

# PUBLIC SECTOR TRENDS 2017

# 21



STATE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE SERIES

**RICHARD BOYLE**  
NOVEMBER 2017

**IPA**  
AN FORAS RIARACHÁIN  
INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC  
ADMINISTRATION

**PUBLIC SECTOR TRENDS**  
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*Dr. Richard Boyle* is Head of Research, Publishing and Corporate Relations with the Institute of Public Administration. He has written extensively on public service reform and on the evaluation of public services.



## FOREWORD

This report examines trends in public sector development and is the eighth in our annual series. The intention is to help inform the debate on Ireland's public sector and public administration, and its role in Irish society.

Here we try to bring some evidence to bear on the important debate on the future shape, size and direction of the public sector. Using data gathered from a number of sources, information on the size and cost of the public sector, the quality of public administration, efficiency and performance, and levels of trust and confidence is presented in a simple but rigorous manner.

In the *State of the Public Service* research series, we seek to provide evidence-informed research and commentary on key aspects of contemporary Irish public administration. The authors of these reports bring their considerable expertise and practical knowledge to the topics selected so as to provide evidence, insights and recommendations to support future development. Our aim is that these reports will not only inform, but also challenge current thinking about how the Irish public service performs. It is intended that these short research reports will be of relevance and use not only to public servants, but also to policy makers and the wider public.

Dr Marian O'Sullivan  
Director General  
Institute of Public Administration

## SELECTED FINDINGS

### The size, cost and inputs of the public sector

- Average government spending per person was €15,780 in 2016.
- Government spending in Ireland is the most centralised in Europe, with just over 90 per cent spent by central government and under 10 per cent by local government.
- In 2016 the numbers employed in the public service rose to over 311,000, the highest since 2008.
- 14 per cent the workforce work in the public service. This is lower than in most European countries.
- Spending on public service pay and pensions continues to grow after several years of falling. Spending was at €18.5bn in 2016, close to 2008 levels.
- Ireland has a lower share of young people employed in central government than many other European countries.
- The proportion of top level civil service jobs filled by private sector applicants was 3 per cent in 2015, down from 20 per cent in 2012.
- The proportion of women in senior management positions is low in comparison to other European countries.
- Irish public administration is seen as the most professional and least politicised in Europe.

### The quality and efficiency of public administration

- The quality of Ireland's public administration is seen by business executives as above the European average. Ireland came 6th of the EU28 on this indicator in 2017.
- On public service values such as independence from political interference, reliability and fairness, Ireland scores well above the European average.
- Just under half of people surveyed say the provision of public services is good.
- Ireland scores well with regard to the impartiality with which people are dealt with by public servants.
- Irish public services are seen as amongst the least bureaucratic (2nd best) and least corrupt (3rd best) in Europe.
- 60 per cent of the public, and just under half of business users, see the civil service as efficient.
- Open data initiatives in Ireland are mid-ranking in European terms. Ireland scores well with regard to data maturity (3rd best).
- Ireland's public administration is seen as one of the best in Europe (3rd best) in encouraging competition and providing a supportive regulatory environment.
- Ex post evaluation of regulation is seen as poor (2nd worst in Europe), as is stakeholder engagement in developing regulations (worst).

## Sectoral performance

### Education

- The 2015 OECD PISA survey shows that Ireland has a higher ranking than the European average in maths, sciences and reading.
- Ireland delivers a reasonable level of educational efficiency when comparing reading and maths performance to spending per student across Europe.
- The opinion of executives that Ireland's education system meets the needs of a competitive economy remains above the European average.

### Health

- Ireland performs well compared to most European countries with regard to life expectancy at birth (81 years) and healthy life expectancy at birth (71.5 years).
- Against a 'basket' of outcomes assessed by the Euro Health Consumer Index, Ireland performs slightly above the EU28 average.
- Ireland's hospitals display comparatively high levels of efficiency compared to other European countries with regard to length of stay in hospital. But the rate of potentially avoidable hospital admissions is high.

## Trust and confidence in public administration

- Levels of trust in government and in parliament have improved from a very low base in recent years and are now just above the European average.
- Trust in regional and local authorities is at the European average.
- Just over half the population tend to trust the public administration in Ireland.
- Satisfaction with the civil service is quite high. Satisfaction with the education system is amongst the highest in Europe. Satisfaction with the quality of health care is below the European average.
- The number of complaints received in Ombudsman offices dropped in 2016, with some variations between offices.
- The number of freedom of information requests is increasing (over 30,000 in 2016).





## 1. INTRODUCTION

There are no clear or agreed definitions for comparative ranking of public administrations. But most people would agree that a number of elements need to be included in any assessment:

- *The size, cost and inputs of the public sector.* While size, cost and inputs alone are not the sole or even main determinants of good public administration, nevertheless in terms of value for money in the delivery of public services, keeping check on the size, cost and other inputs of the public sector and public service is an important consideration.
- *The quality and efficiency of public administration.* Public administration includes policy making, policy legislation and management of the public sector. Such dimensions of public administration can often only be measured by subjective indicators of quality which give a sense of how good the public administration is. There is also an onus on public administration to show that services are being provided efficiently.
- *Sectoral performance.* The delivery of social and economic outcomes in an efficient manner is central to an effective public administration.
- *Trust and confidence in public administration.* The general public ultimately must have trust and confidence in the public administration of a country if it is to be effective.

In this study we examine indicators for each of these four elements of public administration. Where possible and appropriate, data is included for other European countries, in order to enable comparisons to be made. Also, where data are available, we have provided trend data going back over the last decade. The intention is to provide a snapshot of trends in public administration performance in Ireland, to highlight where we are doing well, what challenges are presented and where improvements need to be made.

In a number of charts, as well as showing Ireland's rating relative to the European Union (EU) averages, the top ranked and bottom ranked country as at the time of the most recent data gathering are included for comparative purposes.

In its style and content, the report draws on a number of efforts to benchmark and compare public sector efficiency and performance. These include a European Central Bank

(ECB) international comparison of public sector efficiency<sup>1</sup>, a study by the Netherlands Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP) of comparative public sector performance<sup>2</sup>, the World Bank governance indicators project<sup>3</sup>, the OECD Government at a Glance project<sup>4</sup>, and an IPA study comparing public administrations<sup>5</sup>.

### A word of caution about data limitations

The data presented here needs to be interpreted with great care. First, there is the issue of whether the indicators used to represent public administration provision and quality really captures what public service is about. Indicators, by their nature, only give a partial picture. Second, much of the international comparative data in this report is qualitative data derived from opinion surveys. Some of this survey data comprises small-scale samples of opinion from academics, managers and experts in the business community. The survey data is thus limited both in terms of its overall reliability and the fact that some surveys represent the views of limited sections of the community. Third, the point scores arrived at on some indicators (on a scale from 1–10 for the IMD and WEF data and between –2.5 and +2.5 for the World Bank governance indicators) should not be interpreted too strictly, as there are margins of error associated with these estimates. Fourth, changes over short periods of time should be viewed cautiously. Many of the indicators assessed represent 'snapshots' at one particular point in time. Small shifts in annual ranking are not particularly meaningful.

In all, when interpreting the findings set out in this paper, these limitations should be borne in mind. In particular, small variations in scores should be interpreted cautiously. These may be no more than random variations to be expected given the data being used. What is of interest is to identify broad patterns and trends emerging from the data.

<sup>1</sup> Afonso et al (2003)

<sup>2</sup> Social Cultural and Planning Office (2004)

<sup>3</sup> See <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#home>

<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.oecd.org/governance/govata glance.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Boyle (2007)

## 2. THE SIZE, COST AND INPUTS OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Here we present a range of indicators that show the size, cost and other inputs of the public sector and public service<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> In this study, the public service is defined as the public sector minus the commercial state-sponsored bodies.

## Government expenditure as a share of the economy in Ireland is below the EU28 average

**FIGURE 1 GENERAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE AS SHARE OF GDP**

Source: Eurostat



- A commonly used indicator of public spending in the economy is expenditure as a percentage of GDP (gross domestic product). From 2008 to 2010, as GDP shrank as a result of the recession, Ireland's government expenditure as a percentage of GDP increased rapidly. The particularly large increase in 2010 is mostly explained by the impact on government expenditure of specific government support to banks during the financial crisis, in the form of capital injections.
- Since 2011, as spending reductions introduced by the government came into effect, expenditure as a percentage of GDP had fallen considerably.
- In recent years, the reliability of GDP data for Ireland for comparative purposes has been brought into question, due to the effects of the large scale of multinational company activity in Ireland<sup>7</sup>. In 2017, the Central Statistics Office developed a new indicator, GNI\*, or modified GNI (gross national income). Using this indicator, general government expenditure as a share of the economy is still below the European average in 2016, at 40 per cent.

<sup>7</sup> John Fitzgerald (2016), Problems with the Irish National Accounts and Possible Solutions, Dublin: Central Statistics Office.

## Government expenditure per head of population remains relatively steady, dropping slightly in 2016

**FIGURE 2 GENERAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE PER HEAD OF POPULATION**

Source: Eurostat



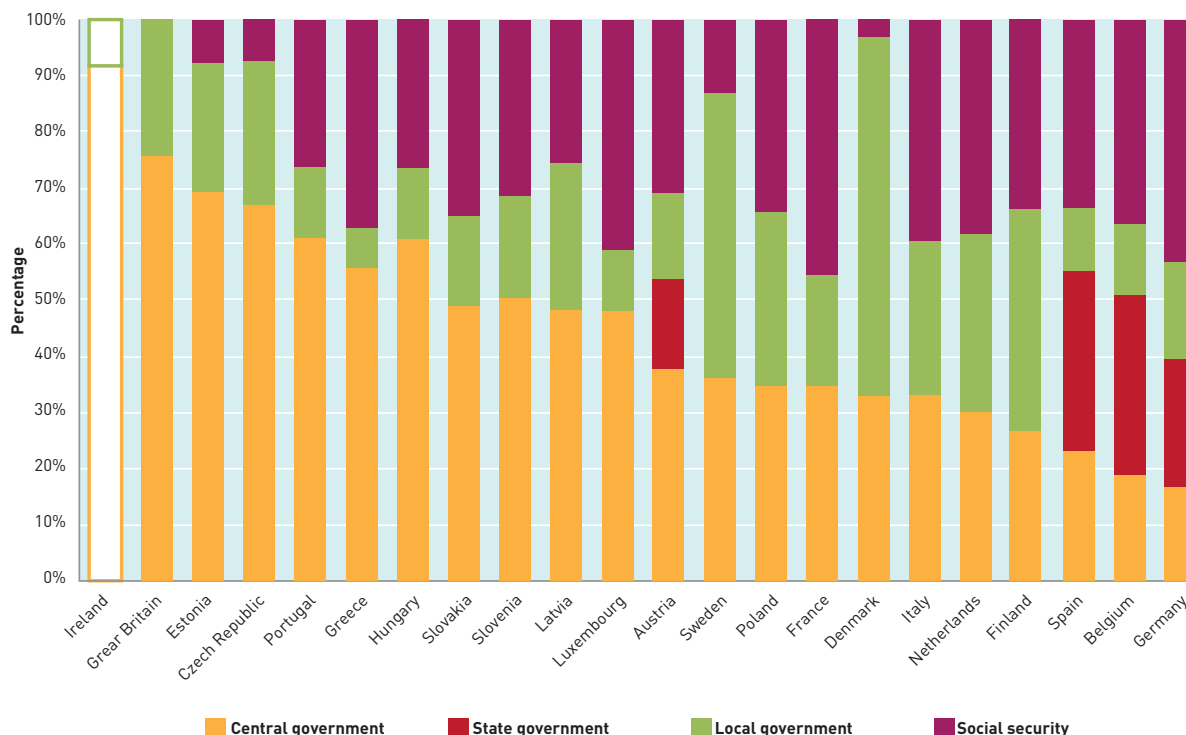
- Expenditure per head of population grew faster in Ireland than the EU average up to 2010. The effect of government support for the banks is clearly visible on the impact on the figures for 2010. From 2010, general government expenditure per head fell significantly.
- From 2013 to 2015 government expenditure per head rose gradually, and was at €16,328 per person in 2015. This is back at the level it was in 2007. Expenditure per head dropped slightly in 2016 to €15,780
- Government expenditure per person in Ireland in 2016 was the tenth highest in Europe. Denmark, shown on the chart, is one of the highest spenders on this indicator, while Bulgaria has the lowest level of government expenditure per head of population in the EU.

<sup>8</sup> Luxembourg has by far the highest level of general government expenditure per head of population, at €38,702 in 2016, but is atypical. Denmark is more representative of countries that have a high level of government spending per head of population.

## Irish government expenditure is the most centralised in Europe

**FIGURE 3 DISTRIBUTION OF GENERAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ACROSS LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT 2016**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2015



- The tasks of government are shared between different levels of government. The nature of this share-out varies markedly between countries.
- Ireland has the highest share of general government expenditure allocated at national level in the OECD in 2016, with just over 90 per cent of expenditure undertaken by central government.
- Centralisation has increased in recent years: central government's share of expenditure was around 82 per cent in 1987.
- At the other extreme, in Denmark only a third of general government expenditure is the responsibility of central government, with local government being responsible for just over 60 per cent.

Expenditure on public service pay and pensions continues to grow after several years of falling.

**FIGURE 4 PUBLIC SERVICE PAY AND PENSIONS**

Source: Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Databank. Separate data on pensions only available from 2011.

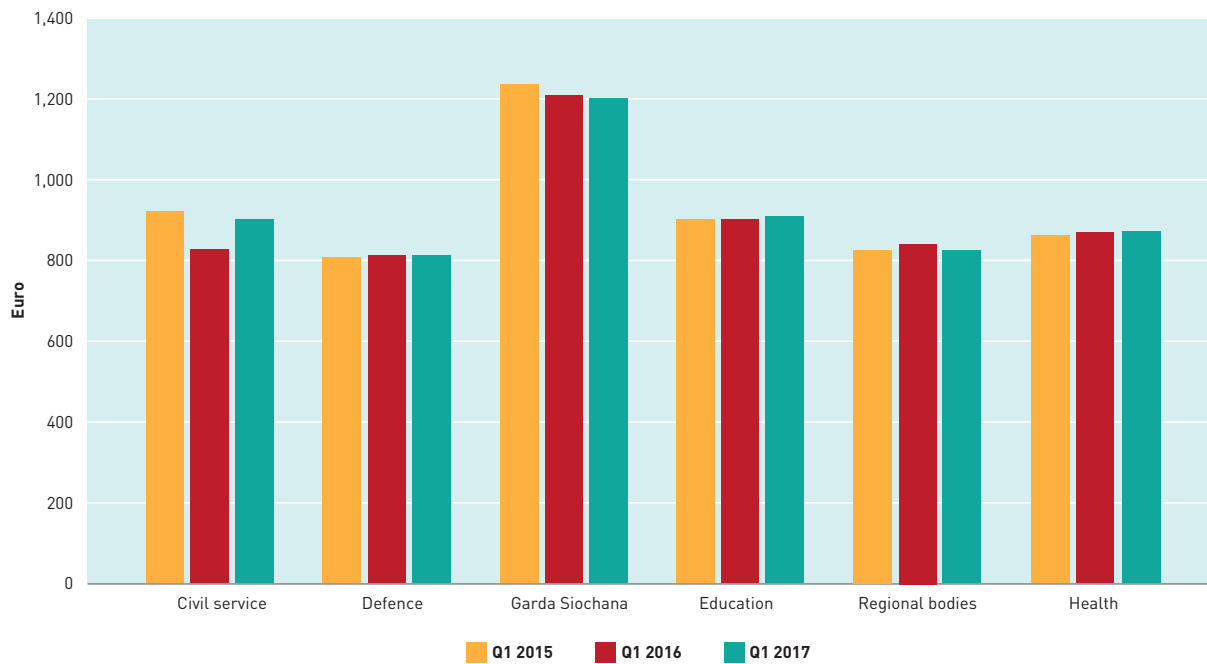


- The public service pay and pension bill reached a peak of €18.7bn in 2008.
- From 2008 to 2014, as the cutbacks in numbers and pay introduced by the Government have taken effect, expenditure on public service pay and pensions decreased from its high of €18.7bn to €16.2bn in 2014.
- Spending on public service pay and pensions increased in 2015 to €17bn, the first rise since 2008. It further increased to €17.7 billion in 2016, and to €18.5 billion in 2017.
- Pensions account for approximately €2.6bn (14 per cent) of the total pay and pension bill in 2017.

## Average weekly earnings in the public sector remain relatively steady

**FIGURE 5 PUBLIC SECTOR AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS**

Source: CSO. Figures are for Q1 each year. 2017 figures are a preliminary estimate.



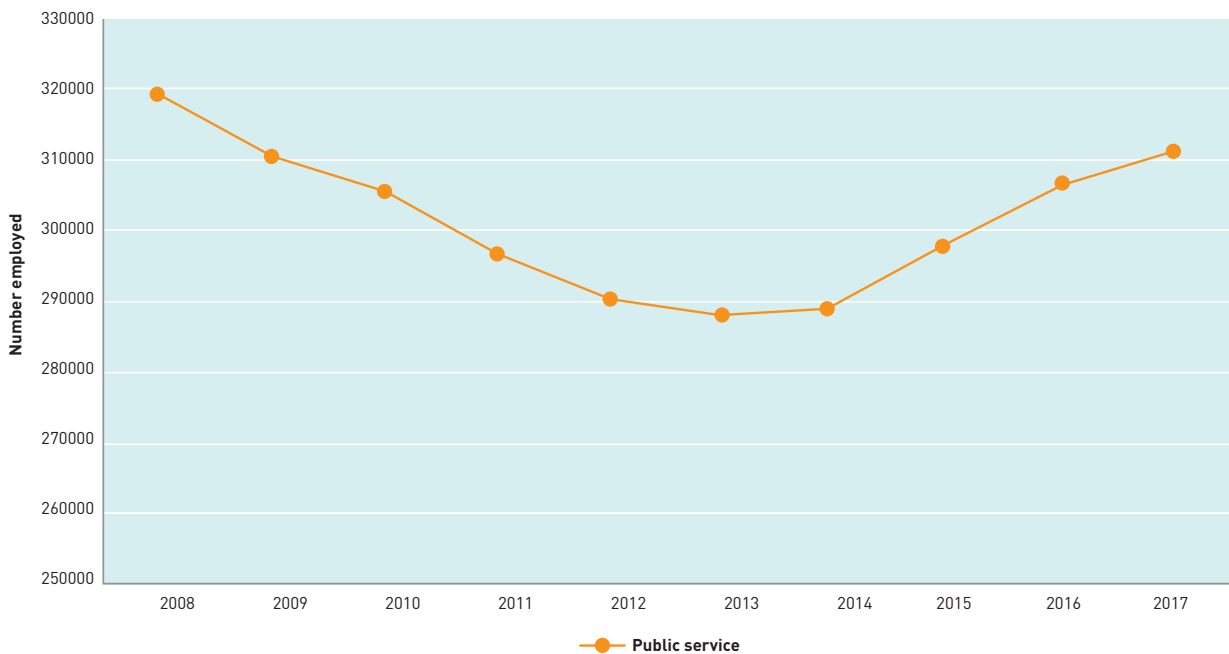
- These are gross earnings figures before deductions for PRSI, tax and other levies. The CSO note that this is particularly relevant to the public sector since March 2009 when the pension levy was introduced.
- Overall, average weekly earnings have remained relatively stable between 2015 and 2017.



## Numbers employed in the public service are continuing to slowly rise after a period of steady decline

**FIGURE 6 NUMBERS EMPLOYED IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

Source: Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Databank<sup>9</sup>



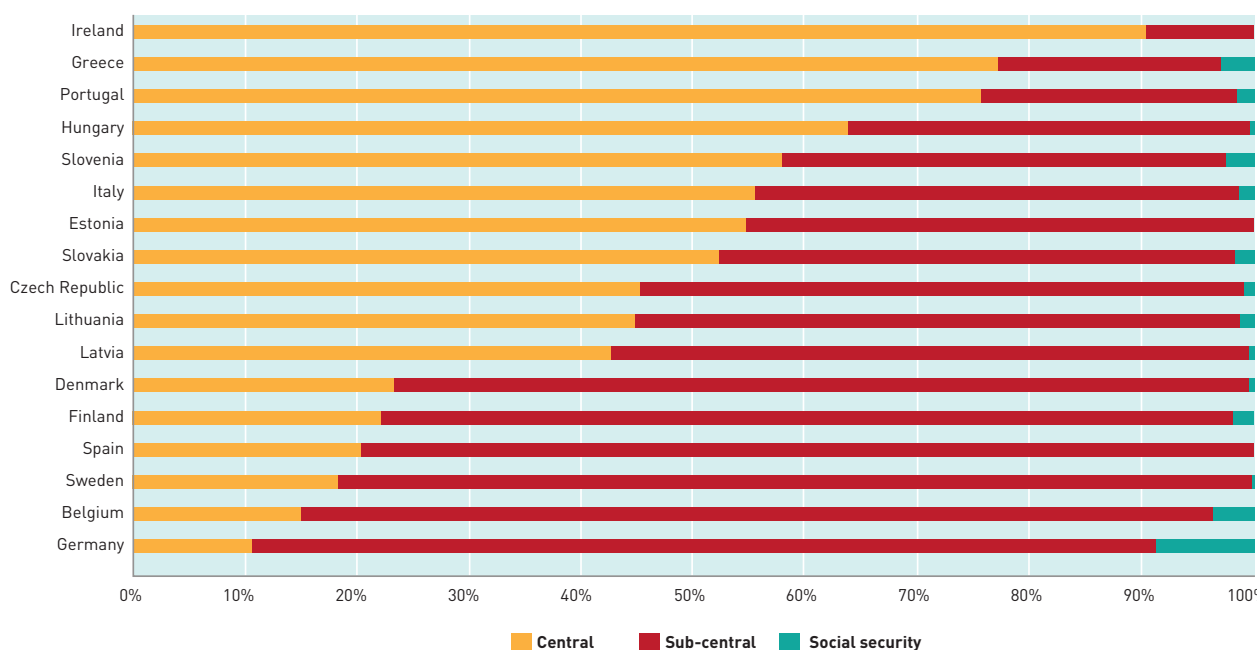
- From its peak in 2008, the total number of people employed in the public service dropped from 320,000 in 2008 to 288,000 in 2013, a drop of 10 per cent.
- The number of people employed in the public service has risen since 2013, but is still below the level of employment in 2008.
- In 2017 the numbers employed rose to over 311,000, the highest since 2008.

<sup>9</sup> Figures are for end of year, apart from 2017 which is for Q2. Figures are for full-time equivalents rather than actual numbers of people.

## Public employment is very centralised in Ireland

**FIGURE 7 DISTRIBUTION OF GENERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT ACROSS LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT 2014**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017

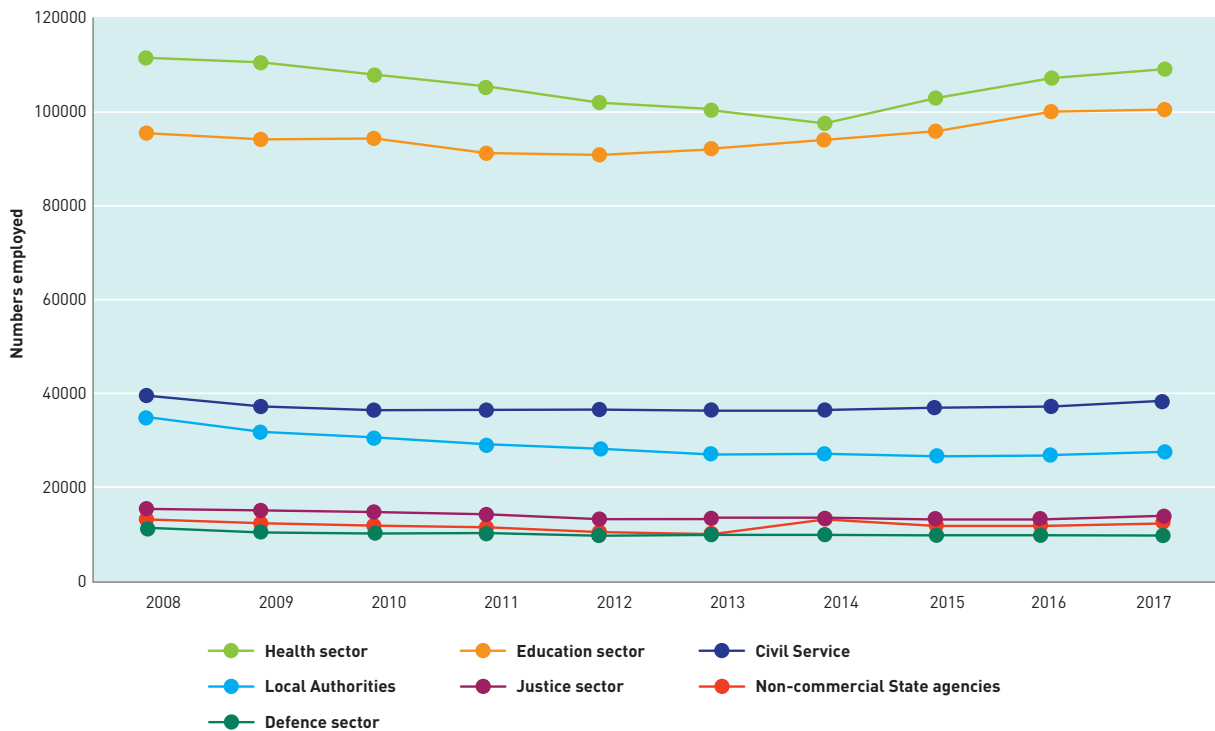


- The centralised nature of Irish public administration is illustrated by this chart, which shows that 90 per cent of general government employment is at central government level. This is the highest central government share in Europe.
- Federal states such as Germany and Belgium tend to have a higher share of sub-central government employment. Though sub-central levels of employment are also high in the Nordic countries, where local authorities have responsibility for a wide range of functions.

## The health and education sectors account for the vast majority of public service jobs

**FIGURE 8 PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR**

Source: Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Databank<sup>10</sup>



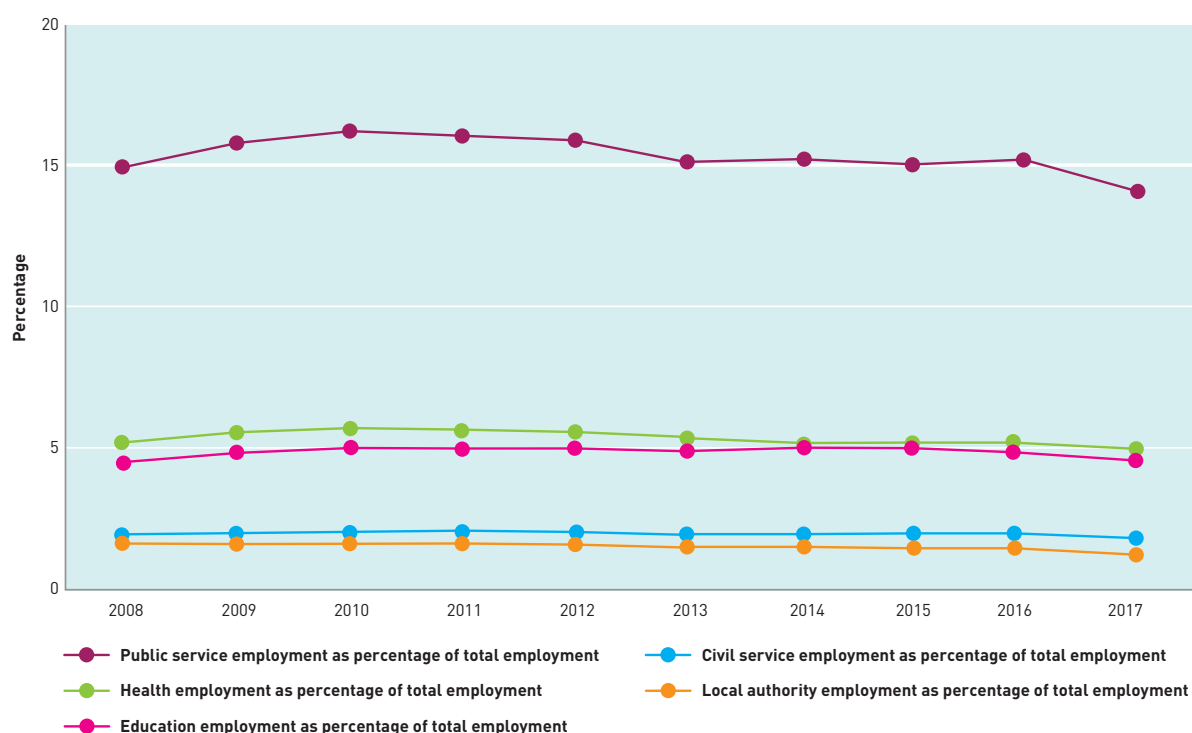
- Two out of every three people employed in the public service work in either health or education. In 2017, there were approximately 109,000 people employed in the health sector and 100,000 people employed in the education sector.
- Employment is still lower in all sectors than in 2008 apart from education.

<sup>10</sup> Figures are for end of year, apart from 2017 which is for Q2

While numbers employed in the public service have varied over the last decade, as a proportion of the total workforce they have stayed relatively constant

**FIGURE 9 PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYMENT AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT**

Source: Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Databank<sup>11</sup>, CSO



- While public service employment grew slightly as a proportion of the labour force in 2009 and 2010, since 2010 its share of the labour force has dropped back again<sup>12</sup>.
- Over the past decade public service employment has generally remained around 15 to 16 per cent of total employment. But in 2016 it is at 14.1 per cent of the labour force, the lowest it has been in the last decade.
- Just under 5 per cent of all those in employment in the economy (public and private) are employed in the health sector, and just under 5 per cent in education. 1.7 per cent of those in employment are civil servants, and 1.3 per cent are in local authorities.

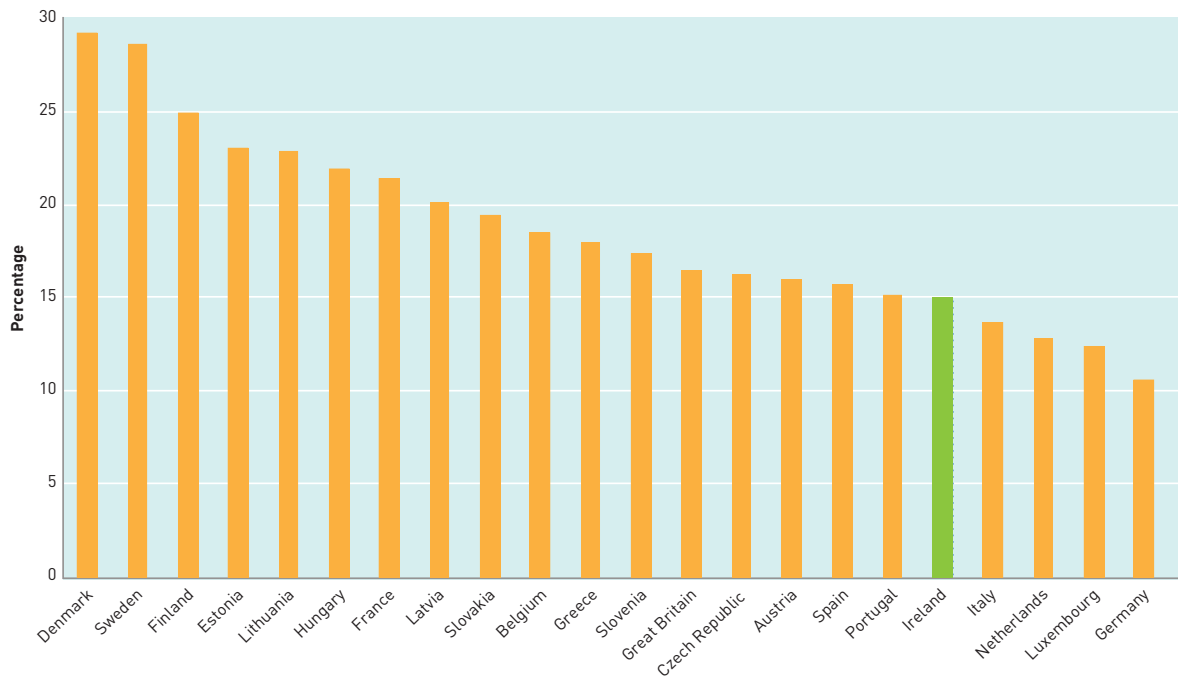
<sup>11</sup> Figures are for end of year, apart from 2017 which is for Q2

<sup>12</sup> Much of the public service data provided refers to full-time equivalents rather than actual numbers of people. So public service employment as a percentage of total employment is in reality larger than that reported. The size of the difference is unknown, though Foley (2009, p.86) estimated it at around 1 per cent in 2007.

