



An  
Phríomh-Oifig  
Staidrimh

Central  
Statistics  
Office

# National Data Infrastructure Annual Report 2025



**Bonneagar Sonraí Náisiúnta**

**National Data Infrastructure**

Standards



Build In

Skills



Build Up

Services



Build Out

**National Data Identifiers**

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# 1 Overview

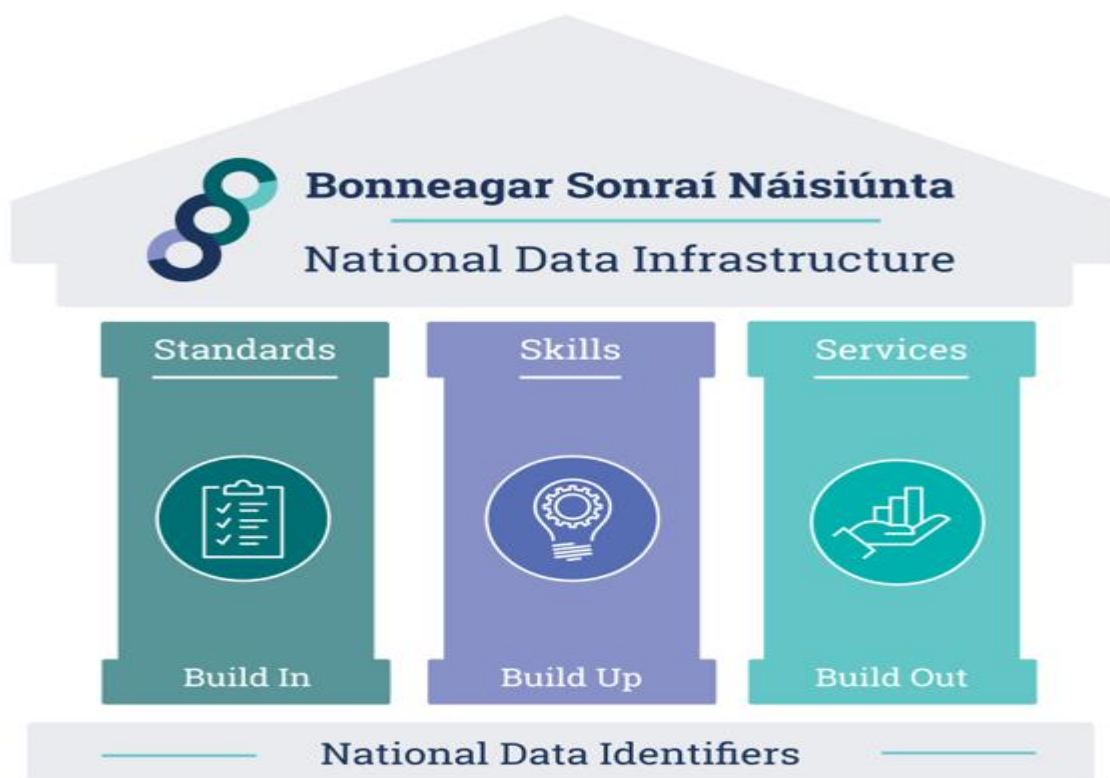
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## 1.1 National Data Infrastructure

The framework for the National Data Infrastructure (NDI) was developed in 2024. It was built on the strong foundations of the National Data Identifiers. The common identifiers- PPSN, Eircode and Unique Business Identifier- ensure that data is linkable across the system. The next step was to build on these strong foundations. Three pillars were identified which would build in standards, build up skills and build out services for the system.

Prior to the introduction of the NDI, the public service was profoundly challenged to effectively utilise data in its response to crises and other challenges. Data was fragmented across government departments and agencies without a consistent means for linking and integration, leading to inefficiencies, duplication, and missed opportunities for innovation.

The development of the NDI began over a decade ago when the CSO presented its proposal for delivering joined-up data for a joined-up government. The first task was to collaborate with colleagues across the system to develop National Data Identifiers – Eircode, Personal Public Service Number (PPSN), and the Unique Business Identifier (UBI). These identifiers laid the foundations for the modernisation of the Irish Statistical System. Given the progress that was made during this period, it was apparent that further supports and services would need to be provided to the national system to meet the increasing demand for using high quality, consistent data. This gave rise to the expansion of the National Data Infrastructure.



## Standards

The CSO is developing a suite of data standards to ensure all data collected across the civil and public service is gathered using agreed standards so that findings can be defined, measured, and presented in a consistent way.

## Skills

Data skills are foundational to every aspect of building and maintaining a data infrastructure for the civil and public service. The CSO continues to develop the range of supports available to the system.

## Services

As the system builds in standards and enhances its skill set, there will be further opportunities to expand the services the NDI can offer. The integration of standards and the development of skills across the system will also enable civil and public bodies to build out the required services to support the ongoing development of the NDI.

## 1.2 National Data Identifiers

The National Data Identifiers is a framework established in 2017 to facilitate the seamless linking and sharing of data across the national data system. Through an integrated approach the common identifiers enable public bodies to fully exploit their rapidly improving data sources for policy and operational purposes. The primary purpose of the National Data Identifiers is to improve the efficiency, accuracy, and analysis of public services by ensuring that data held by different government departments and agencies can be reliably connected. One of the main challenges for Official Statistics is the continued growing demand for data and insight. Developing alternative data sources such as public sector administrative data holdings is critical to addressing this challenge. Realising the full potential of the identifiers requires a continued coordinated approach to data linkage and integration across the system.

To facilitate the linking of data across administrative systems, the National Data Identifiers was established in 2017 and involves the collection and storage of **three** key identifiers on public sector data holdings, whenever they are relevant to National Statistical System (NSS) in their dealings with customers. The three identifiers needed for National Data to be effective are:

- The **Personal Public Service Number (PPSN)** for interactions between the individual and the public sector.
- The **Eircode** to identify location of the respective individual/business.
- The **Unique Business Identifier (UBI)**, to enable improvements in service delivery, and policy formulation and analysis for businesses when interacting with the public sector.

PSBs are fully committed to increasing the collection and use of national identifiers with individual PPSN coverage running at almost 80% for new records<sup>1</sup> in 2024 and the level of new address records with an Eircode assigned of 70% for the same period. Coverage of the UBI on relevant data holdings will be measured in a similar way to PPSN and Eircode as the implementation of the UBI continues to be rolled out.

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<sup>1</sup> New records refer to individuals added to a database during the reference year.

## 1.3 NDI Conference 2025

In November 2025 the CSO held their second NDI themed conference focusing on how the National Data Infrastructure has continued to develop and transform the way we use the data.

The conference showcased the progress made with the NDI during 2025 and promoted progress under the 3 key pillars of Standards, Services and Skill. The expanded NDI is built on the solid foundations of the 3 national identifiers of PPSN, Eircode and UBI. The aim of the expanded NDI is for the CSO to develop supports and guidance to all producers of data across the state in order to utilise the full potential of data and to provide the evidence required for policy formulation and evaluation.

The programme for this year's event was built around four sessions, opening with a presentation on "Realising the Vision", which set the scene by reflecting on a decade of progress and challenges, outlining the next steps in ensuring data is embedded as a national resource. Following that, the day featured three thematic segments focused on the NDI's core pillars: Standards, Skills and Services.

### **Standards – "AI Ready Data"**

This segment addressed the challenges of preparing data for advanced analytics while maintaining quality and trust. It explored and considered what's needed to ensure Ireland's data systems are equipped to meet the opportunities and risks posed by artificial intelligence.

### **Skills – "Data Literacy: A Strategic Enabler"**

This session highlighted the critical role of data literacy in unlocking the full potential of the NDI. It highlighted initiatives that strengthen capabilities across the public sector, support more effective policymaking and build public trust. The session identified emerging needs and the additional skills and capabilities required to stay future-ready.

### **Services – "Virtual Data Rooms (VDRs)"**

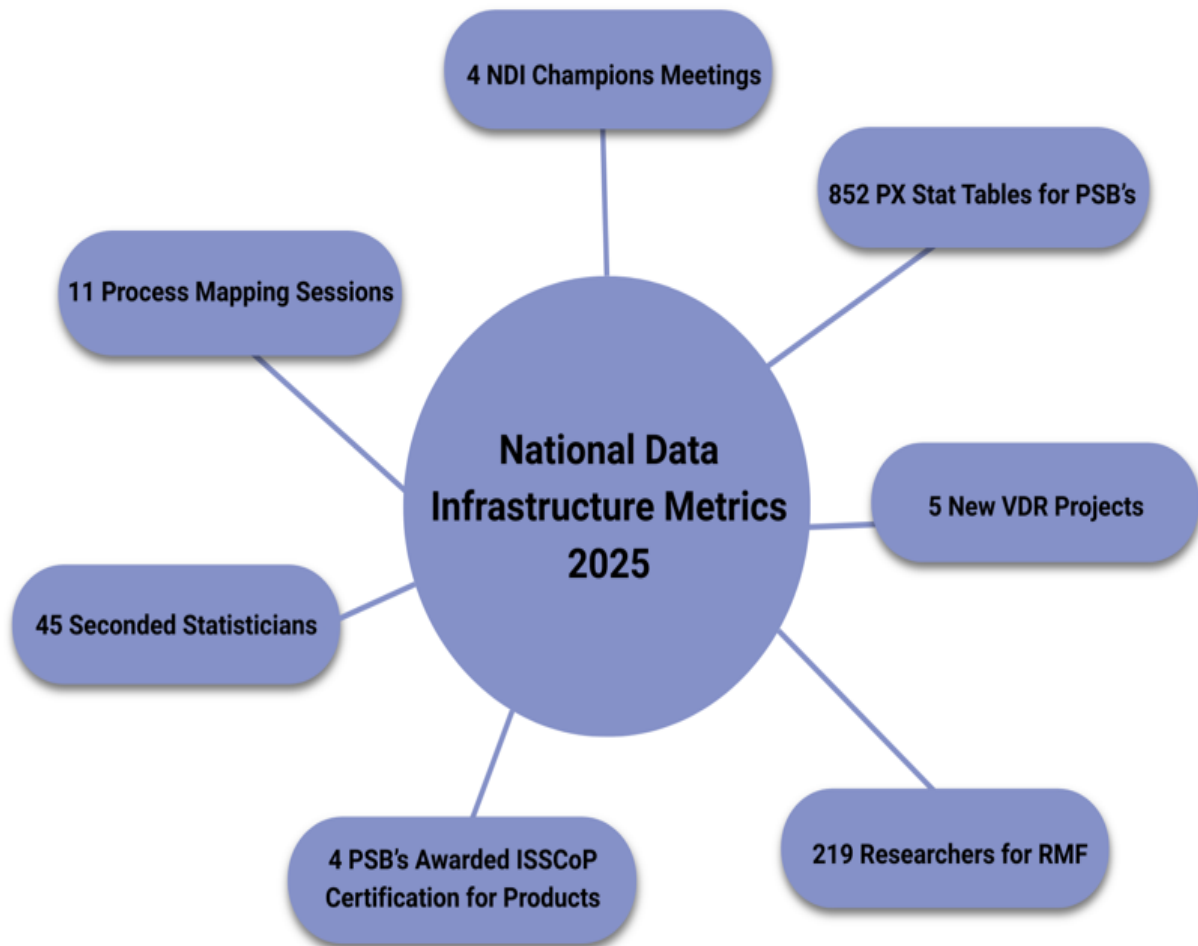
This part of the programme showcased the CSO's VDRs — a collaborative platform enabling public sector bodies to securely access and analyse pseudonymised microdata. It demonstrated how VDRs support evidence-based policymaking, provide valuable insights for policy development and evaluation, and underscore the importance of strong governance, safeguards and collaboration between the CSO and participating organisations to deliver successful projects.

The conference concluded with agreed actions for the year ahead, aligned with the goal of advancing data as a national resource.

## 1.4 NDI Metrics in 2025

The levels of engagement across the system continued to grow in 2025, resulting in measurable progress and deeper alignment. By working together, building on our combined strengths and sharing insights the NDI has accelerated outcomes and created meaningful impact across the system.

The National Data Infrastructure (NDI) metrics provide a systematic framework for evaluating the readiness, effectiveness and quality of our national data ecosystem. Regular measurement enables benchmarking over time across each of the pillars. The metrics will help us to target reforms and focus efforts where they are most needed. By grounding policy design and statistical planning in consistently measured and comparable indicators, the NDI metrics increase transparency, coordination, and the overall impact of data on public outcomes.



Some of the key metrics which continued the advancement of the NDI during 2025 are detailed below:

## Standards



### Irish Statistical System Code of Practice (ISSCoP)

The Irish Statistical System Code of Practice (ISSCoP), coordinated by the Central Statistics Office (CSO), continues to strengthen the quality, transparency and credibility of official statistics produced across Ireland. ISSCoP promotes professional independence, timeliness, accessibility, quality, and confidentiality in statistical outputs, reinforcing public trust in data used for policy, decision-making and public discourse.

2025 saw substantial progress in ISSCoP certification with the CSO Management Board awarding ISSCoP certification to the following organisations:

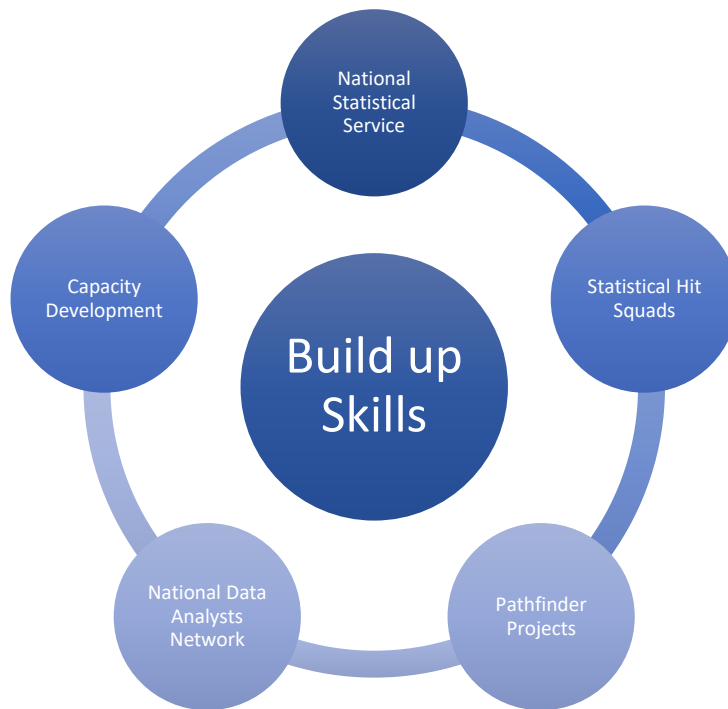
- The Road Safety Authority (RSA) had five products certified, adding official quality-assured statistics to the Irish Statistical System.
- Solas, Ireland's further education and training authority, received ISSCoP certification for one of their statistical outputs in September 2025.
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) added one certified product in October 2025, further expanding the range of official statistics across sectors.
- In December 2025, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) received ISSCoP certification for five key energy statistics, including monthly energy series and the National Energy Balance.

Further information relating to ISSCoP<sup>2</sup> is available on the National Data website.

### National Data Methodology Hub

The National Data Methodology Hub<sup>3</sup> was launched in September 2025. Standard reports on methods and quality for selected statistical outputs from across the system are available on the Hub. These reports provide information to users on the methodology in place in a particular output together with an assessment of the quality of the statistical output in terms of the quality dimensions set out in the Code of Practice for official statistics. The CSO would like to thank the Department of Health for collaborating with us and providing documentation for our proof of concept earlier in the year.

## Skills



### National Statistical Service

The National Statistical Service (NSS), formerly the Irish Government Statistical Service, is a statistical staff secondment programme, formed to assist with the development of statistical capabilities across the Public Service. The service continues to grow and be well received across the system. In January 2025 there were 45 seconded statisticians and senior statisticians appointed to 17 Departments and Public Sector Bodies.

The primary objectives of the secondment programme are as follows:

- Support the enhancement of the statistical capabilities in the Host Organisation.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nationaldata.ie/Standards/ISSCoP/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nationaldata.ie/Standards/NationalDataMethodologyHub/>

- Support the rollout of the NDI (National Data Infrastructure). This will include updates on issues around key NDI identifiers (PPSN, Eircode, UBI) in Host Organisations, as well as implementing data quality and standard classifications.
- Support strong co-operation between NSS and Irish Government Economic & Evaluation Service (IGEES) to improve synergy between the two networks.

### **National Data Analytics Network (NDAN)**

The National Data Analyst Network (NDAN) was launched in January 2025 replacing the Formal Statisticians Liaison Group (FSLG). The group current has over 400 members from 30 Government Departments and Public Sector Bodies.

NDAN promotes the use of public sector data and supports the development of the National Data Infrastructure. It focuses on communication by advancing National Statistics Board (NSB) priorities:

- Aligning data strategies and addressing legislative changes.
- Collaboration by fostering networking.
- Encouraging cross-project collaboration.
- Promoting the use of tools such as the Virtual Data Rooms (VDR's)
- Promoting capacity by sharing project outputs, methodologies and technological solutions to enhance expertise across the system.

There were three NDAN meetings during 2025:

- January (Hybrid)
- May (In-person)
- September (Hybrid)

Members of the network presented on diverse areas of their analytics work, a selection of the presentations are included below:

- The use of AI in the Irish Coast Guard.
- Pobal's use of CSO data for the targeting of resources.
- The development of the live register by the Department of Social Protection.

### **Data Literacy**

An interactive workshop on 'Public Sector Data Literacy - Identifying Key Gaps and Opportunities' was held at an in-person NDAN meeting in Dublin Castle in May 2025. Participants discussed their most pressing data literacy needs. Improving data literacy is a growing priority across the public sector. Many staff work with data every day without realising it, and supporting them to build confidence, skills and good data practices is essential for better decision-making, improved service delivery, and stronger public trust.

To address this need, a new public-sector-wide data literacy training programme is being developed by a cross-sector group of representatives from multiple public bodies, led by the CSO. The programme has been specifically designed for civil and public servants who are at the early stages of understanding data and aims to support us in building a more capable and data-aware workforce.

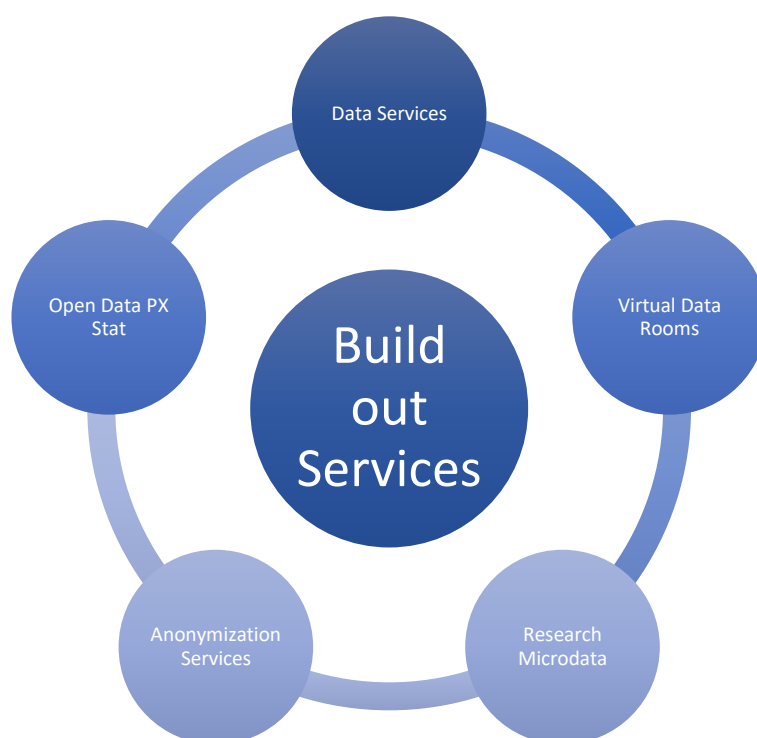
The group are currently planning a pilot rollout, which will test the training with a broad group of staff from across the public sector. The insights from this pilot will help refine the programme before

wider release. The training will combine self-paced eLearning with live, instructor-led sessions. While no dates have been confirmed yet, it is proposed to host the eLearning in April 2026 and live training (online) in early summer 2026.

### Communities of Practice

The CSO Statistical Training Unit continued to engage and promote our Communities for Practice during 2025. There has been increased awareness and membership of the Geographic Information System (GIS) following a successful presentation at the September NDI Champions meeting. The GIS team assisted Department of Health to put up Health Regions and lookups between small areas and these geographies. These are now shared on GeoHive from our AGOL infrastructure.

## Services



### Open Data – High Value Datasets

The European Commission adopted an implementing act (Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/138) on high-value datasets on 21 December 2022, which establishes the list of High-Value Datasets (HVD) belonging to the thematic categories and lays down the arrangements for publishing and reusing HVD. The CSO HVD are listed as per Statistics thematic category.

The Statistical System Coordination Directorate in CSO had a recent collaboration with the UCD School of Computer Science Department - Exploring and Visualising High-Value Datasets: Student Dashboard Presentation.

This initiative was open to students enrolled in UCD's School of Computer Science Information Visualisation module who used CSO HVDs for their Visual Exploration and Communication assignment.

The five best visualisations were selected by UCD academic staff to be delivered at a presentation in Ardee Road which was held recently (15 Jan).

As part of their Information Visualisation module, students enrolled in UCD's School of Computer Science Information Visualisation module utilised CSO data to create dashboards that demonstrated the "exceptional potential for reuse" as defined by EU Regulation 2023/138.

The event strengthened the CSO partnership with UCD and also demonstrated the practical impact and opportunities of how data can be transformed into powerful visual stories and meaningful insights.

### **Virtual Data Rooms (VDR's)**

The objective of the Virtual Data Rooms (VDR) service is to provide a secure environment where Civil and Public Sector (CPS) organisations can apply to the CSO to access pseudonymized data for statistical purposes. This service is being provided exclusively for Civil and Public Sector organisations, whilst working in collaboration with the CSO, to conduct analysis that supports evidence-based decision making, necessary for policy evaluation and formulation.

Further details of progress and VDR metrics are available in Section 1.9 of this report.

### **Research Microdata**

The primary objective of the CSO in providing access to microdata is to support the research community and to ensure that maximum usage is made of the data collected by the CSO. This approach supports the move towards evidence-based policymaking, has the potential to reduce the cost of research and also helps to avoid duplicate data collections.

During 2025 the CSO continued to support the research community through our RMF section. There were 142 RMF projects approved up to September 2025. These projects covered 219 researchers in 32 research organisations.

### **Open Data Hosting on PX Stat**

Under the terms of Regulation 223/09 the CSO has a formal coordination role to play across the National Statistical System (NSS). The broad range of statistics produced across the NSS play an essential part in creating an informed society and are indispensable for making evidence-based policy decisions in Ireland. The [Open Data Directive \(EU\) 2019/1024](#) mandates that public sector bodies make their data freely available for reuse in open, machine-readable formats. There's increased demand to boost transparency, standards and trust in public data. CSO has responded to this demand by expanding its co-ordination role to provide support and services to facilitate the hosting of Open Data on the CSO PxStat system. This enhanced support is due to the fact that many government departments do not have the required expertise or capacity to host open data on their own websites.

The promotion and enhanced support for Open data is a key deliverable of the newly published CSO Data Strategy. Significant progress has been made in 2025 due to the continued engagement across the system.

The number of authorities hosting their data on PX Stat continues to grow year on year. In December 2025 the CSO hosted more than 800 PX Stat tables for 21 authorities. There has been increased demand for this Open Data service across the system, and we will continue to engage and promote this service in the future. We plan to add more than 200 new PX Stat tables from other authorities during 2026.

## **1.5 CSO Data Standards**

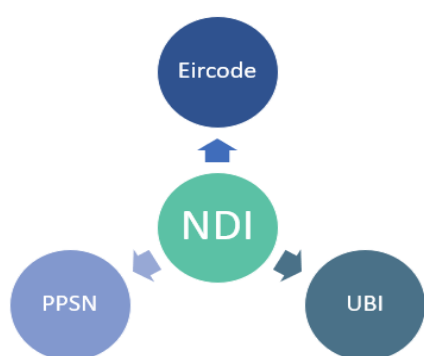
The CSO has developed a suite of common data standards to provide guidance on how key concepts can be defined, measured, and presented in a more consistent manner. The use of common data standards

facilitates the harmonisation and comparability of data while also improving the quality and consistency of information across the Irish Public and Civil Service.

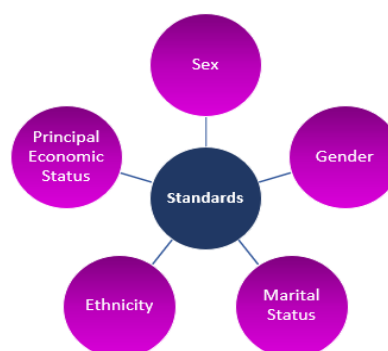
Data standards can be used to unlock Ireland's potential of turning data into a strategic asset. CSO Data Standards support the management of high-quality data and creates a stronger data environment, improving foundations for future developments of statistics and data-driven policy analysis. CSO Data Standards have been developed for concepts which are commonly used across the Irish Public and Civil Service.

## NDI Identifiers to National Data Standards

Linking records in administrative datasets to support data integration



Link records across datasets



CSO Data Standards to link variables

The following ten CSO Data Standards are available through the [CSO Website](#) and the [CSO Data Standards Portal](#):

- CSO Data Standard for Marital Status
- CSO Data Standard for Full-time or Part-time Employment Status
- CSO Data Standard for Principal Economic Status
- CSO Data Standard for Sex
- CSO Data Standard for Gender
- CSO Data Standard for Sexual Orientation
- CSO Data Standard for Household Relationship
- CSO Data Standard for Ethnicity
- CSO Data Standard for Religion
- CSO Data Standard for General Health

The CSO is currently developing a range of data standards, which will incorporate standardised classifications<sup>4</sup>. Initially, these data standards are focused on concepts related to social and demographic statistics. For further information on the available data standards and associated classifications see above.

- CSO Country classification
- CSO Data County and NUTS Regions classification
- CSO Local Authority and NUTS Regions classification

<sup>4</sup> [CSO Statistical Classifications - CSO - Central Statistics Office](#)

## 1.6 Supporting initiatives and legislation

The 2015 National Statistics Board (NSB) Strategy<sup>5</sup> recommended the implementation of a National Data NDI to facilitate the linking of data across the administrative and CSO systems by incorporating unique identifiers for individuals (PPS number), businesses (unique business identifier), and locations (Eircode) in all official data collection and administrative data sets.

There have been various initiatives and legislation put in place to support and develop the NDI since 2015. The current initiatives include:

- The CSO Data Strategy<sup>6</sup>, which was published in January 2026, sets out how the CSO will continue to evolve as a trusted leader in Ireland’s data system while ensuring that Official Statistics remain independent, relevant, and capable of meeting the data needs of a rapidly changing world. It has been developed based on an assessment of internal and external trends and details a new National Data Model designed to support a more effective and transparent national data infrastructure which harnesses data as a national resource. The approach to achieve this is based on CSO core values and principles and sets out the key actions required to deliver this across the Civil and Public Service.
- In January 2026 the CSO Statement of Strategy 2025 – 2028<sup>7</sup> was launched. The Strategy reflects how the CSO can help to drive improvements in the quality of data across the Civil and Public Service by providing support on statistical and data standards, skills and services.
- The *Civil Service Renewal 2030 Strategy - 'Building on our Strengths'*<sup>8</sup> launched in May 2021. It places a real emphasis on ‘Insights-driven Decision-making’ and one of the specific actions in the strategy is to:

*“Further develop the National Data Infrastructure (NDI) to ensure provision of and access to the data needed for policy development”.*

- The *Civil Service Renewal 2024*<sup>9</sup> three-year Action Plan to support the delivery of the Civil Service Renewal 2030 Strategy and outlines the action needed to deliver on the following referenced priority:

*“We will use data as an enabler...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.”*

- In its *Strategic Priorities for Official Statistics 2021-2026*<sup>10</sup>, the NSB stressed the importance of developing secondary data sources<sup>11</sup> such as administrative data and highlighted the value of a coordinated approach to data integration which can lead to cost savings, greater efficiency, and a reduction in duplication in administrative processes across PSBs. The NSB recommended that the NDI be further embedded and highlighted the importance of capturing the Eircode on public sector data

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<sup>5</sup> [https://www.nsb.ie/media/nsbie/pdfdocs/NSB\\_Strategy\\_2015-2020-1.pdf](https://www.nsb.ie/media/nsbie/pdfdocs/NSB_Strategy_2015-2020-1.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/cp/cp-ds/csodatastrategy2026/>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/aboutus/documents/CSO\\_Statement\\_of\\_Strategy\\_2025-2028\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/aboutus/documents/CSO_Statement_of_Strategy_2025-2028_ENG.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/efd7f-civil-service-renewal-2030/>

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/47061-civil-service-renewal-2024-action-plan/#:~:text=Civil%20Service%20Renewal%202024%20\(CSR2024,Evidence%2DInformed%20Policy%20and%20Services.](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/47061-civil-service-renewal-2024-action-plan/#:~:text=Civil%20Service%20Renewal%202024%20(CSR2024,Evidence%2DInformed%20Policy%20and%20Services.)

<sup>10</sup> Quality Information for All – Numbers Matter

[https://www.nsb.ie/media/nsbie/pdfdocs/NSB\\_Statement\\_of\\_Strategy\\_2021\\_2026.pdf](https://www.nsb.ie/media/nsbie/pdfdocs/NSB_Statement_of_Strategy_2021_2026.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Secondary data is information that has been collected for a purpose other than the generation of Official Statistics, an example being administrative data of Government Departments

holdings making a number of recommendations in relation to advancing the collection and integration of the Eircode.

- An initial Public Service Data Strategy<sup>12</sup> was published by OGCIO in 2018 to guide and support PSBs to leverage their data holdings. The Strategy has provided essential supports for PSBs, such as data and API catalogues, a pilot ‘Virtual Data Rooms’ researcher access service (contracted to CSO) and legislative supports for data sharing. The next Public Service Data Strategy is currently being drafted and it expected to be finalised in Q2 2026.
- The 2018 Public Service Data Strategy provided an essential support for PSBs, a pilot ‘Virtual Data Rooms’ researcher access service (contracted to CSO). The VDR pilot was extremely successful with a number of projects completed and further projects planned for 2026, further details are available in Section 1.9 of this report. At the end of 2025 the CSO created a new division within the organisation to further support national data services. During 2026, the CSO will be establishing the VDR as a permanent service.
- The *Data Sharing and Governance Act 2019*<sup>13</sup> provides a legal basis for public bodies to share data for specified purposes in a manner that is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation<sup>14</sup> (GDPR), thereby reducing administrative burden and simplifying the provision of services. This legislation ensures a governed, transparent, and consistent approach in terms of information flows between and within public bodies, while ensuring best practice regarding privacy, security, and data protection, which is central to the development of the NDI.
- The CSO has taken on the competent authority under Article 7 of the EU Data Governance Act (DGA) and Statutory Instrument 272/ 2024. As the DGA competent body, the CSO will work with other public sector bodies to support the continued protection of their data throughout any sharing and reuse activity. This includes providing for disclosure control techniques such as data aggregation and anonymisation, and secure processing environments which allow for data processing while minimising risk of a breach, and provision of templates such as model data sharing agreements between the data holders and end users.
- A new [CSO Metadata portal](#) was developed and launched by CSO in 2024 to provide a comprehensive catalogue of data standards, including common classifications, code lists, and advice on how to collect data in a consistent way. This portal will enhance the accessibility and usability of standards by public sector bodies.
- A suite of data standards, supporting data stewardship, is being developed by CSO. Initial standards, such as marital status, full-time/part-time employment, economic status, gender, sex, sexual orientation and household relationship status were launched in 2024, with additional standards, such as religion, ethnicity, county, local authority, and country are being developed in consultation with stakeholders to address key policy areas.
- There was continued collaboration among the CSO, PSBs, and other stakeholders in 2025 to identify and execute research projects that leverage linked datasets and enhance the understanding and utility of such data linkages.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/1d6bc7-public-service-data-strategy-2019-2023/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2019/act/5/enacted/en/html>

<sup>14</sup> [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\) – Official Legal Text \(gdpr-info.eu\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/679/oj)

## 1.7 NDI Champions Group and Sub-groups

The NDI Champions Group is chaired by the CSO, and its members include representatives from Government Departments and agencies with high value data (see Appendix 1 for membership organisations). The Group meets every quarter and hears from members on developments in administrative data collection systems and related matters. The group also monitors coverage of the NDI-related identifiers across public sector data holdings using the NDI Dashboard (see Section 2) and promotes the importance of increasing coverage of these identifiers within their organisations.

The NDI Champions group met four times during 2025:

- 16<sup>th</sup> January
- 10<sup>th</sup> April
- 4<sup>th</sup> September
- 11<sup>th</sup> December

Two sub-groups of the NDI Champions group were established in 2021 – the Eircode sub-group and the UBI Implementation sub-group.

### 1.7.1 The Eircode Sub-group

In 2023, the sub-group issued the 'Eircode Capture Best Practice Guide' aimed at supporting PSBs experiencing difficulties in Eircode capture and exploring ways to resolve these issues. The guide was endorsed by the NDI Champions and circulated to key stakeholders in 2023, including the Civil Service Management Board.

- In November 2024, the Department of Culture, Communications and Sport (DCCS) launched the Eircode Public Sector Licence. The Licence provides access to the full Eircode database on a free at the point of use basis to all Public Sector Bodies (PSBs).

Benefits of the Eircode Public Sector Licence are:

- (1) Access to a full corporate ECAD licence on a free at the point of use basis thus eliminating the need for a procurement process.
  - (2) Address validation and reduction in duplication of addresses in databases and processes.
  - (3) Access to the main statistical categories available in Census and other National Statistics allowing users compare locations to population data for research and analytical purposes.
  - (4) Enables data sharing where legally possible.
- Throughout 2025 Capita with assistance from CCS have registered 71 PSBs.

### 1.7.2 The UBI Implementation Sub-group

The UBI Implementation sub-group was set up to implement the UBI. [S.I. No. 489/2023 - Data Sharing and Governance Act 2019 \(Allocation of Unique Business Identifier\) Order 2023](#) was signed in October 2023 and included the order that the functions of the Minister for Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform under Section 35 (1) of the Data Sharing and Governance Act 2019 (No. 5 of 2019) are hereby delegated to the Revenue Commissioners. See Section 4 for information on the progress of the UBI.

## 1.8 Advancing the National Data Identifiers

There has been rapid improvement in public sector data in recent years. CSO has actively promoted the use of the NDI identifiers and standards in the public sector for many years which is now bearing fruit.

Because of increased engagement across the system the PPS Number is now being collected in modern, 'real time' online systems with highly accurate API feeds. This is expected to be expanded to all sectors in the coming years, which will facilitate multi-dimensional analysis across all policy areas. In addition, duplicate PPS Numbers have been eliminated over a long period which makes longitudinal analysis possible.

The Eircode and Unique Business Identifier have become available for use. After a slow start, the Eircode in particular, is now widely collected throughout the Public Sector system. CSO has strategically communicated the value of these identifiers as the 'National Data Infrastructure', with liaison groups and dashboards for monitoring progress on adoption. It is now clear that this is only part of the infrastructure needed in PSBs to extract the value from public sector data.

CSO has provided supports to PSBs for many years mainly on the basis of requests for support. We second statisticians within the public sector, which has increased our influence in acquiring and improving data. The National Statistical Service (NSS), with CSO seconded statisticians<sup>15</sup> to other Government Departments and public sector organisations, is driving the development of the NDI.

We have become more proactive in promoting unique NDI identifiers over the last 10 years through strategic communications and 'pathfinder projects'. This increased level of engagement has taken us in unexpected directions such as 'Virtual Data Rooms' (VDRs) for public sector analysts and loan statisticians (internally known as 'hit squads') for short term or crisis needs.

At the January 2026 NDAN meeting Bertrand Dory, DGO in Pobal, presented on how Pobal is integrating the Eircode ECAD dataset to strengthen data quality, standardisation and evidence-based decision-making across programmes. The presentation highlighted the value of ECAD as a trusted national dataset, supporting enhanced address validation, geospatial insights and improved reporting by combining Eircode with CSO, Open Data sources and programmatic data. Examples include data cleaning, GIS mapping, Data matching, and its use in analytical models such as Early Year Equal Start. The presentation emphasised the importance of aligning with national data standards and participating in NDI Champions and Eircode working groups. Next steps focus on scaling data quality assessment, deepening integration of Eircode into Pobal systems, and enabling richer insights to improve public-service delivery, in line with the vision of the NDI and The Digital Public Services Plan 2030.

In September 2025 Libby McCrohan, Department of Health, gave a presentation to the NDI Champions on recent developments in health geographies and the newly publicly available health geography files. She gave some background on the Public Health and Social Care system highlighting inconsistencies where healthcare delivery structures did not align across management, geography, clinical or corporate governance, or budgeting. This led to a fragmented experience for patients and service users. Re-aligning the health services into six HSE Health Regions with underlying nested geographies allows for geographical alignment and greater consistency which also will have a positive impact on future research and analysis. Libby presented an overview of the process, including creating a lookup file of the nesting structure, assigning GUIDs, codes, and classifications, and publishing on GeoHive. She also demonstrated the open data mapping functionality for visualising the healthcare regions.

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<sup>15</sup> Seconded CSO statistical staff totalled 47 in December 2025

## 1.9 Outcomes and Initiatives driven by the NDI

Details of some 2025 collaborative activities such as pathfinder projects and Frontier Series outputs<sup>16</sup>, which bring together data from administrative sources, demonstrate the value of linked administrative data and how joined-up data can facilitate effective decision-making are listed below. CSO's Statistical System Coordination Directorate is driving the development of the NDI through the identification and execution of such projects with Government Departments and agencies:

- **Characteristics of Residential Property Purchasers**<sup>17</sup> This Frontier Release Frontier provides information about the characteristics of people who purchased residential property in Ireland between 2022 and 2024. Price paid, age, income, employment status, nature of occupancy, household composition, occupation, and citizenship are explored. Using Census 2022 data also provides additional insight into the people who bought a home in 2022.

The results presented in this publication are based on a number of data sources:

- The Person Income Register
- Residential Property Price Index dataset
- Stamp Duty participant file
- The Central Records System
- DSP Child Benefit dataset
- The 2022 Census of Population dataset

- **Geographical Profiles of Income in Ireland 2022**<sup>18</sup> This release, published as a CSO Frontier Series Output in 2025, produces household income statistics using administrative data. Estimates are provided at multiple levels of geography, including by county, administrative county (local authority), Local Electoral Area (LEA), and electoral division. It is worth noting that administrative data is pseudonymised prior to any statistical analysis taking place to protect the privacy of individuals.

- **Arrivals from Ukraine in Ireland**<sup>19</sup> This publication series is based on a number of administrative data sources including PPSN allocation and welfare data from the Department of Social Protection, primary and secondary school enrolments from the Department of Education, PAYE Modernisation (PMOD) and data on Revenue Payroll Notifications. Early iterations of the 'Arrivals from Ukraine in Ireland' series of releases focused on the cumulative total of Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BoTP). Series 16 and 17, published during 2025, focussed on the estimated cohort present in the country, using experimental methodology based on recent activity in administrative data as an indicator to whether individuals are still present in the State. This recent administrative activity count is deemed more appropriate as some arrivals may have subsequently left the State. The CSO continues to update the **Ireland's Relationship with Ukrainian People and their Economy Hub**<sup>20</sup> on a monthly basis.

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<sup>16</sup> For information on CSO's publishing formats, visit <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/ourpublishingformats/>

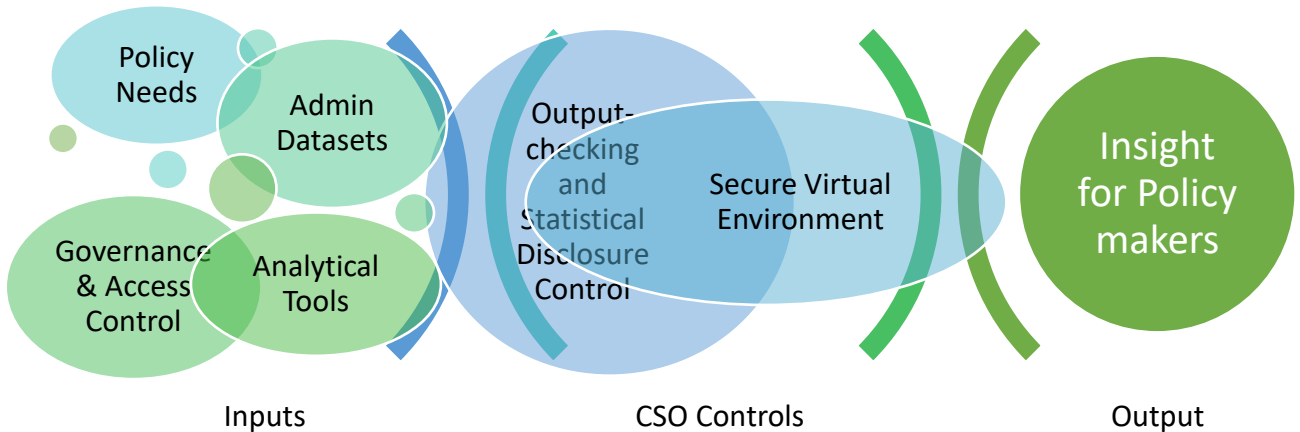
<sup>17</sup> <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/fp/fp-cropp/characteristicsofresidentialpropertypurchasers2022-2024/keyfindings/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/fp/fp-gpiihi/geographicalprofilesincomeireland2022-householdincome/keyfindings/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/fp/p-aii/arrivalsfromukraineirelandseries17/>  
<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/fp/p-aii/arrivalsfromukraineirelandseries16/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-uahub/irelandsrelationshipwithukrainianpeopleandtheireconomy/>

➤ **Pilot Virtual Data Room (VDR's)<sup>21</sup>**



*The following pilot projects were completed during 2025:*

- **Dept. of Health Pilot Project 1** – To determine how the DOH could ensure that people with a low capacity to pay for primary care are enacting their eligibility for free and low-cost care.
- **Dept. of Agriculture, Food and the Marine** – It investigated which factors are most significant in affecting the wellbeing of CAP grant beneficiaries and how they compare to non-beneficiaries from a representative sample of adults in the general population of Ireland.

*The following pilot projects were continued during 2025:*

- **Dept. of Health Pilot Project 2** - The key policy question to be answered is to explore changes to the eligibility criteria for Medical Cards and GP Visit Cards and what are the likely impact of those changes on different groups in the population.
- **Irish Government Economic Evaluation Service (IGEES)** – This project seeks to answer what has been the impact of childcare subsidisation through the NCS on (i) parental labour market decisions (ii) childcare affordability (iii) blend of childcare provision type.

*Pilot projects began with the following PSBs during 2025:*

- **Central Bank of Ireland** - Investigating bank-firm linkages in the Irish economy for growth, monetary policy and financial stability.
- **Dept. of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth** - Assessment of the magnitude of childcare usage for families in receipt of allowances or conditional payments and study how these cohorts compare against the general population in childcare uptake and usage.
- **Marine Institute, Oranmore, Galway** - Socio-economic marine data for offshore wind.
- **Parliamentary Budget Office** - Microsimulation model for income taxes, social insurance, and a range of social welfare benefits.
- **Department of Social Protection** - This VDR is investigating the take-up rates of the One-Parent Family Payment and the Jobseeker's Transitional Payment.

The publications mentioned in this section are examples of the policy-relevant research projects the CSO are developing as part of the CSO's leadership role of the Irish Statistical System which aims to maximise

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.nationaldata.ie/Services/>

the variety and volume of data available and provide high quality information to the Government, businesses and citizens. Under the Statistics Act 1993, the CSO can gather and link administrative data sources and evaluate their potential for statistical use. The CSO treats all data with strict confidentiality and never discloses any data that could subsequently be associated with any person or business. These statistics use pseudonymised records and results are produced at an aggregate level.

There are many publications by the CSO based on the common national data identifiers which highlight the innovative use of administrative data. The piece that is less evident from these publications is the level of work and resources required to transform the source data into the published outputs. In many cases the resources used could be greatly reduced if the NDI identifiers were fully available on the administrative data files.

For example, one of the most regular requests the CSO receives from policy makers, researchers and the wider public is to produce statistics at various levels of geography e.g., county, electoral division etc. The inclusion of the Eircode on public sector data holdings would greatly facilitate the provision of Official Statistics broken down by area or region.

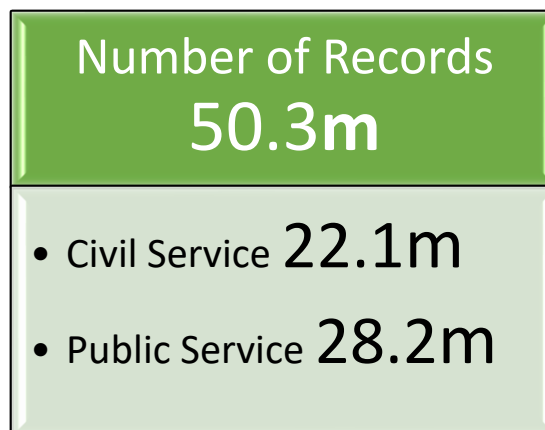
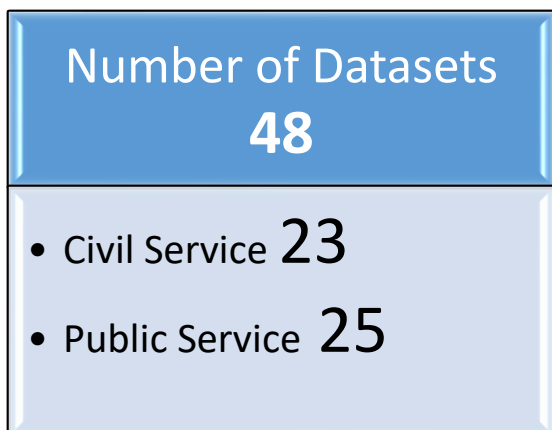
## 2 The NDI Dashboard for 2024

### 2.1 Background

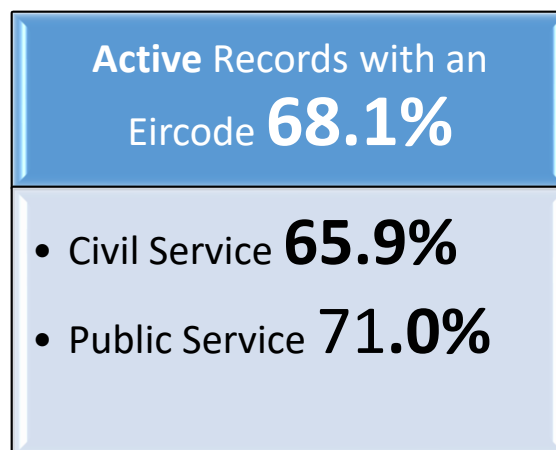
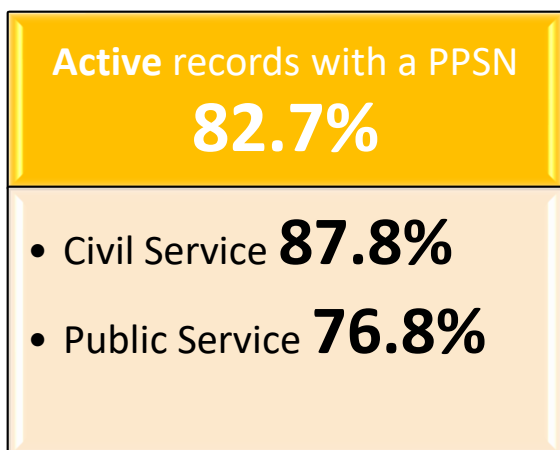
The NDI Dashboard, developed by the NDI Champions Group, summarises the coverage of record-level PPSNs and Eircodes for key data holdings of Government Departments and agencies under their aegis. It was developed to highlight datasets where coverage is low and is used to communicate the key data holdings and coverage metrics to stakeholders.

### 2.2 Analysis Summary 2024

For the year 2024, 48 unique databases containing an estimated 50.3 million records in total were reported.



In 2024, overall PPSN coverage was strong with **79.5% of new records<sup>22</sup>** and **82.7% of active records<sup>23</sup>** having an allocated PPSN. Eircode coverage, continued to grow in the period with **70.0% of new records** having an Eircode assigned and **68.1% of active records**.



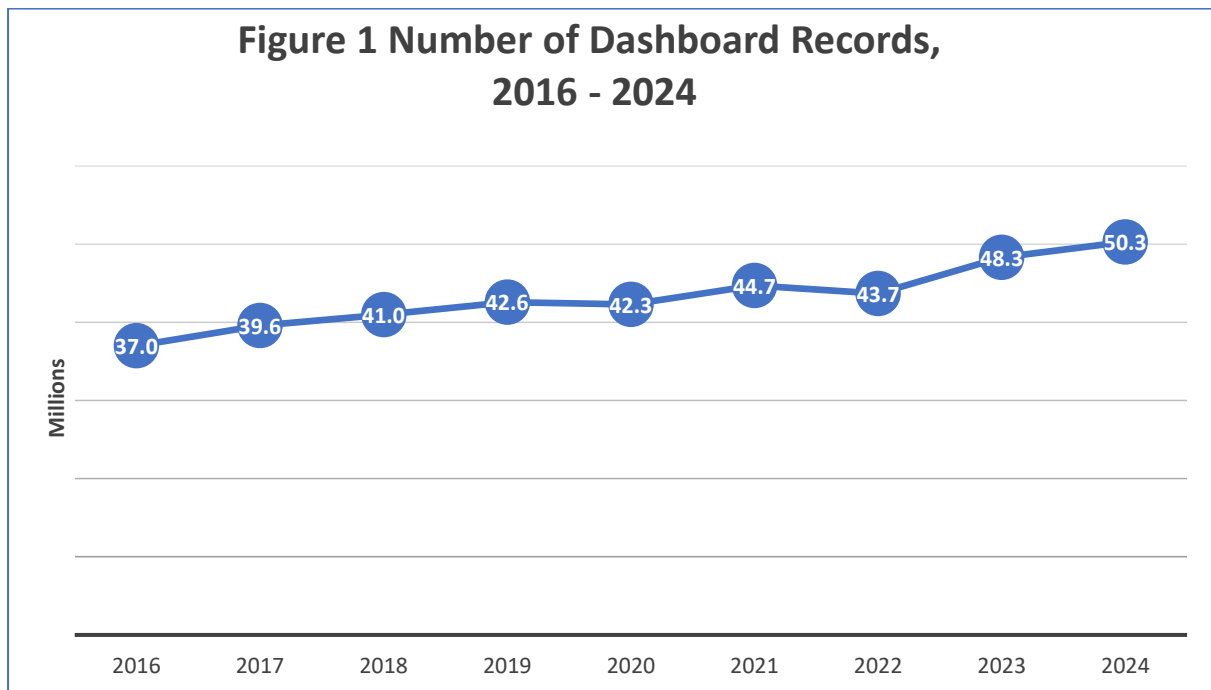
<sup>22</sup> **New records** refer to individuals added to a database during the reference year.

<sup>23</sup> The definition of **Active records** varies across departments / agencies. For example, in the Department of Education datasets an active record refers to individuals enrolled in the current academic year. For the Department of Social Protection, an active record refers to individuals who received a social welfare payment during the calendar year. For the Department of Transport and the Department of Foreign Affairs an active record refers to a valid driver's licence/passport (respectively) which has not expired.

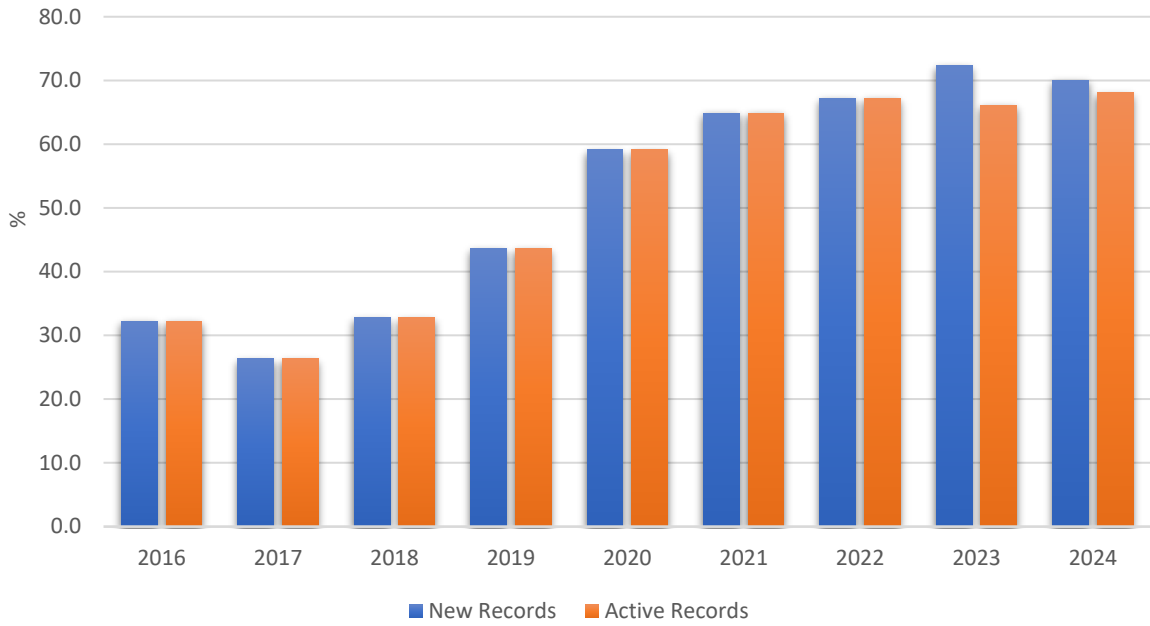
## 2.3 NDI Dashboard Changes 2016-2024

The following summarises the changes in the Dashboard between 2016 and 2024:

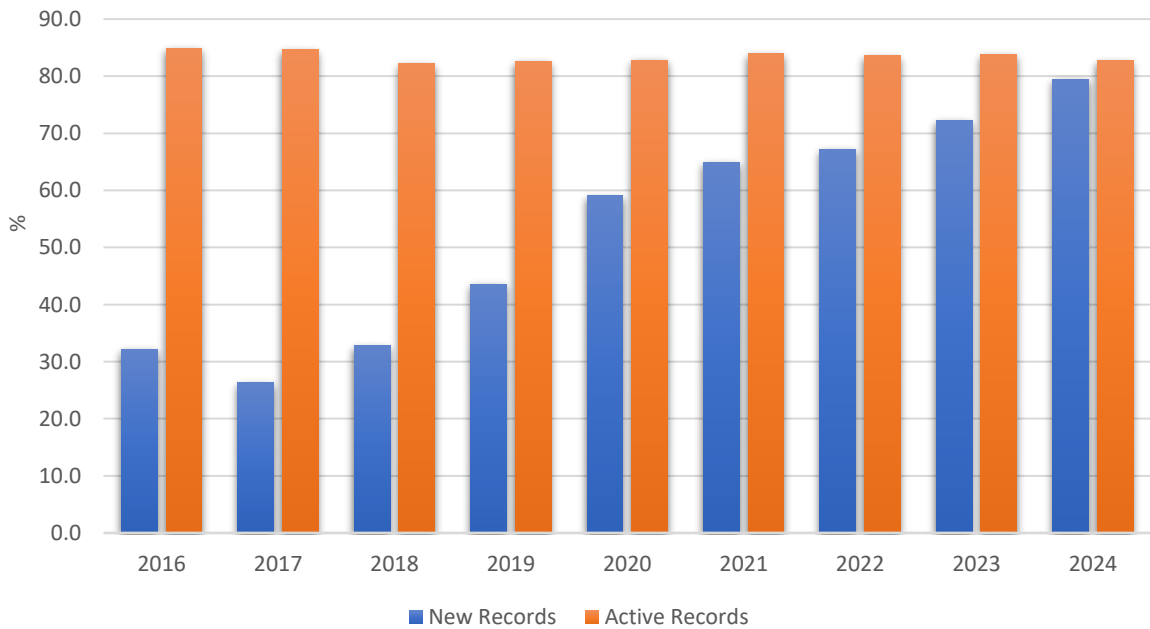
- There were 37.0 million records in 2016 compared to 50.3 million records in 2024, an increase 13.3 million (+36%). The number of records for each year are provided in Figure 1 below.
- There has been continued growth in Eircode coverage since 2016 when the Dashboard was created. The Eircode coverage rate for active records was 37.4% in 2016 compared to 68.1% in 2024. The coverage rate for new records was 32.2% in 2016 compared to 70.0% in 2024. There has been strong growth in coverage rates year on year as the NDI has matured. Annual Eircode coverage rates are provided in Figure 2 below.
- There has been marginal change in PPSN coverage rates since 2016. The PPSN coverage rate for active records was 84.9% in 2016 compared to 82.7% in 2024. The coverage rate for new records was 82.0% in 2016 compared to 79.5% in 2024. Annual PPSN coverage rates are provided in Figure 3 below.
- It is planned that a UBI Dashboard will be created in the future.



**Figure 2 Eircode Coverage Rates  
2016 - 2024**

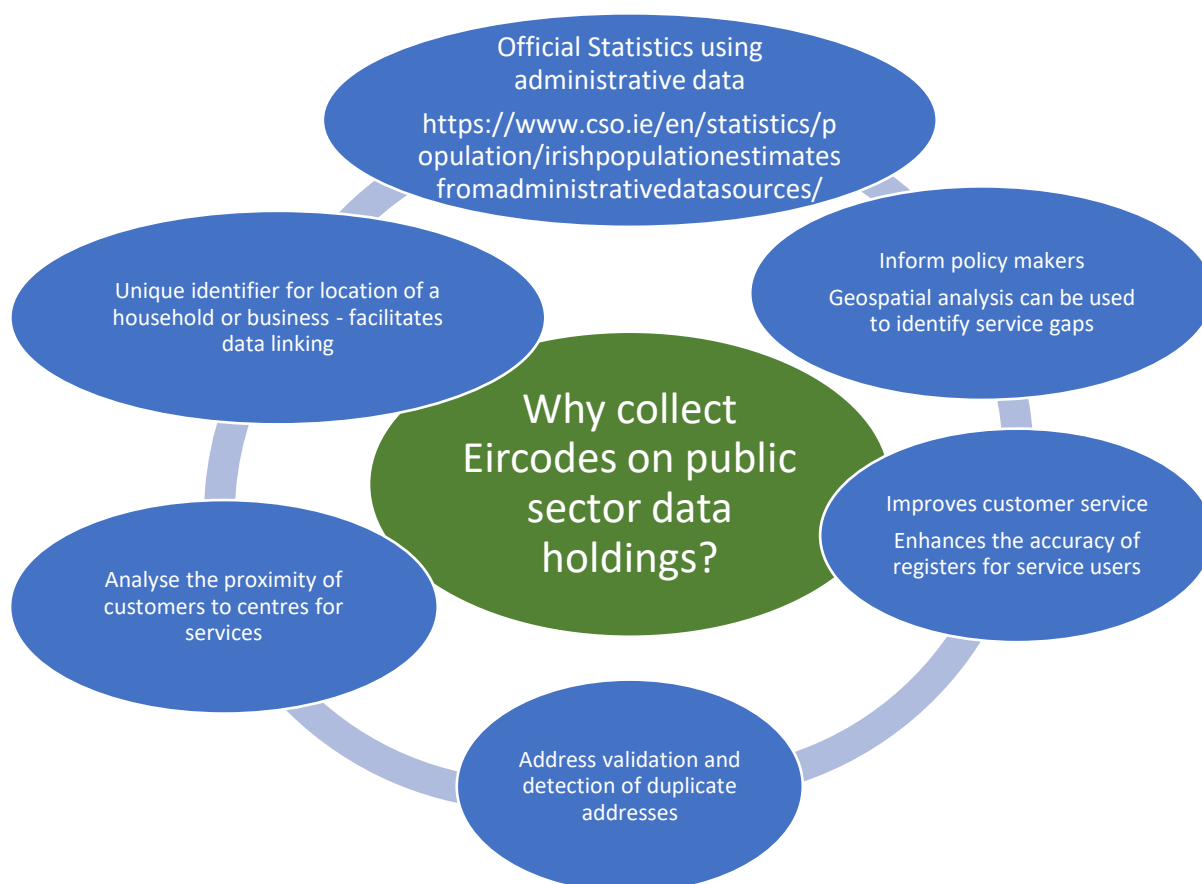


**Figure 3 PPSN Coverage Rates  
2016 - 2024**



### 3 Improving Eircode coverage

Recording the Eircode assigns a unique location identifier to each household or business address and, as over 35% of addresses in Ireland are non-unique (i.e., they share the same address), collecting the Eircode enables the accurate identification of the location of these addresses. There are many benefits to collecting the Eircode. A survey was conducted by the CSO in November 2020 to scope the plans on improving Eircode coverage in the Departments and agencies represented at the NDI Champions Group. When asked about the purpose of increasing Eircode coverage in their organisation, a large number of the NDI Champions said that the purpose was to improve an existing service or to provide a new one.



#### 3.1 Challenges for Public Sector Bodies (PSBs) in capturing the Eircode

The collection of the Eircode by PSBs is improving each year particularly where IT system changes have been implemented which facilitate or promote Eircode capture. Some PSBs have made considerable progress in the collection of the Eircode when interacting with customers but challenges still exist for PSBs.

As previously mentioned, in 2021, the Eircode sub-group of the NDI Champions group was established with the ambition of identifying and exploring ways to resolve issues identified by PSBs who are experiencing common difficulties when capturing Eircodes on their data holdings. As part of that process, the sub-group developed an *Eircode Capture Best Practice Guide* which is intended to act as a support to other PSBs experiencing difficulties in Eircode capture. Members of the sub-group and the wider NDI Champions Group are invited to raise issues re Eircode capture for discussion at the Eircode sub-group meetings. Please contact [NDI@cso.ie](mailto:NDI@cso.ie) with details and/or for a copy of the latest Eircode Capture Best Practice Guide.

It is intended to update the Guide to incorporate developments in recent years, including the launch of the Public Sector Licence which impact on Eircode capture.

## 3.2 Eircode key metrics

Eircodes has and continues to be an overwhelmingly successful State utility. Since the launch, there have been

- Over 215 million lookups on the Eircode Finder since launch.
- Over 26 million lookups in 2025 with 2.3 million average monthly look ups.
- 42,025 addresses assigned an Eircode in 2025 with an average of 3,502 Eircodes assigned per month.
- Over 327k property addresses have received an Eircode since the launch.
- Over 2.7k business organisations and State Agencies licencing Eircodes within their business systems and operations across a wide spectrum of sector.
- In 2023 independent (Year 10) research showed that 98% of respondents provided a validated Eircode for their address with 95% knowing their Eircode by memory.

## 3.3 Request Eircode in transactions with customers – ‘Just Ask’ approach +API

A regular recommendation made to members of the NDI Champions Group and PSBs in general, is to adopt a policy of ‘just ask’ for the Eircode when dealing with customers, where it is relevant to do so. Since it was first introduced in Ireland in 2015, public awareness and use of the Eircode have grown significantly, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic which saw an unprecedented move to online shopping combined with an increasing use of the Eircode by commercial businesses, particularly in the courier and deliveries sector.

Some PSBs have made considerable progress in the collection of the Eircode by adopting a ‘just ask’ policy along with the integration of an Eircode API for validation purposes. The Department of Social Protection Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) online application system recorded an Eircode for 86% of applicants during the COVID-19 pandemic by adopting this approach.

A similar approach was taken by the Revenue Commissioners in their Local Property Tax online payment system which asks the applicant to provide their Eircode and uses a tooltip saying that *“entering an Eircode is highly recommended”*.

The introduction of the Eircode Public Sector Licence removes procurement and administrative barriers to Eircodes data with access to a corporate licence on a free at point of use basis across all public sector bodies which should drive Eircode adoption across the public sector.

## 3.4 Office of Government Procurement (OGP) Open Data and Data Management Framework

The Open Data and Data Management Framework commenced on 24th January 2022. The range of services includes the cleansing of data records to correct any record that is inaccurate, incomplete, incorrectly formatted, duplicated, or even irrelevant to the objective of the dataset. Common inaccuracies in data include missing values, misplaced entries, duplicate data, removal of incorrect or corrupt data and typographical errors. In some cases, data cleansing requires certain values to be filled in or corrected, while in other instances, the values will need to be removed altogether.

All information on the Framework for Open Data and Data Management services can be accessed via the OGP website through the Buyer Zone <https://buyerzone.gov.ie/contracts/4426>. If you have any questions about the Framework or would like to know more, please contact [support@ogp.gov.ie](mailto:support@ogp.gov.ie).

### 3.5 Monthly Assignment of New Eircodes

The need for a more frequent allocation of Eircodes has become a significant issue for owners of new homes and businesses looking to access services that are optimised for the use of Eircodes, such as logistics, deliveries, and the National Ambulance Service.

In March 2023, DECC announced that the frequency at which new addresses are assigned an Eircode will increase from quarterly to monthly. This means that PSB customers with new properties should no longer have to wait 3 months for an Eircode, therefore reducing the chance of a customer not having an Eircode when providing their address information.

This new release schedule will see monthly updates for new properties and quarterly updates to the full GeoDirectory database file. The first monthly release was issued on the 9th of March 2023.

### 3.6 Future of Eircodes

The Department of Culture, Communications and Sport (DCCS) are in the processes of defining the long-term strategic delivery of Eircodes, subsequent to the expiry of the current contract. It is the stated policy position of the Department that the future operating model should be in full compliance with the EU Open Data Directive.

## 4 Unique Business Identifier

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Currently the NDI Dashboard monitors coverage of the PPSN and Eircode in transactions with people on public sector data holdings. It is intended to extend this to capturing the coverage of the Unique Business Identifier (UBI) and business Eircodes<sup>24</sup> in transactions with businesses. The UBI is an equally important element of the NDI which will facilitate the efficient linking of business data across PSBs, when permitted by legislation, enabling improvements in service delivery, policy formulation and analysis for businesses when interacting with the public sector.

The UBI will:

- Enable the consistent identification of businesses across the Public Service.
- Improve the quality and accuracy of business data holding information in the Public Service.
- Facilitate the efficient linking of business data across PSBs (when permitted by legislation).

The Data Sharing and Governance Act, fully commenced in December 2022, makes provision for the allocation of a UBI on administrative data holdings. The first stage of the UBI project, completed in 2021 by Revenue, was the creation of a refined Revenue data set of business entities, where a UBI was assigned to each business entry. This UBI is an administrative number which will link to a company's existing Prem registration, Value Added Tax (VAT) or Companies Registration Office (CRO) number in the data holding of a Department or agency (which includes business records). In 2021, the CSO carried out an initial review of business data holdings to get an indication of the number of business-related data holdings and the

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<sup>24</sup> It is worth noting that the inclusion of the business Eircode on the Eircode NDI dashboard may lead to a reduction in the overall Eircode coverage levels.

identifiers used. The table below indicates that, for the sample of returns, the CRO looks to be the most used business identifier to link with the UBI.

2020 Summary of Business Identifiers	Number of Datasets N	Number of Records N	CRO Coverage		PREM Coverage		VAT coverage	
			New Records	Active Records	New Records	Active Records	New Records	Active Records
			%	%	%	%	%	%
Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine	1	28,223	50.7	43.6	0.0	0.0	65.8	67.6
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Agencies	2	12,451	41.0	41.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications Agencies	1	20,443	58.0	7.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment Agencies	3	1,112,756	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Agencies	2	255,061	52.5	54.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Office of the Revenue Commissioners	17	2,387,816	38.3	45.6	45.5	51.3	72.0	76.4
Department of Transport Agencies	1	34,823	21.0	27.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

The UBI API is live and available for connection to Public Service Bodies (PSBs) who are party to the UBIN data-sharing agreement that came into effect in February 2025. Revenue is the lead agency on this DSA. The participating PSBs are Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment; Tailte Eireann – Valuation Division; The Road Safety Authority; and Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery, and Reform – OGCI. For PSBs not party to the DSA, they may seek to join by accession agreement. As of February 2026, two further PSBs are in the process of joining by accession agreement.

Revenue can provide detail on the technical requirements that need to be met in order to connect to the UBIN API. PSBs seeking to connect to the API will need to request a security certificate from Revenue to sign get requests from their client application. To facilitate PSBs who are building client applications, Revenue maintains a test version of the UBIN API that can be accessed for testing and validation during the development process. Connection details and security certs for this can be provided on request.

## Appendix 1 – Membership of the National Data Infrastructure Champions Group

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The following lists the Government Departments and agencies currently represented at the NDI Champions Group:

An Garda Síochána	Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Central Bank of Ireland	Galway County Council
Central Statistics Office	Health Research Board
Commission for Communications Regulation	Health Insurance Authority
CORU (Health and Social Care Professionals Council)	Higher Education Authority
Courts Service	Health Products Regulatory Authority
Dental Council	Health and Safety Authority
Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine	Health Service Executive
Department of Business Enterprise & Innovation	Irish Blood Transfusion Service
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment	Local Government Management Agency
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth	Medical Council
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	Mental Health Commission
Department of Defence	Mayo County Council
Department of Education	National Transport Authority
Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science	Nurses and Midwifery Board of Ireland
Department of Social Protection	Office of Government Procurement
Department of Foreign Affairs	Office of Public Works
Department of Health	Pension Authority
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland
Department of Justice	Pobal
Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform	Probation Service
Department of the Taoiseach	Public Appointments Service
Department of Transport	Residential Tenancies Board
Enterprise Ireland	Revenue Commissioners
Environmental Protection Agency	Road Safety Authority
	Safefood
	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
	SOLAS- An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
	SUSI
	Táilte Éireann

## Appendix 2 – Extract from Circular 19/2017: Arrangements for the recording and utilisation of Eircodes with the Public Service

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### Section 3: Arrangements

#### **Increase Eircode Capability**

All public bodies should store and integrate Eircodes as part of an address whenever it is relevant to the transactions between the Public Service Body (PSB) and their customers.

The following apply:

- i. All new information technology systems and processes currently being developed should include Eircodes in the address field (where an address field is part of the system or process);
- ii. All existing information technology systems and processes currently being upgraded should include Eircodes in the address field (where an address field is part of the system or process); and
- iii. All information technology systems and processes planned for development should include Eircodes in the address field (where an address field is part of the system or process).

#### **Increase Eircode Use**

In conjunction with the aforementioned measures to increase the public service's Eircode ICT infrastructural capability, public bodies are obliged to consider the following actions in relation to Eircode processing.

- i. Encode active databases containing addresses with Eircodes by matching existing addresses to the correct Eircode. Where matching the correct Eircode is not possible, the relevant Eircodes should be captured through other means in order to ensure all addresses in the active databases have a corresponding Eircode.
- ii. The Eircode field, as part of an address in a database, should be searchable in all Information Technology Systems and processes;
- iii. Incoming Eircodes for a corresponding address should in real-time be validated against the latest Eircode address file and/or database;
- iv. Request an Eircode as part of an address from customers (where an address is required); and all outgoing correspondence shall include Eircode, where available, as part of the customer's address.

## Appendix 3 – Membership of the Eircode Sub-group

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The following lists the Government Departments and Agencies currently represented at the Eircode sub-group:

Central Statistics Office

Department of Social Protection

Department of Environment, Climate and Communications

Department of Justice

Department of Foreign Affairs

Department of Transport

Department of Education

Department of Health

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

Revenue Commissioners

An Garda Síochána

Higher Education Authority

HSE

Local Authority Eircode Group

Local Government Management Agency

Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Ordinance Survey Ireland

Pobal

Residential Tenancies Board

Revenue Commissioners

Road Safety Authority

SOLAS

Táilte Éireann

## Appendix 4 – Membership of the Unique Business Identifier (UBI) Sub-group

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The following lists the Government Departments and Agencies currently represented at the UBI sub-group:

Revenue Commissioners

Central Statistics Office

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

Department of Social Protection

Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Enterprise Ireland

Health and Safety Authority

Road Safety Authority

Táilte Éireann