



2020

ANNUAL REPORT

IPA
AN FORAS RIARACHÁIN
INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION

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Note: Photos in this report of groups who are not socially
distanced were taken prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

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01

REPORT
OF THE
DIRECTOR
GENERAL &
THE CHAIR OF
THE BOARD

01

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL
& THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

The year 2020 was exceptionally challenging due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, but the staff of the IPA responded quickly and effectively to the sudden changes that it necessitated. We are grateful to staff, students and clients of the Institute, who worked with and supported us as we dealt with an unpredicted and far-reaching crisis in a professional and pragmatic manner.



DR FERGAL LYNCH
Chair



DR MARIAN O'SULLIVAN
Director General

Owing to the global spread of Covid-19 in early 2020, and discussions on whether Ireland would follow other countries in terms of restrictions, the IPA began formulating contingency plans and examining policies and procedures for online delivery of education and training programmes, remote working and the facilitation of examinations. The Institute quickly established a Covid-19 strategic group at senior management level. This group met regularly to agree on the Institute's policy in relation to the evolving Covid-19 crisis. It evaluated options and coordinated responses on a range of strategic, managerial and operational matters. A formal Working Group on Technology-Enabled Services, which evaluated from a technological perspective the requirements for the continuation of the delivery of all services, was immediately established. This was followed with the establishment of a Covid-19 working group within the facilities management team and a staff well-being group. The IPA quickly enabled staff to work from home and altered training and education programme delivery and

assessment, the learner experience and the work of all staff in ways that adhered to the principles and practices of good organisational governance. Internal reports of the risks that the Institute faced were presented to the IPA Board on a monthly basis. The decision-making structures already in place in the IPA allowed for efficient and well-informed decisions to take place. The ability to act decisively and efficiently meant that the challenge of staff working remotely, coupled with the online delivery of services, was managed smoothly. The speedy development and use of both hardware and software demonstrated the commitment of management and staff to both embrace and implement change. The management structures, the risk and audit processes, and the culture of governance embedded in the IPA and across all divisions have meant that, during the pandemic, we have met the overarching standards and principles by which we deliver our services to our public service colleagues.

The IPA is Ireland's only public service development agency focused exclusively on public sector development. The IPA is proud of its distinct mission and role in the provision of a unique mix of education, training, research, publishing, consultancy and other support services across the wider public sector. Through our forums, seminars and publications, we also promote dialogue on the development and future direction of public services. This cross-sectoral approach ensures that the IPA applies a unique, whole-of-government perspective to everything that it delivers. We have continued to successfully deliver all of our services during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Annual Report allows time for reflection on what the Institute achieved in 2020. It also provides an opportunity to acknowledge the high levels of professionalism, expertise, commitment and hard work of an excellent team of staff and the IPA Board. It is important that we celebrate and acknowledge a very successful year in very challenging and difficult circumstances.

The Institute continued to offer undergraduate and postgraduate programmes ranging from level 6 to level 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications. Students who enrolled on education programmes receive NUI-accredited qualifications. The online conferring ceremony for accredited programmes took place in



Robert Watt, Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, speaking at the IPA's 'Innovation in the Public Service' conference.

December when 1,012 graduates were conferred with diplomas and degrees and an additional 647 students were presented with certificates.

Seven specialisms were offered on the Bachelor of Arts (Hons) and four on the Bachelor of Business Studies (Hons). The Institute also offered a wide range of certificate and diploma programmes ranging from Law to Computer Studies and from Local Government Management to Public Procurement. Some of the professional diplomas were offered in conjunction with government bodies such as the Central Statistics Office, the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC), the Workplace Relations Commission and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. Overall, over 1,470 students were enrolled on our undergraduate programmes in 2020.

The Institute's Master of Arts programmes have a common first year, which leads to an award of Postgraduate Diploma in Public Management. In year two, students progress to a choice of seven specialist areas. The total number of students enrolled on Master of Arts programmes was 202. The Doctorate in Governance programme commenced in 2003 and in 2020 thirty-six students were enrolled across all years of the doctorate programme.

The IPA has a small, full-time, dedicated team of staff undertaking applied research for government departments and other public sector bodies. The Research Division participated in a research programme with the Public Service Reform Division of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on citizen engagement in respect of policymaking. Two of the four case studies in this research programme were carried out by members of the IPA team, focused (i) on a pilot initiative on participatory budgeting in South Dublin County Council and (ii) on the transition to online applications by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in respect of the Basic Farm Payment Scheme. *Public Sector Trends 2020*, the eleventh report in the series, was also published.



Laura Burke, Director General, Environmental Protection Agency, and Dr Marian O'Sullivan, Director General, IPA, signing the contract for a major research programme.

Under the 'Local Government' series, three research reports were published:

- *Knowledge Management: Lessons For Local Government* by Joanna O'Riordan;
- *Municipal Districts – A Review* by Richard Boyle, Joanna O'Riordan, Laura Shannon and Fergal O'Leary;
- *Measuring Customer Satisfaction in Local Government* by Richard Boyle.

In January the IPA signed a contract for a major research programme with the Environmental Protection Agency to review Ireland's water governance arrangements. The objectives of this two-year research programme are to:

- inform thinking in relation to the third-cycle *River Basin Management Plan, 2022–2027* currently being developed by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage;
- share lessons learnt from new governance arrangements in respect of water with other areas of the Irish public service.

In line with the publishing strategy, overseen by the Institute's Book Publishing Committee, a number of texts were either completed or approved for publication. These included:

- *Industrial Relations in Ireland* (5th edition) by Joseph Wallace, Patrick Gunnigle and Michelle O'Sullivan;
- *A Species of Delusion? The Inspectors of Irish Fisheries 1819–2019* by Noël P Wilkins.

Now in its fifty-fifth year, the IPA continues to publish *Ireland – A Directory*. The Directory is regarded as Ireland's most comprehensive database on public and private organisations. Over 9,000 organisations are included in the Directory, which is also available as a phone or desktop app.

In the Training Division, the Institute continued to provide a broad range of public and customised learning and development programmes and specialist advisory services in the areas of public sector leadership and management, human resource management, governance, accounting, financial management, auditing, project and programme management, and information technology, including accredited programmes which lead to formal membership of professional bodies. Within Q1, all forums and other key events and activities were migrated to an online format, utilising a range of educational and online platforms, including Moodle, MS Teams, Panopto and GoToWebinar. The teaching and learning approach focused on the integration of available resources, e.g. video recordings, case studies, films, real-time delivery, interactive tools and techniques.

