

Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

EVALUATION PAPER

SPECIAL GROUP ON PUBLIC SERVICE NUMBERS
AND PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE

April 2009

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Section 1: Introduction

This Evaluation Paper focuses on three thematic areas and is structured accordingly:

The Department itself (section 2);
Schemes and programmes delivered by, or on behalf of, the Department, set out in line with its six main programme areas (section 4); and
The range of intermediary bodies within the Department's ambit (section 5).

A summary of expenditure across each of the Department's six programme areas (Vote 27) is set out in section 3 of this paper.

Material in relation to Charitable Donations and Bequests (Vote 24) is set out in section 6.

A summary of options identified for reducing expenditure and for rationalisation of services is set out in section 7.

Section 2: The Department

Background

The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs was established by Government in June 2002. It assumed responsibilities from six other Government Departments, including the former Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation, the Department of Agriculture and Food, the Department of Public Enterprise, the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

Remit and functions

The Department's Mission is:

To promote and support the development of communities and to advance the use of the Irish language.

The Department has responsibility in respect of community and rural development, drugs, volunteering, Charities law, the Gaeltacht, Irish language and the islands. The Department also has responsibility for two North/South Implementation Bodies - Waterways Ireland and An Foras Teanga.

Main programme areas

The Department's objectives are implemented across six main programme areas, in line with strategic goals identified in its Statement of Strategy 2008-2010:

Developing Communities: to encourage and facilitate communities to pursue social and economic progress in their areas.

Tackling Drug Misuse: to facilitate a more integrated and co-ordinated response to tackle problem drug use with the aim of significantly reducing the harm caused to individuals and society.

Rural Development: to promote living and working populations in rural areas by helping to foster sustainable and culturally vibrant communities.

Gaeltacht and Islands Development: to help Gaeltacht and island communities to grow through infrastructure development, economic supports and the provision of essential services.

Promotion and Maintenance of the Irish Language: to increase the use of the Irish language countrywide and to assist its growth as an everyday community language in the Gaeltacht.

North/South Co-operation: to maintain, develop and foster North/South co-operation.

Structure of Department

The Department has just under 270 staff. It is currently headquartered at Mespil Road, Dublin 4 (82.8 staff), and also has staff located at Na Forbacha, Co Galway (51.5), Tubbercurry, Co Sligo (100), and at other locations throughout the country (35). On foot of Government decisions in relation to the Decentralisation Programme, the headquarters of the Department will move to Charlestown, Co Mayo.

Staffing

Over the period since its establishment, the Department's staff numbers increased by just 8 (excluding a Ministerial Office complement), despite a budgetary increase of 84% over the same period. This number included 3 inspectors, who transferred into this Department from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. The period saw the establishment and roll out of the Rural Social Scheme in 2006, and the transfer of the Social Economy Programme from FÁS to this Department, as well as the expansion of the CLAR and RAPID programmes.

To manage this substantial increase in workload, the Department has used Pobal, a not-for-profit body established by Government, to support the delivery of services (see section 5 below). Pobal works with the Department in the delivery of seven of its schemes. Recent budgetary pressures have seen the Department's administrative allocation to Pobal fall directly, with a reduction of 30% to be achieved by end-2009. This, combined with restrictions from other Departments, has resulted in savings equivalent to c90 posts in Pobal this year.

Estimate 2009

The Department's estimate for 2009 (as at end-Feb) stands at €490.7m gross (Capital €133.2m; Current €357.5m).

Section 3: Summary of expenditure across main programme areas (Vote 27)

Table 3.1: Main Areas of Spending – Vote 27 – Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

Programme 1	2005 € m	2006 € m	2007 € m	2008 ² €m	2009 ³ € m
A: Community (Subheads B.1-B.8)	91.8	139.1	166.6	178.1	181.7
B: Drugs (Subhead C)	35.5	42.3	52.9	46.14	41.7
C: Rural (Subheads D.1-D.6)	109.0	111.9	111.5	101.0	109.0.
D: Gaeltacht & Islands (Subheads E.1-E.10)	74.0	90.0	97.1	115.8	90.5
E: Irish Language (Subheads F.1-F.3)	4.2	5.9	6.7	7.7	8.9
F: North-South (Subheads G.1-G.3)	31.5	64.5	73.5	70.8	59.4
TOTAL GROSS EXPENDITURE	345.9	453.7	508.5	519.5	491.2
Included in Total Gross Expenditure: -					
Exchequer Pay	37.5	39.6	43.9	47.4	46.7
Exchequer Pensions ⁵	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	
Public service numbers included in Exchequer Pay (Whole Time Equivalent):	2005 WTE	2006 WTE	2007 WTE	2008 WTE	2009 WTE
- Civil Servants ⁶	253	266	276	276	274
Other Public Servants: WDC/Údarás na Gaeltachta	132	128	128	128	128
Foras Teanga	51	53	61	59	59

¹ Expenditure on each Programme includes an apportionment of the Administrative Budget on a pro-rate basis in line with the Annual Output Statement approach.

² 2008 Outturn is provisional.

³ 2009 Estimate as at end February, subject to change in ongoing Supplementary Budget process.

⁴ 2008 Outturn for Drugs excludes expenditure on the Young People's Facilities and Services Fund in view of its transfer to the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs w.e.f. 1.1.09.

⁵ Exchequer Pensions paid from the Vote.

⁶ Includes Drugs Programme (NDST/NACD) and Office of Coimisinéir Teanga staff.

