Office of Government Procurement
Robotic Process Automation Framework
Impact Report
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Foreword

Through the OGP Robotic Process Automation Framework, we have had the pleasure of supporting a wide range of departments, offices and agencies in their process automation journeys. The adoption of RPA is just one component of the broader digital agenda across our public services, and it has effectively demonstrated the benefits that can be achieved for both public servants responsible for delivery and the end users of services. This Impact Report provides a series of case studies that identify the very material quantitative and qualitative benefits realised over the last 24 months. These include areas as diverse as COVID-19 test reporting in the HSE and automation of the Garda Vetting Matching Process in Health Business Services; automation of job seekers requests and Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) arrears communications in the Department of Social Protection; automating pensions processes in the Department of Education and Skills; and automating PAYE and Customs processes in the Revenue Commissioners. Through these and other projects thousands of hours have been saved, and other benefits such as improved timeliness, quality and accuracy delivered.

Importantly, the Framework has also facilitated the building of skills and capability across our public services. This will enable the success achieved to date to be sustained and built upon. I and all of my colleagues in Deloitte would like to thank the clients who have allowed their projects to be featured in this Impact Report. It is only though real life examples that the power of automation can be fully understood. We would also like to thank Derek Melia in the Office of Government Procurement and Laura Mahoney, Philip McGrath and John O’Donoghue in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform for their support for and advocacy of the Framework.

Shane Mohan
Partner, Deloitte Ireland
Government & Public Services Leader

I am delighted to provide the foreword for this comprehensive impact report on the benefits delivered to the Irish public service through the implementation of Robotic Process Automation (RPA). This innovative and flexible solution has been made available to the public service through a partnership between my own team in the Office of Government Procurement and the Public Service Reform Team in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Improving the delivery of services to the Irish people through reform and innovation is at the core of our Department’s work. Naturally, digital transformation is increasingly playing a key role in enabling such innovation and in supporting public servants to focus on meaningful work of value to the citizen. Indeed, “Digital First” is one of the key themes of the recently published Civil Service Renewal 2030 Strategy. In this respect, RPA represents a valuable case study of how digital innovation can deliver practical benefits for the public.

A key focus of this project from the outset was to empower public service staff to become self-sufficient in RPA through extensive training, upskilling and knowledge transfer supports. This collaborative and innovative solution provides all Irish public service bodies with cost-effective access to RPA software and services as well as the training in how to apply it to best effect. In addition, the team, led by this Department, have assisted in creating a number of Centres of Excellence across the Public Service to facilitate knowledge transfer and shared learning.

This report highlights many of the positive benefits achieved through the delivery of this collaborative project in a collection of participating organisations. In a 12 month period alone, close to one million repetitive tasks have been processed, freeing up an estimated 110,000 hours of time for public servants in these organisations to focus on the delivery of services to the public.

I would like to acknowledge the tireless work of colleagues across the Public Service in delivering these outcomes for our citizens. In particular, I would like to thank the RPA project team, the organisations named in this report, those involved in the early testing of RPA, and those who helped craft the procurement framework.

I also would like to recognise the role Deloitte played in the success of this initiative to date. Deloitte were appointed to this framework following an extensive and detailed tender process. Deloitte continue to deliver their services to the high standard required, providing tangible benefits to all Public Service Clients.

Building upon these successes, the OGP and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform will continue to promote the uptake of these innovative solutions, delivering substantial efficiencies, time and cost savings for the benefit of the public.

Paul Quinn,
Government Chief Procurement Officer
Executive Summary

Robotic Process Automation is a key tool to deliver digital transformation that is within reach for all public sector organisations and business areas. Since September 2019, Deloitte is working in partnership with the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform (DPER) and the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) to build knowledge of the opportunity that Robotic Process Automation presents for Public Sector Bodies (PSB’s). In the past year alone Deloitte has worked with public sector partners to reduce administrative burden on their teams by over 14,800 working days. The work already delivered through the RPA Framework in partnership with a range of public bodies is proving how automations can deliver material efficiencies, time and cost savings in very short time - a few months, or even weeks in some cases.

In this report, we outline the benefits of this partnership approach, providing a number of success stories of PSBs demonstrating intelligent automation projects and the benefits they have delivered for their organisations, employees and citizens. We also set out the significant opportunity that exists to build on the work to date and to accelerate the development of RPA capabilities across the Irish public sector, and other opportunities that this will present.

