

# ACTION PLAN FOR JOBS --- 2016



Second Progress Report

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## Commentary

This is the second report of 2016 from the Monitoring Committee established by Government to monitor and drive implementation of the measures contained in the Action Plan for Jobs 2016. It outlines progress made on measures due for completion in the second quarter of 2016.

The Government published the fifth in its multi-annual Action Plan for Jobs series in January this year. This Plan, which contains 304 actions to be implemented in 2016 by all 16 Government Departments and by 46 agencies under the remit of these Departments, will build on the progress made since 2012 to improve supports for job-creating businesses and remove the barriers to employment creation across the economy. These actions are in addition to the over 2,300 actions already implemented under Action Plan for Jobs 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 cumulatively, and reported on by the Monitoring Committee in its previous quarterly reports (see [www.djei.ie](http://www.djei.ie)).

The latest official statistics on employment and unemployment in Ireland (CSO QNHS Quarter 1 2016) show that total employment increased by 46,900 in the year to Q1 2016, bringing total employment to 1,976,500. There was an increase in full time employment of 30,700 and an increase in part-time employment of 16,300. Over the period since the launch of the Action Plan for Jobs in quarter 1 2012, over 151,000 jobs have been created in the Irish economy. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for June 2016 was 7.8%, down from a high of 15.1% in February 2012.

### Actions due in Quarter 2

In the second quarter of 2016, Departments and agencies were to deliver 105 measures under the Action Plan. 15 of the measures due in Quarter 2 of 2016 have not been delivered, giving a completion rate of 86%.

### “Ongoing” actions to be delivered throughout 2016

The Action Plan contains some 93 measures that are described in the plan as “ongoing in 2016”. Although not due in any specific quarter, Departments and Agencies with responsibility for actions listed as “ongoing in 2016” report progress on them for this and the Quarter 4 report. In progressing these “ongoing” actions the Government has, for example:

- A network of 9 Regional Skills Fora has been established and the Regional Skills Fora Website was launched 17th May 2016 – Action 2
- The Government has Launched the single ICT website portal, [techlifeireland.com](http://techlifeireland.com), in partnership with Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and the tech industry to help attract up to 3,000 top tech professionals to Ireland each year – Action 3

- Enterprise Ireland's Innovation Partnership Programme which includes participation by SFI client companies encourages Irish-based companies to work with Irish research institutes for their mutual benefit. 15 innovation partnerships have been approved to date – Action 89
- An allocation of €80,000 has been provided to 16 higher education institutions in 2016 for the purpose of running a total of 35 individual computer camps and coder dojos – Action 69
- Funding was provided to 22 Higher Education Institutions for retention initiatives for ICT students through the Information Technology Investment Fund – Action 70

## Measures not delivered as planned in Q2

As stated above, 15 of the Q2 measures outlined in the Plan have not been delivered on schedule:

- *Roll out the Town and Village Regeneration Scheme to support the economic development of rural towns and villages; Commence the Town and Village Regeneration Scheme – Action 14.* Changes are being made to the scheme on the basis of the new programme for Government. It is envisaged that the 2016 scheme will commence by end Q3 2016 with further details regarding the enhanced scheme outlined in the Programme for Government available as part of the 2017 budgetary process.
- *Finalise and publish the Foreign Languages Strategy; Commence the implementation of actions – Action 54.* Progress on this measure has not been achieved in line with the planned timescale because of competing demands, including the need to deliver on a number commitments set down for delivery in the first 100 days of the new Government.
- *Evaluate the delivery and outcomes of the 2015 Design 4 Growth pilot scheme led by LEO Dublin City which was aimed at assisting participating companies to use good design in a strategic way to enhance their product or service; As per headline action - Action 114.* The Pilot which commenced in January 2016 is ongoing and delayed to Q3- review to be undertaken upon completion.
- *Develop a strategy for the replacement of the outdated Dangerous Substances legislation with a streamlined, lower cost and enterprise friendly system for the licensing of petroleum storage and dispensing facilities; Conclude work of interdepartmental/agency working group - Action 137.* As a consequence of delays in getting the cross-departmental group underway, it will commence its deliberations after the summer and revise the schedule for delivery on its review and recommendations.

