Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

VISION ONE CIVIL SERVICE

Civil Service Renewal 2024

Action Plan

Prepared by the Department of
Public Expenditure and Reform
gov.ie

2021

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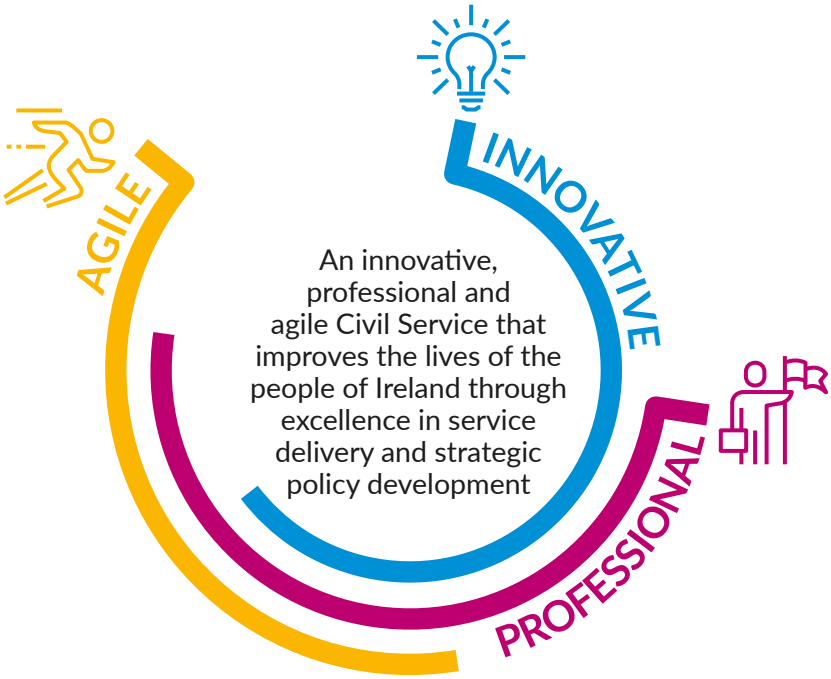
Our Vision



Our Values

Foreword

I am delighted to present to you ***Civil Service Renewal 2024***, the first in a series of three-year action plans supporting the delivery of the Civil Service Renewal 2030 Strategy.

The impact of COVID-19 on our society and economy over the past twenty months has been unprecedented. The Civil Service has proven that it can respond with agility to such challenges. Systems that would ordinarily take years to set up were established in weeks and changes that were once thought impossible occurred in an instant. In many ways, the pandemic acted as a catalyst for enabling future change.

The challenges facing the Civil Service are becoming increasingly urgent and interconnected, from addressing the far reaching implications of climate change to developing solutions to tackle important domestic issues such as housing and healthcare. As our country emerges with strength and resilience from the pandemic, we must ensure that the Civil Service has the capability, agility and foresight to respond accordingly.

Civil Service Renewal 2024 aims to build on our strengths and accelerate key initiatives. It is structured around three core themes which align with the Civil Service Renewal 2030 strategic framework.

1 Digital First and Innovation

New developments in technology have changed how we live and interact with one another. The public expects to engage with our services where and when it is convenient for them to do so. We need a culture of innovation to support the exploration and adoption of new approaches to service delivery and to promote open collaboration to deliver services that are designed with the public in mind.

2 Workforce, Workplace and Organisation of the future

An inclusive society and a competitive economy requires a high performing Civil Service which anticipates and responds effectively to emerging risks and opportunities. We need to develop capabilities, structures and processes to support whole-of-government responses to Ireland's most pressing challenges. Investing in the skills and professionalisation of the Civil Service, embedding a values-based culture, and recognising the value of diversity and gender equality will be critical to delivering on this ambitious plan over the next three years.

3 Evidence-informed Policy and Services

The pace of change in today's society calls for greater capacity to develop coherent, whole-of-government policies that respond to local and global challenges. Improved use of data to support evidence-informed insights and greater collaboration with the public will ensure we design policy with the public and societal well-being in mind.

I am delighted to support this new and ambitious chapter for the Civil Service and I look forward to the benefits and outcomes it will bring to better serve the people of Ireland.

Kind regards,

Michael McGrath, TD

Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform

1 Introduction

Introduction

The Civil Service is at the heart of Irish society and plays a vital role in developing and implementing policy responses to support the Government in addressing a diverse and complex range of issues. It is central to delivering essential services to the public, working in collaboration with the wider Public Service in guiding policy implementation. As a forward thinking public administration, the Civil Service is committed to change, to meet evolving needs and wants, and to continuously improve.

Civil Service Renewal 2030 ("CSR2030") provides the way forward to enable the Civil Service to meet the needs of the Government and address complicated, long term issues. It will deliver meaningful outcomes for society through a cycle of three-year action plans. The 2030 Strategic Framework provides a structured approach to ensure focus and consistency through each three-year planning cycle. The framework seeks to address the needs and demands of today, while providing an opportunity to re-imagine aspects of our organisation in order to respond to future demands. It paves the way for an exciting future for our Civil Service, both in how we continue to deliver services to the people of Ireland, and in how we strengthen our ability to respond to increasingly complex challenges.

Building on our strengths

Recent years have seen a challenging yet progressive period for the Irish Civil Service – a period which delivered a range of important achievements in a changing environment. This Action Plan builds on the achievements of the 2014 Civil Service Renewal Plan and the other reform initiatives that have been implemented in the Civil Service.

The last 18 months in particular have presented unparalleled challenges to society, our businesses and our economy. The public institutions that exist to serve their needs responded with innovation and flexibility across the spectrum of public services. This required imagination and commitment, underlining the strong sense of public service ethos that is shared by civil and public servants. The response to the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated what can be achieved. We will build on this strong foundation as we look to further improve delivery for the Government, the political system, society and our stakeholders.

Supporting recovery and learning from success

Ireland and its people have shown remarkable resilience in dealing with the implications of the pandemic. The country stood together to deal with the sad and difficult circumstances of the crisis. The Civil Service is determined to contribute all it can to help the country recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and to address the challenges facing the country. Major initiatives, including the suite of pandemic supports for employees and businesses and the roll-out of the Vaccination Programme, have been successfully implemented. Ireland's delivery metrics throughout the pandemic compare very favourably internationally. The Civil and Public Service have shown how they can respond in times of crisis and demonstrated the capability and potential to transform and to deliver for our society in a more flexible way. We will learn from this experience to ensure that we capture the long-term benefits and secure lasting change in our operations.

A complex and changing environment

There are a growing number of complex challenges impacting our society that require a coordinated and robust response. They also give rise to a range of opportunities. Some of the key developments that have shaped our long term CSR2030 Strategy and that form a basis for the priorities set out in this three-year Action Plan are detailed below.

- Ireland is susceptible to global uncertainty and change, with developments such as Brexit, geopolitical shifts and international economic volatility at play. Operating within this uncertain environment provides challenges for the public, business and society. It also provides the opportunity for the Civil Service to demonstrate ambitious leadership, underpinned by a high performing, innovative organisation capable of assessing and responding to change and uncertainty.
- The steady growth of our population, and its changing composition, has implications for how we deliver services. Keeping the public at the centre of our planning, delivery, and evaluation processes is critical to our development of policy and services that meet their needs and expectations.
- The complexity of challenges such as housing, homelessness and healthcare is challenging us to work more collaboratively and provide innovative solutions to these urgent issues. The steps set out in this Action Plan, taken together, will help ensure that the Civil Service has the capacity and capability to tackle these issues.
- Ireland is committed to transitioning to a resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy. Addressing climate

change has far reaching implications for every part of society. It also has implications for Civil Service delivery and the implementation of climate action commitments. The Civil Service will go beyond shaping the policy framework and become exemplars of best practice in tackling climate action.

- The scale of investment in public services has never been greater and the Civil Service, working in tandem with the Public Service, must ensure that planned outcomes and lasting benefits are achieved for this investment.
- Advancements in technology provide the opportunity to deliver our services in a more integrated, digital and user friendly way. We can also achieve greater efficiency and derive deeper insights through the use of automation, artificial intelligence, analytics and other solutions. Our digital plans are ambitious and this Action Plan provides the building blocks for us to lead the way in digitisation.

Ambitious change

Our plans under the three themes are the most ambitious to date. We will build on the experience gained in responding to the pandemic and learn the lessons for the future to secure long-lasting change and improve our service delivery.

We will capitalise on our collective expertise through cross-government working and innovation. This will create greater agility to respond in a coordinated manner on pressing challenges. We will take steps to ensure that we have the right governance structures and the capacity and capability to implement the Government's plans.

The Civil Service will drive the climate agenda and help deliver Climate Action Plan 2021 by working collaboratively across all Government Departments and with State Bodies. It will lead in implementing the National Development Plan 2021-2030 and work together with the other sectors of the Public Service to deliver the long-term investment programme that will play a significant role in addressing the opportunities and challenges facing the country.

