Fiscal balances are normalizing following fiscal consolidation

Ireland had a fiscal deficit of 13.8% of GDP in 2009 at the cusp of the financial crisis, and an estimated structural deficit of 8.7% of potential GDP, when adjusted for the economic cycle and one-off fiscal operations. Yet as of 2015, the observed deficit had shrunk to 2% of GDP, while the structural balance reached -1.3% of potential GDP. The closing of this gap reflects the stabilisation of the fiscal balances, which will continue to improve, as the OECD projects that the structural primary balance, when further adjusted for net interest payments, will maintain a surplus of 1.1% from 2015 until 2018.

In Ireland government plays a very strong role in the redistribution of income

Governments fund the provision of goods and services to citizens, but also play a key redistributive role between different groups through the provision of tax benefits and transfers. The difference in income inequality between before and after taxes and transfers, as measured by the Gini coefficient, was the highest among OECD countries in Ireland, the Gini coefficient of disposable income before taxes and transfers was relatively high 0.58 in 2013, yet it fell to 0.31 after taxes and transfers are included. Meanwhile, on average across all OECD countries, the Gini coefficient fell from 0.48 to 0.32 when taxes and transfers are taken into account.

Stakeholder engagement practices for developing regulations are less developed in Ireland than in other OECD countries

On the OECD Indicators of Regulatory Policy and Governance (iREG), which comprise four key dimensions (methodology, oversight and quality control, systematic adoption and transparency), Ireland scores 1.1 in the area of stakeholder engagement for developing primary laws, while the OECD average lies at 2.1. This is inter alia due to the fact that stakeholder engagement is only formally required in the development of some primary laws and subordinate regulations, and that there is no requirement that consultations are open to the general public.
**Public Finance and Economics**

### Fiscal balance* (2015, 2016)

- **2015**: Ireland -2.8% of GDP
- **2016**: Ireland -0.6% of GDP

Source: OECD National Accounts

### Government expenditures (2015, 2016)

- **2015**: Ireland 28.0% of GDP
- **2016**: Ireland 29.5% of GDP

Source: OECD National Accounts

### Government investment (2015, 2016)

- **2015**: Ireland 1.9% of GDP
- **2016**: Ireland 1.7% of GDP

Source: OECD National Accounts

### Government gross debt* (2015, 2016)

- **2015**: Ireland 40.9% of GDP
- **2016**: Ireland 29.5% of GDP

Source: OECD National Accounts

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**Public Employment**

### General government employment as % of total employment (2015)

- **Ireland**: 15.0% of total employment

Source: OECD National Accounts

### Women in the civil service ...

- **Ireland**: 60.4% of central government employees

Source: OECD (2016) Survey on the Composition of the workforce in Central/federal Governments

### ... and in senior positions (2015)

- **Ireland**: 29.1% of central government employees in senior positions

Source: OECD (2016) Survey on the Composition of the workforce in Central/federal Governments

### Percentage of central government employees aged 55 years or older (2015)

- **Ireland**: 26.7% of central government employees aged 55 years or older

Source: OECD (2016) Survey on the Composition of the workforce in Central/federal Governments

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**Public Sector Compensation**

### Annual compensation across central government positions (2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>2015 USD PPP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secretarial Positions</td>
<td>52,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Professionals</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Managers (D3 positions)</td>
<td>88,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Managers (D1 positions)</td>
<td>134,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>231,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD (2016) Survey on the compensation of employees in central / federal governments
Human Resource Management

Composite indicators on HRM practices in central government (2016)

- Extent of delegation of HRM practices in line ministries: 0.61 (Ireland)
- Extent of the use of performance assessments in HR decisions: 0.64 (Ireland)
- Extent of the use of performance related pay: 0.64 (Ireland)
- Use of separate HRM practices for senior civil servants: 0.55 (Ireland)
- Collection of administrative data: 0.68 (Ireland)

Source: OECD (2016) Strategic Human Resources Management Survey

Budgeting

Performance budgeting practices at the central level of government (2016)

- Ireland: 0.41

Source: OECD (2016) Survey of Performance Budgeting

Public Procurement

General government procurement expenditures (2015)

