

**FØRSA**



# **CIVIL SERVICE DIVISION**

**2019-2021**  
**Biennial report**

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# Covid-19 working arrangements in the civil service

The first pandemic in over 100 years has wrought havoc on family and working lives. We have lost many loved ones and the battle continues to control the coronavirus with a huge surge in community transmission after Christmas and a return to Level Five restrictions.

At the outset of the crisis a number of extraordinary measures were introduced and set out in a guidance document for civil and public service employers and employees which apply to all public service employees during the Covid-19 crisis. These measures were introduced by the Government for the duration of the crisis with the union being consulted on an ongoing basis right through to 2021.

What was clear from the outset was that we were not in a normal industrial relations environment. The union's response to measures put in place by the Government was set out clearly at the outset of the crisis.

Fórsa and its members across the civil, public, private, voluntary and semi-state sectors committed to co-operating fully with emergency measures necessary to contain the Covid-19 coronavirus, protect the health and safety of citizens and workers, and maintain essential services during this unprecedented public health emergency.

The union adopted the following formal position:

*"The union will continue to advise its members to cooperate with all necessary measures, including some that might not be acceptable in normal times, so long as employers consult with the appropriate unions, respect existing collective agreements, and reach agreement with the union if they feel it necessary to waive aspects of collective agreements in the short-term."*

Members were strongly advised to cooperate with management efforts to contain the virus, protect the health and safety of citizens and workers, and maintain essential services.

Unprecedented remote working saw over 70% of Fórsa members in the civil service sent home to work remotely. Although the circumstances were less than ideal, the union and its members reacted very speedily to adapt to the new order and thousands of civil servants worked productively from their homes during the first lockdown, which was announced by the Taoiseach on 27th March. Thousands more turned up at offices to deliver essential services. Many hundreds were redeployed to the HSE for vital contract tracing work, or to provide assistance on telephony services in social protraction.

During this period, unions negotiated a national 'Return to Work Safely Protocol' with the Government and employers through the Labour Employer Economic Forum (LEEF) forum for social dialogue. The protocol was designed to support employers and workers to put measures in place to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the workplace. It gives direction on how workplaces should adapt procedures and practices to comply fully with the Covid-related public health protection measures identified as necessary by the HSE. The measures include no-handshaking policy, temperature testing, intensive cleaning, and contact logs to facilitate contact tracing. Each workplace must appoint and train at least one "lead worker representative" charged with working with the employer to ensure that health and safety measures are strictly followed.

A resurgence of the virus occurred in the late summer. This led the Government to reemphasise its guidance on home working. In mid-August, the Government announced that employees should only attend the workplace where it is essential for them to do so, with employers determining what roles are required to be done in the workplace to ensure that important services continue to be provided to the public.

Flexitime arrangements were suspended as an extraordinary measure at the outset of the crisis. The union raised the issue with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER), which agreed to return to normal flexitime arrangements in late August for those based in the workplace on pre-coronavirus working time and attendance patterns. The union is now seeking the restoration of flexitime for those working remotely or in hybrid arrangements.

At the outset of the crisis, and on foot of representations from Fórsa and other unions, the DPER issued guidance that civil and public servants who contracted Covid-19, or had to self-isolate, would receive basic pay including fixed allowances from day one. It also agreed that coronavirus-related sick leave would not be counted as part of sick leave records in cases where a worker had medical or HSE confirmation of the need to self-isolate. This provision for special leave with pay continues to apply to employees who have positive Covid tests or are displaying symptoms and are advised to self-isolate. At the end of 2020, DPER adjusted the arrangement to limit special leave with pay to 28 days unless the worker concerned had been attending the workplace in the 14 days prior to a positive test.

Employees deemed to be at very high risk from Covid-19 continue to be facilitated to work from home to the maximum extent possible. Staff at very high risk can be assigned work outside their usual core duties, or given a new role, if they are cocooning but working from home in their current role is not feasible.



In January 2021, Fórsa issued a statement that said many public service employers were flouting official Government restrictions on workplace attendance under level five of Covid restrictions. The union said the national effort to bring the coronavirus under control could be undermined by widespread management failure to properly identify which workers need to attend their work premises to undertake essential functions. It added that guidelines issued to civil and public service managers fell short of official Government advice to employers across the economy. The intervention led to significant improvements in most sectors.

As this report was finalised, Fórsa was engaged with senior officials of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) after the union raised concerns over sick leave arrangements for staff who suffer from 'long Covid'. This followed changes to DPER guidance on Covid-related sick leave, which could leave some long Covid sufferers with reduced incomes.

In December 2020, Fórsa called for certain groups of civil and public servants to be included as key workers being prioritised for Covid-19 vaccinations.

## Remote working

In May 2020, Fórsa published detailed advice on remote working. *Working at home: Staying safe, connected, healthy and productive* contained advice on health and safety, setting up a workspace, breaks, staying in touch with managers and colleagues, and balancing work with home life and childcare. The guide also included useful tips on data protection, cybersecurity, and safeguarding mental health.

On 10th August, Fórsa issued the results of Ireland's largest ever employee opinion survey on the issue of remote working. The study, conducted on behalf of the union by Amárach Research, found that 86% of respondents were interested in working remotely. Over 80% of those who favoured home working expressed a preference for a hybrid arrangement.

Over 4,300 Fórsa members completed the survey. Seven-in-ten of those who had worked at home during the Covid-19 crisis said remote working had been a positive or very positive experience. Over two-thirds of those who had not worked at home during the crisis also expressed an interest in having access to remote working. Concerns about home working related to four broad areas: Disconnection from the workplace; work encroachment on home life; costs and the appropriateness of home work space; and health and safety issues. The biggest single negative aspect of home working, cited by 69% of respondents, was the lack of interaction with colleagues. Worryingly, just 28% of those who worked remotely said a manager had asked them about their home working set-up from a health and safety perspective.

Fórsa then made a very detailed submission to the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI) consultation on remote working. Informed by the union's membership survey, the submission made 20 recommendations and called on the Government to open a dialogue with unions and employers with the aim of strengthening the legal framework around remote working. It said employers should be required to set objective criteria for determining the tasks and staff selected for home working arrangements, and that employees should have the right to refuse home working without having to give their reasons.

The submission argued that those working remotely should benefit from the same rights, guaranteed by legislation and collective agreements, as comparable staff at their employer's premises. And it called for strong safeguards on health and safety, surveillance, privacy, data protection and cyber-security. It noted that additional household costs accrue from home working. "This was not addressed in temporary arrangements introduced during the Covid-19 emergency, but a different approach is required for long-term arrangements where employees are based at home for significant periods of work time," it said.

In January 2021, Fórsa welcomed the publication of the Government's remote working strategy, and called for engagement with trade unions and other stakeholders on the rollout of proposals to ensure fair access to remote working and proper protections for all staff, regardless of where they work. The Government strategy pledged to establish a legal right to request remote working, introduce legal protections on the right to disconnect, and review the treatment of remote working for tax purposes. It also confirmed the target of making remote working the norm for 20% of public servants. We expect other matters to be dealt with our central discussions including health and safety issues, provision of equipment and clarity on allowances.

As this report was being finalised, civil service unions have met DPER on a proposed blended working policy to take us beyond the pandemic.

## Economic and recovery measures

Fórsa, ICTU and the union-sponsored Nevin Economic Research Institute have all called for enhanced supports to workers, businesses and communities. Fórsa argued that the crisis had demonstrated what can be achieved when the State mobilises financial, organisational and human resources for the common good, when people work together collectively, and when citizens have equal access to essential goods and services. It called for a fundamentally different approach to economic reconstruction to that adopted during the 2008-2010 banking crisis. Fórsa and Siptu jointly drew up detailed proposals, which were submitted to ICTU as it developed its demands for a massive fiscal stimulus, with public investment across a range of public service and infrastructure projects, as part of a plan for Ireland's recovery from the economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The ICTU programme was published in late May as 'No going back: a new deal towards a safe and secure future for all,' which called for universal free public health care, a massive programme of public house building, a cap on the price of childcare, increased investment in education, and the scrapping of plans to increase the State pension qualification age to 67. The paper outlined proposals for a 'green new deal' to tackle climate change and called for higher taxes on wealth, as well as higher social contributions from employers.

Fórsa developed its approach to economic recovery with the publication of a detailed submission on 'Reopening the economy: The State's response and support for businesses,' which was presented to the Oireachtas Special Committee on Covid-19 Response in early June 2020. The submission called for business supports to be made conditional on employers' support for jobs that can sustain a decent income. It also covered a range of economic and workplace issues including the need for Government to continue to support incomes and demand, EU policy requirements, safety issues related to the return to workplaces, childcare issues, remote working and the organisation of working time, industrial relations and social dialogue, and Brexit.

Fórsa and other ICTU affiliates continue to maintain that public money allocated to businesses should be conditional on maintaining employment with decent pay and working conditions, including collective bargaining.

## DPER, Finance and Ombudsman branch

With the completion of the Building Momentum ballot, it was apparent that there was a need to reorganise some branches within the civil service division. This was primarily due to some areas no longer having a functioning branch while others had asked to merge with a larger area.

The DPER, Finance and Ombudsman branch will consolidate clerical and executive grades across these three departments, including the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) and the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the National Shared Services Office (NSSO). This work is ongoing with meetings and consultations with the relevant members with a view to building union strength in departments where there has been little activity lately.



# Incomes

The final instalment of the Public Service Stability Agreement (PSSA), which was worth 2% of gross pay, was paid with effect from 1st October 2020. The pay adjustment meant that, over its three-year lifetime, the PSSA has brought pay adjustments of more than 7% for over 70% of civil and public servants, with slightly smaller percentage adjustments for the higher-paid. Following the PSSA and earlier adjustments, around 90% of civil and public servants have now had their basic pay rates restored to 2009 levels. But most of their incomes are lower than in 2009 because of other factors, including increased pension contributions.