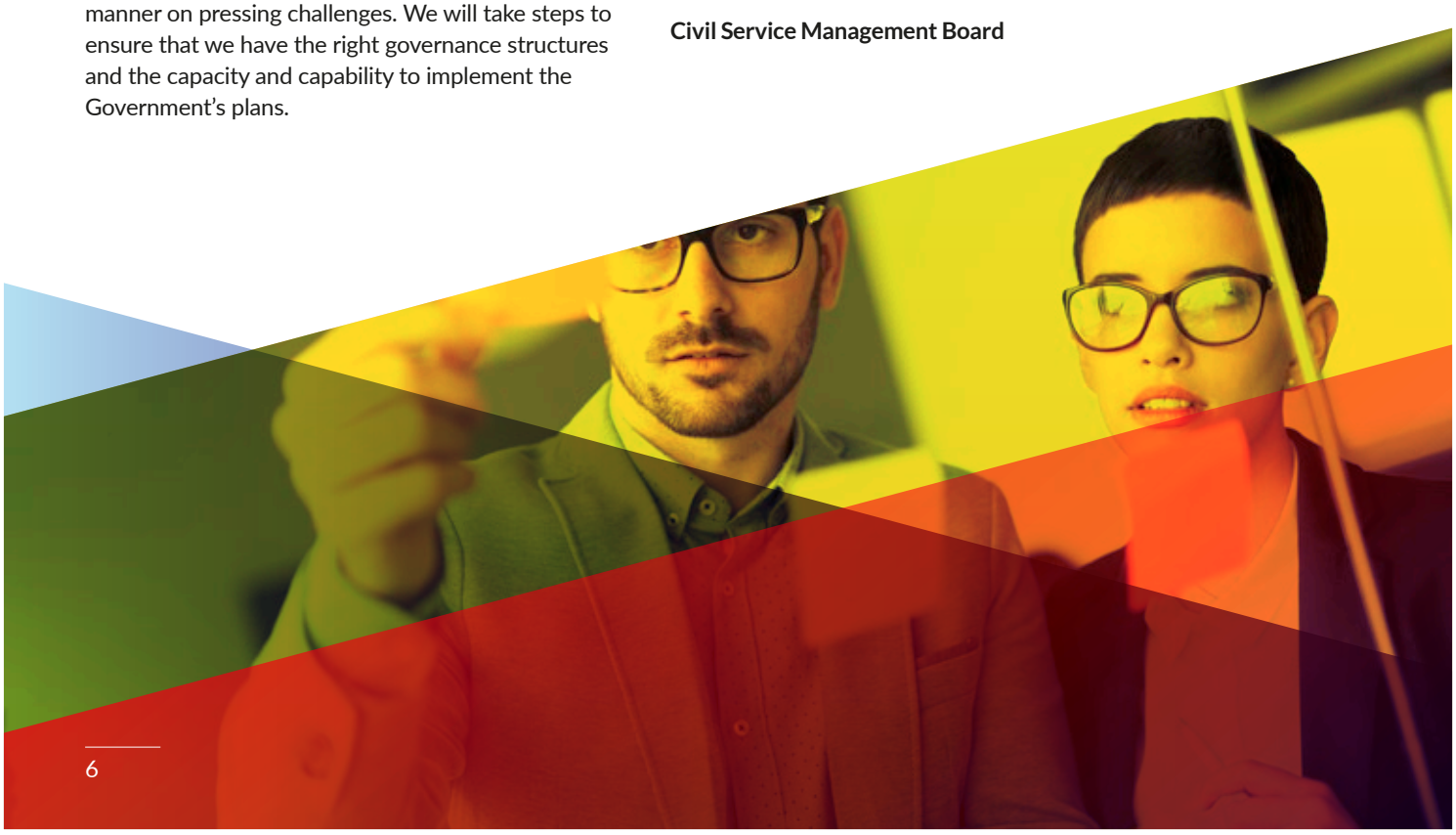
We will implement this Action Plan and work on solutions to meet the significant challenges faced by the country.

The CSR2030 Strategy sets a clear direction for the next ten years. While this Action Plan, CSR2024, outlines the priorities to be delivered over the next three years, it mirrors the themes and priorities in the CSR2030 Strategic Framework which are:

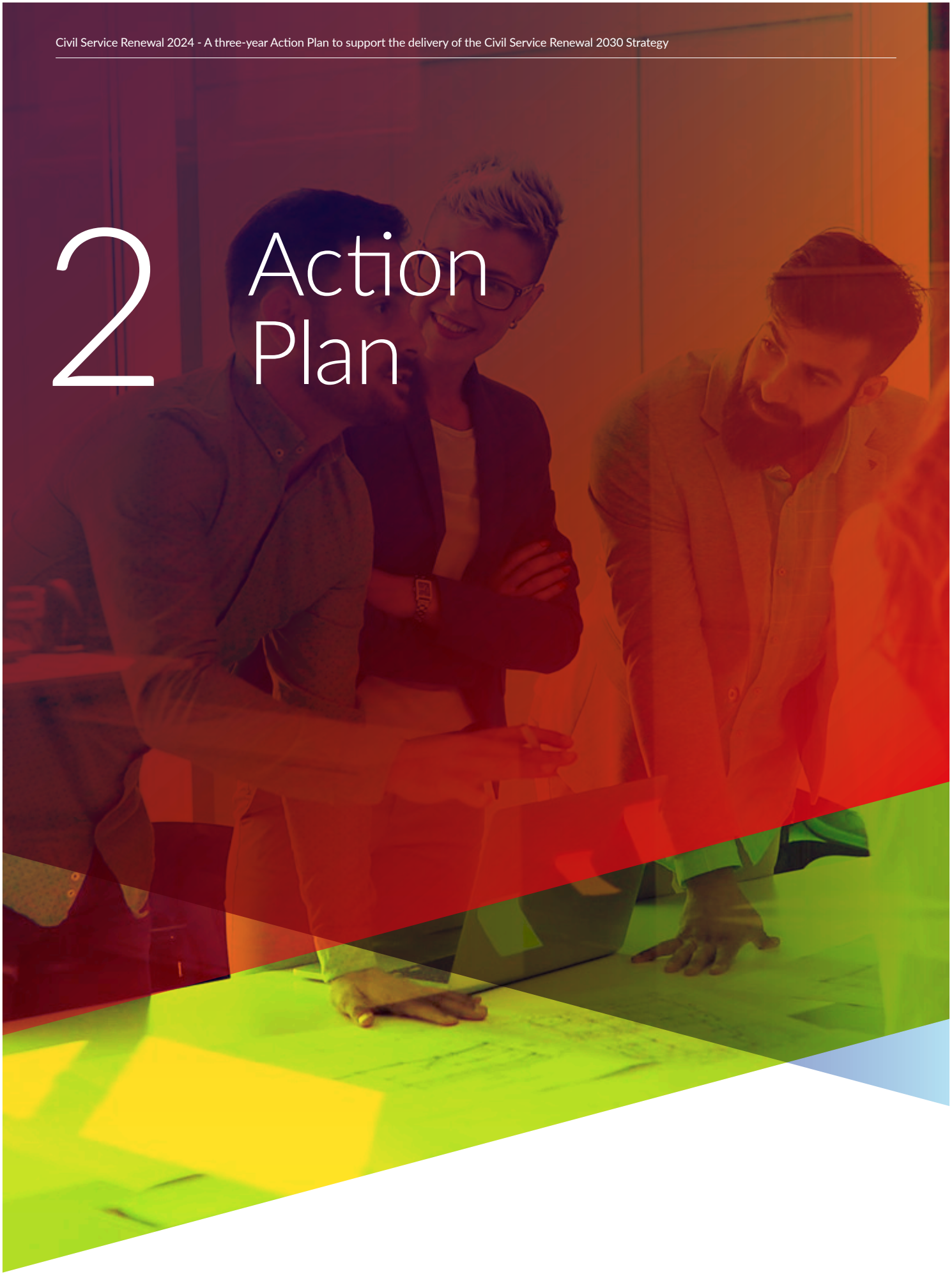
- Digital First and Embedding Innovation
- Workforce, Workplace and Organisation of the Future
- Evidence-Informed Policy and Services

By successfully delivering these key priorities within the lifetime of the Strategy, we will achieve the ambition of CSR2030 to be an *innovative, professional and agile Civil Service that improves the lives of the people of Ireland through excellence in service delivery and strategic policy development*. We look forward to working with staff and stakeholders to successfully implement this Action Plan.