## Employment in government as a percentage of the labour force remains at the lower end of European practice

FIGURE 10 EMPLOYMENT IN GENERAL GOVERNMENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT 2015

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017

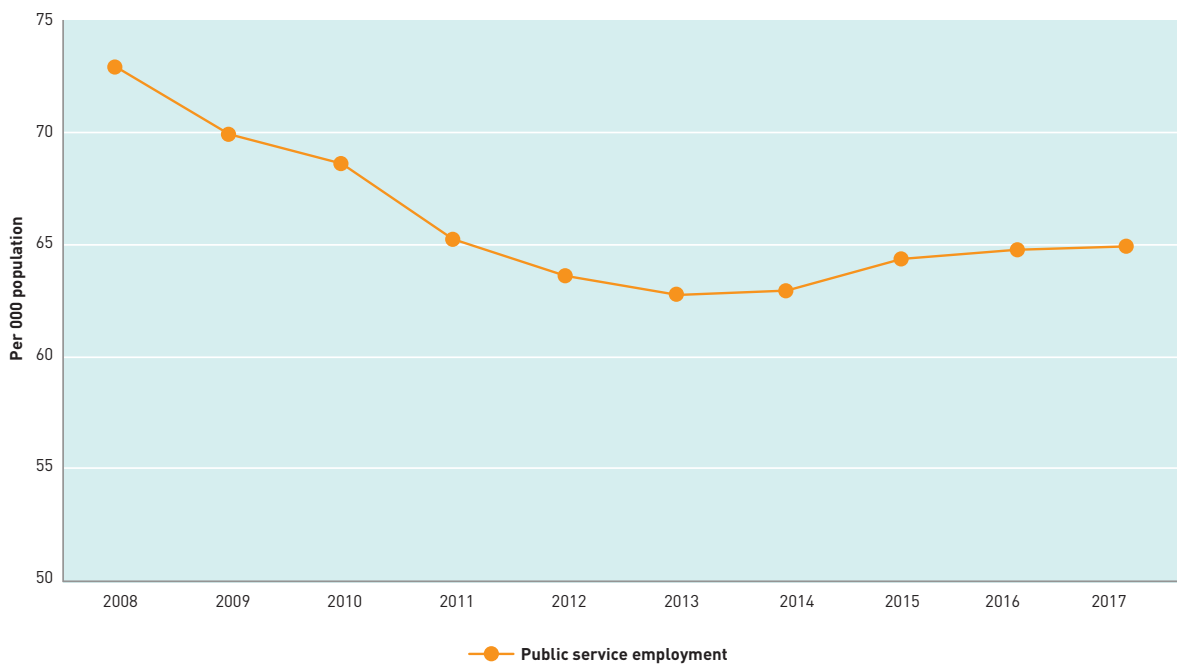


- The size of government employment varies significantly amongst European countries, from 29 per cent of the labour force in Denmark to 11 per cent in Germany in 2015.
- In Ireland in 2015 employment in general government services accounted for 15 per cent of the labour force, towards the lower end of countries surveyed.

After a number of years of decline public service employment relative to the total population has slightly increased in the last two years

**FIGURE 11 PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PER 000 POPULATION**

Source: Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Databank<sup>13</sup>, CSO



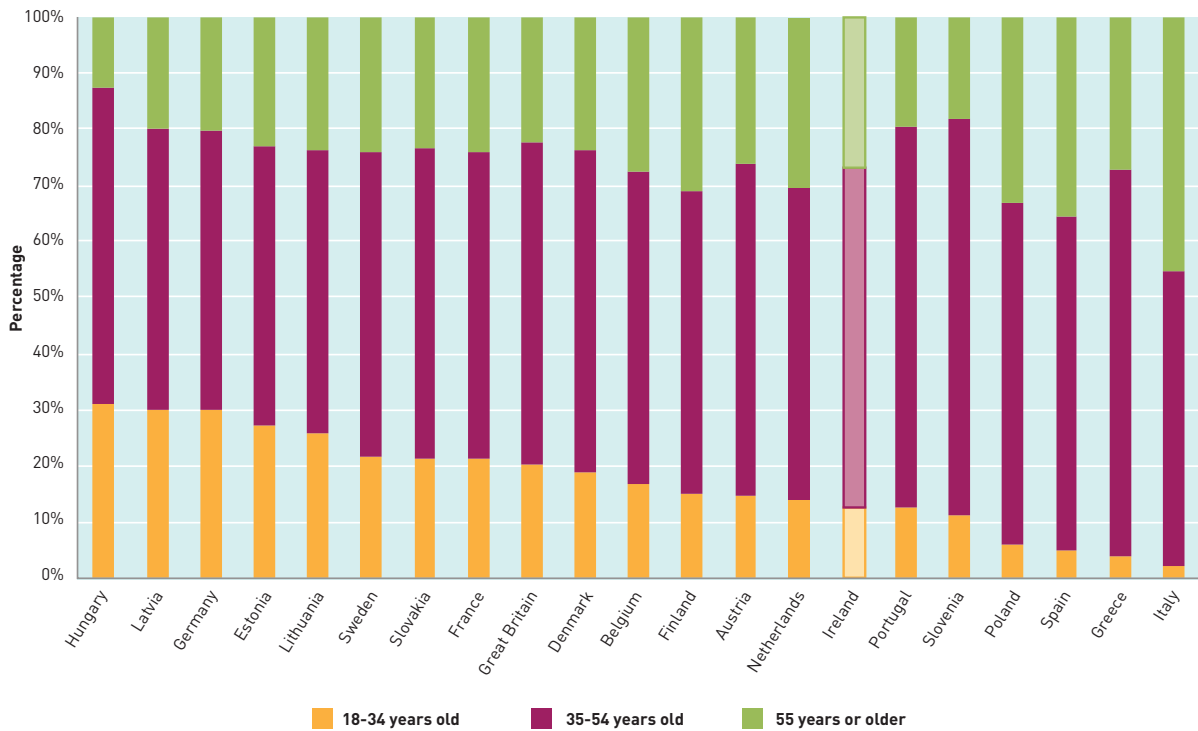
- While public service employment levels have been changing, the population has continued to increase.
- Public service employment relative to the population was relatively stable at between 70 and 73 public sector employees per 000 population up to 2008, but dropped rapidly from 2008 until 2013 when it was at 62.8 public service employees per 000 population.
- The number of public service employees per 000 population rose slightly to 64.9 in 2017.

<sup>13</sup> Figures are for end of year, apart from 2017 which is for Q2

**Ireland has a lower share of young people employed in central government than many other European countries**

**FIGURE 12 SHARE OF PEOPLE EMPLOYED IN CENTRAL GOVERNMENT BY AGE GROUP**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017

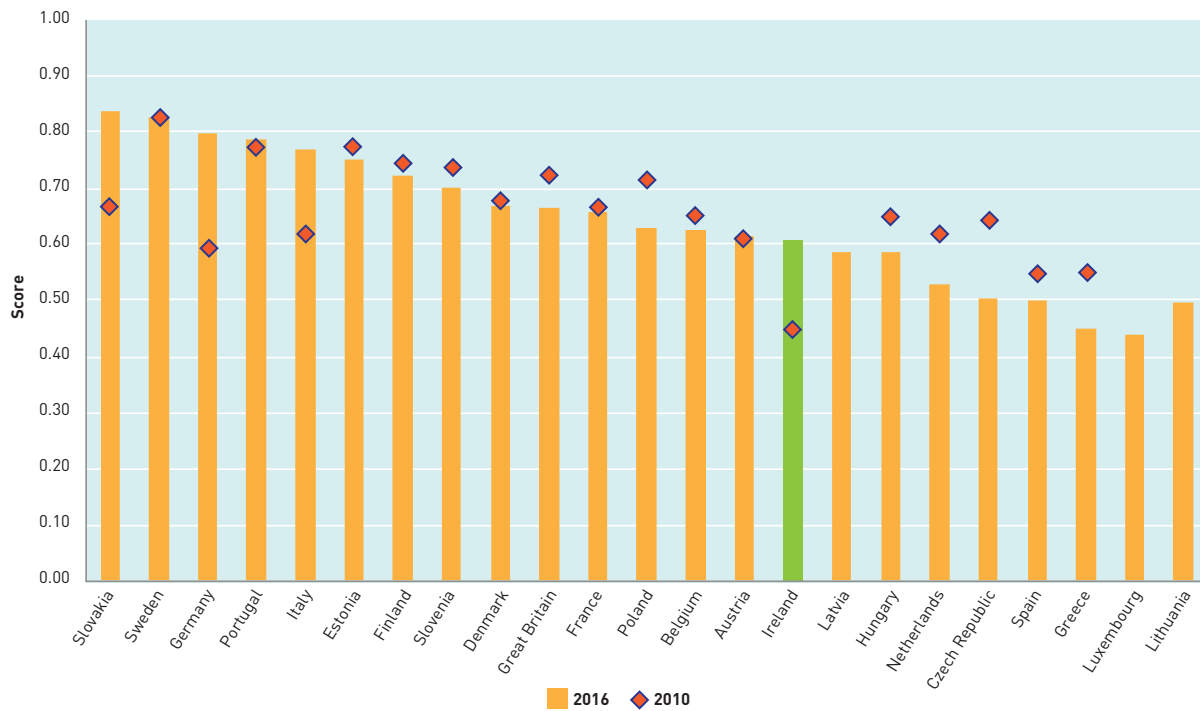


- The effects of restrictions on recruitment during and after the financial crisis are illustrated by the age profile of people employed in central government. Ireland has one of the lowest shares of people aged 18-34 in Europe, at 13 per cent in 2015.
- Just over a quarter of those employed in central government in 2015 in Ireland were aged 55 or older.

## Delegation of human management resource practices has increased, but is still lower than in many other countries

**FIGURE 13 EXTENT OF DELEGATION OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN LINE MINISTRIES IN CENTRAL GOVERNMENT 2016 AND 2010**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017



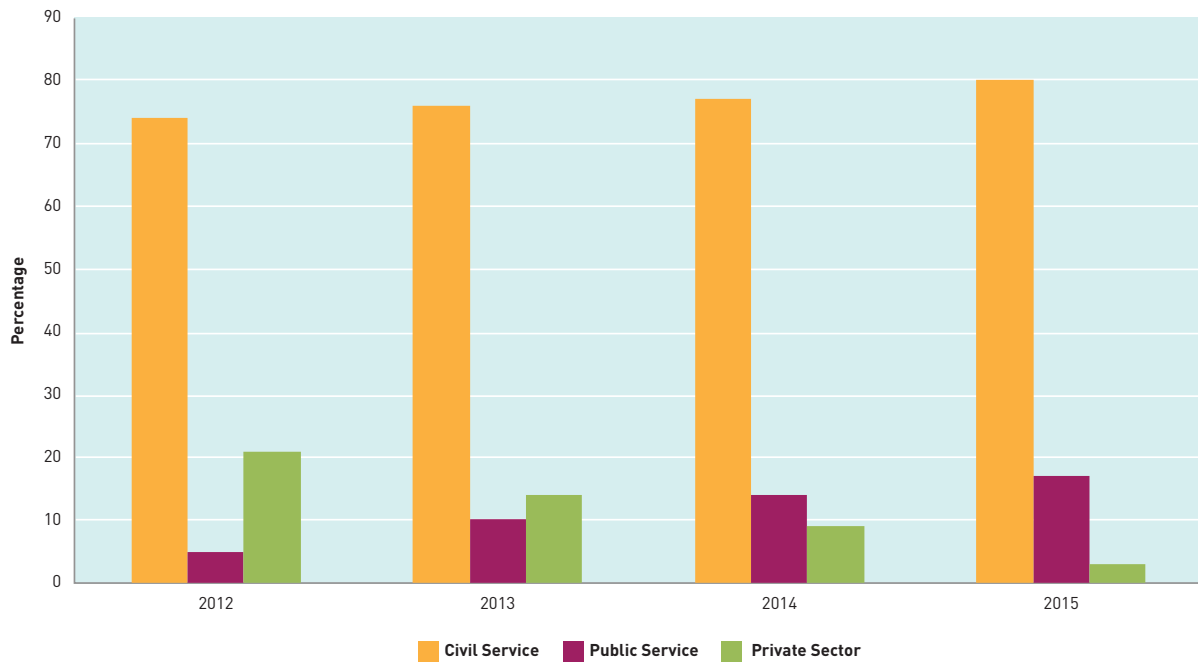
- Ireland is in the lower half of countries who have delegated human resource management (HRM) practices to line departments.
- However, the degree of delegation has risen significantly since 2010, when Ireland had one of the lowest levels of delegation in Europe.



The proportion of top level civil service posts filled by private sector applicants has been falling in recent years

**FIGURE 14 PERCENTAGE OF SUCCESSFUL TOP LEVEL APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE (TLAC) CANDIDATES RECOMMENDED TO MINISTER/GOVERNMENT BY SECTOR**

Source: Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC) Fourth Report to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, 2015 Developments & Trends



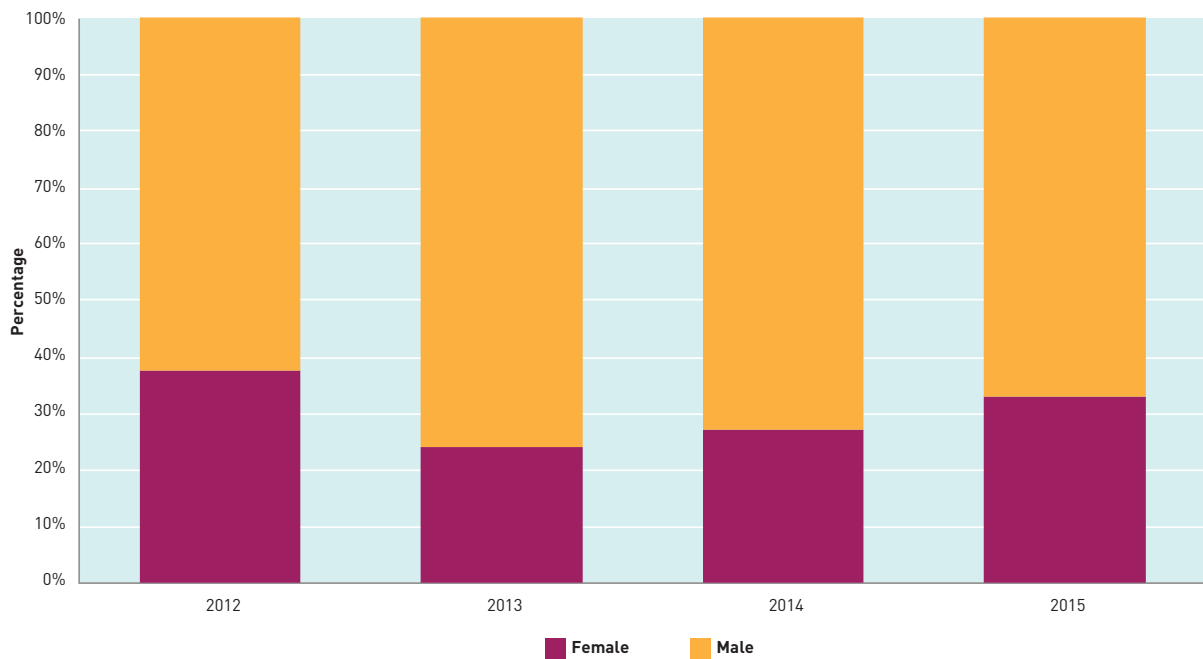
- Roughly 80 per cent of top level appointments are filled from within the civil service .
- The proportion of top level posts filled by private sector applicants reached a high of 21 per cent in 2012, but has dropped each year since then, and was at 3 per cent in 2015.
- The proportion of top level posts filled from the wider public service rose from 5 per cent in 2012 to 17 per cent in 2015.

<sup>14</sup> Top level appointments covers the most senior positions in the civil service – at assistant secretary general level and upwards.

## Around a third of top level posts are filled by women

**FIGURE 15 TOP LEVEL APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE (TLAC) SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES BY GENDER**

Source: Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC) Fourth Report to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, 2015 Developments & Trends

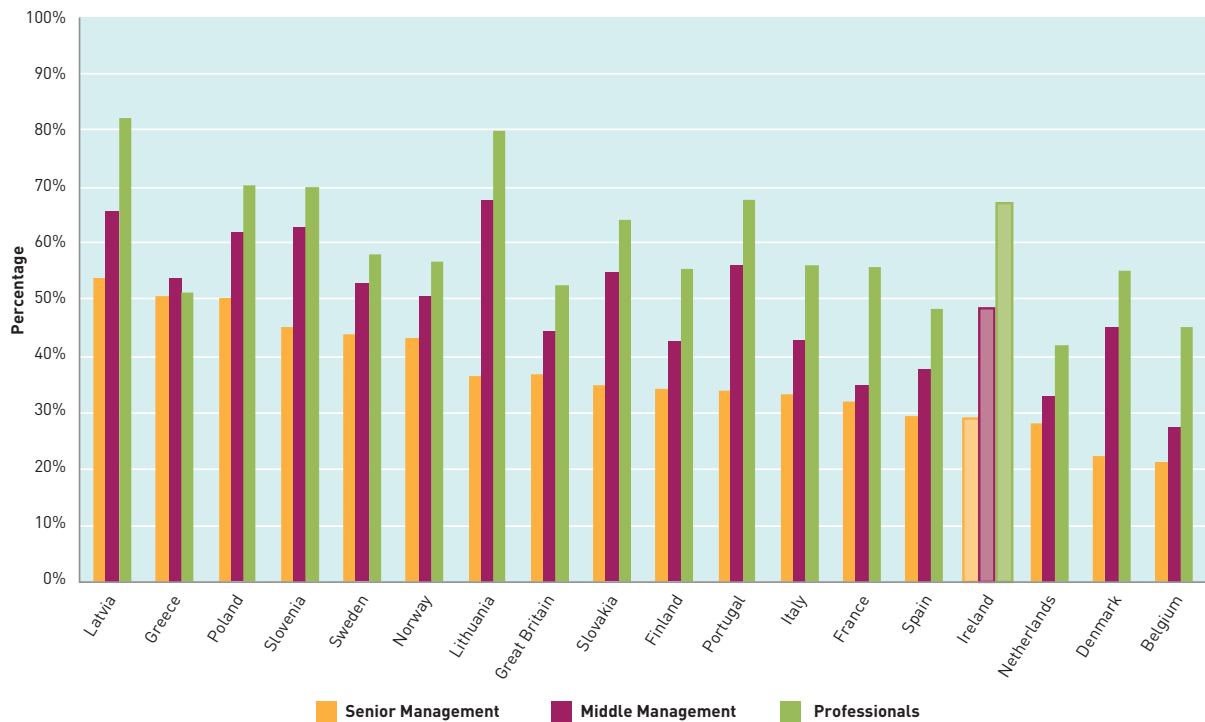


- The proportion of top-level posts filled by women has varied between roughly a quarter and a third of all posts.
- The proportion of posts filled by women has increased in each of 2014 and 2015, when it was at 33 per cent, but is still below the level reached in 2012, of 37 per cent.

## Ireland has one of the lowest shares of women in senior management posts in Europe

**FIGURE 16 SHARE OF WOMEN IN SELECTED CENTRAL GOVERNMENT POSITIONS 2015**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017

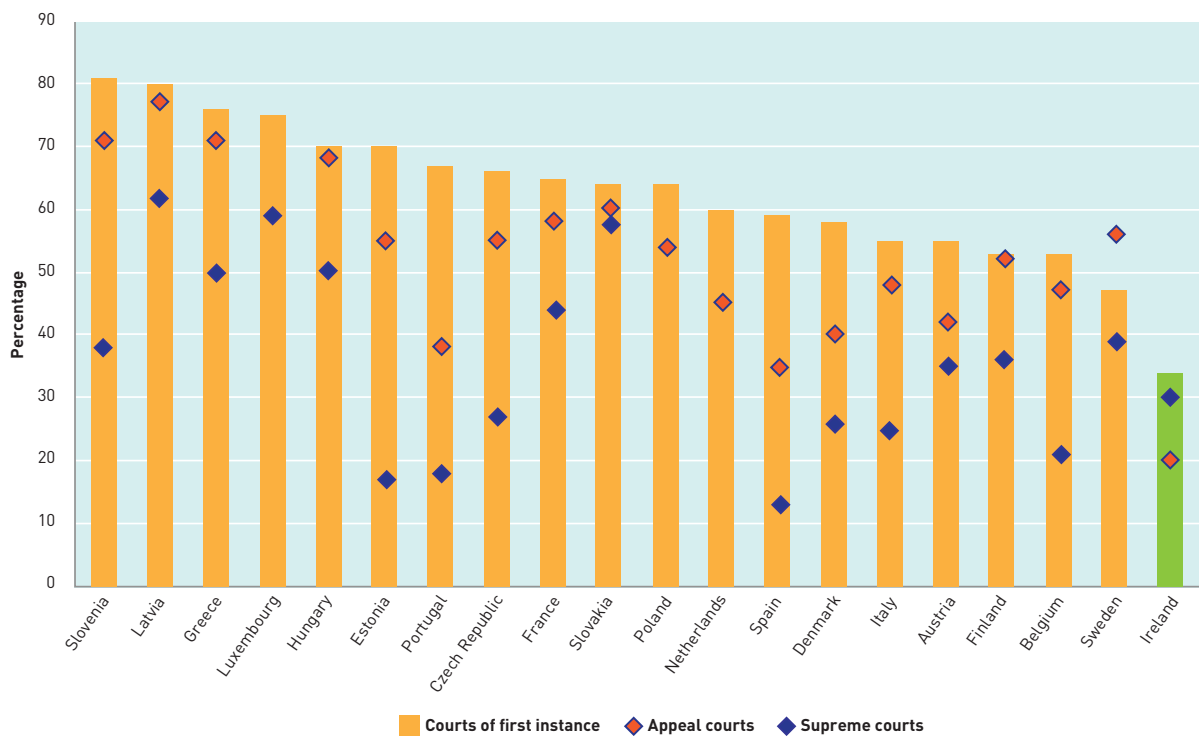


- Ireland has one of the lowest shares of women in senior management posts in Europe in 2015, at 29 per cent.
- Ireland's share of women in middle management posts (49 per cent) is around the average for Europe.
- The share of women in professional posts (senior economists/policy analysts) in Ireland, at 68 per cent, is towards the higher end for Europe.

## Female share of professional judges is low in European terms

FIGURE 17 FEMALE SHARE OF PROFESSIONAL JUDGES BY LEVEL OF COURT 2014

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017

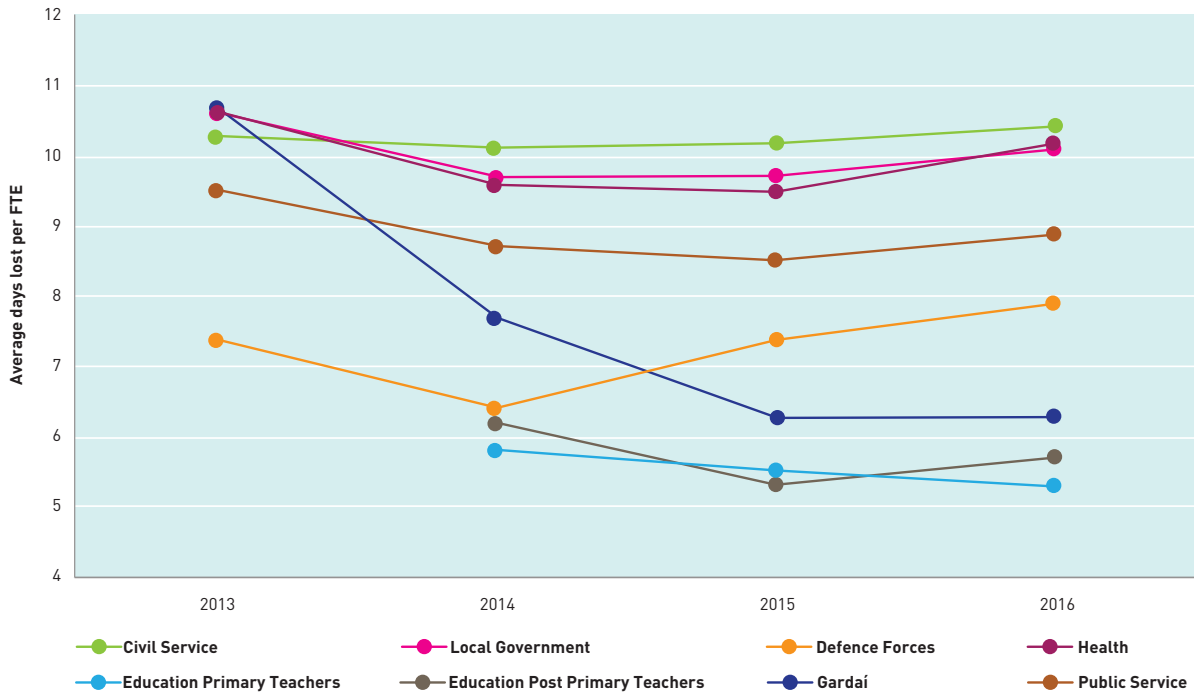


- Ireland had the lowest share of women judges in courts of first instance and appeal courts in Europe in 2014.
- The share of female judges in the supreme court in 2014 was around the European average.

## Sick leave levels vary across the public service

**FIGURE 18 PUBLIC SERVICE SICK LEAVE**

Source: Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, 2016 Public Service Sick Leave Statistics and Trends 2013-2016

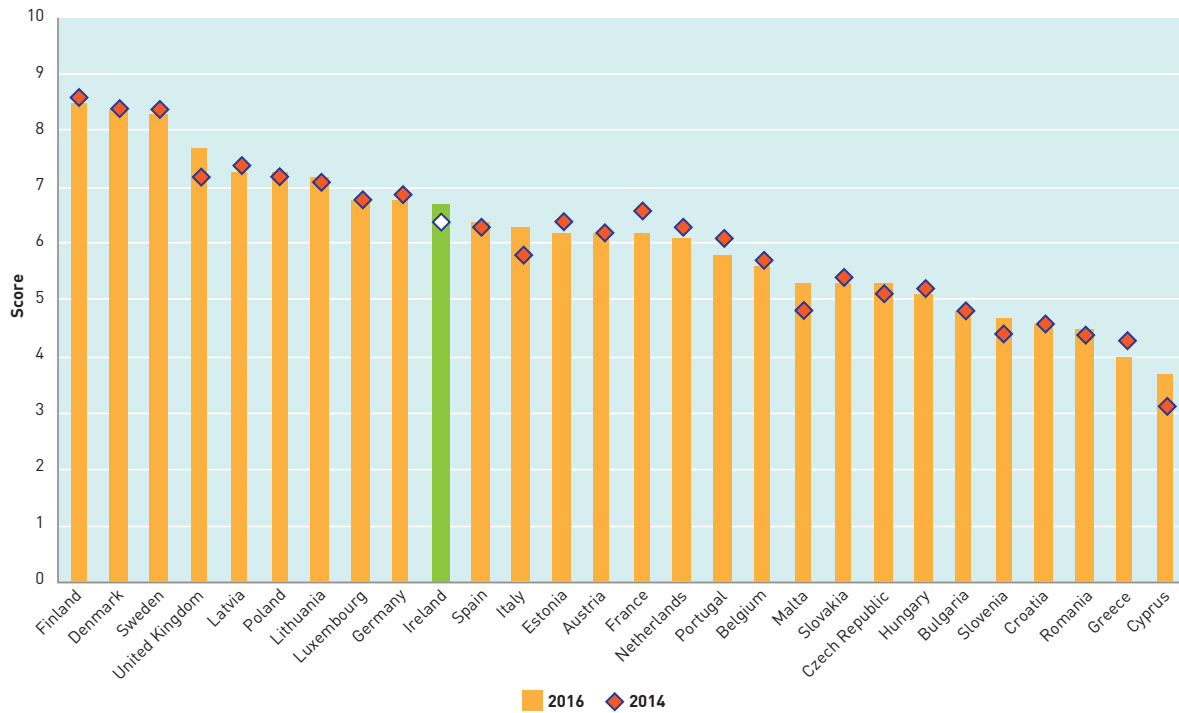


- Sick leave levels in the public service as a whole have tended to fluctuate around 9 days per full time equivalent (FTE) between 2013 and 2016.
- The highest levels of sick leave in the public service are in the civil service, health and local government. The lowest levels of sick leave are in education (primary and post primary teachers).

## Ireland's executive capacity is assessed at around the European average

**FIGURE 19 EXECUTIVE CAPACITY**

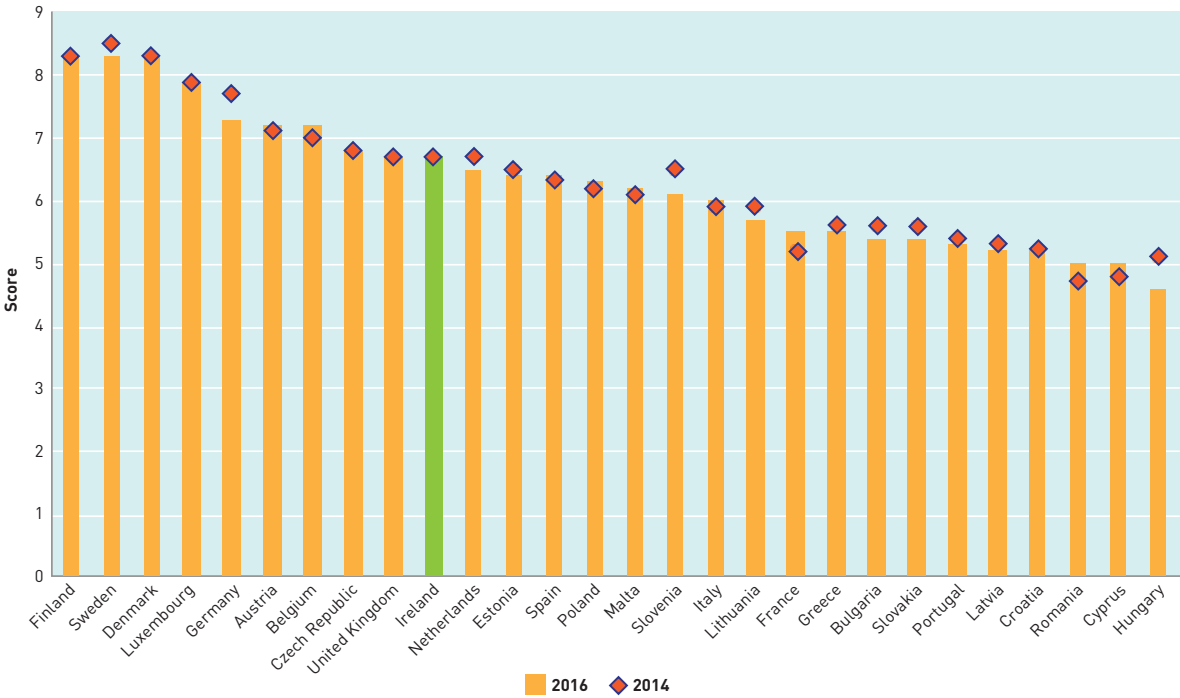
Source: Bertelsmann Stiftung Sustainable Governance Indicators



- This executive capacity index assesses the steering capacity of government. It covers strategic capacity, inter-ministerial coordination, evidence based instruments, societal consultation, policy communication, implementation, and adaptability.
- Ireland falls into the upper-middle ranks with regard to executive capacity. Its score on this measure improved over its 2014 score.
- Finland, Denmark and Sweden are the highest scorers.

