



Regulation of Lobbying in

2017

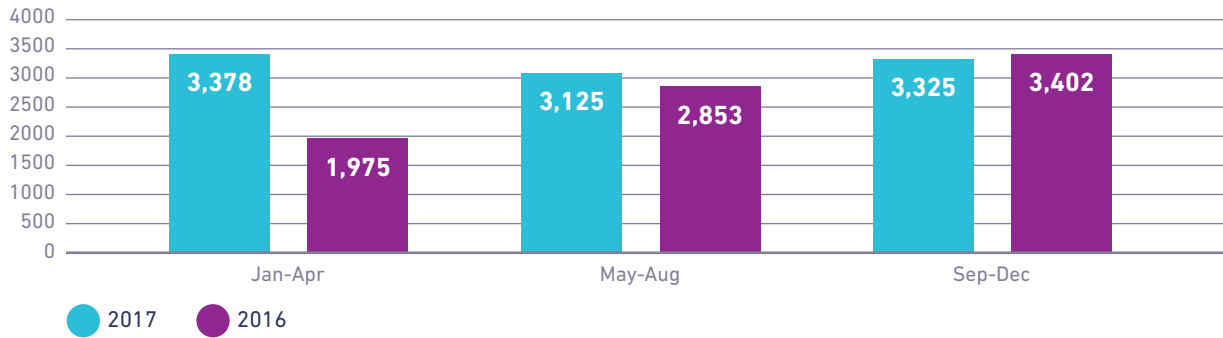
Highlights



Coimisiún um Chaighdeán in Oifigí Poiblí
Standards in Public Office Commission

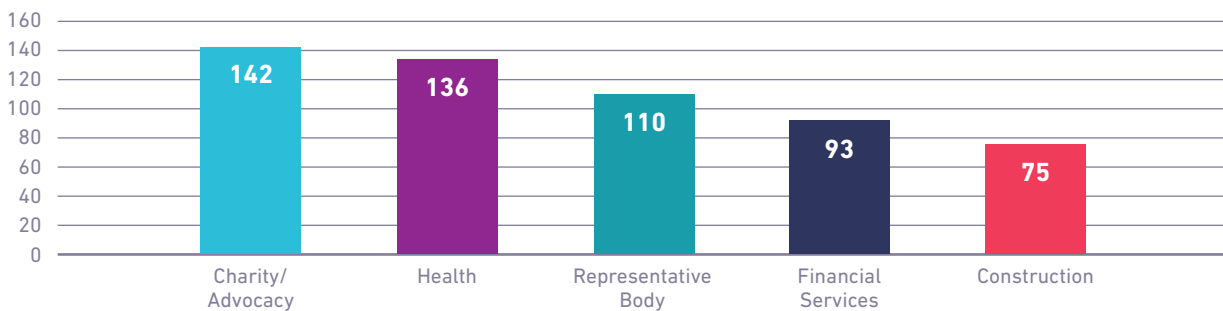
Registrations and Returns

Breakdown of returns per reporting period (2017 vs 2016)

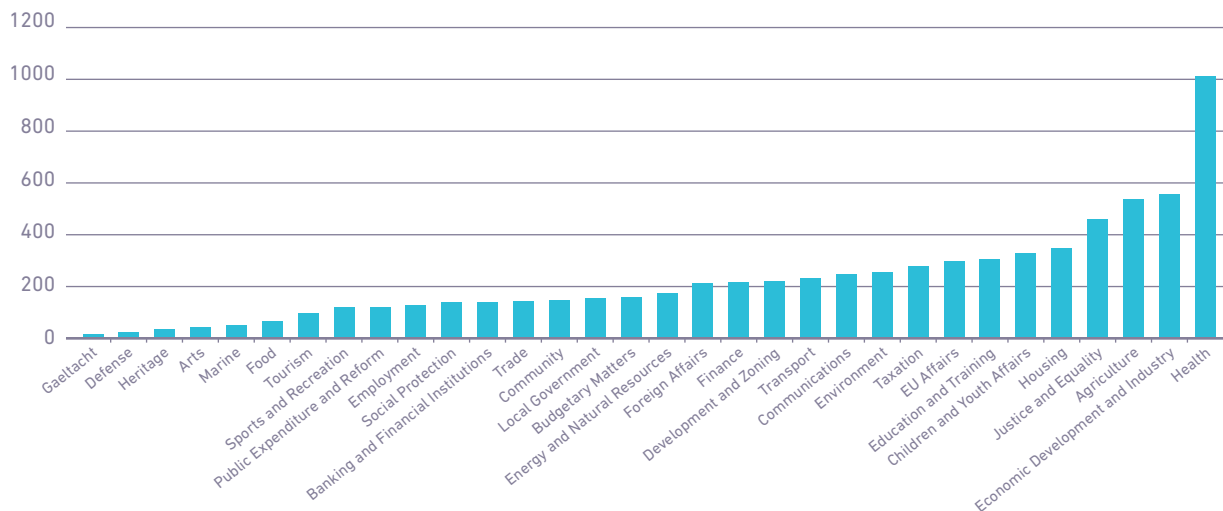


As of June 2018 over 1,700 individuals and organisations have registered and over 24,000 returns of lobbying activities have been submitted.

Top 5 main business activity descriptors on applications to register



No of returns per Public Policy Area Jan - Dec 2017

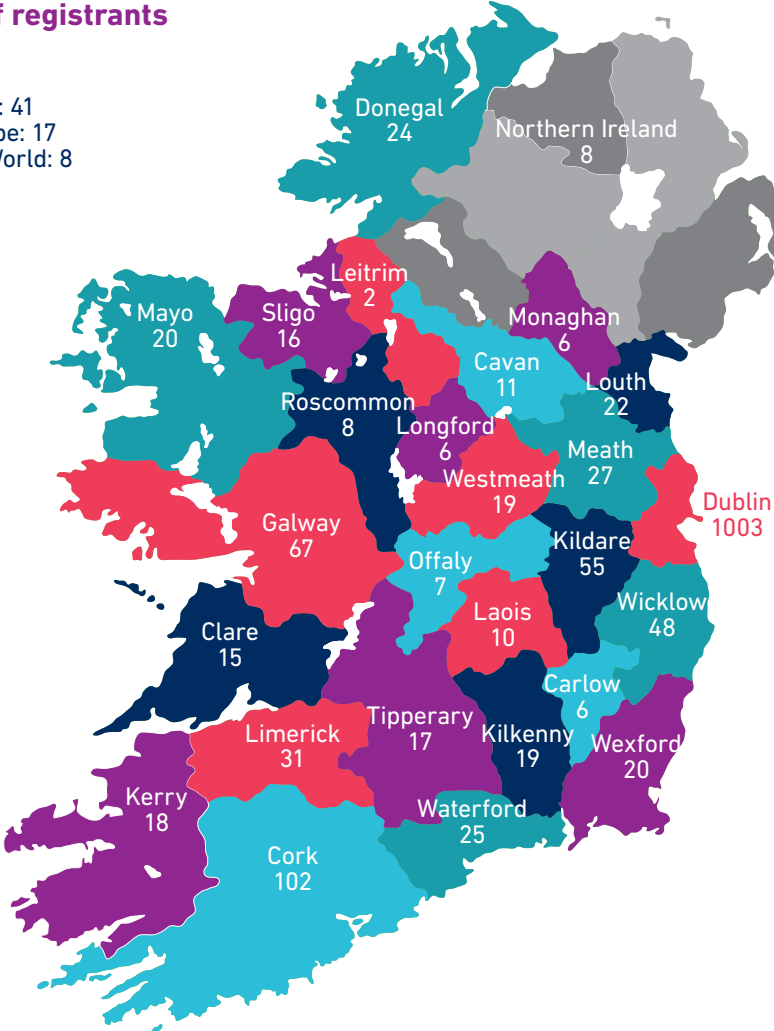


Top 5 policy areas (per relevant period in 2017) on which lobbying activities were reported



Regional location of registrants

Great Britain: 41
 Rest of Europe: 17
 Rest of the World: 8
Total: 1678



As was the case last year, the Commission notes with concern the low level of registrants in several counties. While it is not surprising that Dublin, as the national capital city, has the highest percentage of registrants, it is surprising that a number of counties have single digit numbers of registrants. As Designated Public Officials include local authority members and senior staff as well as TDs, Senators and others, it is to be expected that all counties would have lobbying activities taking place at a local level and a significantly higher number of registrants.

Decisions made by the Commission under the Act

- The Commission has the authority to make decisions under sections 10, 14 and 22 of the Act. These decisions may be appealed.
- Two applications to delay publication of returns were received under section 14 of the Act.
- Both applications were deemed valid and were subsequently published in full on the Register on 11 October 2017.
- Five former DPOs applied for a reduction or waiver of the one year “cooling-off” period provided for under section 22 of the Act.
- In four of the five cases, the Commission granted its consent subject to conditions. In the fifth case the Commission did not grant its consent for a reduction or waiver of the “cooling-off” period.

Enforcement Provisions

Offences under section 20(1) of the Act - Late returns

In 2017, the Commission issued 64* notices during the year to persons informing them of an intent to prosecute for the offence of making a late return if they did not pay the FPN (section 20(1) notice). Most complied once they received this notice. Five files were prepared for examination, of which two resulted in prosecution proceedings being initiated by the Commission and summonses issued. In all cases, compliance was achieved without proceeding to court. Accordingly there were no convictions in 2017 under this section of the Act.

Offences under section 20(2) of the Act – failure to submit a return of lobbying activities

In 2017 the Commission issued 198* notices to persons informing them of the intent to prosecute if the person did not submit a return of lobbying activities (section 20(2) notice). Eight files were prepared for examination relating to non-returns, of which six were referred by the Commission to initiate prosecution proceedings and summonses were issued. While prosecution proceedings were initiated for these files, compliance was achieved in all cases and there were no convictions during 2017 for persons who failed to submit a return of lobbying activities.

*These figures include duplicate letters that issued to a number of registrants where the original letter was returned.

Fixed Payment Notices served under section 21 of the Act

During 2017, 522 Fixed Payment Notices were issued. Of these, 434 were paid (€86,800) and 12 remain unpaid. 76 FPNs were cancelled where it was determined that there were valid reasons to do so.