

An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach Child and Family Agency

# Tusla Data

Management Strategy

2019 - 2022

www.tusla.ie

## **Abstract**

"To enhance the management of data held by Tusla in a secure, holistic and consistent manner that serves the data and information needs of all Tusla stakeholders in delivering better outcomes for children, young people, families and communities."

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As Chair of the Tusla Board, I am delighted to present the first Data Strategy for child and family services in Ireland. This strategy represents another very positive step in the progress that Tusla has brought to the delivery of child and family services since the establishment of the Agency in 2014.

I am very aware that the nature of the work carried out by child and family practitioners is highly challenging and in particular is dependent on critical information being available to inform decisions. Furthermore, increased regulatory and other needs have meant that administrative workloads have increased significantly as the requirement for recording detailed notes throughout all stages of work continues to grow. I am pleased that this data strategy recognises these challenges and establishes an ambitious program of work that seeks to provide the supports and systems to streamline the information gathering processes while at the same time ensuring this information is readily available to support practitioners, policy makers, service planners, researchers and others in their decision making processes.

Trust is established as one of the core values of the Agency and as such I am delighted to see that privacy is a key focus of this strategy and that it aims to ensure that all of the data that Tusla holds is managed in line with the principles of data protection. I also welcome the alignment with Government related data policy and initiatives as set out in this strategy and I wish to acknowledge the work done by Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and others in progressing advances in data management across the Public Service on which many of the actions in this strategy can benefit.

Finally, on behalf of the Tusla Board I would like to again welcome and also affirm our support for this strategy and our commitment to oversight of its implementation.

Pat Rabbitte,
Chairperson

#### 2. Executive Summary

This strategy establishes a recognition of data managementas a core enabler in Tusla to support the delivery of services. Furthermore, it aims to deliver an environment that will enable data to act as a key resource to support the evaluation of outcomes and the informing of policy development, research and planning. This strategy sets out a vision for data management in Tusla and includes a set of guiding principles that inform and underpin this vision. The strategy comprises of a set of themes and supporting actions that will collectively deliver on this vision over the next 4 years.

To enhance the management of data held by Tusla in a secure, holistic and consistent manner that serves the data and information needs of all Tusla stakeholders in delivering better outcomes for children, young people, families and communities.

The improved use of data and information is a common theme identified in both internal and external reports on improving the delivery delivery of child and family services in Ireland. Furthermore, Government data related policy sets out a framework for the Public Service in delivering better outcomes and efficiency through improved data management. This strategy establishes a vision for data management in Tusla that is informed by these collective reports and Government related policy as well as international best practice.

Tusla was established in 2014 bringing 19 unique and separate services under one Agency. Pre 2014 all of these services operated in environments with limited data maturity and relied on either paper based systems or at best utilised limited legacy ICT systems. This combination of delivering complex services that are information dependent but in

the absence of sufficient data and ICT maturity remains a significant challenge for Tusla.

Good progress has been made over the last number of years in areas that have either directly or indirectly helped to improve data management in the Agency. However, despite this progress, Tusla could still be considered as having a large deficit in its level of data maturity. This Strategy aims to address this deficit and progress Tusla to become a leading example in both data management and innovation in supporting the delivery of child and family services.

This strategy is underpinned by Tusla's corporate Vision, Mission and Values and is developed based on the following set of guiding principles that establish a shared vision for the development, promotion and adoption of excellence in Data Management across the Agency.

Principle	Definition
Data as an Enabler	Data is recognised as a key enabler in the delivery of all functions of the Agency
Data processes are digital by default	Digital data system will replace all current paper processes in the Agency
Data reuse 'enter once, use often'	Data that is already held in a system and is fit for purpose and legally reusable is not requested again from employees, service users, partners or other stakeholders

Privacy by design and privacy by default	Ensuring all systems and processes that involve the processing of personal data are developed and operated in line with the principles of data protection
Transparency for Citizens	Citizens know what data is held by Tusla and how it is used. Citizens have easy access to their own personal data as appropriate
Data Awareness	Tusla staff are aware of the value data has in relation to achieving the objectives of the Agency in delivering better outcomes and are also aware of their responsibilities to manage data in a safe, consistent and quality focused manner
Adherence to compliance obligations	Data management structures in Tusla are developed to support compliance with legal, regulatory and Government policy data related requirements

This strategy seeks to build on the progress that Tusla has already made over the last five years and sets out the goals and actions under eight different themes that will collectively deliver on this data management vision.

Theme 1 Data Governance: To establish governance structures for the overall management of data in Tusla — this will include the quality, usability, security and availability of data.

Data governance structures and practices will be defined at all levels by enhancing Tusla's data related policies, procedures, protocols and guidelines (PPPGs). The implementation of these PPPGs will be supported by clearly defined roles and responsibilities for those who are accountable to how data is managed and also for those who are responsible for the direct processing of the data. A quality assurance framework will be developed to monitor and report on the awareness and conformance to these PPPGs at all levels.

Theme 2 Increased Capability: To establish the capability at all levels in Tusla to deliver the program of work under this strategy and to provide for the embedding and continued improvement of excellence in data management across all activities of the Agency. This theme of the strategy aims to ensure that Tusla has the necessary data expertise and resources to deliver on the vision of this strategy. This will involve a resourcing plan to utilise existing staff as appropriate and a proposal to recruit new data related posts if required. A training program to enhance and develop staff awareness and expertise in data management will also be established.

**Theme 3 Records Management:** The records management theme of this strategy seeks to provide the policy, systems, structures and guidance required to establish a well-functioning records management environment in Tusla. A key

initiative under this theme is the establishment of a file registry as the central administration unit with responsibility for governance of file management

and providing expertise and supports to staff across the Agency to promote best filing practice. Records management will be supported by a commitment to Digital First that seeks to progress initiatives to replace all paper channels and processes with digital alternatives such as electronic case management and records management systems.

**Theme 4 Data Quality Management**: To improve the quality of data held by Tusla by developing processes for measuring, monitoring and reporting conformance to prescribed data quality standards and by implementing a continuous data quality improvement plan with supporting operational structures.

