



**An Phríomh-Oifig Staidrimh**  
Central Statistics Office



# CENTRAL STATISTICS OFFICE

Statement of Strategy  
**2017-2019**

**[www.cso.ie](http://www.cso.ie)**

# Foreword



I welcome this ambitious Statement of Strategy, which is my first as Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach with responsibility for the Central Statistics Office (CSO).

Confidence in the quality and independence of official statistics is crucial as Ireland continues to use the information and insight provided by the CSO to guide economic and social development. In May 2017, the Irish Government adopted a Commitment on Confidence in Statistics. In signing this declaration, the Government reaffirmed the CSO's independence, impartiality and quality.

2017 has seen the CSO release a total of 13 publications from the 2016 Census of Population covering amongst other issues, Population Distribution and Movement, Households and Families, Homeless Persons in Ireland, and Education, Skills and the Irish language. These statistics, like all those produced by the CSO, are helping to inform debate and support policy formation, development and implementation. Planning has already begun in respect of the 2021 Census and the Government has agreed to the funding arrangements which will allow Ireland to fulfil its obligations to provide the next round of population and housing census data to the European Commission.

The CSO's role in coordinating statistics across the public sector will greatly increase the capacity to exploit data across the system, leading to improved, evidence based decision making for business, citizens and government alike. I am pleased to support the CSO in implementing this progressive Statement of Strategy and look forward to seeing the CSO meet the challenges of the next three years.

Ba mhaith liom an fhoireann a mholadh as an obair a chuir siad isteach sa Ráiteas Straitéise agus a n-iarrachtaí leanúnacha uilig le haghaidh todhchaí na Príomh-Oifige Staidrimh.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe McHugh'.

**Joe McHugh, T.D.**

*Government Chief Whip and Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach  
December 2017*

# Introduction



It seems a very short time since I welcomed you to the 2016-2019 Statement of Strategy but legal obligations under the Public Service Management Act require that a new Statement of Strategy is published following the appointment of a new Minister of State.

The Management Board and I reviewed the Statement of Strategy published last December to consider if it still meets the strategic direction and aims of the CSO and the wider statistical system. We are happy that the actions outlined remain bold and far reaching, as we had intended when the strategy was developed. The operating environment also remains dynamic with new challenges and opportunities developing constantly.

One such new development in the environment is the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which will come into effect in 2018. This regulation has implications for how the CSO can use statistical personal data and for the design of new processes but sits well with the value of confidentiality which is such an integral part of the CSO.

I am pleased to see that the CSO has already begun to deliver improvements as planned in the Statement of Strategy 2016-2019. One example that comes to mind is the development of a new level indicator in 2017, modified Gross National Income (GNI\*), designed to provide useful information for analytical and economic modelling purposes and to provide more broad-based information on the Irish economy for decision making purposes. This type of high quality information, which is tailored to the Irish situation, and provides insight and knowledge, is exactly the type of product the CSO wants to create to support the process of guiding Ireland's future development.

The CSO continues to aim to fully exploit the potential of the data and technology revolution to deliver a broader range of high quality information on societal and economic change. We are doing so by creating an innovative, agile and high performing organisation. This updated strategy sets out how we are going to continue to meet our customers' needs and I am confident that it positions us to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pádraig Dalton'.

**Pádraig Dalton**

*Director General  
December 2017*

# Who we are

## OUR MANDATE

Our mandate is built on the Statistics Act 1993 and on EU Regulation 223/2009 and allows for;

- The collection, compilation, extraction and dissemination for statistical purposes of information relating to economic, social and general activities and conditions in the State
- The co-ordination of official statistics compiled by public authorities

## OUR VALUES

- Independence, objectivity and integrity are core values
- We ensure absolute adherence to the legal guarantee of confidentiality and all activities comply with statistical and data protection legislation
- We drive innovation throughout all our business and organisational processes
- We are professional, reliable and trusted
- We have respect for our data providers and are committed to finding new ways to reduce the demands placed on them
- We constantly strive to provide excellent service to our customers
- We value our staff and strive to provide an environment in which staff meet their full potential and flourish at work

## OUR MISSION

Provide high quality information, both for evidence-based decision-making and to support accountability

## OUR INDEPENDENCE

The CSO is an independent Office and the Director General of the CSO has sole responsibility in relation to professional statistical matters

# What we do

Data is the foundation of decision-making and the basis for accountability. Good policies start with good data. Our role is to provide independent information and knowledge for effective debate and decision-making across government, business and society. Good quality statistics help people to understand the changes taking place in Ireland's economy and in our society.

## *Turning data into information and knowledge for Ireland*



**DATA**

**INFORMATION**

**KNOWLEDGE**

**INFORMED  
DECISION-  
MAKING**

creates

which generates

and leads to

The Statistics Act is the CSO's comprehensive mandate for compiling official statistics, providing strong safeguards for the independence of official statistics and the protection of confidential data, and underpinning the right to live in an informed society.

# Our dynamic environment

We work in a dynamic global environment, driven by unprecedented growth in the volume and nature of data, where information and knowledge are amongst the world's most valuable resources. Official statistics make sense of this data for evidence-based decision-making.

## Further challenges in our statistical environment include

- The broadened coordination role of the CSO and the Director General, under the amended EU framework legislation for official statistics
- The National Statistics Board's (NSB) vision for the creation of an integrated Irish Statistical System, as detailed in its Strategy for Statistics 2015-2020
- The increasing demand for statistics, at national, EU, and global levels
- Our role in providing information to ensure that citizens can live in an informed society while at the same time ensuring adherence to data protection legislation

Our aim is not only to respond to these powerful drivers for change but to continuously shape the environment in which we work.

# Our mission and strategic priorities —○

## for 2017-2019



# Our role as an influencer

We will continue to be a key influencer of developments in official statistics in Europe and globally through

- Providing leadership in exploiting the potential of secondary data sources, including Big Data
- Driving awareness of the statistical challenges of globalisation and contributing to the development of a broader range of meaningful indicators
- Leading modernisation programmes in the United Nations (UN) and the European Statistical System

# How we will deliver

We are transforming how we work. Our modernisation programme encompasses a new integrated statistical business process model and the technological and organisational capability measures required to deliver our strategy. This model is built on the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) developed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. It will operate across all business areas of the CSO. The aim of this is to improve the volume, timeliness and quality of our statistical products.

## GSBPM - Generic Statistical Business Process Model

SPECIFY NEEDS / DESIGN / BUILD

COLLECT / PROCESS / ANALYSE / DISSEMINATE

EVALUATE

The CSO will support the implementation of the new integrated statistical business process model by building capacity in our people, structures and performance. We will embrace the opportunities provided by the data and technological revolution to improve how we carry out our business and transform how we work.

## Enabling delivery and building capacity



### PEOPLE

Continue to develop the capacity, professionalism, and skills of our people to ensure the CSO can rely on a flexible, versatile and mobile workforce



### PERFORMANCE

Further develop a culture of high performance, innovation and staff engagement



### PROCESSES

Embed a standardised, cost-effective, efficient business statistical model to deliver consistent, high quality statistics



### TECHNOLOGY

Build an adaptive data and services platform that enhances the collection and production process



### ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

Continue to develop the right organisational structures to support modernisation



### QUALITY

Continue to meet the highest standards for quality, data protection and methodology, and exploit all available data sources

CSO

Statement of Strategy 2017-2019

# Our strategic aims

1

## Turn data and statistics into information and knowledge for all

**Deliver timely, relevant and accurate statistical information**

- Deliver on our extensive statistical work programme
- Provide greater insight from our statistical outputs through improved communications, including the use of visualisation and linkage to other statistical outputs
- Build in-house capacity to respond more efficiently to the data needs of users

**Expand the range of our statistical products and services**

- Publish an improved suite of outputs from Census 2016
- Expand and develop statistical outputs on energy and environmental accounts
- Develop our macro-economic statistics to provide additional information on the Irish domestic economy

**Ensure the data is relevant and promote its use**

- Proactively identify and meet customers needs
- Improve communication and accessibility of our statistical products and promote their use
- Further facilitate the use of microdata for statistical research purposes

2

## Increase use of secondary data sources including administrative and Big Data

**Increase the use of secondary data sources**

- Continue to exploit administrative data in the production of official statistics
- Explore and exploit the potential of Big Data for the production of official statistics
- Use the National Data Infrastructure (NDI) to develop new and improved statistical products

3

## Continue to build the capacity of our people

**Build capacity of our people**

- Promote a culture of continuous learning and professional development to ensure staff work to their full potential and actively contribute to deliver the CSO's goals
- Build a strategic HR function to fully align with the changing business needs of the CSO
- Implement an organisational-wide staff engagement and innovation programme
- Continue to create a positive working environment encouraging ongoing staff commitment to the organisation

4

## Modernise our statistical processes and systems

**Enhance the robustness of our statistical processes and systems**

- Implement an ambitious programme of transformation of our statistical processes and systems based on the international standard of the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM)
- Build an adaptive services platform that enables implementation of the GSBPM

**Ensure the quality, integrity, protection and security of our data**

- Implement a GSBPM based Quality Management Framework

5

## Coordinate, oversee and assure the quality of all official statistics produced in Ireland

**Lead the development of the Irish Statistical System and drive the development of the NDI**

- Develop the Irish Statistical System in line with the NSB Strategy for Statistics 2015-2020
- Extend the programme of seconding statisticians to other departments to build a consistent, effective and coordinated analytical service for Government
- Drive the development of the NDI in cooperation with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, building towards a full legislation-backed information system to improve the scope and quality of administrative data
- Identify and execute pathfinder projects with government departments that deliver both value to policy or services and progress the evolution of the NDI

**Coordinate national and European official statistics compiled in Ireland to meet national and EU obligations**

- Develop the role of the CSO as coordinator of statistical activities across all producers of official statistics in Ireland in line with the Statistics Act 1993 and the revisions of the EU Regulation on European statistics

For information on CSO products and services visit our website [www.cso.ie](http://www.cso.ie)

For information on the CSO statistical work programme visit

<http://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/governance/statisticalworkprogramme/>