

**EIGHTH REPORT TO THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC EXPENDITURE AND REFORM  
FROM THE  
TOP LEVEL APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE (TLAC)**

**2019 DEVELOPMENTS & TRENDS**



**REPORT TO THE MINISTER**

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## **Introduction and Background**

The Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC) is a non-statutory committee, established by Government in 1984. This created for the first time an open, competitive process for the nomination of candidates to be appointed to the most senior positions in the Civil Service, at the level of Assistant Secretary, Deputy Secretary and Secretary General.

The TLAC processes replaced a system that operated from the foundation of the State in which such posts were filled without an open process by Ministers or Government, usually on the recommendations of senior members of the service and with a strong emphasis on seniority.

It is the role of TLAC to recommend suitable candidates, while actual appointments are made by Ministers and Government. In every instance during 2019 the Committee's recommendations were accepted and implemented.

In 2012 TLAC was restructured to further ensure its independence and transparency. It now comprises 7 external members and 6 members from within the civil service, thus maintaining a majority of non-civil servants. All members are appointed by the Taoiseach on the nomination of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. This is the eighth annual report to the Minister under current TLAC structures.

TLAC operates under license, granted to the Public Appointments Service, (PAS) by the Commission for Public Service Appointments.

The annual report affords an opportunity to reflect on the work of TLAC, allowing stakeholders to assess its activities and performance, identifying trends and monitoring outcomes.

This is my first report as chair of TLAC, having been appointed in November 2019. I would like to acknowledge the enormous contribution of my predecessor, Jane Williams, who has set a very high bar in the role. I would also like to acknowledge the service of those TLAC members who finished their term during the year (details are set out further in the report.) I have been given the privilege of leading a team of committed and talented members, who have given generously of their time and expertise.

Ms. Ann Higgins provides a Secretariat to TLAC that is wise, thoughtful, meticulously attentive to detail and committed to the highest values of the public service.

Our colleagues in the Public Appointments Service, led by their Chief Executive Officer, Shirley Comerford, support TLAC in many different ways and we rely greatly upon them. I would like to acknowledge their professionalism, commitment, and unfailing courtesy in our common endeavours.

*Conor Brady*  
*Chair TLAC*

October 2020

## OVERVIEW 2019

The overall standard of candidates presenting for interview during 2019 was very high. In a great many instances, more than one of the candidates presenting at final interview would have been considered suitable for appointment.

The Committee may recommend up to three candidates as suitable for appointment at Secretary General level but members generally consider it preferable to recommend one as it also generally does with posts below the level of Secretary General. The interviewing panels' task in making a final recommendation can be difficult in these competitive circumstances. It is clear however that senior posts in the civil service continue to attract numbers of high quality candidates from all sectors.

TLAC distinguishes between general service posts and specialised posts and somewhat different procedures are applied in the selection processes. There will be independent specialist input at short-listing and preliminary interview stages for specialist posts. There are currently 53 specialist posts at Assistant Secretary grade or higher in the civil service.

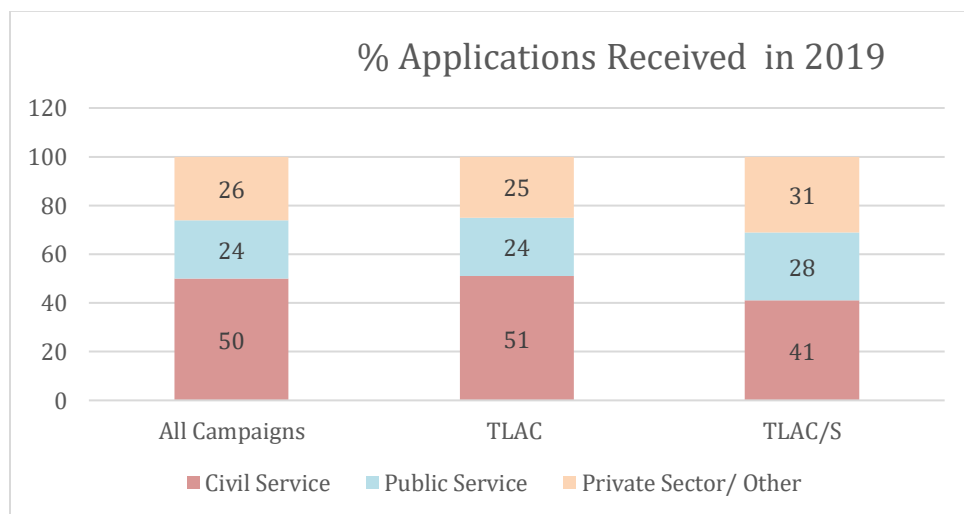
***For a detailed account of how TLAC operates, see "TLAC Role and Procedures"***  
<https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/baa380-top-level-appointments-committee-tlac/>

In 2019 TLAC processed 17 general service posts and 7 specialised posts, a total of 24. This compares with 19 general service posts and 8 specialised posts in 2018, a total of 27. The average total posts (general service and specialised) processed each year between 2012 and 2017 was 26.

Recommendations for appointment were made in 2019 by the interview panel in 17 general service posts. One successful candidate declined the post after recommendation.

Recommendations were made in 5 of the specialised posts. In two cases no candidate was recommended. One successful candidate declined a specialist post after recommendation.

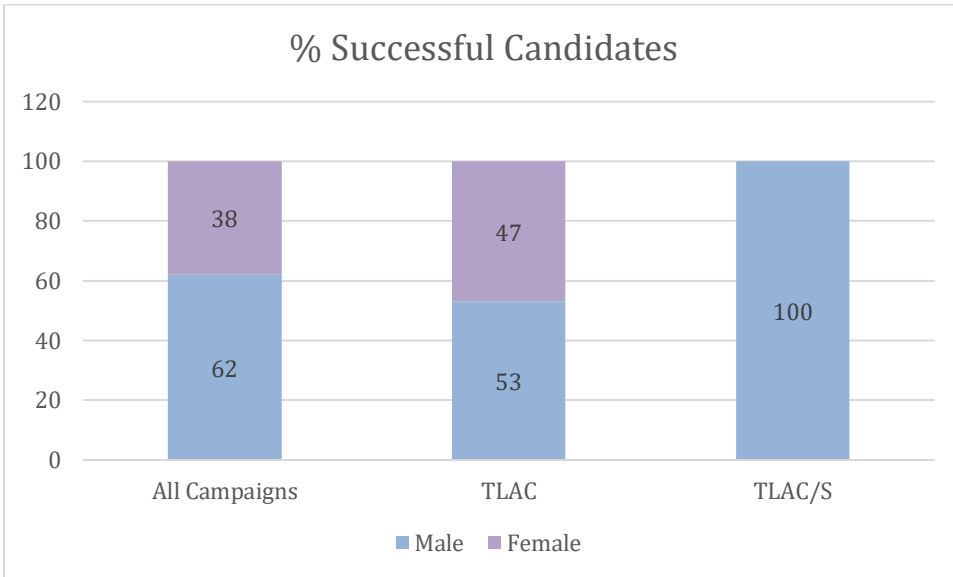
Recent years have seen something of a downward trend in the numbers applying for TLAC posts. In 2018 there were 23 applications on average for each post. Over the previous 7 years the average had been 29. Last year there were 629 applicants for 24 posts, an average of 26 per post. This represents a slight rise on the previous year but it remains below the 8 year average.