## Public service pay and conditions

Fórsa members in the public service voted by a margin of 94%-4% to endorse a new public service agreement called Building Momentum. Because of the level five Covid-19 restrictions on travel and assembly, the union conducted the ballot electronically for the first time. The outcome of Fórsa's ballot, which was announced in late February, was as follows:

Ballots issued:	67,527
Ballots returned:	39,457
Votes cast in favour:	37,828
Votes cast against:	1,629
<b>Majority in favour:</b>	<b>36,199</b>

Fórsa then backed the deal at a meeting of the ICTU Public Services Committee (PSC), which also overwhelmingly endorsed the agreement. Thirteen of the 17 PSC affiliates supported the package and the remaining four subsequently said they would be encompassed by it. The agreement came into force with immediate effect, and runs until December 2022.

Building Momentum allows for two pay increases, each worth 1% of annual salary or €500 a year, whichever is the greater. This means the deal is worth substantially more for lower paid workers in percentage terms. A third increase, worth a further 1%, is available for grade-based bargaining for all public service grades. This can wither be used to deal with issues affecting particular grades, or it could be taken as a straight 1% pay award.

Work-sharers and others who don't work full-time hours will get pro-rata adjustments based on the number of hours they work.

## Pay at a glance

### **1st October 2021:**

A general round increase worth 1% of gross pay or €500 a year, whichever is the greater. The €500 a year floor means those on lower incomes will receive a significantly larger percentage increase than higher paid staff.

### **1st February 2022:**

The equivalent of a 1% increase in annualised basic salaries through a 'sectoral bargaining fund'.

### **1st October 2022:**

A second general round increase worth 1% of gross pay or €500 a year, whichever is the greater.

## Sectoral bargaining

Building Momentum will see the establishment of a 'sectoral bargaining fund,' initially worth 1% of basic pensionable pay during the lifetime of the agreement. It's not possible to increase the allocation by proposing productivity measures. Neither can the process "give rise to unintended cost increasing outcomes."

The fund can be used to deal with outstanding adjudications, recommendations, awards and claims that are relevant to specific grades, groups or categories of workers within the various sectors of the public service. Alternatively, groups can opt to use the available allocation, or part of it, as a sectoral pay round.

The bargaining units - ie, the different grades, groups and categories subject to sectoral bargaining - are to be agreed between unions and employer representatives by the end of March 2021. Unions and management will then decide how the fund will apply in each bargaining unit no later than the end of April 2021. Management and unions would then agree proposals, which must be submitted to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DEPR) for verification by the end of June 2021. Payment would fall due on 1st February 2022.

## Haddington Road hours

Building Momentum also addresses the additional hours introduced for many civil and public servants under the 2013 Haddington Road agreement. This will be done through the establishment of an independent body by the end of March 2021. This body will make recommendations to begin the process of returning to pre-Haddington Road hours.

Roll-out of these recommendations will begin within the lifetime of the agreement, with €150 million available to commence implementation of the outcomes during 2022. Unions and management representatives will then engage proactively on what's necessary for the implementation of any remaining recommendations in the context of the 2023 budget estimates, which will be announced in 2022. Any successor to Building Momentum will deal with the implementation of remaining measures.

The proposed agreement cites a range of issues that the independent body must take account of, including the cost and service impact of addressing the HRA hours. These are set out in section four of the proposed agreement.

## Productivity

In common with all previous public service agreements, Building Momentum also includes certain productivity measures. It acknowledges the recent "unprecedented display of commitment, flexibility, hard work and agility in public service provision" and commits the parties to harness this momentum to meet the immediate challenges of 2021 and 2022. It says these include the continuing response to Covid-19, ensuring that schools remain open and addressing challenges that arose for children during the crisis, a return to normal delivery of health services, managing the response to Brexit, establishing the public service as the driver of best practice on remote working, and addressing digitisation.

It sets out measures to harness the potential for technology to improve service delivery, including engagement with new technologies, and streamlined, automated and redesigned processes and procedures, including remote working "where appropriate." It identifies the need for staff upskilling and retraining as jobs, roles and processes change.

It also sets out measures to improve access to services through reformed work practices, including enabling temporary reassignments where necessary and increasing the movement of staff across the public service where necessary.

And it sets out an implementation and reporting mechanism to ensure delivery of agreed reforms, including through sectoral action plans.

## Other measures

Building Momentum retains the strong protections against outsourcing that have been a feature of public service agreements since 2010. These include requirements on employers to present a 'business case' if they want to outsource a service or part of a service, and a requirement to consult with staff representatives.

Crucially, employers are forbidden to include labour costs in any business case. This is a substantial safeguard because discarding the labour cost provision would effectively mean the majority of business cases would support outsourcing and lead to the privatisation of public services regardless of the impact on pay, working conditions or service quality.

Building Momentum includes a commitment that overtime and premium payments that were reduced or abolished under the 2013 Haddington Road agreement (HRA) will be fully restored by 1st July 2021. This includes the abolition of the hour of unpaid overtime introduced under the HRA. The deal says any costs that arise from these measures must be managed within allocated overtime budgets.



Like the last public service deal, the Public Service Stability Agreement (PSSA), Building Momentum contains a provision to review the terms of the agreement “where the underlying assumptions of the agreement need to be revisited.” However, the union negotiators successfully insisted that PSSA language, which linked this specifically to a worsening economic situation, was deleted. This creates the opportunity to seek a review of the package if the economic situation improves beyond expectations.

Every public service agreement has included restrictions on industrial action, and Building Momentum is no exception. The agreement sets out a detailed dispute resolution process, including an “industrial peace” clause.

## Negotiating the agreement

Throughout 2019, Fórsa had pressed for an early engagement to shape and inform negotiations on the successor to the Public Service Stability Agreement (PSSA), which expired at the end of December 2020. The 2019 engagements took place against the background of strong and improving economic performance and public finances. At that time, Fórsa argued that negotiations should address the fact that public service pay movement had been slower than both inflation and economy-wide pay trends in the period since the 2008 financial crisis. The union also said any new agreement must be capable of dealing with sectoral and grade issues, as well as addressing outstanding restoration issues including working time.

However, a long hiatus in the engagement emerged before and following the general election, which took place in February 2020. The election was followed by months of talks on government formation and the new coalition Government was not in place until 27th June. In the meantime, the Covid-19 crisis had radically damaged the country’s economic and fiscal position, while pushing the issue of a PSSA successor down the list of public policy priorities.

Nevertheless, the June 2020 programme for government committed the new administration to seek to negotiate a new public service pay deal. It said the new Government’s approach to public service pay would “be guided by the State’s financial position and outlook, challenges in relation to recruitment and retention, and conditions within the broader labour market.” It also acknowledged the “important role” played by public servants, and pledged to ensure that “positive work practice changes” introduced during the Covid-19 emergency are embedded in any new pay deal, along with general productivity gains. The programme for government said the Government would seek a sectoral bargaining clause in any agreement, although it did not elaborate on this.

Following the formation of the new Government, the ICTU Public Services Committee met the new Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Michael McGrath, who agreed that public service unions and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) would engage in September 2020 to explore the potential for a successor to the PSSA.

Exploratory talks followed and Fórsa general secretary Kevin Callinan, who led the union side in the negotiations, outlined the union’s headline issues. Fórsa said the process must acknowledge the contribution of public servants, both during the pandemic and in the hard years following the 2008 banking crisis. The union also called for the talks to address outstanding restoration issues, including additional working time introduced for lower and medium-paid workers in 2013. It sought a mechanism for dealing with issues specific to particular grades and categories of staff, as well as an acceptable approach to public service-wide pay adjustments over the lifetime of any new agreement.

The talks were slowed again by Government preparations for Budget 2021, which took place on 13th October. Later that month, the ICTU Public Services Committee (PSC) expressed concerns that the time available to negotiate, draft and ratify any agreement before the end of December was running short. In a statement, the PSC outlined the real possibility that no agreement would be in place at the end of 2020.

Although exploratory engagements continued, formal talks didn’t resume until later November. Intensive negotiations then led to agreement on proposals for a two-year agreement. These were subsequently put to ballot and accepted overwhelmingly (see above).

## Pensions

Fórsa gave a broad welcome to news that retirees aged between 65 and 66 will no longer have to sign on to receive social welfare income support in the year between retirement and qualifying for the state pension. But the union has criticised the fact that the benefit will only be paid at a flat rate of €203 per week, which is equivalent to the maximum jobseeker's benefit rate. Recipients no longer have to sign on at a social welfare office to qualify for the payment, and can now take up an education course and still avail of the benefit. Prior to this change, workers who had to retire at the traditional retirement age of 65 were required to sign on and be available for work.

The union also welcomed the suspension of plans to raise the age for eligibility for the State pension from 66 to 67 from January 2021. Fórsa continues to call for an end to forced retirement and a return to a State pension age of 65, which was in place until 2014.

Meanwhile, the rollout of the proposed auto-enrolment pension scheme was delayed for at least a year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Department of Social Protection said rollout would put too much strain on employers at this time. When implemented, the scheme will see employees automatically enrolled into an occupational pension scheme, with contributions from themselves, their employer and the State. In a submission to a Pensions Commission consultation on the long-term sustainability of State pensions and the social insurance fund, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) argued against the privatisation of the scheme. Fórsa and other unions want it to be managed and paid out as a pay-related top-up of the contributory State pension.

It was confirmed that existing policy on the application of pay increases to civil and public service pensions will continue for the duration of the Building Momentum public service agreement. In the main, this means that pension payments will be adjusted in line with pay adjustments for serving staff. However, this is done in a way that takes account of the fact that, in a small number of cases, pension payments currently exceed parity with pay. This is because pensions were not reduced by the same extent as pay during the last fiscal crisis. Pensions are adjusted in line with the Consumer Price Index in the case of the single public service pension scheme, which applies to all civil and public servants who entered public service employment on or after 1st January 2013.

