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## Research and Information Service Briefing Paper

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# Responses to Historic Abuse in the Republic of Ireland

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This paper provides an overview of the processes carried out by the Irish Government in response to historic institutional abuse in the Republic of Ireland. It summarises those processes already undertaken, ongoing and proposed in relation to Mother and Baby Homes, Magdalen Laundries, Residential Institutional Abuse and Abuse in Religious Schools.

This paper contains references to sexual, physical and emotional abuse, including in relation to children.

This information is provided to Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) in support of their duties, and is not intended to address the specific circumstances of any particular individual. It should not be relied upon as professional legal advice, or as a substitute for it.

## Key Points

- Previous Taoisigh have given public apologies on behalf of the Irish State in relation to a number of types of institutions where abuse has taken place.
- In November 2021, the Irish Government published an Action Plan for Survivors and Former Residents of Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions.
- A number of legislative changes have been made including introduction of The Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 and The Institutional Burials Act 2022.
- There have been various financial redress schemes put in place including the Magdalen Restorative Justice Ex-Gratia Scheme and the Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme.
- A number of Commissions of Investigation have been undertaken and the Irish Government has recently committed to a Commission of Investigation in relation to Historical Sexual Abuse in Day and Boarding Schools Run by Religious Orders in line with the recommendation of the Scoping Report.
- The Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024 completed Dáil Éireann, third Stage on 30 April 2024 and provides for certain health and education supports for survivors of residential institutional abuse.
- A National Centre for Research and Remembrance, to be located on the site of the former Magdalen Laundry in Dublin.
- Other Institutional Reviews have undertaken reviews following allegation of sexual abuse. These include Scouting Ireland and St John Ambulance.
- The Dáil and Seanad have recently been dissolved ahead of the General Election on 29 November. It will be up to the incoming Government post-election to consider whether to continue with commitments made by the previous Government.

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## Introduction

There have been a number of different responses to historic institutional abuse in the Republic of Ireland from successive Irish Governments. These have included apologies, Commissions of Inquiry and redress schemes. This paper outlines what processes have taken place, are currently ongoing and where they are planned in four specific areas: Mother and Baby Homes, Magdalen Laundries, Residential Institutional Abuse and Abuse in Religious Schools. This paper does not go into the specific detail of, for example, Commission findings and specific legislation but instead aims at providing a sense of the scope of the processes undertaken.

There is also a summary of recent relevant research in this area in the Republic of Ireland.

In this paper, where reference is made to “the Government”, this is the Irish Government. It is also worth noting that there are some areas of redress, for example public apologies, which have covered more than one area of historic institutional abuse. This is also the case for the Irish Government’s plans for memorialisation.

In March 2022, the Government approved high-level proposals for a National Centre for Research and Remembrance, to be located on the site of the former Magdalen Laundry on Sean McDermott Street in Dublin. This Centre will stand as a site of conscience to honour equally all those who were resident in Industrial Schools, Magdalen Laundries, Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions, Reformatories, and related institutions.<sup>1</sup>

It is important to note that the Dáil and Seanad have recently been dissolved ahead of the General Election on 29 November. It will be up to the incoming Government post-election to consider whether to continue with commitments made by the previous Government.

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<sup>1</sup> Government of Ireland, [National Centre for Research and Remembrance](#) (2023)

# 1 Mother and Baby Homes

The Irish Government established the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes and certain related matters in February 2015 to provide a complete account of what happened to vulnerable women and children in Mother and Baby Homes from 1922 to 1998. The Final Report of the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes was published on 12 January 2021. The Commission focused on two of the most critical issues raised by former residents of the homes under investigation:

- The lack of information & tracing systems; and
- Redress for the suffering caused.<sup>2</sup>

On 13 January 2021, the Taoiseach Micheál Martin apologised on behalf of the Irish Government to those who spent time in a Mother and Baby Home or a County Home.<sup>3</sup>

## 1.1 Action Plan

In November 2021, the Irish Government published an Action Plan for Survivors and Former Residents of Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions which set out the details of the full range of Government responses to the Commission of Investigation report.<sup>4</sup> There are 22 actions in total, across eight themes which were “developed to respond to the broadest range of needs and wishes which survivors have expressed”<sup>5</sup>. The following table is replicated from the action plan showing the breakdown of themes and actions.

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<sup>2</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2022, [L&RS Bill Digest: Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme Bill 2022](#). Bill No. 97 of 2022 p25

<sup>3</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2022, [L&RS Bill Digest: Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme Bill 2022](#). Bill No. 97 of 2022 p30

<sup>4</sup> Government of Ireland, [An Action Plan for Survivors and Former Residents of Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions](#) (2021)

<sup>5</sup> Government of Ireland, [An Action Plan for Survivors and Former Residents of Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions](#) (2021) p5

**Table 1 Themes and Actions from Action Plan for Survivors and Former Residents of Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions**

Theme	Action
A Survivor Centred Approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of a Strategic Action Plan and Engagement with Former Residents</li> <li>2. Immediate Counselling Support</li> </ol>
Apology	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Apology by An Taoiseach</li> </ol>
Access to Personal Information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Information and Tracing Legislation</li> <li>5. GDPR Right of Access to Commission Records</li> <li>6. Central Repository of Institutional Records</li> </ol>
Archives and Databases	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. National Memorial and Records Centre</li> <li>8. Public Access to Original State Files</li> <li>9. Expansion of the Database</li> <li>10. Appointment of an Archivist</li> </ol>
Education and Research	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Second Level Curriculum</li> <li>12. Research Scholarships</li> <li>13. Research on Terminology</li> <li>14. Further Research on Death Registration Records</li> </ol>
Memorialisation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15. National Memorial</li> <li>16. Local Memorials</li> <li>17. Survivor-led Annual Commemoration</li> </ol>

Theme	Action
	18. Children's Fund
Restorative Recognition	19. Health Supports 20. Financial Support 21. Inheritance Tax
Dignified Burial	22. Burials Legislation

### Summary of the main legislative changes:

The Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022<sup>6</sup> was signed into law on 30 June 2022. This legislation provides a full and clear right of access to birth certificates, birth and early life information for all persons who were adopted, boarded out, the subject of an illegal birth registration or who otherwise have questions in relation to their origins. It also allows for access to information by next of kin in certain circumstances.<sup>7</sup>

The Institutional Burials Act 2022<sup>8</sup> was signed into law on 13 July 2022. This legislation provides a lawful basis for a full-scale forensic excavation, recovery and analysis of the children's remains at the site of the former Mother and Baby Institution in Tuam. It enables a DNA based identification programme to help answer questions affected families may have about their loved ones and aims to ensure that the children there are granted a dignified burial.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ireland [Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022](#)

<sup>7</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2022, [L&RS Bill Digest: Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme Bill 2022](#). Bill No. 97 of 2022 p37

<sup>8</sup> Ireland [Institutional Burials Act 2022](#)

<sup>9</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2022, [L&RS Bill Digest: Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme Bill 2022](#). Bill No. 97 of 2022 p37

## 1.2 Payment Scheme

The Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme Act 2023<sup>10</sup> was enacted in July 2023. This Act principally establishes the Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme to make payments and a form of enhanced medical card to defined groups to acknowledge the suffering that was experienced while resident in Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions.

The Scheme opened for applications in March 2024 and is open to the people who were in one of the specific institutions listed in the Scheme:

- for at least one night, as a mother, for reasons relating to their pregnancy, or the birth or care of their child; or
- for at least 180 days, as a child<sup>11</sup>.

Applicants may also be eligible for work-related payments and health support.

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<sup>10</sup> Ireland [Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme Act 2023](#)

<sup>11</sup> Government of Ireland, [Eligibility criteria for the Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme \(2024\)](#)



## 2 Madgalen Laundries

There have been a number of reports in relation to the Magdalen Laundries. The Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee (The McAleese Report), published in 2013, was mandated with establishing the facts of State involvement with the Magdalen Laundries. It established that “approximately 10,000 women are known to have entered a Magdalen Laundry from the foundation of the State in 1922 until the closure of the last Laundry in 1996. Of the cases in which routes of entry are known, 26.5% were referrals made or facilitated by the State.”<sup>12</sup>

Following this report, the Government asked Mr Justice John Quirke to devise a scheme to address the needs of the women who were admitted to and worked in the Magdalen institutions. Justice Quirke submitted his report to Government in June, 2013 – The Magdalen Commission Report (otherwise known as the Quirke Report).<sup>13</sup> The Government accepted in principle all the recommendations of the report, this included payment of an ex-gratia lump sum to each of those women who are eligible – the amounts which may be paid under the Magdalen Restorative Justice Ex-Gratia Scheme are between €11,500 and €100,000.<sup>14</sup> Changes were made to the Scheme in 2018 following recommendations from the Ombudsman the previous year. This change allowed women to apply to the Scheme who worked in the laundries in the 12 institutions but who were resident in one of the 14 adjoining institutions.