Executive accountability in Ireland is rated at around the European average

FIGURE 20 EXECUTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY  
Source: Bertelsmann Stiftung Sustainable Governance Indicators

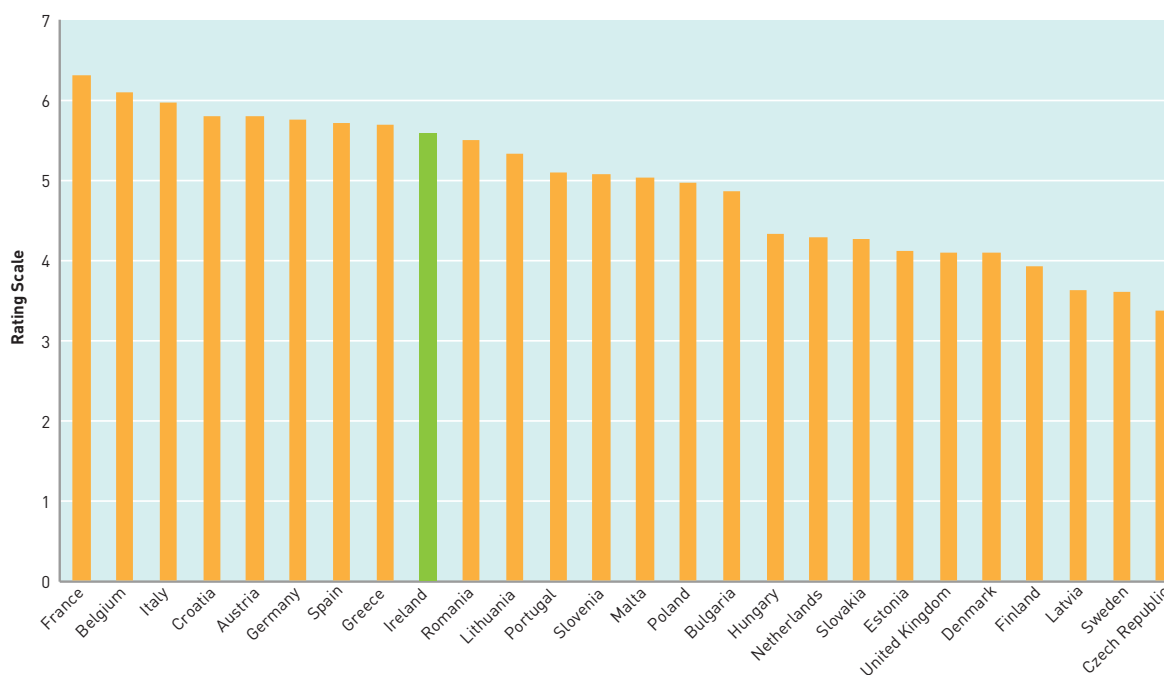


- The executive accountability index examines non-governmental actors' involvement in policy making. It assesses citizen's participatory competence, legislative actors' resources, the role of the media, and the role of parties and interest associations.
- Ireland falls into the upper-middle ranks in terms of executive accountability. Its score has remained relatively steady since 2014.
- As with executive capacity, Finland, Sweden and Denmark receive the highest scores.

Ireland's public administration recruitment and employment conditions are seen as slightly more towards the closed than open end of the spectrum

**FIGURE 21 CLOSEDNESS INDEX 2014**

Source: Dahlström, Carl, Jan Teorell, Stefan Dahlberg, Felix Hartmann, Annika Lindberg, and Marina Nistotskaya. 2015. The QoG Expert Survey Dataset II. University of Gothenburg: The Quality of Government Institute



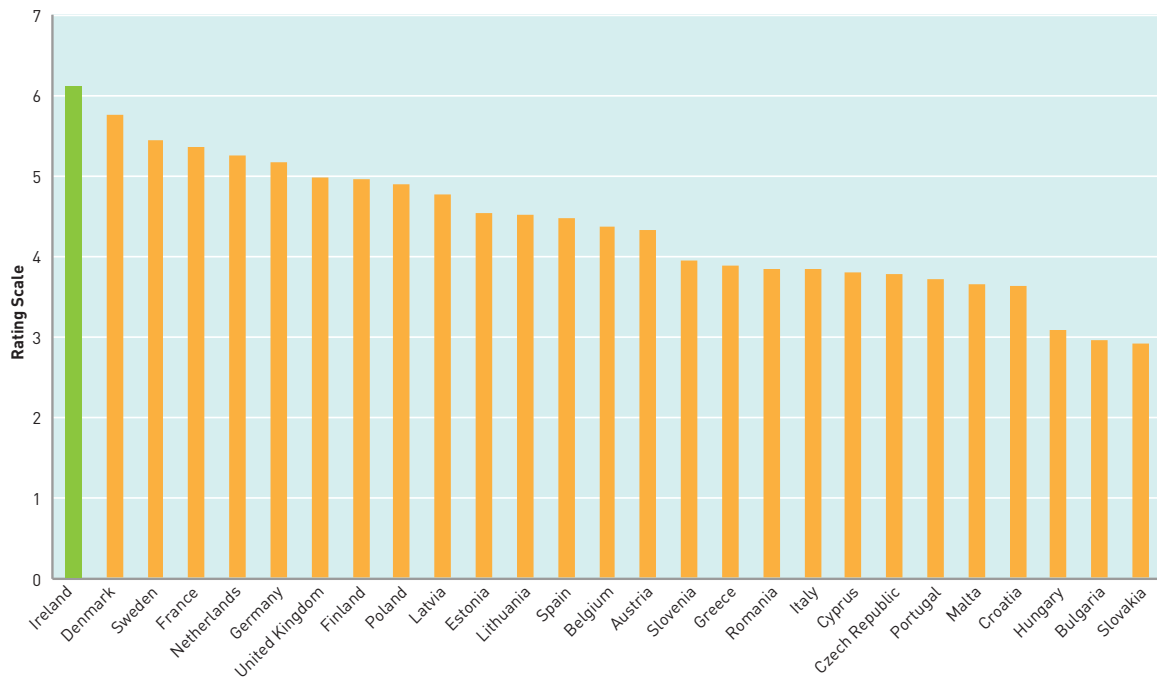
- The Quality of Government Expert Survey, run by the University of Gothenburg, provides a qualitative assessment of the organisational design of public bureaucracies and bureaucratic behaviour across countries. It is based on the subjective assessments of carefully selected country experts. The survey was carried out in 2014.
- The closedness index measures the extent to which the public sector labour market is a special case of the country's general labour market conditions, i.e. the recruitment and employment conditions are more restrictive than those typically seen in the private sector. Higher values represent a more 'closed' public administration.
- Ireland is assessed as towards the more 'closed' end of the spectrum of the EU countries surveyed.



## Irish public administration is seen as the most professional and least politicised in Europe

**FIGURE 22 PROFESSIONALISM INDEX 2014**

Source; Dahlström, Carl, Jan Teorell, Stefan Dahlberg, Felix Hartmann, Annika Lindberg, and Marina Nistotskaya. 2015. The QoG Expert Survey Dataset II. University of Gothenburg: The Quality of Government Institute



- The Quality of Government Expert Survey, run by the University of Gothenburg, provides a qualitative assessment of the organisational design of public bureaucracies and bureaucratic behaviour across countries. It is based on the subjective assessments of carefully selected country experts. The survey was carried out in 2014.
- The professionalism index assesses the extent to which the public administration is professional rather than politicised. Higher values indicate a more professionalised public administration.
- Ireland is ranked as the most professional and least politicised public administration of the countries examined.

### 3. THE QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLIC SERVICES

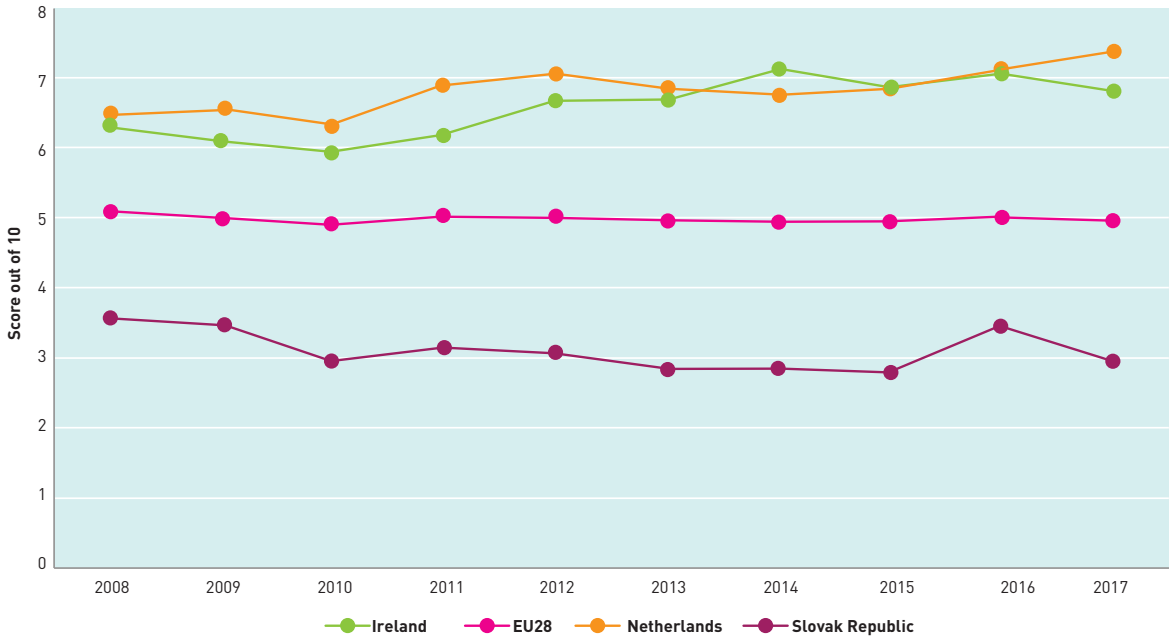
An indicator of the quality of public administration, based on work undertaken by the Social and Cultural Planning Office (2004) in the Netherlands and taken further by Boyle (2007) is used to assess the quality of public administration. Sixteen indicators derived from both the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) and World Economic Forum (WEF) executive opinion surveys are combined to make up an aggregate public administration quality indicator (see Appendix 1 for details). It is complemented by two subsets of this indicator, one of which shows trends in perception about the application of traditional public service values in public administration, the other showing perceptions of the type of competitive and regulatory regime fostered by public administration.

These quality indicators are supplemented by a range of other indicators of aspects of quality and efficiency.

The overall quality of Irish public administration is seen as notably above the European average by executives

**FIGURE 23 QUALITY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SCORE**

Source: IPA analysis based on IMD and WEF data

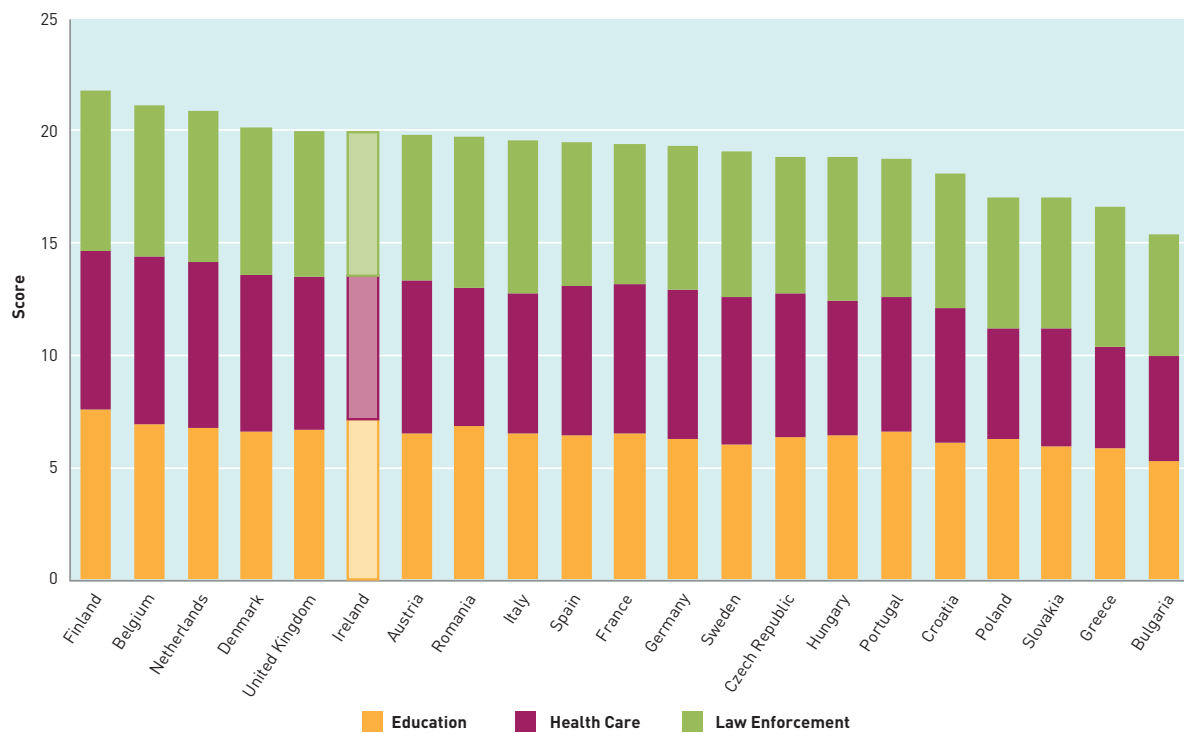


- This quality indicator measures executives’ opinions of the quality of public administration as assessed by a range of indicators covering issues such as effective implementation of government decisions and transparency of decision making (see Appendix 1 for full list).
- Ireland’s score on the quality of public administration index has held relatively steady for the last four years, after increasing for a number of years. Ireland came 6th of the EU28 on this indicator in 2017, behind the Netherlands, Finland, Denmark, Luxembourg, and Sweden.

The public view the quality of public services in Ireland quite highly in comparison with other European countries

**FIGURE 24 PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF QUALITY OF SELECTED PUBLIC SERVICES 2013**

Source: Controlling Corruption in Europe: The Anticorruption Report Volume 1

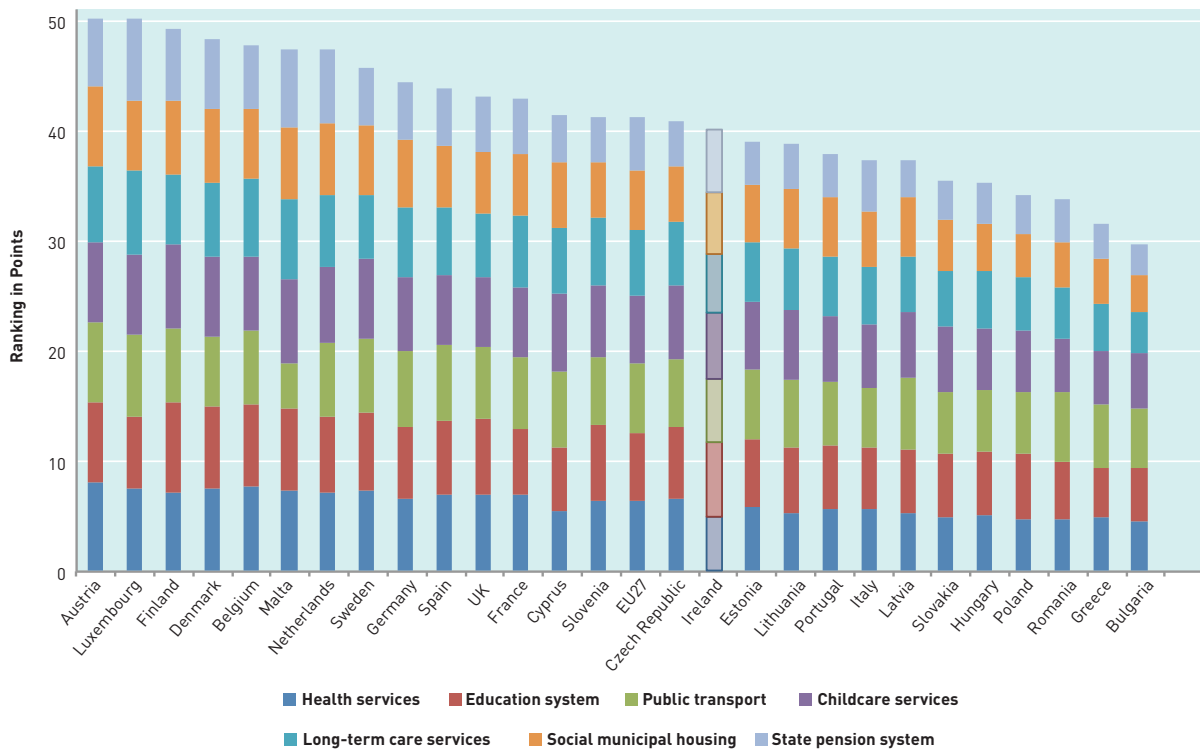


- Public perception of the overall quality of public services in education, health care and law enforcement in Ireland in 2013 was quite high in European terms.
- There was particularly satisfaction with the quality of education services.

At sectoral level, the perceived quality of selected public services is just below the European average. Education is perceived as the best public service, and health the worst

**FIGURE 25 ACCUMULATED AVERAGE PERCEIVED QUALITY OF SELECTED PUBLIC SERVICES, BY COUNTRY (RANKING IN POINTS) 2013**

Source: Eurofound 2013 - 3rd European Quality of Life Survey

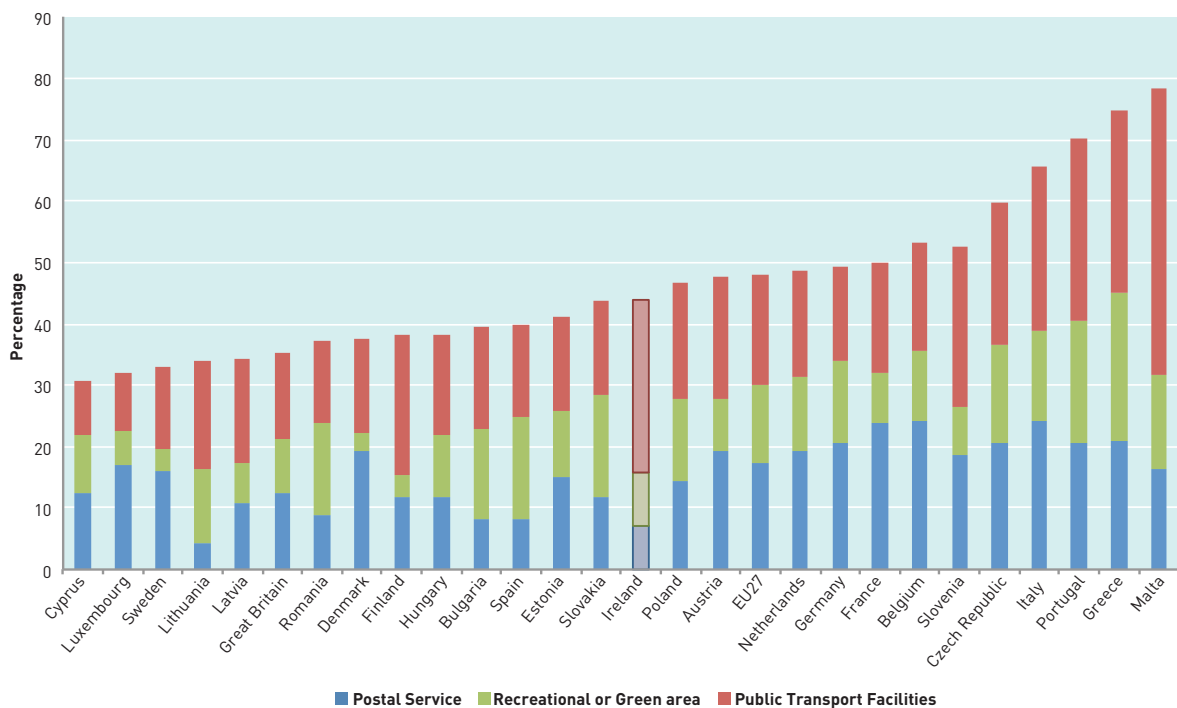


- Data is scaled out of a possible 10 in each category, and 70 for the combination of all 7 services examined. Figures are for 2012.
- Looking at the overall data, we see Ireland ranking 16th of the EU 27 in perceived quality of public services, just below the EU27 average.
- Education is Ireland's best scoring public service, at 6.8 out of 10 points, ranking 10th best of the EU27 countries examined
- Ireland is also above the EU average for the perceived quality of social municipal housing and the state pension system.
- Health is Ireland's worst scoring and ranking public service, at 4.9 out of 10 points, coming 22nd of the 27 EU countries examined.
- Ireland is also below the EU average for the perceived quality of public transport, childcare services, and long-term care services.
- Austria, Luxembourg and Finland hold the top three positions, ranking comparatively highly in all 6 categories.

## The ability to access neighbourhood public services varies according to the service

**FIGURE 26 PERCEIVED DIFFICULTIES IN ACCESS TO LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES, BY COUNTRY 2013**

Source: Eurofound 2013 - 3rd European Quality of Life Survey

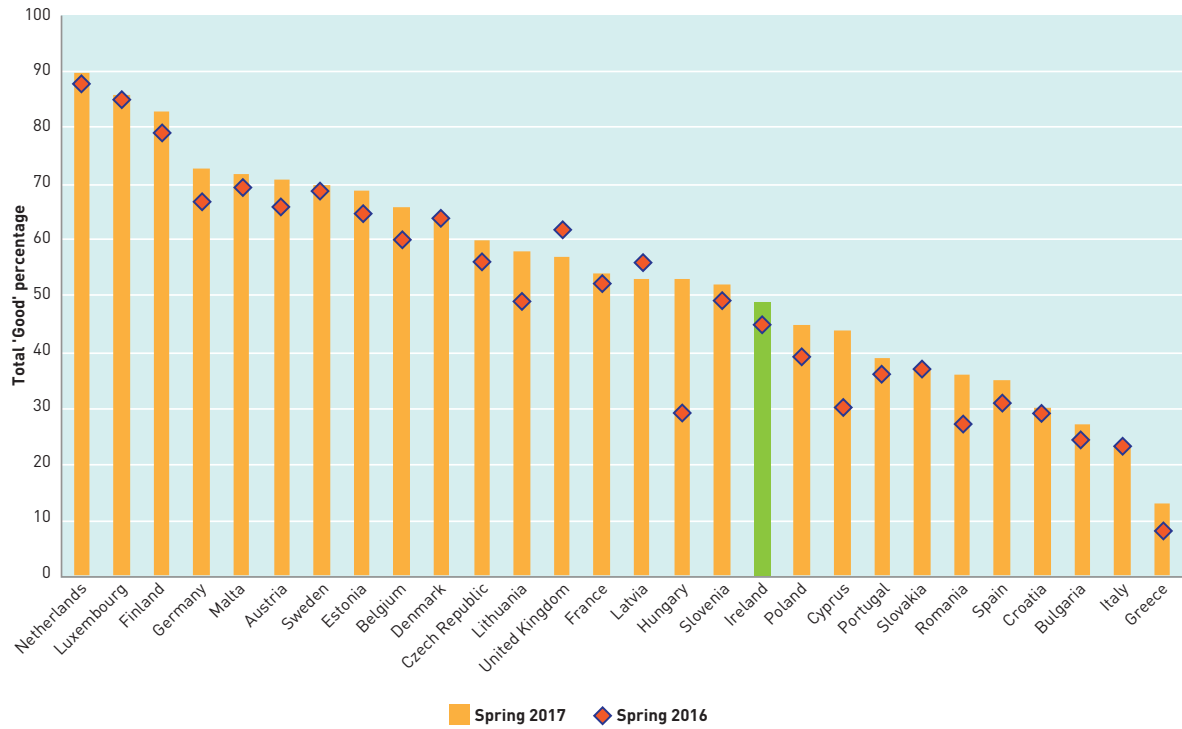


- Ireland sits in the middle of the pack at 13th for 'most difficulty in access to local neighbourhood public services', covering the postal service, recreational/green areas and public transport, ranking slightly above the EU 27 levels.
- With regard to difficulty accessing postal services, Ireland ranks very well, coming in as second least difficult after Lithuania.
- Regarding difficulty accessing recreational or green areas Ireland ranks ninth of the twenty-seven EU countries surveyed, with just under 9 per cent of those surveyed saying they have difficulty accessing these facilities.
- Looking at public transport however, Ireland is among the worst of all the EU 27 in terms of the percentage who say it is difficult to access. This reflects the dispersed nature of settlement and rural nature of the country outside of the main metropolitan areas.

In terms of people's view of the provision of public services Ireland ranks below the European average

**FIGURE 27 THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES**

Source: Eurobarometer



- In spring 2017, just under half of all people surveyed said that the provision of public services was good. This was in the lower half of European responses, though slightly above the rating achieved in spring 2016.
- The Netherlands, Luxembourg and Finland receive the highest rating, with 90 per cent in the Netherlands rating public service provision as good.

Irish maintenance of traditional public service values is seen as significantly better than the European average

**FIGURE 28 QUALITY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SCORE**

IPA analysis based on IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook and WEF Global Competitiveness Report



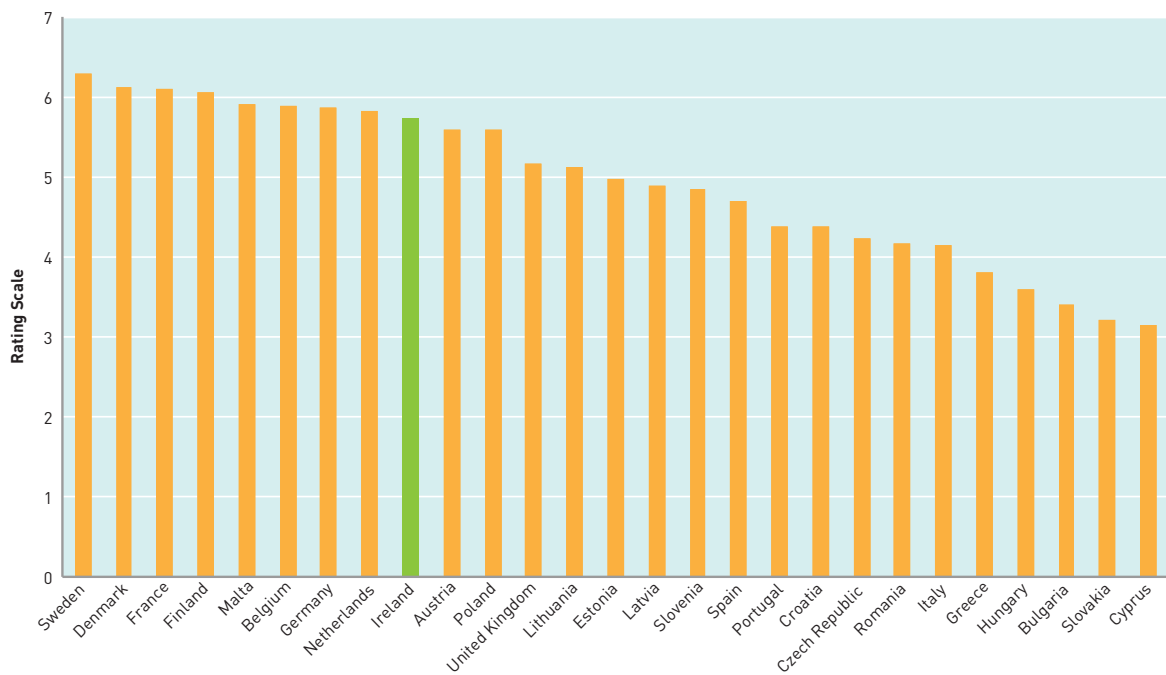
- A sub-set of the quality of public administration indicators can be used to assess what might be termed the 'traditional' public service values such as independence from political interference, freedom from bribery and corruption, transparency, reliability and administrative fairness and equity.
- Ireland's ranking on this traditional public service values indicator has generally been well above the EU28 average. Ireland ranked 7th of the EU28 on this indicator in 2017.
- Finland, the Netherlands and Denmark score highest on this indicator.



## Irish public officials are seen as relatively impartial in their dealings with citizens

**FIGURE 29 IMPARTIALITY INDEX 2014**

Source: Dahlström, Carl, Jan Teorell, Stefan Dahlberg, Felix Hartmann, Annika Lindberg, and Marina Nistotskaya. 2015. The QoG Expert Survey Dataset II. University of Gothenburg: The Quality of Government Institute

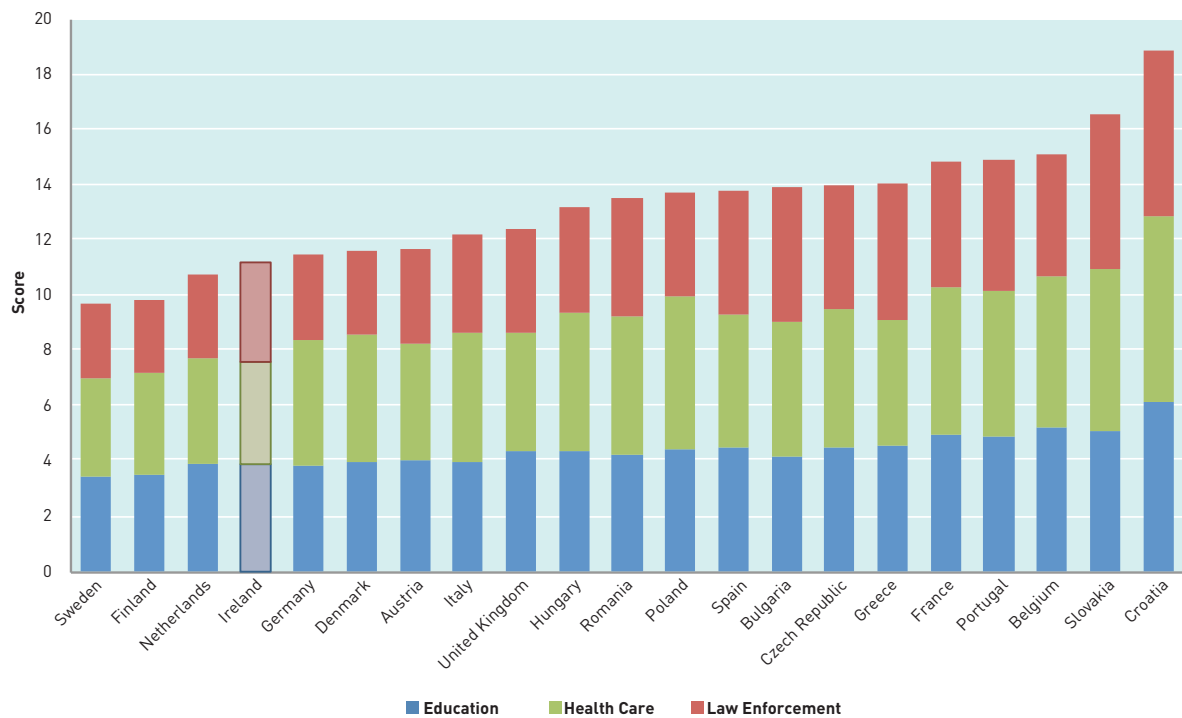


- The Quality of Government Expert Survey, run by the University of Gothenburg, provides a qualitative assessment of the organisational design of public bureaucracies and bureaucratic behaviour across countries. It is based on the subjective assessments of carefully selected country experts. The survey was carried out in 2014.
- The impartiality index assesses the extent that when implementing policies, public sector employees do take anything about the citizen/case into consideration that is not stipulated in the policy. Higher values represent a more impartial public administration.
- Ireland ranks as more towards showing a reasonably strong tendency towards impartiality on the part of public officials when dealing with citizens.