## Travel and subsistence

The standard rates of domestic subsistence were reviewed in 2019, in accordance with an agreed recommendation made by the civil service general council. As a result, the daily subsistence five-hour rate of €14.01 rose to €15.41, and the ten-hour rate of €33.61 increased to €36.97 with effect from 1st July 2019. In accordance with an agreed formula, and in line with changes to the consumer price index (CPI), there was no change in the standard overnight rate. However, the vouched accommodation rate for Dublin increased as a consequence of the increase in the ten-hour rate. There were no changes in motor travel or foreign subsistence rates during the period covered by this report. The current travel and subsistence rates are set out in appendix two.

# Working conditions

## Protecting workplace safety

From the outset of the crisis, Fórsa issued general advice to members on reducing personal risk and helping prevent the spread of the virus, along with guidance on the actions members should take if they showed symptoms. This advice was generally based on prevailing HSE guidance, though the union generally advised more caution for pregnant women and more vulnerable workers. Sectoral and workplace guidance was developed by Fórsa divisions. Union officials and staff dealt with thousands of individual member queries on safety and related matters.

In early April, Fórsa published specific guidance for members who were working in, or who could be asked to work in, environments where there is a higher-than-average risk of contracting the coronavirus. In mid-May, the union issued fresh advice on worker safety as staff began to migrate back to workplaces after periods of remote working.

Working through the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), Fórsa was at the forefront of the negotiation of an agreed national 'return to work safety protocol,' which was also summarised in the new Fórsa guidance. The protocol, agreed in early May, required employers to implement a number of measures in advance of staff returning to workplaces. At union insistence, it included a requirement for employers to recognise at least one Covid-19 lead worker safety representative, with more in larger employments. Shortly after the publication of the protocol, Fórsa won confirmation that civil and public service employers must abide by its measures, and that it would apply equally to employees who remained in their workplace throughout the first lockdown.

In January 2021, Fórsa issued a statement that said many public service employers were flouting official Government restrictions on workplace attendance under level five of Covid restrictions. The union said the national effort to bring the coronavirus under control could be undermined by widespread management failure to properly identify which workers need to attend their work premises to undertake essential functions. It added that guidelines issued to civil and public service managers fell short of official Government advice to employers across the economy. The intervention led to significant improvements in most sectors.

As this report was finalised, Fórsa was engaged with senior officials of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) after the union raised concerns over sick leave arrangements for staff who suffer from 'long Covid.' This followed changes to DPER guidance on Covid-related sick leave, which could leave some long Covid sufferers with reduced incomes.

Between May 2020 and early 2021, some 47% of Irish workplaces were found to be in breach of Covid-19 guidelines following Health and Safety Authority inspections. Almost half of the 5,000-plus workplaces viewed by the authority didn't have proper measures in place to prevent the spread of the virus.

In December 2020, Fórsa called for certain groups of civil and public servants to be included as key workers being prioritised for Covid-19 vaccinations.

## Working time

The Covid-19 crisis had a significant impact on working time and other working arrangements for tens of thousands of civil and public servants, staff in State agencies, the community and voluntary sector, and in the private sector. These included remote working, temporary reassignments to new duties, and the suspension of flexitime. Many experienced temporary changes to rosters and shift patterns, introduced to support social distancing and other public health requirements. Staff whose shift patterns were altered were generally rostered for fewer hours than normal.

In its submission to the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI) consultation on remote working, Fórsa argued that these developments should be factored into broader policy debates about the scope for reducing working time, particularly in the context of the impact of artificial intelligence and other new technologies.

As part of the response to the coronavirus crisis, flexitime arrangements were suspended across the civil and public service in early April 2020. At the end of July, Fórsa sought the reinstatement of flexitime for staff who had returned to workplaces and were back on their normal hours and work patterns following periods of remote working or changed working time. The union raised the issue with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER), which agreed to return to normal flexitime arrangements in late August for those based in the workplace on pre-coronavirus working time and attendance patterns. The union is now seeking the restoration of flexitime for others those working remotely or in hybrid arrangements.

## Childcare

In a submission to the Oireachtas Special Committee on Covid-19 Response, published in June, Fórsa argued that the Covid-19 crisis had highlighted shortcomings in Ireland's system of early childcare and education. It said that the inadequacies of the State's response to Ireland's high-cost, low-pay early years system was inadequate prior to the crisis, and called for the formalising of early childcare and education as a publicly-funded and publicly-provided public service.

While the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) and other public service employers had agreed to a number of measures to assist staff with childcare during the period of school and crèche closures, Fórsa and other unions were critical of the Government's response, most especially on childcare provision for essential workers.

An Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) report, published in early May, had also criticised the Government's response. It said that over a fifth of the Irish workforce were essential workers, and that 100,000 of them had children under the age of 14. It criticised Government proposals to provide childcare to 5,000 health workers as inadequate. Essential employees during the Covid-19 crisis found that most essential workers were concentrated in low-paid sectors like retail and non-professional health grades, and couldn't afford extra childcare costs.



# Industrial relations

## Transition to State industrial relations machinery

In late 2020, in a side letter emanating from the negotiations on a new public service agreement, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform recommitted to the transition from the civil service conciliation and arbitration scheme to the state industrial relations machinery, namely the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) and Labour Court. This long overdue development will signal a necessary modernisation of IR structures in the civil service. As part of the process, Fórsa and other unions are prioritising the creation of a new internal dispute resolution mechanism, which should incorporate departmental and general councils.

## General Council Staff Panel

Pending the transition to new IR structures, and in line with agreed rotations, John O'Flanagan and Kathleen McGee filled the chair and vice chair positions at staff panel in 2020. John O'Flanagan filled the vice-chair position in 2021.

## Arbitration Board

Pending the transition to new IR structures, Dan Murphy was confirmed as adjudicator and the following appointments to the Arbitration Board were confirmed: Loughlin Quinn (chair); David Denny (employer representative); Angela Kirk (staff side representative); and Gerry Rooney (staff side representative - defence). The appointment of former Fórsa national secretary to the board was an important and long-awaited step towards achieving gender balance on the board.

Cases that were processed, or were in process in 2020 are set out in appendix three.

## Equivalent grades committees

Fórsa established two equivalent grades committees following its formation in early 2018. One represents clerical officer grades, and another represents civil service executive grades and public service grades IV-VII. The committees bring together representatives of the grades, from across the union's divisions and sectors, to discuss and work on issues of common interest.

In 2020, the committees undertook electronic surveys to measure the experiences and opinions of members on pay, working time and leave. This process gleaned data from over 940 workplaces, and from thousands of civil and public servants. A detailed analysis has been submitted to the National Executive Committee, along with recommendations.

The committees are to be consulted on the sectoral bargaining element of the Building Momentum public service agreement, and they plan to further develop and implement strategies, and explore opportunities across the union's divisional network.

## Mobility

The application stage of the list-based scheme for HEOs and AOs went live in mid-January 2021. Agreement was reached on HEO and AO positions, which require qualifications or more specialist expertise, and this is scheduled to go live in March 2021 (See below). The offer stage for both the generalist (list-based) and the specialised (advertisement-based) schemes is on schedule for launch by end of May 2021. This will be in alignment with the rollout of the interdepartmental HEO panel. Fórsa also expects to commence engagement on mobility for service and professional and technical grades.

## HR specialist and generalist roles

Action 14 of the civil service renewal plan aims to strengthen professional expertise within corporate functions. HEO generalist skills are applied to different areas of policy and operations. These HEOs are essential and play an important role in the work of the civil service. However, this needs to be complemented by professional expertise in key functions such as HR.

Increasing the diversity of capabilities in the civil service, and the availability of specialist skills alongside core civil service skills, will improve our focus on outcomes, strengthen performance and enhance the delivery of HR throughout the sector.

There are a number of specialist roles that Fórsa believes should be available to HEOs who possess the necessary experience and/or qualifications, and who want to build a career as a human resource specialist in the civil service.



## HR business partner (specialist)

HR business partners work with teams, managers and key stakeholders to help build organisation and people capability, and shape and implement effective people strategies and activities within the organisation. They need to have an excellent understanding of the organisation, its strategy and customers, and a very good understanding of the people challenges faced by the organisation. HR business partners support and guide leadership through strategic business and people planning processes.

## HR industrial and employee relations (specialist)

HR IR/ER specialists require skills and knowledge to effectively manage employee and industrial relations matters in the public service. They need to have experience and insights into the complex public service IR/ER operating environment across a diversity of public service organisations and have sound understanding to the work and structures of the Workplace Relations Commission.

## HR administrator (generalist)

HR generalists focus on the transactional administrative work in HR. They can be involved in a wide variety of activities which vary from day to day. This role is to provide administrative support to the HR Unit and contribute to the continued development of the HR function, providing a high-quality HR service to the organisation.

## Competitions issue

Fórsa returned to discussions on competition methodology, interviews online and a review of graduate recruitment and ongoing apprenticeship schemes in IT and Revenue and consideration of other schemes.

## IT shared services

Discussions are on-going with DPER/OGCIO on the question of the centralisation of IT functions in certain departments, such as helpdesk in which we are seeking the right of members to follow their work. If discussions fail this issue will end up at the Arbitration Board.

## Civil service secondment policy

A draft civil service secondment policy is under discussion with DPER. Fórsa is working to ensure that the new policy allows staff the opportunity to apply for vacancies across departments. Once finalised, the policy should put an end to long-term secondments that effectively turn into permanent arrangements.

## Shared services

Since the 2019 Fórsa civil service conference, there has been a decline in the number of issues arising in relation to HR shared services. However issues continue to arise and, despite improvements, issues on overpayments continue to arise. The union is continuing to review services, and it took part in a high-level committee with senior management to survey the civil service and make ongoing improvements to services.

