

NCPC

National Competitiveness
& Productivity Council

An Chomhairle Náisiúnta

Iomaíochais agus Táirgiúlachta



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Path for the Public Finances 2025 - Ireland's Infrastructure: bridging gaps and building for the future

Thursday, 20 February 2025 :

Dr. Frances Ruane

Chair of the National Competitiveness and Productivity Council

Ireland

Outline

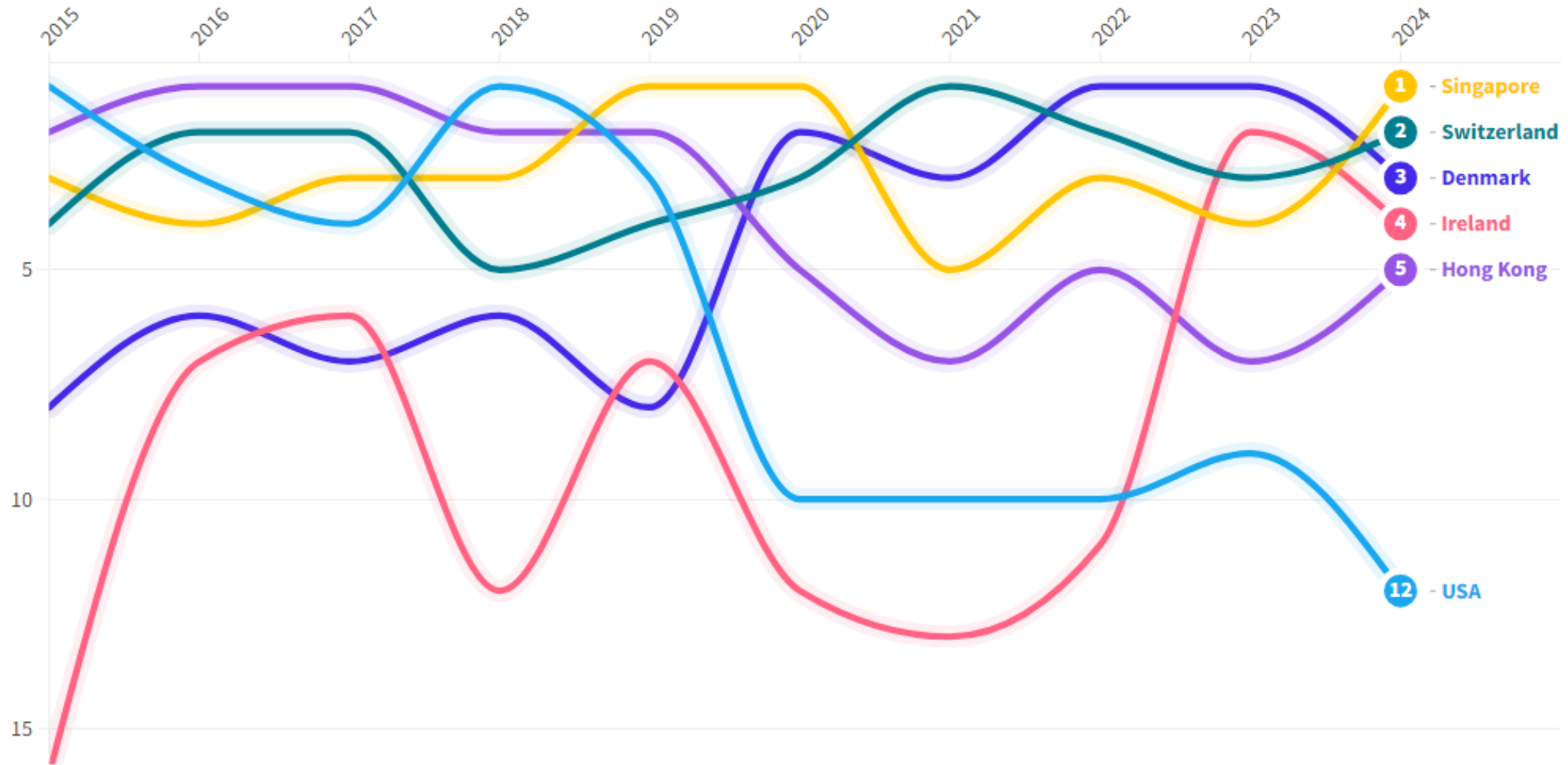
- **Infrastructure is a key driver of competitiveness**
- **How does Ireland's infrastructure compare?**
- **Construction Sector Constraints**
 - **Labour supply**
 - **Planning System**
- **Issues in relation to Housing and Competitiveness**

