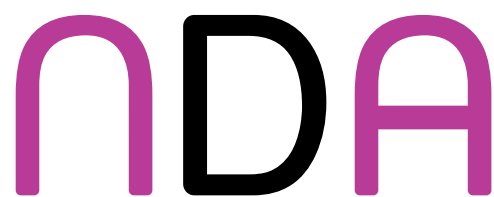


Údarás Náisiúnta Míchumais
National Disability Authority

Annual Report 2024



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National Disability Authority

Annual Report

2024

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Chairperson's statement

Chairperson's statement

I am delighted to present the Annual Report of the National Disability Authority's activities in the year 2024. This was the final year of the NDA's Strategic Plan 2022-2024 and I believe the Authority has delivered an impressive programme of work in alignment with its strategic priorities as set out within that plan.

Key among these was the intensive support provided to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) during 2024 to assist in the development of the next National Disability Strategy. The NDA was pleased to be able to lead on the extensive public consultation that informs the Strategy, and the comprehensive report developed by the team will serve as a useful reference document for Government and all public bodies charged with responsibilities under the Strategy. We look forward to the publication of this Strategy in early 2025, and to its roll-out as a key mechanism for realisation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

During 2024 the Government ratified the Optional Protocol for the UNCRPD. The completion of this long-awaited step allows the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to receive and examine communications from individuals or groups of individuals in Ireland who claim to be victims of a violation of the rights enshrined in the Convention. The NDA welcomes the ratification as a clear signal of the Government's commitment to recognising and realising the rights of disabled people.

This was also the year in which work accelerated to prepare for the implementation of the European Accessibility Act (EAA) following its transposition to Irish legislation in late 2023. The NDA has a defined role to provide advice and support to market surveillance authorities and regulatory bodies with responsibilities under the Act and we welcome the growing collaboration and cooperation across sectors in working to achieve the aim of greater accessibility and inclusion across European boundaries.

In a year which saw a number of electoral events, the NDA updated its previous guidance for Returning Officers on accessible voting and polling stations. We were also pleased to engage with an Coimisiún Toghcháin (the Electoral Commission) to guide on potential improvements to the accessibility of the franchise process, and while further improvements are required, the NDA was pleased to note some progress during the local and European elections in 2024.

The Annual Conference for 2024 was a showcase of the range of social, cultural and sporting activities encompassed within Article 30 of the UNCRPD. The day allowed for fascinating discussions across the different dimensions of the Article, but also for a series of unique and accomplished performances of music, poetry and drama in celebration of the talent among disabled people which this Article aims to have recognised, nurtured and made available to all.

I was also delighted to be able to present the then Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Mr Roderic O’Gorman TD, with our new Strategic Plan 2025-2027 for his approval. This plan will guide the activity of the organisation in the coming years, and particularly emphasises our strengths as a provider of evidence-informed advice and guidance on matters related to disability and Universal Design. The then Minister Anne Rabbitte, Minister of State with responsibility for disability, launched the plan at our Annual Conference in October 2024. I would like to take this opportunity to thank both the former Ministers for their constant support of the mission and goals of the NDA and wish them well in their future careers.

I would also like to congratulate the newly appointed Minister for Children, Disability and Equality, Minister Norma Foley, following her appointment in early 2025. We welcome the focus and commitment given to disability matters in the newly agreed Programme for Government 2025 and look forward to working closely with the Minister and her colleague Minister of State with responsibility for disabilities, Hildegard Naughton, in realising these commitments over the coming years.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow members of the National Disability Authority. As a board, we oversee a wide portfolio of research, monitoring, guidance and advisory activities related to disability and Universal Design. I would like to thank them for their commitment to the mission and vision of the organisation, and their constructive challenge to the NDA team to advance these goals. The staff of the organisation bring expertise and dedication to realising the Authority’s strategic objectives and as you will see from the pages that follow, they have delivered an impressive programme of work during 2024, which I hope you will enjoy reading about further in this report.

Yours

Kathryn O’Donoghue
Chairperson



2024 in Review

In 2024, the NDA continued to deliver work under the five Strategic Priorities identified in its Strategic Plan 2022-2024:

- 1. Deliver independent evidence-informed advice and guidance, and support policy coordination, to advance implementation of national strategies and policies, as well as realisation of the goals of UNCRPD;**
- 2. Deliver independent assessment, monitoring and evaluation of progress against policies, strategies and codes of practice across Government;**
- 3. Advance activities to promote awareness and wider take-up of Universal Design across Ireland;**
- 4. Foster strong and open processes for engaging and consulting with persons with disabilities and the wider disability community;**
- 5. Maintain and enhance organisational effectiveness.**

The NDA developed its work-plan for 2024 in alignment with these priorities, and informed by consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including Disabled Persons' Organisations. The organisation also conducted its work within the broader policy context in Ireland during the year, which included work to develop the next National Disability Strategy, implementation of European Directives and a focus on inclusion and disability during a general election campaign and negotiations for an incoming Government in 2025.

UNCRPD and a new National Disability Strategy

During 2024, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) continued to advance work to develop a National Disability Strategy as a successor to the National Disability Inclusion Strategy (2017-2022). Once finalised, the Strategy will become the primary mechanism for realisation of the goals of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in the Irish context.

The NDA was asked to support the department in this work by facilitating a wide-ranging national consultation process, including initiatives to reach seldom-heard voices. This work commenced in late 2023 and continued into the first quarter of 2024. There was positive engagement from a wide range of stakeholders and a consultation report was developed in a number of formats. This report will be published along with the new Strategy, which is now scheduled for the second quarter of 2025.

The NDA contributed to the Strategy formation process throughout 2024, including through our membership of the Senior Officials Group for the National Disability Strategy and through workshops and other engagements organised by DCEDIY. We also advised on a monitoring framework and oversight structures in relation to the new Strategy.

In November 2024, the Government acceded to the Optional Protocol to the UNCRPD. The Optional Protocol enables the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to receive and examine communications from or on behalf of individuals or groups of individuals in Ireland who claim to be victims of a violation of the rights recognised and protected by the Convention, usually on condition that all domestic remedies have been exhausted first. The NDA provided advice to Government in the discussions leading up to the accession.

We were also pleased to continue our recent practice of devoting our Annual Conference theme to a specific article of the UNCRPD. In 2024, the conference considered Article 30 UNCRPD, relating to the participation of disabled people in cultural life, recreation, leisure, and sport. The conference was well attended, generating significant interest in areas which oftentimes do not feature prominently in policy discourse to advance the rights of people with disabilities.



Employment

The NDA has consistently advised that employment is a critical enabler of socio-economic inclusion as well as playing a part in addressing poverty, which is experienced by disabled people to a greater extent than their non-disabled counterparts.

In mid-2024 the NDA published [its annual independent assessment of progress during 2023 on the Comprehensive Employment Strategy](#). As there was no action plan or monitoring structures in place, this report attempted to document actions that were ongoing related to the CES strategic priorities and identified areas where further focus would be required including under the new National Disability Strategy. We also published a [discussion paper](#) on how new national targets for the employment rate of disabled people could be agreed and set, and how progress towards these targets could be tracked over time.

The NDA commenced the development of a report to provide an overview of progress and challenges experienced by the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2024. This [end of strategy report](#) which also examined a series of employment related indicators was published in early 2025 and will provide learning to inform the employment pillar in the new National Disability Strategy.

During 2024 we were also pleased to note no reduction in relation to the employment of disabled people in the public sector. The NDA's annual report on compliance with Part 5 of the Disability Act for 2023 showed that 4.1% of public sector employees declared that they had a disability. While this is very welcome, we continue to engage with public bodies to ensure they reach the minimum target of the public sector workforce made up of people with disabilities which has increased to 4.5% for 2024 and which will increase to 6% by 2025. Following a review of questions provided to organisations on Part 5, the 2023 report contains more in-depth data about the structures and practices organisations have in place to support employees with disabilities.

Assisted Decision Making

Following commencement in April 2023 of the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 (as amended) (ADMCA), 2024 saw a gradual increase in the number of applications from people who had been made Wards of Court seeking to commence the process to discharge from wardship. The NDA continued their research on the discharge process during 2024, with the aim of understanding how the process of moving from wardship was experienced by people who had been Wards of Court, and their Committees. The research also considers the perspectives and experiences of professionals and key stakeholders involved in the transition from wardship to the new supported decision-making system, with the aim of identifying where improvements or enhancements could be made. Preliminary findings were shared with several relevant stakeholders at the end of 2024 and there was consensus that the research should continue, with a view to capturing the experiences of additional Wards of Court and their Committees and a wider range of stakeholders.

Standards and Monitoring

During 2024, the NDA continued to deliver against its statutory responsibilities in monitoring compliance with relevant legislation. This included monitoring performance in relation to employment of disabled people in the public sector (as above) and compliance with the EU Web Accessibility Directive (WAD). We also continued to monitor performance in relation to Part 3 of the Disability Act, as provided for in the Code of Practice for Accessible Public Services and Information, piloting the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for a more efficient data-gathering process.

We were also pleased to complete development of a Code of Practice for Accessible Public Buildings as requested by the Minister, and which was delivered in late 2024. We look forward to approval of this Code, and a revised version of the aforementioned Code for Accessible Services and Information, at the earliest opportunity. This will allow us to carry out regular monitoring to identify good practice where it exists and also to guide on areas requiring further focus.

The NDA team also continues to contribute to the development and revision of standards that will be relevant to the implementation of the EAA. In addition, work is well advanced on the development of a 'Universal Design Dwellings, requirements and recommendations' report, which aims to provide for standardisation of understanding of the principles and elements of Universal Design across local authorities and built environment professionals. We look forward to this standard being submitted to a public inquiry phase in the first half of 2025, and finalisation at the earliest opportunity thereafter.

Data and Statistics

The NDA have been active over the last number of years in building a case for a National Disability Survey. Such a survey was conducted in 2006 by the Central Statistics office following the 2006 Census of Population and has provided a vast array of data that has been used to inform policy. DCEDIY are now advancing the business case to Government and have set up a steering group which the NDA has joined. The NDA were requested by DCEDIY to lead a consultation with Disabled Persons Organisations, disabled people, civil society and academic representatives, and other relevant stakeholders on a potential National Disability Survey. The NDA received good engagement from the consultation and have developed a consultation report which will inform the business case and next steps.

We also updated previous work on establishing targets for the employment of disabled people. A paper published in 2024 allowed us to update previous work with due regard for the overall improvements in the Irish labour market, the availability of various data sources, and international good practice in establishing quotas or targets and measuring performance against them. We hope this work will be useful in the process to agree commitments on employment under the forthcoming National Disability Strategy.

Transport and mobility

During 2024 the NDA made submissions to Government departments and public bodies on a range of subjects, sign-posting guidance and evidence to inform policymaking to enhance the accessibility of public services. A particular area of focus is transport and active travel, recognising the importance of safe and accessible transport as an enabler for socio-economic participation. The NDA has continued to highlight the challenges experienced by disabled people when changes are made to the built environment without consultation and due consideration for their needs. Where urban spaces are shared by pedestrians, cyclists and motorised traffic, these challenges are exacerbated and can lead to disabled people opting to withdraw from regular social and community participation in the interests of their safety. We continue to engage with local authorities and transport providers to offer suggestions about ways in which these risks can be mitigated in practicable ways to reflect the needs of all users of roads, cycle paths and footpaths.

Universal Design

The NDA, through its Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD), has continued to promote awareness and take-up of Universal Design across a wide range of domains. Significant work was advanced in 2024 in relation to Universal Design in the education space, and we welcome the progress made by higher education institutions in developing campus infrastructure to maximise the inclusion of all students who wish to participate in third level education, including those with autism or an intellectual disability.



**Centre for Excellence
in Universal Design**

The Centre also published Universal Design guidance for the design and maintenance of Changing Places Toilets during 2024. This is intended as a practical guide for building developers and managers on how to incorporate Changing Places Toilets within their premises, meeting the needs of the many disabled people and their families who would be otherwise unable to participate fully in the life of the community. It is hoped that this guidance will be widely applied in relevant public spaces in the coming months and years, so that Ireland's provision of these facilities increases to compare favourably with other countries in Europe, including our Northern Ireland neighbours.

The NDA premises

Towards the end of 2024, the NDA began a programme of works to improve the accessibility of its own building. The works will complete in 2025 and include measures to ensure compliance with current fire and safety regulations, but also to address the recommendations of an accessibility audit conducted in 2019. The works include installation of a Changing Places Toilet facility and an improved entrance way and reception space for the NDA offices.

The nature of the building, a protected structure, has required careful planning and preparation for these works, but we look forward to being able to welcome staff and visitors to an improved premises in 2025.

