

## **Appropriation Account 2023**

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### **Vote 7**

#### **Office of the Minister for Finance**

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## Introduction

As Accounting Officer for Vote 7, I am required each year to prepare the appropriation account for the Vote, and to submit the account to the Comptroller and Auditor General for audit.

In accordance with this requirement, I have prepared the attached account of the amount expended in the year ended 31 December 2023 for the salaries and expenses of the Office of the Minister for Finance, including the Paymaster-General's Office, for certain services administered by the Office of the Minister and for payment of certain grants.

The expenditure outturn is compared with the sums

- granted by Dáil Éireann under the Appropriation Act 2023, including the amount that could be used as appropriations-in-aid of expenditure for the year, and
- provided for capital supply services in 2023 out of unspent 2022 appropriations, under the deferred surrender arrangements established by section 91 of the Finance Act 2004.

A surplus of €6.220 million is liable for surrender to the Exchequer.

The statement of accounting policies and principles and notes 1 to 6 form part of the account.

## Statement of accounting policies and principles

The standard accounting policies and principles for the production of appropriation accounts, as set out by the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform in circular 22 of 2023, have been applied in the preparation of the account except for the following:

### *Intangible assets*

The useful lives and associated amortisation rates of major classes of intangible assets have been estimated as follows:

<i>Asset class</i>	<i>Useful life</i>	<i>Rate of amortisation</i>
Acquired/developed software	10 years	10%

### *Depreciation*

Depreciation is calculated and charged on a monthly basis from the month of acquisition until the month of disposal.

## Statement on internal financial control

### *Responsibility for system of internal financial control*

As Accounting Officer, I acknowledge my responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by the Department.

This responsibility is exercised in the context of the resources available to me and my other obligations as Secretary General. Also, any system of internal financial control can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely manner. Maintaining the system of internal financial controls is a continuous process and the system and its effectiveness are kept under ongoing review.

### ***Shared services***

Payroll, finance and human resource functions are provided on a shared services basis by the National Shared Services Office (Vote 18). I have fulfilled my responsibilities in relation to the requirements of the service management agreement between this Department and the National Shared Services Office for the provision of HR, finance and payroll shared services.

The Accounting Officer for the National Shared Services Office is responsible for the operation of controls within the Shared Services Centres.

The Accounting Officer for the National Shared Services Office has put in place an audit process to provide independent assurance on the operation of controls within shared services. This assurance is a combination of

- internal audit work performed by the National Shared Services Office's internal audit unit, and
- audits conducted by a firm of accountants in accordance with the International Standard on Assurance Engagements (ISAE 3402), designed to report to user departments and their auditors on the controls within shared services. These audits report on the effectiveness of controls operated in 2023.

The Accounting Officer for the National Shared Services Office has provided me with a letter of assurance on the internal control and audit arrangements and reports on the audits of the operation of controls during 2023. I take assurance from the system of control within shared services as reported to me by the Accounting Officer for the National Shared Services Office.

### ***Financial control environment***

A control environment comprising the following elements is in place.

- Financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability.
- Reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned.
- Formal procedures have been established for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action.
- There is an Audit Committee to advise me in discharging my responsibilities for the internal financial control system.
- Procedures for all key business processes have been documented.
- There are systems in place to safeguard the assets.

### ***Administrative controls and management reporting***

A framework of administrative procedures and regular management reporting is in place, including segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability and, in particular, that

- there is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review by senior management
- there are regular reviews by senior management of periodic and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance against forecasts
- a risk management system operates within the Department
- there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the ICT systems
- there are appropriate capital investment control guidelines and formal project management disciplines
- the Department ensures that there is an appropriate focus on good practice in purchasing and that procedures are in place to ensure compliance with all relevant guidelines.

### ***Internal audit and Audit Committee***

The Department uses the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform internal audit function under the terms of the service level agreement between the two Departments. The internal audit unit operates under a written charter which has been approved by the Secretary General of the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform. Its work is informed by analysis of the financial risks to which the Department of Finance is exposed and its annual internal audit plans (which are prepared in consultation with the Audit Committee and approved by me), are based on this analysis. These plans aim to cover the key controls on a rolling basis over a reasonable period. The internal audit function is reviewed periodically by me and by the Audit Committee. I have put procedures in place to ensure that the reports of the internal audit function are followed up.