Waterways Ireland	372	352	343	344	339
An Coimisinéir Teanga	1	1	1	1	1

Section 4: Schemes and Programmes

This part considers, on a programme area basis, schemes and programmes delivered by, or on behalf of, the Department.

4.1 Community (Subhead B)

Goal: To encourage and facilitate communities to pursue social and economic progress in their areas.

Key Strategies:

- To support and facilitate communities
 - To support volunteering and active citizenship
 - To facilitate integrated development in areas of disadvantage
 - To improve service delivery to communities
 - To reform Charity law
 - To manage the applications and disbursements processes relating to the Dormant Accounts Fund

Table 4.1.1 – Inputs

	2007 € million	2008 ⁷ € million	2009 ⁸ € million
Programme Expenditure:	166.6	178.1	181.7
- Current	153.2	157.8	161.1
- Capital	8.0	13.4	13.3
Administration and Other Support	5.4	6.9	7.2
- Pay			
- Non-Pay			
Public service numbers for Programme (Whole Time Equivalents):	2007 WTE	2008 WTE	2009 WTE
- Civil Servants	43.5	40.6	65.92
- Other Public Servants			

Table 4.1.2 – Outputs

2007 Output Achieved	2008 Output Achieved	2009 Estimated Output*
C&V Programmes: 759 local/63 national community group supported	C&V Programmes: 177 local/71 national community group supported	C&V Programmes: 82 local/71 national community group supported

⁷ 2008 Outturn is provisional.

⁸ 2009 Estimate as at end February, subject to change in ongoing Supplementary Budget process.

10,764 elderly persons given security supports	11,762 elderly persons given security supports	2,200 elderly persons given security supports
LDSIP: c35,000 adults in receipt of services for the unemployed; 47,000 young people in receipt of community-based youth services; 1,945 community-based projects supported	LDSIP: 27,807 adults in receipt of services for the unemployed; 51,136 young people in receipt of community-based youth services; 2,291 community-based projects supported	LDSIP: 31,500 adults supported under Services for the Unemployed (including estimated 5,500 LES component); 47,000 young people in receipt of community-based youth services; 2,000 community-based projects supported
CSP: 330 CSP projects employing 1,913 persons	CSP: 363 CSP projects employing 2,590 persons	CSP: 430 CSP projects employing 2,830 persons

* based on current pre-Supplementary Budget estimates

The main programmes under this group of subheads are as follows (allocations for 2009 as at end-February but subject to change in the negotiation of Supplementary Budget estimates):

- B.1 Supports for Community & Voluntary Sector (€22227m)
- B.2 Community Services Programme (€50.674m)
- B.3 Local & Community Development Programmes (€79.40m)
- B.4 Charities Regulation (€0.2m)
- B.5 RAPID (€7.490m)
- B.6 Dormant Accounts – Administration (€1.786m)
- B.7 Dormant Accounts – Initiatives Tackling Economic & Social Disadvantage (€5.7m)

4.1.1 Supports for the Community & Voluntary (C&V) Sector

Significant funding is being provided by the Department in the context of Towards 2016 to support both the activities of the C&V sector and to develop the capacity and infrastructure within the sector. This covers small-scale local grants for community groups, funding for national C&V/Partnership organisations, a community security scheme for older people, and supports for Volunteering initiatives.

The Local Community Grants Scheme (€5.2m) is suspended.

Contracts for the national C&V organisations (€7.4m) conclude next year.

The Community Scheme for Older People (€3.4m), which provides socially monitored alarms and home security devices, remains operational.

Supports for Volunteering (€4.4m), which includes schools-based, as well as volunteer centres and joint ventures with the private sector, is ongoing.

4.1.2 Local and Community Development Schemes

The Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP) - €57.5m - constitutes area-based measures designed to counter disadvantage and to promote equality and social/economic inclusion.

LDSIP is implemented locally by 37 Integrated Local Development Companies, 17 Urban Partnerships and 2 Employment Pacts. Implementing bodies prepare and deliver local development plans that respond to local economic and social needs. Membership comprises statutory agencies, social partners and local elected representatives.

The Community Development Programme (€25m) provides financial assistance to fund community development projects in disadvantaged areas or to particularly disadvantaged groups. The services provided and activities supported by local projects include the provision of information, advice and support to particular target groups, and practical assistance to community groups, e.g., training, information and advice; provision of adult education courses and training opportunities; and support for local enterprise and job creation initiatives.

At present there are 182 projects participating in the Programme, located throughout the country.

Comment

Both programmes are due to be redesigned in the immediate future. Chief amongst the improvements that the Department will seek are better alignment between the programmes themselves and of the delivery structures and better alignment between the delivery structures and those of other Departments/agencies – particularly local authorities.

An overriding concern is to build evaluation processes into the programmes so as to better demonstrate results and avoid programme capture by providers. Arrangements have been made through co-operation with the Office of the Minister for Children and Atlantic Philanthropies to access good international (and thus independent) expertise in the design and evaluation of the programmes. The intention is to be able to measure the effects/outcomes of the programmes in a tangible way that will enable the Department to refocus the programmes as necessary during their lifetime so as to optimise benefits. This redesign and evaluative work is getting underway in the immediate future with a target of having new arrangements in place by end-2009.

4.1.3 Community Services Programme (CSP)

This programme provides employment to 2,600 persons and delivers local services of a social enterprise nature by community groups.

