

Appointment to the National Statistics Board

Closing Date: 15:00 on the 10th of January 2017

**State Boards Division
Public Appointments Service
Chapter House, 26 – 30 Abbey Street Upper, Dublin 1**

Telephone Number: 353 1 858 7441

Email: info@stateboards.ie

stateboards.ie operates under the auspices of the Public Appointments Service and is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

The Public Appointments Service (PAS), established under statute in 2004, provides an independent shared service in recruitment, assessment and selection to organisations across the Civil and Public Services. On 30 September 2014, the Government decided that the PAS should also be given responsibility for putting in place an open, accessible, rigorous and transparent system to support Ministers in making appointments to State Boards. Our dedicated website, www.stateboards.ie, is the channel through which the PAS advertises vacancies on State Boards. It is also the means through which accomplished, experienced and qualified people, including people who might not previously have been identified as available for appointment, can then apply to be considered for particular vacancies.

Membership of State Boards

High standards of corporate governance in all State Agencies, whether in the commercial or non-commercial sphere, are critical to ensuring a positive contribution to the State's overall social and economic development.

Members of State Boards are appointed to act on behalf of the citizen to oversee the running of the affairs of state bodies. State bodies must serve the interests of the taxpayer, pursue value for money in their endeavours (including managing risk appropriately), and act transparently as public entities.

Board members should act on a fully informed basis, in good faith, with due diligence and care, and in the best interest of the state body, subject to the objectives set by Government. In that regard and in accordance with 13.2 of the Guidelines on Appointments to State Boards, "it is advisable that no member of a State Board should serve more than two full terms of appointment or should hold appointments to more than two State Boards."

The [Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016](#) (the Code) provides a framework for the application of best practice in corporate governance by both commercial and non-commercial State bodies.

In order to be an effective contributor on a State Board it is recommended that members should:

- bring independent and objective scrutiny to the oversight of the organisation;
- be prepared to be challenging when necessary while being supportive to the delivery of organisational strategy and objectives;
- be equipped to offer considered advice on the basis of sound judgement and experience;
- be prepared to make a time commitment to their work commensurate with their role.

Appointment to the National Statistics Board

Location:	Dublin (one meeting per year may take place in Cork)
Number of Vacancies:	1
Remuneration:	€5,985 per annum. Travel and subsistence is payable at normal civil service rates where relevant. (It should be noted that in line with the 'One Person One Salary' principle, no public servant will be entitled to receive remuneration in the form of board fees, save for situations that are statutorily provided for e.g. Worker Directors).
Time Requirements:	Approximately 6 meetings/engagements per annum (half days); additional preparatory work/reading and follow up as required.

1. Background

The National Statistics Board (NSB) was set up as a non-statutory body in 1986 and established on a statutory basis in November 1994 under the [Statistics Act 1993](#). Section 8 of the Statistics Act 1993 provides the legislative basis for the Board. The role of the Board defined by Section 19 of the Statistics Act is to guide, with the agreement of the Taoiseach, the strategic direction of the Central Statistics Office.

In the 20 years since the Board was first established the role of the Board has evolved considerably. Previously, the Board primarily advised the CSO on the strategic direction and priority statistical outputs for the CSO. However, in recent strategies and papers the Board has highlighted the importance of data held across the wider public system, and its potential for both administrative and statistical purposes. The Board has developed the concept of an Irish Statistical System (ISS) involving the use of data from across the entire public sector to produce better official statistics. To give effect to this, it has promoted the idea of a National Data Infrastructure (NDI) with shared data management structures, standards and identifiers across the public sector

The Board's current strategy is entitled *NSB Strategic Priorities for Official Statistics 2015-2020 'A World Class Statistical System for Ireland'* and can be found [here](#). In this document the Board sets out an ambition for the Irish Statistical System to become an example of best international statistical practice in the production and dissemination of official statistics.

2. Functions of the Board

It is the duty and responsibility of the board member to contribute to the work of the Board and to contribute to the development of priorities for official statistics in Ireland.

The role of the NSB is to guide the strategic direction of the CSO, with the agreement of the Taoiseach, and in particular, includes:

- establishing priorities for the compilation and development of official statistics;
- assessing the resources of staff, equipment and finance which should be made available for the compilation of statistics; and

- arbitrating, subject to the final decision of the Taoiseach, on any conflicts which may arise between the Office and other public authorities relating to the extraction of statistics from records or to the co-ordination of statistical activities.

The Statistics Act 1993 provides for eight members on the board: two members are nominated by the Taoiseach/Minister of State and three members are nominated by organisations representative of the users of official statistics and providers of information under the Act. The Chairperson of the NSB is appointed by the Taoiseach/Minister of State from among these five members of the Board. Two members of the board are senior representatives of the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Finance. The Director General of the CSO is an ex officio member of the Board.

The composition of the current Board is as follows:

Name	First Appointed	Reappointed	Expiry Date	Position type	Basis of appointment
Gerard O'Neill	14/03/2014		31/12/2016	Board Member	Ministerial appointment in line with Section 18 (1) (a) of the Statistics Act 1993
Helen Johnston (Dr.)	14/03/2014		31/12/2016	Board Member	Ministerial appointment in line with Section 18 (1) (a) of the Statistics Act 1993
John McCarthy	14/03/2014		31/12/2016	Board Member	Assistant Secretary, Department of Finance. Ministerial appointment in line with Section 18 (1) (b) of the Statistics Act 1993
John Shaw	15/09/2016		31/12/2016	Board Member	Assistant Secretary, Department of the Taoiseach. Ministerial appointment in line with Section 18 (1) (b) of the Statistics Act 1993
Padraig Dalton				Board Member	Ex officio. Director General, CSO
Patricia O'Hara (Dr.)	12/10/2013		31/12/2016	Chair	Ministerial appointment in line with Section 18 (1) (a) of the Statistics Act 1993
Rowena Dwyer	14/03/2014		31/12/2016	Board Member	Ministerial appointment in line with Section 18 (1) (a) of the Statistics Act 1993
Tom Geraghty	14/03/2014		31/12/2016	Board Member	Ministerial appointment in line with Section 18 (1) (a) of the Statistics Act 1993

In line with the provisions of Section 18 of the Statistics Act 1993 and the guidelines on appointments to state boards:

- one position on the board will be filled by re-appointment (Chair);
- one further appointment will be made by the Taoiseach/Minister of State following a process undertaken by the Public Appointments Service (details in this booklet);
- three appointments to the board will be made on the basis of nominations by organisations considered to be representative of the users of official statistics and providers of information under the Act (details of these positions can be found on the 'Available Appointments' section of www.stateboards.ie – 'Appointments which do not come under the Guidelines').

3. Person Specification

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates who meet the below criteria.

The successful candidate must have significant demonstrable knowledge and experience of both the official statistical system in Ireland and the international statistical system and the ability to contribute effectively to the work of the NSB and to the development of priorities for official statistics in Ireland. A strong strategic focus and an understanding of the policy environment in which the Central Statistics Office operates is also required.

Candidates must also have experience of **one or more** of the following at an appropriately senior level:

- Statistics and/or Statistical Analysis
- Data Management and/or Data Analytics
- Macro/Micro Economics
- Social Science / Social Policy / Sociology
- EU and/or domestic Law
- Pure/Applied Mathematics
- Regional studies/spatial analysis
- Data Protection
- Strategic Management and Development
- Senior management experience in a public/private organisation
- Participation in International organisations/networks
- Previous board experience

4. Term of Appointment

Appointments to the Board will be for an initial period of 3 years with an option to extend the term of engagement for a second term of 3 years, subject to:

- The membership of any member of the Board may be terminated by the Taoiseach/Minister of State at any time
- A member of the Board may resign his or her membership of the Board by notice in writing sent or given to the Taoiseach/Minister of State, and the resignation shall take effect on the day on which the Taoiseach/Minister of State receives the notice.
- Members of the Board shall, subject to the provisions of this Schedule, hold office upon such terms and conditions as the Taoiseach/Minister of State may, with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, from time to time determine.

- A board member shall cease to be a member of the board if he or she is nominated as a member of Seanad Éireann, is elected as a member of either House of the Oireachtas or as a representative in the European Parliament, or becomes a member of a local authority.

5. Submitting your Application

Before submitting your application, please review the self-assessment questionnaire which can be found [here](#). This questionnaire is designed to help you in considering whether to submit an expression of interest - you are not required to submit the questionnaire as part of the application process.

Having considered the general suitability criteria for membership of a State Board, you should consider carefully how your background and experience fits with the specific appointment criteria set out in the Person Specification section in this booklet. Please give careful consideration to the possibility of any potential conflict of interest that may arise if appointed to this board.

Your submission should be made via the following link www.stateboards.ie together with your **Curriculum Vitae** and a **cover letter** (see Appendix 1 of this booklet for help with the online process).

IMPORTANT NOTE

Please take care when submitting your application. As the Assessment Panel will generally make its recommendation(s) based on consideration of the documentation which you submit, it is most important that you do the following:

1. *Ensure your Cover Letter (and supporting CV) clearly specifies how your particular background and experience meets the requirements of the Board position(s) specified in this booklet, and*
2. *Fully answer any supplementary questions which are presented to you as part of our online application process.*

This will help ensure that the Assessment Panel is as informed as possible as to the basis for your candidature and why you believe you are a person who could potentially be appointed to this State Board.

If you have any questions regarding the application process please email info@stateboards.ie.

6. Assessment Panel

An Assessment Panel (the "Panel") will be convened by PAS to consider and assess the applications received by PAS. The Panel will:

- review and discuss the expressions of interest received against the specific appointment criteria for the role, as advertised in this Information Booklet;
- assess potential candidates further once they meet the specified appointment criteria by undertaking any or all of the following steps:
 - Consideration of the written applications; and/or

- Meeting¹/conference call; and/or
 - Referee checks; and/or
 - Any other selection or verification method deemed appropriate (this may include PAS requiring statutory declarations from shortlisted applicants as to the bona fides of the qualifications and experience contained in their applications).
- arrive at a shortlist of suitable candidates to be sent forward for consideration by the Taoiseach/Minister of State.

Please note that the Public Appointments Service will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by candidates as part of our selection process.

7. Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence. All enquiries, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside those directly involved in that aspect of the process.

Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from computer records for general statistical purposes.

8. Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003

Should your name be forwarded to a Minister for consideration, please note that your cover letter and curriculum vitae will be forwarded to the State Board Liaison Officer in the relevant department and may be retained for up to one year.

For further information on Data Protection please follow the [link](#)

¹ The Public Appointments Service will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

APPENDIX 1

Submitting your application:

In order to submit your application, you should take the following steps:

1. Go to www.stateboards.ie.
2. On the bar at the top of the page click on "Available Appointments".
3. This brings you to a page with all our advertised vacancies. Select whichever position you would like to apply for (you are welcome to apply for more than one position if you wish).
4. On the relevant page please click on the "apply for position" button at the bottom of the page
5. This will bring you to a page on www.publicjobs.ie and, if you already have a publicjobs.ie account, will prompt you for your username and password. If you do not have an account you will be asked to create one.
6. Once you input your details you will be brought to a page where there is a prompt in the middle of the page which says "apply here". Click on the link to the online application form beside it.
7. A form will appear on your screen, some of the text boxes will be populated with information from your publicjobs.ie profile (Name, address etc.). You will need to complete the rest of the fields and enter your name and the date at the bottom of the form. Click on "continue".
8. You will then be brought to a screen where you should upload your CV and Cover Letter. These are required documents and your application cannot be processed without them. Once you have selected these and uploaded them, please click on the "submit" button at the bottom of the page.
9. You will receive an e-mail confirmation (to the address listed in your publicjobs.ie profile) to confirm that your application has been submitted.

You must confirm that you do not have any conflicts of interest or legal impediment which would be likely to interfere with your ability to play a full part on the Board. You must also confirm that you can make yourself available to attend meetings and to carry out the duties of a Board member.