## Gender Balance

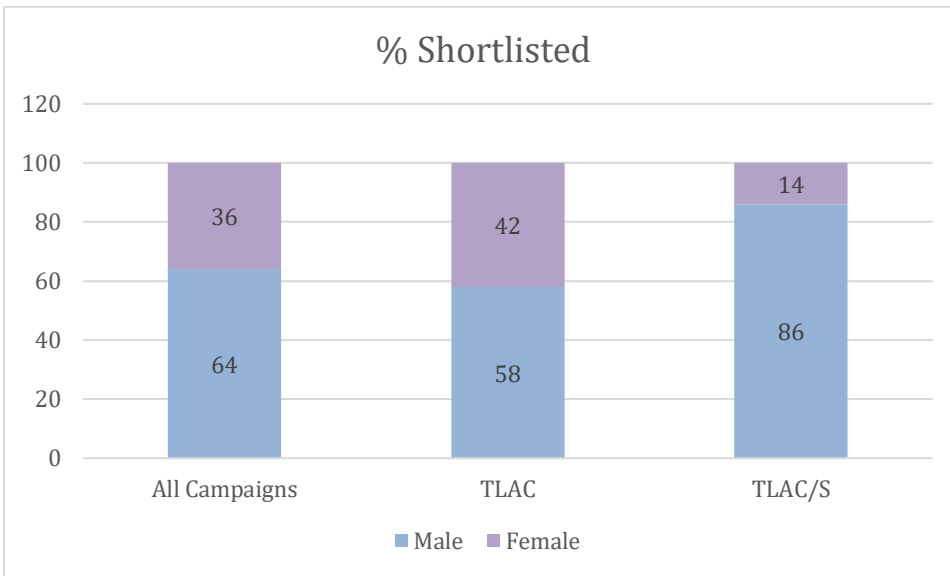
It is Government policy to encourage gender diversity in the civil service, aiming to close the gender gap in top positions.

Of 17 TLAC recommendations for appointment in the general service in 2019, 9 (or 53%) were male and 8 (or 47%) were female. All TLAC recommendations to specialist posts in 2019 were male. Thus 62% of all TLAC recommendations were male.

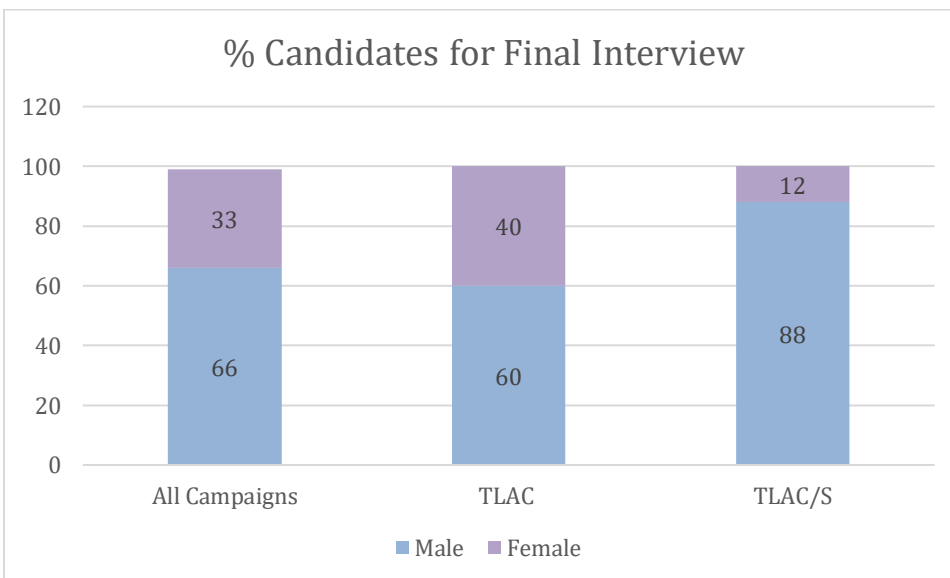


These figures contrast somewhat with the previous year, 2018, when 36% of those recommended at final interview for appointment to general service posts were male and 64% were female. Of 5 recommendations for appointment to specialist posts in 2018, all were female.

Of the candidates shortlisted in 2019 for general service posts, 58% were male and 42% were female. Of those shortlisted for specialist posts, 86% were male and 14% female.



Of the 58 candidates sent forward for final interview in 2019 for general service posts, 35 persons (or 60%) were male and 23 persons (or 40%) were female. Of the candidates sent forward for final interview for specialist posts, 15 persons (or 88%) were male and 2 persons (or 12%) were female.



In each year from 2014 to 2018, the numbers and proportion of females making it through to final interview had increased while the numbers and proportion of males had reduced.



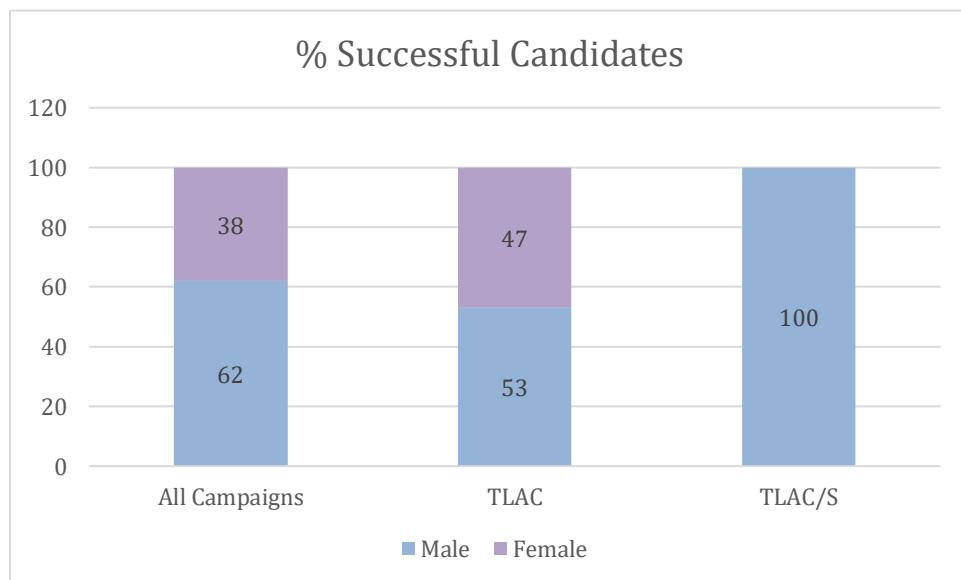
In each year from 2013 to 2018, the numbers and proportion of females recommended for appointment had increased and the numbers and proportion of males had reduced.

In 2018, for the first time ever, more women than men had been appointed to the top two grades in the civil service.

These outcomes for 2019 thus represent something of a deviation from a welcome trend towards gender equality in the top echelons of the civil service.

A significant factor here, however, is the fact that in 2018 all candidates recommended for appointment to specialist posts were female. In 2019 all candidates recommended for specialist posts were male.

It is to be hoped that the deviation shown in the 2019 figures may be a temporary one.



