

'Building Momentum – A New Public Service Agreement, 2021 – 2022'

Civil Service Action Plan – Progress Report Aug 2022

This Action Plan has been developed in accordance with the requirement in - '[Building Momentum](#) – A New Public Service Agreement 2021 – 2022' to develop sectoral action plans linked to the reform agenda in the Agreement (section 1.6 of *Building Momentum*). As stated in the Agreement, the Covid-19 crisis of 2020 saw an unprecedented display of commitment, flexibility, hard work and agility in service provision across the range of civil and public services. The Agreement reflects a commitment by the parties to harness this momentum for change to meet the immediate challenges that present in the lifetime of the Agreement, and to prepare for future challenges. Each of the actions outlined in this action plan are linked back to the reform agenda outlined in *Building Momentum* – the relevant action number is shown in the Actions column.

In accordance with the Agreement this plan sets out objectives, deliverables and timelines, and will be signed off by the Secretary General of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on behalf of the Civil Service Sector.

The Civil Service Action Plan contains commitments to co-operate with a range of reforms across the sector. It also contains examples of the actions specific Departments intend to take. This list is not exhaustive, and the commitments to co-operation in the Action Plan will apply to any such reforms being implemented in civil service workplaces over the lifetime of the Agreement. The Civil Service Action Plan includes input from relevant state agencies where appropriate.

The Irish Prison Service (IPS), while part of the Civil Service, faces challenges specific to itself. For that reason, a separate Action Plan is being prepared.

Action Plan – Sector: Civil Service.

PRIORITY 1				
Improving access to services and increased flexibility in our resourcing model to deliver better services				
<u>ACTIONS</u>	<u>OUTCOMES</u>	<u>TIMEFRAME</u>	<u>MEASURES</u>	<u>PROGRESS/ACHIEVEMENTS</u> <u>JAN – AUG 2022</u>
1.5.2(2) Amending/extending opening arrangements Parties will engage on amending/extending opening arrangements with a view to providing optimal service to customers taking account also of the growth in use of online services.	Improved service delivery to clients	Q1 2021 - Q4 2022	Increased opening hours where need identified and agreed.	DSP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-covid opening hours have resumed in all DSP offices. • An arbitration hearing in January on proposals for 24/7 8-hour shifts in the ISD unit found in favour of DSP. • Following an internal competition the first 4 of 8 HEO appointments have been made from 15 August 2022. HR are now

In the first instance this may involve customer facing areas in DSP, Justice, DETE and PRA.				in the process of recruiting for the remaining positions.
1.5.3(1), 1.5.3(2) Reassignment & Temporary Assignment Policy and Scheme Continued cooperation, subject to consultation, with staff reassignment where required to meet Covid19 critical demands as they arise. Furthermore the retention of the policy for non-covid19 related critical matters will be the subject of further consultation.	To ensure essential services can continue to be delivered at specific times through the Temporary Assignment Policy and Scheme (TAS).	Q1 2021 – Q4 2022	Staff temporarily assigned across the Public Service as required for key initiatives (e.g. contact tracing, vaccination programme support). Staff reassigned within organisations to meet critical demands as they arise.	Cooperation with the TAS and principles/flexibility in operation where required. Scheme continues to be in operation and can be utilised as required.
1.3.3, 1.3.5, 1.5.3(1), 1.5.2(1) Mobility Extending and expanding the permanent Mobility schemes (where appropriate across the wider Public Service, on a reciprocal basis). Consultation/co-operation with broadening of specialist skill lists for mobility at AO, HEO and development of specialist skill set lists at EO and CO in line with PFG Commitments, CS 2030 Renewal and business needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of general mobility schemes in the Civil Service - similar policy/scheme can be utilised by PS. • Review of CS Mobility Scheme for potential broader application across sectors. • Mobility scheme for P&T grades within the CS. • Review feasibility of scheme for Service Officers 	Q3 2021 Q2 2022	Scheme operational and delivering against sequencing arrangements.	Scheme continues to be in operation and can be utilised as required. P&T Mobility Scheme draft guidelines agreed with stakeholders and relevant Trade Unions.
1.3.3, 1.3.5, 1.5.3(1), 1.5.2(1) Secondment Co-operation with CS Secondment Policy, including bodies under the aegis. Acknowledging that mobility remains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondment Policy for the Civil Service – similar policy can be applied by sectors as required. 	Q2 2021 Q2 2022	Policy live and in operation, working in tandem with Mobility Schemes.	Review of CS Secondment Policy has begun with any amendments to be agreed and implemented by Q4 2022

