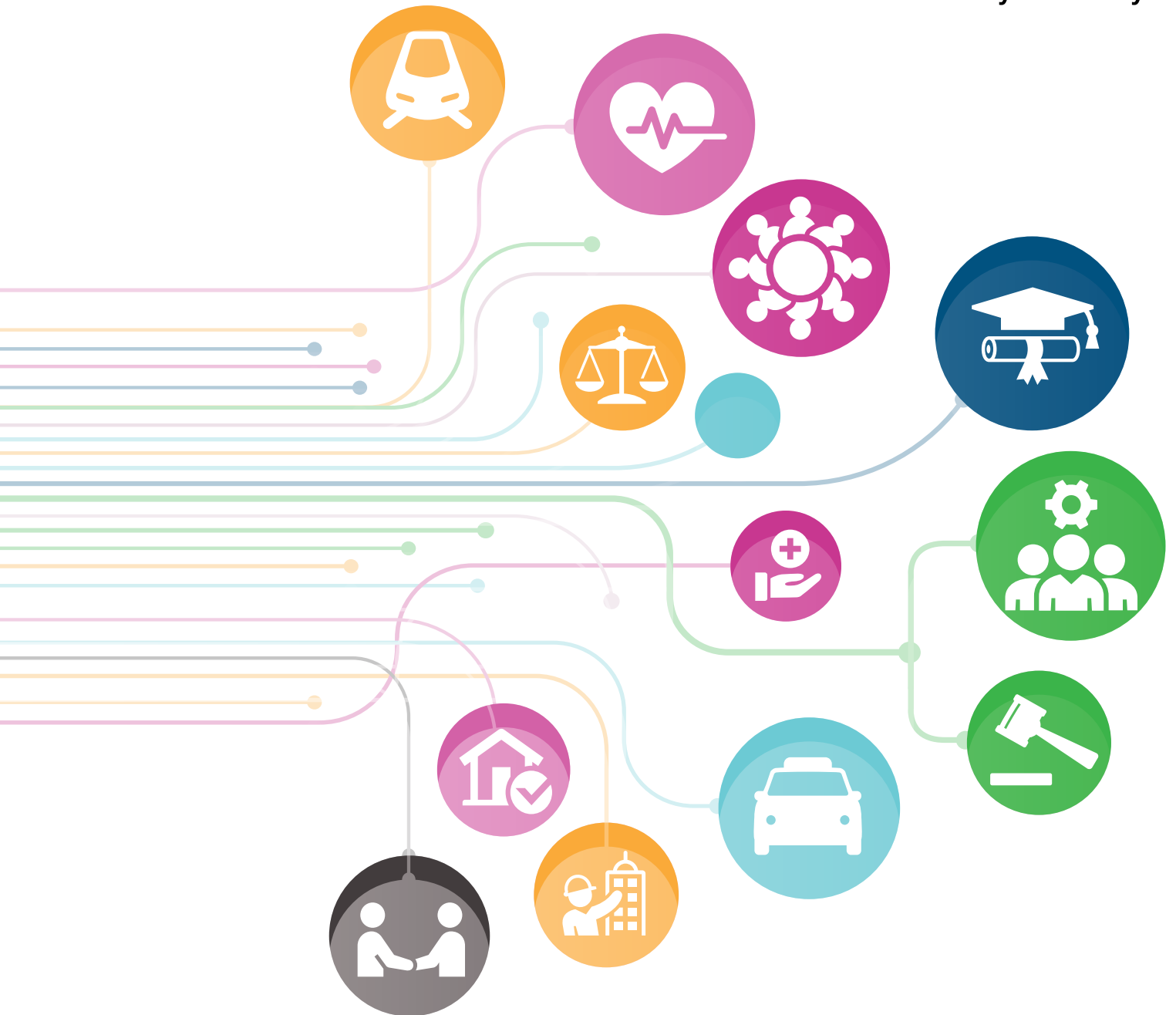
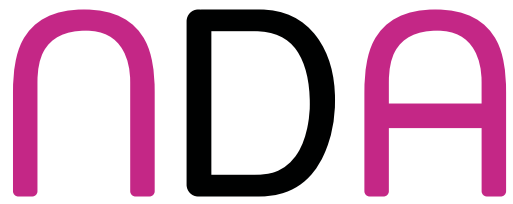


Údarás Náisiúnta Míchumais
National Disability Authority



ANNUAL REPORT

2019



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Publication Date: November 2020

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Chairperson's Statement

I am pleased to present the annual report for the National Disability Authority (NDA) for 2019 to the Minister for Justice and Equality. This report presents an overview of the activities and outputs of the NDA during the first year of our three-year Strategic Plan 2019-2021.

As a statutory body, we continued in our commitment to deliver on our duty to provide independent information and evidence-informed advice to the Government and officials in the public sector on policy and practice to support the achievement of our strategic vision of Irish Society. Our vision is an Ireland in which persons with disabilities can realise their civil and political rights; have opportunities to participate in economic, social, and cultural life; have choice and control over how they live their lives; and reach their individual potential in a society and environment that embraces, accommodates and values the full range of human ability and diversity. We recognise that this requires a whole of government approach, involving many government departments and agencies, working together, and we continued to work with them to this end throughout 2019. Our advice is informed and guided by research, data analysis, and review of good practice, as well as information and learning from the lived experience of persons with disabilities.

The NDA continued our work on Universal Design, to promote the design and development of the environment so that it can be easily accessed, understood, and used by all, regardless of age, size, ability or disability. During 2019, we were pleased with the engagement by educational bodies in supporting the further development and embedding of Universal Design in educational courses for those engaged in designing products, services, ICT and the built environment. We also continued to work with industry, standards bodies and professional bodies, evident from new standards and the standard of award programme participation, displaying awareness of Universal Design and its practical application.

During 2019, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) continued to be a key focus of the NDA's work, and we note that Ireland is due to submit its first report on performance under the Convention to the United Nations in 2020.

Employment for Persons with Disabilities

The NDA continued in its role to provide advice and information to support the implementation of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities (2015-2024) and its first three-year action plan for the foundation stage of the Strategy. We also advised the Department of Justice and Equality in the development of the second three-year action plan, which was published in 2019 and will underpin the activity of many government departments and agencies until the end of 2021.

In 2019, we completed research and published a report on good practice in relation to the provision of reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities, as we recognise this as an area of concern for both persons with disabilities and employers, in terms of attaining and providing reasonable accommodations. The research identifies practical issues that the NDA considers can be addressed through guidance for employers on the provision of reasonable accommodations moving beyond the minimum legislative requirements.

We continued our work to monitor the employment of persons with disabilities in the public service, noting that despite an overall increase in the total number of employees in the public sector, the overall numbers of staff reporting a disability decreased in 2018. As a result, the percentage of employees reporting a disability decreased from 3.5% in 2017 to 3.3% in 2018. While many individual government departments and public bodies have exceeded the target, we have continued to encourage and advise others to develop plans of action to reach and exceed the target, by creating inclusive workplaces and working to attract and retain staff with disabilities. This will be especially important as a minimum of 6% will be required by 2024.

Transforming Lives

Through research, advice and supporting the development of standards and frameworks, the NDA continued to support the initiatives designed to transform disability services to achieve an individualised and tailored approach to supports for persons with disabilities to live lives of their choosing. In 2019, we contributed to initiatives enabling the roll-out of the Interim Standards for New Directions, to achieve a person centred approach. We inputted to HSE's eLearning Module "Living Ordinary Lives in Ordinary Places", launched in 2019, which outlines how to put New Directions into practice across health and social care services.

Personalised Budgets

Following the publication of the report of the Task Force on Personalised Budgets in 2018, the NDA worked during 2019 to advise the Department of Health and the HSE on the design and approach to the evaluation of demonstration projects. This will entail testing the administration and delivery of personalised budgets, and also the experience of individual participants, with a view to guiding a wider rollout of payment models involved. The NDA participated as an independent advisory body on the Oversight Group for the demonstration projects along with officials. The NDA will also lead the evaluation element. We look forward to the learning from this initiative.

Universal Design

Our Centre for Excellence in Universal Design's work includes influencing standards at national and international level. We were delighted to see the new Irish Standard on Customer Communications for Utilities – a Universal Design approach secure a vote of approval for publication during 2019 by the National Standards Authority Ireland. This standard sets out the requirements and recommendations for energy suppliers' communications with household customers who are required to apply the principles of Universal Design to their customer communication under SI 463 of 2011.

We were also pleased to see the new EU Standard on the accessibility of products and services formally launched and published during 2019. This Standard sets out requirements that enable an organisation to design, develop and provide products, goods and services that can be accessed, used and understood by the widest range of users. This is important work as the Centre has specific statutory functions to promote Universal Design of the built environment, products, and services.

Our Centre for Excellence in Universal Design ran another very successful Universal Design

Grand Challenge in 2019 which saw the highest number of entries received since the Grand Challenge's inception, and an impressive breadth of designs across three categories which include the built environment, products, and Information Communication Technology (ICT).

Through our work to guide the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA), we supported the development of Universal Design Guidelines for Early Years Learning and Care Settings which were published in 2019. We look forward to further working to support their implementation by service providers and built environment professionals in 2020.

The Authority and NDA Staff

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Authority members for their work throughout 2019. I would also like to thank all the members of our Finance, Audit and Risk Committees, and Director Performance Committee for their work and guidance throughout the year.

Finally, I would like to sincerely acknowledge and thank the NDA staff and management for their continued dedication to the work of the organisation, and their on-going commitment to deliver high-quality outputs. The scope and standard of work delivered is a clear demonstration of the expertise within the organisation, and the importance of our role in informing the development of policy and practice that can make a real difference in the lives of persons with disabilities.



Helen Guinan
Chairperson
National Disability Authority

Overview and Policy Context

The NDA commenced the first year of its current three-year strategic plan in 2019 under the following strategic objectives:

- To provide research-informed advice to government to guide the development and implementation of national policies, programmes and strategies relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities
- To understand and advise on societal changes, challenges and opportunities that impact on the lives of persons with disabilities
- To promote and monitor the implementation of Codes of Practice, standards, and guidelines in services, and to evaluate policy and practice
- To continue to build awareness and adoption of Universal Design across society in Ireland
- To continue to be an effective and pro-active organisation, committed to delivering on our strategic priorities and communicating our work

The NDA's work programme for 2019 under each of these strategic priorities supported the development and implementation of national strategies and programmes relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities across many government departments and agencies and included the delivery of specific project commitments by the NDA itself, including actions to progress Universal Design.

The Government's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2018 meant that the Convention continued to be central to the NDA's work, including through our work to guide legislation in areas such as deprivation of liberty and our continued work in developing codes of practice to support the implementation of the Assisted Decision Making Act, 2015. The Disability (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2016, includes provisions also supportive of advancing the implementation of the Convention, such as a duty for the NDA in providing information and data. However, while it had been hoped that this would proceed through all stages and be enacted in 2019, this was not the case due to wider pressures on the State.

We recognise that the National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017 – 2021 is intended to advance equality for persons with disabilities in Ireland and that the actions committed therein can assist progress in the implementation of the Convention. We note the ongoing commitment of officials across departments and agencies in 2019 to deliver on the actions within the NDIS as a primary mechanism for delivery on obligations under the UNCRPD.

The National Disability Inclusion Strategy Steering Group (NDISSG) which comprises officials from many government departments and agencies, the Disability Stakeholder Group (DSG) and the NDA, is chaired by the Minister of State with Special Responsibility for Disability Issues. It has an important role to continue to work to monitor and support the implementation of the Strategy. The NDA's role is also to independently assess progress on outputs under the strategy and to analyse data sources to assist in measuring impact. The first

assessment was published in 2019 on the NDA's website and was informed by consideration of reports from departments, as well as information and evidence gathered by the NDA in the course of its membership of working groups and departmental consultative committees. The NDA looks forward to publishing its analysis of impact in 2020. The Strategy informs the research work of the NDA and areas of focus for its independent advice to government.

The Department of Justice and Equality led the mid-term review of that strategy, including consultation with persons with disabilities and other stakeholders during 2019, to inform the strengthening of the Strategy for the remaining period, so that a new plan would be adopted in early 2020. Ireland will be due to present its first report to the UN Committee monitoring the Convention, by mid-2020, on progress and how Ireland is approaching the implementation of its many Articles which cover all areas of life. The NDA has therefore been reviewing how national strategies and programmes fit with the intent of those Articles to build a picture of what is in place and to help in the identification of gaps and areas for attention. This work will continue into 2020.

The year 2019 brought many challenges for Ireland for a number of reasons including in particular, the impact of Brexit negotiations and potential repercussions for many areas of policy and the economy. The housing crisis was also an area of concern, and a focus of the Joint Oireachtas Committee for Housing, where the NDA was asked to present on the situation for persons with disabilities in accessing housing and advise on same. Key learning included recognising the value of Universal Design homes in terms of maintaining sustainable communities and with benefits for persons with disabilities, but also everyone in society. This continued to be a key message of NDA's work including further advice on housing being developed for the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

The national Comprehensive Employment Strategy (CES) 2015- 2024, for implementation by a wide range of government departments and agencies, began its second three-year action plan at the beginning of 2019. It aims in particular to build engagement of employers, including through enhanced awareness and understanding of disability and recognising positive action in this regard. NDA advised on areas to be considered in the new action plan (2019-2021), including the area of supporting entrepreneurship and self-employment for persons with disabilities. In particular, the NDA engaged with the OECD in 2019 to explore a project to guide a national approach to enhanced employer roles towards increasing employment opportunities.

The Transforming Lives Programme encompasses all the activities being progressed by the HSE and Department of Health to reform disability services and systems funded by the HSE. Various initiatives continued to be advanced by HSE during 2019, informed by NDA research and advice including the decongregation programme, implementation of New Directions (alternative to traditional day services), and implementation of frameworks to guide practice, including Outcomes, Quality Assurance and Person-Centred Planning.

The NDA's Centre for Excellence in Universal Design has continued throughout 2019 to build awareness of Universal Design (UD), particularly through its sixth annual Universal Design

Grand Challenge Student Awards competition, which succeeded in promoting UD among third level students and lecturers in design areas.

In light of these policy developments at national level, the NDA work-plan for 2019 included the following key achievements, as well as many others:

- Delivery of 11 Codes of Practice to the Director of the Decision Support Service by end 2019 to facilitate implementation of the Assisted Decision Making Capacity Act (2015);
- Delivery of a report on progress in implementing the National Disability Inclusion Strategy to end of 2018;
- Hosting a round-table on monitoring and implementation of UNCRPD, including input from Austria, UK and Belgium;
- Hosting an engagement workshop with disability representative bodies on UNCRPD;
- Completion of a review of WRC adjudications and good practice in relation to reasonable accommodations to inform guidance for employers;
- Completion of an Operational Review of Section 25 of the Disability Act 2005 in collaboration with the Office of Public Works;
- Delivery of an analysis of quality assurance systems against the Quality Framework for Outcomes-focused Disability Services;
- Delivery of a discussion paper on “Outcome Measurement in evaluating the Quality of Disability Services” to guide HSE, Department of Health, and HIQA considerations on practical measurement approaches;
- Advice to guide on the implementation of frameworks to transform disability supports including the Person-Centred Planning Framework, Quality Framework and Outcomes measurement;
- Ongoing advice to the Department of Health and HSE regarding the design and development of demonstration projects to test approaches to the rollout of personalised budgets for persons with disabilities;
- Completion and publication of research on the experience of respite services by people with disabilities themselves;
- Ongoing support for school leaver profiling for HSE day service funding, including independent support for the appeals process. Profiling for 2019 completed and profiling for 2020 got underway across all CHOs with ongoing quality assurance and monitoring from NDA;
- Hosting a round-table on use of registered intermediaries for victims of crime to ensure they have access to justice, to guide considerations for introduction of a scheme in Ireland;
- Completion of research and guidelines for UD of Early Learning and Care Settings completed in collaboration with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs published in June 2019;
- Delivery of a European Standard, 17161:2019 (Design for All) in collaboration with the National Standards Authority Ireland;
- Publication of a UD Standard on Utilities in partnership with NSAI and CRU;

- Delivery of the 6th annual Universal Design Grand Challenge 2019;
- UD Award in Royal Institute of Architecture Ireland Design Award event 2019 to promote Universal Design in the built environment;
- UD Award in the eGov awards event 2019;
- Completion of a pilot incorporating UD in Primary School design workshops;
- Delivery of NDA Annual Conference on the topic of “UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Past Lessons and Future Aspirations” to guide implementation in Ireland;
- Provision of advice to relevant Departments on the development of the next 3 year Comprehensive Employment Strategy action plan and advice on thematic approach to monitoring;
- Statutory annual report on employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector completed and submitted to the Minister.



Strategic Priority 1

Strategic Priority 1

“To provide research-informed advice to government to guide the development and implementation of national policies, programmes and strategies relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities”

During 2019, the NDA progressed a range of projects and other work to deliver on the goals of this Strategic Priority. Work included research and evaluation to guide the implementation of a range of policies and programmes relevant to disability. NDA advice was informed by evidence and engagement with persons with disabilities, representative organisations, and other key stakeholders across the public sector.

Conduct research to inform and guide the development of policy and practice and to support the implementation of key national strategies and policies

Transforming Lives – National New Directions Policy

New Directions is one of the key policy documents contained in the HSE Transforming Lives programme. It sets out an approach to adult day services that is founded on providing a range of supports for individuals to enable them to access and use mainstream services within the community in order to achieve personal outcomes of importance to them, including education, training, employment or social and cultural activities. The policy is aimed at providing the supports for individuals to have choice and control over how to spend their time.

New Directions – eLearning Module

The HSE’s eLearning Module ‘Living Ordinary Lives in Ordinary Places’ was launched by the Minister of State with special responsibility for Disability Issues, Finian McGrath T.D., on 18th September 2019. The eLearning Module can be accessed through www.HSElanD.ie which is an online learning portal developed and run by the HSE. By January 2020, 3,000 people had completed the module.



“New Directions eLearning Subgroup - Michael Farrell, Martina Lanigan, Angela Moran, Minister McGrath, Anne Melly and Donie O’Shea” at the launch of the eLearning module

The NDA advised and guided on the development of this eLearning Module on New Directions, and chaired the HSE project team. The target group for the eLearning module includes management and frontline staff in HSE funded Adult Day Services.

The eLearning module, which takes approximately 45 minutes to complete, outlines how to put New Directions into practice. It provides staff and management with information on the 12 supports available and the core values that underpin the delivery of HSE funded adult day services. A further module aimed specifically at Leadership/Management in supporting the implementation of New Directions is currently in development and is expected to be delivered in 2020.

New Directions – Interim Standards

The NDA was a member of the HSE National Implementation Team with responsibility for facilitating the rollout of the Interim Standards for New Directions. The NDA took a lead role with HSE advising the development of the **EASI Process** – Evaluation, Assessment and Service Improvement. **EASI** is a Self-Evaluation process and provides an opportunity for service providers to:

- Confirm areas where the service is meeting the **Interim Standards New Directions**
- Plan actions to address any identified gaps in systems and processes
- Identify additional opportunities for improvement, to support continuous improvement

Following the first year of implementing Theme 1 of the Interim Standards, which focused on individualised service and supports, the NDA assisted in reviewing and revising the EASI documentation, which was subsequently made available on the New Directions website. The NDA also delivered training on the interim standards for new staff in November 2019.

Personalised Budgets

The report of the Task Force on Personalised Budgets, published in July 2018, recommended that the Department of Health and the HSE establish demonstration projects to test the delivery of personalised budgets, with a view to identifying the best approach to the wider roll-out of payment models following the initial demonstration phase.

In 2019, the HSE sought expressions of interest from individuals to participate in the demonstration projects. The demonstration projects will run in two phases over a two-year period, with 90 adults taking part in each phase.

The NDA is represented on the Oversight Group for the personalised budgets demonstration projects as an independent advisor. Throughout 2019, the NDA provided advice to the Department of Health and HSE on the design of the demonstration projects, and other related matters, including the content of information materials issued with the call for expressions of interest to participate in the pilot projects.

The NDA will lead the process independently to evaluate the demonstration projects, both

from the point of view of the outcomes and experiences of participants, and those responsible for administering and supporting the system. This will provide learning on how a national system of personalised budgets could best be rolled out in the future.

Moving In Study

During 2019, a major programme of evaluation of the costs and benefits of new, community-based models of service in comparison to traditional institutionalised service provision was further advanced by the NDA.

This project is examining the models of service provided to a large and diverse sample of adults with disabilities and includes an assessment of participants' support needs and, an evaluation of costs and outcomes. Participants include adults with a wide variety of disabilities accessing a range of different support services.

This project includes a before-and-after evaluation of participants living in congregated settings. Participant profiles before and after their move to community settings will be compared to identify benefits flowing from decongregation. Support costs before and after decongregation will also be compared. As the transition process has advanced at a slower than anticipated pace, it became clear during 2019 that not all participants in this strand of the project will transition to community settings before completion of the project in the latter half of 2020.

The fieldwork on this project concluded in early 2020. The project findings will inform the management of decongregation as it continues to progress and provide guidance on the supports and services required to ensure people with disabilities can live the lives they choose within community settings.

The NDA is also a member of a sub-group of the HSE's Time to Move On implementation group, which monitors progress in the transition from congregated settings to community settings. The NDA provided input and advice on the communications protocols necessary to enhance the experiences of people with disabilities, their families and service providers throughout the process.

