



Health Services Staffs
Credit Union

Social Impact Report 2022

Made By Our Members



Welcome

Welcome to Health Services Staffs Credit Union's first Social Impact Report. The report aims to showcase our impact on the community we serve, and the positive difference we are making to our members' lives.



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Our Values

All credit unions are guided by common operating principles, these have strongly influenced the core values of HSSCU. These core values are:

- **Integrity, Respect and Trust:** we act in an honest manner treating all our members with courtesy, respect and concern for their dignity and needs.
- **Empathy:** we see our members as individuals and also partners in our organisation. We listen, learn and work together to find solutions based on their individual needs.
- **Leadership:** we are insightful in the trends of our sectors. We communicate, innovate, share information and endeavour to offer creative solutions within regulatory boundaries.
- **Excellence:** we hold ourselves to the highest standards for the benefit of our members.
- **Social Responsibility:** we care about and consider ourselves part of our community. We strive to give back what we can. We champion a culture of diversity and environmental sustainability.



CEO Foreword

Since the inception of Health Services Staffs Credit Union 52 years ago, our sole purpose has been centred around our members and how we can have a positive financial and social impact on their lives. While the scale of the organisation and the range and manner of delivery of service has changed the key focus on our members has remained the same.

Our current strategic plan entitled '*Building Resilience*' has the member centric focus and the delivery of a positive social impact at its core. Credit unions have been at the heart of Irish communities for many years and have been instrumental in the growth and development of these communities. As an organisation of some 64,400 members, we have a significant impact on the financial and social wellbeing of our members, as is highlighted throughout this report.

Our Credit union currently manages assets of over €440m with savings more than €375m and loans of €230m. The success of our organisation enables us to not alone provide quality financial services to our members, but by generating surplus funds allows us to invest back into initiatives that have a social impact for our members and their families. Members helping other members is what credit unions are about, our movement is built on mutuality, volunteerism, self-help, and a not-for-profit philosophy.





While the credit union has had a strong history of supporting its community the emerging areas of environmental protection and sustainability need to be addressed. Work in this area has started and while there is much to do these matters feature strongly in our plans.

As outlined above, we have always had a social impact however this report is the first time this impact has been documented. I welcome this undertaking as I believe it is time for credit unions to clearly document the huge impact we have in the betterment of our members lives and their communities.

I would like to extend my thanks to all who contributed to the development of this report and look forward to HSSCU continuing make a positive social impact to our members and the communities in which they live and work.



Sean Hosford,
Health Services Staffs Credit Union CEO.



Introduction

This report looks to define the social impacts of the activities undertaken by Health Services Staff Credit Union, across our organisation. This document marks the start of a formal reporting process of HSSCU's social impact on members and the wider community. It Provides us with a starting point to work from to enable us to consistently monitor HSSCU's social impact.

Throughout this report we use a framework developed by the Irish League of Credit Unions as a template to collect relevant information, as well as reviewing other external literature. A report such as this assists HSSCU in providing accountability to members and will also supplement our annual report.

For credit unions, social impact is all about '*the credit union difference*'. This difference is evidenced through the ethos and operating principles that HSSCU adheres to. We believe that by delivering our services in a "*credit union way*" is what sets us apart from other financial institutions and makes a significant difference in our members' lives.

Through the creation of this report, it is hoped members will have a greater understanding of the extent of their credit union's social activities and/or possible impact. We feel there is value in presenting this information to members and the wider community as it assists in developing the relational and emotional aspects of being a member of HSSCU. It is hoped that this report will play a significant role in further developing the credit union's relationship with its members.

Within this report findings from HSSCU's member survey conducted in 2022 have also been included. Insights have been drawn from the survey findings and have been used to assist in the development of this report. The member quotes featured throughout this report are directly from survey respondents.

HSSCU is enthusiastic about the opportunities that such reporting offers us to inform our members and other stakeholders on our service and highlight our continued commitment to the credit union co-operative ethos. As a starting point it offers us the opportunity for better reporting and members a better understanding of the organisation.