## The public view Irish public services as relatively impartial in how they deal with people

**FIGURE 30 IMPARTIALITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES 2013**

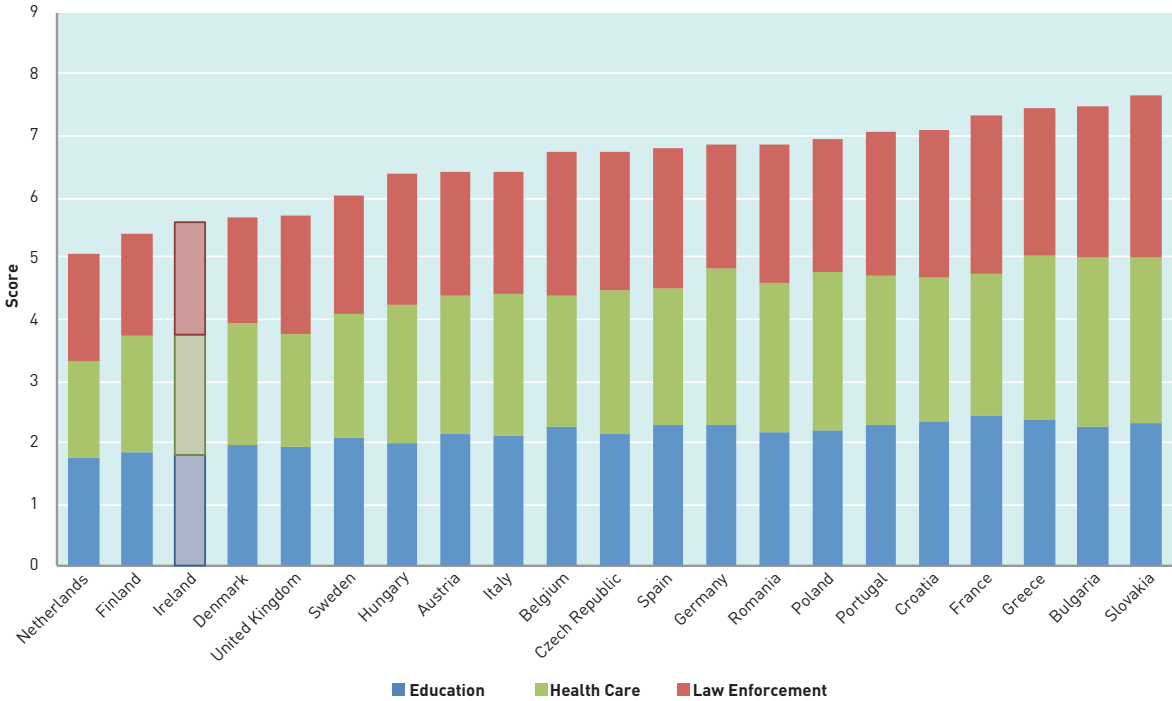
Source: Controlling Corruption in Europe: The Anticorruption Report Volume 1



- Public perceptions of impartiality from a 2013 survey rank Ireland quite highly with regard to impartiality – 4th of the 21 EU28 countries surveyed.
- This high ranking with regard to impartiality applies equally to education, health care and law enforcement services.

Irish public services score highly with regard to equal treatment of people

**FIGURE 31 EQUAL TREATMENT IN PUBLIC SERVICES 2013**  
 Source: Controlling Corruption in Europe: The Anticorruption Report Volume 1

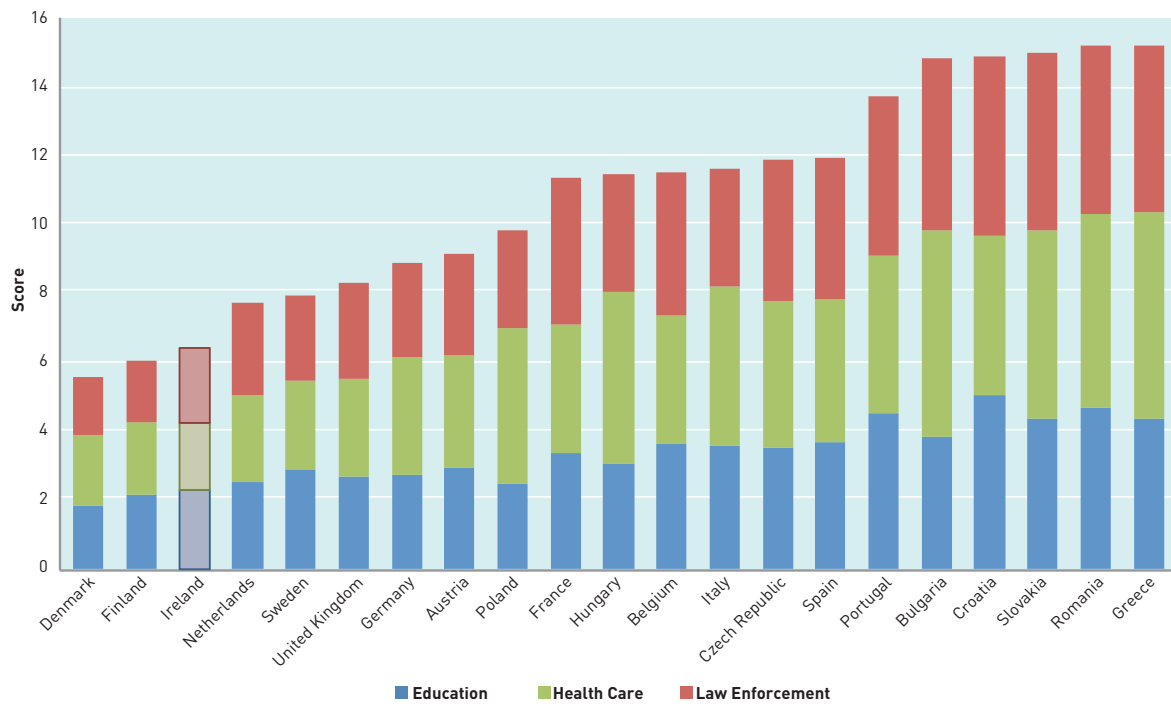


- Ireland ranked 3rd best with regard to equal treatment of people by public services in 2013.
- Education, health care and law enforcement services all do well on this criterion.

## Irish public services are seen as amongst the least corrupt in Europe

**FIGURE 32 PERCEIVED CORRUPTION OF PUBLIC SERVICES 2013**

Source: Controlling Corruption in Europe: The Anticorruption Report Volume 1

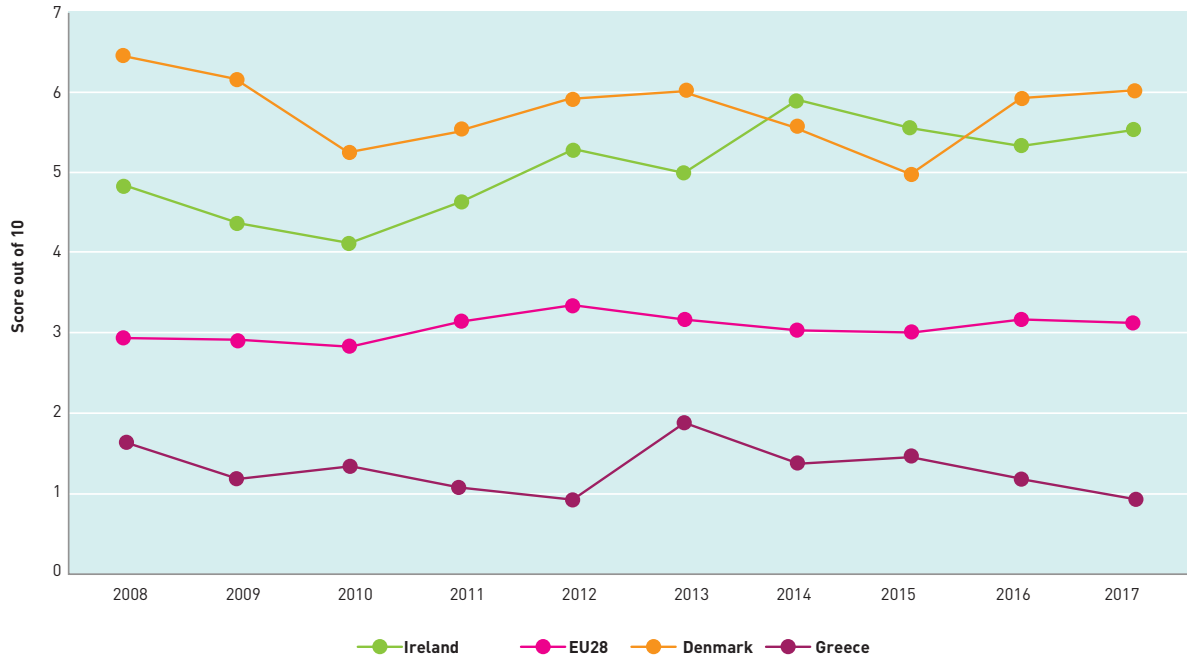


- Ireland ranked 3rd best with regard to perceived levels of corruption of public services in 2013, behind Denmark and Finland.
- Education, health care and law enforcement services are all seen as having relatively low levels of corruption.

## Irish public services are seen as one of the least bureaucratic in Europe by business executives

**FIGURE 33 BUREAUCRACY HINDERS BUSINESS ACTIVITY**

Source: IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook

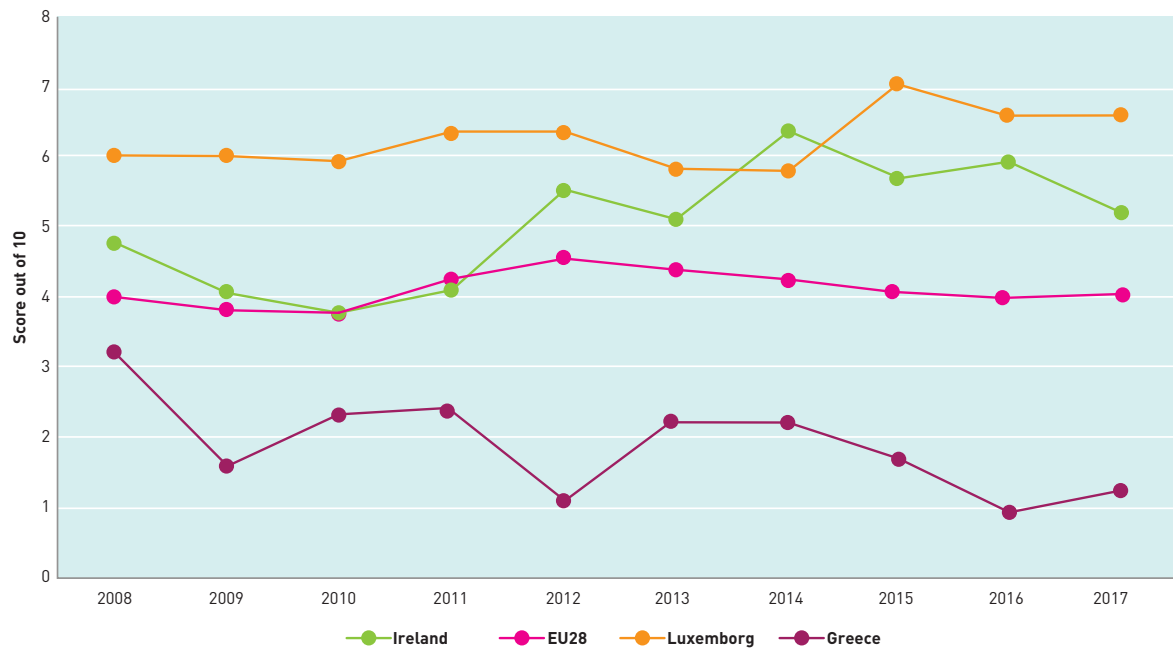


- Respondents to the executive opinion survey carried out by IMD for their World Competitiveness Yearbook indicate that compared to most European countries in the EU, bureaucracy in Ireland is seen as less of a hindrance to business activity. Only Denmark scored better in 2017.
- The Irish score has increased notably since 2010, though it has levelled off since 2014.

## Perceptions about the effective implementation of government decisions rose considerably from 2010 to 2014 but have dropped since then

**FIGURE 34 GOVERNMENT DECISIONS ARE EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED**

Source: IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook

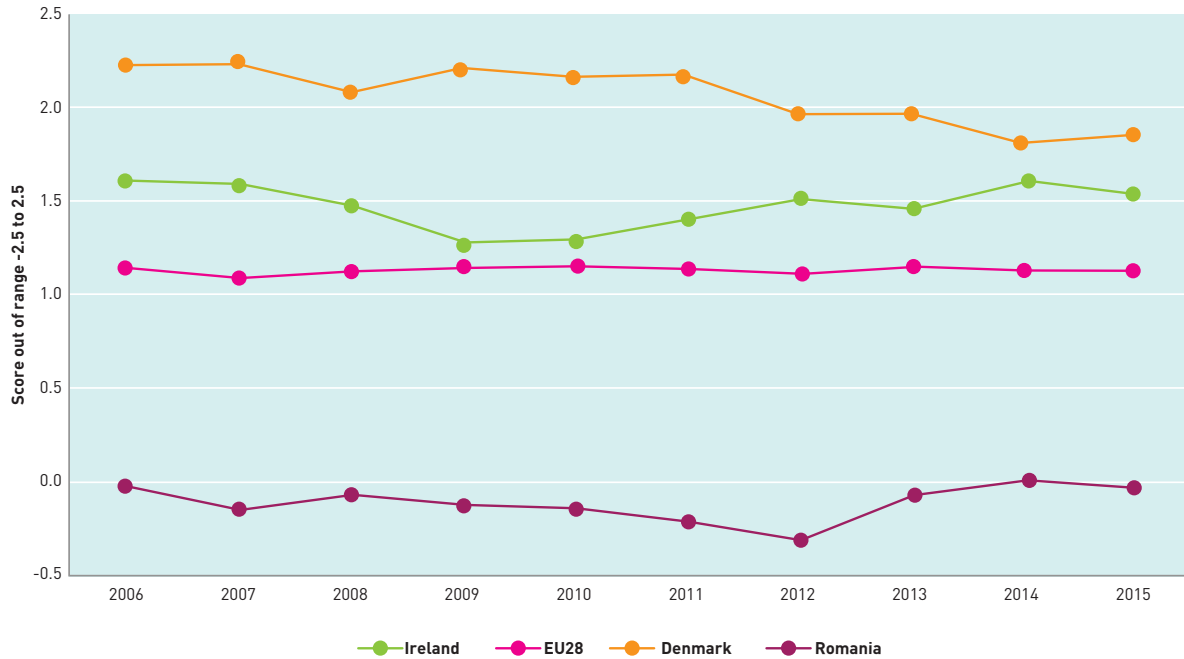


- Responses to the executive opinion survey carried out by IMD for their World Competitiveness Yearbook indicate that the perception that government decisions are effectively implemented in Ireland has improved considerably since 2010, after getting worse for a number of years before that.
- In the mid-2000s, Ireland's ranking on this indicator was well above the European average. In 2010 and 2011 the ranking fell below the EU28 average. It is now well above the EU28 average again, with Ireland ranking 5th on this indicator in 2017. Luxembourg scores best on this indicator, followed by Denmark and Germany.
- Ireland's score has been falling somewhat since 2014, as has the European average.

**In World Bank assessments, Ireland's government effectiveness score remains above the European average and is relatively stable**

**FIGURE 35 WORLD BANK GOVERNMENT EFFECTIVENESS INDICATOR**

Source: World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators

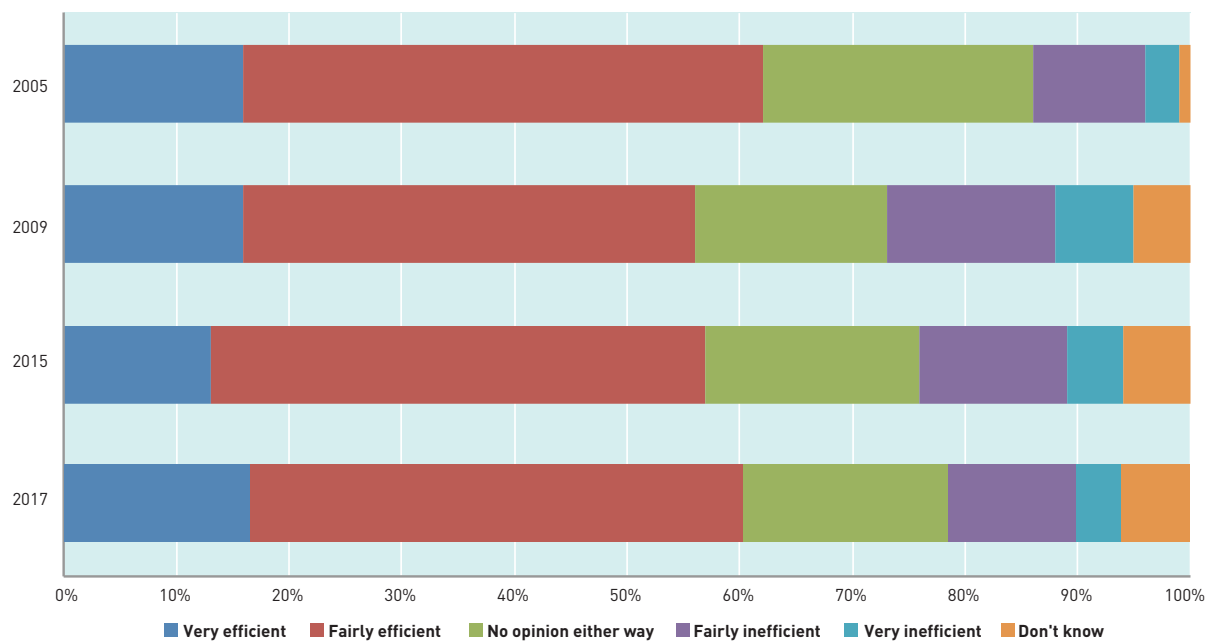


- Since 1996 the World Bank has been using a set of governance indicators as part of its work on promoting good governance. The indicators are drawn from 35 separate data sources constructed by 32 different organisations.
- The Government Effectiveness indicator aims to measure the quality of public services, the capacity of the civil service and its independence from political pressures, and the quality of policy formulation. On this indicator, Ireland ranked well above the EU28 average up to 2007.
- Ireland's score fell from 2005 to 2009, and Ireland's government effectiveness indicator dropped to just above the EU28 average in 2009. It stabilised in 2010, and has been generally improving since then, stabilising in recent years. Denmark is the top European scorer on this indicator and Romania the lowest ranked of the EU28.

## Public impressions of civil service efficiency are generally favourable and improving

**FIGURE 36 IMPRESSION OF CIVIL SERVICE EFFICIENCY**

Source: Ipsos MRBI/Ipsos MORI Veracity Index as published in Irish Civil Service Customer Satisfaction Survey 2017



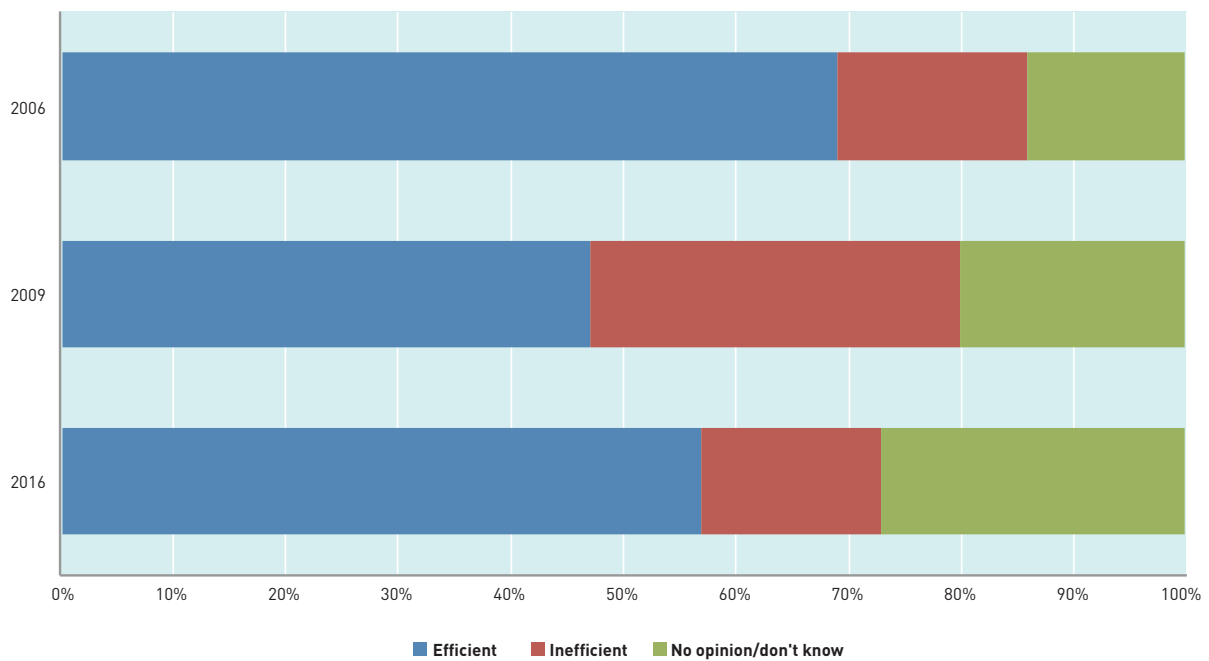
- Most members of the public feel that the civil service is efficient. In 2017, 59 per cent viewed the civil service as either very or fairly efficient. The impression of efficiency has remained relatively constant over the survey periods from 2005.
- 15 per cent of people surveyed in 2017 feels that the civil service is either very or fairly inefficient.
- Recent users of the civil service are much more likely to view the civil service as efficient (71 per cent) than non-users (53 per cent).



## Just over half of business users view the civil service as efficient

**FIGURE 37 BUSINESS PERCEPTION OF CIVIL SERVICE EFFICIENCY**

Source: Civil Service Business Customer Survey 2016

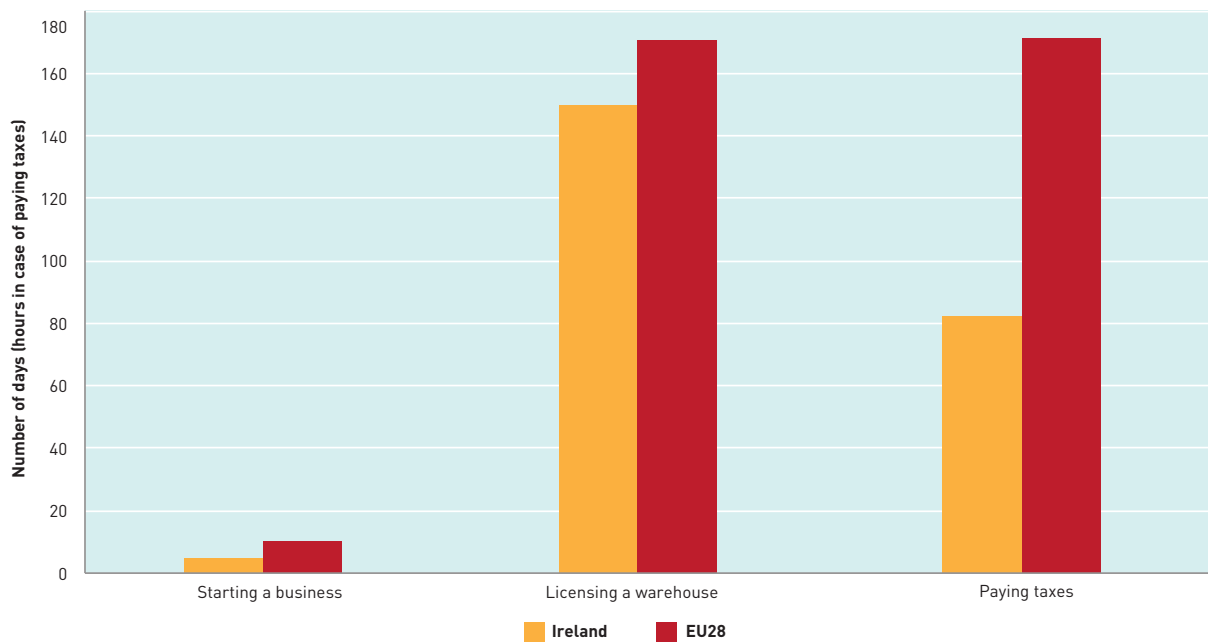


- 57 per cent of business users in 2016 rated the civil service as efficient. 16 per cent rated the civil service as inefficient.
- The perceived level of efficiency was above that achieved in 2009, but below that of 2006.

## Ireland's public administration continues to provide a relatively efficient level of service to business

**FIGURE 38**

Source: World Bank Doing Business indicators

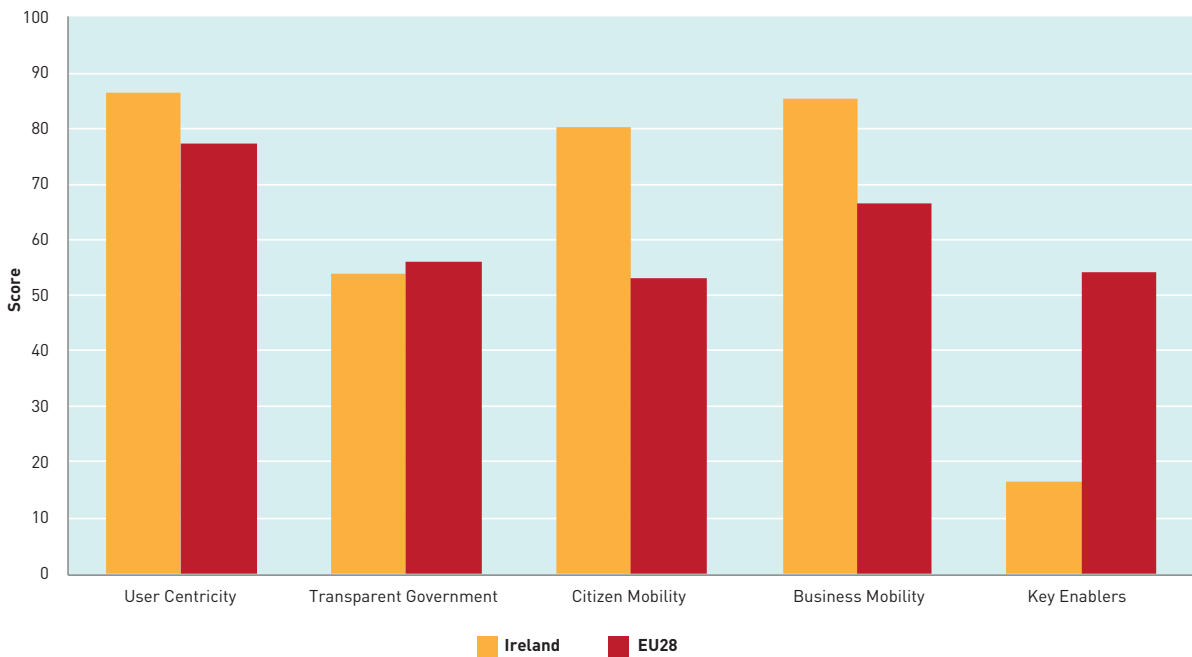


- A 'bottom-up' approach to assessing efficiency of public administration is taken by the World Bank in some of their Doing Business indicator set, with performance assessed from a service user perspective.
- The number of days estimated that it takes an entrepreneur to start a business in Ireland remained at 5 days in 2017. This is down from 10 days in 2013 and 13 days for the previous five years. The EU28 average is 10 days, down from 12 days in 2014. In Denmark it takes 3.5 days, and 37 days in Poland.
- The number of days to complete all procedures required for a business in the construction industry to build a standardised warehouse was estimated at 149.5 days in 2017. This remains lower than the EU28 average of 170 days. The best performers are Denmark (64 days) and Finland (65 days).
- The number of hours it takes a medium-sized company to pay tax in a given year is estimated as significantly lower in Ireland, at 82 hours, than it is for the EU28 (171 hours) average. Ireland ranks third in the EU behind Estonia (55 hours) and Luxembourg (55 hours).

## Government in Ireland has a number of strengths and weaknesses

FIGURE 39 EGOVERNMENT BENCHMARKS 2014-15

Source: EU eGovernment Benchmark 2016

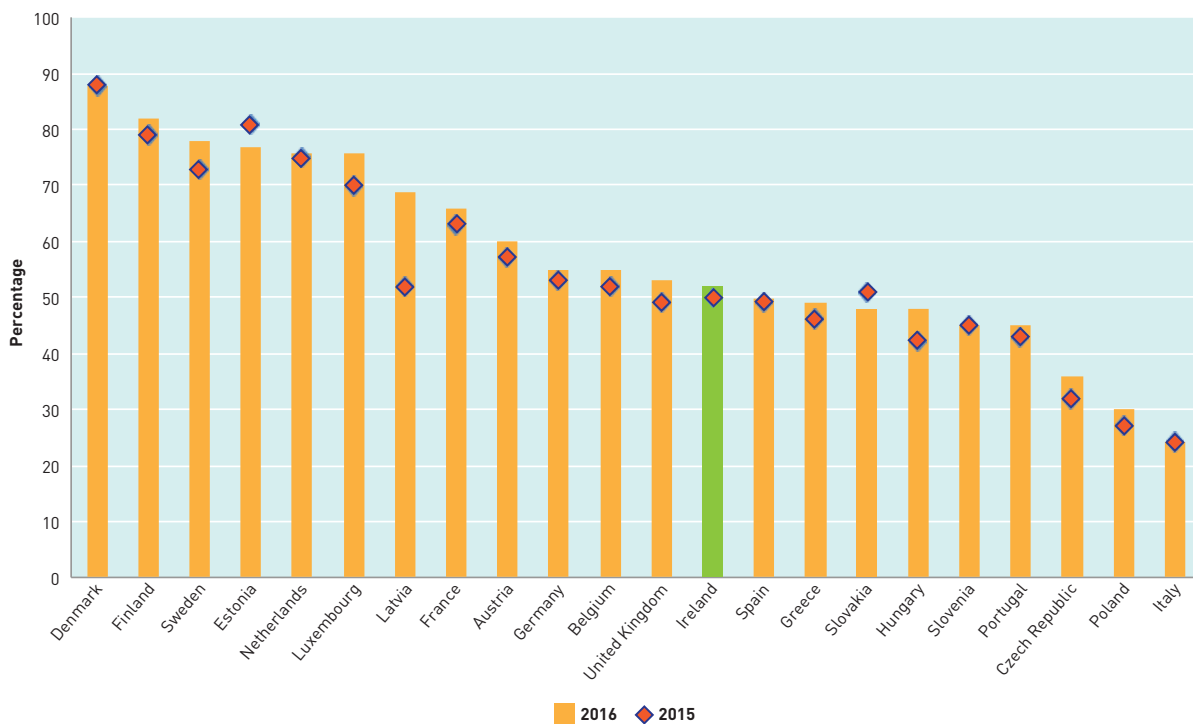


- Ireland ranks above the EU28 average with regard to user centricity (to what extent information about a service is provided online), citizen mobility and business mobility (mobility indicates to what extent European users can use online services in another country)
- Ireland ranks below the EU28 average with regard to transparent government (indicates to what extent governments are transparent as regards: (a) their own responsibilities and performance, (b) the process of service delivery and (c) personal data involved), and, in particular, key enablers (indicates the extent to which five technical pre-conditions for eGovernment are used).

