



Annual Report 2013

Department of the Taoiseach Annual Report 2013



A Message from the Taoiseach

This is the third report on progress made in achieving the priorities outlined in my Department's Strategy Statement 2011-2014. During 2013 my Department continued to support the work of Government to restore financial stability, create jobs and reduce unemployment as well as to help drive the process of reform in accordance with the Programme for Government.

Some of the main achievements for 2013 include:

- Ireland's successful exit from the Troika Programme
- Effective implementation of the 2013 Action Plan for Jobs and Pathways to Work with 61,000 new jobs created in 2013 and, while still unacceptably high, unemployment is falling
- The very successful Irish Presidency of the EU in the first half of the year
- New targets for bank mortgage restructures in place and being met and the new insolvency service up and running
- Reform of the public service continued with the Haddington Road Agreement, a new reform plan published and major reform programmes progressed in the health, local government and education sectors
- New wave of Dáil reforms implemented and Constitutional reform continued through the excellent work of the Constitutional Convention and a further two Referenda held

In most cases my Department worked in collaboration with other Departments, often working through the Cabinet Committee system, to help deliver these outcomes. On behalf of my colleagues and Ministers of State, Paschal Donohoe T.D. and Paul Kehoe T.D., I thank the staff in the Department for their contribution to the progress achieved by the Government in 2013.

Enda Kenny T.D.

Taoiseach

Introduction by the Secretary General

I am pleased to introduce the 2013 Annual Report for the Department of the Taoiseach.

In a year in which the Civil Service began a significant process of looking at its future role and vision, I believe that staff in this Department can be very proud of how they have responded to the challenges presented and contributed to what has been achieved to date.

The success of the Irish Presidency in 2013 was a major step forward for Ireland which is a testimony to the hard work of many which saw 185 high level meetings held in Ireland during the 181 days. The Department has continued to support Government's focus on implementation of policy and service reform involving 90 Cabinet Committee meetings in 2013 with additional related Senior Officials Groups and associated work.

While staffing in the Department has been reduced further post-Presidency, it continued to provide comprehensive support to the Taoiseach at home and abroad, at Government meetings and in the Oireachtas. Work associated with implementing substantial Dáil reforms and the Seanad Referendum took place during the year as well as the considerable work of the Constitutional Convention which was also supported by this Department.

A leadership development programme and extensive training activities are in place to ensure that the Department is ready to meet all future challenges.

I want to thank the staff of the Department for their continued support and commitment and look forward to further progressing Government's work programme over the year ahead.

Martin Fraser

Secretary General

Our Mission

“Our purpose is to help the Taoiseach and the Government to resolve the current economic crisis, to implement their Programme and to build a fairer society and a better future for Ireland and all her citizens.”



Strategic Priorities 2011-2014



1. JOBS AND GROWTH

Tackling the economic crisis, with a particular focus on jobs and growth



2. EUROPE

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



3. PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

Overseeing the full implementation of the Programme for Government



4. SERVICE

Providing excellent support services for the Taoiseach and Government



5. TRUST

Helping to reform and restore trust in the institutions of the State, and in Ireland's reputation at home and abroad, learning lessons from the past



6. REFORM

Helping to renew and transform the public service



7. FAIRNESS

Helping to ensure that Government policies and services support a socially inclusive and fair society



8. PEACE

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



The Core Functions of the Department in 2013

- supporting the Constitutional functions of the Taoiseach and the Government
- acting as the Secretariat to the Government
- providing the Taoiseach's Private Office and the Private Offices of the Government Chief Whip and the Minister of State for European Affairs
- providing the Office of the Tánaiste
- operating the Government Press Office
- support for the Taoiseach in carrying out his duties as Head of Government, including in relation to the Oireachtas, Protocol, the European Council, the North/South Ministerial Council and the British-Irish Council and other EU and international 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
- providing briefing and advice for the Taoiseach on the full range of domestic policy issues and on international affairs
- supporting Constitutional and Oireachtas Reform, including the work of the Constitutional Convention
- 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 and Ireland's Presidency of the EU
- delivering support services through Corporate Affairs Division (HR, Finance, IT and other services)

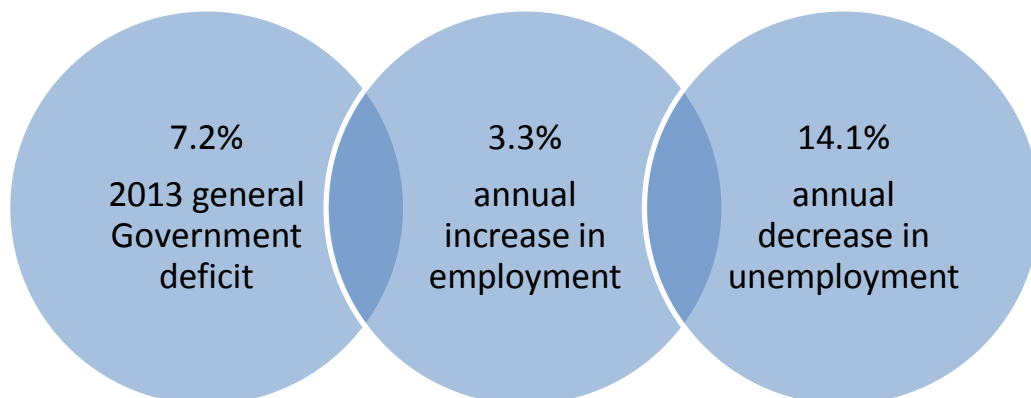


Highlights

In accordance with the Programme for Government, the Department aims to provide a strategic centre which ensures a joined-up approach to the development and implementation of Government policy.

