

## Sick Leave Statistics 2018 – Press Release

### 2018 Sick Leave Statistics for the Public Service

The 2018 Sick Leave Statistics for the Public Service have been published on the Department's website <http://hr.per.gov.ie/sick-leave/>. This includes data on absence in each sector and information on the Average Days Lost per FTE and the Lost Time Rates are available for each Civil Service organisation.

The 2018 statistics (January – December 2018) continue to monitor the impact of the cross-sector reform of sick leave in the public service. The figures relate to over 274,000 Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) across the public service and include the Civil Service and the Education, Health, Justice, Local Government, and Defence sectors.

Since the introduction of the Public Service Sick Leave Scheme in March 2014:

- The rate of sick leave across the service has fallen by 0.1% from 4.3% to 4.2%
- The number of days lost to sick leave per FTE has decreased from 9.5 days to 9.2 days; and
- The total cost of sick leave across the public service is estimated at €381.5 million, which represents a cumulative saving of €156 million since 2013.
  
- Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Paschal Donohoe, TD, said: *"Overall savings in the cost of sick leave across the public service continue to be made, however, further work needs to be done to reduce the impact of the Sick Leave Scheme on the Exchequer. The rate of sick leave in the Public Service remains relatively stable. The rising associated salary costs of sick leave as a result of pay restoration initiatives and a growing public sector workforce have seen a substantial overall rise in sick leave costs for the majority of the Public Sector in 2018.*
- *This Department are continuing to collaborate closely with sectoral management and staff representatives from across the public service to work towards improving the effectiveness of the operation of the scheme."*

In addition to this, management in each of the sectors must focus on the management of absenteeism, and policies designed to assist employers in managing cases of prolonged or frequent absence proactively. The Department will support Sectors in this area by sharing initiatives undertaken in the Civil Service to address the issue."

A number of initiatives have been undertaken in the Civil Service supporting HR units and managers to address absence issues. The initiatives to date include;

- *Policy reform:* For example a revised Disciplinary Policy, the introduction of a Management of Underperformance Policy; and a Management of Attendance Policy which is currently in development.
- *Support and training:* For example, Line Manager training framework in place; Employee Relations Network has been set up to support collaborative learning between Departments; and support and advice being provided on a case by case basis to HR Units in the civil service. In 2018, 51 training sessions on Managing People and Performance were delivered across the Civil Service

- *Analysis and data:* Research and data on the underlying drivers of absence in the sector. Work is ongoing on the development of enhanced reporting tools on absence for Line Managers, HR Units and the Civil Service HR Policy Division.

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### **Notes for Editors**

The reformed single Public Service Sick Leave Scheme was introduced under the [Public Service Management \(Sick Leave\) Regulations 2014 \(S.I. no. 124 of 2014\)](#). The published 2014 Sick Leave Statistics for the public service reflect a nine month impact for most sectors other than the Education sector (Scheme introduced on 31 March 2014 and 1 September 2014 respectively). Comparative information is not available for the Education Sector for 2013 and 2014 as previous statistics related to the school year for 2013/2014 while 2014 statistics relate to the calendar year for 2014. The calendar year reporting brings the Education sector in line with the public service.

The judiciary, members of the Defence Forces and staff of the Central Bank are not included in the Scheme.

Data relating to the majority of non-commercial semi-State agencies, third-level institutions and Education and Training Boards are not currently available.

A review of the operation of the Public Service Sick Leave Scheme was completed in 2016. The review sought to evaluate the effectiveness of the Scheme and address any operational difficulties and issues which may have arisen following its introduction. A large number of stakeholders across the public service are being consulted on the outcomes of this review including sectoral management and union and staff representatives.