## Revenue Commissioners

Revenue's realignment project continued throughout 2019, as the union continued to express concerns in relation to some of the more controversial consequences of the project. With this came the establishment of regional IR fora to allow divisions deal with matters that affected them. These fora remain at an early stage of their development because of the Covid-19 crisis. Only time will tell if they will be constructive.

Fórsa has sought an in-depth review of the restructuring model. Again this has not commenced because of the pandemic. It is hoped that terms of reference will be agreed once we return to more normal workplace arrangements.

### **Brexit**

There has been a significant increase in staffing within Revenue's Customs and Excise division, to deal with the significant operational changes arising from Brexit. A 24/7 attendance pattern, with a 25% shift premium, has been introduced in Dublin, in a departure from the traditional enforcement allowance in that area. Across the country, staff in enforcement and trade facilitation continue to grapple with difficulties that have arisen due to Brexit, including shortcomings in accommodation, given the significant increase in staffing.

### **PAYE modernisation**

Brexit-related staffing increases have in some ways been at the expense of other areas of Revenue. There has been a significant decrease in the number of clerical officers working in PAYE and other tax areas over the last two years. This is due to promotions and retirements, and it has left a shortage of staff available to deal with calls from the public. A working group has been established to develop a fair and equitable roster system across PAYE, and the union continues to lobby Revenue to address the staffing deficit.

A mornings-only service, with a return to longer service at peak periods, was introduced to ensure that correspondence was attended to as well as phone queries. This has been a success.



### Clerical higher scales

Following lengthy discussions an agreement was reached on higher scales in the clerical stream. Approximately 350 higher scales are to be awarded. They will be awarded on a 50% senior/suitable basis, and 50% on a criteria basis. They will be backdated to 1st September 2019. On completion of this process, Revenue will enter discussions on a fair process to ensure that the backlog of awards does not reoccur.

Due to the significant number of cases involved, and due to current restrictions, this process is still ongoing. We are aware that Revenue have been engaging with candidates who meet the criteria under seniority suitability. The second phase, under the criteria basis, will commence after phase one.

### Covid-19 in Revenue

Public Revenue offices closed at the outset of the pandemic, along with all public telephone helplines except the employer's wages subsidy scheme helpline. Within a short period of time, around 80% of Revenue staff were working remotely - all of those whose attendance in the workplace was not essential to maintain services. The supply of equipment continues to be an issue, with staff continuing to use personal laptops and phones in many cases, though Revenue continues to source and redistribute phones, laptops and desktops.

In line with DPER's instruction, Revenue suspended flexitime and introduced an 8.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Sunday clock for staff working remotely. This was designed to facilitate flexible working arrangements for those with caring responsibilities. More telephone services were restored as the months progressed, and some staff were redeployed to the HSE to assist with contract tracing.

The Revenue Commissioners were tasked with the administration of the Covid-19 temporary wage subsidy scheme (TWSS) and, within the first six weeks of the pandemic, Revenue staff had processed over €30 million in payments. Over 8,000 employers have signed up to the Covid-19 wage subsidy scheme, which ensures that workers receive enhanced supports directly from their employer. Unemployment in the State reached 25%, and a significant number of those affected were eligible for payments under the various aid programmes.

July 2020 saw the introduction of the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS), which replaced the TWSS. The EWSS has been extended to run until 30th June 2021. As this report was finalised, some 49,000 employers, with some 537,000 employees, were registered under the scheme.

The Covid-19 restrictions support scheme (CRSS) was introduced in November 2020. It assists businesses impacted by Covid-19 restrictions. Eligible businesses can claim up to €5,000 in weekly payments. Some 97,000 claims, with a total value of over €350 million, have been paid to 20,900 businesses registered for the scheme.

## Department of Social Protection

The combination of work automation, record Covid-related unemployment, and high levels of staff flexibility in response to the pandemic has led to unprecedented workplace change in the Department of Social Protection (DSP), which led to significant industrial relations challenges.

Between February and April 2020, unemployment rose from under 183,000 to almost 817,000 as economic activity was severely restricted. DSP staff worked long hours to ensure that Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) applications were speedily processed. Over 600,000 PUP claims were put into payment in the first two months of the pandemic as staff were redeployed into PUP processing, the income support helpline, and other online supports. Staff from a number of Government offices and departments were redeployed into DSP.

Frontline members in Intreo Centres (ICs) provided face-to-face services to customers throughout the pandemic, with approximately half of DSP's staff continuing to work from the office. Fórsa and its lead worker safety representatives sought to ensure that the agreed return to work protocol was fully implemented.

There were still over 650,000 people unemployed as this report was being finalised. Although 100 activation staff were sanctioned, and 200 temporary clerical officers were assigned to PUP, staffing numbers have not kept pace with this unprecedented increase in demand and Fórsa continues to seek additional staffing.

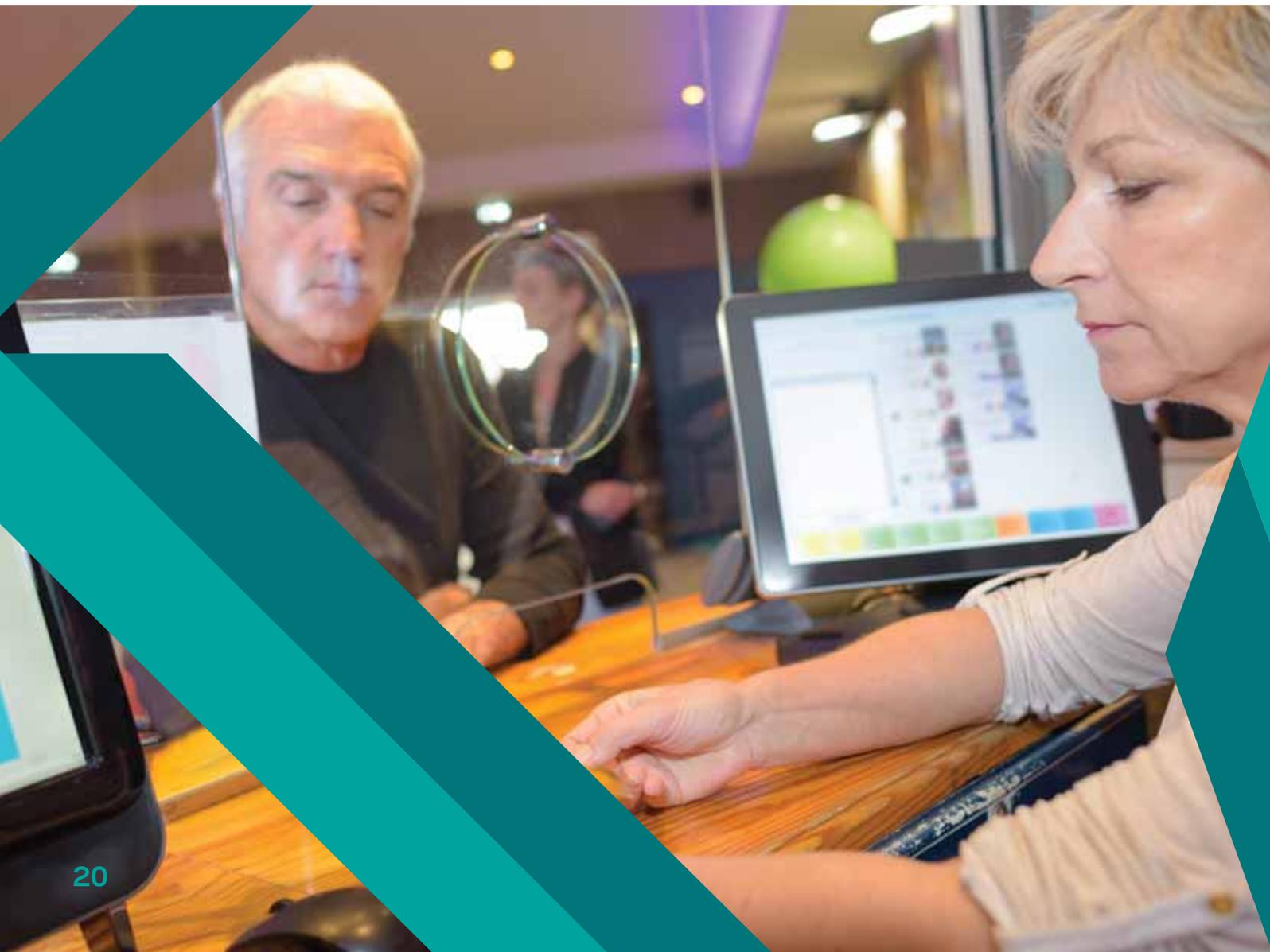
The pandemic has been particularly challenging for staff with caring responsibilities who were required to attend workplaces when schools and childcare facilities were closed. It was also challenging for those who worked from home with inadequate equipment and those with underlying medical conditions.

Fórsa constantly worked to increase the availability of remote working to protect the safety of customers and staff. While it is accepted that some services need to be provided on a face-to-face basis, the union argued that a lot of attendance at ICs was unnecessary because the essential services sought could be delivered remotely. As this report was being finalised, the union was in exploratory discussions on the potential for initial customer engagements to be done remotely, with appointments being arranged where phone, post or online services are inadequate.

### Front office/back office

Non-cooperation with the further rollout of front office/back office (FOBO) was implemented by Fórsa on foot of concerns including the future viability of smaller Intreo centres (ICs), staffing levels and restrictions on family-friendly initiatives. Fórsa and DSP attended discussions in the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC), which requested that certain elements of the FOBO model be examined further. Both the pandemic and automation led to changes in the rollout of FOBO.

Under an interim agreement, DSP has guaranteed that back office jobs will be linked to the local IC. This is a significant and welcome commitment, which will ensure that jobs remain linked to local communities. The interim agreement also provides for longer-term home working for up to 600 staff assigned to back office functions. DSP has reiterated that there is no intention to close ICs, and a review of the network is scheduled for next year. Fórsa wants the issues in dispute to be resolved in advance of further staff transfers to back office functions. The union has also said estimates of the numbers of customers who will transfer from PUP to jobseeker payments should be counted for the calculation of FOBO staffing numbers.