In the Leadership and Management Team, a number of bespoke, multi-module programmes had commenced towards the end of 2019 and the team worked closely with clients to reconfigure these for online delivery during 2020. Senior management programmes for the Criminal Justice Sector, Revenue, Department of Transport, IHREC and a number of local authorities were finalised for delivery in Q4. The Leadership Team also commenced work on the design and development of training to build the leadership capacity of climate action teams to deliver local climate action measures across all local authority functions. The training will constitute one element of a unique collaboration from a range of contributors, managed by the Climate Action Regional Offices, supported by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, and delivered through the Local Authority Services National Training Group. This is one of the most notable collaborations for the Institute in the history of its leadership development work, using the practices, tools and techniques of adaptive leadership to build the capacity of public managers and local government organisations to promote behavioural change and address the complex challenges of climate change.

In relation to CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) accredited programmes, 2020 saw strong demand for our CIPD Diploma in HR Practice and the CIPD Diploma in Learning & Development, with both central programmes and client-based programmes being delivered. We continued with the Mediators' Institute of Ireland Certified Mediation programme on a hybrid basis, where we have sought to mix online sessions and support with, where possible and appropriate and in accordance with public health guidance, some face-to-face delivery for the practical skills aspects.

There was strong demand for financial management and accounting-related services. Consultancy services included advice on statements on internal control, annual financial statements and assurance systems, as well as the development of financial policies and protocols for key sectors. The CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Certificate in International Public Financial Management was also launched.

In addition, a new Housing Forum was launched in August. This forum has an ambitious programme of events, including monthly webinars for housing practitioners on a wide range of contemporary special-interest areas.

Before lockdown and the move to a fully virtual programme, the Governance Forum hosted four in-person events in 2020. From March onwards, the forum went virtual and was successfully migrated to an online webinar series which, due to the broader reach and limited constraints

on access, saw us achieve record numbers of attendees. The virtual platform also allowed us to more easily access national and international contributors and we were very pleased with the positive feedback and acknowledgement received from the forum member organisations.

International Services continued its partnership with ENA (École Nationale d'Administration) to jointly implement a consultancy and support project in the National School of Public Administration (INA), Romania, to enhance the overall level of its services and to build new capacities. Our relationship with the Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC) in Thailand continued to grow. In March we received confirmation that our proposal to the OCSC for delivery of a programme in Ireland was successful. However, in light of the emerging restrictions on international travel induced by the global pandemic, the OCSC postponed discussions on the next stage of commencement of the contract.

A positive financial performance was recorded in 2020. There was significant investment in enhancing our cybersecurity and IT infrastructure, and financial management systems. The IPA is privileged to have a highly talented, professional and committed workforce, and a strong body of associates. The IPA is committed to supporting all staff in their professional and personal development and well-being. Institute specialists continue to support a wide range of organisations undergoing change as a result of the pandemic and the general reform process. Support is provided in the form of short- and long-term learning and development interventions, expert advice, consultancy support and executive coaching.

2020 was a very productive and rewarding year for the IPA. We delivered on our *Strategic Plan*, pivoted our business model and continued to build our reputation at a national and international level. We would like to express our appreciation and thanks to the IPA Board members and all of the IPA staff and associates, our students, clients and member organisations. We look forward to continuing our productive relationship with them in the years ahead.

Dr Fergal Lynch
Chair

Dr Marian O'Sullivan
Director General



02

EDUCATION

02

EDUCATION



DR MICHAEL MULREANY
Assistant Director General

The IPA is the primary specialist provider of education to the public service in Ireland. The education services of the IPA are particularly important at this time of renewal and change in the public service. Our programmes aim to provide specialist skills and knowledge, a broadly based understanding of public management and policy, analytical skills and the opportunity for progression from level 6 awards right up to level 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications. The programmes are also designed to provide a flexible and personalised service so as to facilitate and support students who are working full-time. In that context the provision of online support and delivery for students has become particularly important and is an inevitable trend in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. In recent years the uptake on education programmes has been steadily growing.

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND AND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN ACCREDITED PROGRAMMES

Between 2001 and 2011 the IPA was a recognised college of the NUI. Between 2011 and 2018 the IPA was a recognised college of UCD. In 2018 the IPA resumed as a recognised college of the NUI. Students enrolled on education programmes from September 2018 onwards are eligible to receive NUI-accredited qualifications. The conferring ceremony for accredited programmes took place in December 2020 when 1,012 graduates were conferred with diplomas and degrees. An additional 647 students were presented with certificates.

Delivery of programmes in 2020 was moved online in response to public health restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2020 the Institute offered the following suite of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes ranging from level 6 to level 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

The flagship programmes – the Bachelor of Arts (Hons) and Bachelors of Business Studies (Hons) – were once again offered in 2020. In 2020 seven specialisms were offered on the Bachelor of Arts (Hons) and four on the Bachelor of Business Studies (Hons).

The Institute also offered a wide range of certificate and diploma programmes ranging from Law to Computer Studies and from Local Government Management to Public Procurement. Some of the professional diplomas are offered in conjunction with government bodies. The Professional Diploma in Official Statistics for Policy Evaluation is a one-year programme offered in conjunction with the Central Statistics Office. The Professional Diploma in Human Rights and Equality is delivered in conjunction with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. The Professional Diploma in Industrial and Employment Relations is offered in conjunction with the Workplace Relations Commission and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. In 2020 two new programmes, namely the Professional Diploma in Innovation in the Public Sector and the Professional Certificate in Public Expenditure Management, were offered. Overall, over 1,470 students were enrolled on our undergraduate programmes in 2020.

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

The Institute's Master of Arts programmes have a common first year, which leads to an award of Postgraduate Diploma in Public Management. In year two students progress to a choice of seven specialist areas. In 2020 the total number of students enrolled on Master of Arts programmes was 202.

The Master of Economic Science in Policy Analysis is a two-year programme with the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Policy Analysis at the end of the first year. Students study a range of policy-related subjects in the first year and they work on applied dissertations in the second year. In 2020 twenty-three students enrolled on year one of the programme and nine students on year two.

The Master of Science in Business and Management programme commenced in September 2011. This MSc is a two-year, part-time programme. The first graduates of the programme graduated in December 2013. A new intake of over twenty students was enrolled on the programme in 2020.