Access To Financial Services

Our Phones Team

As a nationwide industrial credit union an important part of our interaction with members is providing remote access to services. The HSSCU phones team plays a key role in communicating with our members. During the past financial year, they received a total of **124,134** calls, covering the range of services that HSSCU provides. The phones team have a comprehensive knowledge of the credit union and are generally the first point of contact for members.

While the system is automated, a member can select the option to receive a call back from staff. This service ensures that the member receives a call back from a member at a time that suits them rather than waiting in a call queue. Last year **12,498** such call backs were made to members at a time that worked best for them. By offering a service like this to members we make it more convenient and flexible for members to access our services.

HSSCU's combined total number of calls came to **136,632** last year, helping to ensure that members had access to their credit union regardless of where they are located in Ireland. While having a total of eight offices around Ireland the phones team provides extensive coverage from Malin head to Mizen Head. The professional and friendly approach taken by the phones team is reflected in the survey results and member quotes.



136,632 Total Calls

"Always easy to contact with quick response and transfer times. Friendly and professional. Love the draw aspect of saving. Love the family feel."



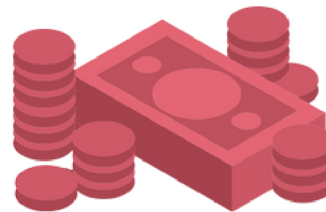
Access To Financial Services

Phone Loan Applications

In the past financial year, we issued almost 20,000 loans. Of these 14,264 applications were taken by phone. This enhances the accessibility of this particular service for members to meet their financial needs. As a nationwide credit union, a service like this is of particular importance to those not located close to a branch.

14,264

Phone Loan Applications



Late Night Calls

HSSCU operates a late night phones service outside of the regular credit union working hours. This is provided on Tuesdays and Thursdays until 6.30 pm throughout the year. During these periods, the phones team received a total of 1,176 calls. This is another service that looks to enhance accessibility for members outside of the regular opening hours. A feature of HSSCU's membership is that many are on shift work, and this looks to reflect that aspect.



1,176 Late Night Calls

"I'm really happy with the HSSCU. The staff are super, even over the phone through covid too. I've moved my current account to the HSSCU also because I like the service so much."



Lending

*"In my opinion the best credit union in the country.
First place I go for a loan."*

The primary income generation activity of HSSCU and any credit union is the provision of loans to members. In the year 2021/2022 the average loan approved was to the value of €6,107. In 2021/22 there was an increase of approximately 21% in the value of loans approved. This is a clear demonstration of the strength of HSSCU but also the trust placed in its services from members.



Total Value of Loans

€123,094,151

Total Loans Approved

20,174

Housing Loans such as home improvements and mortgages are a large and growing section of HSSCU's loan book. In general these loans would be for larger amounts and this also reflects the fact that HSSCU is here for members when they make these important life decisions. In relation to our mortgage products, we saw another year of growth and a total mortgage balance at financial year end of €8.83 Million across HSSCU's mortgage products. HSSCU helped a number of members get their first property.



4.5/5 star lending experience in survey responses.

In 2022 HSSCU had the largest credit union loan book in the country with 52% of our assets on loan to our members. This is made possible by our members choosing HSSCU for their borrowing needs.



Lending

Access to loans and the positive experiences of members in doing so is highlighted best by what they had to say about the service. The variety of loans provided is reflective of our borrowing needs and HSSCU is proud to facilitate members whenever needed.

"Great service, friendly and helpful staff. Love that my loan repayment comes out the same time I get paid, means no worries about repayment. Love the special rate car loan and have recommended to other HSE colleagues and friends."

"Always great customer service for answering questions. I have used the HSSCU for my postgraduate student loans to continue my career in the HSE and couldn't have done it without the no fuss and low-rate students loans."

"Amazing mortgage journey with HSSCU."

"My bathroom floor collapsed and the CU again came to my rescue."