- *Undertake an assessment of the impact of the EU Chemicals Policy (REACH) on the Irish economy and the experience of companies of the registration /authorisation processes and, following consultation with industry stakeholders and the relevant national authorities, identify the steps to be taken to enhance Ireland's capacity to engage and influence the REACH process at EU level; Review domestic and EU developments and conduct stakeholder consultation - Action 138.* As a consequence of delays in setting up the Steering Group, its deliberations will get underway after the summer when it will revise the schedule for preparing and overseeing an assessment exercise based on a consultancy tender.
- *Develop and introduce improved reporting requirements for public authorities in relation to payment performance; As per headline action - Action 154.* Currently liaising with the AGO to confirm legal interpretation of the EU Late Payment Directive and the national Regulation transposing it. The outcome of these discussions may impact the timeline for delivery of this action.
- *Take forward the learnings from the Forum on Entrepreneurship in Schools; As per headline action - Action 192.* Progress on this measure has not been achieved in line with the planned timescale because of a competing demands including the need to deliver on a number of commitments set down for delivery in the first 100 days of the new Government.
- *Implement the enterprise engagement strategy for higher education to include entrepreneurial education as an important part of the national framework for enterprise engagement; Complete and disseminate HEInnovate final report - Action 193.* The report is in the final stages of drafting and will be completed in Q3.
- *Implement the enterprise engagement strategy for higher education to include entrepreneurial education as an important part of the national framework for enterprise engagement; Implement the recommendations from the HEInnovate report - Action 193.* The recommendations in the draft report are being considered and implementation of accepted recommendations will be progressed once the report is finalised.
- *Roll out Enterprise Ireland's new Platform for Growth blended learning management development programme; The programme blends both online activities with face to face learning and focusses on building strong networks within the group. The programme makes significant use of technology to help build networks within the group of participating companies as well - Action 200.* Following the completion of an intensive initial consultation phase, which commenced in January 2016 and involved the establishment of a stakeholders (internal & external) design team the EU tendering process was entered into. Phase 1 of this tendering process resulted in a shortlist of 5 market providers. The Invitation to Tender (Phase 2 of the EU Journal Procurement process) has now been published to the shortlist. The evaluation stage of the process will commence in August. The objective is to appoint the new provider in Q3 and launch the programme in Q4.

- *Transpose new EU Procurement Directives; As per headline action - Action 228.* Directive 2014/24/EU on public procurement and Directive 2014/25/EU on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors have been transposed into Irish law by Regulation; Directive 2014/23/EU on the award of concession contracts will be transposed into Irish law in the coming months.
- *Launch the Meat Technology Centre following the 2015 evaluation on the business case for its establishment; As per headline action - Action 252.* The advertisement of the Centre Director post was delayed pending approval from DPER. A contract is expected to be signed shortly with an agreed nominee who will take up duty in September. The official launch of the Meat Technology Centre is now anticipated for Q4 2016.
- *Place Construction Industry Register Ireland on a statutory footing; Bring Memorandum for Government seeking approval for draft Heads of Bill and referral to Environment Select Committee - Action 279.* This requires the preparation of a Memorandum for Government to seek approval to draft Heads of a Bill to provide for same. The timing of this Memorandum is being reviewed in light of this Department's extensive policy and legislative programme. It is not possible to be definitive about a revised timeframe as yet but it is hoped that clarity will emerge on a timeframe in the coming weeks as the Department gets to grips with the reorganisation and reorientation needed to deliver on the new level of ambition set out the new Programme for Government.
- *Carry out a detailed evaluation of the operational aspects and enterprise impacts of the Trading Online Voucher Scheme; Complete the evaluation of the operational aspects of the programme and identify recommendations - Action 290.* The evaluation of the enterprise impacts of the Trading Online Voucher Scheme was prioritised in Q2. On 31 May last, the Minister published the second enterprise impact report of the Trading Online Voucher Scheme, along with Indecon's report on the macro-economic assessment of the value of Ireland's digital economy. The evaluation of the operational aspects of the programme commenced in Q2, and is being prioritised for completion in Q3. The DCENR has engaged with key stakeholders, and held a focus group with LEO staff during May last. Further engagement by way of surveys is currently under preparation, and analysis of relevant operational data is underway. A number of proposed recommendations have already been identified and will be developed further.
- *Publish and implement the joint Irish Film Board/Broadcasting Authority of Ireland national strategy on skills shortages and talent development; Publish strategy - Action 302.* This Q2 measure is nearing completion and will be published in September 2016.

### **Update on actions delayed in Quarter 1**

As reported at the end of Quarter 1, there were 14 actions delayed. The following 7 measures from this report have now been delivered:



- *Roll out the Youth Employability Initiative to enhance the employability of young people aged 15 to 24 years who are most at risk of unemployment and who are not in education, employment or training; issue the first tranche of funding – Action 44.* Funding was announced under the Youth Employability Initiative (YEI) in June 2016. The full amount of YEI funding to be disbursed in 2016 is €600,000 with 28 projects approved for funding. On the 5th July 2016, invitations to drawdown funding were issued.
- *Roll out the Youth Employability Initiative to enhance the employability of young people aged 15 to 24 years who are most at risk of unemployment and who are not in education, employment or training; provide training workshops to projects – Action 44.* The launch of the Youth Employability Initiative and Learning Forum, which included training for projects, was held on Friday 24 June 2016.
- *Advance the Africa Strategy which provides a comprehensive framework for the development and management of Ireland's official engagement with Africa, through a clearly targeted engagement on trade and economic relations with Africa, including: a renewed Africa Ireland Economic Forum; the strengthening of our embassies' trade promotion tools and capacities, in co-operation with the State agencies; and ongoing support to Irish business representative bodies and companies focused on doing business in Africa; consult with relevant stakeholders and deliver a revised Africa Ireland Economic Forum; including events to engage Irish business representative bodies and relevant companies – Action 223.* The revised Africa Ireland Economic Forum took place in Dublin on June 16 and 17 and brought together business and policy makers from Ireland and Africa to hear about the opportunities for enhanced trade and investment between Ireland and Africa.
- *Issue social clauses guidance material to procuring authorities; as per headline action – Action 233.* Issue of the guidance material has delayed to take on board the provisions of the new EU Directives on Public Procurement dealing with social clauses which were transposed into Irish law on 5 May.
- *Review the operation of the Tender Advisory Service pilot; As per headline action – Action 238.* The Tender Advisory Service was launched in February 2015 to improve communications with suppliers and increase professionalism and consistency in the public service. A review of operations has taken place and a report is currently being finalised and will issue in September.
- *Implement the Construction Contracts Act; Publish the Code of Practice for the conduct of adjudications – Action 280.* A final text of the Code of Practice for the conduct of adjudications has been submitted to the Minister of State for Employment and Small Business, for signature.



- *Implement the Construction Contracts Act; commence public information campaign – Action 280.* The public information campaign has now commenced.

## **Quarter 2 Measures**



## Disruptive Reforms

### Stimulating Regional Growth

**Action 6:** Develop and agree regional indicators to monitor the impact of the plans in terms of, for example, jobs created, new business start-ups, FDI projects won etc.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (DJEI, relevant public bodies)

**Update: Complete**

DJEI has been working closely with enterprise agencies, CSO and other public sector bodies to develop and agree regional indicators to monitor the impact of the Regional Action Plans. A range of regional indicators has been developed and follow up is ongoing with the relevant organisations to access data for inclusion in the first Progress Reports on the Regional Action Plans, which are due to be published in Q3 2016.

**Action 18:** Develop the potential for job creation at regional and local levels through resource efficiency and sustainability initiatives including opportunities in reuse, recycling and recovery of waste as well as waste prevention and cost-saving initiatives for SMEs, farmers, communities and the public sector.

**Q2 Measure:** Negotiate the proposed EU Circular Economy package to ensure opportunities for the development of indigenous waste sector are maximised and develop policy proposals to support job creation in the Irish waste sector following public consultation on the cir. (DECLG)

**Update: Complete**

Negotiation of the Circular Economy Action Plan and legislative package at EU level is ongoing. Ministers at the Environment Council in June were asked to adopt Conclusions regarding the Action Plan. DECLG is collaborating with DJEI, DAFM, local government, the EPA and industry on the Action Plan to ensure that Ireland is well-placed to convert resource efficiency and sustainability opportunities to our economic and environmental advantage. The outcome of a recent public consultation on enterprise opportunities in the waste sector will be important in the development of Ireland's policy position on the Circular Economy Action Plan.

## All Government Transactions with Business Online by 2017- Reducing Red Tape

**Action 20:** Provide updates each quarter on progress achieved towards the Government's commitment to make all licensing, authorisation, certification, permit application, and payment-taking procedures for business fully available online on a progressive basis by November 2017.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (All Departments)

**Update: Complete**

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (DJEI) has identified 45 licences, authorisations, certifications and permits which are provided to business. 14 of these are available online. In relation to the remaining 31, detailed plans to put 15 services online by November 2017 have been developed, 2 of which are in development and will be online in 2016.

The Department is continuing to liaise with the service providers in its business units, offices and agencies to address progress on 16 other services which due to legislative restrictions prevent provision of the service online (for example, a statutory requirement for a hard copy signature), or due to current requirements for hearings in person (for example, copyright and trade mark disputes).

## National Clustering Initiative

**Action 22:** Launch the regional enterprise competitive call to support the development of regional sectors.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update: Complete**

As part of the Government's €250m Regional Enterprise Development Initiative, Enterprise Ireland has introduced a series of new competitive funding initiatives in the areas of entrepreneurship, innovation, enterprise infrastructure and job creation.

The objective is to bring forward fresh collaborative initiatives to boost enterprise and job creation in the regions. An initial fund of €50m was made available for competitive calls.

The first 10m of funding was made available for two calls, of €5m each respectively, in respect of collaborative projects involving (i) the LEOs and (ii) Community Enterprises and other business support organisations.

The focus of this funding is on community-driven enterprise initiatives and how all the local players, public and private, can work together to maximise job creation, through the utilisation of existing infrastructure and the leveraging of nationally available enterprise supports.

