

Consultation On Implementation of the Charities Act Announced

Submitted by [paul.meade](#) [1] on 23 January 2013 - 4:15pm

The Department of Justice and Equality has today announced the [opening of a consultation](#) [2] on the implementation of the Charities Act 2009. This online consultation will remain open until 5pm on Wednesday, 20 March and will cover three specific areas:

1. Charities Regulatory Authority
2. Register of charities
3. Financial and activity reporting by registered charities to the Charities Regulatory Authority.

Background to Consultation

The Charities Act was enacted to reform the law relating to charities in order to ensure greater accountability and protect against abuse of charitable status and fraud. It aims to enhance public trust and confidence in charities and to increase transparency in the Irish community and voluntary sector.

Most of the legal changes contained in the Charities Act have not yet been implemented. The Act provides for the establishment of a new independent regulator for charities – the Charities Regulatory Authority. This has not yet taken place. It is only when this regulator has been established that most of the other changes in the Act can be brought into force.

In November 2011, the Minister for Justice and Equality, Mr. Alan Shatter, T.D., announced that the full implementation of the Charities Act had to be put on hold because of the costs associated with setting up the regulator. This decision was taken because of the need to reduce Government spending, and not because there had been a change in Government policy on the regulation of charities.

The Department of Justice and Equality has since examined how best to advance the aims of the Charities Act in the current circumstances. We explored whether steps could be taken to regulate charities without establishing an independent regulator. Because of the type and range of powers that the new regulator has under the Act, it is not possible to take effective steps to regulate the sector without either first establishing the regulator or repealing the Charities Act and bringing forward new legislation on the regulation of charities.

As statutory independent regulation of the charities sector remains a Government policy objective, the Department is now working to establish a Charities Regulatory Authority, as provided for in the Act, but in a way that takes account of the changed budgetary circumstances.

This consultation is an opportunity for charities, other stakeholders, and members of the public to contribute to this process and to respond to some options suggested by the Department. The Wheel heartily encourages all to participate.

[Go to the online consultation webpage now.](#) [2]

The deadline for submissions is 5pm on Wednesday, 20 March.

Note: online submissions are encourage, but alternatively you can download a submission form via the above link.

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