

# MANAGING CRISES

**REFLECTIONS ON ISSUES IN HANDLING COVID 19**

Royal Irish Academy, 8 July 2020

FRANCES RUANE

# Governance in Crises: General and Covid 19

**Form, Scale, Speed and State of Preparedness**

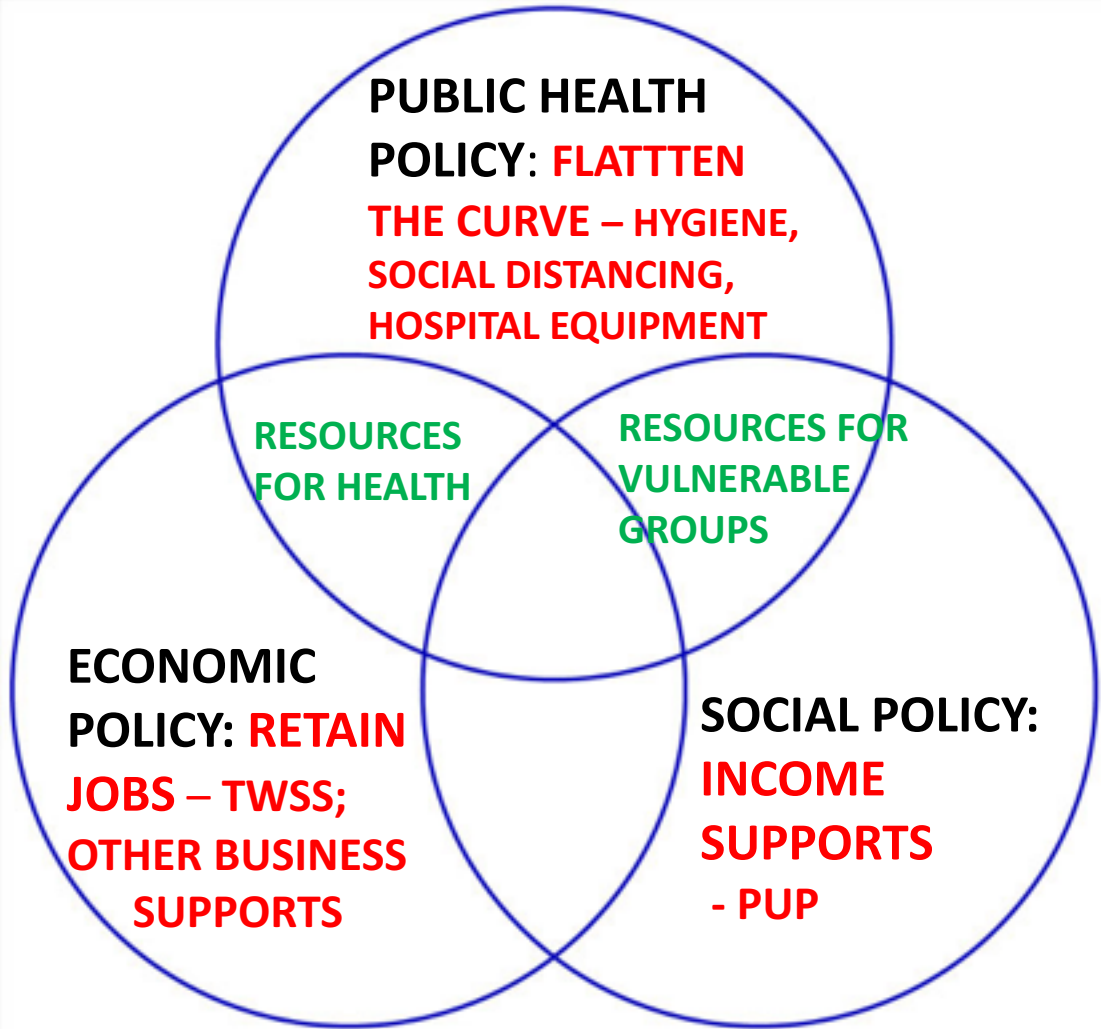
**Who is in charge? What are their responsibilities and who is accountable?**

**Initial Conditions (pre-Crisis)**

**Initial Steps – Health, Population, Socio-economic**

***Feature: strong information and reporting – new indicators***

# IMMEDIATE POLICY RESPONSE TO COVID-19 – CLEAR MESSAGES



INITIAL FOCUS CLEAR AND RESPONSES BROADLY POSITIVE

# GFC Vs Covid-19: Some Differences

## **Global Financial Crisis – Sudden**

- **Response: internationally/EU-led**
- **Economic/finance experts inputting to decision makers and media**
- **Limited data/information**
- **Strategic direction dependent on others**
- **Biggest challenge: Building confidence that we can rebuild/solve problems**

## **Covid-19 – More sudden**

- **Response: public-health led/global guidance**
- **Medical experts reporting directly to Cabinet and population at large**
- **Much more and timely data/information**
- **Strategic direction – mostly ‘own’ and ‘clear’**
- **Biggest challenge: Building confidence that we can open up without ‘new wave’**

# GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE IN MARCH 2020

CABINET COMMITTEE ON COVID 19

SENIOR OFFICIALS GROUP on COVID

NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY TEAM

**COMMS GROUP**

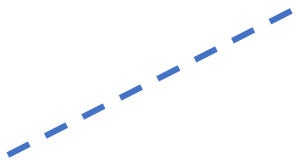
**MEDICALLY  
DRIVEN  
ROADMAP**



SUBGROUPS

EXPERT ADVISORY GROUP

HSE NATIONAL CRISIS  
MANAGEMENT TEAM



Implementation of Action plan informed by reports: medical (NPHE), economic (D/BEI) and social (D/Taoiseach)

# GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE IN JULY 2020

CABINET COMMITTEE ON COVID 19

SENIOR OFFICIALS GROUP

↑  
SOCIAL  
POLICY

↑  
ECONOMIC  
POLICY

↑  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
POLICY NPHE

COMMS GROUP

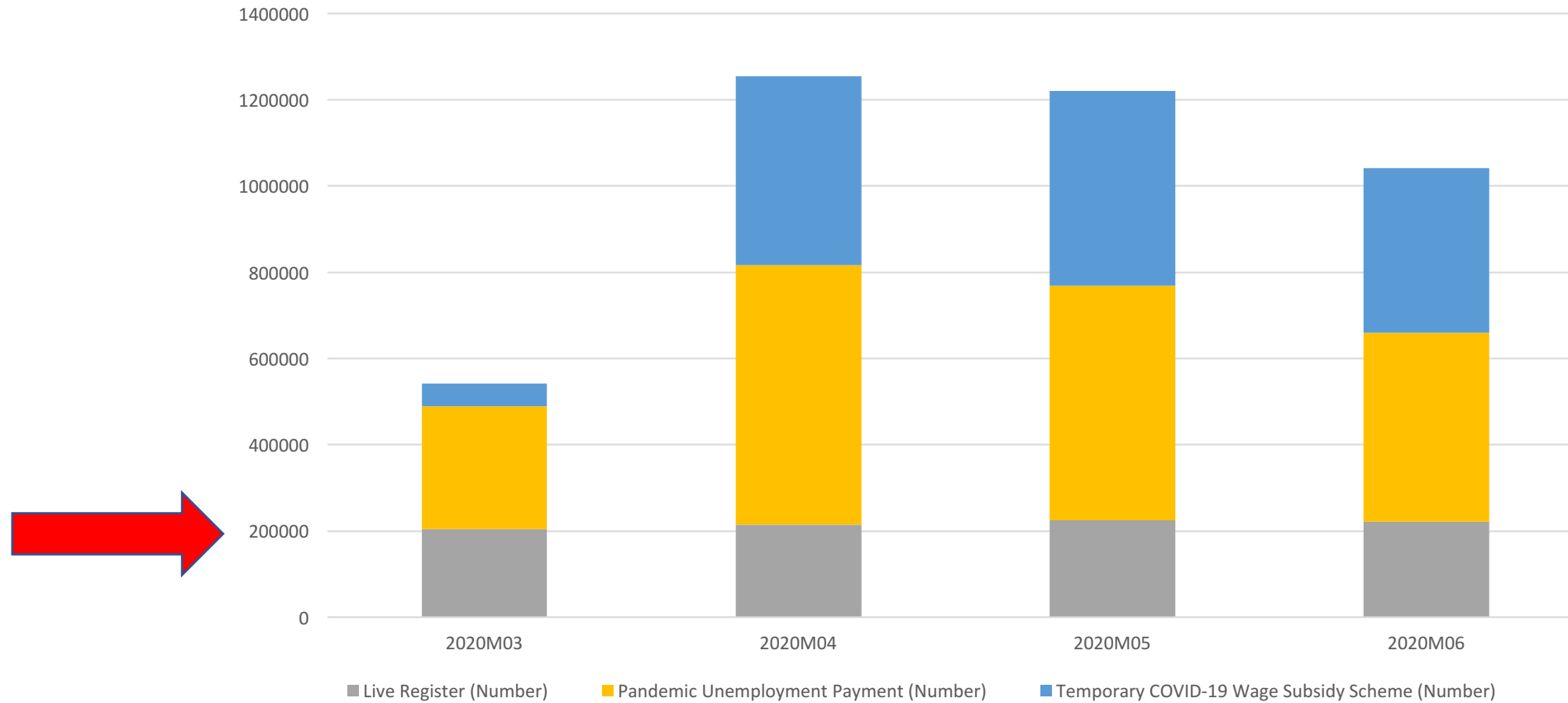
**NEW CABINET COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