The NDA Strategic Plan 2025-2027

The NDA Act 1999 requires the organisation to present a Strategic Plan to the Minister for approval no later than 6 months in advance of the commencement of that plan. Work to develop and deliver the Strategic Plan 2025-2027 therefore took place in early 2024, including consultation with external stakeholders and NDA staff. Informed by the feedback and the developments in the disability landscape, the Authority developed the draft plan to guide the organisation's focus in the coming years and delivered it to the Minister in early June 2024. The plan was subsequently approved and laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas before its formal launch by Minister Anne Rabbitte at the NDA's Annual Conference in October 2024. Work-planning for 2025 was conducted at the end of 2024 within this new Strategic framework.

We hope you enjoy the detailed updates on these and other activities in the remainder of this report.



Minister Anne Rabbitte launches the NDA's new Strategic Plan with NDA Director Aideen Hartney and Chairperson Kathryn O'Donoghue



Strategic Priority 1

Strategic Priority 1:

“Deliver independent evidence-informed advice and guidance, and support policy coordination, to advance implementation of national strategies and policies, as well as realisation of the goals of UNCRPD”

National Disability Strategy

During 2024, work on the development of a new National Disability Strategy continued. In late 2023 and into quarter one of 2024, the NDA conducted a national consultation process on the new Strategy on behalf of DCEDIY. The consultation was underpinned by principles of participation and aimed to be a genuine, accessible, and transparent process which meaningfully engaged with disabled people, with a focus on also capturing issues for people with intersectional identities.

The consultation included themed online focus groups (e.g., on the Cost of Disability), online focus groups with particular groups (e.g., with women, Irish Travellers and LGBTI+ persons), in person and online town hall meetings, a national survey and written submissions. While not yet published, this consultation has resulted in reports in English, Irish and Easy to Read, as well as videos highlighting the findings in ISL, with captioning and voice overs. Further details on the consultation are included under Strategic Priority 4.



A free public in-person Town Hall event to help inform the National Disability Strategy

Where: Clayton Hotel Cork City, Lapp's Quay, Cork T12 RD6E,

When: February 17, 2024

Time: 10.30am to 3pm



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth



Údarás Náisiúnta Míchumais
National Disability Authority

The NDA also participated in a range of events and meetings throughout 2024 to advance the Strategy development process, including a number of 'Challenge Panels' run by DCEDIY in which the outline actions proposed by various departments for inclusion in the Strategy were discussed in detail. Suggestions were made regarding areas for revision or additional focus, as well as actions to address significant gaps. We understand the department has found these sessions very valuable in working to negotiate commitments with the range of departments and agencies who will have responsibilities under the Strategy. We also participated in the Senior Official's Group for the National Disability Strategy and provided advice in relation to a monitoring framework and oversight structures.

In July, the NDA Director and the NDA Head of Policy, Research & Public Affairs attended the DCEDIY Pre-Budget Forum. This was the first forum of its kind run by DCEDIY and the intention was to gather information from a wide range of stakeholders regarding funding priorities for Budget 2025 within the remit of the department. The importance of person-centred disability supports and services was stressed by participants, as was the value of innovation in the system, and the importance of consulting closely with DPOs in the decision-making processes. Much of the information provided by stakeholders will be of value when considering the commitments that can be included in the new Strategy.

Optional Protocol to the UNCRPD

The Government approved accession to the Optional Protocol to the UNCRPD in October 2024, with the Optional Protocol coming into effect in Ireland on 30 November. This action followed the establishment of an Inter-Departmental Working Group in March 2024, whose purpose was to work through the complexities of ratification. The NDA attended this Inter-Departmental Working Group in June 2024 to answer specific questions relevant to our expertise.

Following accession, people in Ireland can now avail of the Optional Protocol's "communication procedure". This procedure allows the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to receive and examine communications from or on behalf of individuals or groups of individuals in Ireland who claim to be victims of a violation of the rights recognised and protected by the Convention. However, there is a requirement that all domestic remedies must be exhausted before bringing a complaint to the UN Committee. The Optional Protocol also allows the UN Committee to undertake inquiries in cases where they receive reliable evidence of 'grave or systemic violations' of the Convention.

Autism Innovation Strategy

On 26 August, the Autism Innovation Strategy was launched, providing a framework for cross-Government action on autism over the next 18 months. The strategy contains 83 actions across four pillars and was developed following consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, including people with autism. The NDA contributed to both the 2022 and 2024 public consultations, providing submissions to both. The NDA has also been assigned responsibility for implementing several actions under

the strategy, covering a range of areas, including data, justice, research, Universal Design and employment. We commenced work on a number of these towards the end of 2024 and will continue to advance this work during 2025. The NDA has also been invited to join the Steering Group for the Strategy. This will enable us to ensure coordination of our actions with others to ensure maximum impact.

Continue to deliver research to high standards, informed by the latest academic developments, practice in Ireland and other jurisdictions, and the lived experience of persons with disabilities

Wards of Court Research

The commencement in April 2023 of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 and amending legislation triggered the beginning of the process of ending the system of adult wardship. The legislation provides for a three-year period during which all adults must be discharged from wardship.

The NDA is conducting research that aims to evaluate the cessation of the system of wardship in Ireland and to document the experiences of persons who have been Wards of Court as they transition to a supported decision-making system. The research is framed by Article 12 of the UNCPRD which addresses the right to equal recognition before the law. The study includes interviews with people who are or have been a Ward of Court and their Committees, observation of High Court hearings to discharge people from wardship and interviews with key stakeholders involved in the process of ending wardship.

The NDA has encountered some difficulty recruiting participants for the research, which is consistent with the very low rate of engagement with the discharge process to date. Data from the Office of the Wards of Court indicate that in the first year of the discharge process discharge applications were received in respect of just 145 adults, accounting for less than 7% of those in wardship. This increased to 230 by August 2024, the period of the initial NDA data collection. Efforts to raise awareness of, and encourage participation in, the Wards of Court research were expanded to include the distribution of posters to public libraries, primary care centres and family resource centres across the country, publication of articles in relevant newsletters, regional radio interviews and attendance at relevant information meetings and events.

In early 2024, the NDA met with the Department of Justice to discuss ways of bringing greater clarity to the issue of legal aid costs for people discharging from wardship. At their invitation, the NDA provided a submission to the Department of Justice on the development of statutory regulations concerning legal aid costs for adults under wardship in discharge applications, as provided for in the ADMCA. More clarity is now beginning to emerge in relation to such costs, which is welcome.

Providing wider context to the ongoing research examining the process and the experiences of people leaving wardship, the NDA also prepared a [background paper](#).

[on Ireland's journey from wardship to supported-decision-making viewed through the lens of the UNCRPD](#). In particular, the paper considers the progress Ireland has made in meeting the requirements of Article 12 of the UNCRPD concerning equal recognition before the law, and the UN Committee's guidance on this topic, by comparing the old wardship system and the new supported decision-making framework under the ADMCA. The paper will be published in early 2025.

The NDA shared preliminary findings at the end of 2024 with the Research Advisory Group and the Research Ethics Committee along with some other key stakeholders. There was a strong consensus that the research should continue so that more Wards of Court and their Committees and other stakeholders are included to ensure that wider perspectives are captured. The research will continue during 2025.

Research Promotion Scheme 2023-2024

The NDA runs a Research Promotion Scheme (RPS) approximately every two years, subject to availability of budget.

The theme for the 2023-2024 Research Promotion Scheme was 'Disability in Marginalised Groups and Communities'. Disabled Persons Organisations were invited to comment on a list of proposed themes and their comments were considered in selecting the final theme. The aim was to fund research that examines the intersectionality of being a disabled member of marginalised groups. For the first time, an Expert by Experience joined the review team in assessing applications and choosing the successful applicants.

The funded projects under the 2023-2024 scheme were:

1. University of Galway and Trinity College Dublin: Professor Eilíonóir Flynn and her team examined the barriers for disabled people with multiple marginalised identities in political candidature or in holding elected office.
2. Trinity College Dublin: Dr Julie Broderick and her team investigated the scale and impact of physical disability in people experiencing long term homelessness in Ireland.

The first report, [Disability, Diversity and Identity in Ireland's Local and European Elections 2024](#), was published in early 2025. A draft of the second report has been received and will be published in mid-2025.

ESRI Partnership Project

The NDA and the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) have undertaken a partnership research programme on matters relevant to disability over recent years. The primary goal of the programme is to create, improve and enhance knowledge on specific policy areas relevant to the lives of disabled people. The remaining project from this partnership is



research on the labour market impacts of Covid-19 to better understand the effects of the pandemic on the employment outcomes of persons with disabilities. There have been a number of issues in accessing and analysing the Labour Force Survey data from the CSO which has delayed this project. A draft analysis was received at the end of 2024 on which feedback has been provided, and we will work with the ESRI to finalise this work in early 2025.

Translate research findings and policy analysis into practical and actionable policy advice for Government and public sector bodies, informed by consultation with persons with disabilities and other relevant stakeholders

Key NDA submissions

The NDA made 32 submissions to a wide range of consultations during 2024. Some key submissions are outlined below, and the remainder are listed in Appendix 4.

Submissions to Coimisiún na Meán

The NDA made three submissions to Coimisiún na Meán (Media Commission) concerning the following topics:

- [Draft Access Rules](#) that contain updated binding targets for Irish Sign Language interpretation, subtitling and Audio Description services and are aimed at improving the accessibility of programming for people with disabilities.
- [Draft Audiovisual On-Demand Media Service Code and Rules](#), which introduces obligations on video-on-demand service providers to progressively make their programming accessible to people with disabilities.
- [Revised Broadcasting Codes and Rules](#) for radio and television broadcasters.

The NDA highlighted several issues in its submissions, including the importance of consulting with DPOs, the need to enhance monitoring of the quality of access services, implementation of the findings of the NDA's review of the Irish Sign Language Act 2017 and the relevance of the UNCRPD and European Accessibility Act. Several aspects of the NDA's advice has been incorporated into the finalised rules and codes.

Submission to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth on equality strategies

Reflecting the importance of an intersectional approach to our work, the NDA made submissions to consultations informing the development of the next [National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy](#) and [National Strategy for Women and Girls](#). We identified specific and tailored actions to address intersectional issues experienced by disabled LGBTI+ persons and disabled women, drawing particular attention to the concerns and recommendations highlighted by both groups during the consultation on the new National Disability Strategy.

During our 2024 consultation, LGBTI+ disabled people highlighted challenges connected to accessibility, discrimination, and understanding when accessing healthcare; a lack of mental health supports, particularly for trans people; and a lack of inclusive sex education, which predominantly focuses on heterosexual and non-disabled experiences. Meanwhile disabled women called for enhanced measures to address violence and abuse, the gender dimensions of care and sexual and reproductive health for women with disabilities. The NDA's submission on the next National Strategy for Women and Girls also recommended greater supports for women with mental health issues, while also calling for research to be undertaken on the reasons for the under-identification of autistic women and girls in an Irish context.

Statements of Strategy

The NDA made submissions to inform the development of a series of Statements of Strategy, including for the [Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage](#), the [Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment](#), the [Courts Service](#) and the [Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission](#). In addition to issues specific to these departments and agencies, the NDA's submissions all emphasised the importance of consultation with disabled people through DPOs and compliance with the UNCRPD and other statutory obligations, including the Disability Act 2005, Web Accessibility Directive and Irish Sign Language Act 2017.

Green Paper on Disability Payments Reform

The NDA made a submission to the Department of Social Protection's [Green Paper on Disability Payments Reform](#) in early 2024. In principle, the NDA welcomed the move to reform disability related social welfare payments with the aim of improving outcomes for persons with disabilities. However, we outlined our strong concerns regarding a potential move towards a social welfare system with conditionality of supports constructed on an individual's capacity to work. Specifically, the NDA considered as problematic the suggested use of the capacity assessment as a tool to calculate the level of disability payments. Also, while the tiered system proposed provided a context for targeting supports, the NDA formed the view that there was a lack of clarity within the Green Paper on the operationalisation of this key pillar of the reform. The submission advised that a more rights-based approach to assessing capacity should be adopted if the proposals were to proceed, and that safeguards must be included. Examples of approaches from other jurisdictions were shared that could provide a more equitable approach to disability payments.

The NDA also emphasised the need for the development of supports for work, outlining the need for wraparound Intreo services and a national vocational rehabilitation pathway to support persons with disabilities in accessing and retaining employment.

On the issue relating to raising the age of accessing Disability Allowance to 18, the NDA saw merit in this change but noted that it would only benefit individuals if they were on a secure individualised pathway to work or further education and relevant supports were available. Although the issue of secondary benefits was not

considered in the Green Paper, the NDA stated its opinion that it was crucial that secondary benefits and their role in creating incentives or disincentives to work were taken into account and further reforms introduced to ensure that work pays. Finally, the NDA advised on how future planned reforms can be better communicated to disabled people and the importance of adopting a co-design process.