Civil Service Management Board



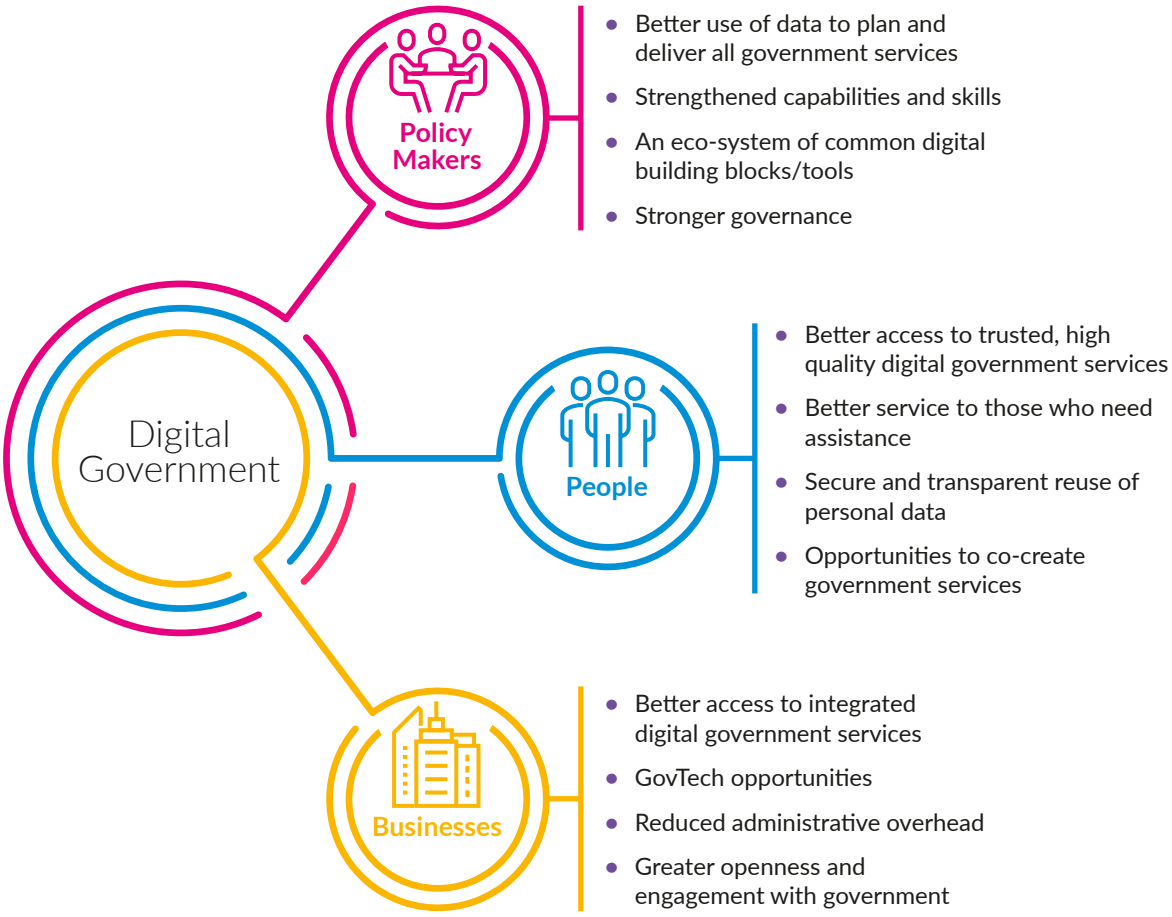
2 Action Plan



Theme 1: Digital First and Embedding Innovation

Technology is advancing exponentially and its application provides enormous opportunities to improve social and economic outcomes in our society. New developments in Information and Communications Technology have fundamentally changed how we live and interact with one another, and have increased expectations for technology enabled public services. Heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic public expectations for a seamless experience, personalisation and innovation have accelerated. In providing an inclusive response to the delivery of services during the pandemic, the Civil Service moved quickly to embrace the opportunities provided by emerging technologies and delivered innovate solutions to solve problems. Demonstrating the art of the possible, these developments have paved the way for the Civil Service to be more agile in terms of embracing digital technology to deliver more customer focused innovative services.

In order to best support Ireland's society and economy today, and into the future, we must seize the opportunity to leverage emerging technologies and innovate in the way we work and serve the Government and the public. Technological innovations can also help to address and manage the effects of climate change. This first three year Action Plan will provide the necessary platform to achieve our ten-year strategic objectives. Building upon a strong foundation we will create a trusted, user-driven, intuitive and inclusive world-leading digital government service. We will build on the progress made in digitising our services and developing our systems by implementing a new Digital and ICT Strategy for the Public Service.



Meeting the demand for digital services

Placing the public at the heart of digital services will create more accessible, trusted and valued digital solutions. The 2030 Digital Compass[1] provides the European way for the Digital Decade and sets out a number of goals, including having 80% of the EU population with sufficient basic digital skills.

Ireland has a wealth of digital start-ups, enterprise and innovative hubs that we can collaborate with and learn from to enrich our overall digital approach. The demand for always-on 24/7 services is growing, with significant progress made in recent years in the delivery of digital services to the public and to businesses. The Civil Service plays a critical role in supporting a more unified, seamless and personalised user experience for the public. By advancing our digital maturity, integrating existing solutions, and identifying new opportunities for efficiency, we will maximise the benefits that digitalisation can bring for society.

Growing our capability and trust in digital delivery

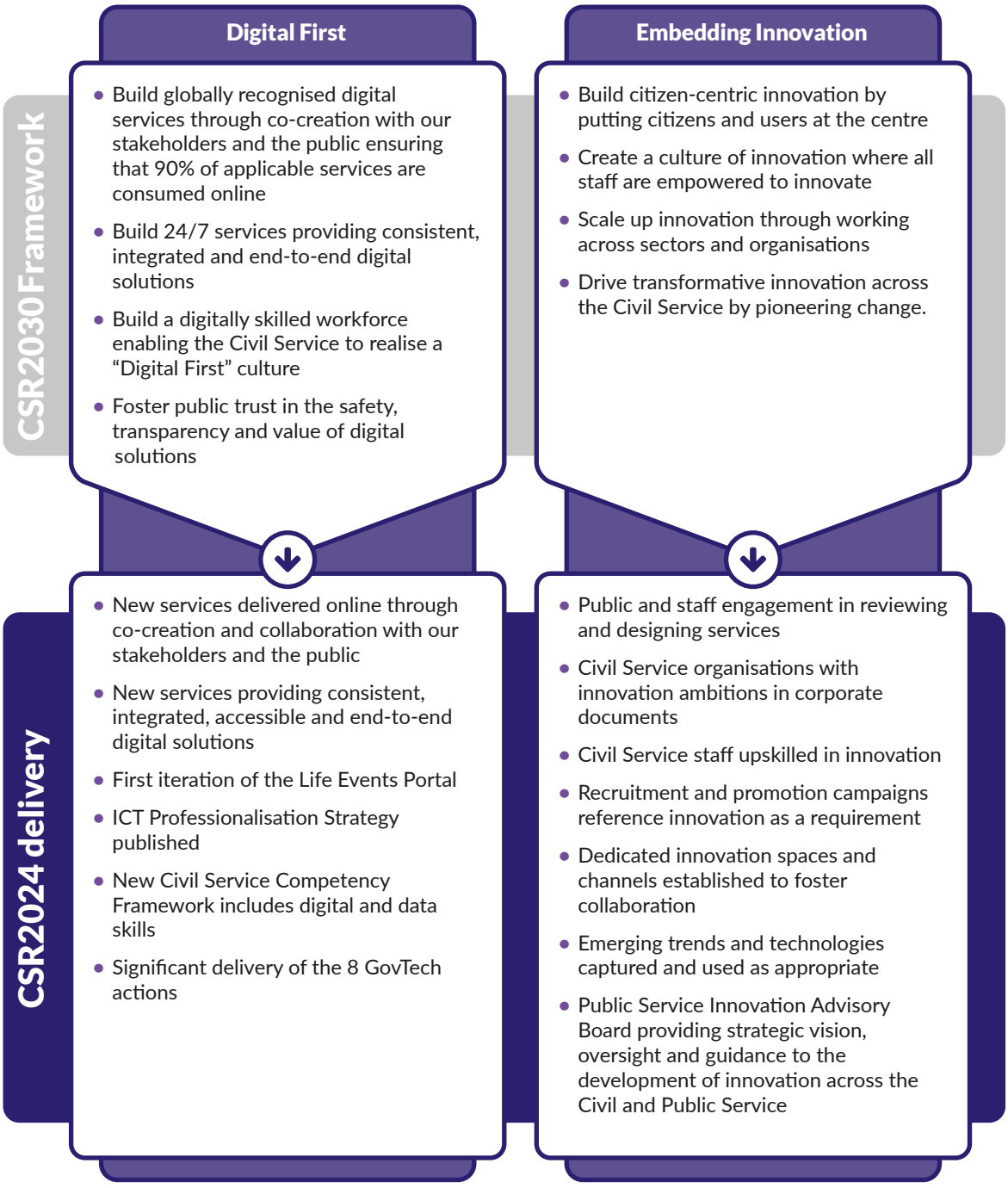
Fostering a 'Digital First' mind-set amongst our staff will encourage greater openness and willingness to digitise. However we will also be mindful of the needs of the public and ensure accessibility to services by all sections of our community. Recruiting and retaining skilled staff to support our digital journey will be challenging given the demand for this expertise in the economy. Technology Skills Ireland 2022 sets out an ambitious target to increase the numbers of learners graduating with high-level ICT skills by over 65% by the end of 2022. Developing the skills and knowledge of our workforce, while providing the digital tools and systems needed, will support our people in embracing technology. Initiatives such as the Digital Skills for Citizens Scheme will continue to provide free basic digital skills training for the public, to equip them with the skills needed to use and enjoy the many benefits that engaging with digital services offers. Bringing greater openness and transparency to the public on our digital progress will help to foster trust. Securing buy-in for digital solutions and focusing on the safety, security and privacy of solutions, will further advance the integrity of our overall digital approach while ensuring that services comply with all data protection obligations.

