Annual Report 2015
At the core of Government policy is the desire to build a strong economy so as to deliver a fair society. While economic recovery remains incomplete and fragile, Ireland was once again the fastest growing economy in the EU in 2015. Over 1,000 additional jobs were created per week and by December the unemployment rate was the lowest in seven years.

Working in tandem with the successful Action Plan for Jobs, the launch of the new Regional Action Plans for Jobs will ensure that the economic recovery is felt in homes across the entire country and will capitalise on the strengths of each region.

Ireland has one of the most open economies in the world. The Department played a central role during 2015 in ensuring Ireland’s interests were effectively represented within the European Union, in further strengthening Ireland’s international reputation, and in promoting trade and investment links across the world. Preparations also began in relation to the emerging risk posed to Ireland by the possibility of changes to the relationship between the United Kingdom and the EU.

Recognising the enormous housing and homelessness challenge facing Ireland, an integrated housing package was agreed in November aimed at stimulating new housing construction and reforms in the private rental sector. Continuing to face the housing challenges will remain a key priority for Government in 2016.

During 2015 there was continued progress with the Government’s reform programme including passage of the Marriage Equality referendum, the report of the Independent Working Group on Seanad Reform and roll-out of the Civil Service Renewal plan.

Considerable work was carried out during 2015 on preparations for the State’s 2016 Centenary Commemoration Programme with this Department playing a central role in the planning for the commemorations. The Department has overall responsibility for many events including the Easter Sunday State Ceremonial at the GPO.

Along with my ministerial colleagues, Paul Kehoe TD, Jimmy Deenihan TD, Dara Murphy TD and Simon Harris TD, I would like to thank the staff in the Department their continued hard work and dedication throughout 2015.

Enda Kenny T.D.
Taoiseach
Introduction by the Secretary General

In March 2015, the Department published its Statement of Strategy 2015-2017, outlining the renewed strategic priorities through which the Department will support the Taoiseach and Government having regard to the emerging challenges facing Ireland.

This is the first report under these renewed priorities. It sets out the progress the Department has made, working with other Departments and Agencies.

The Department has continued to support the Taoiseach, and Government, across the economic and social policy spectrum, including in particular through the Cabinet Committee structure and associated Senior Officials Groups.

The Department co-ordinated Ireland’s engagement with the European Union and supported the Taoiseach in his international engagements and overseas visits including to the United States for St. Patrick’s Day.

The Department also took a lead role in planning for the 1916 commemoration programme in collaboration with all stakeholders and worked to ensure a rich, inclusive and diverse programme of events as Ireland prepared for an important year in commemorating our history.

The Department continued to grow and develop as an organisation, to build on our strategic thinking and forward planning, on identifying risks and on rebuilding trust through greater openness and transparency. A strong focus on supporting and developing the capacity of the Department’s staff was maintained, including through our leadership and personal effectiveness training programmes.

The Department was centrally involved in supporting implementation of the Civil Service Renewal Plan through the work of the Civil Service Management Board. Good progress was achieved, including the establishment of a Civil Service Accountability Board, open recruitment across most grades and completion of the first ever civil service wide employee engagement survey.

Finally, I would like to thank the staff of the Department for their hard work, professionalism and commitment throughout the year.

Martin Fraser
Secretary General
Our Mission

Our purpose is to help the Taoiseach and the Government to develop a sustainable economy and a successful society, to pursue Ireland’s interests abroad, to implement the Government’s Programme and to build a better future for Ireland and all her citizens.