Staffing Project – Disability Services

The NDA continued to examine the experiences of staff and managers who transitioned from an 'old' model to a 'new' model of HSE funded residential disability services during 2019. The purpose of this research was to gather information to inform future planning for the on-going process to transition to community models of service. We conducted 34 interviews with 37 participants. A significant volume of information was gathered through the fieldwork, and analysis work continues in 2020. Key themes emerging are the importance of supervision and oversight to prevent the creation of mini-institutions in the community, staff reluctance to change, and adjusting to a positive risk-taking culture. NDA looks forward to publishing the report on this research during 2020, and in the meantime continues to highlight emerging themes in relevant working groups and committees.

Universal Design Homes policy advice paper

Under Action 97 of the **National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021**, the National Disability Authority (NDA) was tasked with developing a policy paper on ways of achieving Universal Design solutions for new housing so that new homes can be accessed and used by all persons. The NDA submitted the paper to the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government and his officials in December 2019.

This paper sets out a practical set of recommendations for consideration by Government on how to apply a Universal Design approach to the design and building of new homes in Ireland. The recommendations cover regulations, policy changes at national and local authority level and a range of financial measures and incentives designed to encourage developers and the building industry to follow a Universal Design approach to the planning, design and construction of new homes.

In addition, the paper describes the dimensions and features of a Universal Design home and sets out the difference between the higher costs of retrofitting a home as compared to following a Universal Design approach at construction stage.

The paper will be complemented by a cost comparison exercise conducted by the Society of Chartered Surveyors, comparing the costs of building a UD home with a standard construction approach, and which will be available in early 2020.

Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme

Under Actions 98 and 99 of the **National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021**, the NDA was tasked with advising the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government on their project to produce a Single Application Form for the Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes, i.e., Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability, the Mobility Aids Grant and the Housing Aid for Older People Grant. The NDA advised on the research-informed benefits associated with the introduction of a single form with the same structure and wording being used across all 31 local authorities for the first time. This will create its own efficiencies and allow for useful comparisons across local government. The form has been produced in Plain English for ease of use and improved understanding of the provisions of the Schemes. The new form was circulated to all local authorities before the end of 2019.

Oireachtas Joint Committee on Housing, Planning and Local Government

The NDA appeared before the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Housing, Planning and Local Government concerning housing for persons with disabilities. The NDA emphasised its work under the National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021 on a Universal Design Homes policy advice paper and the advice to inform revisions of the Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes (above).

At the hearing, the NDA provided the Committee with an overview of the current issues, including highlighting the following:

- Persons with disabilities are more likely to rely on local authority housing than other

citizens- 12.8% compared to 8.3% of the general population- and constitute about one in ten of residents in public housing;

- Changes in the structure and delivery of housing benefits have not made it any easier for persons with disabilities to secure accommodation. People with disabilities are more likely to have lower income levels than their non-disabled counterparts, and this can lead to many being priced out of the current rental market;
- There have been persistent difficulties with a lack of uniformity across the country in relation to combining an offer of housing with the availability of an appropriate care package, and this in turn has an impact on delivery of the decongregation process, but also building sustainable and inclusive communities in line with Article 19 of the UNCRPD;
- The application processes for social housing, housing adaptation grants, etc. are not accessible to many persons with disabilities. NDA has input advice on same as part of the process led by DHPLG to revise the schemes, and also highlighted the availability of its guidance for housing officers in supported applicants with autism;
- Having a register of accessible dwellings could benefit in addressing the findings of the Social Housing Needs Assessment;
- The need to review and update Part M of the building regulations with due regard to the NDA's **Universal Design Homes Guidelines**, so that the accessibility standard for new builds can be raised;
- As well as the greater need for social housing, there should be a greater emphasis on creating liveable and sustainable neighbourhoods, where persons with disabilities can live full and active lives as part of a real community.

Accessible voting

The NDA made submissions to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in response to public consultations on reform of the electoral register and the establishment of an Electoral Commission in March 2019. The NDA advised that any new Electoral Commission should follow a Universal Design approach to its work in order to realise the provisions of Article 29 on UNCRPD and the relevant actions under the National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021. The NDA also advised that the Department should prepare for the possible impact of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 on all election/referendum officials who may face having to make an assessment of someone's capacity to vote.

The NDA advised changes to legislation to make it easier for persons with disabilities to apply for postal votes and a Universal Design approach to a reformed electoral register. This would be a significant but worthwhile undertaking noting it will only succeed with consistent and accessible engagement with voters and potential voters who will be turning 18 prior to the next election/referendum. The NDA recommended studying the work of the Referendum Commission as a useful starting point and will continue to engage with the Franchise Unit of the Department of Housing in 2020 as work in this area is progressed.

Equality Budgeting

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has established an Equality Budgeting Expert Advisory Group in order to advance the concept of equality budgeting in an Irish

context. Equality Budgeting involves evidence-informed consideration of the likely impact of budgetary measures across a range of areas such as income, health and education, and how outcomes differ across gender, age, ethnicity, etc. Equality Budgeting helps policymakers to better anticipate potential impacts in the budgetary process, thereby enhancing the Government's decision-making framework. In 2018, the focus of the group was on gender budgeting, and in 2019 it was agreed that the next priority for the group would be disability. NDA has been invited to join the group in its capacity as the independent advisory body to government on disability, and will continue to work with the membership throughout 2020 to highlight relevant data sources and policy developments relevant to disability budgeting.

Trinity Health and Education International Research Conference, Dublin

NDA researchers were invited to present at the Trinity Health and Education International research Conference in 2019. The paper sought to promote awareness and discussion regarding the impact of the Health Research Regulations introduced in 2018 and the establishment of the Health Research Consent Declaration Committee on foot of these Regulations. It highlighted the importance of the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities as research participants to ensure their experiences inform research findings. The presentation was informed by NDA's research practice and analysis of issues arising from the Health Research Regulations. In particular, it recognised that the inclusion of persons that lack the capacity to provide informed consent presents ethical, methodological and resource considerations. The paper stressed the need to protect the rights of people with intellectual disabilities to participate in research and to continue to use research as a vehicle for the voice of people with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities. It also stressed the need for clarity with regard to the alignment of the Health Research Regulations with the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015.

The NDA is actively working to advise the Department of Health and the Department of Justice of the need to provide, with appropriate safeguards, for the inclusion of people who lack the capacity to provide informed consent in research relevant to them and also therefore of public interest.

Conduct research, supply evidence-based information and advice to support the further development and implementation of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy

Second three-year action plan under the Comprehensive Employment Strategy (CES)

During 2019, NDA continued to provide support and advice on the implementation of the national Comprehensive Employment Strategy 2015 to 2024 (CES) and the first three-year action plan under the Strategy. Actions are committed for delivery by a range of government departments and agencies under 6 Strategic Priorities. NDA also advised on a second 3-year action plan, building on completed and new actions. This plan was published by the Department of Justice and Equality in December 2019 and will guide the activity of departments and agencies until the end of 2021. NDA itself has several commitments within this action plan, including to:

- Work with the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, along with Enterprise Ireland to develop a strategy that promotes and supports entrepreneurship and self-employment for persons with disabilities;
- Support relevant departments through research and advice in the implementation of Make Work Pay recommendations related to provision of aids and appliances and transport in order to improve employment outcomes for persons with disabilities;
- Develop policy advice for consideration by relevant departments for a national programme of vocational rehabilitation;
- Facilitate and advise departments in progressing implementation of a policy to deliver a coordinated approach to supported employment;
- Examine the current provision of reasonable accommodation to guide good practice.



Reasonable Accommodations research

In 2019, NDA completed research and published a report on good practice in relation to the provision of reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities. The provision of reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities is crucial in addressing the unique barriers- physical, organisational and attitudinal – they can experience in accessing, progressing in, and retaining employment. This research was undertaken in light of our awareness of ongoing concerns expressed by both persons with disabilities and employers about barriers to attaining and providing reasonable accommodations, and the lack of documented good practice in this area.

The report identifies the practical obstacles in the way of a seamless reasonable accommodation process from the perspective of employers, employees and potential employees and highlights good practices as to how these obstacles can be addressed.

As part of the research, a review was undertaken of 82 Workplace Relations Commission and Labour Court decisions concerning reasonable accommodation.

The main barriers to a seamless reasonable accommodation identified through the literature review and consultations included issues around disclosure, lack of documented policies and procedures, failure to respond to requests for accommodations in a timely manner, low awareness regarding the whole area of reasonable accommodations or the type of supports currently available.

Further to this work, NDA aims to develop guidance for employers on the provision of reasonable accommodations during 2020 extending beyond minimum legislative requirements.

Comprehensive Employment Strategy 1.1 – Raising Expectations

As committed in the Comprehensive Employment Strategy (2016-2024), the HSE has initiated the “Raising Expectations” project with the purpose of developing key messages that will be delivered to young people, aged 16-25, to encourage their aspirations to work, recognising that low expectations on the part of individuals, family members and educators can be a key barrier to employment. The NDA has supported the HSE by collecting and analysing data in relation to profiling support needs over a number of years to inform this project.

During 2019, the NDA analysed interviews and focus group data gathered by members of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies and the NDA at venues around the country. Sixty-four persons with a variety of disabilities were encouraged to express their opinions on various topics centred on employment. Data were analysed using a thematic approach and results were used to formulate recommendations to the HSE regarding the type and timing of messages to be delivered to young people.

Work on this project continued with the focus shifting to gaining a detailed perspective of care providers in order to better understand current practices in communicating with individuals regarding employment goals. This work will further guide and inform how communications and messaging relevant to education & training, employment and ability can be provided to individuals to emphasise that employment is a viable aspiration if they wish to work. The outcome of this research will inform the HSE of the changes in current practice that are necessary to fully support their commitment to the CES.

Evaluate progress and challenges in implementing national strategies, measurement against indicators and data and produce independent assessment reports, with particular regard to evaluating outcomes for individuals

National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) assessment of progress

In 2019, NDA published its first independent assessment of progress in the implementation of actions under NDIS 2017-2021. The assessment, which covered the first 18 months of the strategy’s lifetime: 2017-2018, was informed by departmental reporting against actions committed, as well as information and evidence gathered by the NDA in the course of its membership of working groups, committees and departmental consultative committees as well as engagement with disability stakeholders. The assessment highlighted areas where

progress had been made over the course of the first 18 months, and where further focus would be required for the next phase of the strategy's implementation, including:

- A review of the Mental Health Act 2001, and review and implementation of Vision for Change;
- Development of legislation regarding Deprivation of Liberty;
- Improved progress on the process of decongregation;
- Continued implementation of Progressing Children's Disability Services policy;
- Improving structures and supports to facilitate cross-departmental working;
- On-going importance of collecting high quality data and analysing same;

The NDA welcomed progress in the 2017-2018 timeframe in relation to:

- Ratification of UNCRPD in March 2018, with strong Government commitment to realising the vision of the Convention, and to continuing work to allow ratification of the Optional Protocol no later than Ireland's first report to the monitoring committee;
- On-going work to facilitate commencement of the Assisted Decision Making Capacity Act, including:
 - Establishment of the Decision Support Service
 - Development of Codes of Practice to offer practical guidance on the interpretation of the legislation and the variety of decision-support arrangements set out within it;
- Publication of the Make Work Pay Report and on-going implementation of its 24 recommendations, with the aim of ensuring work pays, and is seen to pay, for persons with disabilities, including the increase of the earnings disregard for retention of Disability Allowance and the Medical Card;
- Implementation of the Access and Inclusion Model of supports for children with disabilities in early childcare settings;
- Completion by NCSE of a review of SNA provision in schools supported by research commissioned by NDA, followed by policy advice regarding a new model of allocation of in-school supports;
- Implementation of new ballot papers to facilitate independent voting by persons with visual impairments during referendums;
- Adoption of a suite of indicators developed by NDA to measure progress over the full life-time of the Strategy, with a focus on outcomes for individuals as well as monitoring delivery of actions.¹
- Development of a second 3-year action plan under the Comprehensive Employment Strategy, building on progress made in the foundation phase;

¹ <http://nda.ie/Publications/Others/National-Disability-Inclusion-Strategy/An-Indicator-Set-to-Monitor-the-NDIS1.pdf>

- Publication of the report of the Task Force on Personalised Budgets, including recommendations regarding a series of demonstration projects to test approaches that could be scaled up in a national programme.

The NDA also provided advice to the Department of Justice and Equality on how a thematic approach to meetings of the NDIS Steering Group in 2019 would offer an opportunity to consider some of these areas in further detail with a view to understanding the challenges and barriers to implementation, and exploring potential solutions with all relevant stakeholders.

NDIS mid-term review

The Department of Justice and Equality led a mid-term review of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy during 2019 and NDA continued to provide advice to inform the process of conducting this review. NDA advised that the review would afford the opportunity to:

- Maintain a focus on implementation of existing NDIS actions;
- Refresh the NDIS by identifying actions which need to be revised because the context has changed and by adding some key new actions;
- Include additional actions that will put in place the building blocks for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

The NDA also advised that individual department plans should be developed to support the implementation of the Convention by and across government departments and their agencies. The NDA also commenced an exercise to map the actions within NDIS against the Articles of UNCRPD as part of a process to build a picture of any specific gaps to understand the extent of activity underway across government departments and agencies to progressively realise the goals of the Convention. It is expected that this work will continue in 2020.

Comprehensive Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities Assessment

In early 2019, NDA published its independent assessment of the progress in the implementation of the CES for 2018. The assessment includes an identification of some highlights and achievements in the implementation of the Strategy, noting that 2018 marked the culmination of the first 3-year action plan within the Strategy, which was intended as a foundation phase. The assessment identified those areas where progress was slower than anticipated, and where actions needed to carry over into 2019. The paper also identified those areas where progress has been made, including the delivery of recommendations set out in the Make Work Pay report addressing financial disincentives, the funding of a series of Ability Programmes to test approaches to bringing young people with disabilities closer to the labour market, and ongoing work in relevant departments to explore alternative approaches to employing persons with disabilities in the public sector.

Advise on the implementation of standards in services for persons with disabilities and development of guidance to share good practice

School Leavers Profiling

In previous years, the NDA has supported the HSE in various aspects of the profiling process for School Leavers and Rehabilitative Training Leavers seeking adult day service placements. The NDA has worked with HSE staff over several years to develop the profiling process to assist the allocation of funding by the HSE to disability organisations so that it would be transparent, consistent and equitable across the country and across disability groups.

During 2019, the NDA continued to work with the HSE in this regard, through conducting reviews of the local processes and providing relevant and timely feedback to the HSE at local and national levels. The NDA continues to provide independent validation and quality assurance of the process. In addition to directly assessing the process, the NDA also receives feedback from service users and their families, service providers, and HSE staff.

Findings from this work were collated into a report to guide the HSE on continued improvement in standardising the approach, and it was noted that the outcomes of the profiling process are widely accepted by stakeholders.

Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015- Codes of Practice

In December 2019, the NDA completed its work in developing codes of practice and transferred the 11th, and final, draft Code of Practice to the Director of the Decision Support Service (DSS). Since late 2016, the NDA has now developed a draft of the following Codes of Practice:

- Code of Practice on Supporting Decision-Making and Assessing Capacity
- Code of Practice for Advocates
- Code of Practice for Court Friends
- Code of Practice for Decision-Making Assistants
- Code of Practice for Co-Decision-Makers
- Code of Practice for Decision-Making Representatives
- Code of Practice for Attorneys
- Code of Practice for General Visitors
- Code of Practice for Special Visitors
- Code of Practice for Financial Professionals
- Code of Practice for Legal Professionals

The full commencement of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 is critical to the delivery of the UNCRPD. The draft Codes of Practice will help to operationalise the 2015 Act and will provide guidance to a wide range of stakeholders impacted by the legislation.

The NDA interacted with many stakeholders during the drafting of the Codes and drew from many sources of expertise. The NDA worked closely with a group of Technical Experts, who

provided guidance throughout the drafting process. The NDA also established two writing Groups who assisted in finalising the draft Code of Practice for Financial Professionals and the Draft Code of Practice for Legal Professionals and were made up of professionals from the financial services industry and the legal sector respectively.

All 11 draft Codes of Practice will undergo a review by the Director of the Decision Support Service before being put out for public consultation.

National Framework for Person-Centred Planning

The NDA completed work on research and the development of a national framework for person-centred planning as part of its work to guide the HSE in implementing the Transforming Lives programme. The National Framework for Person-Centred Planning aims to inform and guide how person-centred planning is carried out across services for persons with a disability in Ireland. It describes four key stages of the person-centred planning process and what is important at each stage for planning to be effective.

In 2019, the HSE published the framework and established a demonstration project to support a small number of organisations to implement the framework, through a self-evaluation process. The NDA was represented on a subgroup set up under the New Directions National Implementation Group to advise on this project. The outcomes and learning from the project are to be used to inform the wider rollout of the framework.

Review of Quality Assurance Systems with reference to ‘A Quality Framework: supporting persons with disabilities to achieve personal outcomes’

The NDA concluded a ‘Review of Quality Assurance Systems with reference to ‘A Quality Framework: supporting persons with disabilities to achieve personal outcomes’ in June 2019.

A review of the five quality assurance systems used by disability services in Ireland was carried out to assess the extent to which each of them addresses each of the outcome predictors in ‘A Quality Framework: supporting persons with disabilities to achieve personal outcomes’. That quality framework was developed by NDA in 2018 as part of the same project and identifies the predictors that enable persons with disabilities attain the nine quality of life outcomes domains proposed by the NDA and approved by the Department of Health and the HSE in 2016.

The outputs of this review included:

- A report summarising the findings;
- An annex of tables that maps each of the outcome predictors to; and
- The identifiers of related requirements in each of the five quality assurance systems studied;

The review report and associated mapping was submitted to the HSE in August 2019. The NDA undertook this analysis to help inform considerations by the HSE’s Quality and Standards working group. The NDA continues to advise the group to support the application of this learning.

Outcomes measurement in evaluation the Quality of Disability Services

Since 2012, the National Disability Authority (NDA) has supported the Department of Health and the HSE through research and advice to deliver the recommendations of the 'Value for Money and Policy Review of Disability Services' which are being implemented through the Transforming Lives Programme. Its purpose is to develop services to deliver individualised and community supports so that each individual person with a disability can choose and attain a good quality of life in the community. NDA contributions to the Transforming Lives Programme include research and guidance for the development, with the HSE, of three aligned frameworks for disability services to help an effective individualised approach to supporting persons with disabilities.

In June 2019, the NDA published a discussion paper, **Outcome Measurement in evaluating the Quality of Disability Services** to assist policymakers, funders of services, regulatory bodies and service providers including the Department of Health, HSE and HIQA in considering measurement of indicators and outcomes achieved by individuals in receipt of funded services. This paper provides an overview of outcome measurement in disability services and developments to enhance quality assurance. It is intended that this paper will assist discussion among the relevant stakeholders about how best to use outcome measurement in disability services with a focus on individual attainment of personal outcomes and a good quality of life. It explores the purpose, challenges and limitations of outcome measurement in disability services and highlights the need to align outcome measurement with the development of person-centred disability services that provide tailored support and opportunities to each individual with a disability. The NDA will continue to engage with Department of Health and HSE to consider practical approaches to the measurement of outcomes in services, particularly as work is progressed to implement the Person Centred Planning Framework and the Quality Framework described above.

Presentation to HSE on Quality Framework and Review of Quality Assurance Systems, carried out under Transforming Lives

As part of its work to support the implementation of the Transforming Lives programme, the NDA delivered 'A Quality Framework: supporting persons with disabilities to achieve personal outcomes' in 2018. In 2019 it also conducted a review of five quality assurance systems in use in Irish disability services against the quality framework, to allow service providers to consider whether the quality assurance systems they use are focussed on the achievement of personal outcomes for the persons who use their services. In response to a request from the HSE, and in order to inform next steps, the NDA held an information session on both the Quality Framework and the review of quality assurance systems in November 2019. Feedback was very positive from all who attended and NDA will continue to engage with HSE on implementation in 2020 as required.

National Standards for Adult Safeguarding

The NDA was represented on the Advisory Group for the development of National Standards for Adult Safeguarding, being developed jointly by HIQA and the Mental Health Commission. A public consultation on draft standards was completed in September 2019 and the final standards were launched by the Minister for Health in December 2019.

Conduct research and develop advice to guide on building capacity in the wider community, including consideration of mechanisms to achieve community integration and social inclusion

Research Promotion Scheme (RPS)

During 2019, the NDA launched and published the outputs of four research projects through the Research Promotion Scheme of 2017. At that time, applications were invited in respect of two themes, namely, 'Progressing lifetime communities through Universal Design' and 'The effective promotion and support of community integration of people with disabilities'.

The projects completed in 2019 included:

- A presentation of 19 case studies of people with intellectual disabilities living in Ireland which provide examples of the lived experience of social inclusion and the identification of key policy messages to promote social inclusion from the analysis of the case studies presented, Inclusion Ireland;
- An investigation of the Universal Design of fall detection technologies in the smart home and their impact on lifetime communities, Cork Institute of Technology and Amictia;
- An exploration of family experiences of local play provision in public/community parks and playgrounds and the application of Universal Design principles to outdoor parks and playgrounds, University College Cork;
- A study examining the delivery of day services using a service model based on the New Directions programme, National University of Ireland Galway;
- An exploration of the degree to which person-centred plans have promoted community integration for people with intellectual disabilities, Trinity College Dublin.

Each report has been published on the NDA website. The learning from these projects has informed the NDA's advice and information to government.

Research Promotion Scheme 2019

NDA launched a call for proposals under the Research Promotion Scheme for 2019 on the theme of 'homelessness and disability,' welcoming proposals that could further explore the inter-connection of disability and homelessness, and the extent to which disability can be a factor leading to homelessness, or how homelessness can be a factor in acquiring or exacerbating particular disabilities, e.g. mental health difficulties.

Two projects were approved for funding and are due for completion in 2020, as follows:

- School of Nursing and Human Sciences, DCU with their project titled '**Adult autism in homelessness: prevalence, experiences and support needs in an Irish context – a mixed methods study**';
- Trinity College Dublin in collaboration with the Daughters of Charity with their project examining '**The current housing situation, transitions into and out of homelessness and the risk of homelessness for people with intellectual disability and/or autism and families**'.
- The learning gleaned will be helpful in guiding policy and service considerations.

Develop guidance to support implementation of policy and legislation relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities

Respite project

This research was undertaken by the NDA in 2019 to understand the perspectives of adults with disabilities accessing respite services, recognising that research to date has tended to be more focused on the benefits of respite for family members and carers, rather than the individuals themselves. A qualitative approach was taken, comprising interviews and focus groups with 40 individuals. The study included participants with experience of traditional respite services (overnight) and more alternative services such as short breaks or day-break services. Participants were selected across three organisations. There was a mix of gender, age, rural/urban location and types of respite (although not all types were covered) included in the research. Individuals had primarily an intellectual disability or a physical or sensory disability. Key themes from the research included the importance of ensuring compatibility within groups of respite users, access to respite, and the sense of respite as a break from home and routine.

The report has been submitted to the Department of Health and will complement its research to guide a national respite strategy. The report was also shared with the Minister of State with responsibility for Disability Issues and published to the NDA website. The information from this project will be of benefit in informing that strategy and considerations regarding respite policies and practice.

<http://nda.ie/File-upload/Research-on-user-experience-of-Respite-Services.pdf>

Continue to promote positive public attitudes to disability across all areas of life, including in an employment context

Disability Awareness Funding

Further to a call for proposals for grants to develop disability awareness training materials for employers in 2018, a project proposed by a consortium of disability organisations was approved for funding. The aim of the project was to facilitate improved recruitment and retention of employees with disabilities and support inclusive work environments. The initiative was funded by the NDA, and the group of organisations that came together to develop the materials comprised AsIAm, Not So Different, Rehab/NLN and WALK. The materials have been piloted with both public and private sector employers. Interested employers can engage directly with any of the consortium members to have the training delivered in person. The consortium members are now proceeding to develop an online module to facilitate remote delivery, and this will be completed in 2020.

Someone Like Me Primary School Art Competition

“Someone Like Me” is an annual primary schools’ art competition organised by the NDA as a way of developing children’s awareness and understanding of disabilities. The competition engages children, teachers and others in their awareness and understanding of disabilities.

The competition is open to all primary school pupils from junior infants to sixth class, and during the 2019 competition, entries were received from individual pupils, or a class/school

group. Entries ranged from posters or collages to a papier-mâché or mixed-media sculptures. There were junior and senior category winners in almost every county, along with a national winner from The Downs National School, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, who repeated their victory from 2018.

In total, there were over 2,600 entries from 169 schools. This represented a very slight decrease in schools entering (170 in 2018) and an 8.5% increase in total entries received (2,400 in 2018).

Further develop data collection, and its analysis, seeking to build a wider range of data and statistics to inform planning and development relevant to disability, and to measure progress in key areas

In 2019, the NDA produced a number of statistical factsheets to indicate what life is like for people with a disability in Ireland. The aim of the factsheets is to communicate statistics about disability in an accessible format.

Over the course of the year, three factsheets were produced based on data provided by the Central Statistics Office. The first explored the number of people with a disability in Ireland by characteristics including age, gender and types of disabilities. The second factsheet examined the position on employment of people with a disability and demonstrated an employment gap between people with and without a disability. The third factsheet looked at young people who were Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET).

Annual Conference 2019

The NDA Annual Conference 2019 was held on Thursday, 17th October 2019 in the Croke Park Conference Centre. The Annual Conference was entitled “UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Past Lessons and Future Aspirations”. It provided an opportunity to share Irish and international experience regarding how the UNCRPD can be used to drive policy development in order to deliver positive change for people with disabilities. The conference allowed for discussion on the lessons that could be learned from other countries on how they are implementing the Convention and on their experiences of the review process. It was helpful to explore what could be expected from the first reporting cycle for Ireland.

The conference included international speakers from Serbia, Norway and Austria, as well as Irish speakers from the Department of Justice and Equality, the National Platform for Self-Advocates and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. Three breakout sessions were held, each of which looked at Irish legislation, policy and practice in the context of different UNCRPD Articles and featured speakers with various areas of expertise, particularly the lived experience. The sessions focussed on Accessibility, Independent Living and Employment.

Approximately 120 people attended the Annual Conference. Evaluation of the event indicated that participants found the conference very interesting and relevant. One respondent noted that the Conference was “very informative regarding UNCRPD, international experiences of implementation, challenges, UN expert insight and lived experience. Excellent conference.”

Factsheet
April 2019

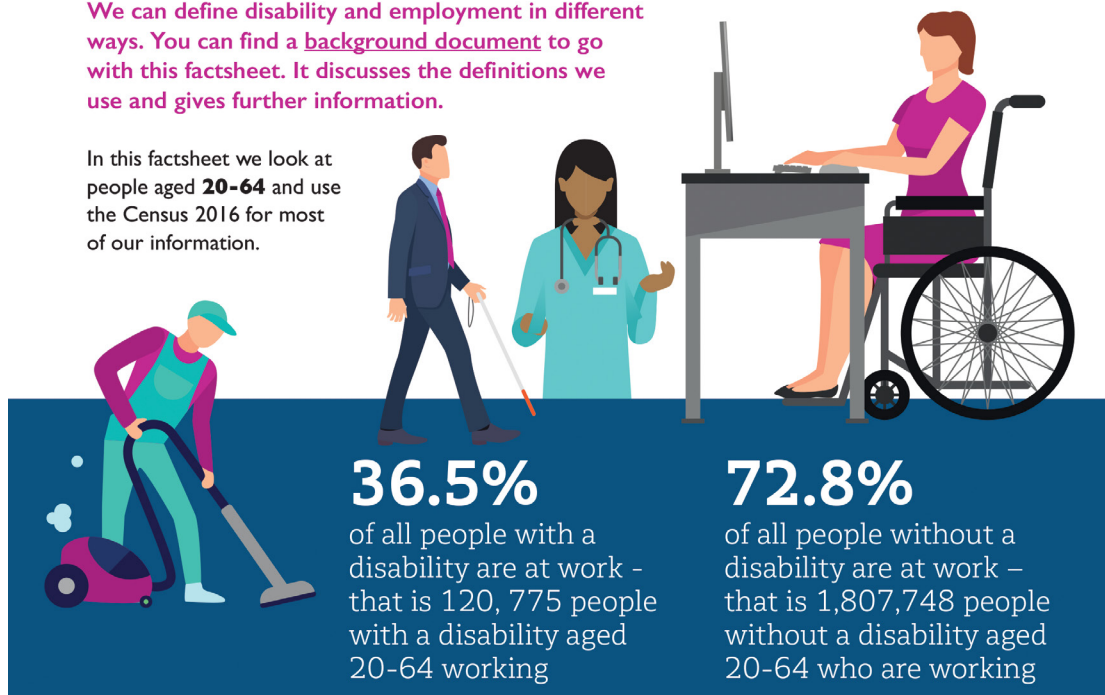
Employment and Disability

NDA

 Údarás Náisiúnta Míchumais
 National Disability Authority

We can define disability and employment in different ways. You can find a [background document](#) to go with this factsheet. It discusses the definitions we use and gives further information.

In this factsheet we look at people aged **20-64** and use the Census 2016 for most of our information.



How many people have a disability in Ireland?

643,131

According to the 2016 Census



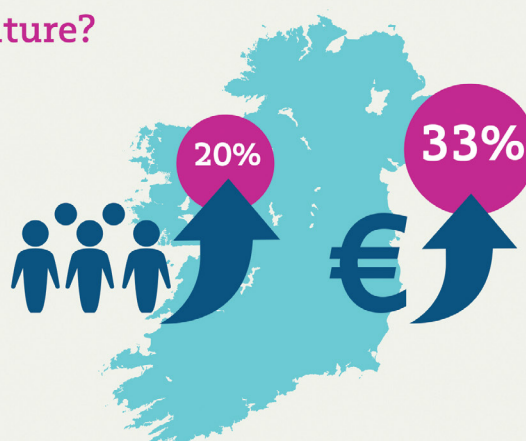
That's 1 in 7 people,
a slight increase since 2011

What will happen in the future?

The Irish population will grow to 5.2 million by 2026. Because there will be both more people and more older people, there will be more people with a disability. By 2026, we expect that the number of people with a disability will have increased by 20%.

The 2018 budget for disability services is €1.8 billion. The NDA estimates that by 2026 this will need to increase by up to 33% to support the increased number of people with a disability.

See <http://nda.ie/Publications/Disability-Supports/Transforming-Lives.html>





Strategic Priority 2

Strategic Priority 2:

“To understand and advise on societal changes, challenges and opportunities that impact on the lives of persons with disabilities”

The NDA notes that the on-going changes and developments in society in Ireland will have implications for the lives of persons with disabilities, as for the rest of the population. The aim of work progressed under this priority during 2019 was to consider some of these societal challenges from the perspective of their potential impact on persons with disabilities. This can help to better inform policy and practice and the achievement of an inclusive society for all persons with a disability, of all ages.

Identify and conduct research to build information and evidence on the implications of societal changes and developments

Research on Ageing with ID and complex health needs

In 2019, the NDA issued a request for tender in respect of the care of older adults with intellectual disability and complex age-related needs. It is recognised that there is little research evidence in this area and that it will increasingly be an area for attention over the next number of years. The research will provide evidence that will guide policy and practice with respect to this expanding cohort of people. This research will commence in 2020 and will be completed in early 2021.

Assistive Technology

During 2019, the NDA consulted bilaterally with statutory stakeholders involved in the funding or provision of assistive technologies across the areas of health and social care, employment and education. The purpose of these consultations was to gain an understanding of the approaches, issues and considerations for what would need to be addressed in the operation of a national programme, while also discussing ways of creating greater synergies amongst the various statutory stakeholders. This builds on previous NDA research.

It is intended that the information gathered through bilateral engagement will assist in informing the design and format of a roundtable discussion with statutory stakeholders, which will take place in 2020, to be followed by engagement and consultation with persons with disabilities and service providers to inform development of policy advice in this area.

Understand the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding these challenging areas, including: persons with disabilities, families and carers, representative organisations and government officials working on policy and practice

Research on Disabled Person's Organisations

In 2019, NDA commenced research on how the perspectives of persons with disabilities can be incorporated in policy making, with a particular focus on the role of Disabled Person's Organisations (DPOs) in this regard. Under UNCRPD, the effective participation of DPOs and

individuals with disabilities will be key to meaningful implementation and monitoring of the Convention. The NDA research examines the nature of DPOs, and explores ways of facilitating and supporting DPO participation, based on learning from other jurisdictions. The work will be finalised in 2020, and will help to inform considerations regarding engagement and participation of persons with disabilities in the process to prepare and submit Ireland's first State Party Report under the Convention.

UNCRPD forum event

The NDA engages with disability stakeholders through various projects, Committees and engagements, it was decided to commence a process of facilitated forum discussions with groups of stakeholders on the theme of the UNCRPD. In 2019, it was decided to host a forum on the Convention as means of hearing the perspectives of disability stakeholders on their views on priority areas for focus in implementation and to address any barriers to same.

A facilitated forum event took place in June, with attendance from a range of representative bodies, including Disabled Person's Organisations (DPOs). The discussion was wide-ranging and highlighted a number of areas where further focus would be required in order for Ireland to move towards realising the goals of the UNCRPD. The participants indicated that this form of engagement was of value to them, and particularly offered an opportunity for them to hear from each other as well as from the NDA. It was suggested that there was value in hosting further events but that each event should focus on an aspect of the Convention. NDA will continue to enhance its engagement with persons with disabilities and with representative organisations in 2020, building on learning from this initial event.

Models of Community Support

NDA has continued to explore effective approaches to community support for individuals with disabilities, noting the importance of building capacity in communities to deliver the mainstream services and supports necessary to enable persons with disabilities lives of their choosing.

Research continued on a range of models of support that were examined during 2019, each offering ways of linking individuals with relevant supports in a mainstream setting. A number of key informant interviews were held with stakeholders who have experience in implementing some of the models under review. The work will continue in 2020, as NDA synthesises the findings of the research and engagement to consider policy advice as relevant and appropriate.

Women's Health Taskforce

The NDA made a presentation to the Taskforce on Women's Health in the Department of Health in October 2019. The NDA highlighted several key issues, including:

- The importance of research and data and cited a variety of research to inform the work of the Taskforce;
- The relevance of the UNCRPD and Article 6 on women with disabilities, and the intersectionality of other Articles relevant to women with disabilities;
- Relevant policy documents including the National Disability Inclusion Strategy and the

Comprehensive Employment Strategy and how factors, such as, socio-economic status; level of education and work are determinants in the quality of health for women with disabilities;

- Specific issues for women with disabilities, such as, reproductive rights, pregnancy, maternity services, as well as, early dementia for women with disabilities; oral health etc.;
- Accessibility and the importance of augmented communication with women with intellectual disabilities.

Gather and analyse information, data and statistics relevant to these areas in order to provide an evidence base for future policy advice and input

NDA engaged with the Central Statistics Office (CSO) on a number of matters in 2019, including advice on the wording of questions for inclusion in Labour Force Surveys from 2021 onwards. NDA welcomes the decision by CSO to use a revised form of Census question in the Labour Force Survey, as this will allow greater detail on the profile of persons with disabilities to be captured and will also allow comparability across survey instruments. NDA is also engaged with CSO as part of the Equality Budgeting Process, and this will be ongoing in 2020.

The NDA also advised on the importance of identifying ways of capturing detailed information regarding the lived experiences of persons with disabilities, including the potential for a National Disability Survey post either Census 2021 or 2026. This would allow the opportunity to capture the views of individuals who have identified as having a disability, with particular reference to the barriers or challenges experienced in various aspects of their lives. A previous such survey was run in 2006, with a sample of 14,000 persons, and this provides valuable quantitative evidence to guide areas of focus for relevant departments and agencies. NDA will continue to engage with the CSO to explore opportunities for such a large scale but specific survey instrument in 2020, advising that it will be particularly beneficial in understanding and presenting Ireland's progress in relation to UNCRPD.

NDA/ESRI Research Programme

In late 2019, the NDA entered into an agreement with the ESRI to commence a programme of research work that could be delivered by them over a 2- 3 year period, to add to the range of research and data that the NDA requires to inform its advice to government and which will be of particular significance in the context of realising the goals UNCRPD. In 2020, work will be advanced in the following areas, as identified by the NDA:

1) Employment

An analysis of skills and qualifications of persons with disabilities, and how these can integrate with employer demand and areas of skills shortages. This will offer a robust analysis of data to guide areas of focus for the policy system.

2) Community Living

Noting the importance of access to personal assistant supports to realise independent living within the community, an examination of existing data on provision and allocation in order to understand demand and unmet need, to guide further consideration at national level.

NDA/OECD Research Programme

Under the Comprehensive Employment Strategy, one of the key strategic priorities focuses on the engagement of employers, which is key to enhancing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. This was supported with an Employer Disability Information initiative as a pilot project, funded by the NDA, which ended in January 2019.

The NDA advise that the need for further exploration on effective means of engaging employers and supporting them in this regard. During 2019, the NDA began discussions with the OECD, to explore the possible delivery of a specific research programme that could help inform and shape a strategic plan of action to enhance the employer's role in supporting employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, drawing from international learning, also considering the State's role in engaging with employers.

It is expected that this project will be delivered over a two-year period, commencing in 2020, and will combine desk research, surveys and interviews with key stakeholders in other jurisdictions, and study visits to a number of regions in Ireland. The work is intended to identify for example: effective engagement strategies and policies at national level in encouraging and supporting employers to employ persons with disabilities; the issues for employers and the various means of addressing; how activation programmes can best support employers and how to enhance delivery by employers; the roles of various actors including departments and agencies, but also employer bodies, individual employers, and specialist providers of employment supports.



Strategic Priority 3

Strategic Priority 3

“To promote and monitor the implementation of Codes of Practice, standards and guidelines in services, and to evaluate policy and practice”

Throughout 2019, the NDA engaged with a range of bodies to advise on standards, and to guide implementation of our Codes of Practice on Accessibility. We evaluated policy through our projects delivered and ongoing engagement with stakeholders.

Evaluate and advise on monitoring mechanisms

Operational Review of Section 25 of the Disability Act

Every government department and public body is required to make their public buildings accessible in line with duties specified in Section 25 of the Disability Act 2005. It requires compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations by January 2022. As provided for in Action 26 of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy, the NDA undertook a review of the operation of this section of the Act jointly with the Office of Public Works, engaging with key public bodies, building user groups and OPW technical staff. The report was launched in July 2019. Key findings indicated low levels of awareness and the need for planned action by all of the relevant bodies to progress compliance. The NDA wrote to the relevant Ministers to guide on actions to address the findings and progress action for accessible public buildings.

Monitor and report on the employment of persons with disabilities in the public service in accordance with Part 5 of the Disability Act

Government Departments and public bodies have legal obligations in relation to the employment of persons with disabilities and ensuring a minimum target of 3% of the workforce is achieved, as per Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005. The NDA has a statutory function to submit an annual report on performance to the Minister for Justice and Equality in this regard. It also has functions to follow up on non-compliance and to specify measures for individual bodies.

Report on Compliance with Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005 for 2018

The NDA submitted the Report on Compliance with Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005 for 2018 to the Minister for Justice and Equality and copied to the Minister for State with special responsibility for Disability Issues before the statutory deadline of Friday 30 November 2019.

In summary, the report outlined that at the end of 2018, the total number of employees in the relevant public sector bodies was 231,706- an increase of 5,897 (2.6%) from the total number of employees in 2017. However, the overall number and percentage of employees reporting a disability decreased from 7,796 (3.5%) in 2017 to 7,585 (3.3%) in 2018. This is a decrease of 211 (-2.7%) people from 2017.

Part 5: Final Determinations of Non-Compliance for 2015 and 2016

Under section 49 of the Disability Act (2005), the NDA may make a request to a public body

that would enable the NDA to assess whether compliance has been achieved, and if there were valid reasons that prevented a public body from meeting the minimum 3% target for 2 consecutive years.

The NDA sent S49 requests to 11 public bodies that had not demonstrated achievement of the minimum 3% target for 2015 and 2016. Following a review of the responses and additional information on measures implemented by public bodies during the period received, the Authority of the NDA agreed the following 7 public bodies warranted a final determination of non-compliance because they did not demonstrate an adequate level of action with regard to proactive measures to recruit persons with disabilities during that period:

- Health Service Executive;
- Irish Blood Transfusion Service;
- Horse Racing Ireland;
- National College of Art and Design;
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland;
- Personal Injuries Board;
- Health Research Board.

It is noted in the case of some of these bodies, that they would have since achieved the 3% target in reports for later years.

Part 5: Draft Determinations of Non Compliance for 2016 and 2017

The NDA sent S49 requests to four public bodies that had not achieved the minimum 3% target for 2016 and 2017, in accordance with section 49 of the Disability Act 2005, as follows:

- Waterford IT;
- Personal Injuries Assessment Board;
- Health Research Board;
- Health Service Executive.

The NDA considered the responses these public bodies provided.

Waterford IT demonstrated that in 2016 and 2017 it had measures in place to create an inclusive work environment where employees felt supported in disclosing a disability, in addition to having proactive policies and processes that focused on increasing the recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities. This public body provided evidence of its commitment to meeting its obligations under Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005 during this two year period. The Authority decided that this public body did not warrant a determination of non-compliance for 2016 and 2017.

The NDA is considering whether the Personal Injuries Assessment Board, the Health Research Board and the Health Service Executive warrant a determination of non-compliance by the

Authority for 2016 and 2017. These three public bodies provided little evidence that they had proactive measures in place to increase the recruitment of persons with disabilities during this two year period.

The NDA continues to work with the public bodies to help them to develop, implement and report on Action Plans that will include a planned approach with detailed specific actions to incrementally increase their recruitment of persons with disabilities. The NDA is aware that it can take time for public bodies to embed changes in their recruitment processes and to see the impact of these changes. However, the NDA looks forward to an improvement in the public sector's overall performance in the near future.

Part 5: Seminar for smaller public bodies on creating an inclusive work environment

In May 2019, the NDA hosted a seminar for public bodies with less than 50 employees that have experienced difficulties reaching the minimum target. There are 34 such bodies, noting some have as little as three staff members. This seminar was well attended by approx. 30 people, representing 21 out of these 34 bodies, some of whom were new to the Part 5 process. The objectives of this seminar were to:

- Increase these public bodies' awareness of the NDA's advice and guidance on creating an inclusive work environment that promotes and supports the recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities;
- Increase these public bodies' awareness of Section 25 of the Disability Act 2005 where a public body is obliged to ensure that its public buildings (other than heritage sites, which are subject to Section 29 of the Act) are, as far as practicable, accessible to persons with disabilities;
- Provide these public bodies with an opportunity to share learning and models of good practice with each other.

There were a number of positive outcomes from this seminar, as follows:

- The public bodies at the seminar are developing a network to facilitate shared learning regarding creating inclusive work environments that promote and support the employment of persons with disabilities;
- Members of Monitoring Committees and Disability Liaison Officers that were new to the Part 5 process indicated that they now have a clear understanding of this process and how they can apply the NDA guidance and advice to increase recruitment and retention opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Review the process to enhance quality of data and reporting under Part 5 of the Disability Act

As the process to report and monitor compliance within the public service of the employment of persons with disabilities under Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005 has been in place since 2007, a review to guide improvements was commissioned in 2019. This review will involve an evaluation of best practices of processes used for monitoring and evaluating diverse talent

in the workplace including a review of best practice internationally. It is aimed to publish the report and recommendations in 2020.

Monitoring the accessibility of public transport – phase two

During 2019, the NDA continued to engage with a number of countries who are also exploring approaches to monitoring the accessibility of public transport in their respective countries further to phase 1 of a project which tested different methods of gathering information to measure compliance. Some of the organisations that the NDA has been liaising with include Transport Analysis, the Swedish government agency tasked with producing official statistics and policy development for the transport sector in Sweden and the Inclusive and Accessibility Team in the UK's Department of Transport, who are responsible for implementing and monitoring the UK's Inclusive Transport Strategy- Achieving Equal Access for Disabled People (2018).

The learning from countries that are developing feasible high-level indicators to monitor the accessibility of public transport is that it is a challenging and complex process. However, the NDA obtained feedback from these countries on the draft indicators for Ireland's public transport service providers and the separate set of draft indicators for service users to guide a national mechanism for monitoring the accessibility of public transport in line with the NDA's Code of Practice.

The indicators for service providers will cover the following areas of the new revised Code of Practice for Accessible Public Services:

- Providing and procuring accessible transport services;
- Having accessible complaint processes and complaints officers to address, respond and resolve complaints in a prompt manner;
- Providing information in accessible formats;
- Accessible websites.

The NDA will pilot the implementation of these indicators so that the mechanism can be refined for rollout.

Public Transport Service Contracts

The NDA worked closely with the National Transport Authority (NTA) in providing new contracts to public transport service providers in December 2019 and advised the inclusion of the following core areas of the **Code of Practice on Accessibility of Public Services and Information provided by Public Bodies**:

- Access to Services;
- Accessible Procurement;
- Access to Information;
- Accessible Complaints;
- Inquiry Officer role.

The National Transport Authority's (NTA) consultation on potential changes to the license conditions for public bus passenger's services to accessibility

In November 2019, the NDA made a submission to this consultation which focused on the NTA's proposed phased approach to improving accessibility to licensed public transport services and the potential costs involved particularly to commercial bus operators providing these services who receive no subsidies from the NTA.

The NDA advised that the licence conditions for the commercial bus and coach sector should include the core elements of what is required to ensure integrated, universally designed transport services. These points were also reflected in NDA's submission to the Oireachtas committee in 2018 on **Accessibility of Public Transport Services for Persons with Disabilities**.

The Core Bus Corridor Initiative and the Bus Connects Project

In June 2019, the NDA made a submission to the Core Bus Corridor Initiative which is part of the Bus Connects Project. The objective of the Core Bus Corridor Initiative is to deliver 230kms of dedicated bus lanes and 200kms of cycle tracks along 16 of the busiest corridors in Dublin. Phase 3 of this consultation process focuses on route assessments and recommendations for core bus corridors across specified areas.

The NTA describe that the objective of the Core Bus Corridor is to achieve reliable, speedier and more frequent services through various means, with seamless integration with other transport types.

In its submission, further to advice provided in 2018, the NDA suggested that the NTA and the proposed advisory committee could review the catchment areas for the Core Bus Corridor Initiative and the Bus Connects project to determine if these areas have the capacity to provide integrated universally designed public transport services. The NDA also suggested that a cross-departmental approach between the NTA, the public transport service providers, relevant government departments and related agencies will also be required to facilitate the effective development and implementation of the Core Bus Corridor Initiative and the Bus Connect Project that provides integrated universally designed public transport services.

Workshop on Bus Stops

The NDA collaborated with the National Transport Authority to operate a Bus Stops Workshop on 25 September 2019. The objective of the Bus Stops Workshop was to review of design options related to the layout around bus stop locations and best practice for the flow of users. Transport designers, representatives of cyclists' groups, and service users with disabilities and pedestrians, attended the workshop. The discussion assisted the identification of key barriers to accessibility that could be addressed through effective design.

Assess and monitor the implementation and impact of national strategies and policies

A number of activities were undertaken during 2019 in preparation for Ireland's first monitoring report on the UNCRPD. A mapping exercise was conducted to examine the extent

to which current NDIS actions and indicators and other ongoing work overlapped with the Articles of the UNCRPD. This exercise helped to identify gaps in the information available. The NDA will continue to work with departments and public bodies during 2020 to identify other areas of activity beyond the NDIS that would be relevant to Ireland's performance under UNCRPD.

Incorporating Universal Design and learning from relevant developments in standards, guidelines and toolkits

Submission on “Contract summary template for electronic communications service providers”

The European Commission, as part of the European Electronic Communications Code (Directive), which regulates the EU market for telecommunication products and services, issued a call for submissions on the design of an EU template for contracts provided to all customers by all telecommunications operators such as mobile phone and broadband providers. The NDA, in consultation with ComReg, submitted detailed observations on the design of the proposed ‘Contract Summary’ templates. The NDA's comments primarily focused on the design, layout and accessible formats in which the summary contract is to be provided. The template for “Contract Summary” is due to be rolled out by 2021.

National Standards for Children's Social Services

The NDA is represented on an Advisory Group for the development of National Standards for Children's Social Services, being developed by HIQA. It is proposed that the new standards to be developed will apply to all child support and protection services provided by Tusla. When complete, the new standards will replace existing standards for the Protection and Welfare of Children, for Foster Care, Special Care Units and for Children's Residential Centres. NDA staff have reviewed provided feedback on a number of drafts in 2019.

Draft Swimming Pool Safety Guidelines

NDA made a submission to Irish Water Safety on their draft Swimming Pool Safety Guidelines in November 2019, in response to a public consultation. The submission focussed on aspects of the guidelines that are relevant to Universal Design and persons with disabilities. The submission noted that as approximately 1 in 7 people in Ireland have a disability, the assumption should be that there will be persons with disabilities in most programmed activities in a pool and it is important that the guidelines explicitly recognise that this is the case. The submission also gave advice on the use of inclusive language.

Dublin Docklands White-water Rafting Centre

NDA made a submission to Dublin City Council in October 2019 in relation to its proposals for the provision of a white-water rafting centre at George's Dock and Custom House Quay, as part of the Council's Part 8 planning procedure. The submission stated that development has the potential to be an exemplar for inclusive water sports in Ireland, by applying Universal Design principles to its design. The proposed centre offers a choice of both moving-water and flat-water activities, and as a result, has the potential to cater for people with a wide range of interests, preferences and abilities. In addition, as the proposed centre is, on-the-whole,

a man-made facility, it should be possible to ensure, by applying universal design principles, that it is easily accessed, understood and used by all people, to the greatest extent possible, regardless of their age, size, ability or disability. The submission included detailed commentary in relation to the proposed changing and toilet facilities, access on and off the water, addressing accessibility and conservation needs in an integrated and balanced manner and the need for user engagement in the design process.



Strategic Priority 4

Strategic Priority 4:

“To continue to build awareness and adoption of Universal Design across society in Ireland”

The NDA continued to engage with key stakeholders throughout 2019 within the public sector and with educational and professional bodies regarding the development of new European and national standards to support work to further the awareness and uptake of Universal Design.

Advise and assist in the development of national and international standards, guidelines and toolkits on Universal Design and promote their implementation by national stakeholders

Re-launch of the Customer Communications Toolkit

The NDA collaborated further with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) on a project to update the Customer Communications Toolkit for the Public Service. The 2017 Toolkit has proven to be very successful with uptake and impact across a wide range of public bodies. The launch of the new version of the Toolkit took place in December 2019 at the DPER Quality Customer Services conference.

Irish Standard on Universal Design - (IS) 374

The new Irish Standard, I.S. 374:2019 ‘Customer Communications for Utilities — A Universal Design approach’, was approved for publication by the National Standards Authority Ireland (NSAI) in September 2019. The development of the new standard was co-chaired by the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) and the NDA’s Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD).

European Standard – Design for All - I.S. EN 17161:2019

The Irish launch of a new European Standard, ‘I.S. EN 17161:2019 Design for All — Accessibility following a Design for All approach in products, goods and services — Extending the range of users’ took place at the National Standards Authority (NSAI), Dublin in June 2019. The standard aligns with related European Commission accessibility initiatives.

This process standard is based on a Universal Design/Design for All Approach. It sets out requirements that enable an organisation to design, develop and provide products, goods and services that can be accessed, understood, and used by the widest range of users. The requirements in the standard are generic and intended to be applicable to all relevant parts of all organisations, regardless of type, size, or products, goods or services provided. This publication standardises an approach for organisations to achieve accessibility in mainstream products, goods and services, and their interoperability with assistive technologies.

Drafting of New CEN Standard and Conformity Assessment of Built Environment

A representative from the NDA is a member of a national mirror committee through the National Standards Authority Ireland (NSAI) which involves reviewing, commenting and voting on the Accessibility and usability of the built environment Conformity assessment. The draft document has been prepared by the Joint Technical Committee CEN-CENELEC/ JTC 11 (CEN- The European Committee for Standardization is a public standards organization) “Accessibility in the built environment”. This document has been prepared under Mandate M/420 given to CEN, CENELEC and ETSI by the European Commission and the European Free Trade Association in support of European accessibility requirements for public procurement in the built environment. It is expected that this new standard will be completed in late 2020.

NSAI UD Standards consultative committee (UDSCC)

The NSAI UD Standards consultative committee met on two occasions during 2019 to assess national standards regarding Universal Design. A new sub committee was formed to monitor and participate in the development of a new standard at European level regarding guide dogs training accreditation across the EU. CEUD staff advised NSAI on the composition of this committee, as well as the support that could be provided by CEUD in this regard. This work continues into 2020.

CEN TC 428 e-Competence Framework

The NDA participated in a meeting held in Milan on 16th April of the European committee, CEN TC 428, which is responsible for developing standards for the e-Competence Framework (eCF). The eCF aims to develop a common language and structure across Europe for the recognition of roles and competences in the ICT sector. The NDA is leading the developing of a Technical Specification that will describe the Universal Design competencies, knowledge and skills that continuous professional development (CPD) training should contain for IT professional roles (e.g. tester, developer etc.). This aligns with the NDA’s Centre for Excellence in Universal Design’s work with the Irish Computer Society to develop CPD in Universal Design for IT professionals in Ireland.

Further promote the development of courses and take-up of curriculum content incorporating Universal Design and delivering this through a Universal Design Learning approach building capacity in relevant initial professional training, education and in continuing professional development (CPD)

Universal Design and Junior Achievement Ireland

During 2019, the NDA continued a partnership project with Junior Achievement Ireland (JAI) and Dublin City Council (DCC) whereby a Universal Design module is being delivered in primary schools as part of the Power of Design Programme initiated by JAI and DCC in previous years.

The Power of Design module uses a ‘learning by doing’ methodology to demonstrate to primary and second level students the positive impact of design on social, cultural and

economic life. The programme was initiated in 2015 as part of Dublin City Council's Pivot Dublin submission and more than 3,000 students have participated in Dublin City Council catchment areas.

The project not only introduces Universal Design to students and their schools but also raises awareness among a range of participating industry volunteers. The direct interaction with students in schools, by working through teachers and principals, is an effective approach for promoting Universal Design.

Phase 1 was completed in 2019 and further to a review of its success, it was agreed to advance to Phase 2 where the UD module would be integrated and rolled out to more schools. It is hoped that a longer term sustainable model can be established thereafter.

On 28 February 2019, the NDA participated in an event that celebrated the value of design in everyday life, where Junior Achievement Ireland (JAI) showcased how they are scaling up their Power of Design programme in partnership with Dublin City Council (DCC) and the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD).

School Design for All from a Universal Design Approach

In 2019, the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) continued its work to develop advice for the Minister for Education and Skills on inclusive education. The NDA agreed to undertake work to guide on design considerations for inclusive school buildings and classes in this regard. During 2019, this work included the development of a briefing paper. The NDA's Centre for Excellence in Universal Design met with representatives of the Canadian Province of New Brunswick's Department of Education to discuss their experience of mainstreaming schools and how their knowledge may help progress this project work. The briefing paper will be completed in early 2020.

Review of Department of Education and Skills Technical Guidance Document (TGDs)

A review of the Department of Education & Skills (DoES) Technical Guidance Documents (TGDs) relates to the NDIS Action 40 on requesting the Department to carry out a review of its TGDs by applying the principles of Universal Design.

In September 2019, the NDA met with the Department of Education's Building Unit staff to explore how this work could proceed and thereafter reviewed the DoES design templates and Technical Guidance Documents. In particular, the NDA focused on TGD 20 for primary and post-primary schools, to identify key elements and features of a universal design approach to schools. Feedback was provided to the Department in late 2019 and the NDA will follow up further in 2020.

Universal Design CPD for ICT professionals

The Centre has pursued the recommended actions arising from the first phase of research on Universal Design Continued Professional Development for ICT professionals. A workshop was hosted with the Irish Computer Society (ICS) to scope a work plan for the delivery of CPD

courses. As a first step and based on the recommendations from the first phase of research, ICS presented a proposed approach for a series of trainings on the accessibility of electronic documents, which would target private and public sector staff, and which is directly related to obligations contained in the European Web Accessibility Directive. It is aimed to progress this stage of the project in 2020.

Continue to promote awareness and understanding of Universal Design in the built environment, products, services, and information and communication technologies through promoting and participating in awards, workshops and conferences

Early Years Settings from a Universal Design Approach

On 10th June 2019, the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Dr. Katherine Zappone, launched the Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care Settings (ELC). The keynote speaker at the launch was internationally recognised architect, Mr Takaharu Tezuka. Mr Tezuka's design of a kindergarten in Tokyo, the Fuji Kindergarten, has won international design awards. The guidelines are an important step in making all ELC services accessible to all children. The publication will offer guidance on the refurbishment, renovation and the building of centres for Early Learning and Care in Ireland.

The work was undertaken by Early Childhood Ireland and Trinity Haus (Trinity College Dublin) on behalf of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design at the National Disability Authority and involved:

- Reviewing national and international best practice, research and guidance in design of early years settings from a Universal Design approach;
- Consulting with a diverse range of stakeholders, including early years practitioners, parents and children; and
- Developing Universal Design Guidance for Early Years Settings, including a self-audit tool, which aims to support the early year's sector in creating universally designed spaces for all stakeholders in both new and retrofit settings.

The Design Guidance will also be useful for built environment design professionals in private and public sectors working on the design of new build and retrofitting of Early Learning and Care settings.

The guidelines are available to download at www.aim.gov.ie

Universal Design Walkability Audit Tool

In December 2018, the National Transport Authority (NTA), CEUD, Age Friendly Ireland, and An Taisce met to discuss the development of a national Universal Design Walkability Audit Tool. The proposal by NTA to develop the Universal Design Walkability Audit tool is informed by previous work by CEUD and Age Friendly Ireland on the 'How Walkable is Your Town?' report, as well as audits carried out as part of An Taisce's Green Schools Programme.

In October 2019, the CEUD conducted a pilot, in partnership with Age Friendly Ireland, of the National Transport Authority's draft Universal Design Walkability Audit Tool. The pilot was undertaken in Kilrush, Co. Clare. The recommended revisions suggested by the NDA are now being incorporated into a revised Audit tool by the NTA and it aims to publish it early 2020.

Universal Design Homes, Sarsfield House, Dublin

CEUD was invited by Dublin City Council's Planning Department to provide advice on Universal Homes in Sarsfield House, Ballyfermot, Dublin. The NDA attended four meetings to discuss multi-generational UD homes at this site. The 3.8 acre field beside Sarsfield Road in Lower Ballyfermot is currently being leased by The Sons of Divine Providence (TSDP) on a long-term lease arrangement from Dublin City Council. A Working Group has now been set up to discuss multi-generational housing from a UD approach and to provide stakeholder feedback to the Dublin City Council's Architects team. The feedback and advice provided by CEUD included that when home environments are people-centred in design, convenient and a pleasure to use, everyone benefits. Universal Design can meet everyone's needs through flexible homes designed to adapt to the lifecycle and lifestyle patterns of people over time. This work is to continue into 2020.

Heritage Ireland 2030 Public Consultation

The Department of Heritage, Culture and the Gaeltacht published Heritage Ireland 2030, a draft national heritage plan, for public consultation. The draft document is based on three themes, with high-level objectives under each theme. The NDA made a submission in this regard, which welcomed that the draft document emphasises the importance of heritage as an amenity to be accessed and enjoyed by everyone. The NDA advised that it should explicitly recognise the need to improve the accessibility of heritage sites, by addressing both conservation and accessibility needs in an integrated and balanced manner.

CEUD presented with the NSAI Innovation Award 2019

On 16 October 2019, the NSAI presented a range of awards to recognise achievement for a variety of initiatives related to standardisation throughout the year. In 2019, the Innovation Award was presented to the CEUD for its role in bringing forward the new standard I.S. 374:2019 'Customer Communications for Utilities — A Universal Design approach'. The NSAI also announced that their nomination of the CEUD for the CEN-CENELEC European Standards Organisation's "Technical Body Officers and Secretaries Awards" was successful. CEUD travelled to Brussels on 12 December to accept an award for significant contribution as a Chair of a standards committee that developed the EN 17161:2019.

NALA Award for the Customer Communications Toolkit

In February 2019, the "Customer Communications Toolkit for the Public Service — A Universal Design Approach" won top prize at the NALA Plain English Awards, in the category, "Best use of plain English by an organisation". Co-developed by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, and the NDA, the Toolkit won, as stated by the jury; "... because it shows workers in the Public Service how to produce communications that can be easily understood by members of the public. It provides a set of very clear, easy-to-follow guidelines about how to improve written, verbal and digital communications. The document is based on a Universal

Design approach and includes useful examples of communications before and after plain English has been used.”

The Toolkit can be viewed at <http://universaldesign.ie/Products-Services/Customer-Communications-Toolkit-for-the-Public-Service-A-Universal-Design-Approach/>

Presentation to the Commission for Regulation of Utilities on Universal Design and the new IS 374

The NDA presented to the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU), as well as to the suppliers it regulates on the Universal Design Toolkit for communications and the new Irish Standard IS 374:2019 ‘Customer Communications for Utilities — A Universal Design approach’ in August 2019, at the request of the CEO of the Commission for Regulation of Utilities. Further discussions on how best to accredit the sector to further incentivise implementation of the new national standard were progressed during 2019 in this regard.

Irish Green Building Council (IGBC)

With near-zero energy buildings (nZEB) coming into force through Part L of the building regulations on the 1st November 2019, home buyers are now being given the opportunity of purchasing more energy-efficient homes. CEUD have been engaging with the IGBC on their revised Home Performance Index (HPI) Ver 2.0 that includes Universal Design requirements for new homes that was launched at the conference in November. The Home Performance Index (HPI) is Ireland’s first national quality and sustainability assessment system for new housing. CEUD had already contributed to version 1.0 in 2015-16 by providing advice and text on the Key Elements and features of Universal Design Homes. CEUD has engaged again with the IGBC on this revised index to ensure that UD is embedded within the HPI 2.0. This work aligns with the Government’s **Housing Options for Our Ageing Population Policy Statement**.

Government of Ireland - Housing Options for Our Ageing Population Policy Statement - Action 3.4 proposed home design rating ‘Design for life’

The NDA is represented on a working group coordinated by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, and with representation from Age Friendly Ireland, the Irish Green Building Council (IGBC) & Local Authority Housing staff to examine how Universal Design Key Elements & Features can be included in this rating system. In 2019, the NDA continued to advise the Department to consider a ‘Universal Design’ rating system for new homes that would be designed and built from a UD approach. This rating system to be based on the new revised Home Performance Index 2.0 that was published by IGBC.

Workshop and Executive Briefing on Universal Design in Banking Services with Bank of Ireland.

In February 2019, the NDA ran an all-day workshop with 24 staff from the Bank of Ireland. Staff from the Centre presented on Universal Design in customer services, digital services and the built environment. Guest speakers included Liam McMunn, Director of Facilities with the Central Bank of Ireland, and winner of a 2018 Zero award for the accessibility of the new Central Bank premises. The workshop focused on the theory and practice of Universal Design in different service area of the bank. The content presented concentrated on NDA guidance

materials and standards developed at European level. Bank of Ireland staff produced a series of actions that were presented to senior management who attended the executive briefing at the closing of the workshop. The workshop was run in the context of the bank's Accessibility Diversity and Inclusion strategy and commitments. A briefing on the workshop was prepared and sent to the Central Bank to update them of CEUD's work in this sector.

Evaluation of Community Banking and Local Provision of Banking and Financial Services in Ireland

NDA submitted observations on an "Evaluation of Community Banking and Local Provision of Banking and Financial Services in Ireland" by Indecon, an economic consultancy, on behalf of the Department of Finance in July 2019. NDA's submission covered issues pertaining to the accessibility and Universal Design of banking and financial services, the importance of social inclusion and community participation and the requirement to support people who may have capacity issues in financial decision-making, as per the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 and the Code of Practice for Financial Professionals.

Consumer Advisory Panel – ComReg

NDA is represented on the Consumer Advisory Panel (CAP) with the telecommunication regulator, ComReg. The CAP is a statutory committee set up under Section 12 of the Communications Act 2002. Held quarterly, its purpose is to advise ComReg on areas of consumer concern which are relevant to the three main areas of ComReg's consumer policy: maximising consumer welfare, protecting consumers, and raising consumer awareness.

During 2019, ComReg advised that Eir, who provide the Irish Text Relay Service (ITRS), have significantly cut the availability of the ITRS from a 24/7 service to approximately 12 hours per day. The NDA advised of the implications of this, noting that the ITRS took significant effort to establish and Ireland was the last EU country to put such a service in place. Due to the slow update of the service, Eir will continue to reduce hours, hence leading to further cuts in the service's availability.

Universal Design Grand Challenge 2019 (UDGC)

The Universal Design Grand Challenge (UDGC) is designed to create awareness and understanding of Universal Design through practical projects that can compete for awards. The 2019 UDGC saw the highest number of entries received (70) over the lifetime of this awards programme. The keynote speech was delivered by Peter Crowley, MRIAI architect, from PAC Studio and judge on the RTÉ 'Home of the Year' programme.

In May 2019, students from third-level colleges across Ireland presented their design projects at the annual Universal Design Grand Challenge Awards ceremony in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Dublin.

The Judges Choice Award for the Built Environment went to Gerry Triyadi from Griffith College for "Universal Design for Aging Population" - an innovative redesign concept for the Red Stable, St Anne's Park, Dublin as a residential building with apartments for both older people and young families.



Gerry Triyadi receiving the Judges Choice Award for the Built Environment 2019

The Judges Choice Award for Products and Services went to Cónall Lane, Laura Lardner, Aaron McLoughlin Sutherland and Aisling Kearney from Trinity College Dublin for “UrTake” - an innovative design that enables the collection of samples for urinalysis in an easier and more dignified way for a wider range of people.



Trinity College Dublin's Conall Lane, Laura Lardner, Aaron McLoughlin Sutherland and Aisling Kearney receiving the Judges Choice Award for Products and Services 2019

The Judges Choice Award for Information and Communication Technology went to Oisín McGrath from NUI Galway for “Galenband” – a new design for wearable devices that targets the burden of undiagnosed intermittent atrial fibrillation (AF), a dangerous heart rhythm abnormality affecting over 20 million individuals worldwide.

The Enterprise Ireland “Universal Design Commercialisation Award” went to Muireann Hickey, Kevin Hayes, Cian O’Leary and Jonathan Mullane from Cork IT for their design “StrydeTech”, a solution that enables people who need assistance to stand up to do so independently.



Demonstration of StrydeTech, recipients of the Enterprise Ireland “Universal Design Commercialisation Award”.

Marketing and promotion of the Universal Design Grand Challenge

NDA have commissioned consultants to assist with marketing, promoting and managing the Universal Design Grand Challenge 2020. While interest continues to grow within the higher education sector in Universal Design, the number of lecturers actively encouraging entries has plateaued due to a lack of awareness of and information on the UDGC. The aim is to run a marketing and social media campaign to better reach the target audience for the UDGC of students and lecturers. It is also envisaged this will encourage more lecturers to teach UD in line with the Centre’s function to support educational development.

Workshop with Office of the Government Procurement

In June 2019, the NDA ran a workshop on Universal Design for the Office of the Government Procurement with the two contractors involved in the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) project to explore how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be applied as an assisted digital service to help people to easily find, access and use online public services that meet their needs, or the needs of someone in their care. The aim of this research is to explore innovative ways of facilitating and enabling the widest extent of participation in terms of users of the Government Digital Services Gateway, www.gov.ie and to guide and assist more people to use digital public services.

(The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform is jointly funding this research in partnership with Enterprise Ireland, through the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO). Enterprise Ireland’s Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) programme

enables public sector bodies to work with some of Ireland's most progressive technology businesses to provide innovative solutions for specific public sector challenges and needs.)

Presentation to The Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) on user perspective and the Universal Design of telecommunications products and services

BEREC and ComReg, Ireland's national telecommunications regulator invited CEUD to speak at a workshop on "Understanding Consumer Concerns and Perspectives" on 12th June in Ghent, Belgium. This workshop was the first of its kind run with the association of European regulators. CEUD's presentation covered the accessibility requirements in legislation including the European Accessibility Act and the European Electronic Communication code, taking a UD approach to the development of telecommunications products and services.

Workshop on accessible electronic documents

CEUD ran a workshop in July 2019 for the Economic Social Research Institute and Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission as well as NDA research staff on creating accessible research reports. The workshop was attended by 22 researchers and communication officers from these organisations and focused on the techniques, checks and tools required for the authoring, conversion and publication of accessible research reports in Word and PDF.

Continue to build a network of Universal Design Champions across the various domains of industry, government, education and the public to extend the knowledge base of good practice in Universal Design

Web accessibility

The NDA notes that Ireland has yet to transpose the EC Web Accessibility Directive which applies to public sector websites and the structures for monitoring same at national level. An increasing number of queries on web accessibility from other public bodies, primarily in relation to new website developments, were received by the NDA in 2019. The NDA has received requests for advice and website reviews from ComReg, QQI, Public Appointments Service, Policing Authority and the HSE for example. The NDA notes however, the need for greater awareness by public bodies of their obligations under the Directive.

Supporting Public Jobs and OGCI on web accessibility

Both the Public Appointment Services (Public Jobs) and the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer have requested assistance in improving the accessibility of their application and website development processes. CEUD is currently developing an 'accessibility test plan' with the Built to Share unit with OGCI that develops applications of the Civil Service. The test plan will be trialled by the developers and incorporated into the Built to Share application development process. Public Jobs are undertaking a restructuring of their IT platforms and development processes and have requested advice on procuring, planning, developing and testing in relation to their website, job application and employment campaign online applications.

Workshop with ComReg on new European Electronic Communications Codes (Directive (EU) 2018/1972)

CEUD held an internal workshop in July 2019 with senior legal, consumer protection and regulatory staff in ComReg to explore practical measures ComReg can take when implementing Directive (EU) 2018/1972, known as the European Electronic Communications Codes, which must be transposed by 11th December 2020. The new Codes replace the existing EU telecoms framework and regulate 6 areas: (1) electronic communications networks and services (“ECN” and “ECS”), (2) associated facilities and services, (3) the authorisation of networks and services, (4) radio spectrum use and numbering resources, (5) access to and interconnection of electronic communications networks and associated facilities, and (6) the protection of end-users. Articles of the new Codes that contain accessibility or Universal Design obligations include:

- Art. 102 on the accessibility of information contained in contracts and on information about the accessibility features of products (e.g. handsets) and services;
- Art. 109 on emergency communications for access for end-users with disabilities, including access to relay services;
- Art. 111 on equivalence of access and choice for end-users with disabilities to telecom products and services for end-users with disabilities.

The new codes will inform ComReg’s approach to accessibility and Universal Design in the telecommunications sector going forward. While the new codes contain more detailed accessibility obligations than the previous telecoms framework, it still leaves significant room for interpretation and implementation. NDA continues to play a role in advising ComReg on such matters.

Universal Design for Learning Guidelines for FET

During 2019, CEUD continued to represent the NDA on an Advisory Committee on Universal Design for Learning for Further Education and Training to advise on guidelines for applying this approach. The Committee is hosted by SOLAS to advise the guidelines project being conducted by AHEAD.

3rd level Universal Design textbook

The Centre is scoping out the possibilities and processes for producing a textbook on Universal Design for computing science studies. The current approach is that a number of invited lecturers would each produce a chapter on a topic area (from UX to Agile to AI). Academic publishers to provide editorial services for book production. The Centre established an editorial board in November 2019 and is progressing the development of the textbook in partnership with Irish and international academic stakeholders.

Target particular sectors in promoting Universal Design practice in partnership with the relevant stakeholders such as the utility, banking and transport sectors

Keynote speech at the Edinburgh Napier University conference on Teaching and Learning.

The NDA was invited to deliver the keynote presentation at the Napier Edinburgh Napier University on Universal Design in higher Education on the 20th June. Napier University had attended the Universal Design in Higher Education and Transformation Congress in November 2018 and this was an opportunity to learn more about how this institution is approaching teaching and learning in the context of their diverse student population. CEUD's presentation covered learnings from the UD HEIT Congress on Universal Design for Learning, the Universal Design of higher education buildings, services and technology and how to include Universal Design in the curriculum of relevant courses of architecture, design, engineering and technology.

The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI) Annual Awards Event – Building for All / Universal Design category

A CEUD staff member was part of the RIAI Judging panel reviewing the entries to this award category which involved visiting a selection of the shortlisted sites. The winner, who received the award on 7th June 2019, was the Brickworks Community Centre and Housing, Islington London, designed by Brady Malalieu Architects. The award-winning entry was commended as an accessible and inclusive urban development and focal point of large housing estate and wider neighbourhood in north London. It was noted that every aspect of the building, from the layout to the signage, has been fine-tuned to maximise use and enjoyment for all and demonstrated the benefits of consultation and engagement with the local community.

24th Anniversary Spider Awards

On Thursday 21st November 2019, the 24th annual Spider Awards took place at the RDS Concert Hall, Dublin. The gala awards ceremony saw industry leaders take home the iconic Spicer awards. Among the winners on the night were Kooba with Mobility MOJO who took home the award for Best in Universal Design. The Mobility MOJO service supports hotels to assess and provide information on accessibility features and services in their hotels. The Mobility MOJO website is an exemplar of accessible design that is engaging and usable for all users.

eGovernment Awards

The 2019 eGovernment awards took place in City hall, Dublin on Wednesday 11th September 2019. The National Disability Authority sponsored the Universal Design Award category. Shortlisted in this category were the Office of the Ombudsman, The New Met Éireann Website & APP, BBC Gaeilge Digiteach, Online Passport Renewal Service and Fingal.ie Wayfinding Accessibility Initiative. The winner of the award went to the new Met Éireann Website & App – Met.ie.

Continue to promote the adoption of Universal Design in practice in the areas of products, services, and Information Communication Technologies

Annual Access Meeting on the provision of access services by the national broadcaster.

The NDA attended the annual Access Meeting by RTÉ on the provision of access services by the national broadcaster. This annual meeting is attended by the regulator, BAI, and disability organisations. New developments reported by RTÉ include a new and improved iPlayer that provides better access to subtitles for people who are deaf and hard of hearing. A persistent issue reported at the meetings is a breakdown in the quality of subtitles provided by broadcasters such as RTÉ when their programming is carried by TV providers such as Virgin Media and Sky. Subscribers to these services report intermittent and poor quality subtitling. BAI advised that under their remit they monitor that broadcasters provide the necessary quantity of subtitles, but that TV service providers such as Sky and Virgin Media are responsible for the quality control of the subtitles displayed on their services. Disability organisations highlighted that this is an ongoing issue for viewers and that they are potentially limited in the choice and value they can receive from their TV subscription packages due to the variances in the quality of access services provided by different TV providers. NDA will continue to engage with relevant stakeholders in 2020 in order to establish if there is further research or guidance that could inform developments in this space.

IDI Annual Awards 2018

CEUD continued its partnership with the Institute of Designers in Ireland (IDI) to honour Irish designers who are creating Universal Designs. The 20th IDI Awards took place at CHQ, Dublin, on 24 January 2019. The winner in the Universal Design category was Una Healy Design for its branding design 'Getting the Messages – Dementia Inclusive Shopping'. The design was developed to support persons with dementia to shop in their local communities.

IDI Graduate Awards 2019

The 2019 IDI Graduate Awards took place in November 2019. There were 59 entries in the Universal Design category. The winner of the Universal Design category was Paul Roper, from IT Sligo, for his design 'MagPin', a redesign of the traditional clothes peg.

Recognition of Excellence in Universal Design – Technological University Dublin

In April 2019, the NDA presented Professor David Fitzpatrick, President of the new Technological University Dublin, with a trophy in recognition and celebration of a decade-long collaboration with its founding Institutions, (DIT, IT Blanchardstown and IT Tallaght) and the new University's commitment to the application of Universal Design. This was the first such recognition by CEUD of excellence by an institution in Universal Design. The trophy was presented by NDA's Chairperson and the CEUD's Chief Officer, and was attended by the Minister of State for Higher Education, Mary Mitchell O'Connor, TU Dublin staff and students, and representatives from the NDA and Grangegorman Development Agency. The Recognition of Excellence trophy commends the University's commitment to several pillars of Universal Design, including in its commitment to making its Grangegorman campus accessible, the inclusion of Universal Design in some of its courses and the promotion of Universal Design for Learning as a key methodology for inclusive education.



Strategic Priority 5

Strategic Priority 5:

“To continue to be an effective and pro-active organisation, committed to delivering on our strategic priorities and communicating our work”

In 2019, the NDA continued in our commitment to effectively delivering on our strategic priorities and in compliance with all of our statutory, regulatory and governance obligations. Throughout the year, we continued to engage with our stakeholders in different ways, including through our staff, submissions, consultations, our websites and our newsletter.

Governance and Financial Reporting

The National Disability Authority is committed to attaining the highest standard of corporate governance within the organisation. Continuing to develop a culture which supports and drives high standards was central to the work programme undertaken by the Authority and the Executive in 2019.

The NDA is a member of the Irish Institute of Public Administration’s governance forum, providing access for Authority members and staff to avail of training and development on governance issues. The overall governance and control framework within the National Disability Authority is guided by compliance with the provisions of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016), as appropriate.

An Oversight and Performance Framework Agreement was established between the National Disability Authority and the Department of Justice and Equality for the 2019 period. This Agreement defined and clarified the roles and responsibilities of both the NDA and the Department of Justice and Equality and detailed the high-level goals and objectives, as well as the key programme of activity that the NDA committed to for 2019. The Agreement also outlined the NDA’s commitment to ongoing compliance with relevant requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). The NDA met with the Governance Unit in the Department of Justice and Equality, to discuss this and other governance matters in 2019.

Financial reports (through management accounts and updates) 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. The management accounts were also shared with the Audit Committee, as appropriate throughout the year.

In accordance with the National Disability Authority Act 1999, the NDA prepared and submitted draft financial accounts for 2018 to the Comptroller and Auditor General. The Financial Statements of the NDA for the year ended 31 December 2019 have been prepared under FRS102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the UK and Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC). The NDA submitted the approved financial accounts and Annual Report for 2018 to the Minister on 27 June 2019.

Internal Audit

The NDA continued to avail of the independent services of the Internal Audit Unit of the Department of Justice and Equality to perform its internal audit function during 2019, to monitor risk, and to review the effectiveness of the NDA's arrangements for governance, risk management and internal control. Two internal audits were carried out in 2019, including a review of internal controls and a review of documented financial procedures in place with no material concerns identified and no high risks identified.

Authority 2019

The Authority of the NDA consists of a Chairperson and 12 ordinary members. The Authority met 6 times during 2019, with two 2-day meetings. A schedule of 2019 attendance, fees and expenses is set out in the Governance Statement. Authority members received Protected Disclosures Training in September 2019 and also participated in a facilitated workshop on risk management to support the development of the NDA's Risk Appetite Statement in November 2019. Representatives of the NDA attended a number of seminars provided by the IPA's Governance Forum throughout 2019. The Authority conducted a self-evaluation of its performance in 2019 in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). This will inform continued improvement in 2020.

The Authority continued to use a paperless system for Authority meetings during 2019. This was facilitated by using Sharefile (a cloud-based file storage system), with hardcopy papers available to members, on request.

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 and in ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of operations. Risk and control functions are established in the role of Audit Committee appointed by the Authority, who review performance, risk matters including policy and practice.

The NDA's Risk Management Committee comprises the senior management group and two independent members, one of whom is the Chairperson (and a member of the Audit Committee). It supports the Executive in the development of a Risk Register and risk activities. During 2019, the Committee met three times. The NDA has an established Risk Register which is reviewed and approved at regular intervals by the Audit Committee and the Authority and has an appointed Risk Officer.

The Risk Management Committee supported the development of a Risk Appetite Statement for consideration by the Audit Committee and thereafter agreement by the Authority. The Statement was approved by the Authority in November 2019.

The Risk environment and any issues for the NDA is considered by the Senior Management Group on a bimonthly basis and is a standing item on the agenda for each Authority meeting. Risk considerations are also built into the NDA's project management system.

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 on the NDA during 2019:

1. Challenges in delivering consistent high-quality outputs to deliver on statutory functions through internal and external expertise, in light of increased demands for research and guidance, increased mobility of expert staff, and dependency on attracting suitably qualified contractors for commissioned projects;
2. Challenges of the multiple demands for managing effective compliance with governance and legislative requirements within required timeframes;
3. Challenges to achieving better and more extensive awareness and understanding of NDA role and outputs among a wide range of stakeholder groups.

During 2019, the NDA put in place plans and actions to mitigate these risks.

In accordance with section 7.2 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016), the NDA commissioned an external review of the NDA's risk management framework in 2019 further to a procurement competition. The review will assist the NDA to consider the process, procedures and documentation it uses to manage risk to identify any areas for improvements. The report of that review is expected in early 2020. Any recommendations made will be considered by the relevant Committees and implemented as appropriate.

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

For the year ended 31 December 2019, the NDA can confirm that a Code of Conduct for the Authority and staff members was in place and adhered to, in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). Furthermore, all Authority members and relevant staff members complied in full 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 2019. The NDA updated its Protected Disclosures Policy during 2019 to include detailed reporting procedures, which was approved by the Authority and its Audit Committee in September 2019. Transparency International Ireland provided briefing sessions on the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 to the members of the Authority and staff in November 2019. Additional sessions are scheduled to be delivered during 2020.

Data Protection/Freedom of Information

During 2019, 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 in light of the Regulation. The NDA

liaised with the Department's Data Protection Support and Compliance Office and the Data Protection Commissioner on the Regulation as relevant to the NDA as matters arose during 2019.

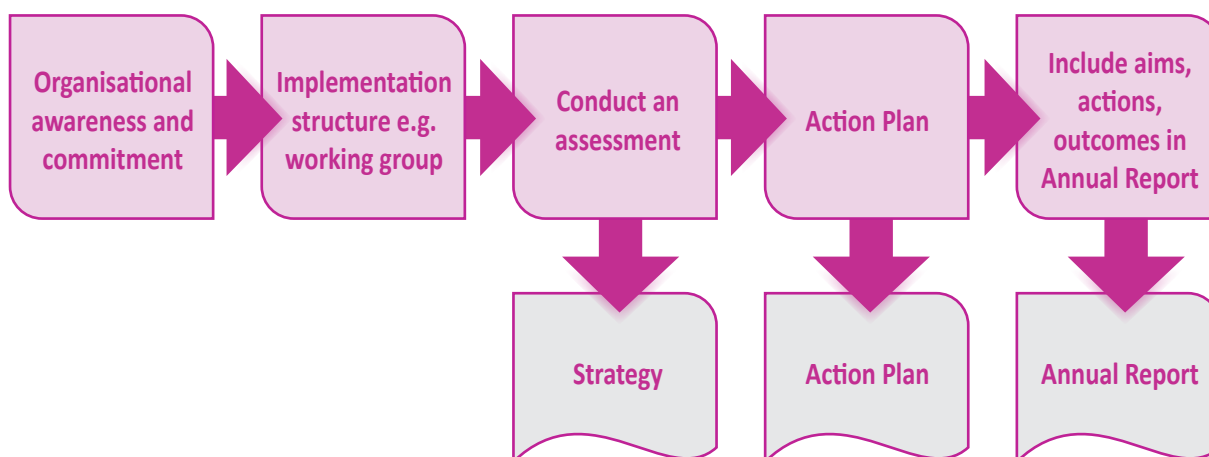
In addition, the NDA recognised the need to enhance document management, to ensure a comprehensive document management framework, to be used consistently across the organisation to assist in its GDPR compliance journey. The NDA engaged services to support the development and implementation of such a framework to address document/records definition; retention; storage and associated legal aspects, in line with GDPR and the FOI Act during 2019. An examination of the policies and procedures was undertaken and recommendations arising that process are expected to be implemented and progressed during the course of 2020.

The NDA received 3 FOI requests in 2019. Two of the request(s) were part-granted with some redactions and answered within the statutory timeframe. The third request related to information which is not held by the NDA.

Public Sector Duty

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014) requires that the NDA conduct an assessment of the human rights and equality issues it believes to be relevant to the functions and purpose of the NDA; set out the policies, plans and actions in place or proposed to be put in place to address those issues; and report on developments and achievements regarding the Public Sector Duty in its annual report.

In order to implement the Public Sector Duty within the NDA, the following process was applied during 2019:



Following awareness training for all staff on 5th September 2019, a Public Sector Duty Working Group was established made up of staff representatives from all functions, to identify human rights and equality issues through a series of short workshops. A proposed action plan based on the outcomes of the workshops was developed in December 2019 to guide improvements during 2020.

Staffing in the NDA

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 at 31 December 2019, the National Disability Authority had 37 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, Public Affairs and Research;
- Centre for Excellence in Universal Design;
- Corporate Services.

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

Senior Management at 31 December 2019

Director	Siobhan Barron
Head of Policy, Public Affairs and Research	Dr Aideen Hartney
Chief Officer, Centre for Excellence in Universal Design	Dr Ger Craddock
Corporate Services Manager	Suzanne Lambe

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, training sessions and access to coaching supports for example. The following is an example of some of the training and development opportunities in 2019.