By January 2022, €32.8m has been paid in awards to 814 applicants.

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<sup>12</sup> M McAleese, [Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee to establish the facts of State involvement with the Magdalen Laundries](#) (2013) p1

<sup>13</sup> Government of Ireland, [The Magdalen Restorative Justice Ex-Gratia Scheme](#) (2022)

<sup>14</sup> Government of Ireland, [The Magdalen Restorative Justice Ex-Gratia Scheme](#) (2022)

### 3 Residential Institutional Abuse

Most recently, in relation to residential institutional abuse, the Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024 was published on 22 April 2024 and completed Dáil Éireann, third Stage on 30 April 2024.<sup>15</sup> The Bill has now lapsed with the dissolution of the Dáil and Seanad. The Oireachtas Library & Research Service has published a comprehensive [Bill Digest](#).<sup>16</sup>

The core purposes of the Bill are to provide for certain health and education supports for survivors of residential institutional abuse, and to provide for the dissolution of the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund Board (commonly known as Caranua).<sup>17</sup>

#### 3.1 Reparations to Date for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse

The Oireachtas Library & Research Service's Bill Digest provides detail on the reparation provided to date for survivors of residential institutional abuse<sup>18</sup>.

These are:

- Apologies and Commissions of Inquiry<sup>19</sup>
  - Previous Taoisigh have apologised on behalf of the State to survivors of childhood abuse in residential institutional settings and to survivors of the Magdalen Laundries.
  - The Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA) was established in 2000. Its findings were published in the “Ryan Report”.
  - The Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes and certain related matters was established by the Irish

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<sup>15</sup> Ireland [Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024](#)

<sup>16</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2024. [L&RS Bill Digest: Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024](#). Bill No. 28 of 2024

<sup>17</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2024. [L&RS Bill Digest: Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024](#). Bill No. 28 of 2024 p3

<sup>18</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2024. [L&RS Bill Digest: Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024](#). Bill No. 28 of 2024 p22

<sup>19</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2024. [L&RS Bill Digest: Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024](#). Bill No. 28 of 2024 pp22-23

Government in February 2015. It submitted its final report to the Minister on 30 October 2020.

- Amendment of the Statute of Limitations concerning Child Sexual Abuse
  - In 1999, the Oireachtas amended the definition of “disability” in the Statute of Limitations Act 1957. This had the practical effect of extending the timeframe in which survivors of childhood sexual abuse could make a personal injury claim where the delay was due to significant psychological problems, which arose as a result of the abuse.
- Compensation: Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)
  - In 2001, the Government appointed an expert Compensation Advisory Committee to design a redress programme for survivors. The RIRB accepted applications from former residents of 139 reformatories, industrial schools and other relevant institutions that were subject to State regulation or inspection. Applications were open until 15 December 2005 (barring some late applications which were allowed).<sup>20</sup>
  - Awards were made within five redress bands (based on an overall severity/injury assessment score). Applicants had 28 days to accept, decline or appeal the initial offer.
  - As of 31 December 2015, 85 per cent of awards were within bands I and II, which allowed for awards of up to €100,000. The average value of an individual RIRB award was €62,250. As of 31 December 2021, 16,663 applications had been reviewed.<sup>21</sup>
  - In 2002, the Government negotiated an indemnity agreement with 18 religious congregations. Under the agreement, the congregations undertook to contribute €128 million in cash, property and other resources to the State. In return, the State

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<sup>20</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2024. [L&RS Bill Digest: Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024](#). Bill No. 28 of 2024 p23

<sup>21</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2024. [L&RS Bill Digest: Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024](#). Bill No. 28 of 2024 p24

- agreed to indemnify the congregations against any claims made against them by survivors via the courts.<sup>22</sup>
- In October 2023, officials from the Department of Education confirmed that the religious congregations had contributed €245 million in total, comprised of €125 million under the 2002 indemnity agreement and approximately €120 million in fulfilment of additional commitments after 2009.<sup>23</sup>
  - In 2021, the Government confirmed that overall expenditure on the Scheme is in the order of €1.245 billion.<sup>24</sup>
  - Criticisms of the RIRB redress scheme included that it was over complex and legalistic and that it was an adversarial and traumatic process. Some survivors also felt that they had been pushed into taking settlements. There were also criticisms around the indemnity provisions requiring survivors to sign a waiver on accepting an award that prevented them from taking civil action against several religious congregations that operated residential institutions or against the State or a public body.<sup>25</sup>
  - Criminal Prosecutions of Individual Abusers
    - UN bodies have made a number of criticisms in regards the lack of cases that have been prosecuted. In 2017, the UN Human Rights Committee reaffirmed the concern that there is a “climate of impunity” in relation to residential institutional abuse, and the “limited number of investigations carried out by An Garda Síochána and the lack of prosecutions”.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2024. [L&RS Bill Digest: Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024](#). Bill No. 28 of 2024 p25