Civil Service Vision

To provide a world-class service to the State and to the people of Ireland
Strategic Priorities 2015-2017

1. SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY
Ensuring jobs and growth are at the heart of Government policy

2. A SUCCESSFUL SOCIETY
Ensuring Government policies and services support a socially inclusive and fair society

3. EUROPE
Ensuring that Ireland plays a full and effective role in all aspects of the European Union

4. PEACE
Helping to maintain peace and further enhance relationships on the island of Ireland and between Ireland and Britain

5. PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT
Overseeing the full implementation of the Programme for Government and the Statement of Government Priorities

6. SERVICE
Providing excellent support services for the Taoiseach and Government

7. TRUST AND REFORM
Helping reform and restore trust in the institutions of the State

8. IRELAND IN A GLOBALISED WORLD
Working to protect our interests, maximise our influence and increase our prosperity in a globalised world
The Core Functions of the Department in 2015

- supporting the Constitutional functions of the Taoiseach and the Government
- providing the Secretariat to the Government
- providing the Taoiseach’s Private Office and the Private Office of the Government Chief Whip
- supporting the work of the Minister of State for European Affairs and Data Protection, the Minister of State for the Diaspora and the Minister of State for International Banking (including IFSC)
- supporting the Office of the Tánaiste
- operating the Government Press Office
- supporting the Taoiseach in carrying out his duties as Head of Government, including in relation to the President, the Houses of the Oireachtas, the European Council, the North/South Ministerial Council and the British-Irish Council, and other EU and international engagements and commitments
- engaging with the formulation and implementation of Government policy, mainly through the system of Cabinet Committees including the Economic Management Council, Senior Officials Groups and the Programme for Government Office
- supporting the Taoiseach and Government in the formulation and implementation of EU policy, including the coordination of EU policy interests across the whole of Government
- providing briefing and advice for the Taoiseach on the full range of domestic policy issues and on international affairs
- supporting Constitutional and Oireachtas reform
- supporting implementation of civil service renewal, including the effective operation of the Civil Service Management Board
- supporting a whole-of-government approach to the planning and delivery of the official 2016 programme for the commemoration of the Easter Rising
- delivering support services through Protocol and Corporate Affairs Division (HR, Finance, IT and other services)
During 2015, the **203 staff** of the Department of the Taoiseach dealt with:

- **18,200** Items of Correspondence
- **765** Parliamentary Questions
- **290** FOI Requests
- **235** Domestic Engagements
- **56** Government Meetings
- **724** Files transferred to the National Archives
- **9** EU General Affairs Council Meetings
- **63** Cabinet Committee Meetings
- **954** Memos for Government
- **231** Speeches Written
- **63** Overseas Visits
- **100** Press Events
- **10** European Council and EU Summit-level meetings
The Department provides the Secretariat to the Government. During 2015, the Government met 56 times and dealt with 954 Memoranda. Cabinet Committees continue to be central to the work of the Department in driving implementation of Government policy and effective cross-departmental collaboration. The Department provides the secretariat for the Cabinet Committees and chairs the supporting Senior Officials Groups. The Cabinet Committee structure is as follows:

- **Economic Management Council**
  - oversees the Government’s approach in respect of economic planning and budgetary matters and banking policy

- **Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs**
  - seeks to accelerate growth, promote enterprise and trade, stimulate employment and address the needs of the unemployed

- **Cabinet Committee on Economic Infrastructure and Climate Change**
  - focuses on the development and operation of key infrastructure and oversees Government’s approach to international and domestic climate change issues

- **Cabinet Committee on European Affairs**
  - oversees the co-ordination of the Irish position on key European issues, in particular those likely to require consideration by the European Council

- **Cabinet Committee on Health**
  - oversees the development and delivery of key health service reforms and drives improvements in selected priority service delivery areas
The Government and Cabinet Committees

- **Cabinet Committee on Construction 2020, Housing, Planning and Mortgage Arrears**: oversee the implementation of the Construction 2020 Strategy and coordinates the Government’s response to help people in mortgage arrears.

- **Cabinet Committee on Justice Reform**: oversees the development of proposals for an independent police authority and other associated reforms to the policing and justice system.

- **Cabinet Committee on Social Policy and Public Sector Reform**: oversees and co-ordinates in areas of social inclusion, poverty reduction and service delivery; supports the development and implementation of public service reform.

- **Cabinet Committee on 1916 Commemorations**: oversees the presentation and implementation of an appropriate, comprehensive, sensitive and inclusive commemoration process for 2016.

- **Cabinet Committee on Irish and the Gaeltacht**: seeks to promote the Irish language and support Gaeltacht communities and Irish-speaking households.