Competitiveness and Productivity Framework



IMD World Competitiveness Rankings

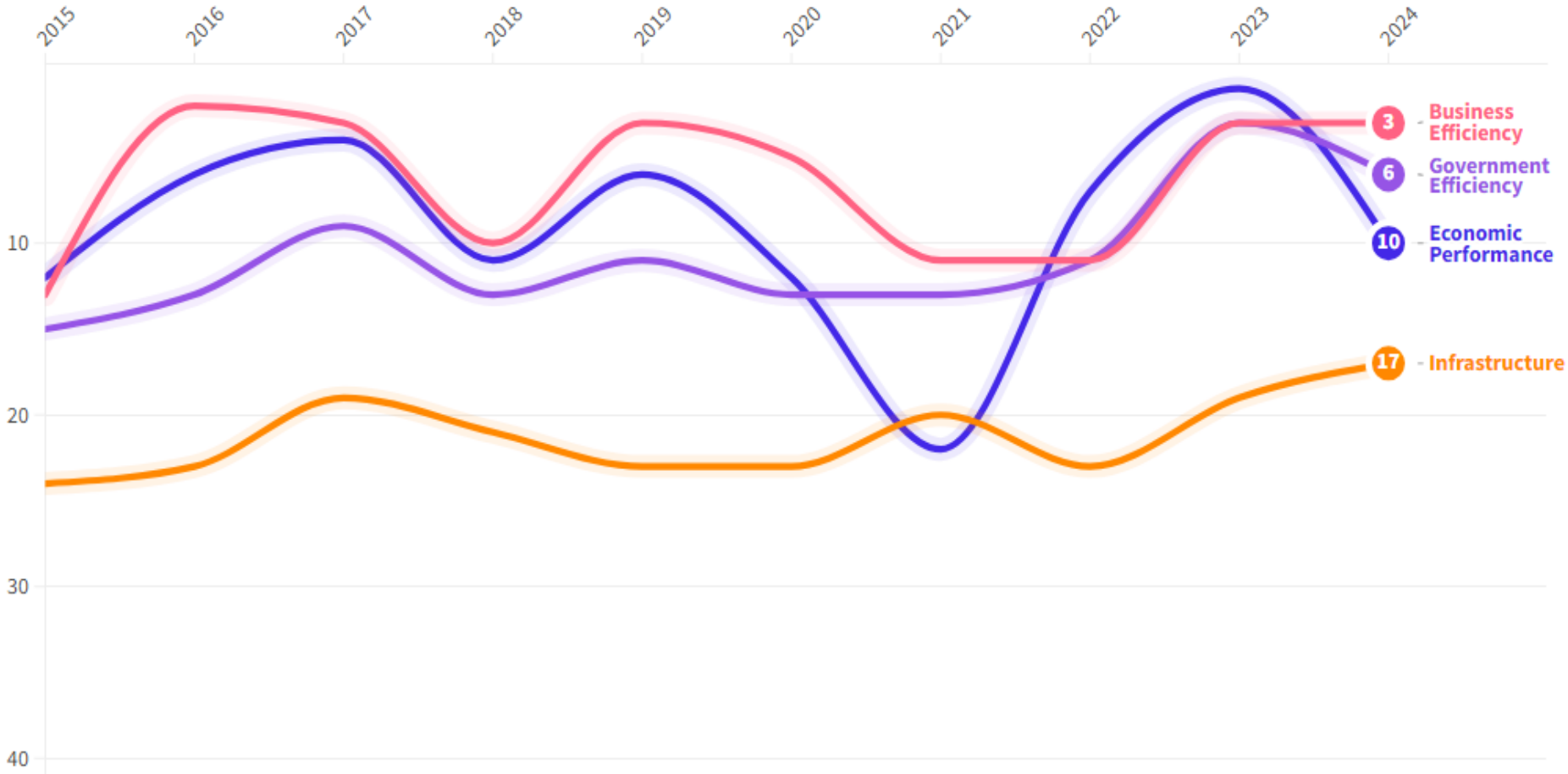
Ireland vs. Others, 2015-2024



Source: [IMD](#)