The Professional Certificate in Governance is a one-year programme which was first offered in 2011. Over 180 students were enrolled on the programme in 2020.



The Doctorate in Governance programme commenced in 2003, and the first graduates were conferred in 2006. Between 2003 and 2011 the Doctorate in Governance programme was jointly offered with Queen's University Belfast. In 2011 the Institute embarked on a new arrangement to jointly offer the programme with UCD. The first graduate of the joint IPA–UCD doctorate was conferred in 2015. In 2019 the NUI approved the IPA's proposal to take sole responsibility for the administration and delivery of the programme. New enrolments of thirteen in 2019 and twelve in 2020 brought to thirty-six the number of students enrolled across all years of the doctorate programme.

Dr Michael Mulreany
Assistant Director General

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT:
ENGAGING AND EMPOWERING LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

**LAURA SHANNON
FERGAL O'LEARY**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESEARCH SERIES | **NO 16**
MARCH 2020



03

RESEARCH

03

RESEARCH

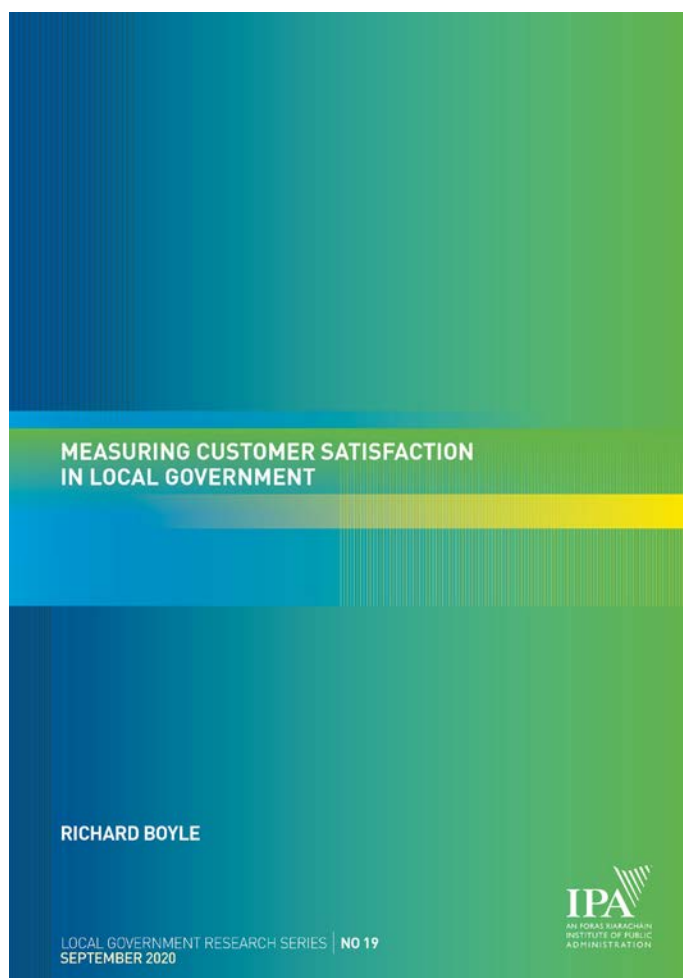
As part of the Research Division's work for the civil service and state agencies sector, a number of reports were published in 2020.



DR RICHARD BOYLE
Head of Research,
Publishing and
Corporate Relations

Under work for central government, two main areas of research were conducted during the year:

- The Research Division participated in a research programme with the Public Service Reform Division of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) on citizen engagement in respect of policymaking. Two of the four case studies in this research programme were carried out by members of the IPA team, focused (i) on a pilot initiative on participatory budgeting in South Dublin County Council and (ii) on the transition to online applications by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in respect of the Basic Farm Payment Scheme. The team also co-authored the overarching paper on citizen engagement. All reports were published by DPER and are available at <https://www.ops.gov.ie/news/citizen-engagement-in-our-public-service-case-studies-june-2020>
- The annual *Public Sector Trends* report, by Dr Richard Boyle, was published in December. The eleventh report in the series, it examines trends in public sector development. 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. This report is available for download at https://www.ipa.ie/_fileUpload/Documents/PublicSectorTrends2020.pdf



Under the 'Local Government' research series, three research studies were carried out for the County and City Management Association (CCMA):

- *Municipal Districts – A Review*
Despite being in existence for several years now, little has been written about the operation and role of municipal districts. This study examines how municipal districts are operating in practice, looks at their strengths and limitations as an element of local government, and highlights opportunities and challenges for the operation of municipal districts in the future. The research was referenced in the 2020 programme for government. The report is available at https://www.ipa.ie/_fileUpload/Documents/MunicipalReport_June2020.pdf

- *Measuring Customer Satisfaction in Local Government*

Prior to the Local Government Management Agency assuming responsibility for capturing data on national customer satisfaction, the CCMA asked the IPA to conduct a research study into measuring customer satisfaction, to draw lessons from national and international good practice. The study encompasses national customer satisfaction initiatives and also what might be done at local authority level. The report is available at https://www.ipa.ie/_fileUpload/Documents/measuring.pdf

• *City and County Management in Ireland, 1929–2020*

The research team has also been working on this book, which will be published in autumn 2021. The book includes a listing of all chief executives of local authorities since the foundation of the state, together with other chapters relevant to local government. It represents an updated version of a similar IPA publication from 1991.

In January the IPA Research Division signed a contract for a major research programme with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to review Ireland's water governance arrangements. The objectives of this two-year research programme are to:

- inform thinking in relation to the third-cycle *River Basin Management Plan, 2022–2027* currently being developed by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage;
- share lessons learnt from new governance arrangements in respect of water with other areas of the Irish public service.

As part of this research programme, two papers were completed by the research team in 2020, which the EPA published in 2021:

- The first report assesses water governance in Ireland using the Water Governance Indicator Framework, a tool developed by the OECD in 2018 to assist countries in assessing their progress towards the EU's Water Framework Directive. The report is available at https://www.epa.ie/publications/research/epa-research-2030-reports/Research_Report_372.pdf
- The second report uses an experimental governance lens to examine Ireland's water governance arrangements. The report is available at https://www.epa.ie/publications/research/epa-research-2030-reports/Research_Report_373.pdf

Other work carried out by the Research Division included the provision of the Irish country chapter for an EU-commissioned project, looking at public administration reform trends across the EU 28 (European Public Administration Country Knowledge – EUPACK2).