### ***Procurement***

The Department ensures that there is an appropriate focus on good procurement practice in the award of all contracts and that procedures are in place to ensure compliance with all relevant guidelines.

The Department has provided details of eight non-competitive contracts in the annual return in respect of circular 40/2002 to the Comptroller and Auditor General and the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform.

### ***Risk and control framework***

The Department has implemented a risk management system which identifies and reports key risks and the management actions being taken to address and, to the extent possible, to mitigate those risks.

A risk register is in place which identifies the key risks facing the Department and these have been identified, evaluated and graded according to their significance. The register is reviewed and updated by the Executive Board on a quarterly basis. The outcome of these assessments is used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level.

The risk register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and responsibility for operation of controls assigned to specific staff.

***Ongoing monitoring and review***

Formal procedures have been established for monitoring control processes so that control deficiencies are communicated to those responsible for taking corrective action, to management and the Executive Board, where relevant, in a timely way. I confirm that key risks and related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies.

***Review of effectiveness***

I confirm that the Department has procedures to monitor the effectiveness of its risk management and control procedures. The Department's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the system of internal financial control is informed by the work of the internal and external auditors and the senior management within the Department responsible for the development and maintenance of the internal financial control framework.

***Internal financial control issues***

No weaknesses in internal financial control were identified in relation to 2023 that require disclosure in the appropriation account.

**John Hogan**  
Accounting Officer  
Office of the Minister for Finance

28 March 2024

## **Comptroller and Auditor General**

### **Report for presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas**

#### **Vote 7 Office of the Minister for Finance**

##### **Opinion on the appropriation account**

I have audited the appropriation account for Vote 7 Office of the Minister for Finance for the year ended 31 December 2023 under section 3 of the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act 1993.

In my opinion, the appropriation account

- properly presents the receipts and expenditure of Vote 7 Office of the Minister for Finance for the year ended 31 December 2023, and
- has been prepared in the form prescribed by the Minister for Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform.

##### ***Basis of opinion***

I conducted my audit of the appropriation account in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) as promulgated by the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions. My responsibilities under those standards are described in the appendix to this report. I am independent of the Office of the Minister for Finance and have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the standards.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

##### **Report on the statement on internal financial control, and on other matters**

The Accounting Officer has presented a statement on internal financial control together with the appropriation account. My responsibilities to report in relation to the information in the statement, and on certain other matters upon which I report by exception, are described in the appendix to this report.

I have nothing to report in that regard.

**Seamus McCarthy**  
Comptroller and Auditor General

16 August 2024

## Appendix to the report

### Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer

The Accounting Officer is responsible for

- the preparation of the appropriation account in accordance with section 22 of the Exchequer and Audit Departments Act 1866
- ensuring the appropriation account complies with the requirements of the Department of Public Expenditure National Development Plan Delivery and Reform's *Public Financial Procedures*, and with other directions of the Minister for Public Expenditure National Development Plan Delivery and Reform
- ensuring the regularity of transactions, and
- implementing such internal control as the Accounting Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the appropriation account free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### Responsibilities of the Comptroller and Auditor General

I am required under section 3 of the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act 1993 to audit the appropriation account and to report thereon to the Houses of the Oireachtas stating whether, in my opinion, the account properly presents the receipts and expenditure related to the vote.

My objective in carrying out the audit is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the appropriation account is free from material misstatement due to fraud or error. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the appropriation account.

As part of an audit in accordance with the ISAs, I exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. In doing so,

- I identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the appropriation account whether due to fraud or error; design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks; and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- I obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal controls.
- I assess whether the accounting provisions of the Department of Public Expenditure National Development Plan Delivery and Reform's *Public Financial Procedures* have been complied with.

I communicate with the Accounting Officer regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

I report by exception if, in my opinion,

- I have not received all the information and explanations I required for my audit, or
- the accounting records were not sufficient to permit the appropriation account to be readily and properly audited, or
- the appropriation account is not in agreement with the accounting records.

### Reporting on the statement on internal financial control

My opinion on the appropriation account does not cover the Accounting Officer's statement on internal financial control, and I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the appropriation account, I am required under the ISAs to read the statement on internal financial control and, in doing so, consider whether the information contained therein is materially inconsistent with the appropriation account or with knowledge obtained during the audit, or if it otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement, I am required to report that fact.

### Reporting on other matters

I seek to obtain evidence about the regularity of financial transactions in the course of audit. I am required to report under section 3 of the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act 1993 if I identify any material instance where public money has not been applied for the purposes intended or where transactions did not conform to the authorities governing them.

I am also required under the 1993 Act to prepare, in each year, a report on such matters arising from my audits of the appropriation accounts as I consider appropriate. In such cases, the audit reports on the relevant appropriation accounts refer to the relevant chapter(s) in my annual *Report on the Accounts of the Public Services*.

## Vote 7 Office of the Minister for Finance

## Appropriation Account 2023

		2023		2022
		Estimate provision	Outturn	Outturn
		€000	€000	€000
<b>Programme expenditure</b>				
A	Economic and fiscal policy			
	<i>Original</i>	26,816		
	<i>Deferred surrender</i>	50		
	<i>Supplementary</i>	1		
			26,867	24,202
				24,985
B	Banking and financial services policy			
	<i>Original</i>	20,498		
	<i>Deferred surrender</i>	50		
			20,548	16,884
				15,405
<b>Gross expenditure</b>				
	<i>Original</i>	47,314		
	<i>Deferred surrender</i>	100		
	<i>Supplementary</i>	1		
			47,415	41,086
				40,390
	<i>Deduct</i>			
C	Appropriations-in-aid		910	911
				1,038
<b>Net expenditure</b>				
	<i>Original</i>	46,404		
	<i>Deferred surrender</i>	100		
	<i>Supplementary</i>	1		
			46,505	40,175
				39,352

**Surplus**

The surplus of the amount provided over the net amount applied is liable for surrender to the Exchequer. Under section 91 of the Finance Act 2004, all or part of any unspent appropriations for capital supply services may be carried over for spending in the following year. €110,000 of unspent allocations in respect of the capital elements of subheads A.2 and B.2 were carried forward to 2024.



	2023	2022
	€	€
Surplus to be surrendered	6,329,913	3,548,171
Deferred surrender	(110,000)	(100,000)
Surplus to be surrendered	<u><b>6,219,913</b></u>	<u><b>3,448,171</b></u>

**John Hogan**  
Accounting Officer  
Office of the Minister for Finance

28 March 2024

## Notes to the Appropriation Account

### Note 1 Operating Cost Statement 2023

	2023	2022
	€000	€000
Programme cost	12,614	11,676
Pay	24,361	22,640
Non pay	4,111	6,074
<b>Gross expenditure</b>	<b>41,086</b>	<b>40,390</b>
<i>Deduct</i>		
<b>Appropriations-in-aid</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>1,038</b>
<b>Net expenditure</b>	<b>40,175</b>	<b>39,352</b>
<b>Changes in capital assets</b>		
<b><i>Intangible assets (note 2.2)</i></b>		
Purchases	(815)	
Amortisation	9	
	(806)	(235)
<b>Changes in net current assets</b>		
Decrease in prepayments	132	
Decrease in accrued expenses	(187)	
	(55)	461
<b>Direct expenditure</b>	<b>39,314</b>	<b>39,578</b>
<b>Expenditure borne elsewhere</b>		
Net allied services expenditure (note 1.1)	22,086	14,694
Notional rents	1,236	1,236
<b>Net programme cost</b>	<b>62,636</b>	<b>55,508</b>

### 1.1 Net allied services expenditure

The net allied services expenditure amount is made up of the following amounts in relation to Vote 7 borne elsewhere, net of costs of shared services provided to other votes.

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
Vote 11 Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform	240	—
Vote 12 Superannuation and Retired Allowances	14,829	14,213
Vote 13 Office of Public Works	993	946
Vote 18 National Shared Services Office	6,445	246
Vote 20 Garda Síochána	244	232
Vote 43 Office of Government Chief Information Officer	472	420
Central Fund - ministerial pensions	269	267
	<u>23,492</u>	<u>16,324</u>
Costs of shared services provided to other votes	(1,406)	(1,630)
	<u><b>22,086</b></u>	<u><b>14,694</b></u>