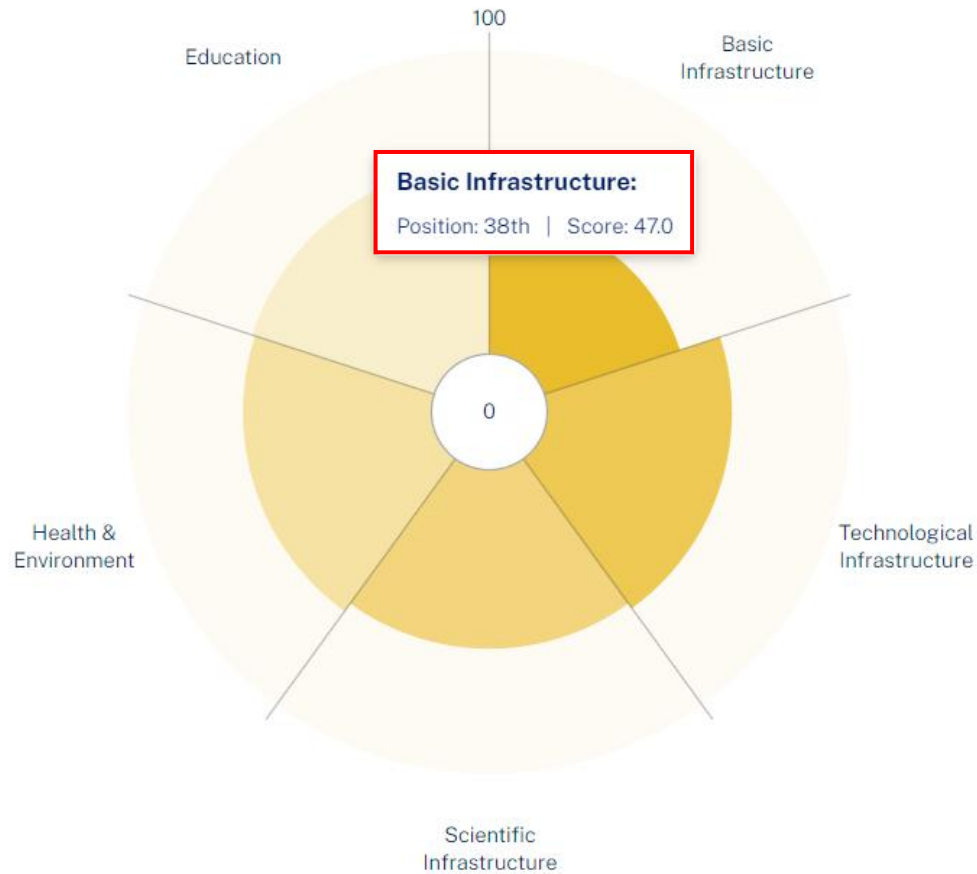
IMD World Competitiveness Rankings

Ireland's