## Restructuring

DSP is considering moving from a regional approach to a functional model across parts of the organisation. The union has outlined concerns in relation to the possible implementation of a dual role and FOBO for community welfare and activation services. Fórsa has sought engagement, and has advised that cooperation will be dependent on clarification that the restructuring will not lead to job displacement and that reskilling and upskilling will be provided.

## Outsourcing

Fórsa has sought a significant increase in DSP staffing to undertake activation work that is currently outsourced. This matter will go to third party as DSP intends to retender for activation work. Outsourcing of telephony work is also set for third party adjudication, along with the removal of wall clocks.

## Third party adjudication

Assessment of executive officer inspector roles is to be carried out in line with an adjudication recommendation. Discussions are ongoing in relation to next steps on the Staff Development Unit (SDU) claim. It is hoped that further engagement on amalgamating records of former FÁS and HSE staff, who transferred to DSP with their functions, can be concluded in the near future.

## Department of Justice

A claim for a Sunday premium for staff working in the Border Management Unit (BMU) was lodged at Departmental Council in 2018. Following a number of bilateral meetings in 2019, it was agreed to engage an external facilitator, and Sean McHugh was selected. Agreement was reached on the payment of a Sunday premium in December 2019, but no agreement could be reached on arrears. This was disagreed at Departmental Council and referred for arbitration. Although Fórsa's statement of case and an HR response were submitted to DPER, the arbitration board has not yet considered the matter because of the pandemic. DPER forwarded the correspondence to the arbitration board in February 2021 and a hearing has been arranged for 24th March.

A claim for an on-call payment, made on behalf of immigration control managers (ICMs), who regularly receive calls after work, was lodged at Departmental Council in June 2020. Following a number of bilateral meetings, HR agreed to put ICMs on shift and to increase the numbers of ICMs as a result.

Competitions for internal HEO and EO panels were held in 2020. Following the 2020 change of Government, the equality section and direct provision sections were transferred from Justice to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY). The union made representations because this change would effect on staff participating in the internal Justice competitions. It was agreed to allow people to progress to the panel stage of the competition, and that successful applicants who were transferred to DCEDIY would have access to promotion in Justice until end of June 2021.

A proactive approach to remote working followed the outset of the pandemic. Staff carried out self-ergonomic assessments in their remote working locations. A survey also helped identify equipment requirements for remote workers. This is ongoing, and high-risk staff are being given priority.

A sub-committee of Departmental Council was also established to oversee the pandemic response in the department. This committee continues to meet every fortnight.

It was agreed that no more than 30% of staff would be in the office at any one time in circumstances where a workplace attendance was required. This was done on a rota basis, and split shifts were also introduced.

Many union activists took on lead worker safety representative roles. The health and safety officer maintained direct contact with them, which meant very few issues arose.

## An Garda Síochana

Both An Garda Síochana and the courts service categorised their staff as essential workers during the pandemic, and most staff continue to attend workplaces and have limited access to remote working. Various changes to work practices and attendance patterns were put in place, along with emergency contingency measures, to maintain essential services. Covid-19 response plans and worker representatives are in operation to ensure worker safety and service continuity.

Fórsa members in the Garda area played a vital role in ensuring the continued provision of administrative, professional, technical and industrial support services. Clerical and executive staff have experienced challenges in all locations including the Garda central vetting bureau, the Garda information services centre, the fixed charge processing office and the command and control centre.

Fórsa and Garda management are in continuing discussions about the move from a district to a divisional operating model (OP) structure. An internal Fórsa communication and representation structure has been put in place and divisional-specific information meetings were held. It has been confirmed 11 divisions will be implementing divisional plans in 2011.

Discussions on the civilianisation process are ongoing, and it has been agreed that dispatching in control rooms will be performed by civilian staff. Agreement has also been reached for clerical officers to take over the front office functions in Garda stations. These two initiatives, and other staffing projects taking place under the rollout of the OP model, will result in a substantial increase of civilian staff.

Fórsa has requested a meeting with the commissioner over concerns that implementation of aspects of the Commission on the Future of Policing could raise significant IR issues, including the possibility of Garda staff could lose their civil service status.

Other issues in the Garda area include:

- The completion of an internal HEO competition, with a significant increase in numbers in the grade
- Additional training for civilian staff and better induction structures
- The rollout of ePMDS to civilian staff, in line with civil service norms
- The introduction of critical wellbeing supports to civilian staff in challenging Garda areas
- A new ICT strategy to upgrade technology in Garda stations
- The establishment of new anti-corruption unit, with draft policies under discussion
- An upgraded call and dispatch system is being designed, with staff inputs, with rollout scheduled by the end of 2022
- Increased accommodation, with two new control rooms scheduled for Cork and Dublin, and a purpose-built building in Military Road Dublin along with increased accommodation works across the country as part of the OP model rollout.

## Courts

Fórsa members in the courts have experienced significant change and challenges during the pandemic, as several new initiatives and workplace changes have been introduced. These include virtual courtrooms and changes to Circuit Court of Justice (CCJ) practices, changes to public counter operations, limited attendance in court rooms, and the use of VLA for those in prison. The return of jury trials also posed a challenge, with jury selection taking place off site in some areas. Internal competitions continue to proceed at EO, HEO and AP level.

### Forensic Science Ireland

Fórsa has established channels in Forensic Science Ireland (FSI) to deal with the 2022 move to a new laboratory facility at Backweston. Following wide-reaching engagement with staff to identify the most pressing needs, a working group was set up to deal with issues with management. Fórsa continues to press its claim for the introduction of a senior laboratory analyst grade.

### Probation service

Fórsa's Probation Officers' branch negotiated a new workload agreement designed to ensure a sensible level of control of workloads. This member-lead initiative was a credit to the branch activists.

### Legal Aid Board

Agreement on the introduction of a new Departmental Council structure, in accordance with the civil service arbitration and conciliation scheme, was reached in the Legal Aid Board. Work has commenced on surveying the members to identify the most pressing issues and building a network of representatives throughout the board.

### Prisons

Prison service staff have continued to provide a vital service during the pandemic, and agreed work patterns continue to operate. EO and HEO promotion competitions are continuing to take place. Fórsa welcomed prison chaplains into membership in August 2020.



## Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

As in other areas of the civil service, the pandemic presented significant challenges in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM). The union responded with a comprehensive engagement with management at Departmental Council and central partnership level.

DAFM also appointed up to 180 general service grades to work in the ports as the impact of Brexit fell on imports and exports to the United Kingdom. These are mainly clerical officer-level posts assigned the title of portal inspectors. An organising initiative to develop union structures was put in place in Dublin Port, where new additional hires were largely new to the civil service.

### Clerical grades

Bilateral meetings on the outsourcing outcome required an adjudication ruling on outsourcing the sheep and goat census which took place in 2019 and 2020. A proposal has been put to management that would provide the necessary clerical officer (CO) hours to undertake the project. No response had been received as this report was finalised.

DAFM management dropped proposals for direct general service grade work in meat factories, and the redeployment of personnel in Kildare Street to other duties, following objections from the union.

Executive officer competitions have been held, resulting in promotions for former COs.

Acting allowances for CO-level portal inspectors who train newly-appointed staff were applied following discussions with management. The EO acting roles were time-bound and applied to those with service prior to 2019. This was recognition that the CO role is not a training grade.

### Executive grades

Following objections from the branch, a proposal by HR to redirect work from the general service grades was dropped.



A dispute over the appointment of a staff member to a HEO position in Dublin Port is the subject of discussions. A staff member from a professional grade was appointed to a post that should have been restricted to executive grades, and a claim has been tabled at Departmental Council. The claim is also addressing the imposition of an order of merit based system on the panels.

### Technical grades

The union has made progress on the number of area superintendent personnel assigned in the department. Progress has been made in placing members off the panel to appointment, but further work is required to bring the cohort to an equivalent level within DAFM.

Claims relating to the following areas have been processed:

- An allowance for technical grade members involved in the Vaccine Technical Team Co-ordinator (VTTC) scheme. (Disagreed report)
- Integrated Controls Division (ICD) claim for storage allowance
- An allowance for technical staff assigned to duties in the meat inspection work area. (Disagreed report)
- Restructuring of technical grade staffing within the crop evaluation/cereals/seed testing area, with a particular emphasis on increased numbers at Supervisory Agricultural Officer (SAO) level in line with other work areas. (Disagreed report).

### Professional grades

Fórsa's Agri-labs branch, Professional Agriculture Inspectors branch and Dairy Producers Inspectors branch were advised of a DAFM proposal to upgrade facilities following investment in modernisation of the department's regional laboratories. Meetings were held with members and management about a proposal to realign the divisions in the food laboratory. A joint negotiating position between the branches is being discussed.

Agreement was reached on promotions in the seed laboratory, plant science division, and on acting positions to higher grades while transitional and training arrangements are underway.

Claims are being tabled for the application of long-service increments to the pay scales for senior serological assistants and supervising serological assistants, who are mainly based in the Cork Laboratory.

## Department of Education

In October 2020, the Department of Education and Skills was renamed the Department of Education, and a new Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science was established. The new department is responsible for policy, funding and governance of the higher and further education and research sectors and for the oversight of the work of State agencies and public institutions operating in those areas. The union has engaged on the transfer of functions. Industrial relations and human resource roles will continue to be provided by staff in the Department of Education.

While most staff continue to work remotely during the Covid-19 pandemic, Fórsa has worked to implement agreed return to work safety protocols and procedures for those required to attend workplaces.

The establishment of the calculated grades executive office was a substantial piece of work. The office was decommissioned towards the end of 2020, but Government decisions on the 2021 Leaving Certificate mean a legislative change is needed to facilitate work being handled directly by the State Examinations Commission, rather than by seconded staff.