- Irish Sign Language;
- Public Sector Duty Workshop;
- Website Content Management System (CMS) Training;
- Report Writing;
- In-House Counsel Masterclass: Data Protection & NIS Regulations;
- Ethical Thinking and Decision Making in Practice;
- GDPR & The Health Research Regulations;
- Annual Research School Workshops;
- Leading Strategy Execution;
- GDPR One Year On – Key Developments in Data Protection for Employers;

- Grant Management Programme – Management of State or EU Funding
- Implementing the Code of Practice and the Future of Governance for State Bodies;
- Supporting Your Leadership Development;
- Essential Employment Law for Irish Employers;
- Emerging technologies, social media and the politics of the algorithm;
- Certificate in Human Resources;
- Data Protection Impact Assessment;
- Minute Taking for Meetings;
- Leadership Decision Making;
- Certificate in Learning & Development.

Staff also attended conferences on relevant work themes including for example:

- Social Inclusion Forum 2019 Collaborative working at local and national level;
- The 15th National Health Summit;
- Transforming Public Service conference;
- Emergency Response Management Conference;
- 2019 European Transport Conference;
- Re(al) Productive Justice Conference;
- Trauma Informed Care in Practice Conference;
- Integrity at Work Conference 2019;
- Housing Conference 2019;
- Growing Up in Ireland Conference.

Workplace Wellness

The NDA continued to make the Employee Assistance Programme available to staff during 2019. This free, confidential, professional service provides a range of support and advice to staff on personal or work-related concerns, which may affect a person's well-being and their performance in the workplace. An Ergonomic/VDU Assessment was undertaken for staff, where required, with recommendations arising implemented.

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 all 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 2019. Activities included Fire Warden & Fire Extinguisher Training, Evac+Chair Training, Safety Representatives Online Training, First Aid Responder Refresher Training and First Aid Responder Training.

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. The results of a self-reporting Staff Census

conducted through a change in status form in April 2019 indicated that the NDA exceeded the 3% target for the employment of persons with disabilities in 2018 achieving 11.76%.

Shared Services

The NDA continued to avail of financial shared services and an ICT and Managed Print support service from the Department of Justice and Equality. The NDA had two meetings with the ICT division in relation to the service in 2019.

The Department also provides an internal audit service to the NDA. As mentioned above, the NDA's payroll, pension and travel & subsistence processing is provided by the Payroll Shared Service Centre of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Library and Information Resource

The NDA Library continued to provide a service for staff by conducting literature searches for staff to support the development of NDA's evidence-based advice and for use in literature reviews and articles.

Other services to staff provided by the Library contractor included:

- Instruction for staff in using online resources;
- Engagement with staff to guide improved response to meet needs;
- Collaboration with staff to enhance projects;
- Responses to queries from staff and general public.

The Library continued to receive visits from the general public on Thursdays, as a reference only library. The library holds extensive collections on disability and related topics, universal design topics, as well as books, eBooks, eJournals, newsletters, and other materials.

Accommodation and Facilities

The NDA's Corporate Services Department is responsible for maintaining a safe and efficient premises and for facilitating arrangements for internal and stakeholder use of the NDA's facilities for meetings and other scheduled events.

Over the course of 2019, the NDA commissioned works to ensure the effective maintenance and use of its accommodation this included a number of audits including electrical, safety, plumbing and security. New gates were installed to the staff carpark, a new alarm system including CCTV were installed. Lighting was also upgraded in a number of areas internally and externally and the Reception was upgraded to enhance accessibility.

Since 1 July 2015 the NDA has had a lease agreement in place with tenants for a number of offices, from which the income is accrued as Appropriations in Aid to the Department of Justice and Equality. Income was transferred to the Department as appropriate in 2019.

Energy

The NDA Energy & Green Team registers and maintains records for the National Disability Authority with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

The National Disability Authority 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, Air Conditioning and General Services;
- 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 2019, 94% of electrical energy use in the buildings was attributable to the National Disability Authority. In relation to thermal energy, 82% of the natural gas used was attributable to the NDA.

Since 1 July 2015, the first floor in the Back Building has been leased and occupied by a private company. This company has a separate electricity meter, although it does not have a separate gas meter.

In 2019, the National Disability Authority consumed 356,593 kWh of energy, consisting of:

- 117,594 kWh of electricity;
- 238,999 kWh of fossil fuels;
- 0 kWh of renewable fuels.

The NDA can report a:

- 30.1% cost savings since baseline;
- 34.9% lower consumption since baseline.

Actions undertaken in 2019

In 2019, the NDA undertook planning and implementation of a range of initiatives to improve our energy performance, including:

- Electrical audit and continued improving the energy performance of its light system(s);
- Energy Training;
- Continued Energy Awareness.

Altogether, these and other energy-saving measures saved the NDA 7,000kWh.

Actions planned for 2020

In 2020, the NDA intends to improve further our energy performance by undertaking the following initiatives:

- Review and upgrade insulation

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 2019. The Officer's contact details are on the home page of the NDA's website.

Oireachtas members' enquiries

In accordance with DPER Circular 24/2016, the National Disability Authority 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.

The Authority also provided information to the Department of Justice and Equality in response to 12 Parliamentary Questions.

Protected Disclosures Freedom of Information

The NDA received three FOI requests in 2019. One request came from a journalist regarding HR matters for which the NDA did not hold any records. The other two requests were received from a member of the public and related to correspondence between the NDA and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Both these requests were answered within the statutory timeframe.



Financial Statements for Year ended 31 December 2019

Financial Statements for Year ended 31 December 2019

Governance Statement and Authority Members' Report For the year ended 31 December 2019

Governance

The National Disability Authority (NDA) was established under the National Disability Authority Act 1999. The NDA has duties to deliver on functions set out in section 8 of the Act and can produce codes of practice in accordance with section 10 of the Act. The NDA has additional functions awarded under the Disability Act 2005 and further in the Disability (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill, 2016, of which the latter has lapsed with the dissolution of the previous Dáil and Seanad. This is expected to be reinstated with the establishment of the current Government. The NDA is independent in the exercise of its functions, in accordance with section 7 of the National Disability Authority Act 1999. The NDA's independent Board (the Authority) is accountable to the Minister for Justice and Equality and is responsible for ensuring good governance and performs this task by setting strategic objectives and targets and taking strategic decisions on all key business issues.

The regular day-to-day management, control and direction of the National Disability Authority are the responsibility of the Director and the senior management group. The Director and the senior management group must follow the broad strategic direction set by the Authority and must ensure that all Authority members have a clear understanding of the key activities and decisions related to the entity, and of any significant risks likely to arise. The Director acts as a direct liaison between the Authority and management of the National Disability Authority.

Responsibilities of the members of the Authority

The work and responsibilities of the Authority are set out in the National Disability Authority Act 1999 and the Disability Act 2005. The Authority has a formal schedule of matters specifically reserved for it for decision to ensure that the direction and control of the NDA is maintained. This schedule includes the following:

- Significant acquisitions, disposals and retirement of assets of the NDA;
- Major investments (in excess of €50,000) and capital projects, contracts and investments;
- Delegated authority levels and risk management policies (standing item);
- Authority committee structures and terms of reference;
- Assurances of compliance with statutory and administrative requirements in relation to the approval of the appointment, number, grading and conditions of all staff (which will also include remuneration and superannuation);
- Approval of annual budgets and corporate plans;
- Approval of annual reports and financial statements;
- Appointment, remuneration and assessment of the performance of the Director.

Section 17 of the National Disability Authority Act 1999 requires the Authority to keep, in such form as approved by the Minister for Justice and Equality, all proper books of account of all income and expenditure of the Authority. In addition, section 16 of the Act states that moneys may be provided by the Oireachtas, a grant of such amount as the Minister for Justice and Equality, with the concurrence of the Minister for Finance, sanction towards the expenses of the Authority in the performance of its functions.

In preparing these financial statements, the Authority is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that it will continue in operation, and;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.

The Authority is responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, its financial position and enables it to ensure that the financial statements comply with Section 17 of the NDA Act. The maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information on the NDA's website is the responsibility of the Authority.

The Authority is responsible for approving the NDA annual plan and budget. An evaluation of the performance of the annual plan and budget was completed on an ongoing basis by the Authority throughout 2019. This includes a review of the monthly management accounts, reports from the Finance Committee and a review of the annual financial statements. The Authority also approves annual work plans and reviews implementation progress up to 4 times per year. The budget and performance as set out in the monthly management accounts are also reviewed by the senior management group and separately by the Finance Committee. The Audit Committee also receives the monthly management accounts.

The Authority is responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Authority considers that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial performance and the financial position of the National Disability Authority at 31 December 2019.

Board Structure

The Authority (i.e. the Board of the NDA) consists of a Chairperson and 12 ordinary members, all of whom are appointed by the Minister for Justice and Equality. Of the 12 members, one is elected through a ballot of the staff and is appointed by the Minister. Another is an officer of the Minister for Justice and Equality and a third member of the Authority is appointed by the Minister as a nominee of the Department of Health.

The members of the Authority are appointed for a term of four years and meet on a bimonthly basis. Under the provisions of the Act, the Authority members may be appointed for a second term. The table below details the appointment period for the current members of the Authority:

Name:	Role:	Appointment Date:	Reappointment Date:
Helen Guinan	Chairperson	July 2014*	August 2018
Ruthann LaMalfa	Member	July 2014*	August 2018
Teresa McDonnell	Member	July 2014*	August 2018
Deaglán O'Briain	Member	December 2014*	December 2018
Aisling Glynn	Member	June 2017*	August 2018
Jack Kavanagh	Member	August 2018	
Cathal Morgan	Member	August 2018	
Kathryn O'Donoghue	Member	August 2018	
Martha Griffin	Member	August 2018	
Deirdre O'Connor	Member	July 2014*	August 2018
Damian Gordon	Member	August 2018	
Brian Callanan	Member	August 2018	
Grainne Collins	Member	August 2018	

*Authority members are currently serving a second term.

The Authority conducted a self-evaluation of its performance in 2019 in line with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). Recommendations from the evaluation process were progressed throughout the year.

The Authority had four committees in 2019, as follows:

1. Audit Committee

The Audit Committee comprises three Authority members and four independent members, one of whom is the Chairperson of the Committee and another of whom is the Risk Committee Chairperson. The role of the Committee, as part of the ongoing systematic review of the business and corporate governance procedures of the Authority, is to oversee and advise the Authority and the Director on matters relating to:

- a) The financial accounting and annual reporting processes;
- b) The effectiveness of internal controls and risk management environment;
- c) The operations and development of the Internal Audit function;
- d) The effectiveness of and the relationship with external Audit; and
- e) Value for money and other corporate governance issues.

The Audit Committee reports to the Authority after each meeting, and formally in writing

annually. The table below details the appointment period for the current members of the Audit Committee:

Name:	Role:	Appointment Date:	Reappointment Date:
John Fitzgerald	Chairperson	March 2017	
Teresa McDonnell	Member	July 2014*	August 2018
Tony Fitzpatrick	Member	June 2017	
Cathal Morgan	Member	August 2018	
Kathryn O'Donoghue	Member	August 2018	
Tim Maverley	Member	August 2018	
John Maher	Member	August 2018	

*Audit Committee members currently serving a second term.

There were 4 meetings of the Audit Committee in 2019. The Audit Committee conducted a self-evaluation of its performance in 2019 in line with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

2. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee comprises four Authority members and two independent members. The duties of the Committee are as follows:

- a) To examine the annual expenditure profile and make recommendations to the Authority in relation to it;
- b) When the annual operating budget is approved, to review its implementation during the course of the year;
- c) To examine management accounts of the Authority on a regular on-going basis;
- d) To bring the annual statutory accounts to the Authority for approval following recommendations from the Audit Committee;
- e) To consider proposals from the Audit Committee where appropriate; and
- f) To review the format of the Authority's accounts.

The table below details the appointment period for the current members of the Finance Committee:

Name:	Role:	Appointment Date:	Reappointment Date:
Kathryn O'Donoghue	Chairperson	August 2018	
Ruthann LaMalfa	Member	July 2014*	August 2018
Pat Fitzsimons	Member	July 2014*	August 2018
Harry McGeary	Member	August 2018	
Damian Gordon	Member	August 2018	
Brian Callanan	Member	August 2018	

*Finance Committee members currently serving a second term.

The Finance Committee is required to hold at least four meetings each year, one of which must coincide with the recommendation for approval of the annual statutory accounts by the Authority. There were seven meetings of the Finance Committee in 2019. The Finance Committee reviewed and updated its terms of reference in November 2019 which were subsequently approved by the Authority. The Committee also conducted a self-evaluation of its performance in 2019 in line with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

3. Director Performance Committee

The Director Performance Committee (a sub-committee of the Authority) was established to agree the Director's responsibilities and actions in line with the NDA work programme as set out in the Strategic Plan and the Annual Work plan. In addition, the Committee act on behalf of the Authority, to review the Director's performance in relation to the agreed responsibilities and actions. The Committee reports to the Authority and informs the Director of the Authority's views and recommendations.

The group met twice in 2019.

Name:	Role:	Appointment Date:	Reappointment Date:
Helen Guinan	Chairperson	July 2014*	August 2018
Deirdre O'Connor	Authority Member	July 2014*	August 2018
Jack Kavanagh	Authority Member	August 2018	

*Director Performance Committee member currently serving a second term.

4. Risk Management Committee

Separate to the Committees appointed by the Authority, an established Risk Management Committee reports to the Audit Committee on risk matters and consists of an independent Chair i.e., an independent member of the NDA Audit Committee as nominated by that Committee, and is comprised of the senior management group, and a nominated representative from the NDA Finance Committee.

The duties of the Committee are as follows:

- a) Defining and reviewing the policy for the management of risks across the NDA;
- b) Overseeing the implementation of the risk management policy;
- c) Supporting the Authority and Senior Management in fulfilling their responsibilities by providing a framework and processes for managing risks;
- d) Promoting awareness of risk management and ensuring that there is a comprehensive process to identify, assess, manage, monitor and report on risks within the NDA;
- e) Undertake a formal review of the NDA's risks on an annual basis;
- f) Reviewing periodic status reports which summarise the status of initiatives and compliance issues;

Monitor the management of risk throughout the NDA and report to the Audit Committee and Authority, including an annual formal report to the aforementioned committees.

The table below details the appointment period for the current members of the Risk Committee:

Name:	Role:	Appointment Date:	Reappointment Date:
Tim Maverley	Chairperson	August 2018	
Pat Fitzsimons*	Member	July 2014*	December 2018
Senior Management Group			

*Risk Committee member currently serving a second term.

The Risk Management Committee met three times during 2019. The Committee reviews and updates the Risk Register on an ongoing basis in accordance with the Code of Practice of the Governance of State Bodies (2016). During 2019, the NDA commissioned an external review of the risk management framework operating in the organisation. Recommendations from the review will be progressed during 2020. The Risk Committee also agreed the NDA's Risk Appetite Statement, which was approved by the Authority at their November 2019 meeting.

Schedule of Attendance, Fees and Expenses

A schedule of attendance at the Authority and Committee meetings for 2019 is set out below including the fees and expenses received by each member. Five Authority members do not receive fees as a result of the "One Person One Salary" (OPOS) principle.

Authority Member	Appointment Date	Committee Fees	Incurred Expenses	Meetings attended
Helen Guinan (Chair)	Reappointed August 2018	8,978	1,739	8/8
Aisling Glynn	Reappointed August 2018	5,985	1,218	6/8
Ruthann LaMalfa	Reappointed August 2018	5,985	167	7/8
Teresa McDonnell	Reappointed August 2018	5,985	259	4/8
Deaglán Ó Briain	Reappointed December 2018	-	-	8/8
Deirdre O'Connor	Reappointed August 2018	5,985	161	7/8
Jack Kavanagh	Appointed August 2018	5,985	-	7/8
Cathal Morgan	Appointed August 2018	-	-	7/8
Kathryn O'Donoghue	Appointed August 2018	5,985	-	7/8
Martha Griffin	Appointed August 2018	-	-	3/8
Damian Gordon	Appointed August 2018	-	-	4/8
Brian Callanan	Appointed August 2018	5,985	-	6/8
Grainne Collins	Appointed August 2018	-	220	8/8

Audit Committee	Appointment Date	Authority Fees	Incurred Expenses	Meetings attended
John Fitzgerald (Chairperson)	Appointed August 2018	2,565	-	4/4
Teresa McDonnell	Reappointed August 2018	-	-	1/4
Tony Fitzpatrick	Reappointed August 2018	-	-	3/4
Cathal Morgan	Appointed August 2018	-	-	4/4
Kathryn O'Donoghue	Appointed August 2018	-	-	4/4
Tim Maverley	Appointed August 2018	-	-	4/4
John Maher	Appointed August 2018	-	-	3/4

Finance Committee	Appointment Date	Committee Fees	Incurred Expenses	Meetings Attended
Kathryn O'Donoghue (Chairperson)	Appointed August 2018	-	-	7/7
Pat Fitzsimons	Reappointed August 2018	-	-	6/7
Ruthann LaMalfa	Reappointed August 2018	-	-	6/7
Harry Geary	Appointed August 2018	-	-	6/7
Damian Gordon	Appointed August 2018	-	-	5/7
Brian Callanan	Appointed August 2018	-	-	6/7

Director Performance Review Committee	Appointment Date	Committee Fees	Incurred Expenses	Meetings Attended
Helen Guinan (Chairperson)	Reappointed August 2018	-	-	2/2
Deirdre O'Connor	Reappointed August 2018	-	-	2/2
Jack Kavanagh	Appointed August 2018	-	-	2/2

Risk Management Committee	Appointment Date	Committee Fees	Incurred Expenses	Meetings Attended
Tim Maverly (Chairperson)	Appointed December 2018	-	-	3/3
Pat Fitzsimons	Reappointed December 2018	-	-	3/3
Senior Management Group		-	-	3/3
		53,438	3,764	

Authority Member Appointments

The current four year term expires in 2022 and therefore, there were no appointments made to the Authority in 2019.

Disclosures Required by Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016)

The Authority is responsible for ensuring that the National Disability Authority has complied with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies ("the Code"), as published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in August 2016. The following disclosures are required by the Code:

(a) Employee short term benefits breakdown

A table showing the breakdown of employee short term benefits is included in Note 6(a) – Remuneration and Other Pay Costs, to the financial statements.

(b) Consultancy Costs

Consultancy costs include the cost of external advice to the management and exclude outsourced "business-as-usual" functions.

	2019 €	2018 €
Legal advice	27,429	12,000
Strategic and governance projects	40,283	31,190
Total Consultancy Costs charged to the statement of income and expenditure and retained revenue reserves.	67,712	43,190

(c) Legal costs and settlements

No expenditure was incurred in the reporting period, in relation to legal costs, settlements and conciliation and arbitration proceedings in relation to contracts with third parties (2018- €0).

(d) Travel and Subsistence Costs

Travel and subsistence are categorised as follows

	2019 €	2018 €
Domestic		
– Direct Authority expenses (the Board)	5,769	7,091
– Indirect Authority expenses	6,402	-
– Employees	13,877	17,237
International		
– Authority (the Board)	-	-
– Employees	9,027	8,645
Total Travel and Subsistence Costs	35,075	32,973

The travel and subsistence expenses incurred directly by the Authority members includes €2,005 paid to a former member in relation to the previous year's costs.

(e) Hospitality Costs

No expenditure was incurred on client hospitality in the reporting period (2018- €0).

	2019 €	2018 €
Authority hospitality	-	810
Staff wellbeing workshop	-	337
Total Hospitality Costs	-	1,147

Statement of Compliance

The Authority has adopted the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) and has put procedures in place to ensure compliance with the Code. The National Disability Authority was in full compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies for 2019.



Helen Guinan
Chairperson

Date: 17 September 2020



Kathryn O' Donoghue
Authority Member

Date: 18 September 2020



Dr Aideen Hartney
Director

Date: 17 September 2020

Statement on Internal Control 2019 – by the Authority of the NDA

Scope of Responsibility

On behalf of the Authority of the NDA, I confirm that the Authority has overall responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal control is maintained and operated, and for reviewing its effectiveness. This responsibility takes account of the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

Through the Director and Senior Management Group structure, the Executive are responsible to the Authority for the implementation and maintenance of internal controls over all functions.

Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a tolerable level rather than to eliminate it. The system can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or detected in a timely way. The system of internal control, which accords with guidance issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, has been in place in the NDA for the year ended 31 December 2019 and up to the date of approval of the financial statements.

Capacity to Manage Risk

Risk management is integral to how the NDA works, and is implemented and monitored through structures described as follows.

The NDA Audit Committee was appointed by the Authority in October 2018 and comprises three Authority members and four independent members including an independent Chairperson who has the requisite financial and audit expertise. The role of the Audit Committee, as part of the ongoing systematic review of the business and corporate governance procedures of the Authority, is to oversee and advise the Authority and the Director on matters concerning the effectiveness of internal controls and the risk management environment. The Committee has responsibility for formally recommending the Risk Register to the Authority for approval at set times during the year. The Committee met four times in 2019 and the Committee's annual report was presented on behalf of the Chairperson, to the Authority on 27th November 2019.

An NDA Risk Management Committee is also in place, chaired by an independent member of the Audit Committee. Membership of that committee also includes an external member of the NDA Finance Committee and the Senior Management Group. The Chairperson reports directly into the Audit Committee on risk matters and the risk policy, guidelines and risk register, which are approved by the Audit Committee for recommendation to the Authority. The Risk Management Committee met three times during 2019.