Performance by Sub-Pillar, 2015-2024

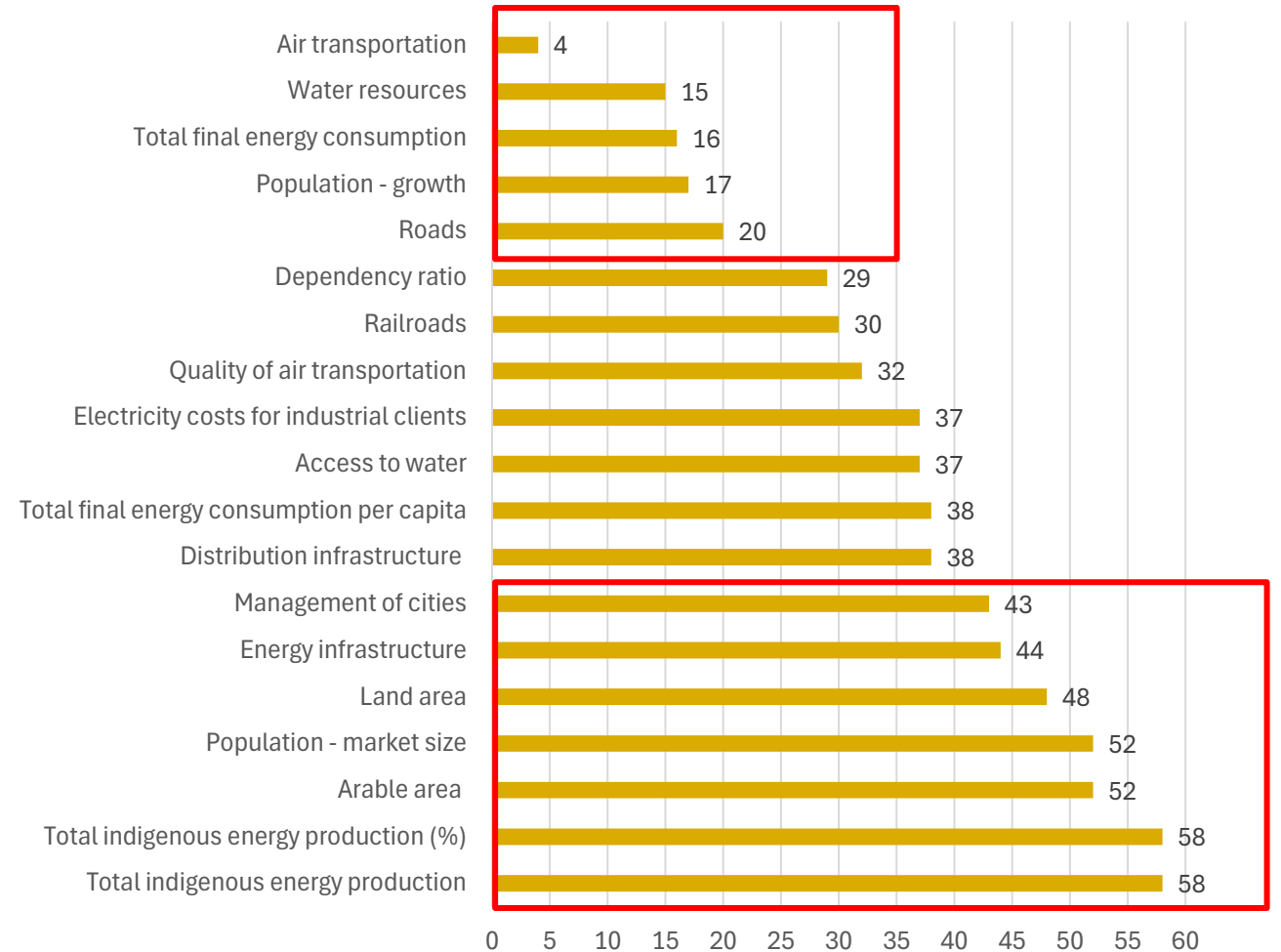


Source: [IMD](#)