## Individual use of the internet to obtain information on government services in Ireland is lower than in much of Europe

**FIGURE 40 INDIVIDUALS USING THE INTERNET TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT PUBLIC AUTHORITIES**

Source: Eurostat

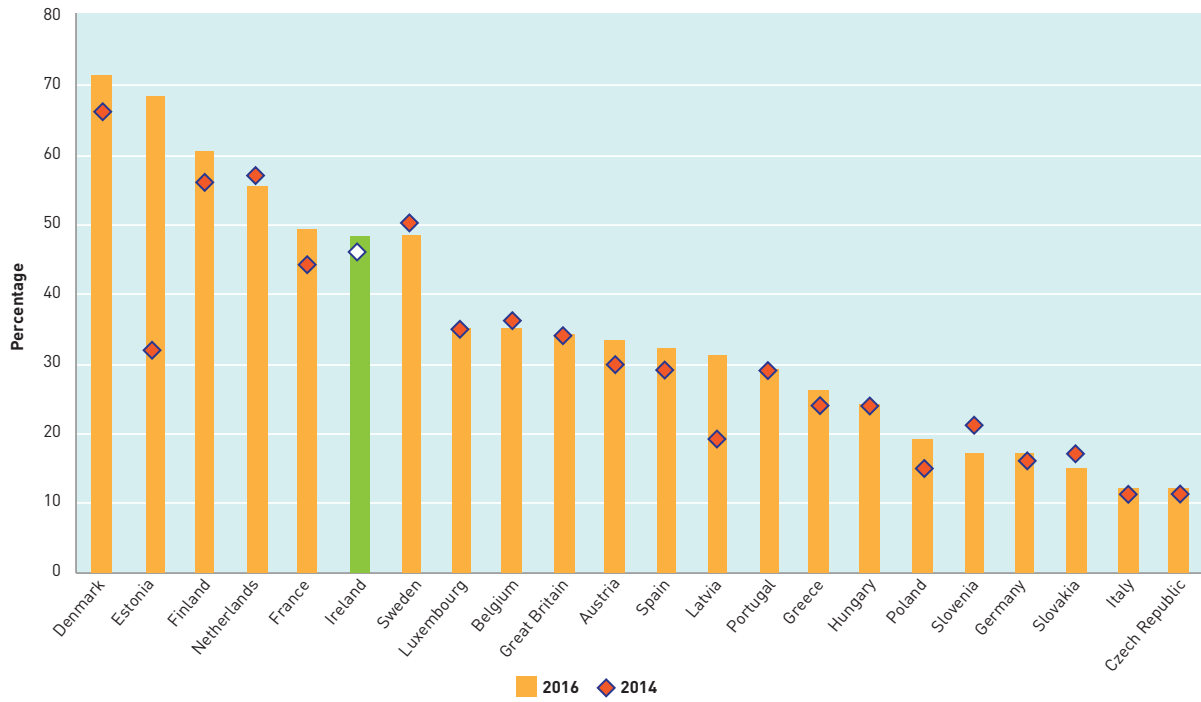


- With regard to using the internet to obtain information on public authorities, Ireland remained at around half those surveyed making use of the internet in 2015 and 2016.
- Of the 22 EU countries examined, this places Ireland in the lower half, ranking 13th.
- The Nordic countries score particularly highly on this indicator.

Individual use of the internet to send filled forms to public bodies in Ireland is higher than in much of Europe

FIGURE 41 INDIVIDUALS USE OF THE INTERNET TO SEND FILLED FORMS TO PUBLIC BODIES IN IRELAND IS HIGHER THAN IN MUCH OF EUROPE

Source: Government at a Glance 2017

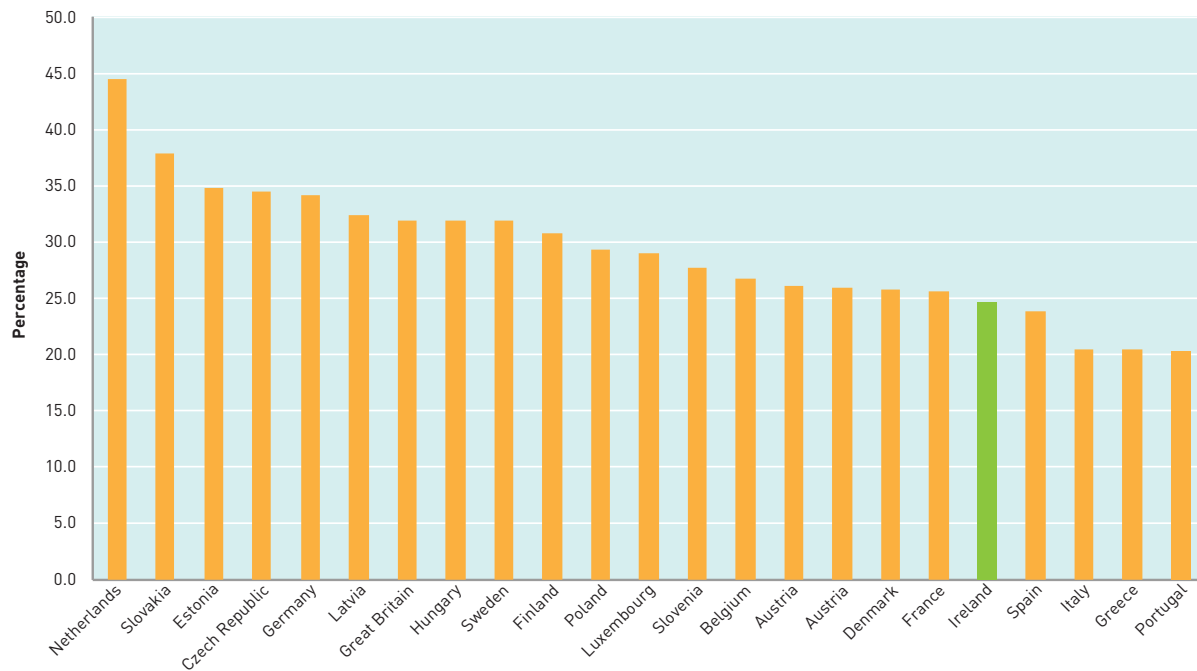


- With regard to using the internet for submitting completed forms, Ireland remained at just under 50 per cent using the internet between 2014 and 2016.
- Ireland remains one of the more active in this area, ranking 6th out of the 22 countries examined.

## Ireland spends less on public procurement than most other European countries

**FIGURE 42 GENERAL GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT AS SHARE OF TOTAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE 2015**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2015

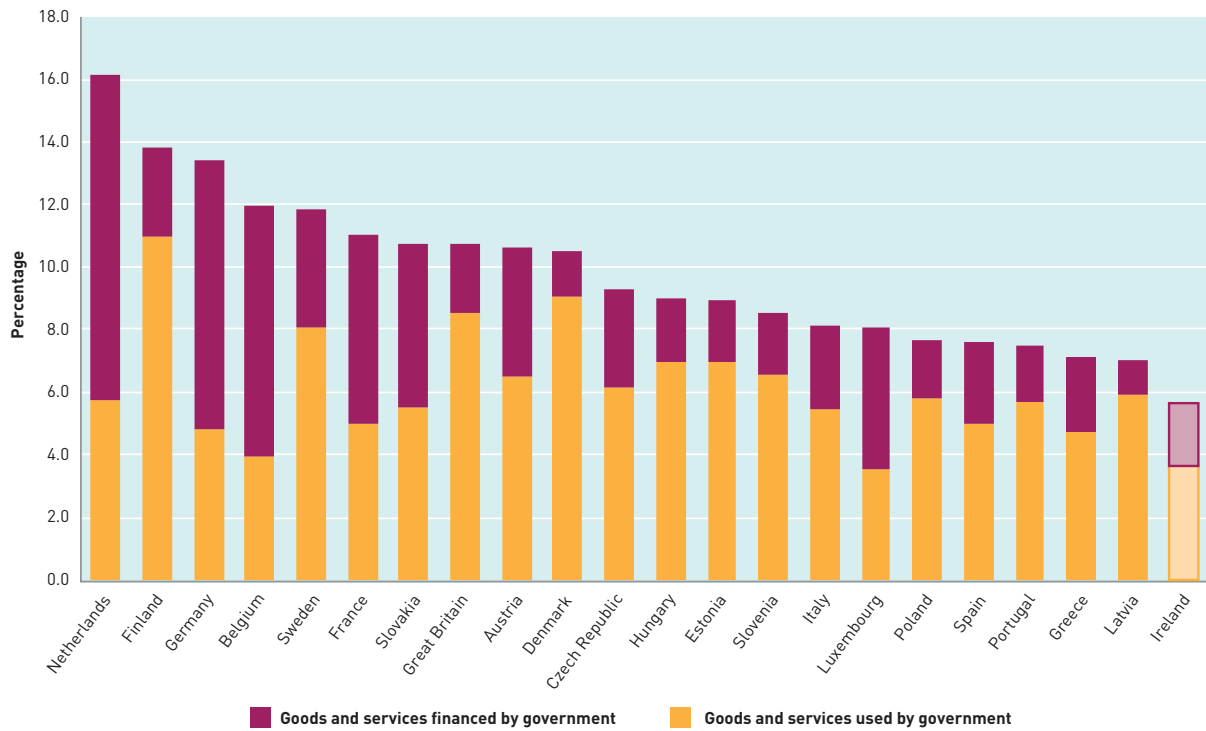


- Public procurement refers to the purchase by governments and state-owned enterprises of goods, services and works and represents a significant amount of government expenditure.
- Ireland spends less on public procurement as a share of total government expenditure than most European countries (25 per cent in 2015).

## As a share of GDP Ireland spends less on outsourcing than other European countries

**FIGURE 43 EXPENDITURE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT OUTSOURCING AS A PERCENTAGE OF GDP 2016**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017



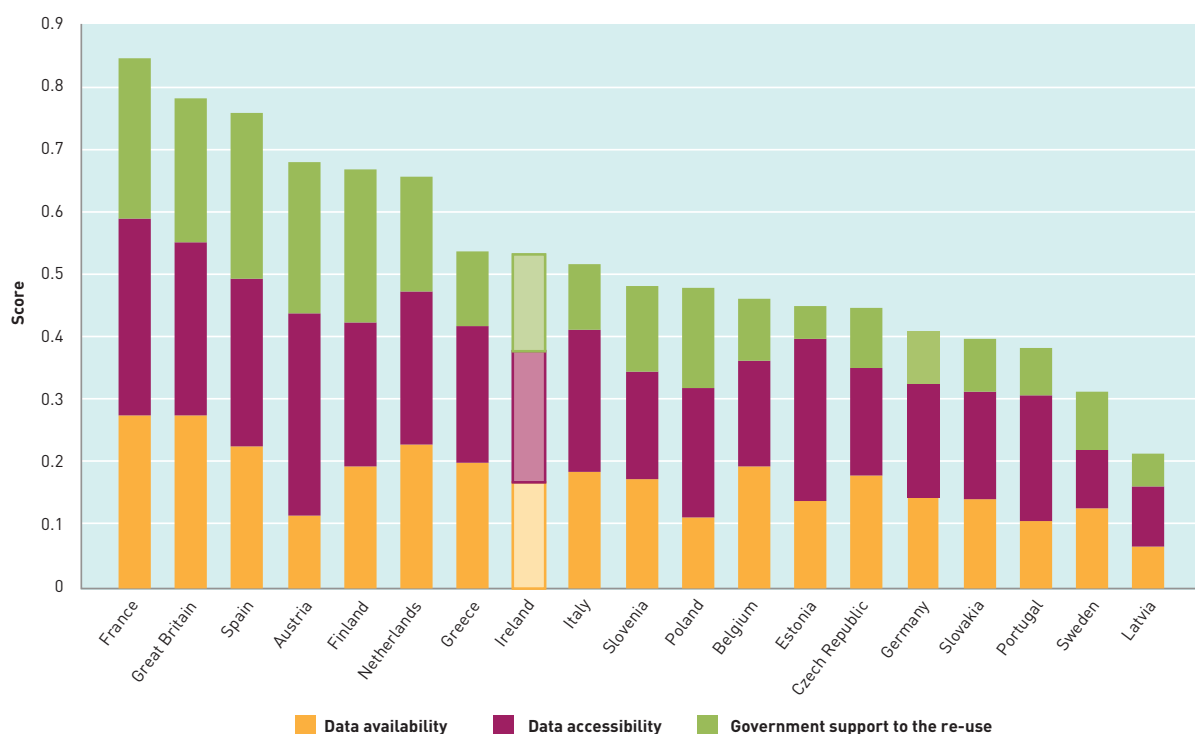
- Governments use a mix of their own employees, capital and outside contractors to produce goods and services. Outsourcing can take place in two ways. Governments can either purchase goods and services to be used as inputs, or they can pay a non-profit or private entity to provide the goods and services directly to the end user.
- In 2016 Ireland outsourcing represented just under 6 per cent of GDP<sup>15</sup>.
- Ireland dedicated the largest share of their expenditure on outsourcing to purchasing goods and services (3.6 per cent), and a smaller share (2 per cent) to outsourcing goods and services through direct third party provision.

<sup>15</sup> As noted in relation to Figure 1, the use of GDP as a reliable comparative indicator for Ireland is problematic.

## Open data initiatives in Ireland are mid-ranking in European terms

**FIGURE 44 OPEN, USEFUL, REUSABLE GOVERNMENT DATA INDEX 2017**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017



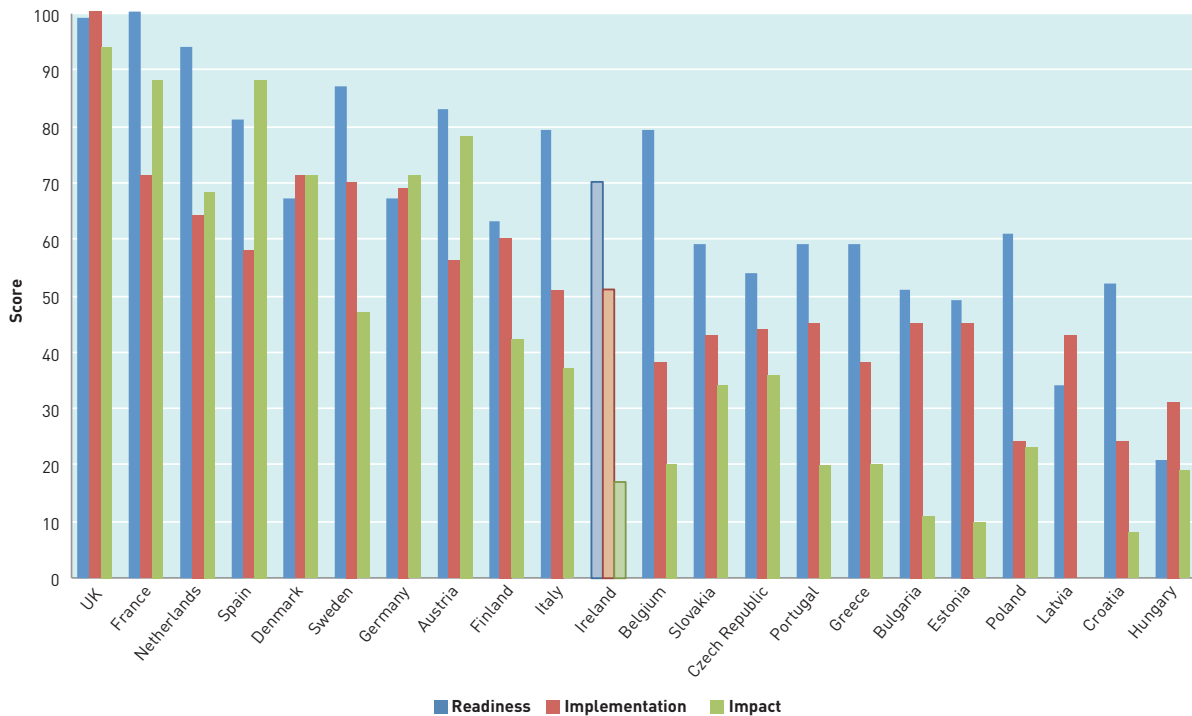
- By making the data collected and produced available, easily accessible and re-usable by citizens and businesses, governments can improve accountability and transparency, create new business opportunities and better inform both citizen engagement and their own decision-making.
- The OECD has created a pilot index on open government data to assess governments' efforts to implement open data in three dimensions: (1) data availability on the national portal; (2) data accessibility on the national portal; and (3) governments' support to innovative re-use and stakeholder engagement.
- On this OECD composite index, government open data efforts were mid-ranking in European terms, some way behind leading countries such as France and Great Britain.
- Ireland has improved its ranking on this index since 2015, when it was ranked at the lower end of European countries.



**Ireland ranks reasonably well with regard to readiness for and implementation of open data but poorly with regard to impact**

**FIGURE 45 2016 OPEN DATA BAROMETER RANKING ON READINESS, IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT**

Source: World Wide Web Open Data Barometer Global Report, 2016

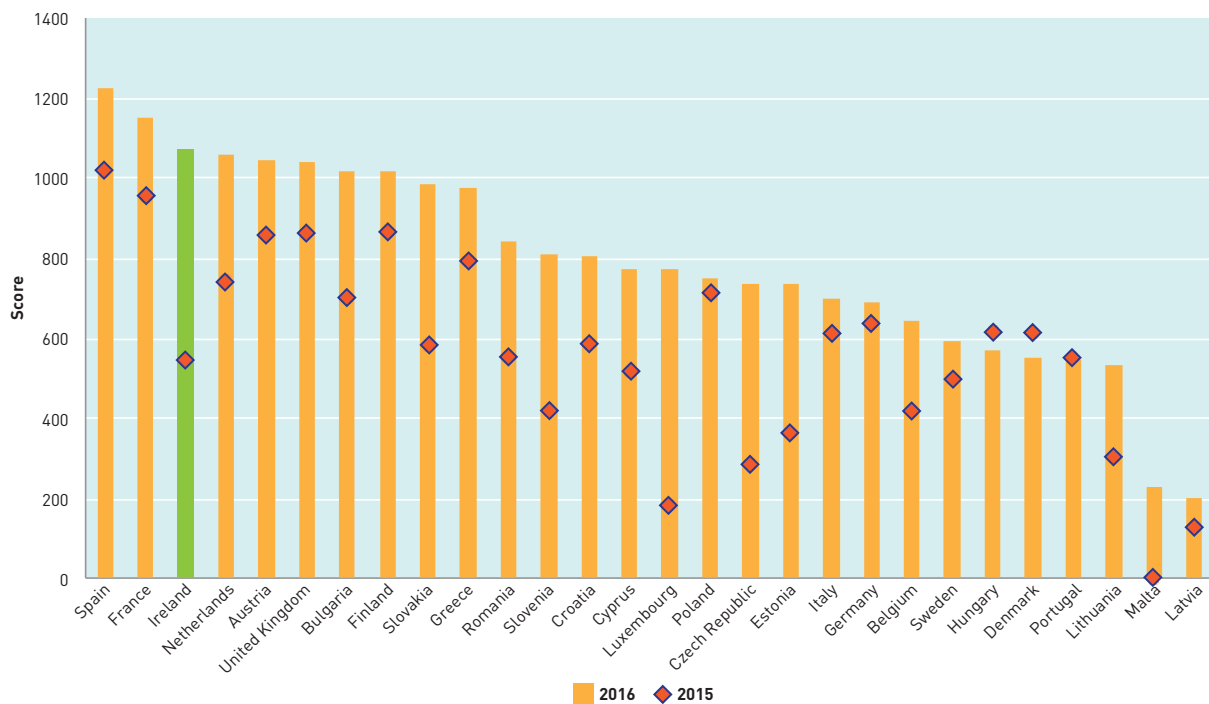


- Information for the rankings is based on surveys and data collected in 2016. Readiness refers to readiness to secure benefits from open data, including the legal, political, economic, social, organisational, and technical foundations that can support the supply and use of open data. Implementation is measured through the availability of data published by government across 15 categories, and the adoption for those datasets of the common practices set out in the Open Definition and the Open Government Data Principles. Impact is measured through media and academic mentions of cases of open data use and impact.
- Ireland ranked 11th overall, up from 15th in 2014.
- Ireland scores well in the readiness category, ranking as 6th overall and well above the average. Ireland is middle ranked with regard to implementation. The lowest ranking is with regard to impact, where Ireland receives one of the lower ratings of the countries examined.

## Ireland scores well with regard to open data maturity

**FIGURE 46 OPEN DATA MATURITY SCORE**

Source: European Data Portal

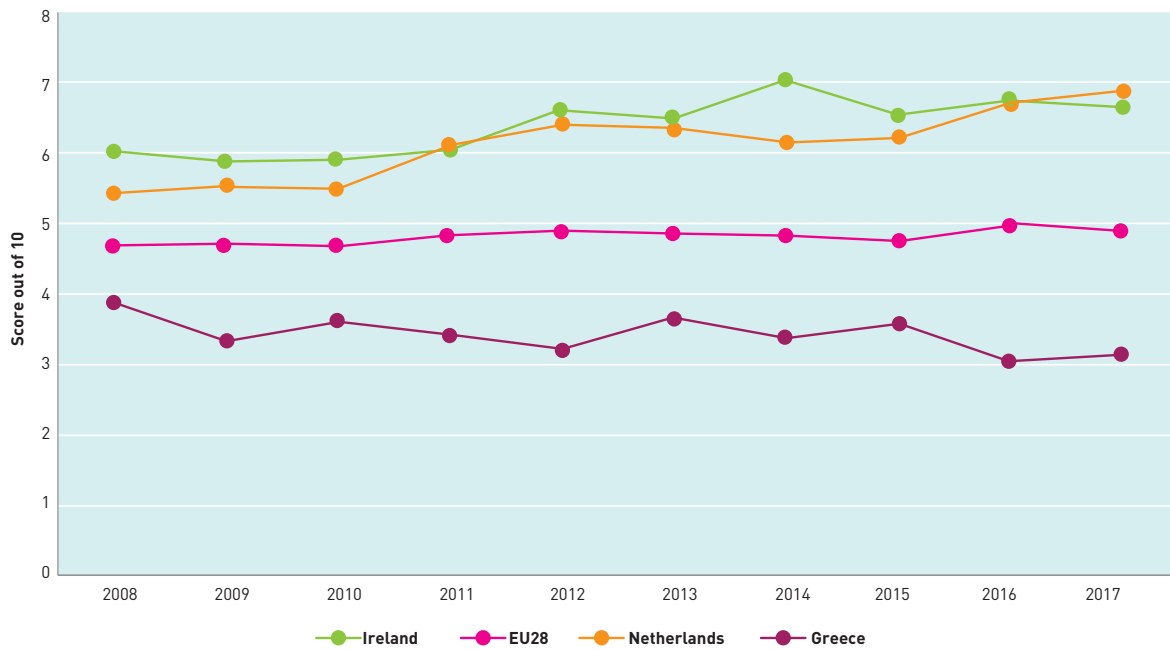


- Open data maturity is described by a series of indicators selected to cover the level of development of national policies promoting open data, an assessment of the features made available on national data portals, as well as the expected impact of open data.
- Ireland ranked 3rd with regard to open data maturity in 2016, up significantly from 2015, when ranked 18th.

**Ireland's public administration is seen as one of the best in Europe in encouraging competition and providing a supportive regulatory environment**

**FIGURE 47 COMPETITIVENESS AND REGULATION INDICATOR (CRI)**

Source: IPA analysis based on IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook and WEF Global Competitiveness Report

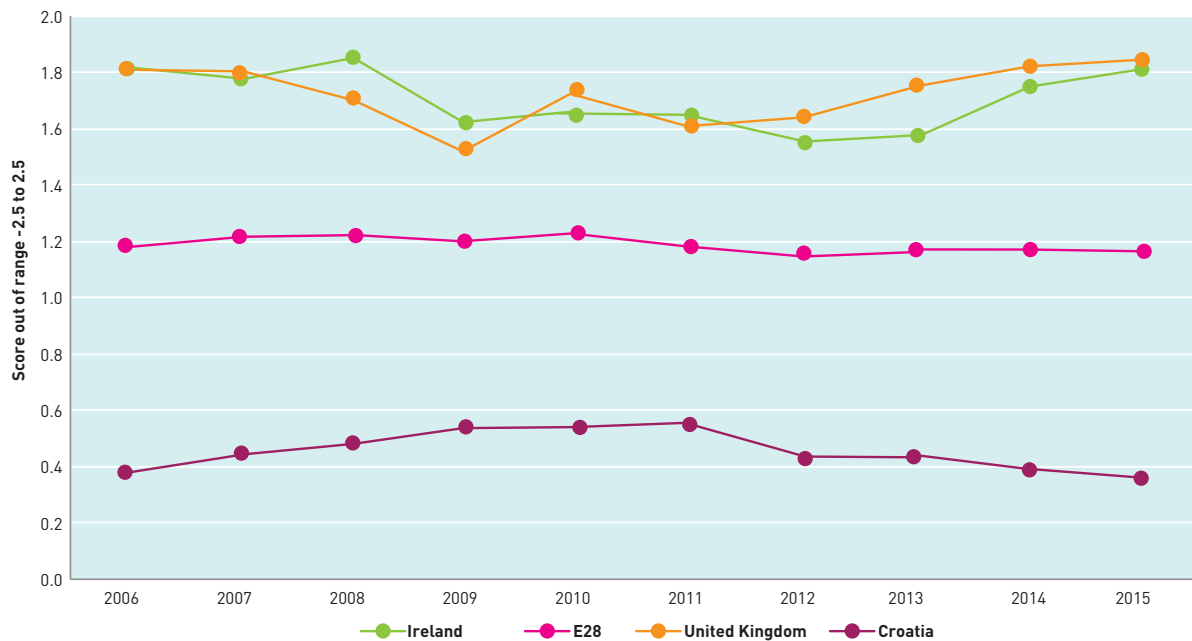


- A sub-set of the quality of public administration indicators can be used to assess issues of competitiveness and regulation. There is an expectation that as part of a quality service, public servants will help ensure a legal and regulatory framework that encourages competition. And that they will scrutinise regulation intensity to ensure it does not become too great a burden on enterprises.
- Ireland's ranking on this competitiveness and regulation indicator is above the European average. In 2017, Ireland ranked third behind the Netherlands and Denmark.
- Developing a public administration that encourages competition and where regulation is not too great a burden on enterprises is an important goal. But events in the banking sphere at the time of the financial crisis indicate the need for strong regulation. It must be remembered that this ranking is based on executive opinion surveys, where there would generally be an interest in less regulation.

## In World Bank assessments, Ireland's regulatory quality ranks as one of the highest in Europe

**FIGURE 48 WORLD BANK REGULATORY QUALITY INDICATOR**

Source: World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators

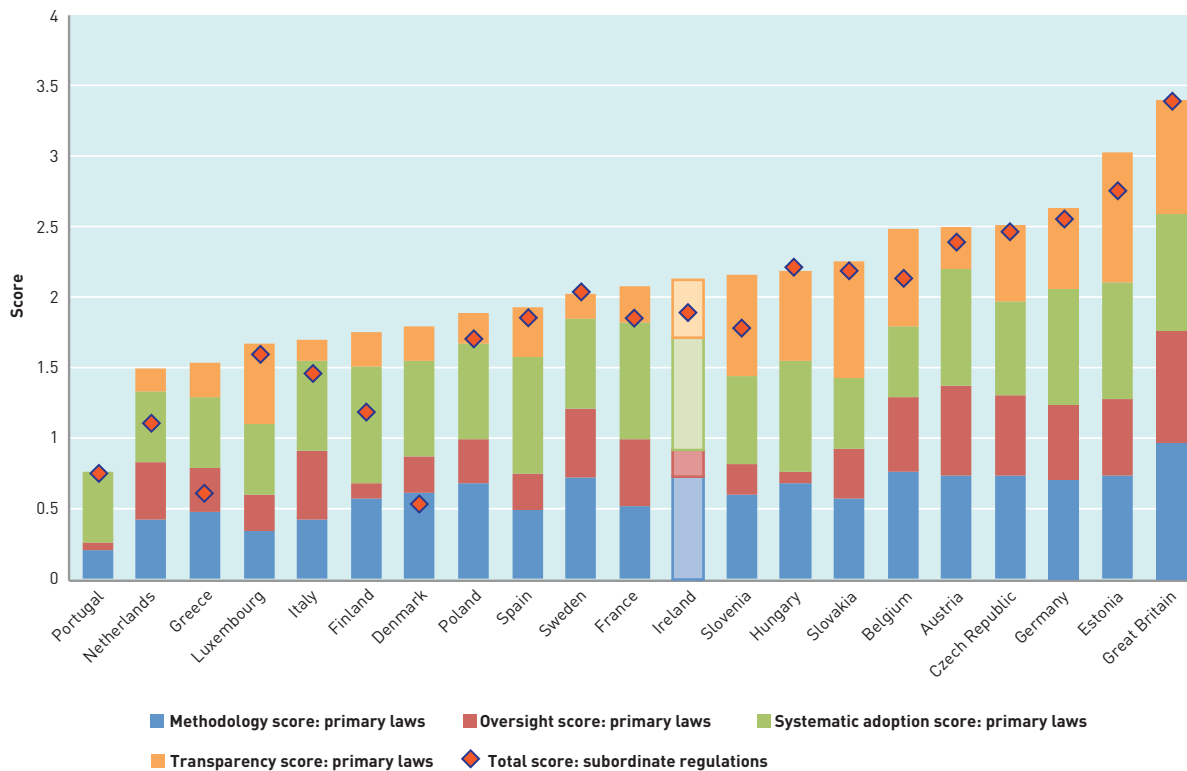


- The Regulatory Quality indicator aims to measure the ability of the government to provide sound policies and regulations that enable and promote private sector development. On this indicator Ireland ranks as well above the European average score.
- The impact of the regulatory problems identified in the financial sector in 2009 clearly has had an impact on the indicator, and Ireland dropped from 1st to 7th ranked European country on this indicator by 2013.
- Ireland's ranking improved in 2015, and on these latest figures is now joint 2nd ranked of the EU28, with the UK ranking highest.