<p>the primary vehicle for staff movement within the Civil Service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of CS Secondment Policy for potential broader application across sectors. 			
<p>1.5.4(4) National Apprenticeship Plan Continue with, and expand on the commitment that ‘apprenticeship and traineeship numbers will expand incrementally, on a sectoral basis’ in line with PFG commitments alongside established primary recruitment processes. Following consultation cooperation with the implementation of the review findings and recommendations from existing apprenticeship pilot programmes (ICT, accounting technicians).</p>	<p>Working with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) to scope out possible expansion of the apprenticeship model in the civil and wider public service in the context of Programme for Government Commitments (the DFHERIS National Action Plan for Apprenticeships 2021 – 2015 commits to an increased annual intake of 10,000 apprenticeships (from c.6,000 per annum currently) with all private and public service employers by 2025).</p>	<p>Q4 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year on year increase in number coming through apprenticeship schemes in line with PFG commitments • Year on year increase in numbers undertaking reskilling internally programmes. 	<p>Further engagement with DFHERIS has taken place with the view to the expansion of existing apprenticeships across the public service and the development, and standing up, of sector-specific and cross-sectoral apprenticeships.</p>

<p>1.3.3, 1.5.2(1), 1.5.3(3) Position management for professional/technical grades Revision of position management practices for professional/technical grades to align with general service grades.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture: Deployment practices in technical and professional (veterinary) streams with respect to recruitment, promotion and internal transfer. <p>Constructive engagement re the applicability of broader mobility initiatives, including deployment to and retention in allowed posts.</p>	<p>Responsive, timely, streamlined, efficient processes</p>	<p>Q1 2021 – Q4 2022</p>	<p>Cooperation with new more efficient processes</p>	<p>DAFM Satisfactory progress has been made in relation to the harmonisation of mobility arrangements among DAFM grade streams.</p>
<p>PRIORITY 2 The potential for technology to transform service delivery Further embrace and support the use of technology through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with new and emerging technology • Streamlined processes and procedures, including intelligent automation, redesign and digitalisation • Upskilling and reskilling 				
<p><u>ACTIONS</u></p>	<p><u>OUTCOMES</u></p>	<p><u>TIMEFRAME</u></p>	<p><u>MEASURES</u></p>	<p><u>PROGRESS/ACHIEVEMENTS</u> <u>JAN – AUG 2022</u></p>
<p>1.4.1, 1.3.5 Shared and common services Cooperation with the continued move towards greater use of shared and common services.</p>	<p>Economies of scale, rationalisation, common platforms, supports collaboration, enhanced productivity, ability to refocus</p>	<p>Q4 2022</p>	<p>Build to Share client on-boarding metrics.</p>	<p>Project plans are in place with a range of Departments and Bodies which will see the number of users of the OGCI's Managed</p>

<p>Commitment that the move to shared and common services may require the redeployment of designated personnel to other organisations, where required following integration into shared service functions.</p> <p>Cooperation with move to common delivery of utility ICT services, infrastructures and applications as provisioned by OGCIO as part of the Build to Share programme.</p>	<p>Departmental IT professionals to act on Dept specific functions.</p> <p>Depts. will have the ability to scale up remote and other working requirements quickly and effectively to meet business and societal needs.</p> <p>Greater levels of innovation and capacity to adopt new digital workplace tools and solutions, will be enabled through upskilling/ reskilling of staff with higher levels of ICT and digital literacy skills.</p>			<p>Desktop Service more than double within the next 2 years.</p>
<p>1.4.1 New and emerging technology Continued consultation and cooperation with intelligent automation, aimed at redesigning and improving services, staff upskilling and retraining as jobs/roles/related processes change, ensuring better career opportunities for all staff, and includes any associated or potential impacts in terms of assignment to new roles/processes.</p> <p>Introduction of digital signatures, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAS • DoTransport 	<p>Greater levels of automation and digital innovation maturity in Depts. Manage staff resourcing in transactional areas.</p>	<p>Q4 2022</p>	<p>Numbers of initiatives being implemented using new or emerging technology.</p>	<p>DPER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support public service bodies to incorporate RPA for the automation of mundane digital based processes including bodies from the health, defence and transport sectors. Actively engaged with OGP on the development of the next iteration of the RPA Framework. • Continue to run a 12 week Foundation Certificate in Artificial Intelligence (AI) attracting large amounts of interest from civil/public servants. • Continue to support the implementation of technology to transform service delivery