On 1 June, Enterprise Ireland announced the allocation of €5m in funding for local and regional initiatives to support new businesses and jobs across the country under the LEO Competitive Fund (€2m allocation) and the Community Enterprise Initiative (CEI Scheme), (€3m allocation).

A second call under these schemes is anticipated in Q4, 2016.

From the balance of €40m for regional funding initiatives, Enterprise Ireland has to date in 2016 launched two schemes and a pilot project: The Regional Accelerator Scheme (€3m), a Cluster Initiative (€500k), and in advance of a new Innovative Procurement scheme being approved for roll out a pilot Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) project with Dublin City Council which commenced in March 2016.

The Accelerator Development Scheme (€3m) is the first competitive initiative to be launched under the €40m competitive regional jobs fund announced by the Government on 15 January.

As a key action under the Action Plan for Jobs 2016 the scheme aims to increase the number of

accelerators operating in the Irish market supporting entrepreneurship, company creation and job creation in new Manufacturing and Internationally Traded Services companies, particularly those outside the greater Dublin area.

Submissions were received by the deadline of 31 March and the assessment process is nearing conclusion.

Enterprise Ireland's Cluster Initiative (€500k) closed for applications on the 21 April and is in the final stage of assessment.

The final call of the €40m funding scheme is being developed at present with a focus on larger scale regionally strategic projects. This is currently being drafted by EI in consultation with DJEI.

### Driving Intellectual Property in Enterprise

**Action 31:** Support the Knowledge Development Box by amending the Patents Act, 1992 to allow for the reintroduction of substantive patent examination in Ireland to ensure qualification for all Irish granted patents under the Knowledge Development Box.

**Q2 Measure:** Secure Government approval for necessary legislative changes to the Patents Act, 1992 and, with the office of Parliamentary Counsel, draft the legislative amendments. (DJEI)

**Update: Complete**

A draft Memorandum for Government has been circulated on eCabinet on 1 July.

**Action 34:** Establish an overarching inter-agency group to scope out and develop a roadmap leading to the development and building of IP capacity at enterprise level including awareness building around IP management in enterprise.

**Q2 Measure:** Establish the inter-agency group. (DJEI, EI, IDA, SFI and other relevant bodies)

**Update: Complete**

DJEI convened the first meeting of the inter-agency group in June 2016. A second meeting will be scheduled for September 2016.

## Increasing Labour Market Participation

**Action 44:** Roll out the Youth Employability Initiative to enhance the employability of young people aged 15 to 24 years who are most at risk of unemployment and who are not in education, employment or training.

**Q2 Measure:** Provide training workshops to projects. (DCYA)

**Update: Complete**

Funding was announced under the Youth Employability Initiative (YEI) in June 2016. The full amount of YEI funding to be disbursed in 2016 is €600k with 28 projects approved for funding.

Those who will be in receipt of funding were notified on Monday 20 June, after approval was received from DAHRRGA. The launch of the Youth Employability Initiative and Learning Forum, which included training for projects, was held on Friday 24 June 2016 [On 5 July 2016, invitations to drawdown funding were issued].

Over 1000 young people aged 15-24 from across the country will participate in the 28 projects allocated funding. While each project is different they can be broadly grouped into 4 categories.

Social enterprise, Pre-training, Career guidance projects, Helping young people to get qualifications

**Action 45:** Participate actively in the Department of Social Protection's Work Placement Programme and the National Internship Scheme

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (D/Defence)

**Update: Complete**

The Defence Organisation continues to actively participate in this programme. At end-June 2016 there were 9 internships filled, 2 placements active, 2 places re advertised and a further 6 in the process of being filled. Of these, 2 are awaiting security clearance and 4 were at interview stage.

**Action 46:** Initiate a pilot Employment Support Scheme, in conjunction with the Department of Social Protection, to enhance the prospects of participants aged between 18 and 24 years obtaining employment to help develop a path to economic independence.

**Q2 Measure:** Implement a pilot scheme with up to 30 participants. (D/Defence, DSP)

**Update: Complete**

A pilot scheme commenced on 20 June 2016 with 25 participants.



## Delivering Skills for a Growing Economy

**Action 47:** Finalise and publish the new National Skills Strategy. The new strategy will set out the framework for the period to 2025 for how Ireland can continue to develop relevant skills and ensure that our supply of skills is activated and effectively used.

**Q2 Measure:** Commence the implementation of actions and recommendations. (DES, DJEI, DSP, SOLAS, HEA, education and training Providers, employers)

**Update: Complete**

Implementation of actions and recommendations of the National Skills Strategy has commenced.

**Action 52:** Systematically monitor and evaluate the impact of Springboard+ to further strengthen the contribution of the programme to supporting learners and skills development, job creation, reducing unemployment and meeting the skills needs of emerging industries.