Expenditure on the Programme amounted to €48.0m in 2008 with a provision of €50.6m in 2009.

4.1.4 Dormant Accounts

The Dormant Accounts Fund Acts provide for an annual transfer by credit institutions and insurance undertakings of monies in accounts determined to be dormant into the Dormant Accounts Fund (DAF). Since its establishment in May 2003 to the end of December 2008, the net transfers to the DAF have totalled some €306.3m. The value of the Fund at end-December 2008, net of liabilities, was some €21.7m. This excludes the amount of some €46m currently maintained in a Reserve Account to meet reclaims and to cover expenses. The level of funds transferring to the DAF is declining, with inflows falling from a high of over €80m in 2006 to just over €33m in 2008. The net inflows (inflows less reclaims) were under €14m in 2008, compared with some €35m in 2006. In these circumstances, the requirement for the Dormant Accounts Board and the other legislative requirements for the disbursement of moneys from the Fund might be usefully revisited.

4.1.5 Charities Regulation

The package of measures contained in the Charities Act 2008 includes provision for the dissolution of the Commissioners for Charitable Donations and Bequests (CCDB). It is envisaged that the savings, both financial and staffing, accruing from the dissolution of the CCDB will contribute towards the cost of establishing the new Charities Regulatory Authority, which is provided for in the Bill.

4.2 Drugs (Subhead C)

Goal: To facilitate a more integrated and co-ordinated response to tackle problem drug use with the aim of significantly reducing the harm caused to individuals and society.

Key Strategies:

- To co-ordinate an overall strategy to tackle problem drug use in Ireland
- To target the provision of services and facilities to optimise their effect in areas of high problem drug use

Table 4.2.1 – Inputs

	2007 € million	2008 ⁹ € million	2009 ¹⁰ € million
Programme Expenditure:	52.9	46.1	42.3
- Current	43.4	39.2	36.0 ²⁰
- Capital	8.1	5.1	4.6
Administration and Other Support	1.4	1.8	1.7
- Pay			
- Non-Pay			
Public service numbers for Programme (Whole Time Equivalents):	2007 WTE	2008 WTE	2009 WTE
- Civil Servants ^{**}	18	20.3	16.1
- Other	1.5	1.5	2.5

^{**}Includes 7 staff on temporary fixed term contracts

Table 4.2.2 – Outputs:

2007 Output Achieved	2008 Output Achieved	2009 Estimated Output [*]
42 facilities/124 services under YPFSF	24 facilities/164 services under YPFSF	Transferring to OMC
480 projects/17 facilities in Drugs Task Force areas	525 projects/36 facilities in Drugs Task Force areas	495 projects/24 facilities in Drugs Task Force areas
N/A	54 Cocaine and Rehabilitation Fund projects	32 Cocaine and Rehabilitation Fund projects

^{*} based on current pre-Supplementary Budget estimates

⁹ 2008 Outturn is provisional.

¹⁰ 2008 Outturn for Drugs excludes expenditure on the Young People's Facilities and Services Fund in view of its transfer to the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs w.e.f. 1.1.09.

¹¹ Estimate as at end February, subject to change in ongoing Supplementary Budget process.

The Department directly funds a number of programmes to tackle drugs misuse, as well as undertaking a key co-ordinating and support role. Funding is principally directed to support initiatives through the Local and Regional Drugs Task Forces and, up to the end of 2008, through the Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund.

The main programme under this heading is as follows (allocations for 2009 as at end-February but subject to change in the negotiation of the Supplementary Budget estimates):

C.1 Drugs Initiative (€38m)

4.2.1 General - Drugs Strategy and Expenditure

State investment in drugs programmes and services beyond the Department is very significant, with a further €200m approximately of expenditure from across various Departments and agencies – mainly focussed on addressing the issues surrounding problem drug use. This figure does not include expenditure through mainstream services that problem drug users also avail of - such as adult and youth education, employment services and treatment services other than those specifically for addiction.

Work is currently underway, led by this Department, to develop a new National Drugs Strategy (NDS) 2009-2016. The Strategy is expected to be finalised in early May 2009. The need for a better overall performance management framework for drugs expenditure across all Departments and agencies will be addressed in the new NDS.

The National Drugs Strategy Team and the National Advisory Committee on Drugs form part of the structures underpinning the delivery of the NDS. The case for continuing or modifying these structures is being actively considered in the context of the work that is underway in developing the new NDS.

4.2.2 Particular efficiency measures

Given the particular remit of the Department in relation to both Local Drugs Task Forces (LDTFs) and, up to the end of 2008, in relation to the Young Peoples Facilities & Services Fund (YPFSF), reviews have been undertaken in relation to both.

Arising from the evaluation of the LDTF projects, it is anticipated that approximately 40 projects will be recommended for funding through a more appropriate funding source or, in some cases, may be discontinued.

The review of the YPFSF is due for completion by the end of April 2009. Its findings are being considered in the context of the new NDS.

