



Ollscoil Mhá Nuad Maynooth University

School of Law & Criminology Research Assistant in EU Law (SWINS Project) (Specified Purpose Contract)

The Role

Maynooth University is committed to a strategy in which the primary University goals of excellent research and scholarship and outstanding education are interlinked and equally valued.

Due to recent success in the competitive EU Horizon 2020 funding, we are seeking a Research Assistant to join the SWINS project team of Maynooth University.

The project, titled Sustainable Wellbeing through Investment in Social Services (SWINS), is a 36-month project funded by Horizon Europe and coordinated by PIN ARCO-University of Florence. SWINS will develop and test a policy-oriented toolbox for the ex-ante assessment of the economic and social returns of investments in social services over the life course. Focusing on the complementarity of services aimed at developing human capabilities throughout the lifespan, it will explore the impacts of alternative social policy scenarios entailing different social services configurations (from maternal care and ECEC, to education and ALMP, up to long-term care). SWINS will conceptualize the returns to social services in terms of income, employment, and growth, as well as bridge knowledge gaps about how these investments influence macroeconomic stability and foster the EU sustainability transition performances. By implementing a right-based social investment approach, SWINS aims to support the rethinking of social services as drivers of the EU's shift towards sustainable wellbeing, going beyond their role as mere safeguards against the transition's side effects.

We are looking to appoint a candidate to support the Lead Investigators, Prof. Delia Ferri and Dr Charles O'Sullivan, in conducting their research. The focus of the Research Assistant will be related in particular but not exclusively to Work Package (WP) 2 and 8 of the project. The researcher will conduct desk-based research on EU law and policy and relevant scholarship. For this position, we are looking to appoint a candidate with strong knowledge of EU law and policy and experience of interdisciplinary EU funded projects.

Overview of the SWINS Project

The structural challenges and shocks Europe has experienced over the past 15 years are not isolated events, but part of a transformative phase of European society. In this context, while one line of studies focuses on measuring performance (which changes, directions, etc.), SWINS is part of a line of studies aimed more at guiding this process and the decisions of policymakers (i.e., where do I allocate my



resources? Which policies yield the most? Which are the most sustainable?). The perspective of Social Services as Social Investment is thus useful for framing social spending among the various tools available to policymakers to support the transition. The sustainability of welfare is indeed a central debate that remains somewhat parallel to that on the green transition and has not found solutions in the review of the Economic Governance Framework and especially the Fiscal Framework. An attempt was made to establish a Golden Rule for social investment, but it is not a viable path. Therefore, it becomes growingly important to find a way to measure the economic and social return of social services.

SWINS takes up the challenge to operationalize a “rights-based social investment paradigm” which transcends the focus on income- and employment-related returns by integrating a broader perspective that includes ecological sustainability and sustainable human development, emphasizing a just transition approach. It conceptualizes and measures this paradigm in social services as a tool to foster the EU’s resilience and sustainable wellbeing. Additionally, SWINS prioritizes the integration of this measurement framework into institutional, regulatory, and policy contexts, situating it within the broader sustainability transition needed to address the social, environmental, and economic challenges of recent decades.

The legal research in SWINS will include comprehensive legal mapping and doctrinal legal research of EU law strands relevant to social services, focusing on state aid, competition, and free movement laws. This desk-based research, essential for understanding EU regulatory frameworks, will also explore the enforcement of state aid and competition law, particularly in relation to the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). The legal mapping conducted under WP2 will also feed into the other WPs, providing a comprehensive legal backdrop and identifying areas for in-depth research, thereby enhancing the overall coherence and effectiveness of the project.

Principal Duties

Administrative and other duties:

This will include:

- Conducting Legal research on EU law on topics related to SWINS
- Conducting literature reviews;
- Working on different project tasks under the supervision of principal investigator Prof. Delia Ferri and Dr. Charles O’Sullivan;
- Contributing to project tasks in collaboration with other project researchers, and supporting work package administration;
- Supporting the organisation of events;
- Supporting the preparation and timely delivery of high-quality project deliverables;
- Actively assisting with, and contributing to, the writing of academic papers for publication;
- Complying with all University policies.

The ideal candidate will have:

Essential

- A Second-Class Honours Grade One (or higher) Undergraduate Law Degree (BCL or LL.B), with a strong EU Law component;
- An LL.M (preferably in the field of EU Law and Policy and further advanced EU law electives taken);
- Previous experience conducting legal research in EU law as a Research Assistant;
- Experience in supporting the organization of major academic events, conferences and workshops;
- Excellent English language writing and speaking skills;
- Attention to detail;
- Ability to work with a great degree of autonomy, manage workloads, deadlines and responsibilities;



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

- Excellent computer skills, including proficiency in Excel, Word, and Adobe Acrobat;
- Excellent interpersonal skills and willingness to engage with complex material.