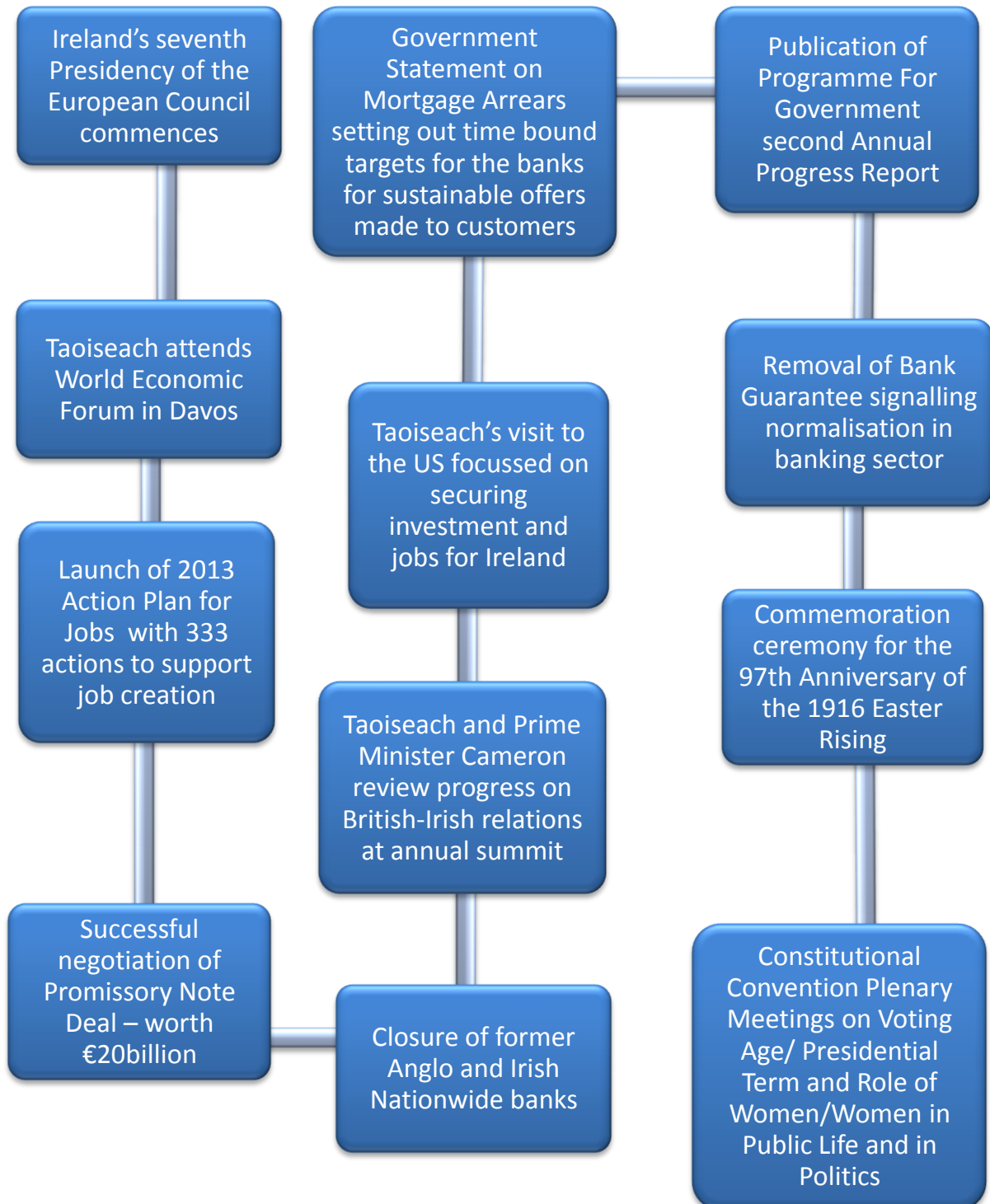
There were a significant number of achievements during the course of 2013 to which the Department contributed, working with other Departments and Agencies:

- Ireland's successful exit from the Troika Programme greatly facilitated by the deal achieved on the Promissory Note and meeting fiscal targets in 2013
- The very successful Irish Presidency of the European Union in the first half of 2013 which has been widely praised
- Ireland's international standing and reputation has been improved including through visits undertaken by the Taoiseach to America, the World Economic Forum in Davos, the G8 Summit in Lough Erne, Japan, and most recently the Gulf States. The Global Irish Economic Forum in October 2013 was another important part of this process
- The effective implementation of the 2013 Action Plan on Jobs, and the updated Pathways to Work Strategy published in July, has been reflected in a fall in unemployment to 12.1% and a return to substantial new job creation
- Continued reform of the public service, in particular through the Haddington Road Agreement concluded last June, as well as major reform programmes in Local Government, Health, Education and other sectors
- Putting in place a comprehensive strategy for mortgage arrears including Central Bank targets for lenders and establishment of the new Insolvency Service
- Political and constitutional reforms including a new phase of Dáil reforms introduced last September, the work of the Constitutional Convention and meeting the commitment to hold a referendum on the Seanad.



The following milestones reflect the culmination of work involving the Department of the Taoiseach, usually in collaboration with other Departments, which contributed to the delivery of Government policy as set out in the Programme for Government.