**Note 2 Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2023**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2023</b> <b>€000</b>	<b>2022</b> <b>€000</b>
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	2.1	—	—
Intangible assets	2.2	1,047	241
<b>Total fixed assets</b>		<b>1,047</b>	<b>241</b>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Bank and cash		—	760
Prepayments	2.3	204	336
Net Exchequer funding	2.7	1,236	—
Other debit balances	2.5	574	271
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>2,014</b>	<b>1,367</b>
<b>Less current liabilities</b>			
Bank and cash		922	—
Accrued expenses	2.4	564	751
Other credit balances	2.6	888	787
Net Exchequer funding	2.7	—	244
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>2,374</b>	<b>1,782</b>
<b>Net current assets/(liabilities)</b>		<b>(360)</b>	<b>(415)</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>687</b>	<b>(174)</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
<b>State funding account</b>	2.8	<b>687</b>	<b>(174)</b>

**2.1 Property, plant and equipment**

	Office equipment €000	IT equipment €000	Total €000
<b>Cost or valuation <sup>a</sup></b>			
At 1 January 2023	223	222	445
Additions	—	—	—
Disposals	—	—	—
Adjustments	—	—	—
At 31 December 2023	223	222	445
<b>Accumulated depreciation</b>			
At 1 January 2023	223	222	445
Depreciation for the year	—	—	—
Depreciation on disposals	—	—	—
Adjustments	—	—	—
At 31 December 2023	223	222	445
<b>Net assets</b>			
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>
At 31 December 2022	—	—	—

Note <sup>a</sup> On 1 January 2023, acquired and developed software assets were reclassified as intangible assets (note 2.2).

**2.2 Intangible assets <sup>a</sup>**

	<b>Acquired and developed software</b>	<b>Assets under development</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
<b>Cost or valuation</b>			
At 1 January 2023	—	241	241
Additions <sup>b</sup>	815	—	815
Transfers	241	(241)	—
Disposals	—	—	—
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>1,056</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>1,056</b>
<b>Accumulated amortisation</b>			
At 1 January 2023	—	—	—
Amortisation for the year	9	—	9
Amortisation of disposals	—	—	—
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Net assets</b>			
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>1,047</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>1,047</b>
At 31 December 2022	—	—	—

Note <sup>a</sup> With effect from 1 January 2023, software acquisition and development assets were reclassified from property, plant and equipment to intangible assets.

<sup>b</sup> Costs associated with the Beneficial Ownership Register Interconnection System (BORIS). During 2023, €509,000 of additions for the BORIS was paid to the Central Bank directly from the Central Fund (and not borne by the Vote). The reason for this was that under Article 123 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the Central Bank of Ireland is prohibited from engaging in 'monetary financing'. Accordingly, it cannot use its own resources to defray expenses incurred by it in the performance of its functions as Registrar. At 31 December 2023, the BORIS had not reached 'go-live' yet due to concerns around potential GDPR issues.

**2.3 Prepayments**

at 31 December	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
IT licences and support	54	260
Training	90	34
Subscriptions	48	39
Other prepayments	12	3
	<b>204</b>	<b>336</b>

**2.4 Accrued expenses**

at 31 December	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
Secondment costs	341	600
Office premises expenses	66	34
General administration	41	52
Travel and subsistence	36	—
Consultancy and other services	80	65
	<b>564</b>	<b>751</b>

**2.5 Other debit balances**

at 31 December	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
Recoupable travel expenditure	81	26
Recoupable travel pass expenditure	19	15
Recoupable salaries	177	72
Other debit suspense items	297	158
	<b>574</b>	<b>271</b>

**2.6 Other credit balances**

at 31 December	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
<b>Amounts due to the State</b>		
Income tax	358	324
Pay related social insurance	240	205
Professional services withholding tax	11	13
Value added tax	45	40
Pension contributions	83	71
Local property tax	2	1
Universal social charge	74	65
	<b>813</b>	<b>719</b>
Payroll deductions held in suspense	75	68
	<b>888</b>	<b>787</b>

**2.7 Net Exchequer funding**

at 31 December	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
Surplus to be surrendered	6,220	3,448
Deferred surrender	110	100
Exchequer grant undrawn	(7,566)	(3,304)
<b>Net Exchequer funding</b>	<b>(1,236)</b>	<b>244</b>

**Represented by:****Debtors**

Bank and cash	—	760
Debit balances: suspense	574	271
	<u>574</u>	<u>1,031</u>

**Creditors**

Due to the State	(813)	(719)
Credit balance: suspense	(75)	(68)
Bank and cash	(922)	—
	<u>(1,810)</u>	<u>(787)</u>
	<b>(1,236)</b>	<b>244</b>

**2.8 State funding account**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
		<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
Balance at 1 January		(174)	52
Disbursements from the Vote			
Estimate provision	Account	46,505	
Deferred surrender	Account	(110)	
Surplus to be surrendered	Account	<u>(6,220)</u>	
Net vote		40,175	39,352
Expenditure (cash) borne elsewhere	1.1	22,086	14,694
Non cash expenditure – notional rent	1	1,236	1,236
Net programme cost	1	<u>(62,636)</u>	<u>(55,508)</u>
<b>Balance at 31 December</b>		<b>687</b>	<b>(174)</b>



**2.9 Matured liabilities**

at 31 December	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
Estimate of matured liabilities not discharged at year end	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>

**2.10 Contingent liabilities**

There is litigation in progress regarding Irish Bank Resolution Corporation (IBRC) and Permanent TSB. These actions are being defended and no estimate of the potential liability has been made.

Certain third party protections (in the form of warranties and indemnities) have been provided in connection with the sale of Irish Life Limited, the disposal of the Bank of Ireland contingent capital notes, the disposal of shares in Bank of Ireland and AIB, and the liquidation of IBRC.

These do not represent a complete list of litigation or third party protections. These particular items have been included as at the time they were instigated or provided they were of particular significance to the Minister and the State.

### Note 3 Vote Expenditure

#### Analysis of administration expenditure

Administration expenditure set out below has been apportioned across the programmes, to present complete programme costings.

		2023		2022
		Estimate provision	Outturn	Outturn
		€000	€000	€000
i	Salaries, wages and allowances			
	<i>Estimate provision</i>	26,805		
	<i>Supplementary estimate</i>	(400)	26,405	22,640
ii	Travel and subsistence	1,084	978	557
iii	Training and development	573	405	306
iv	Professional, consultancy and other services	150	22	13
v	Operating expenses	2,237	924	3,493
vi	Premises and accommodation expenses	1,247	687	598
vii	Communication expenses	324	167	258
viii	Asset and equipment expenses			
	<i>Estimate provision</i>	930		
	<i>Deferred surrender</i>	100	1,030	849
		<b>33,050</b>	<b>28,471</b>	<b>28,714</b>

#### Significant variations

The following outlines the reasons for significant variations in expenditure from the amount provided (+/- 25% and €100,000).

#### iii Training and development

*Estimate provision €573,000; outturn €405,000*

The underspend of €168,000 was due to lower take up than anticipated on some courses and on the Refund of Fees scheme.

#### iv Professional, consultancy and other services

*Estimate provision €150,000; outturn €22,000*

The underspend of €128,000 was because this subhead provided for the cost of miscellaneous consultancies of an administrative nature required for training, studies, research and support services for some Departmental functions, the nature of which are difficult to predict with certainty.

**v Operating expenses**

*Estimate provision €2.237 million; outturn €924,000*

This subhead contained an allocation for interest charges associated with the Surplus Public Expenditure Monies (SPEM) account. However, the underspend of €1.313 million arose because there was a return to positive interest rates and the allocation was not required. Please see note 4.2.

**vi Premises and accommodation expenses**

*Estimate provision €1.247 million; outturn €687,000*

The underspend of €560,000 on this subhead largely relates to difficulties in scheduling planned capital works.

**vii Communication expenses**

*Estimate provision €324,000; outturn €167,000*

This subhead provided for the communication expenses of the Department, including fixed and mobile voice telephony and data network links. The underspend of €157,000 arose as the outturn can be difficult to estimate.

**Programme A Economic and Fiscal Policy**

			<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
			<b>Estimate provision</b>	<b>Outturn</b>
			<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
				<b>Outturn</b>
				<b>€000</b>
A.1	Administration – pay			
	<i>Estimate provision</i>	11,291		
	<i>Supplementary estimate</i>	(400)	10,891	10,645
A.2	Administration – non pay			
	<i>Estimate provision</i>	3,407		
	<i>Deferred surrender</i>	50	3,457	1,803
A.3	Committees and commissions			
	<i>Estimate provision</i>	370		
	<i>Supplementary estimate</i>	401	771	598
A.4	Consultancy services and other services		748	496
A.5	Fuel grant		11,000	10,660
			<b>26,867</b>	<b>24,202</b>
				<b>24,985</b>

**Significant variations**

The following outlines the reasons for significant variations in non-administration programme expenditure (+/-5% and €100,000).

