



**INCLUSION IRELAND**

ANNUAL REPORT

2020



[InclusionIreland.ie](https://www.inclusionireland.ie)



# Table of Contents

**04**

**CEO Message**

---

**07**

**Chairperson's Message**

---

**09**

**Keeping Members Informed**

---

**13**

**Supporting Rights**

---

**15**

**Influencing Change**

---

**19**

**Governance**

---

**21**

**Financial Statements**

---

**26**

**Statistics**

---

**28**

**Acknowledgements & Partners**

---



[CLICK TO GO DIRECT TO SECTION](#)



# CEO Message

At the beginning of 2020, Zoom, social distancing and lockdowns were not very familiar words to most of us. When we launched our Strategic Plan 2020-2023 'Making a difference for people with an intellectual disability, we did not imagine that the world around us would change so much.



You told us during the consultation for our Strategic Plan that people with intellectual disabilities felt “we are not listened to, and we are not heard”. So, our focus at the beginning of the year was the elections for a new Government and hosting events with candidates so that people with intellectual disabilities could have their say and get involved in asking candidates questions about what they would do for people with intellectual disabilities and family members if we voted for them. This also gave us a chance to hear about what were the issues that were most important to people and what practical things that you wanted a new Government to change.

When we all had to work remotely due to Covid-19 restrictions in March, the challenge for Inclusion Ireland was to make sure that we could quickly change how we worked together as a team and continue to communicate with people with intellectual disabilities and family members, so that we could provide useful information sessions and have events online, especially as we could no longer have our events in person around the country.

During this time, we started having weekly meetings with the HSE to ensure that we could communicate what were the biggest issues facing people with intellectual disabilities and their families due to the Pandemic and restrictions and support the HSE to find solutions.

## **We made a space on our website for Covid-19 information and resources to support people in their homes...**

The main issues were the closure of school and day service buildings, visiting restrictions for people in residential services, lack of access to therapists as they were moved to Covid testing centres, making sure that people with intellectual disabilities would have access to intensive care and be treated the same as any other patient without a disability, providing information about Covid-19 restrictions and testing that were available in Easy to Read and that hospital and testing staff had information on how to support a person with intellectual disabilities.

We made a space on our website for Covid-19 information and resources to support people in their homes and had more than 78,000 visits to our website and had a large increase in the demand for information over the phone.

From speaking with people with intellectual disabilities and their families, carrying out surveys and research, we were able to provide a clear picture of the many challenges that people faced during the pandemic in 2020. We appeared before the Oireachtas Committee on Disability Matters twice and sent them submissions explaining how this pandemic was impacting people and what we needed Government to do about it. Our national advocacy helped to draw more attention from the media and political parties to call for more supports for people during Covid restrictions and prioritise the needs of adults and children with intellectual disabilities.

In September, we partnered in a piece of research which looked at the impact of Covid-19 on people with Intellectual Disabilities.

**We had to try and  
improve the experience  
for people as we learned  
how to support people  
to use Zoom...**

We know that this has been a really good experience for some people with intellectual disabilities who may have found travelling to events difficult, but we also know that having events online with Zoom has made it more difficult for other people to participate. We had to try and improve the experience for people as we learned how to support people to use Zoom with an Easy-to-Read Guide and we also published advice on our website on well-being and on how to stay connected with people online to avoid feeling isolated when Covid-19 restrictions meant we had to stay physically apart from family, friends, people we work with and activities in our communities.

In December, Self-Advocates organised a 'Right to Connect' Conference on International Day for People with Disabilities. People described what technologies they were using to connect with other people and activities and what barriers needed to be addressed to bridge the gap and reduce the isolation for people with intellectual disabilities arising from Covid restrictions.

Inclusion Ireland has continued to advocate by highlighting the rights of people with intellectual disabilities through the lens of the UN Convention, to make rights real for people in their everyday lives. We will continue to take this approach as the country recovers and with your participation, influence how we can build back better in 2021.



**Lorraine Dempsey**  
**Interim CEO**

# Chairperson's Message

I am very happy to present to you this report on the work Inclusion Ireland has been doing in 2020. I was elected as Chairperson by the Board in February 2021, having been Deputy Chairperson from 2019 and acting Chairperson following Lorraines retirement at our AGM in November 2020.