How does the OGP RPA Framework work?
The OGP RPA Framework allows multiple Public Sector Bodies to use and procure RPA software, training, and support. Since September 2019, Deloitte is the preferred single provider for the Robotic Process Automation Framework for software licencing, training, support and consultancy services.

Under the Framework, our Deloitte Robotic & Intelligent Automation Team work alongside many public sector bodies from healthcare to local government to support them to reimagine how they deliver some of their essential services using RPA software.

What is Robotic Process Automation?
Robotic Process Automation, robots or “bots” are software programs, which have been designed to automate computer-based transactional processes and rules-based tasks by effectively mirroring how a person might interact with various software applications. RPA is a software program which can be deployed through a variety of service delivery methods such as off premises (for example cloud/hosted) or on premises (within your IT infrastructure).

Typically, RPA software programs automate high volume, computer-based, and rules-based tasks. The software is intuitive, user friendly and should not require elevated levels of technical capability to manage the automated process.

Benefits delivered to date through RPA Framework projects

- 110,000+ hours (14,500+ working days)
  - admin burden reduced / avoided*
- 933,000+ transactions processed* / repetitive tasks removed from civil servant workload
- 1,800+ attended RPA Events / Briefings
- 360 training Hours delivered
- 60 people attended Training

*Calculations based on automations in operation within the Health Service Executive, Department of Social Protection, Revenue Commissioners & Department of Education from April 2020 – March 2021
Other benefits delivered through the partnership

Manage spikes / peaks in demand
Automation supported teams to manage increased workload due to the pandemic.

Accelerate rate to scale
For specific tasks, robots operated approximately twice as fast as a human. RPA supports staff by processing increased volumes, to help eliminate backlogs.

Employee / Citizen experience improved
Increased flexibility in resourcing. Reduced number of mundane tasks for employees, and faster processing time for citizens. Reduced lapsed time for completion of processes / removed handover delays between teams.

24/7 scheduling
Unattended robots do not require human validation or input allowing them to run outside working hours.

Quality Improved
Increased data completeness. Increased data quality. Increased data security.

Accuracy Increased
There has been reductions in total number of errors as the robot carries out the task in the same way each time it is run. This eliminates potential for human error.

Increased Capacity
Automating the process provided additional capacity back to employees, allowing them to focus more time to with colleagues, patients, citizens.

Recruitment / Overtime avoided
As a result of a reduction in processing times, the time and costs associated with recruitment to deal with increased volumes has been reduced.

Standardised Processes
Once a process is automated, a robot will carry out the task in the same way every time it is run. This has provided agencies with reliable and consistent results for citizens, reducing the back and forth between citizen and employee.
1. RPA in Action

Delivering Automation and Building RPA Capability

In this section, we provide insights on some of the key projects that have been successfully delivered through the Framework, from building automation capabilities and infrastructure across a whole sector or department, to more specific pilot projects that have built valuable individual automations. Importantly, these programmes have also provided hands-on experience for the public sector teams involved to build their expertise and to better understand the opportunity that RPA presents.
Health Service Executive

The HSE commenced work with Deloitte in December 2019 on the automation of Health Business Services Human Resources and finance processes. This pilot project showcased the benefits of RPA within the HSE and since then RPA has been implemented across a number of areas in the HSE including the Health Protection Surveillance Centre, Health Business Services Finance team and Health Business Services Human Resources team.

Automation is providing HSE staff with an opportunity to re-design their ways of working using their digital workforce, and embracing virtual assistants as a new layer to HSE multi-disciplinary teams. By investing in an automation training programme, the HSE will diversify their skillset and create a scalable, self-sufficient capability, delivered by HSE employees. Streamlining administrative workload through automation will not only release time for service delivery but will also improve employee engagement which evidence links to improved patient outcomes and experience.

Testimonials:

“RPA has played a hugely important role in the HSE’s response to the Covid-19 emergency. The automation of positive Covid-19 case processing has relieved the administrative burden of Covid-19 surveillance enabling scientists to focus on vital epidemiological analyses, outbreak investigations and reporting”

Kevin Kelly - RPA Centre of Excellence Lead, HSE

Key Benefits

April 2020 – April 2021:

- Reduced lapsed time for completion of processes removing handover delays.
- Employee / Patient Experience: Increased flexibility in resourcing. Ability to amend process without major disruption.
- Quality: Increased data completeness. Increased data quality. Increased data security.