Desirable

- Experience in working in an interdisciplinary team;
- Previous experience in EU-funded projects.
- Experience supporting academic publications;
- Working knowledge of one or more European languages other than English, such as Italian, Spanish, Norwegian, or French;
- A record of scholarly work and publication of international quality, appropriate to career stage, demonstrating potential to become a significant contributor in the field;

Faculty and Research Institutes

The Faculty of Social Sciences comprises the School of Business; Departments of Design Innovation; Economics, Finance & Accounting; Adult and Community Education; Anthropology; Applied Social Studies; Education; Geography; Law; Sociology; the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education; and International Development. Collectively we are members of the Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute (MUSSI), which provides shared research services and an environment supportive of funded research projects and inter-disciplinary research. The role of the faculty is to co-ordinate the academic activities of individual departments, to oversee the strategic development of departments, and to support interdepartmental programmes. The University has also developed a number of interdisciplinary institutes to support excellent research and to build research capacity across disciplines.

The ALL Institute

The [ALL \(Assisting Living & Learning\) Institute](#), a cross-faculty institute established in 2017, is involved in a number of large-scale research projects concerned with ageing, disability and long-term illness where people may benefit from human, technological, systems or policy assistance or support of some kind, and where the inclusion, participation, empowerment and rights of the person are seen as a central aim. ALL is involved in projects globally, with strong connections to civil society organisations, United Nations agencies, and industry. By thinking through the context and meaning of people's lives, ALL seeks to assist them to enhance their quality of life and we provide an unparalleled interdisciplinary environment to achieve this.

Department

The Maynooth University [School of Law and Criminology](#) is one of the newest academic units within the University. The School has 40 staff members and is the fastest growing Law Department in Ireland. It offers a number of popular undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes, educating over 2000 students. The School places a very strong emphasis on research, and staff members regularly publish in leading international academic journals. The School of Law and Criminology has undergone a period of rapid expansion of its range of programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, as well as in its research activities and doctoral programme.

The University

Maynooth University is a very distinctive university, a collegial institution focused on science and engineering, humanities, and social sciences, and equally committed to research, teaching and



community engagement. Located in Ireland's only university town, its distinctive features and character owe much to its unique history and heritage. It provides a high-quality educational experience to over 15,000 students on a campus with 18th century roots and 21st century dynamism.

The strategic trajectory and accomplishments of Maynooth University, in the 25 years since its establishment as an autonomous public university, are exceptional, and a source of great pride to the university community, staff, students and alumni. Maynooth University in 2024 ranked in the top 90 global Times Higher Education (THE) Young University rankings, placing 86th in the world. Maynooth University's growing global reputation is based on the originality, quality, importance and impact of its research and scholarship, commitment to teaching and learning, the quality of academic programmes, and its leadership in widening participation in higher education. The sources of success are the dedication of its staff and the energy and engagement of its students.

Maynooth University is a place of lively contrasts – a modern institution, dynamic, rapidly-growing, research-led and engaged, yet grounded in historic academic strengths and scholarly traditions. With over 15,000 students Maynooth offers a range of programmes at undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral level in the humanities, science and engineering and social sciences, including business, law and education. The University also offers a range of international programmes and partnerships.

Maynooth's unique collegial culture fosters an interdisciplinary approach to research, which its world-class academics bring to bear in tackling some of the most fundamental challenges facing society today. The University's research institutes and centres consolidate and deliver this impact as vibrant communities of learning, discovery and creation. Research at Maynooth also is very much central to its teaching and the University prides itself on placing equal value on its research and teaching missions.

Maynooth University's Values

Our values define who we are, what we believe in and how we act as a community. They underpin our future success and guide our expectations of ourselves and each other. Our values apply to everyone in the University community:

- Integrity
- Collegiality
- Responsibility
- Freedom of expression
- Ambition

Maynooth University Strategic Plan 2023 – 2028

The University's Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028 builds on our rich academic history and strong foundations to set out an ambitious and forward-looking path for the future of our University. This roadmap underscores our commitment to adapt to a changing world while staying true to our values. Our vision is to be a university of excellence, opportunity and impact, having a significant stake in all three. For more information about Maynooth University's future direction, please visit: <https://strategy.maynoothuniversity.ie/>

Plean Straitéiseach Ollscoil Mhá Nuad 2023 - 2028

Tógann Plean Straitéiseach na hOllscoile 2023 - 2028 ar ár stair acadúil shaibhir agus ar ár mbunchlocha láidre chun conair uailmhianach agus cheannródaíoch a leagadh amach do thodhchaí ár nOllscoile. Soiléiríonn an treochlár seo ár dtiomantas do dhul i dtaithe ar dhomhan atá ag síorathrú agus ár ngníomhaíochtaí a chur in oiriúint dó, agus san am céanna a bheith dílis dár luachanna



Ollscoile. Is í an fhís atá againn a bheith mar ollscoil feabhais, deiseanna agus tionchair, agus lámh láidir a bheith againn i ngach ceann de na trí ghné seo.