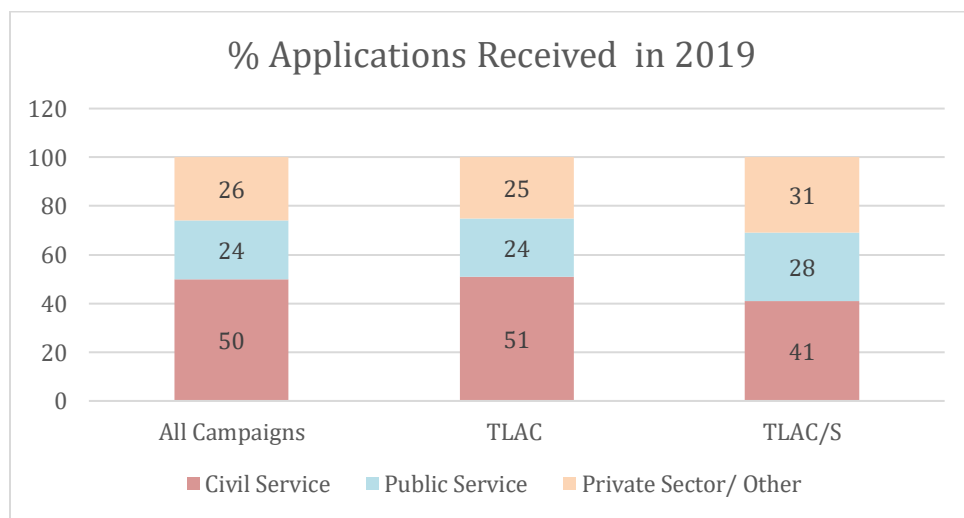
### **Diversity of the Applicant Pool**

The State operates a policy of open recruitment for these senior posts in the Civil Service. The strength of the applicant pool is thus a key ingredient in successful selection. The data shows that the applicant pool is reasonably diverse in gender but arguably less so by other

criteria. No data is available on ethnicity, nationality or other forms of diversity but it would be desirable to have it available in the future. Indeed, as members of ethnic minorities advance in the civil service and in other sectors of the workforce it will be essential to have such data.

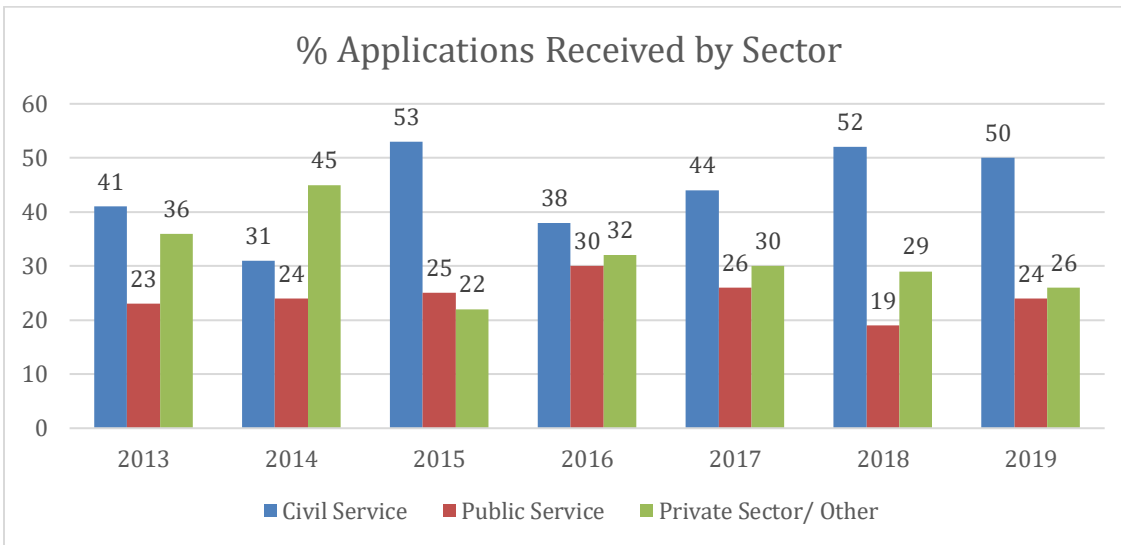
Diversity is an important strength of the current pool. An area of concern in recent years has been the falling numbers of applications as measured in terms of average applications per role advertised, although this has reversed slightly in 2019.

The largest cohort of applicants for TLAC posts is to be found, not surprisingly, among the civil service. In 2019, 48% of applicants for general service posts and 41% of applicants for specialist posts came from within the civil service.



A further 24% of applicants for general service TLAC posts and 28% of applicants for specialist posts, came from the wider public service.

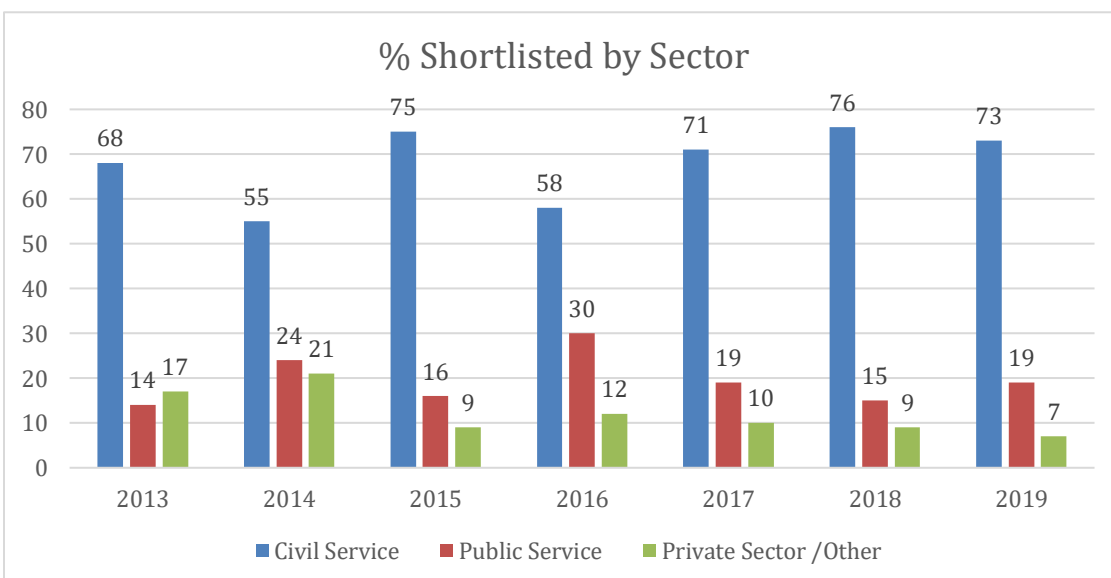
The private sector provided 25% of the applicants for general service posts and 31% of the applicants for specialist posts.



Thus almost half the applicant pool came from outside the civil service.

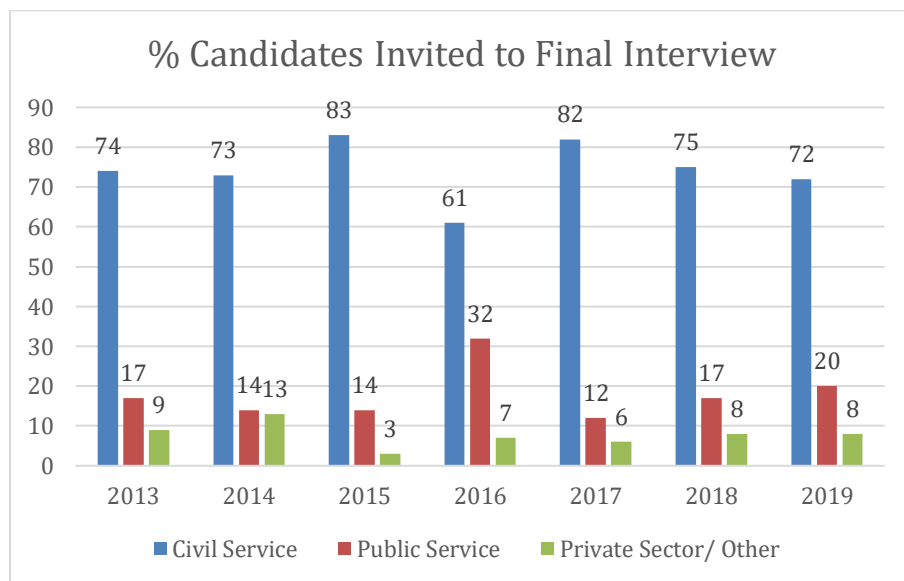
In the previous year, 2018, 52% of the applicants came from the civil service, 19% from the public service and 29% from the private sector.