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHLGH - PRA <p>DSP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobseeker service – expansion and improvement to services including progress on automation / online claims • Intreo Offices – continue cooperation with, and consultation on impacts arising from, the redesign and expansion of services to provide better customer service, more efficiency and greater opportunities for staff to reskill and enhance career progression. <p>DoJ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Transformation Programme across key services <p>DETE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement of legacy IT systems including Employment Permits, Export Licensing; and Labour Court <p>PAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerated use of AI, RPA, chatbots 				<p>through the Future Tech Challenge (FTC) and the Public Service Innovation Fund: FTC drives technology adaptation as a solution through collaboration between the public and private sector. Currently three projects from Health, Local Government and Agriculture are utilising Cloud Computing, Remote Technology and Artificial Intelligence to solve public service challenges.</p> <p>The Public Service Innovation Fund is supporting innovative ideas from across public service aimed at transforming service delivery. The 2022 fund is currently supporting 17 transformative projects from a number sectors, including Local Government, Justice, Education and Enterprise.</p> <p>DSP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer usage via mywelfare.ie stands at over 8.7m transactions up to August 2022; • 17.6m online transactions on the WelfarePartner site to August providing online services relating to Treatment Benefit, Community Employment, Wage Subsidy and
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesign of processes and service delivery – Project Nova <p>DoTransport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AI / Machine Learning: assessment and implementation of new platforms such as eIDAS as eIDAS, Digital Post-box, eCase (and any subsequent introduction including preparatory phases) • RPA: Proof Of Concept of RPA to Departments Change of Vehicle Ownership; trial deployment of RPA across department <p>Oireachtas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Parliament Programme, including Digital Order Paper for Dáil Éireann, digitalisation of manual tasks associated with Oireachtas Committee meetings, processing and laying documents before the Houses, and integration of memory-based translation system with Dáil business system <p>DRCD</p>				<p>Redundancy and Insolvency schemes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part Time Jobseekers online signing stands at 69%. The online signing on service is now also available for fulltime Jobseekers (some 5,000 per month in 2022); • The first phase of the digital Pathways to Work (dPtW) service went live on 25 February 2022 on MyWelfare, with the second phase expected by the year end which will allow Jobseekers to update their records online as part of their on-going engagement with the Intreo service. • A new online service went live in July 2022 to allow officers to schedule and carryout online face-to-face video appointments on MyWelfare. Initially this service is being used for activation review meetings with jobseekers, and will be extended to other appointment types. <p>DoJ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The end to end process review for the International Protection Office (IPO) has assisted in increasing productivity by over 50% in late 2021 and early 2022. The customer insights information
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing co-operation and engagement with virtual first learning. • Ongoing engagement and co-operation from staff on move to online application and assessment processes for funded schemes. <p>DHLGH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Transformation Programme across key services: planning, housing, heritage services, etc. with a focus on improving digital customer experience through process simplification and standardisation and a “digital first” approach. • Modernization of Housing Delivery ICT tracking system in collaboration with Local Authorities through project Díon. • Streamlining interagency data sharing by adoption of standards and implementation of a data exchange platform as 				<p>continues to shape process changes and has embedded a customer focused approach in the IPO.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Undocumented Migrant Scheme paperless process was implemented in an exceptionally short time frame (less than 2 months) and has facilitated a simple and effective customer focused scheme. The scheme was open for a once off period of 6 months and nearly 40% of the applications have been fully processed when the scheme closed in early August. <p>DETE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Permits system upgrade is out for tender since Aug 2022 with a contract expected within 3 months. The system development is expected to take 18 months. • Export Licensing request for tender is expected in October 2022. The system development is expected to take approximately 12 months. • The Labour Court System contract has been awarded and they system development is
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<p>part of the roll-out of a Data Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modernisation and redesign of forecast processes, services and the production and delivery of weather, climate and hydrological information. 				<p>expected to take between 12 – 18 months.</p> <p>DoTransport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple RPA projects completed across the department, bringing efficiencies and process improvements; RPA was also effectively utilised in the delivery of the Licenced Hauliers Emergency Support Scheme administered by the department in Q2; a roadmap of potential projects for 2023 is currently being developed. • Launch of suite of cloud-hosted productivity tools across the department has enhanced staff ability to collaborate and manage departmental priorities, providing greater visibility and reporting to senior management. • Technology Strategy 2022-25 was created which includes proposed changes in ICT governance and a revised ICT operating model; implementation to commence in Q4 2022. • Preparations for migration to Managed Desktop service are significantly advanced, with expected go-live in November 2022.
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				<p>Oireachtas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Members Portal, Áis-Linn, went live in June 2022. The system is being rolled out in a staggered fashion and will be launched to members in the coming months. <p>OPW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A prototype management dashboard for client interactions with OPW property services has been completed and is due to go live following ICT Steering Committee final approval. • Pilot Electronic Stores Mgt. system currently being deployed in a regional office and will be rolled out to other sites. • HR solution for operating staff - A project is underway to develop and implement a HRM ICT System for OPW operational staff. HRM UAT is completed. The next stage is to move to Post Management of the system to ensure future focus of the system to support Work Force Planning. Pilot Tests in various OPW locations to be rolled out in Sept 2022.
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				<p>PRA Work progressing in relation to digital signatures. Legislation now in place.</p> <p>Revenue Two Artificial Intelligence (AI) Proof of Concepts (PoC) undertaken.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auto classification of taxpayer queries applying AI & Natural Language Processing (NLP) • Auto processing of email queries to a taxpayer focused technical support helpdesk. <p>OSi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgraded airborne cameras allow for advanced flight operations and greater resolution mapping • OSi continues to offer its products and services online with approximately 3,5000 transactions per month (93%-95%of which are self-served by users) • OSi manages and hosts GeoHive is as the State’s geospatial data hub recently assisting with the Governments response to the Ukrainian crisis and the hosting of Regional Development Monitors.
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PRIORITY 3				
Flexibility and strengthening capacity				
<u>ACTIONS</u>	<u>OUTCOMES</u>	<u>TIMEFRAME</u>	<u>MEASURES</u>	<u>PROGRESS/ACHIEVEMENTS</u> <u>JAN – AUG 2022</u>
<p>1.3.1(4), 1.3.5(4), 1.5.4(5)</p> <p>Flexible working</p> <p>Agreement in principle to work with departments/offices in relation to revised or new flexible working arrangements following normal consultation processes, taking into account the current agreement on flexible working. This will include, but is not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blended working policies across the Civil Service • DSP (Review, refine and expand functions/services offered by Intreo offices. Including a review and enhancement of cross-divisional working arrangements. This may include the potential to broaden the scope to include work currently done by other PSBs. With the focus on improving customer service, increasing efficiency and providing opportunities for staff to upskill. • DETE (to pilot a 'connected teams' project with a focus on 	<p>Increased flexibility for employee, employer and better services to the public.</p>	<p>Q2 2021</p> <p>Q1 2021 - Q4 2022</p> <p>Q1 2021 - Q4 2022</p>	<p>Blending Working Policy Framework agreed.</p> <p>Number of blended working policies in place in organisations.</p> <p>Cooperation in relation to revised or new flexible working arrangements including agreement on blended working policies and associated changes to work practices.</p>	<p>Blending Working Policy Framework agreed and published. A number of departments and offices have Blended Working Policies in place with the online applications process open.</p> <p>DSP Following a high level review of divisional work and functional re-organisation the detailed review of front office services is currently under way.</p> <p>DETE Connected Teams Implementation Group established and held their first meeting. A number of Actions already implemented around improving the experiences of new entrants, revising of induction training, collaboration and wellbeing.</p>

