

**Exchequer Funding under the
Parliamentary Activities Allowance Legislation
in 2020**

Report to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform in accordance with Section 10D of the Ministerial and Parliamentary Offices Act 1938 as amended by the Oireachtas (Ministerial and Parliamentary Offices) (Amendment) Act 2014



Coimisiún um Chaighdeán in Oifigí Poiblí
Standards in Public Office Commission

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Foreword

I am pleased to furnish this report to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, in accordance with section 10D of the Ministerial and Parliamentary Offices Act 1938, as amended by the Oireachtas (Ministerial and Parliamentary Offices) (Amendment) Act 2014. The statements of expenditure and public auditors' reports in respect of 2020 referred to in the report were furnished to the Standards in Public Office Commission pursuant to sections 10B(1) and 10B(6) of the Act.



Garrett Sheehan
Chairperson
Standards in Public Office Commission
September 2021

Chapter 1: Introduction

Annual allowances are paid to leaders of parliamentary parties in relation to expenses arising from the party's parliamentary activities. Party leaders are required to furnish annual statements of expenditure for these allowances to the Standards in Public Office Commission (the Commission).

Independent members of Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann also receive these allowances and are required to furnish statements.

The allowance is known colloquially as the "parliamentary activities allowance" (PAA).

A qualifying party is defined in the Act as a political party, registered in the Register of Political Parties, which contested the last preceding general election or any subsequent bye-elections and which had at least one member elected to Dáil Éireann or elected or nominated to Seanad Éireann.

This report concerns the statements of expenditure of the allowance for the period 1 January to 31 December 2020 furnished to the Commission by the parliamentary leaders of nine political parties, sixteen independent Senators (including seven former Senators) and twenty-seven independent TDs (including eight former TDs) who received the allowance in 2020.

Where a qualifying party forms part of the Government, the combined allowances in respect of its members of Dáil Éireann (only) are reduced by one-third.

The Commission does not have a role in the allocation of this allowance, but does have a supervisory role in relation to its expenditure. It receives statements of expenditure of the allowance, reviews them for compliance and consults as needed the parliamentary party leaders/independent members where queries arise. The Commission must furnish a report on the statements to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and lay a copy of its report before the Houses of the Oireachtas. It must also facilitate inspection and copying of the statements on request.

Chapter 2: Statements of expenditure furnished by party leaders & independent members

Background

The Act provides that parliamentary party leaders must prepare, or cause to be prepared, a statement of any expenditure from the allowance. This must be done not more than 120 days after the end of the financial year in which an allowance has been paid. The statement must be audited by a public auditor and must be submitted with the auditor's report to the Commission within this 120-day period. Payment of the allowance ceases if the statement and auditor's report for the year of account are not received within 120 days of year-end.

The deadline for receiving returns for the 2020 reporting period was 30 April 2021.

The leaders of the following nine political parties were required to furnish a statement to the Commission in respect of 2020:

- Aontú
- Fianna Fáil
- Fine Gael
- Green Party
- Independents 4 Change
- Labour Party
- Sinn Féin
- Social Democrats
- Solidarity/People before Profit

In addition, sixteen independent Senators and twenty-seven independent TDs were required to furnish a statement to the Commission for 2020.

In accordance with the Act, the funding received may not be applied to, or be used to recoup, election or referendum expenses. The Commission requires that parliamentary party leaders and independent members state on their statement of expenditure that the allowance has not been used for electoral or referendum purposes.

The Commission must furnish a report to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform on the statements and auditors' reports received indicating:

- (i) whether the statements and auditors' reports have been submitted by the specified time limit,
- (ii) whether any expenditure is disclosed which was used to recoup election or referendum expenses and
- (iii) whether the statements comply with Sections 10 (e.g. paid in accordance with the proper rates, etc.) and 10B (a statement of expenditure has been furnished, etc.) of the Act.

Based on the information provided, the Commission is satisfied that no evidence exists of non-compliance with the above provisions.

The Commission is required to provide a copy of its report to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and to lay it before each House of the Oireachtas. A copy of the statements and auditors' reports received must be retained by the Commission and be made available for public inspection and copying at the Commission's offices.

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission's offices are closed to callers. It is therefore not possible to provide for public inspection in person. Copies can be made available on application to the Commission via email at info@sipo.ie or by telephone at (01) 639-5666.

The statements and auditors' reports are also available at www.sipo.ie.

The Appendix to this report provides the following details for 2020:

- Table 1 provides details of funding available to the Parliamentary leaders of qualified political parties
- Table 2 shows the expenditure breakdown by category and by political party
- Table 3 provides details of funding available to independent TDs
- Table 4 shows the breakdown of expenditure by category and independent TD
- Table 5 provides details of funding available to independent Senators, and
- Table 6 shows the breakdown of expenditure by category and independent Senator.

Chapter 3: Parliamentary Activities Allowance - rates of payment during 2020

The Parliamentary Activities Allowance is paid to parliamentary party leaders and elected non-party members of Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

The annual allowances payable in 2020 to parliamentary party leaders in respect of members of Dáil Éireann was as follows:

For government parties

- €42,912 per member for each of the first 10 members elected,
- €34,329 per additional elected member from 11 to 30 members, and
- €17,169 for each member elected over 30 members.

For non-government parties

- €64,368 per member for each of the first 10 members elected,
- €51,493 per additional elected member from 11 to 30 members, and
- €25,754 for each member elected over 30 members.

The annual allowance payable to parliamentary party leaders in respect of members of the Seanad was –

- €42,089 for each of the first five members elected or nominated, and
- €21,045 for each additional member elected or nominated.

Elected non-party members of Dáil Éireann received an annual allowance of €37,037 while elected or nominated non-party members of Seanad Éireann received an annual allowance of €21,045.

Total funding in 2020 to the leaders of the nine qualifying parties was €7,564,034.

Funding made available to non-party members of the Dáil amounted to €667,351.

Funding made available to non-party members of the Seanad amounted to €220,482.

Appendix: Funding and expenditure details

Note: totals may not match due to rounding.

Table 1 – Details of funding available to the Parliamentary Leaders of qualified political parties under the Parliamentary Activities Allowance during 2020

Political Parties	Total received for 2020 €	Brought forward from 2019 €	Total available for 2020 €	Total expenditure 2020 €	Balance carried forward to 2021 €
Aontú	58,401	—	58,401	29,699	28,702
Fianna Fáil	1,964,369	—	1,964,369	1,964,369	—
Fine Gael	1,591,241	191,845	1,783,086	1,420,126	362,960
Green Party	677,300	179,871	857,171	608,799	248,372
Independents 4 Change	86,609	34,373	120,982	80,336	40,646
Labour Party	560,434	808,605	1,369,039	655,443	713,596
Sinn Féin	1,953,110	229,258	2,182,368	1,330,374	851,994
Social Democrats	360,461	79,127	439,588	233,660	205,928
Solidarity-PBP	312,111	129,474	441,585	248,392	193,193
Total	7,564,036	1,652,553	9,216,589	6,571,198	2,645,391

Table 2 – Breakdown by category and by political party of expenditure of the allowance in 2020

Category	Aontú	Fianna Fáil	Fine Gael	Green Party	Independents 4 Change	The Labour Party	Sinn Féin	Social Democrats	Solidarity-People Before Profit	Total
	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
a	—	1,878,330	115,391	30,523	28,263	653,763	1,242,884	220,913	15,856	4,185,923
b	9,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9,000
c	—	2,978	88,303	—	5,127	—	—	—	—	96,408
d	725	—	6,020	38,901	—	1,680	6,736	2,754	—	56,816
e	500	52,866	56,823	—	38,359	—	—	9,993	—	158,541
f	—	—	—	—	—	—	53,004	—	—	53,004
g	—	—	1,153,589	539,375	—	—	27,750	—	—	1,720,714
h	—	14,423	—	—	3,000	—	—	—	—	17,423
i	19,474	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	232,436	251,910
j	—	15,772	—	—	5,587	—	—	—	100	21,459
k	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	29,699	1,964,369	1,420,126	608,799	80,336	655,443	1,330,374	233,660	248,392	6,571,198

Categories of expenditure

- (a) the general administration of the parliamentary activities of a qualifying party;
- (b) the provision of technical or specialist advice likely to be required in connection with legislative proposals or potential parliamentary initiatives;
- (c) research and training;
- (d) policy formulation;
- (e) the provision of consultant services, including the engagement of public relations services;
- (f) polling or public attitude sampling in connection with parliamentary debates or initiatives;
- (g) the purchase of support services for a parliamentary party from the party;
- (h) the payment to a parliamentary leader of any salary or honorarium in respect of duties arising from his or her activities as such leader as distinct from those of a member of Dáil Éireann or a holder of a Ministerial office;
- (i) the payment to another person of any salary or honorarium in respect of duties arising from the person's activities in a parliamentary party;
- (j) the provision for, or recoupment of, transport and personal expenditure incurred by a parliamentary leader, officers or a parliamentary party spokesperson as a result of their parliamentary party function;
- (k) entertainment.

Table 3 – Details of funding available to independent TDs under the Parliamentary Activities Allowance during 2020

Name of TD	Total received for 2020 €	Brought forward from 2019 €	Total available for 2020 €	Total expenditure 2020 €	Balance carried forward to 2021 €
Berry, Cathal	33,604	—	33,604	25,595	8,009
Canney, Seán	35,532	39,271	74,803	30,024	44,779
Collins, Michael	35,532	—	35,532	31,897	3,635
Connolly, Catherine	35,532	50,829	86,361	35,431	50,930
Fitzmaurice, Michael	35,532	27,578	63,110	19,274	43,836
Fitzpatrick, Peter	33,604	—	33,604	30,300	3,304
Grealish, Noel	35,532	56,780	92,312	9,651	82,661
Halligan, John *	1,928	1,277	3,205	2,632	573
Harkin, Marian	33,604	—	33,604	32,411	1,193
Harty, Michael *	1,928	64,975	66,903	1,400	65,503
Healy, Seamus *	—	20,311	20,311	—	20,311
Healy Rae, Danny	35,532	5,544	41,076	38,684	2,392
Healy Rae, Michael	35,532	13,912	49,444	41,917	7,527
Lowry, Michael	35,532	12,478	48,010	15,129	32,881
McGrath, Finian*	1,928	21,112	23,040	7,885	15,155
McGrath, Mattie	35,532	67,147	102,679	33,630	69,049
McNamara, Michael	27,778	—	27,778	26,059	1,719
Moran, Kevin*	1,928	4,900	6,828	6,828	—
Murphy, Verona	33,604	—	33,604	21,868	11,736
Naughten, Denis	35,532	81,953	117,485	10,062	107,422
Nolan, Carol	33,604	—	33,604	7,205	—
O'Donoghue, Richard	33,604	—	33,604	12,994	20,610
O'Sullivan, Maureen*	1,928	27,355	29,283	10,278	19,005
Pringle, Thomas	35,532	2,657	38,189	33,691	4,498
Ross, Shane*	1,928	72,854	74,782	1,215	73,567
Shanahan, Matt	33,604	—	33,604	10,224	23,380
Zappone, Katherine*	1,928	18,498	20,426	—	—
Total	667,354	589,431	1,256,785	496,284	713,675

*ceased to be a member in 2020 – reporting for relevant period of 2020

Notes: The following amounts were returned to the Department of Finance by the former TDs below:

Katherine Zappone - €20,426.31

John Halligan - €573.00

Michael Harty €65,503.15

Seamus Healy - €20,310.76

Finian McGrath - €15,555

Maureen O'Sullivan - €19,005.95

Shane Ross - €71,639.44

In addition, Deputy Carol Nolan returned €26,399.03 of her carryover balance to the Department of Finance.

Table 4 – Breakdown of expenditure of the Parliamentary Activities Allowance during 2020 given by each independent TD

Category	a	b	c	d	e	f	Total
	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
Berry, Cathal	246	13,262	1,053	11,034	—	—	25,595
Canney, Seán	—	14,825	453	14,746	—	—	30,024
Collins, Michael	5,959	1,309	12,329	5,500	6,800	—	31,897
Connolly, Catherine	3,441	29,040	2,950	—	—	—	35,431
Fitzmaurice, Michael	3,441	10,005	—	5,828	—	—	19,274
Fitzpatrick, Peter	—	25,500	4,800	—	—	—	30,300
Grealish, Noel	246	—	2,405	7,000	—	—	9,651
Halligan, John *	1,300	245	300	492	245	50	2,632
Harkin, Marian	3,411	—	11,000	18,000	—	—	32,411
Harty, Michael *	—	—	—	1,400	—	—	1,400
Healy, Seamus *	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Healy Rae, Danny	—	15,700	22,149	615	—	220	38,684
Healy Rae, Michael	—	39,868	—	1,055	—	994	41,917
Lowry, Michael	—	1,100	—	14,029	—	—	15,129
McGrath, Finian*	5,406	—	—	2,479	—	—	7,885
McGrath, Mattie	1,853	27,450	3,577	750	—	—	33,630
McNamara, Michael	—	—	—	26,059	—	—	26,059
Moran, Kevin*	—	5,460	—	768	600	—	6,828
Murphy, Verona	13,008	—	—	8,860	—	—	21,868
Naughten, Denis	1,334	288	2,250	6,190	—	—	10,062
Nolan, Carol	—	7,205	—	—	—	—	7,205
O'Donoghue, Richard	7,828	4,637	222	—	57	250	12,994
O'Sullivan, Maureen*	5,730	3,760	680	—	—	108	10,278
Pringle, Thomas	4,642	15,782	13,267	—	—	—	33,691
Ross, Shane*	—	600	—	615	—	—	1,215
Shanahan, Matt	5,608	—	2,625	154	1,000	837	10,224
Zappone, Katherine*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