This annual report shows how the energy of our staff and members led to a very busy year for the organisation and an increase in the level of engagement in activities and queries. Despite the unexpected challenges of a pandemic, we still met HSE and Pobal funding obligations.

Our members are important to us and especially involving people with intellectual disabilities in the work that we do, whether research opportunities, developing policy positions or planning events was a challenge when we could no longer meet face to face. Thank you to our members for continuing to support Inclusion Ireland and engaging with us online during this very difficult year.

On behalf of the Board, I would especially like to thank the staff for the tremendous efforts to switch our activities online, develop new ways of working and communicating our work to the public and striving to find new ways to keep people with intellectual disabilities engaged with events, research, and consultations at a time when many people were facing personal challenges with the impact of Covid-19 and the restrictions.

We welcomed several new Directors on the Board due to retirements and continue to improve how we can operate as an Inclusive Board. All the Directors are volunteers and give up a lot of time to make sure that Inclusion Ireland is run well.

**It has been a difficult time for many, and we are happy to be able to support our members in getting their voices heard by government, media and the wider public.**

We also appointed new solicitors Mason Hayes & Curran to act for Inclusion Ireland and start the process of reviewing our Constitution to ensure that it reflects current laws and that the objectives of the Company were still appropriate. This will be presented to members later in 2021 to be ratified.

In February 2021, Enda Egan departed as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Board appointed Lorraine Dempsey as Interim CEO while a permanent CEO is recruited. The Board would like to thank Enda for his time at Inclusion Ireland and to sincerely thank all the staff for their efforts in steering the organisation through major changes during 2020 with the pandemic and staff working remotely.

It has been a difficult time for many, and we are happy to be able to support our members in getting their voices heard by government, media and the wider public.

I look forward to another great year for the organisation and wish you all well.

**Marian McNamara**



# Keeping Members Informed

## Enquiries



In 2020, 1647 people contacted us for information and support. This is a more than 20% increase on 2019.

Enquiries came from family members, people with intellectual disabilities and professionals.

Common questions asked were:



- Covid - 19 Information and Support
- Therapy services
- Assessments of Needs
- New Directions
- Assisted Decision Making
- Residential Supports
- Education



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## Information Meetings, Consultations & Seminars

Due to public health restrictions, information meetings were held online this year. We held 13 information meetings viewed by 44,000 people online and topics included Education, Advocacy for your Child and New Directions.



We also held information sessions with experts in psychology, physiotherapy and counselling to give tips on getting through Covid - 19.

Before the lock down in March we held 4 information meetings in Dublin, Sligo and Kildare attended by 246 people. This included two Election 2020 events.



We also had information stands at an expo in the Royal College of Surgeons (Dublin) and at a Department of Social Protection (Portlaoise) expo. We met more than 200 people.



## Election hustings in Sligo

Inclusion Ireland worked with DFI (Disability Federation of Ireland) and ILMI (Independent Living Movement Ireland) to hold election hustings at the Northside Community Centre,



More than 50 self-advocates put questions to the 9 candidates from Sligo-Leitrim constituency on issues like housing, roads, jobs and accessible toilets.



Two advocates, Phillip O'Donnell and Sheila Curran spoke on Ocean FM Radio about the hustings event.

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## Our Right to Connect Conference



On 3rd December we had a big Zoom Conference called The Right to Connect. It was about how computers and the internet can help people with a disability.



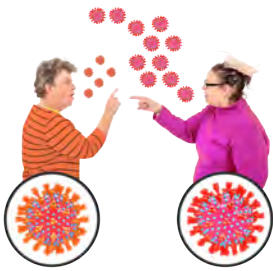
Six self-advocates worked with us to plan and present this conference. The staff from Saint John of God services were also a great help. Over 150 people attended the conference.



Minister Anne Rabbitte opened the conference. There was six video presentations from self-advocates in Kerry, Hartstown, SJOG Liffey, Daughters of Charity, Enable Ireland and Rehab.



There was great chat in the breakout rooms. Everyone agreed that the government should provide more support to get people with disabilities using computers and connecting online.