4.3 Rural (Subhead D)

Goal: To promote and maintain living and working populations in rural areas by helping to foster sustainable and culturally vibrant communities there

Key Strategies:

- ✦ To co-ordinate the implementation of actions for the development of rural communities arising from both national and EU policies
- ✦ To implement various measures designed to improve the economic, social, cultural and physical conditions in rural areas

Table 4.3.1 – Inputs:

	2007 € million	2008 ¹² € million	2009 ¹³ € million
Programme Expenditure:	111.5	101.0	109.0
- Current	50.2	55.5	56.7
- Capital	57.0	41.6	48.0
Administration and Other Support	4.3	3.9	4.3
- Non-Pay			
Public service numbers for Programme (Whole Time Equivalents):	2007 WTE	2008 WTE	2009 WTE
- Civil Servants	43.5	43	43
- Other Public Servants	15	15	15

Table 4.3.2 – Outputs:

2007 Output Achieved	2008 Output Achieved	2009 Estimated Output*
491 full-time jobs created/244 enterprises assisted under RDP	109 full-time jobs created/146 enterprises assisted under RDP	200 full-time jobs created/150 enterprises assisted under RDP
2,600 participants on RSS & 1,784 community projects supported	2,600 participants on RSS & 2,647 community projects supported	2,500 participants on RSS & 1,485 community projects supported
1,042 infrastructural & community projects supported under CLÁR	941 infrastructural & community projects supported under CLÁR	375 infrastructural & community projects supported under CLÁR

* based on current pre-Supplementary Budget estimates

¹² 2008 Outturn is provisional.

¹³ Estimate as at end February, subject to change in ongoing Supplementary Budget process.

The main programmes under this group of subheads are as follows (allocations for 2009 as at end-February but subject to change in the negotiation of the Supplementary Budget estimates):

- D.1 Western Development Commission (€2.246m)
- D.2 Western Investment Fund (€2.3m)
- D.3 Rural Recreation/Rural Development Schemes (€5901m)
- D.4 Rural Social Scheme (€50.400m)
- D.5 LEADER Rural Economy 2007-13 (€27m)
- D.6 CLÁR (€16.86m)

4.3.1 Western Development Commission (WDC)

The function of the WDC is to promote the economic and social development of the Western Region, (defined as the counties of Connacht, plus Clare and Donegal).

Issues regarding the WDC are covered in section 5.3 below.

4.3.2 Rural Development Schemes

These mainly comprise Farm Relief Services (€0.6m), the Rural Development Fund (€1.0m) and Rural Recreation (€5.4m).

The Department's rural recreation strategy concentrates on the development of rural tourism, particularly walking tourism. Through the establishment of Comhairle na Tuaithe, a National Countryside Recreation Strategy has been developed, which takes account of the interests of farming organizations, recreational users and state bodies. This has enabled the Department to develop facilities and open up extensive walkways under a new Walks Scheme. Strong emphasis is placed on co-operation and co-ordination with other tourism interests, including Fáilte Ireland and the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism. There are 607 farmers currently participating in the Walks Scheme, with an estimated further 950 to join during the remainder of 2009. The Department believes that this is valuable work, which, with modest resources, provides strong employment potential.

It is considered that there is some scope for savings through the withdrawal of funding support (€500k) from the pilot Rural Night Transport scheme.

4.2.2 Rural Social Scheme and CLÁR

The Rural Social Scheme provides income support for farmers and fishermen who are currently in receipt of long term Social Welfare payments, and to provide certain services of benefit to rural communities. The scheme, in the Department's view, provides valuable services to the communities in which it operates, as well as opportunities for improved social interaction for participants for marginal additional cost (over the social welfare payment).

The CLÁR programme is a targeted investment programme in rural areas which have suffered significant population decline. This programme addresses minor local infrastructural deficiencies and is important in supporting sustainable rural communities. The programme elements are subject to regular review and refocusing. The Department continually seeks optimal alignment between and across its rural development and community development interventions.

A VFM assessment on the use of leverage funding in the CLÁR and RAPID schemes is being advanced as a priority.

4.2.3 LEADER

LEADER activities are part of the broader based Rural Development Programme (RDP). The RDP measures focus on improving the quality of life in rural areas, diversifying the rural economy and generating enterprise and employment. Several of the measures under the RDP will target investment in tourism. LEADER supports are available throughout the country, with the exception of the cities and the hub and gateway towns.

There is €425m available for the LEADER activities, which is almost three times the LEADER funding of the last programming round.

In general, the maximum rate of aid under the RDP is 50 per cent. Community groups will be eligible for a higher rate of aid at 75 per cent (where this higher rate of grant would not discriminate against private interests or promoters in the same sphere of activity).

Measures to be supported under the programme are as follows:

Axis 3 - The quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy
MEASURE
Diversification into non-agricultural activities (€16.66m)
Business creation and development (€48.26 m)
Encouragement of tourism activities (€45.4m)
Basic services for the economy and rural population (€49.61m)
Village renewal and development (€54.2m)
Conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage (€1.7m)
Training and information for economic factors under Axis 3 (€29.45m)
Axis 4 – LEADER
MEASURE
Skills acquisition and animation measure (€34.63m)
Implementing local development strategies (€4.1m)
Implementing co-operation projects (€10.7m)
Running the Local Action Groups (€80.73)

4.4 Gaeltacht and Islands (Subhead E)

Goal: To support Gaeltacht and island communities through the development of infrastructure and the provision of essential services

Key Strategies:

- ✦ Tackling critical infrastructural deficiencies in the Gaeltacht and enhancing the social, cultural and economic fabric of the region
 - ✦ Promoting employment and enterprise, fostering community development and developing the Gaeltacht economy in order to support Irish as the principal community language
- Afford recognition to the distinctive heritage and culture of populated islands through a range of support programmes and schemes, including funding for capital and current projects, designed to enhance access services and infrastructure