**Theme 5 Master and Reference Data Management**: Master and reference data management is a method used to define and manage the core datasets of an organisation and provides for a single point of reference for these datasets and a single version of the truth. Examples in Tusla might include definitive lists such as the lists of Tusla staff, Tusla offices, foster carers, and the list of service providers. Collectively, Master and Reference Data Management allows for the re-use of data across all Tusla systems and the reduction of data entry as data will be 'entered once' but 'used often'. This theme of the strategy will put in place the standards, processes, controls and systems that will establish and manage these data sets as the agreed and single definitive source of that data across Tusla.

**Theme 6 Data Security Management:** To minimise the risk of inappropriate access to Tusla data by providing a verified data security environment.



This theme will involve implementing data classification, retention schedules and controls as well as defining and implementing appropriate operating procedures in line with data management best practice such as alignment with the ISO27001 Information Security standard. All Tusla data sources will be moved to new secure environments under the control of Tusla ICT thereby addressing the legacy arrangement by which much of Tusla's electronic data sources were managed and supported by the HSE.

**Theme 7 Data Warehousing & Business Intelligence Management** To enable the evaluation of outcomes and evidence informed decision making by establishing the environment and services in Tusla to support data analysis and business intelligence. In practical terms this theme of the strategy will deliver dashboards that provide intuitive views of data in formats such as visual charts with multiple levels of drill downs to give immediate access to information that can provide data-driven insights in support of evidence based decision making, planning, policy development and research.

**Theme 8 Database Management/Data Storage and Operations** To design, implement and support a technical database infrastructure to manage the storage of Tusla's datasets and ensure their integrity and availability.

In conclusion, this strategy provides a comprehensive road map of ambitious goals and actions that will deliver a year on year enhancement of data management in Tusla. Although covering the period 2019 – 2022 the benefits of this strategy will be realised for many years into the future and will see data management established as a key resource in supporting the Agency in delivering its broad range of services to the benefit of children, young people, families and communities.

#### 3. Introduction

#### 3.1 Context

The improved use of data and information in Tusla is a common theme identified in the Tusla Corporate Plan; the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children; the HIQA Report on the investigation into the management of allegations of child sexual abuse against adults of concern by the Child and Family Agency (Tusla); and the report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (The Ryan Report). In addition, Government data related policy such as the Public Service Data Management strategy, the Open Data Initiative, the National Data Infrastructure (NDI), the Data Sharing and Governance Act and the Public Service ICT Strategy collectively set out a vision for the public service in delivering better outcomes and efficiency through improved data management. This strategy establishes a vision for data management in Tusla that is informed by these collective reports and Government related policy as well as international best practice.

This strategy provides a recognition of data management as a core enabler in Tusla to support the delivery of services and the improvement of operational efficiency. Furthermore, it aims to deliver an environment that will enable data to act as a key resource to support the evaluation of outcomes and the informing of policy development, research and planning.

## 3.2 Current Data Management Landscape in Tusla

Tusla was established in 2014 with a challenging remit to bring 19 unique and separate services under one Agency, this diverse range of services, included for example, Child Protection and Welfare, Adoption and Tracing, Regulation of Early Years Services, Domestic Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Services, Education and Welfare Services, Fostering, Aftercare and Residential Services, all of which in their own right are sensitive and high-risk services that have a fundamental dependency on having good data management to support and inform their operations. This challenging remit for the new Agency was further compounded by the limited historical data and ICT maturity under which all the 19 services previously operated.

Effectively all 19 services operated paper based systems or at best utilised limited legacy ICT systems. This combination of delivering services that are information dependent but in the absence of sufficient data and ICT maturity remains a core fundamental challenge for Tusla.

Good progress has been made over the last number of years in areas that have either directly or indirectly helped to improve data management in the Agency. Some examples include:

- The National Policy Oversight Committee (NPOC) ensures Tusla has strong and well governed procedures to provide both policy development and the supports required to implement policy successfully across the Agency.
- Data governance in Tusla is established under the National Data and Information oversight committee (NDIOC) that oversee governance and accountability arrangements in respect of the management of the Agency's data and information.
- The ICT Strategy 2017-2019 has for the first time established an ICT Directorate in the Agency and has led to enhancing the infrastructure, applications and data environments that are providing for a considerable move to digitisation across many of Tusla's core service areas. Some key examples include the mobile enablement of almost 2,500 staff with secure laptops and smart phones; the Tusla Portal that allows all external services stakeholders to now

engaged online with Tusla in areas such as child protection and welfare, funding applications, early years registration and school absence reporting; and the implementation of the **National Child Care Information System (NCCIS)** that provides a case management system for child protection and welfare files.

- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) program is supporting the establishment and operation of the Data Protection Office and the implementation of all related regulatory compliance, project and operational functions.
- The Outcomes for Children (O4C),
  National Data and Information Hub
  provides a public online site that maps
  outcomes, indicators and services for children
  and young people to support service planning,
  research and other stakeholder use.
  https://outcomes4children.tusla.ie
- The National Research Office (NRO) builds relationships with all those engaged in research activities within Tusla as well as the wider research community.

Although these significant steps have been made, deficits in Tusla's data maturity still remain. These deficits are a result of a number of factors including the scale and complexity of the services involved and the historical level of data immaturity in place when these services were brought together under the remit of Tusla in 2014.

#### 3.3 About this Strategy

This strategy aims to aggressively progress Tusla to becoming an exemplar in best practice in data management and an international leader in terms of the use of data and innovation in supporting the delivery of child and family services.

This strategy is anchored by Tusla's corporate Vision, Mission and Values – the strategy will seek to utilise data management excellence to support Tusla and our partners in working together to achieve better outcomes for children, young people, families and communities. The Tusla values will underpin an improved data culture that provides for a recognition and ownership amongst all staff for the quality and privacy of the data they process in the course of their duties. This strategy seeks to build on the progress that Tusla has already made over the last 5 years and sets out the goals and actions under 8 different themes that will collectively deliver on this data management vision:

- Data Governance
- Increased Capability
- Records Management
- Data Quality Management
- Master and Reference Data Management
- Data Security Management
- Data Warehousing & Business Intelligence Management
- Database Management

#### Our Vision

An Ireland that is committed to the safety and well being of children, young people and families.