Ireland's use of regulatory impact analysis (RIA) for developing regulations is around the European average

FIGURE 49 REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR DEVELOPING REGULATIONS 2014

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017

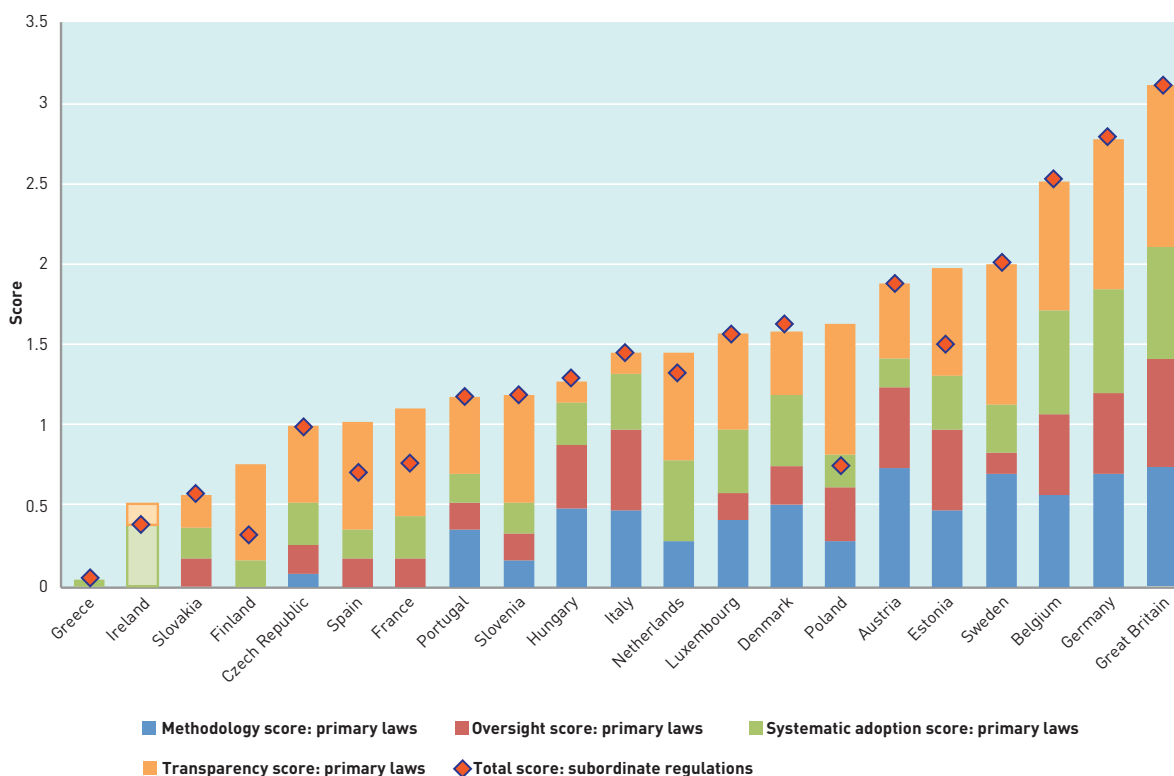


- This composite indicator is composed of four equally weighted categories: methodology gathers information on different assessments; oversight and quality control records mechanisms to monitor and ensure the quality of RIA; systematic adoption records formal requirements and how often RIA is conducted in practice; and transparency records how open RIA processes are.
- Ireland ranks in the middle of the countries examined. Ireland scores relatively well with regard to methodology and systematic adoption, and less well with regard to oversight and transparency.

## Ireland scores poorly with regard to ex post evaluation of regulations

FIGURE 50 EX POST EVALUATION OF REGULATIONS 2014

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017

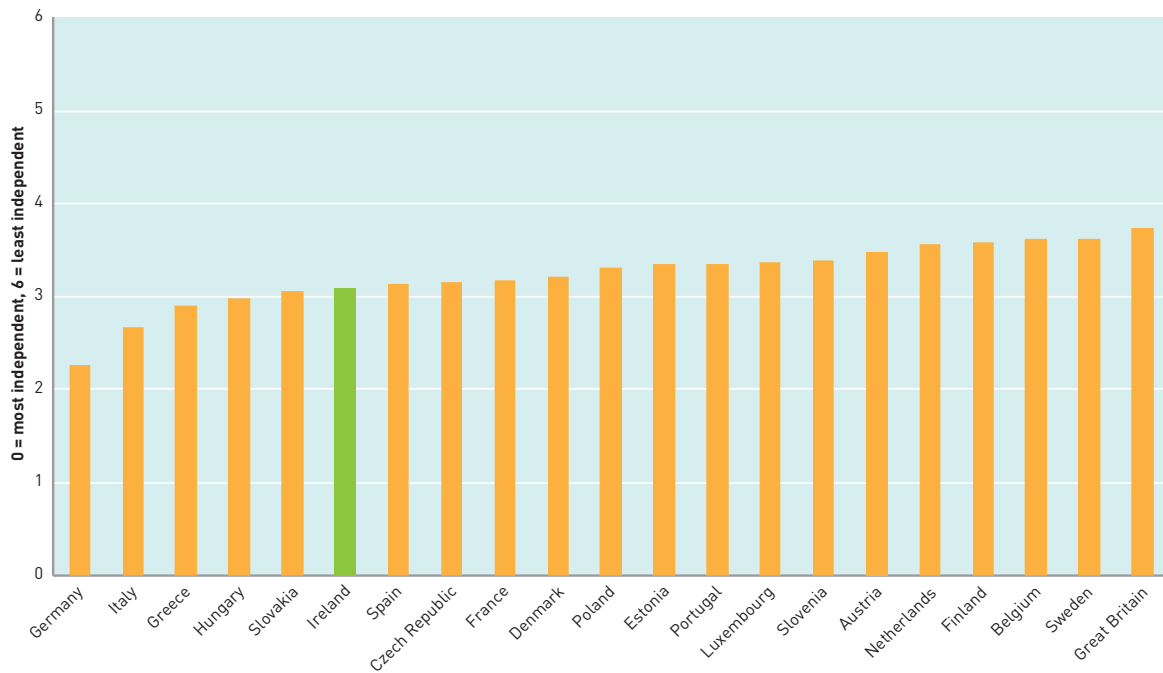


- In general, ex post evaluation has a lower priority in many countries than ex ante regulatory governance tools.
- Ireland scores second worst, above Greece, with regard to ex post evaluation of regulations. Great Britain and Germany achieve the highest scores.

The independence of regulators is ranked a little below that of many other European countries

FIGURE 51 INDEPENDENCE OF REGULATORS IN SIX NETWORK SECTORS 2013

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017

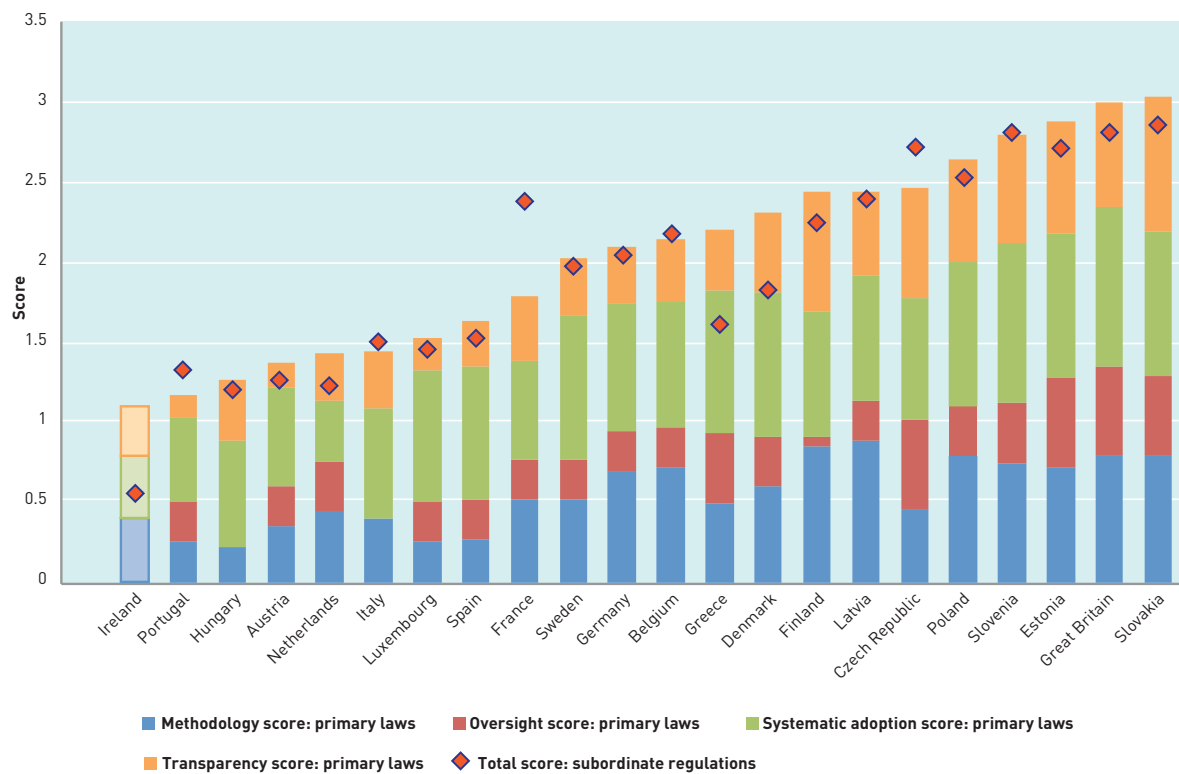


- This indicator captures the formal structures that insulate the regulator from undue influence, including whether a regulator can receive instructions from the executive, whether its independence is stated in law, which bodies can overturn its decisions, and how staff are recruited and dismissed.
- The six network sectors are electricity, gas, telecom, railroad transport infrastructure, airports and ports.
- While there is little variation in score between countries, Ireland scores a little below average for the European countries examined against this indicator.

## Stakeholder engagement in developing regulations ranks particularly poorly

FIGURE 52 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN DEVELOPING REGULATIONS 2014

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017



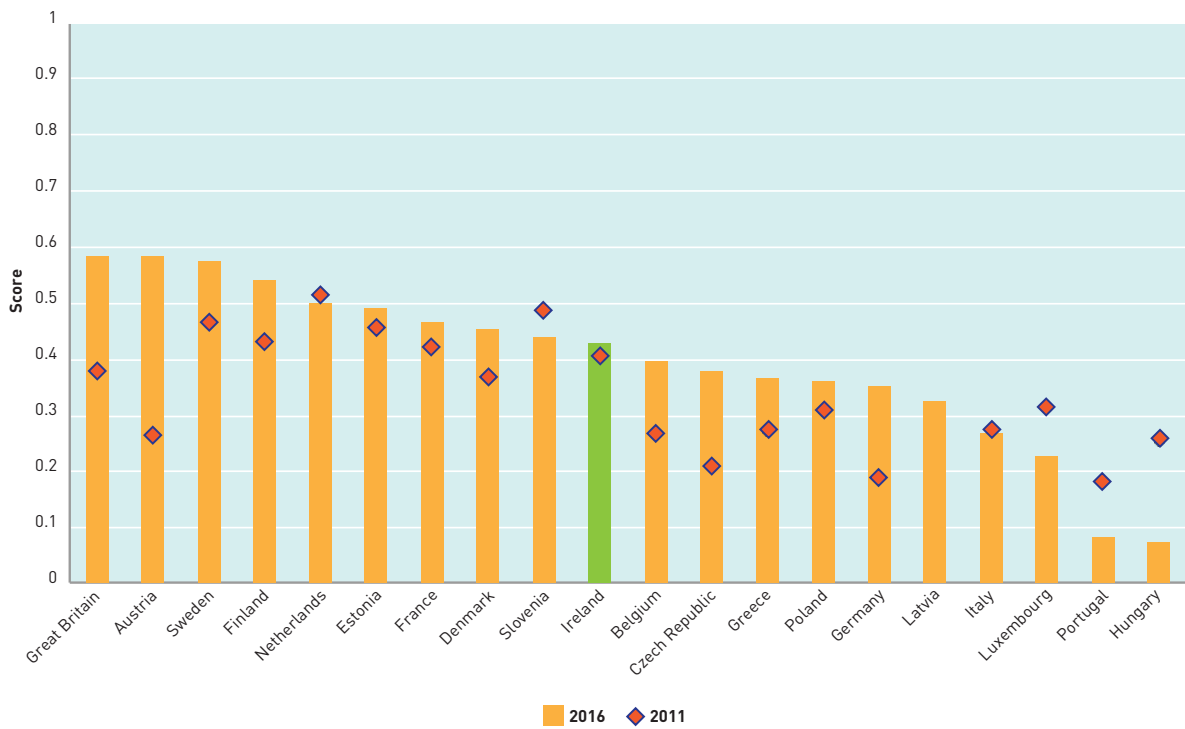
- Stakeholder engagement is a crucial element of regulatory policy, helping ensure regulations are in the public interest by involving those affected by regulations, including citizens, businesses and civil society.
- Ireland records the lowest ranking of countries examined against this indicator.



## Ireland displays average use of performance budgeting practices

**FIGURE 53 USE OF PERFORMANCE BUDGETING PRACTICES AT THE CENTRAL LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017



- This index shows the degree to which performance budgeting practices exist and are used at central government level.
- Ireland is mid-ranked in relation to this index, and remained relatively stable on the indicator between 2011 and 2016. Great Britain and Austria received the best scores.

## 4. SECTORAL PERFORMANCE

Ultimately, the provision of public administration is intended to achieve social outcomes in sectors such as health, education, law and order and transport. As such it is important that any review of public administration looks at sectoral outcomes. In this report, some high-level education and health indicators are included, given that these areas are the largest areas of public expenditure.

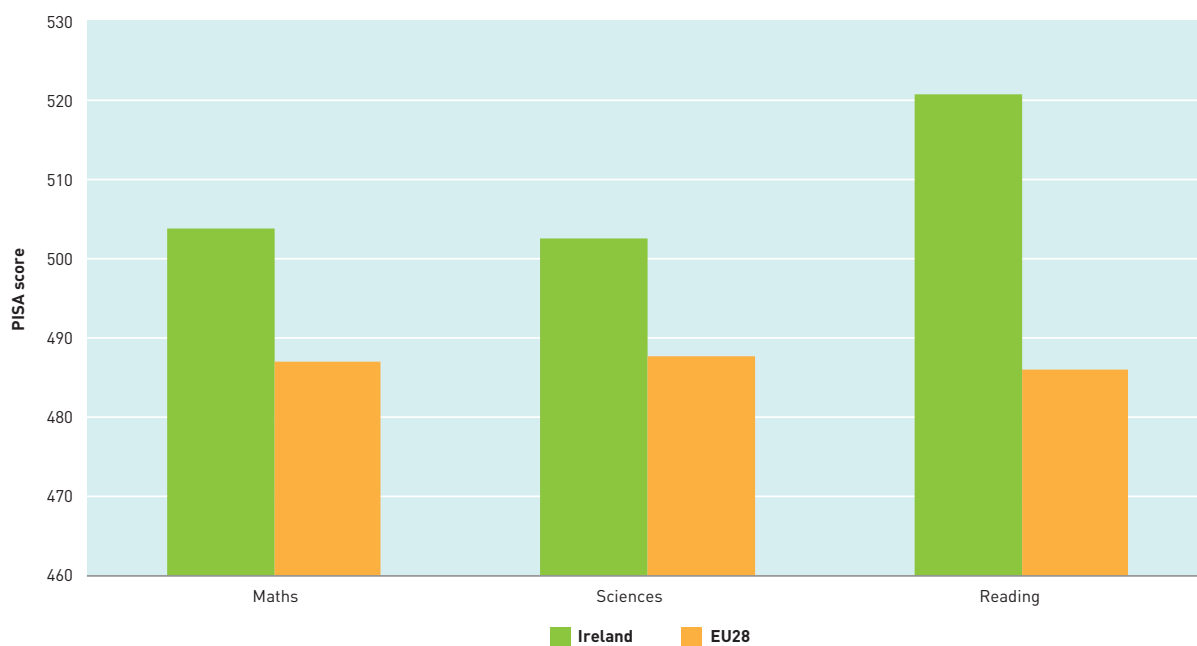
In the education system, high-level outcome indicators that assess performance in reading, maths and science give an overview of performance. Evidence is taken from the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey. PISA is an internationally standardised assessment administered to 15-year olds in schools. Tests are typically administered to between 4,500 and 10,000 students in each country.

In the health sector, high-level outcome indicators in areas such as life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, and other indicators such as length of stay in hospitals, give a sense of performance at the macro level. These are commonly used indicators in international rankings of health and education systems.

## Ireland's educational attainment scores compare well to the European average

**FIGURE 54 PISA EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT SCORES 2015**

Source: OECD PISA 2015 survey

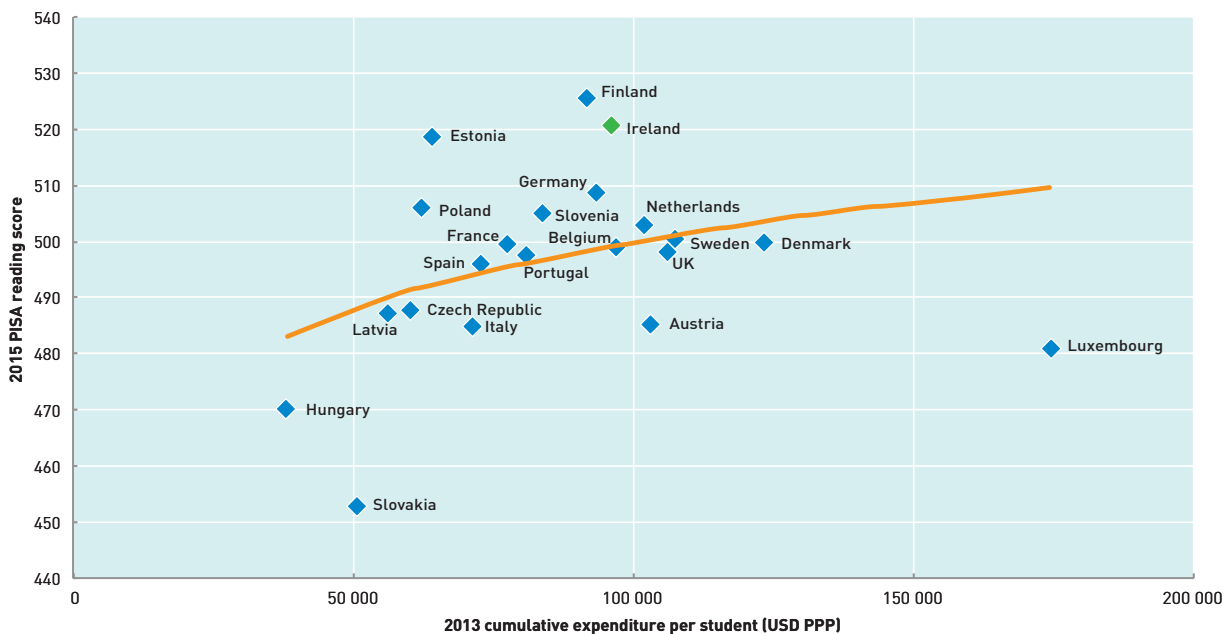


- The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey is an internationally standardised assessment administered to 15-year olds in schools. Tests are typically administered to between 4,500 and 10,000 students in each country.
- The 2015 PISA survey shows that Ireland has a higher ranking than the European average in maths, sciences and reading. Estonia ranks highest in maths, and Finland is the highest ranked European country in sciences and reading.

## Ireland delivers an above average level of educational efficiency when comparing reading performance to spending per student across Europe

FIGURE 55 PISA READING SCORE AND SPENDING PER STUDENT

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017

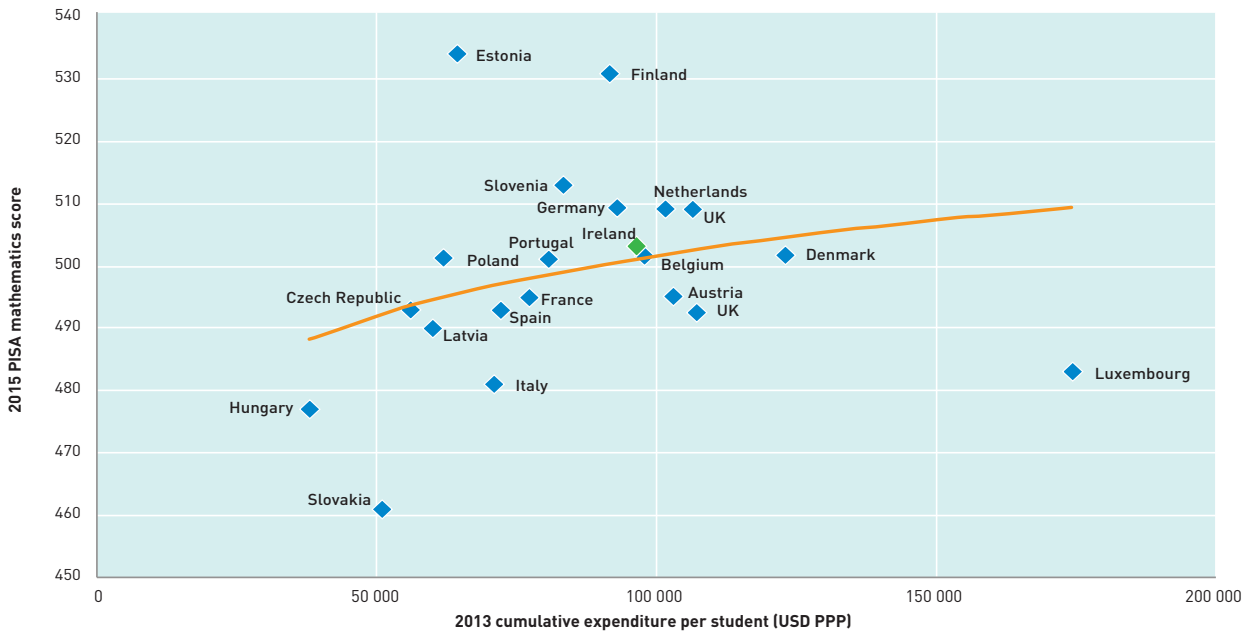


- The OECD (2017) note that educational attainments of individuals, as measured by the PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) score can be seen as an indicator of output of human capital production. When compared to the national cumulative expenditure per student (the educational input), the results can offer an insight into which systems are able to deliver more efficient services.
- Finland achieves a high performance score for reading but only spends around the European average. Ireland is close to Finland with spending close to the European average but with a high performance score, showing a good level of efficiency.

**Ireland delivers an average level of efficiency when comparing maths performance to spending per student across Europe**

**FIGURE 56 PISA MATHS SCORE AND SPENDING PER STUDENT**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017



- Finland and Estonia have particularly good maths scores compared to spending, suggesting the delivery of efficient services.
- Ireland spends around the European average and get results that are similarly around the average, that is, performance is in line with what might be expected given the resources put in, showing an average level of efficiency.

## Ireland's competitive advantage in the perception of its education system by executives remains above the European average

**FIGURE 57 THE EDUCATION SYSTEM MEETS THE NEEDS OF A COMPETITIVE ECONOMY**

Source: IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook

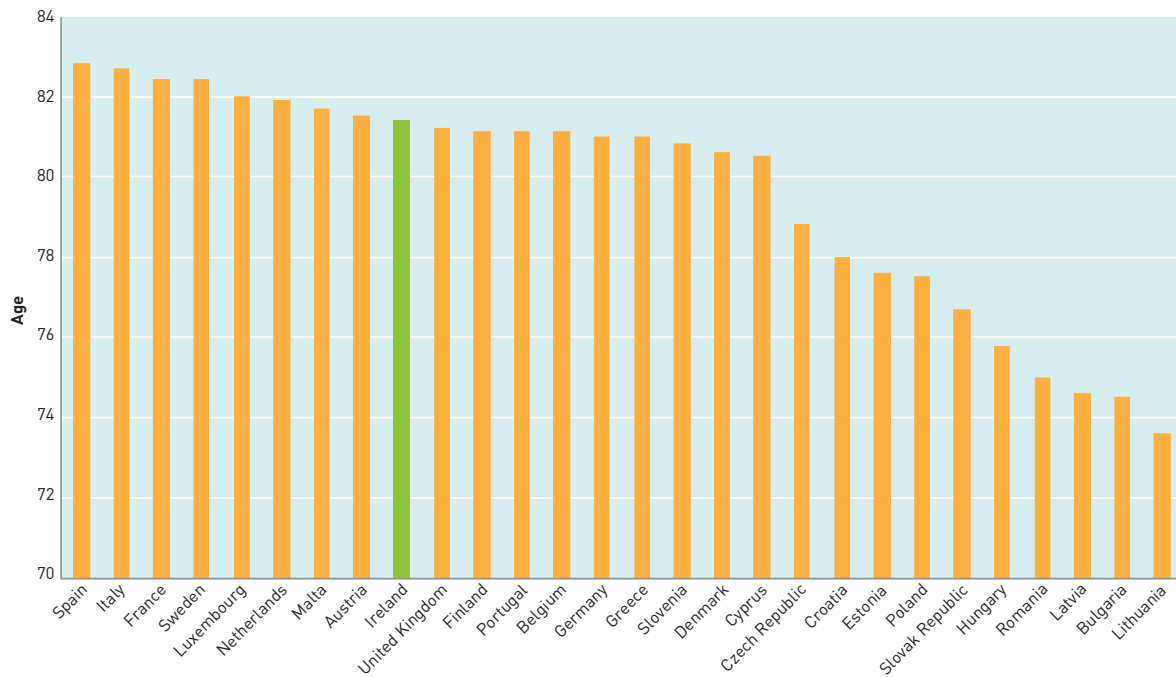


- Executive opinion about the role of the educational system in meeting the needs of a competitive economy is one (though only one) qualitative indicator of how well the education system is functioning.
- From 2005 to 2010 the Irish education system was seen by those executives completing the survey as better than the European average in meeting the needs of a competitive economy. However, the gap was closing.
- From 2010, the opinion of executives that Ireland's education system meets the needs of a competitive economy has improved overall. Ireland ranked third European country on this indicator in 2017.

## Life expectancy at birth is towards the higher end in European terms

FIGURE 58 LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH 2015

Source: WHO

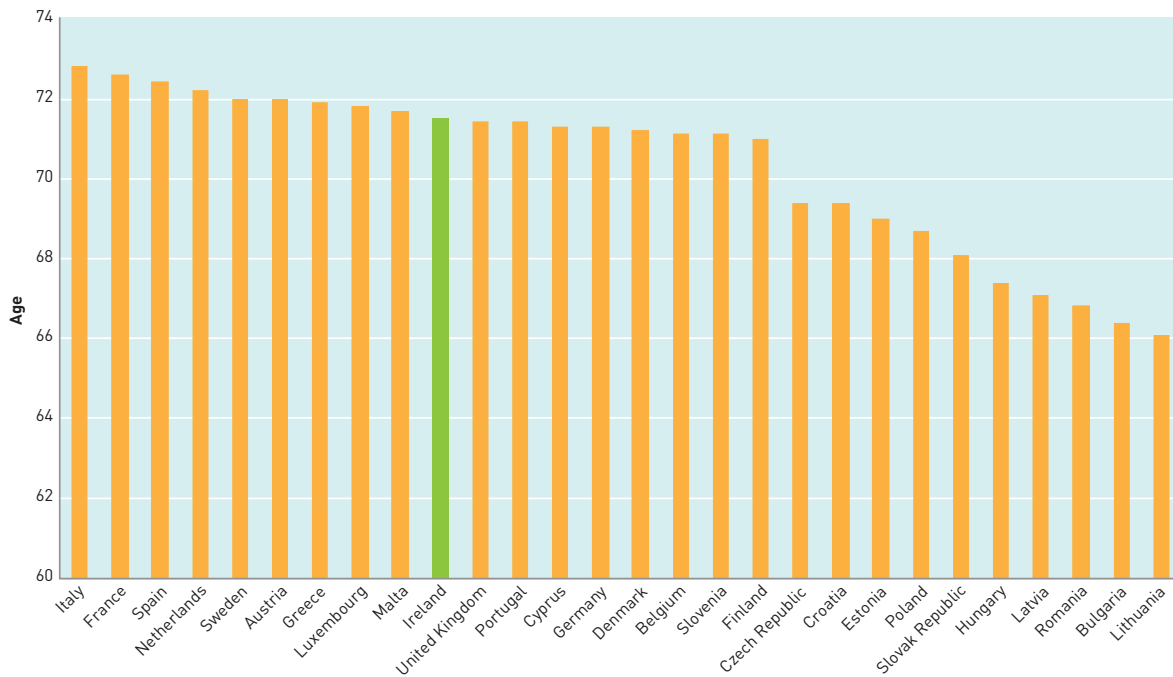


- Life expectancy at birth in Ireland in 2015 was 81 years. The range in EU countries is from 83 years in Spain, down to 74 years in Lithuania.
- Ireland ranked 9th of the EU 28 in 2015.

In terms of healthy life expectancy at birth Ireland ranks reasonably well in Europe

FIGURE 59 HEALTHY LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH 2015

Source: WHO

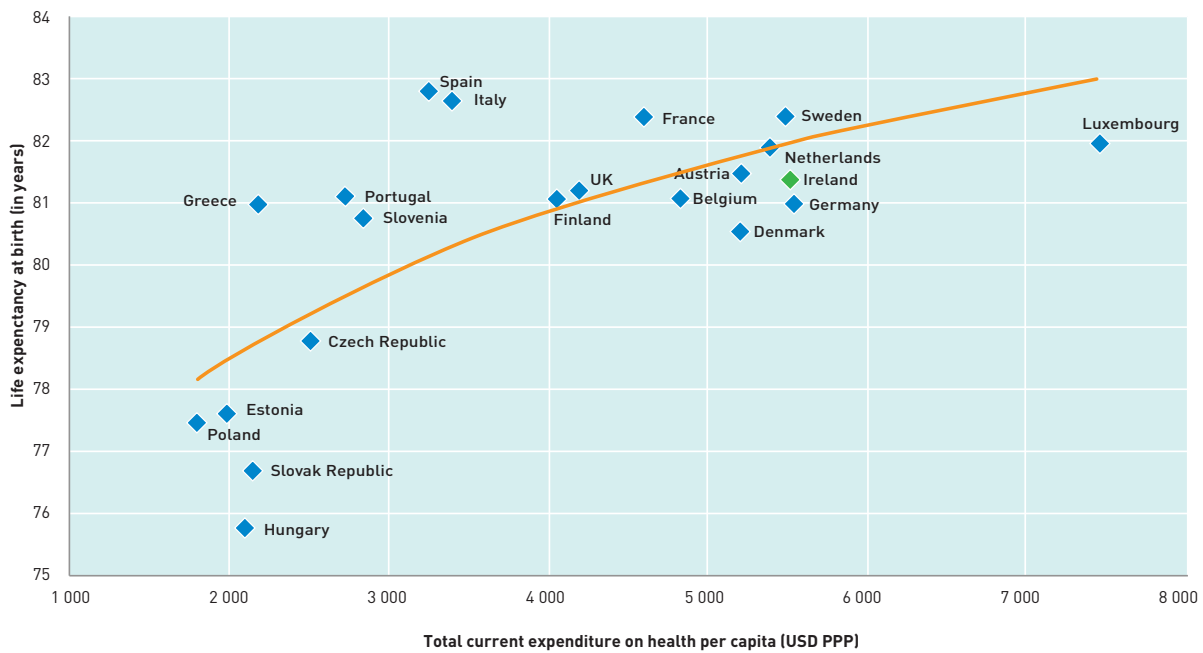


- Healthy life expectancy represents the average number of years that a person can expect to live in 'full health' by taking into account years lived in less than full health due to disease and/or injury.
- Ireland scores 10th best in Europe in 2015 in terms of healthy life expectancy at birth, at 71.5 years.