An internal HEO competition is currently underway, and the union is working to achieve an internal EO competition as soon as possible. Higher clerical scales have been reviewed and awarded satisfactorily.

### **State Examinations Commission**

Staff in the State examinations area came under severe pressure because of the Covid crisis, which required many to be on site to deliver the new Leaving Certificate model in place in 2020 and 2021. This included clerical and executive staff, as well as examiners.

The establishment of the Calculated Grades Executive Office saw staff seconded from the State Examinations Commission to the education department for up to nine months.

The programme of structural reform, including on-line marking, continues, and permanent staffing levels have increased by 23% with an additional 36 posts approved. From January 2020, 24 new permanent posts were secured with the majority being assigned to the examinations and assessment division.

### **National Council for Special Education**

The union agreed a new permanent structure with National Council for Special Education (NCSE) management, which sees the grade of special education needs organiser (SENO) reporting to team managers, and team managers reporting to regional managers. The majority of team managers are SENOS, and are also responsible for managing visiting teachers and advisors. Specialist lead grades have also been introduced.

The proposed introduction of a new special needs assistant 'front-loading allocation' model would change the special education needs organiser role, and Fórsa is currently in discussions on this.

### **National Educational Psychological Service**

Fórsa continues to engage with management on the scheme for the commissioning of psychological assessments, cover for absences, and opportunities for members to have the full range of workshare options. There is also ongoing engagement on health and safety issues as staff return to schools to carry out their duties on site.

The union is currently engaged with the education department on the skip increment agreement for members who came into the service after 2011. Neither the department nor the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform recognise previous agency work or service with 'section 39' employers for the purposes of the skip increments.

The branch has made great strides in organising and recruiting.

### **Inspectorate**

The union pursued, and resolved, a pay anomaly for early years' inspectors. The skip increment circular had not been applied to their pay scale, although it had applied to primary and post-primary inspectors.

The chairs of the unions' Primary and Early Years branch and Post-Primary branch were invited to participate on the planning of the Covid return to work safety protocols following Fórsa's intervention.

### **National Shared Services Office**

A working group has been established on the National Shared Services Office (NSSO) sites in Dublin, Galway, Killarney and Tullamore to implement Covid return to work safety protocols as agreed. It was important for the union to ensure that shared sites in Galway and Killarney had a NSSO presence on committees as there was a continued requirement for some members to be on site. However, the vast majority of staff in the NSSO continue to work remotely. The shorter working year scheme, acting up positions and higher scales continue to be issues for discussion with the NSSO.

## Department of Foreign Affairs

### Passport Office

The union has worked to find work structures that allow people to effectively manage their working and home responsibilities during the pandemic. This has been challenging because of the nature of Passport Office work, and Fórsa has made representations in a very large number of cases. A conciliator has been appointed to work with Fórsa and management to find more structured remote working options for Passport Office staff. Each of the three Passport Office locations has presented a different angle to the challenge but we are hopeful of a resolution.

### Assistant legal advisors

Fórsa has raised the issue of the misclassification of assistant legal advisors as a recruitment grade. Despite making progress within the department, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has opposed change. The union has referred the issue to arbitration.

### Development areas

A review of development specialist areas in Irish Aid has begun, following a 2019 restructuring agreement. Fórsa wants to ensure that Irish Aid structures are appropriate for the work that staff are tasked with. The union has facilitated consultation between union branches in relation to the introduction of a new development specialist officer grade at AO level, and continues to seek resolution to the outstanding LSI issue for development specialists.



An tAontas Eorpach  
European Union

ÉIRE  
IRELAND

### Rent allowance

Fórsa has sought the introduction of a review and appeal mechanism in cases where a staff member cannot find in-budget accommodation at their foreign posting. While the department has traditionally allowed such cases to be reviewed, there is no set structure in place.

### Maternity cover

It has been agreed that the department will provide maternity leave cover in missions abroad. This is a very welcome development and one that was the subject of union discussions in recent years.

### Vaccines

Fórsa has highlighted the issue of vaccines in situations where unvaccinated staff are asked to work in countries that do not have a vaccination programme. The issue has been raised with Foreign Affairs management and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. There has been some EU-level discussion that may lead to the inclusion of foreign embassy staff posted to Ireland in the Irish vaccine programme in exchange for Irish staff abroad being included in the local programmes. However, outside of the EU, similar progress has not been possible.

## Central Statistics Office (CSO)

Throughout 2020 the Statisticians (Professional) branch sought the implementation of a 2019 arbitration finding relating to the abolition of skip increments. A working group jointly chaired by the head of HR and a Fórsa assistant general secretary was established, but the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak delayed meetings from March until September. On resumption of the meetings HR introduced an element of grade restructuring which it said was necessary to get the proposed solution relating to skipped increments over the line with DPER. The branch accepted the proposals in December 2020, and the proposal was submitted to DPER. No formal response had been received as this report was finalised.

A number of promotions from CO to EO were agreed in Census 21, with the proviso that some of those promoted may have to be redeployed after the census. These posts were filled before the pandemic led to the postponement of the census. Alternatives are now being considered.

Field force enumerators were also affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with the result that on-line and telephone contact is now being used to gather statistical information.

A proposal for change in shift arrangements for tourist enumerators in Dublin Airport was received in June 2020. There were various objections from enumerators in particular those on part-time contracts relating to change of hours. Full-time enumerators also had serious concerns. Although a revised proposal was awaited, the union was told that no changes will take place until the pandemic eases.

## Property Registration Authority of Ireland (PRAI)

Most Property Registration Authority of Ireland (PRAI) managers were able to work remotely following the outbreak of the pandemic, but fewer staff at lower grades were able to. The union took the matter up in the authority and with DPER. Following this, management put in place a plan to increase the number of staff working remotely. But when PRAI was defined as an essential service under level five restrictions, public offices had to be staffed. Approximately 40% of staff were then attending the workplace on a rota basis.

Fórsa wrote sought an extension of the HEO regional panel and the regional mapping director panels following a discussion about internal panels at Departmental Council.

Digital mapping officers (DMOs) were regraded to the EO Standard pay scale in 2019, but a union claim for full EO terms and conditions was refused as the grades are not considered to be interchangeable.

## Valuation Office

Valuation management proposed changes to how valuers carry out their work in 2020. A number of bilateral meeting took place prior to the outset of the pandemic, which resulted in the suspension of site visits. Management used this as a means of utilising a building control management system (BCMS). The branch were prepared to operate the BCMS during the pandemic, but believe it is no substitute for proper site visits. Discussions are continuing.

## Tailte Éireann

Tailte Éireann is the new body that will amalgamate the PRAI, the Valuation Office and Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) from January 2022. A steering group meets monthly and reports are shared with all stakeholders.

## National Archives

A major Fórsa event to highlight the Fórsa Archivist's branch's report into the lack of State funding for the archives had to be postponed because of the pandemic. The union has also established consultation between management and the Fórsa branches in the archives.

## Houses of the Oireachtas

The Houses of the Oireachtas have remained open throughout the public health emergency, with most staff having to work from home and attend the workplace on a regular basis. Covid safety reps were elected to ensure compliance with safety regulations in the workplace and the return to the work safety protocol. The union wrote to management on numerous occasions to highlight staff concerns about compliance with safety measures when increased sitting hours were introduced. In January 2021, Fórsa and the AHCPS wrote jointly to the Ceann Comhairle on the matter. The two unions are continuing to work together on the issue.



### **Oireachtas ushers**

Oireachtas ushers have continued to attend work throughout the pandemic. Despite a difficult relationship with management, the branch achieved the restoration of an allowance in line with the PSSA, and members received the outstanding restoration elements just before Christmas. The union also secured a long-sought senior usher allowance, which was awarded through an application process agreed through the union.

The provision of health and safety equipment also emerged as an issue, as did safe rostering, adherence to previous agreements, the rollout of a new system for recording attendance and the use of the convention centre.

In late 2020, Fórsa and management agreed that an independent review of operations in this area should take place, with particular regard to the rostering system. The review, which began in February 2021, is led by former Labour Court chairperson Kevin Duffy.

## **Department of Transport**

In mid-2020, management wrote to the staff side concerning the outsourcing of media monitoring. No consultation was sought. Fórsa wrote to management saying this was a clear breach of the PSSA. Management did not accept this, but only agreed to engage when the union said it would refer the matter to the PSSA oversight body. After two separate pilots and numerous meetings, management concluded that the service could not return to the department. Fórsa is now seeking compensation for loss of earnings for the affected members.

The union has sought clarification from management on an outstanding issue regarding liabilities at HEO level.

In late 2020, management attempted to impose pre-selection rather than preliminary interviews for an upcoming internal EO competition. This was rigorously opposed by the union. Interviews will now take place on-line after a local union representative was involved in the initial testing of the IT system.

## **Department of An Taoiseach**

Outstanding issues of secondment policy and extending the numbers of panels remained on the Departmental Council agenda in 2020 and 2021. Due to the redrafting of a civil service secondment policy, it was decided that this issue will be led by central policy. The extension of the number on panels was achieved in late 2020.

Prior to Christmas 2020, the Office of Government Procurement (OGP), which falls under DPER, published a review of the running of the department. Management said Fórsa and the AHCPs had been consulted, but this was not the case and both unions formally raised the issue. Meetings are ongoing.

# APPENDICES

# Appendix one: Pay scales

Revision of salaries with effect from 1st October 2020 unless otherwise stated.