#### Our Mission

Working together to provide good quality, supportive service to achieve better outcomes for children, young people, families and communities.

#### Our Value













#### 3.4 Summary of Key Benefits

The goals outlined in this strategy are underpinned by stated actions that when delivered will provide tangible benefits for Tusla, our partners and most importantly for the children, young people and families availing of services.

For children, young people and families: The delivery of online services and smart phone Apps will allow children, young people, parents and others to now communicate more easily with Tusla. More generally, the data management actions to be delivered under this data strategy will also help contribute to improvements in services for children and families as information will be readily available to inform the improved planning of services and decision making. These actions will also mean that practitioners such as social workers, social carers or family support staff will have the right information available when they need it to give the best possible services to the children and families they are helping. Finally, better data management will assist Tusla to continue to improve the protection of data it holds and give confidence to children and families that their data is secure and used appropriately.

For service providers: Child and family service providers will benefit from more efficient engagement and easier collaboration with Tulsa supported by extending Tulsa's online Portal to provide a digital alternative to replace previous paper processes such as the submission of funding applications, service plans and service registrations as well as direct service engagements such as the online submission of child protection and welfare

reports or service referrals. The data principle established under this strategy of 'enter once, use often' will also benefit service providers by reducing their administration overhead, once a service provider submits information to Tusla such as a safety plan, fire cert, insurance record etc. they will not have to resubmit that same information again in future submissions \applications\ registrations etc. that they make to Tusla. Service providers will also benefit from Tulsa's open data and open science initiatives and will have access to this information from online data hubs and research repositories to assist in the planning and operation of their services.

For Tusla staff: Staff will benefit from the elimination of the inefficiencies and administration overhead caused by paper systems with the move to an environment where all core services are supported by innovative and easy to use digital systems. Staff will also benefit from the guidance, supports and training to support them in any data related tasks they undertake. Finally staff will have the information they require readily available to support decision making, planning, policy development and research.

For members of the public. Members of the public will benefit from having access to Tusla services online such as access to submit child protection concerns that they may have witnessed. In a wider context the efficiencies and effectiveness enabled by this data strategy will provide for better value for money for tax payers and the improved management of data by public service bodies is an important factor in building trust and confidence with the public.

## 4. Tusla Data Management Principles

The Tusla Data Management Strategy is developed based on the following set of guiding principles that establish a shared vision for the development, promotion and adoption of excellence in Data Management across the Agency. These principles inform and underpin all actions set out in this statement of strategy.

Principle	Definition	Examples
Data as an Enabler	Data is recognised as a key enabler in the delivery of all functions of the Agency	Data informed decision making, outcomes evaluation, planning, policy development and research
Data processes are digital by default	Digital data systems will replace all current paper processes in the Agency	<ul> <li>Digital Portal supporting online referrals, submissions, applications etc. to Tusla</li> <li>Case management systems supporting all services to allow electronic record keeping</li> </ul>
Data Reuse 'Enter once, use often'	Data that is already held in a system and is fit for purpose and legally reusable is not requested again from employees, service users, partners or other stakeholders again	Schools can submit absence returns to Tusla from their school management systems rather than re-enter this data in a Tusla system
Privacy by design and privacy by default	Ensuring all systems and processes that involve the processing of personal data are developed and operated in line with the principles of data protection	Develop Data Privacy Impact Assessments (DPIAs) for all systems to ensure that processing activities are in line with data protection principles
Transparency for Citizens	Citizens know what data is held by Tusla and how it is used. Citizens have access to their own personal data as appropriate	Provide systems that allow individuals to readily and easily avail of their rights to - access information relating to them; to be informed as to how it is used and for what purpose; to have factual errors rectified; to object to the processing of their data and to be fully aware of any data sharing arrangements and their purpose
Data Awareness	Tusla staff are aware of the value data has in relation to achieving the objectives of the Agency in delivering better outcomes and are also aware of their responsibilities to manage data in a safe, consistent and quality focused manner	Staff receive guidance, supports and training to inform them of their data management responsibilities and to support them in any data related tasks they undertake
Adherence to compliance obligations	Data management structures in Tusla are developed to support compliance with legal, regulatory and government policy data related requirements	Data management in Tusla is aligned to all relevant policy and compliance obligations

#### 5. Data Governance

This strategy establishes a
Tusla data governance model
that is aligned to existing Tusla
governance structures and
seeks to expand and enhance
these structures to support
the following data governance
pillars:

To establish governance structures for the overall management of the quality, usability, security and availability of data in Tusla.



Governance & accountability for data management in Tusla is established under the National Data and Information Committees (NDIOC) a sub group of the Tusla Senior Management Team (SMT). Data governance structures and practices will be defined at all levels by enhancing Tusla's data related policies, procedures, protocols and guidelines (PPPGs). Implementation of these PPPGs will be supported by clearly defined roles & responsibilities at both the level of those who are accountable to how data is managed and also at the level of those who are responsible for the direct processing of the data. Data governance will be further enhanced by having a comprehensive quality assurance framework in place that monitors and reports on the awareness and conformance to these specifications at all levels. Similarly, opportunities will be explored with the internal audit function to seek to avail of its capability and access to external expertise to further reinforce the ongoing assessment of conformance both in the context of Tusla's own data specifications and also having regard for best practices and industry norms in data management.

#### National Data and Information Oversight Committee (NDIOC)

Data governance in Tusla is established under the National Data and Information oversight committee (NDIOC), a sub-committee of the Tusla Senior Management Team (SMT) with delegated authority to oversee governance and accountability arrangements in respect of the management of the Agency's data and information.

## **National Policy Oversight Committee (NPOC)**

NPOC is a sub-committee of the SMT that governs, commissions, approves and authorises all policies, procedures, protocols and guidelines (PPPGs) implemented in Tusla. NPOC ensures that Tusla has strong and well governed procedures to provide both policy development and the supports required to implement policy successfully across the Agency.