85,943+ hours admin burden reduced on HSE staff since Sept 2019

543,555 transactions processed
Case Study 1

Automation of the Garda Vetting Matching Process in Health Business Service (HBS) Human Resources

Organisation: HBS Human Resources

The RPA challenge
The National Personnel Records (NPR) team complete over 25,000 Garda Vetting forms per year and is responsible for updating SAP completed forms.

Prior to automation, the Garda Vetting “Matching Process” was performed on a monthly basis. This process required 3,552 hours per annum and was carried out by two staff members. Prior to the automation it took 9.5 minutes for each case to be completed manually.

Results Delivered

- Bertie can process records 52 times faster in approx. 9 - 11 secs per record.
- Improved Accuracy - reducing the amount of Q&A to be carried out. This in turn gives the team more time to maintain databases and fix data quality issues identified by Bertie.
- 95% reduction in manual admin effort achieved by automation
- 40,000 additional cases that can now be processed per annum

Case Study 2

Automation of the Income Debtors process

Organisation: HBS Finance

The RPA challenge
HBS Income Debtors team manually processed reports for 49 acute hospitals every month. Acute Hospitals are required to update the “Acute Hospital Debtors” template at the beginning of every month (including information from the prior month) and revert to the Income Debtors return to the team by email. The Finance team then receives this template, validates the information and uploads it to the HBS Portal. This process is completed 588 times a year (once a month for 49 hospitals) requiring a total of 264 hours (22 hours per month).

Results Delivered

- Enhanced validation and eradication of any human errors.
- Where the process was previously run once a month it is now run daily allowing for data processing on a more timely and efficient basis.
- 10% reduction in admin workload allowing to focus on more essential activities
- 22hrs to 2hrs reduction in processing time
Case Study 3

Positive Covid-19 Test Reporting

Organisation: Health Protection Surveillance Centre

The RPA challenge:
Covid-19 surveillance added a significant workload to the eight HSE-Departments of Public Health. Prior to automation, eight regional HSE Public Health teams were responsible for processing positive Covid-19 as they were received from labs, requiring them to complete three separate sub-processes, which took circa. 26 minutes per case. As the cases increased, a significant amount of pressure was put on Public Health staff. The three processes must be completed for every positive Covid-19 lab result in Ireland. Prior to automation, for every 1,000 cases, over 430 hours of manual processing was required.

Results Delivered

The Health Protection Surveillance Centre developed a robot to navigate the national infectious disease reporting system to process: laboratory records; notifications, and contract-tracing data.

- 26 mins to 3 mins 30 sec
  robots process cases 6 times faster

- 42 number of robots deployed during the surge in December 2020 – January 2021, releasing scientists to focus on analysing Covid-19 results and trends.

- 430 hours reduced admin burden for every 1,000 cases process by the bots.

- 477,171 transactions processed by bots (April 2021).

- 10,128 working days saved on administrative burden.

Automation of this process has supported the Public Health teams to deal with surges of Covid-19, rapidly scaling to accommodate 10,000 daily cases - freeing their time to focus on tracking the disease, managing outbreaks and other essential analysis.
The Department of Social Protection (DSP) saw a huge surge in Jobseeker’s applications in March 2020 as the Covid-19 pandemic closed businesses across Ireland. RPA has proved to be highly successful in rolling out quick and stable solutions to deal with increased demands associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. The automation was further expanded to provide a solution to automate the issuing of PUP Arrears Statements which was designed, developed and deployed in 3 weeks. Automation has further assisted in the issuing of Medical Certificate Reminder letters for those applying for Illness Benefit again freeing up staff from the repetitive and simple workloads to focus on more rewarding work.

**Testimonials:**

“Automation is proving successful in the automation of mundane and repetitive work thus freeing staff to undertake work of a more stimulating and fulfilling nature”

**TJ Keaveney – Assistant Principal Officer**

“Automation has provided a non-disruptive option during a pandemic, to implement an impactful solution which allows officers to focus on mission critical activity – processing PUP payments. RPA enabled our teams to deliver efficient smart technology solutions quickly that can be applied across a number of business areas and can be adapted quickly for future enhancements.”