## General service grades: staff appointed after 6th April 1995

Secretary general I (PPC)  
211,742

Secretary general II (PPC)  
211,742

Secretary general III (PPC)  
200,598

Deputy secretary (PPC)  
183,882

Assistant secretary (PPC)  
142,421 - 148,892 - 155,908 - 162,920

Principal higher (PPC)  
95,661 - 99,490 - 103,337 - 107,177 -  
110,452 - LSI 1 113,901 - LSI 2 117,352

Principal (PPC)  
89,072 - 92,738 - 96,377 - 100,044 - 103,136  
- LSI 1 106,343 - LSI 2 109,547

Assistant principal higher (PPC)  
75,549 - 78,323 - 81,102 - 83,879 - 86,658 -  
88,281 - LSI 1 91,036 - LSI 2 93,800

Assistant principal (PPC)  
69,012 - 71,506 - 73,988 - 76,477 - 78,959 -  
80,392 - LSI 1 82,899 - LSI 2 85,415

Administrative officer (PPC)  
33,053 - 35,546 - 36,257 - 39,378 - 43,372 -  
46,412 - 49,454 - 52,505 - 55,547 - 58,578 -  
LSI 1 60,679 - LSI 2 62,776

Administrative officer higher scale (PPC)  
46,412 - 49,454 - 52,505 - 55,547 - 58,578 -  
60,679 - 62,747 - 64,818

Higher executive officer (PPC)  
49,845 - 51,303 - 52,756 - 54,210 - 55,669 -  
57,123 - 58,578 - LSI 1 60,679 - LSI 2 62,776

Higher executive officer higher scale (PPC)  
52,756 - 54,210 - 55,669 - 57,123 - 58,578 -  
60,679 - 62,055 - LSI 1 63,436 - LSI 2 64,818

Executive officer (PPC)  
30,884 - 32,677 - 33,689 - 35,664 - 37,436 -  
39,148 - 40,854 - 42,525 - 44,213 - 45,853 -  
47,546 - 48,666 - LSI 1 50,259 - LSI 2 51,851

Executive officer higher scale (PPC)  
33,689 - 35,664 - 37,436 - 39,148 - 40,854 -  
42,525 - 44,213 - 45,853 - 47,546 - 48,666 -  
50,259 - 51,444 - 52,631 - 53,821

Clerical officer (PPC)  
24,586 (471.20) - 26,195 (502.02) - 26,604  
(509.85) - 27,401 (525.13) - 28,577 (547.67) -  
29,751 (570.17) - 30,925 (592.67) - 31,781  
(609.05) - 32,747 (627.60) - 33,873 (649.16) -  
34,665 (664.35) - 35,779 (685.68) - 36,885  
(706.90) - 38,612 (739.99) - LSI 1 39,970  
(766.01) - LSI 2 40,592 (777.93)

Clerical officer higher scale (PPC)  
27,401 (525.13) - 28,577 (547.67) - 29,751  
(570.17) - 30,925 (592.67) - 31,781 (609.05) -  
32,747 (627.60) - 33,873 (649.16) - 34,665  
(664.35) - 35,779 (685.68) - 36,885 (706.90) -  
38,612 (739.99) - 39,970 (766.01) - 40,592  
(777.93) - 41,433 (794.05)

Head services officer (PPC)  
626.46 - 643.37 - 656.08 - 676.79 - 696.59 -  
716.40 - LSI 1 740.01 - LSI 2 766.02

**Services officer (PPC)**

442.99 - 469.40 - 479.37 - 500.44 - 519.26 -  
530.52 - 543.70 - 559.55 - 586.64 - LSI 1  
600.04 - LSI 2 621.36

**Services attendant (PPC)**

436.99 - 454.92 - 479.37 - 487.13 - 503.18 -  
522.01 - 538.43 - 556.91 - 579.63 - LSI 1  
598.18 - LSI 2 613.70

**Cleaner (PPC)**

423.01 - 450.83 - 458.61 - 476.79 - 498.63 -  
LSI 1 512.13 - LSI 2 525.68

## Grades common to two or more departments

**Engineer grade I and professional accountant grade I (PPC)**

72,578 - 74,772 - 76,974 - 79,171 - 81,365 -  
83,976 - LSI 1 86,947 - LSI 2 89,921

**Engineer grade II and professional accountant grade II (PPC)**

63,275 - 64,720 - 66,163 - 67,612 - 69,056 -  
69,441 - 70,845 - 72,268 - LSI 1 74,584 - LSI 2  
76,907

**Engineer grade III and professional accountant grade III (PPC)**

32,321 - 34,650 - 35,274 - 38,383 - 41,502 -  
44,622 - 47,743 - 49,670 - 51,592 - 53,526 -  
55,447 - 57,374 - 61,159 - 63,159 - LSI 1  
65,302 - LSI 2 67,440

**State solicitor and prosecution solicitor (PPC)**

33,370 - 35,885 - 36,606 - 39,755 - 43,785 -  
46,862 - 49,927 - 53,010 - 56,086 - 59,145 -  
69,012 - 71,507 - 73,988 - 76,477 - 78,959 -  
80,392 - LSI 1 82,899 - LSI 2 85,415

**Law clerk (PPC)**

520.97 - 543.29 - 576.54 - 601.35 - 630.70 -  
664.12 - 683.77 - 703.43 - 723.07 - 742.79 -  
LSI 1 763.09 - LSI 2 783.34

**Higher legal executive (PPC)**

49,845 - 51,303 - 52,756 - 54,210 - 55,669 -  
57,123 - 58,578 - LSI 1 60,679 - LSI 2 62,776

**Legal executive (PPC)**

34,190 - 36,242 - 37,872 - 39,440 - 40,861 -  
42,133 - 43,418 - 44,702 - 45,990 - 47,235 -  
LSI 1 48,409 - LSI 2 49,940

**Senior engineering draughtsperson (PPC)**

41,767 - 42,567 - 43,568 - 44,582 - 45,590 -  
46,605 - 47,556 - LSI 1 49,102, LSI 2 50,662

**Engineering draughtsperson (PPC)**

618.02 - 636.84 - 659.05 - 674.32 - 696.22 -  
718.20 - 740.20 - 761.27 - 782.34 - 803.41 -  
824.56 - LSI 1 851.40 - LSI 2 878.29

**Chief superintendent mapping (PPC)**

52,053 - 54,491 - 56,930 - 59,362 - 61,82 -  
64,233 - 66,670 - 69,112 - 70,179 - 72,268 -  
LSI 1 74,584 - LSI 2 76,907

**Superintendent mapping (PPC)**

46,203 - 47,804 - 49,139 - 50,459 - 51,795 -  
53,134 - 54,437 - LSI 1 56,100 - LSI 2 57,753

**Examiner in charge (PPC)**

40,123 - 40,40,985 - 41,835 - 42,706 -  
43,572 - 44,445 - 46,203 - LSI 1 47,600 - LSI 2  
49,010

**Examiner of maps (PPC)**

692.03 - 711.05 - 729.37 - 746.44 - 764.88 -  
778.29 - LSI 1 803.83 - LSI 2 829.42

**Mapping draughtsperson (PPC)**

521.37 - 528.65 - 546.34 - 546.09 - 581.95 -  
599.80 - 611.49 - 625.64 - 642.08 - 652.18 -  
668.47 - 684.73 - 701.09 - LSI 1 723.72 - LSI 2  
746.41

**Senior architect (PPC)**

67,580 - 69,987 - 73,381 - 76,769 - 80,167 -  
83,976 - LSI 1 86,947 - LSI 2 89,921

**Architect (PPC)**

36,821 - 39,474 - 40,794 - 43,741 - 46,674 -  
49,630 - 51,587 - 53,543 - 55,507 - 57,457 -  
59,418 - 61,376 - 63,335 - 65,296 - 67,274 -  
LSI 1 69,431 - LSI 2 70,495

**Architectural assistant grade II (PPC)**

563.86 - 603.94 - 618.02 - 636.84 - 659.05 -  
674.32 - 696.22 - 718.20 - 738.29 - 760.29 -  
782.34 - 803.41 - 824.56 - LSI 1 851.40 - LSI 2  
878.29

**Senior laboratory analyst (PPC)**

51,709 - 54,044 - 56,112 - 58,231 - 60,410 -  
62,558 - 64,765 - 66,951 - 69,150

**Laboratory analyst (PPC)**

33,897 - 35,306 - 37,545 - 38,606 - 39,617 -  
42,007 - 43,550 - 45,105 - 46,693 - 48,276 -  
49,862 - 51,461 - 53,074 - 54,074 - 56,284 -  
LSI 1 57,375

**Nightwatchman (PPC)**

442.66 - 467.74 - 480.11 - 498.99 - 517.41 -  
528.22 - 544.51 - LSI 1 562.27 - LSI 2 582.67

## Technical grades in agriculture

### Technical agricultural officer (PPC)

25,206 - 26,591 - 27,493 - 29,013 - 30,533 -  
31,745 - 33,052 - 34,196 - 35,652 - 37,117 -  
38,589 - 40,058 - 41,532 - 42,960 - 44,890 -  
46,359 - 47,821

### Supervisory agricultural officer (PPC)

38,956 - 40,770 - 42,582 - 44,365 - 46,166 -  
47,969 - 49,755 - 51,542 - 53,319 - LSI 1  
55,225 - LSI 2 57,134

### District superintendent (PPC)

40,082 - 43,085 - 46,086 - 49,057 - 52,039 -  
55,029 - 58,003 - 60,994 - LSI 1 63,180 - LSI 2  
65,367

### Area superintendent (PPC)

56,534 - 58,358 - 60,174.00 - 61,996 -  
63,815 - 65,638 - 67,459 - LSI 1 69,749 - LSI 2  
70,943

## General service grades: staff appointed before 6th April 1995

### Secretary general I

211,742

### Secretary general II

201,155

### Secretary general III

190,568

### Deputy secretary

174,688

### Assistant secretary

135,299 - 141,499 - 148,111 - 154,775

### Principal higher

91,003 - 94,648 - 98,306 - 101,949 - 105,062  
- LSI 2 108,343 - LSI 2 111,619

### Principal

84,752 - 88,230 - 91,689 - 95,175 - 98,113 -  
LSI 1 101,161 - LSI 2 104,202

### Assistant principal higher

72,900 - 74,537 - 77,182 - 79,816 - 82,457 -  
83,994 - LSI 1 86,625 - LSI 2 89,245

### Assistant principal

66,663 - 69,089 - 70,424 - 72,783 - 75,145 -  
76,511 - LSI 1 78,889 - LSI 2 81,275

### Administrative officer

31,644 - 34,183 - 34,533 - 37,499 - 41,294 -  
44,184 - 4,074 - 49,974 - 52,860 - 55,745 -  
LSI 1 57,733 - LSI 2 59,727

### Administrative officer higher scale

44,184 - 47,074 - 49,974 - 52,860 - 55,745 -  
57,733 - 59,704 - 61,671

### Higher executive officer

47,447 - 48,833 - 50,211 - 51,591 - 52,972 -  
54,362 - 55,745 - LSI 1 57,733 - LSI 2 59,727

### Higher executive officer higher scale

50,211 - 51,591 - 52,972 - 54,362 - 55,745 -  
57,733 - 59,041 - 60,354 - 61,671

### Executive officer

29,428 - 31,451 - 32,253 - 33,978 - 35,656 -  
37,287 - 38,906 - 40,492 - 42,095 - 43,653 -  
45,258 - 46,329 - LSI 1 47,840 - LSI 2 49,353