Of those shortlisted for general service posts in 2019, 74% were civil servants while 19% of those shortlisted were public servants. However just 7% of those shortlisted were from the private sector. For specialist posts, 73% of those shortlisted were civil servants and 19% were public servants while 8% were from the private sector.



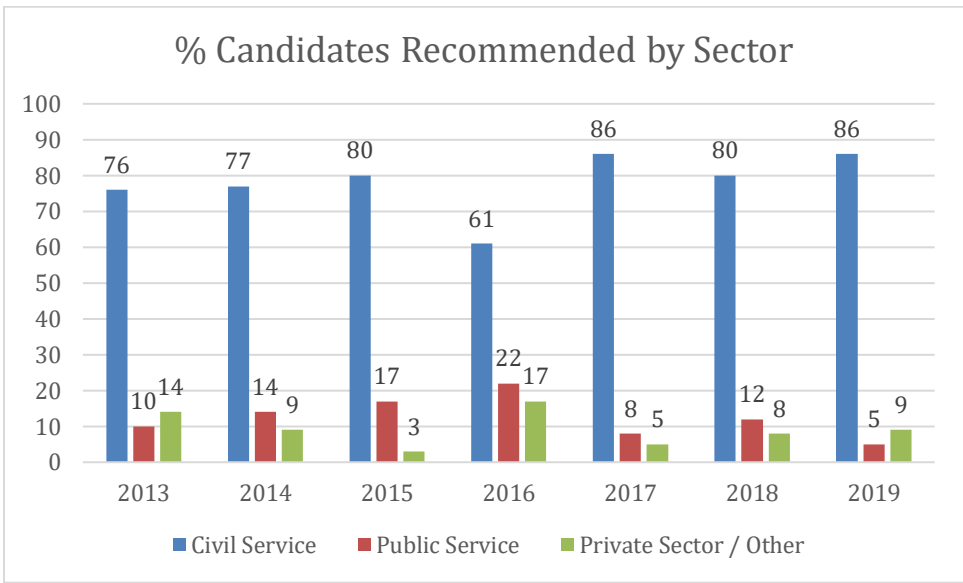
In the previous year, 2018, 76% of those shortlisted were from the civil service, 15% were from the public service and 9% were from the private sector.

Of those sent forward to final interview for general service TLAC posts in 2019, 72% were civil servants, 19% were public servants and 9% were from the public sector. Of those sent forward to final interview for specialist posts, 88% were civil servants, 6% were public servants and 6% were from the private sector.

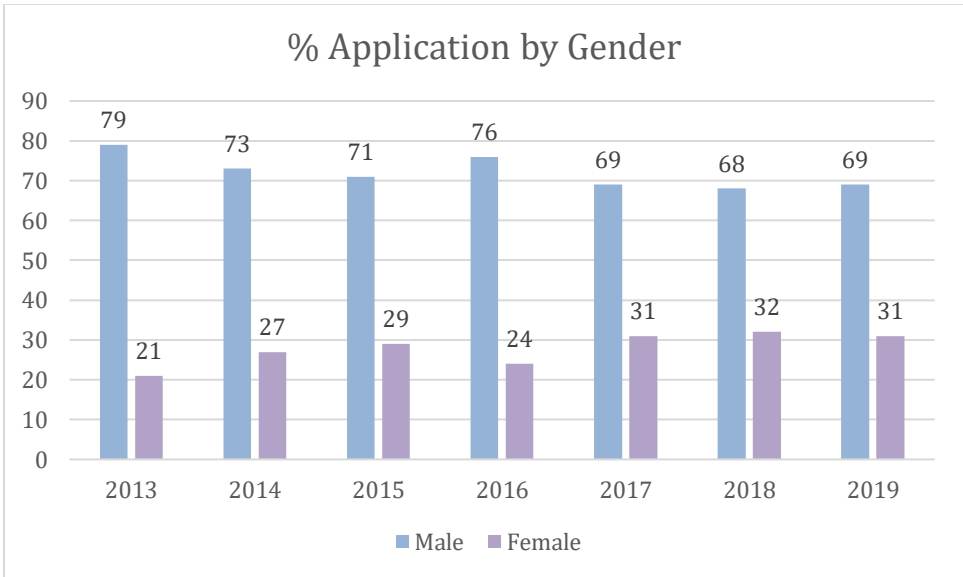


In the previous year, 2018, 75% of those sent forward to final interview were civil servants, 17% were from the public service and 8% were from the private sector.

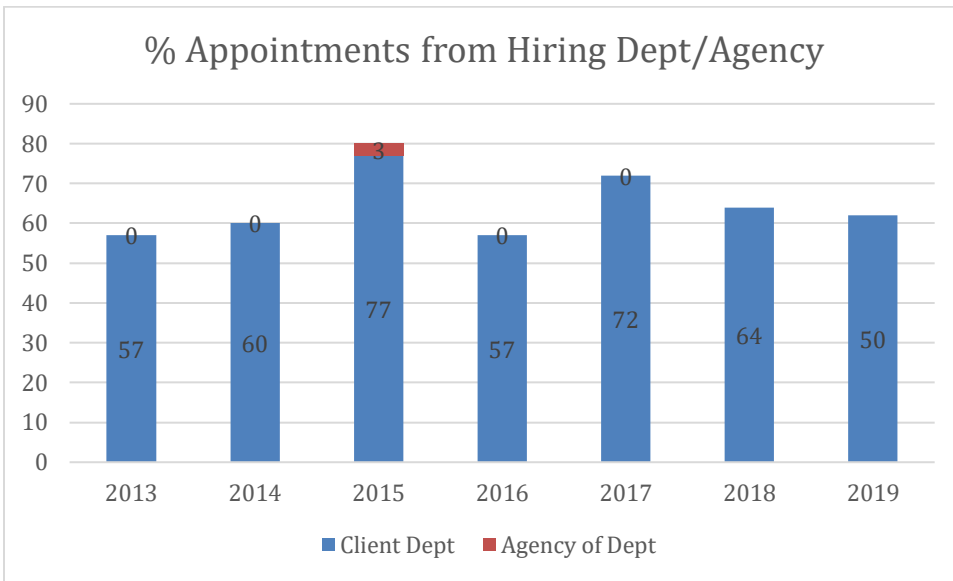
Of those recommended for appointment to general service TLAC posts in 2019, 88% were civil servants, 6% were public servants and 6% came from the private sector. Of those recommended for appointment to specialist TLAC posts, 75% were civil servants and 0% were public servants while 25% came from the private sector.



Of the eligible applicants for all TLAC posts in 2019, 69% were male and 31% were female.



