

Citizens Information Phone Service (CIPS)

2021 Annual Statistical Summary

Caller Summary

The following is a summary of the Citizens Information Phone Service (CIPS) caller statistical data for 2021 (1st January – 31^s December 2021).

Caller - Type of Contact

There were **165,047** calls answered by CIPS during 2021.

Table 1: CIPS Type of Contact in 2021

Caller Type	Number of Callers	% Of Callers
Telephone	161,683	98.0%
Web Chats	2,789	1.7%
Social Media Enquiries	575	0.3%

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, 31.1% were related to *Social Welfare*, followed by *Covid19* (16.4%) and then *Employment* (11.2%).

The table below sets out the number of calls answered across the main call category areas in 2021.

¹ 44.2% of total calls to CIPS in 2021 which were answered were not categorised under specific subject matter areas i.e. 73,020 calls.

Table 2: Main Category of Calls answered by CIPS in 2021

Main Caller Category	No. of Callers	% of all Callers
Social Welfare	28,626	31.1%
Covid-19	15,085	16.4%
Employment	10,323	11.2%
Housing	6,737	7.3%
Money and Tax	5,658	6.1%
Travel and Recreation	4,016	4.4%
Local	3,878	4.2%
Health	3,531	3.8%
Moving Country	2,923	3.2%
Justice	2,856	3.1%
Consumer Affairs	2,685	2.9%
Birth Family and Relationship	2,447	2.7%
Education and Training	1,757	1.9%
Death and Bereavement	961	1.0%
Environment	291	0.3%
Government in Ireland	253	0.3%
Total of categorised calls	92,027	

Caller Sub-Category Breakdown

The following tables provides a more detailed breakdown of call numbers for the five most queried sub-categories during 2021 - Social Welfare, Covid19, Employment, Housing and Money & Tax. This breakdown is based on categorised calls only (55.8% of total callers).

Social Welfare callers by sub-category

CIPS answered 28,626 calls relating to **Social Welfare** issues in 2021 - that is, 31.1% of all callers and the highest area of enquiry. The sub-category *Disability and Illness* was the most queried topic in this category with *Claiming a Social Welfare Payment, Families and Children* and then *Carers* being the next most queried.

Table 3: Breakdown of Social Welfare Call Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in 2021

Call Category	Call Sub-category	Number of Callers	% Of Social Welfare Callers
Social Welfare	Disability and Illness	4,529	15.8%
Social Welfare	Claiming a Social Welfare Payment	4,293	15.0%
Social Welfare	Families and Children	3,087	10.8%
Social Welfare	Carers	2,872	10.0%
Social Welfare	Older and Retired People	2,563	9.0%
Social Welfare	Other	2,500	8.7%
Social Welfare	Extra Social Welfare Benefits	1,998	7.0%
Social Welfare	Unemployed People Job Seekers Allowance	1,612	5.6%
Social Welfare	Unemployed People Jobseekers Benefit	1,162	4.1%
Social Welfare	Social Insurance (PRSI)	817	2.9%
Social Welfare	Supplementary Welfare Schemes	602	2.1%
Social Welfare	Means Test for Social Welfare Payments	516	1.8%
Social Welfare	Back to Education	460	1.6%
Social Welfare	Social Welfare Payments and Work	386	1.3%
Social Welfare	Rent Supplement	339	1.2%
Social Welfare	Activation Schemes Education and Training	240	0.8%
Social Welfare	Death Related Benefits	230	0.8%
Social Welfare	Appeals	118	0.4%
Social Welfare	Social Assistance Payments	107	0.4%
Social Welfare	Unemployed People	90	0.3%
Social Welfare	Social Welfare Miscellaneous	70	0.2%
Social Welfare	Farmers	34	0.1%
Social Welfare	Null	1	0.0%
	Total Social Welfare Calls	28,626	

Covid-19 callers by sub-category

CIPS answered 15,085 calls relating to **Covid-19** in 2021 - that is, 16.4% of all calls which were categorised and represents the 2nd highest subject matter area. The sub-category, *Public Health Measures* was, by far, the most significant area of concern at 53.3% of all Covid-19 related calls.

Table 4: Breakdown of Covid-19 Call Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in 2021

Call Category	Call Sub-category	Number of Callers	% of Covid19 Callers
Covid19	Public Health Measures	8,040	53.3%
Covid19	Pandemic Unemployment Payment	3,346	22.2%
Covid19	Other	1,742	11.5%
Covid19	Enhanced Illness Benefit	900	6.0%
Covid19	Employment Rights	490	3.2%
Covid19	Revenue's Employer Refund Scheme	226	1.5%
Covid19	Returning to work	153	1.0%
Covid19	Supports for Businesses	120	0.8%
Covid19	Older people	37	0.2%
Covid19	Mortgages, Loans, Rents	23	0.2%
Covid19	Students	8	0.1%
	Total Covid-19 Calls	15,085	

Employment callers by sub-category

CIPS answered 10,323 calls relating to Employment issues during 2021 - that is, 11.2% of all caller queries that were categorised. The sub-category of *Employment Rights and Conditions* accounted for the vast majority (82%) of these calls.

