



# Ireland's Open Government Partnership National Action Plan 2014-2016

## End-term Self-Assessment Report

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## End-term Self-Assessment Report

### 1. Introduction and Background

Ireland sought membership of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in the belief that its aims would add further depth and provide an important international complement to our existing reform programme which aims at strengthening transparency and accountability of public institutions, providing improved and innovative public service and increasing citizen participation in policy-making.

The OGP's broadly based structure, together with its international cross-linkages, allows our political representatives and members of civil-society to trade ideas, both with each other and across the globe, about the objectives and the implementation of the OGP. This broadly-based trading of ideas helps to challenge the "accepted ways and whys of doing things" and to shine a light on the things that we are doing well and on the areas that we need to improve on. Ensuring that we have an open, transparent, accountable and ethical system of public administration can enrich and enhance our efforts to rebuild trust between government and citizens, improve public services, and drive innovation and business growth. Rebuilding trust is a cornerstone for our national recovery and will underpin the basis for our sustainable long-term growth.

This self-assessment report looks at progress at the end of our two-year National Action Plan (NAP). The NAP sought to build upon the existing reform foundations and to provide a framework for a new phase of reforms. The vast majority of actions in the Plan are either complete or made substantial progress. The development and finalisation of the NAP required the close participation of civil society, as detailed in section 2 below, and this participation and openness helped contribute to an increase in confidence in Government.

The 26 commitments in the National Action Plan are relevant to the principles of the OGP – transparency, civic participation, public accountability and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. The commitments span the following three core areas:

1. Open Data and Transparency – opening-up Government data for greater accountability, improving public services and achieving economic growth
2. Fostering citizen participation/more active citizenship – Greater citizen consultation and involvement to strengthen democracy and improve public services
3. Rebuilding public trust in Government - strengthening governance and accountability

All three of these core areas address the grand challenges of improving public services and increasing public integrity. In addition, the first two areas also address the grand challenge of more effectively managing public resources.

### 2. National Action Plan Process

#### **A: Consultation during NAP development:**

A great deal of time and effort was invested in the development of the NAP and an intensive process of consultation utilising a variety of mechanisms was undertaken to provide the broadest possible range of citizens the opportunity to engage. The process took place over a period of 14 months in a manner consistent with the OGP Guidelines for Public Consultation on Country Commitments. Following a competitive procurement process, Transparency International Ireland was engaged by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) in June 2013 to manage a public consultation process with civil society aimed at developing proposals for consideration for inclusion in the NAP. Three public meetings, arranged by Transparency International Ireland with funding support from

DPER, were held during summer 2013 involving civil society groups and citizens and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform addressed the first meeting. Some 40 non-governmental organisations (over 100 individuals) participated in the consultation - see details in the archive section of [www.ogpireland.ie](http://www.ogpireland.ie). DPER also encouraged a large number of organisations (civil society, unions, business and public bodies), to advise them of the OGP consultation process and to encourage participation.

The consultation process resulted in a [report](#) containing 62 recommendations for inclusion in the NAP. The recommendations spanned a broad range of areas with diverging degrees of specificity and no priorities assigned. A number of submissions were also submitted to DPER and can be found at <http://www.per.gov.ie/en/background-to-the-development-of-the-national-action-plan/>. The report and submissions were considered by Government and a meeting was held with civil society to consider how best to identify a limited number of recommendations for inclusion in the draft NAP which would best meet OGP objectives and standards.

A Joint Working Group (JWG) comprising representatives of civil society and Government Departments was established and met on a weekly basis from February 6<sup>th</sup> to April 3<sup>rd</sup> with an alternating chair. The JWG considered the recommendations for a period of several weeks culminating in a detailed response to each proposal (<http://www.ogpireland.ie/documents/>) and developed the draft NAP; with the civil society representatives consulting weekly with a Civil Society Forum. The action points from the weekly meetings of the JWG and all drafts of the NAP were published on the web. Following consideration by the Government, the draft NAP was launched at the OGP Europe Regional Meeting in Dublin Castle on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> May 2014 for public consultation. Following the consultation, the NAP was finalised, approved by the Government and submitted to the OGP Steering Committee.

## **B: Consultation during implementation**

Consultation during implementation took place at two levels - in relation to the individual actions under the plan and in relation to the OGP plan as a whole.

### Consultation on implementation of individual actions

Primary responsibility for implementation of specific actions under the Plan rests with the public body to which lead responsibility is assigned and details of the extent of engagement of civil society with the public sector during implementation are set out in the individual templates at Appendix 1. There was extensive engagement in the development of the first Government Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making brought forward by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. There was also extensive consultation at all of the key stages in the development of the legislative reforms brought forward by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to ensure adequate and effective arrangements for governance and accountability and to increase public integrity.

Of particular note is the consultation undertaken during the implementation of the action on the Register of Lobbying. The process included seeking submissions from interested parties, follow-up meetings with stakeholders, hosting an open public seminar, a further consultation phase on the outcome of these, a public consultation on the draft General Scheme, pre-legislative scrutiny, and consultation across all Government Departments. In addition, prior to the enactment of the legislation, a paper-based pilot of the proposed lobbying register was developed and stakeholders (i.e. five groups in total including representative organisations) were invited to highlight issues

encountered and an Advisory Group has been established to advise on implementation of the legislation.

A number of public events have been held, for example in relation to the Open Data actions, referenda were held following the Constitutional Convention in which many stakeholders participated, key policy documents were published for consultation and many other actions were taken to involve citizens and civil society during implementation.

#### Consultation on monitoring of implementation

In relation to the monitoring of implementation, DPER is responsible for collecting information and reporting on progress in respect of the implementation of the Action Plan. A progress update was provided in December 2014, further progress reports were published in April 2015 and, following an update provided at an open consultative event on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015, in August 2015.

As regards consultation on the monitoring of the NAP as a whole, the proposal as set out in the NAP was to establish an Implementation Review Group (IRG) comprising representatives of civil society and Government Departments to monitor and oversee progress in respect of the NAP as a whole. A meeting of public service and civil society representatives was held in December 2014 to discuss draft terms of reference, the appointment of its Chair and the mechanism for appointing members to such a group. There was correspondence and meetings in later weeks in this regard. However, the Department was concerned that having such a small group of civil society representatives would not significantly progress the core objective of the OGP of increasing citizen participation. The Department proposed therefore, and the civil society representatives agreed, that a public consultative event should be held to address such issues. The aim of the event was to seek to establish how best to raise awareness of the OGP, broaden participation of citizens as well as civil society in the OGP and embed it in a sustainable way, and to inform the final approach to a model for monitoring progress in implementation. The event was held on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

#### **C: Consultation on the Self-Assessment Report.**

A draft version of the mid-term Self-Assessment was published for consultation from 21st September to 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015. The response rate was low. One concern related to the short time available to respond to the Self-Assessment Report. However, it should be noted that progress reports on the implementation of the NAP were published at regular intervals and reported on at the consultative event held in July 2015.

Concern was also expressed about some delay in progressing actions in relation to young children and on enabling citizen engagement in local authority budgetary processes. The Digital Strategy for Schools is a long-term goal that sets out a five year programme of work and important progress has been made in the summer of 2016 towards achieving greater teacher support for the reform necessary to maximise understanding of young people in civic life.

A great deal of time and effort was invested in the development of the NAP and a consultation event was held in July 2015 to consider, among other things, how best to broaden participation of citizens as well as civil society in the OGP and embed it in a sustainable way.

### 3. Implementation of National Action Plan Commitments

The Plan spans three main areas, Open Data and Transparency, Citizen Participation and Strengthening Governance and Accountability. Substantial work has been carried out in each area and substantial progress or completion has been achieved in 22 of the 25 commitments:

Completion level	Number of Commitments
Not started / Limited	3
Substantial	5
Completed	17

An overview assessment of each of each of the three main areas is provided below and the Templates at Appendix 1 set out in detail what is going on, by whom, progress made etc. in respect of each commitment.

#### Open Data and Transparency: Actions 1.1 -1.8

Research indicates that delivery on Open Data will enable the public to hold Government accountable for its performance, use data to identify best practice, encourage the public sector to achieve greater efficiencies, improve the quality of analysis and decision-making and help citizens make more informed choices. Making data available to businesses will promote development of innovative products and services and drive economic growth. The commitments in this area focus on opening-up Government data to achieve these objectives.

The completion level in relation to the 8 commitments in this area are set out below:

Completion level	Number of Commitments
Not started / Limited	1
Substantial	0
Completed	7

The specific actions involved are as follows:

Action	Action name	Lead Implementing Agency	Completion Level
1.1	<a href="#">Establishment of best practice standards for Open Data</a>	DPER	Completed
1.2	<a href="#">Establishment of Ireland's Open Data Platform</a>	DPER	Completed
1.3	<a href="#">Undertake an audit of key datasets for publication</a>	DPER	Completed
1.4	<a href="#">Establish a roadmap for the Open Data and an evaluation framework to provide assessment of the ongoing Open Data</a>	DPER	Completed
1.5	<a href="#">Establishment of an Open Data Ireland Governance Board (ODIGB) and Steering and Implementation Group (SIG) for Open Data Ireland</a>	DPER	Completed
1.6	<a href="#">Signing up to the G8 Open Data Charter</a>	DPER	Completed
1.7	<a href="#">Implementing Open Data</a>	DPER	Completed
1.8	<a href="#">Improve computer literacy through implementation of proposed new Digital Strategy for Schools</a>	DE&S	Limited

The Open Data portal (a platform) has been developed with a beta version launched on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015 significantly enhancing the look and feel of the portal and making datasets more accessible. Best practice standards in the form of a Technical Framework to underpin the publication of datasets on the Open Data portal have been developed. The portal currently contains almost 5,000 datasets with preparation of many more datasets for publication in line with the Technical Framework underway.

The roadmap and evaluation framework were developed. Since then a Foundation document on a draft strategy for Open Data was published for consultation to provide future direction on Open Data following implementation of the roadmap. The submissions have been considered and will feed into the Strategy which will be finalised and implementation led by the Open Data Governance Board.

External technical expertise and support has been availed of and the expertise of the Central Statistics Office will be fully utilised to progress the Initiative in the coming years. This support will include supporting public bodies in undertaking audits of datasets and publishing plans to ensure high quality datasets are made available for re-use. The principles of the G8 Charter will continue to guide publication in this regard. A Public Bodies Working Group (a steering and implementation group) was established to steer and implement the project and provide the necessary central technical support.

It was considered that the timing was not right to put an Open Data Governance Board in place until the groundwork had been done on the Initiative. Now that the technical foundations have been put in place, the Open Data Governance Board has been established, and a number of meetings have been held.

In a short space of time, the Open Data Initiative has gained a lot of traction as evidenced by the strong interest in and high calibre of applicants for the Open Data Governance Board and the attendance at public events. The technical work done by the Public Bodies Working Group was hugely instrumental in this, as was the hosting of a number of public events and other initiatives led by the Department, some of the Local Authorities and agencies, civil society and the business sector.

Notwithstanding the good work done, there is more to do. Looking ahead, the two main challenges we have are to:

- Ensure public bodies have the necessary supports to enable them to make high value datasets available over time and the potential of Open Data is realised; and
- promote usage – the success of the Initiative is contingent on this and the Open Data community in Ireland is relatively small. We need the business sector, the researchers/academia and civil society/citizens to identify future opportunities and utilise datasets.

Our immediate focus now will be on supporting public bodies in carrying out audits and publishing datasets to grow the number of high quality datasets on the portal. This will take place on a phased basis. We will continue to host public events and work with stakeholders in line with our draft Open Data Strategy to promote usage as well as continuing to develop new features on the portal such as visualisations to promote usage of data. The Initiative requires the support of civil society, researchers, and the business sector to use the data, provide us with examples of usage and the impact this has had and so achieve the potential benefits.

The Digital Strategy for Schools was published in early October 2015, a little behind schedule. Its five year work programme aims to increase the amount of digital technologies used in the classroom by teachers and students and increase the amount of professional development opportunities for teachers in using ICT as part of their teaching methodologies. The feasibility and desirability of



providing an opportunity for students to pursue an in-depth course of study in discrete ICT skills will be explored during the lifetime of the Strategy.

#### Fostering Citizen Participation/More Active Citizenship: Actions 2.1 - 2.7.2

In recognition of the right of citizens to have an informed say in the public decisions that affect their lives, considerable efforts have been made in relation to the commitments in this area to promote greater participation in policy-making and service delivery.

The completion level in relation to the 13 commitments in this area are set out below:

Completion level	Number of Commitments
Not started / Limited	2
Substantial	4*
Completed	6

\*Two sub-actions under 2.6 has been completed, four are categorized as 'Substantial'.

The specific actions involved are as follows:

Action	Action name	Lead Implementing Agency	Completion Level
2.1	<a href="#">Review national and international practice to develop revised principles / code for public engagement/consultation with citizens, civil society and others by public bodies</a>	DPER	Completed
2.2.1	<a href="#">Undertake public engagement early in the legislative process</a>	DTAOIS; Oireachtas	Completed
2.2.2	<a href="#">Build capacity of public bodies to provide access to information under Aarhus Convention</a>	DECLG	Substantial
2.3	<a href="#">Hold referenda arising from the recommendations of the Constitutional Convention</a>	DECLG; DJ&E	Completed
2.4.1	<a href="#">Pilot approach to implementation of Public Participation Networks</a>	DECLG	Completed
2.4.2	<a href="#">Provide legal base for public participation framework in local government</a>	DECLG	Substantial
2.4.3	<a href="#">Undertake a feasibility study on possible means of enabling further citizen engagement in local authority budgetary processes</a>	DECLG	Not Started/Limited
2.5.1	<a href="#">Develop, finalise and publish the first Government Strategy on children and young people's participation in decision-making</a>	DC&YA	Completed
2.5.2	<a href="#">Maximise participation and understanding of young people in civic life</a>	DE&S	Not Started/Limited
2.6	<a href="#">Customer improvements to be implemented for citizens through technology</a>	DPER	Substantial*
2.7.1	<a href="#">A review of citizen complaints procedures will be undertaken.</a>	DPER	Completed

2.7.2	<a href="#">Enhance customer engagement</a>	DPER	Substantial
*Two sub-actions under 2.6 has been completed, four are categorized as 'Substantial'.			

Highlights in relation to work that has been completed include:

- A comprehensive review of public consultation policies and procedures was carried out in a number of jurisdictions as well as the OECD model of best practice. Following the review, new public consultation guidelines were developed to foster greater citizen involvement and participation and improve principles and procedures for the conduct of consultations by public bodies. These guidelines have been the subject of an 11-week consultation period which concluded on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2015. Several submissions have been received and these were considered in finalising the guidelines. The guidelines will apply to all public bodies.
- Pre-legislative scrutiny of Bills has been expanded and formalised and reasons must be given if a Bill is not sent for such scrutiny by the relevant Oireachtas (Parliamentary) Committee
- Training modules have been provided to relevant public bodies to build capacity in the provision of information under the Aarhus Convention
- Two referenda were held arising from the recommendations of the Constitutional Convention, an initiative which in itself did much to involve citizens in decision-making
- Following pilots, Public Participation networks (PPNs) have now been rolled out across all Local Authority areas. While still at a development stage the results so far have been good insofar as Local Authorities have been undertaking a range of activities to communicate with potential stakeholders of Public Participation Networks to increase awareness and aid in groups joining the PPNs
- The first National Participation Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in decision making 2015-2020 was published in June 2015. The process of development of the Strategy included a national consultation process in 2011 which obtained the views of 66,700 children and young people; a public consultation in 2012, ongoing stakeholder engagement in Departmental initiatives – e.g Dáil na nÓg, Comhairle na nÓg and other initiatives involving children and young people. There are 7 main objectives under the Strategy to give children a voice and an Action Plan which was developed following in-depth bilateral meetings with Government departments and agencies, with non-government stakeholders and with children and young people. A toolkit has also been developed to provide information for managers of organisations and a manual for practitioners on how to make the organisation relevant to 'seldom-heard' children and young people and on how to include them in organisations and events. Work has also commenced on the development of a Participation Hub to provide information, guidance and practical support in delivering commitments outlined in the Action Plan
- A number of technical and innovative services are being introduced to ensure excellent service delivery such as the introduction of the Public Services Card which enables individuals to gain access to public services more efficiently and with a minimum of duplication of effort and the establishment of the new Local Government portal to facilitate one-stop-shop access for all citizens to all local authority services
- Actions are being taken to promote better customer engagement including provision of more customer service training, reviewing customer charter process, formal organisations survey of focus/user groups, meetings, seminars and consultation processes.

### Rebuilding Trust in Government: Actions 3.1 -3.5

The existence of adequate and effective arrangements for governance and accountability within the civil service and between the civil service, the political level and citizens generally is one of the fundamental elements of a democratic system of government. The 5 commitments in this area build on, and give further impetus to, a number of the Government's programme of political reform initiatives and lead to a more open, transparent and responsive Government and the restoration of public trust.

The completion level in relation to the 5 commitments in this area are set out below.

<b>Completion level</b>	<b>Number of Commitments</b>
Not started / Limited	0
Substantial	1
Completed	4

The specific actions involved are as follows:

<b>Action</b>	<b>Action name</b>	<b>Lead Implementing Agency</b>	<b>Completion Level</b>
3.1	<a href="#">Ethics Reform</a>	DPER	Substantial
3.2	<a href="#">Strengthening Freedom of Information - Implement the Code of Practice for Freedom of Information (FOI)</a>	DPER	Completed
3.3	<a href="#">Reform of FOI</a>	DPER	Completed
3.4	<a href="#">Regulation of Lobbying</a>	DPER	Completed
3.5	<a href="#">Encourage, Protect and Raise Awareness of Whistleblower Duties and Protections</a>	DPER	Completed

Much work has been done to achieve these 5 commitments, which will ensure adequate and effective arrangements for governance and accountability are in place and to increase public integrity.

The Protected Disclosures Act 2014 closely reflects international best practice recommendations on whistleblower protection made by the G20/OECD, the UN and the Council of Europe, and draws on recent developments in legislative models adopted or being put in place in other jurisdictions. It provides a framework for the protection of workers in all sectors of the economy against reprisals in circumstances that they make a disclosure of information relating to wrongdoing which comes to their attention in the workplace. Briefing sessions were held to build capacity to implement the Act. Whistleblowing protection is increasingly seen as an essential anti-corruption mechanism and Whistleblowing should become an accepted norm as a result of the Act, promoting a culture of public accountability and integrity.

