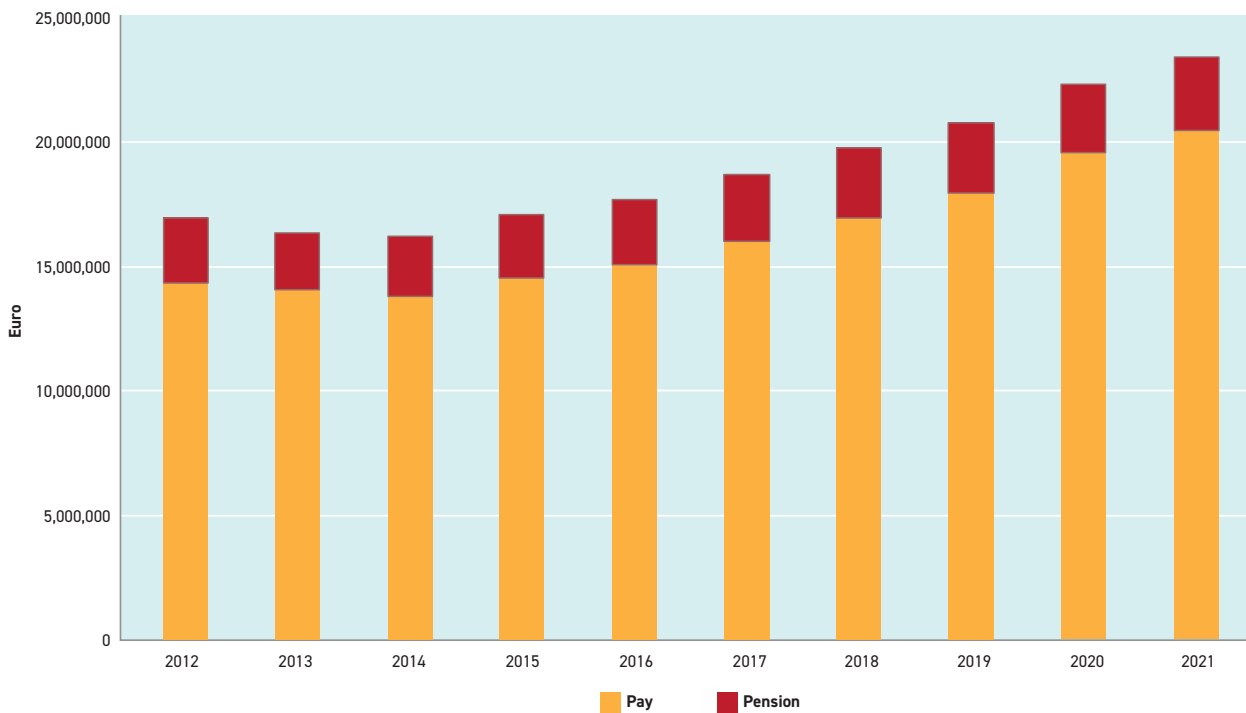


- The tasks of government are shared between different levels of government. The nature of this share-out varies markedly between countries.
- Ireland has by far the highest share of general government expenditure allocated at national level in the OECD in 2020, with just over 90 per cent of expenditure undertaken by central government.
- Centralisation has increased in recent years: central government's share of expenditure was around 82 per cent in 1987.
- Towards the other extreme, in Denmark only a third of general government expenditure is the responsibility of central government, with local government being responsible for just over 60 per cent.

Expenditure on public service pay and pensions continues to grow

FIGURE 4 PUBLIC SERVICE PAY AND PENSIONS

Source: Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Databank.

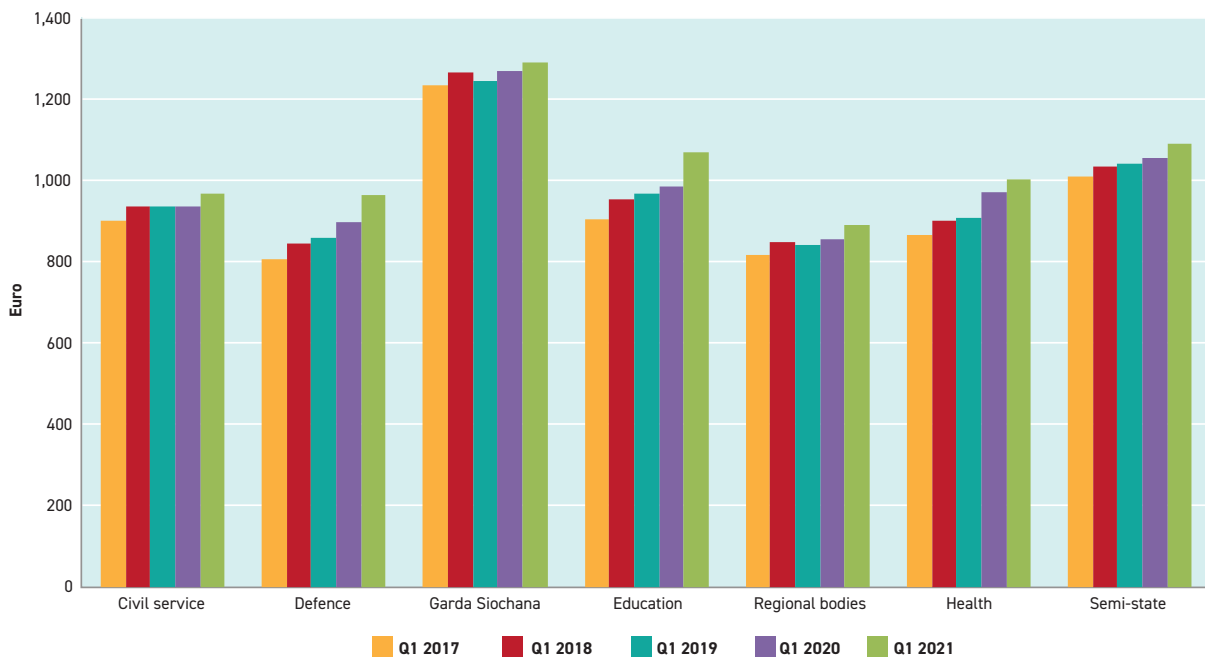


- The public service pay and pension bill reached a peak of €18.7bn in 2008. From 2008 to 2014, as the cutbacks in numbers and pay introduced by the Government took effect, expenditure on public service pay and pensions decreased to €16.2bn in 2014.
- Spending on public service pay and pensions has increased each year since 2014. Spending stands at €23.5bn in 2021, its highest ever total.
- Pensions account for approximately €3bn (13 per cent) of the total pay and pension bill in 2021.

Average weekly earnings in the public sector are continuing to increase

FIGURE 5 PUBLIC SECTOR AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS

Source: CSO. Figures are for Q1 each year.

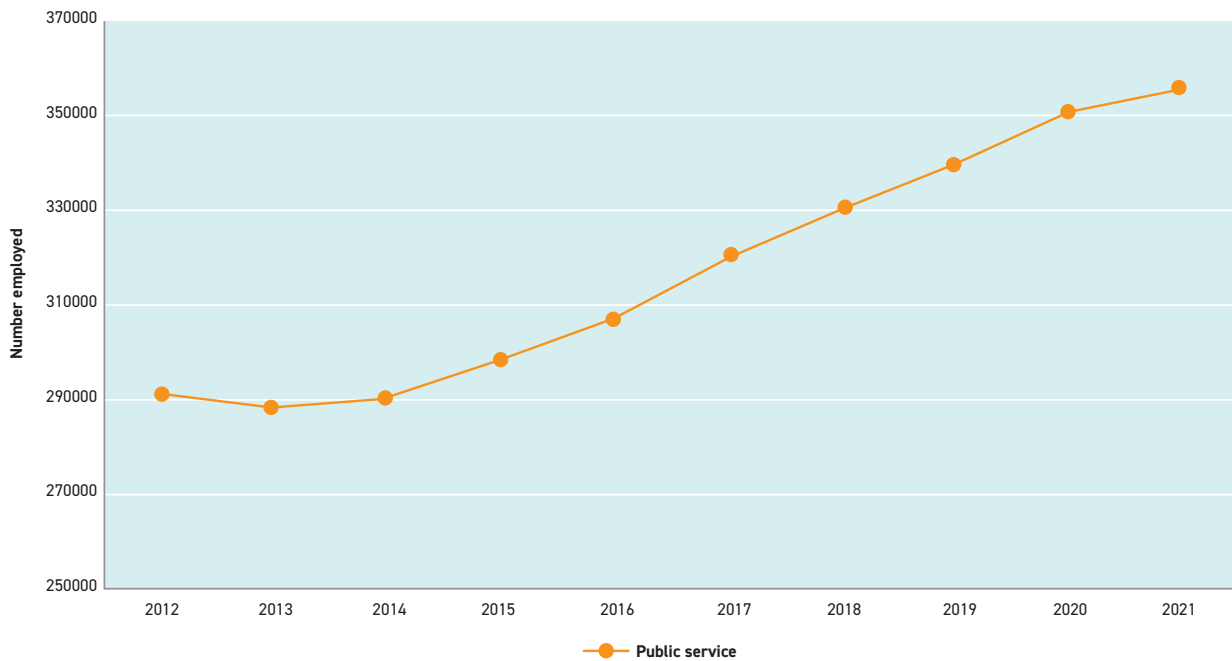


- These are gross earnings figures before deductions for PRSI, tax and other levies. The CSO note that this is particularly relevant to the public sector since March 2009 when the pension levy was introduced.
- Overall, average weekly earnings have increased between 2017 and 2021.

There is a continuing trend of growth in the numbers employed in the public service

FIGURE 6 NUMBERS EMPLOYED IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

Source: Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Databank⁹



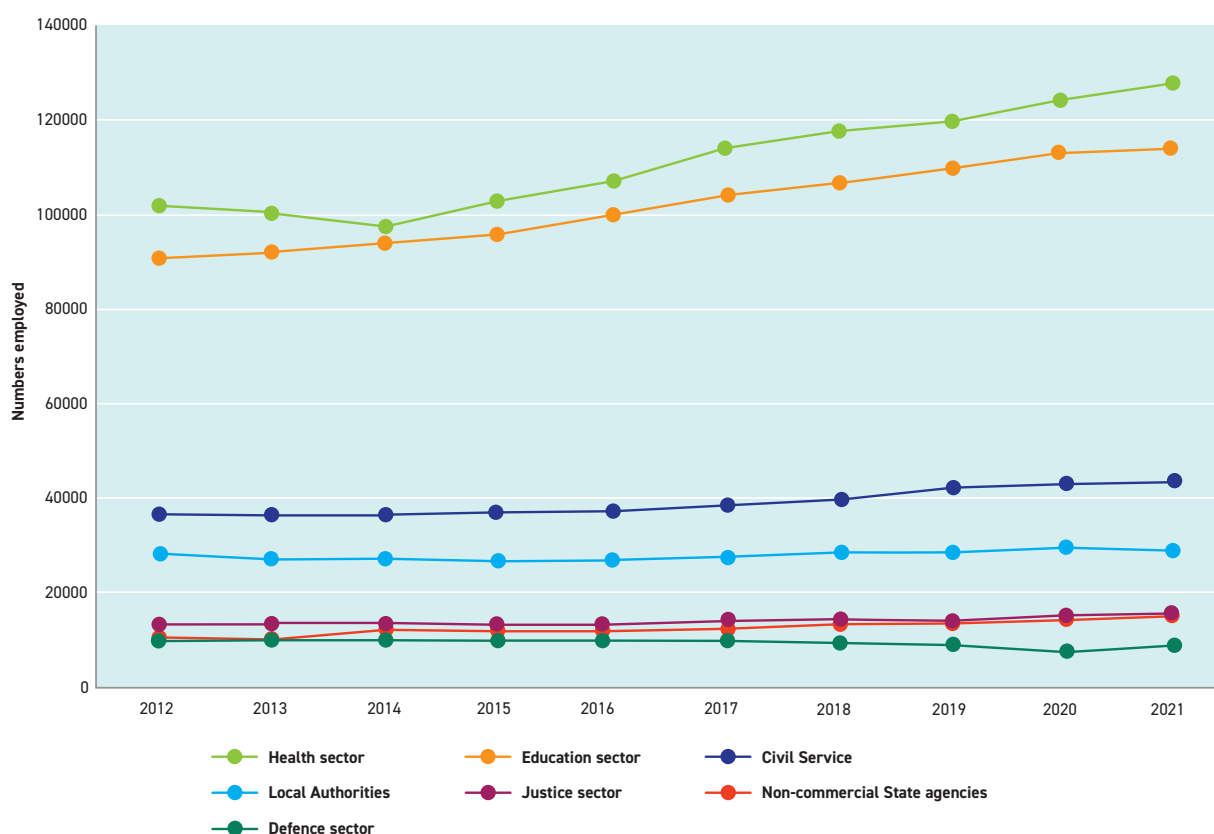
- From its then peak in 2008, the total number of people employed in the public service dropped from 320,000 to 288,000 in 2013, a drop of 10 per cent.
- The number of people employed in the public service has risen since 2013, and there are now almost 25 per cent more employed than there were in 2013.
- In 2021, the numbers employed in the public service stood at 356,000.

⁹ Figures are for end of year, apart from 2021, which is for Q1. Figures are for full-time equivalents rather than actual numbers of people.

The health and education sectors account for the vast majority and a growing proportion of public service jobs

FIGURE 7 PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR

Source: Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Databank¹⁰



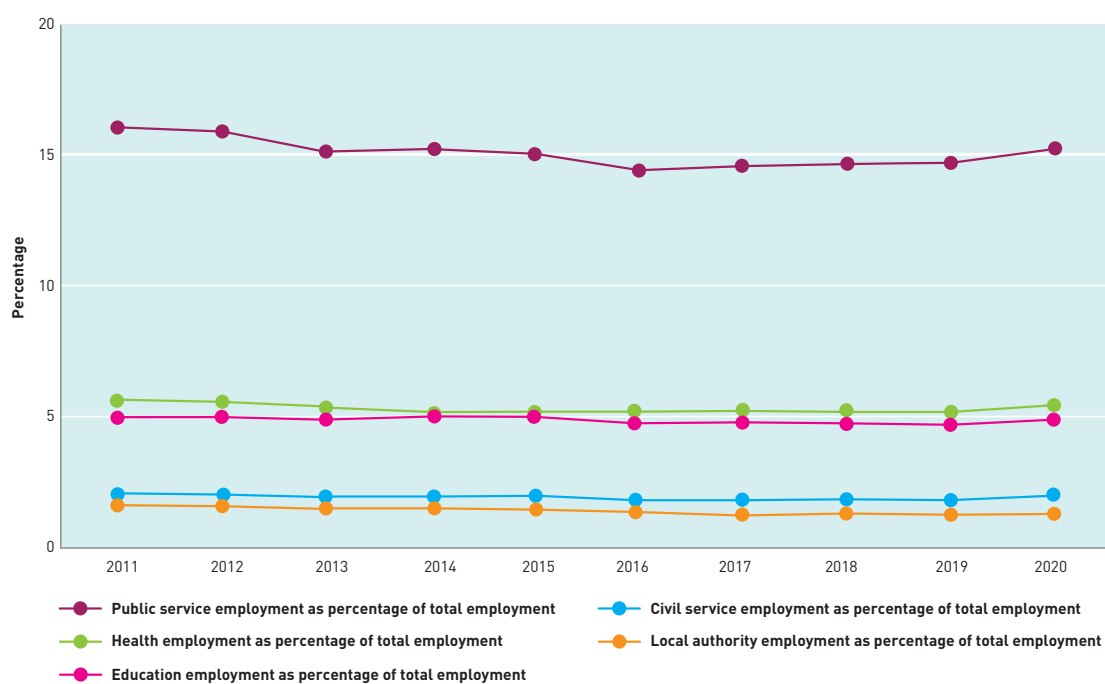
- 68 per cent of people employed in the public service work in either health or education. This is up from 66 per cent in 2012
- In 2021, there were approximately 130,000 people employed in the health sector and 115,000 people employed in the education sector.
- The defence and local authority sectors are the only sectors where employment remains lower than in was back in 2008, before the cutbacks arising from the global financial crisis.

¹⁰ Figures are for end of year, apart from 2021 which is for Q1, the most recent available.

While numbers employed in the public service have increased over the last decade, as a proportion of the total workforce they have remained relatively constant

FIGURE 8 PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYMENT AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

Source: Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Databank¹¹, CSO



- Over the past decade, public service employment has generally remained around 15 to 16 per cent of total employment¹².
- 5.5 per cent of all those in employment are employed in the health sector, and 4.9 per cent in education. 1.9 per cent of those in employment are civil servants, and 1.2 per cent are in local authorities.

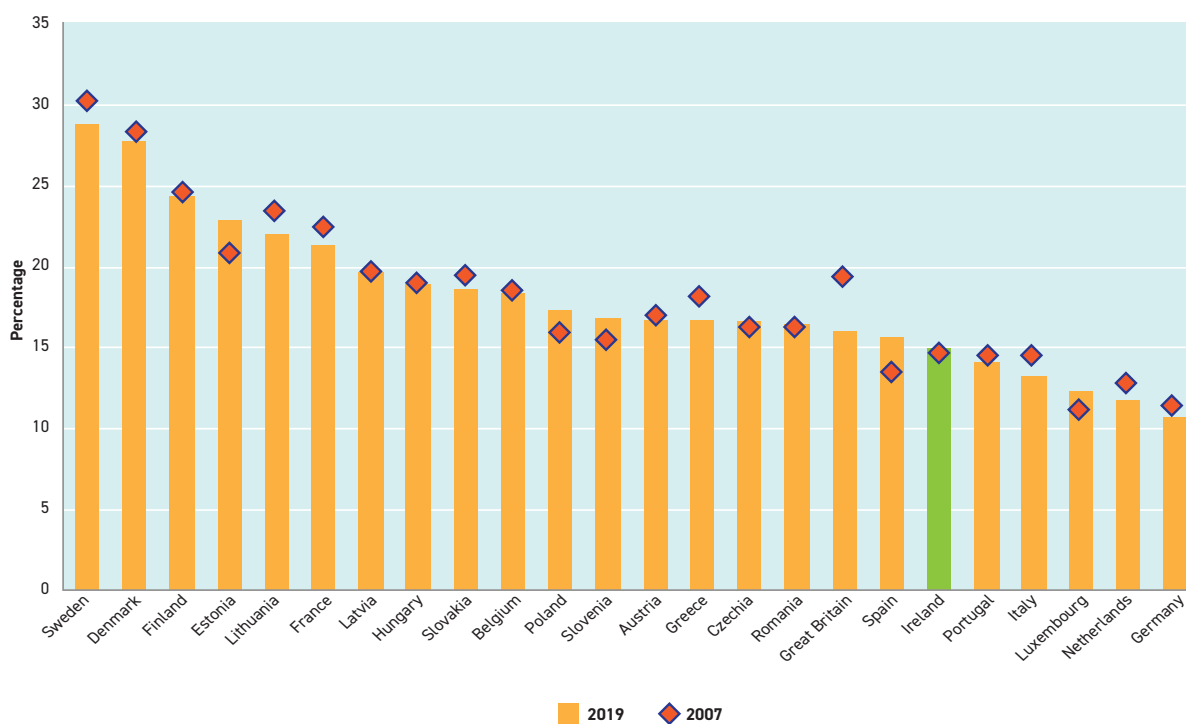
¹¹ Figures are for end of year, apart from 2021 which is for Q1, the most recent available.

¹² Much of the public service data provided refers to full-time equivalents rather than actual numbers of people. So public service employment as a percentage of total employment is in reality larger than that reported. The size of the difference is unknown, though Foley (2009, p.86) estimated it at around 1 per cent in 2007.

Employment in government as a percentage of the labour force remains at the lower end of European practice

FIGURE 9 EMPLOYMENT IN GENERAL GOVERNMENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

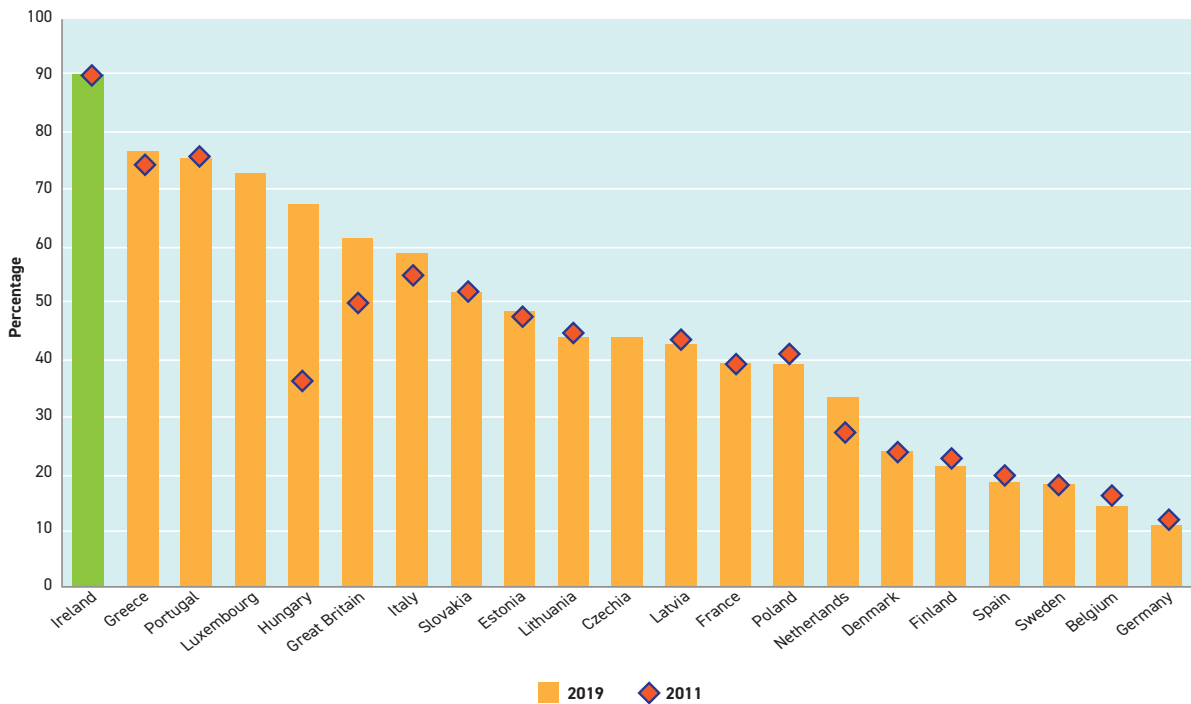


- The size of government employment varies significantly amongst European countries, from 28.6 per cent of the labour force in Sweden to 10.6 per cent in Germany in 2019.
- In Ireland in 2019, employment in general government services accounted for 15 per cent of the labour force, towards the lower end of countries surveyed. This proportion has remained steady in recent years.

Ireland has the highest proportion of staff employed at the central level in Europe

FIGURE 10 PERCENTAGE OF GENERAL GOVERNMENT STAFF EMPLOYED AT THE CENTRAL LEVEL 2019

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

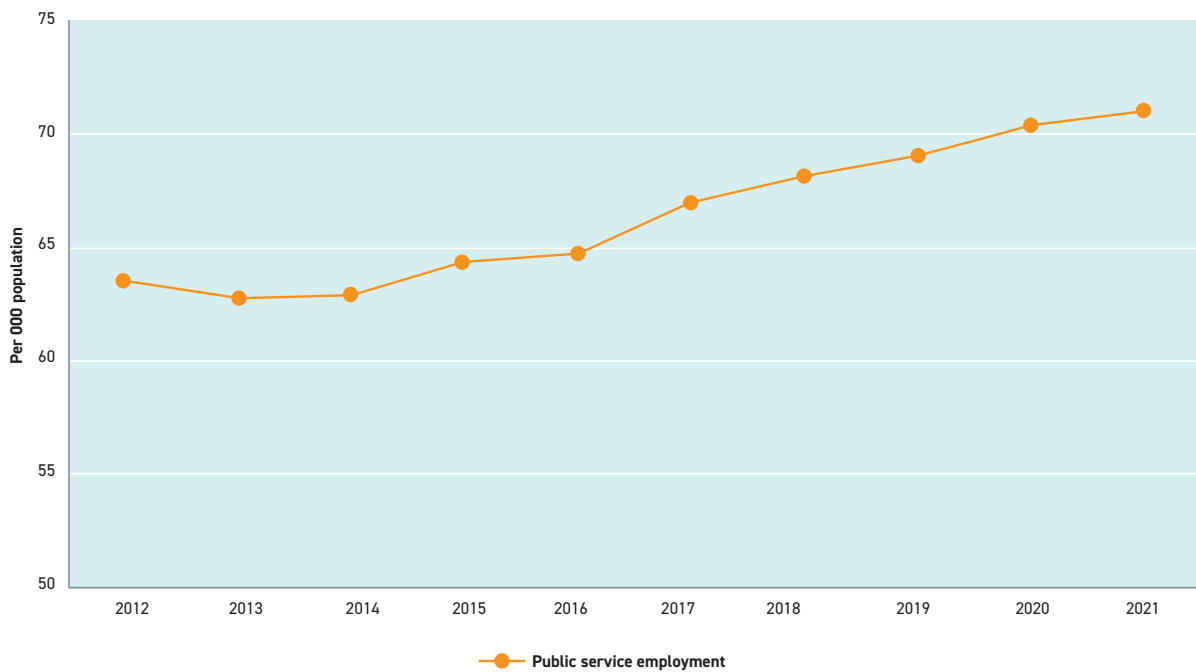


- Between 2011 and 2019, the percentage of general government staff employed at the central level remained relatively stable in most countries.
- Ireland has the highest percentage of general government staff employed at the central level, as opposed to at state, regional or local government level, at 90 per cent. This reflects the highly centralised nature of Irish government.