Members of the team also conducted extensive research with the Department of Justice in respect of its 2019 restructuring programme.

The research team is responsible for editorship of *Administration*, the peer-reviewed research journal of the IPA. Four editions are published each year. The editorial advisory committee of the journal, which includes prominent academics with a public management and politics background, meets once a year. The December 2020 edition was a tribute to Dr Richard Boyle, former



Head of Research, Publishing and Corporate Relations, who retired from the Institute after thirty-four years at the end of 2020. The special edition included a wide range of papers reflecting on public sector challenges and experiences in respect of public service reform. All issues and articles from volume 63 onwards are freely available online: <https://sciendo.com/journal/ADMIN>

Local Authority Times and the *EU News Bulletin* were also published by the Research Division throughout the year.

The team also provided support for the IPA's annual *Ireland – A Directory*, as well as contributions to IPA Education & Training programmes. In addition, the team contributed a chapter on 'Policy Analysis in the Irish Civil Service' to a new publication titled *Policy Analysis in Ireland*, edited by Mary Murphy and John Hogan, and published by Bristol University Press.

Dr Richard Boyle
Head of Research, Publishing and Corporate Relations



04

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

04

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Despite the impact of Covid-19, 2020 was a successful year across the units. This was particularly manifested in how all the teams moved quickly and very successfully to design, create and deliver a diverse range of blended learning online offerings, courses, special topic webinars and programmes. Within Q1, we also migrated forums and other key events and activities to an online format, utilising a range of educational and online platforms, including Moodle, MS Teams, Panopto and GoToWebinar.



TERESA CASSERLY
Director, Business Development,
Leadership and Management,
and International Services

In financial performance terms, each of the units had an exceptional year and achieved the ambitious budgetary targets, in spite of the challenges. In addition to training and development offerings across financial management and accounting, human resource management, information technology, project management, local government and governance, we also offer professionally accredited courses and programmes. In terms of our diversified portfolio, we were also commissioned to provide consultancy and advisory services in central government, local government, state bodies and agencies, regulatory bodies, higher education institutions, education and training boards, publicly funded and public benefit entities, the sports sector and national governing bodies.

The online prospectus for 2020 and the current 2021 prospectus provide an important showcase for our services, and many programmes on the central events list are often sought as in-house events, bespoke for individual organisations. The central events calendar includes over 130 scheduled events alone.

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

Aimed at senior managers in the local authority sector and designed to enhance their leadership capacity to lead out on increasingly complex and ambiguous challenges, our Leadership in Local Government Programme commenced in March 2020 with twenty-five senior managers from administrative and technical roles across some twenty local authorities. This four-module, residential programme is focused on delivering public value through adaptive leadership combined with an action-learning approach to participants' leadership challenges. Participants are immersed in varied activities, teaching styles and learning approaches, continuous opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and individual coaching. The programme engages participants in dialogue with senior leaders from across the public service to exchange perspectives, build understanding of the nature of the leadership challenge in their sector, and access advice and guidance on future career challenges and opportunities.

In the context of the experiential and residential nature of the Leadership in Local Government programme, the pandemic restrictions imposed on meetings and conference venues in Q2 impacted significantly on the remaining modules. Certain aspects of the programme were successfully reconfigured for online delivery while some modules were postponed fully until circumstances allow for a return to in-person delivery. It is intended to complete the programme's final modules as soon as circumstances permit a safe return to in-person learning and development sometime in 2021.

Meanwhile, a number of bespoke, multi-module programmes had commenced towards the end of 2019 and the Leadership & Management Team worked closely with clients to reconfigure these for online delivery during 2020. Senior management programmes for the Criminal Justice Sector, Revenue, Department of Transport, IHREC and a number of local authorities were finalised for delivery in Q4. An extensive programme of support and training was initiated within the area to guide and support internal programme staff, training specialists and associate specialists in creating learner content, refining learning outcomes, devising learning support materials for self-managed learning, and using various learning technologies and platforms to develop and enhance the online learning experience of learners.

The Leadership Team continued to work closely with the Local Government Management Agency to support delivery of the three-year Local Government Graduate Programme that commenced in 2018, with the regional delivery of the competency-based modules and a central induction session. In 2019 graduates entered professionally accredited programmes across six streams: Economic Enterprise and Business Development; Human Resource Management; Project and Programme Management; Innovation Strategy and Change Management; Communications and Marketing; and Data Analytics and Data Metrics. These programmes concluded midway through 2020 and work commenced on the redesign of the remaining competency-based modules for online delivery, scheduled for 2021.

We continued to evolve our teaching and learning approach to integrate available resources, e.g. video recordings, case studies, films, real-time delivery, interactive tools and techniques. This evolution will continue where we see the ongoing potential of virtual and asynchronous education, training and development programmes. We acknowledge that the demand for online delivery of services will continue for the foreseeable future and beyond, that the future will require variants of a blended or hybrid approach, and we are committed to embracing these changes and exploiting the opportunities.



HR Training Unit (l-r): Rebecca Cooney, Eoin Smyth, Maebh O'Connor, Edwin Maguire, Frances Stephenson and Jane Greer.

The Leadership Team commenced work on the design and development of training to build the leadership capacity of climate action teams to deliver local climate action measures across all local authority functions. The training will constitute one element of a unique collaboration from a range of contributors, managed by the Climate Action Regional Offices, supported by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, and delivered through the Local Authority Services National Training Group. This is one of the most notable collaborations for the Institute in the history of its leadership development work, using the practices, tools and techniques of adaptive leadership to build the capacity of public managers and local government organisations to promote behavioural change and address the complex challenges of climate change. The Institute joined a number of national collaborators drawn from across academic institutions, central and local government, the Irish Meteorological Service, the Association of Irish Local Government, energy agencies and MaREI, the world-leading Science Foundation Ireland Research Centre for Energy, Climate and Marine, coordinated by the Environmental Research Institute at University College Cork.

The final programme, which will be launched in 2021, will be known as the Local Authority Climate Action Training Programme. It is the largest training programme in the history of local government in Ireland. Under this programme all c.29,000 local authority staff will engage with the training programme and support the sector to reorient and support positive climate action efforts across the range of services and functions provided at local and community levels. The training courses, under six pillars, will serve to underpin the commitments set out under Action 150 of Ireland's *Climate*

Action Plan, which is to strengthen and empower local authority climate action leadership and build capacity within the sector to further reinforce the delivery of effective climate action.