A modernised, consolidated, restructured and more accessible Freedom of Information Act was developed bringing almost all public bodies within scope and removing the main substantive restrictions in access to official information which had been introduced in 2003. The abolition of the up-front fee for making a request, the reduction of the fees for making appeals, and the minimum threshold and cap limits put in place for search, retrieval and copying have all led to more accessible information and are therefore advancing transparency, accountability and improved decision-making. Following a review of the implementation of FOI by an external expert group, and with the advice and support of a group of public bodies, a Code of Practice was developed to promote best practice among public bodies in relation to the operation of FOI and guide and inform them in the performance of their responsibilities under the FOI Act 2014. The Code was rolled out and implementation is ongoing.

The Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 sets up a statutory regime for the regulation of lobbying activity and provides for the establishment of a web-based public register which ensures significant transparency on who is communicating with whom and about what. There was significant engagement with stakeholders in the development of the Act which came into legal effect on 1 September. It applies to lobbying communication with Ministers, Ministers of State, TDs and Senators, MEPs representing the Irish State, Special Advisers to Minister and senior officials in the Civil Service and the Local Authorities. The Act strengthens the degree of openness and scope for public scrutiny of the interactions and engagements between all sectors of society with the political and administrative systems. It allows the wider public to reach informed evidence-based judgments about the extent to which different interest groups are accessing key decision makers across the political and public service systems and consequently will increase the public understanding of lobbying activity in Ireland.

The Public Sector Standards Bill 2015 was published on 23 December 2015, and completed Second Stage in the Dáil on 20th January 2016. The Bill aims to significantly enhance the existing framework for identifying, disclosing and managing conflicts of interest and minimising corruption risks, to achieve a shift towards a more dynamic and risk-based system of compliance and to ensure that the institutional framework for oversight, investigation and enforcement is robust and effective. This Bill consolidates the current legislative framework governing the ethical obligations of public officials and gives effect to the recommendations of the Tribunals.

#### **4. Conclusion, Other initiatives and Next Steps**

##### **A: Lessons learned**

The action plan contains many commitments and as set out above, there has been substantial progress or completion achieved in the majority of the actions. Nonetheless, perhaps a more focused programme of work with fewer actions would allow more time to be given to working with civil society and citizens in developing the actions in the first place and then keeping them informed and involved as implementation progresses.

When starting a new initiative, it is not always possible to predict the actions that will be required to deliver it and moreover the timing of when the actions should be taken. We saw this for example in relation to the Open Data Initiative where the timing was not right to put a Data Governance Board in place. We have gone beyond the stated actions in the NAP thus giving the initiative greater impetus.

Many of the actions, while stretching and ambitious, were quite concrete so it could be demonstrated that progress had been made. However it will be some time before the impact of the actions can be measured and indeed some of them will be quite difficult to measure as other factors will also have a role. We need to keep this in mind in developing the next NAP.

We are not yet at the position where we can conclude that OGP is something that the general public is aware of and we could do more in terms of publishing our achievements. There is much work to be done in this regard and it will involve a considerable investment of time and resources.

While we set out to achieve a number of actions around citizen participation and really good progress has been made in the specific actions, we would welcome greater civil society/citizen engagement in the OGP. As mentioned above, a consultative event was held on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015, which was well attended, and the objective was to seek views on how to raise awareness of the OGP more generally, how to broaden participation of citizens and civil society in the OGP in a sustainable way, as well as to finalise an approach to a model for reviewing the OGP NAP itself. This will continue to be a priority.

## **B: Conclusions and further steps**

The first NAP was very ambitious with the areas encompassed being extremely important to the functioning of government institutions, economic growth and social development. There has been very substantial implementation of the actions which should support harnessing the potential of Open Data, strengthening citizen engagement in policy-making and increasing government transparency. We are very pleased with the progress that has been made while recognising that improvements can be made. We appreciate the considerable efforts that have been made by all concerned to develop the NAP in the first instance and to ensure delivery of the actions. As the Independent Reporting Mechanism's interim progress report noted, establishing the Implementation and Review Group (IRG) presented difficulties that were not overcome in the period for the first National Action Plan. We will work with civil society to implement the recommendations of the report in order to establish the IRG during the period of the second National Action Plan

We consider the following to be important next steps:

- Establish an appropriate forum to review implementation of actions
- Identify and build stronger working relationships with civil society
- Raise awareness of the OGP, making it relevant to a wider community and promoting greater citizen engagement at local level;
- Strike the right balance in terms of the level of ambition and the need to be realistic in developing NAP2
- Continue to collaborate with other OGP members, sharing knowledge, experiences and lessons learned.

Our membership of the OGP and implementing actions has heightened the profile of the actions and supported implementation. It reaffirms Ireland's commitment to government transparency and provides an important platform to reinforce and add further depth to Ireland's ongoing programme of democratic reform. Continued political and administrative support are vital to the process. We welcome the support, goodwill, interest and enthusiasm of civil society and citizens in the OGP process.

## Appendix 1 - Commitment Completion Templates

Commitment Completion Template		
<b>Action 1.1 – Establishment of best practice standards for Open Data</b>		
Lead implementing agency	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency	Fiona Morley Clarke	
Title, Department	Assistant Principal, Open Data Unit, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	
Email	Fiona.Morley-Clarke@per.gov.ie	
Phone	076 100 7250	
Other actors involved	Government	All public bodies
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	Progress in this action has been the subject of public consultation processes. The Business, Research and Civil Society communities were all involved in the public consultations.
Main Objective	Establishment of best practice standards for Open Data	
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	Establishment and implementation of best practice standards for the publication and licensing of Open Data in Ireland.	
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>	<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services; increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>Open Data can deliver a significant democratic dividend, by facilitating more transparency and accountability of public bodies. Significantly greater availability of Open Data can play an important role in strengthening openness, transparency and accountability and is an important element of Ireland’s Open Government Partnership National Action Plan. It will also require better data discipline in public bodies, providing for greater efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. It is also anticipated that the commitment to collaboration that is a fundamental element of the Open Data Initiative will encourage more citizen participation and greater inclusion.</p> <p>One example of collaboration leading to more transparency, accountability and public participation was the Open Data Licences consultation process which was undertaken in February and March 2015. This consultation process was based on a document which considered a number of options for an Open Data licence for use in Ireland, to help ensure</p>	

	<p>interoperability with other datasets internationally and to help facilitate use and re-use by ensuring continuity of Open Data availability. The document was developed based on a detailed analysis of international best practice, including the EU Commission’s PSI guidelines recommending the use of Open Standard licences.</p> <p>Responses to the consultation recommended the Creative Commons Attribution licence (CC-BY).</p> <p>The Open Data Technical Framework has been completed following public consultation and is available at (<a href="http://www.per.gov.ie/open-data/">http://www.per.gov.ie/open-data/</a>). It recommends CC-BY for publication of Open Data under Ireland’s Open Data Initiative.</p> <p>Generally, the advancement of the core values of the OGP in Open Data will be achieved through regular outreach and dissemination activities to raise awareness of the Open Data Initiative, publicise progress, and seek input from stakeholders including Civil Society.</p>		
<p><b>Ambition</b></p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>The Open Data Initiative aims to make it easier for any interested stakeholder to access, re-use and redistribute Government data, whether for commercial, research, citizen engagement, or other purposes. It also commits to regular engagement in outreach and collaboration activities to raise awareness of Open Data, publicise Open Data progress, and seek input from business, researchers and citizens.</p> <p>The Civil Society/Citizens community has an important role to play in ensuring that Open Data supports good practice in maximising the transparency and accountability gains from the release of datasets.</p>		
<p><b>Completion level</b></p>	<p>Not started / Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p><b>Description of the results</b></p> <p><i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the</i></p>	<p><b>The Open Data Technical Framework is available at <a href="https://data.gov.ie/technical-framework">https://data.gov.ie/technical-framework</a>.</b></p> <p><b>The Technical Framework provides a clear set of requirements for public bodies to ensure that published datasets meet clearly defined standards and are published in a consistent, persistent and truly open way, making them more discoverable, accessible, interoperable and reusable.</b></p> <p><b>The Technical Framework was the subject of a public consultation process during the second half of 2015.</b></p>		

<p><i>commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p><b>Responses to the consultation were very supportive of the proposed approach.</b></p> <p><b>The Framework comprises five key components:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Open Data Licence</b></li> <li>• <b>Formats</b></li> <li>• <b>Metadata</b></li> <li>• <b>Standards and</b></li> <li>• <b>Unique Resource Identifiers</b></li> </ul> <p><b>The completion of this Action (through the development of the Technical Framework) included a full public consultation.</b></p> <p><b>The decision on adopting the Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) licence for the Open Data Initiative was also informed by a full public consultation.</b></p>
<p>End date</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>Next steps</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</p>	
<p>The focus is now on building the number of datasets available as Open Data, and ensuring a high level of compliance with the Open Data Technical Framework.</p>	



## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 1.2 - Establishment of Ireland's Open Data Platform</b>		
Lead implementing agency		Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Fiona Morley Clarke
Title, Department		Assistant Principal, Open Data Unit, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Email		Fiona.Morley-Clarke@per.gov.ie
Phone		076 100 7250
Other actors involved	Government	All public bodies
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	The alpha portal has been in place since July 2014. The beta version, launched on 30/06/15, includes a "Suggest a Dataset" facility which allows all interested stakeholders (from all groups across society) to suggest potential datasets for inclusion. The Open Data Initiative involves public consultation processes and public events. The Business, Research and Civil Society communities were all involved in these consultations and events, and at each of these, participants were asked to consider the potential datasets and use cases of data in the context of the portal.
Main Objective		Establishment of Ireland's Open Data Platform
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		Establishment of Ireland's Open Data Platform, which will contain a data catalogue allowing citizens to search for datasets hosted by public sector bodies.
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>		<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services; increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>These challenges will be achieved by ensuring that Open Data, linked through the portal <a href="http://data.gov.ie">data.gov.ie</a>, will meet the requirements of the Open Data Technical Framework over time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licence (allowing people to use data)</li> <li>• Formats ((e.g., using non-proprietary instead of proprietary formats)</li> <li>• Metadata (precise descriptors about datasets)</li> <li>• Standards (to ensure a common understanding of the data)</li> <li>• Unique Resource Identifiers</li> </ul> <p>This will mean that all datasets published on the Open Data portal will, within an agreed timeframe, be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Machine-Readable</li> <li>• Non-Proprietary</li> <li>• Associated with an Open Licence</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Described by standardised Metadata and will thus be accessible and reusable.</li> </ul>		
<p>Ambition</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>The Open Data Strategy will set out the steps required to ensure that the portal meets the highest international standards as a true Open Data portal where datasets are free to use, reuse, and redistribute. . The Open Data published on the platform will strive to be compliant with the G8 Open Data Charter, including that the data will be available in open, machine-readable formats, with robust and consistent metadata. The Open Data platform will contain a data catalogue that will allow citizens to search for datasets hosted by public sector bodies. Aligned with international best practices and to maximise the potential for data interoperability, the Open Data Platform will strive to publish 5-star quality data where possible. The Open Data platform will also facilitate feedback from citizens, for example enabling citizens to request additional datasets, to provide information about applications for which the data is being utilised and to provide practical knowledge about usability and quality of datasets. The Open Data platform will be continually supported and new features added where necessary.</p>		
Completion level	Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed
			X
<p>Description of the results</p> <p><i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p><b>The portal currently links to 4898 datasets from 88 publishers (as of 06/08/2016).</b></p> <p><b>Statistics published at <a href="https://data.gov.ie/stats">https://data.gov.ie/stats</a> show a very high compliance with the Technical Framework with 3778 datasets meeting the requirements of 3-Star Open Data.</b></p> <p><b>All datasets are compliant with DCAT-AP v1.1</b></p>		
End date	Completed		
Next steps	Ensuring ongoing alignment of the portal with the Technical Framework. Continuing to build the number of high-value datasets made available through the portal.		
<p>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</p>			
<p>Over the lifecycle of the Open Data Initiative, the importance of collaboration with public bodies and other key stakeholders to ensure compliance with the Technical Framework.</p>			

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 1.3 – Undertake an audit of key datasets for publication</b>		
Lead implementing agency		Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Fiona Morley Clarke
Title, Department		Assistant Principal, Open Data Unit, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Email		Fiona.Morley-Clarke@per.gov.ie
Phone		076 100 7250
Other actors involved	Government	All public bodies
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A
Main Objective		Undertake an audit of key datasets for publication
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		Auditing of datasets available within the public service. Determination of the high value data sets to be prioritized for publication. Ensuring correct cataloguing of existing data sets.
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>		<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services; increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>The Open Data Strategy recognises the importance of a planned and structured approach to the publication of data as Open Data. Public bodies should take into account the value, potential for re-use and contribution publication of data can make to realising benefits. Organisational data audits play a key role in this regard.</p> <p>In making data open, public bodies seek to do so in an intelligent and managed manner. A key priority is to identify the data which they already hold. To ensure that the expansion of the portal, <a href="http://data.gov.ie">data.gov.ie</a>, leads to the availability and use of high value datasets, a planned and structured approach to the publication of data as open data is required. This approach should take into account the value, potential for re-use and contribution a dataset can make to achieving the economic, social and democratic benefits of Open Data.</p> <p>Under this Open Data Strategy, all public bodies will be required to conduct an audit of their datasets using a template developed by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, based on</p>

	the COMSODE methodology <sup>1</sup> . As referenced in action 1.2, a significant number of high value datasets have been identified and published following audits.		
<p>Ambition</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>The draft Strategy for Open Data includes the aim that all public bodies will conduct an audit and develop publication plans, thus making Government more open and providing a means of holding Government to account through analysis of the Open Data.</p> <p>It will also help improve the openness of Government by encouraging citizen participation - taking account of “high-demand” datasets, and other requests arising from engagement with the Open Data user community, including Civil Society.</p>		
Completion level	Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed
			X
<p>Description of the results</p> <p><i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p><b>An audit template, based on the COMSODE methodology, was developed and the audit process is ongoing in public bodies.</b></p> <p><b>The Audit Tool is available at <a href="http://audit.data.gov.ie/">http://audit.data.gov.ie/</a>.</b></p> <p><b>It is expected that auditing will be an ongoing process over the full duration of the Open Data Initiative. However, the tools are now in place and progress with increasing the number of datasets available shows that progress has been significant. In addition, a “Suggest a Dataset” feature has been added to the portal (<a href="https://data.gov.ie/dataset/suggest">https://data.gov.ie/dataset/suggest</a>) which allows anyone to suggest additional datasets.</b></p>		
End date	Ongoing over duration of the Strategy		
Next steps	Ongoing engagement with public bodies and stakeholders in progressing a lifecycle approach to Open Data. Working with public bodies in auditing their datasets leading to greater publication levels of high quality / value datasets		
Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)			
The key lesson learned has been that capacity building is required in public bodies to ensure audits are undertaken and publication plans developed. Support is being provided in this respect.			

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.comsode.eu/>

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 1.4 – Establish a roadmap for the Open Data and an evaluation framework to provide assessment of the ongoing Open Data</b>		
Lead implementing agency		Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Fiona Morley Clarke
Title, Department		Assistant Principal, Open Data Unit, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Email		Fiona.Morley-Clarke@per.gov.ie
Phone		076 100 7250
Other actors involved	Government	All public bodies
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	External expertise was contracted to assist in this action. The wider public was engaged through a public consultation, the results of which were published in 2014 ( <a href="http://www.per.gov.ie/en/open-data/">http://www.per.gov.ie/en/open-data/</a> )
Main Objective		Establish a roadmap for the Open Data and an evaluation framework to provide assessment of the ongoing Open Data
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		Outlining steps to develop Open Data in Ireland. Setting quantitative and qualitative criteria. Regular progress assessment; benchmarking to best international practice.
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>		<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services; increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>A roadmap was developed in 2014 setting out a detailed 3 year plan for the objectives, structure and actions necessary to advance publication of national and regional Open Data for maximum impact. The short and medium-term objectives have largely been achieved. The longer term objectives will be achieved in the context of the Open Data Strategy that is currently under development.</p> <p>This challenge of advancing the OGP values is being addressed in the context of the lifecycle approach to Open Data proposed in the Foundation Document for the development of a National Open Data Strategy.</p> <p>By establishing a lifecycle approach to Open Data, there will be a common understanding of the activities that are required in terms of data audits, developing publication plans, and publishing data via <a href="http://data.gov.ie">data.gov.ie</a>. This will be supported by</p>

	<p>ensuring that sound governance structures are in place to achieve a consistent and coherent approach to Open Data across all public bodies. As part of this approach, a set of metrics allowing for ongoing benefits realisation measurement and capture will be developed.</p> <p>The coherent, consistent approach envisaged in the consultation documents will, in turn, help to advance the OGP values of access, accountability, participation, and technological innovation for openness and accountability.</p> <p>These initiatives will be complemented by Ireland’s ongoing engagement in EU and international Open Data benchmarking activities.</p>						
<p><b>Ambition</b> <i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>Significantly greater availability of Open Data will help to strengthen openness, transparency and accountability. Measurement tools will be developed in conjunction with the ongoing implementation of the <a href="#">Public Service Reform Plan</a> and the <a href="#">Public Service ICT Strategy</a>, as well as the Open Data Initiative. The ICT Strategy, in particular, identifies data as a critical enabler of Public Service Reform, facilitating “increased data sharing and innovative use of data across all Public Bodies to enable the delivery of integrated services, improve decision making and improve openness and transparency between Government and the public”.</p>						
<p><b>Completion level</b></p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Not started / Limited</td> <td>Substantial</td> <td>Completed</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>X</td> </tr> </table>	Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed			X
Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed					
		X					
<p><b>Description of the results</b> <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>This Action was initiated in 2014, and has been ongoing, with the roadmap successfully completed by mid-2015.</p> <p>The Work Programme for Open Data has been achieved and the further development of the Open Data Initiative has seen significant progress.</p> <p>Significant engagement with the different stakeholder groups, both individually and together, have seen real progress in terms of the technical framework.</p> <p>The development of metrics is an ongoing challenge, but Ireland has engaged with the European Commission to identify use cases and individual public bodies are paying very close attention to the potential impacts of Open Data in their own areas.</p>						
<p><b>End date</b></p>	<p>Ongoing for the duration of the Open Data Initiative</p>						
<p><b>Next steps</b></p>	<p>Development of specific metrics under the Strategy</p>						
<p>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved)</p>							

and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)

The challenges of capturing the exclusive benefits of Open Data, as opposed to data that is available in other closed formats will need to be addressed in developing the benefits realisation methodology. It is an area where further research is required at international level.

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 1.5 – Establishment of an Open Data Ireland Governance Board (ODIGB) and Steering and Implementation Group (SIG) for Open Data Ireland</b>		
Lead implementing agency		Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Fiona Morley Clarke
Title, Department		Assistant Principal, Open Data Unit, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Email		Fiona.Morley-Clarke@per.gov.ie
Phone		076 100 7250
Other actors involved	Government	All public bodies
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	<p>The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform launched an Expressions of Interest process for membership of the ODGB through <a href="http://www.stateboards.ie">www.stateboards.ie</a>. Applications were invited from three groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business and Enterprise;</li> <li>• Civil Society Organisations; and</li> <li>• Academia and Research</li> </ul>
Main Objective		Establishment of an Open Data Ireland Governance Board (ODIGB) and Steering and Implementation Group (SIG) for Open Data Ireland
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		Establishment of ODIGB and SIG to ensure that a comprehensive governance and oversight and implementation framework is in place for future development of Open Data in line with Action 1.4.
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>		<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services; increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>The Open Data Roadmap included a recommendation to establish an Open Data Board. The time is now right to establish this structure.</p> <p>The Open Data Governance Board (ODGB) will be established on a non-statutory basis to provide leadership in line with best international practice in the area of open data. It will support the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and the Government in driving implementation of the National Open Data Strategy. The Board will consider opportunities to maximise the value of Open Data for long-term economic, social and democratic benefit, and will advise the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform in this regard. The Board will focus on governance of implementation of the Open Data Initiative</p>



	<p>across the Public Service, with particular emphasis on cross-cutting issues.</p> <p>The ODGB will include representatives from public bodies as well as from other key stakeholder groups. These groups include Civil Society.</p> <p>A Public Bodies Working Group (which is the name given to the SIG) has been established. This Group has driven the preparation of the Foundation Document for the development of a National Open Data Strategy and the Technical Framework, which are currently published for public consultation.</p>		
<p><b>Ambition</b></p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>The ODGB will provide strategic leadership in line with best international practice in the area of Open Data. It will support the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and the Government in driving implementation of the National Open Data Strategy.</p> <p>The Board will focus on governance of the implementation of the Open Data Initiative across the Public Service. It will consider how to improve the capacity and capability of public bodies in implementing Open Data, with particular emphasis on cross-cutting issues.</p> <p>The ODGB will consider opportunities to maximise the value of public sector data and information for long-term economic, social and democratic benefit, including through the identification and release of appropriate data free of charge, and make recommendations to Government in this regard. The PBWG (SIG) provides expertise and brings knowledge and capability to the Initiative. The PBWG guides the nuts and bolts issues in relation to technical aspects of policy documents as well as supporting on practical aspects such as audits.</p>		
<p><b>Completion level</b></p>	<p>Not started / Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p><b>Description of the results</b></p> <p><i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p><b>The Open Data Governance Board (ODGB) and Public Bodies Working Group (PBWG) are both established and operational.</b></p> <p><b>The SIG was renamed as PBWG which is the steering and implementation group on operational matters working in tandem with the ODGB which provides leadership and sets strategic direction to ensure the benefits of open data are achieved.</b></p>		

End date	Both governance structures are in place
Next steps	Both governance structures are in place
Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)	
Ensuring that both governance structures work well together to deliver workable approaches to Open Data across a range of distinct public bodies is a challenge that continues to be addressed.	

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 1.6 – Signing up to the G8 Open Data Charter</b>		
Lead implementing agency		Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Fiona Morley Clarke
Title, Department		Assistant Principal, Open Data Unit, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Email		Fiona.Morley-Clarke@per.gov.ie
Phone		076 100 7250
Other actors involved	Government	All public bodies
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A. However, this issue is included in a range of strategic documents which were the subject of public consultation.
Main Objective		Sign up to the G8 Open Data Charter
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		Signing up to G8 Open Data Charter; formulating and implementing a plan for release of the high value data sets taking account of the Charter's Annex within a 2 year timeframe.
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>		<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services; increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>The G8 Open Data Charter is considered the gold standard for Open Data. Ireland's Open Data Strategy (see Foundation Document at <a href="http://www.per.gov.ie/en/open-data/">http://www.per.gov.ie/en/open-data/</a>) will be informed by the key principles of the Open Data Charter and will aim to achieve economic, social and democratic benefits.</p> <p>Open Data has significant potential to deliver valuable benefits across society. In terms of social and democratic benefits, Open Data can lead to, inter alia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More transparency and accountability of public bodies. Significantly greater availability of Open Data can play an important role in strengthening openness, transparency and accountability and is an important element of Ireland's Open Government Partnership National Action Plan.</li> <li>• Better data discipline in public bodies, providing for greater efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.</li> <li>• More citizen participation and inclusion.</li> </ul>
Ambition		To achieve compliance with the principles set out in the Charter. This is being implemented through publication of datasets on

<p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>the portal in line with our Technical Framework (<a href="http://www.per.gov.ie/open-data/">http://www.per.gov.ie/open-data/</a>) and will be ongoing throughout the life of the Initiative.</p>		
<p>Completion level</p>	<p>Not started / Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>Description of the results <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>A <a href="#">foundation document, which</a> was the subject of a public consultation in June/July 2015, endorses the principles of the G8 Charter.</p> <p>The ODGB, which includes representatives of Civil Society, is working to finalise an Open Data Strategy taking account of responses to this consultation process.</p> <p>The identification of appropriate datasets is a matter of ongoing consideration in public bodies.</p>		
<p>End date</p>	<p>The Open Data Initiative endorses the principles of the G8 Charter. There is no requirement to formally sign-up, given that Ireland is not a member of the G8.</p>		
<p>Next steps</p>	<p>Ongoing implementation of Open Data.</p>		
<p>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</p>			
<p>Success will require full and ongoing engagement with all stakeholders.</p>			

## Commitment Completion Template

### Action 1.7 – Implementing Open Data

Lead implementing agency	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency	Fiona Morley Clarke	
Title, Department	Assistant Principal, Open Data Unit, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	
Email	Fiona.Morley-Clarke@per.gov.ie	
Phone	076 100 7250	
Other actors involved	Government	All public bodies
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	Progress with Open Data has involved, as a core element, ongoing engagement and collaboration with interested stakeholders from all areas of society. Public Consultation processes have been open to all.
Main Objective	Implement Open Data	
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	Development of a detailed implementation plan by the Public Bodies Working Group, informed by, for example, the Roadmap and setting out key deliverables and timelines to implement the Open Data strategy.	
Relevance <i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i>	<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services; and increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>This will be achieved through a coherent and consistent approach to Open Data, as set out in the Foundation Document for the development of a National Open Data Strategy, and the Technical Framework, and through a lifecycle approach to auditing and publishing Open Data via the <a href="http://data.gov.ie">data.gov.ie</a> portal.</p> <p>The implementation of the Open Data Initiative will be underpinned by sound governance structures and ongoing outreach and collaboration activities.</p> <p>Significant progress has been achieved in delivering the Work Programme for the Open Data Roadmap. The next phase of this Initiative will be the finalisation and implementation of the Open Data Strategy.</p>	
Ambition	<p>To deliver the strategic objectives of the Open Data Initiative. This will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish mechanism to measure success in realising the benefits of Open Data.</li> </ul>	

<p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a lifecycle approach to Open Data, setting out the activities that are required in terms of data audits, developing publication plans, and publishing data via data.gov.ie</li> <li>• Ensure sound governance structures to ensure that a consistent and coherent approach to Open Data is pursued across all public bodies.</li> <li>• Promote usage of Open Data through engagement with appropriate structures and Sectors</li> <li>• Improve the quality of data available to public bodies for analysis and decision-making to achieve better outcomes for all through improved data analytics.</li> <li>• Set out a consistent approach to Open Data for public bodies.</li> <li>• Identify specific domains for particular attention to allow for release of high value datasets, on a phased basis. Potential domains for the first phase include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Environment,</li> <li>○ Health,</li> <li>○ Transport,</li> <li>○ Culture and Heritage,</li> <li>○ Flooding.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<p>Completion level</p>	<p>Not started / Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>Description of the results <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p><b>A comprehensive Work Programme for Open Data has been implemented and progress has been significant. The Open Data Governance Board, which includes representatives from each of the stakeholder areas under the Open Data Initiative, is working on the next phase of the Open Data Initiative.</b></p>		
<p>End date</p>	<p>Implementation of Open Data will be an ongoing feature of Data Management processes in public bodies into the future</p>		
<p>Next steps</p>	<p>Implementation of Open Data will be an ongoing feature of Data Management processes in public bodies into the future</p>		
<p>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</p>			
<p>Ensuring an action-oriented approach to delivering the Strategy and measuring the impact of datasets</p>			

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 1.8 - Improve computer literacy through implementation of proposed new Digital Strategy for Schools</b>		
Lead implementing agency	Department of Education & Skills	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency	Eddie Ward, Betty Regan, Clare Connolly	
Title, Department	Department of Education & Skills	
Email	<a href="mailto:Eddie_ward@education.gov.ie">Eddie_ward@education.gov.ie</a> ; <a href="mailto:Betty_regan@education.gov.ie">Betty_regan@education.gov.ie</a> <a href="mailto:Clare_Connolly@education.gov.ie">Clare_Connolly@education.gov.ie</a>	
Phone	090 6483961/ 09064 84170/3978	
Other actors involved	Government	Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	NCCA, Teaching Council, Industry, ITE's (Initial Teacher Education Providers), Young people, schools, teachers, Management bodies, Industry.
Main Objective	To realise the potential of digital technologies to enhance teaching, learning and assessment so that Ireland's young people become engaged thinkers, active learners, knowledge constructors and global citizens to participate fully in society and the economy.	
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	To support students in learning to use digital technology, communication tools and the internet to engage in self-directed enquiry in order to develop their digital literacy skills. As students develop their digital literacy skills, they learn how to create, collaborate and communicate effectively and ethically.	
Relevance <i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic</i>	This action relates to open data and transparency. Through the Digital Strategy it is proposed to improve students' digital literacy and thereby ensuring students realise the potential of digital technologies and become engaged thinkers, active learners, knowledge constructors and global citizens to participate fully in society and the economy and will have knowledge of open data and be able to use it throughout their lives.	

<p><i>participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>				
<p><b>Ambition</b> <i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>Students to actively engage in learning and to use digital technology, communication tools and the internet to engage in self-directed enquiry. As students develop their digital literacy skills, they improve their capacity to know what they are looking for, what information to ignore or discard, and how to identify what can be useful or significant. They learn to discriminate between the multiple sources of information available online and to challenge the views they find there. They learn how to create, collaborate and communicate effectively and ethically. This will ensure that the public can access open data in the most efficient way.</p>			
<p><b>Completion level</b></p>	<p>Not started</p>	<p>Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p><b>Description of the results</b> <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>The Digital Strategy sets out a comprehensive set of objectives/actions to be achieved over 2015-2020. The strategy envisages that technology will be used to open up new forms of teaching and collaboration to support different styles of learning. There will be significant increases in the amount of professional development opportunities for teachers in using ICT as part of their teaching methodologies. Students will be actively engaged in learning – both in and out of school and will learn to use ICT critically and ethically. There will be a significant increase in the amount of digital technologies used in the classroom by teachers and students. Schools will take lead roles in planning how they will effectively embed ICT in teaching, learning and assessment practices. This will involve the entire school community in developing an e-Learning plan that takes into account the professional Development needs of teachers, the views and insights of students and parents/guardians. Schools will strengthen their relationships with the wider community, both local and global, connecting more with parents and students in their homes through the use of digital technology.</p> <p>Curriculum specification will support in-depth study of ICT and all future curricula will include clear statements that focus on the development of digital learning skills and the use of ICT as a resource in achieving specific outcomes across the curriculum.</p>			
<p><b>End date</b></p>	<p>2020</p>			
<p><b>Next steps</b></p>	<p>The Strategy was launched in October 2015. An Implementation Steering Group, which will oversee and consult on the</p>			



	implementation of the strategy had its first meeting on 6 July 2016.
Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)	
<p>Additional Information from lead agency:</p> <p>Teacher education will feature strongly in the implementation of the Digital Strategy from initial teacher education through induction and continuing professional development (CPD). The Department's support services and in particular the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) will be key players in helping teachers and schools in becoming competent and confident in the use of ICT for teaching, learning and assessment.</p> <p>The current eLearning framework for schools will be updated to reflect technological and educational developments since it was first developed in 2009. This work will facilitate schools to create linkages with existing school policies, for example School-Self-Evaluation, so that ICT is embedded deeply within the school.</p> <p>The UNESCO ICT Framework for Teachers will be adapted to the Irish context and it has great potential in helping teachers and schools identify their training needs and the CPD required.</p> <p>The Department support services will provide schools with guidance and examples of good practices on the effective, critical and ethical use of ICT for teaching learning and assessment. These examples will reflect real classroom practice in action. Teachers will be encouraged to share their own examples of good practice.</p> <p>Clear governance structures and communication strategies are central to the effective implementation of the Strategy. A Steering Committee has been established to provide oversight and governance. The continued involvement of the key stakeholders and the wider Education Partners will be facilitated through the establishment of a consultative advisory group. Industry will also be represented on the group.</p> <p>All post primary schools have high speed broadband and the emphasis now will be a focus on its effective use for teaching and learning. A key priority for the Strategy will be to provide improved broadband speeds to primary schools and the Department will be collaborating with the Department of Communications, Energy and National Resources (DCENR) in this regard.</p> <p>Risks or challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortfall in resource capacity (including personnel, financial and expertise) in areas of the Department (and its agencies) which have significant policy and leadership responsibilities identified in the Strategy. Other priority works across these same areas and the demands for their delivery.</li> <li>• The successful delivery of some objectives will require participation from independent education providers, statutory bodies, and other Government Departments. Collaborative approach, mutual understanding, good communication and co-operation will be key challenges to achieving associated goals.</li> </ul>	

- Shortfall in financial resources for improved ICT Infrastructure in schools including the provision of High Speed Broadband to primary schools.
- Difficulties in providing broadband connectivity to schools – particularly in rural areas.
- Ensuring a collaborative approach and consistent messaging across all of the areas with responsibility for delivering the Digital Strategy.

## Commitment Completion Template

### Action 2.1 – Review national and international practice to develop revised principles / code for public engagement/consultation with citizens, civil society and others by public bodies.

Lead implementing agency		Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Ian Devlin
Title, Department		Assistant Principal, Department of Public Expenditure & Reform
Email		ian.devlin@per.gov.ie
Phone		604 5741
Other actors involved	Government	All public bodies
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	Public consultation on the draft guidelines, open to all, was undertaken for a period of 11 weeks, concluding on 9 <sup>th</sup> October 2015. Several submissions have been received and these have been considered in the context of finalising the guidelines.
Main Objective		To foster greater citizen involvement and participation through the development of revised guidelines and principles for the consultation and engagement by public bodies with citizens, civil society and others
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		Review national and international best practice to develop improved regulations, principles and procedures for the conduct of consultations by public bodies.
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>		<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services, increasing public integrity and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>The adoption and implementation of principles guiding the carrying out of consultation processes complements and will help achieve the commitment in the Civil Service Renewal Plan (<a href="http://www.per.gov.ie/en/civil-service-renewal/">http://www.per.gov.ie/en/civil-service-renewal/</a>) to strengthen policy-making skills and develop more open approaches to policymaking.</p>
<p>Ambition</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>		The guidelines will help officials in deciding when, with whom and how to consult. They will remind officials of the need to consult among themselves and ask them to be conscious of the necessity to develop more open approaches to policy-making and to involve networks of practitioners, academics and experts in developing and debating policy options at an early stage. The guidelines will set out a brief checklist of issues/stages that officials should have regard to throughout the consultation

	process. Ultimately it should result in facilitation of greater citizen participation in policy making.		
Completion level	Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed
			X
<p>Description of the results <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>A review has been carried out which included an examination of the Codes of Practice/Guidance on Consultation, and Consultation Principles in place in the UK, Australia, and Canada as well as those produced by the Council of Europe, the OECD, and the European Commission. A principles based approach to public consultation is advocated by these administrations and institutions.</p> <p>This review informed the development of a guidance document setting out the principles to inform engagement by Government departments and other public bodies with stakeholders/citizens when developing policy, services and legislation.</p> <p>To ensure that citizens and stakeholders can easily access consultations that are ongoing, it is also proposed to put in place a central repository for all public consultations and consideration will be given to automatically notifying organisations and individuals of consultations in areas where they have registered an interest.</p> <p>A public consultation process on the draft guidance document was held in October 2015. Several submissions were received and these were considered in finalising the guidance document.</p>		
End date	End 2015.		
Next steps	<p>Government is expected to approve the new Guidelines by the end of September 2016. It will be important to raise awareness of the Guidelines and promote compliance if the objectives in the OGP and in the Civil Service Renewal Plan are to be achieved. A Central repository for all public consultations is to be developed.</p>		
<p>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</p>			

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 2.2.1 - Undertake public engagement early in the legislative process</b>		
Lead implementing agency	Houses of the Oireachtas	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency	Charles Hearne	
Title, Department	Houses of the Oireachtas	
Email	Charles.Hearne@oireachtas.ie	
Phone	01 6183113	
Other actors involved	Government	Houses of the Oireachtas Committees
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	In the context of the pre-legislative scrutiny, the Oireachtas Committee may invite interest groups and / or submissions on the draft Bill.
Main Objective	Undertake public engagement early in the legislative process	
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	Oireachtas Committees to conduct systematic pre-legislative scrutiny of draft Bills, enabling consultation with citizens, civic society groups and others.	
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>	<p>This commitment addresses the challenges of: improving public services; increasing public integrity, and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>In November 2013, revised Dáil Standing Orders came into effect that expanded and formalised a Pre-Legislative consideration of legislation where a Minister could have the Heads of a Bill reviewed by the appropriate Oireachtas Committee before the drafting process had been completed and the Bill published. Standing Orders in the 32<sup>nd</sup> Dáil are also being amended to continue process of the pre-legislative scrutiny.</p> <p>The protocols agreed provide that Departments must inform Oireachtas Committees which Bills will be subject to Pre-Legislative scrutiny or not. Where the Heads of the Bill have not been provided to the Oireachtas Committee, the Minister must explain why in the course of his or her second stage speech on the Bill.</p> <p>It is a matter for the relevant Committee to decide whether or not Pre-Legislative scrutiny is appropriate. The Committee Clerk must inform the Minister in writing if pre-legislative scrutiny is</p>	

	<p>not to proceed. The protocols also set out the time limits and the process to apply where it does proceed.</p> <p>As part of the Pre-Legislative Stage the Oireachtas Committee may: undertake research on the policy area including comparative international research; seek written submissions on the Heads of the Bill or on the general subject matter from individual experts, stakeholder groups or interested parties; consult with the general public; and hold public hearings inviting individuals or groups to make presentations to the Committee.</p> <p>The Oireachtas Committee drafts a Report to address the key themes dealt with by the Bill and this is laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas and immediately sent to the Minister by the Committee Clerk. Where there has been Pre-Legislative consideration, the Committee will have an opportunity at Second Stage after the Minister and the Opposition spokespersons to outline the Committee's work.</p> <p>There has been relatively little committee activity to date in 2016, due to the dissolution of the 31<sup>st</sup> Dáil, the general election, the delay in forming a new government and in establishing committees of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Dáil. However, there is political agreement to continue the process of pre-legislative scrutiny. As a result of the appointment of a minority government, it is likely that an increased number of non-government bills (known as Private Members' Bills) will proceed past a second reading in the Oireachtas. Private members do not have the same resources as are available to government Ministers, and are not in a position to support the type of pre-legislative scrutiny which had applied to most government bills. In order to address this, a new process involving detailed scrutiny after the second reading and before committee stage consideration of Private Members' Bills, was being developed at the time of writing of this update (July 2016).</p>		
<p>Ambition</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>To provide greater opportunities for engagement by the public in law making. At the pre-legislative stage, the Committee can consult with citizens, civic society groups and other interested groups.</p>		
<p>Completion level</p>	<p>Not started / Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
			<p>x</p>

<p>Description of the results <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>It was aimed that this Action would be introduced on a phased basis over 2014.</p> <p>By end 2015, pre-legislative scrutiny had become a normal feature of the legislative process, and this Action (Action 2.2.1) had been substantially completed. The Government which was appointed after the 2016 general election has committed itself to continuing the pre-legislative scrutiny process, but the process will be refined to reflect the changed relationship between the Oireachtas and the Government and the increased number of non-government Bills which may pass second stage consideration in the Oireachtas.</p>
<p>End date</p>	<p>It is expected that the pre-legislative scrutiny will continue on an ongoing basis.</p>
<p>Next steps</p>	<p>Continuation of the pre-legislative scrutiny with some adjustment to accommodate non-government Bills (also known as Private Members' Bills) which may become a more prominent feature of the 32nd Dáil.</p>
<p>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</p>	
<p>The workload could be high pending the number or complexity of bills brought forward. Pre-legislative scrutiny remains a work in progress, as we need to modify the process slightly to reflect the changed composition of government and the fact that more non-government bills are likely to progress past second stage readings</p>	

## Commitment Completion Template

### Action 2.2.2 (A) and (B) - Build capacity of public bodies to provide Access to Information on the Environment under the Aarhus Convention

**This template covers 2 actions in the NAP, as follows:**

**A: Development and delivery of a training module for staff in public bodies**

**B: Creation of a database to record requests for information**

Lead implementing agency	Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency	Terry Dunne, Aoife Byrne, Aoife Joyce	
Title, Department	Environment Policy & Awareness	
Email	<a href="mailto:terry.dunne@dccae.gov.ie">terry.dunne@dccae.gov.ie</a> ; <a href="mailto:Aoife.Joyce@dccae.gov.ie">Aoife.Joyce@dccae.gov.ie</a> ; <a href="mailto:Aoife.byrne@dccae.gov.ie">Aoife.byrne@dccae.gov.ie</a>	
Phone	053 911 7419; 053 911 7515	
Other actors involved	Government	All public bodies covered by the European Communities (Access to Information on the Environment) Regulations 2007 – 2014 and all other legislation transposing the Directive 2003/4/EC.
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	Environment Pillar, Environmental Law Implementation Group (ELIG).
Main Objective	Build capacity of public bodies to provide Access to Information on the Environment (AIE) in accordance with Directive 2003/4/EC and the Aarhus Convention.	
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	<p>(A) Development and delivery of a training module to train staff (including AIE officers or decision-makers) in public bodies to facilitate Access to Environmental Information as provided for under Directive 2003/4/EC and the Aarhus Convention.</p> <p>(B) Creation of a database to record requests for information under the AIE Regulations Directive 2003/4/EC <a href="http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/StatisticsandRegularPublications/AccessstoInformationontheEnvironment/">http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/StatisticsandRegularPublications/AccessstoInformationontheEnvironment/</a>. This database will provide a basis for analysis of AIE requests submitted to relevant public bodies similar to that which is in place for Freedom of Information requests (FOI).</p>	
Relevance <i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values</i>	<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of; improving public services, increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>The objective of building capacity of public bodies to provide Access to Information on the Environment under the Aarhus Convention supports the aims of achieving “open data and</p>	



<p><i>of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>	<p>transparency of Government data for greater accountability improving public services and achieving economic growth”.</p> <p>(A) The effectiveness of building the capacity of public bodies to provide access to information under the Aarhus Convention through the development and delivery of a training module to public authority staff is key to promoting transparency of government decision making through the provision of access to information on the environment and public participation.</p> <p>The training module empowers the relevant public authorities resulting in a more efficient and informed service for the public through increased awareness of the Aarhus Convention. The use of online resources (Environlink) promotes the use of technology that offers opportunities for information sharing and collaboration for relevant public authorities.</p> <p>(B) The database of AIE requests supports effective capacity building for public authorities to provide Access to Information on the Environment under the Aarhus Convention through the collection, analysis and disclosure of non-sensitive metadata on AIE. The published database improves the transparency of formal democratic processes.</p> <p>The AIE database promotes transparency of government decision making and carrying out of basic functions. Publishing the AIE database on the Department’s website makes the information public in ways that enables people to both understand what their governments do and the process in doing this.</p>
<p><b>Ambition</b></p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>(A) The training module as designed and delivered (on-going):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significantly enhances the existing framework for AIE requests.</li> <li>• Increases awareness of, and compliance with the Aarhus Convention amongst public authority staff.</li> <li>• Strengthens the standards that are required from public officials in the performance of their functions under the Aarhus Convention.</li> <li>• Puts in place a consistent AIE framework that corresponds with best practice.</li> <li>• Increases awareness of the availability of online resources.</li> <li>• 76 users of Environlink online resource to build network of AIE officers.</li> <li>• On-going response to requests for information packs and access to Environlink by public authority staff.</li> </ul> <p>(Bi) The AIE database that has been published annually serves to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significantly enhance the existing framework for AIE.</li> <li>• Increase awareness of and compliance with the Aarhus Convention amongst relevant public authority staff.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the standards that are required from public officials in the performance of their functions under AIE requests.</li> </ul> <p>Put in place a consistent AIE framework that corresponds with best practice.</p>		
Completion level	Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed
		X	
<p>Description of the results</p> <p><i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>(A)</p> <p>Two AIE training events, open to all public authority staff, have been delivered to date. These were full day events with presentations from the Aarhus Convention National Focal Point, a solicitor with specialist knowledge of AIE legislation and case law and a representative of the OCEI. The first was hosted in September 2014 and the second in November 2015. A third training event is planned for 2016. A total of 234 members of staff representing 44 public authorities in 2014 and 52 public authorities in 2015 have attended these events. The events have received very positive feedback and are opportunities for AIE officers and other staff, including AIE decision-makers and staff with responsibility for collating and disseminating information, to engage and network with their counterparts in other public authorities.</p> <p>In addition, in house training has also been delivered to over 30 staff in the Department of Communications, Energy and National Resources, the Irish Government Department that receives the greatest number of AIE requests. Training has also been delivered as an element of a larger training event to other public bodies: e.g. a presentation on AIE was delivered to the Association of Teachers' Education Centres of Ireland in January 2015.</p> <p>(B) The 2013 AIE statistics were collected in 2014 and published on the Department's website. (This includes statistics for all local authorities, Government Departments and all bodies under their aegis. To date the page has been viewed 340 times. The 2014 statistics have been recently published on the Department's website. Furthermore, the Department in collecting the statistics recommended that each public authority publish its own statistics on its website.</p> <p>The 2015 statistics are currently being compiled and will be published as soon as all returns are received. Going forward, it is expected that the statistics will be compiled and published annually. The statistics record the number of AIE requests submitted to public authorities and show, inter alia, how many were granted, refused or partially granted. Delivery of training and the collection of AIE statistics delivers outcomes raised and discussed at informal bilateral meetings between the Department and civic society groups through the Irish</p>		

	<p>Environment Network (IEN) and the Environmental Law Implementation Group (ELIG) adding value to the delivery of these objectives through civic participation.</p> <p>The attendance at AIE training and number of views on the statistics database demonstrates increased awareness of AIE. The use of Environlink as a resource to the AIE officer network in public authorities builds knowledge and expertise and this will be further promoted through the delivery of the next AIE training session in Q4 2016 and the collation and publication of the 2015 AIE statistical database.</p>
End date	(A) Q4 2016; (B) On-going
Next steps	(A) Organise a third training event for Q4 2016; (B) Compile and publish statistics on AIE for 2016
Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)	
<p>(A) The planning and delivery of a third AIE training module to public bodies is intended to be completed in Q4 2016. Challenges may include availability of resources (staff and funding).</p> <p>(B) Database to be updated and published annually. Challenges may include delays in receipt of requested information from public bodies as requested. One challenge is the identification of public bodies as per recent court ruling on NAMA. It is intended to work closely with the established FOI statistics collection procedure.</p> <p>Additional Comments from Lead Agency:</p> <p>On page 41 of the first Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) report, it is suggested that AIE was on the government agenda from 2013. It should be noted that AIE was on the Government agenda prior to 2013 with the first regulations existing from 2007 and circulars issuing on AIE to Government Departments prior to 2013. A focus on increasing awareness of the Access to Information on the Environment regime, along with the other provisions of the Aarhus Convention, was intensified following the ratification of the Aarhus Convention in 2012.</p> <p>Furthermore the IRM report, again on page 41, reports a comment from a civil society group leader that the training should have been more widely promoted to public authority staff. The training provided has been free of charge and open to all staff of public authorities to attend. It was offered to all public authorities who were requested to promote it internally to their staff.</p>	

## Commitment Completion Template

### Action 2.3 – Hold referenda arising from the recommendations of the Constitutional Convention

**This Action comprises 2 parts as follows, with 2 separate implementing agencies:**  
**A: Referendum on age of candidacy for presidential elections and reducing voting age**  
**B: Referendum on same-sex marriage.**

Lead implementing agency	<b>A:</b> Department of Environment, Community and Local Government; <b>B:</b> Department of Justice and Equality	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency	<b>A:</b> Riona Ní Fhlanghaile, Enda Falvey <b>B:</b> Tracy O'Keeffe (PO); Rachel Dunn (AP)	
Title, Department	<b>A:</b> Franchise Section, Department of Environment, Community & Local Government <b>B:</b> Civil Law Reform Division, Department of Justice and Equality	
Email	<b>A:</b> <a href="mailto:riona.nifhlanghaile@environ.ie">riona.nifhlanghaile@environ.ie</a> , <a href="mailto:enda.falvey@environ.ie">enda.falvey@environ.ie</a> <b>B:</b> <a href="mailto:tnokeeffe@justice.ie">tnokeeffe@justice.ie</a> ; <a href="mailto:rxdunn@justice.ie">rxdunn@justice.ie</a>	
Phone	<b>A:</b> 01 888 2484 (Riona Ní Fhlanghaile), 01 888 2420 (Enda Falvey) <b>B:</b> +353 1 479 0205 (Rachel Dunn)	
Other actors involved	Government	N/A
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A
Main Objective	Hold referenda arising from the recommendations of the Constitutional Convention	
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	The Government committed to holding three referenda in 2015 in relation to reducing the age of candidacy for presidential elections, reducing voting age and same-sex marriage.	
Relevance <i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic</i>	<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services; and increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>The creation of the Constitutional Convention was a core commitment in the 2011 Programme for Government, intended to allow meaningful public participation and consultation in the further shaping and development of Bunreacht na hÉireann. It was asked to consider a range of matters viewed as socially</p>	

<p><i>participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>	<p>significant. The Convention considered the matter of amending the Constitution to allow same-sex couples to marry, and concluded that an amendment was required and should be positively framed and directive (as distinct from permissive) in nature.</p> <p>The Convention recommended that the age of eligibility for election to the office of president should be reduced from the prescribed age of 35 and it also recommended that the voting age should be reduced from 18 years to 16 years.</p>		
<p><b>Ambition</b> <i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>In light of the recommendation by the Constitutional Convention, Government decided in November 2013 to hold a referendum in the first half of 2015 on opening marriage to same sex couples, and directed the Minister for Justice and Equality to undertake the necessary preparatory work. This included outlining the detailed policy approach to be taken, which included review to ensure that marriage would not otherwise be altered and that the position of religious bodies would not be changed either by a proposed constitutional amendment or by any subsequent implementing legislation.</p> <p>The decision to proceed with a referendum was a direct and transparent response to the very strong recommendations of the Constitutional Convention.</p> <p>The Government decided in July 2013, in response to the recommendation of the Constitutional Convention, to hold a referendum, before the end of 2015, on reducing the age of eligibility for election to the office of President from 35 years to 21 years.</p>		
<p><b>Completion level</b></p>	<p>Not started / Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p><b>Description of the results</b> <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>The target was to hold the referenda by the end of 2015.</p> <p>Two referenda were held, i.e. reducing the age of candidacy for presidential elections <b>(a)</b>, and same-sex marriage <b>(b)</b>.</p> <p>The referendum in relation to reducing voting age <b>(a)</b> was not held.</p> <p>The referendums were held on 22 May 2015. The people approved the proposal to enable persons to marry without distinction as to their sex. The people did not approve the proposal to reduce the Presidential candidate age.</p> <p>The Marriage Act 2015 which provides for persons of the same sex to marry was signed into law on 29 October 2015.</p>		

	S. I. No 504 / 2015 appointed 16 November 2015 as the date on which the Marriage Act 2015 would be commenced and from which persons of the same sex would be able to marry.
End date	
Next steps	No further steps are required in relation to the Presidential candidate age or in relation to marriage between persons of the same sex
Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)	
<p>There are a number of other recommendations from the Constitutional Convention which if they were to be implemented would require amendment of the Constitution. The Taoiseach in the Dáil on 9 June 2015 said that ‘the Government do not propose to hold any further referendums during the remainder of its term’. The 31<sup>st</sup> Dáil was dissolved on 3 February 2016, a general election was held on 26 February 2016 and a new Government was formed in May 2016. The new Programme for A Partnership Government proposes that a number of referendums be held, these include referendums on Article 41.2.1 of the constitution regarding a “woman’s life within the home”; the question of amending Article 40.6.1(i) of the Constitution to remove the offence of blasphemy; Ireland’s participation in the Universal Patent Court; and giving the Office of the Ceann Comhairle constitutional standing. There are currently no proposals to proceed with a referendum on lowering the voting age.</p> <p>(i) <u>overall lessons learned and challenges encountered with respect to the action plan development and implementation</u></p> <p>Legislation and related procedures in relation to the conduct of referendums is well established and in the implementation of requirements in respect of the referendums held in relation to the marriage equality and lowering the age of eligibility for Presidential candidates we did not encounter any new challenges to the process.</p> <p>During a debate in the Dáil on 5 July 2015 about the implementation of the remaining recommendations of the Convention on the Constitution views were put forward by the Taoiseach and by opposition leaders on the timing and the subject of referendums and on the question of what number of referendums can be effectively held on the one day. These will clearly be further considered in any decisions on holding referendums in the future.</p> <p>(ii) <u>the positive impact of the activities and related outcomes with respect to each commitment; this could include a broader assessment that may detail actions taken outside the action plan itself, such as political/electoral developments, cultural changes, and plans for the future unrelated to last year’s commitment</u></p> <p>An impact of the holding of the referendum was that it provided a platform and focus for debate on the question of lowering the age of eligibility for Presidential candidates.</p> <p>(iii) <u>Why the referendum on voting age was not held in 2015</u></p> <p>The Government set out its position on 6 February 2015 during the second stage debate on the Private Member’s Bill – Thirty-fourth Amendment of the Constitution (No.2) Bill 2014 – which proposed the reduction in the voting age from 18 to 16. While supportive of a referendum, the Government side indicated their belief that it would be premature to proceed with a referendum on reducing the voting age from 18 to 16 with the other two referendums then in mind – marriage equality and reduction in the age of candidacy for President – for May. During the debate, Minister</p>	

of State Coffey indicated that it would be necessary first of all to consider issues such as the implications of lowering the voting age across the policy spectrum. It was indicated that work had commenced on this and that it would be continuing. The Taoiseach subsequently indicated in the Dáil on 9 June 2015 that the Government did not propose to hold any further referendums during the remainder of its term. In responding to questions in the Dáil on 5 July 2016 about implementing the outstanding recommendations of the Convention on the Constitution, the Taoiseach confirmed that there are currently no proposals to proceed with a referendum on lowering the voting age.

The provisional referendum certificate in relation to the Marriage Referendum became final in August 2015 and on 29 August 2015 the President signed the Thirty-Fourth Amendment of the Constitution (Marriage Equality) Act into law. The Marriage Act 2015, removing the statutory impediment to marriage of the parties being of the same sex and closing new civil partnership registration, was enacted on 29th October 2015 and commenced with effect from 16th November 2015. The referendum result has therefore now been given full effect.

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 2.4.1 – Pilot approach to implementation of Public Participation Networks</b>		
Lead implementing agency	Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency	Diarmuid O'Leary	
Title, Department	Principal, Community Division	
Email	Diarmuid.O'Leary@housing.gov.ie	
Phone	01-888-2948	
Other actors involved	Government	Local Authorities in Galway, Tipperary, South County Dublin and Carlow.
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	Community and Voluntary Groups.
Main Objective	Pilot set up and implementation of Public Participation Networks (PPNs) in four Local Authority Areas - Galway Co. Co., Tipperary Co. Co. South Dublin Co. Co. and Carlow Co. Co.	
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	Developing a PPN in each Pilot local authority area to enable the public to take an active formal role in relevant policy making and oversight activities of the local authority.	
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>	<p>The value of citizen participation in local decision making is directly enhanced by the development of Public Participation Networks –the foundation of which was laid out for the first time on a statutory basis with the Local Government Reform Act 2014.</p> <p>The PPNs will enable the public to take an active formal role in relevant policy making and oversight committees across a range of areas of responsibility in each Local Authority.</p>	
<p>Ambition</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the</i></p>	The aim of developing the PPNs is to facilitate and enable the public to articulate a diverse range of views and interests within the local government system. This will allow the diversity of voices and interests in a local authority area to be facilitated and	



<p><i>commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>involved in decision-making. A parallel and equally important aim is to facilitate the local authority in making better and more-timely decisions.</p> <p>The participation of members of local communities, whether as individuals or as members of local community or other groups in public life and their right to influence the decisions that affect their lives and communities are at the centre of democracy. Open and inclusive policy-making enhances transparency and accountability, and builds civic capacity.</p>		
<p>Completion level</p>	<p>Not started / Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>Description of the results <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>This action is complete.</p> <p>PPNs have now been rolled out across all Local Authority areas. While still at a development stage the results so far have been good insofar as Local Authorities have been undertaking a range of activities to communicate with potential stakeholders of Public Participation Networks to increase awareness and aid in groups joining the PPNs.</p> <p>PPNs are active across all Local Authorities (with the exception of one local authority where the preparatory process is still concluding) in nominating and selecting community representatives for public seats on Strategic Policy Committees and other Committees of the Local Authority, including Local Community Development Committees, where the PPN has five seats across the community and voluntary (two), social inclusion (two) and environmental (one) sectors.</p> <p>All local authorities, with the exception of one, have now established PPNs. Dedicated funding of €80,000 per PPN (comprising €50,000 from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, matched by €30,000 from the local authority) has been provided to support PPNs, including the provision of a dedicated PPN Resource Worker.</p>		
<p>End date</p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p>Next steps</p>	<p>The commitment to pilot PPN's in four local authorities has been completed and the new PPN structures are now being implemented across all 31 Local Authority areas.</p> <p>A National PPN Advisory group has been established, comprised of representatives from various relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>In addition, training and development supports have been provided to PPNs and local authorities to develop capacity of PPN members to fulfil meaningful roles within the local government arena.</p>		

	<p>A PPN User Guide has been developed to assist PPNs in their role and a dedicated PPN database is being developed, supported by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. This database is currently being trialled among a number of PPNs and it is anticipated that it will be rolled out to remaining PPNs by end 2016.</p>
<p>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</p>	
<p>Prior to the development of the Action Plan under the Open Government Partnership initiative, DECLG was already engaged in a process of reform of local government. The Local Government Reform Act 2014 makes legal provision for the reforms set out in the Government’s Action Programme for Effective Local Government, “Putting People First” (<a href="http://www.environ.ie/en/LocalGovernment/LocalGovernmentReform/">http://www.environ.ie/en/LocalGovernment/LocalGovernmentReform/</a>), which was published in October 2012. “Putting People First” emphasises the relationship between the local authority and local community groups. Community organisations have a distinct relevance for the community leadership role of local government as such groupings include many of those citizens most active in, and committed to, their localities. The development of strengthened relationships between local community groups and Local Authorities will be mutually beneficial.</p> <p>Provision of resources, including a resource worker to support the development of the Public Participation Network will ensure the viability and sustainability of the new structures.</p>	

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 2.4.2 – Provide legal base for public participation framework in local government</b>		
Lead implementing agency	Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency	Diarmuid O'Leary	
Title, Department	Principal, Community Division	
Email	Diarmuid.O'Leary@housing.gov.ie	
Phone	01-888-2948	
Other actors involved	Government	All Local Authorities
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A
Main Objective	Provide legal base for public participation framework in local government expanding on that provided in the Local Government Reform Act 2014.	
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	<b>Legislation:</b> Section 46 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 provides the legislative basis which gives effect to the Framework for Public Participation and the Public Participation Networks (PPN's). Section 46 was commenced on 01 June 2014, along with a number of other sections of the Act. Guidelines on implementation of PPN's issued from the Department to Local Authorities in April 2014; these remain in effect and may be amended from time to time.	
Relevance <i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP</i>	<p>Statutory under-pinning of public participation mechanism for engagement with the local authority system enabling the public to take an active formal role in relevant policy making and oversight committees across a range of areas of responsibility in each Local Authority.</p> <p>Meets the government's commitment to strengthen and deepen civic participation at a local level.</p> <p>To develop a framework for public participation in local government, which will set out the mechanisms by which citizens and communities will be encouraged and supported to participate in the decision-making processes of the local authority.</p>	

<i>Values Guidance Note.)</i>							
<p><b>Ambition</b></p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>The PPN will be the main link through which the local authority connects with the community and voluntary, social inclusion and environmental sectors without prejudice to other consultation processes. With effect from 01 June 2014, where community representation is to be provided on appropriate committees of the Local Authority, such as Strategic Policy Committees/Local Community Development Committees etc., it must be sourced through the PPN.</p> <p>The participation of members of local communities, whether as individuals or as members of local community or other groups in public life and their right to influence the decisions that affect their lives and communities are at the centre of democracy. Open and inclusive policy-making enhances transparency and accountability, and builds civic capacity.</p>						
<b>Completion level</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Not started / Limited</td> <td>Substantial</td> <td>Completed</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>x</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed		x	
Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed					
	x						
<p><b>Description of the results</b></p> <p><i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>PPN have now been rolled out across all Local Authority areas. with exception of one local authority area where the preparatory process is concluding. The results so far have been good insofar as Local Authorities have been undertaking a range of activities to communicate with potential stakeholders of Public Participation Networks to increase awareness and aid in groups joining the PPNs.</p> <p>With the exception of one local authority area, PPNs are active across all Local Authorities in nominating and selecting community representatives for public seats on Strategic Policy Committees and other Committees of the Local Authority, including Local Community Development Committees, where the PPN has five seats across the community and voluntary (two), social inclusion (two) and environmental (one) sectors.</p>						
<b>End date</b>	PPNs will be ongoing.						
<b>Next steps</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Making of regulations; - deferred for now</li> <li>2. Setting up oversight group to monitor and evaluate implementation across the local government sector;</li> <li>3. Securing adequate resources to ensure effective implementation of the new arrangements</li> </ol>						
<b>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</b>							
<p>The primary responsibility and accountability for decision-making within the local authority resides in the elected council. As part of a revitalisation of local government, the approaches to engage the public in local authority policy formulation and service design will go beyond the range of communication, consultation and community participation mechanisms used in the past. Approaches to stimulate greater public participation will complement rather than diminish, compete with, or substitute for local representative democracy. The participation of members of</p>							

local communities, whether as individuals or as members of local sectoral, community or other groups in public life and their right to influence the decisions that affect their lives and communities are at the centre of democracy. Open and inclusive policy-making enhances transparency and accountability, and builds civic capacity.

Regulations for the PPNs have been drafted; however, some legal issues remain to be resolved. In this regard it is important that the arrangements for PPNs allow for a degree of flexibility to take account of local circumstances. The introduction of regulations for PPNs at this time may be counterproductive to the overall objective. However, while it is not proposed at this stage to introduce regulations, the matter will be kept under review.

A National PPN Advisory Group has been established, representative of relevant stakeholders and chaired by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government. The first meeting of this group was held in May at which a range of relevant issues was discussed. The next meeting is scheduled for September 2016.

€50K has been allocated centrally for each PPN during 2015, provided it is supplemented by €30K from local authority sources. This will allow the recruitment/deployment of a dedicated resource worker and overheads for each PPN. This level of funding needs to be maintained over time, to ensure the successful development of the new structures.

A number of other initiatives have been developed to support the PPN structure. A PPN User Guide has been developed to provide practical assistance to PPNs. A PPN Data Base comprising a robust data and information management system that all PPN's can use, is currently being developed, supported by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. This is being trialled initially among a number of PPNs and it is anticipated that it will be rolled out to all PPNs by end 2016. .

A series of training and information events have been provided at a number of different geographical locations to support PPNs and local authorities.

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 2.4.3 – Undertake a feasibility study on possible means of enabling further citizen engagement in local authority budgetary processes</b>		
Lead implementing agency		Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Rory O’Leary
Title, Department		Assistant Principal Officer, Local Government Finance Section, Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government
Email		<a href="mailto:Rory.OLeary@environ.ie">Rory.OLeary@environ.ie</a>
Phone		053 – 911 7441
Other actors involved	Government	The Members’ Association and the County and City Managers’ Association
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	
Main Objective		Undertake a feasibility study on possible means of enabling further citizen engagement in local authority budgetary processes
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		Members’ Association & County and City Managers’ Association to undertake feasibility study, in consultation with key stakeholders, on enabling further citizen engagement in local authority budgetary processes.
Relevance <i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i>		This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services; and increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation by assessing how citizen engagement in the local authority budgetary process can be further enabled.

<p style="text-align: center;">Ambition</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>The results of the feasibility study will inform and guide the next steps on how further citizen engagement in local authority budgetary processes can be facilitated.</p>			
<p style="text-align: center;">Completion level</p>	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
	Not started			
<p style="text-align: center;">Description of the results</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>The original aim was that a request would be made by the end of 2014, with a view to the study being carried out by the end of 2015. This has not advanced as quickly as originally anticipated however the Department is continuing to engage with various stakeholders with a view to progressing the commitment.</p>			
<p style="text-align: center;">End date</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">To be decided.</p>			
<p style="text-align: center;">Next steps</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DECLG to discuss approach to study with other actors involved.</p>			
<p>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</p>				
<p>Current status:</p> <p>The budgetary process and its application within the context of the Municipal District structures has been subject of discussion at the Local Government Reform Advisory Group (established by The Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government). Having regard to these active considerations and the potential for further reforms to the budgetary process, it is considered that the opportunity for the timely commencement of Action 2.4.3 will be informed by emerging amendments to the budgetary process. The means by which further citizen engagement might be enhanced can be considered as part of this overall process. This process is still on-going and the Department continues to engage with the various stakeholders with a view to progressing the commitment.</p>				

## Commitment Completion Template

### Action 2.5.1 – Develop, finalise and publish the first Government Strategy on children and young people's participation in decision-making.

Lead implementing agency		Department of Children & Youth Affairs
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Anne O'Donnell
Title, Department		Head of Participation Unit, Department of Children and Youth Affairs
Email		<a href="mailto:Anne_ODonnell@dcya.gov.ie">Anne_ODonnell@dcya.gov.ie</a>
Phone		+353 1 6473016
Other actors involved	Government	<p>Department of Education and Skills</p> <p>Department of Environment, Community and Local Government</p> <p>Department of Health</p> <p>Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport</p> <p>Education and Training Boards</p> <p>Health Information and Quality Authority</p> <p>Health Service Executive</p> <p>Housing Authorities</p> <p>HSE, Mental Health Services</p> <p>Local Authorities</p> <p>Local Government Management Authority</p> <p>Mental Health Commission</p> <p>National Council for Special Education</p> <p>National Educational Psychological Service,</p> <p>National Transport Authority</p> <p>The Teaching Council</p> <p>Tusla – Child and Family Agency</p>
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	<p>Children and Young People's Services Committees</p> <p>Children's Mental Health Coalition</p> <p>Comhairle na nÓg</p> <p>Drug and Alcohol Task Forces</p> <p>Empowering People in Care (EPIC)</p> <p>Family Mediation Service</p> <p>Headstrong Youth Advisory Panel</p> <p>Healthy Ireland Council</p> <p>Legal Aid Board</p> <p>Local Community Development Committee</p> <p>Rural Transport Network</p> <p>Sports Partnerships</p> <p>The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning</p>



	Union of Students in Ireland
Main Objective	Develop, finalise and publish the first Government Strategy on children and young people's participation in decision making
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	Developing strategies, resources, guidance and training to enable appropriate participation by children and young people in decision making.
Relevance <i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i>	<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services; and increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>The National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making (<a href="http://www.dcy.gov.ie/docs/national-strategy-on-children-and-young-people-s-participation-in-decision-making/3456.htm">http://www.dcy.gov.ie/docs/national-strategy-on-children-and-young-people-s-participation-in-decision-making/3456.htm</a>) builds on the achievements and challenges of the National Children's Strategy by further embedding effective, meaningful and systematic participation by children and young people in decision-making on issues that affect them in all aspects of their lives.</p> <p>There is a growing body of evidence on the benefits of participation by children and young people in decision-making across a range of measures, including improved services, policies, research, active citizenship and, most importantly, improvements for children themselves and for society generally.</p> <p>Inclusion of children and young people in decision-making can promote children's protection, improve their confidence, communication skills and ability to negotiate, network and make judgements.</p> <p>There is also strong evidence that participation by children and young people in decision-making can support <b>active citizenship</b> and <b>social inclusion</b> at an early stage and there is general agreement that this is crucial to building and sustaining a healthy society. Young people's engagement with social media in new social movements and global forms of activism is evidence that they take their citizenship very seriously and are engaged actively on issues of importance to them, using a space that is owned and created by them.</p> <p><b>In education</b>, effective and meaningful participation of children and young people has been shown to be beneficial to children and young people, and to schools. Students' participation generally, and in student councils more particularly, can improve academic standards, reduce rates of early school-leaving, improve discipline and facilitate students in acquiring communication, planning and organisational skills.</p> <p><b>Improved services</b> are among the most measurable benefits of children and young people's participation in decision-making. Recent</p>

	<p>studies indicate that using children’s views in the development and evaluation of healthcare service provision can have a significant influence on health outcomes and reduce healthcare usage.</p>
<p><b>Ambition</b></p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>Children and young people live their lives at home, in communities, in childcare, in schools and other education settings, in clubs and organisations. Some children and young people have experience of growing up in care, living with disabilities, being in detention or interacting with the health, mental health, child protection or homelessness services. Children and young people’s voices should be heard in all of these significant settings and they should be facilitated to be active participants in decisions that affect them, in accordance with their age and maturity. It is a key priority of this strategy that seldom-heard children and young people are enabled to take part in decision-making and this is particularly critical in the case of children living in the care of the State or in receipt of child protection and welfare services.</p> <p><b>Accordingly, the priority objectives in this strategy are that:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Children and young people will have a voice in decisions made in their local communities.</li> <li>2. Children and young people will have a voice in decision-making in early education, schools and the wider formal and non-formal education systems.</li> <li>3. Children and young people will have a voice in decisions that affect their health and well-being, including on the health and social services delivered to them.</li> <li>4. Children and young people will have a voice in the Courts and legal system.</li> </ol> <p>The actions outlined in this strategy aim to address the challenges that exist in children and young people being enabled to participate appropriately in decision-making. The use of age-appropriate methods is particularly critical in involving very young children in decision-making. There is a growing body of evidence and good practice on creative methods for involving this age group effectively in decision-making. These methods are already being used by some early education practitioners in Ireland. In addressing these challenges, the strategy contains a series of additional objectives, which include the following objectives:</p> <p><b>Objective 5: Promoting effective leadership to champion and promote participation of children and young people.</b></p> <p>National leadership on participation will be strengthened through the establishment of the DCYA Children and Young People’s Participation Hub, which is one of the key actions in this Strategy (page 31 in Strategy). The hub will support Government departments and other organisations to develop the leadership and culture required to implement the strategy’s actions effectively.</p> <p>Organisational change is essential to ensuring meaningful participation by children and young people in decisions that affect</p>

them. Participation must be embedded within the infrastructure of an organisation and progress beyond one-off, discrete activities, to become an ongoing embedded process.

Effective participation demands a whole-systems approach, combining four key elements, namely:

- Culture: The ethos of an organisation, shared by all staff and service users, which demonstrates a commitment to participation.
- Structure: The planning, development and resourcing of participation evident in an organisation's infrastructure.
- Practice: The ways of working, methods for involvement, skills and knowledge that enable children and young people to become involved.
- Review: The monitoring and evaluation systems that enable an organisation to evidence change effected by children and young people's participation.

This strategy proposes a range of measures to achieve a whole-systems approach to participation:

- increased participation training for individuals and organisations;
- capacity-building;
- awareness-raising;
- skills training for young people and adults;
- the adoption of participation practice standards;
- opportunities for practitioners and organisations to network and share information about participation practice;
- embedding a culture of participation within organisations, whereby young people feel that they are valued, listened to and play an important role in influencing decisions that affect their lives.

Organisational culture and strong leadership are particularly critical in ensuring the involvement of seldom-heard children and young people in decision-making. A precondition for the meaningful, effective and sustainable participation of seldom-heard young people is an appropriate organisational infrastructure, including a cultural climate that values inclusiveness, empowerment and participation.

**Objective 6: Development of education and training for professionals working with and on behalf of children and young people.**

Training for professionals is also critical to participation by children and young people in decision-making. Strategies to give children a voice will only work if there are adults willing to listen to them.

Actions in the present Strategy address the training of professionals and others who work with and on behalf of children and young people. The DCYA Children and Young People's Participation Hub will form partnerships with third-level and further education institutions to oversee development of education on children's rights (including participation in decision-making) for professionals who work with and on behalf of children and young people.

	<p><b>Objective 7: Mainstreaming the participation of children and young people in the development of policy, legislation and research.</b></p> <p>The right of children and young people to a voice in decisions that affect their lives is Government policy since 2000. Since that time, children and young people have been involved in the development of a number of significant pieces of national policy, legislation and research. Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, 2014-2020 also commits to children and young people having a voice in decisions that affect their lives across all five outcome areas of the Policy Framework. Actions in the present strategy commit Government departments and agencies and other stakeholders to involve children and young people in the development of policies, legislation and research.</p>		
Completion level	Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed
			x
<p>Description of the results</p> <p><i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>The original aim was that the strategy would be published in 2014, with ongoing work over the period 2014-2020 and good progress made by mid-2016. The first National Participation Strategy on Children and Young People’s Participation in decision making 2015-2020 (<a href="http://www.dcy.gov.ie/docs/national-strategy-on-children-and-young-people-s-participation-in-decision-making/3456.htm">http://www.dcy.gov.ie/docs/national-strategy-on-children-and-young-people-s-participation-in-decision-making/3456.htm</a>) was published in June 2015. The Strategy includes an Action Plan which was developed following in-depth bilateral meetings with Government departments and agencies, with non-government stakeholders and with children and young people involved in the implementation of Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures (<a href="http://www.dcy.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=3146&amp;ad=1">http://www.dcy.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=3146&amp;ad=1</a>).</p> <p>The implementation of the actions in the action plan will be monitored under the mechanisms established for monitoring the progress of the national framework strategy, Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures.</p> <p>A practical guide aimed at a wide range of professionals who want to find ways to enable marginalised or disadvantaged children and young people to have a say in decision-making at local and national level has been published (<a href="http://www.dcy.gov.ie/docs/A Practical guide to Including Seldomheard Children &amp; Yo/3536.htm">http://www.dcy.gov.ie/docs/A Practical guide to Including Seldomheard Children &amp; Yo/3536.htm</a>) with the Participation Strategy. The Toolkit was developed to provide: information for managers of organisations; and a manual for practitioners on how to include ‘seldom-heard’ children and young people in organisations and events, and how to make the organisation relevant for seldom-heard children and young people.</p> <p>Work has commenced on the development of the Participation Hub. An online database of documents and online resources on the theory and practice of children and young people’s participation in decision-making is being compiled and will be made available. A scoping</p>		

	exercise to explore the needs of stakeholders and inform the establishment of the Participation Hub has also been commissioned and will be complete in Q3.
End date	2020
Next steps	<p>Establishment of a Children and Young People’s Participation Hub is the key priority action for the DCYA in the Action Plan accompanying the strategy. This hub will be the national centre of excellence on children and young people’s participation and will provide information, guidance and practical support to Government departments and agencies in delivering commitments outlined in this strategy’s Action Plan. It will also become a key driver in supporting the implementation of this strategy and Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures. To achieve this, the hub will champion and promote participation, create resources and training materials, conduct training, document and disseminate learning and establish an online children’s participation database. It will also form partnerships with third-level and adult education institutions to oversee development of education on children’s rights (including participation in decision-making) for professionals who work with and on behalf of children and young people.</p> <p>The vision for the Participation Hub includes the establishment by the DCYA of strategic formal partnerships with organisations and initiatives in the statutory and non-statutory sectors to develop and document innovative best practice in children and young people’s participation in decision-making. The hub will involve children and young people appropriately in its development and operation.</p>
Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)	

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 2.5.2 – Maximise participation and understanding of young people in civic life</b>		
Lead implementing agency	Department of Education & Skills	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency	Anita Fitzgerald, Pádraig Mac Fhlannchadha, Breda Naughton, Kevin McCarthy	
Title, Department	Department of Education & Skills	
Email	<a href="mailto:Anita_Fitzgerald@education.gov.ie">Anita_Fitzgerald@education.gov.ie</a> ; <a href="mailto:padraig_macfhlanncha@education.gov.ie">padraig_macfhlanncha@education.gov.ie</a> ; <a href="mailto:Breda_Naughton@education.gov.ie">Breda_Naughton@education.gov.ie</a> ; <a href="mailto:Kevinj_mccarthy@education.gov.ie">Kevinj_mccarthy@education.gov.ie</a>	
Phone	01 8892291	
Other actors involved	Government	Department of Education & Skills, Primary and post-primary schools
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A
Main Objective	Maximise participation and understanding of young people in civic life	
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	Schools exploring how new Junior Cycle can be delivered across curriculum in terms of 24 Statements of Learning in particular that the students “will value what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts”. Implementation of Politics and Society as a Senior Cycle subject to commence in a number of schools from September 2016.	
Relevance <i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All schools will be asked to participate in an important civic project in 2015-16. As Ireland celebrates the centenary of its 1916 Rising, on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016 (Proclamation Day) school children will be asked to contribute to a school ‘proclamation’ (vision for modern Ireland) which will promote citizenship and societal engagement.</li> <li>2. Reforms at ISCED 2 will include an extended emphasis on Civic, Social and Political Education. In time, CSPE will be incorporated into a core area of learning called Wellbeing, strengthening the message that societal and civic involvement are important to every individual’s personal wellbeing. This will foster greater positivity towards civic participation. We also plan to introduce an optional short course in Digital Media Literacy, which will strengthen awareness of technology-related citizenship activity, communication and accountability. Reforms will also aim to recognise and encourage aspects of civic participation outside the classroom e.g. student council participation.</li> <li>3. At ISCED 3, the new optional subject Politics and Society will be introduced to a number of schools in 2016-17, with a</li> </ol>	

	view to widespread implementation thereafter.. It will emphasise political understanding and active, participatory citizenship, including assessment of a major student project component.		
<b>Ambition</b> <i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i>	We aim to continue to foster public and civic engagement, and understanding of the political system through the curriculum. This will include significant engagement with politics directly, e.g. school links to local councils, school visits by local councillors and members of parliament. Students will also be encouraged to participate in their Student Council in their school.		
<b>Completion level</b>	Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed
	Important progress made in Q3 2015.		
<b>Description of the results</b> <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i>	<p>Important progress has been made in the summer of 2015 towards achieving greater teacher support for these reforms, and the final Framework for Junior Cycle has been published (August 2015). The timeline for the introduction of Politics and Society as a Senior Cycle subject is as set out in the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development.</p> <p>The Department in September 2015 will announce launched an extensive programme of commemorative events on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, including citizenship activities such as Proclamation Day, to coincide with the 1916 centenary. These include projects, competitions and resources which support civic engagement and, in several instances, all-island collaboration – see <a href="http://www.education.ie">www.education.ie</a>. As different initiatives reach their start points, details will become available at <a href="http://www.Scoilnet.ie/2016">www.Scoilnet.ie/2016</a>.</p> <p>Junior Cycle reform is being progressed in consultation with teachers and educational stakeholders.</p> <p>A firm commitment to introduce Politics and Society has been given, and work continues on issues around teacher qualification and assessment.</p>		
<b>End date</b>	2017		
<b>Next steps</b>			
<b>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</b>			



## Commitment Completion Template

### Action 2.6.A – Customer improvements to be implemented for citizens through technology: Development of ICT Strategy

This Action comprises six commitments as follows:

- A) Development of ICT Strategy
- B) Development and promotion of Data Sharing and Governance Bill
- C) Public Services Card
- D) Single Customer View
- E) Local Government portal
- F) Establishment of Local Enterprise Offices

#### Commitment A: Development of ICT Strategy

Lead implementing agency		Department of Public Expenditure & Reform
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Barry Lowry
Title, Department		Government CIO, Department of Public Expenditure & Reform
Email		<a href="mailto:Mary.ODonohue@per.gov.ie">Mary.ODonohue@per.gov.ie</a> ,
Phone		076 100 7076
Other actors involved	Government	All public bodies: <a href="#">Public Service ICT Strategy</a>
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A
Main Objective		Customer improvements to be implemented for citizens through technology
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		Delivering better outcomes and efficiency through innovation and excellence in ICT as set out in the <a href="#">Public service ICT Strategy 2015</a> .  Digital trends are revolutionising how governments, citizens and businesses interact with each other and the world. Shifts to digital technology such as the rapid rise in the use of smartphones, widespread information sharing and expectations of ‘anytime, anywhere’ access necessitates investment in whole-of-government strategic projects that target efficiencies or better outcomes for citizens & businesses.
Relevance <i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i>		This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.  <b>Digital First:</b> Digitisation of key transactional services and the increased use of ICT to deliver improved efficiency within Public Bodies and provide new digital services to citizens, businesses and public servants.  Innovative use of ICT in the Public Service will deliver better value for taxpayers by creating efficiencies through integration, consolidation and sharing of common infrastructure, systems and resources.



	<p>Adoption and facilitation of digital technologies will increase productivity, improve the relationship between citizens, businesses and government and will deliver social and economic benefits for Ireland.</p> <p><b>Data as an Enabler:</b> Integrated services and increased data sharing will drive significant efficiencies; will facilitate insight driven decision making; will increase openness and transparency between Government and the public; and will provide a much higher user experience and quality of service for citizens, businesses and public servants.</p>		
<p><b>Ambition</b> <i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>The PS ICT Strategy sets out to build the ICT foundations that will deliver government services into the future. It is specifically aligned with the objectives of the <a href="#">Public Service Reform Plan</a> and the goals of the Civil Service Renewal Plan (<a href="http://www.per.gov.ie/en/civil-service-renewal/">http://www.per.gov.ie/en/civil-service-renewal/</a>). It aims to provide a framework for the delivery of greater efficiencies in Public Service ICT delivery and administration, with better outcomes for citizens, businesses and public servants.</p>		
<p><b>Completion level</b></p>	<p>Not started / Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p><b>Description of the results</b> <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>Good progress has been made on the implementation of the Public Service ICT Strategy. A key pillar of the strategy is the Build to Share stream. As at end Q2 2016, progress includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Government Networks</b> Government Networks offers cost-effective, resilient, carrier-grade, high speed network services for voice, video, and data, to all Public Service Bodies enables secure inter-agency connectivity. Public Service Bodies in approximately 40 towns and cities around the country now have access to high speed, resilient network connectivity and the rollout is continuing during 2016.</li> <li>• <b>Common Applications</b> The Strategy identifies an opportunity for a suite of common applications to be developed centrally for use by all Departments to drive efficiencies and savings. eSubmissions, a common application to manage submissions internally in Departments, is now available to Departments to rollout. It is fully implemented in three Departments with progress well underway with remaining Departments. Work during 2016 includes the development of two further common applications - ePQ and eCorrespondence – which will be available to Departments to implement in late 2016. Potential future common applications may include systems to support records management and managing responses to FOI requests.</li> <li>• <b>Common Infrastructure – The Government Cloud</b></li> </ul>		

	<p>The potential for consolidation and rationalisation of ICT technical infrastructure is recognised as a means to lower computer centre running costs and deliver efficiencies. A proof of concept for a private Government Cloud service is being developed during 2016.</p> <p>A new Government CIO was appointed in April 2016. Following consultations with the Civil Service Management Board, Secretaries General of Departments and Heads of Offices, CIOs and Heads of ICT across the Public Service, the GCIO will bring forward proposals to drive forward the implementation of the PS ICT Strategy by end 2016. These proposals, which will be based on an agreed set of principles, are likely to develop further the <i>Build to Share</i> programme as well as addressing the <i>Governance</i> and <i>Increase Capability</i> streams. In addition, under the <i>Digital First</i> stream, consideration is being given to the development of a Digital Services Gateway to enable more effective digital engagement with Government by citizens and businesses.</p>
End date	2020
Next steps	<p>To end 2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In parallel with maintaining progress with the <i>Build to Share</i> programme already underway, the immediate next step is for the GCIO to get approval for the programme to drive forward the strategy, and to secure the associated necessary resourcing. Given the scale of the challenge and the diversity of the Public Service it is envisaged that the programme will be broken in to a range of project-based activities targeted at achieving the objects of the strategy – <i>Delivering better outcomes and efficiency through innovation and excellence in ICT</i>. A programme of digital projects across the Public Service will be overseen by the Office of the GCIO with updates to the Civil Service Management Board and Public Service Reform and Innovation Network on a regular basis. A Digital Services Gateway is considered to be an essential element to enhance the level of digital engagement by Government with citizens and businesses.</li> </ul>
Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)	
<p>Significant progress has been achieved with the <i>Build to Share</i> and efficiencies are already evident both from the rollout of Government Network services and also of the common applications platform. The implementation plan being developed by the GCIO in conjunction with the CSMB, Secretaries General and Heads of Office, as well as the leaders in ICT in the Public Service, will build on successes already achieved and further the level and effectiveness of on-line engagement of citizens and the delivery of public services through digitisation projects.</p>	

Substantial Seed funding will be required to put in place the structures necessary to achieve the transformation envisaged in terms of both enhancing digital engagement with Government and also driving efficiencies and innovation in ICT and digital service delivery.

## Commitment Completion Template

### Action 2.6.B – Customer improvements to be implemented for citizens through technology: Development and promotion of Data Sharing and Governance Bill

This Action comprises six commitments as follows:

- A) Development of ICT Strategy
- B) Development and promotion of Data Sharing and Governance Bill
- C) Public Services Card
- D) Single Customer View
- E) Local Government portal
- F) Establishment of Local Enterprise Offices

#### Commitment B: Development and promotion of Data Sharing and Governance Bill

Lead implementing agency		Department of Public Expenditure & Reform
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Michael Perkins
Title, Department		Michael Perkins, Assistant Principal, Department of Public Expenditure & Reform
Email		<a href="mailto:Michael.Perkins@per.gov.ie">Michael.Perkins@per.gov.ie</a>
Phone		Michael Perkins: 01 604 5613
Other actors involved	Government	All public bodies
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A
Main Objective		Customer improvements to be implemented for citizens through technology
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		A Data Sharing and Governance Bill will be developed to promote and encourage data sharing between public bodies.
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A</i></p>		<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services; increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>The Data Sharing and Governance Bill will be developed to promote and encourage data sharing between public bodies.</p> <p>On 1 August 2014, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform published a policy paper entitled, “Data Sharing and Governance: Policy Proposals”, which set out key elements of proposed legislation. Interested parties were invited to make submissions responding to the policy proposals. The Department received many constructive submissions, which have contributed significantly to the development of policy on Data-Sharing.</p>

<p><i>detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>	<p>On 24 November 2014, a public information event was held to discuss the outcomes of the consultation, and allowed for useful discussion of the main policy issues from different perspectives.</p> <p>Having considered the submissions received, the Department prepared a draft General Scheme of the Data Sharing and Governance Bill. In July 2015, the Government approved the drafting of the Data Sharing and Governance Bill along the lines of the General Scheme, subject to such drafting or technical amendments as may be agreed between the Minister and the Attorney General.</p> <p>The Heads of Bill were published on the Department’s website, and the drafting of the Bill is now in the preliminary stages.</p> <p>While the consultation phase is now completed, the Department continues to monitor developments, such as, for, example, the September 2015 ECJ judgment in the <i>Bara</i> case, and any implications these may have for the draft legislation.</p>			
<p><b>Ambition</b> <i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>The Data Sharing and Governance Bill will promote and encourage data sharing between public bodies with a view to significantly reducing the administrative burden on citizens and businesses, allowing them to avail of higher quality, more efficient and seamless public services, while reducing reliance on paper documents.</p>			
<p><b>Completion level</b></p>	<p>Not started</p>	<p>Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p><b>Description of the results</b> <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>The target completion date is the end of 2016.</p> <p>At its meeting of 7 July 2015, the Government:</p> <p>(1) approved the drafting of the Data Sharing and Governance Bill 2015, along the lines of the General Scheme, subject to such drafting or technical amendments as may be agreed between the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and the Attorney General;</p> <p>(2) authorised the Minister to arrange for the General Scheme to be submitted to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform for pre-legislative scrutiny; and</p> <p>(3) agreed to the publication of the General Scheme of the Bill on the website of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.</p>			
			<p>X</p>	

End date	
Next steps	<p>Submission of the General Scheme of the Bill to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform for pre-legislative scrutiny.</p> <p>Completion of drafting of the Bill.</p>
<p>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</p>	

## Commitment Completion Template

### Action 2.6.C – Customer improvements to be implemented for citizens through technology: Public Services Card

This Action comprises six commitments as follows:

- A) Development of ICT Strategy
- B) Development and promotion of Data Sharing and Governance Bill
- C) Public Services Card
- D) Single Customer View
- E) Local Government portal
- F) Establishment of Local Enterprise Offices

#### Commitment C: Public Services Card

Lead implementing agency		Department of Public Expenditure & Reform
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Richard Shine
Title, Department		Richard Shine, Principal, Department of Social Protection
Email		<a href="mailto:richard.shine@welfare.ie">richard.shine@welfare.ie</a>
Phone		Richard Shine: 071 9672696
Other actors involved	Government	Relevant public bodies
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A
Main Objective		Customer improvements to be implemented for citizens through technology
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		A number of significant improvements will be made through the new Public Services Card including the incorporation of contactless ticketing chips for travel entitlement and new smart card technology.
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A</i></p>		This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services; and increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation. A number of significant improvements will be made through the new Public Services Card including the incorporation of contactless ticketing chips for travel entitlement and new smart card technology.

<p><i>detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>			
<p><b>Ambition</b> <i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>The purpose of the Public Services Card is to enable individuals to gain access to public services more efficiently and with a minimum of duplication of effort, while at the same time preserving their privacy to the maximum extent possible. The PSC is designed to replace other cards within the public sector such as the free travel pass and the social services card and to make it easy for providers of public services to verify the identity of customers.</p>		
<p><b>Completion level</b></p>	<p>Not started / Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p><b>Description of the results</b> <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>Face-to-Face registration, which involves the capture of an individual's photograph and signature and the verification of identity data already held by the Department, is taking place countrywide in 100 offices of the Department</p> <p>Selected customers, whose identity is regularly authenticated in a face-to-face process, have also been invited to avail of a 'postal' registration process.</p> <p>Registration is now required for individual applicants for a Personal Public Service (PPS) Number and people applying for or in receipt of social protection payments or benefits. It is also a requirement for first time adult passport applicants since March 2016.</p> <p>Online self-scheduling was deployed in Q3 2015 to facilitate customers to book their own appointments e.g. Child Benefit recipients who are working and have limited availability during the standard working day.</p> <p>DSP has also developed an online Identity and Access Management (IAM) solution which allows people to login using credentials that have been verified as part of the SAFE registration process.</p> <p>This IAM went live in February 2016 and has the potential to facilitate start-to-finish high-value online services. The IAM will provide relying parties (public service bodies) with a high level of assurance of the identity of customers accessing online services.</p>		



	<p>A Mobile Registration solution has been developed in-house and trialed in undertaking a number of SAFE registrations (e.g. employees in their work premises as well as residents of congregated settings). Mobile SAFE registration kits are now being made available across the Department's Regional Divisions. The demand for this option is low to date but is expected to increase as SAFE Registration is offered to the wider population.</p> <p>The target for completion is the end of 2017</p> <p>By the end of May 2014, over 730,000 cards had been issued. As of the end of June 2016 over 2 million cards had been issued, including 670,000 Free Travel variant cards. It is intended that a cumulative target of three million cards will have been issued by the end of 2017. Further services will be reviewed with a view to providing them through use of the Public Services Card.</p> <p>The number of Public Service Cards has more than doubled from the levels previous to the action plan, resulting on over 1.27 million new cards being issued since May 2014, with improvements in the registration system having been made.</p>
End date	End of 2017
Next steps	The PSC project has been earmarked as a Pathfinder Project for the Civil Service Management Board as the PSC is essentially a major piece of public service infrastructure that will in time be leveraged by all public bodies. Further services for use through the Cards are under consideration.
Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)	
N/A	

## Commitment Completion Template

### Action 2.6.D – Customer improvements to be implemented for citizens through technology: Single Customer View

This Action comprises six commitments as follows:

- A) Development of ICT Strategy
- B) Development and promotion of Data Sharing and Governance Bill
- C) Public Services Card
- D) Single Customer View
- E) Local Government portal
- F) Establishment of Local Enterprise Offices

#### Commitment D: Single Customer View

Lead implementing agency	Department of Public Expenditure & Reform	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency	Owen Harrison	
Title, Department	Owen Harrison, PO, Office of Government Chief Information Officer	
Email	Owen.harrison@per.gov.ie ; Mark.warren@per.gov.ie	
Phone	Mark Warren: 01 604 5091	
Other actors involved	Government	Relevant public bodies
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A
Main Objective	Customer improvements to be implemented for citizens through technology	
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	A range of new public service applications will be developed based on the Single Customer View.	
Relevance <i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A</i>	<p>New public service applications were developed based on the Single Customer View which gave access to information using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An application to assists organisations looking to verify the identity of customers.</li> <li>• An application that assists with sharing of Public Service Card information</li> </ul>	

<i>detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i>							
<b>Ambition</b> <i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i>	The intention of the system was to reduce the amount of customer interactions with state bodies by sharing information rather than requesting it multiple times. It also improved government by sharing the Public service Card information across a number of bodies.						
<b>Completion level</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Not started / Limited</td> <td>Substantial</td> <td>Completed</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> </table>	Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed			Yes
Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed					
		Yes					
<b>Description of the results</b> <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i>	<p>The Single Customer View system has been developed to provide an advanced form of citizen identification matching solution catering for partial matching, which is now in active use across various Public Service bodies for verifying the identity of customers.</p> <p>The Single Customer View system has also been developed to include a function whereby SAFE2 registered identities (Public Services Card data) can be retrieved and used to electronically share customer identity data and is in use and being trialled within Public Service bodies.</p> <p>The Single Customer View system is now operational and will continue to expand in usage to improve citizen identity quality and interaction over time. Also, it will continue to be sought to increase the system's functionality add value as a key piece of identity infrastructure.</p>						
<b>End date</b>	End 2015						
<b>Next steps</b>							
<b>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</b>							
Not applicable							

## Commitment Completion Template

### Action 2.6.E – Customer improvements to be implemented for citizens through technology: Local Government portal

This Action comprises six commitments as follows:

- A) Development of ICT Strategy
- B) Development and promotion of Data Sharing and Governance Bill
- C) Public Services Card
- D) Single Customer View
- E) Local Government portal
- F) Establishment of Local Enterprise Offices

#### Commitment E: Local Government portal

Lead implementing agency		Department of Public Expenditure & Reform
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Tim Willoughby
Title, Department		Tim Willoughby, Chief Technology Officer, Local Government Management Agency
Email		<a href="mailto:twilloug@lgma.ie">twilloug@lgma.ie</a>
Phone		01 633 2200
Other actors involved	Government	Relevant public bodies
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A
Main Objective		Customer improvements to be implemented for citizens through technology
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		Establishing the new Local Government portal, localgov.ie, facilitating one-stop-shop access for all citizens to all local authority services.
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A</i></p>		<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services; and increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation by integrating the process of building and planning into a process that the Builder and Architects are immersed.</p> <p>The Local Government Portal (<a href="http://www.localgov.ie">www.localgov.ie</a>) is a Service Catalogue of All Local Government Services harnessing open source technologies. The system connects the public with all of the Local Government Services. The first end to end online service on the Portal is the Building Control service, where users can Register, Upload, Pay and monitor progress. There is also an Online Building Register where all previous applications are available to view. This will be available as Open Data on <a href="http://data.localgov.ie">data.localgov.ie</a> in the coming months.</p>

<p><i>detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>			
<p><b>Ambition</b> <i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>The Local Government Portal is a central location where the citizen can find and interact with all of the Local Government Services. The Catalogue details which authorities carry out different services and also harnesses semantics where authorities may call similar services different names. The intention is to build more and more interactive services, similar to the BCMS, which can be accessed, transacted and completed on the Portal.</p> <p>At this stage, the portal is substantially completed – with a catalogue of all Local Government Services and with Transactional Services Enabled,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizen Registration</li> <li>• Online Forms</li> <li>• Upload Documents</li> <li>• Make Payments</li> <li>• Track Applications</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Completion level</b></p>	<p>Not started / Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
		<p>x</p>	
<p><b>Description of the results</b> <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>The aim was that the new Local Government portal <a href="http://www.localgov.ie">www.localgov.ie</a> would be in place in 2014.</p> <p>The Building Control Management System as the Initial Portal delivery has been very successful in its first year. Since the launch on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014, there has been over 10,000 building commencement registered, with over 190,000 documents uploaded, over 2m in payments, over 30,000 registrations of owners, builders, architects and developers. The next phase will see more forms being added to the portal for Fire Certificates, Disability Permits and Completion Certificates.</p> <p>The Portal, as the front end to the BCMS includes reusable components that other services can utilise, Forms, Documents, Payments and Registration.</p>		
<p><b>End date</b></p>			
<p><b>Next steps</b></p>	<p>A tender is issuing from the LGMA to build the next phase of the BCMS project. This phase will add a Mobile use platform for the end user and a more Open Registration system for the public that will allow them to reuse existing identities, rather than having to create new ones for Local Government and that can be leveraged across Local Government.</p>		
<p><b>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</b></p>			

The LGMA is issuing a tender to build the next phase of the project. This will build out more legislatively required functionality for the BCMS, but can also enhance the front end shared services. Areas of interest are – a Mobile platform, so that Mobile users can access services. A more open registration system that will allow for Businesses to view all their transactions, across many users, and will allow users to reuse existing Identities.

**Lessons Learned and Future Plans**

Due to the Nature of the project and the tight timelines, the LGMA had to really focus on the Citizen deliverable and the business deliverables. The project was split into two deliverables, with specific focus on Citizen engagement in the portal and Business requirements in the shared back end. The approach proved successful and is a potential way forward for future projects.

## Commitment Completion Template

### Action 2.6.F – Customer improvements to be implemented for citizens through technology: Establishment of Local Enterprise Offices

This Action comprises six commitments as follows:

- A) Development of ICT Strategy
- B) Development and promotion of Data Sharing and Governance Bill
- C) Public Services Card
- D) Single Customer View
- E) Local Government portal
- F) Establishment of Local Enterprise Offices

#### Commitment F: Establishment of Local Enterprise Offices

Lead implementing agency		Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Claire Crowley, Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (DJEI)
Title, Department		Assistant Principal
Email		claire.crowley@djei.ie
Phone		631 2467
Other actors involved	Government	DJEI
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A
Main Objective		Customer improvements to be implemented for citizens through technology
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		Establish Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) to provide ‘first-stop-shops’ for micro-enterprise and small business sector to avail of enterprise support services, other direct business supports and co-ordinated access to other services for business.
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A</i></p>		<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of improving public services and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>The LEOs serve as a first-stop-shop service to the micro-enterprise and small business sector providing enterprise support services, direct business supports and a sign-posting service to other business supports. In tandem with the formal establishment of the LEOs, a new National LEO Gateway website and 31 LEO sub-sites were launched. In addition, the cross-governmental SMEs Online tool, designed to help Irish start-ups and small businesses navigate the range of Government business supports for</p>

<p><i>detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>	<p>which they could be eligible, is accessible on the LEO Gateway site.</p>		
<p><b>Ambition</b> <i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>In 2012, in recognition of the changes to the social, economic and technological landscape of Ireland in recent years, the Government decided to reform the system for delivery of support to micro and small enterprises. The purpose of the reform was to make the operating environment for businesses more coherent, responsive and conducive to entrepreneurship at local level.</p> <p>The reformed structure provides a service which amalgamates national enterprise policy and local business supports in order to strengthen the local business culture and environment. The LEO structure combines the expert knowledge of the former CEBs with the Business Development expertise of the Local Authorities, overseen by the Centre of Excellence in Enterprise Ireland.</p>		
<p><b>Completion level</b></p>	<p>Not started / Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p><b>Description of the results</b> <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>Thirty-one LEOs were established in April 2014, following the legal dissolution of the County and City Enterprise Boards (CEBs).</p> <p>In tandem with the formal establishment of the LEOs, a new <a href="#">National LEO Gateway website</a> and 31 LEO sub-sites were launched. The objectives of this project were reached in that the project delivered an enhanced web capability for the new LEOs which brought consistency and uniformity to the online tools available to the LEO staff and which ultimately ensured delivery of a high level of service to their clients. It also allowed the application of the new single branding for the LEOs so that no matter which sub-site a customer accessed they would be presented with the same branding, information, layout and options. Key tools were provided such as online applications, events booking and management, integration with social media platforms and use of e-zines etc. The Gateway website provides easy access to all 31 sub-sites and in addition there is also a function to create 'syndicated content' at the centre that is then pushed down to all LEO offices for inclusion on their sub-site.</p> <p>In addition to the website development, the cross-governmental <a href="#">SMEs Online tool</a>, designed by the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Finance, to help Irish start-ups and small businesses navigate the range of Government business supports for which they could be eligible, is accessible on the LEO Gateway site. By answering the eight questions in the Online Tool, a small business will, in one location, be able to:</p>		



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• find out which of the over 80 Government business supports from 27 different Government Departments, Agencies and Initiatives are available to them</li> <li>• obtain information on the range of Government supports for accessing credit</li> <li>• identify their nearest Local Enterprise Office where they can discuss the outcomes of the guide further</li> <li>• download all these filtered results into a document for their further use.</li> </ul>
End date	2014
Next steps	Ongoing provision of the enhanced service.
Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)	

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 2.7.1 - A review of citizen complaints procedures will be undertaken.</b>		
Lead implementing agency		Department of Public Expenditure & Reform
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Kieran Sheedy
Title, Department		Assistant Principal, Department of Public Expenditure & Reform
Email		Kieran.Sheedy@per.gov.ie
Phone		604 5729
Other actors involved	Government	All public bodies
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A
Main Objective		To review the effectiveness of citizen complaints procedures
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		Review how public service bodies respond to complaints; whether they provide information on how to appeal & complain; & the effectiveness of remedies to complaints.
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>		<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of: improving public services; increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>A document setting out the key principles for complaints systems was produced by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in January 2014 to provide clarity for Departments and Offices in terms of how they develop their complaints handling processes, as well as ensuring a greater level of consistency in approach between different organisations. The Guidelines for Customer Charters (2012) also provide for greater consistency in this regard.</p> <p>The review examined the extent to which this principles based approach is being implemented at a practical level in a selection of civil service organisations and non-commercial state agencies</p>
<p>Ambition</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will</i></p>		<p>Citizens will have clear knowledge of complaints procedures. Complaints will be dealt with thoroughly, impartially and in good time and effective remedies will be put in place in response to complaints made.</p>

<i>either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i>			
Completion level	Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed
			X
Description of the results <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i>	Phase 1, which involved a review of Civil Service departments and offices, was completed in April 2016 and Phase 2 which reviewed non-commercial State Agencies was completed at end June 2016. There was very substantial overlaps between the outcomes and recommendations for Phase 1 and 2 and a combined report was published. The recommendations – summarised below - have been sent to the Civil Service Quality Customer Service Network and to individual State Agencies for any follow up action.		
End date	Mid-June 2016		
Next steps	N/A		
Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.			
<p>The review recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To supplement its findings, organisations should engage directly with customers in relation to the effectiveness of their complaints handling processes where they do not already do so, and consideration should be given in future iterations of the Civil Service Customer Satisfaction Survey to including questions specifically related to customer complaint handling processes in respect of civil service bodies.</li> <li>• Civil service bodies should jointly examine the feasibility of applying a common, intuitive, approach to presenting details in relation to customer complaint handling processes on their websites</li> <li>• Public service bodies should ensure that such details are easy for customers to find, including early in any process by Government to re-assign portfolios across public bodies to address specific priorities</li> <li>• The provision of advice and training to staff on Customer Charter and Customer Plan obligations should continue and complainants should continue to be made aware of the need to treat staff with dignity and respect</li> <li>• Organisations should consider including the business case for applying an externally validated quality assurance system to their complaint handling processes</li> <li>• To complement existing corporate governance mechanisms organisations should consider including the formal activation of internal complaint procedures in their risk register.</li> </ul>			

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 2.7.2 - Enhance customer engagement</b>				
Lead implementing agency		Department of Public Expenditure & Reform		
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		David Feeney		
Title, Department		Principal Officer, Reform and Delivery Office, Department of Public Expenditure & Reform		
Email		<a href="mailto:David.Feeney@per.gov.ie">David.Feeney@per.gov.ie</a>		
Phone		01 604 5135		
Other actors involved	Government	All public bodies		
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A		
Main Objective		Enhance customer engagement		
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		Promoting customer engagement through providing more customer service training, reviewing customer charter process, formal organisations survey of focus/user groups, meetings, seminars and consultation processes.		
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>		<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of improving public services; and increasing public integrity; and more effectively managing public resources. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation. In improving how the State provides its services, there is a need to radically change the relationship with the service user. Engagement with the citizen and business customer must be real and meaningful if service delivery is to meet their needs, rather than a perception of those needs. Better customer engagement undoubtedly leads to better public services and is therefore an important aspect of Public Service Reform.</p>		
<p>Ambition</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>		<p>Public Service Reform is a key element of the Government's overall strategy for recovery. The Government's second <a href="#">Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016</a> was published in January 2014 and has a priority focus on improved service delivery and better outcomes, alongside ongoing efficiency measures. A key objective of the Reform Plan is to enhance how the Public Service engages with service users, with a view to improving the quality of their interaction with the Public Service and to facilitate service improvements at organisational and sectoral levels. An important part of this work is about improving the customer experience and some initiatives in this area are summarised below.</p>		
Completion level		Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed
			x	
Description of the results <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first</i>		There have been a range of initiatives to improve customer engagement and customer service undertaken by the		

<p><i>or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in the last year. A number of these are summarised below:</p> <p>All Government Departments, Offices and other public bodies are required to publish <b>Customer Charters and Customer Action Plans</b>, covering a three year period, based around a four-step cycle of Consultation, Commitment, Evaluation and Reporting.</p> <p>A <b>survey of Civil Service business customers</b> has been initiated, with the contract awarded in July 2016, following an open tendering process. This is an important customer engagement initiative. The survey will analyse the experience of Irish businesses in their interaction with Government Departments and Offices, thereby establishing overall satisfaction with the standards of customer service and delivery. It is intended that the fieldwork for the survey will be undertaken in the fourth Quarter of 2016. The final report will be published.</p> <p>This survey will complement the <b>Civil Service Customer Satisfaction Survey 2015</b> published in 2015. The survey was undertaken by Ipsos MRBI following a tendering competition. The purpose of the survey, which had over 2,000 respondents from the general public, was to ascertain satisfaction levels with services, as well as more general perceptions of, and attitudes to, the civil Service. The results of the survey help inform ongoing developments in service delivery across Government Departments and Offices.</p> <p>To complement these centrally driven surveys, public bodies are encouraged to regularly undertake organisational level surveys and other forms of customer engagement.</p> <p><b>Service Design</b> is an innovative approach to improving public services by streamlining processes and improving the customer experience. The Department was centrally involved in a service design training initiative in conjunction with a number of public bodies throughout 2015. The tools and techniques that were part of the training help improve service provision from the customer perspective by identifying bottlenecks and inefficiencies in the current front facing processes; co-creating with service users to provide true customer value; and developing innovative service solutions to key service issues.</p> <p>The Department has now commenced cooperation with the National Disability Authority in the development of 'Universal Design for Customer Engagement' toolkits for Public servants. More generally, the Department promotes the provision of customer service training by public bodies for their frontline staff through the Quality Customer Service Officers' Network.</p>
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	<p>Increased use of <b>plain language</b> is an important part of the Public Service Reform agenda. In order to help achieve this objective, the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) were engaged by the RDO to deliver five sessions of Plain Language Training for public bodies. Officials from more than 20 organisations took part in training. In 2016, the RDO have also, in cooperation with NALA, updated its handbook on the use of plain language for public servants.</p> <p>Due to the nature of customers’ interactions with public services, most engagement and customer improvement tends to take place at an organisational level. In this context, the role of the <b>Quality Customer Service (QCS) Officers’ Network</b> is to coordinate and improve customer service and customer engagement across the Civil and Public Service. Membership of the Network includes representatives from all Government Departments and Offices. The Network is supported by the Department and meets regularly to discuss items of interest and share best practice on all aspects of Customer Service.</p> <p>One specific aspect of the work of the QCS Network is the organisation of an <b>annual conference for public servants</b> to promote best practise in the area of customer service. The most recent annual Customer Service conference took place on 11 December, 2015 in the Ballroom of Iveagh House. Over 130 public servants were in attendance, drawn from Civil Service Departments and major Offices, Local Authorities and the wider Public Service.</p> <p>Finally, the <b>Annual Progress Report</b> on the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016 was published in April 2016 and this sets out a broad range of initiatives to improve public services and customer engagement (<a href="http://www.reformplan.per.gov.ie">www.reformplan.per.gov.ie</a>)</p> <p>Overall, better customer engagement is a key aspect of Public Service Reform and undoubtedly leads to better public services.</p>
End date	The current Public Service Reform Plan runs to end 2016. Many of these initiatives will continue beyond that timeframe.
Next steps	<p>This year’s Public Service Reform and Innovation Conference, took place on 14 July. This event brought together officials from across the Public Service to share and discuss reform initiatives, such as those in the area of customer service, to consider the future direction of reform and innovation in the Irish Public Service.</p> <p>The Annual Customer Service Conference is scheduled for December 2016.</p>

	<p>Finally, though still in development, the next phase of Public Service Reform is likely to include a continued focus on the area of improved customer service.</p>
<p>Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</p>	
<p>A key lesson / conclusion is that enhancing customer engagement should be a priority for all public bodies. While DPER leads and coordinates some initiatives in this area, it is important for all public bodies to play a role. There is no one single initiative that will deliver the overall objective of enhanced customer engagement – this requires a whole series of ongoing initiatives at both central and organisational levels.</p>	

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 3.1 – Ethics Reform</b>		
Lead implementing agency	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency	Joyce Nolan	
Title, Department	Assistant Principal, Department of Public Expenditure & Reform	
Email	<a href="mailto:Joyce.Nolan@per.gov.ie">Joyce.Nolan@per.gov.ie</a>	
Phone	604 5486	
Other actors involved	Government	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in consultation with Government Departments and other stakeholders
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A
Main Objective	Reform of legislative framework governing ethics in public office	
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	Government will bring forward legislation to modernise, consolidate & simplify statutory framework for ethics in public office, will implement recommendations of Final Report of Mahon Tribunal agreed by Government and will draw on international best practice.	
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>	<p>This commitment address the grand challenges of improving public services and increasing public integrity. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>The existence of adequate and effective arrangements for governance and accountability within the civil service and between the civil service, the political level and citizens generally is one of the fundamental elements of a democratic system of government. There is a significant body of research highlighting internationally the important linkage between the quality of public institutions and long-term economic and social sustainability. Moreover, there are a number of significant examples in Ireland’s history – most recently the banking and financial crisis - where institutional weaknesses and governance failures have given rise to very substantial economic and social costs.</p> <p>The effectiveness of the ethical framework in managing conflicts of interest arising for public officials is integral to the quality and efficacy of public governance and in addressing corruption risks. Minimising corruption risks, and ensuring that conflicts between the public interest and private interests of public officials in the performance of their duties are regulated, is central to maximising the value generated and contribution made by the public sector.</p>	
<p>Ambition</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more</i></p>	The Standards in Public Office Commission, the Department of Justice and Equality, the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission, the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Office of the Attorney General were consulted in relation to proposals contained in the draft General Scheme and the Scheme was circulated to all Government	



<p><i>open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>Departments for observations prior to the submission of the Scheme to Government.</p> <p>The reform proposals that have been developed are designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significantly enhance the existing framework for identifying, disclosing and managing conflicts of interest as well as minimising corruption risks;</li> <li>• Strengthen public trust in public administration by reinforcing the standards required from public officials in the performance of their functions;</li> <li>• Achieve a shift towards a more dynamic and risk-based system of compliance;</li> <li>• Ensure that the institutional framework for oversight, investigation and enforcement is robust and effective;</li> <li>• Put in place a consistent, coherent and proportionate ethics framework for all public officials at both local and national level which is calibrated to conflict of interest and corruption risks; and</li> <li>• Ensure Ireland’s disclosure and conflict of interest framework corresponds to international best practice and is appropriately balanced to other important public policy objectives including safeguarding privacy and encouraging participation in public life.</li> </ul> <p>These reforms complement the reforms introduced in the areas of whistleblower protection, ombudsman reform and Freedom of Information in boosting openness, transparency and accountability of public governance.</p>		
<p>Completion level</p>	<p>Not started / Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>Description of the results <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>The Government agreed in June 2015 to the publication of a <a href="#">draft General Scheme</a> to replace the current legislative framework governing ethical obligations for public officials, and to its referral for priority drafting and pre-legislative scrutiny. This will provide the Oireachtas Committee with the opportunity to consult civil society groups, advocacy groups and individuals with expertise in ethics, enabling them to provide input and to develop the draft General Scheme.</p> <p>To inform and encourage public debate, and to facilitate consultation with citizens, users of public services and interested organisations, a <a href="#">Policy Document</a> was also published, setting out the analysis conducted by the Department which informed the Scheme’s development. Comments were sought by Friday 11 September 2015 – see <a href="http://www.per.gov.ie/public-sector-standards-bill/">http://www.per.gov.ie/public-sector-standards-bill/</a>. Submissions were published on the Department’s website.</p> <p>The Public Sector Standards Bill 2015 was published on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015 and completed Second Stage in the Dáil on 20<sup>th</sup></p>		

	January 2016. It is anticipated that the Bill should recommence at Committee Stage in the Dáil in the Autumn.
End date	Q1 2017.
Next steps	Recommence Bill at Committee Stage in the Dáil in autumn 2016 with a view to enactment.
Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)	

## Commitment Completion Template

### Action 3.2 – Strengthening Freedom of Information - Implement the Code of Practice for Freedom of Information (FOI).

Lead implementing agency	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency	Evelyn O'Connor	
Title, Department	Principal, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	
Email	Evelyn.O'Connor@per.gov.ie	
Phone	604 5311	
Other actors involved	Government	All public bodies
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A
Main Objective	Strengthening Freedom of Information - Implement the Code of Practice for FOI	
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	Implementing a <a href="#">Code of Practice for Freedom of Information</a> ; proactive publication of information by public bodies; introducing a 'legislative footprint' regarding current legislative initiatives, published on Department websites.	
Relevance <i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i>	<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of improving public services and increasing public integrity. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation through improved access to information and the decision-making process. The objectives of the Code include promotion of best practice among public bodies in relation to the operation of FOI and guiding and informing them in the performance of their responsibilities under the FOI Act 2014.</p> <p>The implementation of the Code of Practice for FOI will assist greatly in achieving the fundamental aim of the FOI Act 2014: "to enable members of the public to obtain access, to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy, to information in the possession of public bodies, other bodies in receipt of funding from the State and certain other bodies and to enable persons to have personal information relating to them in the possession of public bodies corrected..."</p> <p>The implementation of the Code of Practice involves all those involved in FOI: Requesters, Decision Makers, FOI Officers, Internal Reviewers, and the Office of the Information Commissioner.</p>	
Ambition	The existence of adequate and effective arrangements for governance and accountability within the civil service and	

<p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>between the civil service, the political level and citizens generally is one of the fundamental elements of a democratic system of government.</p> <p>In previous FOI regimes the roles of those involved in FOI were not clearly set out. The Code of Practice for FOI sets out such roles in detail, including the responsibilities for FOI practitioners and management in each public body, thus strengthening governance in implementing FOI in public bodies and resulting in timely information about policy and decisions that affect people's lives.</p> <p>The main objectives of the Code of Practice for FOI are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote best practice in public bodies in relation to the operation of FOI;</li> <li>• Guide and inform the performance of public bodies in relation to their responsibilities under the FOI Act;</li> <li>• Ensure FOI requests are dealt with by public bodies as efficiently as possible;</li> <li>• Secure appropriate consistency and standardisation of approach by public bodies in responding to FOI requests; and</li> <li>• Provide a framework for appropriate oversight and accountability of the performance of public bodies through monitoring of compliance with the Code.</li> </ul>		
<p>Completion level</p>	<p>Not started / Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>Description of the results <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>The aim was that the Code would be published by Q3 2014 for public consultation, finalised by the end of 2014, and that implementation would be ongoing.</p> <p>The Code of Practice was published in tandem with the Commencement of the FOI Act 2014 in October 2014.</p> <p>Implementation of the Code is ongoing with the following areas completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A single FOI Training Framework is in place which provides a panel of trainers from which FOI bodies can procure quality-assured training in a consistent and cost-effective manner – completed Nov 2014;</li> <li>• The reconstitution of the FOI Networks – completed Oct. 2014; Additional networks have been established in 2015 and 2016 in areas such as commercial bodies, education and training boards, and enterprise bodies.</li> <li>• The redevelopment of a modern accessible FOI website along with the issuing of an FOI newsletter quarterly to public bodies.</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A suite of Frequently Asked Questions have been published to assist both citizens and FOI Officers.</li> <li>• Ongoing review and updating of Manuals/ Guidance/ Templates in line with best practice.</li> <li>• Increased resources centrally to assist in provision of advice and guidance as well as collection of statistics</li> <li>• Public bodies have been requested to publish generic email addresses on their FOI contact details to improve access by the public.</li> <li>• FOI Costs – FOI bodies have been furnished with a template to record time spent processing FOI requests.</li> <li>• A Model Publication Scheme and associated Guidance has been published by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform in accordance with Section 8 of the FOI Act 2014 in October 2015</li> </ul>
End date	April 2016
Next steps	<p>New guidance continues to be developed as the need arises</p> <p>The FOI CPU will continue to encourage all public bodies to link up with a network or to create new ones.</p> <p>Records Management – The DPER will review and provide central guidance if required to improve records management.</p> <p>Further templates will be developed to assist public bodies in effectively processing FOI requests.</p> <p>An ICT-based help desk and dealing with FOI queries arising and the collection of statistical data will be developed to support public bodies in the effective operation of the FOI regime.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)</p>	
<p>The Central Policy Unit will continue to provide guidance and to drive and oversee the implementation of the Code. The main risks involved achieving the outstanding items (above) is that a lot of the responsibility lies with the various public bodies, many of whom have various programmes competing for limited resources.</p>	

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 3.3 – Reform of FOI</b>		
Lead implementing agency	Department of Public Expenditure & Reform	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency	Evelyn O'Connor	
Title, Department	Principal, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	
Email	Evelyn.O'Connor@per.gov.ie	
Phone	604 5311	
Other actors involved	Government	Department of Public Expenditure & Reform in consultation with public bodies and the Office of the Attorney General be involved in the delivery of this action. All public bodies will be involved in implementation once the Bill is enacted.
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	N/A
Main Objective	Reform of FOI	
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	Implementing a comprehensive reform of Ireland's Freedom of Information legislation through the FOI Bill 2013 and the establishment of a Code of Practice for FOI as referenced above.	
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>	<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of improving public services and increasing public integrity. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>The new FOI Act came into force on 14 October 2014. It removed the main substantive restrictions in access to official information which had been introduced in 2003 providing access to records which would previously have been excluded.</p> <p>The Act also extends the powers of the Information Commissioner and introduces provisions to ensure that FOI requests for information held electronically are dealt with effectively. It also clarifies that there is a general right of access to records held by public bodies and introduces new policies and principles clarifying that FOI bodies must have regard to the need to achieve greater openness in their activities and adherence to the principle of transparency and to strengthen accountability and improve the quality of decision-making.</p> <p>It also extended FOI to all public bodies unless specifically exempt in whole or in part and provides a framework for the extension of FOI to non-public bodies in receipt of significant</p>	

	<p>funding from the Exchequer. The legislation also provided an opportunity for a necessary consolidation, modernisation and updating of the legislation and the legislation was simplified and restructured to make it more accessible to the citizen.</p> <p>The new Act applies to all public bodies including newly established bodies that conform to the definition of public body in Section 6 of the Act (a very broad definition designed to bring as many bodies as possible within remit), unless they are specifically exempt or part-exempt for necessary reasons such as to protect the economic interests of the State. The Act brought a number of long-established high profile excluded bodies within remit for the first time including the Central Bank, An Garda Siochana and many others.</p> <p>The €15 application fee has been abolished and a minimum threshold of €101 (approx. 5 hours) below which no search, retrieval and copying fees can be charged provided the request can be processed within this time period. A cap of €500 on the charging of search, retrieval and copying was also introduced.</p>		
<p><b>Ambition</b></p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	<p>The existence of adequate and effective arrangements for governance and accountability within the civil service and between the civil service, the political level and citizens generally is one of the fundamental elements of a democratic system of government.</p> <p>The FOI Act 2014 has provided citizens with a more open and transparent method of obtaining information held by public bodies. The abolition of the up-front fee for making a request, the reduction of the fees for making appeals, and the minimum threshold and cap limits put in place for search, retrieval and copying have all lead to more accessible information.</p> <p>The Act is in favour of releasing information with the onus on the relevant public body to apply the necessary exemption, usually subject to a public interest test.</p>		
<p><b>Completion level</b></p>	<p>Not started / Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Completed</p>
			<p>x</p>
<p><b>Description of the results</b></p> <p><i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>It was aimed that the comprehensive reform of Ireland’s FOI legislation would be implemented through the FOI Bill 2013 and the establishment of a Code of Practice for FOI, and that these would be ongoing to be completed by the end of 2014.</p> <p>The <a href="#">FOI Act 2014</a> came into force in October 2014. <a href="#">The Code of Practice for FOI</a> was issued in tandem with the Act.</p> <p>The following legislation has all been issued subsequently in accordance with various sections of the Act:</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SI No 531 of 2014 - Freedom of Information Act 2014 (Fees) (No. 2) Regulations 2014</li> <li>• SI No 103 of 2015 - Freedom of Information Act 2014 (Commencement Date for Certain Bodies) Order 2015</li> <li>• SI No 144 of 2015 - Freedom of Information Act 2014 (Exempted Public Bodies) Order 2015</li> <li>• SI No 148 of 2015 - Freedom of Information 2014 (Effective Date for Certain Bodies) Order 2015</li> <li>• S.I. 218 of 2016 Freedom of Information Act 2014 (Amendment of <i>Schedule 3</i>) Regulations 2016</li> <li>• S.I. 330 of 2016 Freedom of Information Act 2014 (Amendment of Schedule 3) Regulations 2016</li> </ul> <p>A Model Publication Scheme and associated Guidance which provides for the proactive publication by FOI bodies of official information was published by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform in accordance with Section 8 of the FOI Act 2014. Each FOI body was required to complete its own Publication Scheme, based on the Model Publication Scheme, not later than 14 April 2016.</p> <p>Regarding the provision of key principles to guide public bodies in the performance of their functions under the Act; the extensions of the functions/powers of the Information Commissioner; provisions to ensure that FOI requests relating to information held electronically are dealt with effectively; and confirmation that there is a general right of access to records held by public bodies; each of these principles have been addressed in the FOI Act 2014.</p>
End date	Q3/2015
Next steps	Further regulations/orders will be made as required
Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)	
The Information Commissioner may examine and report on the extent to which FOI Bodies are in compliance with Section 8 (Publication of information about FOI bodies) of FOI Act 2014.	



## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 3.4 – Regulation of Lobbying</b>		
Lead implementing agency	Department of Public Expenditure & Reform	
Name of responsible person from implementing agency	Joyce Nolan	
Title, Department	Assistant Principal, Department of Public Expenditure & Reform	
Email	Joyce.Nolan@per.gov.ie	
Phone	01 604 5486	
Other actors involved	Government	Department of Public Expenditure & Reform in consultation with the Office of the Attorney General and public bodies. All public bodies will be involved in implementation on a phased basis.
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	Wide range of stakeholders including representative bodies, NGOs and Charity sector, Business interests, Unions and Consultant PR / Lobbying sector
Main Objective	Regulation of Lobbying	
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)	Securing Government approval for, publishing and enacting the Regulation of Lobbying legislation. Developing a Transparency Code.	
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>	<p>This commitment addresses the grand challenges of improving public services and increasing public integrity. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>The Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 sets up a statutory regime for the registration of lobbying activity on a web-based public register. It will show who is communicating with whom and about what.</p>	
<p>Ambition</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the</i></p>	The existence of a public register of lobbying activity will provide transparency on who is seeking to influence Government and the senior public service in respect of certain issues impacting	

<i>commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i>	on public policy, legislative initiatives or matters involving public funds.		
Completion level	Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed
			x
Description of the results <i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i>	<p>The target for the publishing of the Bill was mid-2014, and for the Enactment the end of 2014.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015</a> is now in place. The Act Commenced on 1 September 2015. The first registration period was from 1 September 2015 to 31 December 2015 and the deadline for the first registrations was 21 January 2016.</p>		
End date	Action Completed. On commencement, the Act applied to lobbying communication with Ministers, Ministers of State, TDs and Senators, MEPs representing the Irish State, Special Advisers to Minister and senior officials in the Civil Service and the Local Authorities.		
Next steps	The scope of the Act will be extended over time to other areas of the wider public service by Ministerial Order. A review of the first year of the implementation of the Act will begin in September 2016.		
Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)			

## Commitment Completion Template

<b>Action 3.5 – Encourage, Protect and Raise Awareness of Whistleblower Duties and Protections</b>		
Lead implementing agency		Department of Public Expenditure & Reform
Name of responsible person from implementing agency		Michael Perkins
Title, Department		Assistant Principal, Department of Public Expenditure & Reform
Email		Michael.Perkins@per.gov.ie
Phone		01 604 5613
Other actors involved	Government	All Government Departments and the Office of the Attorney General were consulted.
	CSOs, private sector, working groups, multilaterals	Trade unions, relevant civil society organisations and employer representative bodies involved.
Main Objective		Encourage, Protect and Raise Awareness of Whistleblower Duties and Protections
Brief Description of Commitment (140 character limit)		Communicate and increase awareness of whistleblowing and the availability of whistleblowing protection consistent with Protected Disclosures legislation.
<p>Relevance</p> <p><i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the OGP Values Guidance Note.)</i></p>		<p>This commitment addresses the challenges of improving public services, and increasing public integrity. It is relevant to the advancement of transparency, accountability and public participation.</p> <p>The Protected Disclosures Act, which has been in place since July 2014, provides a framework for the protection of workers in all sectors of the economy against reprisals in circumstances that they make a disclosure of information relating to wrongdoing which comes to their attention in the workplace. The legislation is drafted to cover as broad a population of persons in the workplace environment as is feasible. The extent of the ‘wrongdoings’ on which protected disclosures can be made is sufficiently broad to ensure that a wide range of possible wrongdoings can be reported.</p> <p>This Act addresses a gap in Ireland’s legal framework for preventing corruption and reflects international best practice relating to whistleblowing protection recommended by, the G20/OECD, the UN Council of Europe and the European Parliament. It requires that every public body shall establish and maintain procedures for the making of protected disclosures by workers who are or were employed by the public body and for dealing with such disclosures. Written information</p>

	in relation to those procedures must be provided to workers employed by the public body. The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform in March 2016 issued Guidance for the purpose of assisting public bodies in the performance of these functions.		
<p><b>Ambition</b></p> <p><i>Briefly describe the intended policy results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i></p>	The existence of adequate and effective arrangements for governance and accountability within the civil service and between the civil service, the political level and citizens generally is one of the fundamental elements of a democratic system of government.		
<p><b>Completion level</b></p>	Not started / Limited	Substantial	Completed
			X
<p><b>Description of the results</b></p> <p><i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i></p>	<p>The Protected Disclosures Act has drawn wide international praise as a best in class provision and represents a small but nonetheless significant step in Ireland's anti-corruption framework.</p> <p>All Public Bodies are required under the Act to prepare and issue written procedures for the making of protected disclosures by their workers.</p> <p>Following detailed consultation with public bodies and a range of other interested parties (including a public consultation period in Q3 2015), the Department of PER finalised and published Guidance to assist public bodies in the performance of their functions under the Act in Q1 2016.</p> <p>Exchequer grant funding of €300K has been allocated to Transparency International Ireland in 2016 for the provision of a free and independent legal advice service to workers who are considering making a protected disclosure and associated awareness raising initiatives.</p> <p>The Protected Disclosures Act has attracted favourable comment in Europe-wide peer reviews of statutory protections for whistle-blowers.</p>		
<p><b>End date</b></p>	Legislation is complete but implementation of the Protected Disclosures Act will be ongoing.		
<p><b>Next steps</b></p>	The Department of PER will finalise and issue during 2016 a request for tender for the establishment of a third-party framework for the provision of services relating to the Protected Disclosures Act to public bodies, including acting as recipient of		

	disclosures, investigation of disclosures, training of staff and legal advice.
Additional information (Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.)	
<p>The emphasis of the Protected Disclosures legislation is to protect individuals making a protected disclosure within the terms of the Act from penalisation. The very fact of the legislation gives rise to an expectation that a range of investigatory mechanisms are available to promptly investigate and adjudicate on all protected disclosures no matter what their nature. In reality, the Act contains no new obligation to investigate: There may very well be an expectation or sometimes an obligation of investigation, but that comes from somewhere else; not from the Protected Disclosures Act. The Act itself is not prescriptive on the approach to be taken to investigating protected disclosures, as this will depend on the specific circumstances that apply in any particular case.</p>	