Committing to an innovative future

Keeping our public at the core of our innovation approach will enhance the value of public services to meet the needs and expectations of our communities. We will work with the public to co-create solutions by listening to and learning from their experiences. Creating the right culture for innovation is key to supporting our system to adapt in response to future change. This involves growing the innovation skills of our workforce and making them feel safe in experimenting with new ideas and the acceptance of failure. It is vital that knowledge is shared across the Public Service. Encouraging staff to share their innovation experiences and providing opportunities to collaborate will promote greater openness to innovate across the Civil Service. Connecting with other innovators in the wider ecosystem will allow us to scale our solutions and build on previous successes. A key aspect to innovation is always thinking ahead and looking to the future. By continuously monitoring emerging trends and developments, we can assess opportunities for innovative technologies. Collaborating with external experts will assist in maximising the potential for the Civil Service to adopt and embed new technologies.

1 The Digital Compass evolves around four cardinal points: Skills, Infrastructures, Business and Government.

Delivering on our 2030 ambition



Digital First Action Plan

Strategic Priority	Actions
1 **Build globally recognised digital services through co-creation with our stakeholders and the public, ensuring that 90% of applicable services are consumed online**	• We will place the public at the heart of digital services to create valued solutions which are shaped by the needs and wants of the public. Services will be designed with the principle of promoting accessibility for all. To do this we will establish a baseline of where we are now in terms of digital delivery.
	• We will collaborate with our stakeholders and consult with the public to build globally recognised digital services.
	• We will progress the implementation of 8 GovTech actions identified in the Cruinnú report to support the Irish economy by applying emerging technologies to reinvent how we deliver services.
2 **Build 24/7 services providing consistent, integrated and end-to-end digital solutions**	• We will promote a common building blocks approach to digital services. To achieve this, all new services must be developed with MyGovID (where user-driven), cybersecurity, transparency, privacy and data re-use as core principles.
	• We will deliver the first iteration of a Life Events Portal for example to register a birth or death.
3 **Build a digitally skilled workforce enabling the Civil Service to realise a "Digital First" culture**	• We will develop the skills and knowledge of our workforce, while attracting and retaining new talent to allow us to build digital capacity and accelerate the digital agenda. • We will provide the training, digital tools and systems needed that will support our people in embracing technology as part of their day-to-day working. • We will provide opportunities for staff to retrain where required to meet emerging demands for core digital and data skills.
	• We will develop and publish a new ICT Professionalisation Strategy and establish the governance structures to support its implementation. • We will include Digital competence in the Civil Service Competency Framework.
4 **Foster public trust in the safety, transparency and value of digital solutions**	• We will bring greater openness and transparency to the public on our digital progress to foster trust in the solutions provided.
	• We will focus on the safety, security and robustness of solutions, and ensure that the right legislative provisions are in place to further advance the integrity of our overall digital approach.

Embedding Innovation Action Plan

Strategic Priority	Actions
1 **Build citizen-centric innovation by putting citizens and users at the centre**	• We will explore and test new ways of engaging with our staff and the public and others to consult on the design and delivery of services. This will be done in line with best international practice and include design thinking, service design and customer journey mapping.
	• We will undertake an awareness campaign across the Civil Service to benefit from the experience of customer facing employees to use their unique position to capture feedback and identify ways to improve services.
	• We will develop and promote the use of a user-driven protocol and guidelines to demonstrate the importance, value and impact of the public's input into the design and delivery of services.
2 **Create a culture of innovation where staff are empowered to innovate**	• We will systematically include our commitment to drive innovation in key corporate documents such as Statements of Strategy, organisational business plans, innovation action plans and risk appetite statements.
	• We will put mechanisms and systems in place to support, recognise and invest in innovation.
	• We will continue to offer staff training in how to innovate and ongoing professional development to leaders throughout the Civil Service.
	• We will formalise the inclusion of innovation in recruitment core competencies at appropriate grades and innovation will similarly be reflected in role profiles.
3 **Scale up innovation through working across sectors and organisations**	• We will provide enhanced facilities for civil and public servants to support cross-organisational innovation and collaboration using cutting-edge methodologies and exploiting new and emerging technologies.
	• We will leverage the knowledge from Civil and Public Service organisations who have implemented successful innovations to assist those elsewhere who require a similar skill set or expertise.
	• Civil Service organisations will identify key projects and initiatives that are innovative in nature and have the potential to be scaled elsewhere in the Civil or Public Service.
	• We will collaborate with the wider ecosystem to encourage co-developed solutions using mechanisms like innovation sprints and hackathons.
4 **Drive transformative innovation across the Civil Service by pioneering change**	• We will establish a foresight function to scan national and international solutions, trends and emerging possibilities to help inform and guide future innovations.
	• We will have representation on the newly established Public Service Innovation Advisory Board which has a mix of civil and public servants and others from outside the Public Service to provide strategic vision, oversight and guidance to the Public Service's innovation function.
	• We will encourage the use of new and emerging technologies across the Civil Service through experimentation and by collaborating with the private sector, start-ups and academia to develop knowledge and experience that will further embed technology adoption across the Civil Service.

Theme 2: Workforce, Workplace and Organisation of the Future

Developing our people and workplaces will help to build an agile and robust Civil Service organisation of the future. By empowering our people and enhancing our structures we can create a more diverse, flexible and collaborative Civil Service workforce. Equipping our staff with the right skills, tools and capabilities to meet business needs as part of a more agile approach to workforce planning will ensure our Departments and Offices can meet the challenges of today and the future.

New ways of working and attracting staff

The Civil Service is committed to being an employer of choice. We want to recruit, retain and further develop a talented and diverse workforce. Informed by evolving business needs and learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic, we will exploit these opportunities to become more flexible and innovative in how we work to better serve our public.

Creating shared spaces and opportunities for multidisciplinary teams to work on projects will encourage collaboration and innovation. Maximising the use of emerging technologies will be key in the delivery of more flexible working models.

Planning for the skills we need

A more strategic workforce planning approach will allow us to better plan and grow for the future. Effective workforce planning at local level will aim to manage workforce requirements to meet evolving business and public needs more efficiently and effectively and address the challenges of the scale of retirements in the future. Having the ability to develop a comprehensive view of our collective capacity and capability needs will enable us to quickly identify and address any critical gaps. This will integrate with wider organisational decisions around business planning, budgetary, recruitment and learning and development processes.

The way services are provided in the future will be very different to the way they are provided today. We are already seeing a shift in demand towards digital channels, requiring new knowledge and skills to support the development and management of these services. By updating the Civil Service Competency Framework we can ensure that it reflects the needs for current and future skills.

The people manager role is key to delivery and we will develop our people managers so they have leadership and management skills for the Civil Service organisation of the future. To deliver high performance in all of our functions and roles we will review our performance management policy and culture.

To position the Civil Service as an employer of choice we will clearly communicate the value of careers in the Civil Service, which will be key to attracting and developing talented people from all communities. By placing a focus on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in delivering HR strategies and initiatives, we can create a fairer, more open and inclusive climate for staff. This will in turn lead to improved decision-making, increased innovation and enhanced productivity in a Civil Service that better reflects Irish society.

Enhancing our approach to HR

As part of the development of our latest People Strategy for the Civil Service, we are assessing the capabilities we need to strengthen and diversify our HR functions. In developing our HR operating model we can better support evolving business needs.

Enhancing our expertise will bring a more consistent and modern approach to strategic HR management in the Civil Service. Improving our approach to HR data collection and analytics is critical to providing evidence-informed decisions. We will explore the potential to develop a Human Capital Management (HCM) system that transforms the traditional administrative functions of HR departments, for example recruitment, training, payroll and performance management, into opportunities to drive engagement and productivity.

Developing our organisations

Our organisational structures should support our workforce to operate in a more flexible, open, and collaborative manner. Adopting new ways of working within our structure will allow us to continue to meet the needs of the public. The Organisational Capability Review programme will continue to provide assistance to Departments and Offices to enhance their organisational development. Our workplace and working models will change as both the nature of work and demands for our services change. Expanding our shared service arrangements for corporate functions across the Civil Service will help to reduce the administrative burden on organisations and maximise the value we can offer to the public.

Fostering our culture

Building on the results of the 2020 Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey, we will explore opportunities to drive cross-Civil Service initiatives to address persistent challenging themes that are common to Departments and Offices. We will continue to survey staff to capture their insights and opinions and use these to inform our approach to workplace developments through the next iteration of the Employee Engagement Surveys. The COVID-19 pandemic underlines the importance of protecting and strengthening the well-being of our staff and further initiatives will be taken across the Civil Service to support well-being over the course of this Plan. Creating a culture for our staff that aligns with our values will significantly improve our performance as a Civil Service. Recognising and celebrating the success of our staff through the Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Awards will also form part of our work to reaffirm Civil Service values. The Civil Service is committed to promoting our native language by implementing the National Plan for the Provision of Irish-Medium Public Services.

