

Independent Reporting Mechanism

Ireland Co-Creation Brief
2025

Open
Government
Partnership



Independent
Reporting
Mechanism

Overview

This brief from the OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) supports the co-creation process and design of Ireland's fifth action plan. It provides an overview of OGP processes in the country and presents recommendations based on collective and country specific IRM findings. The co-creation brief draws from prior IRM reports for [Ireland](#), the [OGP National Handbook](#), [OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards](#), and IRM guidance on [the minimum requirements](#). Section 1 offers guidance for OGP processes and co-creation and Section 2 for commitment design. Government and civil society can determine the extent to which this brief is used to shape the next action plan's trajectory and content.

Ireland has implemented four action plans since becoming a member. Its commitments have achieved impact on lobbying regulation and whistleblower protections. They have also developed a code of practice for governance of charities, improved open data, and fostered citizen participation in legislative decision-making. However, the scope of commitments in Ireland's two most recent action plans was less ambitious than its previous plans. The upcoming fifth action plan cycle offers an opportunity to rebuild momentum. The Open Government Round Table has been an important space for dialogue, so to keep dialogue fresh it could renew membership. To raise the ambition of open government reforms, new commitments could address housing supply, algorithmic transparency, and press freedom. Commitments could also continue efforts to strengthen the ethics framework for public officials, open contracting, and beneficial ownership transparency.

To strengthen the co-creation process, the IRM recommends the following:

- Refresh the Open Government Round Table.
- Deepen engagement in co-creation.
- Update the repository and website.

Section I: Action Plan Co-Creation

The following recommendations present opportunities for national reformers to strengthen OGP institutions and processes in the country.

Recommendation 1. Refresh the Open Government Round Table

The Department of Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation (DPER) formed the Open Government Round Table Multi-Stakeholder Forum in 2021, renewing Ireland's engagement with OGP. In 2024, the Round Table's meetings became more infrequent. To meet the minimum requirements of the [OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards](#), the IRM recommends ensuring the Round Table meets at least every six months during co-creation of the fifth action plan. This period also offers an opportunity to refresh Round Table membership. DPER could release a call for new members alongside a call for commitment proposals, and capitalise on the co-creation process to engage new diverse civil society representation in key thematic areas, such as accountability and transparency. DPER could draw on the experiences of peers across OGP. [Lithuania](#) formed a new Multi-Stakeholder Forum with wider representation during co-creation. [Nigeria](#) identified and gathered a committee of likely implementing institutions during co-creation, which also became a group to oversee the implementation of commitments. The [OGP handbook on designing and managing OGP Multi-Stakeholder Forums](#) also offers useful guidance.

Recommendation 2. Deepen Engagement in Co-Creation

Before the start of co-creation, DPER can plan pathways to embed more strategic government and civil society stakeholder engagement into the commitment development process. The process could directly involve the minister at key junctures, beginning early in the co-creation timeline, which could help demonstrate the political will for an ambitious action plan. Ministerial engagement could encourage government departments' involvement, ensure the plan's themes match political priorities, and offer clear political support for co-creation of commitments with civil society. This could be combined with procedures for civil society to fully take part in determining the content of all commitments, incorporating more direct meetings with departments. As an example, thematic working groups offer one model. In the United Kingdom an [open contracting working group](#) was co-led by government and civil society, and developed one of the most ambitious commitments in the recent action plan. Steps to deepen engagement in co-creation can strengthen joint ownership of the completed plan and subsequent commitment to participate during implementation.

Recommendation 3. Update the Repository and Website

To meet the minimum requirements of the [OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards](#), the IRM recommends updating the OGP webpage with information on the OGP process at

least twice a year. The government should ensure that all relevant materials, such as information on OGP processes, meeting minutes, and other related output are published promptly to ensure transparency and foster better public engagement. This would help Ireland meet the requirements of an OGP repository that contains and publishes relevant information in a timely manner. This information should be easy to find and ideally searchable.

Section II: Action Plan Design

The following recommendations offer policy areas for national actors to consider in the next action plan. They may represent opportunities for new commitments to address issues of national importance or to advance existing reforms.

Area 1. Open Contracting

The [Programme for Government](#) plans to review the public procurement process to improve transparency and participation from small and medium enterprises. It also intends to pursue more efficient procurement of military equipment and embed green public procurement across the public sector, including through setting minimum mandatory green public procurement criteria and compulsory reporting to monitor progress. The next OGP action plan could help implement these reforms, bringing an effort from the [second action plan](#) to fruition. This effort could apply [OECD](#) recommendations to improve public sharing of high-quality and timely procurement data connected across the life-cycle, including the pre-tender and post-tender phases. Reformers could draw on Open Gov Guide resources on [open contracting](#), [defense procurement](#), and the [energy transition](#).

Area 2. Political Integrity

Political integrity reforms can help ensure Irish democracy remains resilient – as outlined by the [Programme for Government](#) – including passage of the Standards in Public Office Bill and improvements to transparency and fairness in political party funding. Ireland’s next OGP action plan could help implement these reforms. Its third and fourth action plans began an [ambitious effort](#) to pass a Standards in Public Office Bill. A new commitment could build legislative support for passage or could support the bill’s implementation, depending on its status at the time the next action plan begins. This could introduce more rigorous and detailed requirements concerning the declaration of interests. A commitment could also amend the Electoral Act to improve the transparency of Ireland’s political donations framework following from the Electoral Commission’s review. These efforts could draw on [Open Gov Guide resources](#) and the experience of counterparts in the [Netherlands](#) and [Croatia](#), which offer different approaches to reforming political finance.

Area 3. Accelerate Housing Supply

The [Programme for Government](#) lays out steps to accelerate housing supply. It intends to introduce a new, all of government national housing plan to follow [Housing for All](#), underpinned by a multi-annual funding commitment. It also aims to complete the second phase of the land use review. The next OGP action plan could help implement these steps using open government mechanisms. Building on the stakeholder engagement and submissions during development of Housing for All, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage could widen public participation in design of the new housing plan. It could also provide relevant stakeholders and members of the public with roles in oversight of government funding and efforts to ramp up construction, for instance, through

the Delivery Group. Likewise, it could provide these groups with a role in land use reform, for example, through a [land observatory](#).

Area 4. Algorithmic Transparency

DPER released [Guidelines for the Responsible Use of AI in the Public Service](#) in May 2025. These guidelines encourage agencies to adhere to principles of transparency and accountability in their use of AI, among other principles. The next OGP action plan could put these principles into practice by introducing new transparency mechanisms to allow civil society, journalists, and the public to participate in oversight. For instance, a commitment could establish a centralised repository where all public bodies can publish relevant documentation – such as their AI use cases, their completed Responsible AI Canvas, and the results of their evaluations and audits of the AI systems’ usage and the fair treatment of users. This effort could support implementation of Ireland’s obligations under the [EU AI Act](#). Reformers could draw on [Open Gov Guide resources](#) and the [OGP Open Algorithms Network](#), with the [United Kingdom](#), [Scotland](#), [Chile](#), and [Uruguay](#) offering different approaches to algorithmic transparency registers.

Area 5. Beneficial Ownership Transparency

Ireland is the world’s largest hedge fund administration centre and the third largest general investment fund administration [centre](#). As the country’s financial role in the world continues to grow, its next OGP action plan provides the opportunity to improve [corporate transparency](#). Following efforts under the [second action plan](#), a new commitment could expand access to beneficial ownership registers and make the submission and verification of corporate data more rigorous. At the same time, it could bolster the resources and mandates of enforcement bodies to enable the investigation of complex cases of international money laundering. This could correspond with the development of a National Strategy to Combat Economic Crime and Corruption, planned by the [Programme for Government](#). This effort could draw on [Open Gov Guide resources](#) and the experiences of counterparts in [Armenia](#) and the [United Kingdom](#), which offer different approaches to beneficial ownership transparency reforms.

Area 6. Press Freedom

Globally, Ireland is among the top ten countries ranked by the [2025 World Press Freedom Index](#). The [Programme for Government](#) intends support for a strong, independent, and diverse media. Ireland’s next OGP action plan could take steps to continue prioritising national media freedom. A commitment could pass the Defamation (Reform) Bill by building necessary legislative support and incorporating the press and civil society in designating appropriate protections against abusive legal threats to journalists. A commitment could also work to build on longer-term predictable [funding](#) for public interest journalism. These

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efforts could draw on [Open Gov Guide resources](#) and the [OGP Horizons' article](#) on the anatomy of an Anti-SLAPP Law.

The brief was reviewed by IRM senior staff for consistency, accuracy, and with a view to maximize the context-relevance and actionability of the recommendations. Where appropriate, external reviewers or members of the IRM International Experts Panel (IEP) review briefs.