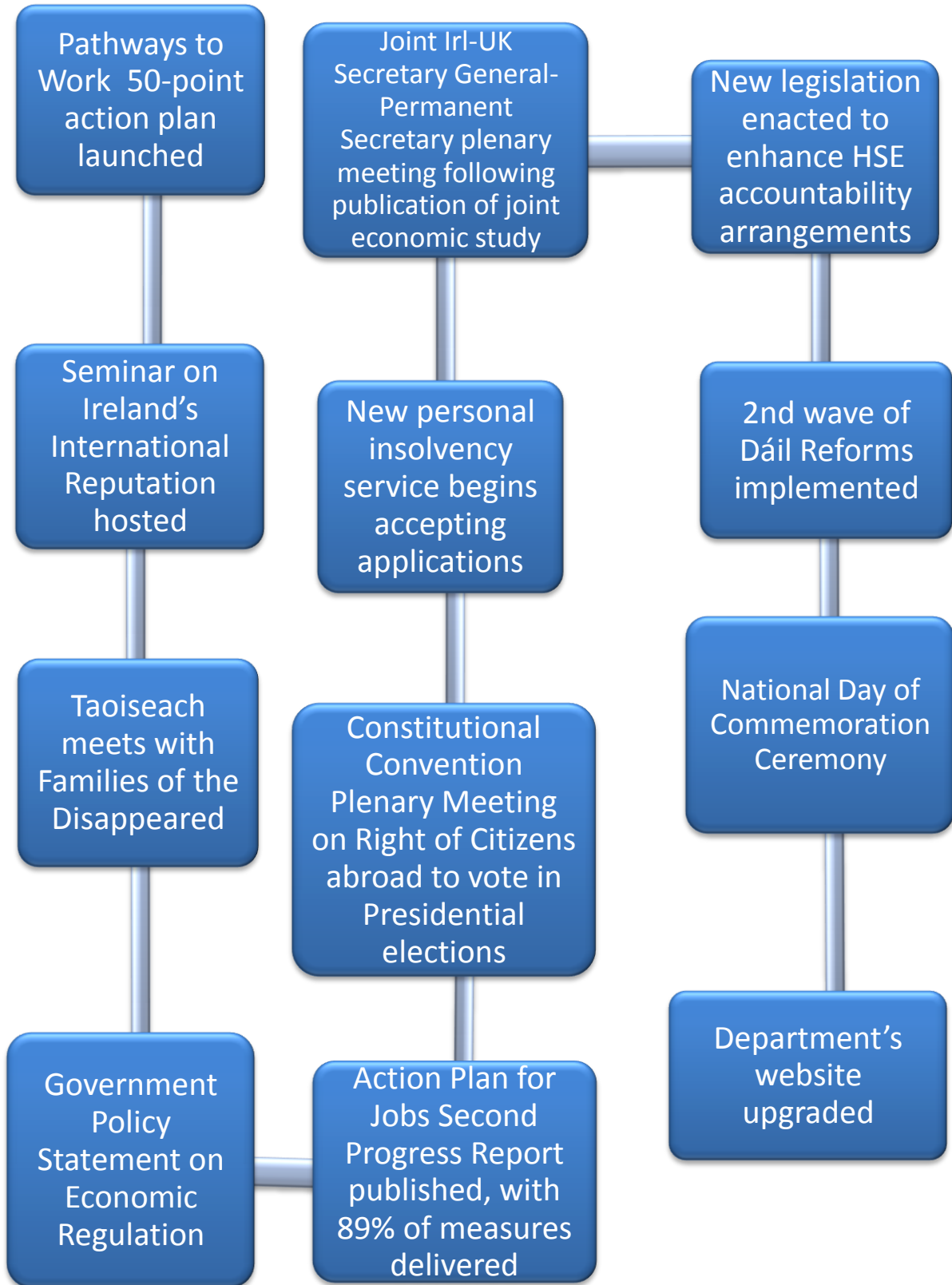
Quarter 1



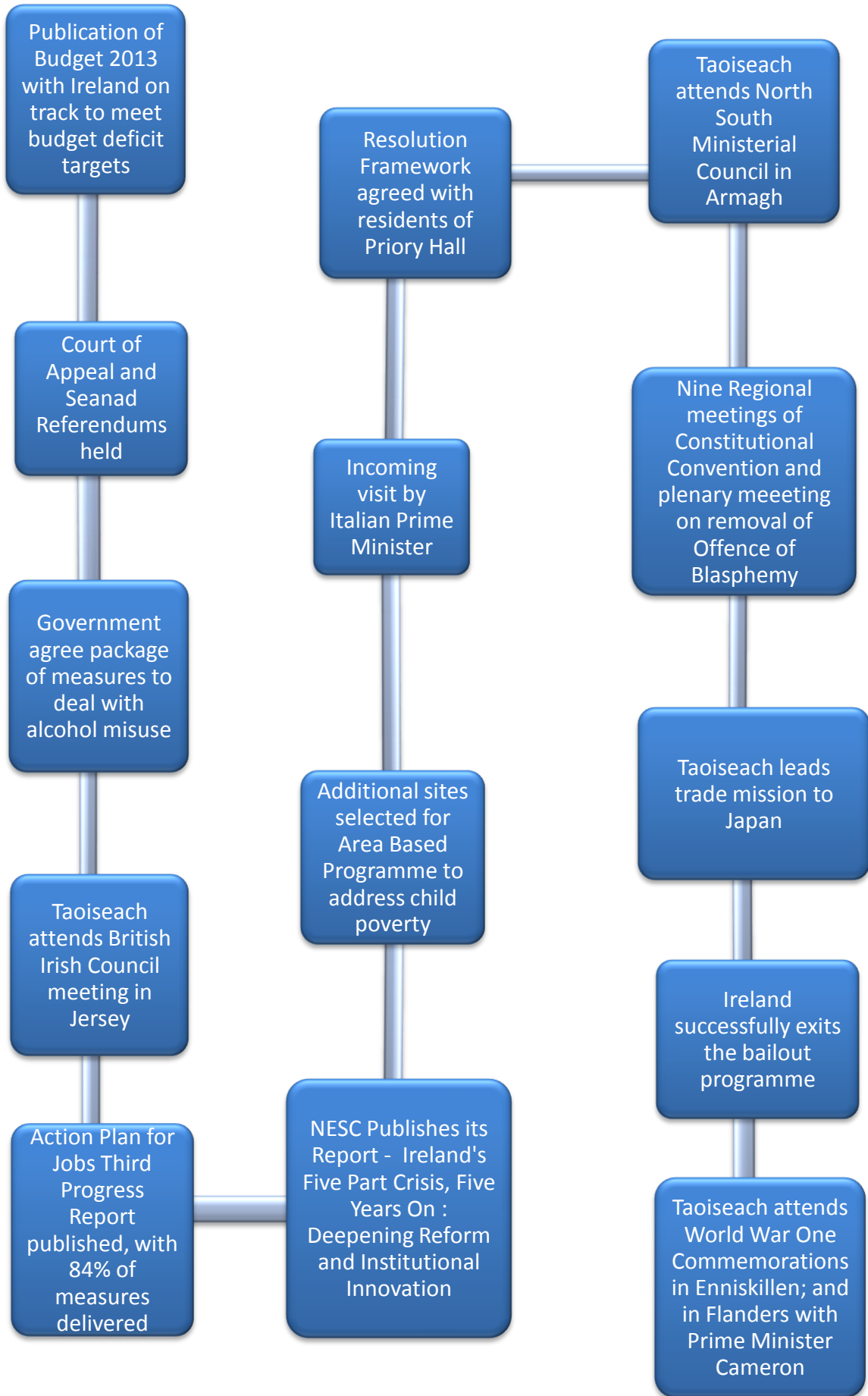
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Quarter 