CSO figures on crime show dramatic increase in serious sex crimes

New CSO figures on recorded crime statistics show that, in the majority of cases, crime rates fell between 2009 and 2013. The CSO figures measure reported and prosecuted instances of sixteen groups of offences identified by the Irish Crime Classification System (ICCS). The figures show short-term changes, between 2012 and 2013, and over the larger period between 2009 and 2013.

In the period, only four ICCS offence group instances increased during the four-year span. These were: Sexual offences (36%), dangerous and negligent acts (7%), robbery, extortion and hijacking offences (13%), and theft and related offences (2%). The other twelve categories saw decreased; the largest decreases were seen in Road and Traffic offences (-47%), and Public order and other social code offences (-36%).

Notably, although homicide offences rose by 5% between 2012 and 2013, they were, on the whole, 6% lower in 2013 than they were in 2009. Sexual offences decreased by -5% in the one-year period; 2,010 offences were recorded in 2013. However, overall, the increase in cases is significant across the four-year period. The Southern Garda Region, which takes in Cork, Galway and Limerick, the highest rate of Dangerous and Negligent acts, per-capita, the highest rate of social order offences per population, the highest level of road traffic offences, and the highest number of offences not otherwise classified were reported.

Areas such as Dublin 4 also had higher rates of social order offences than areas seen to be more anti-social, such as Finglas.

These figures are presented by the CSO as a result of the Garda Inspectorate report on Crime Investigation, and a review of the accuracy of crime data compiled by An Garda Síochána. They advise that caution be applied to the detection rates.

Sixth regional Action Plan for Jobs to be announced

Today, the Minister for Jobs, Richard Bruton TD, will launch the sixth of eight regional Action Plans for Jobs. This plan focuses on the Northeast/Northwest region, and includes historically under-employed areas such as Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan and Louth. More than 31,000 jobs were lost there between 2008 and 2011.

The plan aims to create 28,000 jobs in these areas. It will also look at increasing the number of start-ups, and the survival rate of new businesses by 25% in both respects. It also provides for advance facilities in Letterkenny, Sligo and Dundalk, by the IDA Ireland. Two regional skills forums will be established, and a regional innovation forum. The plan will bring between 300 and 500 jobs to Gaeltacht areas. These figures and promises are in line with those provided for in the five other regional plans.

Previous regional plans have been introduced in the Midlands, South-east region, West and Mid-west regions, and the South-west region. Figures so far suggest that the action plans are a success.
Next month, on Tuesday 15 December, nurses in seven of the country’s busiest hospitals will walk out in rolling work-stoppages in protest of the continuing overcrowding problem.

The affected hospitals will be: Beaumont Hospital, Tallaght Hospital, University Hospital in Galway, Waterford Hospital, Mercy Hospital in Cork, and Tullamore and Cavan hospitals. It is expected that, if the demands of the nurses are not met, further strike action will take place in January. They are demanding 200 new emergency department nurses, and a further 100 to look after patients on trolleys.

Leo Varadkar TD, Minister for Health, assured the public that the crisis was in a much better position than this day last year, saying that 197 new beds have been opened since October, and 44 more are on the way, and there are 759 more nurses than this time in 2014.

The Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO) backed the plan to take strike action by a 92% majority. Their General Secretary, Liam Dornan, said the following of the strike:

“Our members will no longer tolerate having to go to work every day and face constant overcrowding where both the care of patients and the health and wellbeing of staff is compromised without anyone in authority seeming to recognise the consequences.”

He has said, however, that there are contingency plans in place. Only emergency department nurses will strike, and there will be a stand-by crew for large-scale emergencies.

The Friday following the American holiday of Thanksgiving is known by American retailers as “Black Friday” and is seen as one of the busiest and most profitable days of the year for retailers. This year, the day’s sales amounted to $4.5bn, up 14% on last year.

Hopes were high for Irish retailers who planned on cashing in on the hype of the day. In the run-up to the day, it was estimated that shoppers would spend over €100m both in shops and online. However, the Irish Times reported that the turnout on the morning of last Friday’s sales was low, much lower than expected. This was mirrored in the UK.

As for online sales, in a survey done by the Irish Domain Registry (IEDR), it was found that less than 14% of Irish SMEs had planned any deals for the day.