**Q2 Measure:** Continue to gather the full range of quantitative and qualitative data on Springboard+ inputs, outputs and outcomes. (HEA)

**Update: Complete**

The evaluation framework for Springboard provides for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of outputs. The HEA are currently gathering and analysing a full range of quantitative and qualitative data on Springboard+ inputs, outputs and outcomes. A survey of all Springboard+ participants 2011 – 2015 was launched in March 2016 and survey responses are being compiled.

**Action 53:** Roll out the 2016 call for proposals for Springboard Courses, with a particular focus on priority areas identified by industry through the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs including ICT, the medtech and biotech sectors; skills for enterprise to trade internationally; international financial services; entrepreneurship and business start-ups.

**Q2 Measure:** Determine the outcome of the competitive process by an expert panel, in accordance with process and overseen by an independent process auditor. (HEA)

**Update: Complete**

A call for Proposals for Springboard 2016 issued by the HEA on 5th February. The closing date for receipt of proposals was 11th March. The proposals were examined by the expert panel, and courses approved, providing for 5,825 places on 180 courses, in 36 educational institutions. Springboard+ 2016 was launched on 15 June 2016.

**Q2 Measure:** Launch of Springboard+ 2016. (HEA, HEIs, Employers)

**Update: Complete**

Springboard+ 2016 was launched on 15 June 2016, providing for 5,825 places on 180 courses, in 36 educational institutions.

**Action 55:** Deliver the third Further Education and Training Services Plan incorporating improved alignment of provision to employment opportunities and identified skills needs.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (SOLAS)

**Update: Complete**

The third Further Education & Training Services Plan published by SOLAS in May 2016.

**Action 59:** Increase the number of research Masters awards under the Irish Research Council Employment Based Programme to address national skills requirements, particularly in the SME sector.

**Q2 Measure:** Closing date for the 2016 Employment Based Programme. (IRC)

**Update: Complete**

While the IRC was able to increase the number of research Masters available, having assessed the applications submitted the numbers of PhD offers it was able to make is down by 5 for 2016. The Council has implemented a more targeted approach for prospective enterprise partners to lay the groundwork for sustainable delivery going forward under the relevant actions within Innovation 2020. Engagement with enterprise will be managed on a more strategic basis to deliver the increased numbers envisaged under Innovation 2020.

**Action 61:** Conduct a review of the supply and demand of the skills required to meet the needs of the biopharma sector and identify gaps in provision, including a profiling of current provision.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (EGFSN, DJEI)

**Update: Complete**

A draft final report on the Skills Needs of the Biopharma sector was presented to the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs at its meeting on 15 June.

The objective of the report was to review the supply of, and demand for, Biopharma skills over the period to 2020. There is a specific focus in the report on Biologics manufacturing, which is a growing sector within the industry.

The challenges for the Biopharma industry, working in collaboration with education and training providers and stakeholders, are to:

- increase awareness of the range of attractive careers available,
- attract a greater number of available graduates from relevant fields of study,
- ensure the relevance of biopharma education and training programmes,
- support the upskilling of jobseekers for available job openings, and
- continue the upskilling of those in the workplace.

A number of recommendations to support these objectives are made in the report.

The report was adopted by the EGFSN at its meeting on 15 June. Arrangements are being made to publish the report at an early date.

**Action 62:** Review the status of recommendations made in reports of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, including 2015 reports on the freight transport, distribution and logistics sector and the hospitality sector, with a view to progressing implementation of the recommendations and, in particular, those that require prioritisation.

**Q2 Measure:** Report progress to the Expert Group and consider any further action required.. (DJEI, EGFSN)

**Update: Complete**

The Secretariat to the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) conducted desk-based research on the status of recommendations made by the Group in sectoral reports since 2008, including more recent reports on the Freight Transport, Distribution and Logistics sector and the Hospitality sector (it was not necessary to contact individual parties for updates).

The objectives of the review were to:

1. Identify progress which has been made generally in implementing recommendations; and
2. Identify and prioritise key outstanding recommendations which it is considered are still important to progress.

A total of thirteen sectoral reports published by the EGFSN between 2008 and 2015 were reviewed in this exercise. There were a total of 109 high-level recommendations in these reports.

A presentation on the work carried out was made to the EGFSN at its meeting on 15th June.

Several common thematic areas recur in the recommendations which are still valid, e.g.:

- Importance of aligning education and training provision with industry's requirements.
- Establishment of standardised work placements, internship opportunities and structured PhDs.
- Establishment of clear career paths within sectors and communication of career opportunities in those sectors.
- Establishment of upskilling and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes for employees.
- Clear role for Industry in meeting their skills requirements.

At its next meeting in September 2016, the Expert Group will consider the steps to be taken to progress this work further.

**Action 63:** Deliver a strengthened Communications Strategy for the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, which will result in more effective dissemination of information on the skills needs of the economy through improved engagement with education and training providers and other key stakeholders.