Public service employment relative to the total population has increased in recent years

FIGURE 11 PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PER 000 POPULATION

Source: Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Databank¹³, CSO



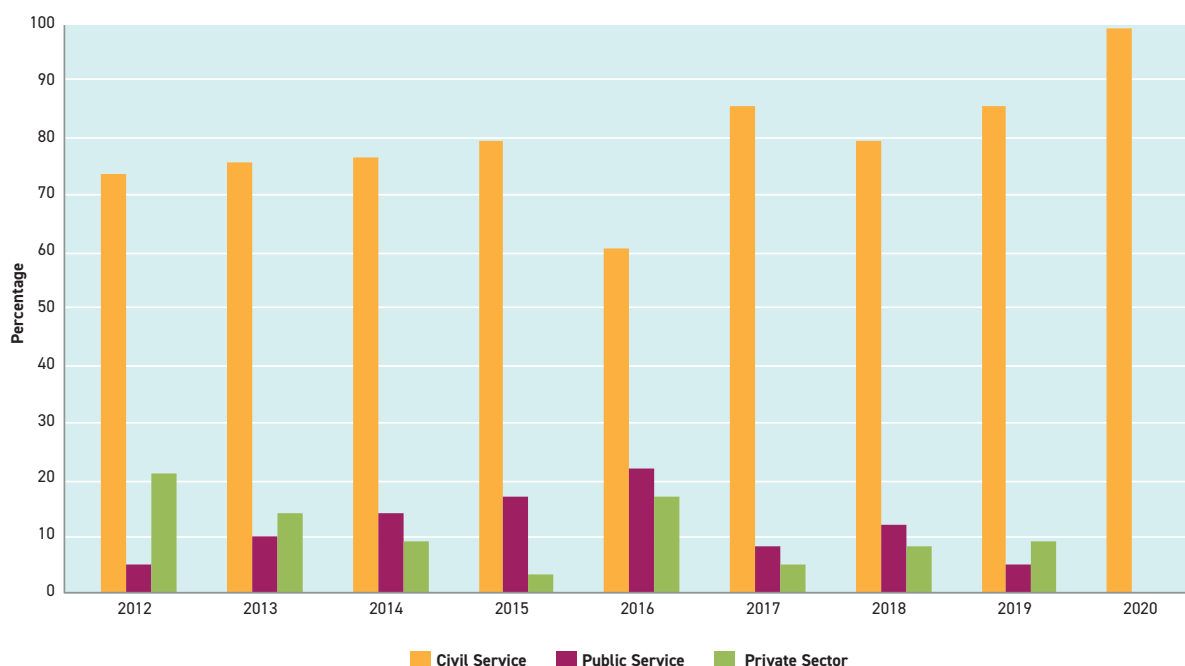
- While public service employment levels have been changing, the population has continued to increase.
- Public service employment relative to the population was relatively stable at between 70 and 73 public sector employees per 000 population up to 2008, but dropped rapidly from 2008 until 2013 when it was at 62.8 public service employees per 000 population.
- The number of public service employees per 000 population rose to 71 in 2021, still below the 2008 figure.

¹³ Figures are for end of year, apart from 2021 which is for Q1

Applicants from within the civil service are currently filling nearly all top-level civil service posts

FIGURE 12 PERCENTAGE OF SUCCESSFUL TOP LEVEL APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE (TLAC) CANDIDATES RECOMMENDED TO MINISTER/GOVERNMENT BY SECTOR

Source: Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC) Ninth Report to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, 2020 Developments & Trends



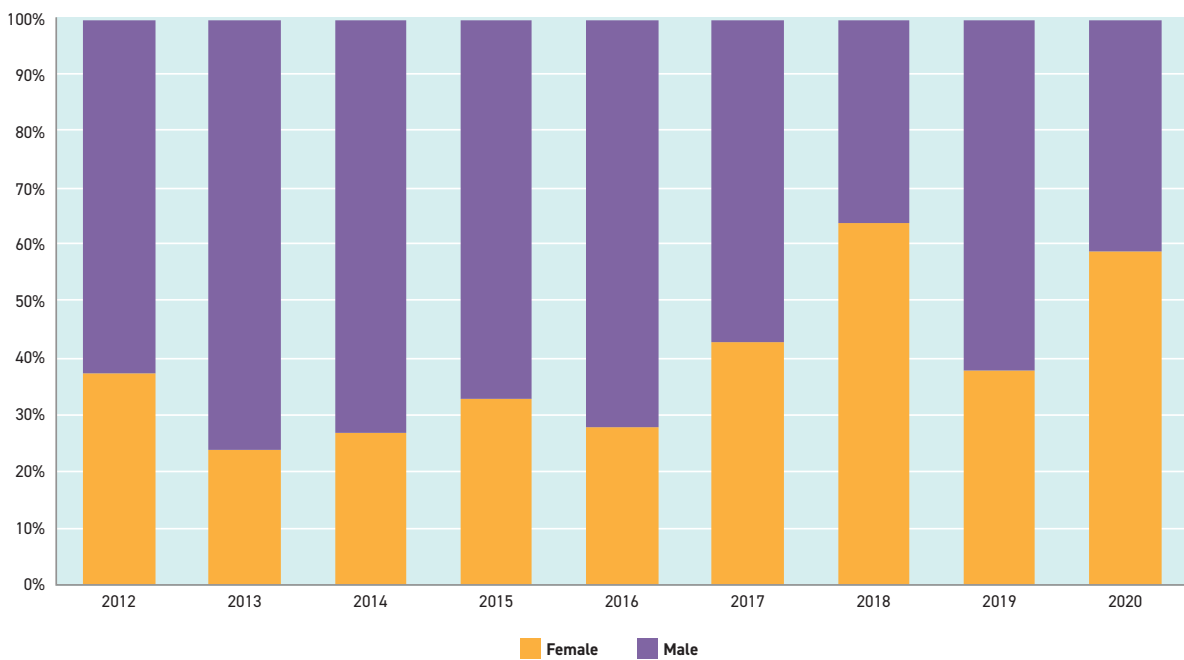
- The proportion of top-level appointments¹⁴ filled from within the civil service has been rising overall since 2012.
- The proportion of top-level posts filled by private sector applicants reached a high of 21 per cent in 2012 but has been lower each year since then.
- The proportion of top-level posts filled from the wider public service rose from 5 per cent in 2012 to 22 per cent in 2016, but has dropped back since then to consistently below 10 per cent.
- In 2020, 100 per cent of successful top-level appointments were filled from within the civil service. This despite more than 70 per cent of all applicants coming from outside the civil service, with more than 50 per cent coming from the private sector.

¹⁴ Top-level appointments covers the most senior positions in the civil service – at assistant secretary general level and upwards.

The proportion of top-level posts filled by women has been higher in recent years overall

FIGURE 13 TOP LEVEL APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE (TLAC) SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES BY GENDER

Source: Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC) Ninth Report to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, 2020 Developments & Trends

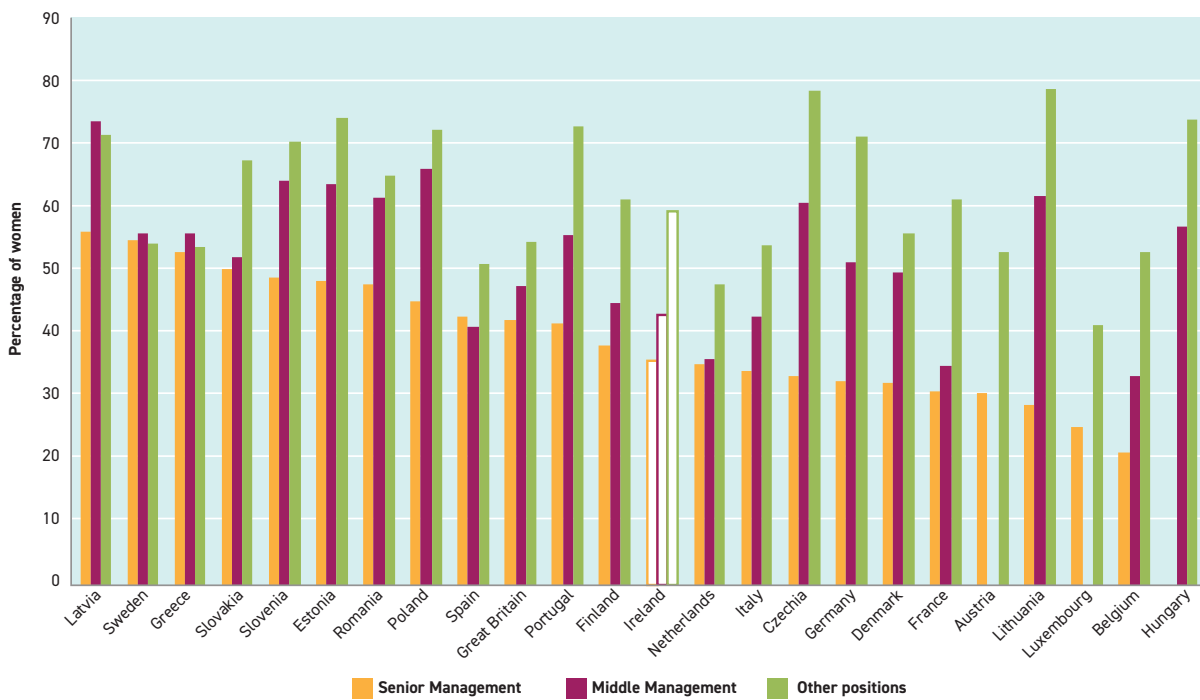


- The proportion of top-level posts filled by women varied between roughly a quarter and a third of all posts up to 2017.
- There has been a notable increase in recent years in the proportion of top-level posts filled by women, for the first time over 50 per cent, at 64 per cent in 2018. After a drop to 38 per cent in 2019, it increased again to 59 per cent in 2020.

The proportion of women in management positions in central government in Ireland is around the average for Europe

FIGURE 14 GENDER EQUALITY BY POSITIONS IN CENTRAL GOVERNMENT 2020

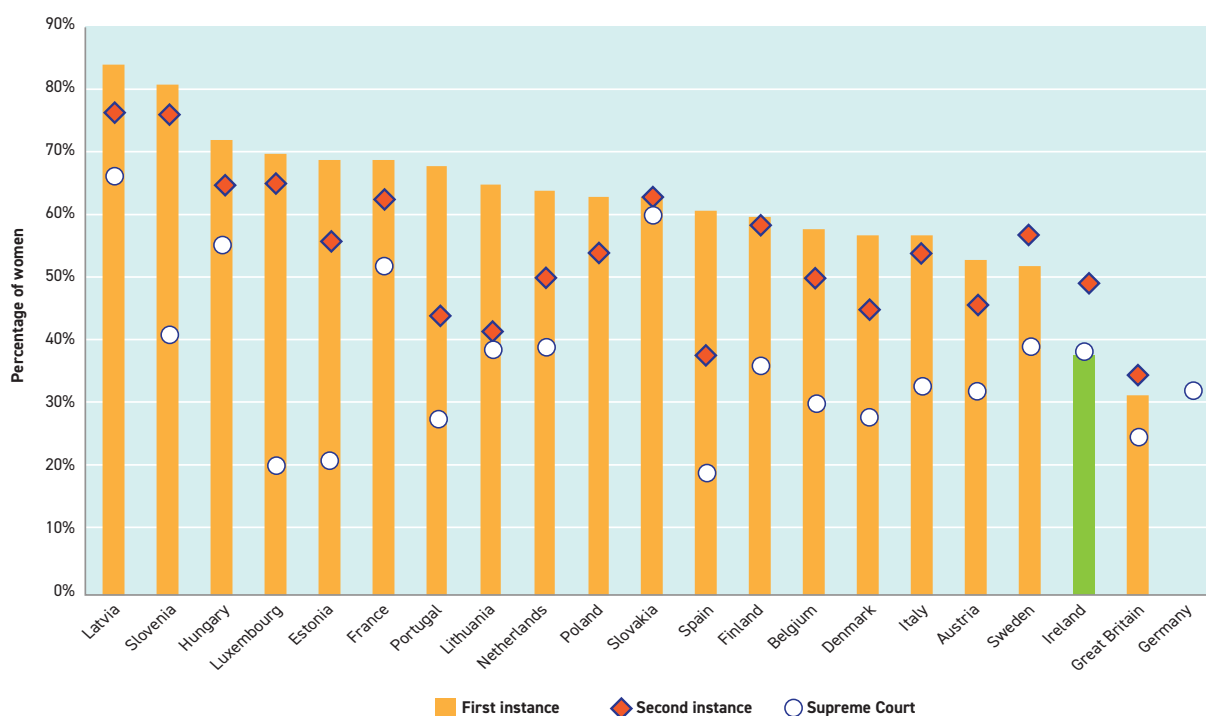
Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021



- Equal representation of women and men in the public sector is a key indicator of progress towards gender equality and diversity.
- The share of women in senior and middle management positions in central government in Ireland is at around the average for Europe. For example, women fill just over one-third of senior management positions. This is some way below the level of just over half of positions filled by women in Latvia, Sweden and Greece.

Ireland has much fewer women judges than most European countries

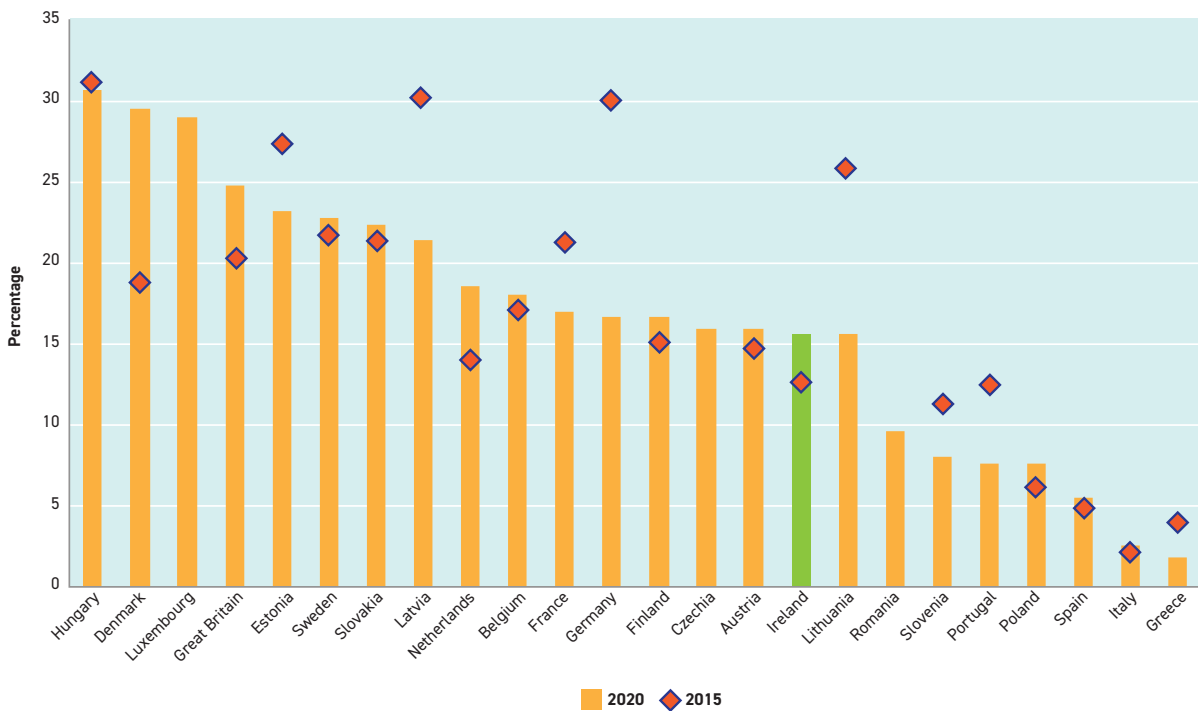
FIGURE 15 GENDER EQUALITY OF PROFESSIONAL JUDGES BY LEVEL OF COURT 2018
Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021



- Data on the gender equality of professional judges by court refers to the share of women occupying judgeships in three levels of courts as of 2018. Courts of first instance are where legal proceedings begin. Courts of second instance review decisions issued by lower courts. Supreme courts are the highest courts within the hierarchy of many legal jurisdictions and primarily function as appeal courts, reviewing decisions of lower and intermediate-level courts.
- Ireland had one of the lowest percentage of women as judges in Europe (of the countries surveyed) in 2018. 38 per cent of the judges of first-instance courts, and 50 per cent of the judges of second-instance courts, were women.
- In most countries surveyed, over 50 per cent of judges at courts of first-instance were women.

Irish central government has a low proportion of younger workers

FIGURE 16 PERCENTAGE OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AGED 18-34
Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

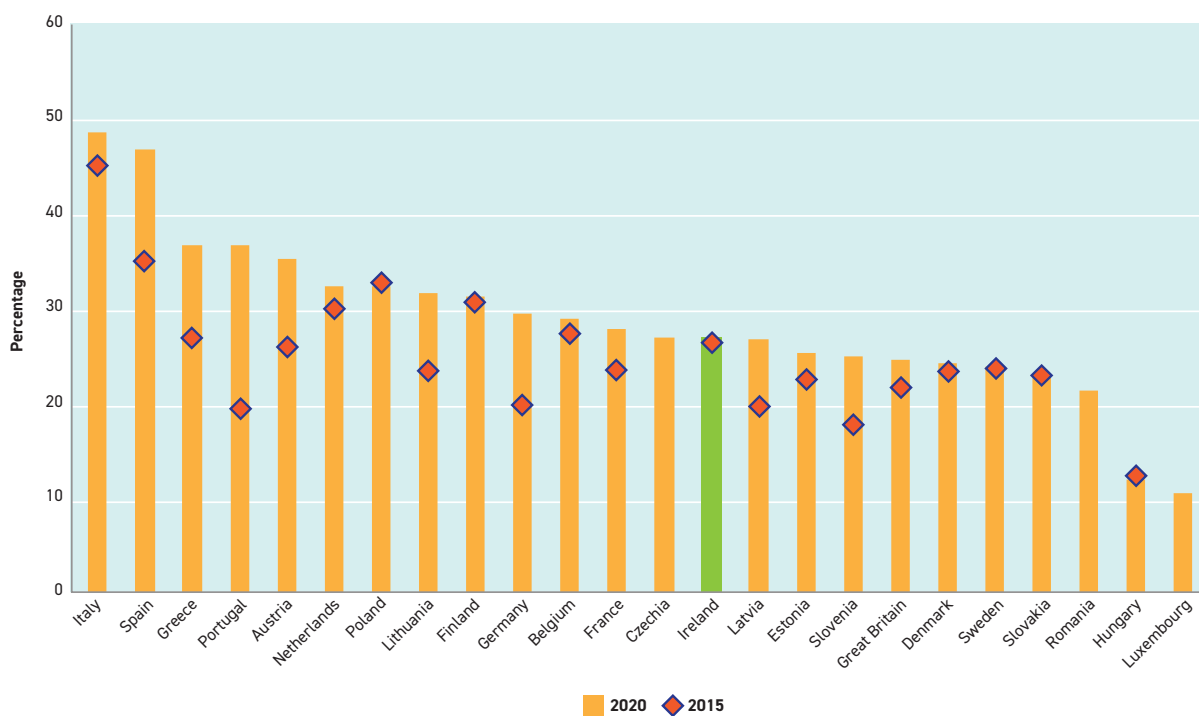


- The age profile of the central government workforce can determine workforce management challenges.
- Ireland has a relatively low proportion of young central government employees. 16 per cent of employees were aged 18-34 in 2020. This is up slightly from 2015 when the percentage was just under 13 per cent. This low proportion of younger workers to some extent reflects the impact of the restrictions on employment introduced in the aftermath of the global financial crisis, which have only been eased in recent years.

Ireland has a relatively low share of central government employees aged 55 or older

FIGURE 17 PERCENTAGE OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AGED 55 OR OLDER

Source: Government at a Glance 2021

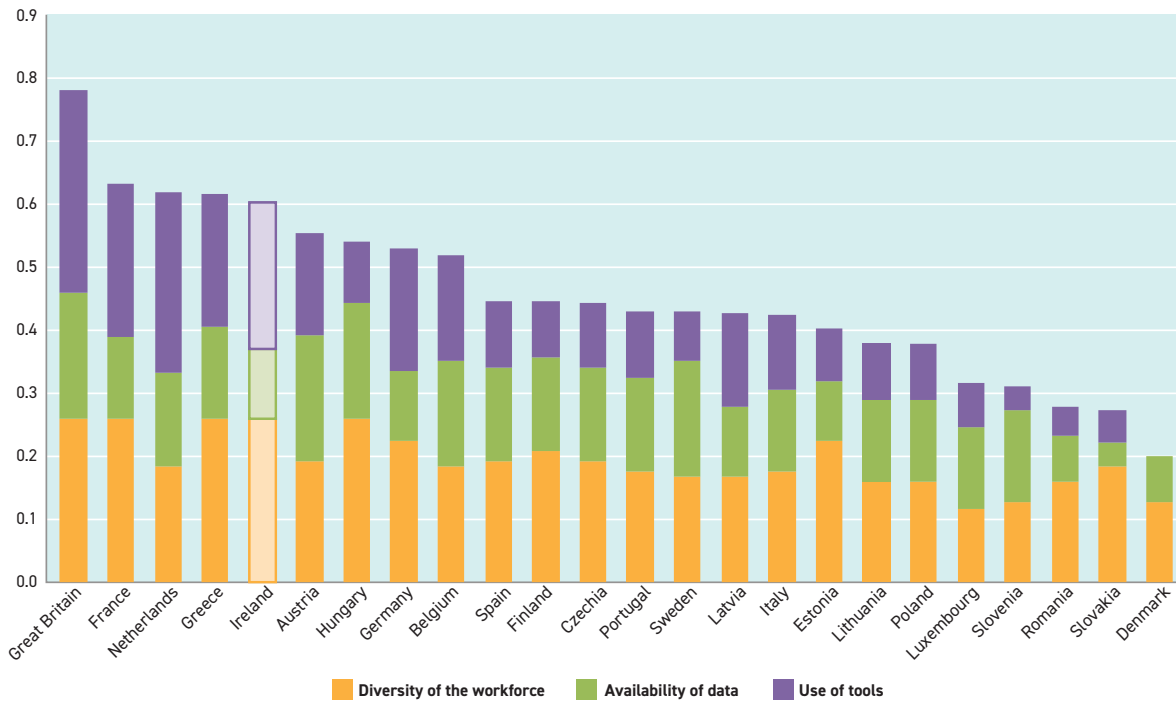


- The age profile of the central government workforce can determine workforce management challenges.
- Ireland has a relatively low share of workers (27 per cent) in central government aged 55 or older in 2020. This share remains the same as it was in 2015. To some extent, this relatively low proportion reflects Ireland's younger age profile in European terms, but also the lingering effects of the global financial crisis, when older employees were offered incentives to leave before their retirement age.

Ireland is among the higher scorers with regard to developing a diverse workforce

FIGURE 18 PILOT INDEX: DEVELOPMENT OF A DIVERSE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WORKFORCE 2020

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

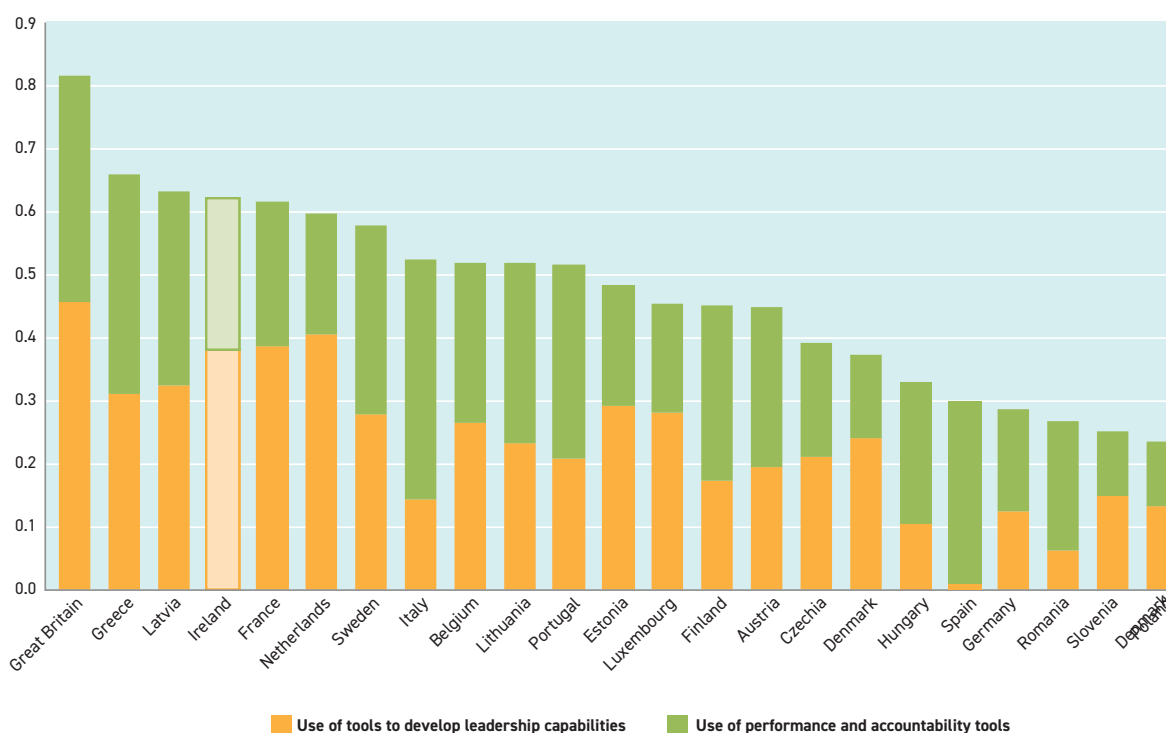


- Increased diversity and inclusion in the public service workforce has emerged as a priority for governments in recent years. A more diverse workforce can bring a range of benefits such as enhance people's trust, and encourage public sector innovation, as different perspectives and skill sets contribute to designing solutions to policy challenges.
- The OECD are piloting an index of government diversity in the workforce. The pilot index is made up of three dimensions: the diversity of the workforce; the availability and use of data to track diversity and inclusion; and the use of tools to develop a diverse and inclusive workforce.
- Ireland is among the higher scorers with regard to developing a diverse workforce. Ireland scores relatively well with regard to the diversity of the workforce and the use of tools to develop a diverse workforce, but less well with regard to the availability and use of data to track diversity.

Ireland scores relatively well with regard to how the State manages its senior public servants.

FIGURE 19 PILOT INDEX: MANAGING THE SENIOR LEVEL PUBLIC SERVICE 2020

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

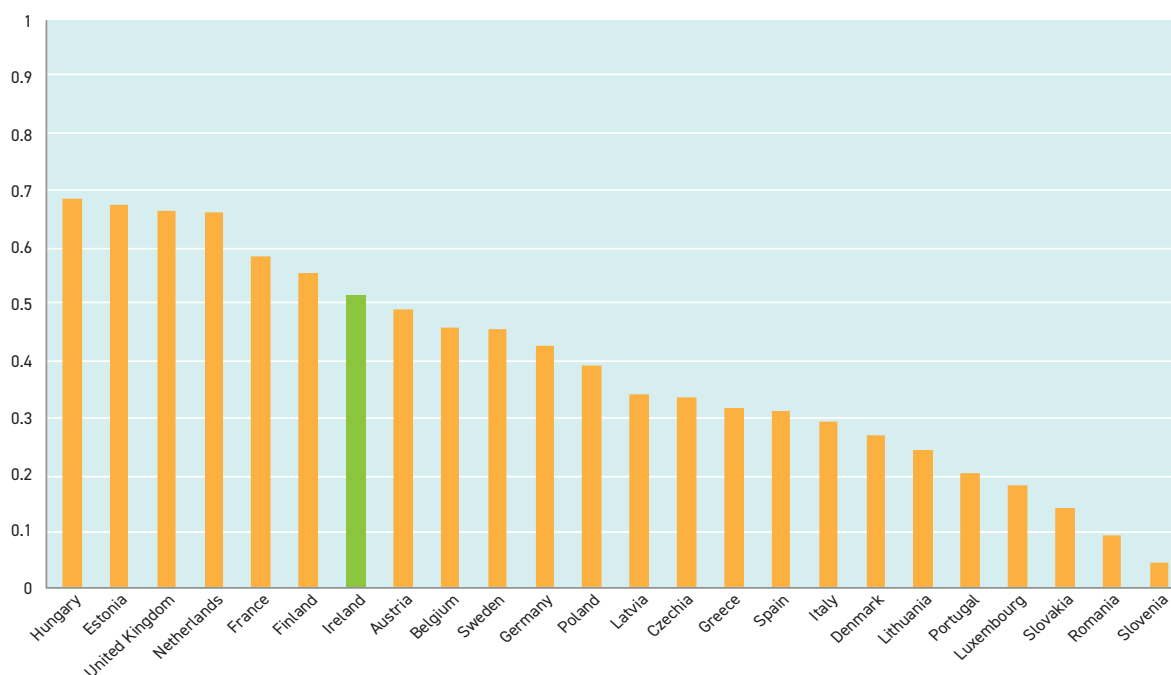


- Senior level public servants with responsibility for leading and improving major government functions are central to good public administration.
- The OECD are developing a pilot index concerning the management of the senior level of the public service. The index comprises two main dimensions: the development of leadership capabilities, and the use of performance and accountability tools. Each dimension is built from survey responses to several related questions. The index ranges from 0 (no policies to manage the senior level public service) to 1 (high level of use of policies to manage the senior level public service).
- Ireland scores relatively well with regard to how the State manages its senior public servants, showing a relatively high level of use of policies to manage the senior public service.

Ireland is above the European average with regard to the use of active recruitment practices to secure a skilled and diverse workforce for the public sector

FIGURE 20 PILOT INDEX: USE OF PROACTIVE RECRUITMENT PRACTICES 2020

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

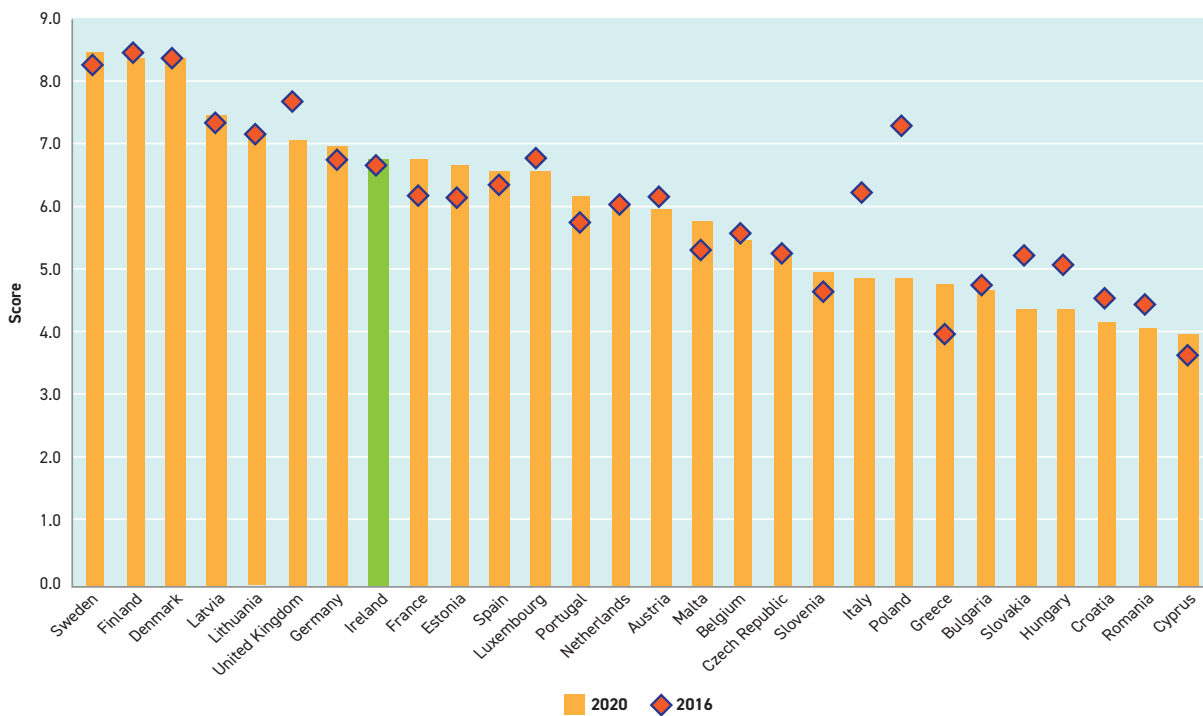


- Governments need to attract and recruit staff with an increasingly diverse range of skills to address complex policy and service delivery challenges. Governments are in competition with other sectors for these skills, so they try to reach a wide range of candidates to ensure the diversity and quality of the candidate pool.
- The OECD are developing a pilot index of proactive recruitment practices used by governments. The composite indicator is made up of the following aspects of employer attractiveness: elements highlighted in recruitment material; policies to attract more and better candidates with in-demand skills; the use of methods to determine what attracts skilled employees; adequate pay systems to attract good candidates; and having actions in place to improve the representation of under-represented groups. The index ranges from 0 (no use of proactive recruitment practices) to 1 (high level of use of proactive recruitment practices).
- Ireland is above the European average with regard to its recruitment practices for the public sector, though a little below the highest scoring countries.

The steering capacity of the Irish government is assessed at a little above the European average

FIGURE 21 EXECUTIVE CAPACITY

Source: Bertelsmann Stiftung Sustainable Governance Indicators

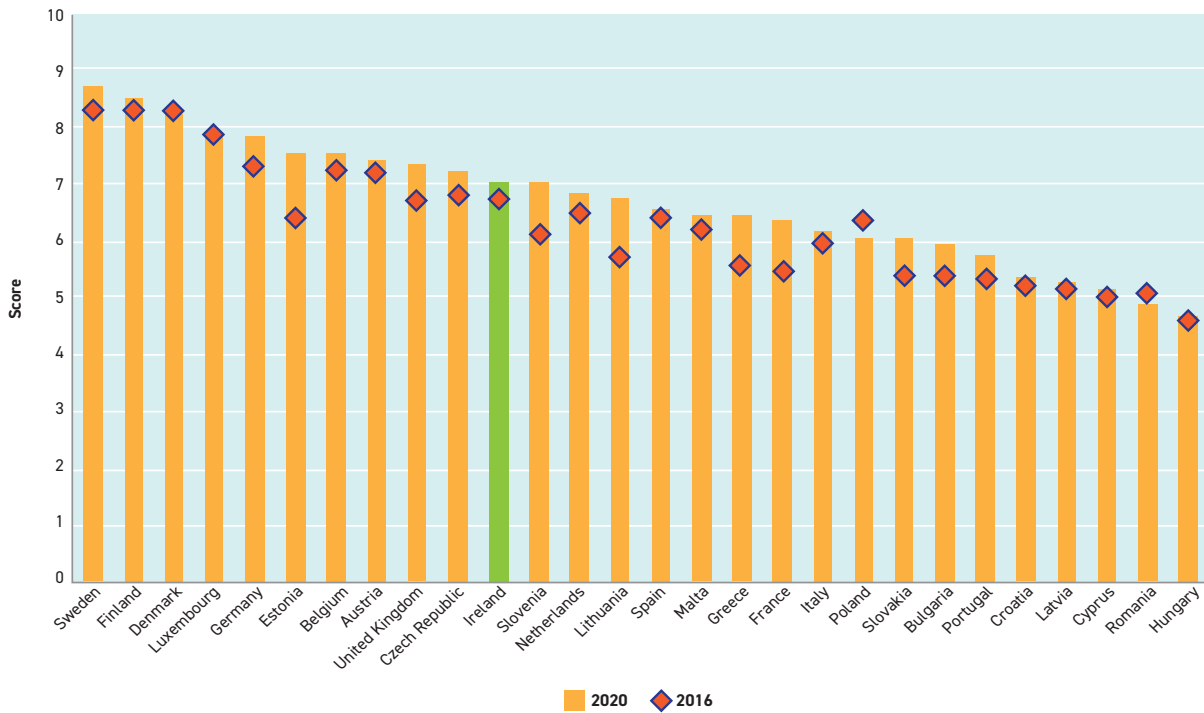


- This executive capacity index assesses the steering capacity of government. It covers strategic capacity, inter-ministerial coordination, evidence based instruments, societal consultation, policy communication, implementation, and adaptability.
- Ireland falls into the upper-middle ranks with regard to executive capacity.
- Sweden, Finland and Denmark are the highest scorers.

Executive accountability in Ireland is rated at slightly above the European average

FIGURE 22 EXECUTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

Source: Bertelsmann Stiftung Sustainable Governance Indicators



- The executive accountability index examines non-governmental actors' involvement in policy-making. It assesses citizen's participatory competence, legislative actors' resources, the role of the media, and the role of parties and interest associations.
- Ireland falls into the upper-middle ranks in terms of executive accountability. Its score has remained relatively steady since 2016.
- As with executive capacity, Sweden, Finland and Denmark receive the highest scores.

3. THE QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLIC SERVICES

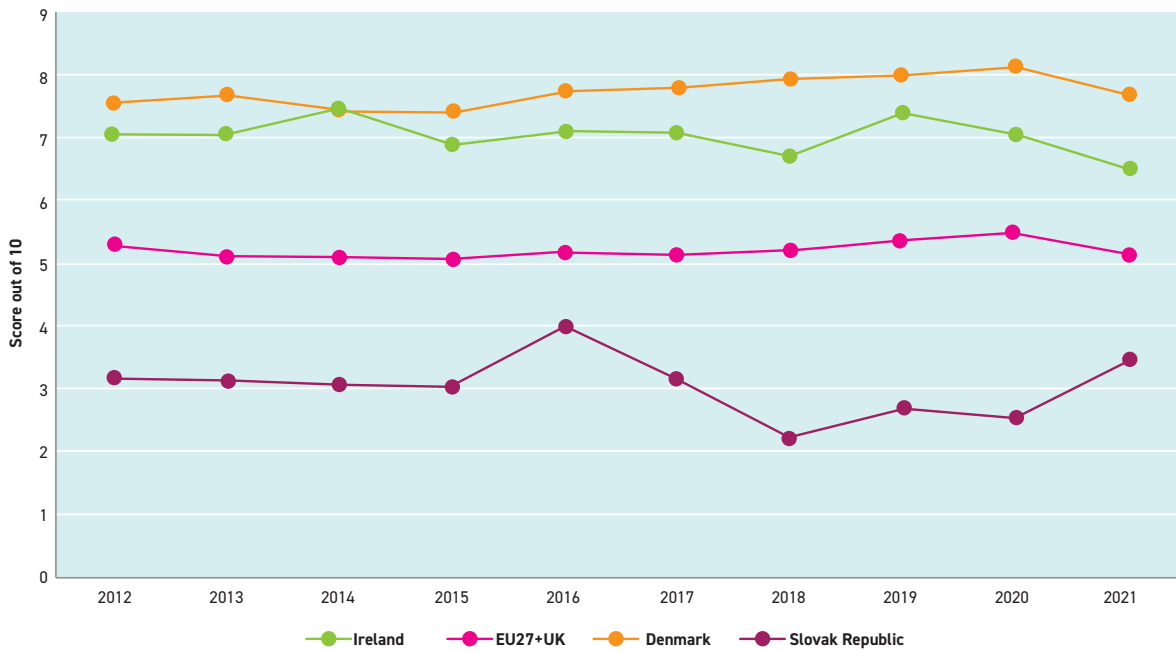
An indicator of the quality of public administration, based on work undertaken by the Social and Cultural Planning Office (2004) in the Netherlands and taken further by Boyle (2007) is used to assess the quality of public administration. Eight indicators derived from the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) executive opinion survey are combined to make up an aggregate public administration quality indicator (see Appendix 1 for details). It is complemented by two subsets of this indicator, one of which shows trends in perception about the application of traditional public service values in public administration, the other showing perceptions of the type of competitive and regulatory regime fostered by public administration.

These quality indicators are supplemented by a range of other indicators of aspects of quality and efficiency.

Executives see the quality of Irish public administration as above the European average

FIGURE 23 QUALITY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SCORE

Source: IPA analysis based on IMD World Competitiveness yearbook data

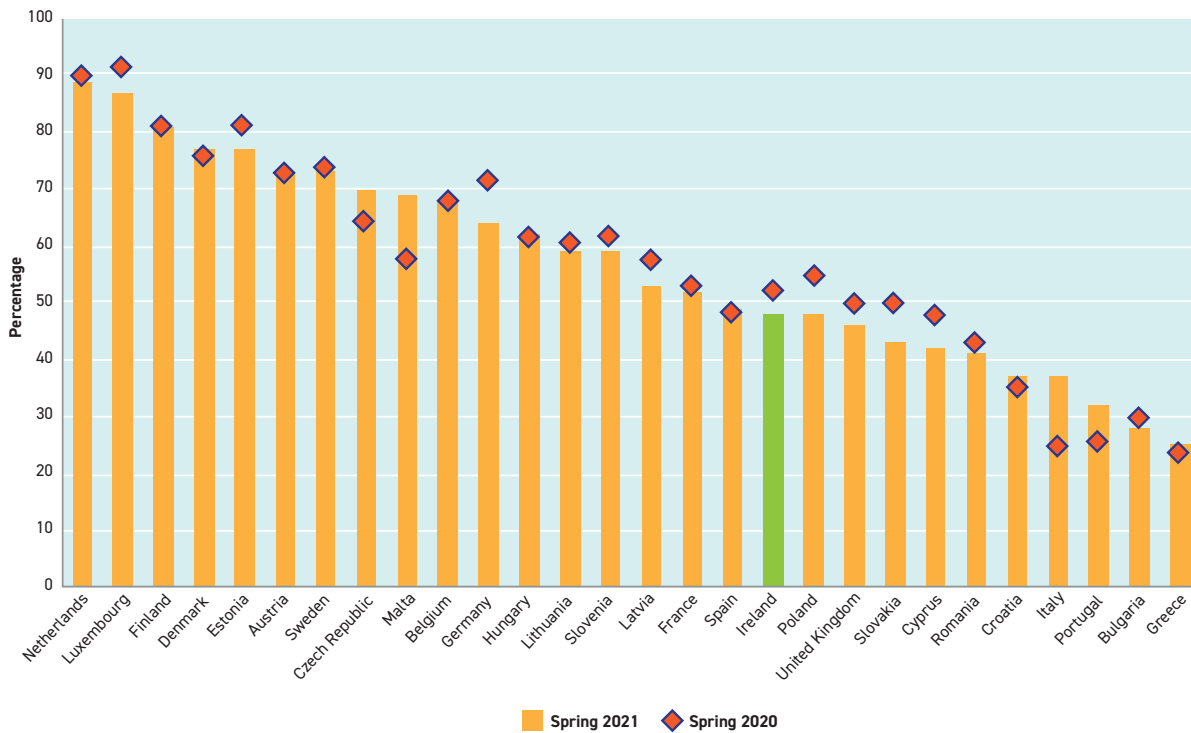


- This quality indicator measures executives' opinions of the quality of public administration as assessed by a range of indicators covering issues such as the existence of bribery and corruption, and transparency of decision making (see Appendix 1 for full list).
- Ireland's score on the quality of public administration index has fallen slightly over the last two years. Ireland came sixth of the EU27+UK on this indicator in 2021.

The provision of public services in Ireland is rated less well than in many European countries

FIGURE 24 TOTAL POSITIVE FEELINGS TOWARDS - PROVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICE

Source: Eurobarometer

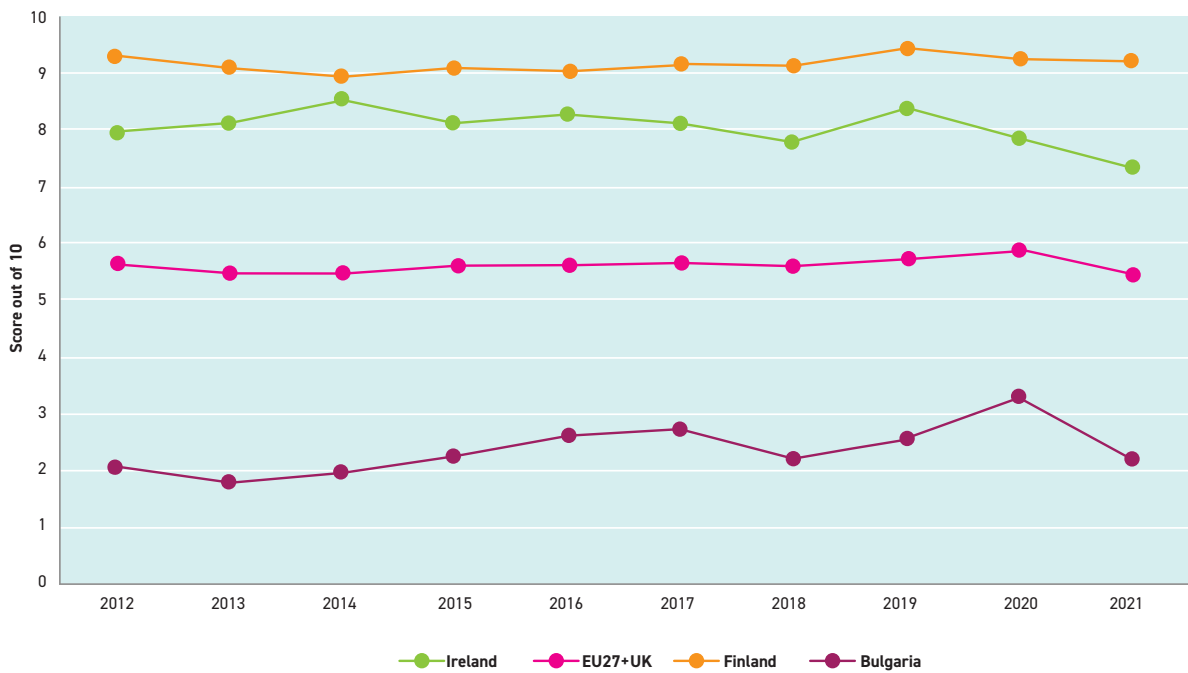


- In spring 2021, just under half of all people surveyed said that the provision of public services in Ireland was good.
- The Netherlands and Luxembourg receive the highest rating, at 89 per cent and 87 per cent respectively rating public service provision as good.

Irish maintenance of traditional public service values is above the European average

FIGURE 25 TRADITIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE VALUES INDICATOR (TPSVI)

Source: IPA analysis based on IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook data

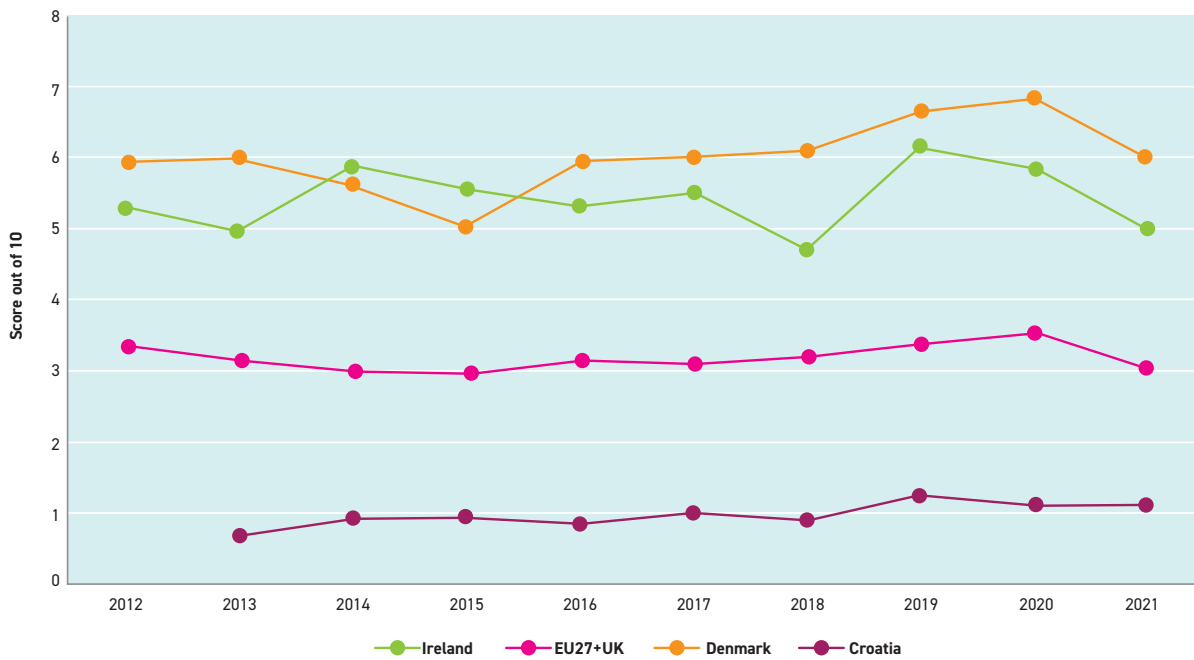


- A sub-set of the quality of public administration indicators can be used to assess what might be termed the 'traditional' public service values such as independence, freedom from bribery and corruption, transparency, reliability and administrative fairness.
- Ireland's ranking on this traditional public service values indicator has generally been well above the EU28 average. Ireland ranked seventh of the EU27+UK on this indicator in 2021. Its score has reduced slightly in recent years
- Finland, Denmark and Sweden score highest on this indicator.