Delivering on our 2030 ambition

CSR2030Framework

Workforce of the Future

- Develop and implement flexible working models
- Develop and introduce a new workforce planning framework
- Prioritise and drive the development of key skills for the workforce of the future
- Continue to develop strategic HR capacity

Workplace and Organisation of the Future

- Review and deliver organisational structures that foster greater agility and collaboration
- Re-imagine our workplaces to deliver better public services
- Expand and maximise the potential of shared services
- Foster workforce equality, diversity, inclusion and well-being
- Promote a positive workplace culture that aligns with Civil Service values

CSR2024 delivery

- Civil Service Blended Working Framework and associated Departmental policies implemented
- Flexible working models and ways of working explored
- Departments and Offices have workforce plans in place
- Civil Service current and future skills needs mechanism developed
- Recruitment processes aligned with business needs
- Revised competencies for the Civil Service Workforce of the Future
- Reviewed performance management policy, culture and process
- Strengthened leadership skills and capability at all levels
- Additional pathways to attract and develop talent
- Effective and fit for purpose HR services and supports available across the Civil Service
- A more diverse Civil Service workforce
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) focused data gathering, reporting and analysis
- Work commenced on a Human Capital Management (HCM) System to transform and integrate our HR and payroll systems

- An enhanced and accelerated model of delivery for the Organisational Capability Review Programme
- Review of the Civil Service organisational structure and design completed
- Agile and flexible workplaces meeting business needs and delivering better services to the public in place
- Expanded suite of shared services identified for the Civil Service
- Culture and values of the Civil Service reaffirmed
- Civil Service Employee Engagement programme enhanced
- Increased provision of public services through the Irish language

Workforce of the Future Action Plan

Strategic Priority	Actions
1 Develop and implement flexible working models	• Departments and Offices will develop more flexible and innovative ways of working, within a central Blended Working Framework.
	• We will explore a range of flexible working models.
	• We will review and explore service delivery options and associated working model requirements.
	• We will assemble diverse and multi-disciplinary teams to address issues that require inputs that go beyond divisional or organisational boundaries.
2 Develop and introduce a new workforce planning framework	• We will reinvigorate workforce planning and its value, and fully integrate it with the business planning, budgetary, recruitment and learning and development processes.
	• We will establish a multi-disciplinary Senior Working Group to sponsor and lead the embedding and review of strategic workforce planning across the Civil Service.
	• We will design a change management plan to embed workforce planning and implement a plan to strengthen workforce planning capability and capacity.
	• We will review our recruitment and selection processes to ensure they are aligned with the business needs.
3 Prioritise and drive the development of key skills for the workforce of the future	• We will develop a Civil Service skills register, which is a key component of strategic workforce planning. This will enable the optimum use of capabilities and skills to deliver high quality public services and address complex whole of Government challenges.
	• We will review and update the Civil Service competency framework to reflect current and anticipated knowledge, skills and behaviour needs.
	• We will undertake a comprehensive review of Civil Service performance management policy and culture, to drive effective individual, people manager, team, organisational and whole-of-Government performance.
	• We will promote a culture of coaching and mentoring behaviours by people managers and senior leaders. We will develop learning and development initiatives on the people manager aspect of a manager's role. People managers will have access to a range of people metrics that will inform and support them in their role.
	• We will develop an extensive range of new OneLearning courses to support civil servants in effectively performing in their roles.
	• We will continue to prioritise the development of leadership skills and capabilities at all levels including the design of a new Civil Service Talent Management Framework.
	• We will review current and create additional pathways to attract and develop talented people to work in the Civil Service, including those from new and diverse communities.
	• We will undertake Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) focused data gathering, reporting and analysis informed by the EDI Maturity Model.
	• We will develop an awareness campaign and roll out EDI training for all staff.
	• We will take a whole-of-government approach to developing and communicating a Civil Service value proposition.

Strategic Priority	Actions
4 Continue to develop strategic HR capacity	• We will complete the pilot HR Operating Model project through design and implementation phases, resulting in recommendations for consideration for rollout across the Civil Service.
	• We will partner with a professional body to recognise and increase HR professionalisation in the Civil Service.
	• We will establish a project team and develop the business case for a Human Capital Management (HCM) System that transforms the traditional administrative functions of HR departments, for example recruitment, training, payroll and performance management, into opportunities to drive engagement and productivity.

Workplace and Organisation of the Future Action plan

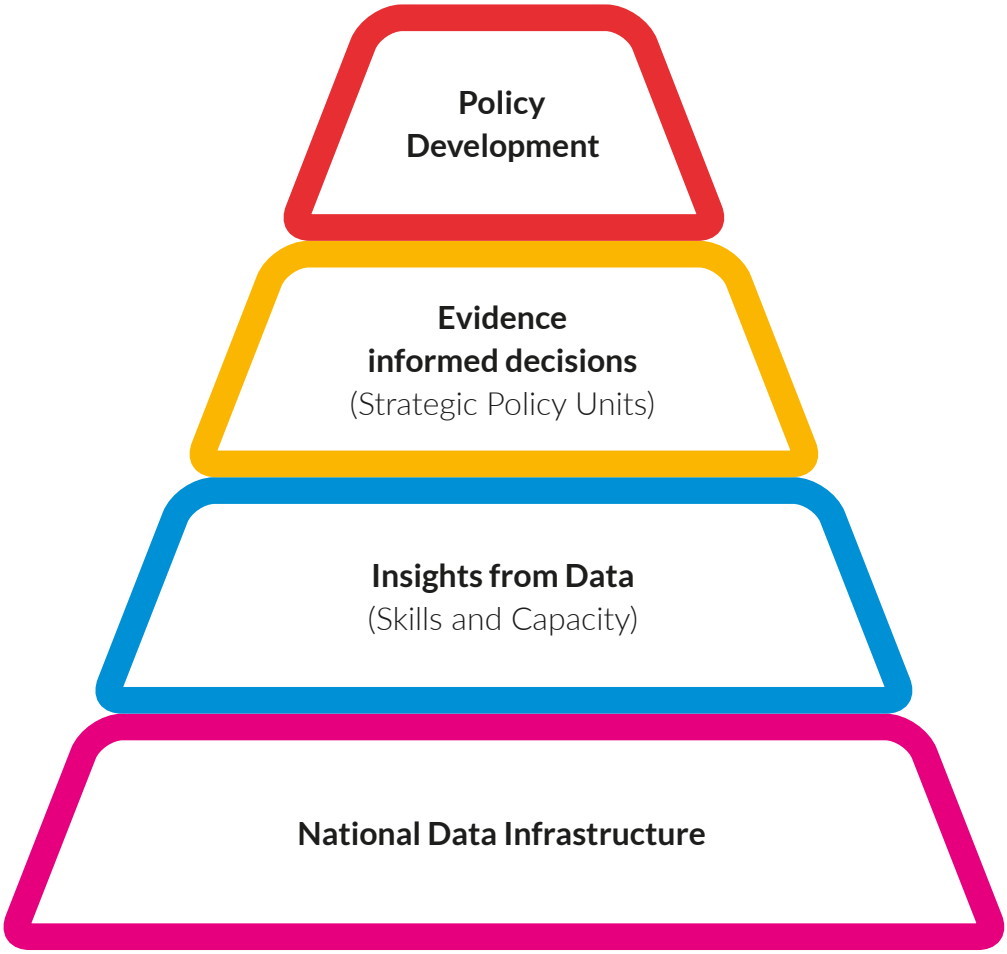
Strategic Priority	Actions
1 Review and deliver organisational structures that foster greater agility and collaboration	• We will review the delivery model for the Organisational Capability Review process and accelerate the programme. We will continue to make recommendations to enhance and support organisational development and assist organisations in implementing any necessary changes.
	• We will complete the review of the organisation structure and design of the Civil Service and develop a plan to implement the key findings.
2 Re-imagine our workplaces to deliver better public services	• We will optimise our workplaces to meet the changing needs of our staff and better support the business needs and delivery of services to the public.
	• We will harness the opportunities of new and emerging technologies to support how, where and when we deliver to boost productivity and efficiency.
	• We will provide workspaces to facilitate collaboration and innovation.
3 Expand and maximise the potential of shared services	• We will identify new areas of work that would benefit from a shared services model.
	• We will review and examine ways to further exploit the potential benefits of existing shared services while harnessing opportunities from emerging technologies.
	• We will complete the implementation of the initial phases of the Financial Management Shared Service.
4 Promote a positive inclusive workplace culture that aligns with Civil Service values and supports employee well-being	• We will review and refresh our Civil Service culture and values. We will develop a Civil Service wide communication and engagement campaign to re-establish our value proposition.
	• We will support people managers to deliver an inclusive workplace culture by providing development opportunities.
	• We will implement the Health and Well-being Framework to support initiatives consistently across the Civil Service to protect and strengthen employee health and well-being. We will monitor well-being metrics through our enhanced surveys.
	• We will explore opportunities to drive cross-Civil Service initiatives to address persistent challenging themes that are common to Departments and Offices.
	• We will develop a second iteration of the Employee Engagement Survey to streamline the approach and to support timely interventions.
	• We will continue to recognise and celebrate the success of staff and Departments and Offices through the Civil Service Excellence and Innovation awards and through local recognition events which support best practice in how we deliver our business.
	• We will progress the implementation of the National Plan for the Provision of Public Services through the medium of the Irish language.