The NDA's Risk Policy, Guidelines and Framework were previously reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Authority in July 2018. They set out the NDA's capacity to deal with risk, the risk management processes in place, risk management monitoring structures and details the roles and responsibilities of staff in relation to risk. The NDA

commissioned an external review of risk management in the NDA, in accordance with Section 7.2 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies during the latter half of 2019. Recommendations of enhancement opportunities from that review will be implemented during 2020.

The Authority has a Finance Committee to review and monitor expenditure and budget planning. The committee comprises members from the Authority and independent members and it meets at least 4 times per year. The Finance Committee met 7 times during 2019.

The Authority avails of audit services from the Internal Audit Unit under the Department of Justice and Equality and conducts a programme of work agreed directly with the Audit Committee and approved by the NDA Authority.

The NDA is also a member of the IPA governance forum and availed of training through same on areas including risk management throughout 2019.

Risk and Control Framework

The NDA has implemented a risk management system which identifies and reports key risks and the management actions being taken to address them and, to the greatest extent possible, to mitigate those risks. In November 2019, the Authority approved the NDA's Risk Appetite Statement, agreed by the Audit Committee, which details the level of risk the NDA is willing to take in order to meet its strategic objectives. This statement acts to guide management in setting goals and making decisions so that the NDA is more likely to achieve its goals and sustain its operations.

A risk register is in place which identifies the key risks facing the NDA which have been evaluated and graded according to their significance. The register is reviewed and updated by the Senior Management Group who have responsibility for its implementation. The Register and reviews of progress in implementing actions are supported by the Risk Management Committee. The Chair of the Committee reports into the Audit Committee who consider the risks and progress. The Audit Committee recommends the register for approval by the Authority.

The outcome of risk assessments is used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level. The risk register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and responsibility for operation of controls assigned to specific staff for delivery within stated timeframes. In addition, the NDA operates a project management system whereby the risks of individual projects are identified at the earliest stage of a proposal alongside the actions to address these. The NDA's project management policy, designed to specify the essential elements in the management of projects including the assessment of project risks, was approved by the Authority and implemented during 2019. The NDA has had a Project Management framework in place since 2014.

The NDA budget is profiled at the start of year and distributed between all relevant items as approved by the Authority, including payroll, central services and commissioned works. The

detailed profile of expenditure and performance is reviewed regularly through the monthly management accounts, meetings of the Senior Management Group, and at meetings of the Finance and Audit Committees, and through reports to the Authority where finance and expenditure appear as a standing item on the agenda. The monthly management accounts are reconciled with reports of expenditure received from the Department of Justice and Equality and reports of the Payroll Shared Services Centre under the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Consistent quality reports from shared service centres are important in informing fully effective controls monitoring.

ICT Systems and Assets

The NDA avails of the shared ICT support service from the Department of Justice and Equality and the shared print management service through the Irish Prison Service. A Service Level Agreement was established for a further 3 year period in November 2019 with the Department in relation to the ICT service and arrangements are in place to back up NDA systems.

The NDA takes assurance from the Head of ICT in the Department of Justice and Equality's letter and statement of assurances stating that adequate IT controls are in place and are operating effectively. A statement of assurances is appended to the letter, covering information management including security & privacy; ICT disaster recovery; SLA arrangements; security of ICT infrastructure; ICT asset management; Data Protection; Mobile Asset Security; Communication networks; Governance of ICTs and Project Management practices.

IT assets are recorded on the Asset Register of the Department of Justice and Equality and checked at regular intervals. All other assets are recorded on the NDA Asset Register and checked at regular intervals. Assets are treated in the financial statements in line with the appropriate depreciation rates.

Shared Financial Services

The Department has provided written assurance to the NDA in relation to controls of the Financial Shared Service. The NDA receives monthly reports of expenditure from the Department and these are reconciled monthly against NDA data on expenditure and budget profiles. The NDA takes assurance from the system of control within the Department of Justice and Equality as reported by the Assistant Secretary of the Corporate Services Department.

The NDA also avails of shared services from the Payroll Shared Services Centre (PSSC) under the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's National Shared Service Office (NSSO). The service is covered under a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the PSSC and the Department of Justice and Equality. A Memorandum of Understanding for the provision of this service was established in April 2020 directly between NSSO and the National Disability Authority.

The NDA receives fortnightly payroll reports from PSSC. The controls operated by the NDA in relation to payroll were covered in the Internal audit of Internal Controls conducted in quarter one of 2020. In addition, the payroll procedures formed part of a separate Process Review of the Financial Statements completed in 2018.

Fraud and Irregularities

There are no matters of fraud or irregularities to report for 2019.

The NDA has a Protected Disclosure Policy and procedures for notification of protected disclosures and any alleged fraudulent incidents or irregularities. This policy was further updated and approved by the Authority in November 2019, which establishes the structures and processes for receiving and dealing with disclosures, and to make reports annually on any disclosures.

The parties which are to be notified of such incidents are:

The Audit Committee

The Authority members

The Head of the Internal Audit Service

The Secretary General of the Department of Justice and Equality

The Minister (as appropriate)

The Comptroller and Auditor General

An Garda Síochána, where appropriate

There were no Protected Disclosures reported in 2019. The NDA maintains a register for Protected Disclosures and all alleged fraudulent incidents. The NDA has procedures in place to ensure their investigation. During 2019, Authority members and staff received updated Protected Disclosures training, delivered by Transparency International. In accordance with section 22 of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, the NDA published its Protected Disclosures Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2019 on 2nd July 2020.

Tax Compliance

Most of NDA payments are processed through shared financial services including:

- Payment of invoices through the Financial Shared Services under the Department of Justice and Equality based in Killarney, Co. Kerry;
- Payment of salaries, pensions, pension lump sums and travel and subsistence through the Payroll Shared Services Centre under the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Expenditure in relation to tax is made under the VAT and Employer tax numbers of the Department of Justice and Equality. The NDA complies with requirements to apply Professional Services Withholding Tax (PSWT).

Accountability

The Authority prepares a Strategic Plan every 3 years under the National Disability Authority Act, which is submitted to the Minister for Justice and Equality for approval. The current plan for 2019 to 2021, was approved by the Minister for Justice and Equality during 2018 and subsequently laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas. The annual work plans are aligned to the strategic priorities and senior management report at regular intervals to the Authority on progress in its implementation.

The system of internal control which by its nature is dynamic, is continually developed, maintained and monitored in response to the emerging requirements of the organisation. Key elements, processes and procedures include:

- Clear separation of roles of the Chairperson and the Director as set out in the NDA governance manual;
- Procedures for key business processes have been documented, financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability;
- There is a regular management reporting process and a framework of administrative procedures which includes segregation of duties, a system of delegation and accountability and a system for the authorisation of expenditure;
- The organisation has policies and procedures designed to strengthen compliance with all pay and travel requirements as per the Department of Finance and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform circulars;
- The organisation has a performance delivery agreement in place with the Department of Justice and Equality, and has regular governance meetings with the Department in relation to its delivery;
- The committees of the Authority i.e. the Audit, Finance, Risk and Director Performance Review Committees all have their terms of reference which are subject to review by the Authority. The Authority and its Finance and Audit Committees reviewed their performance during Q2 2019 for the previous 12 month period;
- The Audit Committee considered whether the separate Risk Committee would continue, and it was considered that this added value to the work of the Audit Committee which oversees risk management. The Authority approved this approach. A risk review commissioned at the end of 2019 was also informative in this regard;
- The Director Performance Committee met during 2019 to agree the Director's responsibilities and actions in line with the NDA work programme as set out in the Strategic Plan and the Annual Workplan. The Committee reports to the Authority and informs the Director of the Authority's views and recommendations;
- The Authority commenced succession planning for the role of the Director of the NDA in September 2019, to make the necessary preparations in advance of the cessation of the current term. This was completed in July 2020 with the appointment of a new director and was done in accordance with the schedule of matters reserved for decision by the Authority and appointed responsibility for overseeing recruitment to the Performance Committee;

- There are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the information and communication technology systems. The NDA has a Service Level Agreement in place with regard to the shared ICT support service it avails of under the Department of Justice and Equality;
- There are systems in place to safeguard and account for assets;
- The Executive of the NDA works continuously to improve control systems and to report to the Audit and Finance Committees on same;
- The Annual Report is produced incorporating the financial statements and is published by the NDA once it has been laid before the Oireachtas.

The NDA's Corporate Governance manual is aligned with the Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies (2016). The manual sets out the role of members of the Authority and of the Executive and procedures for delegated authority, decisions, interests of members and other matters.

The NDA has a Data Protection Officer, a Freedom of Information Officer and a Risk Officer. In line with the General Data Protection Regulation, the NDA is working to maintain compliance with the Regulation through its day to day operational activities.

Ongoing Monitoring and Review

Formal procedures have been established for monitoring control processes, and control deficiencies are communicated to those responsible for taking corrective action in the relevant areas, with provisions to inform management, the Authority and its committees, where relevant, in a timely way.

I confirm that the following ongoing monitoring systems are in place:

- Key risks and related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies, whereby the Risk Management Committee meet at least twice yearly, and the Audit Committee meets at least quarterly.
- The Director reports to the Authority every two months on organisation, governance, business plans and project matters, bringing any items to the Authority that require approval.
- The Director monitors expenditure performance and ensures there are regular reviews by senior management of periodic and annual performance on budget and project implementation. This includes review of monthly management accounts and administration of a project management system, which supports performance measurement against work plan commitments and budgets/forecasts.
- Risk management is a standing item on the Authority agenda.
- Reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned. The Finance Officer reports to the Corporate Services Manager and produces monthly accounts for review by senior management, the Finance Committee and the Authority. The Finance Committee considers the financial

analysis produced by the senior management group and reports to the Authority on performance. The Finance Committee meets 4 – 6 times per year to review expenditure performance and budget management.

- Effectiveness of controls are subject of independent audits which are directed by audit programme determined by the Audit Committee. For 2019 this has included a review of documented financial procedures in addition to a review of internal controls. The reports of audits are considered by the Audit Committee and presented to the Authority.
- The Authority has considered the reports of audits conducted in 2019 including the review of internal controls and review of preparation of accounts and is satisfied that there are effective controls in place.

Procurement

I confirm that the NDA has procedures in place to ensure compliance with current procurement rules and guidelines and that during 2019 the NDA complied with those procedures except for one instance with expenditure of €18,785 incurred in establishing a new contract for security. The delay was due to the need to repeat a tender competition in order to secure a contractor. Further to a second tender competition in December 2018, a new service arrangement was identified and a contract put in place in April 2019.

The NDA has a documented procurement policy in place and systems for evaluating and awarding contracts, and reporting on procurement outcomes to the Authority, the NDA continued to enhance existing procurement procedures and practice throughout the year.

Review of Effectiveness

I confirm that the NDA has procedures to monitor the effectiveness of its risk management and control procedures. The NDA's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal and external auditors, the Audit Committee which oversees their work and the senior management group within the NDA with responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.

The annual independent review of internal controls was undertaken in early 2020. It is considered that Internal Audit provides an objective evaluation and opinion on the effectiveness of the NDA's framework of governance, risk management and control. The overall conclusion from this audit is that effective internal controls are in place. The report of this audit was considered and approved by the Audit Committee on 19th March 2020 and was presented to the Authority for consideration and noting at its meeting on 26th March 2020. The Internal Audit Unit also conducted a review of the NDA's Finance Procedures Manual in November 2019 and the report issued in July 2020. The report will be considered by the Audit and Finance Committees and the Authority with recommendations expected for implementation by the end of 2020.

The Audit Committee considered the implementation of recommendations from previous audit findings (both internal and external) and provided assurances on these in their annual report to the Authority in November 2019 in relation to same.

This statement on internal control has been adopted by the Authority further to discussion and consideration of all assurances provided.

Internal Control Issues

There were no weaknesses in internal control identified in relation to 2019 apart from the delay in the procurement of the new security service contract.



Helen Guinan

Chairperson

Date: 17 September 2020



Ard Reachtaire Cuntas agus Ciste
Comptroller and Auditor General

Report for presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas - National Disability Authority

Opinion on the financial statements

I have audited the financial statements of the National Disability Authority for the year ended 31 December 2019 as required under the provisions of section 17 of the National Disability Authority Act 1999. The financial statements comprise

- the statement of income and expenditure and retained revenue reserves
- the statement of comprehensive income
- the statement of financial position
- the statement of cash flows and
- the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In my opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the National Disability Authority at 31 December 2019 and of its income and expenditure for 2019 in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102 — *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland*.

Basis of opinion

I conducted my audit of the financial statements in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) as promulgated by the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions. My responsibilities under those standards are described in the appendix to this report. I am independent of the Authority and have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the standards.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Report on information other than the financial statements, and on other matters

The Authority has presented certain other information together with the financial statements. This comprises the annual report, the governance statement and Authority members' report and the statement on internal control. My responsibilities to report in relation to such information, and on certain other matters upon which I report by exception, are described in the appendix to this report.

I have nothing to report in that regard.

Orla Duane
For and on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General
22 September 2020

Appendix to the report

Responsibilities of Authority members

As detailed in the governance statement and Authority members' report, the Authority members are responsible for:

- the preparation of financial statements in the form prescribed under section 17 of the National Disability Authority Act 1999
- ensuring that the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with FRS102
- ensuring the regularity of transactions
- assessing whether the use of the going concern basis of accounting is appropriate, and
- such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Responsibilities of the Comptroller and Auditor General

I am required under section 17 of the National Disability Authority Act 1999 to audit the financial statements of the Authority and to report thereon to the Houses of the Oireachtas.

My objective in carrying out the audit is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement due to fraud or error. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the ISAs, I exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. In doing so,

- I identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements whether due to fraud or error; design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks; and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- I obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal controls.
- I evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures.
- I conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, on whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my report. However, future events or

conditions may cause the Authority to cease to continue as a going concern.

- I evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Information other than the financial statements

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information presented with those statements, and I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, I am required under the ISAs to read the other information presented and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or with knowledge obtained during the audit, or if it otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

Reporting on other matters

My audit is conducted by reference to the special considerations which attach to State bodies in relation to their management and operation. I report if I identify material matters relating to the manner in which public business has been conducted.

I seek to obtain evidence about the regularity

of financial transactions in the course of audit. I report if I identify any material instance where public money has not been applied for the purposes intended or where transactions did not conform to the authorities governing them.

I also report by exception if, in my opinion,

- I have not received all the information and explanations I required for my audit, or
- the accounting records were not sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited, or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records.

National Disability Authority
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND RETAINED REVENUE RESERVES
For the year ended 31 December 2019

	Note	2019 €	2018 €
Income			
Oireachtas Grants	2	4,275,899	3,939,786
Net Deferred Pension Funding	3	455,100	401,900
Other Income	4	200,809	137,266
Transfer from/(to) the Capital Account	7	55,305	36,982
Total Income		4,987,113	4,515,934
Expenditure			
Projects and Commissioned Works Payable	5	577,516	561,238
Administration and Operations Costs	6	3,264,407	2,975,414
Retirement Benefit Costs	3	975,100	1,018,700
Reduction in the value of fixed assets	8	75,686	77,651
Total Expenditure		4,892,709	4,633,003
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	9	94,404	(117,069)
Balance Brought Forward at 1 January 2019		259,689	376,758
Balance Carried Forward at 31 December 2019		354,093	259,689

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 16 form part of these financial statements.

On behalf of the Authority of National Disability Authority:



Helen Guinan
Chairperson

Date: 17 September 2020



Kathryn O' Donoghue
Authority Member

Date: 18 September 2020



Dr Aideen Hartney
Director

Date: 17 September 2020

National Disability Authority
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
For the year ended 31 December 2019

	Note	2019 €	2018 €
Surplus/(Deficit)		94,404	(117,069)
Actuarial gain/(loss) on retirement benefit obligations	3	(2,152,700)	2,631,300
Adjustment to deferred pension funding		2,152,700	(2,631,300)
Total Comprehensive Income/(Loss) for the year		94,404	(117,069)

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 16 form part of these financial statements.

On behalf of the Authority of National Disability Authority:



Helen Guinan
Chairperson

Date: 17 September 2020



Kathryn O' Donoghue
Authority Member

Date: 18 September 2020



Dr Aideen Hartney
Director

Date: 17 September 2020

National Disability Authority
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 31 December 2019

	Note	2019 €	2018 €
Fixed Assets			
Property, plant & equipment	8	2,921,779	2,977,084
Total Fixed Assets		2,921,779	2,977,084
Current Assets			
Receivables	10	500,073	388,061
Cash and cash equivalents		45,224	53,940
		545,297	442,001
Current Liabilities (amounts falling due within one year)			
Payables	11	(181,204)	(172,312)
Net Current Assets		364,093	269,689
Long term Liabilities (amounts falling due after one year)			
Rental deposit held	12	(10,000)	(10,000)
Retirement Benefits			
Deferred retirement benefit funding asset	3	(26,742,400)	(24,134,600)
Retirement benefit obligations	3	26,742,400	24,134,600
Total Net Assets		3,275,872	3,236,773
Representing			
Capital account	7	2,921,779	2,977,084
Retained revenue reserves		354,093	259,689
		3,275,872	3,236,773

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 16 form part of these financial statements.

On behalf of the Authority of National Disability Authority:



Helen Guinan
Chairperson

Date: 17 September 2020



Kathryn O' Donoghue
Authority Member

Date: 18 September 2020



Dr Aideen Hartney
Director

Date: 17 September 2020

National Disability Authority
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended 31 December 2019

	2019 €	2018 €
Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities		
Excess Income over Expenditure	39,099	(154,051)
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	75,686	77,651
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables	(112,012)	64,169
(Decrease)/Increase in Payables	8,892	54,539
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities	11,665	42,308
Cash Flows from Investing Activities		
Payments to acquire Property, Plant and Equipment	(20,381)	(40,669)
Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities	(20,381)	(40,669)
Cash Flows from Financing Activities		
Bank Interest received	-	-
Net Cash Flows from Financing Activities	-	-
Net (Decrease)/Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents	(8,716)	1,639
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January 2019	53,940	52,301
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December 2019	45,224	53,940

National Disability Authority
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 31 December 2019

1. Accounting Policies

The basis of accounting and significant accounting policies adopted by the National Disability Authority (NDA/Authority) are set out below. They have all been applied consistently throughout the year and for the preceding year. The financial statements are presented in Euro (€).

a) General Information

The National Disability Authority was set up under section 6 of the National Disability Act 1999, with its premises at 25 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4 on 12 June 2000 on the dissolution of the former organisation, the National Rehabilitation Board (NRB).

The principal function of the National Disability Authority (NDA) is to advise the Minister for Justice and Equality regarding issues of policy and practice relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities.

National Disability Authority's particular functions as set out in section 8 of the National Disability Act 1999 include:

- To act as a central, national body which will assist the Minister in the coordination and development of policy in relation to persons with disabilities.
- To undertake, commission or collaborate in research projects and activities on issues relating to disability and to assist in the development of statistical information appropriate for the planning, delivery and monitoring of programmes and services for people with disabilities.
- To advise the Minister on appropriate standards for programmes and services provided or to be provided to persons with disabilities and to act as an advisory body with regard to the development of general and specific standards in relation to such programmes and services.
- To monitor the implementation of standards and codes of practice in programmes and services provided to persons with disabilities and to report to the Minister thereon.
- To liaise with other bodies, both corporate and unincorporated, involved in the provision of services to persons with disabilities and to facilitate and support the development and implementation of appropriate standards for programmes and services for persons with disabilities.
- To prepare codes of practice for the purpose of achieving the aim of good standards and quality in the provision of programmes and services provided or to be provided to persons with disabilities.

- To recognise the achievement of good standards and quality in the provision of programmes and services to persons with disabilities, including through the provision of a disability equality awards system.
- To prepare strategic plans.

Additional functions of the Authority under the Disability Act 2005 include:

- To prepare codes of practice relating to the accessibility of public buildings, services, information resources and heritage sites at the request of the Minister (Part 3).
- To monitor compliance and ensure implementation with statutory targets for recruitment and employment of people with disabilities in the public sector, recommend actions to be taken where these targets are not being met, and prepare codes of practice where requested (Part 5).
- To establish and operate a Centre for Excellence in Universal Design in relation to the built environment, products, services and information technology which will promote the principles of universal design so that each of these may be accessed, understood and used to the greatest practicable extent by people with disabilities:
- In the most independent and natural manner, and
- In the widest possible range of situations without the need for adaptation, modification, assistive devices or specialised solution (Part 6).

b) Statement of Compliance

The financial statements of the National Disability Authority for the year ended 31st December 2019 have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102, the financial reporting standard applicable in the UK and Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), as promulgated by Chartered Accountants Ireland.

c) Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared using the accruals method of accounting, except as indicated below and in accordance with FRS 102 under the historical cost convention. Financial Reporting Standards recommended by recognised accountancy bodies are adopted as they become operative. The financial statements are in the form approved by the Minister for Justice and Equality. The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the National Disability Authority's financial statements.

d) Revenue

Oireachtas Grants

The NDA receives a grant annually from the Department of Justice and Equality as provided in the National Disability Authority Act 1999. Oireachtas Grants are recognised on a cash receipts basis.

Other Income

Other Income comprises rent, HSE funding, social welfare benefits and funding on behalf of

the European Commission in relation to a once off contract for standards development and is recognised on an accruals basis.

e) Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation, adjusted for any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided on all property, plant and equipment at rates estimated to write off the cost less the estimated residual value of each asset on either a straight-line or reducing balance basis over their estimated useful lives, as follows:

(i) Freehold Premises	2.5% per annum (Reducing balance)
(iii) Fixtures and Fittings, Equipment	10% per annum (Straight line)
(ii) Computer hardware and software	20% per annum (Straight line)

Residual value represents the estimated amount which would currently be obtained from disposal of an asset, after deducting estimated costs of disposal, if the asset were already of an age and in the condition expected at the end of its useful life.