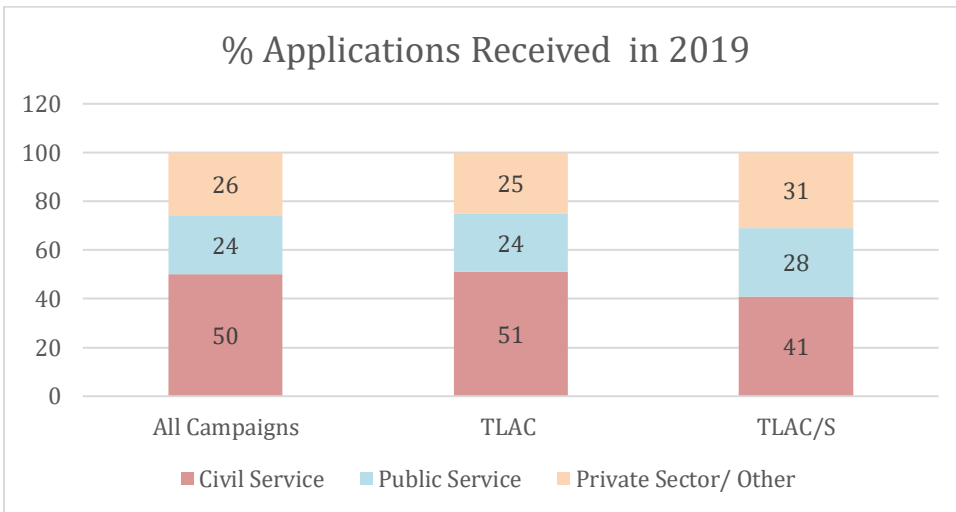
Of those recommended for appointment in regard to the 24 posts processed in 2019, 12 came from within the hiring department or one of its agencies, 6 from other departments within the civil service, while 3 came from outside the civil service. In 3 cases no appointment was made.



In the previous year, 2018, 80% of those recommended for appointment were from the civil service, 12% were from the public service and 8% from the private sector.

These figures disclose a broad consistency between 2019 and 2018 and, indeed, over the previous six years. Although almost half of all applicants come from outside the civil service, with a quarter of all applicants coming from the private sector, the success rate in securing recommendation for appointment is highest by far for civil servants, appointed from within their parent department or one of its agencies.

Although civil servants comprised 50% of the candidate pool in 2019, they comprised 88% of those recommended for appointment. Public servants comprised 24% of the applicant pool and 5% of those recommended for appointment. The private sector provided 26% of the applicant pool and 9% of those recommended for appointment.



It is difficult to say whether these proportions make for the “right mix” in the upper echelons of the civil service. A greater variety of career backgrounds and experience should serve to broaden its capacities. It is also necessary to have continuity, strong corporate memory and specialised knowledge. Nonetheless, it is clear that by far the largest single cohort securing senior appointments comprises candidates coming from within the civil service itself, although not necessarily from within the departments in which vacancies have arisen.

### **TLAC Specialist Posts**

There were 7 TLAC Specialist competitions in 2019, the same number as 2018. In 2 instances no recommendation was made and in 1, a candidate who had been recommended, declined the post. Over the period 2012 to 2019 there were 37 specialist posts, giving an average of 4.6 per annum. In some years, there may be no specialist posts. Consequently 2019, like 2018, can be regarded as a relatively busy year for specialist posts with seven competitions. The range of specialist areas can be summarised as falling into the legal, medical and veterinary, parliamentary and garda specialisms, together with some CEOs of state bodies.

In 2019, 79% of applicants for specialist posts were male and 21% were female. In the previous year, 68% of applicants were male and 32% were female. In 2018, the percentage of females rose to 47% at shortlisting, 70% at final interview and 100% at successful candidate level.

However, 2019 told a different story. Of those candidates called forward for final interview 88% were male and 12% were female. Of those recommended for appointment 100% were male.

75% of those recommended for appointment to specialist posts in 2019 were from within the civil service and 25% were from the private sector.

There are notable differences between what happens in general service appointments and in specialist appointments. The lower level of civil service applications for specialist posts is significant (51% v 41%). This may be wholly due to a specialist expertise base issue but it would be interesting to understand if it is contributed to by ‘out of the mainstream’ perceptions, perhaps giving rise to concerns about career limitation. There is a correspondingly higher application level from the wider public service and the private sector.

Throughout the selection process, the non-civil service applications succeed at a much higher level in specialist roles than they do in the general service roles.

It would be worth probing these findings to discover if factors other than specialist expertise are at work. The comparison has provided a useful internal comparison that can be probed for further insights, such as the use of ‘head-hunters’ for specific posts.

## **How TLAC Works**

- The role of TLAC is to support the Government objective that the recruitment and selection process for the most senior Civil Service positions is accessible to the widest pool of qualified candidates from all sectors.



- TLAC identifies the best candidate(s) for each position, judging each one on his/her suitability, in the context of the post to be filled, and against the other candidates who are in competition for it.
- TLAC then makes recommendations to the relevant Minister or to Government as appropriate.
- TLAC operates under the *Code of Practice for Appointments to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service*, in accordance with the principles of merit, consistency, accountability, probity, best practice and professional confidentiality.
- TLAC operates in an independent manner and strictly on the basis of open competition and merit.
- Subject to certain exceptions, TLAC deals with all posts at and above Assistant Secretary level or equivalent in the Civil Service.

## **TLAC Structure**

The membership of the Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC) comprises 7 external members and 6 internal members, maintaining a majority of non-civil servants. The 13 members are comprised of, (i) the Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform; (ii) the Secretary General to the Government; (iii) 4 other senior civil servants appointed for three year terms ; (iv) 7 members from outside the Civil Service appointed for 3 year terms, 1 of whom is the chairperson.

TLAC members are nominated by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and appointed by the Taoiseach.

## **The Membership of the TLAC Committee in 2019 was as follows:**

- Ms. Jane Williams, Managing Partner, Sia Partners (Chairwoman)
- Mr Conor Brady, Former editor of The Irish Times and former Commissioner GSOC. (Mr Brady succeeded Ms Williams as chair in November 2019 on the expiry of her term of office.)

- Mr. James Breslin, Secretary General, Department of Health (now at Higher Education, Innovation and Science) – from September, 2018 alternate TLAC Member.
- Mr. Charles Dolan, Director, Consulting Ltd
- Mr Martin Fraser, Secretary General to the Government
- Mr Mark Griffin, Secretary General, D/Communications, Climate Action & Environment (Mr Griffin’s term of office came to an end in November 2019).
- Ms. Brid Horan, Former Deputy CEO of the ESB and Non-Executive Director.
- Mr Phillip Matthews, Qualified Executive and Team Coach and former President/CEO and Board Member, National College of Ireland.
- Mr. Maurice Quinn, Secretary General, Department of Defence – from September, 2018 alternate TLAC Member.
- Dr Orlaigh Quinn, Secretary General, Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation.
- Ms Bride Rosney, Former Special Advisor to President Mary Robinson. (Ms Rosney’s term of office expired in November 2019)
- Mr Robert Watt, Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure & Reform.
- Ms Barbara Cotter, Non-Executive Director and Consultant/Advisor and Former Partner A&L Goodbody.
- Ms Katherine Licken, Secretary General, D/Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht.
- Mr John McCarthy, Secretary General, D/Housing, Planning & Local Government. (Mr McCarthy’s term of office expired in March 2020).
- Mr Graham Doyle, Secretary General, Department of Transport, Sport and Tourism (now at Housing), was appointed in November 2019.
- Mr Barry O’Connor, Former Managing Partner, MERC, was appointed in November 2019.
- Ms Fiona Tierney, former Chief Executive, Public Appointments Service, was appointed in November 2019.