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT UNIT

In relation to CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) accredited programmes, 2020 saw strong demand for our CIPD Diploma in HR Practice and the CIPD Diploma in Learning & Development, with both central programmes and client-based programmes being delivered. We continued with the Mediators' Institute of Ireland Certified Mediation programme on a hybrid basis, where we have sought to mix online sessions and support with, where possible and appropriate and in accordance with public health guidance, some face-to-face delivery for the practical skills aspects.

On the short online programmes for 2020, the unit met the demand and responded with the delivery of training for HR for Line Managers, Interviewer Board Member Training, Interviewee Training, Recruitment Practices for HR Practitioners, Performance Management & Development Training, Managing Personal Safety at Work, Psychometric Testing for Candidates, Freedom of Information Training and Dignity at Work programmes. The unit was also commissioned to undertake specialist consultancy and advisory projects.

LOCAL AUTHORITY UNIT

Similar to the other teams, the Local Authority Unit was very active in 2020. The launch of the new Housing Forum in August 2020 was a significant highlight for the unit. The forum has an ambitious programme of events, including

monthly webinars for housing practitioners on a wide range of contemporary special-interest areas. The events were very well attended, with over 100 (local authorities, approved housing bodies and public sector agencies representatives) attending each event. The A-Z Training Programme in Local Government continued to be very popular, in addition to the very successful legislative training programme. These programmes are offered online with a mix of pre-recorded video lectures coupled with real-time interactive sessions. The unit also provided a suite of housing courses, including Social Housing Fundamentals, Debt Management and Rental Inspection programmes. The team continued to support the delivery of the local government accredited programmes, including the LG Certificate, LG Diploma, Housing Certificate and Housing Diploma.

IT/PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT

There was continuing strong demand for GDPR training courses, as well as for the project management offerings and social media courses. The unit has traditionally offered end-user training and this has migrated across to a fully virtual offering. During the year we were commissioned to lead on several strategy review and planning engagements, and we continued to actively work within client organisations and within our central programme on building project management capacity and capability at senior and middle management levels across key sectors.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT UNIT

There was also strong demand for financial management and accounting-related services. Consultancy services included advice on statements on internal control, annual financial



Top: Pictured (l-r) at an IPA Housing Forum event were Cian Rohan, Assistant Specialist, and Philip Byrne, Senior Specialist, Local Government Unit.

Left: Pictured (l-r) speaking at an IPA Governance Forum event were Nicholas Marcoux, Senior Governance Specialist; Aidan Horan, Director, Governance, Finance, Human Resource Management, Information Technology / Project Management and Local Authority; and Tom Ward, Senior Governance Specialist.

statements and assurance systems, as well as the development of financial policies and protocols for key sectors. We launched the CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Certificate in International Public Financial Management (IPFM) and we are pleased with the success rates achieved. In addition to the regular courses in the online prospectus on budget management, finance for non-financial managers, sector-specific accounting events, special topic webinars, internal audit and other areas, the new offerings on aspects of the *Public Spending Code* were very well received, with both central offerings and increasingly in-house client offerings in strong demand in 2020 and into 2021.

GOVERNANCE UNIT

Before lockdown and the move to a fully virtual programme, the Governance Forum hosted four in-person events in 2020, which drew large attendances to the Institute. These topic areas included Department–Agency Relationships and Information Governance, as well as the highly popular session on contemporary hot topics, which featured Seamus Coffey, Chair of the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council; Robert Watt, Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform; and Dr Richard Boyle, Head of Research, IPA. From March onwards, the forum went virtual and was successfully migrated to an online webinar series which, ironically, due to the broader reach and limited constraints on access, saw us achieve record numbers of attendees. The virtual platform also allowed us to more easily access national and international contributors and we were very pleased with the positive feedback and acknowledgement received from the forum member organisations, who noted our work to sustain the forum programme.

The virtual events focused on a wide range of relevant governance areas, including assurance and accountability arrangements, financial reporting and financial governance, strategy, risk management systems, culture, communications and stakeholder relations. We had a very successful event involving Minister Michael McGrath, TD, on 10 September, at which he launched a new annex to the state body code, as well as highlighting the advent of more periodic critical reviews.

We also convened the Chairpersons' Network and the Board Secretaries' Network and again the virtual platform proved very beneficial in allowing access by greater numbers to these dedicated network sessions.

In terms of governance services in 2020, we continued to see strong demand for advisory and consultancy services as well as for supporting clients with induction, training and continuing development programmes for boards, governing bodies, committees, and wider governance and leadership teams. We continued to provide board and committee effectiveness reviews as well as commissioned assignments on assessing the adequacy and effectiveness of their governance structures, arrangements and frameworks benchmarked against good practice norms and standards across different sectors. In terms of the rollout of the *Governance Code for Sport*, we actively collaborated with Sport Ireland on a range of webinar events for national governing bodies and chairpersons. The unit also supported the delivery of the Professional Certificate in Governance programme throughout 2020.

The Pension Forum also continued in a virtual format in 2020 with some special-interest events delivered and more planned into 2021.

Teresa Casserly

Director, Business Development, Leadership and Management, and International Services

Aidan Horan

Director, Governance, Finance, Human Resource Management, Information Technology / Project Management and Local Authority



05

INTERNATIONAL SERVICES



05

INTERNATIONAL SERVICES

International Services continued its partnership with ENA (École Nationale d'Administration) to jointly implement a consultancy and support project in the National School of Public Administration (INA), Romania, to enhance the overall level of its services and to build new capacities. The project, supported by funding from the Structural Reform Support Service (SRSS) of the EU Commission, has assisted with the design of a new organisational strategy and development of a research/innovation unit, together with identifying innovative learning tools to expand its portfolio of online learning and enhance its branding. These reform measures are seen as important steps towards the fulfilment of the country's overarching public administration reform plans.



TERESA CASSERLY
Director, Business Development,
Leadership and Management,
and International Services

We learned in late 2019 that, with a change in government in Romania, INA's structure and management were being reformed, placing it under the authority of the Ministry of Public Work, Development and Administration. Thus, most activities had to be adapted to that situation. SRSS took a decision to put all project activities on hold until the situation became clearer to all concerned. Subsequently, the IPA was informed that INA was to be rebranded as the National School of Public Administration (SNAP). In early 2020 communication was resumed with a view to making progress on the implementation of remaining project activities and SRSS subsequently agreed to extend the project to 26 June 2020.

