



ÚDARÁS UCHTÁLA na hÉIREANN
THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY of IRELAND

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 DECEMBER 2023

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

CONTENTS	PAGE
AUTHORITY INFORMATION	3
REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL	4
GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND BOARD MEMBERS' REPORT	5 - 11
STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL	12 - 14
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND RETAINED REVENUE RESERVES	15
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	16
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	17
STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS	18
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	19 - 34

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

AUTHORITY INFORMATION

Composition of the Authority:	Ms. Orlaith Traynor, Chairperson Mr. Sean O'Brien, Deputy Chairperson Mr. Paul Harrison Judge Patrick McMahon Dr. Helen Buckley Dr. Margo Anglim Professor Sheila Greene
Chief Executive Officer:	Dr. Lorraine Horgan (appointed 04/01/2024)
Interim Chief Executive Officer:	Colm O'Leary (11/04/2023 to 10/01/2024) Philip Crosby (09/01/2023 to 10/04/2023)
Office:	Shelbourne House Shelbourne Road Dublin 4
Telephone Number:	01 230 9300
Website:	aai.gov.ie
Bank:	Danske Bank Institutions IE 3 Harbourmaster Place International Financial Services Dublin 1 D01 K8F1
Auditors:	Comptroller & Auditor General 3A Mayor Street Upper Dublin 1
Solicitors:	Mason Hayes & Curran South Bank House Barrow Street Dublin 4 Matheson 70 Sir John Rogerson's Quay Grand Canal Dock Dublin 2



Ard Reachtaire Cuntas agus Ciste Comptroller and Auditor General

Report for presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas Adoption Authority of Ireland

Opinion on the financial statements

I have audited the financial statements of the Adoption Authority of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2023 as required under the provisions of section 112 of the Adoption Act 2010. The financial statements comprise

- the statement of income and expenditure and retained revenue reserves
- the statement of comprehensive income
- the statement of financial position
- the statement of cash flows, and
- the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In my opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the Adoption Authority of Ireland at 31 December 2023 and of its income and expenditure for 2023 in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102 — *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland*.

Basis of opinion

I conducted my audit of the financial statements 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 Adoption Authority of Ireland 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 information other than the financial statements, and on other matters

The Adoption Authority of Ireland has presented certain other information together with the financial statements. This comprises the governance statement and Board members' report, and the statement on internal control. My responsibilities to report in relation to such information, 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.

John Crean
For and on behalf of the
Comptroller and Auditor General

20 May 2024

Appendix to the report

Responsibilities of Board members

As detailed in the governance statement and Board members' report, the Board members are responsible for

- the preparation of annual financial statements in the form prescribed under section 112 of the Adoption Act 2010
- ensuring that the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with FRS 102
- ensuring the regularity of transactions
- assessing whether the use of the going concern basis of accounting is appropriate, and
- such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Responsibilities of the Comptroller and Auditor General

I am required under section 112 of the Adoption Act 2010 to audit the financial statements of the Adoption Authority of Ireland and to report thereon to the Houses of the Oireachtas.

My objective in carrying out the audit is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are 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 these financial statements.

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 financial statements 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 evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures.

- I conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, on whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Adoption Authority of Ireland's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Adoption Authority of Ireland to cease to continue as a going concern.
- I evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance 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 financial statements to be readily and properly audited, or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records.

Information other than the financial statements

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information presented with those statements, and I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, I am required under the ISAs to read the other information presented and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements 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 of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

Reporting on other matters

My audit is conducted by reference to the special considerations which attach to State bodies in relation to their management and operation. I report if I identify material matters relating to the manner in which public business has been conducted.

I seek to obtain evidence about the regularity of financial transactions in the course of audit. I report 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.

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND BOARD MEMBERS' REPORT

Governance

The Board of the Adoption Authority of Ireland was established under the Adoption Act 2010. The functions of the Board are set out in section 96 of this Act. The Authority is accountable to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and is responsible for ensuring good governance and performs this task by setting strategic objectives and targets and taking strategic decisions on all key business issues. The regular day-to-day management, control and direction of the Adoption Authority of Ireland is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the senior management team. The CEO and the senior management team must follow the broad strategic direction set by the Authority and must ensure that all Authority members have a clear understanding of the key activities and decisions related to the entity, and of any significant risks likely to arise. The CEO acts as a direct liaison between the Authority and management of the Adoption Authority of Ireland.

Board Responsibilities

The work and responsibilities of the Board are set out in the Adoption Authority of Ireland's Code of Governance, which also contains the matters specifically reserved for Board's decision. Standing items considered by the Board include:

- declaration of interests,
- reports from Sub-Committees,
- financial reports/management accounts,
- performance reports, and
- reserved matters.

Section 112 of the Adoption Act 2010 requires the Chief Executive Officer of the Adoption Authority of Ireland to keep, in such form as may be approved by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, all proper and usual accounts of money received and expended by it.

In preparing these financial statements, the Board of the Adoption Authority of Ireland is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently,
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent,
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that it will continue in operation, and
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, its financial position and enables it to ensure that the financial statements comply with Section 112 of the Adoption Act 2010. The maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information on the Adoption Authority of Ireland's website is the responsibility of the Board of the Authority.

The Board is responsible for approving the annual plan and budget. Evaluation of the performance of the Adoption Authority of Ireland by reference to the annual plan and budget is regularly considered at Board meetings.

The Board is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Board considers that the financial statements of the Adoption Authority of Ireland give a true and fair view of the financial performance and the financial position of the Adoption Authority of Ireland at 31 December 2023.

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND BOARD MEMBERS' REPORT

Board Structure

The Board consists of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson and 5 ordinary members, all of whom are appointed by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The members of the Board were appointed for a period of five years and meet at least on a monthly basis. The table below details the appointment period for current members:

Board Member	Role	Date Appointed
Orlaith Traynor	Chair	01/11/2020
Sean O'Brien	Deputy Chair	01/11/2020
Paul Harrison	Board Member	01/11/2020
Judge Patrick McMahon	Board Member	01/11/2020
Helen Buckley (Dr.)	Board Member	01/11/2020
Margo Anglim (Dr.)	Board Member	01/11/2020
Sheila Greene (Professor)	Board Member	01/11/2020

The Board undertook an internal evaluation of its own effectiveness in 2023 and will carry out an external review in 2024.

The Board has established two sub-committees, as follows:

- 1. Risk and Audit Committee:** comprises two Authority members and two independent members. The role of the Risk and Audit Committee (RAC) is to support the Board in relation to its responsibilities for issues of risk, control and governance and associated assurance. The RAC is independent from the financial management of the organisation. In particular, the Committee ensures that the internal control systems including audit activities are monitored actively and independently. The RAC reports to the Board after each meeting, and formally in writing annually.

The members of the Risk and Audit Committee are Ms. Patricia Gilheaney (Chair), Ms. Orlaith Traynor (Chairperson of the Authority), Mr. Paul Harrison (Board Member) and Ms. Tara McDermott (External Member). Ms. Tara McDermott's term ended on the 19th October 2023 and a recruitment process commenced in 2023 with an individual being identified to join the Committee in March 2024. There were four meetings of the Committee in 2023.

- 2. Research Subcommittee:** comprises four Authority members, two independent members and six staff members.

The main functions of the Research Subcommittee are to support the AAI in the development of a research strategy, to regularly review and advise on such projects as are proposed by the AAI, and to consider and make recommendations on matters of policy relating to research to the Board.

The Committee also advises on research commissioned by the Board, promotes the dissemination of any research that is completed, and advises on the allocation of research funds.

In 2023, membership of the committee comprised as follows: Dr. Helen Buckley (Chair of the Subcommittee and Board Member), Ms. Orlaith Traynor (Chairperson of the Authority), Prof. Sheila Greene (Board Member), Dr. Margo Anglim (Board Member), Dr. Claire McGettrick, Co-Director of the Clann Project (External Member), Dr. Richard Sullivan, Professor Emeritus, University of British Columbia (External Member), Mr. Philip Crosby / Mr. Colm O'Leary (Interim CEO), Dr. Judy Lovett (Research Officer), Mr. Darren Broomfield (Principal Social Worker), Mr. Gordon Corrigan (Manager, Records), Mr. Mark Kirwan (Manager, Domestic Adoption) and Ms. Orla Bolger (Manager, Inter-Country Adoption). There were three meetings of the Committee in 2023.

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND BOARD MEMBERS' REPORT

Schedule of Attendance, Fees and Expenses

A schedule of attendance at the Board and Committee meetings for 2023 is set out below including the fees and expenses received by each member:

	Full Board Meeting (11 in total 2023)	Orders Meeting (6 in total 2023)	Governance Meetings (2 in total 2023)	Total	Risk & Audit Committee	Research Committee	Fees 2023 €	Expenses 2023 €
	11	6	2	19	4	3		
Orlaith Traynor	10	5	2	17	3	2	57,646	-
Sean O'Brien	9	6	2	17	-	-	7,695	-
Paul Harrison	10	2	2	14	3	-	7,695	-
Judge Patrick McMahon	8	3	1	12	-	-	7,695	-
Helen Buckley (Dr.)	10	5	1	16	-	3	7,695	-
Margo Anglim (Dr.)	9	5	2	16	-	2	7,695	-
Sheila Greene (Prof.)	9	6	2	17	-	2	7,695	-
Tara McDermott	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Patricia Gilheaney	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-
Claire McGettrick	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Richard Sullivan (Prof.)	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Philip Crosby	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Colm O'Leary	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Mark Kirwan	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
Judy Lovett	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
Darren Broomfield	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Orla Bolger	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Gordon Corrigan	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
							103,816	-

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND BOARD MEMBERS' REPORT

The Adoption Act 2010 states that a person is only eligible for appointment as Chairperson of the Board if the person is or was, at any time during the 2 years immediately before the appointment, a Judge of the Supreme Court, the High Court, the Circuit Court or the District Court or is a barrister or solicitor of not less than 10 years standing.

The Chairperson was paid in accordance with agreed rates from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on the basis of the skill sets required as stated in The Adoption Act 2010.

Key Personnel Changes

Ms. Patricia Carey, Chief Executive Officer, resigned from the Adoption Authority of Ireland on 20th December 2022. Philip Crosby was appointed as Interim Chief Executive Officer on 9th January 2023 until 10th April 2023. Colm O'Leary served as Interim Chief Executive Office from 11th April 2023 until 10th January 2024. Dr. Lorraine Horgan was appointed as Chief Executive Officer of the Adoption Authority of Ireland on the 4th January 2024.

Disclosures Required by Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016)

The Authority is responsible for ensuring that the Adoption Authority of Ireland has complied with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies ("the Code"), as published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in August 2016. The following disclosures are required by the Code:

Employee Short-Term Benefits Breakdown

Employees' short-term benefits table is disclosed within the Financial Statements in note 4 (a).

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND BOARD MEMBERS' REPORT

Consultancy Costs

Consultancy costs include the cost of external advice to management and exclude outsourced 'business-as-usual' functions.

	2023	2022
	€	€
Legal advice		
- General Advice	75,441	120,949
GDPR	20,912	318,427
Review of Accredited Bodies	15,926	11,638
Pension and Human Resources Advice	2,768	2,768
Other Consultancy Costs	21,081	61,398
Public Affairs	11,211	-
Information and Tracing *	-	125,470
Medical Advisor	11,975	20,157
Covid-19 Legal Advice and Support - Remote Judicial Hearings	-	4,197
Covid-19 Return to Work Assessment and Protocols	-	540
Development of Business and Strategic Plan	24,890	1,436
Total consultancy costs	184,204	666,980
Consultancy costs capitalised	-	-
Consultancy costs charged to the Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves	184,204	666,980
Total	184,204	666,980

** The Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 was signed into law on 30 June 2022. This landmark legislation provides a full and clear right of access to birth certificates and birth and early life information for all persons who were adopted, boarded out, nursed out, the subject of an illegal birth registration or who otherwise have questions in relation to their origins. It also allows for access to information by next of kin in certain circumstances. The new law establishes a Contact Preference Register and a robust tracing service, as well as a range of new bespoke measures to address issues arising for people affected by illegal birth registration. It also mandates the safeguarding of adoption records by the AAI.*

2023 was the first full year of operation under the Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022.

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND BOARD MEMBERS' REPORT

Legal Costs

The table below provides a breakdown of amounts recognised as expenditure in the reporting period in relation to legal costs. This does not include expenditure incurred in relation to general legal advice received by the Adoption Authority of Ireland which is disclosed in Consultancy costs above.

	2023	2022
	€	€
Legal fees - legal proceedings	1,092,690	1,318,970
Third Party Costs	331,712	-
Total	1,424,402	1,318,970

Travel and Subsistence Expenditure

Travel and subsistence expenditure are categorized as follows:

	2023	2022
	€	€
Domestic		
Board*	-	-
Employees	7,401	4,080
International		
Board*	-	-
Employees	3,712	3,533
Total	11,113	7,613

* includes travel and subsistence of €nil paid directly to Board members in 2023 (2022: €nil) and expenditure paid by Adoption Authority of Ireland on behalf of the Board members.

Hospitality Expenditure

The Income and Expenditure account includes the following hospitality expenditure:

	2023	2022
	€	€
Authority / Committee / Staff hospitality	9,464	4,845
Total	9,464	4,845


THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND BOARD MEMBERS' REPORT

Statement of Compliance

The Adoption Authority of Ireland has adopted the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (revised 2020), as originally published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in August 2016 and has put procedures in place to ensure compliance with the Code.



Orlaith Traynor
Chairperson



Dr Lorraine Horgan
Chief Executive Officer

Date 16/05/2024

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL

Scope of Responsibility

The Adoption Authority of Ireland was established with effect from 1st November 2010 in accordance with The Adoption Act 2010. I, as Chairperson of the Board make this statement in accordance with the requirement set out in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) and I acknowledge the Authority is responsible for the system of Internal Control. The Authority has delegated responsibility to the Chief Executive to deal with management and operational issues and to report to the Authority regularly.

The Authority's payroll administration, processing and payment is carried out by the Payroll Shared Services Centre (PSSC) under a service management agreement which outlines the roles and responsibilities of each party in relation to payroll processing.

Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a tolerable level rather than eliminate it. The system can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, that transactions are authorised and properly recorded, and that material error or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected on a timely basis.

The system of internal control, which accords with guidance issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has been in place in the Adoption Authority of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2023 and up to the date of approval of the financial statements.

Capacity to Handle Risk

The Authority has a Risk and Audit Committee (RAC) comprising two Authority members and two external members. The Authority has also established an internal audit function which is adequately resourced and conducts a program of work agreed with the RAC. The RAC met four times in 2023.

The Authority has procured the services of an external firm to carry out the Internal Audit function based on a programme of work agreed with the RAC. The internal auditor carried out an audit, in January 2024, of the internal controls in operation in 2023 and their report was submitted to the RAC and the Board as part of the annual review of the effectiveness of internal controls. The internal audit function operates in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

Risk and Control Framework

The Adoption Authority of Ireland 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 Adoption Authority of Ireland and these have been identified, evaluated and graded according to their significance. The register is reviewed and updated by the RAC on a regular basis. Risks and risk management are also standing agenda items at Board meetings. The outcome of these assessments is used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level.

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL

The risk register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and responsibility for operation of controls assigned to specific staff. I confirm that a control environment containing the following elements is in place:

- procedures for all key business processes have been documented,
- financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability,
- there is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review by senior management,
- there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the information and communication technology systems,
- there are systems in place to safeguard the assets, and
- control procedures over grant funding to outside agencies ensure adequate control over approval of grants and monitoring and review of grantees to ensure grant funding has been applied for the purpose intended.

Ongoing Monitoring and Review

The system of Internal Control is based on a framework of regular management information, administrative procedures including segregation of duties, and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular, it includes:

- Appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is reviewed regularly by senior management.
- Regular review by senior management of periodic and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance against forecasts.
- Regular senior management team meetings.
- Service Management Agreements are in place for areas which are administered on behalf of the Authority.

The following steps have been taken to ensure an appropriate control environment:

- The Authority has a regular schedule of meetings at which it is provided with regular updated reports of expenditure.
- A Risk and Audit Committee of the Authority (RAC) has been established. Its terms of reference include ensuring that the systems of Internal Control are operating effectively.
- Management responsibilities are clearly assigned, with corresponding accountability.

Mechanisms have been established for ensuring the adequacy of the security of the Authority's information and communication technology systems (in collaboration with Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO)).

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL

Internal Control Issues

No internal control issues were identified during the year.

Procurement

The Adoption Authority of Ireland has procedures in place to ensure compliance with current procurement rules and guidelines.

Review of Effectiveness

I confirm that the Adoption Authority of Ireland has procedures to monitor the effectiveness of its risk management and control procedures. Adoption Authority of Ireland'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, the Risk and Audit Committee which oversees their work, and the senior management team within the Adoption Authority of Ireland responsible for the development and maintenance of the internal financial control framework.

I confirm that the Authority conducted an annual review of the effectiveness of internal controls for 2023 in January 2024



Signed _____
Orlaith Traynor
Chairperson

Date: 16/05/2024

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND RETAINED REVENUE RESERVES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	Year ended 31 December 2023 €	Year ended 31 December 2022 €
INCOME			
Oireachtas Grants	2	7,162,930	7,971,684
Other Income	3	16,388	7,319
Deferred retirement benefit funding		684,063	706,701
		7,863,381	8,685,704
EXPENDITURE			
Staff Costs	4	4,146,566	3,137,596
Board Costs	5	103,816	103,816
Grant Funding for Accredited Agencies	6	244,458	213,256
Office Expenses	7	1,099,847	648,631
Professional Fees	8	937,638	1,791,124
Information and Tracing	9	451,207	2,335,554
Travel Expenses	10	11,113	7,613
Depreciation	11	57,931	46,637
		7,052,576	8,284,227
Surplus for the year before appropriations		810,805	401,477
Transfer from/(to) capital account	15	27,060	(54,629)
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		837,865	346,848
Balance brought forward at 1 January		(996,307)	(1,343,155)
BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 DECEMBER		(158,442)	(996,307)

The Statement of Cash Flows and Notes 1 to 21 form part of these financial statements.



Signed _____
Orlaith Traynor
Chairperson



Signed _____
Dr Lorraine Horgan
Chief Executive Officer

Date 16/05/2024

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	2023	2022
	€	€
SURPLUS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR	837,865	346,848
Experience gains/(losses) on retirement benefit obligations	100,000	(265,000)
Changes in assumptions underlying the present value of retirement benefit obligations	13,000	3,185,000
Total actuarial gains/(losses) in the year	113,000	2,920,000
Adjustment to deferred retirement benefits funding	(113,000)	(2,920,000)
Total Comprehensive Income for the year	837,865	346,848

The Statement of Cash Flows and Notes 1 to 21 form part of these financial statements.

On behalf of the Authority of the Adoption Authority of Ireland:



Orlaith Traynor
Chairperson



Dr Lorraine Horgan
Chief Executive Officer

Date: 16/05/2024

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023 €	2022 €
FIXED ASSETS			
Property, Plant and Equipment	11	219,403	246,463
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and Cash Equivalents		229,983	97,737
Receivables	12	201,724	156,620
		<u>431,707</u>	<u>254,357</u>
CREDITORS (AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR)			
Payables	13	<u>(582,649)</u>	<u>(443,664)</u>
NET CURRENT LIABILITIES		(150,942)	(189,307)
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>68,461</u>	<u>57,156</u>
Provision for Liabilities and Charges	14	(7,500)	(807,000)
RETIREMENT BENEFITS			
Retirement benefits obligations	19(iii)	(8,662,000)	(8,356,000)
Deferred retirement benefit funding asset	19(iv)	8,662,000	8,356,000
NET ASSETS / (LIABILITIES)		<u>60,961</u>	<u>(749,844)</u>
REPRESENTING			
Retained Revenue Reserves		(158,442)	(996,307)
Capital Account	15	219,403	246,463
		<u>60,961</u>	<u>(749,844)</u>

The Statement of Cash Flows and Notes 1 to 21 form part of these financial statements.



Signed _____

Orlaith Traynor
Chairperson



Signed _____

Dr Lorraine Horgan
Chief Executive Officer

Date: 16/05/2024

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023 €	2022 €
<u>Cash flows from operating activities</u>			
Surplus for the year		837,865	346,848
Depreciation	11	57,931	46,637
(Increase) in debtors	12	(45,104)	(123,282)
(Decrease) in creditors	13 & 14	(660,515)	(218,835)
Capital account movement	15	(27,060)	54,629
Loss on Disposal of Assets	7	322	598
Net cash inflow from operating activities		163,439	106,595
<u>Cash flows from investing activities</u>			
Payment to acquire fixed assets	11	(31,193)	(101,864)
Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets		-	-
Net cash outflow from investing activities		(31,193)	(101,864)
Increase / (Decrease) in cash in the year		132,246	4,731
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		97,737	93,006
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		229,983	97,737

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The basis of accounting and significant accounting policies adopted by the Adoption Authority of Ireland are set out below. They have been applied consistently throughout the year and for the preceding year.

a) General Information

The Adoption Authority of Ireland was set up under the Adoption Act, 2010 with a head office at Shelbourne House, Shelbourne Road, Dublin 4. The functions of the Adoption Authority of Ireland are set out in section 96 of the Adoption Act 2010. They include the following:

- performing in the State the role of a Central Authority under The Hague Convention;
- at the request of the Minister, providing general advice to him or her about adoption matters;
- undertaking or assisting in research projects and activities relating to adoption services;
- compiling statistical information and other records as to the proper planning, development and provision of those adoption services;
- maintaining the register of accredited bodies; and
- maintaining the register of intercountry adoptions.

The Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 was signed into law on 30 June 2022. This landmark legislation provides a full and clear right of access to birth certificates and birth and early life information for all persons who were adopted, boarded out, nursed out, the subject of an illegal birth registration or who otherwise have questions in relation to their origins. It also allows for access to information by next of kin in certain circumstances. The new law establishes a Contact Preference Register and a robust tracing service, as well as a range of new bespoke measures to address issues arising for people affected by illegal birth registration. It also mandates the safeguarding of adoption records by the AAI.

The Adoption Authority of Ireland is a Public Benefit Entity (PBE).

b) Statement of Compliance

The financial statements of the Authority for the year ended 31 December 2023 have been prepared in compliance with the applicable legislation, and with FRS 102 the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council in the UK.

c) Basis of Preparation

The financial statements are prepared under the accruals method of accounting and under the historical cost convention in the form approved by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth with the concurrence of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, in accordance with Section 112 of the Adoption Act 2010. The Financial Statements are prepared on a going concern basis.

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the Authority's financial statements.

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

d) Revenue

Oireachtas Grants

Revenue is generally recognized on an accrual basis; one exception to this is in the case of Oireachtas Grants which are recognized on a cash receipts basis and also include amounts paid on behalf of the Authority by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

Capital Grants

Grant funding used to purchase property, plant and equipment is transferred to a Capital Account and released back to income in line with the depreciation of the related assets. The balance on the Capital Account represents the unamortized value of grant received for capital expenditure purpose.

Other Income

Income shown in the financial statements under Other Income represents amounts invoiced to third parties in the ordinary course of business.

e) Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation, adjusted for any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided on all property, plant and equipment, other than freehold land and artwork, at rates estimated to write off the cost less the estimated residual value of each asset on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives, as follows:

(i)	Fixtures and Fittings	10% per annum
(ii)	Office and IT Equipment	20% per annum

Residual value represents the estimated amount which would currently be obtained from disposal of an asset, after deducting estimated costs of disposal, if the asset were already of an age and in the condition expected at the end of its useful life.

If there is objective evidence of impairment of the value of an asset, an impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves in the year.

f) Foreign Currencies

Transactions denominated in foreign currencies are translated into euro and recorded at the rate of exchange ruling at the dates of transactions. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated into euro at the rates of exchange ruling at the reporting date or at forward purchase contract rates where such contracts exist.

g) Receivables

Receivables are recognised at fair value, less a provision for doubtful debts. The provision for doubtful debts is a specific provision and is established when there is objective evidence that the Adoption Authority will not be able to collect all amounts owed to it. All movements in the provision for doubtful debts are recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves.

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

h) Employee Benefits

Short-term Benefits

Short term benefits such as holiday pay are recognised as an expense in the year, and benefits that are accrued at year-end are included in the Payables figure in the Statement of Financial Position.

Retirement Benefits

The Adoption Authority of Ireland Superannuation Scheme came into operation on 3 April 2017 under S.I. No. 157 of 2017. This scheme relates to the Authority's staff who redeployed to the Authority from other civil or public service organisations. Prior to this Scheme, the Authority operated the model superannuation scheme (model scheme) for State employees. The Adoption Authority Superannuation Scheme adapted the rules of the Civil Service Superannuation Scheme, being an occupational pension scheme for public servants hired prior to 2013.

Employee deductions under the Scheme are retained by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

The Authority also joined the Public Service Transfer Network in 2017 and arrangements are in place to facilitate the transfer of reckonable service for former civil and public service staff who redeployed to the Authority. We facilitate such requests by new joiners, as well as employees currently employed by the Authority, at the employee's discretion. Therefore, the transfer of reckonable service will continue to be ongoing.

The Authority has included an actuarially calculated pension liability and pension asset in respect of its superannuation scheme in these financial statements.

Single Public Service Pension Scheme

The Authority also operates the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (Single Scheme). New entrant public service staff employed by the Authority after 1 January 2013, are members of the Single Scheme in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012. The Single Scheme provides for consumer price index-linked defined benefit pensions based on career average pay. The Authority makes the necessary deductions from salaries for staff who are part of the scheme and employee contributions are transferred to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on a monthly basis in accordance with the provisions of the Scheme.

Both pension schemes are unfunded pay-as-you-go statutory schemes with benefits payable under the Schemes funded by the Exchequer. (See note 19).

i) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Authority has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events; it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation; and the amount of the obligation can be estimated reliably.

j) Contingent Liabilities

Contingent liabilities arising as a result of past events, are not recognised when (i) it is not probable that there will be an outflow of resources or that the amount cannot be reliably measured at the reporting date or (ii) when the existence will be confirmed by the occurrence or non-occurrence of the uncertain future events not wholly within the Authority's control. Contingent liabilities are disclosed in the financial statements unless the probability of an outflow is remote.

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

k) Critical Accounting Judgements and Estimates

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for assets and liabilities as at the statement of financial position date and the amounts reported for revenues and expenses during the year. However, the nature of estimation means that actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. The following judgements have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

Depreciation and Residual Values

The Board has reviewed the asset lives and associated residual values of all fixed asset classes, and in particular, the useful economic life and residual values of fixtures and fittings and have concluded that asset lives and residual values are appropriate.

Provisions

The Adoption Authority makes provisions for legal and constructive obligations, which it knows to be outstanding at the period end date. These provisions are generally made based on historical or other pertinent information, adjusted for recent trends where relevant. However, they are estimates of the financial costs of events that may not occur for some years. As a result of this and the level of uncertainty attaching to the final outcomes, the actual out-turn may differ significantly from that estimated.

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

	2023	2022
2 GRANTS	€	€
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth	7,347,527	8,092,522
Less employee contributions retained by DCEDIY	(32,110)	(16,017)
Less employee contributions remitted to DPER (SPSPS)	(94,223)	(70,925)
Less ASC retained by DCEDIY	(58,264)	(33,896)
	7,162,930	7,971,684

Grants are drawn down from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Vote 40 subhead C6.

	2023	2022
3 OTHER INCOME	€	€
Income from Adoption Certificates	7,688	6,991
Courier Income	-	328
Bank Interest	8,700	-
	16,388	7,319

Courier income represents charges by the Authority to applicants for costs incurred in the onward delivery of documentation by courier. (Note 7).

	2023	2022
4 STAFF COSTS AND EMPLOYEE INFORMATION	€	€
Wages and Salaries (incl PRSI er)	3,214,859	2,239,842
Retirement Benefit Costs (note 19 ii)	576,403	678,162
Outsourced Finance Support	110,257	127,408
Learning and Development	61,081	25,350
Recruitment Costs	67,649	66,834
Temporary Agency Staff	102,841	-
Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and Wellbeing	13,476	-
	4,146,566	3,137,596

Whole Time Equivalents (WTE) at the end of the year were 61 (2022: 48).

An amount of €58,264 (2022: €33,896) in respect of additional superannuation contributions was deducted from staff salaries and retained by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. In 2023, employee pension contribution amounting to €94,223 (2022: €70,925) was deducted from staff in respect of the Single Scheme and transferred to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

An amount of €3,552 (2022: €2,685) of overtime payments or allowances was made in the year. Retirement lump sums paid in the period amounted to €76,937 (2022: €92,299).

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

4(a) Employee benefits breakdowns

Range of total employee benefits		Number of Employees	
From	To	2023	2022
€60,000	- €69,999	8	5
€70,000	- €79,999	6	4
€80,000	- €89,999	2	1
€90,000	- €99,999	1	-
€100,000	- €109,999	2	-
€110,000	- €119,999	-	-
€120,000	- €129,999	-	-
€130,000	- €139,999	-	-
€140,000	- €149,999	-	1

Note: For the purposes of this disclosure, short term employee benefits in relation to services rendered during the reporting period include salary, overtime allowances and other payments made on behalf of the employee but exclude employer's PRSI.

	2023	2022
4(b) CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REMUNERATION	€	€
Outgoing Chief Executive Officer's annual basic salary	-	134,854
Interim Chief Executive Officer's annual basic salary	113,077	-

The Chief Executive Officer did not receive any performance related payments or any other benefit in kind during the year. The Chief Executive Officer's pension entitlements are in line with standard entitlements in the Adoption Authority Superannuation Scheme 2017.

	2023	2022
5 BOARD COSTS	€	€
<u>Board members fees and stipends:</u>		
Orlaith Traynor	57,646	57,646
Sean O'Brien	7,695	7,695
Paul Harrison	7,695	7,695
Judge Patrick McMahon	7,695	7,695
Helen Buckley (Dr.)	7,695	7,695
Margo Anglim (Dr.)	7,695	7,695
Sheila Greene (Professor)	7,695	7,695
	103,816	103,816

The Adoption Act 2010 states that a person is only eligible for appointment as Chairperson of the Board if the person is or was, at any time during the 2 years immediately before the appointment, a Judge of the Supreme Court, the High Court, the Circuit Court or the District Court or is a barrister or solicitor of not less than 10 years standing.

The Chairperson was paid in accordance with agreed rates from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on the basis of the skill sets required as stated in The Adoption Act 2010.

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

6 GRANT PAYMENTS TO ACCREDITED AGENCIES

	2023	2022
	€	€
Grant Funding for Accredited Agencies	244,458	213,256
	244,458	213,256

7 OFFICE EXPENSES

	2023	2022
	€	€
Contract Cleaning	49,260	41,055
Office Expenses	182,912	94,707
Office Furniture (under €1,000)	11,680	14,068
Conference and Catering Costs	17,230	14,885
Annual Membership, Subscriptions and Registration	24,632	18,719
International Social Service **	6,150	5,780
Telephones and Internet	11,606	16,682
Light and Heat	33,573	25,415
Postage	27,772	19,170
Office Supplies/Stationery	12,910	13,325
Courier	3,031	7,679
Printing	13,202	6,496
Advertising	13,180	-
Information Communication Technologies	655,503	333,296
Translation Expenses	12,013	8,853
Stenography	9,253	11,190
Hospitality	7,202	4,845
Bank Charges	2,267	891
Covid-19 Expenses	-	1,473
Library	165	6,220
Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	322	598
Insurance	5,984	3,284
	1,099,847	648,631

*** expenditure on International Social Service represents Ireland's contribution to the International Reference Centre for the Rights of the Children deprived of their Family (ISS/IRC).*

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

8 PROFESSIONAL FEES	2023	2022
	€	€
Legal Fees*		
<i>Operational Cases (Sections 18,30,54 and 92)</i>	702,206	852,422
<i>General Advices</i>	407,153	120,949
<i>Legacy Cases</i>	-	173,772
<i>Other Cases</i>	369,571	292,776
<i>Legal Contractors</i>	4,550	33,823
<i>(Decrease) / Increase in Provision</i>	(799,500)	(277,000)
<i>Accountancy and Compliance Costs</i>	87,991	83,613
<i>Review of Accredited Bodies under the remit of s.133, Adoption Act 2010</i>	15,926	11,638
<i>Pensions and Human Resources Advice</i>	2,768	2,768
<i>Research and Consultancy</i>	21,081	64,905
<i>Risk and Audit Committee Costs</i>	30,627	34,915
<i>Audit</i>	19,800	20,000
<i>Internal Audit</i>	17,688	31,786
<i>Medical Advisor</i>	11,975	20,157
<i>GDPR</i>	20,912	318,427
<i>Covid-19 Legal Advice and Support - Remote Judicial Hearings</i>	-	4,197
<i>Covid-19 Return to Work Assessment and Protocols</i>	-	540
<i>Development of Business and Strategic Plan</i>	24,890	1,436
	937,638	1,791,124

* included in legal fees are amounts paid for litigation in which the authority was (a) the applicant and (b) the respondent. The authority is obliged to bring certain cases to the High Court where, in domestic adoption, the birth father cannot be notified and consulted on the proposed adoption.

The Authority is also obliged to attend the High Court as a respondent where a birth parent guardian is not consenting to the adoption, where the child is not an orphan or, in certain circumstances, where a party wishes to have an entry in the Register of Intercountry Adoptions and the authority has not been able to grant same in accordance with the provision of the 2010 Adoption Act.

Included in legal fees are amounts paid for litigation in which the authority was the respondent. Included in legal fees are amounts paid for third party costs of €331,712 (2022: €nil).

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

9 BIRTH, INFORMATION AND TRACING	2023	2022
	€	€
Advertising Costs – (TV, Radio, Print Media)	4,153	1,504,970
PR Consultancy Fees	-	125,470
Records Storage	440,000	705,114
General Register Office (GRO) Fees	842	-
Tracing Resources	6,212	-
	<u>451,207</u>	<u>2,335,554</u>

The Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 was signed into law on 30 June 2022. This landmark legislation provides a full and clear right of access to birth certificates and birth and early life information for all persons who were adopted, boarded out, nursed out, the subject of an illegal birth registration or who otherwise have questions in relation to their origins. It also allows for access to information by next of kin in certain circumstances. The new law establishes a Contact Preference Register and a robust tracing service, as well as a range of new bespoke measures to address issues arising for people affected by illegal birth registration. It also mandates the safeguarding of adoption records by the AAI.

10 TRAVEL EXPENSES	2023	2022
	€	€
Domestic Travel	7,401	4,080
Foreign Travel	3,712	3,533
	<u>11,113</u>	<u>7,613</u>

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

11 PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	IT and Office Equipment	Fixtures and Fittings	Total
	€	€	€
<u>Cost</u>			
At 1 st January 2023	224,888	181,606	406,494
Additions for the period	15,537	15,656	31,193
Disposals	(434)	-	(434)
At 31 st December 2023	239,991	197,262	437,253
<u>Accumulated Depreciation</u>			
At 1 st January 2023	101,895	58,136	160,031
Depreciation charge for the period	38,445	19,486	57,931
Disposals	(112)	-	(112)
At 31 st December 2023	140,228	77,622	217,850
<u>Net Book Value</u>			
At 31 st December 2023	99,763	119,640	219,403
At 31 st December 2022	122,993	123,470	246,463

	2023	2022
	€	€
12 RECEIVABLES		
Prepayments	201,724	156,620
	201,724	156,620
13 PAYABLES	2023	2022
	€	€
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Creditors	180,215	8,987
Accrued Expenses	364,746	386,959
Value Added Tax	17,184	10,761
Professional Services Withholding Tax	19,448	32,751
Other Creditors	1,056	4,206
	582,649	443,664

Amounts due in respect of Professional Services Withholding Tax relate to amounts withheld from payments to suppliers of professional services. These amounts were paid to the Revenue Commissioners after the year end.

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

14 PROVISION	As at 31 December 2023 €	As at 31 December 2022 €
<u>Legal Costs</u>		
Amount at the beginning of the year	807,000	1,084,000
Additions to provision	-	285,000
Amounts charged against the provision	(700,000)	(185,000)
Unused amounts reversed	(99,500)	(377,000)
Amount at the end of the year	7,500	807,000

There are a small number of on-going cases which involve (i) issues which arose following Ireland's accession to The Hague Convention, and (ii) historic matters which arose under the remit of An Bord Uchtála. The Authority is a respondent in these cases and is actively defending the cases. Should it be unsuccessful in these proceedings the Authority will strongly resist the imposition of costs orders. The Authority has made a provision for the costs associated with these proceedings.

In consultation with the Authority's legal advisors the provision made by the Authority is a best estimate of the costs of the proceedings.

15 CAPITAL ACCOUNT	2023		2022	
	€	€	€	€
Balance at 1 st January 2023		246,463		191,834
Purchase of Fixed Assets		31,193	101,86	101,864
Amount amortised in line with asset depreciation for the year		(57,931)		(46,637)
Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets		(322)		(598)
Transfer from Income and Expenditure Account		(27,060)		54,629
Balance at 31st December 2023		219,403		246,463

16 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

There were no capital commitments at 31st December 2023.

17 CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

As outlined in the accounting policies the Authority makes provision for legal costs where it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation and the amount of the obligation can be reliably estimated. While there are a number of cases whereby costs can be estimated and provided for, certain cost elements relating to these cases are uncertain and cannot be reliably estimated due to uncertainty surrounding how the cases will proceed.

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

18 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS/ DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Key management personnel consist of the CEO and members of the Authority. Total compensation paid to key management personnel, including Authority members' fees and total CEO remuneration, amounted to €216,893 (2022: €238,670) (Notes 4 and 5).

The Adoption Authority of Ireland complies with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State bodies issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in relation to the disclosure of interests by the Authority members and its staff. Formal procedures exist to ensure adherence with this requirement of the code. No related party transactions took place in 2023.

19 RETIREMENT BENEFIT COSTS

i. Authority Staffing

As noted in S.I. No. 460 of 2017, under the Superannuation (Designation of Approved Organisations) Regulations, 2017, the Adoption Authority of Ireland Superannuation Scheme was approved by the Minister for the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on 20th October 2017, and has been operational since this time.

New entrant staff employed by the Authority after 1 January 2013 are members of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme in accordance with Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012. Deductions from staff salaries are transferred to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on a monthly basis in accordance with the Act.

ii. Analysis of total retirement benefit costs charged to the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves

	31 December 2023	31 December 2022
	€	€
Current service cost *	454,000	646,000
Interest on retirement benefit scheme liabilities	307,000	153,000
Less employee contributions	(184,597)	(120,838)
Total charges to the statement of income and expenditure and retained revenue reserve	576,403	678,162

* the current service cost includes employee contributions totaling €184,597 in 2023. (2022: €120,838)

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

iii. Movement in net retirement benefit obligations during the financial year

	31 December 2023	31 December 2022
	€	€
Net retirement benefit obligation at 1 January	8,356,000	10,794,000
Current service costs	454,000	646,000
Interest costs	307,000	153,000
Benefits paid in period	(342,000)	(317,000)
Experience (gain)/loss on liabilities	(100,000)	265,000
Changes in actuarial assumptions	(13,000)	(3,185,000)
Net retirement benefit obligations at 31 December	<u>8,662,000</u>	<u>8,356,000</u>

iv. Deferred funding asset for retirement benefits

The Authority recognises amounts owing from the State for the unfunded deferred liability for retirement benefits on the basis of the set of assumptions described above and a number of past events. These events include the statutory basis for the establishment of the retirement benefit scheme, and the policy and practice currently in place in relation to funding public service pensions including contributions by employees and the annual estimates process. The Authority has no evidence that this funding policy will not continue to meet such sums in accordance with current practice.

The net deferred funding for retirement benefits recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves is as follows:

	31 December 2023	31 December 2022
	€	€
Funding recoverable in respect of current year retirement benefit costs	761,000	799,000
Retirement lump sum paid in period	(76,937)	(92,299)
	<u>684,063</u>	<u>706,701</u>

The deferred funding liabilities for retirement benefit as at 31 December 2023 amounted to €8,662,000. The Oireachtas grant from DCEDIY (Note 2) did not include funding in respect of pensions as the pension payments of €265,063 (Note 19 iii) were met from Vote 12 Superannuation and Retired Allowances. The balance of €76,937 relates to a retirement lump sums paid in the year.

v. History of defined benefits obligations

	2023	2022
	€'000	€'000
Defined benefit obligations	8,662	8,356
Experience (gains)/losses on defined benefit scheme liabilities	-	-

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

vi. Description of scheme

Authority Scheme

The pension scheme is a defined benefit final salary pension arrangement with benefits and contributions defined by reference to the Civil Service Superannuation Scheme, in line with public sector scheme regulations. The scheme provides a pension (one eightieth per year of service), a gratuity or lump sum (three eightieths per year of service) and spouse's and children's pensions. Normal Retirement Age is a member's 65th birthday, and pre 2004 members have an entitlement to retire without actuarial reduction from age 60. Pensions in payment (and deferment) normally increase in line with general public sector salary inflation.

Single Scheme

The Single Scheme is the occupational pension scheme for public servants hired since 2013. It is a defined benefit scheme, with retirement benefits based on career-average pay. The scheme generates pension credits and retirement lump sum credits for each scheme member. These money credits, known as "referable amounts", accrue as percentages of pay on an ongoing basis. The referable amounts accrued each year are revalued annually until retirement in line with inflation increases (Consumer Price Index). The annual pension awarded on retirement is the cumulative total of a scheme member's pension referable amounts, and the retirement lump sum awarded is, similarly, the total of the scheme member's lump sum referable amounts.

Valuation

The valuation used for FRS 102 disclosures has been based on a full actuarial valuation by a qualified independent actuary taking account of the requirements of the FRS in order to assess the scheme liabilities at 31 December 2023.

The principal actuarial assumptions used to calculate the components of the defined benefit cost for the year ended 31 December 2023 were as follows:

	31 December 2023	31 December 2022
Discount rate	3.30%	3.65%
Inflation rate	2.30%	2.65%
Salary increases	3.80%	4.15%
Pension increases	3.30%	3.65%

The mortality basis adopted allows for improvements in life expectancy over time, so that life expectancy at retirement will depend on the year in which a member attains retirement age (age 65). The number of members in the Scheme and the number of deaths is too small to analyze and produce any meaningful Scheme-specific estimates of future levels of mortality. Average future life expectancy according to the mortality tables used to determine the pension liabilities are:

	31 December 2023	31 December 2022
	Years	Years
Male aged 65	22.1	22.1
Female aged 65	24.3	24.3

THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

20 ACCOMMODATION

The Adoption Authority of Ireland operates from Shelbourne House, Shelbourne Road. Rent is funded in kind by the OPW for the third and fourth floor.

Since the 1st May 2022 the Adoption Authority of Ireland has rented the ground floor of Shelbourne House, Shelbourne Road. The total cost of rent for the year ended 31 December 2023 was €440,000 (2022: €280,486) (also see Note 7). This lease is in operation until 31 July 2026. The Authority sets out in the table below its estimated commitments in respect of this lease:

	2023	2022
	€	€
Payable within one year	440,000	440,000
Payable within two to five years	696,667	1,136,667
Payable after five years	-	-
	<u>1,136,667</u>	<u>1,576,667</u>

21 APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial statements were approved by the Adoption Authority of Ireland at its meeting on 14th May 2024.