In April 2024, the Department of Social Protection announced that it would not proceed with the Green Paper proposals but that it would examine the learnings from the submissions received.

Submission to the Department of Transport on their Shared Mobility Hubs report

In May, CEUD staff prepared a submission to the Department of Transport on their Shared Mobility Hubs report. The submission informed the Department of Transport of their obligations to ensure that their hubs would be built and designed for universal use, as well as informed them of several resources to aid in their consultation on and design of the hubs.

NDA submission to the Department of Transport on the public consultation for the Moving Together draft strategy and implementation plan

The NDA made a submission regarding the above consultation which covered uniquely both the strategy and implementation which were published at the same time. The focus from the Department is very much in the areas of decarbonisation and sustainability with little reference to the third pillar of social impact. Key points raised in our submission are the statutory responsibilities that the Department are required to implement and in particular engagement with DPOs and disabled people. They requested support on how to make the documents accessible as well as how to engage with DPOs and disabled people which we also provided.

Work across the public sector to support co-ordination of disability policy and provide independent facilitation and guidance to drive solutions for cross-sectoral challenges

Review of assessment methods

The NDA was requested by the Taoiseach's office through the Senior Officials Group on Transport to convene a working group to examine the potential for a common assessment of disability methodology across the public sector. To inform this work the NDA conducted a scoping review of disability assessment practices to explore how disability status is currently assessed, international trends and approaches, and an examination of a human rights approach to disability assessments. Two meetings of the working group have taken place and between the meetings the NDA met separately with the various departments on the steering group to better understand the disability assessment methods they use. The group decided on two outputs as follows:

- Paper examining the potential synergies in existing selected disability assessment methods;
- Paper examining options for the introduction of a European Disability Card.

The NDA led on the development of these papers which have been submitted to the Department of the Taoiseach.

A separate sub-group was also established specifically looking at potential reforms to the Disabled Drivers and Passengers Scheme. The NDA also provided extensive input to this group.

European Disability Card

In early February 2024, political agreement was reached by the European Parliament and the European Council on the introduction of the European Disability Card. The European Disability Card will serve as a proof of 'disability status' when visiting another European Union (EU) country. It will grant cardholders equal access to special conditions and preferential treatments anywhere in the EU when using public transport, attending cultural events and visiting museums, leisure and sports centres, amusement parks, and more.

The EU Directive establishing the European Disability Card entered into force in November 2024. EU Member States, including Ireland, will have 2.5 years from this date to adapt their national legislation and 3.5 years to apply the Directive and start issuing the Cards. The NDA have prepared and published a [frequently asked questions](#) document in relation to the Card. The paper mentioned above in relation to options for the introduction of a European Disability Card in Ireland will also help inform Ireland's position as it works to develop procedures around issuing a card.

Public Appointments Services' newly established Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I) Advisory Board

NDA accepted the invitation for the Public Appointments Service (PAS) to be on their newly established Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I) Advisory Board. The Advisory Board meets twice a year to provide independent expertise, fresh perspectives, and access to external networks and resources. The Board independently assess existing ED&I initiatives, projects, and research, providing objective feedback and recommendations for improvement. Additionally, the Board helps to benchmark PAS's ED&I efforts against sector standards and best practices, helping to inform their future work.

Workshop with the Department of Transport

In October, CEUD were invited as a follow up to our submission by the Department of Transport for a workshop with stakeholders to consider some of the key issues of importance to the development of shared mobility hubs. Specifically they presented responses to their [public consultation](#) outlining the rationale for the development of shared mobility and mobility hubs in the context of Ireland's emissions reduction

targets. This work was to inform their Sustainable Mobility Management and Implementation Division on the development of a National Policy Statement on Shared Mobility, in line with commitments set out in the [Climate Action Plan 2024 \(CAP24\)](#) and the [National Sustainable Mobility Policy \(SMP\)](#) to expand the availability of shared mobility options in Ireland. The policy statement aims to explore key issues within an Irish context, including considerations around governance, operations, data, communications, accessibility, safety and inclusion. CEUD staff reiterated the concerns and issues that persons with disabilities and older people have in dealing with shared spaces that would need to be considered in the new policy.

Meeting with the National Transport Authority (NTA)

In October, CEUD attended the Wayfinding Centre for a pre-consultation meeting of the Technical Working Group (TWG) set up by the NTA to discuss the design of bus stops adjacent to cycling tracks, existing designs, known concerns and infrastructure that can be developed or tested at future workshops. The next stage is to invite DPOs, persons with disabilities, older persons, cyclists and pedestrians to further workshops to discuss designs and provide feedback. Following the meeting CEUD reviewed the terms of reference for the TWG and shared a list of DPO's contract details. This work is set to continue into 2025.

Presentation to DCEDIY Access Officers

The Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) in the Department of Children Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) made a request to CEUD to have a presentation made to their Access Officers on the [Access Officer Guidance for Public Bodies](#) which is available on the NDA website.

CEUD gave this presentation to six of DCEDIY's Access Officers and their DLO in July 2024. In this presentation CEUD covered the:

- Responsibilities of Public Bodies
- Responsibilities of the Access Officer
- How a Universal Design Approach can help
- Useful resources

An Access Officer from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage also presented at CEUD's request, and they spoke about their experience as an access officer, how they carry out their role, linking in with Access Officers in their department and examples of some requests they had previously received.

CEUD is now reviewing and updating the guidance document that is available for Access Officers on the NDA website and aim to publish this in Q1 2025.

Develop Codes of Practice and guidance, and contribute to standards that can support the implementation of legislation, policies and programmes across the public sector

Development of standards to be harmonised with the European Accessibility Act (EAA)

CEUD continue to input to development of standards to be harmonised with the EAA, which has been transposed into Irish regulation as [S.I 636:2023](#). CEUD participate in this work through collaboration with [National Standards Authority Ireland](#) (NSAI) as an expert as part of the [NSAI Technical Committee \(TC\) 23](#) as well as at European level through the CEN/CENELEC standards committees.



This committee with expert input from CEUD staff is currently contributing to the work on a number of standards including:

- European Commission Standardisation Request (SR), CEN/CENELEC/ETSI (M/587) to develop a number of new standards in support of the [Directive \(EU\) 2019/882](#) on accessibility requirements for products and services (EAA).
- the revision of [EN 17161:2019 Design for All - Accessibility following a Design for All approach in products, goods and services - Extending the range of users](#).
- revision of EN 301 549 V3 the harmonized European Standard for ICT Accessibility

CEUD has been participating in this standardisation work by drafting comments and attending meetings on the revision of the standards and submitting changes to the national committee for review and agreement to send on to the various European standardisation committees.

National Market Surveillance Authorities

Under the requirements of the EAA and the national regulation S.I 636/23, NDA staff have engaged in supporting the six market surveillance authorities on better understanding accessibility as defined in the regulation. NDA staff are preparing tailored guidance to support these agencies in advance of the implementation deadline of June 2025.

Webinar on Understanding the European Accessibility Act (EAA)

The NDA hosted an online webinar in December 2024, entitled “Understanding the EAA and decoding its Accessibility Requirements”, which provided an overview of the European Accessibility Act, and had contributions from both staff members and external stakeholders. We were particularly pleased that one of the main architects of the EAA, Inmaculada Placencia Porrero, joined the webinar and presented the EU Commission’s viewpoint and took questions from attendees. We were also pleased to have contributions from members of the Irish Accessibility Networking Group, who

provided insights from both a commercial perspective, as well as the lived experience of people with disabilities. There were approximately 250 people in attendance in a hybrid capacity. The event was run in association with AccessibleEU.

Submission of draft Code of Practice (COP) on Accessible Public Buildings

On the request of the Minister, the NDA throughout 2023 and 2024 developed, through working closely with a technical committee comprising Government officials and key professional bodies such as the RIAI along with Disabled Persons Organisations, a draft that was then widely circulated for public consultation. The final draft of the Code of Practice on Accessible Public Buildings was submitted to Ministers O’Gorman and Rabbitte for approval on 30 September. The NDA are awaiting sign off of the COP before it begins to carry out monitoring on the accessibility of public buildings.

Progress on new Irish Standard on Universal Design Dwellings, requirements and recommendations

A significant step in advancing the uptake and understanding of Universal Design (UD) as it relates to dwellings is the development of a consensus national standard on Universal Design Dwellings. A wide range of stakeholders have been engaging in this work. The first complete draft of the standard was issued to the NSAI Working Group for comment in August 2024. Public consultation is now planned for Q1 of 2025 with publication in Q4 of 2025.

Submission to Meath County Council on Proposed Variation to Meath County Development Plan

In November 2024, the NDA made a submission in respect of a proposed variation to the Meath County Development plan, which included specific percentage targets for the provision of age-friendly lifetime adaptable homes in new housing developments, designed in line with the NDA’s publication Universal Design Guidelines for Homes in Ireland (2015). The percentage target of 30% was aligned with Action 4.6 of the Housing Options for our Ageing Population Policy Statement. The submission was supportive of the variation but included feedback on strengthening the language in the plan by referring to policies in both the ageing and disability sectors. It also included advice on terminology and reference to NDA publications.

NDA submission in response to public consultation on Strategy for World Heritage in Ireland 2024 – 2034

NDA made a submission in response to a public consultation on a ‘Strategy for World Heritage in Ireland 2024 -2034’. NDA advised that the strategy could put a stronger emphasis on the importance of improving accessibility to the development and management of World Heritage Sites. It noted the obligations of public bodies under Section 29 of the Disability Act to make heritage sites accessible and the guidance available in the Code of Practice Accessible Heritage Sites. NDA are working on revising the Code of Practice of Heritage sites in 2025 to be published by Q4 2025.

New Directions: HSE outcomes-focused monitoring system for Adult Day Services

Since Q3 2023, the NDA has been supporting the development of an outcomes-focused monitoring system to support the implementation of New Directions in Adult Day Services. The NDA has previously worked in partnership with the HSE to support the development of the New Directions Interim Standards (published in 2015) and an accompanying self-assessment and quality improvement tool to assist services to assess their progress in meeting these standards called Evaluation, Action, and Service Improvement (EASI), which was published in 2019. To progress this, the HSE has initiated a project to develop an objective and outcomes-focused monitoring system to assess day services' progress towards achievement of the New Directions Interim Standards. The NDA is a member of the project Steering Group and is chairing and providing project support to the Outcomes-focused Working Group.



During 2024, the NDA led on a number of consultations with service provider managers and with frontline support staff. The HSE (through a specialist contractor) consulted with people who attend Adult Day Services and the HSE (through an umbrella body) hosted a family survey, the data from which the NDA have analysed. The NDA prepared three consultation reports and a summary report. The NDA presented to the Steering group meeting on the findings of the consultations and a proposal for the involvement of experts by experience and specialist advisors on the monitoring team.

NDA has made progress on developing the monitoring methodologies including all necessary Standard Operating Procedures, guidelines, documentation and training materials. The NDA attended the six monitoring visits during in November and December to support the ongoing training of the assessors. Work on refining the assessment process including training of experts by experience to participate in the assessment teams will take place in 2025.

Higher education

The NDA has continued to provide advice and support to the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) regarding supports required for disabled people to access and remain in higher education. NDA supported a visit from Minister O'Donovan to UCC to hear the experiences of students first hand and a subsequent broader event, 'Starting the Conversation – Disability Supports in Tertiary Education' event in October. Key barriers discussed included the lack of continuity in Personal Assistant services, the absence of career guidance, and the lack of structured transition support.

The department plan to develop a white paper on 'Disability Supports in Tertiary Education – with a Focus on Employment' and the NDA will input to this as appropriate.

Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH)

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) issued a call for proposals to higher education institutions under the Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH) Fund Strand 4. Phase 2 (2023-2025) involved proposals for course provision for Students with Intellectual Disabilities. The NDA/CEUD team assisted the HEA with the call itself and NDA, CEUD and HEA staff and 2 experts from USA and South Africa independently reviewed and assessed the proposals received.



Previously NDA supported Phase 1 of the PATH 4 funding strand, which aimed at providing funding to support inclusive universally designed higher education environments for all. The funding was dispersed to HEIs based on provision of approved project plans.

Both strands of the PATH funds are to support the embedding of Universal Design (UD) approaches and inclusive practices in HEIs which will benefit all students and in particular autistic students and enable the building of capacity in HEIs for greater participation by students with intellectual disabilities in higher education. Phase 2, which the NDA was involved in over the course of 2022/23, involved a three-year pathfinding pilot to support an enhancement of course provision for students with intellectual disabilities and to inform future policy considerations for students with intellectual disabilities. The Minister and DFHERIS have acknowledged the NDA input and support for this initiative. The NDA will continue to provide HEA with advice and support as these programmes are implemented.