<sup>23</sup> As cited immediately above

<sup>24</sup> Dáil Éireann, 9 September 2021, [Parliamentary Questions 548, 549](#)

<sup>25</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2024. [L&RS Bill Digest: Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024](#). Bill No. 28 of 2024 p26

<sup>26</sup> UNCAT, [‘Concluding Observations to Ireland’s initial Report’](#) (2011) UN Doc. CAT/C/IRL/CO/1, para. 20

- Education
  - The Education Finance Board paid grants to former residents of the relevant institutions and their relatives. It was generally seen as an easy and straightforward to access scheme.<sup>27</sup>
- Caranua
  - This is the service name for the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund Board, established in 2013. It was an independent statutory body to provide supports to survivors to improve their lives and wellbeing. Caranua was criticised for being inconsistent and for the backlog of applications.<sup>28</sup>

There were a number of other methods of redress including free of charge counselling services, family tracing services and the adoption of the Sex Offenders Act 2001 which provided for the establishment of a sex offenders' register.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2024. [L&RS Bill Digest: Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024](#). Bill No. 28 of 2024 p27

<sup>28</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2024. [L&RS Bill Digest: Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024](#). Bill No. 28 of 2024 p28

<sup>29</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2024. [L&RS Bill Digest: Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024](#). Bill No. 28 of 2024 p29

## 4 Abuse in Religious Schools

The Scoping Inquiry was established on 7 March 2023 as a non-statutory inquiry by the Minister for Education. The inquiry was asked to fulfil a number of tasks, the foremost of which was to set out a potential framework for a Government response that, in so far as possible, would best meet the outcomes sought by survivors of historical sexual abuse<sup>30</sup>. The scoping inquiry did not investigate the allegations of sexual abuse made within the report as it was not within its function to do so. This scoping inquiry was led by Mary O'Toole, Senior Counsel. The Report of the Scoping Inquiry into Historical Sexual Abuse in Day and Boarding Schools Run by Religious Orders<sup>31</sup>, was submitted to the Education Minister, including recommendations for next steps and was subsequently published in June 2024. The report itself is lengthy and detailed, running to nearly 700 pages (not including appendices) and covering 5 volumes. This paper does not go into detail on the content but does give a brief overview of what was covered as well as the recommendations.

The Terms of Reference<sup>32</sup> for the report set out that the purpose of the report was to:

- set out a potential framework for a Government response into historical sexual abuse in day and boarding schools run by religious orders that could also form a template for Government responses elsewhere.
- make recommendations on the scope/breadth and sequencing of such a response or modular response that will, in so far as is possible, best meet outcomes sought by survivors of historical sexual abuse and to suggest Terms of Reference for same.

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<sup>30</sup> M O'Toole SC, [Report of the Scoping Inquiry into Historical Sexual Abuse in Day and Boarding Schools Run by Religious Orders](#) (2024) Volume 1 p5

<sup>31</sup> Government of Ireland, [Scoping Inquiry into Historical Sexual Abuse in Schools run by religious orders](#) (2024)

<sup>32</sup> Government of Ireland, [Terms of Reference for the Scoping Inquiry into Historical Sexual Abuse in Schools run by religious orders](#) (2023)

- outline findings of best practice that emerge from workstreams as relevant and appropriate to future practice in the area of child protection and potential restorative justice initiatives by religious orders.

Central to the work undertaken by the scoping inquiry was engagement with survivors, led by a child protection expert and conducted by facilitators trained in trauma-informed practice. The report contains a large amount of information directly from survivors and contains many quotes and pieces of individual testimony. These include accounts of what happened; accounts of the impact of sexual abuse on their childhood and adolescence and in adulthood and what participants wanted to see next.

