

Area Commissioning Plan: Galway and Roscommon, 2019 - 2021



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency



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Foreword

Head of Commissioning

Through our Commissioning Strategy (2018), Tusla has indicated its intention to adopt a new approach to commissioning services. This new approach to commissioning has been robustly informed through national and local consultation with all stakeholders, support from the Institute for Public Care at Oxford Brookes University and by research and evaluation from the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, NUI Galway.

Tusla will now seek to commission all of its resources in the most efficient, effective, equitable, proportionate and sustainable way in order to achieve outcomes for children. I would also like to thank all of those who have participated in the consultation and roll out to date as your contribution has helped to shape the unique approach to commissioning that Tusla is implementing, with particular emphasis on prevention and early intervention, participation, integrated working and use of evidence.

This Area Commissioning Plan is a deliberate blend of national priorities, as informed by policy, legislation and Tusla strategic planning, with local priorities, as informed by local analysis and meaningful participation of children, young people, parents, other commissioners and service providers. The relationship between national and local service planning is a two-way process and I look forward to reviewing Area Commissioning Plans to inform the Senior Management Team in its corporate and business planning on an on-going basis.

Eifion Williams,

Eifion Williams
Head of Commissioning,
Tusla

Foreword

Area Manager

On behalf of the Tusla, Child and Family services in Galway and Roscommon, I wish to thank everyone who has participated in the development of this Area Commissioning Plan. In particular, I want to thank Mark Molloy from the Institute of Public Care for his support, guidance and excellent facilitation during the process, and the behind the scenes work of Marie Gibbons and Morgan Mee in writing up the plan and pulling together all the different strands that have gone into this document. I also want to thank team members who led discussions at the stakeholder events and the support provided by our dedicated administration team.

It was great to see such positive engagement by a wide range of partner agencies and service providers at the four stakeholder events held across the two counties. For many of us this was a learning process with new language and methods of engagement delivered in a manner that encouraged discussion and inclusion. I am confident that the process involved will strengthen the strong working

relationships that already exist within our two counties and provide the impetus for new work collaborations and partnerships. I am hopeful that because of this process, we have reached a better, shared understanding of our local landscape in terms of service provision and the totality of available resources, and that going forward we have a clearer picture of the pressure points and priorities that lie ahead. Additionally, we understand that these pressure points and priorities will not be solved without close interagency and cross service partnerships.

In developing this commissioning plan, I want to ensure that Tusla is targeting local services in line with national priorities and statutory responsibilities, thus adding value to services affecting the lives of children and families living in our communities. This Commissioning Plan provides transparency in the distribution of service provision throughout Galway and Roscommon and will underpin a fair and equitable distribution of services.

This plan gives clear direction to Tusla, Child and Family services in Galway and Roscommon. The commissioning priorities identified highlight areas of work where our local teams must engage with all the other stakeholders to achieve the desired objectives. It was clear from our round table discussions that “a one size having to fit all approach” does not work and that creative and bespoke solutions are necessary. To achieve these goals, the work of Tusla will be underpinned by a vision that has early preventative services, collaborative working arrangements, and responsive frontline services and clear a customer voice / focus at its core.

As we now move towards the implementation of this plan, there are many challenges ahead as the needs and make up of our local communities constantly change. For this commissioning plan to succeed all services across the statutory and community sector in Galway and Roscommon will need to work together and find solutions that are sustainable, flexible and creative in meeting the needs of local children and families.

I know that there is a strong commitment by all Tusla staff to work to these goals. I also know that they will find willing partners to work with across several other service providers and agencies.



*John Donnellan
Area Manager,
Galway and Roscommon*

1. Introduction

This Area Commissioning Plan sets out how the Tusla Child and Family Agency's (hereafter known as the Agency) resources will be organised and deployed to meet the care, protection and welfare needs of children and young people in counties Galway and Roscommon over the period 2019- 2021.

The plan is aligned with key Agency strategies and priorities including the *National Commissioning Strategy*, the *Prevention, Partnership and Family Support Strategy*, the *Child Protection and Welfare Strategy*, the *Alternative Care Strategy* and the National Service Delivery Framework. The plan is also informed by the *Galway Roscommon Area Implementation Strategy 2018-2020* and each county's Children and Young People's Plan.

The direction presented here will inform how the Agency responds to the needs of children in Galway and Roscommon through providing timely, responsive, and proportionate child and family centred services. The plan emphasises the need to work in collaboration with our partner organisations in both counties and to

adopt innovative and creative approaches that achieve improved outcomes for all our children, young people and their families.

The Galway and Roscommon service area is large and diverse. Galway is characterised by its large geographical size and relatively bigger population. While it has an urban centre, much of the county is rural and isolated. The county has distinctive Irish speaking and island communities. Roscommon is landlocked and largely rural in character. Its smaller population is often required to access services that are located in neighbouring counties or larger towns such as Athlone and Sligo. Every effort has been made to ensure that this diversity is reflected as fairly and as accurately as possible in the plan.

Development of this plan was overseen by an Area Commissioning Team chaired by the Area Manager and supported by the Institute of Public Care, Oxford Brooks University. The membership of this Area Commissioning Team is presented in Appendix 1.

What is Commissioning?

The Child and Family Agency describes commissioning as a strategic process that plans how resources available to improve outcomes for children and families will be allocated in the most effective, equitable, proportionate and sustainable way.¹

More specifically, this Area Commissioning Plan will:

- Ensure the allocation of the Agency's resources is informed by an analysis of the strengths and needs of children, young people and their families within both counties
- Inform the process of allocating resources internally and direct any local service restructuring that may be undertaken
- Guide the external commissioning and decommissioning of services
- Identify and acknowledge emerging service priorities
- Contribute to the on-going development of constructive and effective working

partnerships with other statutory, community and voluntary organisations

The Commissioning Process

Development of this plan has been informed by an analysis of relevant local and national strategies and existing quantitative data as well as data collected through a series of consultation workshops that took place in Galway and Roscommon in late 2018 and early 2019. Child and Family Agency staff, contracted partner organisations and a broad range of other stakeholders participated in these events.

In each county, the first stakeholder event introduced the commissioning concept and considered the needs of children and young people in relation to their protection and welfare, identified gaps in services and gathered feedback on areas to prioritise over the next three years.

The follow-up consultation sessions were designed to give feedback to stakeholders on the main findings of the commissioning process to that

¹ Child and Family Agency (2013) *Commissioning Guidance*. Dublin: Child and Family Agency.

point and to confer on the identified priority themes.

In early 2019, a survey of local Agency staff was conducted and 68 staff members responded. In addition to this, a number of focussed team discussions and planning meetings were held during 2018 and early 2019.

Research undertaken by Galway and Roscommon Children and Young People's Services Committees into the needs of local children and young people and the experience of parents in the Child Protection Conference System in Galway and Roscommon were also considered when drafting this plan.

A record of findings from the principal elements of the consultation process can be viewed in Appendix 2.

2. National Context for Commissioning

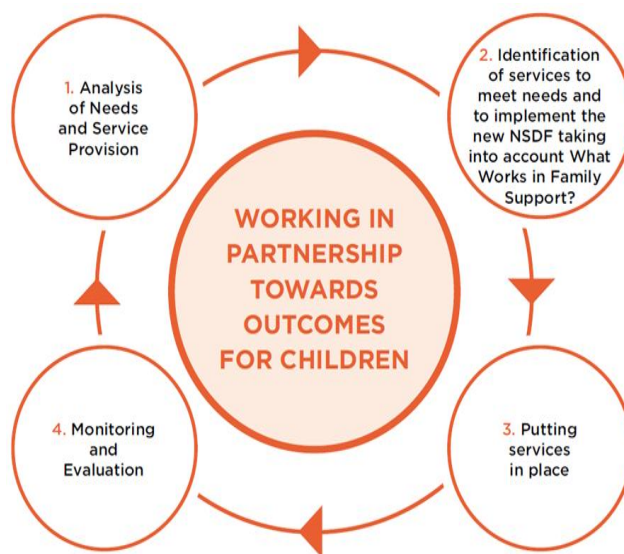
The Child and Family Agency's *Commissioning Strategy* sets out the approach the Agency will take to commissioning during the five year period ending in 2021.² This strategy positions the Galway and Roscommon service area within phase 3 of the national roll-out of the commissioning process, wherein it can benefit from the experience acquired during phases 1 and 2.

The preparation of Area Commissioning Plans (ACP) signals a new direction relating to the strategic allocation of both internal and external resources for each of the Agency's service areas. *Better Outcomes Brighter Futures*³ states that the Agency must:

'Provide and commission both universal and targeted evidence – informed parenting supports and ensure early identification of 'at risk' children and families to strengthen families and reduce the

incidences of children coming into and remaining in care.'

Furthermore, in its *Corporate Plan 2015-2017*⁴, *Business Plan 2017*⁵ and its *National Commissioning Toolkit 2017*⁶, the Agency highlights the importance of commissioning and details the approach to be taken by local service areas to ensure a coherent and consistent application of Commissioning nationally.



Source: Institute of Public Care, Oxford Brooks University, 2018

² Child and Family Agency (2017) *Tusla Commissioning Strategy*. Dublin: Child and Family Agency.

³ Department of Children and Youth Affairs (2014) *Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: The national policy framework for children and young people 2014 – 2020*. Dublin: Stationary Office.

⁴ Child and Family Agency (2015) *Tusla Corporate Plan 2015 – 2017*. Dublin: Child and Family Agency.

⁵ Child and Family Agency (2017) *Tusla Business Plan 2017*. Dublin: Child and Family Agency.

⁶ Child and Family Agency (2017) *National Commissioning Toolkit*. Dublin: Child and Family Agency.

The National Service Delivery Framework⁷ articulates a role for the Agency spanning the continuum of care from early intervention and prevention, to child protection and welfare, to provision of alternative care.

The *Tusla Commissioning Strategy* commits the Agency to reflecting the following principles in every stage of its commissioning cycle:

- Early intervention / prevention will be prejudiced at all levels of service delivery - low, medium and high.
- Priority will be given to programmes and services that are evidence based and evidence informed.
- Commissioning will take account of and actively address the specifics of the local sector. For example, the rural and urban context.
- Commissioning will support both small highly targeted services and large scale local, regional and national services.

- Commissioning should incorporate key capacity-building measures for the local community and voluntary sector in order that it can respond to the local service context.

In line with guidance provided in *Tusla's Commissioning Priorities: Working Paper 2016*⁸, this document reflects the Agency's intention to adopt a progressive universalist approach, informed by a conceptualisation of need at low/medium/high levels, where prevention is understood to occur at all levels of need. Veerman and Yperen's⁹ typology of evidence is used when considering levels of evidence to be gathered.

⁷ Child and Family Agency (2019) Organisational Structure and National Delivery Structure [Online] Available at: www.tusla.ie.

⁸ Child and Family Agency (2016) *Tusla's Commissioning Priorities Working Document*, Child and Family Agency, unpublished.

⁹ Veerman, J. W. & van Yperen, T. A. (2007) 'Degrees of freedom and degrees of certainty: A developmental model for the establishment of evidence-based youth care.' *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 30(2): 212-221.

3. Local Context for Commissioning

The Galway and Roscommon Area Commissioning Plan recognises that the Agency is not the only organisation with responsibility for the provision of services to children, young people and their families in Galway and Roscommon. The plan provides a framework for the Agency to work collaboratively with partner organisations in the planning, delivery and implementation of accessible, effective and evidence informed services.

Through the Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSCs) and the Child and Family Support Networks (CFSNs), positive collaborative relationships already exist with statutory organisations and the community and voluntary sector.

This plan recognises that building and developing relationships with partner organisations is crucial to delivering positive outcomes for children.

Locally Agreed Principles of Service Delivery

In the Galway and Roscommon service area, the Agency has committed to undertake a process of commissioning that is clear, open, flexible, transparent and collaborative. These principles will underpin the planning, implementation and review phases of the process.

During the stakeholder consultation events undertaken to inform this plan, it was agreed that 4 underlying principles of service delivery would feature in all commissioned services.



These principles and underlying approaches reflect a shared responsibility that can only be met through partnership and collaboration.

Prevention and Early Intervention	Needs led and Proportionate	Encouraging Participation	Collaboration
<p>We will seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build the capacity of universal early help systems • Promote early intervention and at all levels of need • Improve access to more specialised therapeutic services in the community to meet identified need 	<p>We will seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more effective supports to children and families with complex needs • Avoid crisis driven responses • Build capacity of our partners to respond to complex needs (including those arising from Adverse Childhood Experiences and trauma) 	<p>We will seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make engagement with children and families routine • Ensure the views of seldom heard children, young people and their families are heard in planning and decision making 	<p>We will seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance collaboration and partnership through the continued support of interagency networks

4. Establishing Commissioning Priorities for Galway and Roscommon

The commissioning priorities agreed for Galway and Roscommon have been informed by an analysis of demographic information, local Child and Family Agency referral rates, existing levels of service delivery and data gathered during the consultation process. An overview of the themes emerging through each of these data strands is presented below alongside an outline of the how the Agency's resources are currently deployed and an overview of the strengths and challenges associated with service delivery in both counties.

Demographic Profile of Galway and Roscommon

The geographical county of Galway is divided into two distinct administrative areas: Galway city and County Galway. Measuring 6,149 square kilometres, County Galway is the second largest county in Ireland. At 2,648 square kilometres, County Roscommon is the 11th largest county by area. Galway city has been Ireland's most rapidly developing urban area and is the only city in Ireland to have

experienced above average population growth during the period 1996 to 2016.

County Galway incorporates the single largest and most populous gaeltacht area in the country; the county is home to 9,445 people who speak Irish daily.¹⁰

County Roscommon is predominantly rural in character, with Roscommon Town being the largest population centre. Athlone, which is partly located within the county, acts as a service centre for the south of the county. The northern part of the county is influenced by proximity to counties Sligo and Leitrim.

¹⁰ Central Statistics Office (2017) *Census of Population 2016*. [Online] Available at www.cso.ie (Accessed Feb 12th 2019).

Headline Demographic Statistics

Headline Demographic Statistics Galway and Roscommon

Source: Census 2016
* 2016 Pobal HP Deprivation Index



179390



County Galway

78669



Galway City

64554



Roscommon

Total Service Area Population: 322,612



Population Growth 2011 to 2016

County Galway: 2.4%

Galway City: 4.2%

County Roscommon: 0.7%

Ireland: 3.8%



Children 2016

(aged 0 - 18 years)

County Galway

48,084

Galway City

15,523

Roscommon

16,305

26.8% | 19.7% | 25.3%



Lone Parents

16,445

Children living in Lone Parent
Households across the Service Area



Diversity

15,546 15,667 6,132

Speak a language
other than English
or Irish at home

Galway City is Ireland's most multicultural city with
18.6% of its inhabitants born outside of the country



Relative Affluence and Deprivation*

In Galway, the city is more affluent
than the county.

+4.9

+0.4

-2.4

Roscommon is marginally less
affluent than the national average.



Travellers

Galway city and County have the
2nd and 3rd highest proportion of
Travellers per total population in
the county

Between 2011 and 2016,
Roscommon had the 2nd highest
increase in Traveller population

Population of Service Area

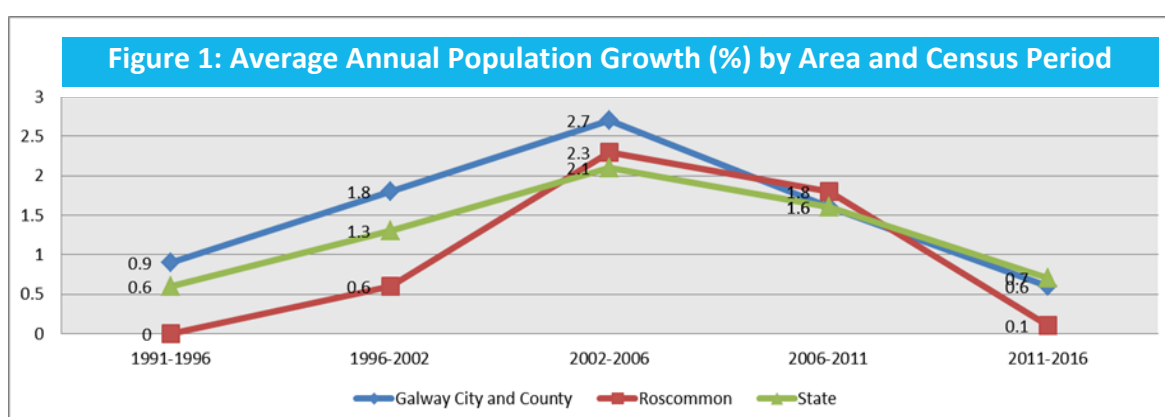
During the period 2011 to 2016, the population of Galway city grew at a faster rate (4.2%) than did the population in the surrounding county (2.4%). The percentage growth in County Roscommon during this period was significantly lower at 0.7%. The national average rate of population growth during this time was 3.8%.

Growth Trends

Bolstered by the development of Galway city, the Galway city and county area has experienced an average annual population growth of 1.7% over the period 1991 to 2016. This figure is significantly higher than the national average of 1.4%. In contrast,

County Roscommon is significantly lower than the national figure.

The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) project that the West Region, comprising counties Galway, Roscommon and Mayo will experience an average annual population growth of 0.7% during the period 2016-2040. This is slightly below the national projection of 0.8%¹¹. Notwithstanding projections for the West, as a Region, it is projected that the population of Galway city and environs will continue to grow. Ireland's National Planning Framework strategy sets a minimum target population for Galway city of 120,000 people by 2040.¹² This would represent an average annual growth rate of 1.9% for the city.



at 1%, the corresponding figure for

Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), number RS70.

¹² Government of Ireland (2018) *Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework*. Dublin: Government of Ireland.

Table 1: Population Change per Administrative Area, 2011 and 2016				
	Population 2011	Population 2016	Actual Change 11-16	% Change 11-16
Galway City	75529	78668	3139	4.2
Galway County	175124	179390	4266	2.4
Roscommon	64065	64544	479	0.7
State	4588252	4761865	173613	3.8

Source: Central Statistics Office, 2017

Relative Affluence and Deprivation

Galway city is the most affluent local authority area within the West Region and the third most affluent local authority area in the country. While the city's 2016 HP Deprivation Index Score for 2016- 4.9, is lower than the 5.2 awarded in 2011, the city is categorised as marginally above average. The most affluent areas are situated towards the west of the city, whereas parts of the city centre and city east are more disadvantaged. County Galway is the second most affluent local authority area within the West Region and is not characterised by particular extremes of affluence or deprivation. However, of its 741 small areas, 73 are classified as disadvantaged and one as extremely disadvantaged. There are some differences in the relative affluence and deprivation between various parts

of the county. The most affluent parts in County Galway are situated in the wider environs of Galway city, particularly to the West of the city. The most disadvantaged parts of the county are along the isolated west coast and in Ballinasloe.

County Roscommon experienced a drop in its relative deprivation score from -2.1 in 2011 to -2.4 in 2016. Of the 108 Electoral Divisions in County Roscommon, the majority, 71, are inclined towards deprivation; i.e. 63 are marginally below average and eight are disadvantaged. The most affluent areas are the wider environs of Boyle and Athlone (excluding the towns themselves). Overall, the western parts of the county are slightly more disadvantaged than their eastern counterparts.

Table 2: Relative HP Deprivation Index Score			
	2006	2011	2016
Galway City	2.7	5.2	4.9
Galway County	-0.3	0	0.4
Roscommon	-1.2	-2.1	-2.4

Source: Pobal, 2018

Communities experiencing higher levels of disadvantage require additional supports and services to safeguard the health and wellbeing of children.¹³

Population Speaking Languages Other Than Irish or English

Despite its smaller population, there are more people speaking a language other than English or Irish at home in the city, 15,677, than there are in the county, 15,546. A further 6,132 people in County Roscommon speak a

language other than English or Irish at home.

A further noteworthy characteristic of the data presented in Table 3 concerns the prevalence of Portuguese speakers in County Galway. There are more Portuguese speakers in County Galway, 1,212, than in Galway city and County Roscommon combined, 1,167.

Table 3: Population Usually Resident and Present in the State who Speak a Language other than English or Irish at Home by language and by City and County, 2016									
	All	Polish	French	Romanian	Lithuanian	Spanish	Russian	Portuguese	Chinese
Galway City	15677	4273	1231	623	714	883	627	594	294
Co. Galway	15546	4224	1919	346	645	681	343	1212	162
Roscommon	6132	1536	552	155	373	127	207	573	62
State	612018	135895	54948	36683	35362	32405	21707	20833	17584

Source: Central Statistics Office, 2017

¹³ Bywaters et.al (2016) 'The evidence between poverty, child abuse and neglect: an evidence view' London: JRF

Traveller Population

Census 2016 recorded 1606 people living in Galway city who identify as Irish Traveller. This represents 2.1% of the city's population. A further 2640 people, 1.49% of the population, living

in County Galway identify as Travellers. Behind County Longford, these are the second and third highest concentrations of Travellers by local authority area in Ireland.

Table 4: Irish Travellers Usually Resident and Present in the State as a Proportion of the Total Population by County and City, 2016			
		Irish Travellers	Irish Travellers per 1,000 pop
Galway City		1606	21.2
Galway County		2640	14.9
Roscommon		516	8.1
State		30987	6.6

Source: Central Statistics Office, 2017

Current Service Provision

The Child and Family Agency provides a range of internally resourced and externally contracted services to meet the needs of children and families in Galway and Roscommon. The breadth of services delivered incorporates those of a preventative nature as well as those aimed at early intervention or at addressing complex needs.

The Agency provides services at levels 2, 3 and 4 on the Hardiker Model of Intervention. In line with *Tusla's Commissioning Priorities: Working Paper 2016*, this commissioning plan uses a low/medium/high understanding of prevention and reflects the Agency's intention to adopt a progressive universalist approach.

Within the Galway and Roscommon Service Area, the Agency has a long history of providing family support services through its own family support teams as well as through partnerships and collaborations with external organisations. Coupled with a tradition of investing in training and supports for foster carers, this has

contributed to the service area having a comparatively high rate of general foster care placements and a comparatively low rate of residential and special care placements.

Child and Family Agency Referral Rates in Galway and Roscommon

Alongside the work undertaken at a whole-of-community level, the Agency is working over 2,500 open cases.

Table 5 demonstrates that, at a given time, approximately 1 in every 26 children, requires an intervention directly from the Agency. Additionally, the Agency provides services to young adults who are leaving care and to adults who are retrospectively reporting abuse.

These figures do not include beneficiaries of the work of the 8 Family Resource Centres, core-funded by the Agency, in the Service Area. In the same way, these figures do not include beneficiaries of the work of Agency-funded partner organisations in the community and voluntary sector.

Table 5: Activity Levels as at end of May 2019		
	Galway & Roscommon	% of Child Population
No. of Children (aged 0 – 18 years) Galway & Roscommon*	79912	100
No. of Cases Open to Tusla Prevention, Partnership and Family Support Services**	862	1.08
No. of Cases Open to Tusla Child Protection & Welfare Services	1293	1.62
No. of Retrospective Abuse Cases Open	81	0.10
No. of Children in Care	390	0.48
No. of Children on Child Protection Notification System**	79	0.10
No. of Young People in Receipt of Aftercare***	138	0.17
No. of Open Cases awaiting Allocation of Social Worker	42	
No. of Cases Awaiting Family Support Intervention**	277	
No. of Referrals Received for Retrospective Abuse during May 2019	10	

* Source: Central Statistics Office, 2017

** As at end of December 2018

*** As at end of March 2019

Source: Office of Child and Family Agency Information Manager, July 2019

A review of the Agency's national data shows that the number of children received into care has declined over past 5 years: from 6,454 in 2014 to 6,026 in 2018. Table 6 demonstrates that the number of children in care in Galway and Roscommon decreased in

line with national data, from 484 in 2014 to 398 at the end of 2018. There was, however, an increase in the number of children in residential care in Galway and Roscommon from 2 in 2014 to 8 in 2018.

Table 6: Children in Care Nationally and in Galway and Roscommon Service Area per Type of Care						
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total	National	6,463	6,388	6,297	6,189	6026
	Galway and Roscommon	484	404	449	441	398
Number in Residential Care	National	325	327	304	338	364
	Galway and Roscommon	2	2	5	5	8
Number in Special Care (therapeutic environments)	National	16	16	12	12	14
	Galway and Roscommon	1	1	0	0	2
Number in General Foster Care	National	4137	4137	4100	4041	3958
	Galway and Roscommon	356	307	320	317	309
Number in Relative Foster Care	National	1874	1832	1715	1661	1586
	Galway and Roscommon	123	90	82	88	76
Other (incl. respite, supported lodgings, detention centres)	National	106	109	126	137	94
	Galway and Roscommon	2	4	7	7	3

Figures 2 and 3 illustrate that a clear majority of children in care, both nationally, 66%, and in the Galway and Roscommon Service Area, 78%, are placed in General Foster Care. Nationally, a further 26% of children in care are fostered by relatives. The

corresponding figure in Galway and Roscommon is 19%. The proportion of children in Residential Care in the Galway and Roscommon Service Area, 2%, is significantly lower than the national figure of 6%.

Figure 2: Children in Care (National) by Type of Care, 2018

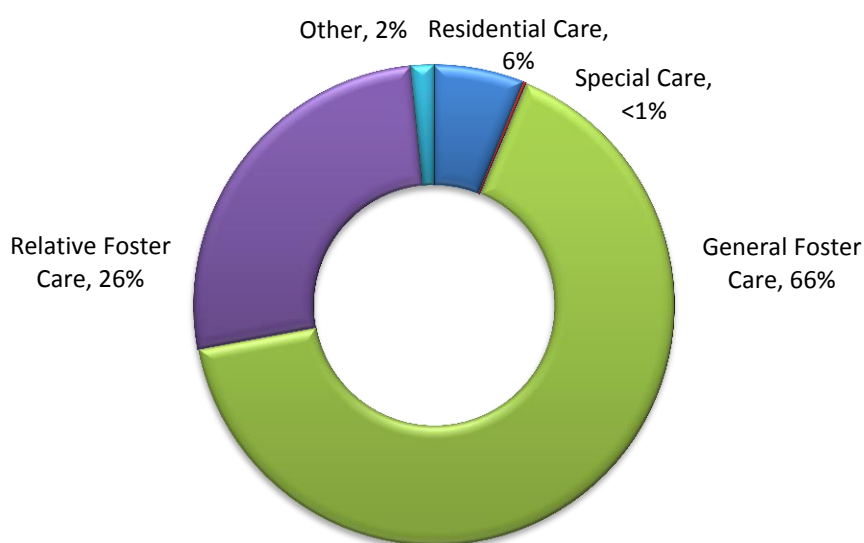
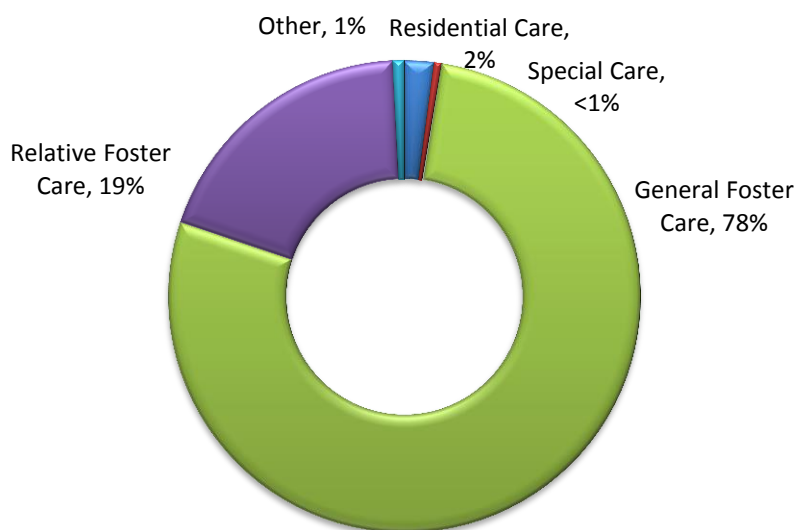


Fig 3: Children in Care (Galway and Ros) by Type of Care, 2018



Child and Family Agency Finances and Resources

The 2018 financial allocation for the Galway and Roscommon Service Area was €23,830,000. Of this, €12,220,000 was committed to pay costs (Figure 4).

Non-pay categories of costs included, but were not limited to, rents, maintenance of facilities, equipment and programme costs including those commissioned from external partners.

Figure 4: Breakdown of Costs, 2018

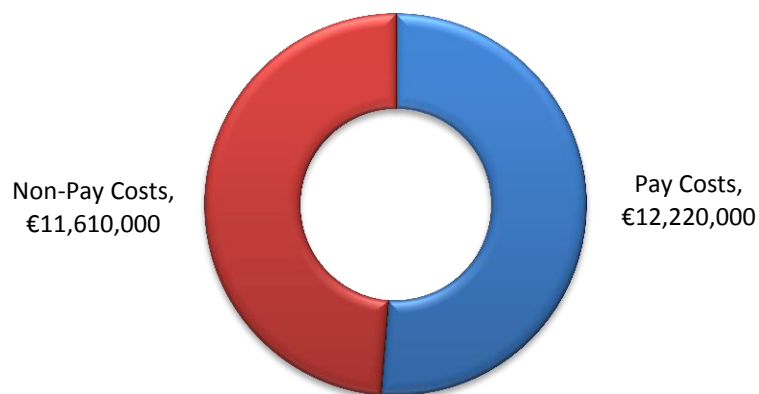
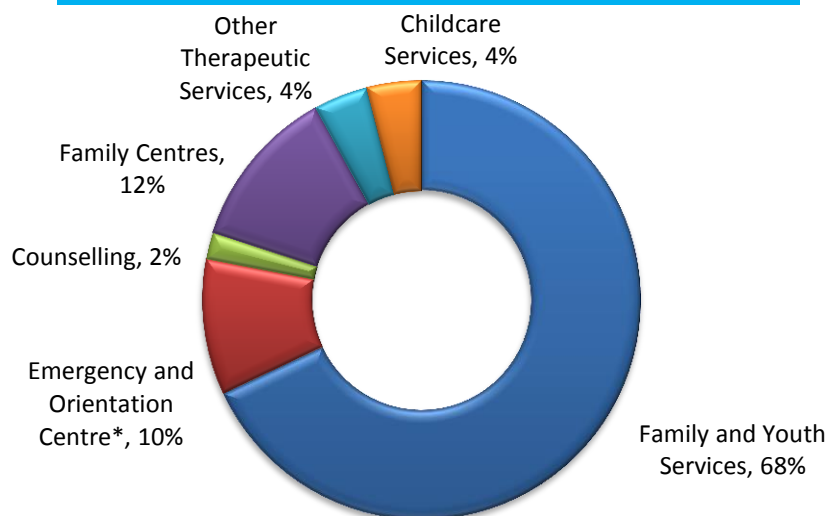


Figure 5: Services Commissioned from External Partner Organisations by Category, 2018



* Relates to specific allocation ring-fenced for expenditure related to the Emergency and Orientation Centre, Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon.

In 2018, the Agency entered into service level agreements with external partner organisations to the value of €1,804,914. Approximately 90% of this spending is committed to long-term agreements that run into 2019 and beyond.

Services commissioned from external partner organisations are varied in nature. These services are categorised by theme in Figure 5.

No substantial increase to the annual allocation received by the Galway and Roscommon Service Area is anticipated during the period considered in this plan.

Child and Family Agency Staff Resources

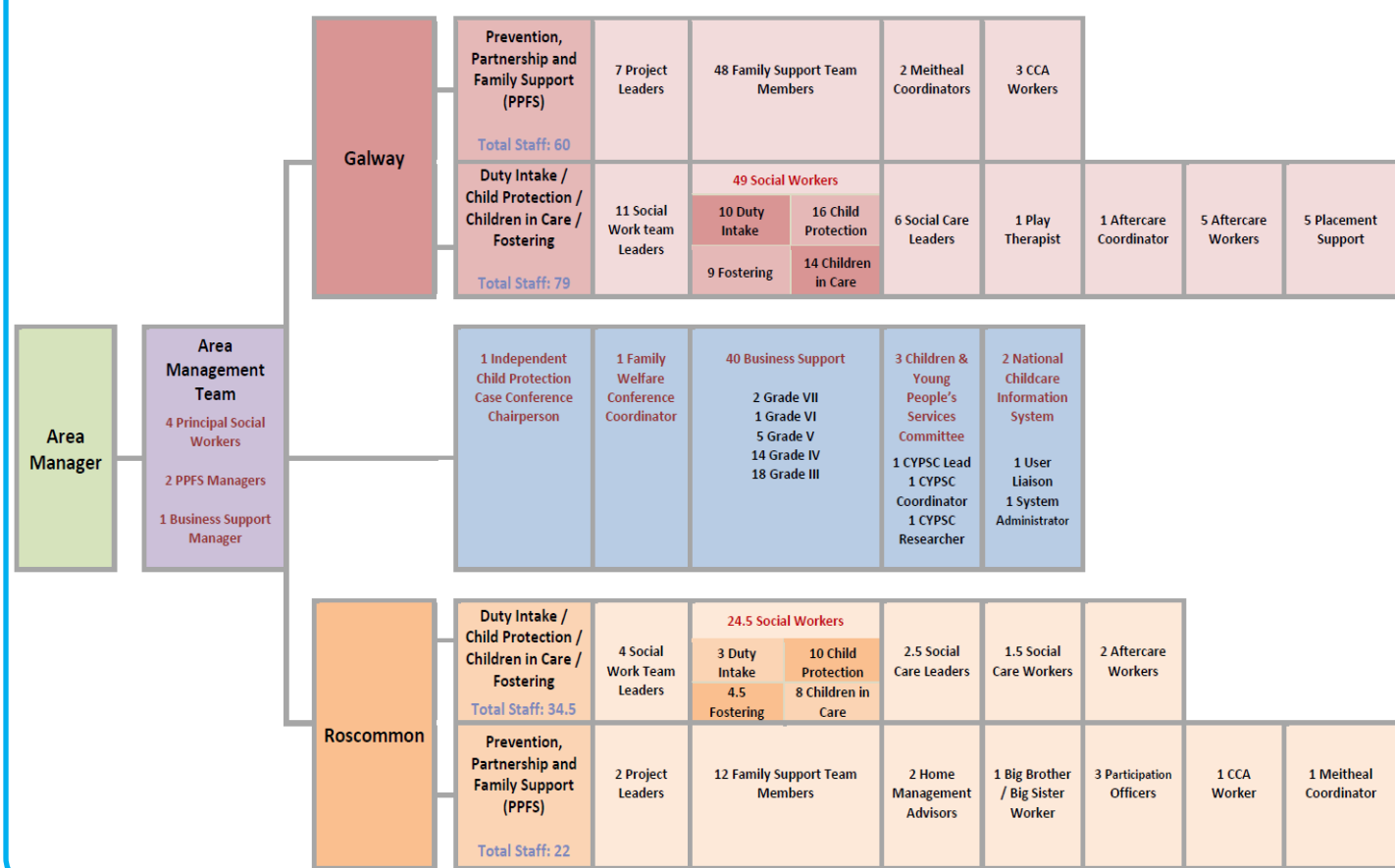
The Agency currently employs 250 staff in the Galway and Roscommon Service Area. These are managed by an Area Management Team comprising an Area Manager and 7 senior managers.

The staff structure comprises:

- 8 Social Work Child Protection Teams
- 8 Family Support Teams working across 12 Child and Family Support Network areas
- 3 Children in Care Teams
- 3 Fostering Social Work Teams
- 2 Aftercare Teams
- Local Education Welfare Officers

The Agency's staffing structure is presented in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Galway and Roscommon Service Area Staffing Structure, 2019



Strengths and Challenges of Service Provision in Galway and Roscommon

Discussion at the stakeholder consultation events in Galway and Roscommon concluded that:

- The community and voluntary sector is strong across the two counties
- That strong and positive working relationships exist between different organisations

- Geographical and thematic gaps in service delivery persist across the two counties

These conclusions are supported by the data gathered through the survey questionnaire administered to Child and Family Agency staff.

A record of findings from the principal elements of the consultation process can be viewed in Appendix 2.



Quality of Services Delivered

The standard of services delivered to children, young people and families in both counties is considered to be high.

Community and voluntary providers referred to evidence informed programmes that delivered measurable outcomes for children and families.

Specific themes that emerged during the stakeholders events included:

- Staff delivering local services are capable and demonstrate considerable expertise
- Community and voluntary services are reporting tangible outputs
- There is evidence of improved outcomes for service users
- Local statutory, community and voluntary services are reliable, flexible and accessible

Working Relationships

Collaborative networks are in place across both counties through CYPSCs and CFSNs.

There was consensus at each of the stakeholder events that these networks need to be further strengthened.

Relevant themes featuring prominently during the stakeholder events were as follows:

- Working in partnership achieves better outcomes for children and families
- Staff within the statutory and community and voluntary sectors feel enabled and supported to work together
- A greater awareness of the roles filled by individuals and organisations, alongside a greater understanding of

referral pathways, increases the beneficial potential of networking

Geographical and Thematic Gaps

A number of gaps in local service delivery were identified during the consultation events with stakeholder organisations. These gaps related to service type as well as to geographical availability.

The need to engage children and families in the design of services was recognised at each stakeholder event, as was the need to involve children and families in decision-making processes that directly affects them.

While recognising the practicality of locating specialist services in urban areas, stakeholders noted that a lack of transport services was making access to services difficult.

Specific gaps highlighted during the consultation events are identified in Appendix 2.

Pressure Points Specific to Child and Family Agency Services

Demand for services is high across the Galway and Roscommon Service Area. The following pressure points were highlighted during the consultations that informed this plan:

- Meeting the high level of need for Family Support services is creating challenges in terms of the timely delivery of services and in relation to the nature and extent of the services provided
- Assessing and responding to all reports made to local Duty Intake and Child Protection teams in line with the Children First National Guidelines is resource intensive
- Providing supports required to sustain foster placements (and achieving a better understanding of the causes for placement breakdown)
- Enhancing local capacity to provide aftercare services

5. Commissioning Priorities for Galway and Roscommon

Five priority areas for the period 2019 to 2021 have been identified for commissioning within the Galway and Roscommon Service Area. These are:

1. Supporting children growing up within minority communities
2. Responding to drugs and alcohol misuse
3. Providing safe spaces for children and young people
4. Supporting parents, guardians, foster carers and kinship carers
5. Aligning with therapeutic services

By applying the 4 locally agreed principles of commissioning as set out in Section 3, actions undertaken within these priority areas will:

- focus on early intervention
- be underpinned by collaboration and co-operation between the Agency and its partner organisations
- ensure that responses are needs-led and proportionate
- be informed by consultation with children, young people and families as stakeholders

Given their overarching nature, the Agency recognises that it is the shared responsibility of all services to address these priority areas.

In committing to this plan, the Agency is undertaking to prioritise these work areas within its own plans and structures and to ensure that any external commissioning is advancing one or more of the objectives listed below.

In prioritising these areas, the Agency seeks to achieve the best outcomes for children and families in counties Galway and Roscommon.

Figure 7: Commissioning Priorities and Locally Agreed Principles of Service Delivery



Priority Area 1: Supporting children growing up within Minority Communities

This theme was prioritised in the Galway and Roscommon stakeholder events, internal staff consultations and analysis of secondary data.

Contextual Data¹⁴

As a proportion of its resident population, Galway City is the most multi-cultural administrative area in the state with 18.6% of its residents recorded as non-Irish in 2016. County Galway, 8.4%, and County Roscommon, 10.3%, recorded percentages below the national average of 11.6%. Notwithstanding this, there are pockets within both county areas where this population is significantly above the national average: Gort (26.6%), Tuam (19.5%), Ballinasloe (15.1%), Roscommon town (22%), Loughrea (14.8%), Athenry (17.9%), Ballaghaderreen (19%).

Gort is one of the top ten most multicultural towns in Ireland with 26.6% of the population recorded as non-Irish. Just over 13% of the total population is Brazilian. There is an estimated 100 'undocumented' families living in Gort and its hinterland¹⁵.

There are two direct provision centres located in Galway City. In October 2018, there were 197 residents, comprising families and single females, in The Eglington and 159 single men in Great Western House.¹⁶ There is one Emergency Reception and Orientation Centre in Ballaghaderreen. On the 4th April 2019 there were 79 children from 28 families resident in the centre.¹⁷

The Galway Roscommon Service Area is multi-lingual. In Galway City, 15,677, people speak a language other than English or Irish. The corresponding figures for County Galway and County Roscommon are 15,546 and 6,132 people respectively.

There are 4,762 Travellers living in the Galway and Roscommon Service Area. This equates to 14.7 per 1000 of population. The corresponding national figure is 6.5 per 1000.

In Ireland, children from ethnic minority communities, including Travellers, are about seven times more likely to be subject to care proceedings than other children.¹⁸ Children from minority populations are over-represented in referrals to the Child and Family Agency. Of the 303 children in care in Galway, 84 are from the Travelling community and 44 are from other minority communities. In County Roscommon, 32 of children in care are from minority communities.¹⁹

¹⁴ Unless otherwise stated, all figures taken from Central Statistics Office (2017) *Census of Population, 2016*. [Online] Available at www.cso.ie (Accessed 13th March 2019).

¹⁵ Justice for the Undocumented (2019).

¹⁶ Reception and Integration Agency, Dept of Justice and Equality (2018) *Monthly Report: October 2018* [online] Available: <http://www.ria.gov.ie/en/RIA/October%202018%20monthly%20report%20updated%20.pdf/Files/October%202018%20monthly%20report%20updated%20.pdf>. (Accessed: 15th Feb 2019).

¹⁷ Emergency Reception and Orientation Centre, Ballaghaderreen, County Roscommon (2019) [Number of Residents], unpublished.

¹⁸ Coulter, C. (2015) *Child Care Law Reporting Project: Final Report*. Dublin: CCLRP.

¹⁹ Child and Family Agency (2019) *National Child Care National Child Care Information System (NCCIS)*, end Feb 2019.

Challenges Presenting for Services

Integration with local communities

Language and translation barriers when interacting with service providers

Transient or unsecure living arrangements resulting in delays accessing, attending or maintaining services

Increased risk of poverty and social exclusion

Increased difficulties accessing services and claiming benefits for undocumented children and families

Increased risk of poor mental and physical health

High levels of stress impacting negatively on parenting capacity

Lack of cultural competence among staff working within minority communities

The impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma

Any commissioning activity undertaken by the Child and Family Agency that relates to supporting children growing up in minority communities will advance one or more of the objectives listed below.

Commissioning Objectives

1(a) That those working with minority communities have the required knowledge, cultural competencies and capacity

1(b) That information regarding minority groups and cultures is shared through CYPSCs and CFSNs

1(c) That migrant parents better understand their children's experience of integration

1(d) That new parents participate in Parent and Toddler Groups and other peer support networks

1(e) That children from minority communities are supported to realise their potential in school

Progress toward the achievement of the commissioning priorities relating to children growing up in minority communities will be tracked by reference to the following indicator set:

Measuring Progress

Relating to Commissioning Objective 1(a): Number of staff from Tusla and Tusla supported organisations that have attended cultural competency training (local Tusla data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 1(b): Number of presentations and structured inputs relating to the needs of minority groups and cultures made at CYPSC and CFSNs (local Tusla data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 1(c): Number of parents from minority groups and cultures attending parenting programmes (local Tusla data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 1(c): Perceived supportive / unsupportive nature of relationship between Transition Year students and their parents where the parents were not raised in Ireland (Planet Youth data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 1(d): Number of parents from minority groups and cultures participating in Parent and Toddler Groups (local data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 1(e): School retention rates of children from minority groups and cultures (local Educational Welfare Services data)

Priority Area 2: Responding to Drug and Alcohol Misuse

This theme was prioritised in the Galway stakeholder event, consultations with young people, internal staff consultations and analysis of secondary data available.

Contextual Data

Drug and alcohol abuse is identified as the primary concern in between 7% and 11% of all child protection reports received by the Child and Family Agency in Galway. It is cited as a complicating factor in between 30% to 35% of all reports.²⁰

Since September 2018, the Child and Family Agency in Galway has dealt with 192 parents and 44 children / young people with a drugs or alcohol problem.²¹

Of the 71 children on the Child Protection Notification System (CPNS) in Galway, drugs and alcohol are a primary concern in 26. The CPNS records the names of children who have Child Protection Plans agreed at a Child Protection Conference. If a child has an active Child Protection Plan in place then it has been decided that the child is currently at risk of significant harm and needs support to be safe and well.²²

Of the 9 young people from Galway in residential placements, at least 7 have significant difficulties with drugs or alcohol.²³

A 2019 internal profiling exercise of 55 young people identified at serious risk of admission to care found that 11 had drugs or alcohol as the primary presenting issue.²⁴

Approximately 24 children in Galway city have been expelled from school over the past 2 years as a result of drug use or supply.²⁵

Challenges Presenting for Services

Unstable home life

Potential neglect or abuse of children

Increased risk of disrupted education

Loss of childhood for children growing up in households affected by alcohol and drugs

Increased risk of parental separation, family breakdown and care placements

Established pattern of inter-generational drug and alcohol use

²⁰ Child and Family Agency (2019) *National Child Care National Child Care Information System (NCCIS)*, end Feb 2019.

²¹ Child and Family Agency (2019) *National Child Care National Child Care Information System (NCCIS)*, end Feb 2019.

²² Child and Family Agency (2019) [Child Protection Notification System: Galway], unpublished.

²³ Child and Family Agency (2019) [Alternative Care data: Galway], unpublished.

²⁴ Child and Family Agency (2018) *Creative Communities Plan: Galway and Roscommon*, unpublished.

²⁵ Child and Family Agency (2019) [Educational Welfare Service: Galway], unpublished.

Any commissioning activity undertaken by the Child and Family Agency that relates to supporting children growing up in households affected by drugs and alcohol will advance one or more of the objectives listed below.

Commissioning Objectives

- 2(a) That regular and reliable data collection is undertaken through the Planet Youth initiative
- 2(b) That children and young people have access to primary prevention initiatives
- 2(c) That children, young people and their families have access to local counselling services
- 2(d) That all relevant services promote agreed key messages
- 2(e) That parents are supported to prevent and reduce drug and alcohol use among their children

Progress toward the achievement of the commissioning priorities relating to children growing up in households affected by drugs and alcohol will be tracked by reference to the following indicator set:

Measuring Progress

Relating to Commissioning Objective 2(a): Number of surveys collected as part of the Planet Youth initiative (Planet Youth data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 2(b): Percentage of school age-children engaging in hobbies weekly or more frequently (Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Survey data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 2(b): Percentage of Transition Year students participating in structured sports or recreational activities (Planet Youth data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 2(c): Numbers attending local counselling services (Health Service Executive data; Family Resource Centre data; other local service provider data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 2(d): Number of Consensus Statements agreed by service providers (local CYPSC data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 2(e): Numbers on parents participating on parenting courses with a specific module on drugs and alcohol (local Tusla data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 2(e): Percentage of Transition Year students who have smoked in the past 30 days; Percentage of Transition Year Students who have used an e-cigarette in the past 30 days; Percentage of Transition Year students who have taken alcohol in the past 30 days; Percentage of Transition Year students who have been drunk in the past 30 days; Percentage of Transition Year students who have used cannabis by number of times (Planet Youth data)

Priority Area 3: Child and Youth Spaces and Services

This theme was prioritised in the stakeholder events in Galway and Roscommon, consultations with young people, internal staff consultations and analysis of secondary data available.

Contextual Data²⁶

Galway Roscommon Education Training Board (GRETb) works with young people between the ages of 10 and 24 years. For this age group, GRETb funds 12 staff-led youth services and 110 volunteer-led youth clubs across Galway City, Galway County and Roscommon.

Significant gaps remain in the geographic spread of staff-led youth services.

Across the service area, there are 23,651 children aged 5 to 9 years.²⁷ This age group does not fall under the remit of the GRETb funded youth services.

Different age groups appreciate different features of the youth groups that they attend. While all age groups place most importance on meeting up with friends and other young people, younger respondents enjoy participating in activities more than older participants do.

Over a fifth, 21%, of young people who already attend youth clubs cited the need for improved youth facilities. This survey did include the views of young people living in an area where there is no youth facility.

Of the 447 young people who responded to a 2018 youth-led research project in Athenry, County Galway, 51% felt that the standard of services available to young people was either very good or good. Only 45% felt that the standard of facilities in the town was very good or good.²⁸

‘Child and Youth spaces play an important role for today’s young people in helping them to navigate the challenges they face in a highly complex society and in gaining confidence in forming a coherent sense of identity.’²⁹

²⁶ Unless otherwise stated, all data is taken from: Perez-Goodbody, R. (2019) *A Needs Analysis to Inform Youth Work Provision: Evidence Baseline Report on Children and Young People in Galway and Roscommon*. Galway and Roscommon Education Training Board: Galway.

²⁷ Central Statistics Office (2017) *Census of Population, 2016*. [Online] Available at www.cso.ie (Accessed 13th March 2019)

²⁸ Athenry Child and Family Support Network et al (2018) *Findings of a Youth-led Research Project* [Online] Available at: https://www.cypsc.ie/_fileupload/Documents/Resources/Galway/ATHENRY%20FINAL%2013th%20April.pdf (Accessed: March 13th 2019).

²⁹ Forkan, C. et al (2015) *An operational profile and exploration of the perceived benefits of the youth café model in Ireland*. Department of Children and Youth Affairs: Dublin.

Challenges Presenting for Services

Absence of safe, accessible and affordable child and young person friendly spaces across both counties

Significant geographical areas across both counties where young people do not have access to a universal youth service

Children under 10 years old cannot attend GRET funded youth services

Preventative influence of accessing supervised youth services, formal and informal, is not available to many children and young people

There is no simple, stigma-free, way for young people to access services (especially mental health services)

Services do not benefit from having casual, positive and routine connection to local children and young people

Lack of drop-in supports for young people in Aftercare

There is no suitable space to accommodate parental access to children in County Roscommon

Any commissioning activity undertaken by the Child and Family Agency that relates to the provision of safe, accessible and affordable child and youth friendly spaces will advance one or more of the objectives listed below.

Commissioning Objectives

3(a) That children and young people have access to safe, accessible and affordable child and youth friendly spaces

3(b) That children aged 5 to 9 years of age have access to services with a youth work informed methodology

3(c) That transport is recognised as an essential component of child and young people friendly services

3(d) That young people in Aftercare have access to appropriate drop-in supports

Progress toward the achievement of the commissioning priorities relating to the provision of safe, accessible and affordable child and youth friendly spaces will be tracked by reference to the following indicator set:

Measuring Progress

Relating to Commissioning Objective 3(a): Number of young people attending youth services (local Galway Roscommon Education Training Board; local Garda Diversion data; other relevant local data sources)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 3(a): Number of spaces where youth work is taking place (DCYA Service Locations and Catchment Areas mapping tool; local Galway Roscommon Education Training Board; local Garda Diversion data; other relevant local data sources)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 3(b): Number of children aged 5 – 9 years attending services with a youth work informed methodology (relevant local data sources)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 3(c): Number of local service plans that recognise and address transport needs (Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 3(c): Number of Tusla Service Level Agreements that recognise and address transport needs (local Tusla data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 3(d): Number of people in Aftercare attending drop-in service (relevant local data sources)

Priority 4: Supporting Parents, Guardians, Foster Carers and Kinship Carers

This theme was prioritised in the stakeholder events in Galway and Roscommon, internal staff consultations and analysis of secondary data available.

Contextual Data

The average age of mothers at maternity for first birth in Galway County (32 years), Galway City (32.9 years) and County Roscommon (31.3 years) are all higher than the national average of 31 years. Galway County and Galway City have the second and third highest average age of mothers at maternity for first birth in the country.³⁰

During 2017, 25 babies in County Galway, 9 babies in Galway City and 16 babies in County Roscommon were born to mothers under the age of 20 years.³¹

26.8% of the total population in County Galway is aged 0 to 17 years. The corresponding figure in County Roscommon is 25.3%. These proportions are both slightly higher than the corresponding national figure of 25%. However, in Galway City this figure is just 19.7%. This is the third lowest percentage rate in the country behind Cork City (17.2%) and Dublin City (17.8%).³²

The proportion of family types comprising married couples with children in Roscommon town (47.3%) is slightly higher than the national average of 46.6%. The towns of Castlerea (33.4%), Clifden (34.7%), Boyle (34.9%) and Loughrea (38.5%) all have significantly lower proportions of married couples with children.³³

There are 218 Foster Carers in County Galway and 67 Foster Carers in County Roscommon.³⁴

Nationally, 15.5% of family types comprise one-parent mothers with children. The towns of Clifden (21.2%), Castlerea (20.7%), Loughrea (20.2%), Gort (19.2%) and Tuam (18.2%) all have a significantly higher proportion of this family type. Galway City and Suburbs (17.4%) also has a higher than average proportion of this family type. Loughrea town also has a significantly higher proportion of lone parent fathers with children, 4%, than the national average of 2.4%.³⁵

The numbers involved in informal kinship care are unknown. Typically, kinship carers are older, less affluent and in poorer health than non-kin Foster Carers. While informal kinship carers have many similar issues to formal kinship carers they are, as a population, largely invisible.³⁶

³⁰ Central Statistics Office (2017) *Vital Statistics Yearly Summary 2017*. Available at: www.cso.ie/en/statistics/birthsdeathsandmarriages/vitalstatistics/. (Accessed: 13th March 2019).

³¹ Central Statistics Office (2017) *Vital Statistics Yearly Summary 2017*. Available at: www.cso.ie/en/statistics/birthsdeathsandmarriages/vitalstatistics/. (Accessed: 13th March 2019).

³² Central Statistics Office (2017) *Census of Population, 2016*. [Online] Available at www.cso.ie (Accessed 13th March 2019).

³³ Central Statistics Office (2017) *Census of Population, 2016*. [Online] Available at www.cso.ie (Accessed 13th March 2019).

³⁴ Child and Family Agency (2019) *National Child Care National Child Care Information System (NCCIS)*, end May 2019.

³⁵ Central Statistics Office (2017) *Census of Population, 2016*. [Online] Available at www.cso.ie (Accessed 13th March 2019).

³⁶ O'Brien, V (2012) 'Kinship Care: Enhanced Support Needed' in *Voices of the Forgotten: 30 Years of the International Foster Care Organization*. USA: IFCO Vanity.

Challenges Presenting for Services

Some parents, guardians, foster carers and kinship carers are experiencing stress and anxiety and this can impact negatively on their ability to provide safe and secure environments for children

Parenting in the context of relationship breakdown

Family Violence and its impact on children

Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences and trauma

Parents struggling to cope with challenging behaviour

Lack of access to accurate and relevant information, in multiple formats, for parents, guardians, foster carers and kinship carers

Lack of awareness of issues facing kinship carers

Any commissioning activity undertaken by the Child and Family Agency that relates to supporting parents, guardians, foster carers and kinship carers will advance one or more of the objectives listed below.

Commissioning Objectives

4(a) That parents have access to local and national online supports (www.positiveparenting.ie, www.tusla.ie and parenting24seven.ie) that promote the *50 Key Messages for Parents*³⁷

4(b) That parents can avail of peer support opportunities and parent-to-parent mentoring arrangements

4(c) That the distinctive support needs of kinship carers are identified and addressed

4(d) That services use the CFSN structure to apply a 'no wrong doors model' for parents, guardians, foster carers and kinship carers

4(e) That capacity within community-based services to provide parenting supports and to make appropriate referrals is consolidated and enhanced

³⁷ Child and Family Agency (2013) *50 Key Messages to Accompany Investing in Families: Supporting Parents to Improve Outcomes for Children*. Dublin: Child and Family Agency.

Progress toward the achievement of the commissioning priorities relating to the support of parents, guardians, foster carers and kinship carers will be tracked by reference to the following indicator set:

Measuring Progress

Relating to Commissioning Objective 4(a): Number of visitors to local website; Number of leads from local website; time spent on local website; event triggers on local website (Google Analytics)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 4(b): Number of parents attending Parent and Toddler Groups and availing of other peer supports (relevant local data sources)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 4(b): Number of parents participating in Community Mothers programme (local Tusla data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 4(c): Number of local service plans referencing kinship carers (relevant local data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 4(c): Number of staff receiving briefs / training on the distinctive needs of kinship carers (local Tusla data and other relevant local data sources)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 4(d): Number of meetings of CFSNs; Number of organisations attending CFSN meetings (local Tusla data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 4(d): Number of complaints received relating to poor referral practice (local Tusla data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 4(e): Number of appropriate referrals made by working partners to Tusla Family Support Services (local Tusla data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 4(e): Number of parenting supports indicated in Tusla Service Level Agreements (local Tusla data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 4(e): Number of Tusla staff trained in delivery of Parenting Programmes (local Tusla data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 4(e): Number of Parent Support Champions within partner organisations (relevant local data)

Priority Area 5: Aligning with Therapeutic Services

This theme was prioritised in the stakeholder events in Galway and Roscommon, internal staff consultations and analysis of secondary data available.

Contextual Data³⁸

In 2014, 25.2% of schoolchildren in the West Region (counties Galway, Roscommon and Mayo) reported being bullied at school.³⁹

There are a high number of private services offering therapy and counselling; affordable, community-based services (including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, play and art therapy) can be accessed through the network of Family Resource Centres

Therapy and counselling services in Galway and Roscommon are concentrated in urban areas with limited specialised therapeutic outreach services

In some areas of County Roscommon, access to therapy and counselling may require travelling to another county

Access to therapy and counselling offered by statutory providers usually requires a referral from a General Practitioner or a Primary Care Professional

Challenges Presenting for Services

Children and young people experiencing stress, anxiety and mental ill-health (often as a result of bullying, exam pressure, social anxiety, bereavement and parental separation)

Child and young people experiencing domestic violence

Parents, guardians, foster carers and kinship carers who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences in childhood

Waiting lists for mental health services for children and parents

Lack of awareness of impact of parental mental illness on children

Lack of perinatal mental health supports

Difficulties accessing addiction counselling

³⁸ (Unless otherwise stated) Child and Family Agency (2019) An Audit of Therapeutic Services in Galway and Roscommon. Galway: Child and Family Agency.

³⁹ Department of Health (2015) *The Health Behaviours in School Children (HBSC) Survey 2014*. Available at: <https://health.gov.ie/blog/publications/the-health-behaviours-in-school-children-hbsc-survey-2014/> (Accessed: 19th March 2019).

Any commissioning activity undertaken by the Child and Family Agency that relates to aligning with therapeutic services will advance one or more of the objectives listed below.

Commissioning Objectives

- 5(a) That there is understanding within services of different professional roles and responsibilities
- 5(b) That there is an increase in the nature and extent of therapeutic services available through community-based organisations
- 5(c) That access to counselling services for children, young people and parents is improved
- 5(d) That services promote positive infant mental health
- 5(e) That services adopt a whole-of-family approach to dealing with mental illness

Progress toward the achievement of the commissioning priorities relating to furthering alignment with therapeutic services will be tracked by reference to the following indicator set:

Measuring Progress

Relating to Commissioning Objective 5(a): Number of meetings of CFSNs; Number of organisations attending CFSN meetings (local Tusla data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 5(a): Number of Service Profiles shared on www.positiveparenting.ie (local Tusla data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 5(b): Numbers attending therapeutic services in FRCS (SPEAK FRC data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 5(c): Numbers attending counselling services in FRCS (SPEAK FRC data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 5(c): Number of hours of therapy purchased by Tusla for service users (local Tusla data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 5(c): Percentage of children who report high life satisfaction (Health Behaviour in School-aged Children)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 5(c): Transition Year students' self-identified standard of mental health (Planet Youth data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 5(d): Implementation of Infant Mental Health related actions in Galway City Early Years Health and Wellbeing Plan, County Galway Early Years Health and Wellbeing Plan and Roscommon Early Years Health and Wellbeing Plan (relevant local data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 5(e): Number of staff trained in Family Talk, or similar, programme (relevant local data)

Relating to Commissioning Objective 5(e): Percentage reduction in transfers from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services to Adult Mental Health services

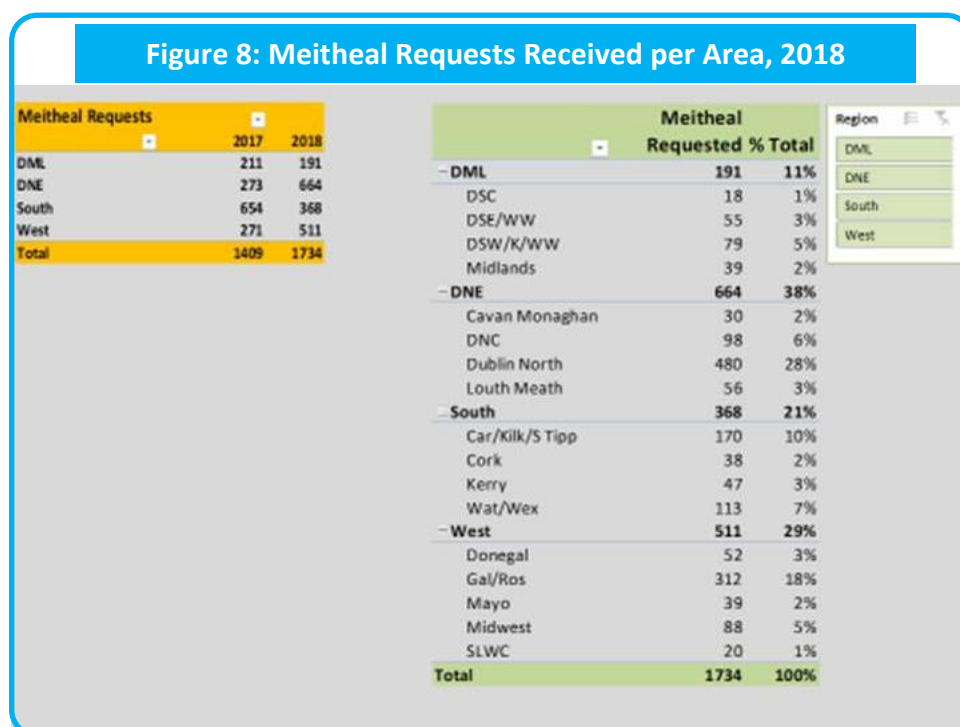
6. Identified Models of Practice

Meitheal, Tulsa-led National Practice Model

Meitheal is the national practice model for co-ordinating service provision to children and families who require early intervention and multi-agency intervention but who do not meet the threshold for referral to the Social Work Department under Children First. A Meitheal can be led by either a community, voluntary or statutory organisation. The Meitheal model enables services to communicate and

work together more effectively so that a range of expertise, knowledge and skills can be applied to meet the needs of the child and family within their community.

As seen in Figure 8, the Galway and Roscommon Service Area recorded 312 requests for Meitheals during 2018. This equates to 18% of all Meitheal requests in the country; the second highest level of activity recorded by any service area.



Source: National PPFS Programme Office

Local collaborative and evidence informed programmes

Since 2014, three evidence informed programmes have been developed by the Agency, and its partner organisations, in the Galway and Roscommon Service Area.

The Adolescent Support Project, Roscommon

This project is designed for young people who have a high level of need and are at risk of entering the care system. Participants usually present with a history of previous service involvement often characterised by poor engagement. The project employs a holistic, strengths based, approach that engages participants and their families. The approach encompasses relationship-based practices, the development and promotion of life skills, problem solving and resilience building. Physical activity and the accessing the outdoor environment are a key feature of the programme.

The project is managed jointly by the Agency and Foróige and is coordinated

by 2 project staff.⁴⁰ Elements of project delivery are undertaken by outdoor pursuit centres and the project is linked to the Erasmus programme. Currently, 18 young people are participating on the project.

Dúshlán, Galway

[meaning 'Challenge' in Irish]

Established in 2017, Dúshlán is a personal development programme designed to run for 10 months that targets 15 to 17 years olds at risk of coming into care.

It was developed by the Child and Family Agency in partnership with Foróige and Galway Roscommon Education Training Board / Petersburg Outdoor Education and Training Centre. The programme aims to challenge young people's attitude to authority, education, peers, society and family. It encourages participants to reflect on their personal responsibility and behaviour. Participants experience new and challenging outdoor activities and are given the opportunity to gain level 4 QQI qualifications in a number of subjects. As part of the programme the participants take part in

⁴⁰ Overview of Roscommon Adolescent Support Project, Tusla June 18

weekly group work sessions, 1 to 1 sessions with their assigned mentor and regular reviews with their link worker.

What young people and their parents had to say about *Dúshlán* in 2017

"My son had anxiety, depression and low self-esteem going into the group. It has changed his life (and mine)"

"Overall this was a great experience and I am so glad I was chosen for it"

Click to see more on *Dúshlán*:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXGs3UbZHCo>

7. Support to Partner Organisations

The Child and Family Agency in Galway and Roscommon will provide regular and ongoing support to contracted services including annual meetings with the Interim Area Manager and frequent review meetings with Prevention, Partnership and Family Support managers in Galway and Roscommon.

Queries in relation to Service Level Agreements should be directed to:

Galway:

susan.forde@tusla.ie

Roscommon:

georgina.kilcoyne@tusla.ie

Appendix 1: Area Commissioning Team

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Peggy Ryan

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Helen Kelly

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Advised by:

Mark Molloy

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Julie O'Donnell

Principal Social Worker,
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Appendix 2: Findings of Consultation Process

Tusla Staff Survey

Between the 31st January to 15th of February 2019, 68 staff of the Child and Family Agency in Galway and Roscommon completed an anonymous online survey questionnaire. The questionnaire can be viewed at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/V7FK72J>

Summary of Roscommon Tusla Staff Responses

Minority Groups	Young People's Mental Health	Drugs and Alcohol	Domestic Violence	Specific Age Groups	Specific Services Needed
Syrian Refugees	preventative services for young people who are caught up in problem of social media use; children's addiction to technology at a very young age and how this is impacting on all areas	Families affected by alcohol and drugs seems to be on the increase.	DV families	Very little being offered to individuals under the age of 12 in relation to mental health awareness, or groups for them to attend	Admin support for Social Workers
Multi cultural needs	Online sexual activity/ child abuse. Online activities like bullying etc		DV against males	Young People leaving care and lack of housing	Parenting in all families Families involved with HSE(Medical), CAMHS
Immigration families A large amount of slovakians have arrived in roscommon and could do with more resources Multi-cultural communities Asylum seekers in area 2/1/2019 10:30 AM	I am finding that I my work with young people is mainly around area of mental health, anxiety/stress. If there is more funding allocated to prevention I believe this would reduce.				lack of child psychology services in north Roscommon. getting services/ parenting into little villages and town where there is no transport In the small villages and towns children that are not into football need access to STEM programmes etc.
the different nationalities that have now moved into the area no English and their family lives start at a very early age and this is having an affect all around school family life parenting etc	Anxiety caused by Social Media				
INTEGRATION AND SERVICES					

Summary of Galway Tusla Staff Responses

Minority Communities	Minority Communities Homelessness/ Direct Provision	Trauma/ Therapy Services	Specific populations	Specific areas	Other
diversity of cultural and ethnic groups	Children of families now in Direct Provision Centres and Emergency Accommodation for Homeless.	The impact on Trauma on young children and their development; and the extent to which this then impacts on services at a later time	children of foster carers lone parents, youth mental health	Galway City - Ballinfolle/Headford Road area not served by Tusla family support. Should have family support base in area due to social disadvantage, growing population in area and lack of other services.	Placing exercise equipment/ machines in public areas as happens in other countries
migrant families, new communities- children now becoming teenagers - lack of services in certain areas undocumented Families Traveller Community	parenting programmes for mainstreamed homeless families children being cared for by families ie grandparetns, older siblings, aunts etc without support from agencies	child sexual abuse community therapy services - a variety of different therapy interventions should be explored and funded	early intervention Needs of adolescents when family/care placements are breaking down	Also Gort/south galway area due to amount of undocumented brazilians, poverty and labour market exploitation	Need to be able to make Tusla referrals to Childcare Community Subvention Schemes - there is currently no budget allocated to this
Undocumented and Non national families - both of EU and Non EU origin	Children of families now in Direct Provision Centres and Emergency Accommodation for Homeless.	All ASD assessments are now being referred to Athenry where there is a long waiting list (I believe it is well over a year) A lot of parents have to have this assessment done privately but unfortunately most parents can not afford this	Siblings relative groups in care		
Consideration needs to be given to undocumented children/ children from non EU countries in care. The uncertainty in relation to their status generates stress for both the yp and impacts placement stability.		Vulnerable children leaving care. Children with complex trauma needs who are in care. We need well resourced care packages for children with complex needs as in more cooperation from psychology and camhs..	Isolated populations in rural areas - neglect b virtue of a lack of services or equitable access to same		

Collaborative Networks are in place but need to be strengthened and supported

- More joined up thinking and co-ordination needed
- Statutory and non-statutory agencies working together provides good support to those staff working within these organisations
- Willingness to work together in partnership, which achieves better outcomes for children & families
- Gaps in service provision and overlap should be avoided

Quality Services offer better outcomes for children and families

- Responsiveness of staff
- Tangible Outputs
- Improved Outcomes
- Reliable and Accessible Services
- Service user voice and participation should be promoted

Needs Analysis of Current and Future Populations of children and Families	Future proofing the plan	Evaluation and review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •More specialised and therapeutic resources •Community supports – Psychology/SLT/OT/Play Therapy (waiting lists) •Limited drug and alcohol services for parents, guardians, foster carers and kinship carers and children. •Homelessness •Undocumented families. •Future parents – Children in Care •ACEs – Target Population •Families with complex needs including mental health issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Need to implement joint working protocol between Tusla/HSE •Robust needs analysis •More clear guidelines on interagency work •Analyse – Plan – Review – do •Clear identified needs. •Commitment from services/professionals and clear roles/expectations •Shared use of resources •Clarity of roles within the areas •Opportunity to address, resource, divide •Joint working with other non Tusla services •Bringing together of similar services •Consultation •Listen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Joined up thinking – shared understandings – on-going continuous review •Consensus agreement with partners about plan. •Sharing of data to inform evaluation •Agreeing protocols and expectation in advance •Evaluate interagency processes with children and families at the centre •Agree Models of Practice. •What practiced things can be applied to generic themes •Use of pilot area for cohesive programme/joint planning/Identification of gaps/awareness/open communication