Ireland's IMD World Competitiveness Infrastructure Pillar Ranking



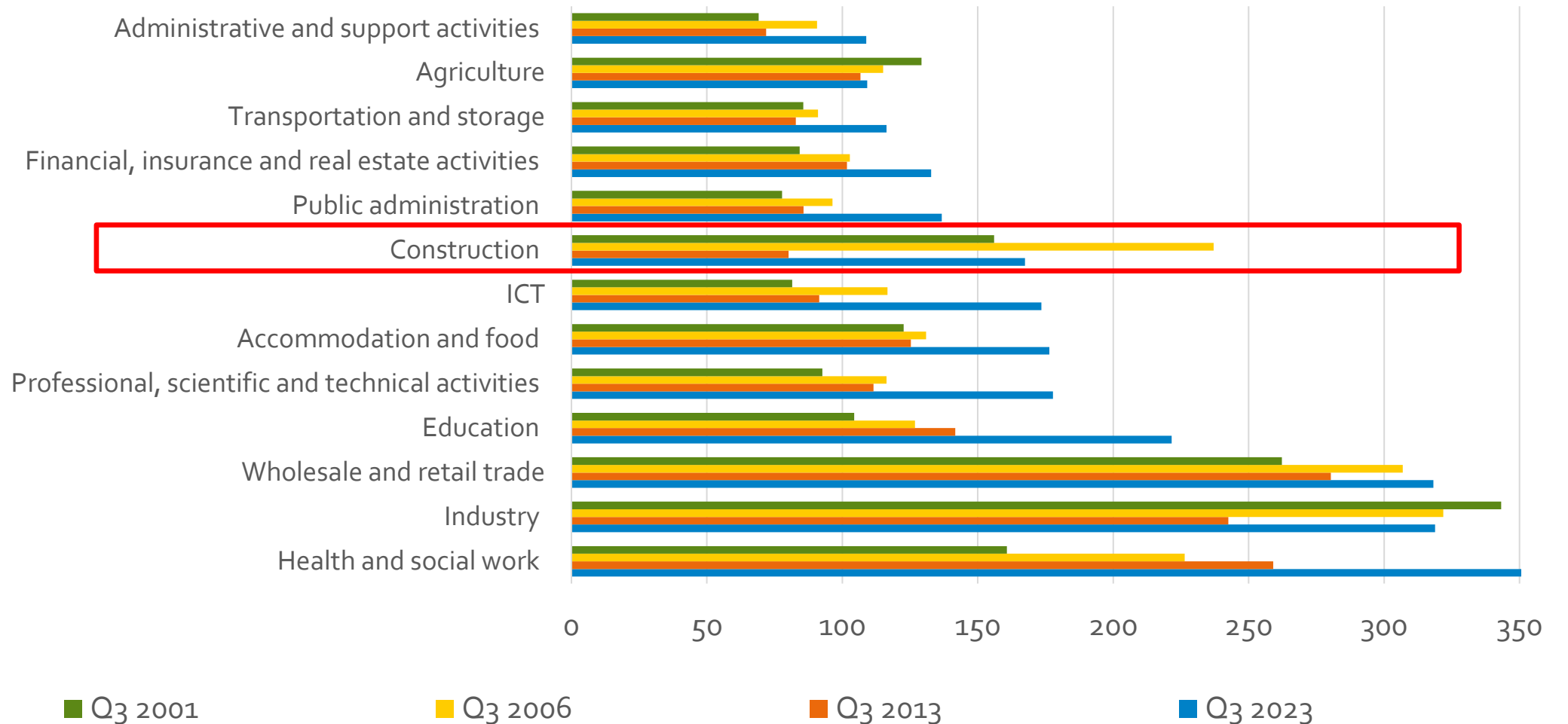
Basic Infrastructure sub-category rankings