- Mr John McKeon, Secretary General, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection was appointed in April 2020.

Appointments to TLAC are staggered to ensure continuity. External members receive an annual honorarium of €7,695 with the person acting as chair receiving an annual honorarium of €11,970. Internal members do not receive any payment additional to their civil service salaries.

### **Processes Prior to Final Interview and Selection**

When a vacancy arises, a job specification is prepared by the hiring department in conjunction with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The draft specification is circulated to the TLAC membership for any observations.

The Public Appointment Service (PAS) will work with the Secretary General of the hiring department (usually referred to in this context as the “receiving Secretary General”) to ascertain the key skills required for the role and to identify the current and critical issues within the organisation that would be of particular interest to potential candidates.

TLAC has developed two frameworks setting out the key competencies which will form the basis of interviews and the assessment of candidates’ suitability. The first of these is applied to posts at Assistant Secretary level while the second applies for Secretary General posts. The four key competencies for posts at Assistant Secretary level and which provide the framework for final interview are:

***Strategic Thinking and Vision;***

***Delivery Focus and Personal Drive for Results;***

***Managing Relationships;***

***Specialist Expertise and Self Development;***

The key competencies for posts at Secretary General level and which provide the framework for final interview are:

***Leadership;***

***Judgement;***

***Managing Relationships;***

***Personal Drive for Results;***

Appointments at the grade of Deputy Secretary are made in a small number of departments, including Health, Foreign Affairs and Trade, Employment Affairs and Social Protection and in the Department of Justice and Equality. These appointments are made following the TLAC procedures for Assistant Secretary but candidates are asked to present on the four key competencies as set out (above) for Secretary General grade.

Further information on required competencies is to be found within the Advice Centre on the PAS website [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie)

Candidate information booklets are prepared by PAS in conjunction with DEPR and the hiring department. Relevant information for each post will also be available on [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie). This will include job title and description, pay scale, location, closing date for applications etc. Guidance notes on preparing a CV and on the selection and interview processes are also provided.

PAS advertises all posts on selected national newspapers, on social media and by circulating relevant professional bodies and associations.

In certain circumstances, PAS, in conjunction with TLAC, may arrange an executive search process, using retained external specialists.

After the advertised closing date, applications are shortlisted by a selection board formed by PAS. This will comprise an independent chairperson, an independent expert in the relevant area of expertise, a Secretary General (but not from the hiring Department) and a member of TLAC. The TLAC member will generally follow the competition process through to completion.

The Secretary General from the hiring department will be in attendance for Assistant Secretary level posts to provide a briefing on the role and the Department. The selection board agrees the shortlisting criteria, which is consistent with the skills, experience and competencies required for the post. The selection board reviews and assesses each application against the criteria which have been set down, and determines a shortlist of candidates who will be brought forward for further consideration at the Preliminary Interview stage.

The Selection Board will next conduct competitive preliminary interviews of those candidates who have been shortlisted. A TLAC representative will participate at this stage for Secretary General posts and specialist posts.

Suitable candidates from the preliminary interviews will then go forward to the final interview stage. They will be required to complete an Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ) prepared and analysed by suitably qualified professionals retained by PAS. They will be required to nominate referees who will be asked by PAS to provide assessments of their professional competencies and their general suitability for the role to be filled.

In advance of final interview, candidates will also be required to provide TLAC *via* PAS in writing with a full *curriculum vitae* along a personal statement, setting out the reasons why they have made their application. They will be required additionally to provide a written narrative setting out their career experience in relation to the principal competencies set down for the role.

They will finally be required to make a further presentation on paper, setting out the principal points they wish to set out in relation to the fulfilment of the role, if appointed. This may be a combination of written and graphic content.

These processes will apply for both Assistant Secretary and Secretary General posts. For posts at the level of Secretary General, in-depth executive assessments, aimed at eliciting more detail than the OPQs employed at lower levels, are undertaken by suitably qualified professionals retained by PAS.

### **Competitive Final Interview and Recommendation**

The number of candidates going forward for final interview can vary. For some posts in 2019 there were up to 5. In others there were 3.

The interview panel for final TLAC interviews comprises 5 persons. Two Secretaries General will participate as will 3 external members, including the TLAC chair who will chair and conduct the interview process. The Secretary General of the hiring Department will be in attendance to brief the panel members in advance. The hiring Secretary General will have earlier furnished TLAC with a completed questionnaire setting out the key skills and challenges relating to the post.

The hiring or receiving Secretary General will be present for the interviews. He/she will not participate directly in the dialogue between the candidates and the members of the interview panel. However once the panel members have finished, he/she may engage with the candidate and ask some questions of the candidate also.

Prior to the interviews, the panel will be verbally briefed on the content of the OPQs which have been completed by each candidate. These briefings will be delivered by a representative of PAS. A PAS representative will also brief the panel on the content of the references taken up from the persons nominated by candidates as referees.

For posts at Secretary General level there is a longer briefing to detail and describe the outcomes of the in-depth, executive assessments.

An hour and fifteen minutes is allocated for each candidate. This allows for interview, discussion and assessment among panel members.

After introductions between the candidate and the members of the interview panel, the candidate is allocated 8 minutes to go through their presentation verbally. Then each member of the panel will engage him/her in conversation on one of the principal competencies.

The chair may or may not then ask additional questions.

Next, the receiving Secretary General will be invited to ask questions of the candidate.

Finally, the candidate will be afforded an opportunity to revisit anything that has come up during the course of the interview, to address anything that he/she feels has not been touched upon, or to make any final remarks.

## **Recommendations to Minister/Government**

When the last interview has concluded, the members of the panel will confer.

The hiring Secretary General has an opportunity to offer views and the panel members may ask him/her further questions relative to the role.

Having heard the views of the hiring Secretary General, the panel will then take a final decision on its recommendation. At Secretary General level, in the event that the panel is unable to make a final adjudication, it may recommend up to three candidates to the Minister or the Government as being suitable for appointment.

The chair will then notify the Minister in writing of the panel's recommendation. The receiving Secretary General will notify the successful candidate and the TLAC secretariat will notify those who have not been successful on this occasion. The receiving Secretary General will also notify unsuccessful candidates from within the hiring department.

Unsuccessful candidates will be advised that they may request feedback about their interview from the Chair. This opportunity is generally if not universally availed of by interviewees. The current practice is to deliver this feedback in writing by email.

## **Trends and Patterns in Summary**

Certain trends and patterns are identified within TLAC's processes since 2012, albeit with variations.