Today is Cyber Monday, a key day for online sales. It remains to be seen whether Irish consumers will take advantage of the deals available on the World Wide Web.
Coming Up at Public Affairs Ireland

Training

Proofreading Skills
Wednesday 2 December
9am to 1pm
PAI Main Office

Interview Skills for Interviewees
Thursday 3 December
9am to 3pm
PAI Main Office

Introducing
New for January:

Certificate in Regulatory Investigations,
Inspections and Prosecutions
3 day course
Begins Tuesday 23 January
9am to 4pm
PAI Main Office

On the Blog

Irish refugee legislation: moving towards a fair and fast process
PAI editor Shauna Nimmo
Read here

Irish Budget has been approved by the European Commission
Tom Ferris
Read here

Migration Patterns, into and around the OECD
PAI Editor Shauna Nimmo
Read here

Northern Ireland would suffer most from Brexit
PAI editor Shauna Nimmo
Read here
Tuesday 1 December

2.00 p.m.
Questions (Minister for Justice and Equality)

3.15 p.m.
Leaders Questions

3.36 p.m.
Questions (Taoiseach)

4.36 p.m.
Order of Business
Motion re: Supplementary Estimate (Defence) (back from committee) (without debate)

5.06 p.m.
Topical Issues
Residential Tenancies (Amendment) (No 2) Bill 2012 - (Amendments from the Seanad) (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)

8.30 p.m.
Private Members Business - Rent Certainty and Prevention of Homelessness Bill 2015 [PMB] (Sinn Féin)

10.00 p.m.
Dáil Adjourns

Thursday 3 December

9.30 a.m.
Questions (Minister for Health)

10.45 a.m.
Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill 2015 - Amendments from the Seanad (Department of Environment, Community and Local Government)

Dublin Docklands Development Authority (Dissolution) Bill 2015 - Order for Report, Report and Final Stages (Department of Environment, Community and Local Government)

Child Care (Amendment) Bill 2015 [Seanad] - Committee, Report and Final Stages (Department of Children and Youth Affairs)

12.00 noon
Leaders Questions

12.21 p.m.
Order of Business

Morning Business Continued

4.42 p.m.
Topical Issues

5.30 p.m.
Dáil Adjourns

Wednesday 2 December

9.30 a.m.
Questions (Minister for Children and Youth Affairs)

10.45 a.m.
Residential Tenancies (Amendment) (No 2) Bill 2012 - (Amendments from the Seanad) (Resumed) (Department of Environment, Community and Local Government)

Health Insurance (Amendment) Bill 2015 - Order for Report, Report and Final Stages (Department of Health)

Harbours Bill 2015 - Order for Report, Report and Final Stages (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport)

Equality (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2013 [Seanad] - Committee, Report and Final Stages (Department of Justice and Equality)

12.00 noon
Leaders Questions

12.21 p.m.
Order of Business

12.51 p.m.
SOS (1 hour)

1.51 p.m.
Topical Issues

2.39 p.m.
Dáil Adjourns
Tuesday 1 December

2.30 p.m.
Commencement Matters

3.30 p.m.
Order of Business

4.45 p.m.
Motor Vehicles (Duties and Licences) Bill 2015 – All Stages

   Motion regarding the Earlier Signature of the Motor Vehicles (Duties and Licences) Bill 2015 – without debate
   (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)

6.15 p.m.
Legal Services Regulation Bill 2011 – Report and Final Stages (resumed)
   (Department of Justice and Equality)

7.00 p.m.
International Protection Bill 2015 – Order for Second Stage and Second Stage
   (Department of Justice and Equality)

9.00 p.m.
Seanad Adjourns

Wednesday 2 December

10.30 a.m.
Commencement Matters

11.30 a.m.
Order of Business

12.45 p.m.
Social Welfare and Pensions Bill 2015 – Committee Stage
   (Department of Social Protection)

4.00 p.m.
Planning and Development (Amendment) Bill 2015 – Order for Second Stage and Second Stage
   (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)

6.00 p.m.
National Cultural Institutions (National Concert Hall) Bill 2015 – Report and Final Stages
   (Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht)

Seanad Adjourns

Thursday 3 December

10.30 a.m.
Commencement Matters

11.30 a.m.
Order of Business

12.45 p.m.
Finance Bill 2015 - Second Stage
   (Department of Finance)