Business executives see Irish public services as one of the less bureaucratic in Europe

FIGURE 26 BUREAUCRACY HINDERS BUSINESS ACTIVITY

Source: IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook data

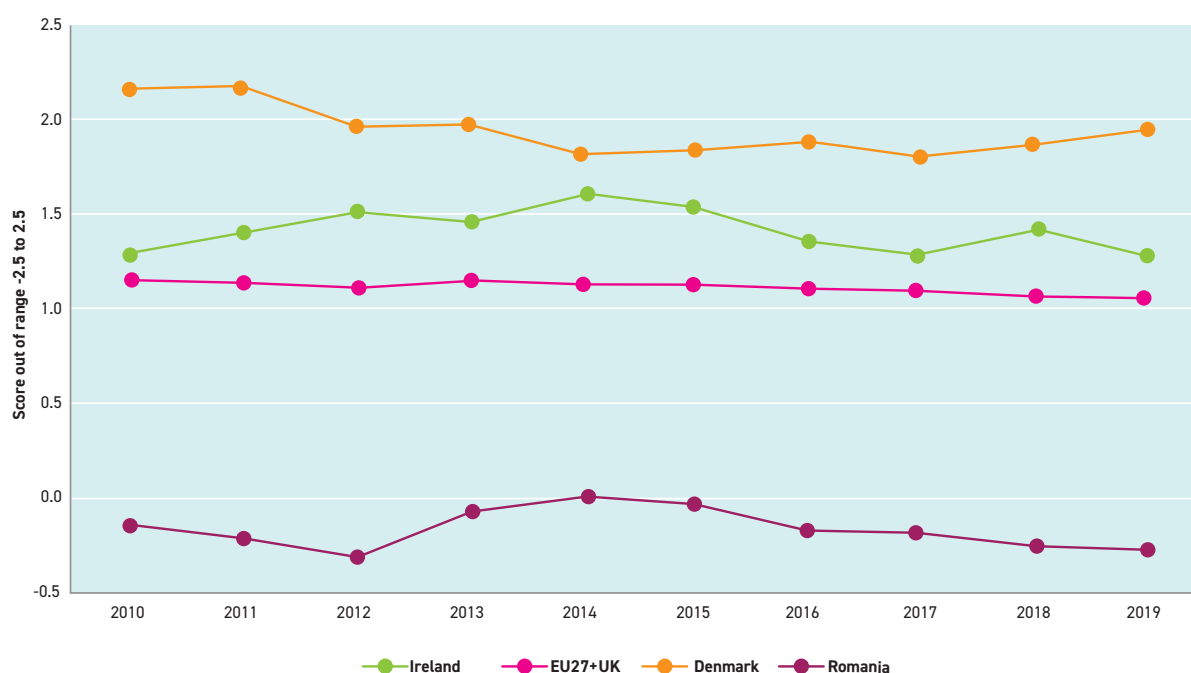


- Respondents to the executive opinion survey carried out by IMD for their World Competitiveness Yearbook indicate that compared to most European countries in the EU, bureaucracy in Ireland is seen as less of a hindrance to business activity. Ireland ranked sixth on this indicator in 2021.

In World Bank assessments, Ireland's government effectiveness score remains above the European average but is falling

FIGURE 27 WORLD BANK GOVERNMENT EFFECTIVENESS INDICATOR

Source: World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators

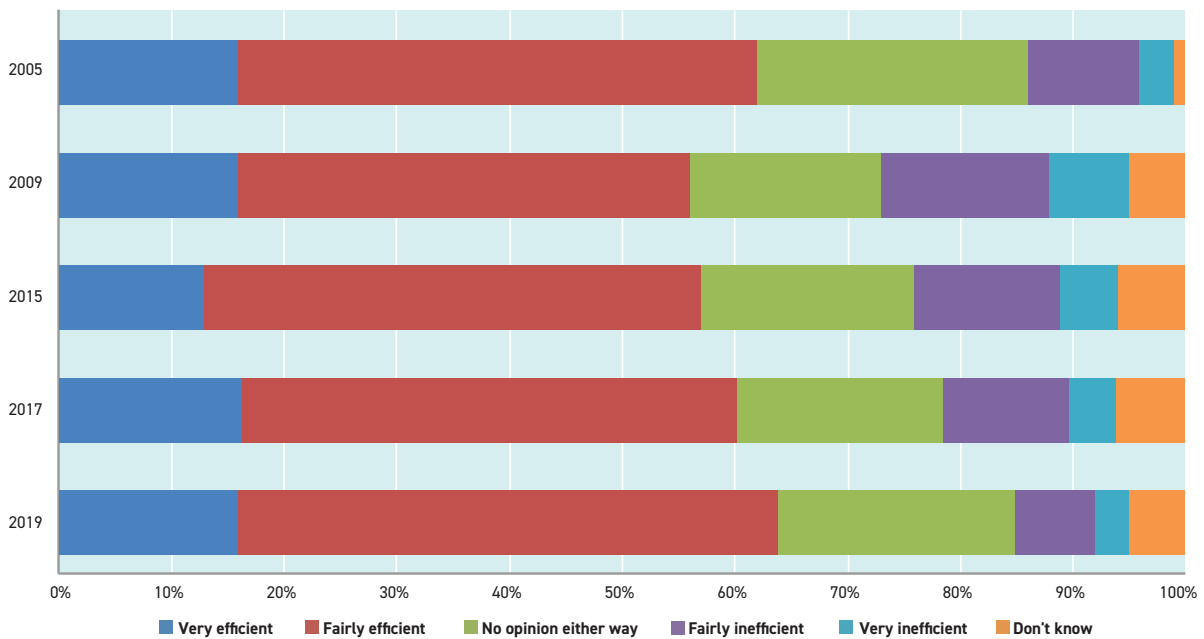


- Since 1996, the World Bank has been using a set of governance indicators as part of its work on promoting good governance. The indicators draw from 35 separate data sources constructed by 32 different organisations.
- The Government Effectiveness indicator aims to measure the quality of public services, the capacity of the civil service and its independence from political pressures, and the quality of policy formulation. On this indicator, Ireland ranked well above the EU27+UK average up to 2007.
- Ireland's government effectiveness indicator score dropped to just above the EU27+UK average in 2009. It stabilised in 2010, and generally improved up to 2014. Ireland's score has trended downwards overall since 2014 but remains a little above the European average. Denmark is the top European scorer on this indicator and Romania the lowest ranked.

Public impressions of civil service efficiency are generally favourable and improving

FIGURE 28 IMPRESSION OF CIVIL SERVICE EFFICIENCY

Source: Irish Civil Service Customer Satisfaction Survey, 2019

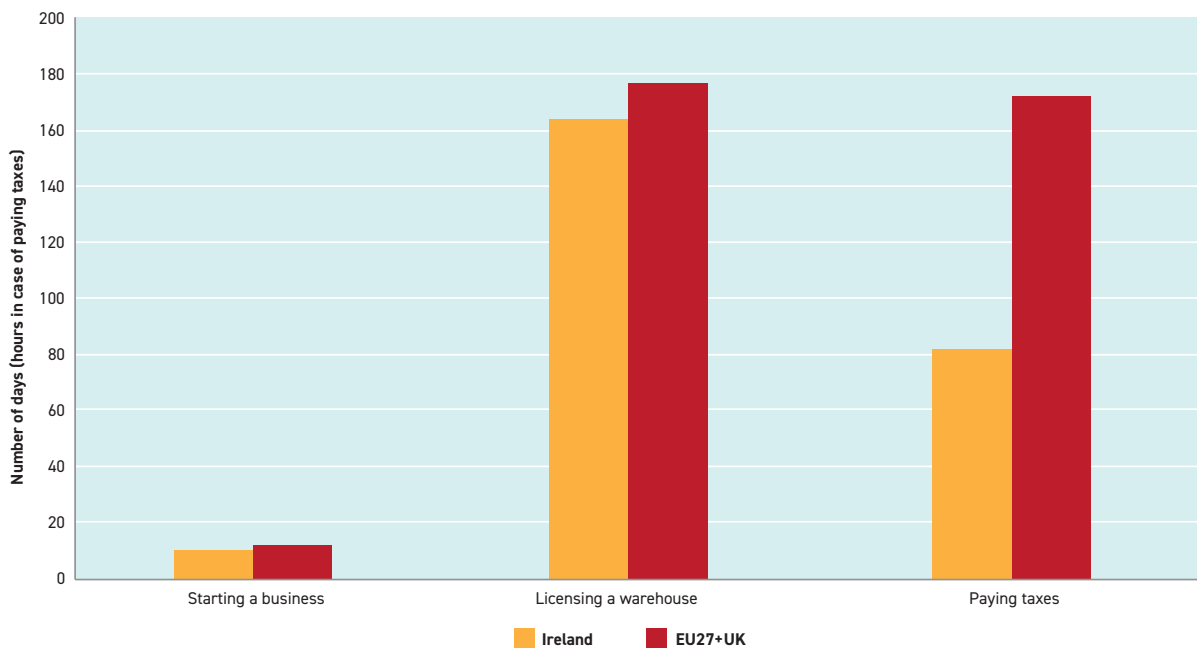


- Most members of the public feel that the civil service is efficient. In 2019, 64 per cent viewed the civil service as either very or fairly efficient. This is the highest figure recorded since the survey started in 2005.
- 10 per cent of people surveyed in 2019 feels that the civil service is either very or fairly inefficient, down from 15 per cent in 2017.

Ireland's public administration continues to provide a relatively efficient level of service to business

FIGURE 29 WORLD BANK DOING BUSINESS INDICATORS 2020

Source: World Bank Doing Business indicators

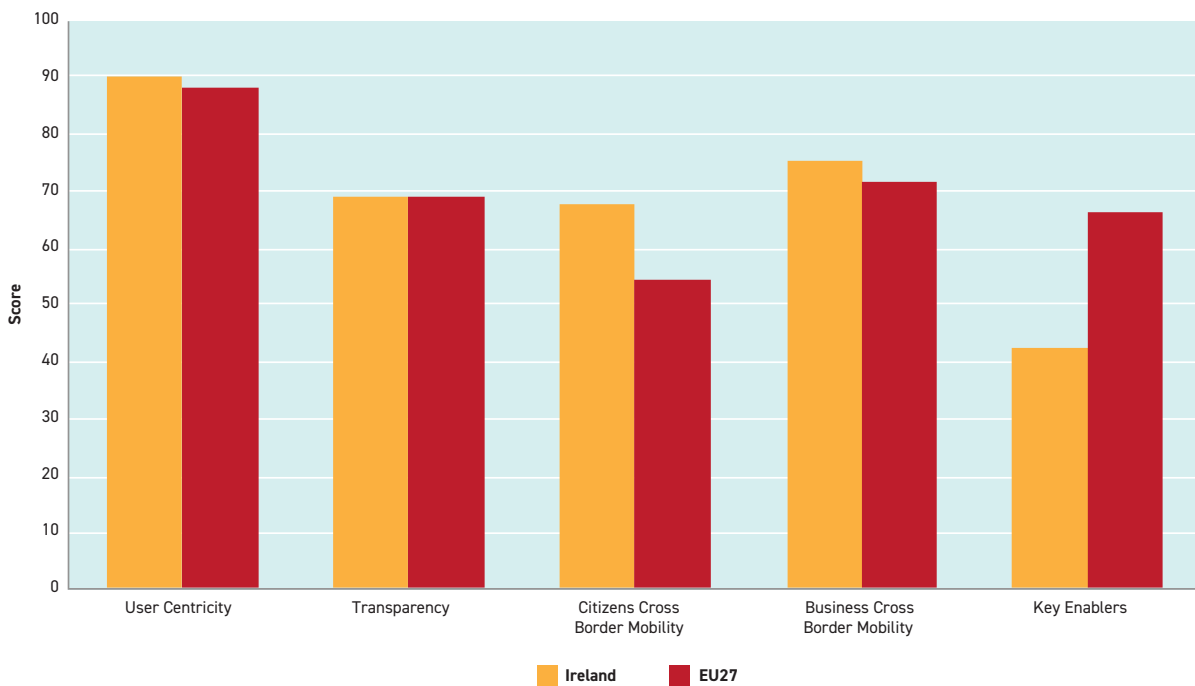


- A 'bottom-up' approach to assessing efficiency of public administration is taken by the World Bank in some of their *Doing Business* indicator set, with performance assessed from a service user perspective.
- The number of days estimated that it takes an entrepreneur to start a business in Ireland reduced to 5 days in 2016 and stayed at that level until 2020, when it increased to 11 days. The EU27+UK average is 12 days. In Denmark, Estonia and the Netherlands it takes 3.5 days.
- The number of days to complete all procedures required for a business in the construction industry to build a standardised warehouse in Ireland was estimated at 164 days in 2020. This remains just a little lower than the EU27+UK average of 177 days. The best performers are Denmark (64 days) and Finland (65 days).
- The number of hours it takes a medium-sized company to pay tax in a given year is estimated as significantly lower in Ireland, at 82 hours, than it is for the EU27+UK (172 hours) average. Ireland ranks third in the EU behind Estonia (50 hours) and Luxembourg (55 hours).

Government in Ireland overall performs slightly above the European average, with some variances depending on the benchmark used

FIGURE 30 EGOVERNMENT BENCHMARKS 2020

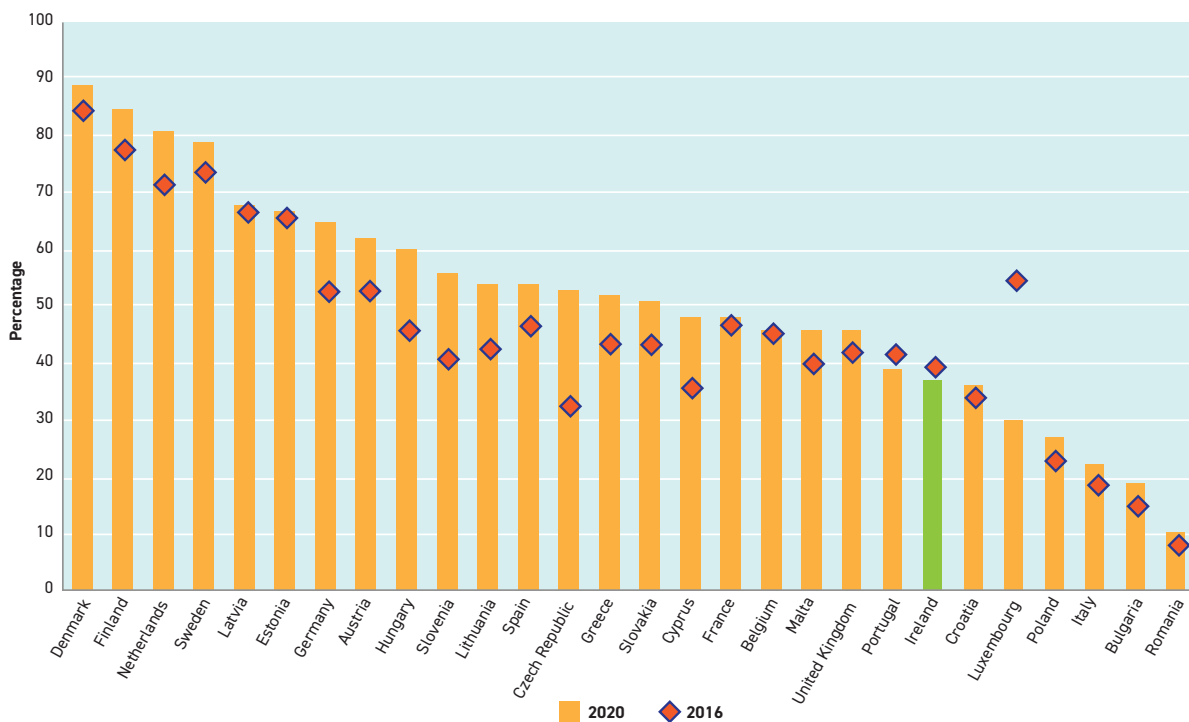
Source: EU eGovernment Benchmark 2020



- Ireland ranks above the EU27 average with regard to user centricity (to what extent information about a service is provided online), citizen mobility and business mobility (mobility indicates to what extent European users can use online services in another country)
- Ireland ranks at the EU27 average with regard to transparent government (indicates to what extent governments are transparent as regards: (a) their own responsibilities and performance, (b) the process of service delivery and (c) personal data involved).
- Ireland ranks below the European average with regard to key enablers (indicates the extent to which five technical pre-conditions for eGovernment are used).

Individual use of the internet to obtain information on government services in Ireland from public authority websites is below the European average

FIGURE 31 INDIVIDUALS USING THE INTERNET TO OBTAIN INFORMATION FROM PUBLIC AUTHORITIES WEBSITES
Source: Eurostat

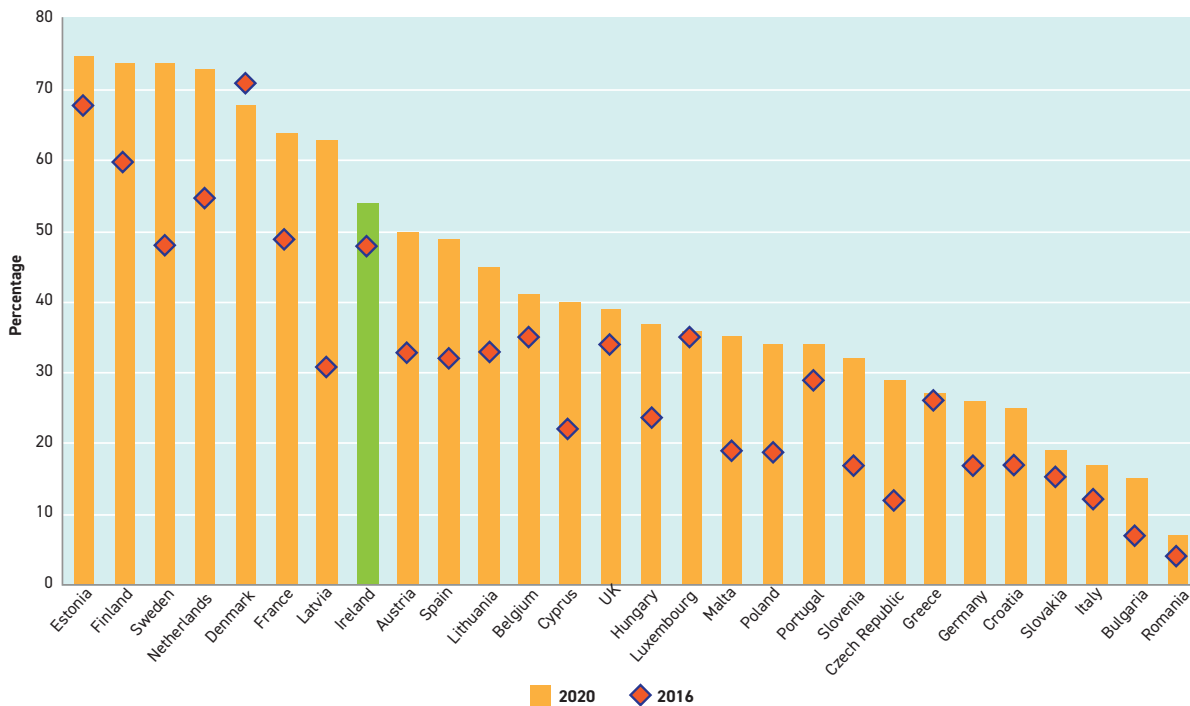


- Only 37 per cent of individuals in Ireland use the internet to access the websites of public bodies. This is below the European average.
- This compares with countries like Denmark, Finland and the Netherlands where over 80 per cent use the internet to obtain information from public authorities websites.

Individual use of the internet to send filled forms to public bodies in Ireland is higher than in much of Europe

FIGURE 32 INDIVIDUALS USING THE INTERNET TO SEND FILLED FORMS TO PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

Source: Eurostat

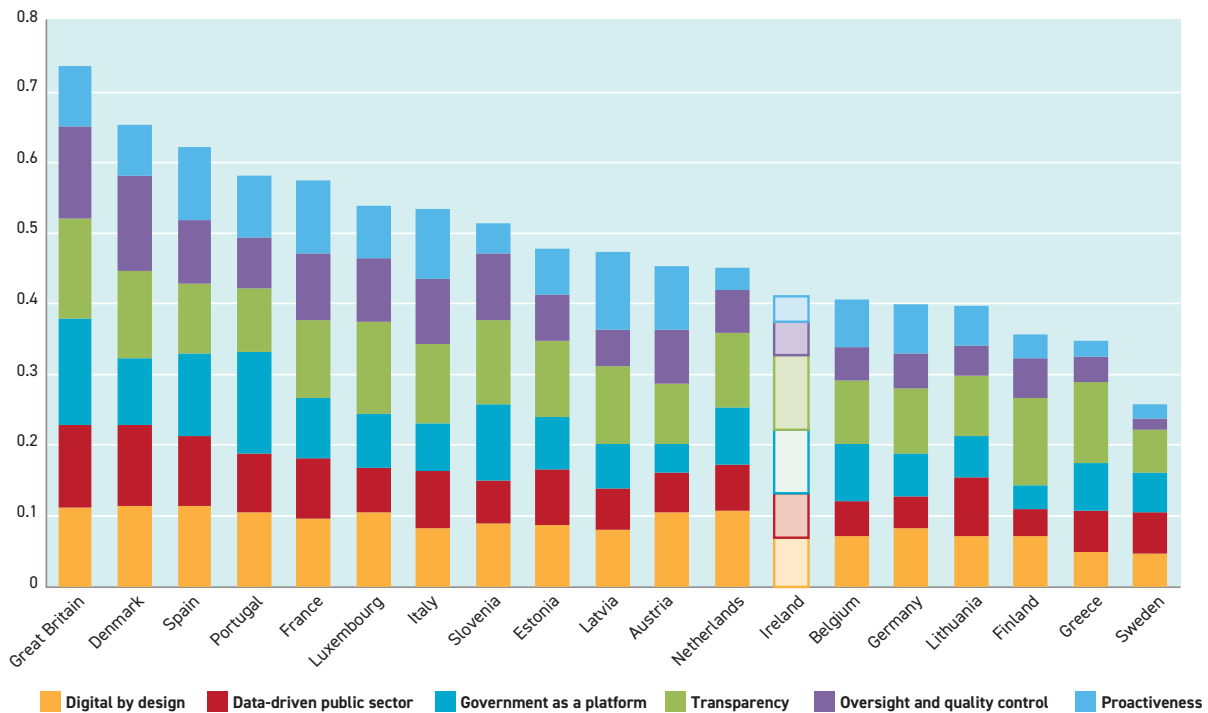


- With regard to using the internet for submitting completed forms, in Ireland just over half of those surveyed used the internet in 2020, a small increase since 2016.
- Ireland remains one of the more active in this area, ranking eighth of the EU27+UK.
- There have been substantial increases in some countries, such as Sweden and Latvia between 2016 and 2020.

Ireland is among the lower scorers on an index of digital government maturity

FIGURE 33 OECD DIGITAL GOVERNMENT INDEX 2019

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

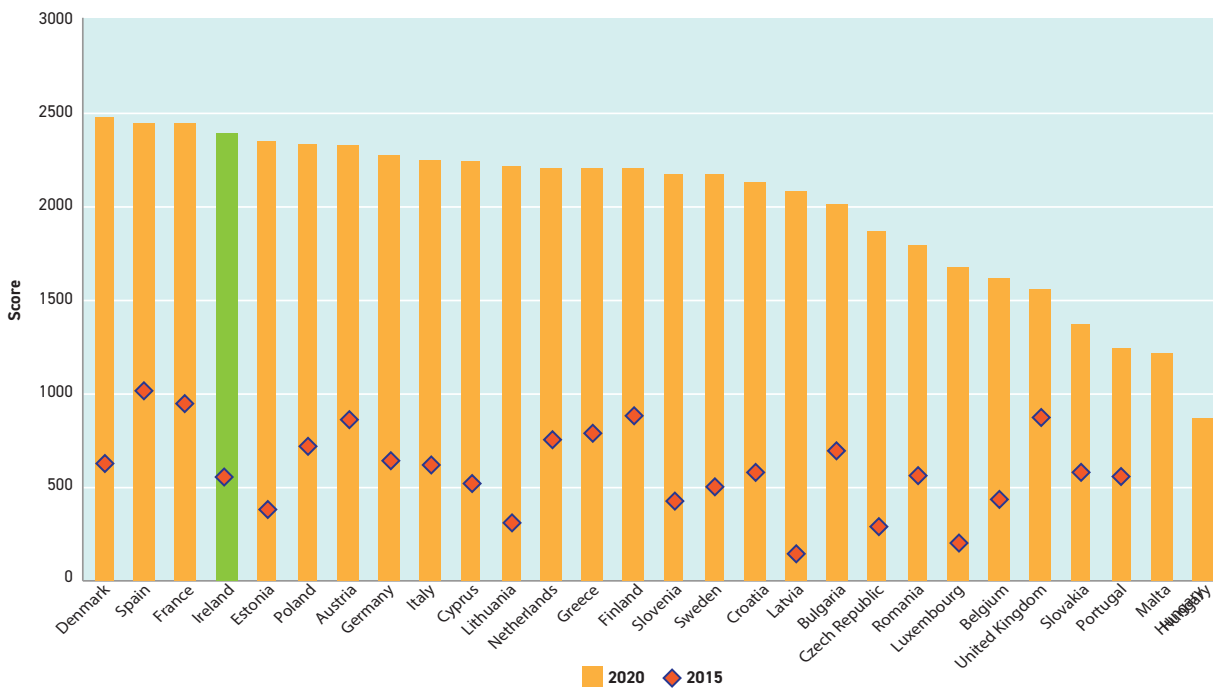


- The Digital Government Index (DGI) assesses and benchmarks the maturity of digital government policies and their implementation under a coherent and whole-of-government approach. It thereby aims to help appraise governments' ability to operate in an increasingly digital and global world. Scores range from 0 (the lowest) to 1 (the highest). It has six dimensions based on the OECD Digital Government Policy Framework (DGPF), each with an equal weight: digital by design, data-driven public sector, government as a platform, open by default, user-driven and proactiveness.
- On this index, Ireland is at the lower end of the spectrum for European countries surveyed with regard to the maturity of digital government policies and their implementation.