Table 4.4.1 – Inputs

	2007 € million	2008 ¹⁴ € million	2009 ¹⁵ € million
Programme Expenditure:	97.1	115.8	90.5
- Current	32.1	36.3	31.6
- Capital	60.7	75.0	55.3
Administration and Other Support	4.3	4.5	3.6
- Non-Pay			
Public service numbers for Programme (Whole Time Equivalents):	2007 WTE	2008 WTE	2009 WTE
- Civil Servants	45	50.8	74.6
- Other Public Servants	113	113	113

Outputs:

2007 Output Achieved	2008 Output Achieved	2009 Estimated Output*
25,184 students/1,087 adults attending Irish courses in Gaeltacht	26,907 students/1,205 adults attending Irish courses in Gaeltacht	25,000 students/1,000 adults attending Irish courses in Gaeltacht
75 community/infrastructural projects supported in Gaeltacht	74 community/infrastructural projects supported in Gaeltacht	52 community/infrastructural projects supported in Gaeltacht
17 lifeline island access services & 89 capital projects supported	21 lifeline island access services & 87 capital projects supported	23 lifeline island access services & 24 capital projects supported

* based on current pre-Supplementary Budget estimates

¹⁴ 2008 Outturn is provisional.

¹⁵ Estimate as at end February, subject to change in ongoing Supplementary Budget process.

The main programmes under this group of subheads are as follows (allocations for 2009 as at end-February but subject to change in the negotiation of the Supplementary Budget estimates):

- E.1 Gaeltacht Housing Grants (€2.95m)
- E.2 Gaeltacht Cultural and Social Schemes (€9.932m)
- E.3 Gaeltacht Community & Recreational Facilities (€4.8m)
- E.4 Gaeltacht Improvement Schemes (€4.2m)
- E.5 Islands Transport & Other Services (€5.7m)
- E.6 Islands Infrastructure (€23.732m)
- E.7 Údarás - Administration (€11.81m)
- E.8 Údarás – Current Programmes (€4.185m)
- E.9 Údarás – Capital Programmes (€19.65m)

4.4.1 Linguistic Study on the Use of Irish in the Gaeltacht

The Cabinet Committee on Irish and the Gaeltacht has been mandated by Government to consider matters arising in the context of the Report of the Linguistic Study on the Use of Irish in the Gaeltacht and to agree an integrated action plan to secure the future of Irish as the community language in the Gaeltacht. It is also considering issues in regard to the development of a national 20 Year Strategy for Irish.

[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20]

4.4.2 Island Programmes

There has been a substantial increase in the volume and complexity of work in this area over the past few years. A restructuring carried out on foot of a recent VFM Review has facilitated a realignment of duties to allow a more focused approach regarding the procurement and monitoring of island transport services.

In terms of capital spending on islands, the major part of this for 2009 is already contractually committed. While the capital allocations for islands for 2010 and subsequent years are already earmarked for substantial reductions on current levels, the Department would argue strongly that some reasonable level of capital funding be retained in view of the particular constraints under which island communities have to live.

4.4.3 Údarás na Gaeltachta

Relevant issues in relation to Údarás are addressed in section 5.

4.5 Irish Language (Subhead F)

Goal: To increase the use of the Irish language countrywide and to support it as the everyday community language in the Gaeltacht

Key Strategies:

To develop a 20-year Strategic Plan for the growth in the use of Irish and in bilingualism

- To secure better provision of public services through Irish through phased implementation of the Official Languages Act and other measures
- Promote the availability of qualified persons with Irish language skills to meet EU recruitment needs and the needs of public bodies in Ireland
- To promote strategic and language planning initiatives to meet the linguistic requirements of the Gaeltacht
- To foster the language and the culture of the Gaeltacht so as to consolidate Irish as its principal community language

Table 4.5.1 – Inputs

	2007 € million	2008 ¹⁶ € million	2009 ¹⁷ € million
Programme Expenditure:	6.7	7.7	8.9
- Current	5.2	7.3	7.9
- Capital	0.2	0.1	0.6
Administration and Other Support	1.3	0.3	0.3
- Non-Pay			
Public service numbers for Programme (Whole Time Equivalents):	2007 WTE	2008 WTE	2009 WTE
- Civil Servants	18	15	21.42
- Other Public Servants	1	1	1

Table 4.5.2 – Outputs:

2007 Output Achieved	2008 Output Achieved	2009 Estimated Output*
15 Irish language groups/projects supported	13 Irish language groups/projects supported	13 Irish language groups/projects supported
41 projects supported under 4 targeted measures	46 projects supported under 4 targeted measures	43 projects supported under 4 targeted measures
3 third level courses supported in context of Irish as EU official & working language	7 third level courses supported in context of Irish as EU official & working language	9 third level courses supported in context of Irish as EU official & working language

* based on current pre-Supplementary Budget estimates

The main programmes under this group of subheads are as follows (allocations for 2009 as at end-February but subject to change in the negotiation of the Supplementary Budget estimates):

- F.1 Ciste na Gaeilge (€6.633m)
- F.2 An Coimisinéir Teanga (€0.96m)
- F.3 Advanced Irish Language Skills Initiative (€0.944m)

4.5.1 20 Year Strategy for Irish

¹⁶ 2008 Outturn is provisional.

¹⁷ Estimate as at end February, subject to change in ongoing Supplementary Budget process.