*CONTINUING  
ROLE OF MEDICAL  
ADVICE IN PACE  
OF REOPENING*

*Central coordinating  
role of D/Taoiseach*

# SCALE OF ACTIONS/SUPPORTS ON ENTIRELY NEW SCALE

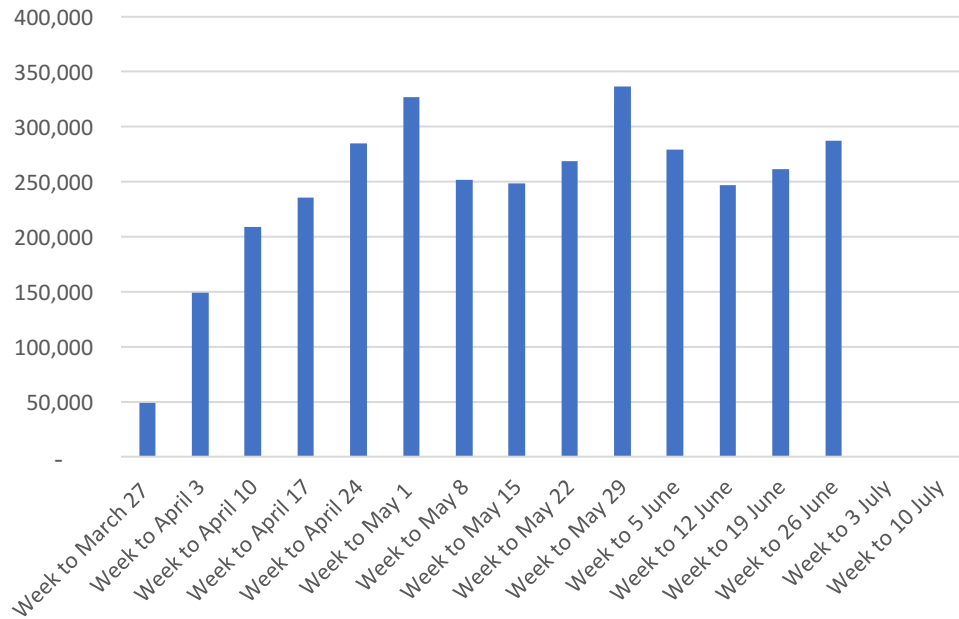
UNEMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS\* - CSO DATA



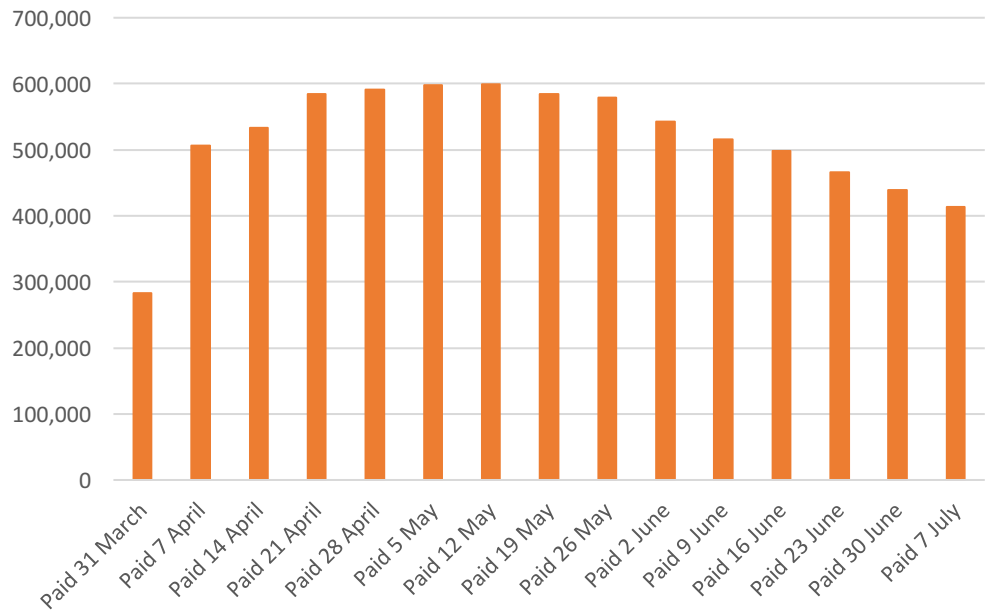
\*THERE ARE SOME OVERLAPS ON SCHEMES SO TOTALS HERE ARE HIGHER THAN ACTUAL TOTAL

# RAPID POLICY RESPONSES: REVENUE COMMISSIONERS AND D/SOCIAL PROTECTION

## Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme



## Pandemic Unemployment Payment



Some signs of recovery with numbers on schemes falling but still high

**PATH TO RECOVERY?**



# MANAGING THE RECOVERY ...

- **From handling ‘pandemic crisis’ to ‘more familiar economic/social problems’ if we avoid a major new wave**
- **Future phases will look more like last crisis?**
  - Managing tradeoffs to maintain societal support and reputation
  - Policies to support recovery, while minimizing LT burdens / costs
  - Addressing deferred problems – calling out new problems
- **Different international order - medium-term influence**
  - Greater EU downturn – slower recovery?
- **Next – How to measure progress? Role of new Cabinet Committee..**