# **Citizens Information Phone Service (CIPS)**

# **Quarterly Statistical Summary - Q4 2023**

## **Caller Summary**

The following is a summary of the Citizens Information Phone Service (CIPS) caller statistical data for Quarter 3 2023 (1st October 2023 – 31st December 2023).

### **Caller - Type of Contact**

There were **31,130** calls answered by CIPS during Q4, 2023.

*Table 1: CIPS Type of Contact Q4 2023*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Caller Type | Number of Callers (Q4 -2023) | % Of Callers |
| Telephone | **30,588** | 98.2% |
| Web Chats | **492** | 1.6% |
| Social Media Enquiries | **50** | 0.2% |

### **Call Category Types by Main Category**

The Table below sets out the main categories of enquiry for the categorised call types.[[1]](#footnote-1). Of the total calls categorised, 38.9% were related to *Social Welfare*, followed by *Employment* (13.9%) and then *Housing* (8.3%).

The table below sets out the number of calls answered across the main call category areas in Q4 2023.

*Table 2: Main Category of Calls answered by CIPS in Q4 2023*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Main Caller Category | Number of Callers in 2023 (Q4) | % of all Callers | Q4 ’22 – Q4 ‘23  % Change |
| Social Welfare | 6851 | 38.9% | -1.8% |
| Employment | 2447 | 13.9% | -0.9% |
| Money and Tax | 1464 | 8.3% | 1.7% |
| Housing | 1341 | 7.6% | -0.4% |
| Moving Country | 1210 | 6.9% | 2.6% |
| Health | 736 | 4.2% | 0.5% |
| Consumer Affairs | 625 | 3.6% | -0.1% |
| Justice | 576 | 3.3% | 0.5% |
| Local | 508 | 2.9% | -0.6% |
| Travel and Recreation | 453 | 2.6% | 0.1% |
| Birth Family and Relationship | 397 | 2.3% | 0.1% |
| Education and Training | 306 | 1.7% | 0.3% |
| Budget 2024 | 243 | 1.4% | -1.1% |
| Death and Bereavement | 198 | 1.1% | 0.1% |
| Ukraine | 83 | 0.5% | 0.0% |
| Environment | 82 | 0.5% | 0.2% |
| Government in Ireland | 50 | 0.3% | 0.1% |
| Covid-19 | 33 | 0.2% | -1.1% |
| Total of categorised calls | **17,603** |  |  |

## **Caller Sub-Category Breakdown**

The following tables provides a more detailed breakdown of call numbers for the five most queried sub-categories during Q4 - *Social Welfare, Employment, Money and Tax, Housing,* and *Moving Country*. This breakdown is based on categorised calls only (75.6% of total callers).

### **Social Welfare callers by sub-category**

CIPS answered **6,851** calls relating to **Social Welfare** issues in Q4 2023 - that is, 38.9% 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 (as it was in Q4 2022), with *Disability and Illness* and *Carers* being the next most queried.

*Table 3: Breakdown of Social Welfare Call Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in Q4 2023*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Call Category | Call Sub-category | Number of Callers | % Of Social Welfare Callers |
| Social Welfare | Claiming a Social Welfare Payment | 1,072 | 15.6% |
| Social Welfare | Disability and Illness | 1,032 | 15.1% |
| Social Welfare | Carers | 690 | 10.1% |
| Social Welfare | Extra Social Welfare Benefits | 595 | 8.7% |
| Social Welfare | Families and Children | 591 | 8.6% |
| Social Welfare | Older and Retired People | 576 | 8.4% |
| Social Welfare | Back to Education | 314 | 4.6% |
| Social Welfare | Unemployed People Job Seekers Allowance | 307 | 4.5% |
| Social Welfare | Appeals | 291 | 4.2% |
| Social Welfare | Unemployed People Jobseekers Benefit | 280 | 4.1% |
| Social Welfare | Other | 263 | 3.8% |
| Social Welfare | Supplementary Welfare Schemes | 188 | 2.7% |
| Social Welfare | Social Insurance (PRSI) | 130 | 1.9% |
| Social Welfare | Social Welfare Payments and Work | 124 | 1.8% |
| Social Welfare | Activation Schemes Education and Training | 102 | 1.5% |
| Social Welfare | Means Test for Social Welfare Payments | 94 | 1.4% |
| Social Welfare | Unemployed People | 62 | 0.9% |
| Social Welfare | Death Related Benefits | 59 | 0.9% |
| Social Welfare | Rent Supplement | 26 | 0.4% |
| Social Welfare | Social Assistance Payments | 24 | 0.4% |
| Social Welfare | Social Welfare Miscellaneous | 23 | 0.3% |
| Social Welfare | Farmers | 8 | 0.1% |
|  | **Total Social Welfare Calls** | **6,851** |  |

### **Employment callers by sub-category**

CIPS answered **2,447** calls relating to **Employment** that is, 13.9% 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 with 87.3% of all Employment-related calls.

*Table 4: Breakdown of Employment Call Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in Q4 2023*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Call Category | Call Sub-category | Number of Callers | % of Employment Callers |
| Employment | Employment Rights and Conditions | 2,137 | 87.3% |
| Employment | Unemployment and Redundancy | 118 | 4.8% |
| Employment | Self-Employment | 59 | 2.4% |
| Employment | Employment and Disability | 37 | 1.5% |
| Employment | Other | 31 | 1.3% |
| Employment | Employment Schemes and Internship | 21 | 0.9% |
| Employment | Migrant Workers | 13 | 0.5% |
| Employment | Types of Employment | 7 | 0.3% |
| Employment | Starting Work and Changing Job | 6 | 0.2% |
| Employment | Appeals (Enforcement) | 5 | 0.2% |
| Employment | Enforcement and Redress | 5 | 0.2% |
| Employment | Retirement | 5 | 0.2% |
| Employment | Part Time Employment | 2 | 0.1% |
| Employment | Equality in Work | 1 | 0.0% |
|  | **Total Employment Calls** | **2,447** |  |

**Money & Tax callers by sub-category**

CIPS answered **1,464** calls relating to **Money & Tax** that is, 8.3% of all subject categorised callers, with most of these calls relating to *Income Tax Credits* & *Reliefs and Income Tax,* which represents 54.8% of all Money and Tax calls.