The final report consists of seven main sections:

- What Survivors Have Told Us;
- The Extent of Allegations of Sexual Abuse in Irish Schools;
- The Context of Sexual Abuse in Irish Schools;
- Lessons from Past Inquiries into Child Abuse;
- The Current Child Protection Framework;
- Implementing Outcomes Sought by Survivors;
- Recommendations Based on Survivors' Views.

#### 4.1 Recommendations and Next Steps

The report contained recommendations to the Irish Government, these stemmed from key concerns that most participants wanted to see.<sup>33</sup> The primary recommendation in relation to a Framework for a Government response into historical sexual abuse in day and boarding schools run by religious orders is:

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<sup>33</sup> M O'Toole SC, [\*Report of the Scoping Inquiry into Historical Sexual Abuse in Day and Boarding Schools Run by Religious Orders\*](#) (2024) Volume 4 p636

“that the Government establish a Commission of Investigation pursuant to the Commissions of Investigation Act 2004, while also establishing a Survivor Engagement Programme to collect and publish anonymised accounts of survivors who cannot or do not wish to give formal evidence before the Commission. We recommend that the Commission be as survivor-centred as possible and consistent with fair procedures.”<sup>34</sup>

The report also recommends that the Government consider establishing a redress scheme for survivors of historical abuse in day or boarding schools run by religious orders and to consulting with the religious orders about contributing to a redress scheme.<sup>35</sup>

Further recommendations relate to improving the experience for survivors in legal processes and the establishment of dedicated support services for survivors, particularly in relation to the Commission and potential participation in that process.<sup>36</sup>

The inquiry also proposed terms of reference for a Commission of Investigation into Historical Sexual Abuse in Day and Boarding Schools Run by Religious Orders and the proposed framework for such a Commission which are set out in Chapter 26 of the report.<sup>37</sup>

When considering what type of statutory inquiry to recommend, the inquiry looked at both a Tribunal of Inquiry or a Commission of Investigation. Whilst both have their pro and cons, the inquiry concluded that a recommendation to establish a Commission of Investigation was the most appropriate. This model, the report sets out, offers accountability, transparency, flexibility, compellability

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<sup>34</sup> M O'Toole SC, [Report of the Scoping Inquiry into Historical Sexual Abuse in Day and Boarding Schools Run by Religious Orders](#) (2024) Volume 4 p663

<sup>35</sup> M O'Toole SC, [Report of the Scoping Inquiry into Historical Sexual Abuse in Day and Boarding Schools Run by Religious Orders](#) (2024) Volume 4 p663

<sup>36</sup> Government of Ireland, [Press release - Minister for Education announces Commission of Investigation to be set up and Report of Scoping Inquiry to be published](#) (2024)

<sup>37</sup> M O'Toole SC, [Report of the Scoping Inquiry into Historical Sexual Abuse in Day and Boarding Schools Run by Religious Orders](#) (2024) Volume 4 p664



and a speedier mechanism to investigate matters of public concern, and does so in the least adversarial model available.<sup>38</sup>

In September 2024, in response to the Scoping Inquiry report, the Minister for Education announced that the Irish Government would establish a Commission of Investigation in line with the Inquiry's recommendation. There has been no specific confirmation of a redress scheme but, during a debate in Dáil Éireann, the Taoiseach stated that "redress will have to be" part of the process.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>M O'Toole SC, [\*Report of the Scoping Inquiry into Historical Sexual Abuse in Day and Boarding Schools Run by Religious Orders\*](#) (2024) Volume 4 p642

<sup>39</sup> Dáil Éireann debate, 18 September 2024 [Vol. 1058 No. 1](#)

**Table 2 Processes undertaken in relation to Historic Abuse**

	<b>Reports/Commissions</b>	<b>Government Actions</b>	<b>Redress Schemes</b>
Mother and Baby Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commission report completed 2021</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apology from An Taoiseach</li> <li>• Action Plan published</li> <li>• Approval of high-level proposals for a National Centre for Research and Remembrance<sup>40</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022</li> <li>• The Institutional Burials Act 2022</li> <li>• The Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme Act 2023</li> </ul>
Magdalen Laundries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'McAleese Report' 2013</li> <li>• 'Quirke Report' 2013</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apology from An Taoiseach</li> <li>• Accepted Quirke report recommendations</li> <li>• Introduced ex-gratia scheme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Magdalen Restorative Justice Ex-Gratia Scheme</li> </ul>

<sup>40</sup> This will honour equally all those who were resident in Industrial Schools, Magdalen Laundries, Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions, Reformatories, and related institutions.