3



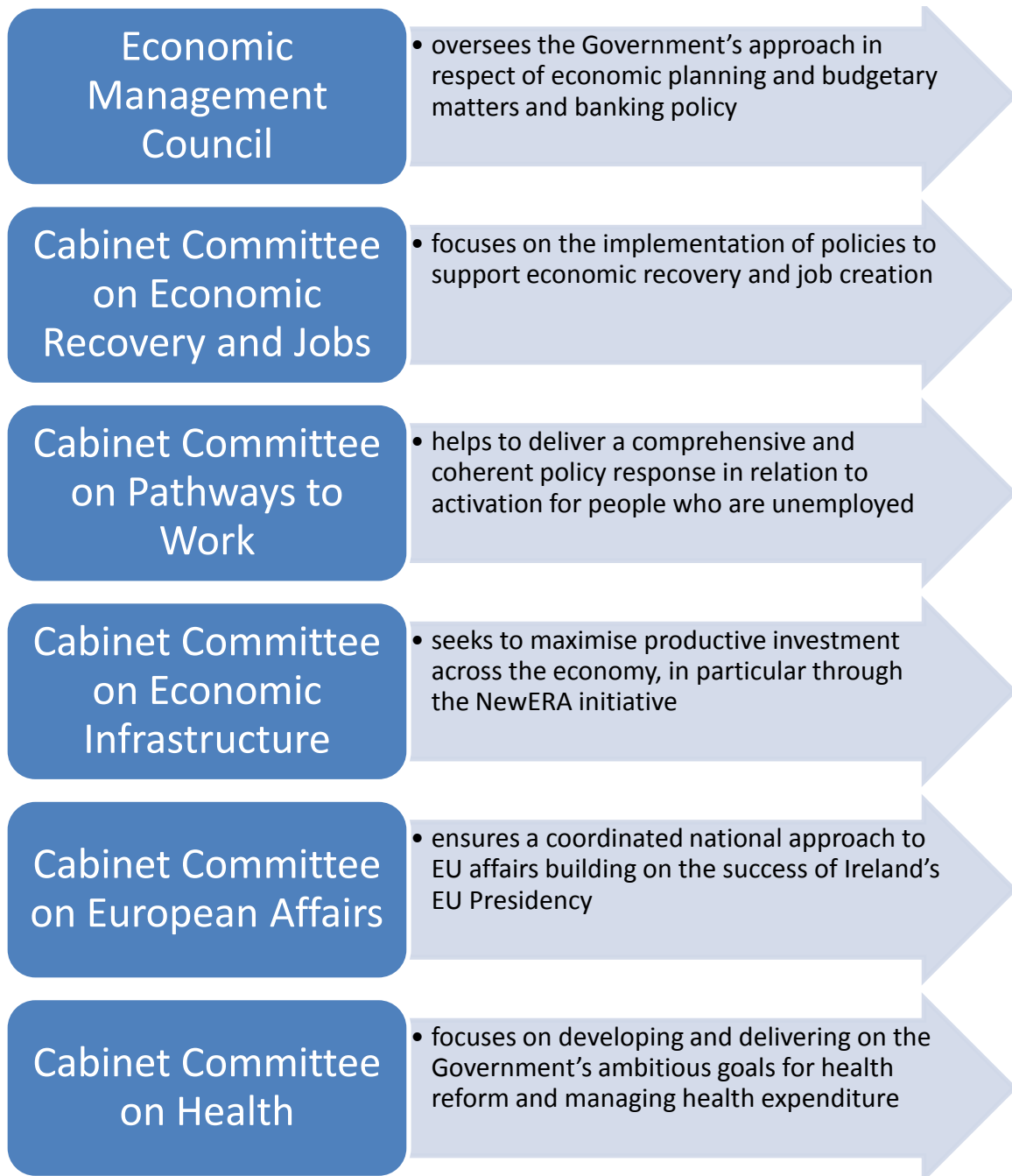
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Cabinet Committees

