



Public finances are recovering steadily, but public investment remains low

From a modest fiscal surplus of 0.3% of GDP (3.8% structural surplus) and according to the *System of National Accounts* definition a very low debt-to-GDP ratio of 27% in 2007, the global financial crisis led to a deficit reaching 13.9% of GDP in 2009 (8.9% structural deficit) and the debt ratio rising to 137% of GDP in 2013. As a result of the consolidation efforts pursued by the government, the deficit level decreased to 4.1% of GDP in 2014 (2.9% structural deficit) and is expected to further shrink in the coming years. Public investment levels are recovering much more slowly: from being the second highest in the OECD at 12.7% of overall public expenditure in 2007, public investment had fallen to the lowest level in the OECD at only 3.5% by 2013, significantly below the OECD average (7.8%). Nonetheless, public investment is slightly recovering as evidenced between 2013 and 2014, when it increased by 1.5 percentage points amounting to 4.9% of overall public expenditure.



Chapter 2: Public finance and economics
[General government fiscal balance as a percentage of GDP](#)
[General government gross debt as a percentage of GDP](#)
[General government investment as a share of total investment](#)

Fiscal consolidation has included a large share of administrative expenditure reductions, including in public sector pay

From 2009 to 2014, the overall compensation of government employees decreased by 2.3 percentage points as a share of GDP. In order to reduce government costs, Ireland used virtually the full spectrum of policy measures to reform and control compensation in central government. Pay reductions (with higher reductions for top-level public servants), reduction in allowances and bonuses and ongoing wage freezes have all been applied. More broadly, employment reform tools have included a recruitment freeze, non-replacement of retiring staff and some outsourcing of activities, but without recourse to privatisation or compulsory dismissal.



Chapter 2 Public Finance and Economics
[Production costs as a percentage of GDP](#)
Chapter 6 Human Resource Management
[Compensation reforms implemented since 2008](#)
[Employment reforms in select OECD countries' central public administrations](#)

Satisfaction with public services is above the OECD average, with the exception of health care

The Irish people show among the highest levels of satisfaction across the OECD with the education system (83%) compared to an average of 67% across the OECD, and strong satisfaction with the judicial system (67%) compared to an average 54% for the OECD. However, citizen satisfaction with the health care system (67%) is slightly below the OECD average of 71%.



Chapter 12: Serving Citizens
[Citizens' satisfaction with the health care system](#)
[Citizens' satisfaction with the education system](#)
[Citizens' confidence with the judicial system](#)

How to read the figures:

 Country value in **blue**
(not represented if not available)

 Average of OECD countries
in **green**

 Range of OECD country
values in **grey**

Values have been rounded.
n.a. refers to
data not available

GOVERNMENT INPUTS: FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES

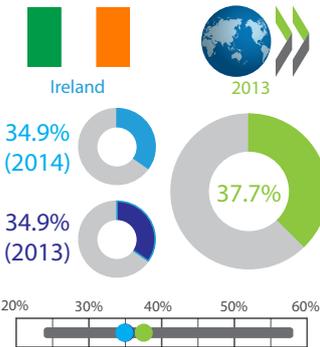
Public Finance & Economics

Public Employment & Compensation

Public Finance and Economics

Government revenues (2013, 2014)

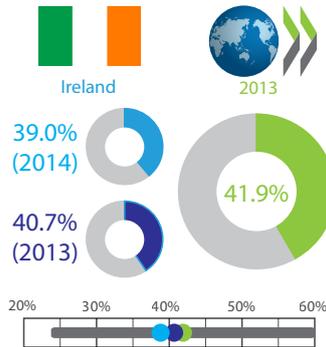
% of GDP



Source: OECD National Accounts

Government expenditures (2013, 2014)

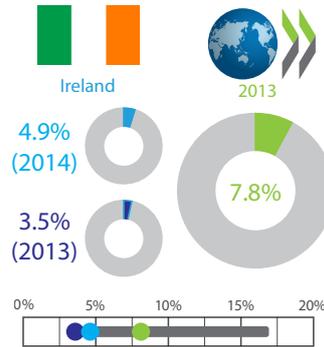
% of GDP



Source: OECD National Accounts

Public investment (2013, 2014)

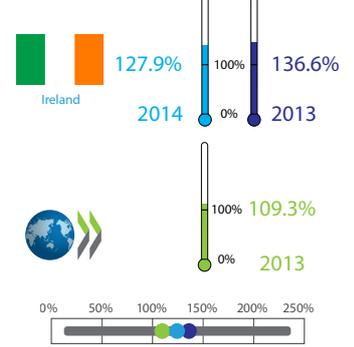
% of of total govt. expenditures



Source: OECD National Accounts

Government gross debt* (2013, 2014)

% of GDP



Source: OECD/Eurostat National Accounts
* SNA definition, see Notes

Fiscal balance* (2013, 2014)

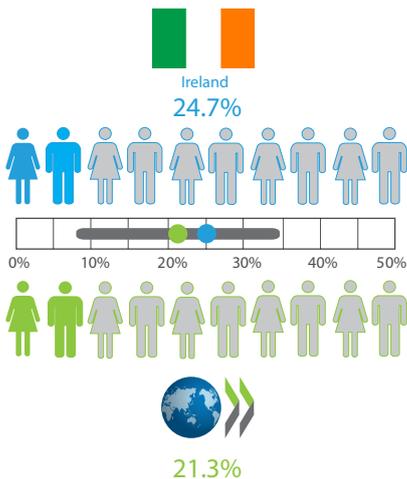
% of GDP



Source: OECD National Accounts. * See Notes

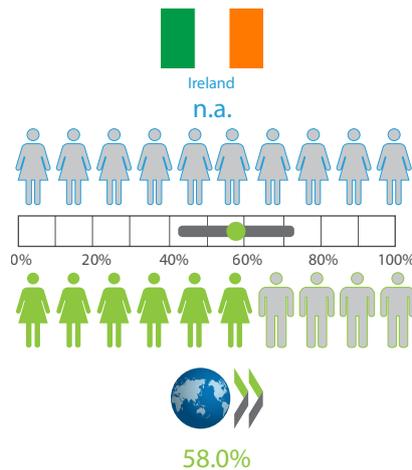
Public Employment and Compensation

Public sector employment as % of total employment (2013)



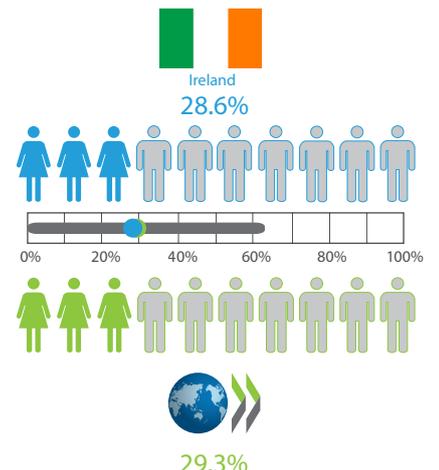
Source: International Labour Organization (database)

Public sector employment filled by women (2013)



Source: International Labour Organization (database)

Share of women ministers (2015)



Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union Parline Database

GOVERNMENT PROCESSES

Institutions

Regulatory Governance

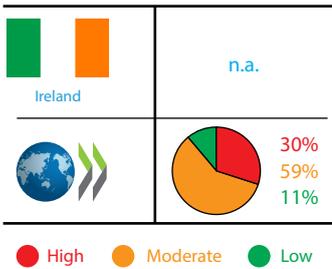
Public Procurement

Public Sector Integrity

Digital Government

Institutions

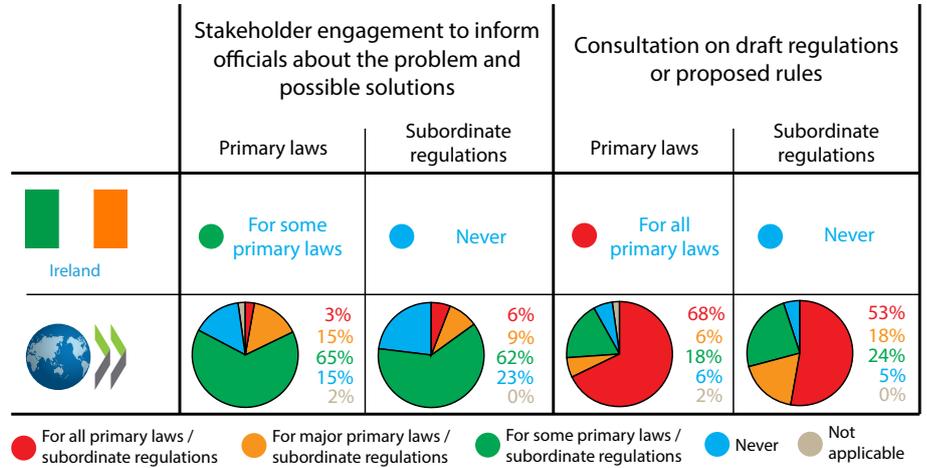
Level of influence of the Centre of Government over line ministries (2013)



Source: OECD 2013 Survey on Centre of Government

Regulatory Governance

Stakeholder engagement and consultation (2014)

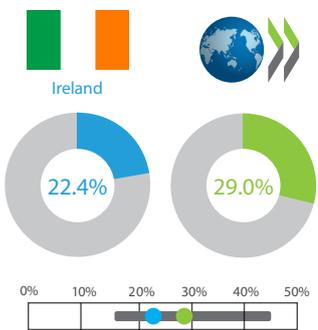


Source: OECD Regulatory Policy Outlook (forthcoming)

Public Procurement

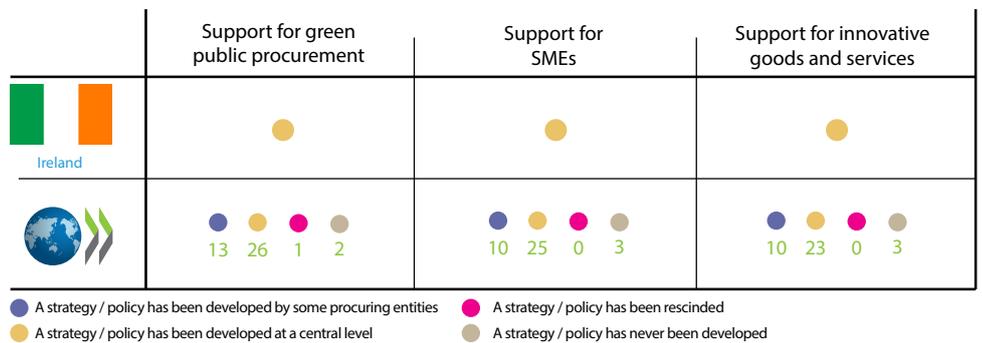
Procurement expenditure (2013)

% of government expenditures



Source: OECD National Accounts

Strategic public procurement - Objectives (2014)

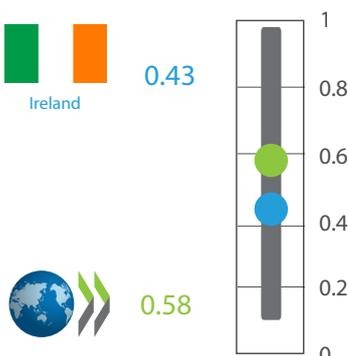


Source: 2014 OECD Survey on Public Procurement

Digital Gov.

OURdata Index: Open, Useful, Reusable Government Data (2014)

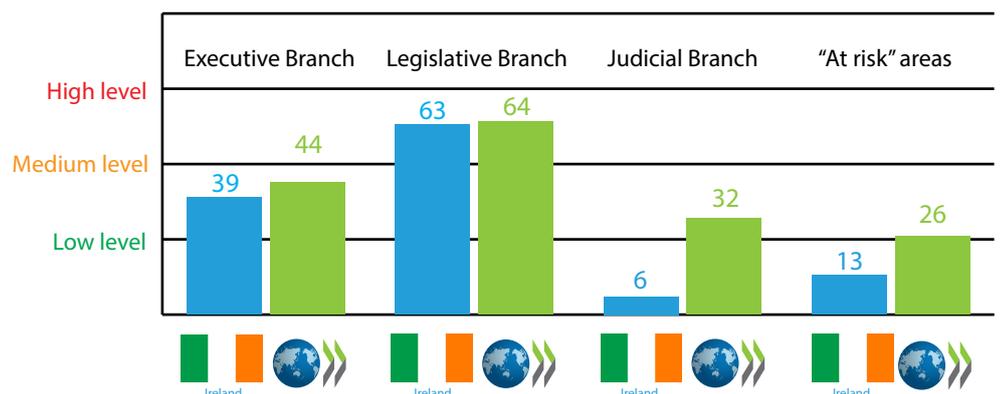
Composite index from 0 lowest to 1 highest



Source: 2014 OECD Survey on Open Government Data

Public Sector Integrity

Level of disclosure of private interests across branches of government (2014)



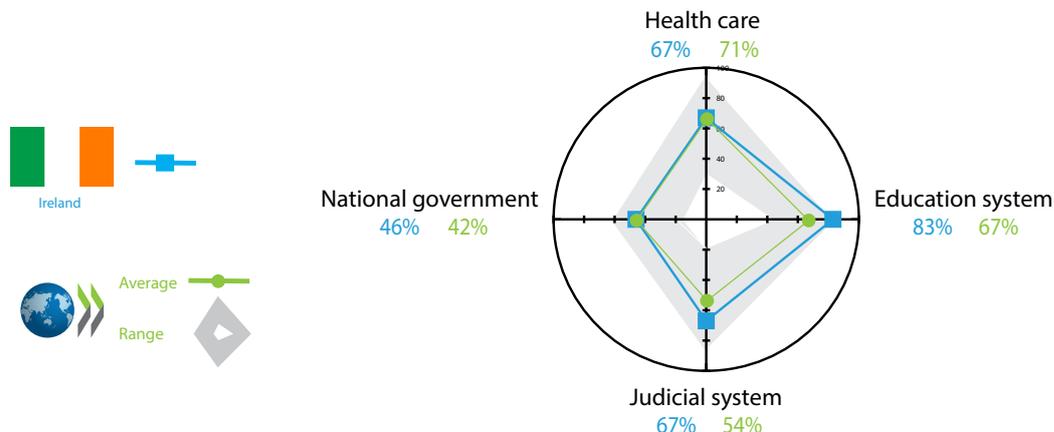
Source: 2014 OECD Survey on Managing Conflict of Interest in the Executive Branch and Whistleblower Protection

GOVERNMENT OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

Core Government Results and Service Delivery

Satisfaction and confidence across public services (2014)

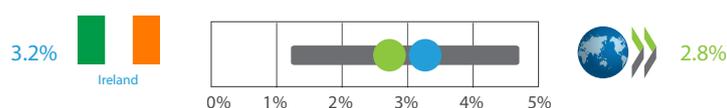
% of citizens expressing confidence/satisfaction



Source: Gallup World Poll

Access to healthcare (2012)

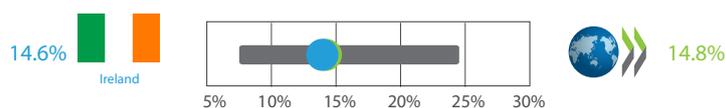
Out of pocket expenditure as a % of final household consumption



Source: OECD Health Statistics 2014

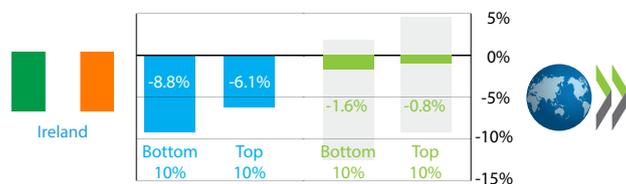
Equity in learning outcomes (2012)

PISA mathematics score variance by socio economic background



Source: OECD, PISA 2012 results: Excellence through equity, 2013

Changes in household disposable income, by income group (2007-2011)



Source: OECD Income Distribution Database

Limited government powers (2014)



Source: The World Justice Project

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.
- **Structural fiscal balance**, or underlying balance, represents the fiscal balance adjusted for the state of the economic cycle (as measured by the output gap which resulted as the difference between actual and potential GDP) and one-off fiscal operations.
- **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.

Government at a Glance 2015

With a focus on public administration, OECD Government at a Glance 2015 provides readers with a dashboard of key indicators assembled with the goal of contributing to the analysis and international comparison of public sector performance across OECD countries. Indicators on public finances and employment are provided alongside composite indexes summarising aspects of public management policies, and indicators on services to citizens in health care, education, and justice. Government at a Glance 2015 also includes indicators on key governance and public management issues, such as regulatory management, budgeting practices and procedures, public sector integrity, public procurement and core government results in terms of trust in institutions, income redistribution and efficiency and cost-effectiveness of governments.

The Excel spreadsheets used to create the tables and figures in Government at a Glance 2015 are available via the StatLinks provided throughout the publication:

http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/gov_glance-2015-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/ataglance.htm