**Louise McKeever – Department of Social Protection**

**Key Benefits**

- **Accuracy** in completion of processes, removing handover delays.
- **Scalability** Robots could be scaled quickly to deal with increased volumes of application.

109,025 applications processed

14,236 hours admin burden reduced

14,236 hours
Case Study 1

Automation of Jobseekers Requests

The RPA challenge
Facing a backlog of over 100,000 Jobseekers’ applications to be processed and registered, and being under significant strain processing large volumes of Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) claims, the DSP looked to RPA as a solution. Jobseekers’ applications can take an officer approx. 5-10 minutes to be processed manually. In May 2020, work commenced with Deloitte to automate this large work load.

Results Delivered

103,000+
The backlog of applications RPA was able to clear

Application Processing reduced by 50%

600
number of applications bots register daily

The RPA system implemented is fully scalable with the ability to add more licenses and instantly increase capacity to deal with any further spikes in applications.

109,000+
Applications processed

Staff have been able to move away from repetitive rule-based tasks associated with registering claims and to focus on more challenging and higher value activities during one of the Department’s busiest periods.

October 20
Deployment of PUP Arrears Process to fully automate Jobseekers’ Payment Process

New RPA bots now running full time in the department

10

Processes automated

March 20
Covid 19 Pandemic
significant supports are required for employees who cannot work due to the pandemic

April 20
RPA Project kick off
- Internal team from within DSP analysed and started the automation process of registering Verified Jobseekers Requests
- Deployment of Verified Jobseekers Registration

May 20
Deloitte join team

June 20
Process analysis and development to automate the registration of unverified customers

July 20
Automation expanded
Deployment of Unverified Jobseekers Registration

August 20
Developing DSP RPA Capacity
- Deloitte worked with the department to develop an RPA approach for the Department to bring automation to other business areas
- Unverified Jobseekers Registration enhancement deployed to associate requests to claims

September 20
Automation further expanded
Development and analysis of POC to fully automate Jobseekers Payment Process

October 20
Analysis and development of process to move those excluded from the Jobseekers Registration process

November 20
Deployment of process to move those customer excluded from jobseekers registration

December 20
Analysis and Development of PUP Arrears Process

Case Study 2

Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) Arrears Communications

The RPA challenge
The RPA team was approached to assist in the issuing of PUP arrears communications at the end of November 2020. With PUP arrears due to be paid in December 2020, the department were faced with an influx of requests for PUP Arrears statements and looked for RPA to assist in the processing.

Results Delivered

- **1,000+** PUP arrears cases that could be processed daily by bots
- **less than 24 hours** PUP arrears queries processed and communicated
- **3 weeks** RPA solution developed and deployed for PUP Arrears communications to all applicants

The automated solution was:
- fully scalable, allowing the Department to add and remove bots to meet demand.
- capable of processing a request in half the time it would take an officer.
- Staff could continue focusing on executing critical tasks rather than having to juggle this new repetitive process with existing work.

Case Study 3

Illness Benefit Medical Certification

The RPA challenge
An automated solution has been implemented to issue communications to Illness Benefit claimants who have not submitted supporting medical evidence with their application. The bot works by extracting records of pending Illness Benefit claims with no “Certificate of Incapacity for Work” attached and then issues a general correspondence communication for each record. The communication is intended to prompt the claimant to submit their supporting medical evidence to complete the processing and eventual reward of their claim.

Results Delivered

- **150** illness benefits communications that robots will process daily
- **2** employees released to focus on higher value work
- **8 minutes** Processing time reduced per case

Automation has eradicated any human error from the process.
Capacity to deal with any spikes in demand greatly increased.
Revenue Commissioners

The Revenue Commissioners supported by Deloitte, commenced work on a proof-of-concept automation project in March 2018 before the OGP framework was in place. The success of this “Spouse Creation” project, led to further collaboration between Deloitte and Revenue Commissioners on automation projects. These projects have generated a host of benefits for both Revenue and the public alike. Revenue is continuing to explore opportunities for further deployment of RPA technologies. Revenue has recently renewed its RPA licensing agreement using the OGP framework.