Theme 3: Evidence-Informed Policy and Services

Evidence-informed insights are central to good strategic policy-making. This Action Plan aims to ensure that the Civil Service makes better use of data, further develops analytical skills and capacity of the Civil Service and invests in our policy development infrastructure. To ensure that the Civil Service always provides high quality policy advice, we will baseline our current level of capacity and internal structures and promote a culture of innovation and openness through greater outreach and external participation and consultation in policy development.

The key building blocks to enhance our insights-driven policy-making capabilities include access and use of data, supporting skills development and improving the policy making infrastructure and outreach.

- **Data:** Improving the use of available administrative data in the system can help inform decision-making and solve problems.
- **Skills:** Equipping our staff with appropriate skills and capabilities to derive policy insights from available data.
- **Policy Development Infrastructure:** Facilitating a joined-up approach to evidence informed policy development through Strategic Policy Units and stakeholder engagement.



Investing in our strategic policy infrastructure to create an effective bridge between data insights and public policy

Embedding multi-disciplinary Strategic Policy Units in Departments will facilitate the development of high quality evidence based policy and a structure for rigorous evaluation throughout the policy cycle. These units will work with system-wide supports and disciplines to enhance our strategic policy infrastructure. A standardised framework will enable consistency in the policy development process and provide guidance to policy-makers. Evaluating the broader impacts of public policy on societal well-being is a key component to better policy-making and will link to equality and environmental goals. The nature of challenges we face calls for a more collaborative approach to policy-making and a need to use the experience and expertise from across and beyond the Civil Service. By engaging with the public on an ongoing basis and drawing on strategic partnerships with the public service and the research community at key stages, we can strengthen the value and impact of our responses.

Managing uncertainty in an ever changing environment is complex and the recent lessons from the COVID-19 global pandemic have underlined the importance of alertness to and preparedness for major disruption. A new initiative to ensure that Ireland is ready for future challenges and that complements the National Risk Assessment process will help to mitigate against that uncertainty. Developing our strategic foresight capability to take a longer term view will assist in future-proofing plans and decisions.

Developing our skills and capacity to gain insights from data

As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, equipping our staff with the tools and skills to analyse data will help tackle the important national issues now facing the country including Brexit, Climate Change, housing, homelessness and healthcare. The IGEES and Irish Government Statistical Service (IGSS) will play a key role in equipping our staff with data and analytical capabilities to generate insights to inform policy development and the delivery of public services.

Maximising the potential of public data and delivering the National Data Infrastructure

Data and information provided by the public play a critical role in enhancing the quality of policy and services provided by the Civil Service. Further developing the National Data Infrastructure, led by the Central Statistics Office, will allow for an innovative approach to the provision of insights to support policy development and service delivery. It lays the foundations for enhanced data sharing mechanisms between Public Bodies which will facilitate better insights-driven decision making. Implementing the Public Service Data Strategy will enable a more joined-up whole-of-Government approach to how data is used and managed within the public service.

Ensuring the public have a clear understanding of how their data is being used, managed, shared and protected throughout the process will increase awareness and trust in our approach. Engaging with the public on an ongoing basis will demonstrate adherence to legislative and regulatory provisions. We will progress the objectives of the Open Data Strategy through the publication of high value government data in open format, making it publicly available and freely reusable; and engaging with a broad community of stakeholders to promote its social and economic benefits. It will increase openness and transparency between Government and the public.

Delivering on our 2030 ambition

CSR2030Framework

Strategic Policy Development

- Review, develop and invest in our strategic policy infrastructure
- Further develop a rigorous, professional and evidence-informed approach to policy development
- Prioritise and incentivise greater whole-of-government policy development and implementation
- Develop our strategic foresight capability

Insights-driven Decision-making

- Build a framework to inform the public about why their data is collected and how it is managed and used
- Develop the Irish Government Economic Evaluation Service (IGEES) as an effective bridge between data insights and public policy
- Further develop the National Data Infrastructure (NDI) to ensure provision of and access to the data needed for policy development

CSR2024 delivery

- Multi-disciplinary *Strategic Policy Units* across Departments where evidence informed policy making is conducted through bridging data insights to policy decisions established.
- A new 'Strengthening Policy Making Framework' launched
- A best practice and maturity framework for policy outreach and engagement
- First Government of Ireland Future Readiness Report published

- Support the Civil Service in developing analytical capability, professionalism and innovation in a structured manner drawing together, and building upon, developmental initiatives including OneLearning and IGEES.
- Library service for Policy Analysts established
- Further roll out of the NDI through the CSO
- Progress the objectives of the Open Data Strategy 2022 and its successor

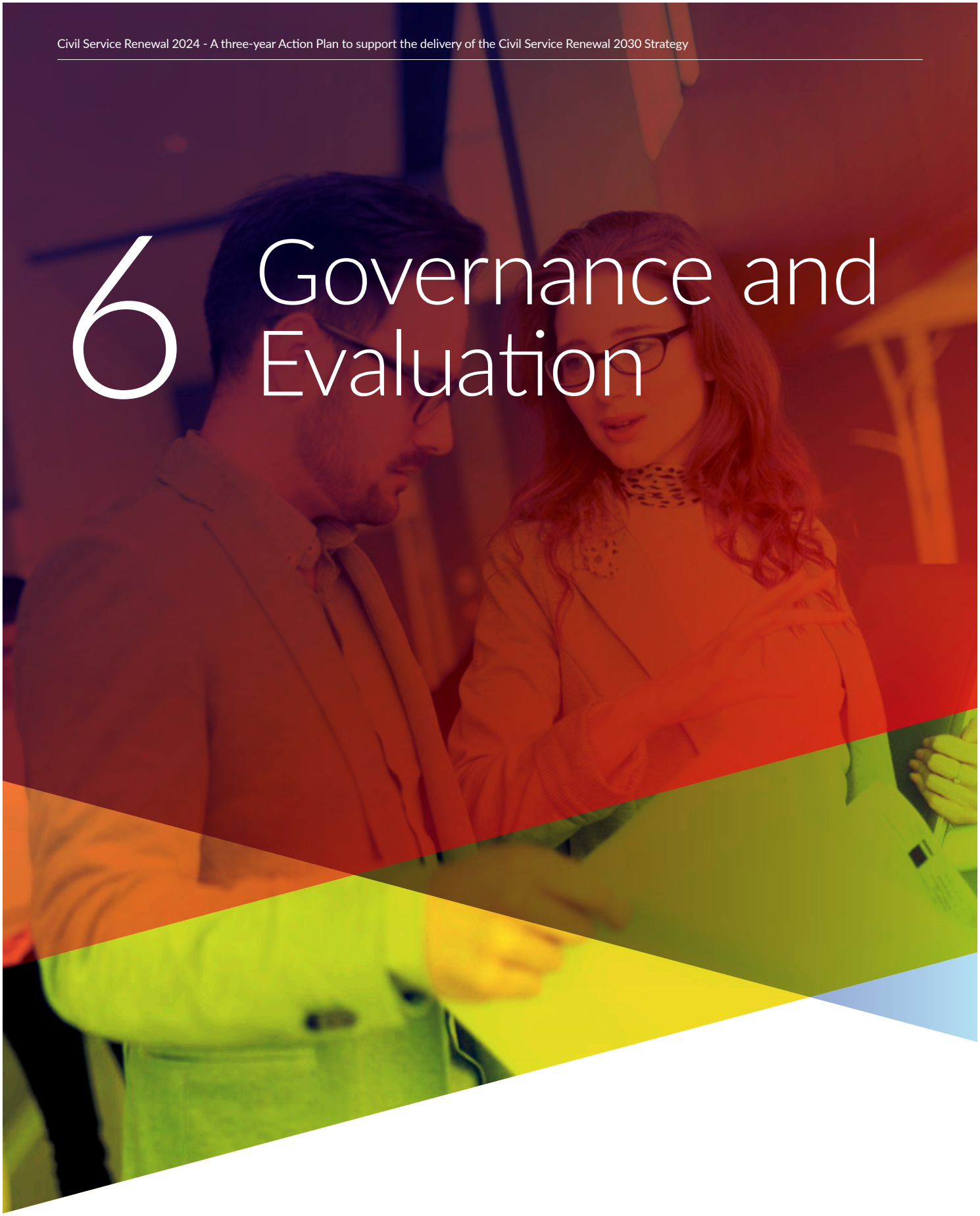
Strategic Policy Development Action Plan