Construction sector still recovering from GFC

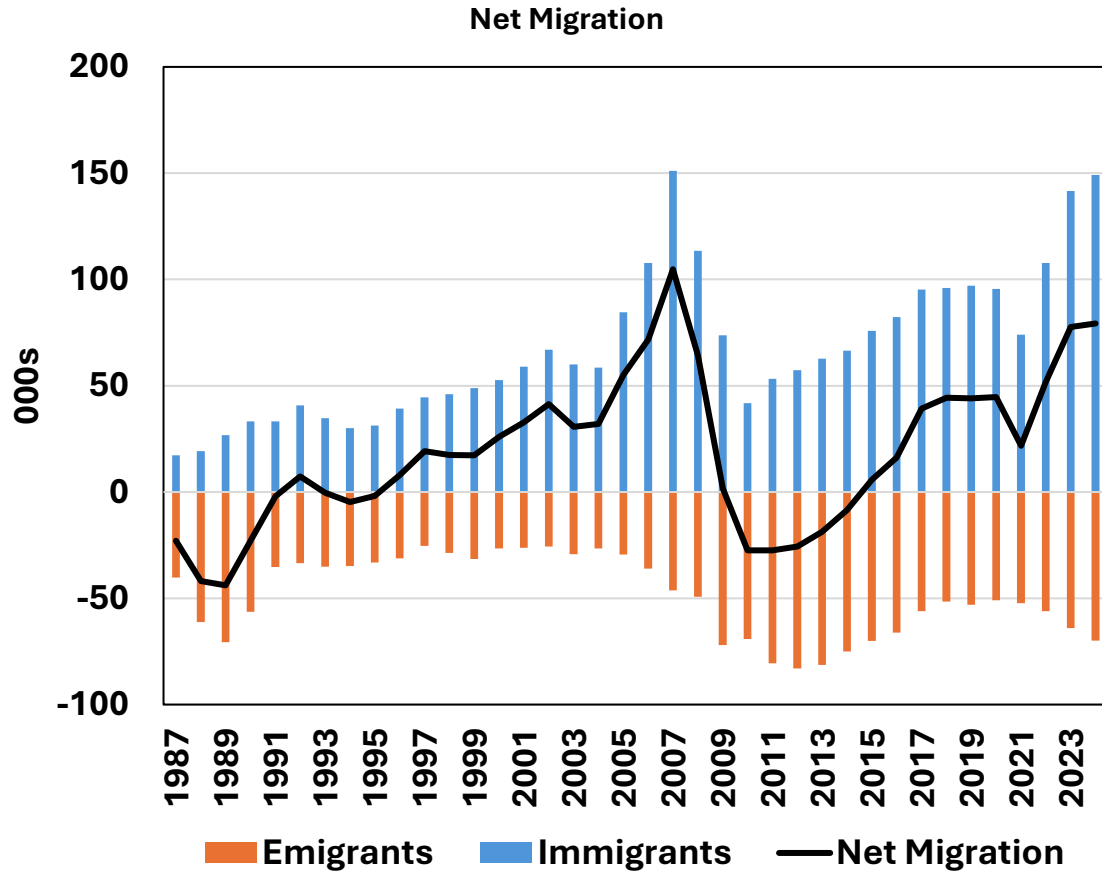
- Uncertainty about recovery
- Availability of finance
- Risk aversion
- Low innovation rates (digitalisation, MMC)
- Building Regulations
- Slow decision making / prioritisation

Labour Supply Constraints – Scale of construction sector employment



Source: CSO

Labour Market Constraints: Access to mobile labour for construction



Planning system

Increased planning complexity over past decades – multi-tier system – now including the courts

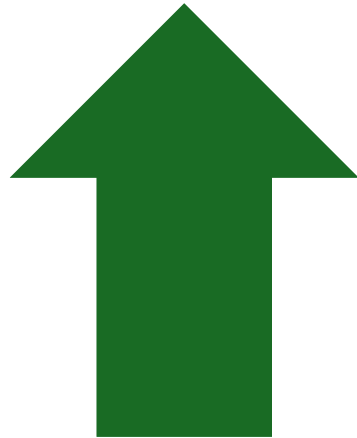
Increase in Planning Applications 2012 – 2020

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
No	20,343	21,191	22,001	20,825	29,312	31,090	32,107	32,314	31,008

Planning Regulator called out resource shortages in ABP, LG

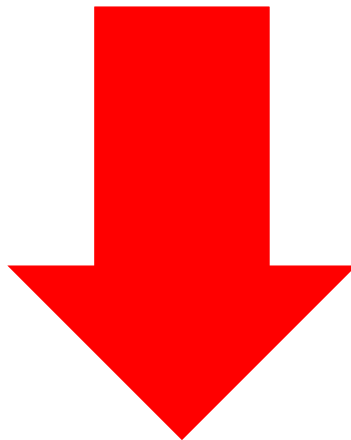
Significant increase in An Bord Pleanála Staffing and backlog reduced

Since 2023...



