

Fiscal Centralisation in Ireland: an imbalanced state

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Ireland: One of the most centralised states in Europe

- Territorial structures and number of governance units,
- Internal power distribution, Range of functions,
- Financial autonomy
- Relationship to other layers of government

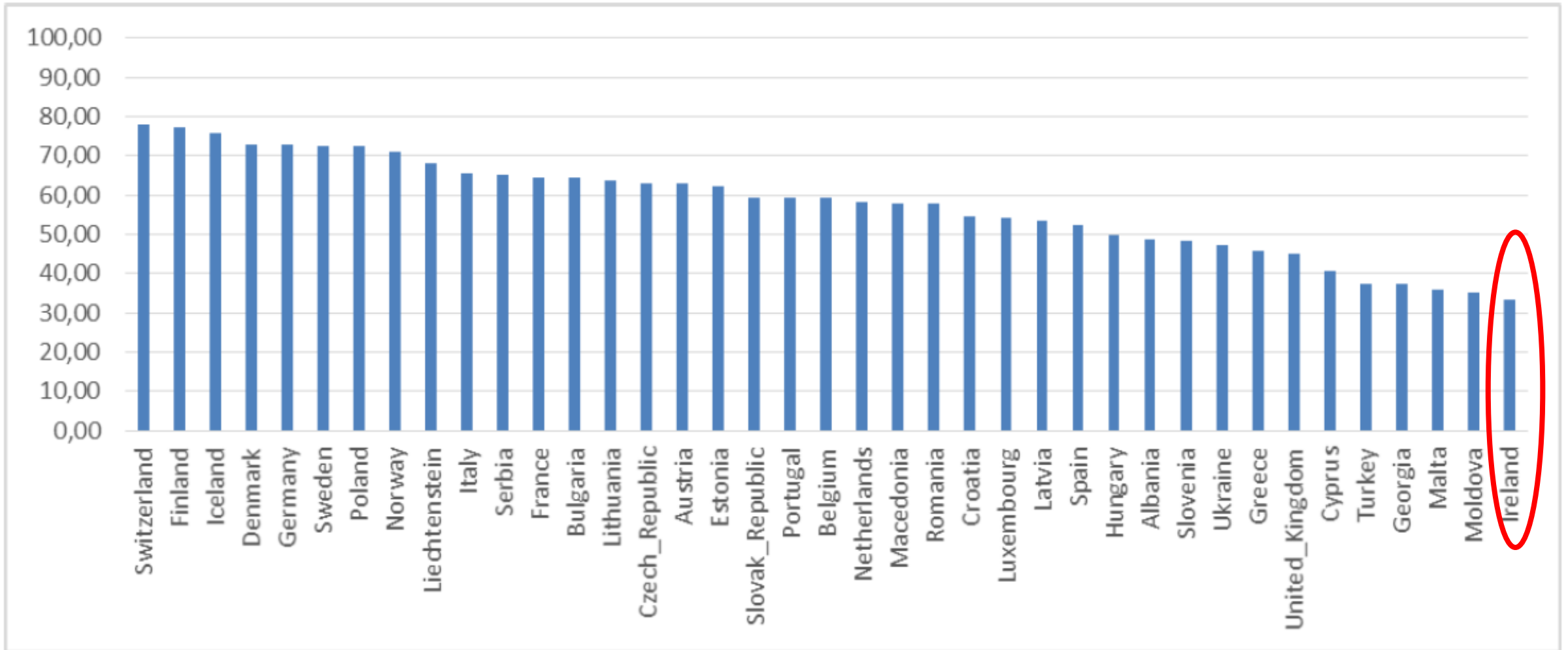
(Page and Goldsmith, 1987; Hesse and Sharpe, 1991, Loughlin et al, 2010; Swianiewicz, 2014)

Territorial structures and number of governance units

Regional government



Figure 5.23: Local Autonomy Index: Country Ranking 2014



Source: Self-rule Index for Local Authorities (2018); See also Ladner et al., 2018

Local Government

THEN (from 1921)

County councils
County borough
councils\corporations\city councils
Borough councils\Urban district
councils
Town commissions\town councils
Rural councils

NOW (2022)