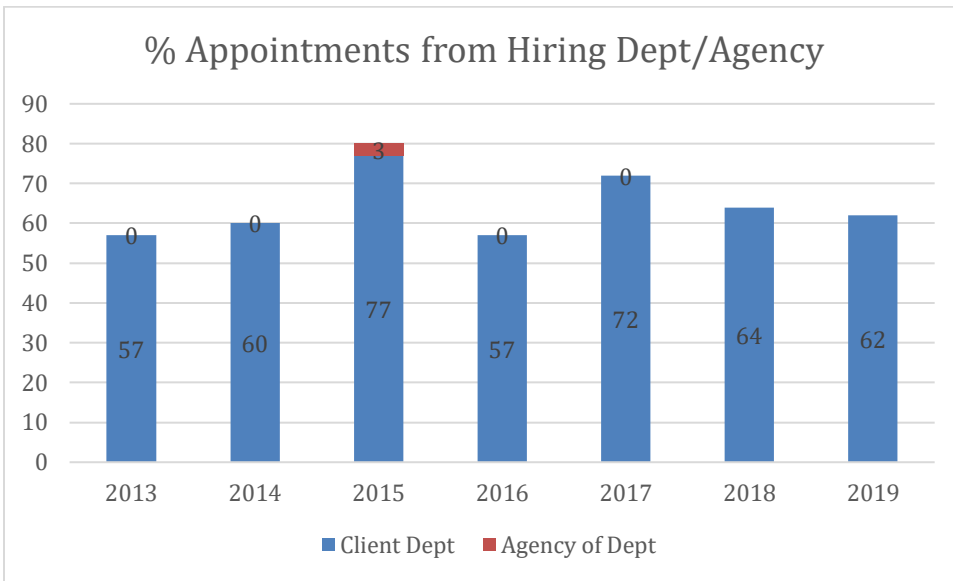
In 2013 and 2014, for example, applications for TLAC posts from the private sector exceeded those from within the civil service itself. In subsequent years, however, the proportion of applications from the private sector dropped. In 2019, the year in review here, just 25% of applicants for general service TLAC posts were from the private sector compared to 48% from the civil service. The balance of applications (26%) came from the wider public service.

This would seem to suggest that civil service posts may be more attractive in a weaker economic climate and less so in a stronger economic climate.

Civil service applicants are much more likely to be recommended for appointment (82%) than either public service applicants (12%) or private sector applicants (6%). This pattern has been broadly consistent with an average of 76% of those recommended for appointment coming from the civil service in the years 2012-2018.

A high proportion of those recommended for appointment tend to come from within the hiring department or one of its agencies. In 2018 64% of those recommended for appointment to general service posts came from within the department or one of its agencies. This figure is close to the average over the period 2012-2018. In 2019 62% of those recommended for appointment came from within the hiring department or one of its agencies.





## Commentary

It is part of TLAC’s brief to advise the Minister and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on the effectiveness of appointments to senior positions in the public service. Accordingly, the Committee makes the following observations.

1. The TLAC process is designed to be open, fair, independent, impartial and efficacious.

By definition, however, there is always a judgment call to be made in nominating candidates for appointment. The role of the receiving Secretary General is a sensitive but important one in the process. The Secretary General does not participate in the final selection by the interview panel but the Members will give careful attention to what he/she sets out as the priorities for the department and for the incoming appointee.

It sometimes appears to Committee members that a receiving Secretary General sees a choice to be made between a candidate who can “hit the ground running” and another candidate who might perhaps have long-term potential but who will take time to become familiar with the role.

This may go some way to explaining the fact that in 2019 62% (64% in 2018) of those candidates recommended for appointment came from within the hiring department or one of its agencies. It would be reasonable to conclude that there must be lost opportunities here to benefit from the varied career experiences and fresh thinking of outsiders.

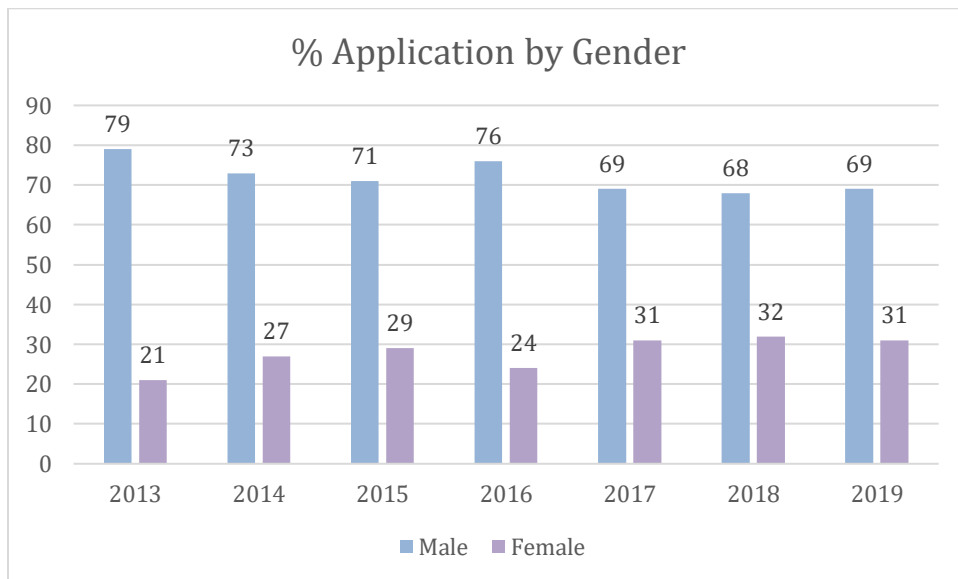
It may be that providing additional supports for Secretaries General in relation to continuity and succession planning, where possible, could help in this regard.

2. Going before a TLAC panel is invariably a challenge and, to a degree, a rite of passage in the career path of a civil servant, or indeed, for candidates outside the civil service. Every effort is made by the Committee to put candidates at ease, to be fair, courteous and to maintain consistency across the interviews, while probing the candidates' capacities and abilities. However, no ongoing, formalised system operates for TLAC candidates to give feedback to the Committee about their interview experience. It would be desirable to institute some such process, perhaps in a questionnaire format.
3. TLAC raised concerns in its 2017 and 2018 reports that the drop in candidate numbers, as measured by the number of applications per post, could impact upon the choice that is available for important positions. This situation has improved somewhat in 2019 with 26 applications on average per post compared with 23 in 2018. It is still however behind the average of 28 over the past 8 year period.

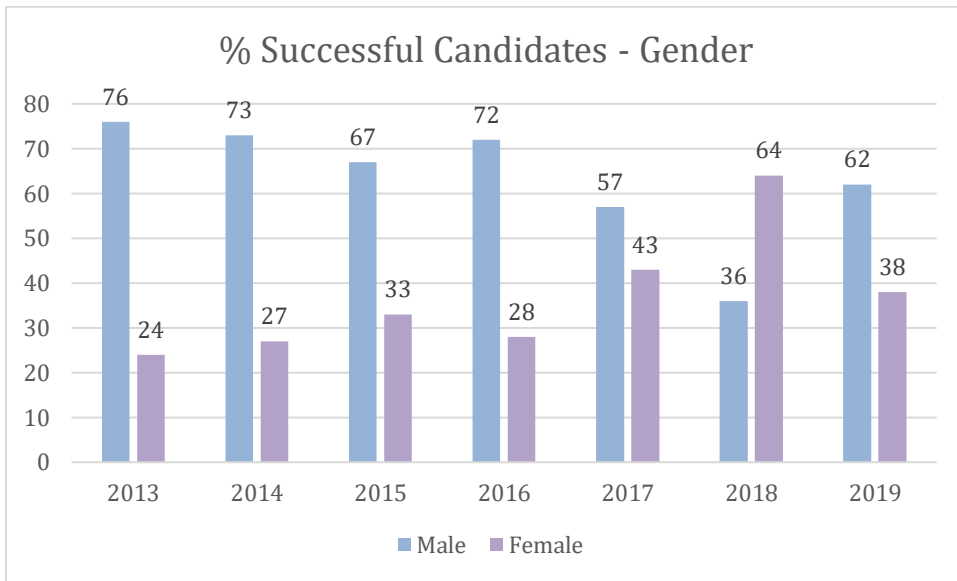
In its 2018 report, TLAC suggested that some examination be undertaken to ascertain possible reasons behind this, speculating that the level of reputational risk now associated with senior public roles may be impacting on the numbers. The Committee would reiterate that suggestion.