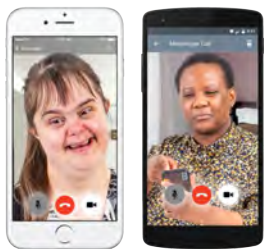


## Covid-19 Information

Our first response to the Covid-19 pandemic was to provide clear and accessible information, to support children and adults with an intellectual disability to access key public health information and services and educational and community resources.



We wrote a lot of Easy Read Guides about Covid 19 and put them on our website. We covered topics like: Support for staying safe at home - Minding your Mental Health, the Signs of Covid, and going for a Covid test.



We also worked with the HSE to make sure that staff on their helpline had good answers for the questions that were important to people with an intellectual disability and helped them with easy-to-read documents.



Education, therapy supports and daily activities closed down. Inclusion Ireland published lots of information on our website to help people to home educate, therapy resources and online activities that could be done from home.



Throughout the first months of lockdown due to Covid-19, Inclusion Ireland gathered and shared information in a weekly newsletter. This information included virtual supports in education, therapy, keeping well, all the Covid-19 news, mental and physical wellness.



## Website Work

### Inclusion Ireland Website

As part of a 2020 website review and redesign, information for people with intellectual disabilities and family members - including educational supports, decision-making and future planning. We have more work to do in 2021 and 2022 as we develop our information.

[CLICK TO GO TO INCLUSION IRELAND WEBSITE](#)



### How to Complain Website

Inclusion Ireland has completed a website on how to make a complaint about a public service in 2020.

[CLICK TO GO TO HOW TO COMPLAIN WEBSITE](#)



The website is fully accessible, and the information is in easy to read format.



The How to Complain website will help people with an intellectual disability fully access public services.



# Supporting Rights

## Public Sector Duty



In 2019, we started work on a project on the Public Sector Duty. People with intellectual disability delivered and received training on the Duty.



In 2020 people with intellectual disabilities were supported to check Sligo and Offaly County Council against the Public Sector Duty.



The staff in both councils were very helpful and friendly. They told us about the services they have for the public and how they work to include people with disabilities.

We produced a report of this work.

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## Disability Participation and Consultation Network (DPCN)



The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth asked Inclusion Ireland to be the 'organising member' of the new DPCN in December 2020.



The DPCN is a cross disability group.



Membership of the DPCN includes four grant-funded organisations and over 100 members from around the country which include individuals and disability organisations.

We are looking forward to working on the DPCN in 2021.



## Changing Places Ireland

We worked hard to get a working group set up in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to look at changing planning rules. The changes will hopefully lead to Changing Places in many large buildings in future.

We also had a petition calling for more changing places that got more than 7000 signatures.



## Happy at Home Campaign

When Covid-19 started lots of people felt sad. We wanted to give people a bit of hope so we asked people to send in photos or videos of what they were doing to stay 'happy at home'.



We got a great response from people stuck at home because of lockdown. There were many happy photos of lots of different activities. People were dancing, singing, being creative with art and there was lots of cookery.



We put the photos on Facebook. People really liked them, and we got more than 100 photos and videos.

## Communication Boards



Inclusion Ireland has been working with the assistive technology department at Trinity College Dublin to promote the use of Communication Boards in playgrounds and in public spaces.



We looked at membership of Inclusion Ireland. What does membership mean? Who are our members? What do members want?

We have made the building of our membership a priority for 2021.

# Influencing Change



## Policy Advocacy

Inclusion Ireland worked to change law and policy to make sure people with disabilities have the right supports to live in their community.



We did this by:

- Writing to government departments. This is called making a submission
- Involving people with disabilities in submissions.
- Talking to government and members of the opposition parties.





Inclusion Ireland made 24 policy submissions and reports in 2020.

**These submissions included:**

**1. Submissions to many Government Departments on their Statements of Strategy**

A Statement of Strategy is a document that says what the Department will do for the next few years.



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**2. Pre Budget Submissions**

We sent in our annual pre-budget submissions.

It talked about education, social protection, health, housing, employment and participation. To help us we had meetings with people with disabilities and a survey.