63 Cabinet Committee meetings held
During 2015, the Department organised, or assisted in organising, a number of notable events and inward official visits, including:

- Visits by French Prime Minister Manuel Valls and President of the Federal Republic of Germany, H.E. Joachim Gauck
- Visits by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Speaker of the US House of Representatives John Boehner and the Prime Minister of India, H.E. Narendra Modi
- The four day visit by HRH Prince of Wales and HRH the Duchess of Cornwall
- The State Funeral for the re-interment of Thomas Kent in Cork

The Department also supported the Taoiseach and the Ministers of State as they represented and promoted Ireland at various meetings and engagements abroad.

Over the St. Patrick’s Day period, the Taoiseach travelled to Washington DC, Atlanta and Austin in the US and participated in over 30 meetings and speaking engagements including bilateral political meetings, business and economic focused events and civic engagements.

The Taoiseach addressed the United Nations during the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September, taking the opportunity while in New York to meet with former US President Bill Clinton. He joined other world leaders at the opening of Climate Change negotiations in Paris and also at the World Economic Forum in Davos.

The Taoiseach travelled to the Lebanon and the Golan Heights to meet the Irish troops on UN peacekeeping duties. He met with the Lebanese Prime Minister Tammam Salam during that trip. He also met with French President Francois Hollande during his visit to France, to march with the President and other European and world leaders at a rally in memory of those killed in the Charlie Hebdo attack.

He visited the Ireland pavilion at the Milan EXPO as part of his visit to Italy, where he also met with Italian Prime Minister Renzi. He also attended ten European Council and other EU summit level meetings during 2015.

In fulfilling his EU related responsibilities, the Minister for European Affairs and Data Protection travelled overseas on 27 occasions, including to Brussels, Finland, Latvia, Spain and the UK. The Minister for Diaspora Affairs undertook a number of visits to broaden and deepen Ireland’s engagement with the diaspora, including to New York, California, Texas, Canada and the UK.

The Minister with Special Responsibility for International Banking (including IFSC) attended a number of international engagements to promote Ireland’s International Financial Services Strategy, including in Hong Kong, the US, Germany, Paris, Brussels and London.
The 2016 Centenary Commemoration Programme is a cross-government commitment to ensure that 2016 will be a year of rich, inclusive and diverse activities celebrating Irish history from 100 years ago. It is supported by an Inter-Departmental Committee and the Cabinet Committee on 1916 Commemorations whose secretariat is provided by the Department.

The Protocol Division in the Department began planning for the 100th anniversary of the Easter Rising in late 2014. At the heart of this collaborative planning process was the need to inform all parties, stimulate debate and discussion about 2016 and foster initiatives to put in place an inclusive, varied and respectful programme of events during 2016, across Ireland and around the world.

Extensive collaboration took place during 2015 with Government Departments and Agencies including, the newly established 2016 Project Office in the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces, the Office of Public Works, An Garda Síochána, Dublin City Council and private enterprise.

The Programme for 2016, launched in April 2015, is an ambitious and wide-ranging national commemorative initiative, comprising seven strands each with an extensive programme of events: State Ceremonial, Historical Reflection, An Teanga Bheo, Youth and Imagination, Cultural Expression, Community Participation and Global and Diaspora.

The Department has overall responsibility for the Easter Sunday State Ceremonial at the GPO, followed by a parade involving military and emergency services, as well as a wreath-laying ceremony in the Stonebreakers Yard in Kilmainham and a State Reception in Dublin Castle.

In collaboration with all stakeholders, the Department is working to ensure that 2016 will belong to everyone including friends and families overseas – regardless of political or family background, or personal interpretation of Ireland’s modern history.

The Department is also co-ordinating the planning of a ceremony at the Irish National War Memorial Gardens in Islandbridge to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme and organising the National Day of Commemoration in the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham.
In 2015, Ireland was once again the fastest growing economy in the EU with continued strong fiscal governance and the creation of over 1,000 jobs per week. Ireland’s unemployment rate continued to drop and by December was at 8.8%, the lowest in seven years.