In late March/early April the IPA reimagined the project for online delivery using the Zoom platform. The IPA was originally supposed to work directly with INA staff in Romania in March 2020. This would support INA to move towards a blended learning approach for the delivery of its programmes and courses and build capacity across certain delivery areas. The IPA, through its revised plan, delivered a set of e-guidelines, which were developed as an output under Project Component 3.1, and organised an agreed schedule of online meetings and

consultations to support an efficient handover, customisation and e-coaching for a pilot team of key staff in INA. This was a crucial element for the introduction of successful blended content in an online environment, building INA's capacity for the future. In the initial stages of consulting and coaching, the IPA worked with INA's intact pilot team while specific areas of focus emerged within the team that necessitated additional online activities, requiring the IPA to provide more deliberate guidance, advice and institutional capacity-building for INA. By mid 2020 the IPA's Leadership Team had successfully delivered all remaining elements of the project for INA within the EU's specified time frame.

In 2019 the IPA was invited to submit a proposal to the Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC) of the Royal Kingdom of Thailand for the design, development and delivery of a Leadership and Strategic Management programme, incorporating digital transformation for talented Thai civil servants, to be delivered in Ireland in July 2019. The successful proposal was awarded to an Australian University with a significant online presence.

In late 2019, on invitation from the OCSC, the IPA submitted a proposal for the design, development and delivery of a Strategic Management Programme, incorporating strategic analysis and implementation, the policymaking process, project management and digital transformation for talented Thai civil servants, to be delivered in Ireland in July 2020.

In March 2020 we received confirmation that our proposal to the OCSC in Thailand for delivery of a programme in Ireland was successful. In both concept and design, the programme we offered OCSC was strongly influenced by the IPA's long-standing experience in delivering senior leadership interventions, including the IPA's flagship Leadership Challenge programme. We committed to arranging an exceptional itinerary of site visits and case studies to provide insights into leadership in practice, exposure to practitioners and dialogue with policymakers

and exceptional leaders who have led thoughtful and strategic interventions to effect meaningful, strategic change in the real world. Our itinerary of site visits offered opportunities for engagement with senior managers and leaders with the background and strategic ability to work with complex policy areas and adaptive challenges. Our programme focused heavily on developing stronger networks amongst participants, a key principle underpinning our approach to leadership learning and development in general.

However, in light of the emerging restrictions on international travel induced by the global pandemic, the OCSC postponed indefinitely discussions on the next stage of that contract.

Teresa Casserly
Director, Business Development, Leadership
and Management, and International Services



06

LIBRARY &
INFORMATION
SERVICES

06

LIBRARY & INFORMATION SERVICES

The Institute is unique in hosting the only specialist library in the country dedicated to public administration.



SENAN HEALY
Head of Library &
Information Services

The vision for the IPA Library is to be a central and intrinsic part of the Institute community, connecting our users to the information they need to help them succeed. The Library aims to promote a culture of research-informed practice and decision-making, deliver flexible, responsive and high-quality services aligned with the needs of our customers, and help to enable academic success by fostering essential information literacy skills. The Library's core mission is to provide access to the best information and research in a timely manner to students, staff and members of the Institute, and to advise on the appropriate, critical and ethical use of information.

The Library, located in Lansdowne Road, provides a lending, reference and information service to students, staff and members of the Institute. Queries from researchers are also welcomed by phone or email. Access is provided to books, e-books, journals, electronic databases, reports, statistics and official publications in the general area of public management. This service covers a wide range of subjects, including management, economics, sociology, law, criminology, health, finance and local government. The continued development and curation of the Library's unique collection has cemented its position as a key national resource in the arena of public management and administration. In 2020 the Library focused on the development of its e-book collection to make more than 700

key texts available to students when 'in-person' access to the Library was not possible.

The aim of the Library is to provide the right information and resources in the most appropriate format and in a timely manner to a diverse and geographically dispersed range of clients. Different avenues of communication are used by the Library to promote its services. Librarians provide orientation sessions to students at the start of the academic year and information sessions to individual students or to groups (online and in person) over the course of the year. Hundreds of students attended online information sessions while the Library was closed during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Librarian attends briefing sessions to students embarking on research work for dissertations and advises them on the library assistance available to them. Twitter has been adopted as the main social media platform to engage with IPA students, the external research community and other libraries.

Reading rooms are available for study, for consulting and borrowing books, and for accessing electronic resources. Students can avail of the Library service by phone, by email, by webchat or by accessing electronic databases and thousands of full-text journal articles via Moodle. Materials not held in the Library may be requested through the inter-library loans service and items can be delivered in hard copy or electronically.

During term the Library is open from 9.15 a.m. until 8.00 p.m., Monday to Thursday, and until 5.15 p.m. on Friday. It also opens on a restricted basis on the majority of Saturdays during term. Full and up-to-date information on opening hours is available on the IPA website.

Senan Healy
Head of Library & Information Services

A SPECIES OF DELUSION?

The Inspectors of Irish Fisheries
1819–2019

Noël P. Wilkins



07

PUBLISHING

07

PUBLISHING

The work of the Publications Division, as a part of the Whitaker School of Government and Management, links with the wider education and research activities of the Institute, and provides an important knowledge and information base to inform the practice of public administration. The year 2020 saw the completion of a number of projects.



DR RICHARD BOYLE
Head of Research,
Publishing and
Corporate Relations

BOOKS PUBLISHED

In line with the publishing strategy, overseen by the Institute's Book Publishing Committee, a number of texts were either completed or approved for publication. These included:

- *Industrial Relations in Ireland* (5th edition) by Joseph Wallace, Patrick Gunnigle and Michelle O'Sullivan. This new edition is a comprehensive overview of contemporary industrial relations in Ireland. The book covers all the main contextual issues and theoretical perspectives, combined with information on the institutional framework to allow the formation of an informed view of the subject. It presents a historical context, allowing for an appreciation of factors leading to the development of industrial relations processes, law and practice. Notes and PowerPoint presentations were also developed as an additional resource for lecturers.
- *A Species of Delusion? The Inspectors of Irish Fisheries 1819–2019* by Noël P Wilkins. This book tells the story of how the inspectorates were established, who they were, how they functioned, and their contribution to the present-day management and regulation of Irish fisheries.