Testimonials:

“The RPA pilot has proven the potential of the technology and provides significant benefits from a number of standpoints. It delivers a more accurate, consistent and efficient service to our PAYE taxpayers. It frees our skilled staff to focus on higher-value work and more strategic projects. This is hugely positive from our perspective and allows us to better deploy our staff and optimise our performance, productivity and output.”

John Barron, CIO Revenue Commissioners

Key Benefits

Staff freed to work on higher-value work
Across all the processes staff were enabled to refocus their efforts from repetitive clerical work to work that was more rewarding and of a higher value.

Increased accuracy and consistency
Particularly for large complex processes such as the PAYE Basis of Assessment Mismatch process, robot workers can complete processes more accurately and more consistently than human workers.

- 17,000+ Customs Auto Release cases closed
- 250,000+ Export Control System cases closed by bots - Backlog eliminated
- 44 Robots could handle 44 times as many cases each week as human workers
### Case Study 1
**PAYE Spouse Creation Link**

**The RPA challenge**
The “PAYE spouse/spouse link” creation process was performed daily throughout 2018, with 20,566 work items which needed to be processed because of a form 11 and PAYE modernisation and data alignment initiative.

Cases were randomly worked by employees across various departments (500 to 1000 employees potentially solving cases) with an average of 85 cases solved per day and an estimated processing time ranging from 1 hour to 3 hours, depending on the complexity of the case.

### Results Delivered

- **Automation Re-Configurability**: Automations and business objects developed for this process can be easily reconfigured for other processes, thus increasing automation efficiency.
- **100**: The capacity of cases each robot could handle daily.
- **8 minutes**: The average time RPA takes to process a case; this saved approx. 2 hours per case.

### Case Study 2
**Export Control System**

**The RPA challenge**
The Export Control System is a system in place across the EU that controls indirect exports. The manual process in place resulted in staff members manually searching for Movement Reference Numbers (MRN) and using the Export Control System to request the status before then completing the relevant details and closing of the movement.

### Results Delivered

- **250,000**: Cases closed to date using automation.
- **20,000**: Each robot has the ability to handle 20,000 cases per week, this compares to 450 cases per week prior to automation.

- **Improved Reputation**: Previously Ireland had the most outstanding cases in the entire EU and was regularly called out on it by the EU Commission. As a result of this project, Ireland has received praise from the EU for its efforts to tackle these legacy cases.

### Case Study 3
**PAYE Basis of Assessment Mismatch**

**The RPA challenge:**
On the Revenue Commissioners system, when customers submit forms for assessment that conflict with their current basis for assessment it is necessary to initiate a clean-up process. The established manual process had over 200 steps and was not well documented resulting in a high level of inconsistency in how Revenue Commissioners’ hundreds of staff members executed the process.

### Results Delivered

- **Improved Accuracy & Consistency**: Due to the complex nature of the process, manual input was prone to errors and inconsistencies; automating the process significantly reduced these issues.
- **Staff Freed to Focus on Higher Value Work**: Automation of the process allows staff to refocus their efforts from clerical work to work that is more rewarding and of a higher value.
- **250**: Each robot has the capacity to handle over 250 cases per day.
Case Study 4

Customs Auto Release

The RPA challenge:
When importing goods to Ireland, an importer completes a Single Administration Document (SAD) detailing the items being imported. Depending on the types of goods being imported, additional control checks may be required by Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and the Health Service Executive (HSE). The RPA solution has fully automated the processing of the control check notifications received from DAFM/HSE.

Results Delivered

10,000
The number of cases RPA can process per week significantly reducing the processing time of each case to only 1 minute

24/7 processing
Most cases were expected in the early morning outside of normal working hours; automation means these cases can be handled as they arrive

Reduced Risk
Automation significantly reduced the risk of shortages of food and other essential items if Revenue Commissioners couldn’t handle the high caseload that might result from a hard Brexit.

Recruitment / Outsourced Support Avoided
Automating the process allowed Revenue Commissioners to manage additional workload without incurring the additional costs of recruitment / outsourcing.
RPA in Action
Pilot Projects
RPA challenge #1:
Service History statements are generated to calculate teaching and non-teaching staff's pension benefits and lump sum. The details for the statement are gathered from several sources and compiled together to create a full-service history. As the data is gathered from many sources, the calculation of pension benefits is a manual task and can be a labour-intensive process. This requires information to be manually transcribed from one source to another on the member’s file to facilitate the checking process carried out by the Executive Officer and Higher Executive Officer.

RPA Solution #1:
Deloitte worked with the DoE team to automate the service history generation process using the data available from digital sources. This demonstrates the value that RPA can deliver. This automation is currently live and being used to support the Pension Unit team to speed up the completion of pension statements.

RPA challenge #2:
The primary function of the Department's Pension Unit is to administer pension schemes for teachers and non-teaching staff. The Pension Unit team process thousands of retirement and other retirement-related benefits and queries each year. Up to 22 paper documents could need to be checked per case for service history details. These documents are stored in a variety of different folders. Identifying and gathering the documents can significantly add to the time required to complete the service history generation process, leaving the team struggling to meet the demand of requests received.

RPA Solution #2:
Deloitte leveraged UiPath’s Document Understanding Framework to extract, interpret and process data from the various scanned paper records into a digital database for easy access and retrieval of relevant information required for the completion of a service history generation. This was a ‘Proof of Concept’ to demonstrate the capabilities of Optical Character Recognition (OCR).
Testimonials:

“(The project) adjusted to remote working as Deloitte provided stage gates, clear handover points, scheduled workshops with appropriate subject matter experts and knowledge transfer sessions.”

Kate Waterhouse, Assistant Principal Officer, DoE

“Deloitte were fantastic and worked with us to see what activities could and could not be automated within the process”.

“Aisling Curley, Principal Officer, DoE

Key Benefits

The use of RPA to populate even the most basic elements of the service history from the various data sources will save approximately 35 minutes per case:

**118 days**
Admin burden reduced on the Pension Unit each year

**6,306 days**
Looking into the future, with 80,000 scheme members, this will be a saving of 6,306 days or equivalent 25 working years.

RPA challenge:
Pobal works on behalf of the Government to administer and manage Government and EU funding to address disadvantage and support social inclusion. Pobal provide management and support services to circa 31 programmes. Pobal works to provide programme design to implementation support to financial administration and governance of funding allocations to thousands of National and Local Community-based organisations.

Pobal’s Financial Accounting Package is used to pay beneficiaries, record beneficiary budgets and, in some instances, beneficiary expenditure is also recorded. When a grant concludes, the information contained for application codes should be complete and should reconcile, i.e. budget payments & expenditure should match.

RPA Solution:
There are two manual processes which currently take place on the accounting package that are being automated for this pilot project:

- Reconciliation of individual application codes.
- Closing and reporting of individual application codes.

Key Benefits

Using automation to complete these tasks presents a number of benefits for the Pobal team:

Improved Accuracy & Consistency
Automating the process standardised the performance of the task and streamlined the process thus supporting accuracy and consistency in data extraction and reporting.

Improved Compliance & Control
Improve timeliness on the closure of accounts – as this task is now automated this can be completed more speedily and managed more effectively.

Staff Freed to Focus on Higher Value Work
Automation of the process allows staff to refocus their efforts from data extraction and collation activities to more higher value data review and validation activities.

1,200 hours
The additional time per year required by a finance team member to complete this reconciliation task.
Tax Appeals Commission

Overview
The Tax Appeals Commission (TAC) provide an independent appeals process in relation to the hearing and adjudication of all tax appeals.

The TAC examines complaints from people who feel they have been unfairly treated by assessments raised by the Revenue Commissioners in a fair, impartial and expeditious manner.

RPA has been used to automate the process of creating a New Appeal case when an appellant emails in a “Notice of Appeal” form concerning their taxes.

Key Benefits

This automation project has delivered a number of key benefits for the TAC team:

Standardised / Improved process
Through this project the New Appeals process was standardised. The Notice of Appeals form was re-designed to a standardised form, to allow the robot to capture the correct information.

Reduced Error
The new form has reduced the room for human error by applicants when completing the form, which was a common reason for delays in processing a new appeal.