Higher Education Authority presentation

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) hosted an Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) conference in April 2024. The NDA were invited to present the findings of the NDA secondary analysis of the National Survey of Student Experiences of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions (2021) and to take part in a panel discussion titled 'Advancing an Intersectional approach to EDI in Higher Education Institutions'. The NDA referred to the importance of collecting equality data and to the importance of a universal design approach to the publication of information and provision of services relating to sexual misconduct.

Shortlisted Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Awards.

The Department of Further & Higher Education, Innovation, Research & Science (DFHERIS) along with the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and the NDA were shortlisted for the 9th annual Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Awards, for their collaborative work on the consultation phase of the National Access Plan, which had identified that students with an intellectual disability were underrepresented in Higher Education. This was under the category for Strategic Policy Development, Insights Driven Decision Making & Excellence Through Collaboration.

The aim of the National Access Plan was to take measures to increase access and participation levels for this cohort of student and, in doing so, transform their life opportunities. While this work did not win an award it was an important recognition of the value of consultation and its ability to inform policy direction.

Accessible Voting Checklist

Ahead of the local and European elections in June 2024, the NDA worked with the Franchise Unit in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to agree updates to the Accessible Voting Checklist. The Checklist was amended to reflect current best practice in relation to the physical accessibility of polling stations. Other updates included reference to the supply and use of Braille Ballot Paper Templates on polling day. The Department circulated the revised checklist to all Returning Officers as part of their manual for the June elections.

This work was followed by an invitation from the Department to meet with and present to Returning Officers to advise them on how they can make the polling day experience as accessible to as many voters as possible. Feedback from the Department indicated that the presentation was well received. The NDA have continued to advise the Department on the accessibility of voting and voter information through its membership the Working Group on Accessible Voting. Recent research conducted by an Coimisiún Toghcháin (the Electoral Commission) as part of the 2024 elections and referendums may also inform further revisions to the checklist.

Continue to drive and support the collection and use of disability data to inform policy decisions

Employment targets paper

Under Article 27 of the UNCRPD, disabled people have a right to employment on an equal basis with others in an inclusive and accessible labour market. However, globally and in Ireland, disabled people are employed at much lower rates than people without disabilities. The Government has previously set targets to increase the employment levels of disabled people as part of its broader equality goals. With a new National Disability Strategy being developed in 2024-2025, it was considered timely to consider the setting of new targets. This [discussion paper](#) offered guidance on how these could be set.

The paper looked at past national employment targets for disabled people in Ireland as set out in various national strategies and plans. It described employment trends and current levels of employment among people with and without disabilities, both in Ireland and in comparable countries. It reviewed how best to measure employment levels of people with disabilities and the various sources of data available to monitor progress towards targets. The paper also examined employment quota schemes in other countries aimed at increasing employment levels of disabled people. The paper concluded in a series of recommendations on the setting of new national employment

targets for disabled people in Ireland. This paper may be used to inform targets in the new National Disability Strategy.

Census 2027

The NDA engaged during 2024 with the CSO's Census advisory group on questions for a pilot of the 2027 Census of Population. A number of submissions were made on the disability related questions. The NDA advised the CSO on consultation with DPOs and on final decision relating to the questions. The 2027 Census was piloted during the year and the NDA assisted with dissemination of the pilot.



Strategic Priority 2

Strategic Priority 2:

“Deliver independent assessment, monitoring and evaluation of progress against policies, strategies and codes of practice across Government”.

Monitor and report on implementation of national strategies and policies relevant to disability, to identify areas requiring further focus and attention including NDIS and CES, and delivery against goals of UNCRPD

Monitoring Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005

The NDA has a statutory role in monitoring and reporting annually on the progress public bodies are making to meet their obligations under Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005 regarding the employment of persons with disabilities.

Report on Compliance with Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005 for 2023

This is the eighteenth report NDA has produced on the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector.

The key findings from this report are:

- At the end of 2023, the total number of employees in the relevant public sector bodies was 273,747 an increase of 13,313 (5.1%) from 2022
- The number of employees reporting a disability passed 4% for the second year in a row. The number of employees reporting a disability increased from 10,631 in 2022 to 11,254 in 2023 (+623, +5.9%). However, the percentage of employees reporting a disability remained at 4.1%, the same as 2022. This is because of the significant increase in the total number of employees in the public sector in 2023 (+13,313, 5.1%) and because the number and percentage of employees reporting a disability in the HSE dropped from 2,331(2.3%) to 1,735 (1.6%) in 2023
- In 2023, 160 public bodies (76.2%) met the 4.5% target compared to 141 public bodies (66.2%) in 2022
- In 2023, 110 public bodies (52.4%) met the 6% target compared to 103 (48.4%) in 2022

In Q1 2024, after consultation with Monitoring Committees, public bodies, Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) and disability stakeholders, the NDA introduced more qualitative questions on measures public bodies have in place to meet their obligations under Part 5. The Report for 2023 contains a summary of these measures.

The English and Irish versions of this report were submitted to the Minister for the Department of Children, Equality Disability, Integration & Youth and the Minister

of State with responsibility for Disability before the statutory deadline of the 30 November 2024. The NDA await sign off by the Minister before publishing to the NDA website.

Increase in the minimum statutory target for the Report on Compliance with Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005 for 2024

The NDA has consistently advised the public sector that the minimum statutory employment target will be increasing from 3% to 4.5% for the Report on Compliance with Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005 for 2024. The NDA notes that the number and percentage of employees meeting the forthcoming 4.5% and 6% target is increasing every year. However, if the public sector is to achieve these targets in a timely manner, public bodies need to build on the progress they have made to date and prioritise improving their performance under Part 5.

HSE's compliance with Part 5

The Minister for Health and the HSE have received correspondence from the NDA that the HSE did not receive a draft determination of non-compliance for 2021 and 2022. The HSE provided considerable evidence that in 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to provide unprecedented disruption to this public body's daily operations, as did the cyberattack that occurred in 2021.

In 2021 and 2022, the HSE also demonstrated an improvement in its performance and reported an increase in the number and percentage of employees reporting a disability from 514 (0.6%) in 2020 to 1,508 (1.6%) in 2021. In 2022, the HSE reported that 2,331(2.3%) of its employees reported a disability.

As the HSE did not reach the minimum 3% target in 2022 and 2023, the NDA sent a S.49 request to the HSE for this two-year period in November 2024. We will be reviewing their response in 2025.

In December 2024, the Chairperson of the NDA's Authority and the NDA's Executive had a very productive meeting with the Chairman of the HSE Board, a member of the HSE's Board and representatives from the HSE's National HR office on how the HSE and its new six regional health areas can build on the progress that has been made to date to improve its performance under Part 5.

Public bodies' performance under Part 5

In May 2024, the NDA's Authority reviewed the report on the performances of the following four public bodies that did not make the minimum 3% target in 2021 and 2022:

- Atlantic Technologies University (ATU) Galway-Mayo
- Bord Bia
- Land Development Agency
- The Arts Council

On reviewing the individual circumstances pertaining to each of the bodies during the two-year period in question, the Authority decided that none of these public bodies warranted a draft determination of non-compliance for 2021 and 2022. Each of these public bodies had provided evidence that they had measures in place to meet their obligations under Part 5. All of these public bodies have improved their performance in 2023. The NDA wrote to these public bodies to inform them of the Board's decision, requesting an update on how the measures outlined are being progressed.

Comprehensive Employment Strategy indicators report

This final report on the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2024 (CES) offers an in-depth analysis of Ireland's efforts to enhance employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities over the past decade. The report evaluates progress, achievements, and gaps in implementing the CES.

The final review examined an indicator set comprised of a mixture of process and outcome indicators which drew on a wide variety of data sources. The review also examined the series of annual independent assessment reports on the CES developed by the NDA. Views on the key achievements of the strategy and on areas requiring further focus and development were sought from members of the CES Implementation Group and departments and agencies with responsibilities for delivery of actions under the strategy. Findings from engagements with disabled people that related to employment were also included.

A target was set in the CES to increase the proportion of people aged 20-64 years with disabilities who are in employment from 33% in Census 2011 to 38% by 2024. By Census 2016, the employment rate of disabled people increased to 36.5% and the overall employment target for 2024 looked set to be achieved. Changes to the census questions from which data on disability are derived mean that a direct comparison between the employment levels of disabled people in 2022 and 2016 is not possible. However, the employment rate disparity between people with and without disabilities remains substantial in Ireland, and this is probably a better indicator to examine than the proportion of disabled people in employment. Ireland's disability employment gap (DEG) continues to be one of the largest across the European Union. There has been no substantial reduction in the DEG over the lifetime of the CES according to the Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC) data. While lower in 2022 than in 2015, year-on-year fluctuations mean this should not be considered as evidence of a sustained downward trend.

Over the lifetime of the CES, a number of positive developments were realised across a range of areas. The CES laid some important groundwork in creating an inclusive employment landscape for disabled people in Ireland. However, significant challenges remain, as evidenced by the persistent disability employment gap and the continuing fragmentation in, and inflexibility of, support services frequently described by disabled people when consulted. Some of the challenges included gaps in a

supported employment programme, gaps in information and supports for employers, and although improving, gaps in the provision of career guidance.

By embedding learnings from the CES into the forthcoming National Disability Strategy, Ireland can continue to progress towards a more inclusive workforce and society. The NDA has recommended that developing a comprehensive supported employment system that meets the needs of people with higher support needs and people who acquire a disability during their working lives should be a priority for the new strategy. Another key learning is that for a whole-of-Government approach to addressing the disability employment gap to succeed, coordinated working with a structured monitoring and implementation process is crucial. This requires support, resources, and active engagement from all relevant Government departments and their agencies.

The [final review of progress report](#) is currently being finalised and will be published in early 2025.

Monitor and report on compliance with legislation and codes of practice, to provide independent and robust assessments of progress, including ISL, WAD, Disability Act Parts 3 & 5

EU Web Accessibility Directive (WAD) Monitoring

The NDA completed the monitoring for 2024, and this is the third of three annual reports that fulfils NDA's monitoring and reporting obligations for 2022-2024 under the Directive as per Implementing Decision 2018/1524.

The 2024 report has shown significant improvement in levels of compliance across certain cohorts of public bodies. While most Local Authorities have addressed accessibility issues identified by the automated tests under their Simplified Review, a significant minority have yet to do so. Local Authorities and other public bodies subject to Simplified Review should consider these results as the beginning of their accessibility journey. It is necessary to engage with real users and address issues identified in manual testing to ensure real accessibility and achieve compliance with the Directive. The NDA has committed to include some element of manual testing in its Simplified Review methodology for some sites in 2025 which will help public bodies move beyond focusing solely on automated testing results.

NDA has observed that in general those public bodies that engage with their monitoring results and reach out to the NDA and other sources of authoritative information to receive and share guidance, demonstrate ongoing improvements in their compliance. The NDA observes a consistent and welcome trend by public bodies in addressing accessibility in the development of new or existing websites and mobile apps. It is also critical that public bodies continue to consider accessibility in the publishing of content to their website and avoid the routine publishing of inaccessible PDFs.

The NDA monitoring team completed collating the 2024 national report on WAD monitoring and the three-year report to be submitted to the European Commission. Both were submitted to the Minister for Environment, Climate, Communications and Transport in December.

WAD Webinar in partnership with EU Accessible HUB

The WAD team in partnership with the Irish Computer Society (ICS) and the Accessible EU Hub held a hybrid information seminar in June. Titled “From Compliance to Excellence – using accessibility to create great digital services for all” speakers and panellists included John Barron, CIO, Revenue Commissioners, Karen Whooley, Head of Digital, Houses of the Oireachtas and Aoife Geoghan, head of Design and Content, for GOV.ie. Panellists were drawn from the tech sector and public bodies subject to monitoring. The seminar was attended by 140 in-person and online participants and covered topics such as accessible website design and development and building a digital accessibility program in your organisation. Participants were very enthusiastic about the opportunity to meet and share experiences and advise and embed accessibility in their organisations. The WAD team also launched a new piece of guidance on the [“Public procurement of accessible websites and mobile apps”](#) at the event.

Robustly evaluate the impact of policies and programmes to ensure they are achieving intended objectives

Review of Children’s Disability Network Team Service Model

The NDA have been commissioned by the HSE to conduct a review of the Children’s Disability Network Team (CDNT) service model. Progressing Disability Services (PDS) was the term used for the reconfiguration of children’s disability services. Now that reconfiguration has taken place the operation of children’s disability services is through the CDNT service model. This model is based on the 12 principles of PDS and the review of the CDNT service model will be framed around these 12 principles. The review will use a number of methods. Surveys, interviews and focus groups will be used to gather the experiences and views of parents of children with disabilities, children with disabilities, staff and managers, and relevant stakeholders. Analysis will be conducted on monthly CDNT metrics. There are other elements of the review which are currently being developed including identifying the optimal workload of staff and the configuration of teams to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of operations.