Two NPOC initiatives will be established under this strategy:

• NPOC will be extended to include a Data Management Plan as a component to be delivered as part of all policy development programs, thereby ensuring that data management is an intrinsic consideration and component part of

## 5. Data Governance (Cont'd)

the development of PPPGs and associated implementation plans. Initially the focus will be on all new or updated policies being progressed under NPOC and will then be extended to retrospectively revisit existing polices with the aim of ensuring all services in Tusla that involve the processing of data have a comprehensive and robust data management plan. This program of work will initially be sequenced to give priority to main service areas that involve the processing of personal data.

• NPOC development groups will be established to focus on developing a comprehensive and robust set of data and information related PPPGs covering records management and data & information security. This will include the adoption of the ISO27001 Information Security standard as well as alignment with Government related policy such as the Public Service Data Strategy, the National Data Infrastructure and the Public Service Open Data initiative.

#### Quality Assurance & Audit

The Tusla ICT Directorate in conjunction with the Quality Assurance Unit will develop and implement a **data management monitoring** and compliance program to monitor that data management policies, procedures, protocols and guidelines are embedded in practice across the Agency. Assessment of data management practice will form part of monitoring visits and will be used both as an indicator of the success of the implementation of this strategy and as a source of learning to inform continuous improvement initiatives.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Establishing data management excellence in Tusla will require a whole system approach involving all staff. Roles and responsibilities will be explicitly defined in policy and where appropriate in contracts of employment and third party contracts. Some key initiatives that will be progressed over the course of this strategy will include:

- Staff development: Clear guidance, supports and training will be provided to all staff with a particular focus on data handling responsibilities to embed a culture of good management of data at all touch points that ensures benefits such as regulatory compliance, administration efficiency and knowledge management.
- External stakeholder management: Data related roles and responsibilities will be clearly agreed with all external stakeholders who process data controlled by Tusla. These obligations will be established in contracts and data sharing agreements covering all vendors, service providers, agency staff and other stakeholders who may have access to this data.
- Establishment of data management related roles: To support the implementation of this strategy and the on-going data management capability and practice in Tusla a range of formally assigned roles will be established. These roles will be defined and expanded on in the "Increased Capability" section of this strategy.

The plan below outlines the actions to be progressed under this 'Data Governance' theme of the strategy.

Ref	Action	Initial Benefit By	Complete By
DG-1	Establish a <b>set of high level principles</b> that create a shared vision for the improvement of data management in Tusla and guide the formulation of this Data Management strategy and related policies	Q2 2019	Q1 2019
DG-2	Establish the <b>National Data and Information</b> Oversight Committee as a sub-group of the Tusla Senior Management Team to oversee governance and accountability arrangements in respect of the management of the Agency's data and information	Q1 2019	Q1 2019
DG-3	Extend the function of the National Policy Oversight Committee (NPOC) to include a Data Management Plan as a component to be delivered as part of all new and updated policy development programs	Q2 2019	Q3 2019
DG-4	Under the governance of NPOC revisit existing Tusla polices and develop an associated data management plan with the aim of ensuring that all services and areas of activity in Tusla that involve the processing of data have a comprehensive and robust data management plan	Q4 2019	Q4 2022
DG-5	Define and clarify the <b>roles and responsibilities</b> of all directorates in respect of data and information management and of all stakeholders (both internal and external) who process data controlled by Tusla	Q3 2019	Q4 2020
DG-6	Develop a set of data policies, procedures and standards that seek to formally and universally define how data is managed in Tusla and by which compliance can be ensured. This will include a comprehensive policy framework covering records management and data & information security. The policy framework will include adopting the ISO27001 Information Security standard as well as alignment with Government related policy such as the Public Service Data Strategy, the National Data Infrastructure and the Public Service Open Data initiative	Q3 2019	Q3 2020
DG-7	Develop and implement a data management monitoring and compliance program to monitor that the data management policies, procedures and guidelines are embedded in practice across the Agency	Q4 2020	Q4 2022
DG-8	Establish <b>Data Management reporting</b> structure that will provide reporting at both an individual business unit level and at an overall Agency level. This analysis and associated report will define the current data management posture and will consist of performance against agreed data quality indicators, compliance levels, current data maturity assessment, program progress updates, risk analysis and future planning  An overarching annual data management report will be proceeded to the Tusle SMT and Board in the first quarter.	Q1 2020	Q4 2022
	presented to the Tusla SMT and Board in the first quarter of each year. The annual report will consist of an end of year assessment and program overview for the coming year		

## 6. Increased Capability

The development of data capability at all levels is fundamental to achieving the goals and objectives of this strategy. Furthermore, excellence in data management is not an end in itself but rather it is an ongoing continuous improvement that requires permanent capability to ensure that Tusla's data maturity develops year on year with ongoing increased benefit realisation across all areas.

The program of work under the 'Governance' theme of this strategy will define and clarify the roles and responsibilities of all business units and staff with regard to the management of data that Tusla processes. The 'Governance' program will formally and explicitly define these roles and responsibilities in Tusla's policy framework and also in employee, vendor and third party contracts as appropriate. To meet the obligations set by these roles and responsibilities this strategy will also progress an "Increased Capability" theme to ensure that Tusla has the necessary data expertise and resourcing to deliver on the vision of this strategy. The "Increase Capability" theme will seek to define a resourcing plan; recruit new expertise; enhance and develop staff awareness and expertise in data management; and finally seek to utilise existing resources as appropriate. The plan below outlines the actions to be progressed under this goal.

To establish the capability at all levels in Tusla to deliver the program of work under this strategy and to provide for the embedding and continued improvement of excellence in data management across all activities of the Agency.