Ireland is one of the leaders with regard to open data maturity

FIGURE 34 OPEN DATA MATURITY SCORE

Source: European Data Portal



- Open data maturity is described by a series of indicators selected to cover the level of development of national policies promoting open data, an assessment of the features made available on national data portals, as well as the expected impact of open data.
- Ireland ranked fourth with regard to open data maturity in 2020, down from first in 2019 but up significantly from 2015, when ranked eighteenth.

Ireland's public administration is viewed by executives as one of the best in Europe in encouraging competition and providing a supportive regulatory environment

FIGURE 35 COMPETITIVENESS AND REGULATION INDICATOR (CRI)

Source: IPA analysis based on IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook data

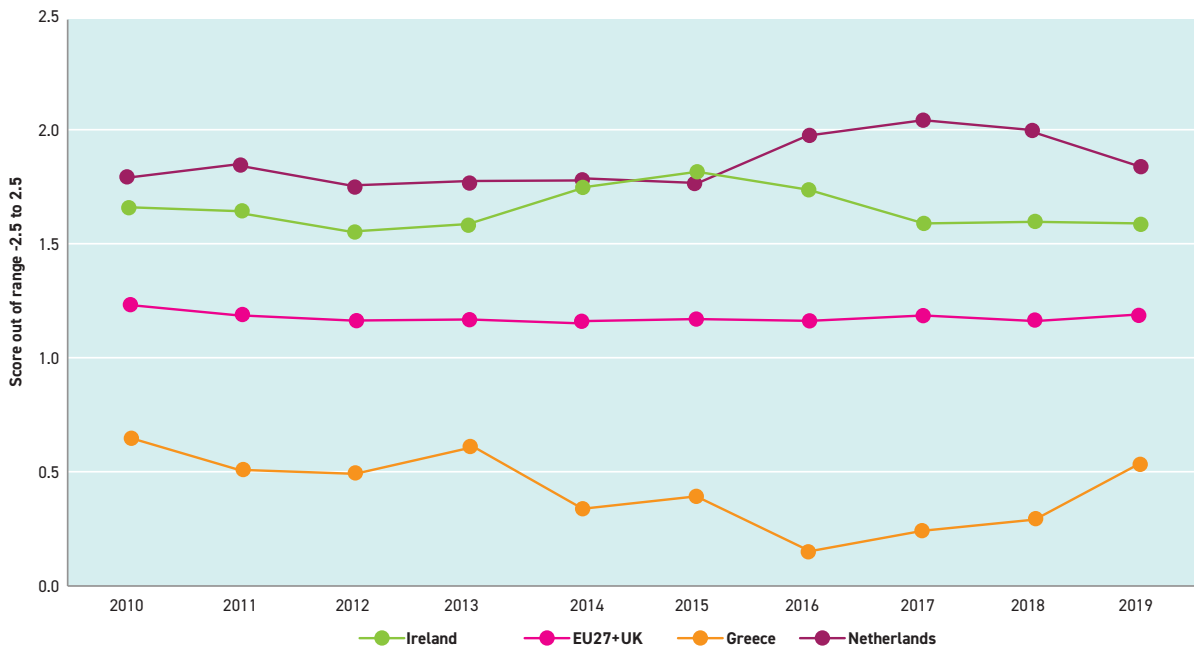


- A sub-set of the quality of public administration indicators can be used to assess issues of competitiveness and regulation. There is an expectation that as part of a quality service, public servants will help ensure a legal and regulatory framework that encourages competition. And that they will scrutinise regulation intensity to ensure it does not become too great a burden on enterprises.
- Ireland's ranking on this competitiveness and regulation indicator is above the European average. In 2021, Ireland ranked fifth.
- Developing a public administration that encourages competition and where regulation is not too great a burden on enterprises is an important goal. But events in the banking sphere at the time of the financial crisis indicate the need for strong regulation. It must be remembered that this ranking is based on executive opinion surveys, where there would generally be an interest in less regulation.

In World Bank assessments, Ireland's regulatory quality ranks as one of the highest in Europe

FIGURE 36 WORLD BANK REGULATORY QUALITY INDICATOR

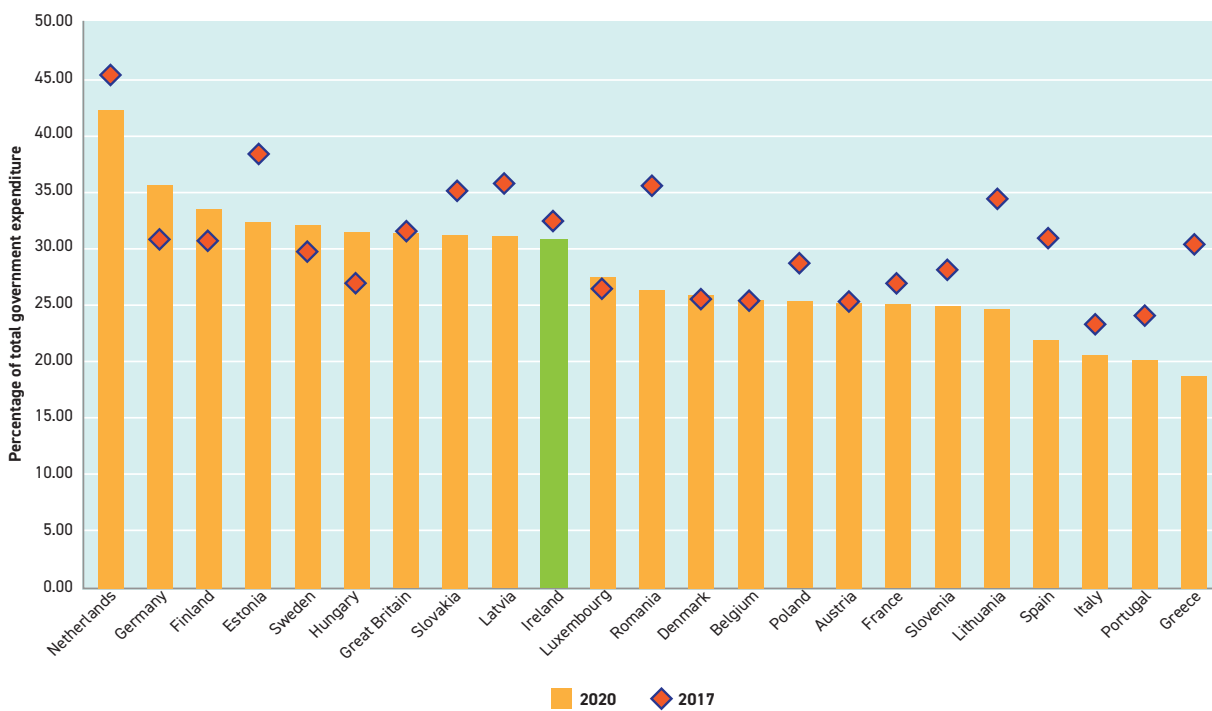
Source: World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators



- The Regulatory Quality indicator aims to measure the ability of the government to provide sound policies and regulations that enable and promote private sector development. On this indicator Ireland ranks as well above the EU27+UK score.
- The impact of the regulatory problems identified in the financial sector in 2009 clearly has had an impact on the indicator, and Ireland dropped from first in 2009 to seventh ranked EU27+UK country on this indicator by 2013.
- In 2019 Ireland ranked seventh EU27+UK country. Netherlands ranked highest.

Ireland's procurement spending as a proportion of total government expenditure is close to the European average

FIGURE 37 GENERAL GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT SPENDING AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE
 Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

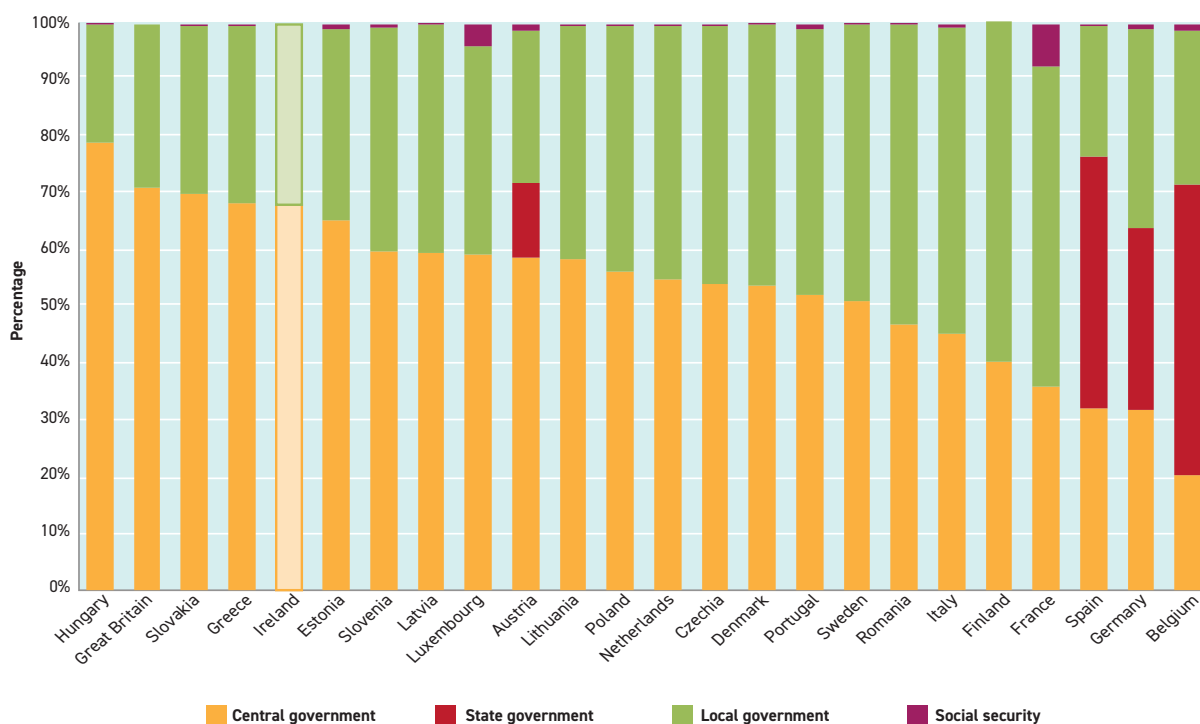


- Governments procure large amounts of goods and services to help them implement policies and deliver public services.
- Ireland's procurement spending as a proportion of total government expenditure, at 31 per cent in 2020, is close to the European average.

Investment spending in Ireland is mainly managed by central government

FIGURE 38 DISTRIBUTION OF INVESTMENT SPENDING ACROSS LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT 2020

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021



- Public investment can enhance productivity, promote economic growth, and foster societal wellbeing. Examples of government expenditure that constitute investment include purchases of transport and energy infrastructure, school and hospital buildings, IT systems, and defence systems. Government investment often includes purchases needed to implement long-term policies, such as investment in green energy infrastructure to support action on climate change.
- The proportion of investment spending managed by central government, in line with the centralised nature of the Irish state, is at the higher end for Europe, at 68 per cent in 2020.
- In countries with more decentralised structures, investment is more likely to be primarily managed by state and local governments.

4. SECTORAL PERFORMANCE

Ultimately, the provision of public administration is intended to achieve social outcomes in sectors such as health, education, law and order and transport. As such, it is important that any review of public administration looks at sectoral outcomes. In this report, some high-level education and health indicators are included, given that these areas are the largest areas of public expenditure.

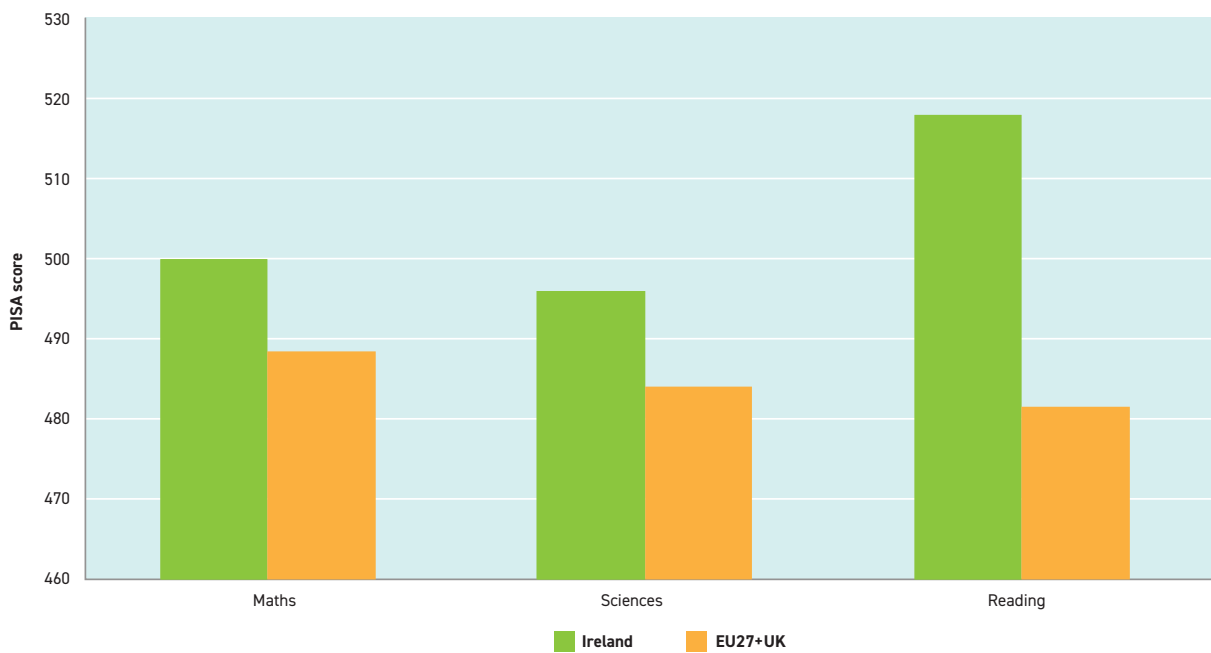
In the education system, high-level outcome indicators that assess performance in reading, maths and science give an overview of performance.

In the health sector, high-level outcome indicators in areas such as life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, and other indicators such as length of stay in hospitals, give a sense of performance at the macro level. These are commonly used indicators in international rankings of health and education systems.

Ireland's educational attainment scores compare well to the European average

FIGURE 39 PISA EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT SCORES 2018

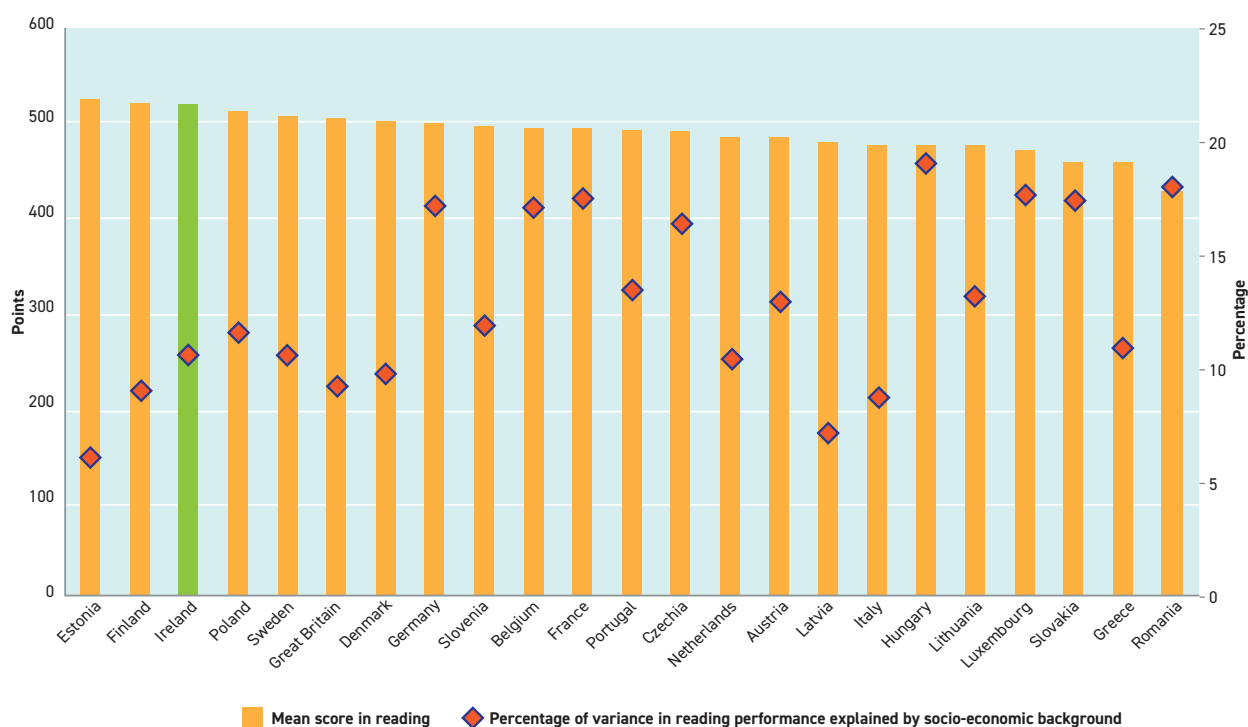
Source: OECD PISA 2018 survey



- The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey is an internationally standardised assessment administered to 15-year olds in schools. Tests are typically administered to between 4,500 and 10,000 students in each country.
- The 2018 PISA survey shows that Ireland has a higher ranking than the European average in maths, sciences and reading. Estonia is the highest ranked country in all three categories.

Irish students score well in reading with socio-economic background being less of an influence than in many European countries

FIGURE 40 MEAN SCORE IN READING AND PERCENTAGE OF VARIANCE EXPLAINED BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND 2018
Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

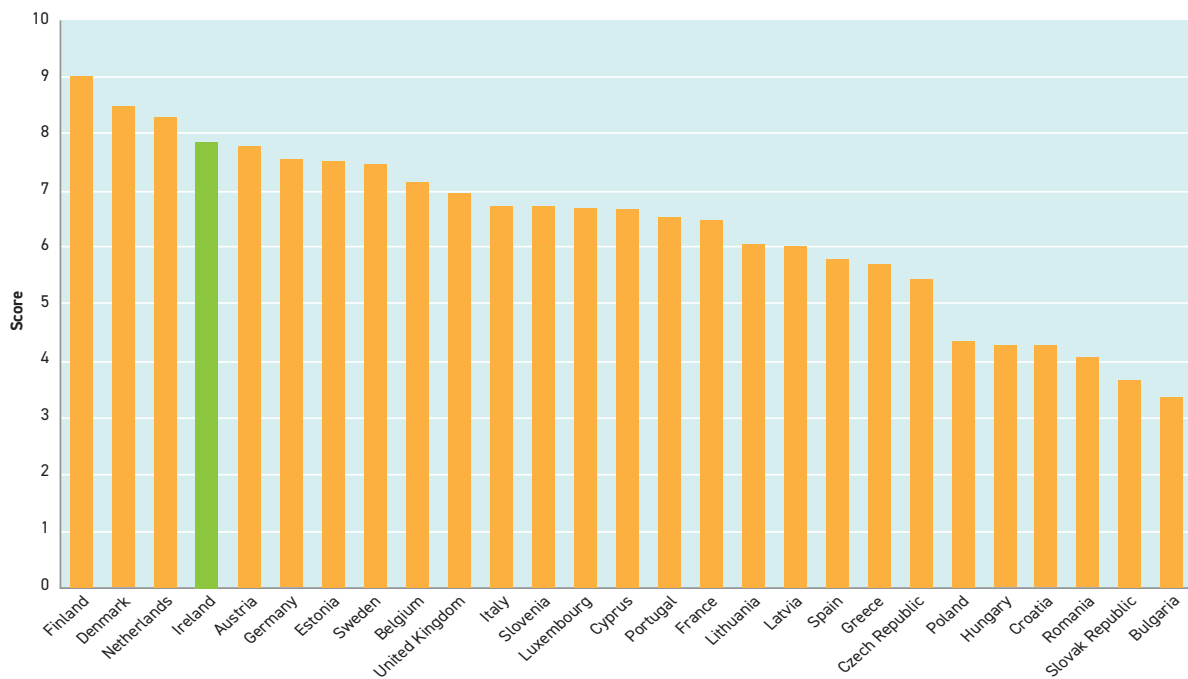


- In 2018, students across the OECD reached an average of 487 points in reading in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Ireland (518 points) had one of the highest scores.
- However, these averages hide inequalities between students. On average across the OECD, 12 per cent of the variance in performance can be attributed to students' socio-economic status. In Ireland, this percentage is 10.7 per cent. A lower percentage means that socio-economic background plays a less significant role.

Ireland's executives perceive the primary and secondary education system highly in terms of it meeting the needs of the economy

FIGURE 41 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION MEETS THE NEEDS OF A COMPETITIVE ECONOMY 2021

Source: IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook data

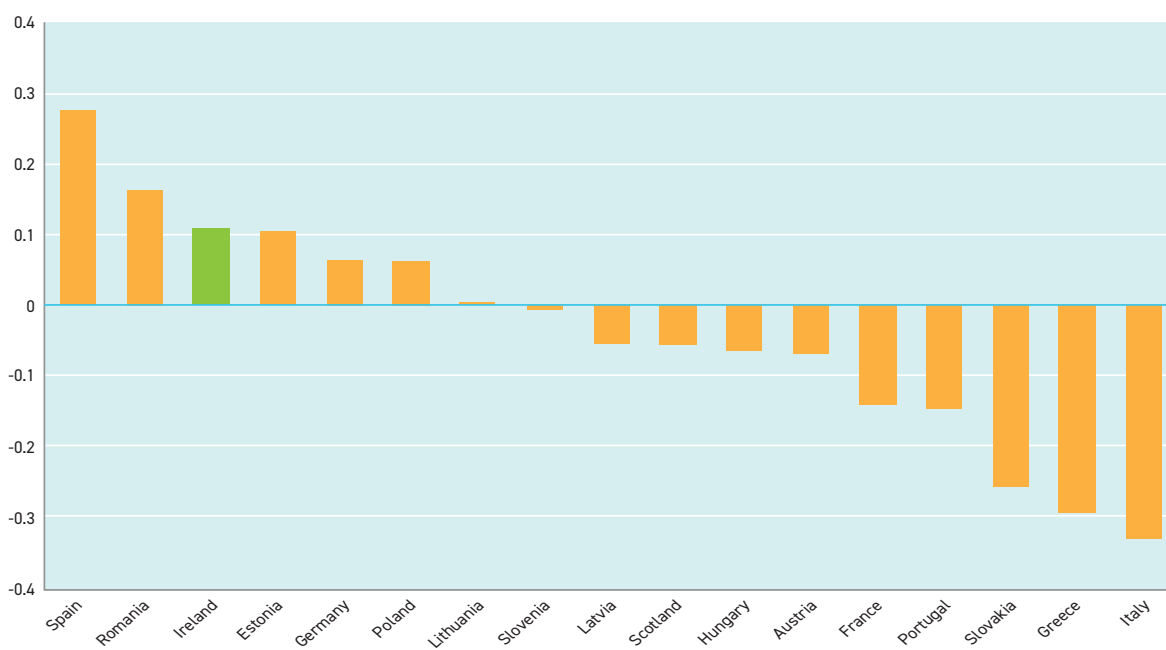


- Executive opinion about the role of the educational system in meeting the needs of a competitive economy is one (though only one) qualitative indicator of how well the education system is functioning.
- Ireland's primary and secondary education are ranked fourth best in Europe in terms of meeting the needs of a competitive economy, behind Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands.

Irish students reported a greater ability than the European average to deal with unusual situations and overcome difficulties

FIGURE 42 INDEX OF COGNITIVE ADAPTABILITY 2018

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

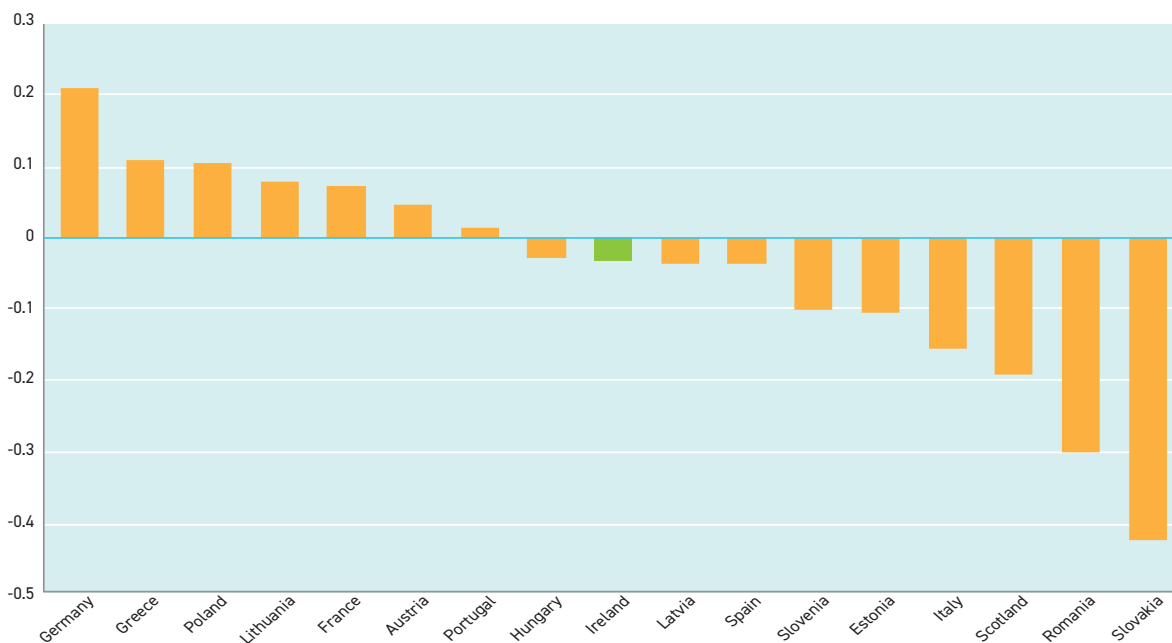


- Students need to acquire competences that will allow them to navigate and thrive in an interconnected and changing world. The index of cognitive ability refers to students' ability to adapt to new situations. Positive values indicate that students have a greater ability than the average student does across countries.
- Irish students reported a greater ability than the European average to deal with unusual situations and overcome difficulties.