**A.3 Committees and commissions**

*Estimate provision €370,000; outturn €598,000*

The overspend of €228,000 arose mainly because of an agreement to pay the Department of Health in respect of the salary of the Chair of the Disabled Drivers Medical Board of Appeal, which was not anticipated in the estimate provision.

**A.4 Consultancy services and other services**

*Estimate provision €748,000; outturn €496,000*

The underspend of €252,000 arose due to the nature of this subhead where the work programme cannot be predicted with certainty and budgets must be set at a prudent level to allow the units to address issues as they arise.

**Programme B Banking and Financial Services Policy**

		<b>2023</b>		<b>2022</b>
		<b>Estimate provision</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>Outturn</b>
		<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
B.1	Administration – pay	15,514	13,716	12,381
B.2	Administration – non pay			
	<i>Estimate provision</i>	3,138		
	<i>Deferred surrender</i>	50	3,188	2,308
B.3	Committees and commissions	42	21	25
B.4	Consultancy and other services	1,267	360	676
B.5	Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman	537	479	491
		<b>20,548</b>	<b>16,884</b>	<b>15,405</b>

**Significant variations**

The following outlines the reasons for significant variations in non-administration programme expenditure (+/-5% and €100,000).

**B.4 Consultancy and other services**

*Estimate provision €1.267 million; outturn €360,000*

The underspend of €907,000 arose due to the nature of this subhead where the work programme cannot be predicted with certainty and budgets must be set at a prudent level to allow the units to address issues as they arise.

## Note 4 Receipts

### 4.1 Appropriations-in-aid

		2023		2022
		Estimated	Realised	Realised
		€000	€000	€000
1	Recoupment of expenses under bank guarantee scheme	10	—	49
2	Receipts from additional superannuation contributions on public service remuneration	750	776	753
3	Miscellaneous	150	135	236
<b>Total</b>		<b>910</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>1,038</b>

### 4.2 Extra receipts payable to the Exchequer

	2023	2022
	€000	€000
Balance at 1 January	—	—
Collected	11,976	—
Transferred to the Exchequer	11,976	—
<b>Balance at 31 December</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>

In 2023, the SPEM account earned interest of €11.927 million. This was paid to the Exchequer.

## Note 5 Staffing and Remuneration

### 5.1 Employee numbers

Full time equivalents	2023	2022
Number of staff at year end	352	313

### 5.2 Pay

	2023 €000	2022 €000
Pay	21,451	20,011
Redundancy/severance	16	30
Pension payment	21	—
Higher, special or additional duties allowances	216	167
Other allowances	527	490
Overtime	173	159
Employer's PRSI	1,957	1,783
<b>Total pay</b>	<b>24,361</b>	<b>22,640</b>

### 5.3 Allowances and overtime payments

	Number of recipients	Recipients of €10,000 or more	Highest individual payment	
			2023 €	2022 €
Higher, special or additional duties allowances	16	10	29,946	31,728
Other allowances	124	8	116,178	50,717
Overtime	56	7	26,476	22,470
Extra remuneration in more than one category	12	8	52,065	26,602

### 5.4 Department staffing by pay band

The number of Department employees whose total employee benefits (including basic pay, allowances, overtime; excluding employer PRSI, employer pension costs) for the financial year fell between €20,000 and €59,999 and within each band of €10,000 from €60,000 upwards are as follows.

Pay band (€)		Number of employees	
From	To	2023	2022
20,000	59,999	176	194
60,000	69,999	28	16
70,000	79,999	12	18
80,000	89,999	37	35
90,000	99,999	34	21
100,000	109,999	10	13
110,000	119,999	8	10
120,000	129,999	11	9
130,000	139,999	1	2
140,000	149,999	—	—
150,000	159,999	1	—
160,000	169,999	3	3
170,000	179,999	2	1
180,000	189,999	—	—
190,000	199,999	—	2
200,000	209,999	1	—
210,000	219,999	—	—
220,000	229,999	—	1
230,000	239,999	—	—
240,000	249,999	1	—

### 5.5 Other remuneration arrangements

This account includes expenditure of €265,742 in respect of five officers who were serving outside the Department for all or part of 2023 and whose salaries were paid by the Department.