**3. Submissions to the Oireachtas Committees on Covid-19 Response and Disability Matters**

In this submission we put forward what the experiences of people with intellectual disabilities and their families, and asked the Government to do more to support people. We attended 3 Oireachtas Committees.



**We successfully campaigned for:**

- government commitment to equal access to healthcare for people with an intellectual disability during Covid - 19
- clear information on Covid-19 incidence and controls in residential services
- clarity for people with disability in the Covid-19 vaccination plan.







## Election 2020

In February 2020 there was a general election in Ireland. People got to vote for a new government.

We publicised our easy-to-read guide to voting to make people aware of their right to vote.



Inclusion Ireland wrote a manifesto (which is a list of important issues) for people with disabilities. We checked all the party manifestos to see what they promised on disability issues.



In this manifesto we called on all candidates to promote the rights of people with disabilities.

We said it was important that disability issues are a priority for the next Government.



Our manifesto focused on 3 main areas.

1. Ensure the rights and participation of people with disabilities
2. Support community inclusion
3. Address disability poverty

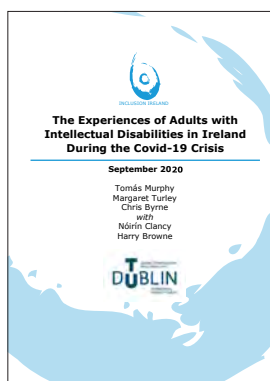


We hosted 'hustings' events in Sligo and Dublin where people with disabilities got to meet the election candidates.

Inclusion Ireland also met lots of candidates to tell them about disability issues.

## Research

This research was carried out by three people with disabilities with support from TU Dublin and Inclusion Ireland. Eleven people were interviewed by Zoom about their experience during Covid-19.



People spoke about how hard it was having to stop work at their day service, not meeting their family and friends and their feelings of being isolated.

People spoke about how they supported themselves by getting out for walks, writing poetry, doing classes and meetings online.



We also carried out 5 national surveys of family members and people with intellectual disabilities. This helped us to represent issues and crises that resulted from the closure of day services and the closure of school for children with special educational needs.



In 2019, we finished our 19 stories of social inclusion research.

In 2020, we spoke about this at two HSE webinars for staff who are helping to move people out of big residential services to community homes.

# Governance



Governance is about how an organisation is run.

Good governance is running an organisation well.

Inclusion Ireland made sure it was run well in 2020 by using the Charity Governance Code.



In 2020, there was 14 people on the board of directors.

4 members of the board have lived experience of intellectual disability. There is a support worker to assist the 4 directors.



In 2020, like many organisations, Inclusion Ireland had to have its Annual General Meeting online using Zoom.



The Audit and Risk Committee and board of directors makes sure that Inclusion Ireland manages and spends its funding in the proper way and is in line with laws saying how charities should be run.



## **Inclusion Ireland Accounts**

All Inclusion Ireland members receive a copy of the 2020 accounts.

The accounts say where we got money and how we spent it.




There is a plain english summary of the accounts for members below.



Inclusion Ireland's audited accounts for 2020 are available on our website [www.inclusionireland.ie](http://www.inclusionireland.ie)



# Financial Statements

Our auditors have checked our accounts for 2020 and the full Financial Statements for Inclusion Ireland is available on our website [www.InclusionIreland.ie](http://www.InclusionIreland.ie) or by clicking on [Audited Accounts Inclusion Ireland](#). 

At the end of 2020, there was 14 people on the Board of Directors.

Inclusion Ireland has an inclusive Board. 4 members of the board have lived experience of intellectual disability. There is a support worker to assist the 4 Directors.

## Inclusion Ireland Board of Directors 2020

Directors Name	Attendance at Meetings	Notes
Stephen O’Riordan	3	
David Fraughan	7	
Stephen Kealy	4	Retired 7th November 2020
David Girvan	6	Retired 7th November 2020
Sarah Jane Lavin	7	
Lorraine Dempsey	6	Retired 7th November 2020
Francis Coughlan	1	Retired 7th November 2020
Helen Connaughton	5	
Dermot Reynolds	0	Resigned 23rd November 2020
Marian McNamara	7	
Maria Panza	3	Appointed 27th July 2020
Marianne Garvey-McMahon	3	Appointed 27th July 2020
Glenn Shanley	1	Appointed 7th November 2020
Ashley Sands	1	Appointed 7th November 2020
Nora Torpey	1	Appointed 7th November 2020
Siobhan Bryan	1	Appointed 7th November 2020
John Moore	0	Appointed 7th November 2020
Martin Rowan	0	Appointed 7th November 2020
Tomás Murphy	1	Appointed 7th November 2020