Access To Affordable Credit

The area of low value loans and access to affordable credit are explored in this section. Typically, small value loans would be for Christmas, bills, communions, confirmations, or to cover the cost of a domestic emergency or purchase. It is an important segment of our lending, and the credit union plays a key role in providing these loans at an affordable interest rate. The credit union's personal loan rate is 8.8% APR, which most of these loans would fall under. This is a very attractive rate compared to competitors and other credit unions.

We cater for all loan sizes from under €1,000 up to mortgages of €400,000. By providing such a wide scope in loan values it ensures that we are meeting the borrowing needs of our entire membership.

There are many reasons for these loans but it is an area that the credit union prides itself on, from Christmas to an emergency at home HSSCU is there for its member's. As a member owned organisation the empowering of members to better improve their situations runs to the core of what credit unions are about. We are also mindful that by being available to our members we reduce the chances of them seeking other high cost credit options. While the credit union caters for higher than ever loan values, there remains an important emphasis on being there for members who require smaller amounts.

"I really love the HSSCU and totally depend on them for my borrowing needs. The service they offer is excellent when compared to the experience of others I know. Keep it up please."





Access To Affordable Credit

"I have always been thankful to HSSCU for helping with getting a loan and helping me with payments when times were hard for me. The insurance offer on loans helped me. The Christmas club is a fantastic idea. The staff are also fantastic."

Loans Under €2,000 Issued

€10,296,705	8,217	€1,253
Total Value	Number Issued	Average Amount

Loans Under €1,000 Issued

€3,070,281	4,058	€757
Total Value	Number Issued	Average Amount

Loans Under €500 Issued

€544,266	1,257	€433
Total Value	Number Issued	Average Amount

This demonstrates that HSSCU offers loans to those that other financial service providers would likely turn away as being too small in value. Facilitating borrowing at this value level is an important aspect of the credit union service. Decisions are based on a member's ability to repay. HSSCU provides members with access to affordable credit which might not be available elsewhere.

"I find the HSSCU so easy to deal with the staff are lovely very friendly and understanding. The HSSCU has on numerous occasions been on hand for emergencies."



Our Opening Hours

"Talk about a great and helpful professional team, any time I have called in branch so nice and patient, great service, thank you."

The credit union operates a total of seven locations where members can use services in person. HSSCU provides a good geographical spread of branch, reflective of the nationwide common bond within which it operates. Our office locations look to reflect HSSCU's membership where they live and work. Outlined below are the opening hours of HSSCU including the extended phones team hours.

Through the operation of our office network HSSCU provides members with a face-to-face option should they choose to use it. The majority of HSSCU's membership works or resides in Dublin, which is reflected in the branches located there. HSSCU is open to its members for an average of **240** hours per week across all service delivery channels. Online access is obviously available 24/7 to those with online accounts team together.

Open 240 Hours in a typical week.



HSSCU's opening hours outside regular business times come to a total of seven and a half hours in its offices per week and the phone team for 5 hours. This is a combined total of twelve and a half hours per week or an average of **50** hours per month.

"Staff in Dublin 8 office are so lovely to deal with. Be it over the phone or in the branch, they're very helpful and always find dealing with them so easy!"



Opening Hours

A Nationwide Credit Union with 7 Locations.



Through having a presence in a number of locations around Ireland HSSCU is in a position to facilitate members who want or need to access services in person. Each branch is staffed with welcoming and highly trained staff members.



High Street: Monday - Friday 9:00 - 17:00

James Street: Monday 9:30 - 17:00 | Tuesday - Friday 9:00 - 17:00

Ranelagh: Tuesday - Friday 9:00 - 17:00

Saturday 10:00 - 14:00



Cork: Monday 10:00 - 17:00 | Tuesday - Friday 9:30 - 17:00

Galway: Monday - Tuesday | Wednesday Closed |

Thursday - Friday 9:30 - 12:30 | 13:30- 17:00

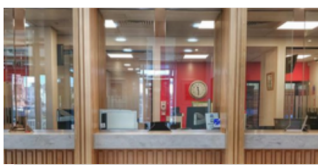
Limerick: Thursday - Friday 9:30-12:30 | 13:15-16:30

Saturday 9:30 - 13:00



Jim Larkin, Liberty Hall: Thursdays 9:00 – 12:00

(SIPTU Members Only)



Phones Team: Monday 9:30 – 17:00,

Tuesday - Thursday 9:00 – 18:30,

Wednesday - Friday 09:00 – 17:00

*As of the date of writing this report, Opening Hours have change in Ranelagh and Limerick.

Ranelagh: Monday: 9:30 - 17:00 | Tuesday - Friday: 9:00 - 17:00.

Limerick: Wednesday: 9:30 - 13:00 | Thursday & Friday: 9:30 – 12:30 (Closed For Lunch) 13.15 – 16.30

"Staff in Cork are all exceptional!"

"Just would like to congratulate the staff of HSSCU High St. branch for their commendable service they offer to every member!"





Our Member Protection

ECCU Group Life: Loan Protection & Life Savings services

In 1958 the pioneers of the Irish credit union movement had a keen awareness of the need to protect their members. As a result, the credit union movement founded its own life assurance company called ECCU Assurance DAC and developed two life assurance products called loan protection and life savings insurance cover. Through this company members savings with HSSCU are insured up to €20,000, and subject to meeting certain criteria a loan with HSSCU is cleared upon a member's death. The credit union received €1,112,007.73 from ECCU in 2022, payable directly into deceased members accounts.

HSSCU also provides Death Benefit Insurance to members who hold €50 or greater in shares. The benefit is worth €3,250 and is provided at no additional cost to members. The €3,250 is paid upon death, towards their funeral expenses. Through our member survey HSSCU identified that 40% of respondents were aware of HSSCU's Death Benefit Insurance.

Member Protection Costs

The cost to HSSCU for providing Share and loan insurance is paid by the credit union as an ongoing expense. A total €1,495,812 was paid in in Loan Protection & Life Savings claims in 2022, benefitting the next of kin of deceased members. During the same financial year of 2022 HSSCU also covered the cost of Death Benefit Insurance to the value of €741,221.

"I don't know what I would do in an emergency if I was not in credit union. Most understanding and professional people I have come across."

"Have always been treated with dignity & respect when dealing with this HSSCU."



Charitable Donations

During the financial year of 2022 HSSCU provided a total of **€67,489** in sponsorship and donations to a wide variety of causes. Proposals for donations are predominantly brought forward by members, enabling HSSCU to engage with the wider community. Providing support to the community is integral to credit unions and it is something we take immense pride in doing year on year. Donations were made to organisations right across the country. Members are encouraged to submit requests for causes they are involved with or passionate about.

A total of fifty-one charities received financial support from HSSCU in 2022. By giving back to local community groups, on behalf of our members, we know that everyone in our community benefits. The ability to do this and to this scale is largely down to members interaction with HSSCU.



€67,489

Total Amount Provided





Not For Profit Financial Benefit

Due to the strong financial performance of HSSCU in 2022 we were in a position to provide a Share Dividend and Loan Interest Rebate to members. These figures are outlined below in greater detail. For HSSCU to be in a position to provide these benefits was very positive and a reflection of the credit union's strong performance despite some challenging

The total Share Dividend paid was **€350,154 (0.1%)**. As a not-for-profit organisation, this is one of the benefits of HSSCU membership. This dividend was a return on members' savings, based on the performance of the credit union during the financial year. The Total Number of members who received a Share Dividend was **63,049**. Members on average received €5.55 from the dividend, however it is dependent on members level of shares as to how much an individual received.

The Loan Interest Rebate came to a total of **€391,479 (2.5%)**. This provides an additional benefit to members who borrow with HSSCU. The Total Number of members who received a Loan Interest Rebate was **22,044**. The average amount received was €17.75. This return of member loan interest, makes borrowing with HSSCU even better value.

These benefits had a direct positive social impact by putting money back into members pockets, these funds come at a time when the cost of living is increasing across Irish society.

"HSSCU offer so much, and it's always been a joy dealing with them - unlike any other standard bank- the best of service and staff."

Share Dividend Total:
€350,154 (0.1%)

Loan Interest Rebate Total:
€391,479 (2.5%)





Christmas Saving Service



2,555 Members
€2.6+ Million Saved

This is a savings facility that is provided to members to help them save for Christmas. In the last pay out in 2022 over €2.6 million was saved by members in preparation for Christmas. These funds are ringfenced and held in a separate account to normal savings accounts. The accounts are paid out in the middle of November each year, just in time for Christmas. It is a very popular service with 2,555 members taking part.

"Love being a member, great service and best thing I ever did joining."



Member Prize Draw

At HSSCU, we operate a monthly member prize draw. Members have the opportunity to win a large number of cash prizes throughout the year. The top monthly prize is €20,000 and there are a further 10 prizes of €1,000 distributed to lucky members. The draw is funded solely by our members and the prize fund is determined by the amount of monies paid in by members. Additionally, there is scope to run special draws throughout the year such as additional summer and Christmas draws.



Over €1 Million in Prizes in 2022

Monthly top prize of €20,000 and an additional ten runners' ups getting €1,000 each. In the Christmas Bonus Draw a total of €600,000 was given away to members.



Membership

2022 has seen continued strong growth in HSSCU's membership. This is a strong testament to the work being done by HSSCU staff. HSSCU will strive to continue being the financial service provider of choice for its members and those eligible to join. At HSSCU almost 65% of our membership are female which is reflective of our common bond.



4,959 New Members
8.3% Increase



"I just can't recommend the HSSCU enough. So easy to deal with and so friendly."



Communicating With Members

As a nationwide credit union, we employ a number of communication methods to reach our members. This allows us to provide information about services, updates and activities taking place across the credit union.



Kredit

This is a biannual booklet that is circulated to members along with their account statements. It provides information that is pertinent to activities at the date of issue. This is circulated to members in a digital and printed format. It assists in keeping members informed about HSSCU



Communicating With Members

Social Media

Our activity across each platform enables two-way communication between HSSCU and our members. Through these channels HSSCU is able to hear from members in an informal manner on a variety of topics. The number of followers on each social media platform is outlined below.



Facebook: 14,200



LinkedIn: 622

Total Social Media Following



Instagram: 3,300



Twitter: 1,400

19,522

Monthly engagement varies greatly depending on the platform, with each one offering a different opportunity to engage with members and non-members. It is also a chance to be in online conversations and discourse. HSSCU's social media looks to maintain a personable touch on social media. Content is made up of informative items, fun, giveaways, and methods of communication that are open to all at their convenience. Followers of HSSCU's social media accounts frequently engage and comment on the content posted, often generating interaction between members themselves.

Email

HSSCU operates an email ezine that provides timely and useful information to our 18,000 subscribers, made up of members and non-members. The Ezine is available to anybody through our website. Email is also an effective tool in circulating regulatory requirements like the Annual General Meeting documentation.

This assists in reducing the environmental impact of printing and posting notifications to the adult and active membership. Emails look to drive traffic back to HSSCU's website where members have access to a wealth of information. HSSCU receives a large volume of emails on a weekly basis from members as they look to access services, provide documentation, and get information.



Youth Engagement

A wide variety of youth clubs, societies and organisations were sponsored over the course of the 2022 financial year. Sponsorship requests which are normally brought forward by our members enable the credit union to make a positive social impact in the wider community. These donations were part of an over €67,000 amount donated, which has been previously outlined in this report.

Providing donations and sponsorship is one aspect of HSSCU's youth engagement. HSSCU also engages with students entering the health services profession through the main third level colleges.

- Laura Lynn Foundation
- Trinity Med Day
- Bonagee United
- Children's Health Foundation
- Clares Wish Foundation
- Crumlin Scout Troop
- Helium Arts
- UCC Medical Research Society



Another area of youth engagement is the junior accounts that are provided by HSSCU. These accounts encourage parents to open accounts for their children. There is also scope for engagement of schools in the community common bond of HSSCU. As of the end of 2022 there was a total of 2,785 juvenile accounts with HSSCU.



2,785 Juvenile Accounts



Education Support

Betty Noone Memorial Bursary

This year HSSCU has paid out €118,050 to 519 members resulting in an average of €227.50 paid out. A service such as this is a differentiating feature of HSSCU compared to other financial institutions. It is a feature of the not-for-profit ethos and how HSSCU gives back directly to its members. In 2022 to improve accessibility for members we created an online application form making it more convenient for members to apply.

Higher Education Scholarships

We would like to congratulate this year's HSSCU Scholarship winners. They have received the first instalment of their share of €50,000 towards their further education costs. We received a very high volume of applications this year with a bumper number submitted. HSSCU's scholarship and bursary offerings are open to all eligible members, and we would encourage members to ensure they meet the required criteria

€50,000

Scholarship Fund



€120,000

Bursary Fund





Education Support



Pascal Keeves (Director) with Matthew Comiskey scholarship recipient.

Congratulations to the 2022 Scholarship Winners. These successful applicants are listed below along with where they are from. The funds provided to these members directly supports their educational development.

Matthew Comiskey - Donegal

BSc Hons Biomedical Science - Ulster University

Janice Curran - Dublin

Bachelor of Arts (HONS) - Healthcare Management -
Institute of Public Administration

Georgia Gargan - Dublin

General Nursing & Paediatrics - Trinity College Dublin

Sophie Molloy - Dublin

Speech and Language Therapy (Professional Qualification) MSc -
University of Limerick

Michelle Reilly - Dublin

BSc. Hons Counselling & Psychotherapy - PCI College





Education Support

What Past Scholarship Recipients Had To Say

Alison Lynch

“For over ten years, I had dreamed about returning to university to further my education in psychology and perhaps, even begin a new career. I was consistently held back due to the huge cost involved in returning to education, particularly as a mature student. As time moved on, the more difficult it became and it seemed like a pipe-dream to achieve. When I read about the HSSCU scholarship, I knew it would eliminate the main barriers in my way and saw it as the only realistic opportunity available to me.

One year on, I have completed my post grad in Applied Neuropsychology with first class honours. I now have the opportunity of a new career and future in psychology that not so long ago, seemed impossible. I have the opportunity to help other people's lives. Life has opportunities now. None of this would have been possible without the HSSCU scholarship. For that, I am eternally grateful. Thank you.”

Simon Yeates

“Welcoming a new baby into the world had put financial pressure on our household and I was in a position where I wasn't sure if I could continue my studies. The scholarship allowed me to continue at a very uncertain time. I remember getting the call that I was successful and feeling speechless. I'm so grateful that the credit union has given me this opportunity to continue my studies and provide a better future for my family.”

Brian O'Connell

“Fortunately, I won, and I got to go to college and study the thing that I actually really want to study and without the scholarship I wouldn't be able to do it. This course is it's making a huge difference to my life. I love the course.”





Our Volunteers

The involvement of volunteers throughout the credit union sector is a key differentiator from other financial service providers bringing a positive impact to both the credit unions and to the volunteers themselves. The following section highlights the role and impact of volunteers at HSSCU.

HSSCU Volunteer Overview



Board Members: 11

Board Oversight Committee Members: 3

Volunteers on Committees: 6

Director Mentor Programme: 5

Volunteer Time

Credit unions would not exist without their volunteers. Our volunteers have given approximately **968 hours*** of their time at no charge working for the betterment of your credit union. Due to the nature of these meetings, they can vary in length, but this is a conservative estimate of the hours done by volunteers the previous year. This equates to over **120** working days that HSSCU volunteers have given to the running of their credit union..

**968
Hours**



**40+
Days**

The time listed above is a minimum as volunteers are required to prepare for meetings, undertake training, and read a lot of material to keep themselves informed. Without volunteers, our credit union would not be able to serve its community as it has done for over 52 years.

** This has been calculated using the average time that meetings take and the number of meetings in a year. The time spent reading and preparing for meetings has not been included. Thus, the figure provided is an estimation of volunteer's time provided to HSSCU.*



Our Volunteers

The 13 Committees and a basic outline of requirements for 2022 included the following:

- **Board Oversight Committee:** Minimum of four meetings each financial year. At least one member of this committee will attend all board meetings.
- **Board of Directors:** meets at least once a month with there typically being 14-16 meetings taking place throughout the year. Meetings can take up to three hours depending on the agenda.
- **POSM Committee:** Monthly meetings with each one lasting 1 ½ hours to 2 hours.
- **Nominations Committee:** typically meets 6-8 times a year with meetings usually last 1 to 1 ½ hours.
- **Risk Committee:** Report to the board at least quarterly for approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours.
- **Audit & Compliance Committee:** Report to the board at least quarterly and committee meets 8-10 times a year. With these meetings typically lasting 2 hours.
- **Remuneration Committee:** Report to the board at least quarterly for approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours.
- **Investment Committee:** Report to the board at least quarterly for approximately 1 to 2 hours. Annually on average the committee meets every two months.
- **Credit Committee:** Meets on a weekly basis with meetings usually lasting 2 ½ hours.
- **Credit Control Committee:** Monthly meeting that lasts between 1 to 1 ½ hours.
- **Information Technology Committee:** Report to the Board at least quarterly for approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours.
- **Membership, Education & Development Committee:** Typically meets six times a year with meetings lasting 1 to 1 ½ hours.
- **Environment Social & Governance Committee:** Typically meets six times a year with meetings lasting 1 to 1 ½ hours.

HSSCU was represented at the ILCU AGM, World Council of Credit Unions, at the CUDA conference The Supervisors Forum, the Chairs Forum and Chapter Forum.



**Volunteers are at the heart of
HSSCU.**



Our Volunteers

Training

The commitment of our volunteers has been instrumental in the success of our credit union. That is why HSSCU is committed to supporting our volunteers by providing extensive training throughout the year. By doing this we not only invest in the individual, but we see it as an investment for the entire local community.

Volunteers are required to do a minimum of 15 hours training each, with some roles requiring specific training to the position. There is also additional training that is provided by HSSCU beyond the minimum requirements.

Statutorily required training, including Anti Money Laundering (at least annually), Health & Safety, manual handling training Ethics and Data Protection also need to be completed. This training ensures that volunteers are competent in their roles and understand their obligations.

Additional Training

Training was carried out through a variety of organisations including the Central Bank of Ireland, CUDA, IBEC, NCAI, LIA, ILCU, UCD and University of Cambridge Institute. Included within this training were three volunteers who undertook diplomas supported by HSSCU.

While continually looking to improve, the Board of the HSSCU initiated an ongoing review of organisational culture using frequent Board Meeting Effectiveness Surveys in tandem with performance conversations.





Environmental Initiatives

Office Renovations

At HSSCU we maintain our branch offices to the highest standard. Renovation work was conducted in our Cork and Galway branches in 2020. This was followed by extensive renovation work completed in our High Street branch in 2022. In 2023 work has commenced in Limerick and Ranelagh to develop these branches. As these renovations are carried out, we ensure that we incorporate the most modern systems to ensure our buildings can be more efficient and that we reduce our carbon footprint.

Green Roof

In our recent High Street project, we installed a sedum roof. This will have a positive environmental impact on our area. This roof is made up of plants that provide a habitat in the centre of Dublin City. The green and living roof is a layer of plants placed on top and brings a whole host of benefits to the building and the environment. The plants are low growing succulents from the sedum family. These plants appear to sit on top of the thin, often rocky soil that they grow in, which is perfect for a green roof.



The benefits of green roofs include improved health benefits due to reduced pollution because of CO2 capture, and energy savings. Adding plants and trees to the urban landscape in turn increases photosynthesis, reducing carbon dioxide levels produced by vehicles, industrial facilities, and mechanical systems. It also increases oxygen production. It provides a green space for wildlife in an otherwise very urban setting and while it's not a large area it is an effective one. This is due to the roof being away from street level and the changes to green spaces that accompany that.



Environmental Initiatives

Tree Planting

HSSCU has planted a tree for every new current account that was opened in 2022. This is an initiative that focuses on making a positive impact on climate change, enhances environmental protection and which helps to strengthen biodiversity. It is an investment in our collective future. The credit union has committed to planting a total of 1,000 trees on the Dingle peninsula in Kerry. This is part of a promotional campaign that planted a tree for each member who opened a current account during a designated time period.

The trees planted will assist in developing HSSCU Wood, will grow every time a current account is opened with us! HSSCU's focus was on native Irish tree that were planted on location. As these wooded areas develop, they help local biodiversity and form animal's habitats. The plan is to also facilitate the support of bees in the area within these woods.

Cloudforests, are a leading Irish climate action company focused on forest creation and environmental protection. A carbon negative business and directly investing in land to plant trees. Recently our partners announced the location of their newest forest site, Cloudforest 5. This site is in Mountoven, Camp, Co. Kerry on the fabulous Dingle Peninsula. The site is over fourteen acres sweeping down to the Atlantic Ocean and boasts fantastic panoramic sea views. Collaborating with our partners we have been allocated a section of this site for the HSSCU's wood.

1,000
Native Irish Trees





Environmental Initiatives

Green Loans

In the previous financial year, a total of 29 Green Loans were provided to members. This came to a total value of €262,200 with the average loan €9,047. There is considerable room for development in this area of lending.

Something to note on this particular loan type is the fact that HSSCU's special home improvement rate would have taken in a large segment of this loan type. However, even allowing for that there is ample room for growth in Green loans.

Travel Reduction

HSSCU throughout the organisation has utilised virtual meetings which cut down on the amount of travel by meeting attendees.



HSSCU AGM

The 2022 AGM was a hybrid meeting which further reduced the number of people traveling for the meeting with a total of 170 members attending online. This is coupled with an increased number of members receiving their notifications via email, now stands at 18,600. As a promotional activity for in person attendee's native Irish wildflower seed packs were distributed.



Sense of Belonging



The survey results have been used in other areas of the report where they were relevant to that section. Some stand out survey findings on this area include.

- Following a survey, members rated the overall service provided by HSSCU as 4.6 Stars out of a maximum 5 stars. Indicating members highly rate the level of service that they receive.
- 98% of the survey respondents stated that they would recommend HSSCU.
- The majority of respondents were only a member of HSSCU.

These findings would indicate a strong sense of belonging to HSSCU from members but also the value they place in the credit union. HSSCU is made by our members and is proudly there for them when needed.

"Love being a member, great service and best thing I ever did joining."



Conclusion

As is outlined in this report HSSCU has an overall positive social impact on its members directly and on the wider community. This is done through the provision of financial services which in turn generate a surplus that can then be reinvested. Having a social impact is an integral part of how credit unions operate and is ingrained in the organisation.

This document looks to outline and focus on this area of its business. The report has also highlighted areas where HSSCU can develop, improve on, and even look to start working on. As is mentioned within the introduction this is a starting point for HSSCU's journey in this area and this report is a foundation for continued betterment in this area. All stakeholders involved with HSSCU look forward to continuing to report on the area of social impact.



Average Member Rating for Overall Services

"HSSCU have this wholistic approach to members. It is something members are comfortable dealing with tier services. Thank you HSSCU."

"You're all deadly!!!"

"Love this credit union!"



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Social Impact
Report 2022