- Ireland: 24.7%

Source: OECD National Accounts

Strategic public procurement - Objectives (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Support for green public procurement</th>
<th>Support for SMEs</th>
<th>Support for innovative goods and services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some procuring entities have developed an internal strategy/policy
A strategy/policy has been developed at a central level
A strategy/policy has been rescinded
There has never been a strategy/policy in place

Source: OECD (2016) Survey on Public Procurement

Regulatory governance

Composite indices on regulatory governance for primary laws* (2014)

- Stakeholder engagement in developing regulations: 1.09 (Ireland)
- Regulatory Impact Assessment for developing regulations: 2.12 (Ireland)
- Ex post evaluation of regulations: 0.51 (Ireland)

Source: OECD Indicators of Regulatory Policy and Governance (iREG)

* See Notes
**Fiscal balance** as reported in the System of National Accounts (SNA) framework, also referred to as net lending (+) or net borrowing (-) of government, is calculated as total government revenues minus total government expenditures.

**Regulatory governance indicators:** The results for stakeholder engagement and Regulatory Impact Assessment apply exclusively to processes for developing primary laws initiated by the executive. Data is not applicable to the United States, where all primary laws are initiated by Congress. In the majority of countries, most primary laws are initiated by the executive, except for Mexico and Korea, where a higher share of primary laws are initiated by parliament/congress (respectively 90.6% and 84%).

**Government gross debt** is reported according to the SNA definition, which differs from the definition applied under the Maastricht Treaty. It is defined as all liabilities that require payment or payments of interest or principal by the debtor to the creditor at a date or dates in the future. All debt instruments are liabilities, but some liabilities such as shares, equity and financial derivatives are not debt.

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**OURdata Index: Open, Useful, Reusable Government Data (2017)**

Composite index: from 0 lowest to 1 highest

- **Ireland:** 0.53
- **Global Average:** 0.55

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government support to re-use</th>
<th>Data accessibility</th>
<th>Data availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD (2017) Survey on Open Government Data

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**Individuals using the Internet for sending filled forms via public authorities websites in the past 12 months (2016)**

- **Ireland:** 48.0%
- **Global Average:** 35.6%

Source: OECD, ICT database; and Eurostat, Information Society database

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**Core Government Results**

**Satisfaction and confidence across public services (2016)**

- **National government:**
  - Ireland: 57% satisfaction, 42% confidence
- **Police:**
  - Ireland: 79% satisfaction, 77% confidence
- **Health care:**
  - Ireland: 60% satisfaction, 70% confidence
- **Judicial system:**
  - Ireland: 70% satisfaction, 55% confidence
- **Education system:**
  - Ireland: 83% satisfaction, 67% confidence

Source: Gallup World Poll

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**Differences in income inequality pre and post-tax and government transfers (2013)**

- **Ireland:**
  - Pre-tax and transfers: Higher inequality 0.58, Lower inequality 0.31
  - After tax and transfers: Higher inequality 0.47, Lower inequality 0.32

Source: OECD Income Distribution Database

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**Limited government powers (2016)**

- **Ireland:** Limited government powers 0.75

Source: The World Justice Project

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**Notes**

- **Fiscal balance** as reported in the System of National Accounts (SNA) framework, also referred to as net lending (+) or net borrowing (-) of government, is calculated as total government revenues minus total government expenditures.
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**Government at a Glance 2017**

*Government at a Glance* provides readers with a dashboard of key indicators assembled with the goal of contributing to the analysis and international comparison of public sector productivity and performance. Indicators on government revenues, expenditures, and employment are presented, alongside key output and outcome data for education, health and justice. Information on key enablers to increase productivity including on digital government, budget procedures, strategic human resource management, open government data and innovative practices are also included. In a context of tight budget constraints in many member countries, good indicators are needed more than ever, in order to help governments make informed decisions regarding resource allocation and to help restore confidence in government institutions.

The Excel spreadsheets used to create the tables and figures in *Government at a Glance 2017* are available via the StatLinks provided throughout the publication: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/gov_glance-2017-en](http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/gov_glance-2017-en)

For more information on the data (including full methodology and figure notes) and to consult all other Country Fact Sheets: [www.oecd.org/gov/govataglance.htm](http://www.oecd.org/gov/govataglance.htm)