

Reference No: E109/116/83; **Date:** 16/11/2001

16/11/2001 LP:- UK-Ireland/Sweden Ireland Exchange of Civil Servants

To: All Personnel Officers

I am directed by the Minister for Finance to refer to the above schemes. The UK-Ireland scheme has been in operation since 1985 and the Sweden-Ireland scheme since 2001. Under the terms of the schemes, civil servants from Ireland may be temporarily transferred to the UK civil service (including the Northern Ireland civil service) for six months, or to the Swedish civil service for three months, with a reciprocal arrangement for civil servants from the UK and Sweden to be temporarily transferred to the Irish civil service. In exceptional circumstances the period of temporary transfer may be extended. In some cases civil servants may be temporarily transferred to areas of the public service outside the civil service. It is intended to facilitate the temporary transfer under the schemes of up to three officers to both the UK civil service and to the Swedish civil service in 2002.

The schemes were introduced in the interests of improving mutual understanding. The administrations have found that they also provide a useful opportunity for officers to broaden their range of experience in specialist areas of work of relevance to their parent Department. Officers on temporary transfer are required to undertake a significant task or body of work at an appropriate level during the period of transfer.

While called exchange schemes, it is not essential that direct "head for head" exchanges take place. An overall balance between the number of temporary transfers in each direction is maintained by the Department of Finance.

If you are interested in nominating members of your staff to participate in the UK-Ireland or Sweden-Ireland Exchange Scheme, I would be grateful if you would bring the attached information note to the attention of your staff. Completed application forms should reach Mr. Maurice Kiely at this office by Friday, 21 December 2001.

Applications (on the official application form, copy attached) should be forwarded only if you are satisfied that the officers are suitably qualified, have done well in the discharge of existing duties, are suitable from the point of view of health with particular regard to sick leave (Circular 34/76, as amended by Circular 32/91, refers), show the potential for advancement to a higher grade and will be released on paid temporary transfer for the duration of the exchange. Suitable applicants will:

? be serving in an established capacity, in a grade at approximately Executive Officer, Higher Executive Officer or Assistant Principal levels;

? have had at least five years satisfactory service in that grade or another eligible grade on the date of this letter;

? have proven ability and experience in public administration such as would demonstrate the potential of the officer to derive maximum benefit from the scheme and make a significant contribution to the Department/Office to which temporarily transferred.

If one or more of your nominees is offered an exchange, it will involve you continuing to pay his/her salary for the duration of the exchange and paying an allowance in respect of necessary travel and subsistence expenses in the UK or in Sweden. This Department will advise on the level of subsistence payable. These payments will not be recouped by the UK civil service or the Swedish civil service.

Due to a revised timetable for implementation of the Exchange Schemes, the 2002 schemes are following closely on those of 2001.

If you have any further queries, Mr. Maurice Kiely (Tel: 6045739) will be pleased to assist.

Joe McGovern
Assistant Secretary

E109/116/83
16 November 2001

Information Note for Applicants

UK-Ireland/Sweden-Ireland Exchange of Civil Servants Schemes

1. Under the terms of the UK-Ireland and Sweden-Ireland Exchange of Civil Servants Schemes, civil servants from Ireland may be temporarily transferred to the UK civil service for six months, or to the Swedish civil service for three months, with a reciprocal arrangement for civil servants from the UK and Sweden to be temporarily transferred to the Irish civil service. In exceptional circumstances the temporary transfer may be extended. The UK scheme has recently been extended to include temporary transfer arrangements with the Northern Ireland Civil Service. The UK and Swedish schemes which were agreed, respectively, in 1984 and 2001 were introduced in the interests of improving mutual understanding. The administrations have found that the schemes also provide a useful opportunity for officers to broaden their range of experience in specialist areas of work of relevance to their parent Department. Officers who are sent on temporary transfer will be allocated a significant task or body of work at an appropriate level, by the host administration, to be undertaken during the period of transfer. Civil servants may in certain circumstances be temporarily transferred to areas of the public service outside the civil service.
2. Applications (on the official application form) from officers in any Department or work area will be considered, subject to considerations of national security or confidentiality. The UK and Northern Ireland Civil Service are particularly interested in taking on temporary transfer professional or technical officers.
3. An officer who is selected for temporary transfer will continue to receive his/her salary as normal for the duration of the exchange. Necessary travel expenses and payment of an allowance will be made to the officer in respect of subsistence expenses in the UK or in Sweden.
4. Suitable applicants will
 - (a) be serving in an established capacity, in a grade at approximately Executive Officer, Higher Executive Officer or Assistant Principal levels;
 - (b) have had at least five years satisfactory service in that grade or another eligible grade by the date of this letter;
 - (c) have proven ability and experience in public administration such as would demonstrate the potential of the officer to derive maximum benefit from the scheme and contribute significantly to the Department/Office to which he/she is temporarily transferred.
5. Officers who wish to apply for a temporary transfer to commence in 2002, should do so on the official application form, available from Personnel Sections. Completed application forms should be sent to officers' own Personnel Sections (check for in-house closing date). Personnel Sections will then send the completed forms to Mr. Maurice Kiely, Department of Finance, 73-79 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2, to reach him not later than Friday, 21 December 2001.

6. Applications should be forwarded only if the Head of the Department is satisfied that the officers are suitably qualified having regard to paragraph 4 above, have done well in the discharge of existing duties, are suitable from the point of view of health with particular regard to sick leave (Circular 34/76 refers), show the potential for advancement to a higher grade and will be released on paid temporary transfer for the duration of the exchange.

7. Applications will be sent by the Department of Finance to the appropriate section in the UK (including Northern Ireland) and Swedish civil service with a view to arranging temporary transfers for up to three officers to each country in 2002.

8. If you have any queries about the schemes or your application, they should be addressed to your own Personnel Section in the first instance.