## Directors' Report

- The Board approved the Financial Statements on 25 May 2021.
- The Audit & Risk Committee proposes the annual budget to the Board and reviews the company's activities and costs during 2020 and provides a regular report to the Board.
- All Board Directors are volunteers and receive no pay or benefit from their position.
- The Directors are satisfied that the company finances are healthy.
- The Directors continue to carry out the processes and reporting required by the Charity Regulator and Charities Act 2009 and Standards in Public Office Act 2001
- The Company's current reserves are equivalent to 99 days trading.

## Events since the end of year

Enda Egan resigned as CEO at the end of February 2021 and Lorraine Dempsey was appointed as Interim CEO by the Board until a new CEO is recruited.

## Inclusion Ireland Income Statement Summary

From: 1st January 2020 to 31st December 2020

Our surplus for 2020 is bigger than expected at €47,019. This is because our bank agreed to write off a portion of our mortgage loan by €235,672.

The HSE also gave us €38,683 that was part of our funding from 2018.

When we take those two figures into account and adjust for loss of €145,073, our profit for 2020 is €8,336.

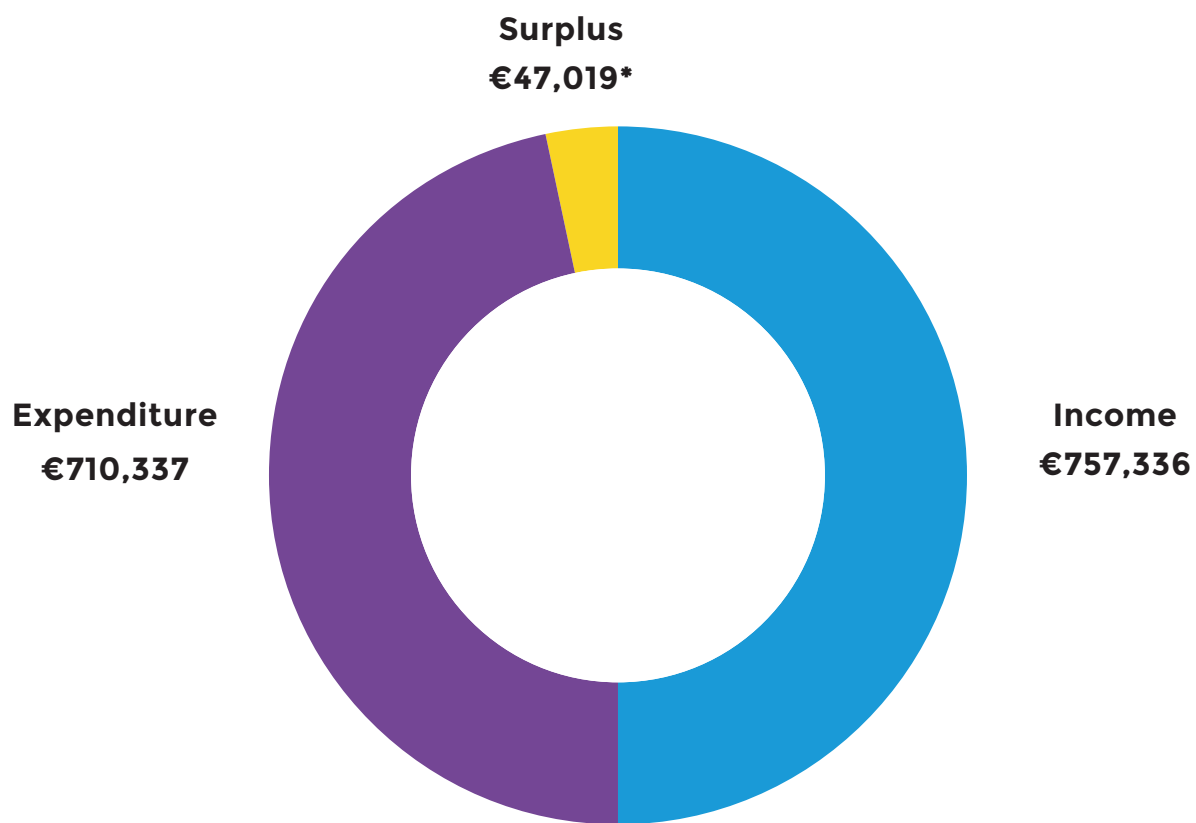
INCOME	2020	2019
TOTAL	€757,356	€725,280