+117

posts sanctioned
and filled

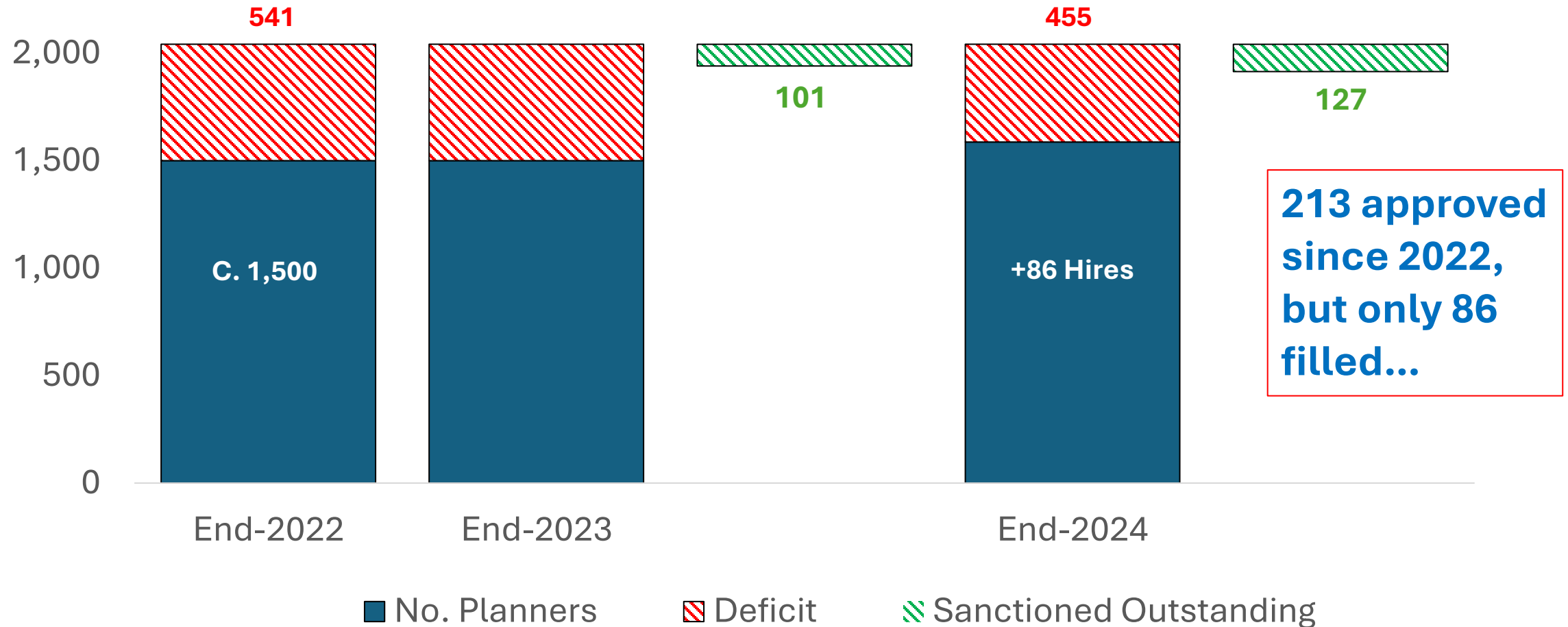


-2,100

case backlog

- **c. 300** posts (Jan 2025)
- **+5** decision making board members (to 15)
- **1,400** case backlog at January 2025

Some increase in Local Authority Planning Posts – slow despite Ministerial Plan to increase resources .. facing supply constraints ...



Talent mobility makes housing important for competitiveness

Issues for Individuals

- Cost / Availability / Uncertainty / Wellbeing

Issues for Enterprises and HR Managers

- Search and relocation challenges => business purchase of housing stock?

Issues for Economy

- Impact of housing costs on wage levels / domestic consumption



Thank you

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