The Economic Management Council and Cabinet Committees continue to be central to the work of the Department of the Taoiseach in driving implementation of Government Policy and effective cross-departmental collaboration





Cabinet Committees

90

**Cabinet Committee meetings
in 2013**

**Cabinet Committee
on Mortgage Arrears
and Credit
Availability**

- coordinates the Government's response to help families in mortgage arrears and oversees measures to ensure availability of sufficient finance to the economy

**Cabinet Committee
on Public Service
Reform**

- oversees Government's extensive programme of public service reform

**Cabinet Committee
on Social Policy**

- drives forward social policy reforms and service improvements to support an inclusive and fair society

**Cabinet Committe
on Climate Change
and the Green
Economy**

- deals with strategies to meet our demanding greenhouse gases emission targets, as well as opportunities arising for Ireland in green enterprise

**Cabinet Committee
on Irish and the
Gaeltacht**

- seeks to promote the Irish language and support Gaeltacht communities and Irish-speaking households



Ireland's Presidency of the European Union 2013

The Department of the Taoiseach, working closely with the Irish Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels, oversaw the implementation by all Government Departments of the Presidency programme, which focused on delivering stability, jobs and growth. The Presidency results report, published in early July 2013, sets out the significant achievements of the Irish Presidency in delivering on the programme which Ireland set itself.

The Presidency involved chairing 2,477 meetings and events across Europe, of which 185 were held in Ireland, over the 181 days of the Presidency. Over 200 policy commitments were achieved, including more than 80 in legislative form, requiring 374 trilogues with the European Parliament and 111 hours of political engagement by Ministers with the European Parliament.

Notable achievements included securing agreement with the European Parliament on the €960 billion Multi-annual Financial Framework 2014-2020, securing agreement and front-loading a €6 billion Youth Guarantee, securing agreement on key banking and economic governance measures such as the Single Supervisory Mechanism, the Capital Requirements Directive, progress on Banking Resolution and Recovery and agreement on the "Two Pack", delivering on reform of the CAP and the Common Fisheries Policy, and securing the mandate for the start of negotiations between the EU and the US on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

The Department of the Taoiseach was also responsible for the Presidency Communications strategy including its website, public communications, broadcasting and photography services. The Presidency website (www.eu2013.ie) had over 517,000 visits from over 200 countries. It is estimated that over 24,000 visitors came to Ireland for Presidency-related events. There were also a further 929 events worldwide as part of the Presidency's cultural programme.





State Visits and Events

In 2013, the Department organised, or assisted in organising, a number of notable official visits and events, including:

- Inward Official Visits by the President of Norway; Prime Minister of Canada; Prime Minister of Japan; Prime Minister of Italy; Vice Premier of China; Secretary General of NATO; former US President Bill Clinton; former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton
- Inward EU Presidency-related visits by the Presidents of the European Parliament, Commission and Council; President of Latvia; Prime Minister of Serbia; Prime Minister of Sweden; Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund; and EU Commissioner Barnier
- Commemoration ceremony for the 97th Anniversary of the Easter Rising
- Annual National Day of Commemoration ceremony in Dublin
- On 19 December 2013 the Taoiseach and Prime Minister Cameron visited the war graves in Flanders to commemorate and honour all of those, Irish and British soldiers who died in the First World War.

A key aspect of the Department's work is supporting the Taoiseach's engagements with international audiences. In total, during 2013, the Taoiseach participated in some 45 meetings and speaking engagements in the United States with a wide range of senior political, civic and business leaders, and in 24 political, business and speaking engagements in Japan, and he made some 15 speeches to international audiences here in Ireland. The Department also supported the Taoiseach in his attendance at meetings throughout the year in the UK and Europe including those at the European Council.

233 domestic engagements carried out by the Taoiseach

90 speaking engagements by the Taoiseach during overseas visits

260 Speeches written



Strategic Priority 1 **Jobs and Growth**

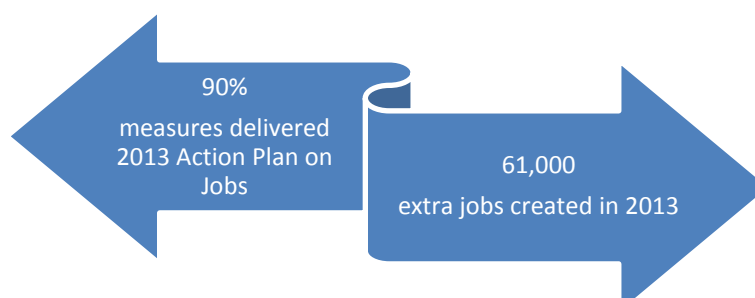
Jobs and recovery remain the top priority and the Department continued to support the work of the Taoiseach and Government in overseeing the implementation of the Government's Programme in respect of economic planning and budgetary matters, the economic recovery programme and the co-ordination of banking policy.

Building on the successful implementation of 90% of measures in the first plan, the second Action Plan for Jobs (2013) was launched in February, with the Department helping to ensure balance and coherence of actions across the economy, and across the Government system. Although still unacceptably high, unemployment is falling and new jobs are being created at the fastest rate since 2007 – up 61,000 year-on-year at end 2013.