	<b>Reports/Commissions</b>	<b>Government Actions</b>	<b>Redress Schemes</b>
Residential Institutional Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse 2000</li> <li>• The Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes 2020</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apology from An Taoiseach</li> <li>• Redress Schemes</li> <li>• Sex Offenders Act 2001</li> <li>• Govt-commissioned consultation with survivors 2019</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)</li> <li>• The Education Finance Board</li> <li>• Residential Institutions Statutory Fund Board (Caranua)</li> <li>• Counselling services</li> <li>• Family tracing</li> </ul>
Abuse in Religious Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoping Inquiry 2024</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to establish Commission of Investigation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Govt considering redress scheme per scoping inquiry rec.</li> </ul>

## 5 Wider Historical Abuse

There have been a number of other institutions which have recently undertaken reviews following allegations of sexual abuse. This section briefly outlines these.

### 5.1 Scouting Ireland

There have been a number of allegations of sexual abuse of children within the scouting movement. As a result, in 2018, State funding for Scouting Ireland was suspended over governance issues surrounding a rape complaint. Scouting Ireland commissioned a report into the scandal and in 2020 The Historical Sexual Abuse in Scouting: A Learning Review<sup>41</sup> (the ‘Elliot Report’) was published. The Report found that there was a cover-up and a failure to report abuse within Scouting Ireland.

### 5.2 St John Ambulance

An independent review was commissioned in 2022 by St John Ambulance Ireland (SJAi) to review the adequacy and effectiveness of SJAi’s response to complaints of sexual abuse within the organisation following a number of complaints of sexual abuse of children<sup>42</sup>. SJAi accepted all recommendations contained in the report and have regularly set out how they are progressing the implementation of these – most recently in June 2024<sup>43</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup> I Elliot, [\*Historical Sexual Abuse in Scouting: A Learning Review\*](#) (2020)

<sup>42</sup> G Shannon SC, [\*Independent review of the Handling of Past Complaints of Abuse in St John Ambulance Ireland\*](#) (2022)

<sup>43</sup> St John Ambulance Board of Directors, [\*Third Update - St John Ambulance Ireland Response to Dr Geoffrey Shannon SC’s Independent Review of the Handling of Past Complaints of Abuse in St John Ambulance Ireland\*](#) (2024)

## 6 Summary of Relevant Research

There are a number of pieces of research which investigated the extent and prevalence of abuse and some of these are listed here. This may not be a complete list. Some of this research has already been referenced in the paper but is included again here for ease. However, according to recent research undertaken by the Oireachtas Library & Research Service, there is no up-to-date data which precisely shows the number of survivors of abuse in residential institutions who are still alive today.<sup>44</sup> Relevant research includes:

- Special Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General on the Cost of the Child Abuse Inquiry and Redress Scheme (2016);
  - This sets out that as of 31 December 2015, the Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB) had made awards of compensation to 15,579 survivors<sup>45</sup>.
- The Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse ('The Ryan Report') (2009);
  - Around 1,500 persons came forward with complaints to the Commission<sup>46</sup>. Individuals described cases of physical, emotional and sexual abuse as well as neglect.
- Report of a 2019 Government-commissioned Consultation with Survivors<sup>47</sup>;
- Final Report of the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes<sup>48</sup> (2021);
- Report of the Scoping Inquiry into Historical Sexual Abuse in Day and Boarding Schools Run by Religious Orders (2024)<sup>49</sup>;

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<sup>44</sup> Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2024. [\*L&RS Bill Digest: Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024\*](#). Bill No. 28 of 2024 p4

<sup>45</sup> Comptroller and Auditor General Special Report, [\*Cost of Child Abuse Inquiry and Redress\*](#) (2016) p29

<sup>46</sup> The Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse, [\*The Commission Report\*](#) Vol.3 Ch.2 p9

<sup>47</sup> B Walshe and C O'Connell, [\*Consultations with Survivors of Institutional Abuse on Themes and Issues to be addressed by a Survivor Led Consultation Group\*](#) (2019)

<sup>48</sup> Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes, [\*Final Report of the Commission\*](#) (2021)

<sup>49</sup> M O'Toole SC, [\*Report of the Scoping Inquiry into Historical Sexual Abuse in Day and Boarding Schools Run by Religious Orders\*](#) (2024)

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<sup>50</sup> G Shannon SC, [\*Independent review of the Handling of Past Complaints of Abuse in St John Ambulance Ireland\*](#) (2022)

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