ID	Action	Initial Benefit By	Complete By
IC-1	Develop a data management resourcing plan to define the capability and sizing of data management expertise required in Tusla to deliver this strategy and to provide for the ongoing delivery of data management services. The plan will include a proposal to recruit new data related roles and also propose to utilise existing staff as appropriate  Output  New posts will be established in the ICT Directorate to provide data management capabilities and services in areas such as data strategy and policy development, data management planning, data warehousing, data analytics and business intelligence, data security and database management  New posts for operational services to provide administration supports for storage and retrieval of records	Q2 2020	Q2 2020

ID	Action	Initial Benefit By	Complete By
IC-1	<ul> <li>New 'Data Quality Officer' posts will be established in Operations to support the implementation of data quality improvement initiatives across Tusla service areas with a particular focus on social work case files</li> <li>Other resourcing: This strategy will give consideration to all roles required to put in place the data management expertise required in Tusla. In addition to the specific roles stated above consideration will also be given to establishing new posts for archivists, records management officers and other related roles</li> <li>Note: Tusla is also increasing capacity in Data Protection capability under a separate GDPR program to support the operation of the Data Protection Office and all related regulatory compliance, project and operational functions.</li> </ul>	Q2 2020	Q2 2020
IC-2	Subject to budgetary funding, progress a <b>recruitment campaign</b> to fill all roles identified in the Data Management Resourcing Plan	Q2 2020	Q4 2021
IC-3	Utilising Existing Functions: It is expected that other existing functions in Tusla could provide key roles in supporting the enhancement of data management. Examples may include – work force learning and development training officers including data management modules in induction or other appropriate existing training courses; Quality Assurance Officers including data management audit checks in monitoring visits etc	Q2 2020	Q4 2021
IC-4	Staff development: Provide data management guidance, supports and training to all staff with a particular focus on data handling responsibilities to embed a culture of good management of data at all touch points that ensures benefits such as regulatory compliance, administration efficiency and knowledge management	Q2 2020	Q4 2020
IC-5	Identify data stewards from existing staff across all business units and establish a Data Stewards network. Data stewards will be sought to take on the responsibility to promote data management good practice across their units and to support their colleagues with data related activities. Some activities that the stewards will support include: providing induction for new staff on data management good practice; conducting friendly assessments and provide feedback and supports to colleagues; and acting as the point of contact in their business units to support the data management initiatives being progressed under this strategy	Q2 2020	Q4 2020

#### 7. Records Management

Records are created to provide formal evidence of the activities, functions and decisions of the Agency. All information created or received by Tusla staff in the course of their duties on behalf of the Agency should be considered as records. Records can be in a variety of forms including:

- Paper documents both written and printed matter
- Electronic records for example word processing files, spreadsheet files, databases (such as records on SAP HR or records on the NCCIS), emails, text messages, social media posts and electronic data on any media such as USB drivers, disks or tapes
- Books, drawings, photographs and videos

To establish a well-functioning Records Management environment in Tusla for all electronic and paper records.

 Any medium on which information is recorded or stored by graphic, electronic or mechanical means (or copies thereof)

Records management guidance published under the Irish Public Service ICT Strategy defines records management as follows:

'records management relates to a broad set of corporate responsibilities and enables Public Service bodies carry out their functions effectively in addition to supporting the smooth operational requirements of National Archives, Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation'

The improved use of Record Management in Tusla is a common theme identified in the Tusla Corporate Plan; Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children; the HIQA Report on the investigation into the management of allegations of child sexual abuse against adults of concern by the Child and Family Agency (Tusla); and the report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (The Ryan Report). This records management theme of the strategy will seek to provide the policy, systems, structures and guidance required to establish a well-functioning records management environment in Tusla It

should be noted that the 19 services brought under the remit of Tusla on the establishment of the Agency in 2014 were effectively operating entirely paper based systems and as such Tusla holds large volumes of paper records dating back many decades. This theme of the strategy will enhance the management of these and subsequent records by progressing 3 core initiatives:

- Progress digital first and digital by default principles going forward. This will see the progression of initiatives to replace all paper channels with digital alternatives such as extending the successful online Portal to all services; the Portal supports digital submissions to Tusla as an alternative to paper forms being submitted by post. These principles will also underpin initiatives to ensure that all services have a modern digital case management system. Digital first and digital default will ensure that going forward all new records are digital and thereby not add further to challenges associated with the large volume of paper records the Agency currently holds.
- A project to scan and digitise all current open case files thereby ensuring that all current and future work will be managed in digital enabled processes.
- Historical closed paper files will not be digitised at this time due the scale of investment required and to instead enable a prioritised focus in the years from 2020 to 2022 on the considerable challenge to digitise all current case files. However, all historical paper files will be identified and recorded in a complete registry. In addition, a proposal with respect to the future management of these older closed files (including options for digitisation) will be developed as an input into the Agency's next data strategy post 2022.

To achieve the goals set out under this theme of the strategy the following action plan will be progressed.

Ref	Action	Initial Benefit By	Complete By
RM-1	Review and update the <b>Tusla Record Management Policy</b> and develop a comprehensive implementation plan (based on the other actions under this theme above) that supports the establishment of good record management practice across the Agency in line with the principles and objectives of the policy	Q4 2020	Q4 2022
RM-2	Develop a File Register (a file is a collection of grouped/related records, such as a case file). The register will be the definitive list of all files (paper and electronic) held by the agency and will cover both operational and corporate files. The register will record the owner, description, location, status and relevant dates for each file. This action will involve a comprehensive audit of all paper file locations and the recording of this information on the register for each file. This initiative will also involve the development of filing rules and guidance to ensure the file register is always up to date as new files are created	Q4 2019	Q4 2022
RM-3	Establish the office of the File Registry. The file registry will be the central administration unit with responsibility for managing the File Register and for performing organisational wide searches on information held on electronic systems in response to appropriate authorised requests (for example for Freedom of Information and Data Access Requests). The file registry will also have responsibility for governance of file management and will provide expertise and supports to staff across the Agency to promote best filing practice. Consideration will also be given to centralising the provision and management of file storage services nationally (including off site storage service providers) under the office of the file registry. A file registry is a typical function in many public service bodies and the Tusla file registry will be modelled on the structures in place in other public service bodies who are exemplars of filing best practice	Q4 2020	Q4 2022
RM-4	Under the office of the File Registry manage records classification and retention policy for all record types processed by the Agency	Q1 2020	Q4 2022
RM-5	Develop records management guidelines and ensure that training and other supports are available to assist staff. This will include the development of model files with associated naming conventions and filing rules for both paper and electronic files that will give clear guidance to staff. These guidelines will also include service specific guidance such that all staff members have clear references as to how records should be filed for their area	Q1 2021	Q4 2022
RM-6	Align with the Tusla ICT Strategy to ensure that suitable electronic case management and records management systems are available to all services to support their record keeping obligations. This action will include the implementation of the Public Service records management system and related apps (eDocs, eFOI, ePQ, eCorrespondence and other apps) in line with Government policy and the Public Service ICT Strategy	Q1 2020	Q4 2022