Throughout 2013 the Department worked with all relevant Departments to ensure that a comprehensive and coherent policy response was delivered in relation to getting people back to work, centred on the Pathways to Work strategy. This has delivered more regular and on-going engagement with people who are unemployed and greater targeting of work activation places and opportunities.

Throughout 2013 a range of important infrastructural strategies, to support job creation and productive investment in the economy were considered by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Infrastructure e.g. Bus Service Policy, Ireland/UK Energy Export Policy and Aviation Policy. Following a public consultation and engagement with sectoral Departments, a new Government Policy Statement on Economic Regulation was published in July 2013 by the Department.

The Department carried out an assessment of the effectiveness of the IFSC Clearing House Group and made recommendations as to how the structure could be enhanced with a particular focus on maximising job creation and economic growth in Ireland. The Department continued to implement measures to increase the openness and transparency of the Group including publication of minutes.





Strategic Priority 2 Europe

The Department supported the Taoiseach in his role as a member of the European Council and the Tánaiste to exercise his overall responsibility for the co-ordination of EU Affairs. The Department also assisted the Minister of State for European Affairs.

In 2013 the Department supported the Taoiseach in all negotiations at EU level and effectively managed Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first six months of the year. Since June, the Department has been working to maximise the value derived from the Presidency in pursuing its strategic, policy coherence and institutional engagement agendas.

The Department contributed to delivering a strategic approach to Ireland's engagement with the EU including through ongoing bilateral engagement and alliance building. It promoted coherence across policy positions taken by Ireland in relation to EU matters and monitored progress made in relation to major horizontal issues including Europe 2020 and the Multi-annual Financial Framework, to ensure effective advancement of Irish interests, and supported the identification of policies at EU level which can best contribute to national interests and ensured that supporting actions are prioritised.

The Department worked to improve engagement with the EU institutions and with the Oireachtas and to better communicate with Europe. In 2013 the Communicating Europe Initiative provided funding of €159,000 to over 40 groups in respect of projects aimed at deepening public awareness of the role that the European Union plays in our daily lives. The second year of the Blue Star Programme saw a significant jump from 32 to 94 in the number of participating primary schools involving 5,000 pupils from across Ireland learning about the European Union.





Strategic Priority 3 **Programme for Government**

The Programme for Government Office engaged with all Departments to monitor progress on the commitments contained in the programme. A second Annual Report setting out progress was published in March 2013. In the first two years, progress was reported on two thirds of commitments.

The Office also supported the Taoiseach in his engagement with Ministers at bilateral meetings and Cabinet Committee meetings to drive progress on the Programme for Government.

Good progress continued during 2013 on implementing the commitments under the responsibility of the Department of the Taoiseach.

A second phase of Dáil reforms was introduced, including extending the sitting time of the Dáil each week to allow extra time for legislative debate and measures to develop the role of Oireachtas Committees in the Budget process.

The Constitutional Convention met in plenary session throughout 2013 and by end year had submitting reports on issues such as the Presidential term, the Dáil electoral system, the role of women in public life and same-sex marriage. It also held nine regional meetings during the year, giving the public an opportunity to contribute to the final phase of the Convention's work.

Following a review of the sector by Forfás and a public consultation, the Government's Statement on Economic Regulation was published in July 2013.

The legislative work associated with the holding of the referendum in 2013 on the abolition of the Seanad was also carried out by the Department.



66% of Programme for
Government Commitments
Reported on



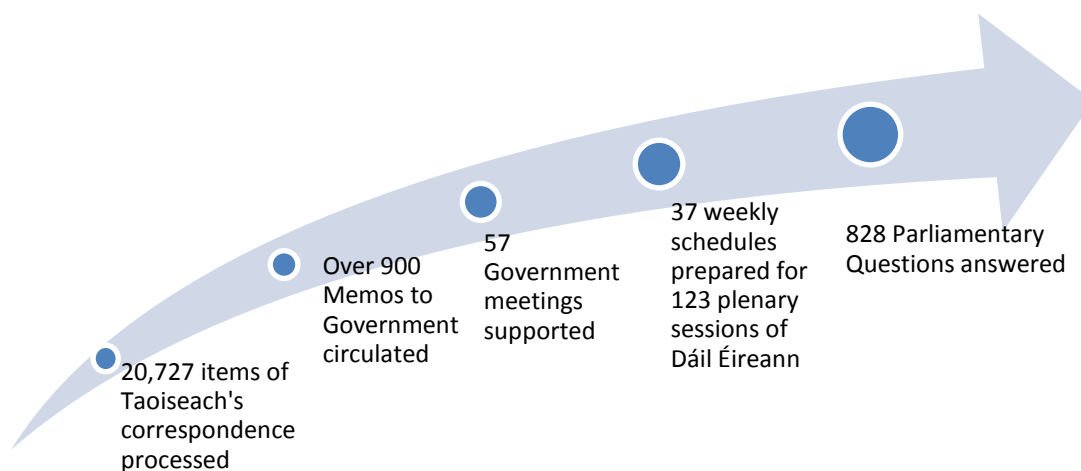
Strategic Priority 4 Service

During 2013, 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, tours of Government Buildings and responding to representations from the public. Following the EU Presidency in 2013, the staffing compliment in the Department was reduced to 181. Staff numbers are down 17% and the overall budget is down 57% since 2008.

The Corporate Affairs Division provides 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. During 2013 Corporate Support Services conducted a Review of ICT Services, continued implementation of the HR Strategy 2012-2014, managed significant short-term demands associated with the EU Presidency, and initiated a review of the Department's Customer Charter.