As already mentioned, the Cabinet Committee on Irish and the Gaeltacht is considering issues in regard to the development of a national 20 Year Strategy for Irish. It is anticipated that the Strategy, when published, will determine the manner in which funding is provided in support of the Irish language in future years.

4.5.2 Ciste na Gaeilge

In the context of a recent VFM/ERI Review of Ciste na Gaeilge, the Department is keeping under review future arrangements for the delivery of Irish language programmes funded from the Ciste so as to ensure that optimum coherence and administrative efficiency is achieved.

Steps already taken to ensure greater coherence in this area include the abolition of Bord na Leabhar Gaeilge and transfer of its functions to Foras na Gaeilge from 1 January 2008. Also in 2008, arrangements were made to transfer the work of the Colmcille Initiative (which promotes links between Gaelic speakers in Ireland (North and South) and Scotland and is funded jointly by the three administrations) to Foras na Gaeilge and to dissolve its separate organisational structure.

4.5.3 Advanced Irish Language Initiative

This is a dedicated fund to provide supports for advanced Irish language third-level courses, particularly in the context of requirements arising from the status accorded to Irish as an official and working language of the EU. Given the political importance of continuing to work with the EU Institutions to help ensure that sufficient personnel with the required Irish language expertise are available to meet ongoing requirements, it is not considered that any savings can be achieved in this area.

4.5.4 Official Languages Act

The Department has already promoted measures to help ensure that public bodies can achieve greater efficiencies in meeting their obligations under the Act. These include an accreditation system for Irish language translators, electronic databases for terminology, signage, etc, and an on-line placenames database. Other resources under development include a computer-based memory-assisted translation resource for use by public bodies. These developments, together with greater promotion of web-based publications under the terms of the Act, will assist public bodies in reducing costs, while promoting more eco-friendly practices.

4.6 North-South Co-operation (Subhead G)

Goal: To maintain, develop and foster North/South co-operation

Key Strategies:

- To support Waterways Ireland, the North/South Waterways Body
- To support An Foras Teanga, the North/South Language Body (comprising Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency)
- To promote North/South co-operation in other areas of activity within the Department's remit

Table 4.6.1 – Inputs

	2007 € million	2008 ¹⁸ € million	2009 ¹⁹ € million
Programme Expenditure:	73.5	70.8	59.4
- Current	59.0	55.7	46.3
- Capital	13.1	12.3	10.7
Administration and Other Support	1.4	2.8	2.4
- Non-Pay			
Public service numbers for Programme (Whole Time Equivalents):	2007 WTE	2008 WTE	2009 WTE
- Civil Servants	5	5	6.24
- Other Public Servants	404	403	398

Outputs:

2007 Output Achieved	2008 Output Achieved	2009 Estimated Output
98% of waterways network navigable in boating season; 770m of new moorings; specified capital works progressed.	95% of waterways network navigable in boating season; 554m of new moorings; specified capital works progressed.	95% of waterways network navigable in boating season; 400m of new moorings; specified capital works progressed.
39 Irish language/ community groups supported by Foras na Gaeilge	36 Irish language/ community groups supported by Foras na Gaeilge	36 Irish language/ community groups supported by Foras na Gaeilge (under review)
Initiation of Ulster-Scots schools projects	200 schools/45,000 children involved in Ulster-Scots schools projects over 2 years	40 schools /12 drama companies involved in Ulster-Scots schools projects

* based on current pre-Supplementary Budget estimates

¹⁸ 2008 Outturn is provisional.

¹⁹ Estimate as at end February, subject to change in ongoing Supplementary Budget process.

The main programmes under this group of subheads are as follows (allocations for 2009 as at end-February but subject to change in the negotiation of the Supplementary Budget estimates):

- G.1 An Foras Teanga (€18.228m)
- G.2 Waterways Ireland (€37.017m)
- G.3 PEACE/INTERREG Programmes (€1.772m)

4.6.1 North/South Implementation Bodies

Issues relating to the North/South Implementation Bodies are addressed in section 5 below.

4.6.2 PEACE/INTERREG

Steps taken in recent years ensured greater coherence in the delivery of relevant programme measures, with the concentration of all relevant Departmental functions into a single administrative area and the putting in place of service level agreements with SEUPB and the intermediary delivery agency Border Action.

Savings in this area would not appear feasible, given the major reduction in funding that has taken place under PEACE III and the more peripheral role that the Department will have in the future. The key issue for the Department will be to ensure that the small number of measures for which it has responsibility are managed effectively and that EU drawdowns are maximised.

Section 5: Intermediary and other Bodies within the ambit of the Department

The Department works with a range of State agencies and other bodies, which are charged with specific responsibilities in the community/voluntary, rural, drugs, Irish language, and Gaeltacht and islands sectors.

The main bodies involved are:

Pobal

Údarás na Gaeltachta

Western Development Commission

An Coimisinéir Teanga

National Drugs Strategy Team and National Advisory Committee on Drugs

Local Development Bodies (Area Partnerships and LEADER), Community-based bodies, including Community Development Projects (CDPs), and Local and Regional Drug Task Forces (LDTFs and RDTFs)

North/South Implementation Bodies – An Foras Teanga (comprising Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency) and Waterways Ireland

Commissioners for Charitable Donations and Bequests (see section 6 below).