EXPENSES	2020	2019
TOTAL	€710,337	€716,015

2020 Surplus, Income & Expenditure	€47,019	€9,265
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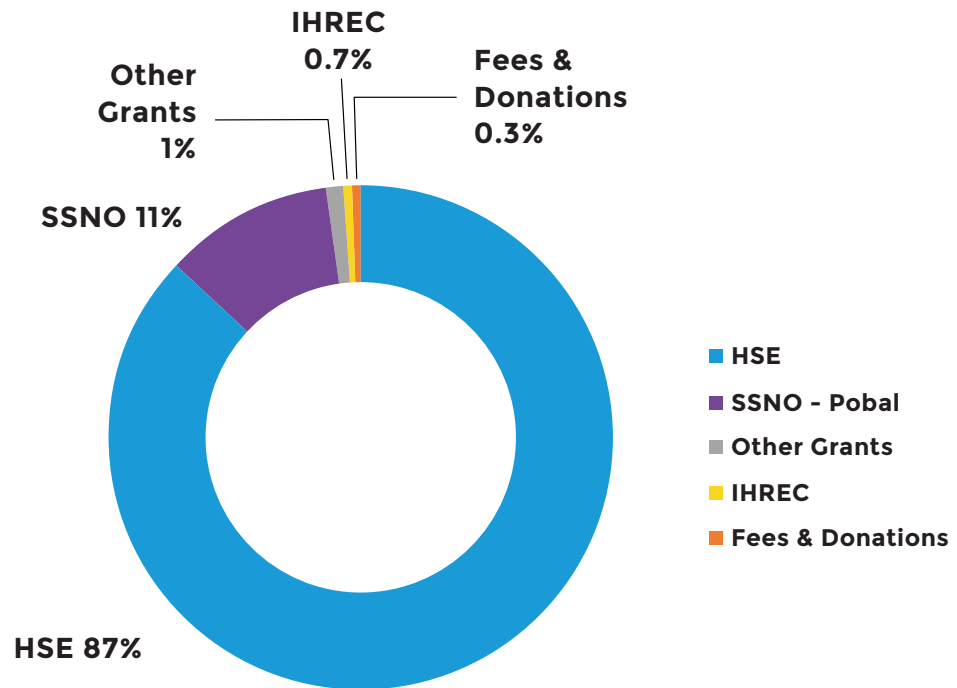