Strategic Priority	Actions
1 **Review, develop and invest in our strategic policy infrastructure.**	• Implement the Programme for Government commitment to create Strategic Policy Units across Departments where evidence informed policy making is conducted through bridging data insights to policy decisions. Strategic Policy Units will include multi-disciplinary teams as necessary to the policy area, such as: a. Statisticians through the IGSS b. Economists and analysts through the IGEES c. Science advisors d. Accountants e. Legal experts
	• We will progress an extensive consultation process in Year 1 to gain insights on the role and impact of Strategic Policy Units in bridging the gap between data insights and policy decisions. This consultation process will include: bilateral engagement with policy units across Government departments; external discussion forums with academia and other research institutions; workshops with IGEES Governance Groups and facilitate Open Policy Debates.
2 **Further develop a rigorous, professional and evidence-informed approach to policy development**	• We will develop a standardised policy development approach through a 'Strengthening Policy Making Framework' drawing on extensive cross-government experience. The framework will cover international best practice, a digital toolkit and evaluative techniques such as cost-benefit analysis, poverty-proofing and regulatory impact assessment. The policy-proofing of current expenditure proposals will reference the National Well-being Framework. This approach will also be developed as a pillar of the Public Spending Code.
3 **Prioritise and incentivise greater whole-of-government policy development and implementation**	• We will convene a Task Force on Policy Outreach, Engagement and Consultation, as a cross-departmental team, using existing structures where available, to identify good and innovative practices in engaging and consulting with stakeholders in policy research and development. • In year one, we will consider output from the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science *Creating Our Future*[2] research communication campaign and utilise the key learnings from this, and other consultation processes, to inform the work programme for the new Task Force on outreach.
4 **Develop our strategic foresight capability**	• We will provide high-level guidance on how each Department can incorporate a strategic foresight dimension into the work agenda of its Strategic Policy Units; including as part of its risk management, innovation and public reporting processes. The objective is to develop an 'anticipatory' approach to trends and to potential disruptors to traditional modes of policy development and service delivery.
	• We will build upon the National Risk Assessment process with a complementary Government of Ireland Future Readiness Report, with clear Civil Service-wide ownership and accountability.

2 A National Conversation on Research in Ireland (https://creatingourfuture.ie/)

Insights-driven Decision-making Action Plan

Strategic Priority	Actions
1 **Build a Framework to inform the public about why their data is collected and how it is managed and used**	• Established as part of the Data Sharing and Governance Act, the Data Governance Board will improve public knowledge and facilitate increased confidence in and acceptance of data use. The work plan of the Board will include: – The introduction of data management standards and guidelines – Prohibiting or enforcing the collection of certain data by Public Service Bodies (PSBs) – Directing PSBs to share data under the Act – Cataloguing all data sharing in the Public Service – Designating Base Registries – The creation of a Unique Business Identifie r(UBI) – The creation of a Personal Data Portal
	• We will help the wider public service through training and guidance notes to foster data sharing and best practice data collection and management within a framework developed as part of the National Data Strategy.
	• We will progress the objectives of the Open Data Strategy by broadening the range of public bodies actively engaged in the Open Data initiative and continuing to engage with stakeholders and encourage the use of Open Data.
2 **Develop the Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service (IGEES) as an effective bridge between data insights and public policy**	• We will support the Civil Service in developing capability, professionalism and innovation in a structured manner and will draw together, and build upon, developmental initiatives including OneLearning and IGEES. This will include a CPD programme for Policy Analysts across Government Departments. • We will establish a library service for Policy Analysts. • We will progress and publicise the development of the IGSS to ensure that the wider Civil Service are aware of the services provided. • We will progress the IGEES recruitment initiative to ensure that there is an availability of analytical skills which will be needed to generate insights from data and feed them into the policy development process.
3 **Further Develop the National Data Infrastructure (NDI) to ensure provision of and access to the data needed for policy development.**	• We will use data as an enabler in line with the National Data Strategy by promoting key datasets, such as the PPSN and Eircode, in the design or redesign of public services. This will also require Civil and Public Service organisations to participate in data-sharing agreements in addition to publishing greater levels of open data.



6 Governance and Evaluation

Governance and Evaluation

A number of mechanisms will underpin our approach to monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this first Action Plan under CSR2030.

Civil Service Renewal Programme Management Office (PMO)

The Civil Service Renewal PMO will co-ordinate the implementation of the Action Plan using robust project and programme management. It will work closely with stakeholders to ensure that actions are delivered.

Strategic Project Management Approach

This first Action Plan sets out the initiatives that will progress each of the strategic priorities for the next three years. Appropriate governance arrangements will be put in place and Secretaries General will sponsor actions or groups of actions. Where possible, existing structures will be used to drive progress in an enhanced collaborative approach to the delivery of the plan. Project Managers will be assigned to each of our goals and detailed project plans, with associated outcomes and indicators, will be developed to support the delivery of this Action Plan. Each Project Sponsor and Project Manager will agree project milestones and, led by the Civil Service Renewal PMO, they will report to the Civil Service Management Board on a regular basis on the progression of their assigned projects. Project team members will have representation from all levels within the Civil Service.

Measuring for Success

Progress on implementing the commitments within the action plans will be measured, evaluated and reported on.

We will incorporate a broader set of outcomes to measure the impacts of our interventions on societal well-being, as per the commitment set out in the Programme for Government. Any risks and dependencies connected to the Action Plan will also be monitored and managed. A key focus of our evaluation approach will be on identifying lessons learned that can be applied to future work.

A range of indicators will be used to monitor progress at project level and will be reported on a regular basis to the Civil Service Management Board.

Progress Reports

The Civil Service will publish Progress Reports on an annual basis to detail the status of the priorities within the Action Plan and the progress on meeting the planned outcomes for each theme. The successes and accomplishments delivered by our people will also be communicated and celebrated.

Governance

Clear governance arrangements are critical to ensuring that progress is made on achieving the overall objectives of CSR2030 and implementing the actions in CSR2024. The Civil Service Management Board will collectively lead on the delivery of the overall Strategy and oversee the implementation of CSR2024.

Communications and Engagement

The implementation of actions in CSR2024 will be supported by a comprehensive and innovative staff communications and engagement programme throughout the course of this plan. This will raise awareness of the strategic objectives of the ten-year CSR2030 Strategy and the implementation priorities for the first three years. It will also provide opportunities for staff to engage with Civil Service Renewal and to give feedback on the actions and their implementation. This approach will support and facilitate the ongoing development of a culture of involvement and inclusion within the Civil Service and promote a greater sense of ownership and commitment for the delivery of the actions. It will be underpinned by regular progress updates on the success and impact of the actions which will encourage ongoing engagement and support for the plan.

The Civil Service Employee Engagement Surveys, conducted in 2015, 2017 and 2020, have provided a wealth of information on what it is like to work in the Civil Service. The findings of these surveys help to create a more effective and efficient Civil Service and have informed initiatives in areas such as Learning and Development, Employee Engagement and Well-being. We will explore how the Employee Engagement Survey series can be improved and streamlined to deliver results to Civil Service organisations on emerging issues in a more timely way.

Appendices

List of all Actions

Digital First and Innovation
Digital First

Actions	Year
• Establish baseline	1
• Collaborate with stakeholders and consult with the public	1
• Implement 8 GovTech actions identified in the Cruinnú report*	3
• Promote a common building blocks approach to digital services	1
• Deliver the first iteration of a Life Events Portal	2
• Develop the skills and knowledge of our workforce, while attracting and retaining new talent	1-3
• Provide training, digital tools and systems	1-3
• Provide opportunities for staff to retrain where required to meet emerging demands for core digital and data skills	1 -3
• Develop and publish a new Civil Service ICT HR Professionalisation Strategy	2
• Include digital competence in the Civil Service Competency Framework	1-2
• Bring greater openness and transparency to the public on our digital progress	1

**Implementation of this action will be progressed over the lifetime of the CSR2030 Strategy*

Embedding Innovation**

Actions	Year
• Explore and test new ways of engaging with our staff and the public and others to consult on the design and delivery of services	1-2
• Undertake an awareness campaign across the Civil Service to benefit from the experience of customer facing employees to use their unique position to capture feedback and identify ways to improve services	1-2
• Develop and promote the use of a user-driven protocol and guidelines to demonstrate the importance, value and impact of the public's input into the design and delivery of services	2-3
• Systematically include our commitment to drive innovation in key corporate documents such as Statements of Strategy, organisational business plans, innovation action plans and risk appetite statements	1
• Put mechanisms and systems in place to support, recognise and invest in innovation	1-3
• Continue to offer staff training in how to innovate and ongoing professional development to leaders throughout the Civil Service	1-3
• Formalise the inclusion of innovation in recruitment core competencies at appropriate grades and reflect in role profiles	1
• Provide enhanced facilities for civil and public servants to support cross-organisational innovation and collaboration	1-3
• Leverage the knowledge from Civil and Public Service organisations who have implemented successful innovations to assist those elsewhere who require a similar skill set or expertise	1-3
• Identify key projects and initiatives that are innovative for scaling elsewhere in the Civil or Public Service	1-3
• Collaborate with the wider ecosystem to encourage co-developed solutions	1-3

Actions	Year
• Establish a foresight function to scan national and international solutions, trends and emerging possibilities to help inform and guide future innovations	1-3
• Ensure Civil Service representation on the newly established Public Service Innovation Advisory Board which has a mix of civil and public servants and others from outside the Public Service to provide strategic vision, oversight and guidance to the Public Service's innovation function	1
• Encourage the use of new and emerging technologies across the Civil Service through experimentation and by collaborating with the private sector, start-ups and academia to develop knowledge and experience that will further embed technology adoption across the Civil Service	1-3