If there is objective evidence of impairment of the value of an asset, an impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves in the year.

f) Capital Account

The Capital Account represents the unamortised value of income used for capital purposes (i.e. acquisitions).

g) Receivables

Receivables are recognised at fair value, less a provision for doubtful debts. The provision for doubtful debts is a specific provision and is established when there is objective evidence that the NDA will not be able to collect all amounts owed to it. All movements in the provision for doubtful debts are recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves.

h) Employee Benefits

Short-term Benefits

Short-term benefits such as holiday pay are recognised as an expense in the year. Benefits that are accrued at year-end are included in the Payables figure in the Statement of Financial Position.

Retirement Benefits

The NDA operates a defined benefit superannuation scheme for staff, funded annually on a pay as you go basis from monies provided by the Department of Justice and Equality and also from staff contributions, which are retained by the Department and credited to a suspense account on the Department's Vote ledger. Lump sum entitlements to retiring staff are paid from the suspense account whereas monthly pension payments to retired staff are paid out of current income.

Up until the end of 2019, 11 staff came within the Single Public Services Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme"), which is a defined benefit scheme for pensionable public servants appointed on or after 1 January 2013. Single Scheme members' contributions are paid over to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform by the Department of Justice and Equality.

Pension costs reflect pension benefits earned by employees and former National Rehabilitation Board employees, including single scheme contributions, where appropriate, and are shown net of staff pension contributions, which are retained by the Department of Justice and Equality and paid over to DPER (for single scheme members). An amount corresponding to the pension charge is recognised as income to the extent that it is recoverable and offset by grants received in the year to discharge pension payments.

Actuarial gains or losses arising on scheme liabilities are reflected in the Statement of Comprehensive Income, and a corresponding adjustment is recognised in the amount recoverable from the Department of Justice and Equality.

The financial statements reflect, at fair value, the assets and liabilities arising from the NDA's pension obligations and any related funding, and recognises the costs of providing pension benefits in the accounting periods in which they are earned by employees. Retirement benefit scheme liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method.

i) Critical Accounting Judgements and Estimates

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for assets and liabilities as at the reporting date and the amounts reported for revenues and expenses during the year. However, the nature of estimation means that actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. The following judgements have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

Depreciation and Residual Values

The executive has reviewed the asset lives and associated residual values of all fixed asset classes, and in particular, the useful economic life and residual values of fixtures and fittings and has concluded that asset lives and residual values are appropriate.

Retirement Benefit Obligation

The assumptions underlying the actuarial valuations for which the amounts recognised in the financial statements are determined (including discount rates, rates of increase in future compensation levels, mortality rates and healthcare cost trend rates) are updated annually based on current economic conditions, and for any relevant changes to the terms and conditions of the pension and post-retirement plans.

The assumptions can be affected by:

- (i) the discount rate, changes in the rate of return on high-quality corporate bonds
- (ii) future compensation levels, future labour market conditions
- (iii) health care cost trend rates, the rate of medical cost inflation in the relevant regions

2 Oireachtas Grants

The Oireachtas Grants voted to the National Disability Authority from the Department of Justice and Equality as shown in the financial statements consists of:

	Note	2019 €	2018 €
Grants for current expenditure	Vote 24 Subhead D3	4,275,899	3,939,786
		4,275,899	3,939,786

3 Retirement Benefit Costs

(a) Analysis of total retirement benefit costs charged to the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves

	2019 €	2018 €
Current service costs	597,300	671,100
Interest on retirement benefit scheme liabilities	482,400	447,800
Employee Contributions	(104,600)	(100,200)
	975,100	1,018,700

(b) Movement in net retirement benefit obligations during the financial year

	2019 €	2018 €
Net retirement benefit obligation at 1 January	24,134,600	26,364,000
Current service costs	597,300	671,100
Interest costs	482,400	447,800
Actuarial (gain)/loss	2,152,700	(2,631,300)
Pensions paid in the year	(624,600)	(717,000)
Net retirement benefit obligation at 31 December	26,742,400	24,134,600

(c) Deferred funding for retirement benefits

The NDA recognises these amounts as an asset corresponding to the unfunded deferred liability for retirement benefits on the basis of the set of assumptions described above and a number of past events.

These events include the statutory basis for the establishment of the retirement benefit schemes, and the policy and practice currently in place in relation to funding public service pensions including contributions by employees and the annual estimates process. The NDA has no evidence that this funding policy will not continue to meet such sums in accordance with current practice.

Also, for single scheme members, section 44 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 provides for funding of pension payments, as they fall due by

way of payments out of the Central Fund or from funds provided by the Oireachtas, for that purpose.

The net deferred funding for retirement benefits recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves was as follows:

	2019 €	2018 €
Funding recoverable in respect of current year retirement benefit costs	1,079,700	1,118,900
State grant applied to pay retirement benefits	(624,600)	(717,000)
	455,100	401,900

The deferred funding asset for retirement benefits at 31st December 2019 amounts to €26.7m (2018: €24.1m).

(d) General description of the schemes

The retirement benefit scheme is a defined benefit final salary pension arrangement with benefits and contributions defined by reference to current “model” public sector scheme regulations. The scheme provides a pension (being 1/80 per year of service), a gratuity or lump sum (being 3/80 per year of service) and spouses and children’s pensions. Normal retirement age is a member’s 65th birthday, and pre-2004 members have an entitlement to retire without actuarial reduction from age 60. Pensions in payment (and deferment) normally increase in line with general public sector salary inflation.

The NDA also participates in the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (single scheme). This scheme is the defined benefit pension scheme for pensionable public servants appointed on or after 1 January 2013 in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012. The scheme provides for a pension and retirement lump sum based on career-average pensionable remuneration, and spouse’s and children’s pensions. The minimum pension age is 66 years (rising in line with State pension age changes). It includes an actuarially-reduced early retirement facility from age 55. Pensions in payment increase in line with the consumer price index.

The valuation used for FRS 102 disclosures has been based on a full actuarial valuation performed in March 2020 by a qualified independent actuary, taking account of the requirements of the FRS in order to assess the scheme liabilities at 31 December 2019.

The principal actuarial assumptions were as follows:

	2019	2018
Rate of increase in salaries	3.4%	3.60%
Pension Increases – Superannuation scheme	2.4%	2.60%
Discount rate	1.2%	2.00%
Inflation rate	1.4%	1.60%
State pension increases	1.4%	1.60%
Pension increases- SPSPS	1.4%	1.60%

Mortality

58% of ILT15 for males with improvements (see below).

62% of ILT15 for females with improvements (see below).

Annual compound improvements in annuity rates of 0.36% p.a. (Males with no spouse's pension), 0.30% p.a. (Males with spouse's pension), 0.30 p.a. (Females with no spouse's pension) and 25% p.a. (Females with spouse's pension) for each year between 2014 and the year in which normal retirement date falls.

The table below shows the assumed life expectancy for members attaining normal retirement age in 2020 and 2040.

Year of attaining age 65	2020	2040
Life expectancy male	21.3	22.9
Life expectancy female	23.9	25.4

4. Other Income

	2019 €	2018 €
Social Welfare	14,791	1,790
Rental Income	56,703	56,703
HSE Funding	103,523	78,773
NEN Funding	25,792	-
	200,809	137,266

Rental income of €56,703 includes rent of €38,000 and €18,703 for the associated service charge received from tenants who rent a floor at 25 Clyde Road from the NDA.

The NDA receives funding from the HSE for 2 staff (1.5 whole time equivalents) working on 2 specific HSE research projects.

The NDA received a payment from NEN (the professional standards body in the Netherlands) which covered costs for its participation in an EC funded project to support the development of a European standard on Design for All over the period 2013 to 2019. This resulted in the finalisation and adoption by CEN-ELEC, the **European Standards Organization as designated by the European Commission**, of the standard in 2019 i.e. “EN 17161:2019 Design for All-Accessibility for Products and Services”.

5. Projects and Commissioned Works

	2019 €	2018 €
Research	175,763	255,490
Information Resources	11,301	12,694
Universal Design Promotion	51,415	91,919
Standards and Guidelines	156,670	59,395
Conference and Seminars	22,555	9,105
Consultation	-	1,683
Translation	2,963	3,788
Disability awareness program	156,849	127,164
	577,516	561,238

6. Administration and Operations Costs

		2019 €	2018 €
Remuneration and other pay costs	6(a)	2,420,176	2,236,353
Building overheads and improvements		227,098	183,934
Rates		53,009	52,400
Cleaning and domestic services		46,131	54,191
Authority Fees and expenses		69,196	66,518
Postage and telecoms		23,432	22,475
Office costs		45,983	36,348
Library		34,647	33,185
IT costs		134,770	125,931
Professional fees		65,776	57,096
Audit fees		17,600	16,000
Staff training		56,222	24,436
Recruitment fees		30,084	34,210
Consultancy		40,283	31,190
Hospitality		-	1,147
		3,264,407	2,975,414

(a) Remuneration and Other Pay Costs

	2019 €	2018 €
Staff salaries (including holiday pay accrual)	2,260,611	2,108,434
Agency Staff pay	136,661	102,036
Staff travel and subsistence costs	22,904	25,883
	2,420,176	2,236,353

Staff salaries are stated net of €50,616 recouped from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) for 1 staff member on secondment (2018- €56,998).

The NDA finance officer providing finance service support was contracted through an external firm of accountants until late 2019, when a recruitment competition was successful. The contracted costs are included in Agency Staff pay.

Employee Short Term Benefits Breakdown

Range of total employee short term benefits		Number of Employees	
From	To	2019	2018
Less than	€59,999	21	21
€60,000	- €69,999	3	3
€70,000	- €79,999	3	7
€80,000	- €89,999	6	1
€90,000	- €99,999	1	1
Greater than	€100,000	2	2
Total number employed		36	35

The short-term benefits in relation to services rendered during the reporting period include salaries but exclude employer's PRSI. No other benefits such as holiday pay have been included.

There were no payments made to any staff members in relation to overtime or termination benefits (2018: €0).

One staff member returned from a career break in 2019.

Authority Members Fees and Expenses

	2019	2018
	€	€
Authority fees	56,505	59,428
Direct Authority travel expenses	5,769	7,090
Indirect Authority travel expenses	6,402	-
Conference costs	520	-
	69,196	66,518

Included in the Authority fees is €1,101 relating to a former member and €1,966 for employer's PRSI (2018: €0). The direct Authority travel expense also include €2,005 relating to a former member.

Authority fees shown in Note 6 are inclusive of accruals of €245 (2018: €157). Mr Donie O'Leary also received travel expenses to the value of €349 (2018: €492) in respect of his membership of the Disability Stakeholder Group and its sub-committee. The latter expenses are disbursed by the NDA and captured under the Projects and Commissioned Works heading (Note 5).

Director's Remuneration

The Director was paid a salary in 2019 of €104,617 (2018: €103,271) on the Civil Service Principal Officer (Higher) pay scale, where the increase year on year related to the pay restoration from 1 January 2018 under the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest (FEMPI) Act 2015 and the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017. No other payment was made in the year to the Director in the nature of pay. The Director is a member of the Department of Justice and Equality superannuation scheme and her entitlements do not extend beyond the standard entitlements available under such a scheme.

Additional Superannuation Contribution

€81,043 (2018: €92,838) was deducted from staff by way of the additional superannuation contribution and retained by the Department of Justice and Equality. The Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) replaced the Pension Related Deduction (PRD) with effect from 1 January 2019 and is a permanent contribution based on pensionable remuneration only.

7. Capital Account

	2019 €	2018 €
Opening balance	2,977,084	3,014,066
Income applied to purchase of fixed assets	20,381	40,669
Amortised in year in line with asset depreciation	(75,686)	(77,651)
Transfers (to)/from Statement of Income and Expenditure and Revenue Reserves	(55,305)	(36,982)
Closing balance	2,921,779	2,977,084

8. Property, Plant and Equipment

	Computer hardware and software €	Fixtures and Fittings, Equipment €	Freehold Premises €	Total €
Cost at 1 January 2019	28,661	110,476	4,459,907	4,599,044
Additions	-	6,080	14,301	20,381
Disposals	(2,105)	-	-	(2,105)
At 31 December 2019	26,556	116,556	4,474,208	4,617,320
Depreciation at 1 January 2019	28,661	107,076	1,486,223	1,621,960
Depreciation on Disposals	(2,105)	-	-	(2,105)
Charge for the year	-	986	74,700	75,686
At 31 December 2019	26,556	108,062	1,560,923	1,695,541
Net Book Value				
At 1 January 2019	-	3,400	2,973,684	2,977,084
Net movement for the year	-	5,094	(60,399)	(55,305)
At 31 December 2019	-	8,494	2,913,285	2,921,779

The Authority operates its business from premises at 25 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4, which it owns. The Authority does not own or lease any other property.

9. Deficit/surplus for the Year

As noted in the accounting policies, the Oireachtas grant is recognised on a cash receipts basis and represents the gross payments made by the Department on behalf of the NDA, offset in some instances by receipts remitted to the Department. Other income and expenditure in the financial statements is recognised on an accruals basis. As a result, the surplus/deficit on the statement of comprehensive income, does not represent a normal operating surplus/deficit. This is largely attributable to the variance between cash-based funding and expenditure accounted for on an accruals basis.

10. Receivables

	2019	2018
	€	€
Department of Justice and Equality*	415,832	334,903
Prepayments	48,474	35,257
Other Debtors	35,767	17,901
	500,073	388,061

* The costs of pension lump sums are met from a specific / suspense account maintained by the Department of Justice and Equality for that purpose. The Department of Justice and Equality retains the superannuation contributions from all staff and credit these to that account on a fortnightly basis. Lump sum payments over the course of the year are charged to that account. The balance here represents the amount held in the account at 31st December 2019.

11. Payables - amounts falling due within one year

	2019	2018
	€	€
Department of Justice	57,173	21,800
Holiday pay accrual	66,356	52,155
Audit fee	17,600	16,000
Other accruals	40,075	82,357
	181,204	172,312

12. Payables – amounts falling due after one year

Creditors falling due after more than one year consists of €10,000 (2018: €10,000) held as a rental deposit in respect of the lease agreement regarding part of the property held at 25 Clyde Road.

13. Key Management

Key management personnel comprise the Director and 3 Senior Managers. Total remuneration, excluding employer's PRSI, paid to key management personnel amounted to €384,846 (2018: €389,146). Remuneration to key management personnel was overstated in 2018 as this included €25,810 in employer's PRSI. Authority members' fees amounted to €53,438 (2018: €59,428). Please refer to Note 6 for a breakdown of the remuneration and benefits paid to all staff, including the Director. Payments to Authority members are disclosed in the Governance Statement.

14. Related Party Disclosures

The National Disability Authority adopts procedures in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform covering the personal interests of Authority members. In the normal course of business, NDA may approve grants or enter into other contractual arrangements with entities in which NDA Authority members are employed

or are otherwise interested. In cases of potential conflict of interest, Authority members do not receive Board documentation, participate in, or attend discussions regarding these transactions. A register is maintained and available on request of all such instances.

There were no transactions in the year in relation to the Authority's activities in which Authority members had any beneficial interest.

15. Events after the Reporting Date

The NDA has a reasonable expectation, at the time of approving the financial statements, that they have adequate resources to continue its operations. For this reason, the NDA continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted how the NDA operates, with all staff substantially moved offsite and resources diverted to managing implications of the pandemic. No impact is expected in relation to the 2019 financial statements and currently we are not predicting a significant impact for 2020. NDA's income is derived from grant funding, which continues to be received throughout the pandemic and therefore are financially less impacted than those industries that have closed or have limited output.

16. Approval of the financial statements

The financial statements were approved by the Authority of the National Disability Authority on 4th June 2020.

General Information

Head office : 25 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4

Director : Dr Aideen Hartney (appointed 13th July 2020)

Siobhan Barron (resigned 24th July 2020)

Solicitors : Messrs. Beauchamps, Grand Canal Dock, Dublin 2

Bankers : Bank of Ireland, 104 Ranelagh, Dublin 6

Bank of Ireland, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4

Auditors : Comptroller & Auditor General, 3a Mayor Street Upper, Dublin 1

Appendix 1: Authority and other committees in 2019

Name:	Role:	Appointment Date:
Helen Guinan	Chairperson	July 2014*
Ruthann La Malfa	Member	July 2014*
Teresa McDonnell	Member	July 2014*
Deaglan O'Briain	Member	July 2014*
Aisling Glynn	Member	June 2017
Jack Kavanagh	Member	August 2018
Cathal Morgan	Member	August 2018
Kathryn O'Donoghue	Member	August 2018
Martha Griffin	Member	August 2018
Deirdre O'Connor	Member	August 2018
Damian Gordon	Member	August 2018
Brian Callanan	Member	August 2018
Grainne Collins	Member	August 2018

*Authority members are currently serving a second term.

Audit Committee

Name:	Role:	Appointment Date:
John Fitzgerald	Chairperson	March 2017*
Teresa McDonnell	Member	July 2014*
Tony Fitzpatrick	Member	June 2017*
Cathal Morgan	Member	August 2018
Kathryn O'Donoghue	Member	August 2018
Tim Maverley	Member	August 2018
John Maher	Member	August 2018

*Audit Committee members currently serving a second term.

Finance Committee

Name:	Role:	Appointment Date:
Kathryn O'Donoghue	Chairperson	August 2018
Ruthann LaMalfa	Member	July 2014*
Pat Fitzsimons	Member	July 2014*
Harry McGeary	Member	August 2018
Damian Gordon	Member	August 2018
Brian Callanan	Member	August 2018

*Finance Committee members currently serving a second term.

Risk Management Committee

Name:	Role:	Appointment Date:
Tim Maverley	Chairperson	August 2018
Pat Fitzsimons*	Member	July 2014*
Senior Management Group		

*Risk Committee member currently serving a second term.

Director Performance Committee

Director Performance Committee

Name:	Role:	Appointment Date:
Helen Guinan	Chairperson	July 2014*
Deirdre O'Connor	Authority Member	July 2014*
Jack Kavanagh	Authority Member	August 2018

*Director Performance Committee member currently serving a second term.

Appendix 2: Representation on external bodies in 2019

- Member of the IDS TILDA (Intellectual Disability Supplement of the Longitudinal Study on Ageing) Steering Committee.
- Member of the Research Advisory Group of the Safer Spaces project in University College Cork

Department of Health

- Member of HSE New Directions National Implementation Group
- Member of the Tripartite Team – Transforming Lives
- Member of the Personalised Budgets Implementation Oversight Group
- Member of Transforming Lives Working Group 2
- Member of the HSE's National Consultative Forum
- Member of HSE New Directions Community Inclusion & Active Citizenship Subgroup
- Member of Disability Consultative Committee
- Member of HSE's National Disability ICT Board
- Member of HSE Progressing Disability Services Training Group
- Member of HSE Progressing Disability Services Outcomes for Children and Families Framework Group
- Health Research Board National Disability Databases Advisory Committee

Department of Children and Youth Affairs

- Member of AIM Project Team
- Member of AIM Cross-Sectoral Implementation Group
- Member of Department of Children and Youth Affairs Working Group on Overage Exceptions for Children Accessing Early Childhood Care and Education programme
- Member of TÚSLA – Early Years Inspectorate Forum

Department of Education

- Member of National Council for Special Education Consultative Forum
- Member of An Garda Síochána – Strategic Human Rights Advisory Committee

Departmental Consultative Committees

There are 9 Departmental Consultative Committees (DCCs), tasked with monitoring the implementation of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy, in particular the NDIS actions allocated to that particular Department. They comprise department /agency officials, NDA representatives, DSG members, and often representatives of disability organisations, and they meet 4 times a year (usually). They are as follows:

- Department of Justice and Equality
- Department of Health
- Department of Housing
- Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
- Department of Education and Skills
- Department of Children
- Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation
- Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
- Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment (NDA not represented in 2019)

Appendix 3: Publications in 2019

Employment Publications

- Reasonable Accommodations: Obstacles and Opportunities to the Employment of Persons with a Disability
- Comprehensive Employment Strategy: 2018: National Disability Authority Year-end Review

Environment

- An Operational Review of the Effectiveness of Section 25 of the Disability Act 2005

National Disability Inclusion Strategy

- NDA Independent Assessment of the Progress under National Disability Inclusion Strategy

Environment

- Research to inform the development of a National Framework for Person Centred Planning

Appendix 4: Policy advice papers in 2019

Policy advice papers issued in 2019 included:

Department of Children and Youth Affairs

- Consultation on Draft Childminding Action Plan
- Consultation on DCYA Statement of Strategy 2020 – 2022
- Consultation on Regulation and Quality Improvement for School-Age Childcare

Department of Education & Skills

- Consultation on NCSE Advice on the Future Role of Special Schools and Special Classes
- Consultation on Guidelines for Schools in relation to use of reduced timetables in schools
- Consultation on Guidelines Physical Restrain and Isolation in Schools

Department of Justice & Equality

- Review of the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989
- Garda Inspectorate Consultation on Custody Arrangements

Department of Health

- Consultation on the Proposed Draft Service Specifications, Assessment Criteria and Process to Designate the Major Trauma Centre for the Central Trauma Network
- Consultation on climate change adaptation for the health sector

Department of An Taoiseach

Consultation on the National Digital Strategy



National Disability Authority
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www.nda.ie

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