Table 5: Breakdown of Employment Call Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in 2021

Call Category	Call Sub-Category	Number of Callers	% of Employment Callers
Employment	Employment Rights and Conditions	8,549	82.8%
Employment	Unemployment and Redundancy	686	6.6%
Employment	Self-Employment	378	3.7%
Employment	Other	256	2.5%
Employment	Employment and Disability	96	0.9%
Employment	Enforcement and Redress	78	0.8%
Employment	Starting Work and Changing Job	63	0.6%
Employment	Employment Schemes and Internship	62	0.6%
Employment	Migrant Workers	41	0.4%
Employment	Types of Employment	37	0.4%
Employment	Equality in Work	35	0.3%
Employment	Retirement	27	0.3%
Employment	Part Time Employment	11	0.1%
Employment	Appeals (Enforcement)	4	0.0%

	Total Employment Calls	10,323	
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Housing callers by sub-category

CIPS answered 6,737 calls relating to **Housing** issues during 2021 - that is, 7.3% of all categorised callers, with 80.1% of calls relating to three main topics - *Local Authority and Social Housing, Renting a Home* and *Housing Grants and Schemes*.

Table 6: Breakdown of Housing Call by Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in 2021

Call Category	Call Sub-category	No. of Callers	% of Housing
Housing	Local Authority and Social Housing	2,418	35.9%
Housing	Renting a Home	1,818	27.0%
Housing	Housing Grants and Schemes	1,159	17.2%
Housing	Other	379	5.6%
Housing	Buying a Home	367	5.4%
Housing	Planning Permission	248	3.7%
Housing	Homelessness	177	2.6%
Housing	Losing your Home	82	1.2%
Housing	Building or Altering a Home	65	1.0%
Housing	Emergency Accommodation	24	0.4%
	Total Housing Calls	6,737	

Money and Tax callers by sub-category

CIPS answered 5,658 calls relating to **Money and Tax** during 2021 - that is, 6.1% of all categorised callers, with *Income Tax* and *Income Tax Credits and Reliefs* being the most queried topics within this.

Table 7: Breakdown of Moving Country Call Sub-Categories answered by CIPS in 2021

Call Category	Call Sub-Category	Number of Callers	% of Money and Tax Callers
Money and Tax	Income Tax	1,632	28.8%
Money and Tax	Income Tax Credits and Reliefs	1,279	22.6%
Money and Tax	Capital Taxes	553	9.8%
Money and Tax	Property Taxes	453	8.0%
Money and Tax	Other	413	7.3%
Money and Tax	Housing taxes and reliefs	354	6.3%

Money and Tax	Duties and VAT	308	5.4%
Money and Tax	Insurance	152	2.7%
Money and Tax	Debt	144	2.5%
Money and Tax	Pensions	95	1.7%
Money and Tax	Financial Institutions	87	1.5%
Money and Tax	Moving Country and Taxation	75	1.3%
Money and Tax	Loans and Credit	61	1.1%
Money and Tax	Savings and Investments	17	0.3%
Money and Tax	Consumer Protection Code and Mortgages	13	0.2%
Money and Tax	Wills	12	0.2%
Money and Tax	Universal Social Charge (USC)	8	0.1%
Money and Tax	Tax on Savings and Investments	2	0.0%
	Total Money and Tax Calls	5,658	

Calls by Sub-category - Top Six areas.

This table provides a breakdown of the six most queried sub-categories from the 92,027 categorised call to CIPS during 2021, with *Employment Rights and Condition* receiving the highest level of calls - followed by various Covid19 and Social Welfare topics.

Table 8: Most Queried Sub-Categories received by CIPS in 2021

Call Category	Call sub-category	Number of Callers	% of all categorised Calls
Employment	Employment Rights and Conditions	8,549	9.3%
Covid19	Public Health Measures	8,040	8.7%
Social Welfare	Disability and Illness	4,529	4.9%
Social Welfare	Claiming a Social Welfare Payment	4,293	4.7%
Local	Local Government	3,878	4.2%
Covid19	Pandemic Unemployment Payment	3,346	3.6%

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 2021 - with *Social Welfare*, *Travel and Recreation*, and *Housing* accounting for almost two thirds of all of the policy feedback.

Table 9: Social Policy Returns by Main Category (as percentage) received by CIPS in 2021

Main Caller Category	% of SPRs
Social Welfare	35.9%
Travel and Recreation	17.8%
Housing	12.2%
Money and Tax	11.1%
Moving Country	9.6%
Others	13.5%