*ceased to be a member in 2020 – reporting for relevant period of 2020

Categories of expenditure

- (a) the provision of technical or specialist advice likely to be required in connection with legislative proposals or potential parliamentary initiatives;
- (b) research and training;
- (c) policy formulation;
- (d) the provision of consultant services, including the engagement of public relations services;

- (e) polling or public attitude sampling in connection with parliamentary debates or initiatives; and
- (f) entertainment.

Table 5 – Details of funding available to the independent members of the Seanad under the Parliamentary Activities Allowance during 2020

Name of Senator	Total received for 2020 €	Brought forward from 2019 €	Total available for 2020 €	Total expenditure 2020 €	Balance carried forward to 2021 €
Black, Frances	21,045	12,567	33,612	4,025	29,587
Boyhan, Victor	21,045	36,321	57,366	7,208	50,158
Craughwell, Gerard	21,045	18,956	40,001	18,809	21,192
Dolan, John *	5,180	21,030	26,210	8,550	17,660
Freeman, Joan *	5,180	17,590	22,770	17,937	4,833
Higgins, Alice Mary	21,045	16,905	37,950	24,698	13,252
Kelleher, Colette *	5,180	2,081	7,261	1,173	6,088
Keogan, Sharon	15,865	—	15,865	3,960	11,905
Lawless, Billy *	5,180	3,024	8,204	4,920	3,284
Marshall, Ian *	5,180	30,551	35,731	21,525	14,206
McDowell, Michael	21,045	20,998	42,043	6,016	36,027
Mullen, Ronan	21,045	—	21,045	21,045	—
Norris, David	21,045	29,060	50,105	12,161	37,944
Ó Ceidigh, Pádraig *	5,180	29,711	34,891	12,087	22,804
O'Donnell, Marie Louise *	5,180	29,533	34,713	4,693	30,020
Ruane, Lynn	21,045	36	21,081	20,448	633
Total	220,485	268,363	488,848	189,255	299,593

*ceased to be a member in 2020 – reporting for relevant period of 2020

Notes: The following amounts were returned to the Department of Finance by the former Senators below:

John Dolan - €17,658.83
 Marie Louise O'Donnell - €30,019.57
 Joan Freeman - €4,832.61
 Colette Kelleher - €6,087.87
 Billy Lawless - €3,283.80
 Ian Marshall - €14,206.01
 Pádraig Ó Ceidigh - €22,802.99

Table 6 – Breakdown of expenditure of the Parliamentary Activities Allowance during 2020 provided by each independent member of the Seanad

Category	a €	b €	c €	d €	e €	f €	Total €
Black, Frances	457	—	3,568	—	—	—	4,025
Boyhan, Victor	800	—	5,296	1,112	—	—	7,208
Craughwell, Gerard	2,153	180	5,050	11,363	—	63	18,809
Dolan, John	954	—	1,102	6,429	—	65	8,550
Freeman, Joan	14,040	150	2,167	1,580	—	—	17,937
Higgins, Alice Mary	8,009	6,271	5,616	4,400	—	402	24,698
Kelleher, Collette	—	—	312	861	—	—	1,173
Keogan, Sharon	1,163	1,522	476	799	—	—	3,960
Lawless, Billy	861	—	—	4,059	—	—	4,920
Marshall, Ian	—	3,548	206	17,771	—	—	21,525
McDowell, Michael	4,507	—	1,078	431	—	—	6,016
Mullen, Ronan	1,408	16,862	2,637	—	—	138	21,045
Norris, David	—	—	—	12,161	—	—	12,161
Ó Ceidigh, Pádraig	3,395	4,619	—	4,004	—	69	12,087
O'Donnell, Marie Louise	—	86	254	4,182	—	171	4,693
Ruane, Lynn	29	12,705	7,134	430	—	150	20,448
Total	37,776	42,395	34,690	51,811	—	1,058	155,643

*ceased to be a member in 2020 – reporting for relevant period of 2020

Categories of expenditure

- (a) the provision of technical or specialist advice likely to be required in connection with legislative proposals or potential parliamentary initiatives;
- (b) research and training;
- (c) policy formulation;
- (d) the provision of consultant services, including the engagement of public relations services;
- (e) polling or public attitude sampling in connection with parliamentary debates or initiatives;
- (f) entertainment.