5.1 Pobal

Background

Pobal is an intermediary company established in the early 1990s to administer social inclusion programmes. At present it delivers 18 programmes on behalf of this and other Departments. In 2008, Pobal transferred over €400m to community and voluntary groups on behalf of various Departments.

So as to effectively control costs, the Department has formal arrangements in place with the company, including a negotiated yearly administration budget, detailed programme funding controls and oversight of arrangements involving other Departments. Pobal's administrative costs were reduced in both 2007 and 2008.

Administration costs paid by us to Pobal are clearly directly related to the scale of the work required by us and other Departments. To the extent schemes are ended or curtailed, funding to Pobal will fall.

Savings proposals

As already mentioned, recent budgetary pressures have seen the Department's administrative allocation to Pobal fall further reduction of 30% to be achieved by end-2009. This, combined with restrictions from other Departments, has resulted in savings equivalent to c90 posts in Pobal this year.

The Department does not consider it feasible to make further cuts in the administrative allocation to Pobal in 2009. Pobal undertakes work in the delivery of programmes for a range of Government Departments, as well as public bodies. Such work ranges from the Childcare Programmes, to the Rural Transport Initiative, to CCTV in communities, to the RAPID programme, etc. [TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]

5.2 Údarás na Gaeltachta

Outputs:

2007 Output Achieved	2008 Output Achieved	2009 Estimated Output*
1,038 new jobs created	1,269 new jobs created	650 new jobs created
8,026 full-time/4,006 part-time jobs supported	8,193 FTEs supported**	8,193 FTEs supported**
100 co-operatives/ community groups supported	100 co-operatives/ community groups supported	85 co-operatives/ community groups supported

* based on current pre-Supplementary Budget estimates

** Údarás na Gaeltachta no longer collects figures in respect of existing full-time and part-time jobs supported. These figures have now been replaced by the more accurate measure of Full Time Equivalents supported.

Background

The primary responsibility of Údarás na Gaeltachta is to develop the Gaeltacht economy in order to preserve and enrich the Irish language as the principal language therein. In pursuance of its objectives, Údarás na Gaeltachta, established in 1980, pursues strategic aims in the areas of industrial development, regional development and human resources development. Údarás is also involved in community, cultural and language development activities.

The Department provides financial assistance annually to Údarás in relation to capital expenditure, current expenditure and administration. In addition, further non-exchequer investment arises from Údarás' own resources (e.g., rental income, consultancy services, sale of assets, EU funding, etc.). In 2008 a sum of approximately €13.47m was realised from these sources.

At end-2008, employment in enterprises supported by Údarás totalled almost 8,200 full-time equivalents.

Savings proposals

[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20]

Notwithstanding this, the Department considers that

the level and alignment of posts in Údarás should be benchmarked; and an update review of the Údarás building programme is warranted.

5.3 Western Development Commission (WDC)

This small body charged under statute with promoting the economic and social development in the Western Region has an annual budget of c€2.4m. Apart from such work and administration of the Western Investment Fund, the Commission undertakes ongoing policy research for the Department. It contributed strongly to the Rural Economy chapter in the NDP, and it provides valuable ongoing policy research on rural development issues to the Department and the wider public service. It is felt that its remit should be re-defined to focus on rural development.

It is also proposed that the Western Investment Fund should be re-focused more strategically.

5.4 An Coimisinéir Teanga

This independent Office was established under the Official Languages Act 2003 and undertakes a key role in overseeing implementation and compliance by public bodies with the Act.

This organisation is impacting significantly across public bodies through requiring full compliance with the legislation. It is vigilant, resolute and committed to delivering full implementation by public bodies of the Official Languages Act.

No change is recommended.

5.5 Central Drugs Structures

The National Drugs Strategy Team (NDST) and the National Advisory Committee on Drugs (NACD) form part of the structures supporting the National Drugs Strategy. Given the scarcity of resources and issues around multiple structures and diffused accountabilities, the Department proposes that the NDST be abolished. Instead, it is proposed that the lead role for co-ordinating drugs issues will rest with a dedicated ministerial function. While the NACD will continue, given its critical research role, its secretariat function will be absorbed into the proposed new ministerial office, thus maximising opportunities for potential staff savings.

5.6 Local and Community Development Bodies, including rural and drugs structures
Reforms here have seen the amalgamation of LEADER and Partnership structures from 94 to 55, so as to avoid overlaps, deliver improved efficiencies and enhance accessibility for local groups.

Building on such work, the Department now proposes that such integrated county structures should provide shared services to Community Development Projects and Local and Regional Drugs Task Forces in their areas. In this way, payroll and other administration can be centralised, improved efficiencies secured and small local groups enabled to improve focus on their primary work.

Almost 40% of the budget of the Community Development Programme was allocated to Regional Support Agencies (RSAs) to assist projects in 2003. This was reduced to 10%. [TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]

5.7 North/South Implementation Bodies

The Department, with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland, is a joint sponsor of two North/South Implementation Bodies established under the Good Friday Agreement - Waterways Ireland and An Foras Teanga (comprising Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency).

Savings proposals

It may be noted that the North/South Implementation Bodies are distinctive organisations set up by the Irish and British Governments under international law and any significant changes to their functions or funding would require to be agreed in advance on a on a joint consensual basis, North and South.

The two Governments agreed as part of the St Andrew's Agreement that a joint review of all North/South Implementation Bodies would be carried out. This is under way at present and it is understood that a number of changes in relation to the functions of the Bodies are under consideration. However, no firm details are available in this regard.