**Q2 Measure:** Agree measures to be taken to strengthen the Communications Strategy of the Group. (EGFSN, DJEI)

**Update: Complete**

The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) was established in 1997 to advise the Government on emerging and future skills needs of the economy. The Group's work is widely disseminated to education and training providers, industry bodies, guidance counsellors, and through relevant websites.

As part of its 2016 work programme, the EGFSN agreed to review how it communicates its key messages to stakeholders and whether there is scope for using additional avenues or media tools to deliver these messages. The overarching objective is to ensure the maximum awareness of the emerging skills needs of the Irish economy so that these skills needs, can be met in a timely way.

The EGFSN considered its Communications Strategy in the first half of 2016, and agreed it can make better use of more concise report formats and visual tools to help deliver its key messages.

A new Communications Strategy will be developed in the second half of 2016.

## Increasing ICT Skills

**Action 66:** Through strengthened collaboration between Government, the education system and industry and as part of the goal of making Ireland the most attractive location in the world for ICT skills and ability, implement the key actions from the ICT Skills Action Plan 2014 – 2018.

**Q2 Measure:** Determine the outcome of the competitive call determined by an expert panel, in accordance with process and overseen by an independent process auditor. (HEA, HEIs)

**Update: Complete**

A call for Proposals for Springboard 2016 issued by the HEA on 5th February. The closing date for receipt of proposals was 11th March. The proposals were examined by the expert panel, and courses approved. Springboard+ 2016, incorporating the ICT Conversion Courses was launched on 15 June 2016. 2,752 full and part-time ICT courses are provided under Springboard+ 2016. Of these, 1,943 are full and part-time ICT conversion places including 699 places on a new pilot 2-year part-time ICT Conversion Course.

**Q2 Measure:** Launch of Springboard+ 2016. (HEA, HEIs, employers)

**Update: Complete**

Springboard+ 2016, incorporating the ICT Conversion Courses was launched on 15 June 2016. 1,943 full and part-time ICT conversion places are provided under Springboard+ 2016 including 699 places on a new pilot 2-year part-time ICT Conversion Course.

**Action 68:** Continue collaboration and engagement between enterprise and higher education providers to provide Level 8 ICT Conversion programmes as part of the Springboard+ 2016 programme.

**Q2 Measure:** Determine the outcome of the competitive process by an expert panel, in accordance with process and overseen by an independent process auditor. (HEA)

**Update: Complete**

A call for Proposals for Springboard 2016 issued by the HEA on 5th February. The closing date for receipt of proposals was 11th March. The proposals were examined by the expert panel, and courses approved. Springboard+ 2016, incorporating the ICT Conversion Courses was launched on 15 June 2016. 2,752 full and part-time ICT courses are provided under Springboard+ 2016. Of these, 1,943 are full and part-time ICT conversion places including 699 places on a new pilot 2-year part-time ICT Conversion Course.

**Q2 Measure:** Approve and launch the new conversion places as part of Springboard+ 2016. (HEA, HEIs, employers)

**Update: Complete**

Springboard+ 2016, incorporating the ICT Conversion Courses was launched on 15 June 2016. 1,943 full and part-time ICT conversion places are provided under Springboard+ 2016 including 699 places on a new pilot 2-year part-time ICT Conversion Course.

**Action 72:** Enhance industry input to programme content, provision of work placements and promotion of ICT programmes as part of the implementation of Skillnets ICT conversion Programmes.

**Q2 Measure:** Commence delivery of ICT Conversion Programmes. (Skillnets)

**Update: Complete**

The Skillnets ICT conversion programmes have commenced. Four dedicated Skillnet networks are engaged in the design and delivery of ICT Conversion Programmes with enterprise. The four networks are ICT Ireland Skillnet, ISA Software Skillnet, ITAG Skillnet and Animation Skillnet. 4 ICT conversion programmes have been completed to date in 2016 with 43 trainees. Further programmes are currently underway or planned to commence in H2 with over 240 trainees to be trained by year-end.

### Attracting world class talent to Ireland

**Action 73:** Deliver the online application system for employment permits.

**Q2 Measure:** Develop and test the system. (DJEI)

**Update: Complete**

The system has been developed and was deployed for testing. Testing is currently underway.

**Action 75:** Undertake the Biannual Review of Highly Skilled and Ineligible Occupations Lists.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline. (DJEI)

**Update: Complete**

Twice yearly the Department reviews the Highly Skilled Eligible Occupations Lists, which set out the lists of occupations deemed to be critically important for Ireland and in significant short supply. The Department also updates the list of occupations previously considered ineligible for permits, to reflect any changes from clear surplus of skilled Irish and EEA nationals available to shortages emerging.

The first 2016 review received Ministerial approval in mid-June.

## Innovation

**Action 94:** Support collaboration between the health system and enterprise leading to development and commercialisation of new healthcare technologies and to facilitate the health system to find efficiencies and improvements.