## Cost-effectiveness of health expenditure is at a reasonable level but could be improved

**FIGURE 60 LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (2015) AND TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON HEALTH CARE PER CAPITA (2016) OR NEAREST YEAR**  
Source: OECD Health Statistics 2017

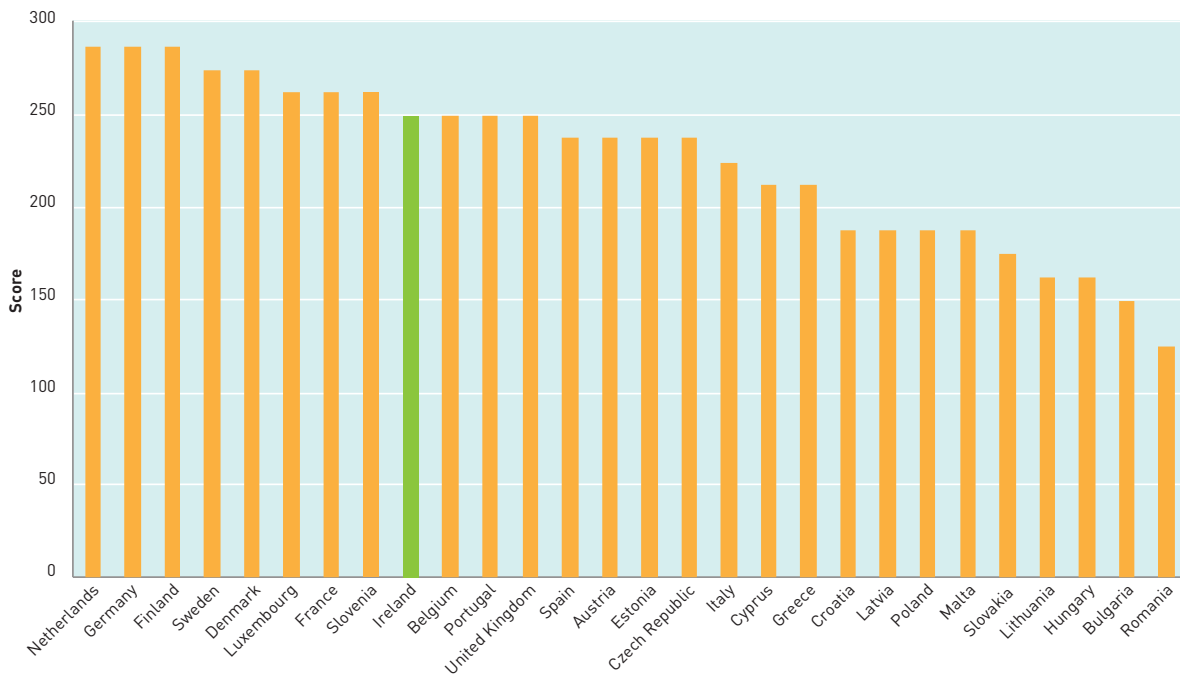


- In order to assess the cost-effectiveness of health services, OECD data allows comparison of improvements in life expectancy to total health expenditure per capita in countries. They note, however, that conclusions should be drawn with care, as many other factors beyond total health spending have a major impact on life expectancy and total health expenditure comprises both public and private expenditures.
- Overall, there is a positive relationship between total health expenditure per capita and life expectancy. Italy and Spain stand out as having relatively high life expectancy relative to their expenditure.
- Ireland has a level of life expectancy just a little below what might be expected given the level of expenditure, suggesting cost-effectiveness is neither particularly good nor particularly bad.

## Ireland ranks slightly above the EU28 average in achieving consumer health outcomes

**FIGURE 61 EUROPEAN HEALTH CONSUMER OUTCOMES INDEX 2016**

Source: Euro Health Consumer Index 2016



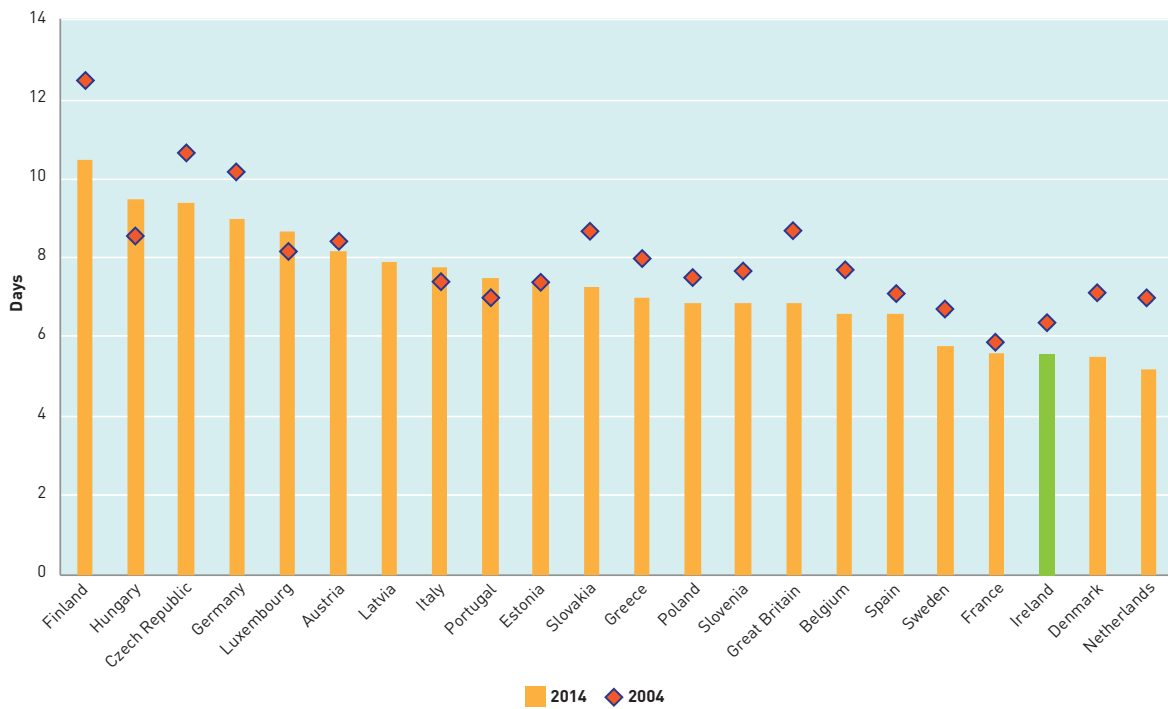
- The Euro Health Consumer Index 2016 (Health Consumer Powerhouse, 2017) includes a composite 'basket' measure of a sub-set of indicators focused on health outcomes<sup>16</sup>. The higher the score on this index, the better the outcomes.
- Ireland ranks just above the EU28 average on this health outcomes index. The Netherlands, Germany, and Finland achieve the top three rankings.

<sup>16</sup> The outcomes measured in 2016 are: decrease of cvd deaths; decrease of stroke deaths; infant deaths; cancer survival; potential years of life lost; MRSA infections; abortion rates; depression; and COPD mortality.

## Ireland's hospitals display comparatively high levels of efficiency with regard to length of stay

**FIGURE 62 AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY IN HOSPITALS FOR ALL CONDITIONS**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017

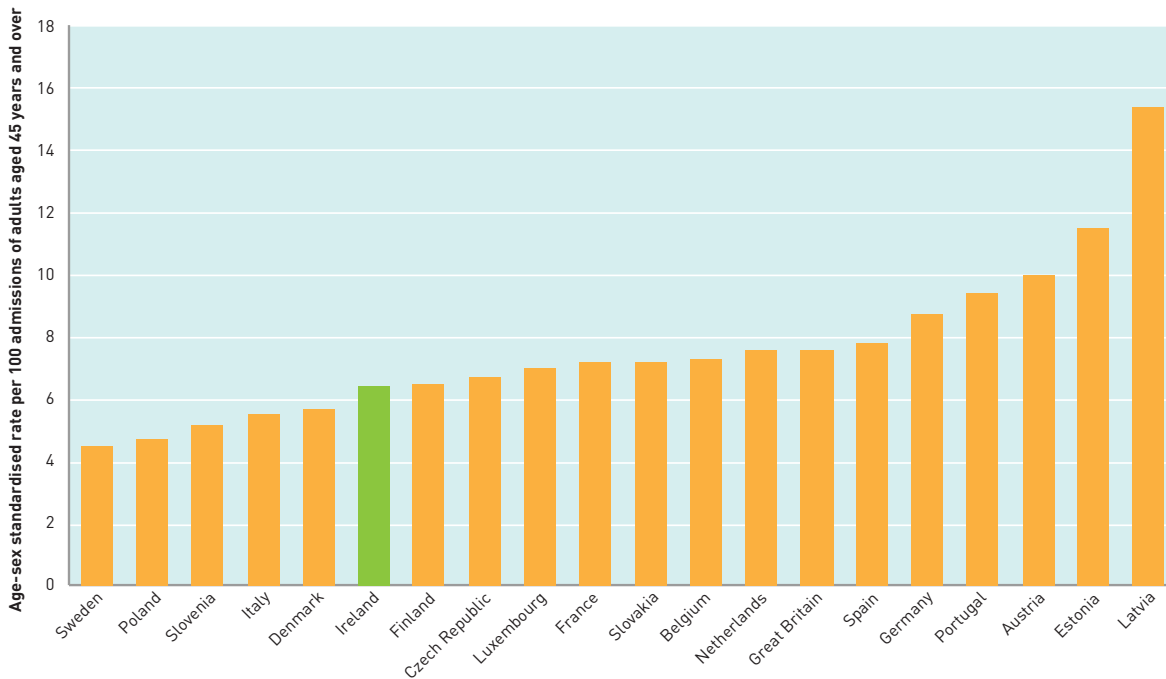


- Average length of stay in hospitals is a commonly used indicator of efficiency in the health system. All other things being equal, a shorter stay is associated with reduced costs. However, shorter stays do tend to be more service intensive and more costly per day. And too short a length of stay may cause adverse health effects.
- On a comparative basis, Ireland shows a low level of length of stay in hospitals (5.6 days in 2014), suggesting a relatively high level of efficiency.
- In most countries, including Ireland, length of stay has reduced from 2004.

## Mortality rates for heart attack victims after admission to hospital at the lower end for Europe

**FIGURE 63 THIRTY DAY MORTALITY AFTER ADMISSION TO HOSPITAL FOR HEART ATTACK 2013 (OR NEAREST YEAR)**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017

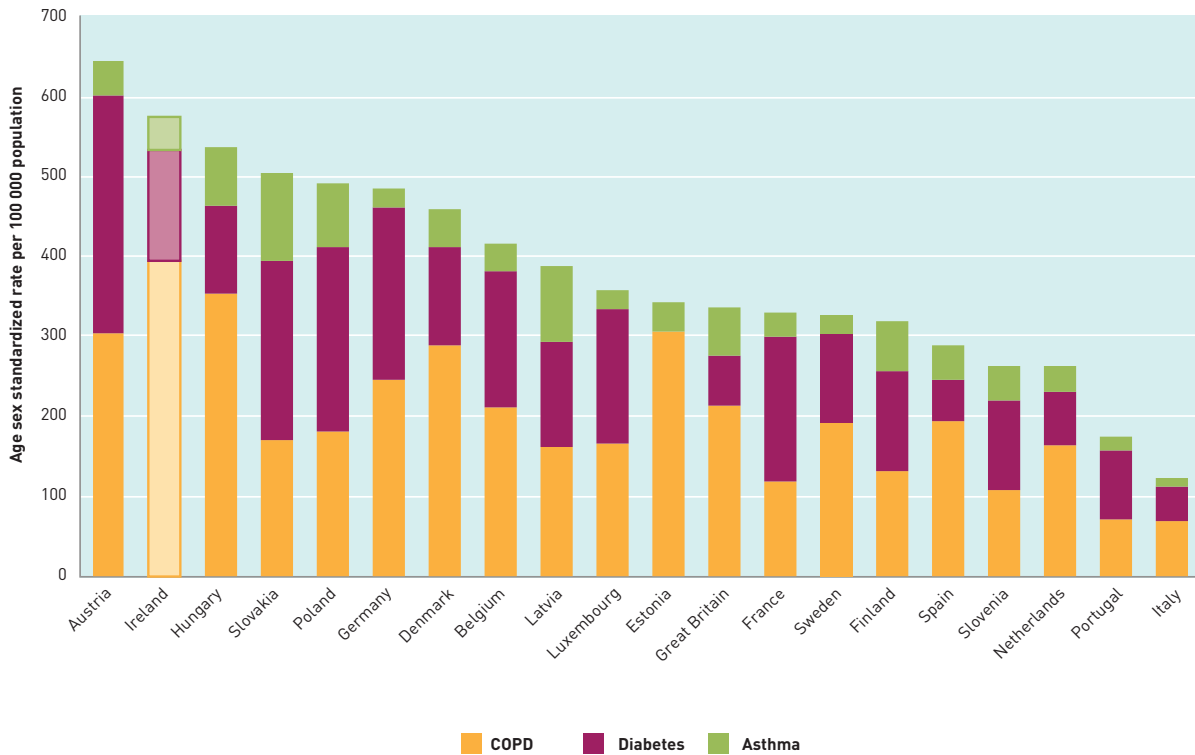


- Case-fatality rates for people admitted to hospital following an acute myocardial infarction (heart attack) have significantly decreased between 2006 and 2013.
- Case-fatality rates in Ireland fell by almost 30 per cent between 2006 and 2013. Ireland is close to but slightly better than the European average.

The rate of potentially avoidable hospital admissions in Ireland is high

FIGURE 64 ASTHMA, DIABETES AND COPD HOSPITAL ADMISSION IN ADULTS 2013 (OR NEAREST YEAR)

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017



- A number of chronic health problems such as asthma, diabetes and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) can be treated in the primary care system to avoid unnecessary and costly hospital care.
- The rate of potentially avoidable hospital admissions was high in Ireland in 2013, with only Austria getting a higher score.

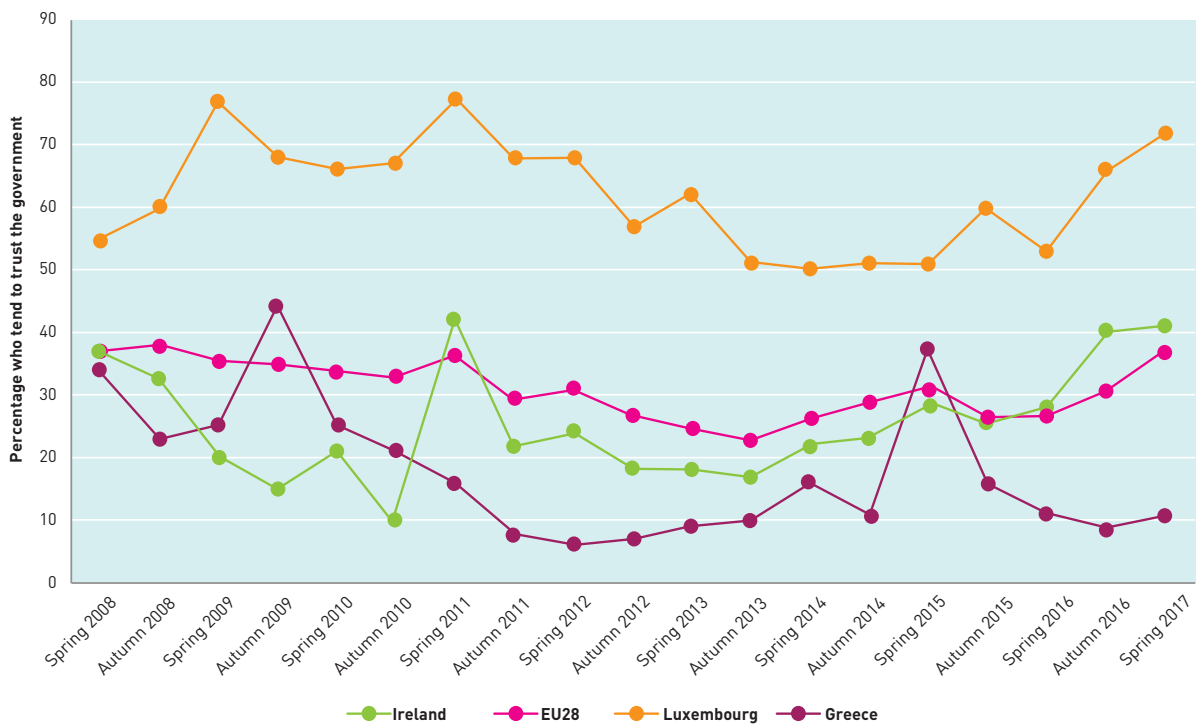
## 5. TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Twice a year Eurobarometer measures the level of public confidence in the national government and the national parliament. National government is not defined, and the extent to which it covers both political and administrative elements of government is unclear. But it is likely to primarily reflect levels of trust in the political parties in power at the time of the survey. Periodic surveys of trust in regional and local authorities and in different sectoral workforces by Eurobarometer are also examined, as are levels of satisfaction and confidence with police, education, health care and the justice system. Complaints to Ombudsman's offices are tracked as an indicator of confidence in public services.

## Trust in government continues to grow and is now slightly above the European average

**FIGURE 65 LEVEL OF TRUST IN GOVERNMENT**

Source: Eurobarometer

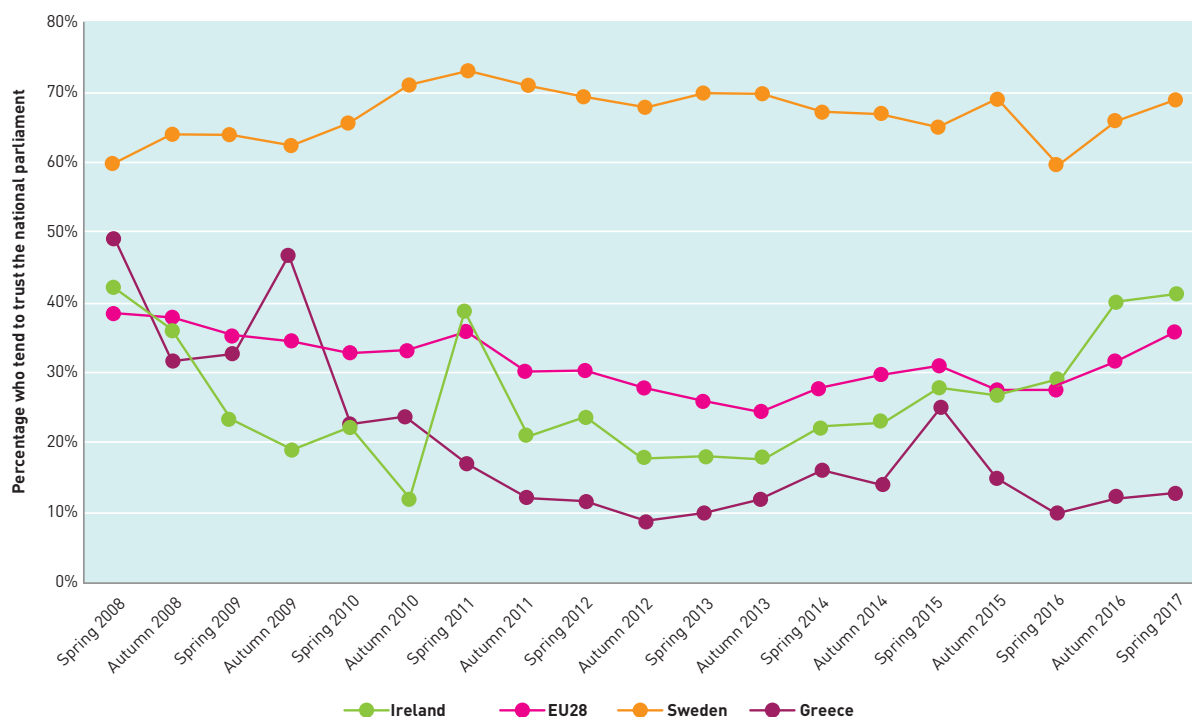


- The level of public trust in government in Ireland tended to be around the EU average from 2001 to 2008.
- However, there was a dramatic fall in the level of trust in government in Ireland from 2008 to 2010. Trust in government in the rest of Europe also fell, but only slightly. In autumn 2010, Ireland expressed the lowest level of trust in government of any of the EU27 (10 per cent).
- In spring 2011, the level of public trust increased significantly to 42 per cent expressing trust in the Irish government, reflecting the election of a new government. This fell back to 22 per cent by autumn 2011.
- Trust in government has increased since 2013, and 40 per cent of those surveyed in spring 2017 said they tended to trust the government. This figure is now back slightly above the European average of 37 per cent.

## Trust in parliament continues to improve and is now slightly above the European average

**FIGURE 66 LEVEL OF TRUST IN NATIONAL PARLIAMENT**

Source: Eurobarometer



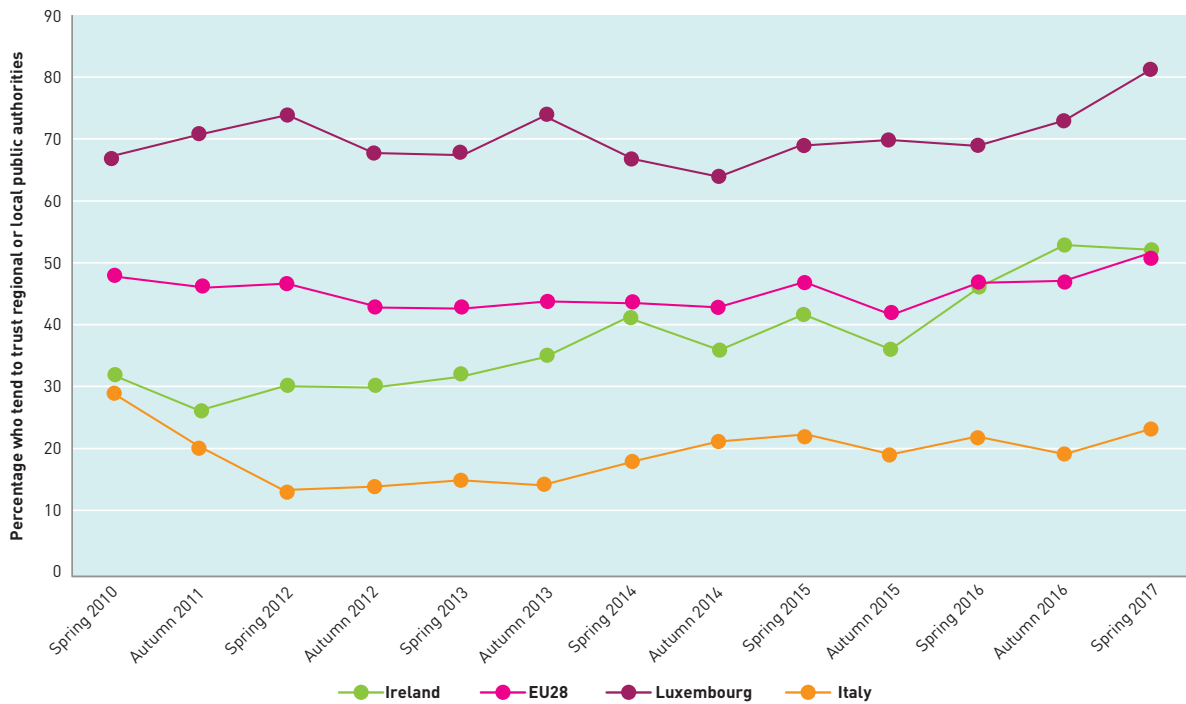
- Irish trust in parliament was around the EU average until 2008. From 2008 to 2010, as with trust in government, trust in parliament dropped rapidly both in absolute terms and compared to the European average.
- In spring 2011, the positive perception brought about by the election of a new government led to the proportion of respondents who expressed trust in the Irish parliament being back above the EU average, at 39 per cent. The level of trust subsequently fell again.
- Trust in parliament in Ireland has gradually increased since 2012 and following an increase in autumn 2016 stood at 41 per cent in spring 2017. This is just above the European average of 36 per cent.



Trust in regional and local authorities is at the European average after several years of being below the average

**FIGURE 67 LEVEL OF TRUST IN REGIONAL OR LOCAL PUBLIC AUTHORITIES**

Source: Eurobarometer

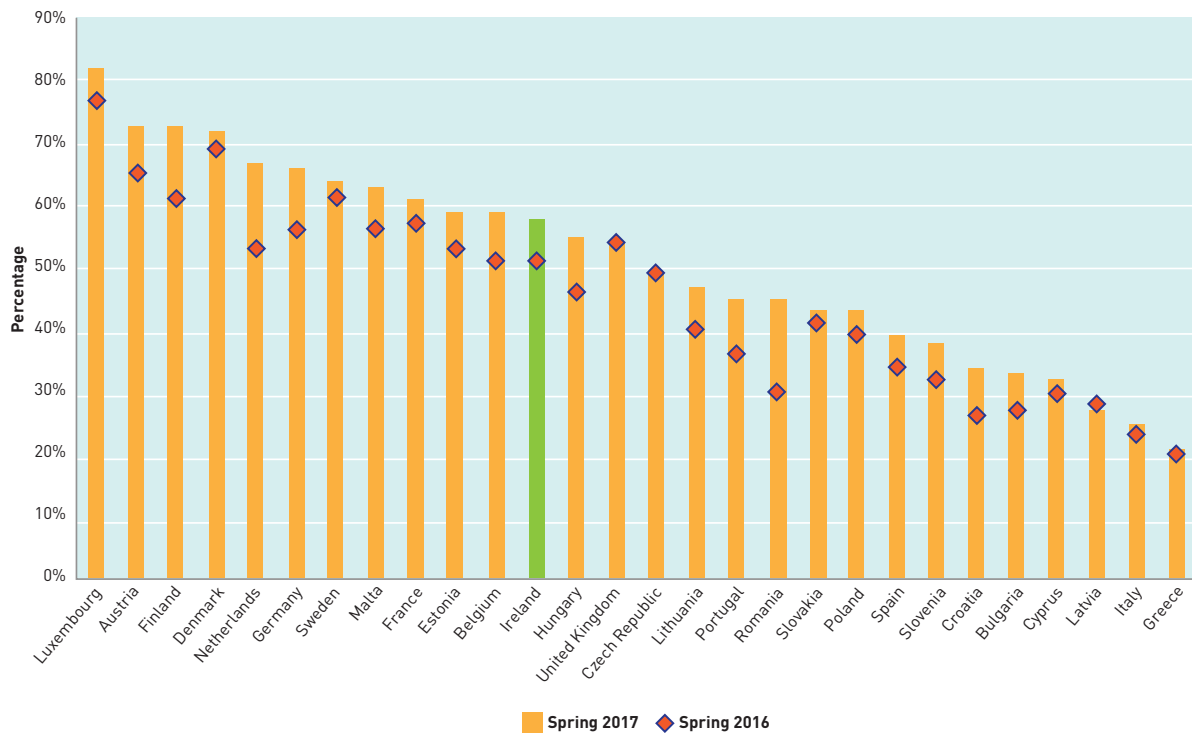


- The level of trust in regional and local authorities in Ireland was at 26 per cent in 2011, down from 40 per cent in 2008. It has increase since then, and stood at 52 per cent tending to trust regional and local authorities in spring 2017.
- After exhibiting one of the lower levels of trust in the EU in 2011, the level of trust expressed is now back close to the EU28 average.

## Trust in the public administration in Ireland is around the European average

**FIGURE 68 TEND TO TRUST - PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

Source: Eurobarometer

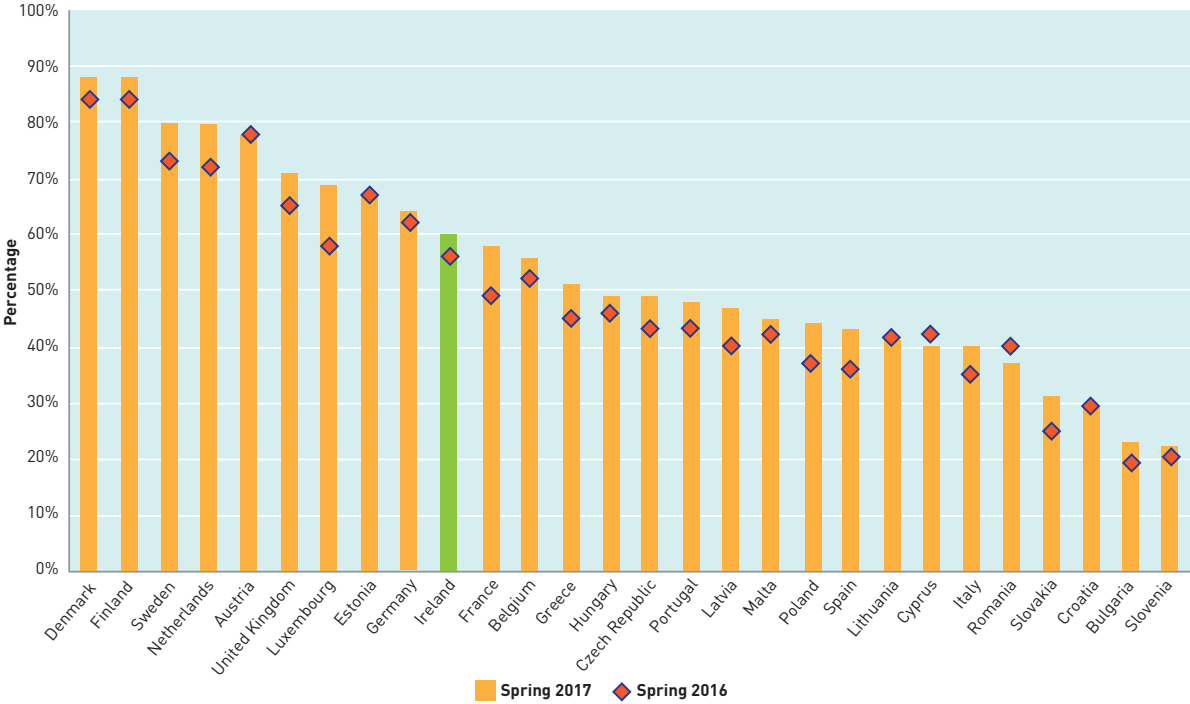


- With regard to trust in public administration, Ireland sits 8 points above the EU28 average at 58 per cent. Trust has increased by 7 points since spring 2016.
- Luxembourg ranks the highest in this category, with a score of 82 per cent. Greece is the lowest ranking country with a score of 21 per cent.

Ireland ranks slightly above the European average with regard to trust in the justice/legal system

**FIGURE 69 TEND TO TRUST - JUSTICE/LEGAL SYSTEM**

Source: Eurobarometer

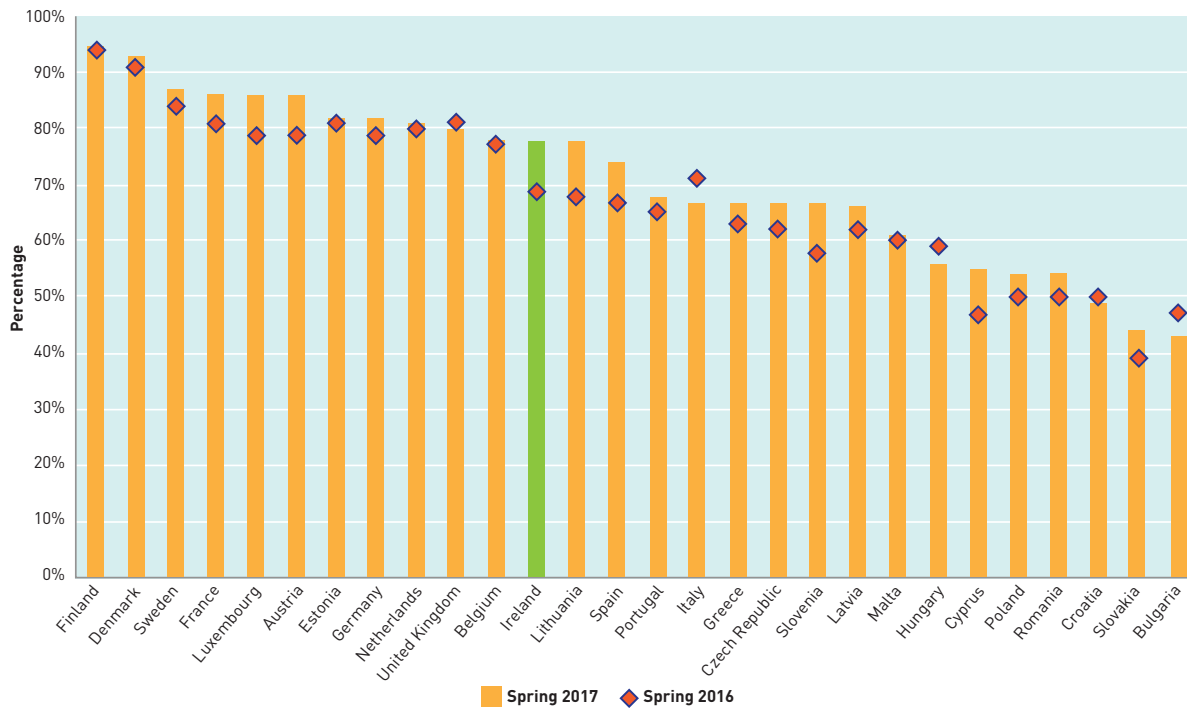


- Ireland, with trust in the justice/legal system at 60 per cent, ranks 5 points above the EU28 average of 55 per cent in this category.
- Denmark and Finland display the highest levels of trust with the justice/legal system.