*Table 6: Breakdown of Money & Tax Call by Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in Q4 2023*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Call Category | Call Sub-Category | Number of Callers | % of Health Callers |
| Money & Tax | Income Tax Credits and Reliefs | 432 | 29.5% |
| Money & Tax | Income Tax | 370 | 25.3% |
| Money & Tax | Capital Taxes | 132 | 9.0% |
| Money & Tax | Housing taxes and reliefs | 104 | 7.1% |
| Money & Tax | Debt | 69 | 4.7% |
| Money & Tax | Other | 68 | 4.6% |
| Money & Tax | Property Taxes | 56 | 3.8% |
| Money & Tax | Duties and VAT | 48 | 3.3% |
| Money & Tax | Moving Country and Taxation | 38 | 2.6% |
| Money & Tax | Financial Institutions | 37 | 2.5% |
| Money & Tax | Insurance | 35 | 2.4% |
| Money & Tax | Consumer Protection Code and Mortgages | 21 | 1.4% |
| Money & Tax | Pensions | 21 | 1.4% |
| Money & Tax | Loans and Credit | 12 | 0.8% |
| Money & Tax | Universal Social Charge (USC) | 7 | 0.5% |
| Money & Tax | Tax on Savings and Investments | 5 | 0.3% |
| Money & Tax | Wills | 5 | 0.3% |
| Money & Tax | Savings and Investments | 4 | 0.3% |
|  | **Total Money & Tax Calls** | **1,464** |  |

### **Housing callers by sub-category**

CIPS answered **1,341** calls relating to **Housing** issues this quarter - that is, 7.6% of all caller queries that were categorised. The sub-categories of *Local Authority and Social Housing*, *Housing Grants, Renting a Home* and *Housing Grants and Schemes* accounted for 76.6% of all Housing-related calls.

*Table 5: Breakdown of Housing Call Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in Q4 2023*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Call Category | Call Sub-Category | Number Of Callers | % Of Housing Callers |
| Housing | Local Authority and Social Housing | 353 | 26.3% |
| Housing | Renting a Home | 350 | 26.1% |
| Housing | Housing Grants and Schemes | 324 | 24.2% |
| Housing | Buying a Home | 92 | 6.9% |
| Housing | Other | 74 | 5.5% |
| Housing | Emergency Accommodation | 62 | 4.6% |
| Housing | Homelessness | 32 | 2.4% |
| Housing | Planning Permission | 25 | 1.9% |
| Housing | Building or Altering a Home | 21 | 1.6% |
| Housing | Losing your Home | 8 | 0.6% |
|  | **Total Housing Calls** | **1,341** |  |

### **Moving Country callers by sub-category**

CIPS answered **1,210** calls relating to **Moving Country** during this quarter - that is, 6.9% of all categorised callers, with *Irish Citizenship, Irish Residence Permit (IRP) Applications and Renewals* and *Immigration Office queries* being the most popular topics within this.

*Table 7: Breakdown of Moving Country Call Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in Q4 2023*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Call Category | Call Sub-Category | Number of Callers | % of Health Callers |
| Moving Country | Irish Citizenship | 353 | 29.2% |
| Moving Country | IRP Applications and Renewals | 202 | 16.7% |
| Moving Country | Immigration Office | 167 | 13.8% |
| Moving Country | Moving to Ireland | 152 | 12.6% |
| Moving Country | Family Reunification | 134 | 11.1% |
| Moving Country | Visa | 67 | 5.5% |
| Moving Country | Asylum Seekers and Refugees | 47 | 3.9% |
| Moving Country | Other | 39 | 3.2% |
| Moving Country | Moving Abroad | 34 | 2.8% |
| Moving Country | Leave to Remain | 10 | 0.8% |
| Moving Country | Ukraine | 5 | 0.4% |
|  | **Total Moving Country Calls** | **1,210** |  |

**Calls by Sub-category - Top Five areas.**

This table provides a breakdown of the five most queried sub-categories from callers to CIPS during Q4, with E*mployment Rights* receiving the highest level of calls - followed by *four Social Welfare* topics.

*Table 8: Most Queried Sub-Categories received by CIPS in Q4 2023*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Call Category | Call sub-category | Number of Callers | % of all categorised Calls |
| Employment | Employment Rights and Conditions | 2,137 | 12.1% |
| Social Welfare | Claiming a Social Welfare Payment | 1,072 | 6.1% |
| Social Welfare | Disability and Illness | 1,032 | 5.9% |
| Social Welfare | Carers | 690 | 3.9% |
| Social Welfare | Extra Social Welfare Benefits | 595 | 3.4% |

**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 this Quarter, 68.3% of calls are related to Social Welfare, Housing and Moving Country concerns.

*Table 9: Social Policy Returns by Main Category (as percentage) received by CIPS in Q4 2023*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Main Caller Category | % of SPRs |
| Social Welfare | 29.1% |
| Housing | 19.6% |
| Moving Country | 19.6% |
| Money and Tax | 17.5% |
| Health | 7.4% |
| Travel and Recreation | 3.2% |

1. 43.5% of total calls to CIPS in Q4/2023 which were answered were not categorised under specific subject matter areas i.e. 13,527 calls. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)