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Lead topic: The National Lottery Fund	Sub-topic: Funds for Good Causes	Contact: Margot Dunne Ext: 5523
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FAST FACTS

- **Since 1986, the National Lottery has raised over €4 ½ bn in funds for Good Causes**
- **In 2014, €178m was made available for Good Causes from the Lottery Fund**
- **The estimate for 2015 is €200m.**
- **Under the terms of the new Lottery licence, 65% of the Gross Gaming Revenue (total net sales minus prizes) must be made available for Good Causes.**

Q&A'S

- **How are good causes selected?**

The proceeds of the National Lottery are remitted to the Exchequer which, in turn, provides the funds for “Good Causes”. Appendix 1 of the Revised Estimates for Public Services, which is published each year, gives a breakdown by Department of all the expenditure areas that are supported by the proceeds of the National Lottery. The areas covered include:

- sport and recreation,
- national culture and heritage (including the Irish language),
- the arts (within the meaning of the Arts Act, 2003),
- the health of the community,
- youth, welfare and amenities, and
- the natural environment.

The Act also provides that the proceeds may be applied to such (if any) other purposes as the Government may determine from time to time.

- **Why has funding from the National Lottery not been provided for the Natural Environment category.**

The 2013 Act provided for a new area – the Natural Environment – to be added to the list of categories that may be funded by the Lottery. It is open to relevant Departments (e.g. the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government or the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht) to make a proposal for Lottery funding for a project or programme relevant to this new area. Should an application be received, it will be considered in the context of the level of funds available for Good Causes in the relevant year as well as the Government's overall expenditure ceiling.

While, to date, moneys from the National Lottery Fund have not been disbursed to

this area, it is important to note that the Government already provides significant funding to the Environment Sector, e.g. the Environment Fund and through the Vote of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

- **Why have funds for Good Causes been in decline in recent years?**

Lotto game sales peaked in 2008 but had declined by 40% in the five years to 2013. This resulted in a decline in funds for Good Causes. The accepted analysis is that the Lotto game was losing public interest as the jackpot was considered too low. The prevailing economic circumstances may have also had an influence.

It is hoped that the introduction of the new Lottery Operator and the improved economic circumstances will have a positive impact on funds for Good Causes. Early indications are that funds available for Good Causes in 2015 will be higher than the 2014 outturn.

- **What about the licence fee?**

A total of €196m was provided in the Estimates in 2014 for projects which are being funded/part-funded from the Licence fee. At end 2014, Departments reported that €158m of this had been spent. A further €25m was included in the Estimates for 2015. The balance of funding will be provided as required over the next two to three years. The licence fee will also provide €200m towards the National Children's Hospital.

- **What is the estimate of Funds for Good Causes for 2016 and the 2015 outturn?**

Estimates received from the Office of the Regulator of the National Lottery indicate that the forecast outturn for 2015 is €197m and the Estimate for 2016 is €203m. We would hope to see these figures grow over the coming years.

- **Will the Game Change negatively impact on funds for good causes?**

The Lotto game change was only recently introduced and so it is still too early to assess the impact of the change on sales and Good Causes revenue. However, in sanctioning any Lotto game change, the Regulator must take into account the impact on the long term sustainability of the lottery and on revenue for Good Causes. When applying for sanction to change the Lotto game, the Lottery Operator provided detailed market research material supporting its case. The change was introduced on the basis that it would grow the game which, of course, would have a positive impact on funds for Good Causes. The Operator also noted that failure to change the game would have a negative impact on Good Causes revenues.