**\*Including 2018 HSE retained funding**

## **Inclusion Ireland 2020 Accounts Analysis**

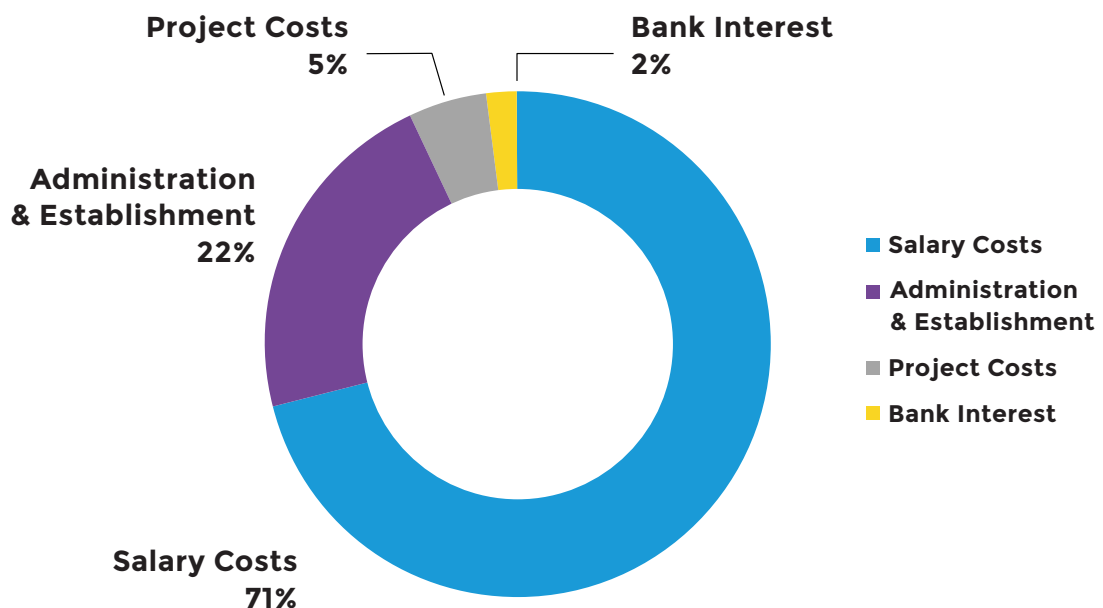
The HSE is our main funder and our funding for 2020 remained at the same level as 2019, where we had a 20% cut to our funding. We also receive SSNO (Scheme for Supporting National Organisations) funding from Pobal and some small grants for projects. Inclusion Ireland is always looking at other sources of income to meet our strategic objectives.

## Breakdown of Income of €757,336



## Breakdown of Expenditure of €710,337

Inclusion Ireland's main expenditure is on staff salaries. We employed 13 staff in 2020 with a mixture of full time, part time and fixed term contracts.





## Inclusion Ireland Balance Sheet Summary

As at 31st December 2020

MONEY WE HAVE	
Fixed Assets - Building	€460,002
Fixed Assets - Computers, Desks, etc.	€5,757
Current Assets - Money in the Bank	€533,611
Current Assets - Debtors	€10,548
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€1,009,918</b>
MONEY WE OWE	
Mortgage Account	€397,414
Other bills that are not paid yet	€235,754
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€633,168</b>
<b>OVERALL ASSETS</b>	<b>€376,750</b>

# Statistics



## 200

In 2020, Inclusion Ireland had 200 individual members and 26 group members



## 246

246 people attended an Inclusion Ireland public meeting in Dublin, Sligo and Kildare.

We also met hundreds of people at Expos in Dublin and Portlaoise.



## 16,469

At the end of 2020 we had 16,469 likes on Facebook. A 25% increase. 44000 people viewed an Inclusion Ireland, Facebook Live video.



## 10,616

At the end of 2020 we had 10,616 followers on Twitter. An 18% increase.



# 905

In 2020, 905 people received 28 Inclusion Ireland e-newsletters by email.

In 2020, 110 groups received 27 Connect Family Network e-newsletters by email.



# 78,000

In 2020, more than 78,000 people visited the Inclusion Ireland website.



# 24

We made 24 policy submissions throughout the year.



# 4

We produced 4 reports on: rights during Covid-19, education of children (2) and the closure of day services.

# Acknowledgements & Partners



Thank you to all of our members, self-advocacy groups and parent and family groups that we worked with in 2020.



## **Inclusion Ireland received funding from:**

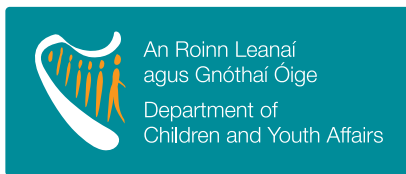
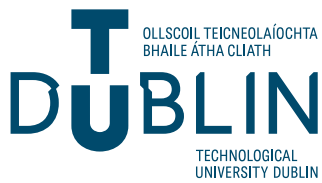
The Health Service Executive, Healthy Ireland Fund, The Government Scheme to Support National Organisations, the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, The Community Foundation (RTE People in Need), The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and membership fees.



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Offaly County Council  
Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí



Inclusion Ireland receives funding from Government through the Scheme to Support National Organisations, administered by Pobal to do this work.



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# INCLUSION IRELAND

**National Association for People  
with an Intellectual Disability**

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