Ref	Action	Initial Benefit By	Complete By
RM-7	Digital First, digital records by default. Progress initiatives to replace paper channels with digital alternatives, this will include paper forms that are completed externally and then submitted to Tusla and also current internal processes that result in the creation of paper. For example, the Tusla Portal initiative that is reducing paper being submitted at the front door by offering an alternative digital option for online submissions to Tusla. Some key initiatives to be progressed under this initiative include:  © Extend the Tusla Portal to cover all types of submissions to Tusla across all services. All paper forms such as referral forms, registrations and applications will be replaced by an online alternative  © Introduce support for all messages types on the Portal, this will replace the current process of notes or documents being posted or emailed to and from Tusla. Instead users will have a messages inbox on the Portal where information can then flow directly into case management systems such as NCCIS, thereby greatly reducing the administration overhead of filing  © Data sharing and integration with external partner systems. This will enable partners such as schools, health professionals, law agents and Gardaí to transfer relevant data from their internal case management systems to Tusla and vice versa, where appropriate and legitimate to do so in line with data protection principles. This will replace the current practice where enormous volumes of records are printed by partners and then posted to Tusla where the records are in turn typically scanned and then re-entered on Tusla's case management systems. Instead these integration initiates will allow data to securely transfer from one system to the other where appropriate to do so and without the need for paper records to be printed or the re-keying of data	Q2 2019	Q4 2022
RM-8	Progress a national archiving and digitisation program to review all paper records for current and recently closed case files held by the Agency with the intention of either securely destroying (if the records should no longer be retained) or scanning, digitally storing and then destroying each paper file where appropriate. The overall objective of this action is to significantly reduce the amount of paper records that Tusla holds. In addition, develop a proposal with respect to older files with consideration given to the scale and investment required to also undertake a archiving and digitisation program for these records	Q3 2020	Q4 2022

## 8. Data Quality Management

Tusla has referenced internationally recognised data quality frameworks to inform the data quality structures to be implemented under this theme of the Tusla data management strategy, namely the DMBOK V2 (2018) and CIHI (2017) data quality frameworks. The current Data Quality Framework guidance from HIQA also references both these frameworks and HIQA guidance has also be used to inform the proposed structures.

To improve the quality of data held by Tusla by developing processes for measuring, monitoring and reporting conformance to prescribed data quality standards and by implementing a continuous data quality improvement plan and supporting operational structures.

The term data quality refers not only to the characteristics of the data but also to the processes used to measure and improve the quality of the data. In order to measure data quality Tusla will adopt the following dimensions of data quality as adapted from the frameworks referenced above:

Dimension	Definition	Examples
Completeness	Are all data records completed as required	All child records have a date of birth
Validity	Does all data conform to any associated data control rules	Child welfare referrals are for persons under 18 years of age
Accuracy	Does the data correctly describe the event or object	Address information accurately matching eircode
Consistency	Can we compare data across different data sets (e.g. different systems)	Readily matching a service provider's record in a case management system to their record in the financial payments system
Reasonability	Does the data match previous or expected patterns	Are there spikes or anomalies in the data statistics in one area that may indicate an error or some form of inconsistency
Uniqueness	Data is recorded only once	A single master record of a child's details
Timeliness	Data is recorded in appropriate amount of time after the event being recorded occurred	Time it may take for a case reported to Tusla to be entered on the system

To achieve these data quality goals the following action plan will be progressed.

Ref	Action	Initial Benefit By	Complete By
DQ-1	Develop the <b>Tusla Data Quality Framework</b> .  The framework will consist of:  1. Data quality policies, standards, procedures and guidelines  2. Metrics reporting for measuring data quality  3. Program of data quality assessments  4. Data quality improvement plan	Q2 2020	Q4 2022
DQ-2	Develop standard operating <b>procedures to report on data quality</b> and escalation protocols in relation to data non-conformance	Q1 2020	Q4 2021
DQ-3	Deliver a <b>Data Quality Dashboard</b> whereby the quality of records in NCCIS and other data systems can be monitored against set quality criteria. The quality dashboard will be used to support <b>Data Quality Assessments</b> of these datasets. The initial focus will consist of an assessment of records held on the NCCIS system and will then be extended to cover all data held by Tusla. Examples will include assessment levels of duplicate records, levels of incomplete records, levels of out dated records etc. The assessment will establish a baseline on which continuous improvement of data quality can then be measured over the lifetime of this data strategy	Q4 2019	Q4 2022
DQ-4	Data Quality Improvement Plan. Multiple actions across different themes of this strategy will contribute directly or indirectly to improving data quality, such as the actions under this data quality theme as well as initiatives under the data governance and increased capability themes outlined previously in this strategy document that included actions such as 1) to define clear roles and responsibilities, 2) to develop a data management monitoring and compliance program and 3) to establish data management reporting structures, 4) to develop staff and embed good culture in data management and 5) to establish a data stewards network to promote data management good practice across their units and to support their colleagues with data related activities  This overarching action will manage all these quality related initiatives in a jointed up and coherent data quality improvement plan	Q2 2020	Q4 2022

## Master and Reference Data Management

**Master data management (MDM)** is a method used to define and manage the core datasets of an organisation. This provides an organisation with a single point of reference for these datasets and a single version of the truth. Examples in Tusla might include definitive lists such as the list of Tusla staff, the list of Tusla offices, the list of approved foster carers etc.

To establish data sets that are agreed as the single definitive source of that data across Tusla

A master dataset will contain lookup fields or reference values, which govern the permissible values for a field in the master dataset. For example, the permissible files of employee contract types might be Permanent, Temporary Full Time, Part Time etc. **Reference Data Management** is the method used to define and manage these lists of permissible values. It describes the agreed set of values. By agreeing reference data across the Agency, the ability to interpret, share and analyse information across Tusla will be enhanced.