The Department continued to support the Taoiseach and Government in implementing economic policies to deliver sustainable growth and job creation, including effective management of cross-cutting issues in the areas of competitiveness, enterprise and employment through the work of the Economic Management Council and the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs.

Working closely with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, the Department oversaw implementation of the Action Plan for Jobs, including ongoing monitoring of delivery, discussion at the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs, publication of quarterly progress reports and initiatives to promote greater awareness and take-up of Government schemes and supports to assist business and job creation.

The 2015 Action Plan, with an overall implementation rate of 89%, continued to build on the reforms of previous years with actions designed to achieve specific impacts in terms of jobs, exports and start-ups, market penetration and innovation, efficiency of public interaction with business, finance and access to talent.

The creation of eight new Regional Action Plans for Jobs during 2015 placed a strong focus on stimulating regional growth. To support these Plans, €250m is being made available over 5 years through IDA Ireland’s capital investment programme and through a series of competitive calls by Enterprise Ireland.

Other significant developments in this area during 2015 included the publication of the Government’s Capital Plan 2016–2021 setting out Exchequer investment of €27bn over the next six years; launch of Enterprise 2025, a 10-year jobs strategy aimed at delivering sustainable, enterprise-based jobs growth; and publication of the Governments new strategy for science, technology and R&D, Innovation 2020.

In November, the Department supported the Taoiseach’s participation in the UN climate change negotiations in Paris (known as COP21) where agreement was reached on measures to limit global temperature increases.

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 sets out the Government’s ambition to substantially cut CO2 emissions by 2050 and work is underway on a National Mitigation Plan to achieve that reduction. In addition, the Energy White Paper, published in December 2015, set out policy for the transition of Ireland’s energy sector to a low-carbon model.
The Department supports the Taoiseach and Government through the relevant Cabinet Committees to ensure Government policies and services support a socially-inclusive and fair society.

The Cabinet Committee on Social Policy and Public Service Reform continued to provide a basis for cross-Departmental co-ordination in areas of social inclusion and poverty reduction. There was a sustained focus during 2015 on the implementation of the Action Plan to Address Homelessness, including putting in place the Cold Weather Initiative to tackle rough sleeping over the winter period. In the area of disability, the Committee contributed to the development of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities, the new model of supports for children with disabilities to fully participate in pre-school settings and a range of new autism actions for inclusion in the National Disability Implementation Plan. Other work advanced in 2015 included the new Irish Refugee Protection Programme to manage refugees arriving in Ireland under the EU resettlement programmes and advancing recommendations in relation to Direct Provision.

The Cabinet Committee on Health continued to provide oversight of the development and delivery of the key health service improvements in line with the commitments in the Programme for Government. Key issues progressed during 2015 included continued implementation of activity-based funding across hospitals and the roll-out of free GP care to children under six and people over 70.

The Cabinet Committee on Construction 2020, Housing, Planning and Mortgage Arrears continued to support and promote actions to increase the supply of housing to address the shortfall in accommodation and to stimulate the construction sector. The Capital Investment Programme announced in 2015 is providing €2.9bn to provide housing for 35,000 families up to 2020. Further actions in 2015 include new rent stability and tenancy protection measures to support tenants in private rented accommodation and new powers for the Courts to overturn insolvency deals rejected by creditors or banks.

The National Economic and Social Council (NESC) continued to advise the Taoiseach on strategic issues for Ireland’s economic, social and environmental development, providing a forum for social dialogue between various sectors and the Government on the challenges facing the country.
The Department provides a basis for coordination, coherence and strategic direction in Ireland’s engagement with the EU across the whole of Government. It does this by ensuring coherence across policy positions, developing a strategic approach to Ireland’s engagement with the EU, prioritising key issues of national importance and building alliances through bilateral and institutional engagement.

The Department supported the Taoiseach in his role as a member of the European Council and his attendance at ten European Council and other EU summit-level meetings. The ongoing migration and refugee crisis was at the centre of European discussions for much of the year, with Ireland voluntarily committing itself to participation in the relocation and resettlement of refugees, and the Naval Service playing an important part in rescue missions in the Mediterranean.