31 local authorities

2014: 114 becomes 31

Maybe it's just efficiency

Country	Number of local authorities	Average population per authority	Average population per councillor
Belgium	589	18,000	800
Denmark	98	55,000	1,200
Finland	336	15,500	410
Germany	12,340	6,500	420
Ireland (Rep)	31	139,800	*5,196
Netherlands	441	37,000	1700
Northern Ireland	11	154,500	3678

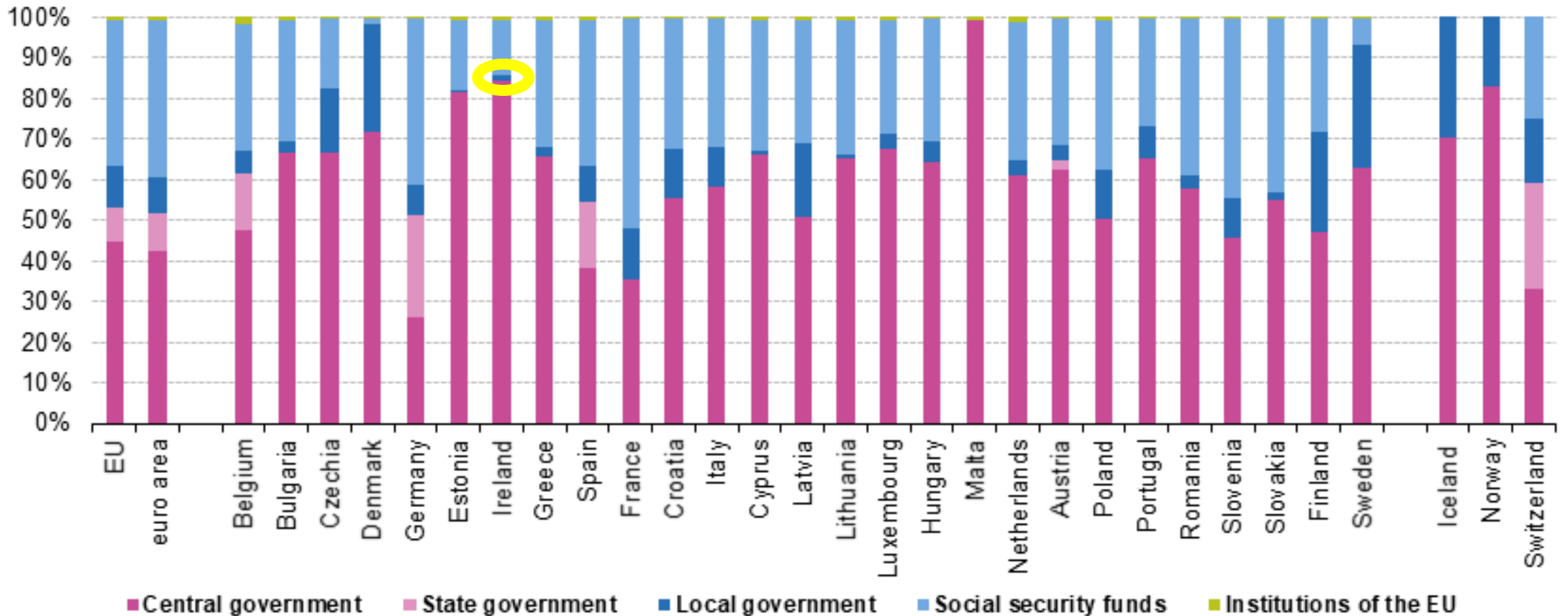
Source: data extracted from Oireachtas Library and Research Service, 2012, 2013.

And very hardworking councillors?

Country	Average population per councillor
Belgium	800
Finland	410
Denmark	1200
Spain	620
Ireland (2014)	5196

Source: Oireachtas Library and Research Service, 2014

Breakdown of tax revenue by level of government in 2020 (percentage of total)