Collectively, Master and Reference Data
Management will facilitate the re use of data across
all of Tusla systems and reduce the administration
overhead of data entry as data will be 'entered once'
but 'used often'. In addition, master and reference
data management contributes to ensuring better
quality and consistency of data. This area of Master
Data Management is a key guiding principle of the
Public Service Data Strategy 2019-2023 which uses
the term "Base Registry" or 'Register' to refer to a
master dataset. The Tusla action plan for Master
and Reference data will align to this government
policy and seek to deliver the following actions.

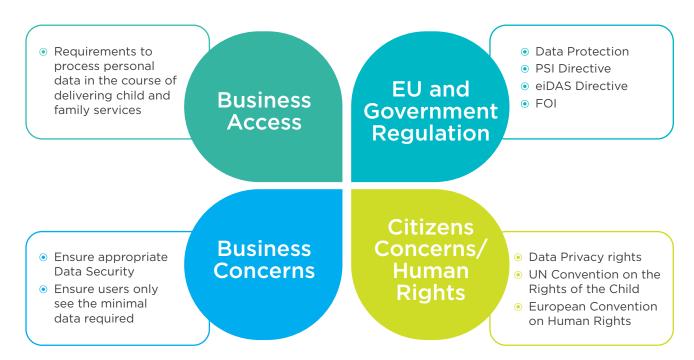
Ref	Action	Initial Benefit By	Complete By
MD-1	Approve a <b>Master and Reference Data Management</b> and Governance approach for all datasets	Q1 2020	Q1 2020
MD-2	Implement a <b>Data Cataloging Solution</b> to record the definition of Master and Reference datasets and other core datasets in Tusla	Q3 2019	Q2 2020
	Develop master and reference datasets for all of Tusla's activities. This initiative will likely see in the order of 100 master record datasets established and over 1,000 reference datasets established thereby ensuring that Tusla has a single agreed and definitive source for this information	Q2 2020	Q4 2022
MD-4	Implement and integrate the <b>definitive master data</b> across all Tusla systems	Q2 2020	Q4 2022
MD-5	Implement and integrate the <b>definitive reference data</b> across all Tusla systems	Q2 2020	Q4 2022

## 10. Data Security Management

Data security includes the planning, development and implementation of security policies procedures and controls to provide for appropriate access to Tusla data. The drivers for data security and the requirement to manage the security of data is an ever-increasing theme in data management in line with increased regulation, oversight and privacy requirements. The key drivers for data security management for Tusla can be summarised in the figure below where they are categorised into Business Access Requirements, Business Concerns, Citizen Rights and Regulatory Requirements.

To minimise the risk of inappropriate access to Tusla data by providing a verified data security environment in line with regulatory and compliance requirements and to establish a culture of data security and trust.

#### **Data Security Requirements for Tusla**



This theme of the Tusla Data management strategy seeks to mitigate the risks to data held by Tusla by implementing appropriate data classification and controls as well as defining and implementing appropriate operating procedures in line with best practice for data management. A further important

element of this theme is to address the legacy arrangement by which much of Tusla's electronic data sources such as ICT systems and file shares are managed and supported by the HSE.

Ref	Action	Initial Benefit By	Complete By
DS-1	Develop and implement <b>Privacy by Design and Privacy by Default</b> standards in Tusla's Software Development Lifecycle (SDLC) to ensure all new systems provide for data privacy as a core principle	Q4 2019	Q1 2020
DS-2	Develop a <b>high level register of all Tusla data sources</b> (e.g. a set of records in a database, a location of paper files, a group of electronic files in a file share etc.) with assigned privacy classification and retention schedules	Q4 2019	Q4 2020
DS-3	Migrate all Tusla data sources that are currently under the management of HSE to new environments under the control of Tusla ICT	Q3 2019	Q4 2022
DS-4	Put in place a <b>team based access control governance structure</b> for each data source that ensures the data can only be accessed by the appropriate team of Tusla staff members	Q1 2020	Q4 2020
DS-5	Enhance the robustness of the data security elements of the Tusla's <b>Joiners, Movers and Leavers</b> processes to ensure that staff can only access data that is appropriate to their current roles	Q4 2019	Q2 2020
DS-6	Transfer the management of all Tusla user accounts and access control from the HSE to Tusla ICT	Q4 2019	Q4 2022
DS-7	Implement <b>Data Security Audits</b> to ensure implementation and compliance with data security policies and standards	Q3 2020	Q4 2020
DS-8	Develop <b>Data Privacy Impact Assessments</b> (DPIAs) for all systems to ensure that processing activities are in line with the principles of data protection	Q4 2019	Q4 2022



# 11. Data Warehousing & Business Intelligence Management

Business Intelligence (BI) involves the planning, implementation and control processes to provide the information required to inform decision making, planning, policy development and research as well as supporting knowledge driven working. In practical terms business intelligence are dashboards that provide intuitive views of data in formats such as visual charts with multiple levels of drill downs to give immediate access to statistical information that can provide data-driven insights. The goal of this theme of the strategy is to provide Tusla with this business intelligence capability across all business activities from operational to corporate functions and at all levels from local, area, regional and national perspectives.

This business intelligence theme supports the move to evidence based decision making as stated as a key objective of the Tusla Corporate strategy. Furthermore, the Irish Public Service Data Strategy, 2019 – 2023 sets out the following vision and objectives for business intelligence in the Irish Public service that this theme of the Tusla data management will align with:

"Data is the foundation of decision making and the basis for accountability. In order to effect good policies and provide useful statistical insights, data must be used to support evidence based or informed decision-making. Evidence-based decision making, whether by Government, business or the general public, is reliant on directly available quality data or insights derived through research. The vision espoused in this strategy promotes better treatment of data through improved data management, governance and architecture, where quality data improves and feeds into evidence based decision-making"

- Public Service Data Strategy, 2019 - 2023

In advance of progressing a business intelligence infrastructure, Tusla will first develop a Data Warehouse (DW). A Data Warehouse is a central repository where copies of all relevant data is stored and provides for the integration of these data sources to enable the joining up of data as

To enable the evaluation of outcomes and evidence informed decision making by establishing the environment and services in Tusla to support consistent and integrated data analysis and business intelligence.

required. The Tusla Data Warehouse will contain the data from all key Tusla systems such as NCCIS, Portal and SAP in addition to data from external sources such as CSO data. This integrated data warehouse can then be used by business intelligence services to provide the reports, charts, trends and any associated analytics required. In particular, this integrated data can deliver greater insights into how the various Tusla functions operate in relation to one another in a way that was not possible to date, for example in comparing funding data from financial systems with outcomes data from operational systems.