During 2024 there were discussions with the HSE and DCEDIY with input from the union to agree the approach. This has now been agreed with the review due to start in early 2025.

2024 was also spent developing survey tools and compiling literature reviews to inform the review. Monthly data collected by CDNTs was combined with the HSE CDNT staff census 2023 and the Census of population data 2022 to give a baseline series of metrics for monitoring progress in the CDNTs.

AI tool for monitoring

A pilot project was initiated to engage a qualified and experienced supplier of ICT products and services to provide a customised artificial intelligence (AI) tool to find and extract data from the websites of Government departments and bodies under NDA's aegis for monitoring of Part 3 of the Disability Act. It was proposed that the supplier would co-design with the NDA and lead the implementation of a pilot study to assess that tool. This study and accompanying report is intended to inform future decision-making regarding the use of AI tools for monitoring activities at NDA/CEUD. The tool has been advanced with the external contractor through an iterative process. The pilot, to be completed by Q1 2025, includes evaluating if this is a process and solution that can be advanced and expanded further in 2025.



Strategic Priority 3

Strategic Priority 3

“Advance activities to promote awareness and wider take-up of Universal Design across Ireland”

Universal Design Awareness training for Fáilte Ireland Strategic Partners

In October, CEUD staff along with Stephen Cluskey of [Mobility Mojo](#) provided a workshop to organisations and local authorities who are partnering with [Fáilte Ireland](#) to enhance their tourism infrastructure, facilities and visitor experiences through [Just Transition funding](#). The workshop was entitled, **Inclusive Tourism: taking a Universal Design Approach**. The attendees were staff from local authorities, Cóilte, Bord na Mona, Waterways Ireland and the Office of Public Works (OPW).

The workshop introduced Universal Design to achieve inclusive tourism in the visitor experience. The workshop presented a range of different personas engaged in a variety of scenarios. Feedback from an evaluation survey on the workshop was very positive.

Encourage take up and compliance with Universal Design principles to foster implementation of best practice

Walkability Audit Reports

CEUD worked with Age Friendly Ireland (AFI) to develop a descriptive summary of a series of walkability audit reports. Data was extracted from 48 reports that focused on towns across 14 counties, as well as buildings and outdoor spaces such as a beach, public park and a housing estate provided by AFI. The outputs focused on the top 5 barriers that were encountered in both towns and public buildings which covered elements such as poorly maintained footpaths, wayfinding, and road crossings. This report is to inform further work on development of a user experience audit tool to align with the ongoing monitoring of the Code of Practice on Accessibility of Public Services and Information provided by Public Bodies.

Launch of Universal Design Guidelines for Changing Places Toilets

The Universal Design Guidelines for Changing Places Toilets are aimed at designers, building managers and owners of facilities as well as clients, industry professionals and disability stakeholders. The purpose of the guidelines is to:

- provide good practice guidance on the location of Changing Places Toilets, having regard to the use and operation of a building
- provide good practice guidance on the provision and design of Changing Places Toilets
- provide good practice guidance on managing and maintaining Changing Places Toilets

- complement implementation of the Building Regulations (Part M Amendment) Regulations 2022, which make provision for Changing Places Toilets, having regard to the use and size of a building.

The guidelines and summary documents are available for download in a range of formats.

Former Minister, Anne Rabbitte, formally launched the Universal Design Guidelines for Changing Places Toilets on 27 June at a CEUD launch event, which was held in partnership with AccessibleEU. Speakers at the event included representatives from Independent Living Movement Ireland, Changing Places Ireland, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, CEUD, and O'Herlihy Access Consultancy, as well as an international expert from the USA, Mark Trieglaff. Videos of the launch are available on our website.



Access to Changing Places Toilets

CEUD met with Changing Places Ireland in October, along with Catherine Dollard, an architect in Limerick County Council and member of the RIAI Universal Design Taskforce. The meeting was requested by Limerick County Council, to discuss the potential for public service innovation funding to pilot a suitable approach for providing easy access to Changing Places Toilets that are locked for security reasons. A range of approaches were discussed to get user feedback from Changing

Places Ireland. Limerick County Council proposed to apply for funding to pilot an agreed approach with a view to a national roll-out if a suitable approach is found.

Standardised Design of State-Sponsored Purpose-Built Student Accommodation

In October, CEUD met with officials from the Department of Higher and Further Education, which has commissioned a study to develop a standardised design for state-sponsored Purpose-Built Student Accommodation. CEUD advised on the need for Universal Design to be integrated into the design of student accommodation and provided the Department and contractor for the project with advice on key design considerations, appropriate design guidance and student groups for consultation.

Cost Review of Universal Design Homes

The draft report Universal Design Homes – Review of Associated Costs was submitted to the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI) in December. In January 2025, CEUD met with the SCSI committee with responsibility for review and approval of the report and presented on the findings to the group. Approval from the SCSI for the report is expected in Q1 2025.

Fáilte Ireland Review of National Assurance Quality Framework for Hotels

In December, CEUD engaged with a Fáilte Ireland consultation, which was conducted as part of a review of hotel standards and classifications. The focus of the meeting was how inclusive and accessible tourism should be reflected in the Registration and Renewal of Registration Regulations for Hotels and the Fáilte Ireland Hotel Classification Scheme, which are under review.

Fáilte Ireland training on Universal Design for Accessibility and Inclusion

In December, CEUD participated on an expert panel which formed part of Fáilte Ireland training on Universal Design for Accessibility and Inclusion for the tourism sector. This training was part of the EU Just Transition Tourism Learning Network programme. The training emphasised how embedding Universal Design in tourism projects leads to inclusivity and sustainability.

CEUD are continuing to liaise with the Fáilte Ireland Inclusive Tourism team to identify future opportunities for both organisations to collaborate further.

CPD Webinar: In Sickness and in Health: Lessons from Universal Design in Healthcare

CEUD hosted a CPD webinar with architect Hanna Kickham of O'Connell Mahon Architects in June titled 'In Sickness and in Health: Lessons from Universal Design in Healthcare'. The webinar highlighted the significant benefits of incorporating Universal Design principles into building design, highlighting the advantages for individuals of all ages and health conditions, illustrated through compelling examples,

with a particular focus on the National Rehabilitation Hospital, which won the RIAI Universal Design Award in 2021. There were 154 attendees with positive feedback received.

Department of Housing Standardised Approaches to Design Housing Study

The Department of Housing has commissioned a housing study called '[standardised approaches to design](#)' under Priority Action 11 of Housing for All 2023 which commits to publishing standardised approaches to the design of housing to include the development of standardised dwelling types and standardised specifications, including for building services, with the aim of reducing the cost of construction and supporting Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) adoption. In August 2024, the Department invited CEUD to a meeting to discuss the best approach to Universal Design in the study. CEUD was also invited to a stakeholder engagement workshop in September. CEUD continue to engage with Department with the prospect of UD being incorporated into the final designs in 2025.

Provide policy advice through the development of guidelines and contributing to standards in order to support the implementation of best practices in design of services and products for all citizens

Age Friendly Ireland training on Age Friendly Housing and Public Realm

CEUD recorded a training video called 'Building for Everyone: An Introduction to Universal Design' in response to a request from Age Friendly Ireland. The video will be used as part of Age Friendly Ireland's training on Age Friendly Housing and Public Realm. The training is offered to relevant staff in various sectors including local Government, whose actions and decisions shape accommodation and public realm provision.

Presentation to Age Friendly Housing Technical Advisors Network

CEUD was invited by Age Friendly Ireland to speak at the March 2024 meeting of the Age Friendly Housing Technical Advisors Network, which was held at the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA). The presentation gave an update on the proposed Universal Design Homes Internal Layout Checklist and new Irish Standard on Universal Design Dwellings, as well as new data from Census 2022 on the proportion of households in Ireland with at least one disabled person living in them (40%). The importance of the new standard on Universal Design Dwellings was emphasised in feedback from the Technical Advisors, as a key document to support their work. It is expected that the standard will go to public consultation in the first quarter of 2025.

Emergency Call Answering Service/112

The role of the Emergency Call Answering Service (ECAS) is to identify and route the Emergency Communications that are received by the ECAS through to the appropriate Emergency Service (Garda, Fire, Ambulance or Coast Guard and, in cases involving aircraft, Air Traffic Control). In advance of the expiration of the current contract with their service provider, on 24 November 2025, the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications is now planning to undertake a formal public procurement for the appointment of an Operator to operate the ECAS. The Department asked the NDA to assist in drafting content for their pre-procurement document and questionnaire. The NDA linked the Department with the relevant DPO for Deaf people and deaf organisations, and also did an accessibility check on the document and the linked survey.

In addition to these activities, the Department and ComReg have agreed to work with the NDA on the new Emergency Communications Standard that is to be harmonised under the European Accessibility Act. They will also participate on the relevant National Standards Authority of Ireland committee.

Guide and advise on curricula to build capacity including the integration of Universal Design for Learning

UDG4ELCS Implementation Project

The Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care Settings (UDG4ELCS) implementation project is to promote understanding and adoption of the UDG4ELCS by Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School-Age Childcare (SAC) educators/practitioners, as well as by built environment professionals involved in the design, planning and construction of ELC and SAC settings.

CEUD and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) formed an Implementation Project Team to secure a contractor and work on a project to promote understanding and adoption of the Guidelines by Early Learning and Care providers and practitioners.

Mary Immaculate College (MIC) and Piquant are a consortium contracted by DCEDIY to produce deliverables to achieve three objectives of this project which includes:

- developing a communications strategy
- designing and developing an online knowledge exchange platform that will be a dynamic website
- the development and provision of online, self-paced e-learning modules for the ELC/SAC and Built Environment sectors

In late 2024, the then Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Roderic O’Gorman announced the launch of the €25m Building Blocks Extension Grant scheme for early learning and childcare providers.

The scheme will have four strands:

- Extensions to existing premises for private services
- Extensions to existing premises for community services
- Purchase of new premises for community services
- Construction of new premises for community services

All projects are required to deliver net increases in full-time places for one to three-year-olds. Projects are also required to incorporate Universal Design (UDG4ELCS).

Guest lecture to Griffith College Interior Architecture Students

In October 2024, the Senior Built Environment Design Advisor at CEUD provided a guest lecture to Interior Architecture students at Griffith College Dublin. The students were working on a project to design a community centre, with Universal Design incorporated into their project brief.

Lectures on Universal Design in the Built Environment as part of ATU Masters in Built Environment Regulation

Four lectures on Universal Design in the built environment were delivered to students on the ATU Masters in Built Environment Regulation in March and April. CEUD delivered one of the lectures and commissioned the remaining three. The first lecture was an introduction to Universal Design in the built environment. Tom Grey (TrinityHaus) gave the second lecture on Universal Design and Accessibility in Legislation. The third lecture was delivered by Nicola Ryan (StudioRed architects) on Stairs: A Universal Design Approach and the fourth by Eoin O’Herlihy (O’Herlihy Access Consultancy) on Doors: A Universal Design Approach. The lectures were repeated as online Zoom CPD webinars in September and October, promoted as a partnership with the RIAI.

Webinar Series on Universal Design in the Built Environment

The above four lectures were also provided by CEUD as a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) webinar series on Universal Design in the Built Environment in September and October 2024 in partnership with the RIAI. The four lunchtime webinars were hosted with different speakers. The topics and speakers were as follows:

- Building for Everyone: Introduction to Universal Design, with Ruth O’Reilly, Centre for Excellence in Universal Design
- Beyond Part M: Universal Design and Accessibility Legislation with Tom Grey, TrinityHaus
- Inclusive Steps: Universal Design for Stairs, with Nicola Ryan, Studio Red Architects
- Welcoming All: Universal Design for Doorways, with Eoin O’Herlihy, O’Herlihy Access Consultancy

The webinars were very well attended with over 200 architects and built environment professionals at each of the four events. The webinars are now available as a recording via the [CEUD](#) and RIAI websites.

Presenting at EU Accessible Hub conference in Portugal

The CEUD Chief Officer presented at the EU Accessible Hub conference in Portugal in October. The focus of the conference was on advancing Inclusive Higher Education in Europe. A CEUD staff member presented on how taking a systems approach to applying Universal Design in Education is beneficial for all. This is part of the ongoing collaboration with this EU network on building capacity across the EU and in particular on ensuring that UD and accessibility become part of the educational curricula.

Presenting at Educational Building Conference in RDS

CEUD staff chaired and presented at the Educational Building conference hosted by the Department of Education in the RDS on 7 November. The theme of the session was advancing Universal Design in Education. CEUD's Senior ICT Advisor chaired the session with speakers from UCD, AHEAD and IDI as well as Dr Miguel Valles from Portugal. Dr Valles presented the journey that Portugal have been on since 2009 on delivering inclusive education in relation to Article 24 of the UNCRPD. Portugal have been assessed twice by the UNCRPD committee with the committee issuing very strong recommendations on ensuring Portugal move from a segregated education system to a more inclusive education system.

A closed hybrid session was also organised by CEUD on 8 November that took place in Engineers Ireland. This was a more informal session with a number of NDA staff as well as staff from the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and the Department of Education Building unit in Tullamore. The outcome clearly showing there is still a gap in understanding on what inclusive education in Ireland looks like.

CEUD Presentation at UD2024 Conference in Oslo, Norway

CEUD presented at the UD2024 conference in Oslo at the end of November 2024, along with David Hallinan (policy analyst at NESC and former Senior Research Officer at the NDA). The conference paper was entitled "[Universal Design Homes: Social Value and Economic Benefits](#)". One Swedish conference contact followed up with CEUD, noting that the University of Lund is using the CEUD's [Building for Everyone: An Introduction to Universal Design](#) webinar in a course for Occupational Therapy students.

Promote awareness through partnerships with professional awards programmes

Institute of Designers Ireland Awards

CEUD partners with the Institute of Designers in Ireland (IDI) to promote Universal Design among both the design community and student design community. As part of its partnership with IDI, CEUD honours Irish designers who are applying a Universal Design approach in their designs by judging the Universal Design category of the IDI awards in both the IDI Design Awards and the IDI Graduate Design Awards each year.

The IDI Design Awards for professionals took place in the RDS in Dublin on 14 November 2024. This year there was a total of 36 entries in the Universal Design category. The winner of the Universal Design Category was Tap Creative with their retail design of Petmania. CEUD chose Tap Creative as the winner of this award because their redesign of the Petmania flagship store featured information and communications that are perceptible, with clear, easy to read signage and easy to understand, simple and intuitive navigation of the store and its services.

The IDI Graduate Design Awards took place in October 2024 in Belfast School of Art. CEUD judges reviewed a total of 116 design entries to the Universal Design category. These entries were divided between Built Environment, ICT and Product and Services.

This year the judges choose 'Designing a dignifying cup for people with dysphagia' as the winner of the UD award. This project involved the redesign of a volume control beaker that helps to manage liquid intake while reducing choking risk. It is evident that the designer was aware of the stigmatisation that some users experience from using other options available on the market. Their modern and sleek design makes this cup more appealing to users and reduces the stigmatisation that they might feel.



IDI Awards 2024 - Dr Ger Craddock and TapCreative

Universal Design Grand Challenge Finals 2024

The final of the Universal Design Grand Challenge 2024 was held at the Aviva Stadium in October. This was the ten-year anniversary of the event and was held online via Zoom Webinar as well as in-person.

Students competed for awards in three categories and audience members in attendance at the Aviva were able to vote in the People's Choice award.

The event opened with a new element this year, the 'Meet the Finalists' networking event, where attendees and judges were invited to chat with the finalists about their designs prior to the award ceremony. This was included based on feedback from the previous year stating that the judges would like more time to get to know the designers outside of the presentation. As the 'Meet the Finalists' was a pilot, judging was on the students' presentations only and not during this networking time. Feedback from judges and students on the night was that 'Meet the Finalists' worked very well as both an icebreaker for the students and an opportunity for judges to get a better idea of what goes into each design.

This year the inspiring keynote address was delivered by Kim Mackenzie Doyle, an internationally renowned designer and CEO of the BIG IDEA.

The winners in the categories were:

- Built environment winner: Products and Services winner: [Architecture of Care: Gradual Spatial Transition](#)
- Technology Winner: [Hagstone: Delivering adaptive and accessible indoor navigation via smartphone using a 3D digital twin](#)
- Products and Services Winner: [Swimsafe](#)
- People's Choice winner: [Architecture of Care: Gradual Spatial Transition](#)



Alannah Hayes, winner of both Best Environment and People's Choice for Architecture of Care: Gradual Spatial Transition



Products and Services Winner Swimsafe



Technology winner Hagstone

Irish eGovernment Awards

A CEUD staff member was a judge on the Irish eGovernment Awards which was held in September 2024 for the first time in four years. The winner of this year's "Universal Design and accessibility" category was the "Visit Dublin" website by Fáilte Ireland. Although not subject to monitoring, this website is an example of the "accessibility-first" approach increasingly being taken by public bodies when developing new websites and is a welcome exemplar of good practice.

Young Scientist Exhibition NDA Award and Exhibition Stand

CEUD hosted a stand at the BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition. This exhibition ran from the 11 – 13 January 2024 in the RDS in Dublin. The CEUD stand was one of 57 stands that were in the exhibitor's hall of the exhibition.

Over the three days CEUD ran an activity at their stand called the Connected Game. This game challenged students to connect a USC, a USB and headphone jack into a device while not being able to view the device or the cables as they were in a closed box. Along with running the Connected Game, CEUD also had Universal Design guidance documents on display and a PowerPoint presentation that provided information about CEUD and the work that we engage in.



Dr Ger Craddock presenting the NDA Special Award to Luke Blackwell

There was great engagement with students at the stand over the three days with lots of them wanting to complete in the Connected Game. There was also positive engagement with other stands holders and teachers who wanted to know more about Universal Design.

The NDA would like to congratulate the 3rd year student, Luke Blackwell from CBS Thurles, on winning the NDA Special Award and also on achieving first place in the individual intermediate Social and Behavioural science category at the BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition 2024. Luke's project was assessing the wheelchair accessibility of fourteen midlands towns that also included over 400 hundred people surveyed along with a number of case studies of wheelchair users he interviewed.

Guide and advise on Universal Design of technological solutions to foster inclusive and sustainable communities

Workshop on EAA in collaboration with Google

NDA staff were invited to collaborate with Google and Tilting the Lens on a workshop on client/retail banking as it pertains to the EAA. NDA staff were heavily involved in workshop design, preparation, and implementation. NDA made presentations outlining the role of the EAA in the banking context, and also participated in panel discussions and workshops which formed part of this half-day event. Many of the leading banking organisations were present at the event.



Strategic Priority 4

Strategic Priority 4:

“Foster strong and open processes for engaging and consulting with persons with disabilities and the wider disability community”.

Consultation and engagement

Summaries of consultation processes on the National Disability Strategy and a potential National Disability Survey have already been mentioned in this report with more information provided below. The NDA senior management team also meets with Disabled Persons Organisations and other disabled people and disability organisations regularly to keep abreast of current and emerging concerns and to share our work. DPO members are now routinely invited to sit on advisory groups and technical groups related to our projects.

The NDA also accept a number of invitations each year to present at various events. These engagements were wide-ranging and included engagements with young people. For example:

- presentation to Cork City Youth Council, which is affiliated to Comhairle na nÓg, on the findings of our consultation with children and young people with disabilities as part of the development of the new National Disability Strategy. Each year, their Youth Council works on a particular campaign or topic, with this year's project focused on disability awareness and inclusion in Cork city
- talk delivered to Portlaoise Foróige Club about ways to foster inclusion for young people with disabilities in their locality
- lecture to students in the University of Galway on the NDA's work and disability law and policy in Ireland
- participation in a roundtable discussion for students in the University of Maynooth which focused on the contribution and importance of research to evidence-based policy-making
- presentation of NDA research on the Experience of sexual harassment and sexual violence by disabled students in Irish Higher Education Institutions at the Higher Education Authority's National Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Conference 2024.

Provide guidance and information to public sector bodies to progress a culture of meaningful engagement with persons with disabilities

Guidance to public sector bodies

The NDA consistently advises Government departments and public bodies about the importance of meaningfully engaging with persons with disabilities. This includes promoting the use of our Participation Matters Guidelines across the public sector. These guidelines are a practical resource to support public officials at national and local level to meaningfully consult with and actively involve disabled people and

their representative organisations in policy development and other decision-making processes to meet obligations set out under the UNCRPD.

The NDA also uses the opportunity presented by speaking engagements with public sector bodies and its membership of working groups and committees to continually highlight the need to meaningfully engage with DPOs and disabled people. For example:

- The NDA Director and the Head of Policy, Research and Public Affairs participated in a lunch and learn seminar organised by the Office of the Ombudsman in October, with a useful discussion about how the Ombudsman is improving processes for meeting the needs of disabled customers.
- Local Development Companies are responsible for administering a range of schemes at local level designed to improve the inclusion of marginalised populations – including disabled people – in the socio-economic lives of their communities. The NDA Director presented on the work of the NDA to the social inclusion oversight forum of this Network. The NDA highlighted the importance of engagement with DPOs and disabled people at the local level.
- The Irish Government Economic Evaluation Service, based in the Department of Public Expenditure, NPD Delivery and Reform held two knowledge sharing symposia on disability, with the NDA presenting on the benefits of disability research in informing policy.



NDA representatives attend the Irish Government Economic Evaluation Service symposia

- The NDA engaged with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications on the synergies between the Sustainable Development Goals and the UNCRPD and the development of an approach which takes account of both sets of commitments. In particular, we highlighted the need to increase the engagement of persons with disabilities with the national stakeholder engagement mechanisms in line with UNCRPD Article 4(3).
- The NDA has engaged with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and welcomes the establishment of their new monitoring unit that will be focused on their independent monitoring role for the UNCRPD.

Ethical Guidance

The NDA adheres to the highest standards in relation to research ethics. We published revised [ethical guidance for research with disabled people](#). The revised guidance takes into account new legislation such as the Health Research Regulations, the establishment of the Health Research Consent Declaration Committee and the commencement of the amended Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act.

People with disabilities who don't have the capacity to explicitly consent should not be unfairly excluded from research. The revised guidance includes information and advice on the inclusion of people that do not have the capacity to provide explicit consent.

Hold annual, thematic events to hear directly from persons with disabilities and their representative bodies, while continuing to carry out focused consultation on specific projects to inform NDA outputs

Consultation on a new National Disability Strategy

DCEDIY requested that the NDA support them in managing the consultation on a successor strategy to the National Disability Inclusion Strategy. The new strategy will be one of Ireland's mechanisms for driving progressive implementation of the UNCRPD. The consultation was run between November 2023 and February of 2024. It consisted of a number of strands, including a survey for disabled people, a survey for carers, thematic focus groups, focus groups for seldom heard groups, bespoke consultation with seldom-heard individuals (people with intellectual disability and autism) and with children, as well as a series of town hall events. In addition, video or written submissions were invited. Multiple formats were made available for the survey. Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) were particularly targeted in the consultation, with DCEDIY holding regular meetings with DPOs and strong DPO engagement achieved in the other consultation strands.

Engagement included 34 focus group discussions, 18 interviews, 4 large consultation meetings, 81 written and four video submission, and a national survey completed by 484 people. The consultation survey aimed to identify the issues most important to disabled people's quality of life and to explore how people with disabilities feel they

are treated. The three issues rated as important to their quality of life by the highest proportion of respondents were:

- getting health or social care services and supports,
- having enough money to cover the extra costs related to their disability,
- being able to get and use public or private transportation easily.

Throughout the many consultation activities, participants raised a number of challenges experienced by disabled people in Ireland and proposed several solutions to these. Spanning a range of topics, these challenges and potential solutions were collated in a comprehensive consultation report, in which the contributions and proposals of DPOs were highlighted. While the key purpose of the report is for use in developing the new Strategy, it will also be useful to inform reporting ahead of Ireland's first examination under the UNCRPD, to shape the national disability research agenda and Government policies, and to inform other Government strategies and action plans more generally.

The final report on the consultation has been produced in a number of formats and will be published along with the new Strategy, with an expected publication date in Q2 of 2025.

National Disability Survey

The NDA have been active over the last number of years in building a case for a National Disability Survey. Such a survey was conducted in 2006 by the Central Statistics office following the 2006 Census of Population. The survey provided in-depth information on the lives, needs, and difficulties experienced by individuals with a disability, and it is still used to inform policy. DCEDIY are now advancing the business case and have set up a steering group which the NDA were invited to join. The NDA were requested by DCEDIY to lead a consultation with DPOs, disabled people and other civil society, academic and other relevant stakeholders on a potential National Disability Survey. NDA received good engagement from the consultation and have developed a consultation report which will inform the business case and next steps.

Annual Conference

The NDA's 2024 Annual Conference took place on 24 October at the AVIVA Stadium. The event focused on the participation of disabled people in culture, sport, recreation, and leisure in line with Article 30 UNCRPD. The event generated high interest, with almost 150 people attending the event in-person, and well over 100 participants joining online. Topics covered included arts and creativity, sports, recreation and leisure, cultural heritage, identity and tourism, film and the media.

The event featured almost thirty speakers, with a mix of presentations, panel discussions and cultural performances. Participants included Minister Anne Rabbitte, theatre director Petal Pilley and former Paralympian Jason Smyth, with the Minister

for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin, also recording a closing address. In line with this year's Article 30 theme, the event also featured a musical performance and poetry recital, as well as an art exhibition of ten talented artists with intellectual disabilities. Feedback received from attendees through evaluation surveys was very positive. In addition, the event received coverage on national media outlets, including RTÉ. [Video recordings](#) of the conference are available on the NDA website.



