

# Teacher Supply

Newsletter No. 2

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An Roinn Oideachais  
agus Scileanna  
Department of  
Education and Skills

## New challenges for teacher supply

The Covid-19 public health emergency has changed the way we all live and work. For the education system it has created unprecedented challenges at all levels, from pre-school through to third level. For the foreseeable future, it is likely to determine how the Department engages with our stakeholders, how stakeholders engage with each other and how our front line education services are provided.

The Department's **initiatives to support teacher supply** are progressing in this challenging environment. The Teacher Supply Steering Group, chaired by the Secretary General, and the working groups reporting to it, continue to progress actions to address the issues around teacher supply.

### Key achievements in 2019

- \* Publication of the **technical report "Teacher Demand and Supply in Ireland 2020 – 2036"** for consultation with stakeholders.

The report indicates that, at post-primary level, enrolments will increase to 2024/2025. Accordingly, it is projected that the demand for teachers, in both existing and new subjects, will increase in tandem. At primary level, enrolments are decreasing, but challenges remain for schools in recruiting teachers, particularly substitutes and also in certain regions.

- \* Introduction of **SubSeeker**, the new substitute teacher recruitment portal.

- \* **Primary Schools Supply Panel Pilot Scheme** designed to address the short term staffing needs of schools

A new pilot scheme was **announced** by Minister McHugh in September 2019.



Teachers, employed in a base school, are available to cover short term vacancies in schools participating in a designated cluster.

Six clusters were established: one each in north and south Dublin, Co. Kildare, Co. Meath, Cork city and Co. Galway.

Following its successful operation in 2019/2020, the pilot scheme will continue for 2020/21 in the established clusters.

The Department will continue in its efforts to meet the needs of schools with regard to the supply of teachers in the wake of Covid-19. New challenges will undoubtedly arise that will require creative solutions to be developed and implemented by both the Department and the education partners if we are to ensure that the needs of our schools and our students are met.

## Data Technical Report

- The technical report, **Teacher Demand and Supply in Ireland 2020 – 2036**, was published in November 2019. The report sets out projections for the demand for and supply of teachers at both primary and post-primary levels to 2036.
  - In January this year, as part of a consultation process, a data workshop was held with key stakeholders in attendance. The aim was to ensure that the assumptions underpinning the report were valid and correct.
  - Following this consultation process and after further analysis by the Department, the report has been updated and will shortly be available on the Department's website.
  - Analysis is currently ongoing to determine the demand for post-primary subject teachers.
- The overarching aim is to develop a robust evidence informed model to project teacher demand and supply and, ultimately, a Teacher Workforce Planning Model that will inform the policy of the Department and relevant agencies with regard to teacher supply.

**Teacher Demand and Supply in Ireland**  
**2020—2036**  
**A Technical Report**

## Higher Education Actions

### Call for upskilling programmes

- In December 2019 the Higher Education Authority (HEA) issued a call to higher education institutions (HEIs) to develop programmes for existing teachers to upskill to teach mathematics, Spanish and physics
  - The HEA call was made on behalf of the Department and was open to HEIs that have primary or post-primary ITE programmes accredited by the Teaching Council.
  - It is intended that the programmes will be open to already qualified and registered post-primary teachers and they will be offered on a part-time, flexible basis. Participating teachers will not have to pay fees.
  - Further details on the outcome of the call will be made available in the coming months.
- Other higher ed. measures:**
- New post-primary initial teacher education (ITE) undergraduate programmes were introduced for 2019 in a number of priority subject areas, including mathematics, modern foreign languages, computer science and Irish with more planned to commence in 2020.
  - By the February CAO deadline, there was an increase of 10% in first preference applications for post-primary undergraduate programmes compared to 2019.
  - The Teaching Council has undertaken a review of the implementation of the guidelines for student teacher school placements. The Council and the Department are currently considering the implementation of the School Placement Working Group's report.
  - For 2019 / 20, the Department allocated an additional €1 m to the Student Assistance Fund (SAF), ring-fenced for PME students.



# Communications Campaign

TEACHING TRANSFORMS.  
SHAPE THE FUTURE.

- The national [Teaching Transforms](#) promotional campaign (digital, newspaper, social media) is **continuing** and is designed to coincide with **key dates** in the educational calendar, such as the closing dates for applications to PME programmes and CAO Change of Mind.



- A **national consultative forum** on Teacher Supply with the education partners was held in Dublin in November 2019.
- Consultations with **student teachers** and with **primary** and **post-primary** school students have also taken place.
- The [Teaching Council](#), in association with the management bodies, continued to attend **graduate and recruitment fairs** around the country in 2019 and early 2020.

- The Teaching Transforms campaign was represented at the 2019 National Ploughing Championships and this year's BT Young Scientist Exhibition, engaging with students, parents and the public.

## Recruitment Portals

- **SubSeeker**: a new central portal for **short term substitute vacancies** jointly developed by IPPN / NAPD, went live in December 2019. This service matches available teachers with short term substitute vacancies. **SubSeeker** is a **free service** to schools and teachers within EducationPosts.ie.
- The development of an online recruitment portal for **long term vacancies** for teachers is currently being progressed.



## Turasabhaile.com

- In May 2019, the post-primary school management bodies and NAPD launched [Turasabhaile.com](#), a website matching registered teachers resident abroad with post-primary teacher vacancies. Over 55 posts were filled in 47 schools in a wide range of subjects for the 2019/20 school year using Turasabhaile.com, with many candidates interviewed using video technology.
- It is intended that Tursabhaile.com will operate again for vacancies arising for the 2020/21 school year.

## Future Consultations & Campaigns

- As a result of Covid-19, the Communications Working Group will **explore new ways** in which to engage with all our stakeholders including holding **online** forums and focus groups.
- It is our intention that future campaigns would **promote diversity** in the teaching profession. We would love to hear from teachers and students who are traditionally underrepresented in the teaching profession, particularly those from a minority background, that may be willing to share their story with us.

# School Policies and Procedures

- A number of new measures were introduced for schools to increase the pool of available teachers and substitute teachers in the classroom.
- The Department published [Circular 0015/2019](#), facilitating the sharing of teachers between post-primary schools.



- In August 2019, the Department issued [Circular 0044/2019](#) which revised the teacher recruitment procedures for primary schools. The Circular allows for the use of digital technology to interview applicants for teaching posts. Post primary recruitment procedures are currently being reviewed.

- For the 2019/20 school year the [restrictions on the employment of teachers on career break](#) were suspended.

- The Teaching Council is currently

developing more streamlined processes to enable teachers who have qualified outside the State to register.



# Next Steps & Feedback

In addition to ongoing engagement with stakeholders, the Department hopes to issue a regular Teacher Supply newsletter. We would welcome your feedback. Ideas and suggestions can be emailed directly to the team:

[teachersupply@education.gov.ie](mailto:teachersupply@education.gov.ie)



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