**Q2 Measure:** Launch Health Innovation Hub Ireland. (EI, DJEI, DoH)

**Update: Complete**

The establishment of Health Innovation Hub Ireland (HIHI) with €5m of funding from Enterprise Ireland over 5 years was announced by the Ministers for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation; and Health on 26 January.

The HIHI was created as a key piece of national infrastructure to support and accelerate the development of healthcare facing Irish industry by facilitating structured access to the Irish healthcare system to testbed new products and services in a real life setting.

Testing and validating products in a reference site such as hospitals or primary care will give exporting Irish industry an advantage in product development and in accessing overseas markets.

The HIHI will also facilitate structured identification, development and commercialisation of new innovations from within the healthcare system via creation of new HPSU\*s and knowledge transfer to existing industry.

Enterprise Ireland and the HIHI, hosted at UCC, have completed contract negotiations for the establishment of the Hub. An Operations team is in place and laying the ground work for operational ramp-up including calls from Industry to establish HIHI projects in Q3.

**Q2 Measure:** Appoint a Director of Health Innovation Hub Ireland. (HIHI)

**Update: Complete**

Following a competitive process, a Director has been selected and will take up appointment in Health Innovation Hub Ireland on completion of contracts.

**Action 108:** Cultivate individual enterprise focused early stage career researchers, and building on a decade of partnering with 300 employers, increase the number of Enterprise Partnership Scheme Post doctorate awards.

**Q2 Measure:** Launch the 2016 Enterprise Partner Scheme. (IRC)

**Update: Complete**

The programme was launched in Q2. The closing date for the applications was June 2016. There were a total of 100 applications – 74 post graduate and 26 post-doctoral.

The Council has recently commenced a survey of the key stakeholders of our enterprise programmes – researchers, institutions and enterprises to gather perspectives on impact and outcomes from the programmes and how each might be further enhanced going forward, including in relation to postdoctoral provision.

**Action 110:** Promote the new innovation standard among the third-level education sector and research community in Ireland.

**Q2 Measure:** Develop a number of case studies for application of the Innovation Standard in conjunction with relevant state agencies. (NSAI)

**Update: Complete**

NSAI and Enterprise Ireland have identified three companies interested in participating in a project to assess the application of the CEN/TS 16555 Innovation Management standard. The aim of the project is to get feedback from the companies on the merits or otherwise of using the standard in their business.

**Q2 Measure:** With the third level education sector and research community, plan and agree to deliver four appearances/presentations at relevant events. (NSAI)

**Update: Complete**

To date NSAI delivered presentations on the new innovation standard, CEN/TS 16555, to the DCU Alpha Innovation Unit and Athlone IT. Two further talks were scheduled in June for the Ignite Academy and Plato Group at Dundalk IT.

## Design for Innovation

**Action 113:** Consider what follow up actions are necessary in response to the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation research study on Economic Impact of Design Across All Sectors of the Economy.

**Q2 Measure:** Consider what follow up actions are necessary to strengthen linkages between the key actors involved in national and regional design activities to optimise their contribution to business development. (DJEI, EI, DCCOI)

**Update: Complete**

In response to the above Study, the Design and Crafts Council were asked to draft a national design strategy in consultation with the key stakeholders in design in Ireland. Included in the draft strategy is a focus on the development of design capability from education through enterprise, with specific actions suggested.

The draft strategy will be submitted to the Minister for Jobs Enterprise, and Innovation for consideration. In addition, under Enterprise Ireland's Community Enterprise Initiative, the DCCOI was awarded funding for the establishment of a centre that will be a hub for engagement between regional and sectoral players and the design community.

**Q2 Measure:** Examine specific options to respond to enterprise needs in relation to design and to increase the economic impact of design-intensive and non-intensive sectors. (EI, DCCOI)

**Update: Complete**

Design enterprises are broadly based across Ireland and there is a strong cadre of young firms in key traditional design sectors. Enterprise Ireland's role in supporting entrepreneurs in design is focused on those who have ambitious export focused expansion plans.

Enterprise Ireland has examined a number of options to respond to current enterprise needs in relation to design and to increase the economic impact of design-intensive and non-intensive sectors.



**Action 115:** Investigate the opportunity for Irish participation in design based projects under Horizon 2020.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI, DCCOI)

**Update: Complete**

Running from 2014 to 2020 with a budget of just over €70 billion, Horizon 2020 is the EU's programme for research and innovation and is part of the drive to create new growth and jobs in Europe. Ireland is well positioned to benefit from Horizon 2020, building on our excellent performance in the last EU programme for research and development.

Enterprise Ireland reviewed opportunities for Irish participation in design based projects under Horizon 2020. Arising from this an agreement has been reached by Enterprise Ireland to partner with the PDR Centre at Cardiff Metropolitan University on EU funded design study under Atlantic Area Programme. Work has commenced, with the PDR Centre taking a lead, on the application process.