The future of Britain’s membership of the EU was also a key focus during 2015. There were regular discussions at political level, including the Taoiseach’s two meetings with Prime Minister Cameron. In parallel, officials from the Department liaised closely with other Departments, as well as with our permanent representation in Brussels, our embassy in London and our embassies across the EU to ensure a comprehensive, whole-of-Government approach. Officials also engaged regularly with their UK counterparts.

The negotiations over Greece’s economic and financial situation, which came to a head in June/July, necessitated three special Euro summits, in all of which the Taoiseach participated.

Important cross-cutting issues on which the Division played a key role included the Digital Single Market (where Ireland led in the preparation of a joint statement by the Taoiseach and seven other leaders) and the internal EU negotiations on climate change.

The Department also supported the Minister of State for European Affairs and Data Protection, who travelled regularly to Brussels and Luxembourg to represent Ireland at the General Affairs Council, engaging with European colleagues on issues such as better regulation, the EU-UK question and preparatory work for European Councils.

The Department continues to administer a centralised fund to assist the placement of Irish officials in EU institutions and other international organisations in positions identified as being of strategic relevance to Ireland’s interests. At end-December 2015, 17 officials were on secondment under the scheme.
In 2015 a British Irish and Northern Ireland Affairs Division was created to provide continued support to the Taoiseach and Government in helping to maintain peace and develop new relationships on the island of Ireland and between Britain and Ireland and to consider bilateral issues arising in the context of the UK/EU debate.

The Irish and British Governments continue to work together to further embed peace and the normalisation of politics in Northern Ireland. Following the political impasse last year in Northern Ireland, the Taoiseach along with PM Cameron convened talks with the political parties who subscribed to the Stormont House Agreement. These talks concluded successfully in November with A Fresh Start – the Stormont House Agreement and Implementation Plan.

The Taoiseach and the Prime Minister held two Summit meetings in 2015, in June and November, and discussed matters including the UK’s membership of the EU; the situation in Northern Ireland; and progress on the work programme arising from the Joint Statement of 2012, including trade promotion and cooperation in relation to defence and security matters. Work continues to be progressed through the bilateral contacts of the Permanent Secretaries and Secretaries General Group, whose fourth plenary meeting took place in October in Dublin.

The Taoiseach visited Northern Ireland in March and took the opportunity to meet with the families of those killed in the Kingsmill atrocity as well as visiting Ballymurphy and meeting with the families of those killed there in 1971.

For the fourth consecutive year the Taoiseach attended and laid a wreath at the Remembrance Sunday ceremonies in Enniskillen commemorating those from all traditions who gave their lives in the First World War.

The Department is working to ensure the Ireland 2016 commemorations are inclusive and respectful of the many intertwined traditions on the island of Ireland.

The Taoiseach hosted the British-Irish Council Summit in Dublin Castle in June, where discussions included the economic situation in Member Administrations, youth unemployment and work being done to tackle substance misuse. The Taoiseach attend a further meeting of the British-Irish Council in London in November.

The Taoiseach chaired the twentieth plenary meeting of the North South Ministerial Council in Dublin Castle in June. Discussions included financial and economic matters and EU funding opportunities as well as cross-border smuggling and fuel laundering. The Taoiseach attended a further plenary meeting of the North South Ministerial Council in December in Armagh.

The Programme for Government office monitors the implementation of these commitments across all Government Departments and reports to Government on a regular basis.

The fourth Annual Progress Report was published in March 2015 and set out new progress achieved. A fifth and final report was published at the beginning of 2016. Across the five reports published since 2011, Government has reported on 93% of the Programme for Government commitments.

The Department continued to progress implementation of the commitments under its own responsibility, mainly focused on Oireachtas and Constitutional reform. Two further referenda were held in May, one of which paved the way for the successful introduction of same-sex marriage later in the year, this represented the first ever constitutional change arising from a recommendation by a Citizen’s Convention.

The Independent Working Group on Seanad Reform, established by the Taoiseach, published its report in April 2015 and the Taoiseach met opposition party leaders to discuss the Report’s contents. Statements on the Report were made in the Seanad in May and July.