[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 24 (1) (d)]

Separate from the above, the Department has requested Foras na Gaeilge to review its support to 19 core-funded Irish language organisations. While, as already mentioned, there has been some useful rationalisation in recent months - Bord na Leabhar Gaeilge was abolished and its work transferred to Foras, as was the work of the Colmcille Initiative - it is considered that there is a need for a strategic re-focusing of Foras' funding to language organisations in order to eliminate inefficiencies and overlaps, and achieve savings through a reduction in the number of funded organisations. The review will be completed before mid-2009.

With regard to Waterways Ireland and the Ulster-Scots Agency, no savings are proposed, pending receipt of the recommendations in the review being carried out under the St Andrew's Agreement.

Section 6: Commissioners for Charitable Donations and Bequests

Table 6.1: Main Areas of Spending – Vote 24

Programme ²⁰	2005 € m	2006 € m	2007 € m	2008 ²¹ €m	2009 ²² € m
A. Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland	0.335	0.365	0.382	0.385	0.471
TOTAL GROSS EXPENDITURE	0.335	0.365	0.382	0.385	0.471
Included Total Gross Expenditure: -					
Exchequer Pay	0.274	0.296	0.327	.326	0.401
Exchequer Pensions ²³	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008
Public service numbers included in Exchequer Pay (Whole Time Equivalents):	2005 WTE	2006 WTE	2007 WTE	2008 WTE	2009 WTE
- Civil Servants	8	8	8	8	8
- Other Public Servants	-	-	-	-	-

The Commissioners for Charitable Donations and Bequests (CCDB) are mandated under the Charities Acts 1961 and 1973 to provide services to trustees of charities and to carry out the intentions of persons making donations and bequests to charities. The Commissioners provide various services for charities without charge, many of which are of a judicial nature.

The CCDB has its own Vote (Vote 24). The monies granted are for the salaries of the Secretary of the Board/Accounting Officer and 7 full-time staff, as well as the operational expenses of the Office.

Savings proposals

As already referred to, the CCDB will fall to be dissolved within the framework of the new regulatory regime provided for in the recently enacted Charities Act 2008. It is envisaged that the savings, both financial and staffing, accruing from the dissolution of the CCDB will contribute towards the cost of establishing the new Charities Regulatory Authority, which is provided for in the Bill.

The new Authority will provide an integrated regulatory regime for charities in Ireland. It will bring together certain functions previously exercised by a number of

²⁰ There is no Programme Expenditure under Vote 24 - all expenditure is administrative.

²¹ 2008 Outturn is provisional.

²² Estimate as at end February, subject to change in ongoing Supplementary Budget process.

²³ Exchequer Pensions paid from the Vote.

entities (including the CCDB), as well as introducing significant new functions to ensure greater accountability and transparency in the charities sector.

Section 7 – Summary of options for reducing expenditure and rationalising services

Area	Proposal	Savings
Administration (Subhead A)	The Department's 2009 administration costs are already reduced by €1.273m on 2008 provisional outturn of €20.23m (reduction of €0.117m on pay and €1.156m on non-pay).	No further saving proposed, pending clarification of pre-Supplementary Budget allocations.
Intermediary Bodies	<p>Abolish:</p> <p>National Drugs Strategy Team – general functions to be absorbed by proposed new dedicated ministerial office.</p> <p>Commissioners for Charitable Donations and Bequests (CCDB) - functions to be amalgamated within framework of a new regulatory authority.</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>Modify:</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>Western Development Commission – re-focus Western Investment Fund more strategically and re-define functions of Commission to rural development.</p> <p>National Advisory Committee on Drugs – secretariat function to be absorbed into new dedicated ministerial office, thus maximising potential for staff savings</p>	<p>€500k in a full year.</p> <p>Savings to be allocated to new authority.</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>Efficiency measure. Not quantifiable at this time.</p> <p>Not quantifiable</p>

		pending the establishment of new office.
Community (Subhead B)	<p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>Redesign and realign CDP and LDSIP programmes following CES review for improved outcomes to provide for better community development interventions.</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>Repeal Dormant Accounts Acts to abolish Board, eliminate process and allow funds to go solely to RAPID areas</p>	<p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>Not quantifiable at this time.</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20 & SECTION 21]</p> <p>€250k in a full year.</p>
Rural (Subhead D)	<p>Withdrawal of funding support (€500k) from the pilot Rural Night Transport scheme.</p> <p>Return of Farm Relief Services to Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.</p> <p>Horizontal review of a range of interventions, including Rural Social Scheme and Community Services Programme.</p> <p>VFM Review on use of leverage funding in CLÁR and RAPID schemes to be undertaken.</p>	<p>€0.5m</p> <p>Efficiency measure.</p> <p>Savings not quantifiable at this stage.</p> <p>Savings not quantifiable at this stage.</p>
Gaeltacht and Islands (Subhead E)	<p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20]</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20]</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20]</p>	<p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20]</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20]</p> <p>[TEXT WITHHELD – SECTION 20]</p>

		SECTION 20]
Irish Language (Subhead F)	Consideration of a national 20 Year Strategy for Irish by the Cabinet Committee on Irish and the Gaeltacht.	Not quantifiable at this stage.
North-South (Subhead G)	Foras na Gaeilge to review its support to 19 core-funded Irish language organisations with a view to a strategic re-focusing and a reduction in the number of funded organisations.	Not quantifiable at this stage.