<p>team behaviours in a blended work framework)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture (additional flexible arrangements including compressed/autonomous hours) 				
<p>1.3.1(4), 1.3.5(4), 1.5.4(5) Accommodation Local engagement and cooperation with any changes to property utilisation required by departments to support their business , including preparatory changes aimed at making better and/or more efficient use of office space. This specifically includes changes in office space resulting from flexible ways of working (e.g. blended working.) This may mean, but is not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working to the concept of agile, open plan accommodation (at all grades) • Optimising the utilisation of desks including the question of rights to designated workstations • Optimising office floor plates through no automatic right to single occupancy office for any grade while having due regard for the effectiveness of blended working 	<p>More efficient use of capital resources and reduction in overhead costs.</p>	<p>Q1 2021 - Q4 2022</p>	<p>Co-operation with changes to associated working practices and changes to accommodation to deliver efficiencies.</p>	<p>DoJ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 single occupancy offices will be reconfigured in the coming months to provide more collaborative working spaces. • Meeting rooms are being upgraded with facilities to host video conference meetings. • A software application has been procured to manage bookings for car parking, shared desks and single occupancy rooms. • A clean desk policy has been implemented <p>DRCD DRCD have completed an audit of buildings to ensure efficiencies in terms of office space and configuration.</p> <p>Revenue Review of Accommodation requirements are underway.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colocation across organisations when required <p>This will include, but is not limited to office reconfiguration/rationalisation in the following organisations: Justice</p>				
<p>1.3.3, 1.5.2, 1.4.1(3) Professionalisation Cooperation with the development of strategies for further professionalisation of functional expertise (e.g. HR, ICT) following normal consultation processes. Supporting future skills development as set out in the 2030 future skills plan (e.g. major projects management, policy, data analytics).</p> <p>Co-operation with the implementation of ongoing ICT strategies.</p> <p>*Apprenticeship's are part of the functional strategies, please see the above action re National Apprenticeship Plan.</p>	<p>Accelerate the professionalisation of functions through defined strategies, including functional career paths for all required functions to deliver goals of CS Renewal 2030</p>	<p>Q1 2021 - Q4 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Functional development strategies across the CS and PS • Number of defined 'specialist career paths' across the CS and PS • Number of specialist competitions and hires into (recruitment), and through (mobility) the system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HROM Detailed Design, Blueprint Implementation Plan and HROM Benefits Indicators have been completed. • Pilot Departments have recently established Communities of Expertise within their individual departments. • Initial scoping of Memorandum of Understanding (M.O.U.) is underway with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)
<p>1.3.3 Organisational Reviews Cooperation in relation to organisational reviews following normal consultation processes. In the first instance that involves: DRCD ongoing co-operation with actions arising from Organisational Capacity Review</p>				<p>DRCD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commenced external review of programmes and schemes to ensure they are being administered as efficiently/ effectively as possible. • ICT Strategy developed and moving forward on a programme