Arising from its consideration of the seventh Report of the Convention on the Constitution, on Dáil reform, the Government decided to proceed with a number of immediate reforms that will come into effect at the outset of the next Dáil, including election of the Ceann Comhairle by secret ballot, proportionate allocation of Oireachtas Committee Chairs under the d’Hondt system and regular appearances by the Taoiseach before the Working Group of Committee Chairs.

Measures advanced in 2015 to support the development of Dublin as an international city region include the laying of tracks for the cross-city LUAS service, the launch of a new Dublin tourism brand A Breath of Fresh Air and the flagship capital projects progressing under the Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme.
During 2015, the Department provided a wide range of support services to the Taoiseach, the Government and members of the public, as well as internal support services. This included work associated with Government meetings, Parliamentary Questions, briefings, speeches, Freedom of Information requests, Internal Audit, tours of Government Buildings, responding to representations from the public, organising events and responding to media queries.

The Corporate Affairs Division continued to provide a broad range of support services to the rest of the Department, including Human Resources, Finance, ICT, Information Management and Support and Staff Development and Training.

In keeping with the Civil Service Renewal commitment to expand the model of sharing services and expertise across organisations, the Department transferred responsibility for the delivery of its payroll and travel and subsistence payments services to the new Payroll Shared Service Centre (PSSC). A small project team oversaw the transition to the PSSC, including the migration of data and the training of staff in the use of the new CorePortal.

A further significant change project was undertaken to facilitate the Department’s migration to the Civil Service HR and Pensions Shared Service (PeoplePoint) in July 2015. A small project team oversaw the migration of data, process mapping and organised information sessions for staff regarding the move to PeoplePoint.

ICT projects completed during 2015 included migration to a new mobile device management system, a move of all mobile devices to a new provider, implementation of a new remote access solution, upgrades/enhancements to various business systems including the eCabinet system and the freedom of information system and a number of technology upgrades.

The Department also provided administrative support to the Commission of Investigation (Irish Bank Resolution Corporation) and the Commission of Investigation (Certa in Matters relative to An Garda Síochána and other persons).

In accordance with our HR Strategy, the Department implemented a Learning and Development programme designed to support people in their roles, career development and business needs. The programme included a diverse range of activities including in-house workshops, externally-facilitated workshops, Health and Safety training and a series of Lunch and Learn presentations throughout the year.

The Department received no disclosures from its employees in 2015 under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014.
Throughout 2015, the Department provided support to the Taoiseach and Government to reform and restore trust in the institutions of the State.

Following a process of collaboration with a range of stakeholders including contributions from public consultation, the Department prepared and published the second National Risk Assessment. It sets out a list of strategic risks, both financial and non-financial, which Ireland faces, with a view to stimulating public debate on those risks and the appropriate responses.

In relation to Civil Service Renewal, the Department supported the work of the Civil Service Management Board, chaired by the Secretary General, which met monthly to oversee implementation of the Civil Service Renewal Plan. There was good progress in 2015. Measures advanced include the establishment of a Civil Service Accountability Board chaired by the Taoiseach, open recruitment across most grades and completion of the first ever civil service wide employee engagement survey. A progress report was published in July setting out the achievements of the six priority actions in the ‘first 200 days’.

Public Service Reform measures continued to be supported during 2015 through the work of the Cabinet Committee on Social Policy and Public Service Reform and the Lansdowne Road Agreement securing continued industrial peace and productivity reforms in the public service. The transition to shared services for HR, payroll and pension services continued successfully and the new Public Service ICT Strategy was launched early in the year to provide more effective use of ICT to improve services. The Department also continued to roll out new requirements in relation to Freedom of Information, protected disclosures and lobbying.

The Cabinet Committee on Justice Reform oversaw a number of reform measures to the policing and justice system, including the establishment of an independent Policing Authority. Other measures advanced were a transformation programme for An Garda Síochána including new ICT investment; strengthening of the powers of Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission in relation to complaints and investigations, and completion of independent reviews into complaints alleging Garda misconduct or negligence and the various Commissions of Investigation.
The Department works with other Departments to promote Ireland’s interests globally and to maximise our influence politically and economically.