### Executive officer higher scale

32,253 - 33,978 - 35,656 - 37,287 - 38,906 -  
40,492 - 42,095 - 43,653 - 45,258 - 46,329 -  
47,840 - 48,967 - 50,093 - 51,220

### Clerical officer

25,324 (485.35) - 26,456 (507.03) - 27,201  
(521.30) - 28,318 (542.70) - 29,434 (564.09) -  
30,550 (585.47) - 31,351 (600.82) - 32,436  
(621.60) - 33,342 (639.00) - 34,082 (653.16) -  
35,135 (673.34) - 36,774 (704.77) - LSI 1  
38,065 (729.49) - LSI 2 38,659 (740.88)

### Clerical officer higher scale

25,456 (507.03) - 27,201 (521.30) - 28,318  
(542.70) - 29,434 (564.09) - 30,550 (585.47) -  
31,351 (600.82) - 32,436 (621.60) - 33,342  
(639.00) - 34,082 (653.16) - 35,135 (673.34) -  
35,774 (704.77) - 38,065 (729.49) - 38,659  
(740.88) - 39,455 (756.13)

### Head services officer

602.60 - 616.03 - 631.91 - 650.97 - 663.53 -  
682.34 - LSI 1 704.77 - LSI 2 729.49

### Services officer

432.68 - 446.97 - 459.81 - 476.94 - 494.34 -  
521.17 - 524.91 - 532.61 - 558.48 - LSI 1  
576.68 - LSI 2 597.61

### Services attendant

432.68 - 433.45 - 459.81 - 467.04 - 479.35 -  
496.92 - 519.85 - 530.07 - 551.66 - LSI 1  
569.34 - LSI 2 590.05

### Cleaner

405.87 - 429.76 - 440.02 - 457.36 - 475.23 -  
LSI 1 487.58 - LSI 2 507.54

## Grades common to two or more departments

### Engineer grade I and professional accountant grade I

69,077 - 71,165 - 73,257 - 75,348 - 77,429 - 79,907 - LSI 1 82,733 - LSI 2 85,559

### Engineer grade II and professional accountant grade II

60,201 - 61,579 - 62,947 - 64,325 - 65,698 - 67,071 - 68,439 - 69,828 - LSI 1 70,988 - LSI 2 73,190

### Engineer grade III and professional accountant grade III

33,926 - 36,553 - 39,518 - 42,477 - 45,477 - 47,281 - 50,942 - 52,766 - 54,427 - 58,257 - 60,089 - LSI 1 62,132 - LSI 2 64,162

### State solicitor and prosecution solicitor

31,943 - 34,181 - 34,862 - 37,861 - 41,688 - 44,613 - 47,523 - 50,455 - 53,376 - 56,281 - 66,663 - 69,089 - 70,424 - 72,783 - 75,145 - 76,511 - LSI 1 78,889 - LSI 2 81,275

### Law clerk

502.96 - 524.48 - 548.74 - 572.30 - 604.04 - 623.07 - 638.80 - 651.33 - 670.04 - 688.73 - 707.46 - LSI 1 726.73 - LSI 2 745.97

### Higher legal executive

47,447 - 48,833 - 50,211 - 51,591 - 52,972 - 54,362 - 55,745 - LSI 1 57,733 - LSI 2 59,727

### Legal executive

36,070 - 37,564 - 38,909 - 40,119 - 41,334 - 42,560 - 43,788 - 44,967 - LSI 1 46,086 - LSI 2 47,543

### Senior engineering draughtsperson

39,770 - 40,529 - 41,479 - 42,453 - 43,403 - 44,367 - 45,271 - LSI 1 46,743 - LSI 2 48,221

### Engineering draughtsperson

594.21 - 609.81 - 627.69 - 648.64 - 663.17 - 684.03 - 704.9 - 725.00 - 745.02 - 765.04 - 785.11 - LSI 1 810.59 - LSI 2 836.12

### Chief superintendent mapping

49,548 - 51,859 - 54,176 - 56,490 - 58,801 - 61,110 - 63,432 - 65,750 - 67,789 - 69,828 - LSI 1 70,988 - LSI 2 73,190

### Superintendent mapping

43,991 - 45,506 - 46,778 - 48,029 - 49,299 - 50,568 - 51,813 - LSI 1 53,387 - LSI 2 54,960

### Examiner in charge

38,204 - 39,027 - 39,840 - 40,663 - 41,490 - 42,318 - 43,991 - LSI 1 45,317 - LSI 2 46,648

### Examiner of maps

659.17 - 677.27 - 694.65 - 710.94 - 728.40 - 741.12 - LSI 1 765.44 - 789.79

### Mapping draughtsperson

496.33 - 510.32 - 520.05 - 536.90 - 553.83 - 570.89 - 587.84 - 604.85 - 614.88 - 633.63 - 643.00 - 652.31 - 667.79 - LSI 1 689.33 - LSI 2 710.83

### Senior architect

64,283 - 67,606 - 69,842 - 73,067 - 76,291 - 79,907 - LSI 1 82,733 - LSI 2 85,559

### Architect

38,853 - 41,647 - 44,440 - 47,238 - 49,100 - 50,957 - 52,816 - 54,678 - 56,540 - 58,400 - 60,265 - 62,121 - 64,004 - LSI 1 66,048 - LSI 2 68,105

### Architectural assistant grade II

594.25 - 609.81 - 627.69 - 648.64 - 663.17 - 684.03 - 703.12 - 724.07 - 745.02 - 765.04 - 785.11 - LSI 1 810.59 - LSI 2 836.12

### Senior laboratory analyst

49,219 - 51,436 - 53,397 - 55,412 - 57,483 - 59,519 - 61,619 - 63,679 - 65,784

### Laboratory analyst

32,769 - 33,957 - 35,763 - 36,770 - 37,728 - 39,998 - 41,466 - 42,944 - 44,452 - 45,954 - 47,460 - 48,981 - 50,510 - 52,061 - 53,562 - 54,599

### Nightwatchman

461.13 - 475.60 - 492.57 - 510.06 - 525.68 - LSI 1 535.19 - LSI 2 554.56

## Technical grades in agriculture

### Technical agricultural officer

26,543 - 27,613 - 29,063 - 30,513 - 31,649 - 32,895 - 33,960 - 35,351 - 36,755 - 38,147 - 39,552 - 40,908 - 42,742 - LSI 1 44,128 - LSI 2 45,515

### Supervisory agricultural officer

37,094 - 38,826 - 40,546 - 42,240 - 43,952 - 45,663 - 47,361 - 49,057 - 50,749 - LSI 1 52,554 - LSI 2 54,368

### District superintendent

38,171 - 41,028 - 43,876 - 46,697 - 49,535 - 52,373 - 55,199 - 58,035 - LSI 1 60,117 - LSI 2 62,193

### Area superintendent

53,801 - 55,526 - 57,258 - 58,986 - 60,716 - 62,450 - 64,175 - LSI 1 66,357 - LSI 2 68,540

# Appendix two: Travel and subsistence

## Standard domestic subsistence rates

Effective from 1st July 2019

### Overnight rates remain

<b>Normal rate</b> €147.00	<b>Reduced rate</b> €132.30	<b>Detention rate</b> €73.50
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### Day rates

<b>10 hours or more</b> €36.97	<b>5 hours but less than 10 hours</b> €15.41
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## Vouched Accommodation (VA) Domestic subsistence rates (for use in Dublin only)

Effective from 1st July 2019 will remain

<b>Vouched Accommodation (VA) rate</b> VA Rate	<b>Accommodation</b> Vouched cost of accommodation up to €147.00	<b>Plus</b>	<b>Meals</b> €36.97
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# Appendix three: Adjudication and arbitration cases

The following adjudication and arbitration cases were processed, or in process, in 2020.

## Adjudication

### Parties: Fórsa and An Garda Síochána

Grading of call despatcher in Garda control rooms. The hearing took place on 10th March 2020. The finding stated that the appropriate grading for call despatcher is clerical officer plus an allowance. Having regard to all of the foregoing, my finding is that the appropriate grading for the call despatcher is clerical officer plus a pensionable allowance in the nature of pay of €2,000 per annum.

## Arbitration

### Fórsa and Department of Justice

Sunday premium retrospection at Border Management Unit (BMU), Dublin Airport (joint referral). While the substantive issue was settled a year ago, disagreement remains regarding the payment of retrospection. The parties have jointly agreed to proceed to arbitration on the issue. The date has been set for 24th March 2021.

### Fórsa and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (EOs on AO and HEO panels)

This referral centred on whether it was legitimate to remove members from the HEO panel if they accepted an offer of promotion to AO. The Arbitration Board found that it wasn't, favouring Fórsa and declaring that the six members be made an offer of HEO.



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