**Aligned with *Making Innovation Real*, the Public Service Innovation Strategy

Workforce, Workplace and Organisation of the Future
Workforce of the Future

Actions	Year
• Develop more flexible and innovative ways of working, within a central Blended Working Framework	1
• Explore a range of flexible working models	2
• Review and explore service delivery options and associated working model requirements.	2
• Assemble diverse and multi-disciplinary teams to address issues that require inputs that go beyond divisional or orgnisational boundaries	2
• Reinvigorate workforce planning and its value, and fully integrate it with the business planning, budgetary, recruitment and Learning and Development processes	1-3
• Establish a multi-disciplinary Senior Working Group to sponsor and lead the embedding and review of strategic workforce planning	1-3
• Design a change management plan to embed workforce planning and implement a plan to strengthen workforce planning capability and capacity	3
• Review our recruitment and selection processes to ensure they are aligned with the business needs	2
• Develop a Civil Service skills register, which is a key component of strategic workforce planning	2
• Review and update the Civil Service Competency Framework to reflect current and anticipated knowledge, skills and behaviour needs	1-2
• Review of Civil Service performance management policy and culture to drive effective individual, people manager, team, organisational and whole-of-Government performance	2-3
• Promote a culture of coaching and mentoring behaviours by people managers and senior leaders	1-3
• Develop an extensive range of new OneLearning courses to support civil servants in effectively performing in their roles	1-3
• Continue to prioritise the development of leadership skills and capabilities at all levels including the design of a new Civil Service Talent Management Framework	1-3
• Review current and create additional pathways to attract and develop talented people to work in the Civil Service, including those from new and diverse communities	2
• Undertake Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) focused data gathering, reporting and analysis informed by the EDI Maturity Model	1-2
• Develop an awareness campaign and roll out EDI training for all staff	2
• Take a whole-of-government approach to developing and communicating a Civil Service value proposition	2-3
• Complete the pilot HR Operating Model project through design and implementation phases	1-2
• Partner with a professional body to recognise and increase HR professionalisation in the Civil Service	1-3
• Establish a project team and develop the business case for a Human Capital Management (HCM) System	1-3

Workplace and Organisation of the Future

Actions	Year
• Review the delivery model for the Organisational Capability Review process and accelerate the programme	1-3
• Complete the review of the organisation structure and design of the Civil Service and develop a plan to implement the key findings	3
• Optimise our workplaces to meet the changing needs of our staff and better support the business needs and delivery of services to the public	2
• Harness the opportunities of new and emerging technologies to support how, where and when we deliver to boost productivity and efficiency	1-3
• Provide workspaces to facilitate collaboration and innovation	1-3
• Identify new areas of work that would benefit from a shared services model	3
• Review and examine ways to further exploit the potential benefits of existing shared services	1-3
• Complete the implementation of the initial phases of the Financial Management Shared Service	3
• Review and refresh our Civil Service culture and values	1-3
• Develop a Civil Service wide communication and engagement campaign to re-establish our value proposition	3
• Support people managers to deliver an inclusive workplace culture by providing development opportunities	1-3
• Implement the Health and Well-being Framework to support initiatives consistently across the Civil Service to protect and strengthen employee health and well-being	1-3
• Explore opportunities to drive cross-Civil Service initiatives to address persistent challenging themes common to Departments and Offices	1-3
• Develop a second iteration of the Employee Engagement Survey to streamline the approach and to support timely interventions	1
• Continue to recognise and celebrate the success of staff through the Civil Service Excellence and Innovation awards and through local recognition events	1-3
• Progress the implementation of the National Plan for the Provision of Public Services through the medium of the Irish language	1-3

Evidence-informed Policy and Services
Strategic Policy Development

Actions	Year
• Implement the Programme for Government commitment to create Strategic Policy Units across Departments where evidence informed policy making is conducted through bridging data insights to policy decisions	3
• Progress an extensive consultation process to gain insights on the role and impact of Strategic Policy Units in bridging the gap between data insights and policy decisions	1
• Develop a standardised policy development approach through a 'Strengthening Policy Making Framework' drawing on extensive cross-government experience	2
• Convene a Task Force on Policy Outreach, Engagement and Consultation	1
• Consider output from the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Creating Our Future research communication campaign and utilise the key learnings from this, and other consultation processes, to inform the work programme for the new Task Force on outreach	1
• Provide high-level guidance on how each Department can incorporate a strategic foresight dimension into the work agenda of its Strategic Policy Units	2
• Build upon the National Risk Assessment process with a complementary Government of Ireland Future Readiness Report, with clear Civil Service-wide ownership and accountability	3

Insights-driven Decision-making

Actions	Year
• The workplan of the Data Governance Board will include: – Introduction of data management standards and guidelines – Prohibiting or enforcing the collection of certain data by PSBs – Directing PSBs to share data under the Act – Cataloguing all data sharing in the Public Service – Designating Base Registries – The creation of a Unique Business Identifier (UBI) – The creation of a Personal Data Portal	1-3
• Help the wider public service through training and guidance notes to foster data sharing and best practice data collection and management within a framework developed as part of the National Data Strategy	1-2
• Progress the objectives of the Open Data Strategy by broadening the range of public bodies actively engaged in the Open Data initiative and continuing to engage with stakeholders and encourage the use of Open Data	1-3
• Support the Civil Service in developing capability, professionalism and innovation, to include a CPD programme for Policy Analysts across Government Departments	2
• Establish a library service for Policy Analysts	1
• Progress and publicise the development of the IGSS to ensure that the wider Civil Service are aware of the services provided	1
• Progress the IGEES recruitment initiative to ensure that there is an availability of analytical skills which will be needed to generate insights from data and feed them into the policy development process	1
• Use data as an enabler in line with the National Data Strategy by promoting key datasets, such as the PPSN and Eircode, in the design or redesign of public services	1-3

10-Year Strategic Framework

Evidence-Informed Policy and Services

Strategic Policy Development

- Review, develop and invest in our strategic policy infrastructure
- Further develop a rigorous, professional and evidence-informed approach to policy development
- Prioritise and incentivise greater whole-of-government policy development and implementation
- Develop our strategic foresight capability

Insights-driven Decision-making

- Build a framework to inform the public about why their data is collected and how it is managed and used
- Develop the Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service (IGEES) as an effective bridge between data insights and public policy
- Further develop the National Data Infrastructure (NDI) to ensure provision of and access to the data needed for policy development

Digital First and Innovation

Digital First

- Build globally recognised digital services through co-creation with our stakeholders and the public ensuring that 90% of applicable services are consumed online
- Build 24/7 services providing consistent, integrated and end-to-end digital solutions
- Build a digitally skilled workforce enabling the Civil Service to realise a "Digital First" culture
- Foster public trust in the safety, transparency and value of digital solutions

Embedding Innovation*

- Build citizen-centric innovation by putting citizens and users at the centre
- Create a culture of innovation where all staff are empowered to innovate
- Scale up innovation through working across sectors and organisations
- Drive transformative innovation across the Civil Service by pioneering change

Workforce, Workplace and Organisation of the Future

Workforce of the Future

- Develop and implement flexible working models
- Develop and introduce a new workforce planning framework
- Prioritise and drive the development of key skills for the workforce of the future
- Continue to develop strategic HR capacity

Workplace and Organisation of the Future

- Review and deliver organisational structures that foster greater agility and collaboration
- Re-imagine our workplaces to deliver better public services
- Expand and maximise the potential of shared services
- Foster workforce equality, diversity, inclusion and well-being
- Promote a positive workplace culture that aligns with Civil Service values

*Aligned with *Making Innovation Real*, the Public Service Innovation Strategy

CSR2024 Evidence Base

The development of CSR2024 is informed by range of sources that together provided a comprehensive evidence base.

Taskforce

A Taskforce of senior civil servants representing all Government Departments participated in a whole-of-Government process to shape Civil Service Renewal 2030 which informed the development of Civil Service Renewal 2024.

Civil and Public Service Response

The experience of the Civil and Public Service in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Organisational Capability Reviews

The Organisational Capability Review programme examines the areas of strategy, leadership, delivery and organisational capability and lessons learned from the six reviews completed to date under the Organisational Capability Review programme.

Civil Service Employee Engagement Surveys

Findings of the Civil Service Employee Engagement Surveys undertaken in 2015, 2017 and 2020 provide data on the measures of employee engagement and the views civil servants have on their work. Findings from supplementary analyses from the surveys on shaping the future of work and remote working

Civil Service Customer and Business Satisfaction Surveys

The results of the latest Civil Service Customer and Business Satisfaction Surveys published in 2019.

Consultation with Management Boards

A consultation process was held with Management Boards to facilitate Departmental feedback on the direction of reform.

Implementation of the 2014 Civil Service Plan

41 Town Hall meetings with approximately 3,500 staff were held over the course of implementation of the 2014 Civil Service Renewal Plan providing the opportunity for civil servants to discuss workplace issues and the reform programme.

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland