

Citizens Information Phone Service (CIPS)

2023 Annual Statistical Summary

Caller Summary

The following is a summary of the Citizens Information Phone Service (CIPS) caller statistical data for 2023 (1st January – 31^s December 2023).

Caller - Type of Contact

There were **135,477** calls answered by CIPS during 2023. Calls to CIPS decreased by 1.7% compared to 2022.

Table 1: CIPS Type of Contact in 2023

| Caller Type | Number of Callers (Q1 2023) | % Of Callers |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Telephone | 133,258 | 98.36% |
| Web Chats | 1,981 | 1.46% |
| Social Media Enquiries | 238 | 0.18% |

Call Category Types by Main Category

The Table below sets out the main categories of enquiry for the categorised¹ call types. Of the total calls categorised, 39.1% were related to *Social Welfare*, followed by *Employment* (14.2%) and then *Housing* (8.6%).

The table below sets out the number of calls answered across the main call category areas in 2023.

¹ 39.6% of total calls to CIPS in 2023 which were answered were not categorised under specific subject matter areas i.e. 51,587 calls.

Table 2: Main Category of Calls answered by CIPS in 2023

| Main Caller Category | Number of Callers in 2023 | % of all Callers | % Change 2022 vs 2023 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Social Welfare | 31,982 | 39.1% | -3.5% |
| Employment | 11,595 | 14.2% | -6.4% |
| Housing | 7,025 | 8.6% | -1.3% |
| Money and Tax | 6,208 | 7.6% | +14.1% |
| Moving Country | 5,237 | 6.4% | +8.6% |
| Health | 3,538 | 4.3% | -4.7% |
| Consumer Affairs | 2,731 | 3.3% | -9.0% |
| Justice | 2,621 | 3.2% | +2.9% |
| Travel and Recreation | 2,488 | 3.0% | -32.2% |
| Local | 2,197 | 2.7% | -50.9% |
| Birth Family and Relationship | 2,044 | 2.5% | -13.7% |
| Education and Training | 1,511 | 1.8% | -4.7% |
| Death and Bereavement | 930 | 1.1% | -14.0% |
| Ukraine | 419 | 0.5% | +310.8% |
| Covid-19 | 366 | 0.4% | -92.2% |
| Environment | 323 | 0.4% | +28.2% |
| Budget 2024 | 446 | 0.5% | -12.5% |
| Government in Ireland | 229 | 0.3% | -2.1% |
| Total of categorised calls | 81,890 | | |

Caller Sub-Category Breakdown

The following tables provides a more detailed breakdown of call numbers for the five most queried sub-categories during 2023 - Social Welfare, Employment, Housing, Money & Tax and Moving Country. This breakdown is based on categorised calls only (61.4% of total callers). The top five categories make up 75.8% of all call types.

Social Welfare callers by sub-category

CIPS answered 31,982 calls relating to **Social Welfare** issues in 2023 - that is, 39.1% of all callers and the highest area of enquiry. The sub-category *Claiming a Social Welfare Payment* was the most queried topic in this category with *Disability and Illness* and then *Carers* being the next most queried.

Table 3: Breakdown of Social Welfare Call Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in 2023

| Call Category | Call Sub-category | Number of Callers | % Of Social Welfare Callers |
|----------------|---|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Social Welfare | Claiming a Social Welfare Payment | 5,958 | 18.6% |
| Social Welfare | Disability and Illness | 4,791 | 15.0% |
| Social Welfare | Carers | 4,603 | 14.4% |
| Social Welfare | Families and Children | 2,712 | 8.5% |
| Social Welfare | Older and Retired People | 2,683 | 8.4% |
| Social Welfare | Extra Social Welfare Benefits | 2,269 | 7.1% |
| Social Welfare | Unemployed People Job Seekers Allowance | 1,413 | 4.4% |
| Social Welfare | Other | 1,282 | 4.0% |
| Social Welfare | Unemployed People Jobseekers Benefit | 1,253 | 3.9% |
| Social Welfare | Back to Education | 986 | 3.1% |
| Social Welfare | Supplementary Welfare Schemes | 794 | 2.5% |
| Social Welfare | Social Insurance (PRSI) | 583 | 1.8% |
| Social Welfare | Social Welfare Payments and Work | 583 | 1.8% |
| Social Welfare | Appeals | 436 | 1.4% |
| Social Welfare | Means Test for Social Welfare Payments | 433 | 1.4% |
| Social Welfare | Death Related Benefits | 349 | 1.1% |
| Social Welfare | Activation Schemes Education and Training | 342 | 1.1% |
| Social Welfare | Rent Supplement | 147 | 0.5% |
| Social Welfare | Unemployed People | 135 | 0.4% |
| Social Welfare | Social Welfare Miscellaneous | 108 | 0.3% |
| Social Welfare | Social Assistance Payments | 74 | 0.2% |
| Social Welfare | Farmers | 47 | 0.1% |
| Social Welfare | Mortgage Interest Supplement (MIS) | 1 | 0.0% |
| | Total Social Welfare Calls | 31,982 | |

Employment callers by sub-category

CIPS answered 11,595 calls relating to **Employment** in 2023 - that is, 14.2% of all calls which were categorised and represents the 2nd highest subject matter area. The sub-category, *Employment Rights and Conditions* was, by far, the most significant area of concern at 87% of all Employment-related calls.

Table 4: Breakdown of Employment Call Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in 2023

| Call Category | Call Sub-category | Number of Callers | % of Employment Callers |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Employment | Employment Rights and Conditions | 10,088 | 87.0% |
| Employment | Unemployment and Redundancy | 532 | 4.6% |
| Employment | Self-Employment | 275 | 2.4% |
| Employment | Employment Schemes and Internship | 145 | 1.3% |
| Employment | Employment and Disability | 130 | 1.1% |
| Employment | Other | 130 | 1.1% |
| Employment | Enforcement and Redress | 93 | 0.8% |
| Employment | Migrant Workers | 60 | 0.5% |
| Employment | Types of Employment | 37 | 0.3% |
| Employment | Starting Work and Changing Job | 34 | 0.3% |
| Employment | Equality in Work | 29 | 0.3% |
| Employment | Retirement | 23 | 0.2% |
| Employment | Part Time Employment | 13 | 0.1% |
| Employment | Appeals (Enforcement) | 6 | 0.1% |
| | Total Employment Calls | 11,595 | |

Housing callers by sub-category

CIPS answered 7,025 calls relating to Housing issues during 2023 - that is, 8.6% of all caller queries that were categorised. The sub-categories of *Local Authority and Social Housing*, *Renting a Home* and *Housing Grants and Schemes* accounted for over 78% of all Housing-related calls.

Table 5: Breakdown of Housing Call Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in 2023

| Call Category | Call Sub-Category | Number Of Callers | % Of Housing Callers |
|---------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Housing | Local Authority and Social Housing | 1,914 | 27.2% |
| Housing | Renting a Home | 1,845 | 26.3% |
| Housing | Housing Grants and Schemes | 1,742 | 24.8% |
| Housing | Buying a Home | 441 | 6.3% |
| Housing | Other | 387 | 5.5% |
| Housing | Homelessness | 295 | 4.2% |
| Housing | Planning Permission | 161 | 2.3% |
| Housing | Emergency Accommodation | 116 | 1.7% |
| Housing | Building or Altering a Home | 65 | 0.9% |
| Housing | Losing your Home | 59 | 0.8% |
| | Total Housing Calls | 7,025 | |

Money & Tax callers by sub-category

CIPS answered 6,208 calls relating to **Money & Tax** issues during 2023 - that is, 7.6% of all subject categorised callers, with the vast majority of these calls relating to *Income Tax Credits and Reliefs* and *Income Tax* queries, these account for 59.2% of the calls.