4. The 2019 reverse of the earlier trend towards greater representation of women in recommendations for appointment is problematic.

It is not the case that fewer women are applying for TLAC roles. In 2019 69% of applicants were male and 31% were female. In 2018, 68% of applicants were male and 32% were female. Thus the application pool was almost the same.

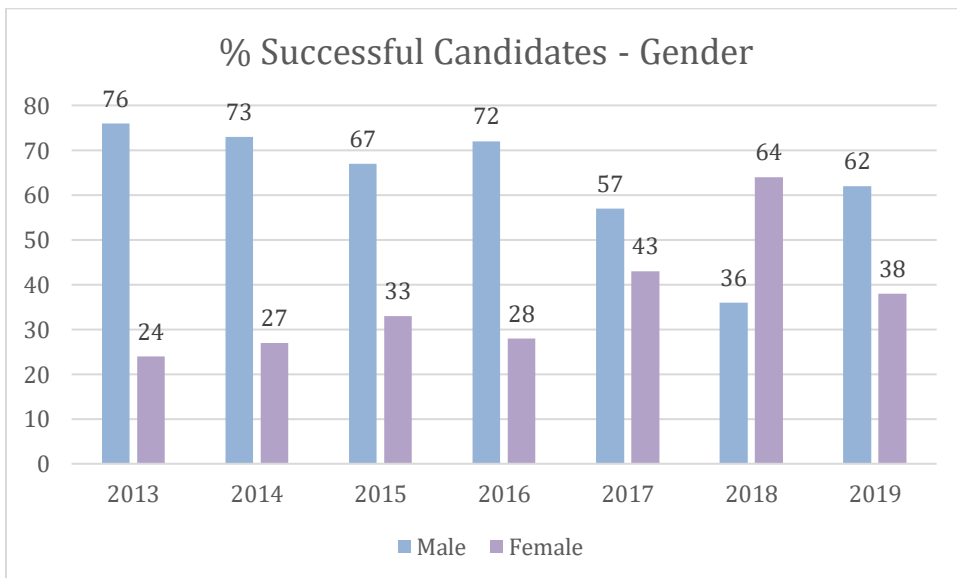


The contrast in final outcomes, as between gender, in percentage terms between 2018 and 2019, is significant. In 2018 two women were recommended for every man. In 2019 fewer than half of those recommended for appointment (47%) were women.



All specialised posts in 2018 were secured by women. All specialised posts in 2019 were secured by men.

In numerical terms, however, the set is small. In 2019, 8 women were recommended for appointment to all TLAC posts and 14 men were recommended.

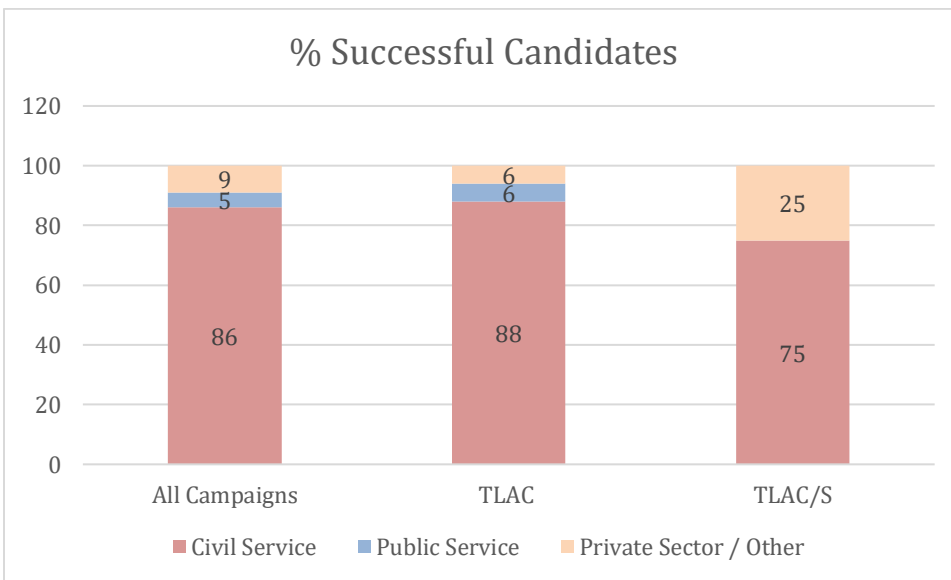


This may be no more than a temporary, one-off, outcome. But it must bear attention.

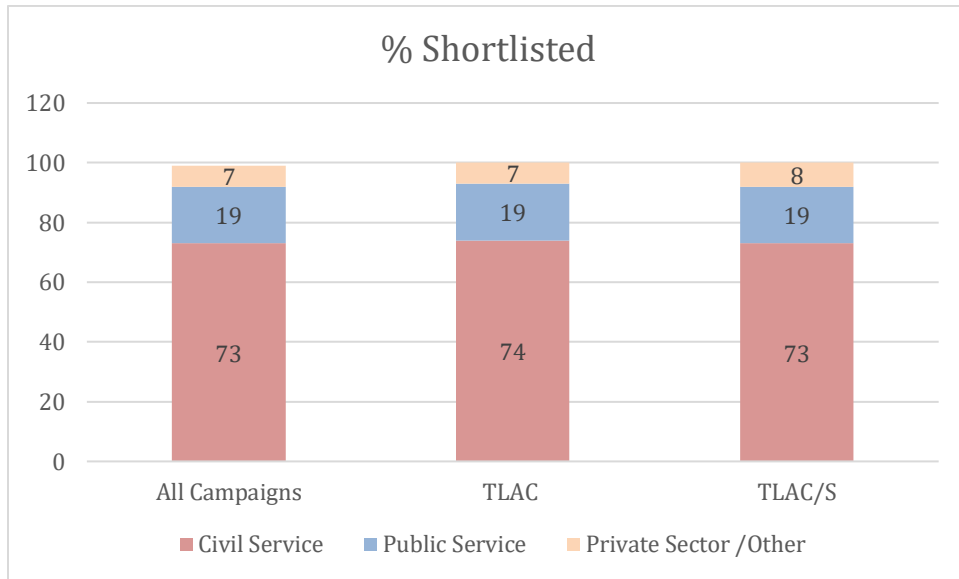
- There is very little ethnic diversity in the pool of candidates currently coming to preliminary and final interview stage, notwithstanding an increasingly varied ethnic intake into the workforce, as documented, for example, by ESRI. It is desirable that the composition of the civil service should broadly reflect the ethnic makeup of the community.

Consideration should be given to measures that will serve to bring an appropriate number of persons of ethnic diversity to senior positions within the civil service. Measures should also be taken to track the ethnic diversity of those applying for TLAC posts.

- While 25% of those applying for TLAC general service posts came from the private sector in 2019 (compared to 29% in 2018) just 6% of those recommended for appointment came from the private sector. For specialist posts, 25% of those recommended were from the private sector.



Experience at shortlisting stage indicates that some applications from the private sector are speculative. In these cases applicants do not have the competencies or experience that are required and that have been set out in the job specifications. Thus a high rate of fallout is not to be wondered at.



Nonetheless, it should be possible and it would be useful to learn more about the reasons why private sector employees may or may not be interested in working in the civil service. If there are perceived obstacles, whether cultural – in the broad sense - financial or anything else, it would be important for the future effectiveness of the service to know what they are and to see how they might be addressed.

-Ends-