A number of reports were also published on behalf of the Institute's Research Division, including:

- *Knowledge Management: Lessons For Local Government* [Local Government Research Series No. 17] by Joanna O'Riordan;

- *Municipal Districts: A Review* [Local Government Research Series No. 18] by Richard Boyle, Joanna O'Riordan, Laura Shannon and Fergal O'Leary;
- *Measuring Customer Satisfaction in Local Government* [Local Government Research Series No. 19] by Richard Boyle;
- *Public Sector Trends 2020* [State of the Public Sector Series Research Paper No. 26] by Richard Boyle;
- three issues of *Local Authority Times*.

IRELAND – A DIRECTORY

Now in its fifty-fifth year, the Directory is regarded as Ireland's most comprehensive database on public and private organisations. Approximately 9,000 organisations are included in the latest edition, including government departments, local authorities, voluntary agencies, trade and professional organisations, merchant banks, advertising agencies, third-level institutions, independent radio stations, the media and EU institutions. The Directory is also available as a phone or desktop app. The Tánaiste, Leo Varadkar, TD, accepted a copy of the Directory on the steps of Government Buildings on 11 December 2020.

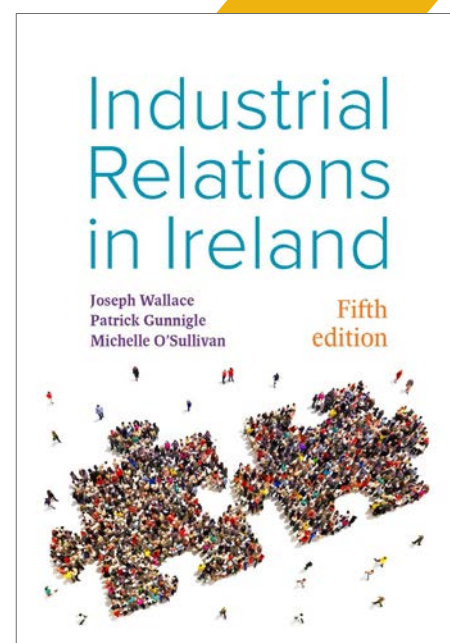
ADMINISTRATION JOURNAL

Four issues of the Institute's journal, *Administration*, were published throughout the year. All issues and articles from volume 63 onwards are freely available online: <https://sciencdo.com/journal/ADMIN>

PUBLISHING CONSULTANCY

The Publications Division continued to offer its expertise in the production and management of publishing projects on behalf of other public sector organisations. The *Irish Probation Journal* was produced on behalf of The Probation Service and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (North/South publication), and the latest volume of the *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy* series was published on behalf of the Royal Irish Academy.

Dr Richard Boyle
Head of Research, Publishing and
Corporate Relations



VOL 68 No 4 2020

Administration

Journal of the Institute of Public Administration of Ireland

A Tribute to Dr Richard Boyle



08

FINANCE &
CORPORATE
SERVICES



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FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES

The goals and objectives of the Finance and Corporate Services Division are aligned with the *IPA Corporate Strategy* and the division adopts a partnership approach in meeting the demands of stakeholders, both internal and external. The delivery of IPA Education, Training and Development, Research and Publishing services continued throughout 2020, and enabling this business continuity, within government guidelines, presented significant challenges for the IPA's Corporate Services Division. Working with colleagues across the Institute, IPA Finance and Corporate Services personnel ensured that targets and objectives continued to be achieved and demonstrated excellence and commitment to the IPA's vision and mission. Key areas of high performance across the Finance and Corporate Services Division for 2020 are outlined below.



NOREEN FAHY
Director, Finance and
Corporate Services

FINANCE

The audited Financial Statements for 2020, which accompany this report, demonstrate a surplus, continued growth in reserves and sustained liquidity. This excellent performance is of particular note given the already acknowledged business continuity risks posed by the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions.

The successful implementation of Phase 1 of a new Financial Management System, in October 2020, was on time and within budget. This system will enable more effective business intelligence gathering and improve the efficiency of our supply chains and management information for decision-making. This cloud-enabled and paperless solution will also support the IPA in implementing government recommendations in relation to sustainability and cybersecurity.

PROCUREMENT

There were continued improvements in the IPA centralised procurement function, further enhancing the effectiveness of the internal control environment within the IPA.

There were further reductions in the number of >€25k non-compliant/non-competitive procurements, and the implementation of an organisation-wide three-quotes process for procurements <€25k was completed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Business continuity required the IPA to move to an online Education and Training business model in order to abide by government guidelines at the advent of the pandemic restrictions in 2020. The IPA ICT team, working with colleagues across the organisation, successfully developed and implemented the technological infrastructure solutions to enable this digital and business transformation.

Zero business continuity cyberthreats were realised due to successful risk mitigation and significant investment in human and financial resources across all aspects of cyber and data security.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE AT WORK

There were no Covid-19 outbreaks relating to business operations at the IPA premises in 2020. All Health and Safety Authority Covid-19 protocols were implemented and managed very efficiently by the IPA facilities team. All IPA personnel who attended site for essential business purposes engaged with and adhered to all health and safety protocols.

FACILITIES AND ESTATES

Investment continued in the IPA sustainability programme, and the national Public Sector Energy Efficiency targets were exceeded for the three-year programme ending in 2020.

Where restrictions allowed, the implementation of the Board-adopted accommodation policy continued, which focuses on contemporary office solutions, including paperless solutions, staff well-being and clean desk policies.

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE

The Institute complied with its financial, taxation and regulatory obligations during 2020, and continued to review and update its corporate governance structures in line with the 2016 *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies*. The IPA continues to strive for excellence in its governance arrangements and implemented many improvements in its own governance effectiveness during 2020.

To reflect the serious nature of the pandemic, and specifically the potential risks to business continuity, the Senior Management Group instigated an enhanced risk reporting regime to the IPA Board and Audit and Risk Committee for the duration of the pandemic.

The IPA Audit and Risk Committee continued to oversee the implementation of the IPA *Strategic Internal Audit Plan* throughout 2020, which contributed positively to the assurance arrangements across the organisation.

FINANCIAL PROSPECTS FOR 2021

Notwithstanding the significant impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had on the business operations of the IPA, a positive financial performance is expected for 2021. As continuously acknowledged by the Board of the IPA, this is due to the commitment, drive and agility of the IPA management and staff in pivoting the delivery of Training and Education services to a fully online and remote working model, with minimal interruption to service. The IPA management and staff continue to plan for the various eventualities of the new business model that will reflect the post pandemic world, and financial indications for 2021, at this early stage, remain very positive.