Irish students are at the European average regarding their understanding of global issues such as climate change and the refugee crisis

FIGURE 43 INDEX OF SELF-EFFICACY REGARDING GLOBAL ISSUES 2018

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

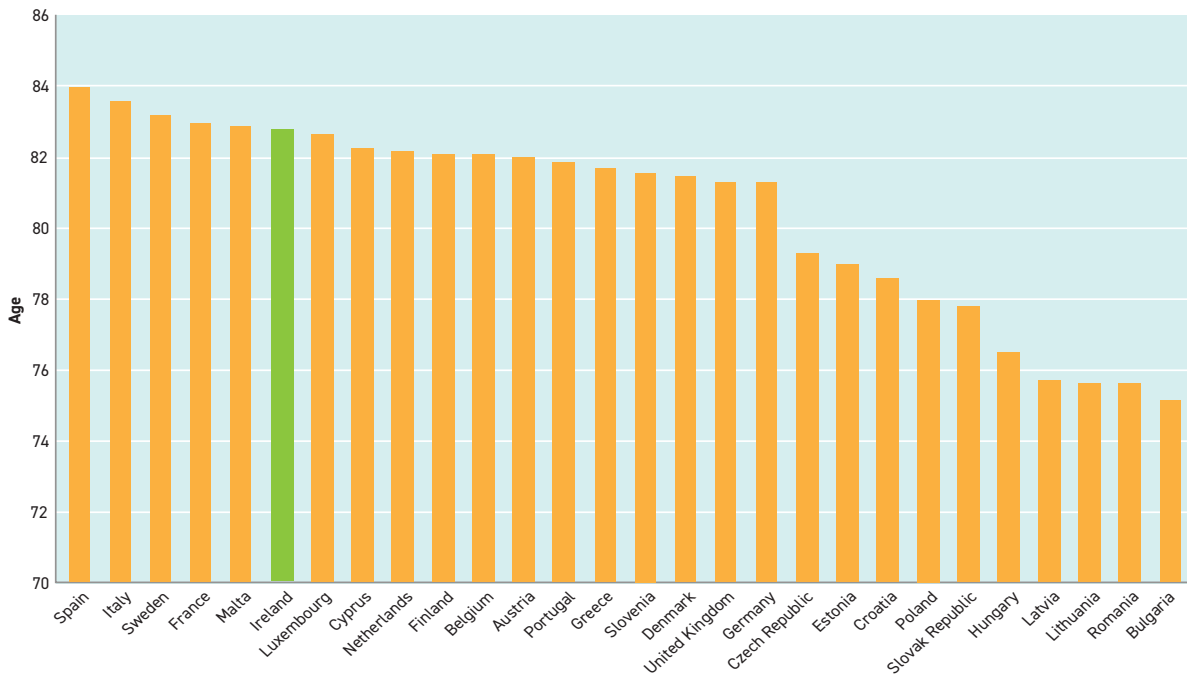


- Being able to understand the reasons behind phenomena including climate change, refugee crises and pandemics, and engage in productive debate about them, is an important global competence. The PISA index of self-efficacy regarding global issues assesses students' ability to perform these tasks. Students assessed five tasks, such as 'Explain how carbon dioxide emissions affect global climate change' on a four-point scale (from 'I could not do this' to 'I could do this easily'). The average for these indexes is zero. Positive values indicate that students have a greater ability than the average student across countries.
- Ireland is mid-ranked in European terms on this index.

Life expectancy at birth is towards the higher end in European terms

FIGURE 44 LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH 2019

Source: Eurostat

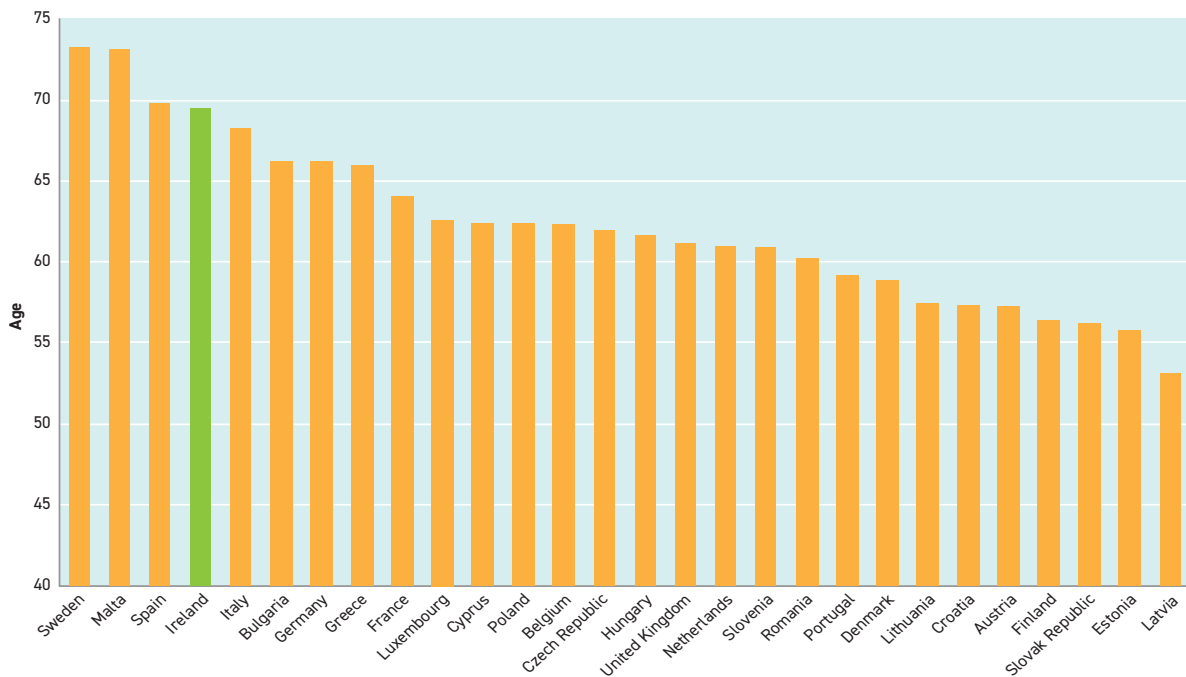


- Life expectancy at birth in Ireland in 2019 was 82.8 years. The range in EU countries is from 84 years in Spain, down to 75.1 years in Bulgaria.
- Ireland ranked sixth of the EU27+UK in 2019.

In terms of healthy life expectancy at birth Ireland ranks highly in Europe

FIGURE 45 HEALTHY LIFE YEARS AT BIRTH 2019

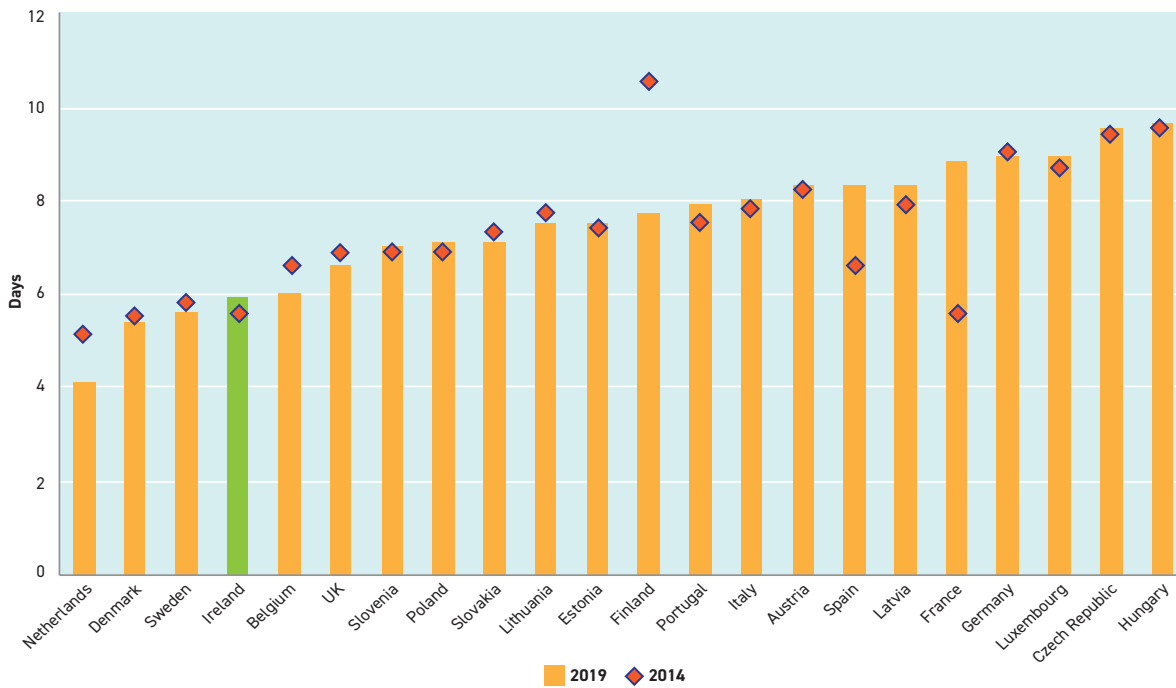
Source: Eurostat



- Healthy life expectancy represents the average number of years that a person can expect to live in 'full health' by taking into account years lived in less than full health due to disease and/or injury.
- Ireland ranks fourth best in Europe in 2019 in terms of healthy life expectancy at birth, at 69.6 years.

Ireland's hospitals display comparatively high levels of efficiency with regard to length of stay

FIGURE 46 AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY IN HOSPITALS FOR ALL CONDITIONS
 Source: OECD Health Statistics 2021

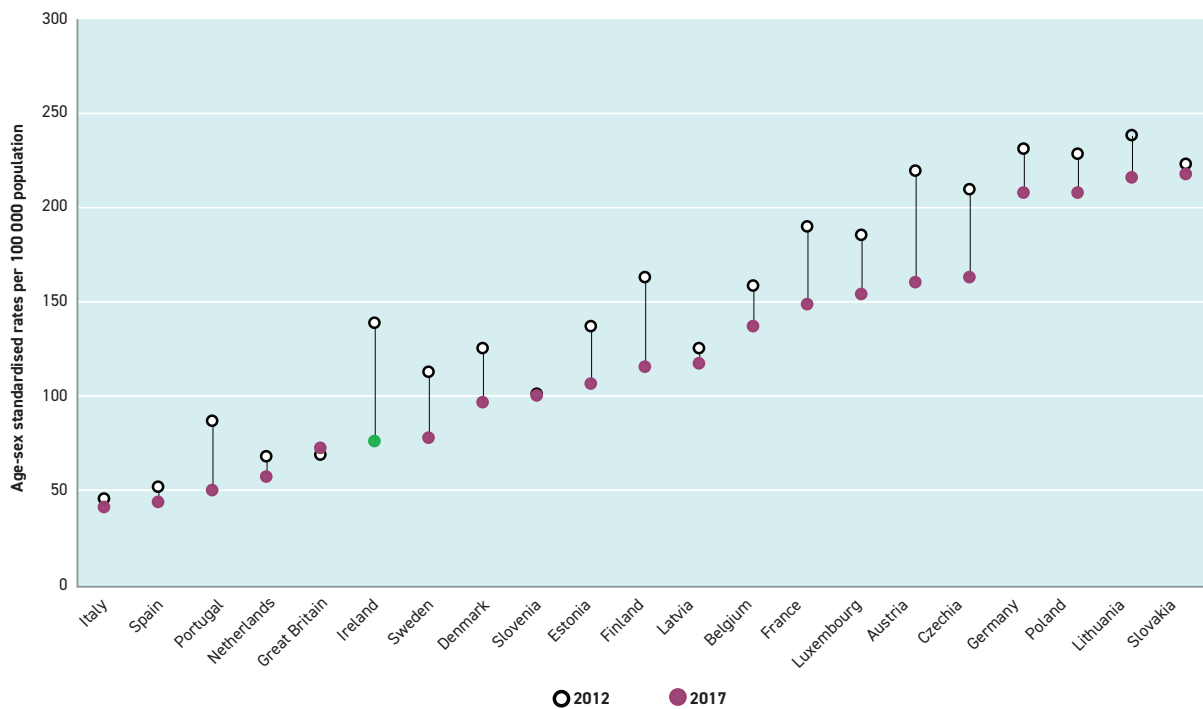


- Average length of stay in hospitals is a commonly used indicator of efficiency in the health system. All other things being equal, a shorter stay is associated with reduced costs. However, shorter stays do tend to be more service intensive and more costly per day. And too short a length of stay may cause adverse health effects.
- On a comparative basis, Ireland shows a low level of length of stay in hospitals (5.9 days in 2019), suggesting a relatively high level of efficiency.

Ireland's hospitalisation rate for diabetes is relatively low

FIGURE 47 DIABETES HOSPITAL ADMISSION IN ADULTS 2012 AND 2017

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

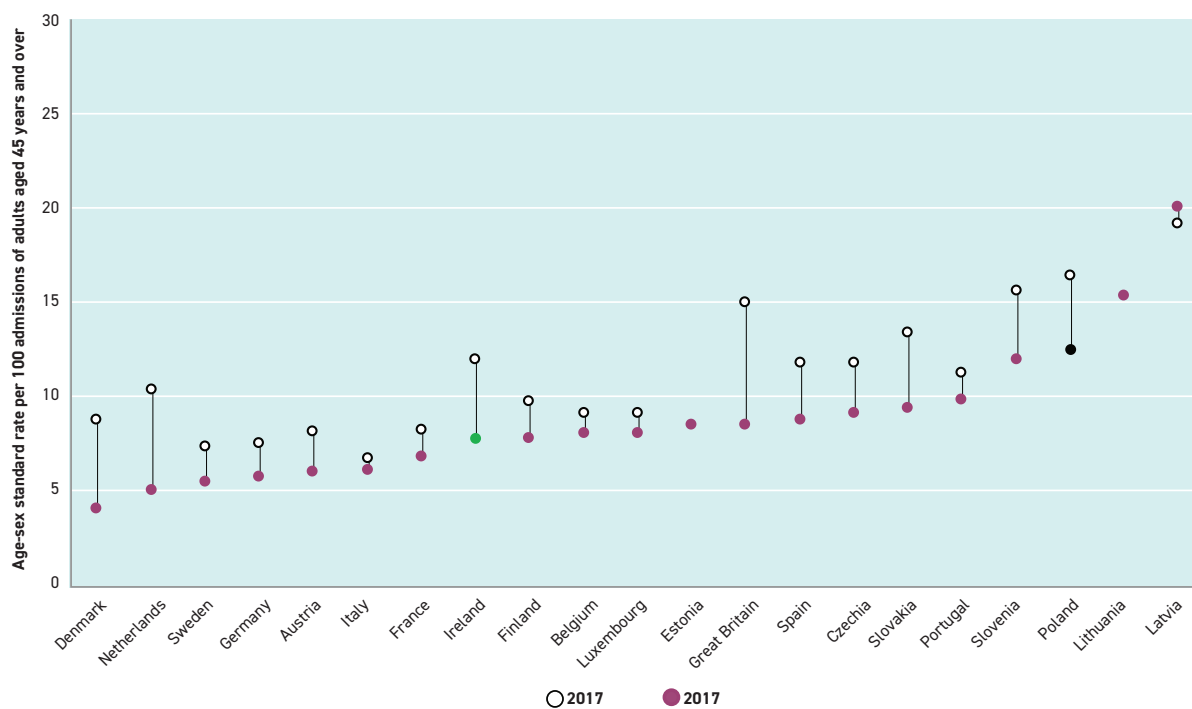


- Diabetes is a growing chronic condition with well-established treatments that can mostly be delivered at the primary care level. High-quality primary care can prevent unnecessary admissions to hospital and is a sign of an efficient use of health resources.
- Ireland has a relatively low level of hospital admission for diabetes, at 78 per 100,000 people in 2017. This was a significant improvement from a level of 140 per 100,000 people in 2012.

Ireland's mortality rate for strokes is relatively low and improving

FIGURE 48 THIRTY DAY MORTALITY AFTER ADMISSION TO HOSPITAL FOR ISCHAEMIC STROKE BASED ON UNLINKED DATA 2007 AND 2017

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021



- One aspect of quality and efficiency of care is the mortality rate for various diseases following admission to hospital.
- Ireland's health care system is relatively efficient in treating strokes, as reflected in its relatively low thirty day mortality rate following stroke hospitalisation. The mortality rate dropped significantly between 2007 and 2017.

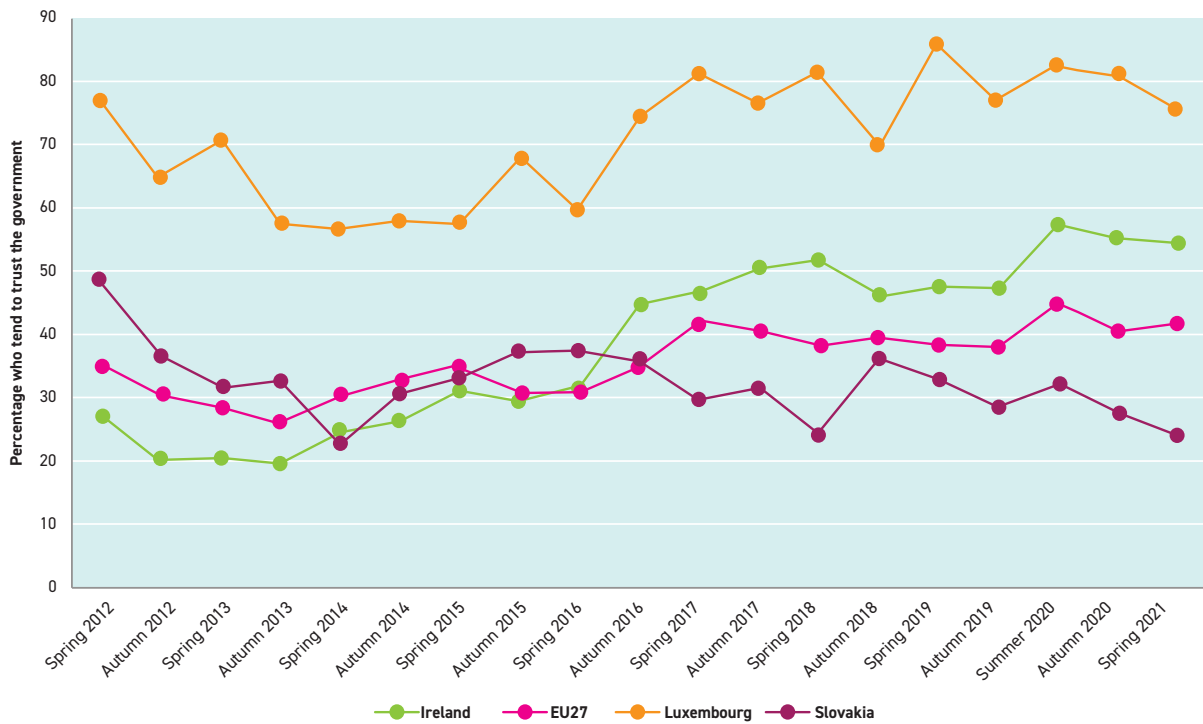
5. TRUST, SATISFACTION AND CONFIDENCE IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Twice a year Eurobarometer measures the level of public confidence in the national government and the national parliament. National government is not defined, and the extent to which it covers both political and administrative elements of government is unclear. But it is likely to primarily reflect levels of trust in the political parties in power at the time of the survey. Periodic surveys of trust in regional and local authorities and in different sectoral workforces by Eurobarometer are also examined, as are levels of satisfaction and confidence with police, education, health care, local government, and the justice system. Complaints to Ombudsman's offices are tracked as an indicator of confidence in public services, as are freedom of information requests.

Trust in government remains above the European average

FIGURE 49 LEVEL OF TRUST IN GOVERNMENT

Source: Eurobarometer

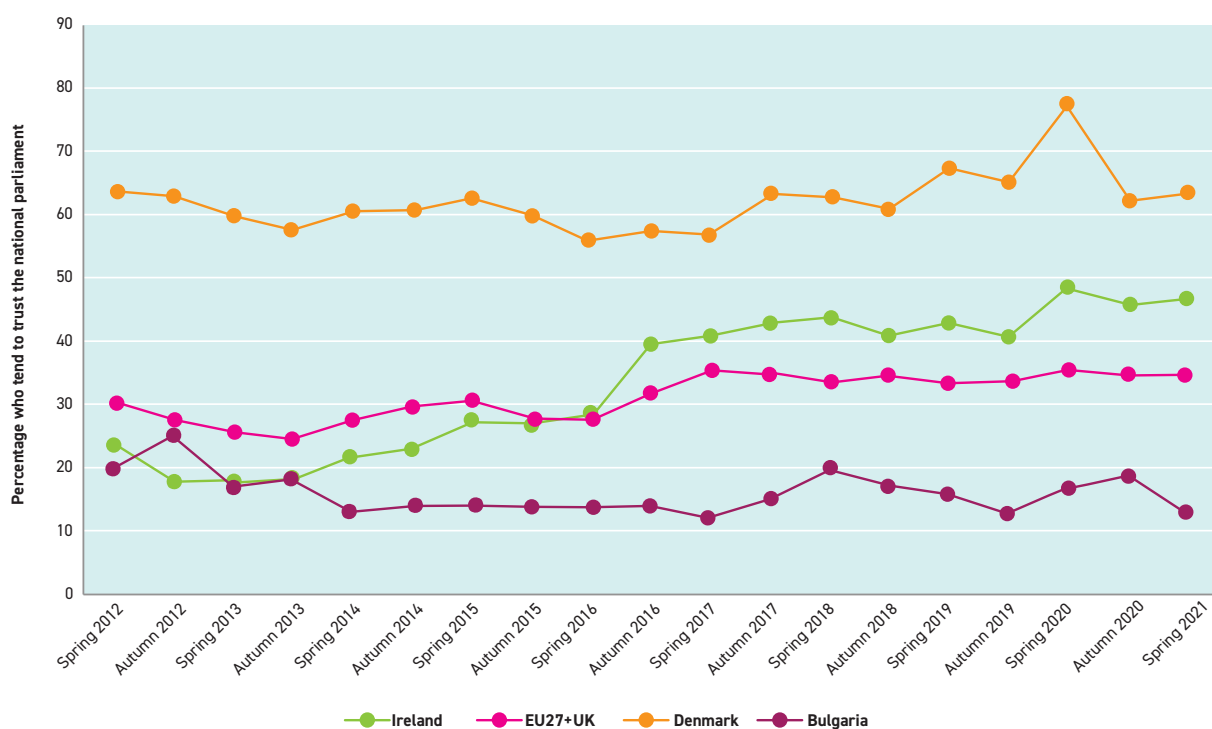


- There was a dramatic fall in the level of trust in government in Ireland from 2008 to 2010. Trust in government in the rest of Europe also fell, but only slightly. In autumn 2010, Ireland expressed the lowest level of trust in government of any of the then EU27 (10 per cent).
- Trust in government in Ireland has increased since 2010. Trust in government in Ireland in spring 2021 stood at 48 per cent.
- Luxembourg has a high level of trust in government at 67 per cent.

Trust in parliament is above the European average

FIGURE 50 LEVEL OF TRUST IN NATIONAL PARLIAMENT

Source: Eurobarometer

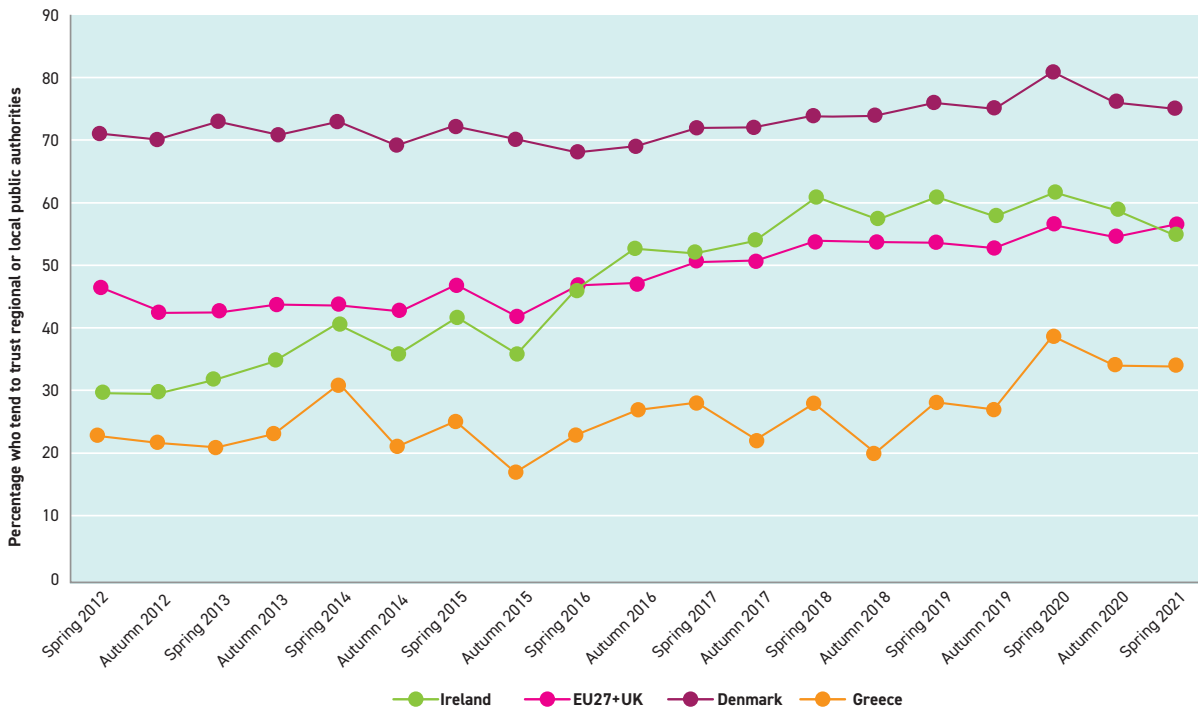


- From 2008 to 2010, as with trust in government, trust in parliament in Ireland dropped rapidly both in absolute terms and compared to the European average.
- Trust in parliament in Ireland gradually increased from 2012 to 2016 and was relatively stable from then until 2019, at just over 40 per cent.
- There has been an increased recording of trust in parliament in Ireland from 2020, and the level of trust was at 47 per cent in spring 2021. This is above the European average of 37 per cent.
- Denmark has a high level of trust in the national parliament, of 64 per cent in spring 2021.

Trust in regional and local authorities is around the European average

FIGURE 51 LEVEL OF TRUST IN REGIONAL OR LOCAL PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

Source: Eurobarometer

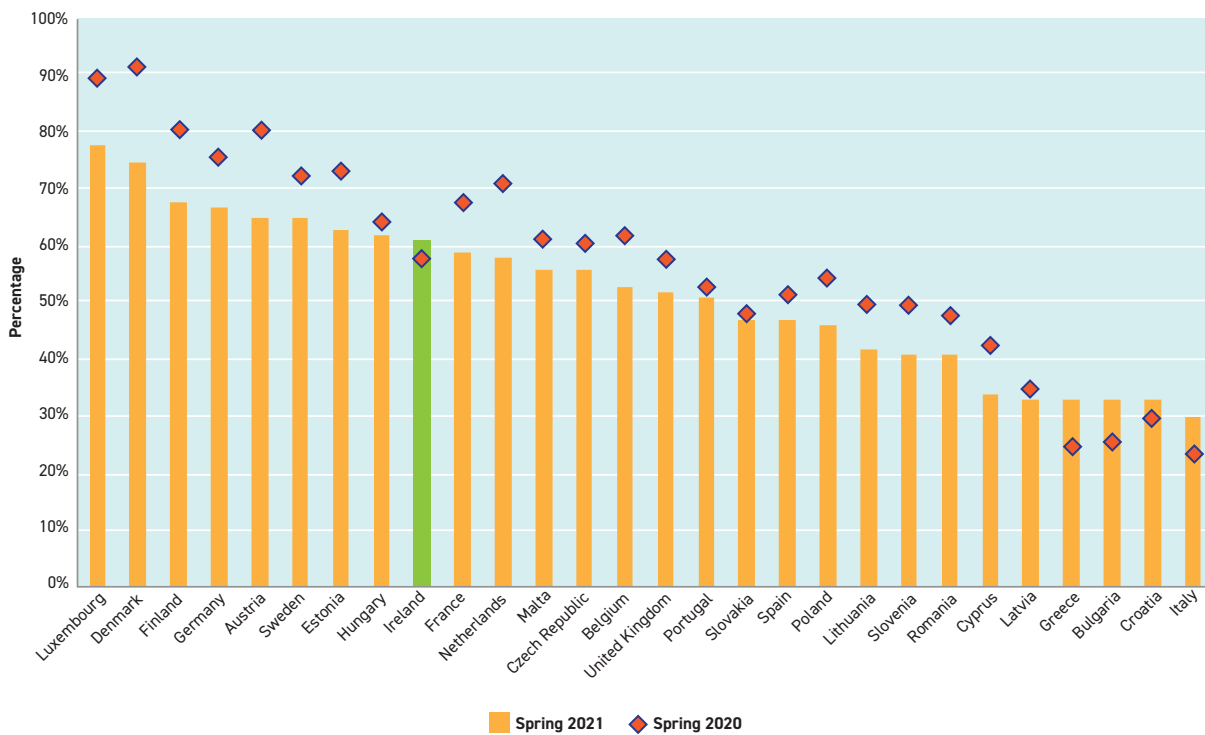


- The level of trust in regional and local authorities in Ireland was at 30 per cent in 2012, down from 40 per cent in 2008. It gradually increased since then, and stood at 62 per cent tending to trust regional and local authorities in spring 2020.
- The level of trust has fallen a little in the last couple of surveys, and at spring 2021 stood at 55 per cent, just below the EU27 average of 57 per cent.

Trust in the public administration in Ireland is a little above the European average

FIGURE 52 TEND TO TRUST - PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Source: Eurobarometer

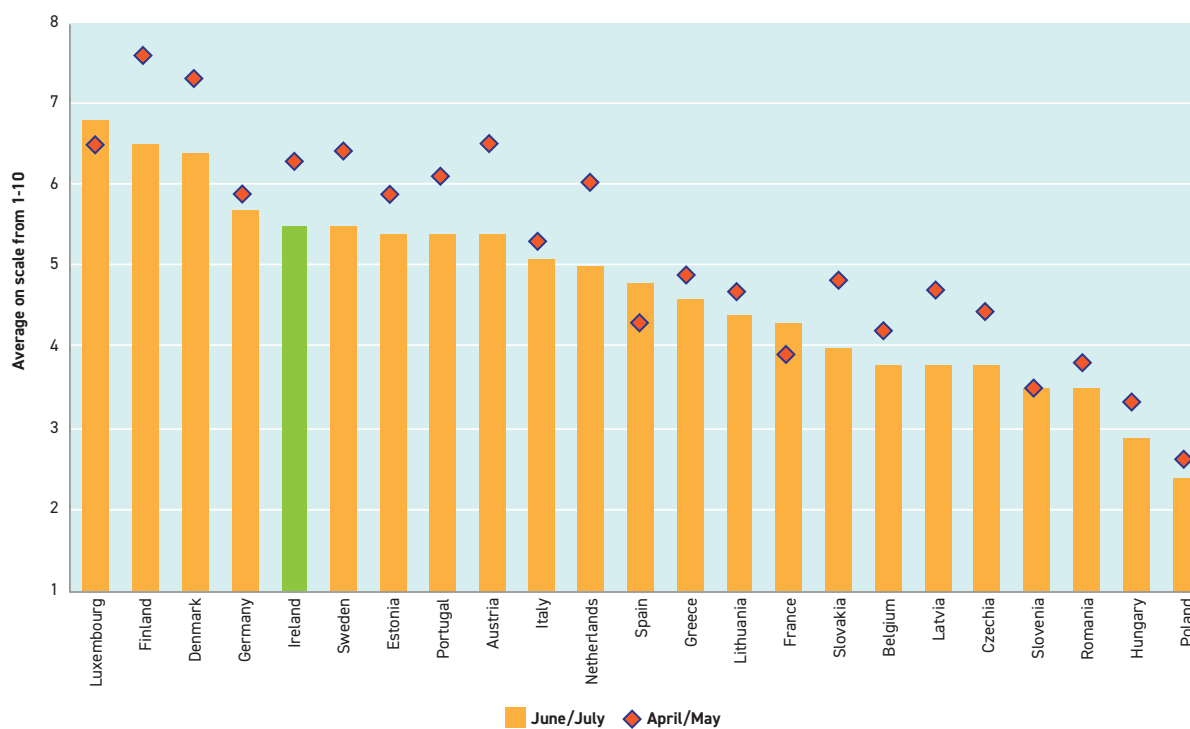


- With regard to trust in public administration, Ireland, at 61 per cent, sits 9 points above the EU27 average of 52 per cent.
- Trust in public administration in Ireland has increased over the last few years, up from 51 per cent in spring 2016.
- Ireland is one of the few countries where reported levels of trust in public administration did not fall significantly between spring 2020 and spring 2021. This fall quite likely relates to attitudes to how governments have responded to the Covid-19 crisis (see the chart on the next page).

Trust in government fell in most countries during the first wave of Covid-19

FIGURE 53 TRUST IN GOVERNMENT DURING THE FIRST WAVE OF COVID-19 2020

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

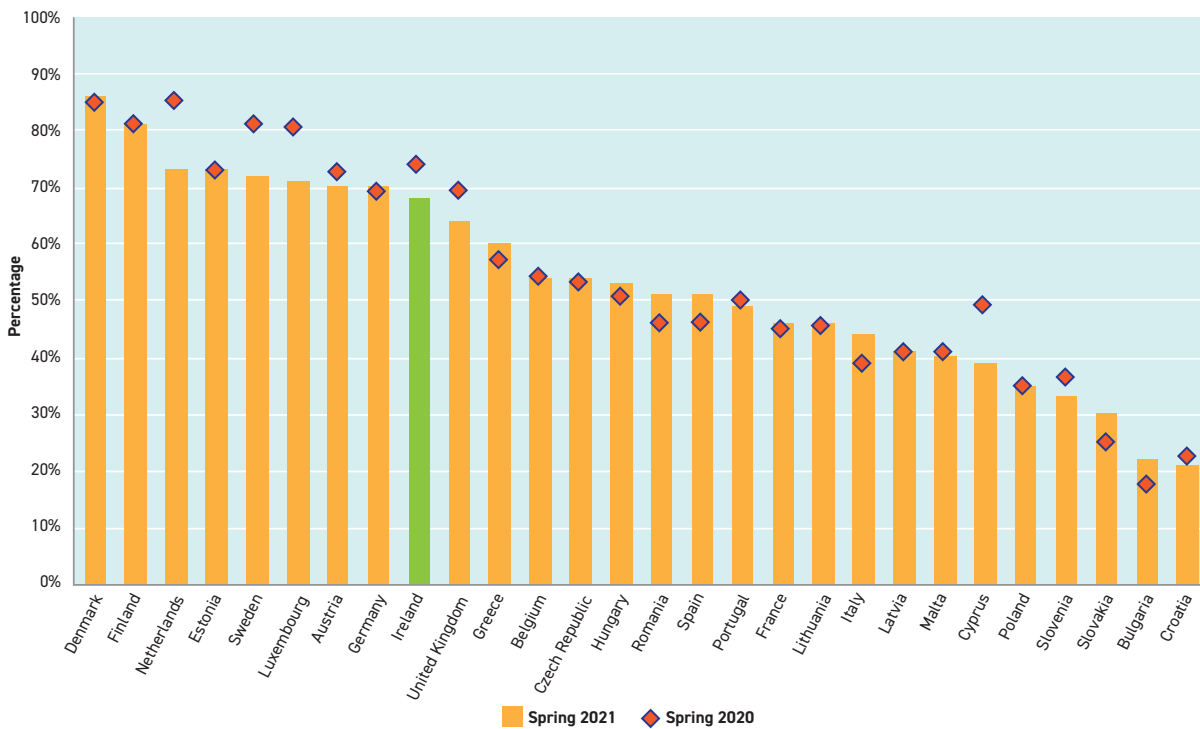


- Trust in most European governments fell between April/May and June/July 2020, as the first wave of Covid-19 hit.
- Trust in government in Ireland, at 5.5 out of 10, was a little above the European average, but still some way below the leaders of Luxembourg, Finland and Denmark.

Ireland ranks reasonably high with regard to trust in the justice/legal system

FIGURE 54 TEND TO TRUST - JUSTICE/LEGAL SYSTEM

Source: Eurobarometer

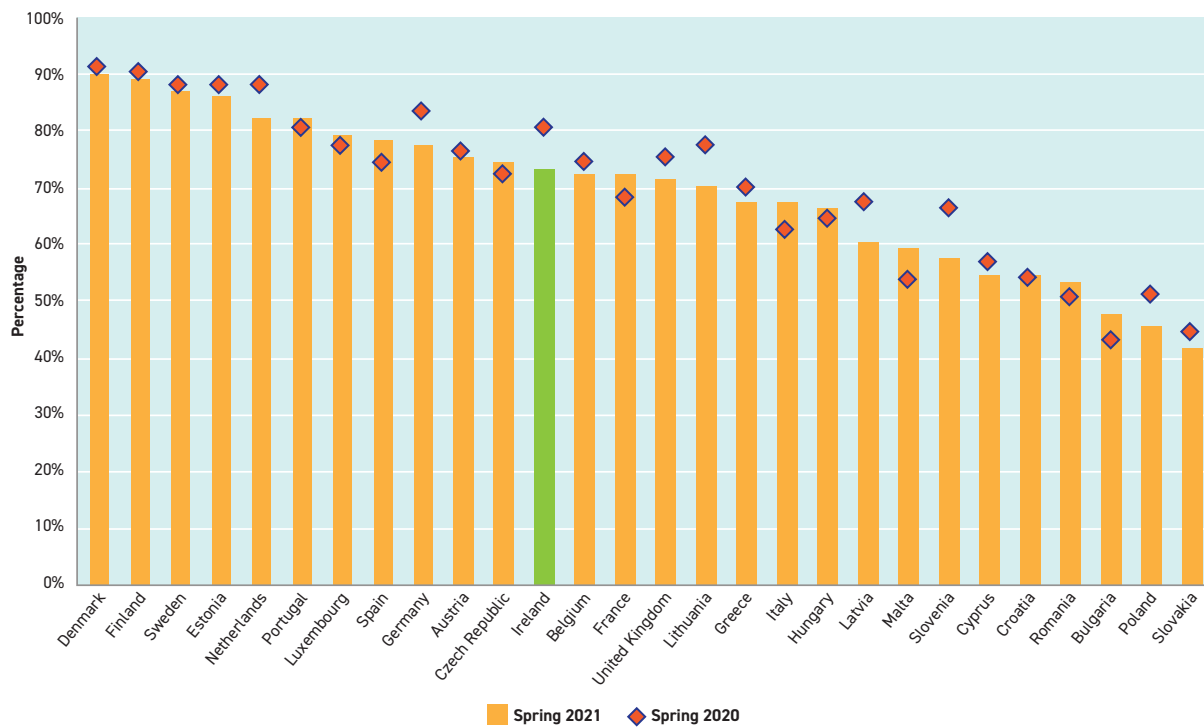


- Ireland, with trust in the justice/legal system at 68 per cent, ranks above the EU27 average in this category.
- Denmark and Finland display the highest levels of trust with the justice/legal system.

Trust in the police is back above the European average

FIGURE 55 TEND TO TRUST - THE POLICE

Source: Eurobarometer

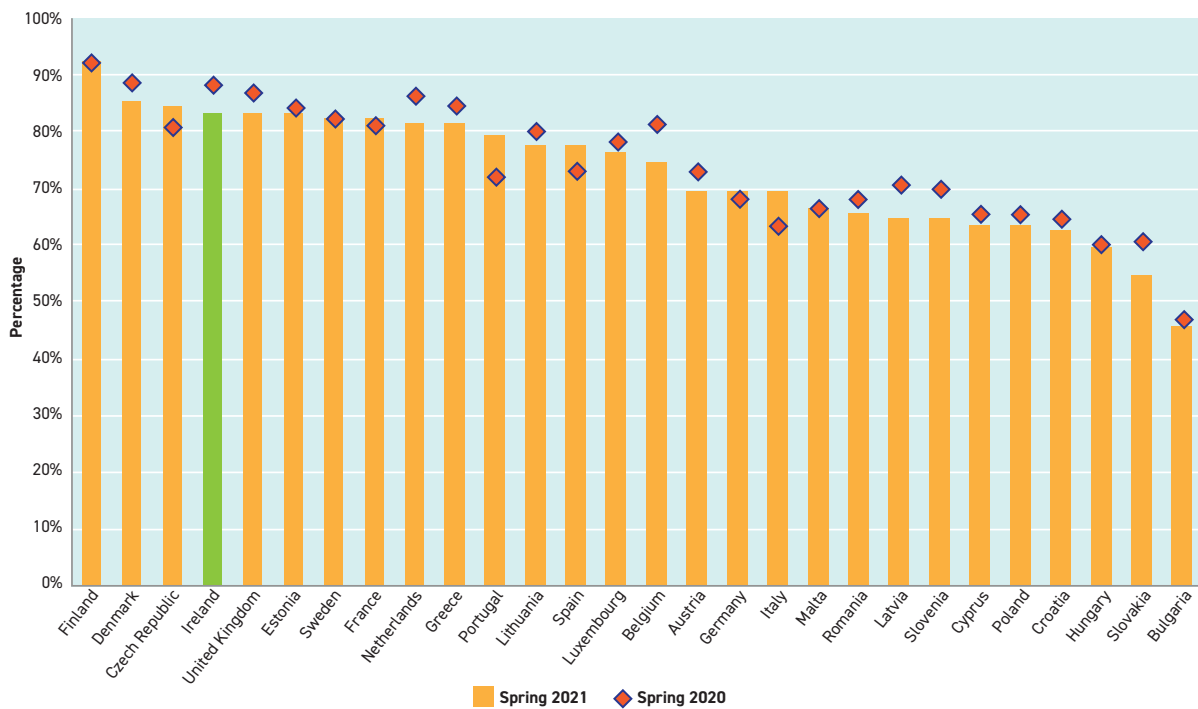


- Trust in the police in Ireland fell significantly to 67 per cent in 2018, from a high of 78 per cent in spring 2017. However, it is at 74 per cent in spring 2021, just above the EU27 average of 71 per cent.
- Denmark and Finland have very high trust scores of around 90 per cent.

There is a high level of trust in the army in Ireland

FIGURE 56 TEND TO TRUST - THE ARMY

Source: Eurobarometer

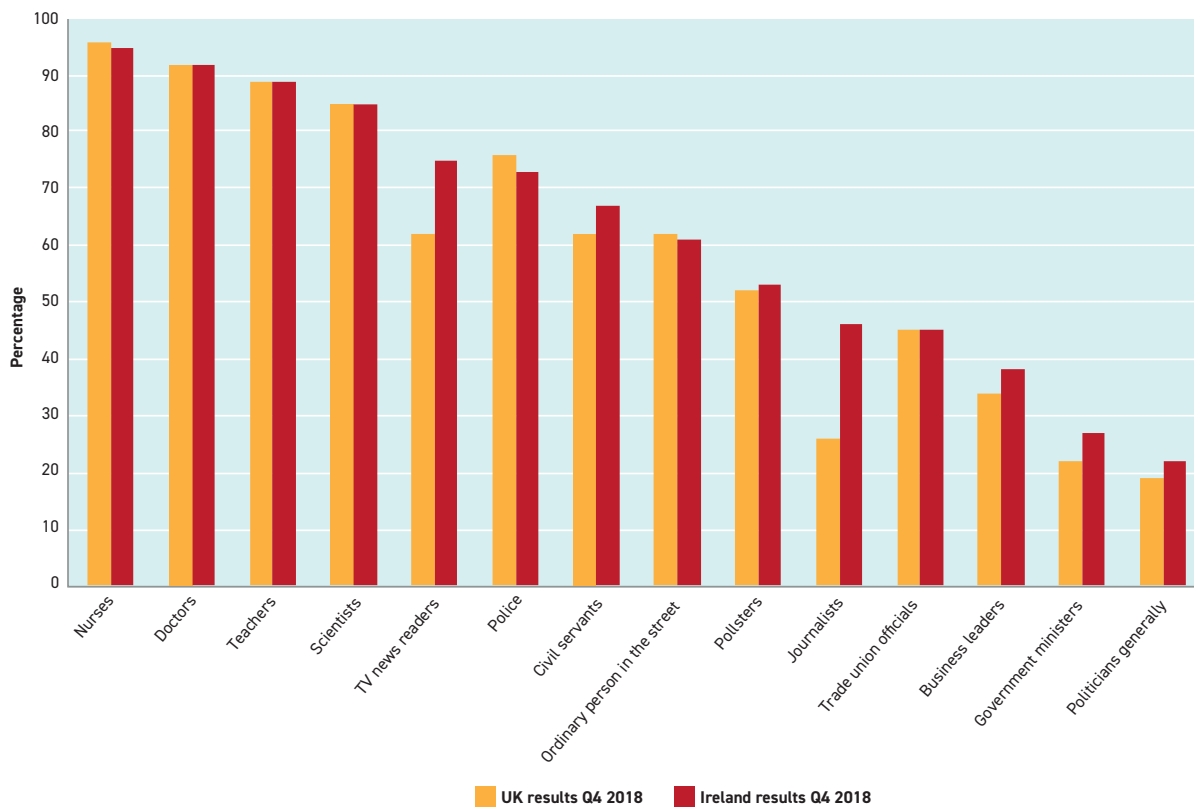


- Ireland is the fourth highest country in Europe with regard to level of trust in the army, with a score of 84 per cent.
- This category had the highest European average trust score of all the public services surveyed, at 73 per cent.

Trust in public servants to tell the truth is reasonably high

FIGURE 57 LEVEL OF TRUST TO TELL THE TRUTH

Source: Irish Civil Service Customer Satisfaction Survey 2019.

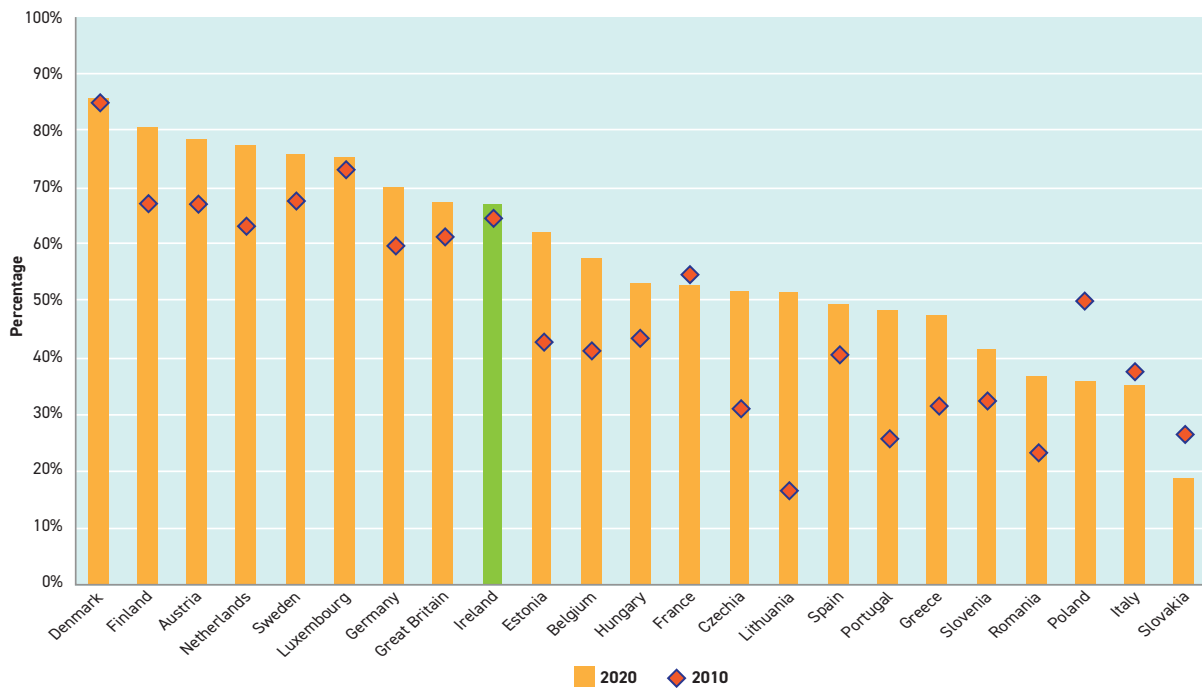


- In general, the level of trust in public servants is much higher than the level of trust in the government or parliament.
- There is over 90 per cent trust in nurses and doctors to tell the truth. This drops to 73 per cent for the police (down from 81 per cent the previous year) and 63 per cent for civil servants.
- Levels of trust in Ireland are similar to but in some case slightly higher than in the UK.

Citizen confidence with the judicial system and the courts in Ireland is above the European average

FIGURE 58 CITIZEN CONFIDENCE IN THE JUDICIARY SYSTEM AND THE COURTS

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

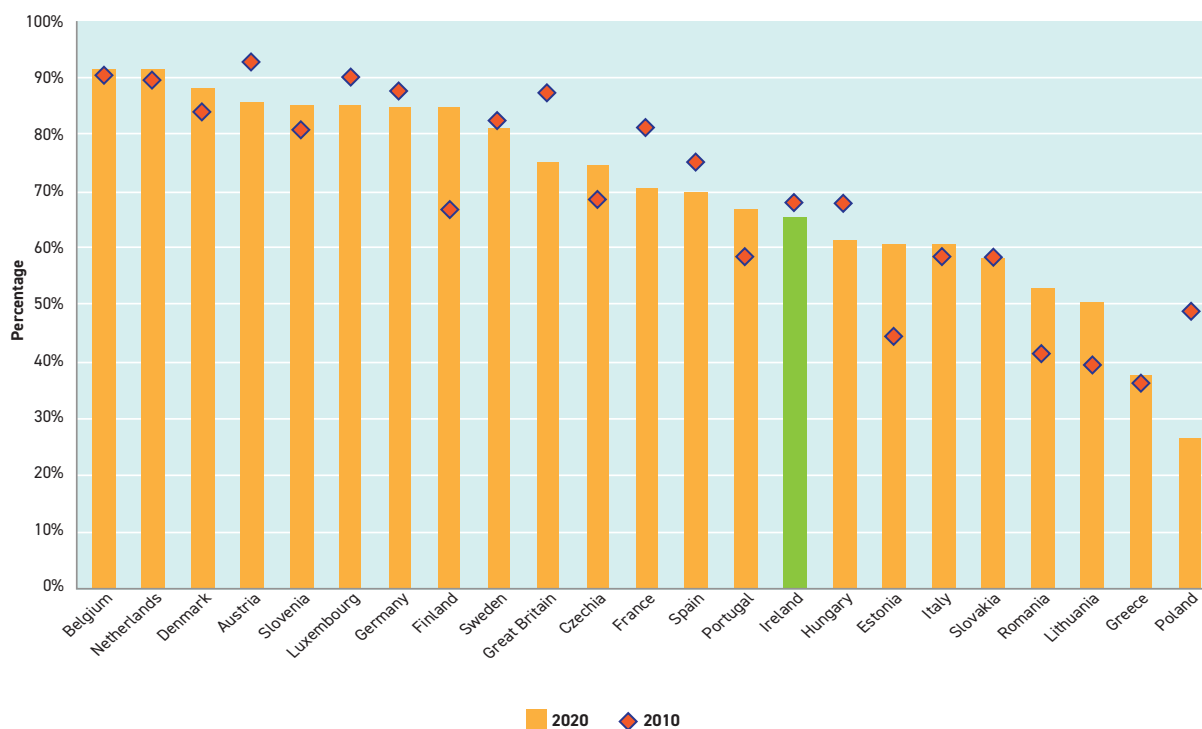


- Citizen confidence with the judicial system and the courts in Ireland in 2020, at 67 per cent is above the European average.
- Confidence has remained at a relatively stable level since 2007.

Citizen satisfaction with the healthcare system is a little below the European average

FIGURE 59 CITIZEN SATISFACTION WITH THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

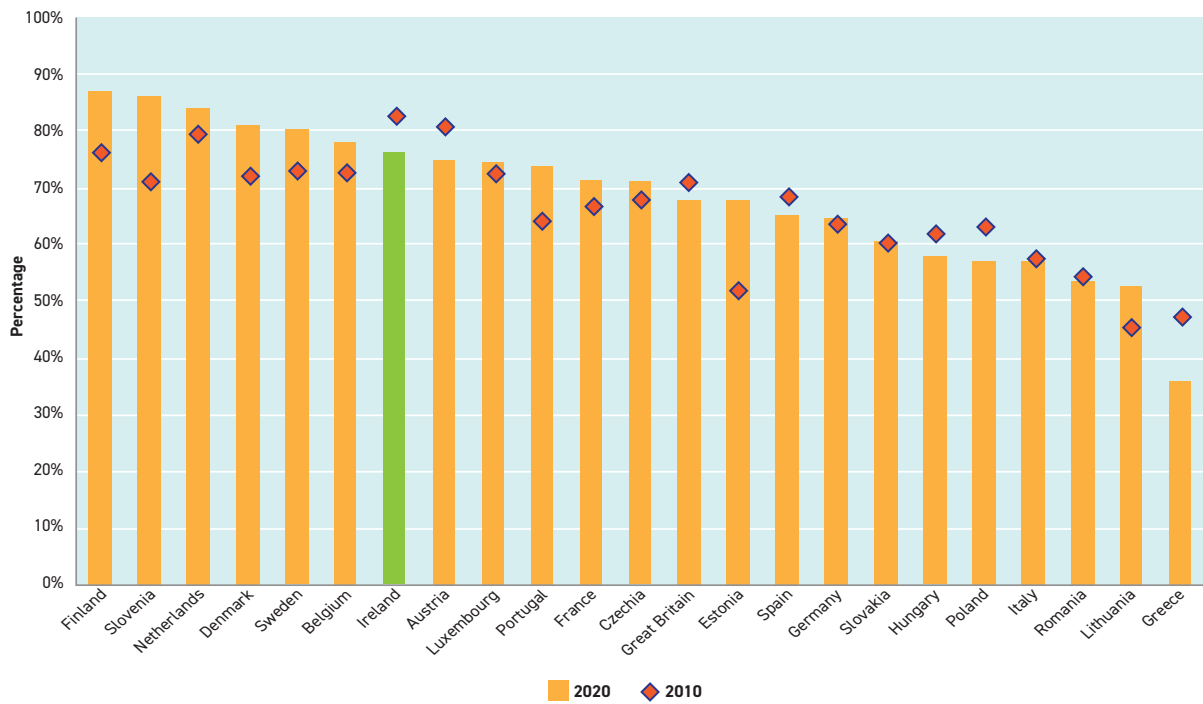


- At 66 per cent, citizen satisfaction with the healthcare system in 2020 is a little below the European average.
- Satisfaction levels have not changed dramatically in recent years: they were at 68 per cent in 2010 and 60 per cent in 2016.

Citizen satisfaction with the education system and schools remains at a high level in Ireland but has fallen slightly

FIGURE 60 CITIZEN SATISFACTION WITH THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AND SCHOOLS

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2021

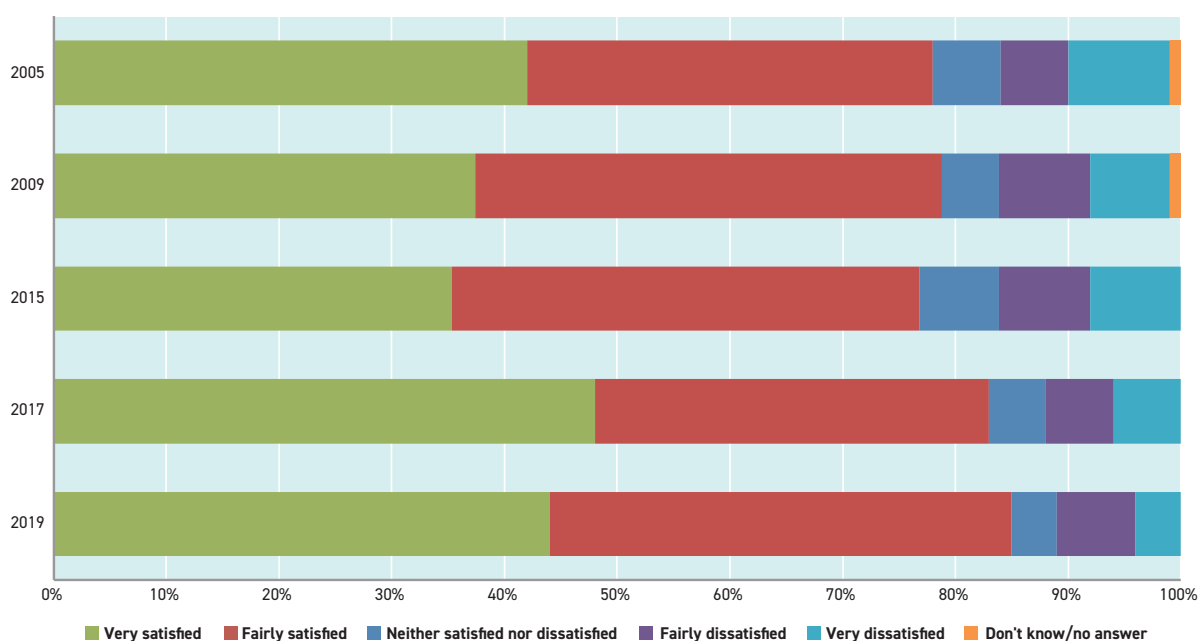


- Citizens express a high level of satisfaction with the education system and schools, at 76 per cent in 2020.
- Ireland scored the highest level of satisfaction with the education system and schools in 2010, but is now seventh highest.

Public satisfaction with the service received from the civil service is high

FIGURE 61 LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH SERVICE RECEIVED FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE

Source: Irish Civil Service Customer Satisfaction Survey 2019

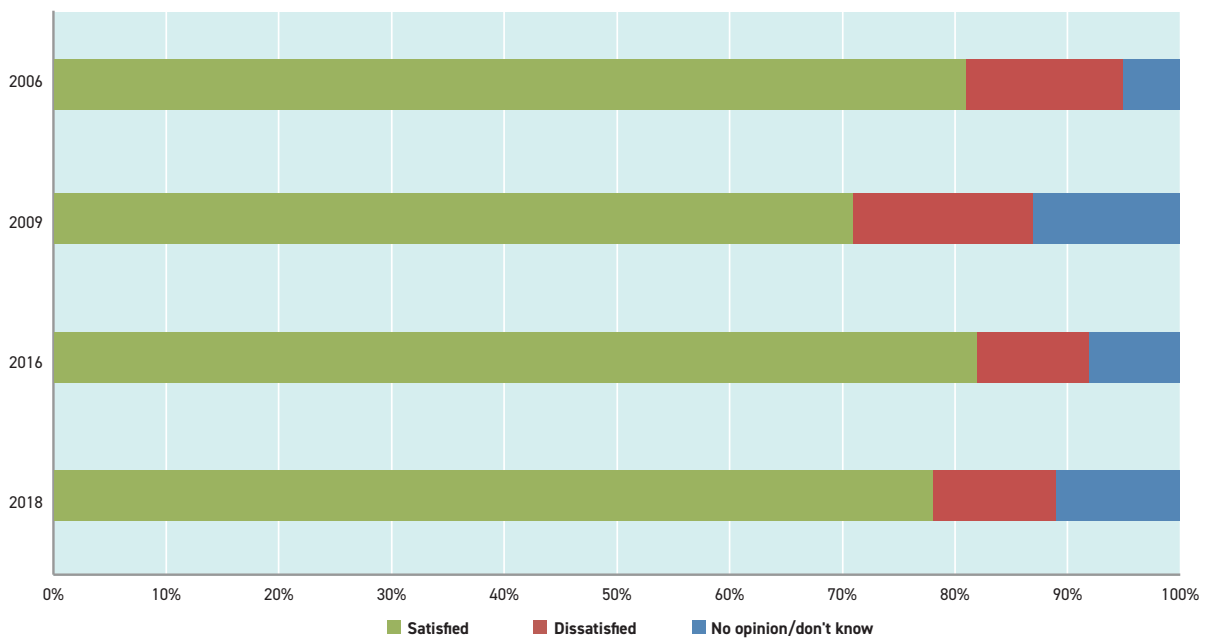


- Most members of the public are satisfied with the service received from the civil service. 85 per cent of those surveyed were either very or fairly satisfied in 2019. The level of satisfaction is higher than in the four previous surveys (2005, 2009, 2015 and 2017).
- 11 per cent of the public were either very or fairly dissatisfied with the level of service provided to them by the civil service in 2019. This level of dissatisfaction is lower than in previous surveys.

Businesses display a reasonably high level of satisfaction with the service received from the civil service

FIGURE 62 LEVEL OF BUSINESS SATISFACTION WITH SERVICE RECEIVED ON LAST INTERACTION WITH CIVIL SERVICE

Source: Civil Service Business Customer Survey 2018

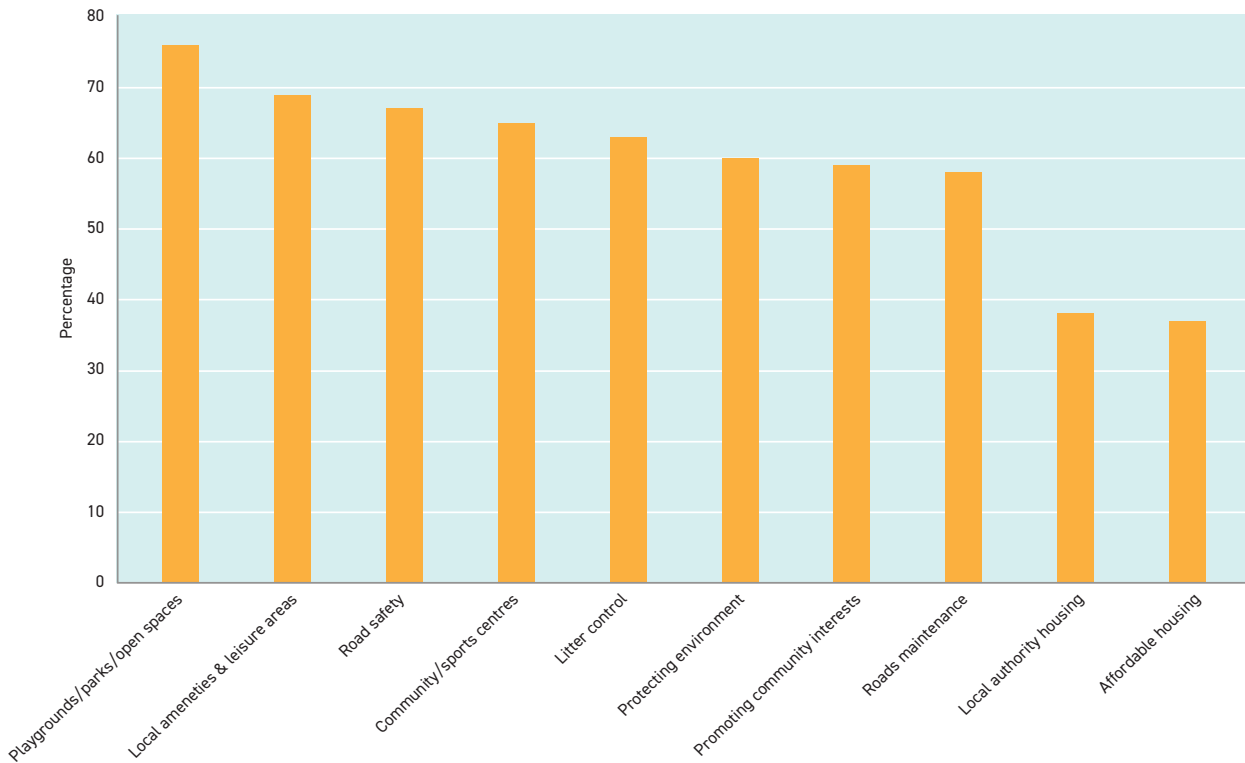


- Business satisfaction with the service received from the civil service stood at 78 per cent satisfied in 2018.
- The percentage of businesses saying they were dissatisfied stood at 11 per cent in 2018.

Satisfaction with local council's services varies depending on the service

FIGURE 63 SATISFACTION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITY SERVICES

Source: National Oversight and Audit Commission Local Authority Satisfaction Survey 2019

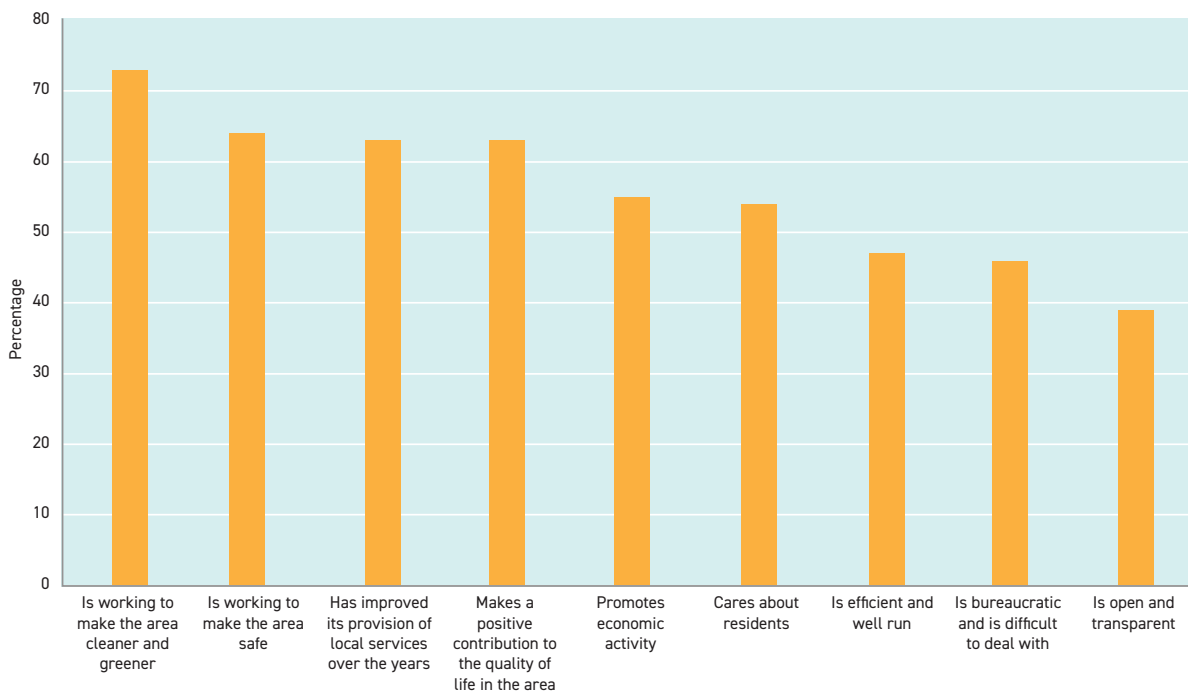


- Around three-quarters of people are satisfied with the playground/parks/open spaces service provided by their local authority.
- The lowest level of satisfaction related to housing services, with both affordable housing and local authority housing getting a satisfaction rating below 40 per cent.

Most people have broadly positive views of their local authority

FIGURE 64 PUBLIC VIEWS ON THE CONTRIBUTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Source: National Oversight and Audit Commission Local Authority Satisfaction Survey 2019

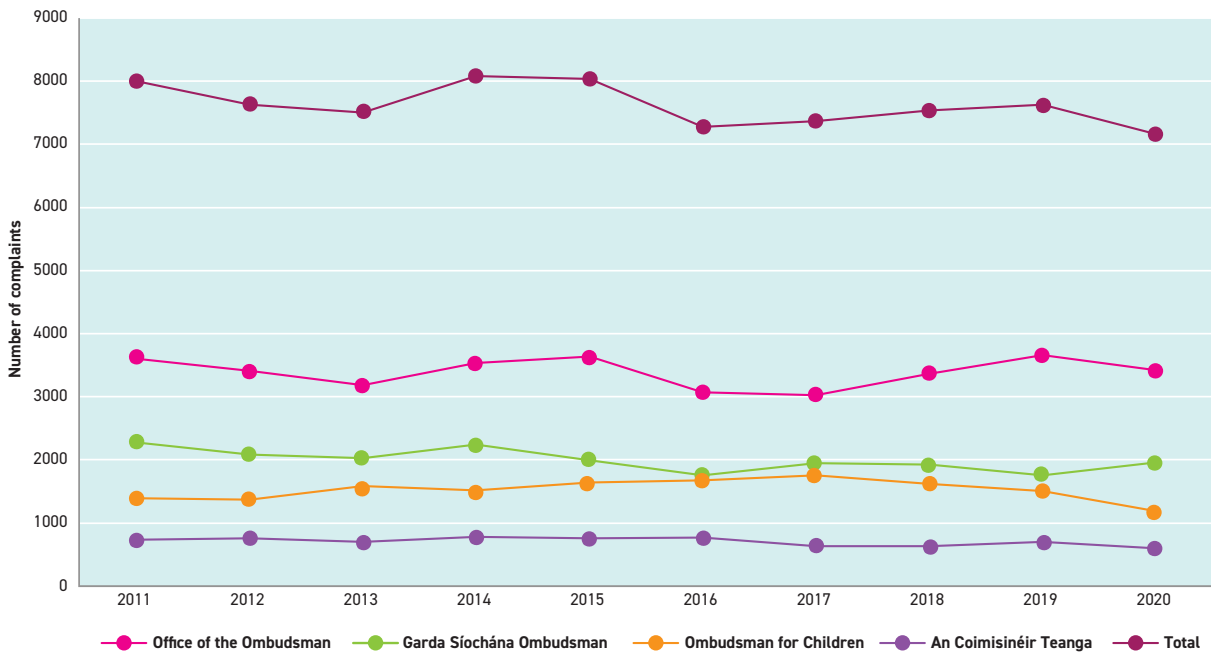


- The majority of respondents (73 per cent) believe that their local authority is working to make their area cleaner and greener.
- Just over 60 per cent believe that their local authority is working to make the area safe, has improved the provision of services over the years, and makes a positive contribution to quality of life in their area.
- Less than half of respondents believe that their local authority is efficient and well run, and is open and transparent.

Complaints to Ombudsman offices fell overall in 2020

FIGURE 65 COMPLAINTS TO OMBUDSMAN OFFICES

Source: various Ombudsman Office annual reports.

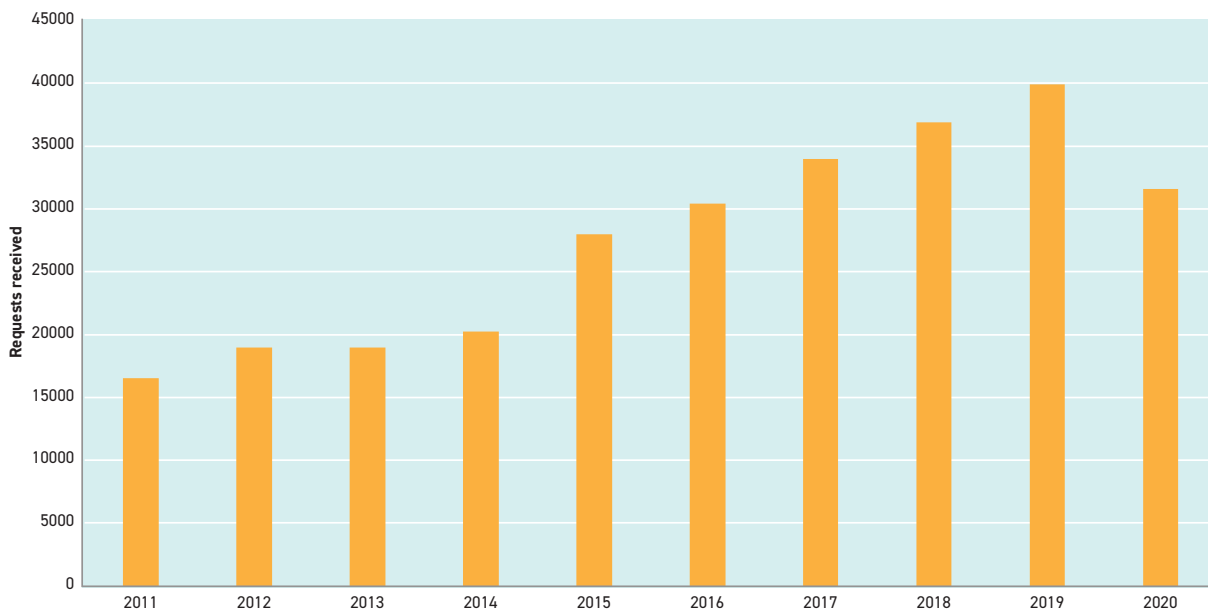


- Ombudsman offices received 7,164 complaints in 2020, down from the 2019 figure. It is likely that the Covid-19 pandemic had an effect here.
- The one office that bucked the trend was the Garda Síochána Ombudsman, who recorded an increase in the number of complaints.

The number of freedom of information requests received by public bodies fell for the first time in 2020

FIGURE 66 NUMBER OF FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS RECEIVED

Source: Office of the Information Commissioner annual reports



- The number of freedom of information (FOI) requests stood at 31,591 in 2020. This represents a decrease of 21 per cent on 2019. It is likely the Covid-19 pandemic had an effect here.
- Prior to 2020 there has been a continuous upward trend in FOI requests, from just over 10,000 in 2007, with a large increase since 2014, when the Freedom of Information Act 2014 removed restrictions and extended the range of bodies covered.
- The HSE accounts for just under a third of the requests received.

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APPENDIX 1

INDICATORS USED TO MAKE UP THE IPA PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION QUALITY INDICATOR
(data from IMD World Competitiveness yearbook)

	Data Source and Indicator	Description
Traditional Public Service Values Indicator (TPSVI)	Justice Processes	Justice is fairly administered
	Bribery and Corruption	Existence of bribery and corruption
	Transparency	Government policy is transparent

	Data Source and Indicator	Description
Competitiveness and Regulation Indicator (CRI)	Legal and Regulatory Framework	The legal and regulatory framework encourages the competitiveness of enterprises
	Public Sector Contracts	Public sector contracts are sufficiently open to foreign bidders
	Intellectual Property Rights	Intellectual property rights are adequately enforced
	Public and Private Sector Ventures	Public and private sector ventures are supporting technological developments
	Bureaucracy	Bureaucracy hinders business activities