The collective themes set out in this Tusla data management strategy such as data governance and data quality management will all contribute to provide the underlying quality data sources required to achieve these business intelligence goals. The plan below sets out the key actions that will be progressed under this theme of the strategy.

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Ref	Action	Initial Benefit By	Complete By
BI-1	Design and implement a Data Warehouse and Business Intelligence infrastructure that integrates all required datasets. This integration will involve developing extract, transfer and load (ETL) capability to collect data from all Tusla systems such as NCCIS and SAP. The integration will also include data quality tools to verify the quality of data being collected	Q4 2019	Q4 2021
BI-2	Review existing standalone\manual decision support and data analytics processes in Tusla with a view to now automating and transforming these processes in the context of Tusla having a sophisticated Business Intelligence capability	Q3 2019	Q2 2022
BI-3	<b>Deliver BI dashboards</b> and analytics for all areas of activity. The initial priority focus will be on data related to NCCIS, HR, Finance and specific dashboards to support the reporting on indicators under the Tusla performance framework	Q2 2020	Q2 2022
BI-4	Deliver a <b>BI plan with agreed governance structures</b> for business intelligence and data analytics in Tusla	Q4 2020	Q4 2020
BI-5	Deliver a <b>National Mapping Viewer</b> for Tusla administrative boundaries with census demographics data and other identified geographical datasets to facilitate improved visualisation of data to support planning and analysis	Q4 2019	Q3 2020
BI-6	Deliver Tusla open data capability and publishing plan for identified and appropriate datasets in line with the <b>Public Service Open data initiative</b>	Q3 2019	Q4 2020
BI-7	Support and contribute to enhancing the <b>Outcomes for Children, National Data and Information Hub</b> . The Hub is a joint initiative between the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) and Tusla. The Hub provides a public online site that maps outcomes, indicators and services for children and young people to support service planning, research and other stakeholder use. Key components of this action will be to support the Hub governance group and enhance the technical architecture and capability of the site	Q1 2019	Q4 2022
BI-8	Implement an outline site (the <b>Tusla Data Hub</b> ) to present and share Tusla published performance data. The site will enhance the visualisation and accessibility to data currently published in paper form in documents such as the Tusla annual report	Q1 2020	Q1 2020
BI-9	Provide data related supports for Tusla's Open Science initiatives under the National Research Office including the provision a Research Database to support research collaboration and publication	Q2 2020	Q4 2021

## 12. Database Management/Data Storage and Operations

Database management includes the design, implementation and support of the electronic databases used by Tusla to store data. Having a robust and well managed technical database infrastructure is a fundamental pillar on which all other goals in this data management strategy are dependent. Database management is a key enabler of an efficient data lifecycle from the initial collection of data through to the availability phase, backing up and securing the data and eventual data destruction. The plan below outlines the key technical actions that will be delivered to achieve this goal.

To design, implement and support a database infrastructure to manage the storage of Tusla's datasets and ensure their integrity and availability to the Agency.

Ref	Action	Initial Benefit By	Complete By
DM-1	Design and <b>implement a robust database infrastructure</b> to support all the database requirements across all Tusla services. This will include the provision of secure, fast and highly available databases	Q3 2019	Q4 2020
DM-2	Develop an operating model for the <b>secure backup of data</b> ensuring all backups are operating correctly	Q3 2019	Q3 2019
DM-3	Implement encryption and security measures on all datasets to established standards and implement Role Based access control to all database instances	Q4 2019	Q4 2020
DM-4	Implement a <b>Source Control system</b> for all databases to ensure to support controlled version control of all database changes	Q4 2021	Q4 2021



#### 13. Glossary of terms

**API** Application Programming Interface

**Business Intelligence** technology-driven process for analysing data and presenting actionable information to facilitate informed decisionmaking.

**CSO** Central Statistics Office.

**DATA** Data are facts or details from which information is derived. Individual pieces of data are rarely useful alone. For data to become information, data needs to be put into context.

**DATA MANAGEMENT** Data Management is the development, execution, and supervision of plans, policies, programs, and practices that deliver, control, protect, and enhance the value of data and information assets throughout their lifecycles.

**Data Analytics** Data analytics is the science of analysing raw data in order to facilitate informed and evidence based decision-making.

**EIRCODE** A Unique 7-character code consisting of letters and numbers. Each Eircode consists of a 3-character routing key to identify the area and a 4-character unique identifier for each address, for example, A65 F4E2.

**ENTITY** An entity is any object that we wish to store information about. Entities are usually recognisable such as person, referral, address or activities.

**FOI** Freedom of Information.

**GIS** Geographical Information Systems.

**GDPR** General Data Protection Regulations.

**UGI** Unique Geographic Identifier.

**HSE** Health Service Executive.

**INFORMATION** When data is processed, organized, structured or presented in a given context so as to make it useful, it is called information.

IAM Identity Access Management ICT Information and communication technology.

**IGEES** Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service.

**IGSS** Irish Government Statistical Services.

**NCCIS** National Childcare Information System. National Case Management System for Child Protection and Welfare.

**OECD** The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

**OSI** Ordnance Survey Ireland.

**PPSN** Personal Public Service Number.

**RECORD** Can mean any of the following—books, maps, plans, drawings, files, photographs, films, microfilms and other micrographic records, sound recordings, pictorial records, magnetic tapes, optical or video discs, other machine-readable records, - made or received, and held in the course of its business.

**SDLC** Software Development Lifecycle is the process for planning, developing, testing and deploying a software system.

**UBI** Unique Business Identifier.

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