The Institute's block grant remains at €2.725m for 2021 (the same as 2020), a positive support from its parent department. The IPA had budgeted for 2021 turnover at €12.292m with a budgeted surplus of €58k.

Noreen Fahy FCCA
Director, Finance and Corporate Services



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CONFERRING CEREMONIES

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CONFERRING CEREMONIES

Due to the public health restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the IPA was not able to hold in-person conferring ceremonies in Dublin Castle. Keen to acknowledge the achievement of those students who had completed their programmes in 2020, the Education Division worked hard to provide virtual conferring ceremonies that would enable students to enjoy what is an important occasion for themselves and their families. On Friday, 18 December 2020, students were able to watch a live stream of events from the Institute that were attended by the President of the IPA, the Chairman of the IPA, the Registrar of the NUI and IPA academic staff. These virtual ceremonies also included messages of congratulations from the Chancellor of the NUI, the Secretary General of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, the Head of the Whitaker School and lecturing staff. An example of one of these virtual conferring ceremonies (postgraduate awards) is available at: <https://www.ipa.ie/home/confering-2020-4.5377.html>

A total of 1,012 students were conferred with diplomas, bachelor degrees or postgraduate degrees. An additional 647 students were presented with certificates.

The prizes awarded at these ceremonies were as follows:

Whitaker School of Government & Management Postgraduate Student of the Year 2020

Jerry O'Donovan

Whitaker School of Government & Management Undergraduate Student of the Year 2020

Claire Moran

POSTGRADUATE DEGREE AWARDS

Master of Arts (Criminal Justice)

First Place: Shauna Kerr

Master of Arts (Financial Management)

First Place: Sarah Henry

Master of Arts (Healthcare Management)

First Place: Thomas MacMahon

Master of Arts (Human Resource Management)

First Place: Jean Usher

Master of Arts (Leadership & Strategy)

First Place: Brendan O'Dowd

Master of Arts (Local Government Management)

First Place: Anthony Fitzpatrick

Master of Arts (Public Management)

First Place: Liam Doherty



Master of Economic Science in Policy Analysis

Joint First Place: Robert Barnes, Jennifer Coone, Niamh Guihen

Master of Science in Business & Management

First Place: Roisin Somers

POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA AWARDS**Postgraduate Diploma in Policy Analysis**

Joint First Place: Kerry Curran, Sarah O'Farrell

Postgraduate Diploma in Public Management

First Place: Margaret Triggs

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE AWARDS**Professional Certificate in Governance**

First Place: Janice Gaffney

Professional Certificate in Governance (An Garda Síochána)

First Place: Joanne McCormack

Professional Certificate in Governance (Sport Ireland)

First Place: Conn McCluskey

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE AWARDS**Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (Healthcare Management)**

First Place: David McCabe

Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (Human Resource Management)

First Place: Valerie Campbell

Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (IT Management)

First Place: Cian Coghlan

Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (Law & the Administration of Justice)

Joint First Place: Eugene Gargan, Peter Kelly

**Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (Local Government) &
Recipient of the Annual Cork County Council Academic Achievement Award**

Sinead Ni Thiarnain

Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (Management & Public Management)

First Place: Claire Moran

Bachelor of Business Studies (Hons) (Accounting) & Recipient of the Annual CIMA Prize

First Place: Leanne Burke

Bachelor of Business Studies (Hons) (Human Resource Management)

First Place: Louise Clarke

Bachelor of Business Studies (Hons) (Marketing)

First Place: Rose Anderson



UNDERGRADUATE PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA AWARDS

Professional Diploma in Health Economics

First Place: Eoin Ryan

Professional Diploma in Housing Studies

First Place: Marcus Campbell

Professional Diploma in Human Rights & Equality

Joint First Place: Danielle Daly, Brenda Fields

Professional Diploma in Industrial & Employment Relations

First Place: Yvonne Grant

Professional Diploma in Managing Change

First Place: Barry McCann

Professional Diploma in Official Statistics for Policy Evaluation

First Place: Kieran O'Leary

Professional Diploma in Project Management

First Place: Anthony O'Reilly

Professional Diploma in Public Procurement

First Place: Karolina Wiktorowska

UNDERGRADUATE DIPLOMA AWARDS

Diploma in Business Studies

First Place: Michelle Harrison

Diploma in Civil Service & State Agency Studies

First Place: Muiriosa Cassells

Diploma in Computer Studies

First Place: Lisa Morgan

Diploma in Healthcare Management

First Place: Laura Tier

Diploma in Human Resource Management

First Place: Mary Martin

Diploma in Law

First Place: Deirdre Stacey

Diploma in Local Government Studies

First Place: Jennifer Harrington

Diploma in Management

First Place: Maria Malone

Diploma in Public Management

Joint First Place: Gillian Coffey, Gary Donoghue



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OUTREACH

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OUTREACH

The Institute's outreach programme continued across the wider public sector. The expertise of IPA staff is often called upon in ways other than the direct provision of services.

The Director General is a member of a network of Directors of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Europe and the OECD International Schools of Government Steering Group. She is also a member of the Association of Chief Executives of State Agencies (ACESA) Board, attends NUI Senate meetings and chairs the Strategic Advisory Forum for the Patient Advocacy Service. Dr Michael Mulreany, Assistant Director General, is a member of the audit and risk committee of The Arts Council and a member of the steering committee of the 'History of the Department of Finance Volume 2' project. Dr Richard Boyle was a member of the *Our Public Service 2020* Public Service Management Group and a member of the International Evaluation Research Group on Policy and Programme Evaluation. Noreen Fahy and Aidan Horan are members of a number of public and state sector audit and risk committees. IPA specialist staff serve as nominated non-executive members of audit and risk committees within government departments, state and regulatory boards, and local authorities, as well as on a national governing sports body. IPA staff also serve as members of professional bodies who work in the public interest and in areas relevant to the mandate of the Institute.

During 2020 there were a number of virtual spring and summer breakfast seminars aimed at CEO, director or senior executive levels, which raised important issues. For example, the IPA's Governance Forum hosted a monthly seminar on governance-related matters. The IPA also hosted a number of morning seminars to promote dialogue and debate amongst senior civil and public servants on key topics.

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INSTITUTE SENIOR MANAGEMENT



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KATHERINA MCCAUL
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