

**Reply (13th June 2013) from Minister Shatter to a Parliamentary Question on the subject of citizenship applications.**

49. Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide a breakdown in tabular form of the number of applications for naturalisation year on year from 2009; if he will provide a breakdown of applications processed, approved, refused and pending/under review; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [28274/13]

**REPLY**

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter): The number of applications received for the years from 2009 to end May 2013 are as follows : 15,700, 12,500, 18,300, 19,900 and 7,700 respectively.

The number of applications approved for these years is 6,100, 5,000, 14,300, 23,400 and 15,100. Those refused or deemed ineligible amounted to 7800\*, 3100, 1800, 1600 and 400 respectively.

When I came into office in March 2011 one of my immediate priorities was to address the large backlog of citizenship applications for naturalisation pending a decision that had built up over several years. At that time there were approximately 22,000 applications awaiting decision, many of which had been waiting for 2-3 years or longer.

Considerable resources were and continue to be deployed to process applications and more than 55,000 decisions on naturalisation applications have been made since I came into office. It is my intention that we continue to build on this success this year and, in this regard, over 15,000 valid applications have been decided to date in 2013.

\* It should be noted that 4,000 of the applications refused related to applications lodged by one section of the migrant community on the basis of inaccurate and misleading information circulated within their community regarding a supposed entitlement to Irish citizenship."