### 5.6 Payroll overpayments

at 31 December	Number of recipients	2023 €	2022 €
Overpayments	28	48,118	18,060
Recovery plans in place	8	25,543	9,266



### 5.7 Severance/redundancy

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During 2023, one staff member whose employment was terminated, received redundancy payments of €3,156 and severance payments of €13,111. No early payment of pension, additional added years of notional service, or any other enhancement to the accrued pension terms have been granted.

### 5.8 Remuneration and benefits of Accounting Officer

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The Accounting Officer's remuneration and taxable benefits for the financial year was as follows.

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
Basic pay	241	225

The value of retirement benefits earned in the period is not included above. The Accounting Officer is a member of the pre-1995 superannuation scheme for established civil servants and his entitlements to retirement benefits do not extend beyond the standard terms of that pension scheme.

## Note 6 Miscellaneous

### 6.1 Banking system functions

The Minister for Finance delegated a number of banking system functions to the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA) under statutory instrument (SI) 115 of 2010. This delegation was revoked with effect from 5 August 2011 under SI 395 of 2011 and the NTMA Banking Unit has since been seconded to the Department of Finance. At the direction of the Minister, the costs of the unit, comprising staff costs and certain consultancy costs, continue to be met by the NTMA.

### 6.2 Committees and commissions

	2023	2022
	€000	€000
<b>Permanent commission</b>		
Credit Union Advisory Committee <sup>a</sup>	21	25
Disabled Drivers Medical Board of Appeal <sup>b</sup>	598	86
<b>Fixed purpose commission</b>		
Commission on Taxation and Welfare <sup>c</sup>	—	128
	<b>619</b>	<b>239</b>

- Note <sup>a</sup> The Committee's statutory function (under section 180 of the Credit Union Act 1997) is to advise regarding
- improvement of the management of credit unions
  - protection of the interest of members and creditors of credit unions and
  - other matters relating to credit unions upon which the Minister, the Central Bank or such other persons may be specified by the Minister, may from time to time seek by way of advice from the Committee.
- <sup>b</sup> The Disabled Drivers Medical Board of Appeal acts as an appeal body for those applicants refused a primary medical certificate by a senior medical officer in respect of the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers (Tax Concessions) Scheme. The Board was established in 1989. The entire Board resigned in November 2021 which contributed to the lower spend in 2022. However, following negotiations the Department agreed to make a payment to the Department of Health to meet the costs associated with the salary of the Chair to the Board. The Board is now up and running, and appeal hearings recommenced in December 2023.
- <sup>c</sup> The Commission on Taxation and Welfare was established to independently consider how best the taxation and welfare systems can support economic activity and promote increased employment and prosperity, while ensuring that there are sufficient resources available to meet the costs of public services and supports in the medium and longer term. The report by the Commission on Taxation and Welfare was launched on September 14 2022. There were no costs incurred in 2023.

**6.3 Compensation and legal costs****Payments/costs paid by the Department in the year**

	<b>Claims by members of the public</b>	<b>Total 2023</b>	<b>Total 2022 <sup>a</sup></b>
Number of cases	—	—	3
	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
Department's own legal costs	—	—	22
Payments by/on behalf of Department			
Compensation	—	—	—
Legal costs	—	—	—
Other costs	—	—	—
<b>2023 Total</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>22</b>
2022 Total	22	22	

Note <sup>a</sup> These costs have been refunded to the Department by a third party in 2022.

**6.4 Surplus Public Expenditure Monies (SPEM) account**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
Negative interest charge	—	2,715

Note The Surplus Public Expenditure Monies (SPEM) account exists to facilitate tracking of the borrowing and repayment of surplus funds held in the supply account of the Paymaster General. Negative interest charges on balances in the SPEM account at the Central Bank were a charge on Vote 7 in 2022. However, most of these charges were effectively reimbursed, via the surrender to the Central Fund of 80% of Central Bank annual surpluses.

In 2023, the SPEM account earned interest of €11.9 million. This was paid to the Exchequer as an 'extra receipt' and is reflected in note 4.2.

**6.5 Deferred surrender**

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Deferred surrender comprises savings in 2023 of €110,000 in capital expenditures in the following subheads that were carried over to 2024.

	<b>2024</b>
	<b>€000</b>
A.2 Administration – non pay	<u>110</u>

The Department moved to one strategic programme in 2024.