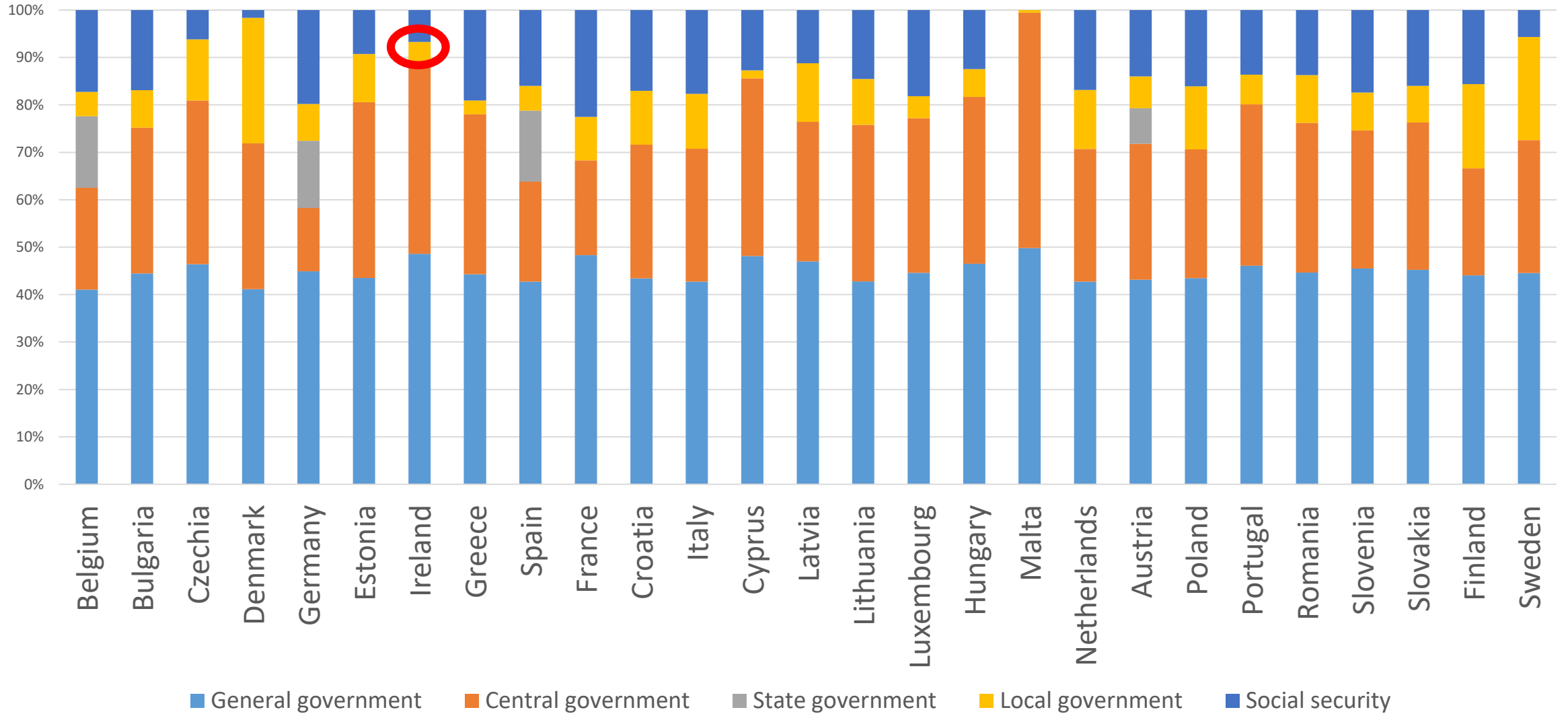


Source: Eurostat (gov_10a_taxag)

eurostat 

Source: Eurostat available at https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Tax_revenue_statistics#Differences_in_the_structure_of_tax_revenue_across_the_EU

Share of Public Spending by Level of Government, EU, 2020



Source: Eurostat

And comparative variation
within Irish local government

Proportion of Expenditure in Each Expenditure Division by County Council, City Council, and City and County Council

2022	All	County	City	City and County
Housing and Building	37	23.4	41.5	74.9
Road Transport & Safety	19.5	25.6	12.9	8.4
Water Services	6.6	8.3	5.4	2.5
Development Management	8.6	11.3	5.7	3.9
Environmental Services	11.6	10.8	18.6	5.3
Recreational and Amenity	8.6	9.7	10.5	2.7
Agri, Educ, Hlth & Welfare	0.8	1.2	0.2	0.2
Miscellaneous	7.4	9.8	5.2	2.2

Source: Local Authority Budgets, 2022

Percentage Change in Expenditure Between 2005 and 2022

	All	County Councils, City and County Councils	City Councils
Housing and Building	325	471	151
Road Transport & Safety	21	20	30
Water Services	-19	-11	-41
Development Management	184	201	120
Environmental Services	-10	-13	-4
Recreational and Amenity	80	96	50
Agri, Educ, Hlth & Welfare	-80	-75	-95
Miscellaneous	131	139	98
Total	65	75	40