## Trust in the police is just above the European average

**FIGURE 70 TEND TO TRUST - THE POLICE**

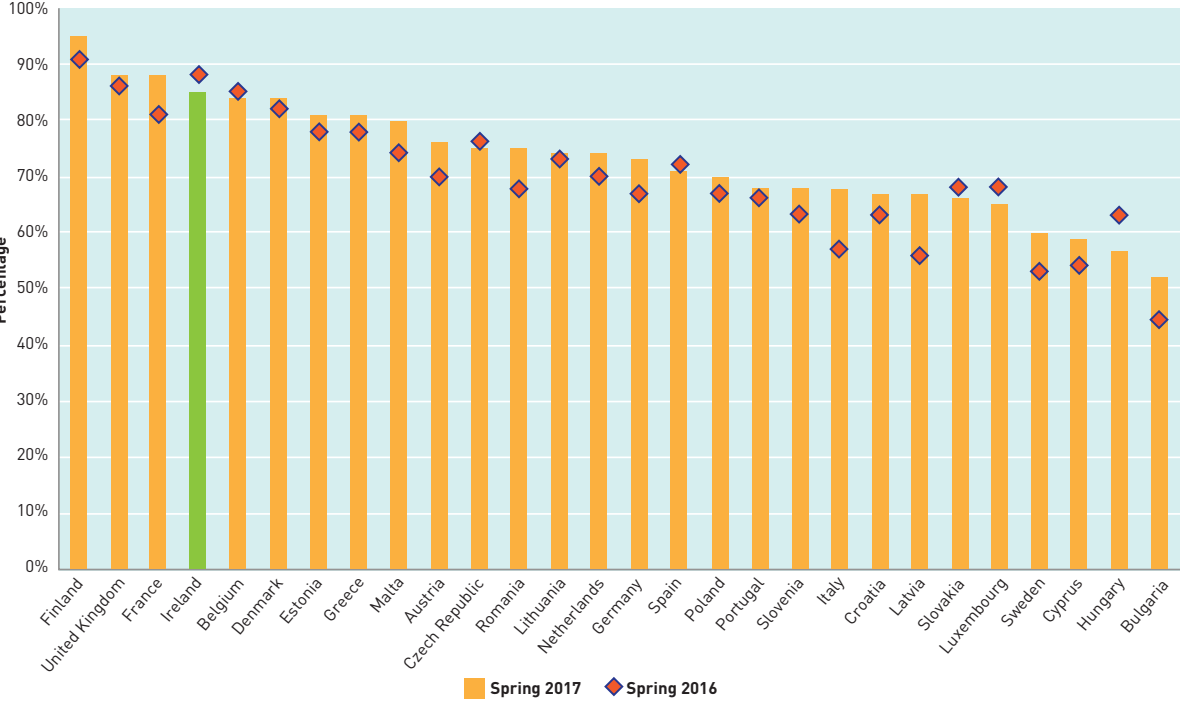
Source: Eurobarometer



- With regard to the level of trust in the police, Ireland is at 78 per cent, just 3 points above the EU 28 average of 75 per cent.
- Finland maintains the top spot, with a very high score of 95 per cent.

There is a high level of trust in the army in Ireland

FIGURE 71 TEND TO TRUST - THE ARMY  
Source: Eurobarometer

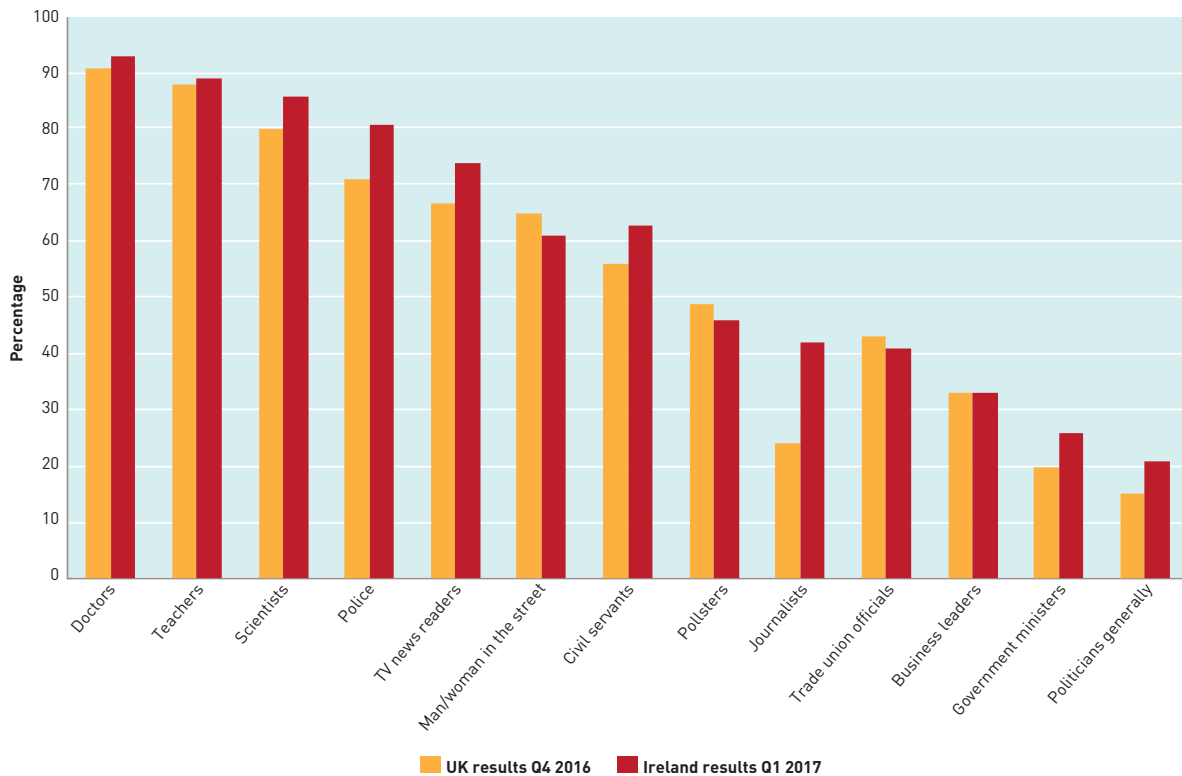


- Ireland is the fourth highest country in Europe with regard to level of trust in the army, with a score of 85 per cent, 15 points ahead of the EU28 average.
- This category had the highest average trust score of all the public services surveyed, at 75 per cent.

## Trust in public servants to tell the truth is reasonably high

**FIGURE 72 LEVEL OF TRUST TO TELL THE TRUTH**

Source: Ipsos MRBI/Ipsos MORI Veracity Index as published in Irish Civil Service Customer Satisfaction Survey 2017

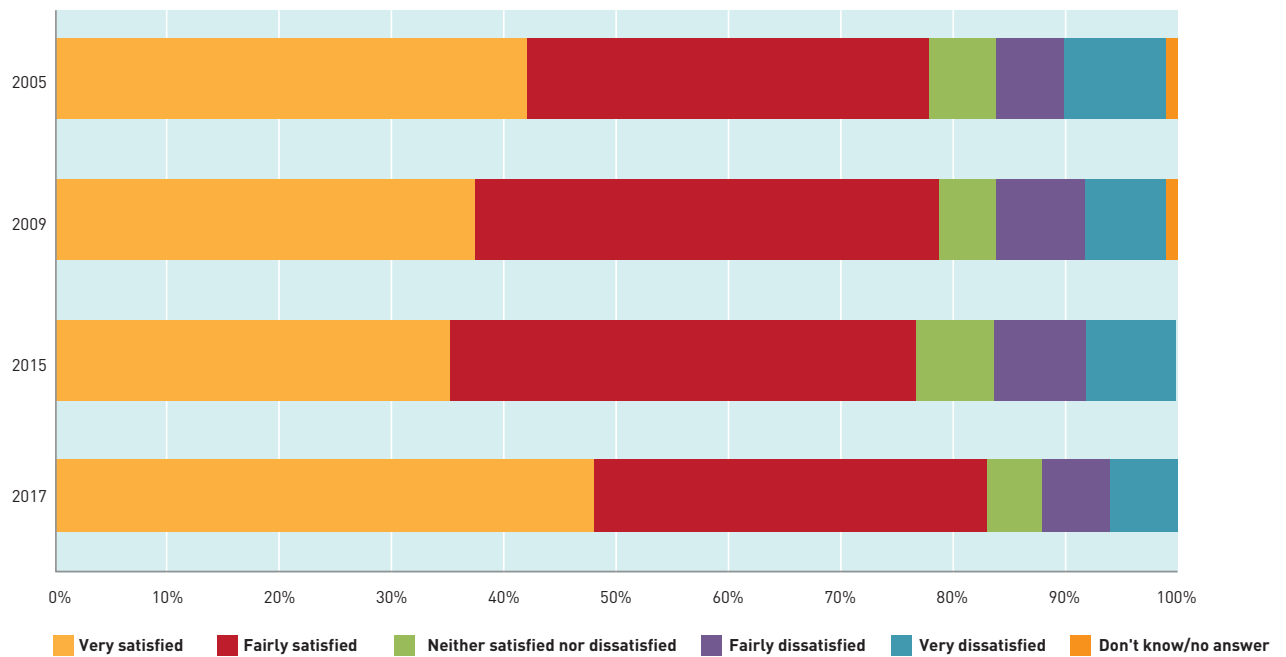


- In general, the level of trust in public servants is much higher than the level of trust in the government or parliament.
- There is almost 90 per cent trust in teachers to tell the truth. This drops to 81 per cent for the police and 63 per cent for civil servants.
- Levels of trust in Ireland are higher than in the UK.

## Public satisfaction with the service received from the civil service is increasing

**FIGURE 73 LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH SERVICE RECEIVED FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE**

Source: Ipsos MRBI/Ipsos MORI Veracity Index as published in Irish Civil Service Customer Satisfaction Survey 2017

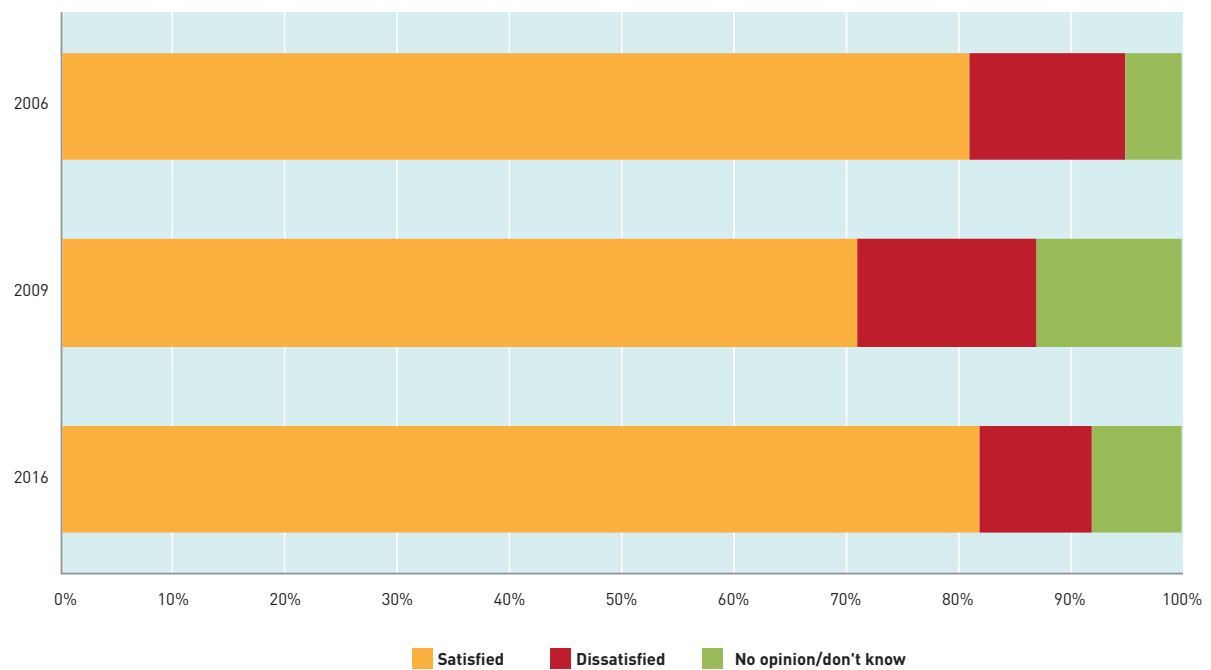


- Most members of the public are satisfied with the service received from the civil service. 83 per cent of those surveyed were either very or fairly satisfied in 2017. The level of satisfaction is higher than in the three previous surveys (2005, 2009 and 2015).
- 12 per cent of the general public were either very or fairly dissatisfied with the level of service provided to them by the civil service in 2017. This level of dissatisfaction is lower than in previous surveys.
- The main reasons given for dissatisfaction were that the process was too slow and waiting time on the phone/holding time/automated service.

## Businesses display a reasonably high level of satisfaction with the service received from the civil service

**FIGURE 74 LEVEL OF BUSINESS SATISFACTION WITH SERVICE RECEIVED ON LAST INTERACTION WITH CIVIL SERVICE**

Source: Civil Service Business Customer Survey 2016



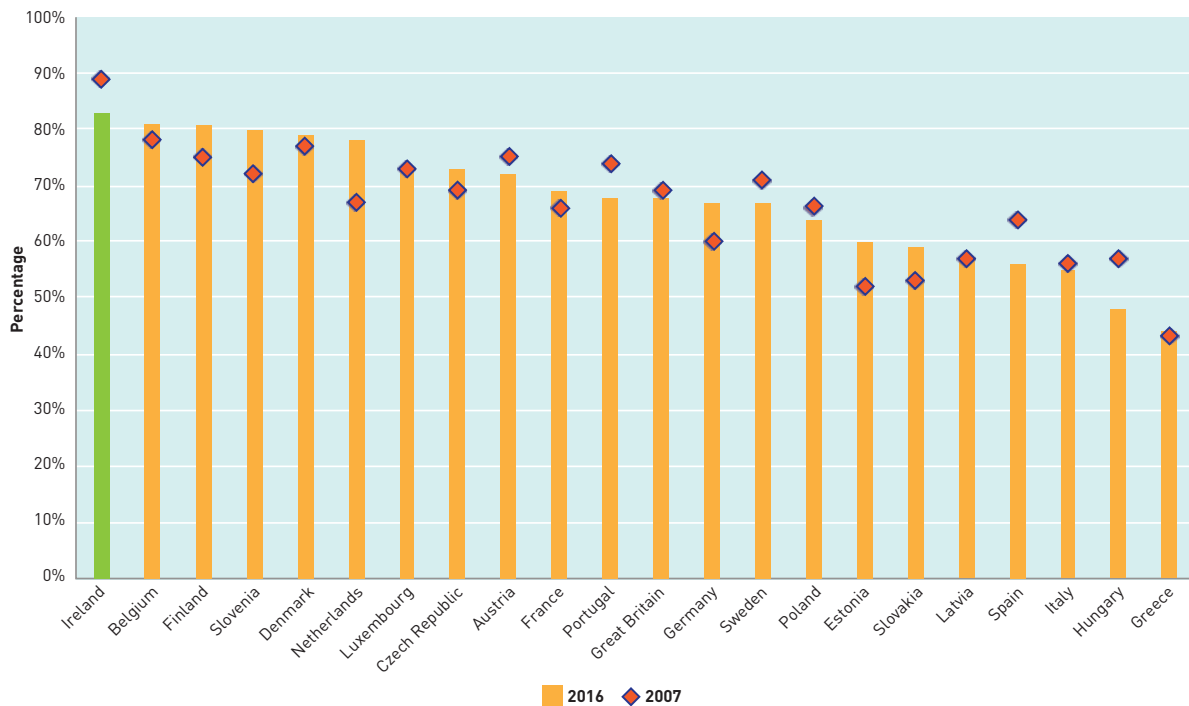
- Business satisfaction with the service received from the civil service stood at 82 per cent satisfied in 2016. This was higher than in previous surveys in 2006 and 2009.
- The percentage of businesses saying they were dissatisfied stood at 10 per cent in 2016, lower than in previous surveys.



## Irish residents are the most satisfied in Europe with the educational system

**FIGURE 75 CITIZEN SATISFACTION WITH THE EDUCATION SYSTEM**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017, based on Gallup World Poll data

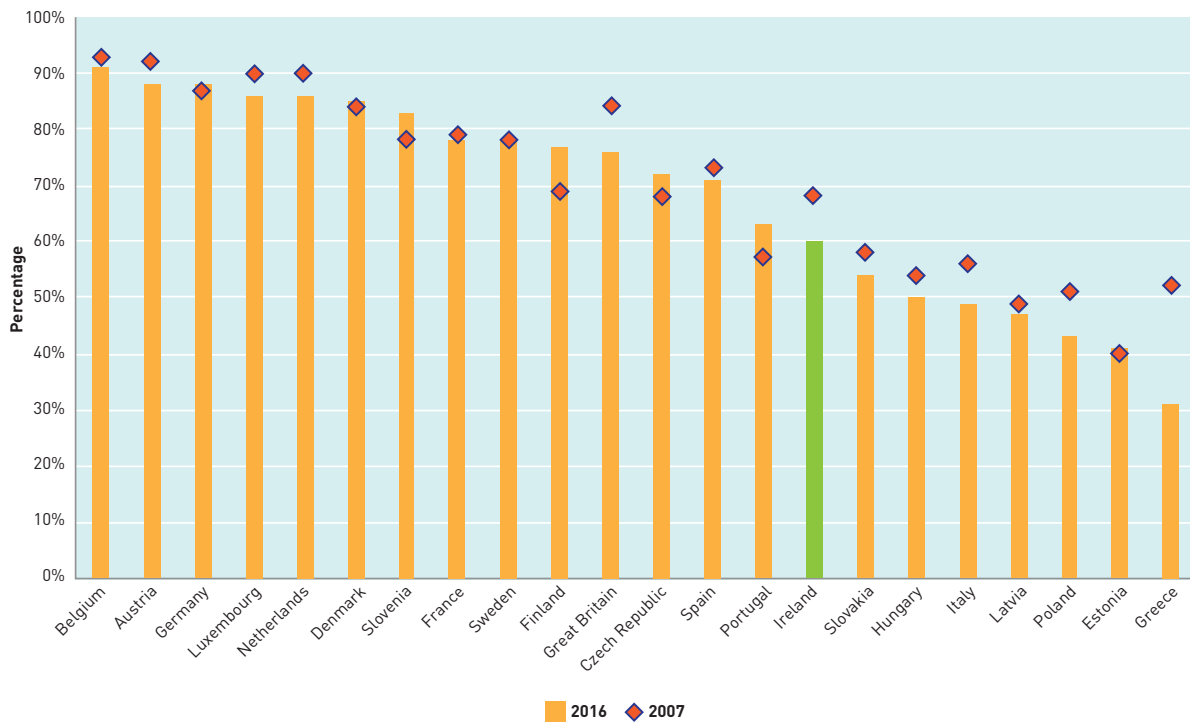


- Data for satisfaction with the education system and schools refers to the percentage of 'satisfied' answers to the question: In the city or area where you live, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the educational system or the schools?
- The level of satisfaction in Ireland, at 83 per cent in 2016, is the highest of all the European countries surveyed. However, satisfaction levels have dropped from 2007, when they were at 89 per cent.

There is a relatively low level of satisfaction with health care compared to many European countries

**FIGURE 76 CITIZEN SATISFACTION WITH THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017, based on Gallup World Poll data

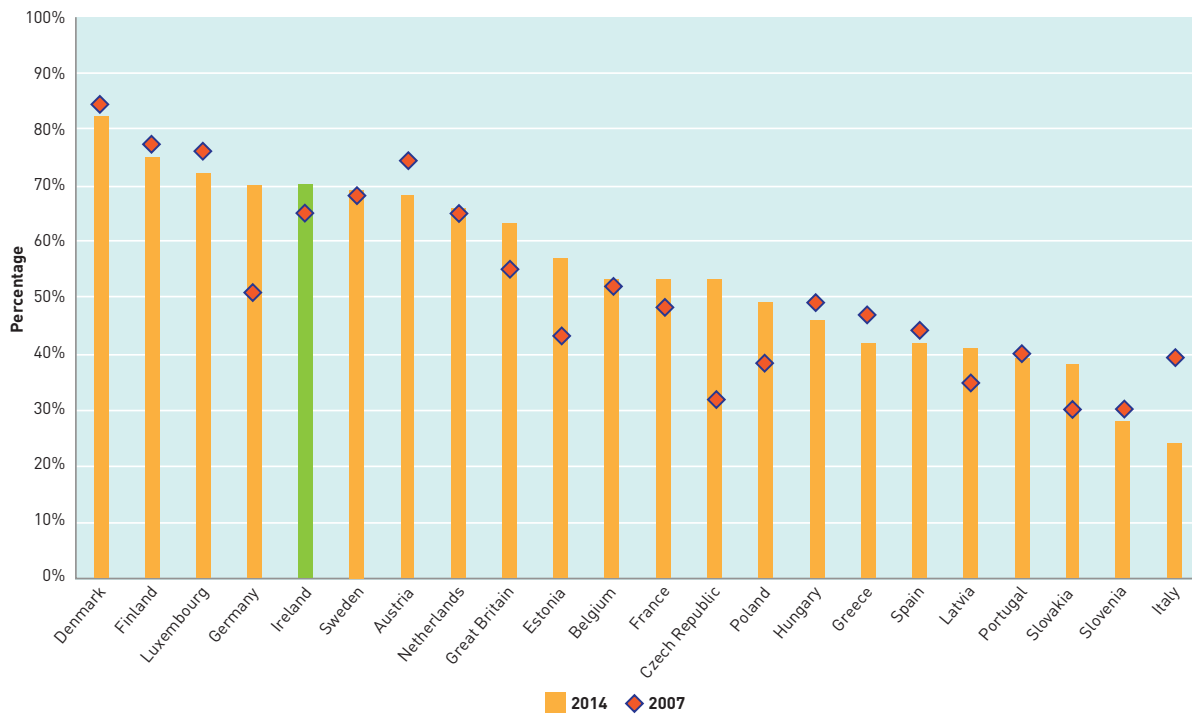


- Data for satisfaction with the availability of quality health care refers to the percentage of 'satisfied' answers to the question: In the city or area where you live, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the availability of quality health care?
- Satisfaction with health care in Ireland is slightly below the European average, at 60 per cent in 2016. The level of satisfaction has dropped from 68 per cent in 2007.

## Confidence in the judicial system and courts service is quite high compared to other countries

**FIGURE 77 CITIZEN SATISFACTION WITH THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM**

Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017, based on Gallup World Poll data

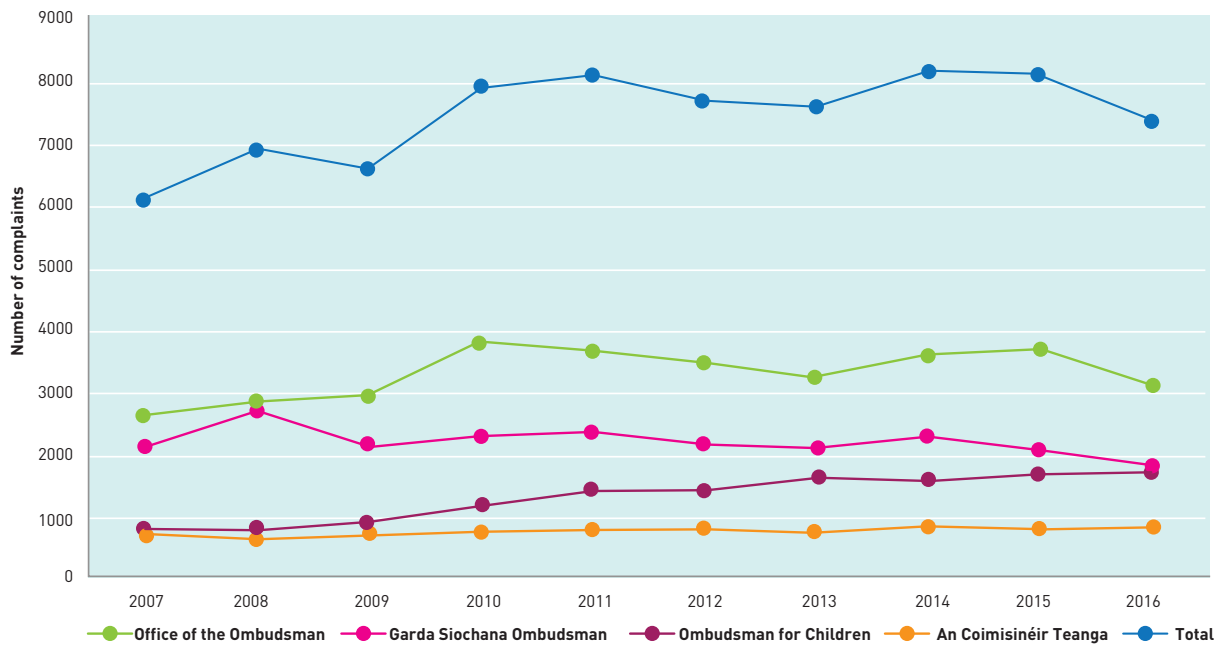


- Data for confidence in the judicial system refers to the percentage of 'yes' answers to the question: In this country do you have confidence in each of the following, or not? How about the judicial system and courts?
- Confidence levels in the judicial system and the courts in Ireland are quite high in European terms, at 70 per cent.

## Complaints to Ombudsman offices dropped in 2016

**FIGURE 78 COMPLAINTS TO OMBUDSMAN OFFICES**

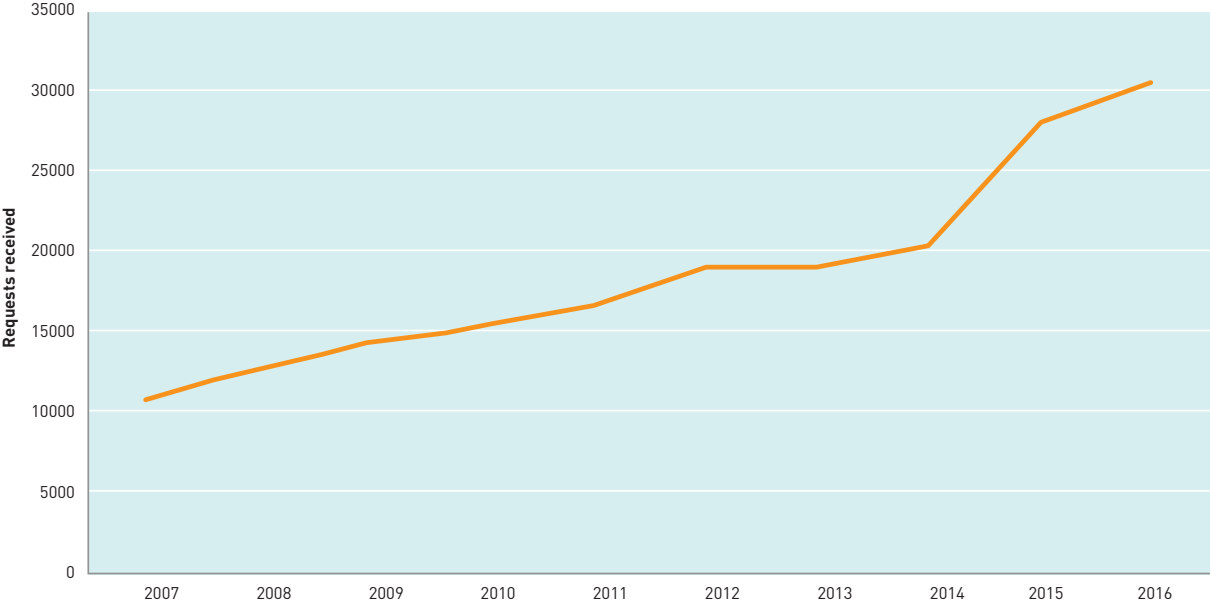
Source: various Ombudsman Office annual reports.



- The total number of complaints received by ombudsman offices dropped in 2016. From a high of just over 8,000 complaints in 2014 to 7,275 in 2016.
- The cause for the drop was a fall in the number of complaints to the Office of the Ombudsman and the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission.
- There was a small increase in the number of complaints to the Ombudsman for Children's Office and to An Coimisinéir Teanga.

The number of freedom of information requests is increasing over time

FIGURE 79 NUMBER OF FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS RECEIVED



- The number of freedom of information (FOI) requests stood at just over 30,000 in 2016.
- There has been a continuous upward trend in FOI requests, from just over 10,000 in 2007, with a large increase since 2014, when the Freedom of Information Act 2014 removed restrictions and extended the range of bodies covered.

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## APPENDIX 1

### INDICATORS USED TO MAKE UP THE IPA PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION QUALITY INDICATOR<sup>1</sup>

	Data Source and Indicator	Description
<b>Traditional Public Service Values Indicator (TPSVI)</b>	Government Decisions (IMD)	Government decisions are effectively implemented
	Justice Processes (IMD)	Justice is fairly administered
	Judicial Independence (WEF)	The judiciary is independent from political influences of members of government, citizens or firms
	Diversion of Public Funds (WEF)	Diversion of public funds to companies, individuals or groups due to corruption
	Bribery and Corruption (IMD)	Existence of bribery and corruption
	Favouritism in Decisions of Government Officials (WEF)	When deciding upon policies and contracts, government officials are neutral
	Transparency (IMD)	Government policy is transparent
	Wastefulness of Government Spending (WEF)	The composition of public spending is wasteful
	Reliability of Police Services (WEF)	Police services can be relied upon to enforce law and order

	Data Source and Indicator	Description
<b>Competitiveness and Regulation Indicator (CRI)</b>	Legal and Regulatory Framework (IMD)	The legal and regulatory framework encourages the competitiveness of enterprises
	Public Sector Contracts (IMD)	Public sector contracts are sufficiently open to foreign bidders
	Ease of Doing Business (IMD)	The ease of doing business is supported by regulations
	Intellectual Property Rights (IMD)	Intellectual property rights are adequately enforced
	Public and Private Sector Ventures (IMD)	Public and private sector ventures are supporting technological developments
	Bureaucracy (IMD)	Bureaucracy hinders business activities
	Burden of Government Regulation (WEF)	Complying with administrative requirements (permits, regulations, reporting) issued by government is burdensome