				management information system for all our funding streams.
PRIORITY 4				
Business/operational/policy changes leading to internal efficiencies				
<u>ACTIONS</u>	<u>OUTCOMES</u>	<u>TIMEFRAME</u>	<u>MEASURES</u>	<u>PROGRESS/ACHIEVEMENTS</u> <u>JAN – AUG 2022</u>
1.3.3 Business/operational/policy changes leading to internal efficiencies. In the first instance that involves: DAFM: The parties reaffirm their commitment to constructive engagement on DAFM outsourcing proposals, in accordance with protocols set out in previous national agreements.	More efficient deployment of veterinary and technical resources to high value core work.	Q4 2021	Outsourcing of TSE Sampling in Knackeries. Staff are deployed to higher value work which will yield greater organisational and societal benefit.	DAFM There has been satisfactory engagement between the parties in relation to the outsourcing of TSE Sampling.
1.5.3(3) Standardisation In principle agree standardisation and automation of policies and associated processes with a view achieving greater efficiencies (e.g. HCM or any other related HR/IT system) following normal consultation processes.	Responsive, timely, streamlined, efficient policies	Q4 2022	Cooperation with new more efficient processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blending Working Policy Framework agreed and published. • Discussions underway with unions in relation to updates to the annual leave and bereavement leave circulars. • Progress made in annual leave discussions with bereavement discussions planned in coming months.
1.5.3(3) Redesign of policies Agreement that the following principles will apply in the redesign of all HR policies. This includes but is not limited to: - The policy reforms including legislative changes deemed necessary for the	Responsive, timely, streamlined, efficient policies	Q3 2021 – Q4 2022	Revised policies in place where required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions underway with unions in relation to updates to the annual leave and bereavement leave circulars. • Progress made in annual leave discussions with bereavement discussions planned in coming months.

<p>move to the WRC e.g. discipline, grievance, and appeals structures. - Reform of annual leave and bereavement leave policies and processes.</p> <p>Principle: Decision making will be devolved to the appropriate management level reflecting normal employment law standards Principle: Policies and procedures will be streamlined in line with good employment law / HR practice, and in particular, will avoid unnecessary layers or additional steps. Principle: Design of policies will deliver efficient (e.g. cost-effective and timely) and user-friendly processes. Principle: Processes will be standardised, wherever feasible, to deliver efficiencies.</p>				
<p><u>Compliance with industrial peace provisions of the Agreement:</u></p>				
<p>There has been compliance with the industrial peace provisions of the Agreement and recourse to the dispute resolution process as provided for under the Agreement where appropriate.</p>				

Sign off:



Secretary General

Date: 03/10/2022