In January, the Taoiseach and the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade launched *The Global Island: Ireland’s Foreign Policy for a Changing World*, a comprehensive review of Ireland’s foreign policy. It offers a forward-looking vision of Ireland’s foreign policy and sets down the key focus for Government’s global engagement.

Ireland has one of the most open economies in the world and through measures, including the Action Plan for Jobs process, the Department supports the work to improve Ireland’s international competitiveness, building skill-sets and developing global links with priority regions.

Ireland continues to be competitive in attracting new foreign direct investment, with over 1,000 multinational corporations choosing Ireland as their strategic European base.

The Department supports the Minister for Diaspora Affairs in deepening engagement with and supporting our global diaspora including through the publication of a National Diaspora Strategy, production of a local diaspora toolkit, delivery of a €200k local grant scheme and the establishment of an interdepartmental committee to oversee implementation of the Strategy and to identify barriers to the return of emigrants. The fourth Global Irish Economic Forum was held in 2015, bringing together leading influencers around the shared objective of bolstering Ireland’s recovery.

The Department supported the Minister of State for International Banking in his role on development of the implementation framework for the new IFS2020 Strategy which was launched in March and sets out a clear vision for Ireland’s International Financial Services Sector for the next five years. Quarterly progress reports have been published showing strong progress on implementation including employment growth of 7.4% in 2015.

The Department also supported the Minister for State for European Affairs and Data Protection in overseeing implementation of the Government’s roadmap to ensure Ireland’s approach to data protection in the digital economy is best-in-class globally. A data protection forum, chaired by the Minister and including representatives from industry, civil society and academia was established in 2015 to address emerging global trends that see both society and industry make innovative use of personal data as a resource.
# Department of the Taoiseach
## Expenditure for the year 2015

### 2015 Provisional Outturn €000

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADMINISTRATION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Salaries, Wages and Allowances</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel and Subsistence</td>
<td>469</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training and Development and Incidental Expenses</td>
<td>667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal and Telecommunications</td>
<td>261</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office Equipment and External IT Services</td>
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<td>Offices Premises Expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consultancy Services</td>
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<td><strong>Total Administration</strong></td>
<td><strong>14,460</strong></td>
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<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER SERVICES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>National Economic and Social Development</td>
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<td>Office (Grant-in-Aid)</td>
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<td>Tribunal of Inquiry</td>
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<td>EU Engagement</td>
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<td>Irish Personnel in EU and International Institutions</td>
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<td>Commission of Investigation</td>
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<td>Data Protection</td>
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<td>Diaspora Affairs</td>
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<td><strong>Gross Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>23,271</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Less Appropriations-in-Aid</td>
<td>(909)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Net Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22,362</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

(Interest paid in 2015 because of late payments totalled €338)
Staff in the Department *

*There were 203 whole-time-equivalent staff working in the Department at end 2015, including permanent staff and those on secondment, temporary contracts, internships and other arrangements.
Energy usage in the Government Buildings complex, which includes the Department of the Taoiseach, is administered by the Houses of the Oireachtas. In recent years there have been significant changes in how energy services are provided and in how service charges are apportioned among the various tenants of the complex. Changes include moving from oil-fired boilers to new biomass boilers, the installation of new electricity meters and the recalculation of floor space usage across the complex.

During 2015 the Department of the Taoiseach consumed a total of 2,317.8 MWh of energy, consisting of:

- 884.8 MWh of Electricity
- 1,433 MWh of Gas

The Department also consumed 34.86 tonnes of wood pellets used in the complex’s biomass boiler. Usage of wood pellets was down on 2014, due to a breakdown of the boiler, and this resulted in a slight increase in the Department’s consumption of gas in 2015.

**Actions Planned for 2016**

For 2016, the Department will continue to work to achieve further energy reductions, particularly in respect of electricity usage, including through replacement of some systems and equipment with more energy efficient units. We also plan a further review of the control of the heating system.