Source: Local Authority Budgets, 2022; 2005

Sources and Changes in Local Government Revenue

	% of revenue 2022	% change from 2014
Government Grants and Subsidies	40	203
General Purpose Grant		-100
Goods/Services	25	3
Commercial Rates	28	15
Property Tax	7	100
Total	100	50

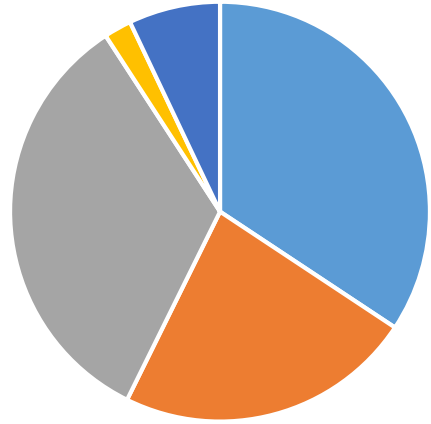
Source: Local Authority Budgets, 2022; 2014

Revenue Variation in the Dublin Authorities

	Government Grants and Subsidies	Goods/Services	Commercial Rates	Property Tax	Contributions by other authorities
%					
Dublin City Council	34	23	34	2	7
DLR County Council	25	25	44	5	1
Fingal County Council	24	22	51	3	1
South Dublin County Council	28	20	50	2	1

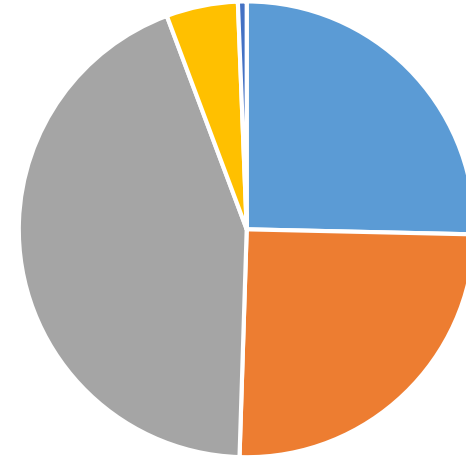
Source: Local Authority Budgets, 2022

Revenue Variation in the Dublin Authorities



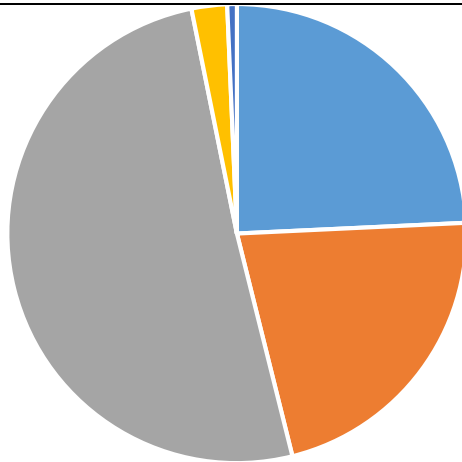
Dublin City Council

- Government Grants and Subsidies
- Commercial Rates
- Contributions by other authorities
- Goods/Services
- Property Tax



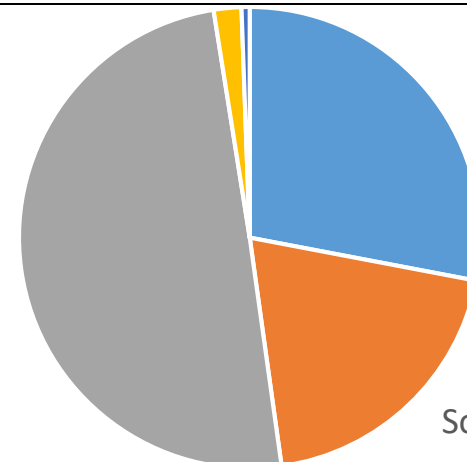
DLR County Council

- Government Grants and Subsidies
- Commercial Rates
- Goods/Services
- Property Tax



Fingal County Council

- Government Grants and Subsidies
- Commercial Rates
- Goods/Services
- Property Tax



South Dublin County Council

- Government Grants and Subsidies
- Commercial Rates
- Contributions by other authorities
- Goods/Services
- Property Tax

Thank you and questions.