2.45 p.m.
International Protection Bill 2015 – Committee and Remaining Stages
   (Department of Justice and Equality)

5.00 p.m.
Health Insurance (Amendment) Bill 2015 – Second Stage
   (Department of Health)

Seanad Adjourns
This week’s Committee Meetings

Tuesday 1 December

Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Select) CR2, LH 2000 1.30 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: 2015 Supplementary Estimates for Public Services - Vote 32 (Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation) [Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation]

Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: (i) The Organic Farming Scheme [Representatives from Bord Bia]; and (ii) Sea Fisheries Sustainability Impact Assessment [Representatives from Birdwatch Ireland]

Social Protection (Select sub) CR4, LH 2000 2.15 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: 2015 Supplementary Estimates for Public Services - Vote 37 (Social Protection) [Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection]

Health and Children (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 4 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: HIV in Ireland: Advances in testing opportunities and enhancing engagement with health services (Mr. Tiernan Brady, Director of Gay HIV Strategies, Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN); Mr. Niall Mulligan, Executive Director, HIV Ireland and Ms. Deirdre Seery, CEO, Cork Sexual Health Centre)

Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 4.45 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 5.15 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Briefing on Pre-Ecofin Council Meeting [Minister for Finance]

Transport, Tourism and Sport (Select sub) CR4, LH 2000 6.15 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: 2015 Supplementary Estimates for Public Services - Vote 31 (Transport, Tourism and Sport) [Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport]

Thursday 3 December

Children and Youth Affairs (Select sub) CR2, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: 2015 Supplementary Estimates for Public Service – Vote 40 (Children and Youth Affairs) [Minister for Children and Youth Affairs]

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) Conference Room, Agriculture House 10 a.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Public Accounts CR3, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: (i) Business of the Committee; and (ii) Finance Accounts 2014; and (iii) 2014 Annual Report and Appropriation Accounts of the Comptroller and Auditor General:
   a. Vote 7: Office of the Minister for Finance
   b. Chapter 1: Exchequer Financial Outturn for 2014
   c. Chapter 2: Government Debt
   d. Chapter 3: Cost of Bank Stabilisation measures as at end 2014
      [Officials from the Department of Finance and from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform]

Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 11 a.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Health and Children (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 11.15 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Discussion regarding the HPV Vaccine (Gardasil) [Representatives from R. E. G. R. E. T. support group; and Dr. Colette Bonner, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health]

Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)

Transport and Communications (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 3.15 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Energy policy including renewable and energy security [Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources]

Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Select sub) CR1, LH 2000 5 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: 2015 Supplementary Estimates for Public Services - Vote 29 (Communications, Energy and Natural Resources) [Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources]

Wednesday 2 December

Justice, Defence and Equality (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Engagement with Ms. Margaret Taylor, Chairperson Designate, Classification of Films Appeal Board

Transport and Communications (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Unconventional gas exploration and extraction [Representatives of the Environmental Protection Agency]

Foreign Affairs and Trade (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Sustainable Development Goals and the integration of disability issues into Ireland's Overseas Development Aid Programme [Christian Blind Mission]

Members' Interests of Dáil Éireann (Select) CR2, LH 2000 12.30 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Finance (Select sub) CR4, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: 2015 Supplementary Estimates for Public Services - Vote 7 (Office of the Minister for Finance) [Minister for Finance]

Justice, Defence and Equality (Select) CR2, LH 2000 3 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Session A: 3 p.m.
2015 Supplementary Estimates for Public Services – Vote 20 (Garda Síochána); and Vote 21 (Prisons) [Minister for Justice and Equality]; and Session B: 5 p.m.
Criminal Justice (Burglary of Dwellings) Bill 2015 [Minister for Justice and Equality]

Public Expenditure and Reform (Select sub) CR4, LH 2000 3 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: 2015 Supplementary Estimates for Public Services – Vote 12 (Superannuation and Retired Allowances); and Vote 17 (Public Appointments Service) [Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform]

Department of the Taoiseach (Select sub) CR4, LH 2000 4 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: 2015 Supplementary Estimates for Public Services - Vote 6 (Office of the Chief State Solicitor) [Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach]

Public Service Oversight and Petitions (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 4 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: (a) Private; and (b) Public Petitions received