Léigh anseo le haghaidh breis eolais faoi thodhchaí Ollscoil Mhá Nuad: <https://strategy.maynoothuniversity.ie/?lang=ga>

Our Strategic Plan sets out an ambition to be an excellent place to learn and work, and an inclusive community where students and staff can flourish and make a distinctive contribution to the national system of higher education and the public good. Achieving this requires staff to have a strong sense of connection to the University and support from colleagues. We recognise that our people are our greatest resource and actively seeks to attract, develop, and retain a talented workforce by creating a positive and welcoming University environment. As well as offering a competitive salary, access to a public sector pension scheme, and annual leave allowance, the University also provides other facilities and benefits including, but not limited to:

- Family-friendly leave schemes
- Tax Saver travel scheme and Cycle to Work scheme
- On-campus crèche
- On-campus restaurants and coffee shops
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Health and Well-Being programmes
- Education support opportunities
- Continuous Professional Development opportunities, including leadership programmes, mentoring, Aurora programme.
- Study and Exam leave
- Sports facilities and gym

To learn more about being part of the Maynooth University team, please visit our website at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/come-work-with-us>

Selection and Appointment

- Only shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend for interview;
- Candidates invited for interview will be required to make a brief presentation;
- Appointments will be approved by the President based on the report of the selection board;
- It is anticipated that interviews will be held during the month of September 2025];
- The appointment is expected to be effective from as soon as possible thereafter.

Equality and Diversity

Maynooth University actively works to ensure equality, celebrate the diversity of our community, and promote inclusion. To learn more about our commitment to Equality and Diversity, please read the Maynooth University [Equality and Diversity Policy](#) / [Polasáí Comhionannais agus Éagsúlachta](#), our policy on the [Employment of People with Disabilities](#), and our [Gender Equality Action Plan 2023-2026](#). We aim to reflect the diversity of the community we serve and welcome applications from all individuals across our society.

Terms and Conditions

Tenure	This is a full-time post for a specified purpose, anticipated to be 12 months duration.
---------------	---



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Location	The place of work is the campus of Maynooth University, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.
Salary	Research Assistant, Level I (2025): €33,292 – €34,545 p.a. (3 points) Appointments will be made in accordance with public sector pay provisions.
Hours of work	A 37-hour working week is in operation in respect of full-time positions (pro-rated for part-time positions). This can be reviewed or adjusted from time to time through national agreements.
Annual Leave	Annual leave and public holidays are provided for in the University policy: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/policies/annual-leave-policy Annual leave will be allocated on a pro-rata basis for part-time and temporary positions.
University policies and schemes	Employees of the University will be subject to the terms of the University policies and schemes, available on the University website at: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/university-policies https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/policies
Pension	This is a pensionable post. Employees of the University will enter into a public sector pension scheme, and as such, applicants must ensure they are eligible to become a member of a public sector pension scheme for the duration of the appointment. Details of the public sector pension schemes are available at: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/pension-information
Eligibility	Applicants should note that eligibility is determined by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. Further information regarding eligibility is available at: https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/what-we-do/workplace-and-skills/employment-permits/employment-permit-eligibility/ Non-EEA applicants are responsible for ensuring they can secure a visa to travel to Ireland. Any offer of employment is conditional on applicants securing the appropriate employment permissions. Former Irish Public Service employees - Certain Restrictions on Eligibility Eligibility of applicants formerly employed by an Irish Public Sector body, and who availed of an Irish Public Service Redundancy or Incentivised Retirement Scheme under the Schemes below, may be affected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants • Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) • Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010) • Department of Environment, Community & Local Government (Circular Letter LG(P) 06/2013)



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

	Applicants should ensure that they are eligible to be re-engaged in the Irish Public Service under the terms of such Schemes. Applicants should address queries with their former Irish Public Sector employer.
Garda vetting	Garda vetting or clearance may be required by the University.
Medical	The University may require a medical examination as a condition of employment.

Data Protection Law

Applications to the University will be treated in accordance with the University Data Protection Policies. For information on the University's Data Protection Policies and Privacy Notice, please see our website: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/data-protection>

Application Procedure

Closing Date:

23:30hrs (local Irish time) on **Friday, 19th September 2025**.

Please note all applications must be made via our **Online Recruitment Portal** at the following link:

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/vacancies>

Applications must be submitted by the closing date and time specified above. Any applications which are still in progress at the closing time on the specified closing date will be cancelled automatically by the system.

Late applications will not be accepted.

Maynooth University is an equal opportunities employer

The position is subject to the Statutes of the University



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH