

From Paper to Pixels — Ireland's National Archives Uses AI and RPA to Digitise the Entire 1926 Census

AI in the Public Sector · Good practice · Ireland

Quality score: 67/100

Evidence strength: Descriptive / self-reported

Summary

Ireland's National Archives used OCR and robotic process automation to transcribe nearly 3 million 1926 Census entries — a task estimated at 23 person-years by hand — publishing the fully searchable records online in April 2026.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Evidence of impact / measured public value	3/3
Transparency, fairness & accountability	2/3
Transferability / demonstrated replication	1/3
Scalability beyond pilot	3/3
Governance, capability & sustainability	1/3

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

[C-NAPSE web research](#) — accessed 2026-08-13

[National Archives of Ireland](#) — accessed 2026-08-13

[RTÉ Brainstorm — From paper to pixels](#) — accessed 2026-08-13

[National Archives — Census 1926 digitisation project](#) — accessed 2026-08-13

[Boston Globe — Ireland's 1926 census goes digital](#) — accessed 2026-08-13

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