A panel discussion at the 2024 NDA Annual Conference



Audience interaction at the 2024 NDA Annual Conference

Someone Like Me Art Competition

'Someone Like Me' is an annual primary schools' art competition organised by the NDA. It is a powerful platform that promotes disability awareness among young minds. This competition aims to open young eyes to see beyond the surface and realise our similarities and unique differences. It serves as a tool for children to learn and engage in heartfelt conversations, sparking curiosity and empathy.

The 2023 Someone Like Me art competition was the eighth year of the competition; 2,281 entries were received from 197 schools across all 26 counties. The awards ceremony was held in Dublin City Hall on 17 January, 2024. It was also livestreamed on the Someone Like Me website. The awards ceremony was attended by Minister Rabbitte. The competition was covered by RTE News2Day, the Irish Examiner (with an accompanying photo) and regional newspaper and radio.

The overall national winner were students from third and fourth class in Meelick National School, Co. Clare. They designed a book drawing on their own experience as a class group of how the school and their teacher have made the classroom a place where everyone can be themselves and fully participate in the life of the school in a way that is inclusive of all their needs.



An entry at the 2024 Someone Like Me art competition

There were two national Highly Commended winners. The first was fifth class from Borris National School, Co. Carlow. Pupils created a 'train to inclusion'. They wrote positive words that they felt described their classroom and school environment and place them on the brick work. The second was middle class from Ábalta Special School, Co. Galway. As a school for children with autism and complex needs, they focused on the theme of neurodiversity creating six parts of a big brain using different shapes, colours and materials.

Minister Anne Rabbitte formally launched the 2024 Someone Like Me art competition in Galway along with the two county winners from the 2023 competition. The 2024 competition attracted 2,708 entries from 255 national schools across the country, and the 2024 county winners were announced at the end of 2024. The national winners were announced at an awards ceremony in early 2025.



Minister Anne Rabbitte formally launched the 2024 Someone Like Me art competition



Strategic Priority 5

Strategic Priority 5:

“Maintain and enhance organisational effectiveness”.

NDA Website

The revised nda.ie website, launched in 2022, was one of the best performing website among public body websites assessed as part of the Web Accessibility Monitoring in 2024, with an overall accessibility score of 91.69%.

Staff Resources

In accordance with section 27 of the National Disability Authority Act 1999, the NDA is the employer of its staff. The Executive, led by the Director, implements the strategy, annual work plan and policies of the National Disability Authority on a day-to-day basis.

As of 31 December 2024, the National Disability Authority had 45 staff. The NDA’s payroll, pension and travel and subsistence processing is provided by the Payroll Shared Service Centre of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The NDA facilitates communication on key issues between management and a recognised trade union that represents NDA staff interests.

The Executive consists of three sections:

- Policy, Research and Public Affairs;
- Centre for Excellence in Universal Design and Standards & Monitoring;
- Corporate Services

The Heads of these three sections, reporting to the Director, comprise the senior management group.

Senior Management at 31 December 2024

Director	Dr Aideen Hartney
Head of Policy, Research and Public Affairs	Dr Rosalyn Tamming
Chief Officer, Centre for Excellence in Universal Design and Standards & Monitoring	Dr Ger Craddock
Head of Corporate Services	Ms Evelyn Moore

Training and Development

The NDA continued to roll out a training and development plan for staff informed by the Performance Development Management System (PMDS) and individual needs, which included attendance at seminars, conferences, webinars, training sessions and workshops. A number of training courses and workshops were scheduled internally for staff including:

- Fire Warden Training
- Interview training Preparation
- Pensions Training Foundation Course
- OGP Framework & info session PPE workwear & first aid supplies

The following is an example of some of the external training and development opportunities availed of in 2024:

- Improving Time Management and Prioritising your Workload
- Crisis Communications Workshop
- Women in Leadership – International Women’s Day
- Shaping the workforce of the Future conference resources
- Cert in Leadership Training
- Accessible Social Media
- LinkedIn for Business
- X (formerly Twitter) for Business
- Core Skills HEO
- Managing Hybrid and Remote Teams
- Word Advanced training course
- VBA Excel training
- Mastering Public Speaking & Presentation Skills Masterclass
- Understanding Invisible Disabilities in The Workplace
- Open Data Training
- Research & Evaluation Project Management Course
- DSE Assessor Training
- Key Evaluation Tools for Infrastructure Guidelines Seminar
- Annual Review of Employment Law 2024
- The Sustainability Agenda for Public Sector Bodies
- AI for Business - An Introduction
- Explorer Training
- Open Presentation Skills
- Leveraging AI for HR and the Workplace
- Minute Taking For Meetings
- Fire Safety In Public Buildings Conference
- Dealing with Difficult Customers and Behaviours
- Overview of Freedom of Information
- Climate Action Leadership Training
- FOI for Decision Makers and Internal Reviewers

All new staff carried out the following training:

- NDA Disability Equality eLearning
- Protecting Data When Home Working eLearning
- Return to Work Safety Protocol
- Protected Disclosure (Whistle Blowing) Training

Health & Safety Training consisted of:

- Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Assessment
- Ergonomic Assessment
- First Aid Responder

Communications

During 2024, a review of the Communications Strategy was undertaken to inform the development of a new Strategy which will be developed in 2025. The review identified several areas where engagement increased, and the effectiveness of NDA communications improved, since the commencement of the strategy including:

- the delivery of three new websites (an NDA English language website, an NDA Irish language website, and an English language CEUD website)
- significant growth in followers and activity across the three social media platforms targeted
- increased frequency of the NDA Newsletter
- a move from in-person events to a blend of accessible in-person, online and hybrid events
- improved internal communications through regular staff meetings, the adoption of new IT systems such as Teams, and a review and update of the NDA Style Guide and the NDA Social Media Policy
- the commissioning of new NDA communications collateral, and the strengthening of jointly branded NDA and CEUD communications and collateral.

One area identified for attention in the coming year was improving resourcing of the communication functions. The capacity issue within the team is being addressed in 2025 which will allow more content creation and regular monitoring of communications functions.

Other areas identified for attention in 2025 include: improving internal communications across the organisation; updating the NDA corporate branding guidelines; improving analytics and identification of measurable KPIs for all external communication channels; working with OGCI0 to identify and rollout IT software

across the organisation that is accessible and effective; delivering an Irish language CEUD website; reviewing the content on the NDA website; and, producing 'a guidance document for promoting good practice on accessibility and Universal Design for events for internal and external stakeholders' as committed to under the 2024 Public Sector Duty Action Plan.

Governance and Financial Reporting

The NDA is committed to attaining the highest standard of corporate governance within the organisation. The overall governance and control framework within the NDA is guided by compliance with the NDA Act 1999 and the provisions of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

During 2024, given the ongoing implementation of the NDA's Blended Working policy, particular emphasis continued on monitoring the control environment operating in the NDA, focussing on financial and data management.

An Oversight and Performance Framework Agreement was established between the NDA and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth. The 2024 Performance Delivery Agreement detailed the high-level goals and objectives, as well as the key programme of activity that the NDA committed to for 2024.

Internally produced financial reports showing details of expenditure against the agreed budget were reviewed by the Finance Committee and the Authority throughout the year on a bi-monthly basis (through management accounts and budget updates). The management accounts were also shared with the Audit & Risk Committee throughout the year. In accordance with the National Disability Authority Act 1999 and the Code of Governance for State Bodies 2016, the NDA prepared and submitted draft financial accounts for 2024 to our parent department and the Comptroller and Auditor General. The Financial Statements of the NDA for the year ended 31 December 2024 have been prepared under FRS102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the UK and Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC). The NDA will submit the approved financial accounts for 2024 to the Minister.

Risk Management

The effective management of organisational risk requires robust control processes to support the Authority and the Executive in achieving the NDA's objectives. Risk and control functions are established in the role of Audit & Risk Committee appointed by the Authority, who review performance, risk matters including policy and practice.

The risk environment for the NDA is monitored and considered by the Senior Management Group at regular intervals and is a standing item on the agenda for each Authority meeting. The NDA has an established Risk Register which is reviewed and approved at regular intervals by the Audit & Risk Committee and Authority, as appropriate. The Authority has a designated Chief Risk Officer and has developed and approved the organisation's Risk Appetite Statement.

In line with the requirement under the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies to publish top risks, and reflecting on key priorities of the organisation, the following were identified as the potential risks that could negatively impact the NDA during 2024:

1. Risk of insufficient capacity to respond to increased demands in the delivery of Statutory and operational functions of NDA especially in a challenging employment market.
2. Risk of disruption due to Cyber-attack.
3. Risk of incapacity to deliver on new functions such as European Accessibility Act (EAA) transposition, without additional resources.

Authority 2024

The Authority of the NDA consists of a Chairperson and 12 ordinary members. The Authority met 8 times during 2024. A schedule of 2024 attendance, fees and expenses is set out in the Governance Statement, which forms part of the Annual Financial Statements. The Authority underwent an external evaluation of its performance in 2024 in line with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). Recommendations from the previous evaluation process (2023) were progressed throughout the year.

Internal Audit

Following their appointment through a tendering process in 2021, Crowleys DFK continued in 2024 to provide the NDA with a suite of Internal Audit services agreed with the Audit & Risk Committee and approved by the NDA Authority in 2023.

Oireachtas members' enquiries

In accordance with DPER Circular 24/2016, the NDA provided a dedicated enquiries email address OireachtasReps@nda.ie for members of the Oireachtas seeking information on matters pertaining to the work of the NDA.

Public Sector Duty

During 2024, the NDA revised its Public Sector Duty Equality and Human Rights Action Plan. Our new action plan, covering the period 2024–2026, has a smaller number of more focused actions which allows for more effective monitoring. One of the biggest actions in the new plan is to make our working environment safe and accessible and a programme of building works commenced in 2024, which will include a number of accessibility upgrades including a changing places toilet.

Another new action identified in the plan is to ensure the NDA is a welcoming safe and inclusive environment for all employees, regardless of background or other characteristics. This action contains several sub actions, including a commitment to provide briefings for staff on lived experiences of people across a range of equality grounds. The first of these briefings was held in October 2024, with Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre invited to present to NDA staff. This interactive and

participatory session focused on the importance of an intersectional approach to disability and the experiences of disabled Travellers in Ireland. A second briefing was held in December 2024, focusing on the work undertaken by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency to advance disability rights in Europe, including through an intersectional lens.

More briefings are planned for 2025, including briefings to consider the experiences of disabled women and disabled people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.

Health and Safety

The NDA is committed to ensuring the well-being of its employees by maintaining a safe place of work and ensuring compliance with the requirements pursuant to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (as amended). The NDA's Health and Safety Committee continued to support monitoring and guidance on Health and Safety matters during 2024. A Health & Safety Advisory Audit was conducted by the NDA's internal auditors in Q3 2023 with the final report received in early 2024. It observed that 'Health and Safety is a clear priority for the NDA'. All recommendations have been enacted or are in the process of being enacted.

Disability Act 2005

Under Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005, public sector bodies are required to report on their level of employment of persons with disabilities. As per the last staff census, the percentage of NDA employees with a disability, under the definition in the Disability Act 2005, was 40% for 2023.

The NDA has taken all reasonable measures to promote and support the employment by it of persons with disabilities. For example, providing an accessible work environment, including Work Station Assessments, with further remote work station and ergonomic assessments conducted in 2024.

Library and Information Resource

During 2023 a review of the library was undertaken, and a decision made to reduce the holdings in our physical library. Much of the material in the library is available electronically and much information is out of date. The process of reducing the physical stocks is completed. Books and documents of historical importance and particularly those from the National Rehabilitation Board and the NDA are being retained. As the NDA no longer has a librarian, we have a contract with Trinity College Dublin who provide articles to us electronically on request and also provide supports in relation to literature searches. This is in addition to our paid subscription service to EBSCO information services.

Accommodation and Facilities

The NDA's Corporate Services Department is responsible for maintaining a safe and efficient premises. During 2024 Accent Solutions (now trading as Apleona Ireland Facilities Management) entered its fourth contracted year in providing an integrated facility management service. Over the course of the year a programme of

preventative maintenance continued as well as commissioned works to ensure the effective maintenance and use of its accommodation.

Following a planning application submitted to Dublin City Council being granted in May 2023, a design team were appointed to progress building improvement works. The teams' consultative process, which included meeting with a working group comprised of staff from across the NDA, resulted in final designs being presented in early 2024. A Request for Tender for construction services issued shortly after, with Tolmac Construction the successful bidder. Construction work began in Q3 2024, with NDA staff utilising several vacant offices, previously used by a private company whose lease expired in 2023.

Due to the cost of the works, it will be necessary to progress on a phased basis over a number of years.

Energy

The NDA Corporate Services Department registers and maintains records for the NDA with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

The NDA has a total floor area of 2,633 m² which comprises a two-storey over garden level Victorian Building (×2), a link building completed in 2006 and an adjoining three-storey plus attic building completed in the early 1980s.

The main energy users are:

- Electrical Energy: Lighting, ICT & Offices
- Thermal Energy (Natural Gas): Space Heating (LTHW radiator circuits and under floor heating) and Hot Water (HWS).

For the purposes of making a statutory return for 2024, 100% of electrical energy use in the buildings was attributable to the NDA. In relation to thermal energy, 100% of the natural gas used was attributable to the NDA.

In 2024, the National Disability Authority consumed 277,981 kWh of energy, consisting of:

- 71,750 kWh of electricity;
- 206,231 kWh of fossil fuels;
- 0 kWh of renewable fuels.

The NDA can report a:

- 58.6% lower consumption since baseline.

Actions undertaken in 2024

In 2024, the NDA undertook planning and implementation of a range of initiatives to improve our energy performance, including:

- Continued implementing recommendations from 2021 Energy Audit Review
- Climate Action Leadership training for Senior Management staff
- SEAI Energy Show 2024

SEAI requirements

The NDA's Action Roadmap communicates how the organisation aims to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate. Senior Management review and update the document annually. We are committed to ensuring that the carbon emissions that arise as a result of our activities are kept to a minimum and, to this, to implementing energy-efficient and environmentally friendly practices.

The NDA is satisfied with its progress to date in terms of the Mandate's aims around reduction in CO2 emissions, energy efficiency improvements and increased renewable energy. The NDA will be fully compliant with Circular 1/2020 (Procedures for offsetting the emissions associated with official air travel) for 2024 reporting.

Access Officer

The NDA's Access Officer, appointed in line with the Disability Act 2005 continued to be available to guide on any assistance required for persons with disabilities who accessed the NDA's facilities, events and website in 2024. The Officer's contact details are on [the NDA's website](#).

Code of Conduct, Ethics in Public Office, Additional Disclosures by Authority Members and Protected Disclosures

For the year ended 31 December 2024, the NDA can confirm that a Code of Conduct for the Authority and staff members was in place and adhered to. Furthermore, all Authority members and relevant staff members complied with their statutory responsibilities under the Ethics in Public Office legislation.

As a public body, the NDA is required under section 22 of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, to publish an annual report in relation to the number of protected disclosures made to it in the preceding year, and the action taken in response to any such protected disclosures.

No protected disclosures were made to the NDA in the period 1 January to 31 December 2024.

Data Protection/Freedom of Information

The NDA received four Freedom of Information (FOI) requests in 2024. One request was granted and three requests were part-granted with some redactions. All were dealt with within the statutory timeframe.

During 2024, the NDA continued a programme of work to ensure its compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and its related risks mitigated. This included updating and developing key policies and procedures as appropriate as well as having Data Protection refresher training for all staff. An Advisory Audit on GDPR policies and procedures was conducted in 2022 with the remaining recommendations being completed in 2024.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Authority and other committees in 2024

Name:	Role:	Appointment Date:
Kathryn O'Donoghue	Chairperson	August 2018*
Jack Kavanagh	Member	August 2018*
Cathal Morgan	Member	August 2018*
Rebecca Gageby	Member	November 2022
Deirdre Sheehan	Member	November 2022
Bernadette Egan	Member	November 2022
Adrian Carroll	Member	November 2022
Eltin Ryle	Member	November 2022**
Thomas Maguire	Member	November 2022
Lorraine Lally	Member	November 2022
Jane Ann Duffy	Member	November 2022
Vivian Rath	Member	November 2022
Niamh Fawl	Member	January 2021
Roderick Bond	Member	December 2023

*Authority members currently serving a second term.

** Eltin Ryle, appointed to the Authority in November 2022, resigned his position in May 2024. A recruitment process to appoint a replacement began in 2024, with a candidate expected to be appointed in early 2025.

Audit and Risk Committee

Name:	Role:	Appointment Date:
John Fitzgerald	Chairperson	March 2017*
Tony Fitzpatrick	Member	June 2017*
Tim Maverley	Member	August 2018*
John Maher	Member	August 2018*
Rebecca Gageby	Member	December 2022
Thomas Maguire	Member	December 2022
Adrian Carroll	Member	December 2022

*Audit & Risk Committee members currently serving a second term.

Finance Committee

Name:	Role:	Appointment Date:
Rebecca Gageby	Chairperson	December 2022
Thomas Maguire	Member	December 2022
Deirdre Sheehan	Member	December 2022
Lorraine Lally	Member	December 2022
Gary Watters	Member	December 2022
Niall Scanlon	Member	February 2023

Director Performance Committee

Name:	Role:	Appointment Date:
Kathryn O'Donoghue	Chairperson	November 2022
Jack Kavanagh	Authority Member	August 2018*
Cathal Morgan	Authority Member	November 2022
Rodd Bond	Authority member	December 2023

*Director Performance Committee member currently serving a second term.

Appendix 2: Representation on external bodies in 2024

Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage and associated agencies

- National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022-27 National Implementation Steering Group
- Working Group on Accessible Voting
- Irish Water Stakeholder Forum
- Working Group on the provision of a Changing Places Facility

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and associated agencies

- AIM Project Team
- AIM Cross-Sectoral Implementation Group
- TÚSLA – Early Years Inspectorate Forum
- Employer's for Change Strategy Group
- Participation Unit's Disabilities Working Group
- Equality Data Strategy Group (led jointly by DCEDIY and CSO)
- HSE Disability Services National Quality Improvement Governance Review
- HSE Digital and Assistive Technology Committee
- HSE Person-Centred Planning Framework Implementation Subgroup
- HSE New Directions National Implementation Group
- Personalised Budgets Implementation Oversight Group
- Health Research Board (HRB) National Ability Supports System (NASS) Committee
- DCEDIY Disability Services Stakeholder Advisory Group
- Interim DCEDIY Research Ethics Committee

Department of Justice and associated agencies

- Department of Justice – Youth Justice Advisory Group
- Irish Prison Service Autism Steering Group

An Garda Síochána – Strategic Human Rights Advisory Committee Department of Education and associated agencies

- National Council for Special Education Consultative Forum
- NCSE Research Sub-committee
- EPSEN Act Advisory Group
- NCSE expert advisory group on modelling of future special class capacity

Department of Further and Higher Educational Research, Innovation and Science and associated agencies

- Sainghrúpa athbhreithnithe oiliúna SOLAS, (SOLAS Expert Review Group)
- An Grúpa Comhairleach 'Foghlaim a Bhunathrú chun Feabhais, Cuimsiú a Chothú' de chuid SOLAS um Thodhchaí an Bhreisoideachais agus na hOiliúna (SOLAS 'Transforming Learning, Fostering Inclusion' Advisory Group on the Future of Further Education and Training)
- Dublin Regional Skills Forum
- Higher Education Authority PATH 4 Phase 2 External Assessment Panel

Department of Social Protection Social Inclusion Division Technical Advisory Group on Data and Statistics

- Disability Stakeholders Forum

Department of Health and associated agencies

- HIQA Advisory Group developing Overarching Standards for the Care and Support for children using Health and Social Care Services
- HSE Disability Services National Quality Improvement Governance Review Committee on the Review of Part B Fire Safety
- Department of Health's Protection of Liberty Expert Advisory Group

Department of Taoiseach

- Senior Official's Group on the National Disability Strategy
- Senior Official's Group on Transport

Other

- IDS TILDA (Intellectual Disability Supplement of the Longitudinal Study on Ageing) Steering Committee;
- National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) Universal Design Standards Consultative Committee (NSAI TC023) and its subcommittee and working groups
- The European Committee for Standardization (CEN) Technical Committees (TCs): CEN TC452 (and its workings groups (WGs)), CEN TC320, CEN TC228 WG14, CEN TC 293 WG12, CEN-CENELEC Standardisation Request Ad-hoc Group Accessibility (SRAHG-ACC) for M/587
- Council of Institute of Designers in Ireland UCD AHEAD Steering Group on the development of a Digital Badge in Universal Design for Student/Learner Support & Engagement
- UCC ID+ project to support access to HE for learners with Intellectual Disabilities
- Senior Official's Group on Transport

Appendix 3: Publications in 2024

- [Strategic Plan 2025-2027](#)
- [Annual Report 2023](#)
- [Literature review on the factors that lead to development of behaviours that challenge and prevention and management of crisis situations among children and young adults with disability.](#)
- [Effective Practice: Managing the transition of staff from congregated to community settings](#)
- [Effective Practice: Managing homes in the community following transition from congregated settings](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions: European Disability Card](#)
- [Discussion paper on National Employment Targets](#)
- [Experience of sexual harassment and sexual violence by disabled students in Irish Higher Education Institutions](#)
- [Ethics Guidance for Disability Research](#)
- [Experience of sexual harassment and sexual violence by disabled students in Irish Higher Education Institutions](#)
- [Ethical Guidance for Research with Disabled People](#)
- [Summary of Ireland's Monitoring 2022-2024 EU Web Accessibility Directive](#)
- [Universal Design Guidelines for Changing Places Toilets](#)
- [Ireland's Annual Monitoring Report for EU Web Accessibility Directive 2024](#)
- [IT Procurement Toolkit](#)
- [Report on Compliance with Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005 for 2023](#)

Appendix 4: Policy advice papers and submissions in 2024¹

- [NDA Submission to the Consultation Paper on the Central Bank's Consumer Protection Code](#)
- [NDA Submission to the Department of Justice on draft Regulations concerning legal aid costs in discharge applications under Part 6 of the Assisted Decision Making \(Capacity\) Act 2015 \(as amended\)](#)
- [NDA submission on Green Paper on Welfare Reform in Ireland](#)
- [NDA Submission on the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Strategy Statement 2025-2027](#)
- [NDA Submission to SETU Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Plan 2024-2029](#)
- [NDA Submission on Courts Service Strategic Plan 2024-2027](#)
- [NDA Submission to the Joint Committee on Disability Matters on "The role of disabled persons organisations and self-advocacy in providing equal opportunities under the UNCRPD"](#)
- [NDA Submission to the Department of Social Protection on a National Child Poverty Target](#)
- [Submission from the National Disability Authority to the Electoral Commission's Draft Research Programme](#)
- Public Consultation to inform the development of the Culture, Creativity and Climate Policy Framework
- NDA Submission to DCEDIY's draft Autism Innovation Strategy
- NDA Submission to the Department of Rural and Community Development on the New National Social Enterprise Policy
- [NDA Submission to Coimisiún na Meán concerning the Draft Access Rules for Television Broadcasting Services](#)
- [NDA Submission to Coimisiún na Meán concerning the Draft Audiovisual On-Demand Media Service Code & Rules](#)
- [NDA Submission to Coimisiún na Meán concerning the Draft Code of Fairness, Objectivity and Impartiality in News and Current Affairs](#)
- [NDA Submission on Statement of Strategy 2024 – 2025 for Department Enterprise, Trade and Employment](#)
- [NDA Submission to the Joint Committee on Disability Matters on Moving towards Rights-Based Disability Impact Assessments](#)
- [NDA Submission to Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Statement of Strategy 2024-2025](#)

¹ Some submissions do not contain a hyperlink as they may have been in the form of a survey or letter.

- [NDA Submission to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth on the successor to the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.](#)
- [NDA Submission to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth to inform the development of the new National Strategy for Women and Girls.](#) - National Disability Authority
- NDA Submission to Indecon Consultants' National Advocacy Strategy review
- NDA Submission to the Department of Justice concerning jury reform
- Submission in response to public consultation on Strategy for World Heritage in Ireland 2024 – 2034
- Submission of draft Code of Practice on Accessible Public Buildings
- Submission to the Department of Transport on the public consultation for the [Moving Together draft strategy and implementation plan](#)
- Submission to the Department of Transport on their Shared Mobility Hubs report
- Submission on proposed variation No. 3 of the Meath County Development plan 2021-2027
- Submission to the NCCA on the Primary Curriculum
- Submission to the Dublin City Council regarding Clontarf bus stop number 1724
- Submission to the National Transport Authority on the [CycleConnects Environmental Assessment and Updated Network – Public Consultation](#)
- Submission to the National Transport Authority on the [Maximum Taxi Fare Review 2024 – Public Consultation](#)
- Submission to the Department of Transport regarding the [Strategy for Data Concerning Electric Vehicles Recharging Infrastructure – Public Consultation](#)



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National Disability Authority is the independent state body providing evidence informed advice on disability policy and practice to the Minister, and promoting Universal Design in Ireland.