A pilot induction programme was introduced during 2013 targeting newly-assigned staff. In addition to supporting an enhanced rollout of PMDS, the Department implemented a leadership development programme for senior management and put in place a programme of in-house training, including IT skills and grade-based training programmes.

In addition to ICT support provided to staff working on the EU Presidency and support for the EU 2013 website, ICT projects advanced during 2013 included WiFi internet access, the rollout of Voice Over IP and upgrading the Department's website and Intranet.





Strategic Priority 5 **Trust**

During 2013, the Department continued to promote trust and transparency through online publication of information on a quarterly basis and supporting the progress of key Government initiatives in this area including new Freedom of Information provisions and Ireland's membership of the Open Government Partnership.

Measures to enhance policy capacity in the Department included participation of staff in the Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service, and investment in training and development.

Work commenced in 2013 on further measures to improve strategic thinking and forward planning. In September 2013, the Government announced, as part of its package of Dáil reform measures, its intention to publish for debate in the Dáil a new document called the National Risk Assessment which will set out the major risks (both financial and non-financial) facing Ireland in the year ahead.

The Department supported the Taoiseach in his work to enhance and build Ireland's international reputation. This included planning and supporting the Taoiseach's participation in a number of jobs and trade focussed international visits in 2013 which provide a platform for the Taoiseach to promote Ireland as a location for trade, investment and tourism.

Following the successful management of the EU Presidency and the bailout exit, Ireland's international reputation has significantly improved, a fact reflected in sovereign bond yields following exit from the bailout, positive reviews by rating agencies and Ireland moving up from 15th to 12th in 2013 in the Corporate Reputations Country Reprtrak.

The Department continued to fulfill its obligations to make information available under Freedom of Information and transferred over 1,100 files containing 30-year-old records to the National Archive to ensure their availability for public inspection.





Strategic Priority 6 **Reform**

The Department continues to support the Government's extensive programme of reform through the Cabinet Committee on Public Service Reform and through direct involvement in a number of initiatives. This has seen the introduction of a range of measures to overhaul the Dáil and Local Government, continued Constitutional reform and ongoing delivery of an extensive programme of public service reform designed to deliver improved services to the public with more transparency and greater efficiency. Some of the key highlights from 2013 include:

- In addition to the two referendums held in 2013, work on Constitutional reform continued through the work of the Constitutional Convention.
- The Department also supported implementation of significant Dáil reforms introduced during 2013 to increase the working week of the Dáil and improve Oireachtas oversight of the legislative process.
- The Haddington Road Agreement came into force in July 2013 to deliver a reduction of €1 billion in the public service pay and pensions bill by 2016.
- An updated Public Service Reform Plan has been published by the Government setting out an ambitious new phase of reform.
- Significant progress was achieved on reforming service delivery in the key sectors of health, education and local government including the establishment of Hospital Groups and the Money-follows-the-Patient system of financing hospitals; publication of legislation to implement the most radical reform of Local Government in over 100 years; and reform of school patronage and school admissions and the rollout of the new Junior Cycle.

2013 also saw the commencement of a Civil Service Renewal Programme jointly sponsored by the Secretaries General of the Departments of the Taoiseach and Public Expenditure and Reform. This aims to develop a renewed Vision for the Civil Service of the future and specific actions to achieve this Vision. A public consultation process is also underway on strengthening Civil Service accountability which, along with the outcome of the Renewal Programme, will result in an integrated set of reforms to prepare the Civil Service for the challenges ahead.



Strategic Priority 7 **Fairness**

Through the work of the Cabinet Committees on Social Policy, Health and Mortgage Arrears, the Department supports cross-Departmental co-ordination on reforms and service improvements to support an inclusive and fair society. The Department also coordinated Ireland's National Reform Programme update for 2013, which set out progress made in achieving Ireland's national targets under the EU 2020 strategy.

Key developments progressed through these structures in 2013 include a set of measures agreed by Government to combat alcohol misuse; the launch of Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing; the selection of 13 projects for the area based approach to tackling child poverty; and publication of the National Positive Ageing Strategy, the Homelessness Policy Statement and the National Disability Implementation Plan.

The Cabinet Committee on Mortgage Arrears continued to drive progress on measures to help families in mortgage arrears. 2013 saw the new Insolvency Service of Ireland up and running and the publication by the Central Bank of specific time bound targets for the banks to make offers of sustainable solutions, and conclude agreements with, mortgage-holders in arrears. By the end of 2013, mortgage arrears had stabilised and engagement between consumers and lenders led to 51,188 permanent mortgage restructures.

During 2013 the Department led a process of engagement with stakeholders, including the Priory Hall residents, the Irish Bankers' Federation and Dublin City Council, which resulted in agreement of a Framework for Resolution of the Priory Hall complex. Implementation of this Framework is now being overseen by a committee chaired by Dr. Martin McAleese and supported by the Department.

The National Economic and Social Council (NES) 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.

51,188 permanent mortgage restructures

13 projects progressed under the area based approach to tackling child poverty



Strategic Priority 8 **Peace**

As co-guarantors of the Good Friday Agreement, the Irish and British Governments continue to do all in their power to support the Executive in Northern Ireland to build peace, reconciliation and prosperity. While great progress has been made, there is much still to be done. The Panel of Parties on talks on parades, flags and emblems and the past, under the Chairmanship of Richard Haass and the Vice-Chairmanship of Meghan O’Sullivan, provided a focus for making progress on these outstanding and challenging issues.

The North South and East West agendas continued to be progressed through the relevant structures and institutions of the Good Friday Agreement. The Taoiseach attended two British Irish Council Summits and two North South Ministerial Council Plenary meetings during 2013. Further opportunities continue to be identified for cooperation on improved and more cost-effective delivery of public services on a North South basis, e.g. energy, transport, health and higher education.

The Taoiseach continued his series of meetings with families of victims on all sides of the community in Northern Ireland in 2013. He met with the Disappeared Group and with members of the Justice for the Forgotten Group and attended the Sunday Remembrance service in Enniskillen.

Relations between Ireland and the UK continue to strengthen. The Taoiseach met Prime Minister Cameron in London in March 2013 to discuss progress on the Joint Statement. Following the publication of a Joint Economic Study to identify areas for collaboration, the heads of Government Departments from both countries met in Dublin to map out a work programme on the basis of the findings and recommendations from the study.



Department of the Taoiseach
Expenditure for the year 2013

2013 Provisional Outturn

€000

ADMINISTRATION

Salaries, Wages and Allowances	11,323
Travel and Subsistence	350
Training and Development and Incidental Expenses	427
Postal and Telecommunications	329
Office Equipment and External IT Services	658
Offices Premises Expenses	328
Consultancy Services	0
EU Presidency	2,030
Total Administration	15,445

OTHER SERVICES

National Economic and Social Development	
Office (Grant-in-Aid)	1,950
Tribunal of Inquiry	2,513
Constitutional Convention	824
Referendum on Abolition of the Seanad	1,193
Gross Total	21,925

Less Appropriations-in-Aid	(960)
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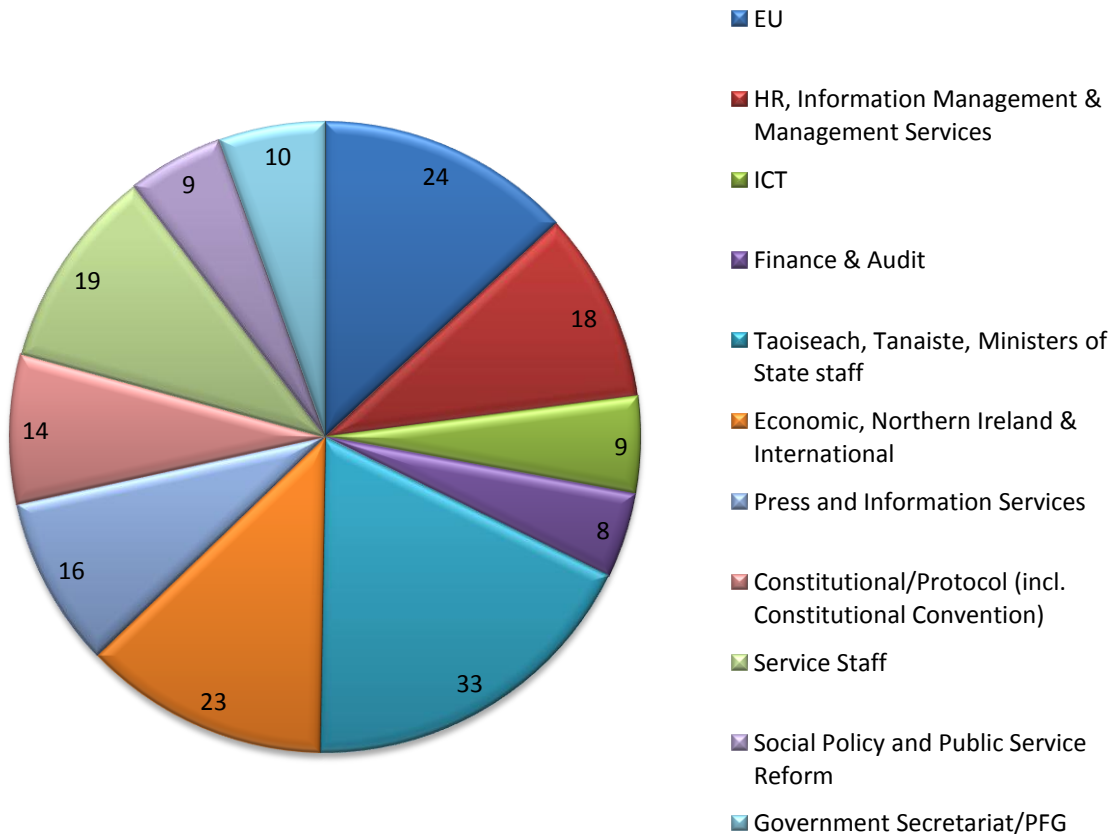
Net Total	20,965
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(Interest paid in 2013 because of late payments totalled €8.79)



Staffing

Staff in the Department *



*These are 183 whole-time-equivalent persons working in the Department including permanent staff and those on secondment, temporary contracts, internships and other arrangements



Overview of Energy Usage in 2013

In 2013, the Department of the Taoiseach consumed a total of 2,440 MWh of energy, consisting of:

- 1548 MWh of Electricity;
- 892 MWh of Gas;

This represents a reduction of just over 3% in Electricity consumption over the last year.

Gas consumption increased slightly during 2013 largely due to a recalculation of the proportion of total floor space utilised by each stakeholder within the Government Buildings/Leinster House complex. However, the installation of a wood pellet biomass boiler, which will generate up to 25% of the heating needs for the entire complex, is expected to reduce our Gas consumption significantly during 2014.

Actions Planned for 2014

For 2014, the Department will continue to work to achieve further energy reductions including the replacement of some systems and equipment with more energy efficient units; a review of the operation of the heating system to ensure that economies can be made where possible; and having information days to encourage staff to be more energy efficient.