



**An tSeirbhís um Cheapacháin Phoiblí**  
**Public Appointments Service**

**INFORMATION BOOKLET AND APPLICATION DOCUMENTS**  
**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

The Public Appointments Service on behalf of the Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC) intends to hold a competition for the purpose of recommending a person for appointment to the position of

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL**  
**DEPARTMENT OF THE TAOISEACH**  
**EUROPEAN AFFAIRS**

**TLA/C/454**

The Public Appointments Service is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

The Public Appointments Service will run this campaign in compliance with the codes of practice prepared by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA). These are available on [www.cpsa-online.ie](http://www.cpsa-online.ie)

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**ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL  
DEPARTMENT OF THE TAOISEACH  
(TLA/C/454)**

**TITLE OF POSITION:** Assistant Secretary General

**OFFICE** Department of the Taoiseach

**LOCATION** Dublin

**European Affairs**

This is a key role within the restructured Department of the Taoiseach which, in accordance with the Programme for Government, will operate as a cabinet office to oversee the delivery of the programme.

Building on the recent strengthening and enhancement of the EU function, including the appointment of a Second Secretary General for EU affairs and the integration of EU Coordination into the Department of the Taoiseach, the person appointed to this post will play a direct role in assuring Ireland's standing as a respected and influential member of the European Union.

Working closely with colleagues in other Departments he or she will direct the European and EU-International Affairs Division in:

- Advising the Taoiseach, Tánaiste and Minister of State for European Affairs on European Union issues of importance to Ireland;
- Supporting the Taoiseach in his role as an EU Head of Government, including in his preparation and participation in meetings of the European Council, eurozone meetings and EU-international summit meetings, including during Ireland's EU Presidency in 2013;
- Supporting the Tánaiste and Minister of State for European Affairs in their participation in the General Affairs Council;
- Bringing a whole of Government perspective to complex cross cutting EU policy issues, including ensuring coherence and consistency in the formulation of EU policy across Government;
- Advising on and managing ministerial and interdepartmental coordination structures on European Affairs, including on engagement with the Oireachtas;
- Supporting the Cabinet Committee on European Affairs and managing the secretariat for other interdepartmental committees;
- Identifying medium-to-long term European Union issues of strategic importance to Ireland, in particular issues with a substantial potential impact on the domestic policy agenda and co-ordinating cross-departmental analysis of and advice on them;
- Overseeing effective and efficient transposition and implementation of EU law across Government Departments;
- Stepping up Ireland's engagement on EU affairs across Government;

- Managing the Taoiseach's programme of EU related international visits and of meetings with high level visitors to Ireland;
- Advising on and managing the preparation of speeches, articles and parliamentary addresses by the Taoiseach, Tánaiste and Minister of State for European Affairs on European Union matters;
- Generally supporting the Taoiseach in his or her role as Head of Government in conducting bilateral relations with other States and in dealing with international organisations;
- Ensuring that Ireland's EU policies are kept under constant review.

The appointee must:

- Have, or be capable of acquiring within a short period, a thorough knowledge of current issues within the European Union and in Ireland's international relations;
- Have, or be capable of acquiring within a short period, the skills and capacity to work in an effective and cooperative manner across Government Departments in order to ensure policy coherence on EU matters;
- Have excellent policy analysis and policy formation skills, including a demonstrated capacity for innovative and strategic thinking;
- Have excellent written and oral communication skills, including the capacity to present options for decision-making in a succinct and persuasive manner;
- Have a clear understanding of and an ability to work with the Irish and EU political processes;
- Have demonstrated leadership, management and interpersonal skills;
- Have an ability to build strong team relationships within the Department, with other Departments/Agencies and with external stakeholders;
- Be self-reliant and capable of performing under pressure;
- Have demonstrated sound judgement;
- Be capable of discharging all aspects of the work of the Department of the Taoiseach at Assistant Secretary level.

The attention of candidates is drawn to the generic competencies that have been developed for use by TLAC for Assistant Secretary posts.

## **Key Competencies for effective performance**

The attention of candidates is drawn to the key competencies that have been developed for use by the Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC) for Assistant Secretary posts.

The competency framework has identified 10 key individual competencies associated with effective performance, clustered into 4 main dimensions as illustrated below:

<b>Leadership</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Managing Relationships</b>	<b>Personal Drive for Results</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leads on the management of Change</li><li>• Focus on Human Resources</li><li>• Corporate Contribution</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analysis &amp; Thinking Skills</li><li>• Strategic Contribution</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Managing Critical Relationships</li><li>• Communication</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organisational Skills</li><li>• Results Orientated Approach</li><li>• Professional Integrity</li></ul>

## **Eligibility to compete**

Candidates should note that eligibility to compete is confined to citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

Special conditions apply to citizens of Bulgaria and Romania with regard to their entitlement to be employed and work in Ireland. A candidate who is in doubt in this regard should consult the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation.

## **Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER)**

It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees from the Civil Service, under that Scheme, are not eligible to apply for another position in the Civil Service. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.

## **Department of Health and Children Circular 7/2010**

The Department of Health Circular 7/2010 of 1 November 2010 introduced a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public health sector or in the wider public service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public moneys. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the redundancy scheme also, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years, after which time any re-employment will require the approval of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. People who availed of either of these schemes are not eligible to compete in this competition.

## **Declaration**

Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a public service scheme of incentivised early retirement.

## **Assistant Secretary General** **Principal Conditions of Service**

### **General**

The appointment is subject to the Civil Service Regulations Acts 1956 to 2005 and the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 and any other Act for the time being in force relating to the Civil Service.

### **Pay**

The salary for the position of Assistant Secretary General (with effect from 1 January, 2010) is as follows;

PPC [Personal Pension Contribution]

**€134,523 - €140,636 - €147,262, - €153,885(Max)**

*Or (as appropriate to the employee's employment history)*

Non-PPC Pay Scale:

**€127,796 - €133,605 - €139,898 - €146,191(Max)**

Candidates should note that:-

- **entry will be at the minimum point of the scale; and**
- **the rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.**

Increments are awarded annually subject to satisfactory performance.

### **Tenure**

The appointment is to an established position on a probationary contract in the Civil Service. The probationary contract will be for a period of one year.

### **Functions, Powers and Duties**

The key responsibility of the person appointed will be to manage a number of the Department's strategic priorities in the area of European Affairs. S/he will also be required to perform any duties which may be assigned as appropriate to the position.

The officer may not engage in private practice or be connected with any outside business which would interfere with the performance of official duties or conflict in any way with the position of Assistant Secretary General.

### **Headquarters**

The headquarters of the Department of the Taoiseach is currently based in Dublin. When absent from home and headquarters on official duty an officer will be paid appropriate travelling expenses and subsistence allowances, subject to normal civil service regulations.

### **Hours of attendance**

Hours of attendance will be fixed from time to time but will amount to not less than 41 hours gross per week. The Assistant Secretary General will be required to work such additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of his/her duties subject to the limits set down in the working time regulations. The rate of remuneration payable covers any extra attendance liability that may arise from time to time.

### **Annual Leave**

In addition to the usual public holidays the annual leave for this position is 30 working days.

### **Sick Leave**

During properly certified sick absence, provided there is no evidence of permanent disability for service, pay on a pro-rata basis will apply in accordance with the provisions of the sick leave circulars.

Officers who will be paying Class A rate of PRSI will be required to sign a mandate authorising the Department of Social Protection to pay any benefits due under the Social Welfare Acts direct to the Department of the Taoiseach and payment during illness will be subject to the officer making the necessary claims for social insurance benefit to the Department of Social Protection within the required time limits.

### **Superannuation and Retirement**

The successful candidate will be offered the appropriate pension terms and retirement age conditions as prevailing in the civil service at the time of being offered an appointment.

The current pension and retirement age conditions terms and conditions are as set out immediately below. Candidates should be aware that, as announced in *Budget 2010*, the Government has decided to introduce a new single pension scheme, along with a new retirement age provision, for new recruits to the public service.

**NB: Candidates should note that this may mean that pension and retirement age terms different from those set out below may accompany an offer of appointment.**

At present the terms of the Pension Scheme for Established State Employees and of the associated Spouses' and Children's Pension Scheme for Established State Employees apply to such appointments. Membership of this scheme includes the following provisions with respect to pension terms, retirement age and associated conditions:

### **New Entrant Status**

If the appointee is deemed to be a new entrant (as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004), there is no specified retirement age in respect of the appointment to the position. The minimum age at which pension is payable is 65.

If the appointee is deemed not to be a new entrant (as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004) the minimum age at which pension is payable is 60 and retirement is compulsory on reaching 65 years of age.

At the time of being offered an appointment, the Department will, in the light of the appointee's employment history, determine whether he or she is a "new entrant". Appointees will be required to disclose their full public service history.

### **Abatement**

Normal rules regarding abatement of pensions will apply, as appropriate. However, if the appointee was previously employed in the Civil Service and was awarded a pension under voluntary early retirement arrangements (other than the Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement (ISER)) the entitlement to that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements will, however, be made for the reckoning of previous service given by the appointee for the purpose of any future superannuation award for which the appointee may be eligible.

If the appointee availed of an incentivised scheme for early retirement or voluntary early retirement in another sector of the public service (other than the HSE) the entitlement to that pension will cease with effect from the date of reappointment. Special arrangements will, however, be made for the reckoning of previous service given by the appointee for the purpose of any future superannuation award for which the appointee may be eligible.

If the appointee was previously employed in the Civil Service and was paid a marriage gratuity, pensionable service before marriage will not be reckoned for superannuation purposes unless an appropriate refund is made in respect of that gratuity.

This appointment is subject to the pension-related deduction in accordance with the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2009.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

Different pay and conditions may apply if, **immediately prior to appointment**, the appointee is:

- -already a serving civil servant who is paying Class B rate of PRSI, or
- serving in an unestablished capacity in the civil service and has had continuous service in that capacity since 5 April 1995 or,
- serving elsewhere in the public sector in a position in respect of which s/he is paying Class B, C or D rate of PRSI contribution.

**The above represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate.**

## THE SELECTION PROCESS

### How to Apply

Applications must be made by submitting an on line application and attaching a) to d) listed below.

- a) A comprehensive CV clearly showing your relevant achievements and experience in your career to date. Please see CV Guidance Note at Appendix I.
- b) The 'Key Achievements Form' at Appendix II. Please copy and save format in a separate document.
- c) An organisation chart indicating your current position within the Senior Management team (or if not currently employed, in your most recent employment), see Appendix III.
- d) A **short (i.e. no more than 2 pages) cover letter/ personal statement** outlining why you wish to be considered for the post and where you believe your skills and experience meet the requirements of position Assistant Secretary, European Affairs, Department of the Taoiseach.

**Please note that documents a) – d) listed above should be submitted as one attachment.**

### Closing Date

**Your online application and CV, etc. must be submitted on the Public jobs website (not later than midnight on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2011.**

*If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your application within **24 hours** of applying, please contact Elaine at 01 8587497 or email [elaine.ryan@publicjobs.ie](mailto:elaine.ryan@publicjobs.ie)*

### Selection Process

The Selection Process may include:

- shortlisting of candidates, on the basis of the information contained in their application, to reduce the list of candidates to a more manageable number for interview;
- a competitive preliminary interview;
- completion of an online questionnaire;
- supplementary application form;
- a competitive interview which will be conducted by the Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC).

### Please Note

Candidates called forward to Interview conducted by the Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC) would then be requested to complete a 'Supplementary Application Form' which would collect/address more detailed questions about your skills, experience, motivation and how they meet the requirements of this demanding role. It should be noted that there will only be a short period of time available (a number of days) to complete and submit the supplementary application.

Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the Public Appointments Service and/or TLAC.

You should ensure that the contact details specified on the application form are correct.

### Short-listing

In the event of a short-listing exercise being employed an expert board will examine the information provided in your application forms and assess it against pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position.

**It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/ experience in your application.**

### **References**

We would appreciate it if you would start considering names of people who you feel would be suitable referees that we might consult (2 - 3 names and contact details). The referees listed here do not have to include your current employer, but should be in a position to provide a reference for you. Please be assured that we will only collect the details and contact referees should you come under consideration at preliminary interview stage.

### **Other important information**

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

The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend interview, or a successful result letter, is not to be taken as implying that the Public Appointments Service is satisfied that such a person fulfils the requirements or is not disqualified by law from holding the position.

Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it, the Public Appointments Service may at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

### **The importance of Confidentiality**

We would like to assure you that protecting confidentiality is our number one priority. You can expect, and we guarantee, that all enquires, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside those directly involved in that aspect of the process.

### **Quality Customer Service**

We aim to provide an excellent quality service to all our customers. If, for whatever reason, you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive from us, we urge you to bring this to the attention of the unit or staff member concerned. This is important as it ensures that we are aware of the problem and can take the appropriate steps to resolve it.

### **Candidates' Rights - Review Procedures in relation to the Selection Process**

The Public Appointments Service will consider requests for review in accordance with the provisions of the codes of practice published by the CPSA. The Codes of Practice are available on the website of the Commission for Public Service Appointments <http://www.cpsa-online.ie/>

Where a candidate is unhappy with an action or decision in relation to an application, s/he can seek a review under Section 7 of the code of practice:-

- The candidate must address his/her concerns in relation to the process in writing, setting out the basis for the complaint being made, to the Chief Executive, Public Appointment Service, in the first instance. A complaint or request for review must be made within 10 working days of the notification of the initial decision or within 5 working days of the outcome of the informal review stage, if availed of.
- However, where the decision being conveyed relates to an interim stage of a selection process, a request for review must be received within 4 working days of the date of receipt of the decision or within 2 working days of receipt of a decision under the informal process; candidates electing to use the informal process at the interim stage must do so within 2 working days of communication of the decision to them.
- In communicating the outcome to the candidate, which will be done by means of written report, the initial reviewer should indicate that he/she may seek further review by referring the matter to the Decision Arbitrator and that a request to do so must be made with 7 working days of receipt of the outcome of the initial review.

Where a candidate believes that an aspect of the process breached the CPSA's code of practice, s/he can have it investigated under Section 8 of the code by the CPSA.

## **Candidates' Obligations**

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the process.

Candidates must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information;
- canvass any person with or without inducements;
- personate a candidate at any stage of the process; or
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way.
- 

Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine/or imprisonment.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- where he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- where he/she has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.

## **Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003**

When your application form is received, we create a record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature and should you be successful certain information you provide will be forwarded to the employing organisation. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003. To make a request under the Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003, please submit your request in writing to: THE DATA PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR, PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS SERVICE, "CHAPTER HOUSE", 26-30 ABBEY STREET UPPER, DUBLIN 1, ensuring that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record. A fee of €6.35 should accompany your request. Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from records for general statistical purposes.

**If you feel you would benefit from a confidential initial discussion about any aspect of this significant opportunity, please contact Tommy Quinn on +353 1 8587405 or email [tommy.quinn@publicjobs.ie](mailto:tommy.quinn@publicjobs.ie)**

**Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify.**

## Appendix I

### Guidance Note on the Curriculum Vitae

Your CV should be no longer than **3-4 pages** in length and should clearly state your relevant achievements and experience in your career to date. A sample CV is attached below for reference. Please note this is only a guidance note and does not intend to prescribe what format is required.

An expert board will examine the CV's and assess them against the requirements of the position. It is therefore in your own interest to ensure your CV clearly and accurately reflects your track record of achievement in areas such as people, change and budget management as well as your track record in delivering on key strategic projects.

#### Sample Curriculum Vitae Layout

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Contact details:**

**Telephone:** *Note: Please include Land line & mobile*

**Email Address:**

#### Career History

*NOTE: Your career history is best presented in reverse chronological order so that the most recent roles appear first. Please ensure you cover the last 10-15 years work experience or last 3 or 4 roles in some level of detail depending on what you have done. For each position, please ensure you clearly indicate your **Management Level**, the **Budget** you were responsible for and the **Number of Staff** reporting to you.*

*Positions held more than 15 yrs ago require only a summary description.*

Current Position:      Job Title      Company      Dates: From-To      Salary

- Main Responsibilities & Achievements (please ensure to include sufficient relevant detail)
- .....
- .....

Previous Position 1:      Job Title      Company      Dates: From-To      Salary

- Main Responsibilities & Achievements (please ensure to include sufficient relevant detail)
- .....
- .....

**Education Details:** *Note: Please specify status of award if not complete. Should you come under consideration for appointment, you may be required to provide evidence of any qualifications awarded.*

- Institution      Award (e.g. BA, MBA etc)      Subject      Year Awarded
- .....      .....
- .....      .....

**Other Training:**

- Subject      Training Body      Year Completed
- .....
- .....

**Professional Memberships etc:**

- Level of Membership      Professional Body / Association
- .....

**Other:** *Note: you may want to briefly note other achievements that you feel may be relevant to the particular role, for example - other roles you may hold (e.g. Board Member); Key Presentations; Language Skills (including level of fluency); industry / sectoral recognitions: Publications etc.*

## Appendix II

### Key Achievements

For each of the areas below, please briefly highlight specific achievements, contributions or expertise you have developed from your career to date which clearly demonstrate your suitability to meet the challenges of the role of Assistant Secretary, European Affairs, Department of the Taoiseach. Please restrict your answers to the space provided

<b>Leadership</b>
<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Managing Relationships</b>
<b>Personal Drive for Results</b>

## Appendix III

### Guidance Note on the Organisation Chart

We would appreciate it if you would forward a copy of an organisation chart indicating your current position within the Senior Management team in your organisation/company.

There is no fixed requirement here in terms of format, and we will accept whatever format is convenient for yourself (e.g. an existing published chart from your organisations website/annual report), but we would emphasise that the selection panel have requested this to help them understand your level within your current / most recent organisation and your positioning relative to other senior managers.

If you do not have access to a corporate chart you may find the template below useful.

If you are independent or have not been part of an organisation recently, a chart is not necessary.

#### Organisation Chart Template