Table 6: Breakdown of Money & Tax Call by Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in 2023

| Call Category | Call Sub-category | # of Callers | % of Money & Tax Callers |
|---------------|--|--------------|--------------------------|
| Money & Tax | Income Tax Credits and Reliefs | 1,965 | 31.7% |
| Money & Tax | Income Tax | 1,712 | 27.6% |
| Money & Tax | Capital Taxes | 510 | 8.2% |
| Money & Tax | Duties and VAT | 367 | 5.9% |
| Money & Tax | Housing taxes and reliefs | 306 | 4.9% |
| Money & Tax | Other | 283 | 4.6% |
| Money & Tax | Debt | 258 | 4.2% |
| Money & Tax | Property Taxes | 172 | 2.8% |
| Money & Tax | Financial Institutions | 165 | 2.7% |
| Money & Tax | Insurance | 140 | 2.3% |
| Money & Tax | Moving Country and Taxation | 102 | 1.6% |
| Money & Tax | Pensions | 94 | 1.5% |
| Money & Tax | Loans and Credit | 51 | 0.8% |
| Money & Tax | Consumer Protection Code and Mortgages | 27 | 0.4% |
| Money & Tax | Wills | 20 | 0.3% |
| Money & Tax | Savings and Investments | 18 | 0.3% |
| Money & Tax | Universal Social Charge (USC) | 11 | 0.2% |
| Money & Tax | Tax on Savings and Investments | 7 | 0.1% |
| Money & Tax | Total Money & Tax Calls | 6,208 | |

Moving Country callers by sub-category

CIPS answered 5,237 calls relating to **Moving Country** during 2023 - that is, 6.4% of all categorised callers, with *Irish Citizenship*, *Irish Residence Permit Applications and Renewals* and *Immigration Office* queries being the most common topics within this category.

Table 7: Breakdown of Moving Country Call Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in 2023

| Call Category | Call Sub-Category | Number of Callers | % of Health Callers |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Moving Country | Irish Citizenship | 1,523 | 29.1% |
| Moving Country | IRP Applications and Renewals | 959 | 18.3% |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-------|
| Moving Country | Immigration Office | 946 | 18.1% |
| Moving Country | Moving to Ireland | 686 | 13.1% |
| Moving Country | Visa | 341 | 6.5% |
| Moving Country | Family Reunification | 234 | 4.5% |
| Moving Country | Moving Abroad | 166 | 3.2% |
| Moving Country | Other | 149 | 2.8% |
| Moving Country | Asylum Seekers and Refugees | 118 | 2.3% |
| Moving Country | Leave to Remain | 78 | 1.5% |
| Moving Country | Ukraine | 37 | 0.7% |
| | Total Moving Country Calls | 5,237 | |

Calls by Sub-category - Top Five areas.

This table provides a breakdown of the five most queried sub-categories from the 81,890 categorised calls to CIPS during 2023, with *Employment Rights and Condition* receiving the highest level of calls - followed by various Social Welfare topics.

Table 8: Most Queried Sub-Categories received by CIPS in 2023

| Call Category | Call sub-category | Number of Callers | % of all categorised Calls |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Employment | Employment Rights and Conditions | 10,088 | 12.3% |
| Social Welfare | Claiming a Social Welfare Payment | 5,958 | 7.3% |
| Social Welfare | Disability and Illness | 4,791 | 5.9% |
| Social Welfare | Carers | 4,603 | 5.6% |
| Social Welfare | Families and Children | 2,712 | 3.3% |

Social Policy Feedback

In addition to collecting data on callers' queries, CIPS Information Officers also identify 'Social Policy Returns' (SPRs) - that is, instances that are indicative of a wider policy or administrative concern that is impacting on the caller ability to access a social or public service. These SPRs provide CIB with useful, anonymised case study material that can 'get behind' the statistics and demonstrate how policy (and the administration of policy) can impact on peoples' lives. Staff in CIPS the national phone service are well-placed to identify and record these issues, many of which will arise repeatedly and will have a significant impact on callers.

The table below provides an indication of the key areas where Information Officers identified that difficulties were arising for callers during 2023, of which 92.6% were concerned with issues relating to *Social Welfare, Money & Tax, Housing, Moving Country, and Health*.

Table 9: Social Policy Returns by Main Category (as percentage) received by CIPS in 2023

| Main Caller Category | % of SPRs |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Social Welfare | 27.4% |
| Money and Tax | 22.6% |
| Housing | 18.6% |
| Moving Country | 13.2% |
| Health | 10.8% |
| Others | 7.4% |