Increase Processing Rate
Automation supports the Tax Appeals Commission in processing increased volumes of cases per year and eliminating backlogs with the associated tax revenue benefit for the state.
Local Government Management Agency

Overview
The LGMA is a state agency which provides a range of professional services to the local government sector. Previously, when LGMA employees were working remotely, the time & attendance (T&A) process required each person to inform their manager of their work details, who would then collate and send to Human Resources for manual entry of this data into their T&A system. This manual process brought with it the usual complications where omission of details and missed timelines put additional workload on the HR function to rectify. The LGMA in partnership with Deloitte and supported by DPER have now automated this process. RPA now automatically collates and enters all submitted data which previously was done manually, saving Human Resources up to 1 hour administration work daily. The way this process was automated not only allowed LGMA staff to be freed from this tedious task, but also allows for the process to be replicated or modified to suit any of the 31 local authorities across Ireland. The implementation of this innovation in the LGMA illustrates that, with minimal effort, the benefits of these type of automation solutions can be shared among similar organisations to maximise efficiencies.

National Transport Authority

Overview
The NTA utilised RPA to automate the Transport Coordination Unit’s (TCU) monthly finance returns process. The Rural Transport Programme (RTP) Finance team conduct a manual review of the monthly finance returns submitted by each TCU. Given the large number of checks that must be performed, the objective of the RPA solution was to simplify the process. The solution now automates the most manual, repetitive and time-consuming elements of this process and thereby frees up the RTP Finance team’s time to focus on more value-add activities.
RPA is here to stay... but it is only the beginning

The RPA Framework has presented the opportunity to build capability and expertise across the Irish public sector to re-design services using RPA as a key component. Significant progress has already been made in accelerating the provision of digital services through Our Public Services 2020, and an opportunity now exists to accelerate these services and support further digital transformation.

By continuing to invest in the development of shared capability and infrastructure for RPA, it will also create the right environment and capability to drive the adoption of these technologies, fast track the implementation of change through sharing of expertise, assets, automations and use cases across the whole public service. This type of approach is already delivering value in the Irish public sector. The HSE Robotic Process Automation (RPA) Centre of Excellence is driving this type of approach to collaboration by building skills across the whole health sector.

Yet, by itself, RPA also has limitations: Bots can only follow logical rules-based processes. They do not see patterns in data or extract meaning from images, text or speech. RPA software is programmed to process functions, such as registration, invoicing or data transfer, without understanding the logic behind them. As organisations exhaust the opportunities to automate such simple processes, it...
becomes necessary to implement more intelligent automation in order to continue reaping rewards.

Automation, robotics, artificial intelligence (AI), and cognitive technologies are changing the way work gets done, they can process unstructured data and automate tasks that previously required human intelligence or judgment, such as extracting meaning from images, text or speech, detecting patterns and anomalies, and making recommendations, predictions or decisions. These technologies are used by public services to reduce backlogs and cut costs, to handle tasks, to reduce fraudulent transactions and to transform how services are provided to citizens. There are a host of tools and technologies which, combined with RPA, will allow Irish public sector organisations to move towards more intelligent automation:

- **Computer vision:** analysing digital images or videos and creating classifications or high-level descriptions that can be used for decision-making and action.

- **Deep learning:** a specific type of machine learning that uses cascading layers of model parameters to learn and represent a hierarchy of concepts. Examples include speech and image recognition.

- **Intelligent Character Recognition:** ICR is the next generation of Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology, which uses AI to enhance the quality of data extracted from documents through context and machine learning.

- **Natural language processing or generation:** systems that help computers analyse or generate human language. Examples include automated analysis of customer emails or conversational technologies such as chatbots.

- **Optical Character Recognition:** OCR is a technology that enables the conversion of non editable documents, such as scanned paper or PDF files, into digital text.

- **Predictive algorithms or other machine learning-based solutions:** systems that can learn from and make decisions and predictions based on data.

- **Process mining:** This refers to the use of specialised data mining algorithms to identify trends, patterns and details contained in event logs recorded by an information system, to define and understand the underlying business process.

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**Office of Government Procurement RPA Framework is there to support you**

The OGP Framework for the provision of RPA services, training, and support makes it very easy to get started on your automation journey. To learn more about RPA and other automation technologies, or to discuss how to get started with RPA, contact the Deloitte or Department of Public Expenditure & Reform teams:

Email: IE_GPS_RPA@deloitte.ie  
Email: rpa@per.gov.ie  
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