## Competitiveness

### Institutionalising the Drive for Competitiveness

**Action 120:** The National Competitiveness Council's priority issues for sustainable competitiveness over the short and medium term will be brought to Government. Individual Government Departments will respond and bring forward proposals as appropriate to enhance competitiveness. This work will be overseen by the relevant Cabinet Committees.

**Q2 Measure:** Lead on a response from relevant Departments and agencies to the NCC recommendations to address data deficits in the insurance sector (in particular costs and award levels) through the Cabinet Committee structures. (DoF, DJEI, DTTAS, DJE, CBI, CSO, PIAB)

**Update: Complete**

The Department of Finance is currently undertaking a Review of Policy in the Insurance Sector. One element of this work is an examination of the factors contributing to the increasing cost of insurance. This work will include the issue of the availability of insurance data. This work on the cost of insurance will identify any issues that can be addressed on a more immediate basis and those that require more long-term policy implementation. It is being undertaken in consultation with the Central Bank of Ireland, other Government Departments, Agencies and interested bodies and is being progressed through the Working Group of the Cost of Insurance chaired by Minister of State Eoghan Murphy.

### Reducing the Cost of Doing Business

**Action 129:** Pilot a range of affordable financing options to support domestic households in improving the energy efficiency of their home.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (DCENR)

**Update: Complete**

SEAI is piloting a number of affordable financing measures in 2016. These include salary incentive schemes, loan offers through credit unions and tailored efficiency upgrade advice and project management assistance to homeowners. It is hoped that these pilots will lead to the development of solutions that can be rolled out nationally to support the deeper retrofits that will be essential to put Ireland on a trajectory to meet 2030 climate targets.

**Action 130:** Ensure the implementation of Regulating for a Better Future across Departments, building upon recent progress and completing outstanding actions. Actions will focus on enhancing national competitiveness and securing Ireland's ongoing economic recovery.

**Q2 Measure:** Report progress on the implementation of sectoral actions. (DTTAS/ DCENR/ DECLG/ LRC/D/Taoiseach)

**Update: Complete**

Aviation Sector

There is currently no arrangement for any sharing of front and back office administration functions among aviation regulatory authorities (Commission for Aviation Regulation and Irish Aviation Authority).

Action 5.2.1 of the National Aviation Policy (2015) states: "The organisational arrangements for provision of safety and economic regulatory oversight will be restructured taking account of the review of the appropriate model for airport charges regulation and of developments and timelines under the Single European Sky (SES) legislation. In advance of any restructuring options being pursued there will be full consultation with interested parties."

The review of airport charges regulation was completed in December 2015 and a public consultation exercise on that review and on the future policy for the airport charges regulation is underway at present, after which the NAP Action 5.2.1 will be addressed.

Update: The independent review of airport charges regulation was completed in December 2015 and a public consultation process is now underway. Following that process, the Department will consider all of the submissions received along with the recommendations of the report with the intention of finalising and publishing a policy on airport charges regulation by the end of 2016.

Public Transport Sector

The position in relation to public transport regulation is that no sectoral regulators have been identified in the public transport sector where it would be appropriate that they would share front office (legal/economic) and back office (IT/Personnel/Administration) administrative functions. Therefore, the above step under Action No. 130 is not applicable to the public transport sector.

It would not be appropriate for the National Transport Authority (NTA) and the Commission for Railway Regulation (CRR) to share front office and back office functions. As it stands at present, a shared services approach already applies internally in CRR and internally in the NTA in relation to the administration and delivery of several separate regulatory functions.

Update: Trialogue negotiations between Council, European Parliament and Commission are ongoing and expected to be completed shortly.

Update: The National Transport Authority (NTA) is currently reviewing the operation of the commercial bus licensing regime and expects to report to the DTTAS in Q3 2016.

Update: A number of changes to taxi legislation were enacted in the Public Transport Act 2016. There will be continuous review of taxi legislation as required during 2016.

## Easier to do Business

**Action 134:** Develop a Client Relationship Management system in the Irish National Accreditation Board which will make it easier for business to apply for accreditation.

**Q2 Measure:** System test. (HSA/INAB)

**Update: Complete**

System design has been finalised and is undergoing system and user testing.

**Action 135:** Develop and introduce a smartphone GeoSMART Inspection application to assist the interaction between inspectors and employers and allow for real time data sharing.

**Q2 Measure:** Develop the inspection app. (HSA)

**Update: Complete**

The development work for the mobile application for inspection has been provided to the HSA ICT group for initial user acceptance testing. This testing is currently underway.

**Action 136:** Further promote and expand the small business, construction and agribusiness sections of BeSMART.

**Q2 Measure:** Construction canteen poster campaign (Q1 and Q2). (HSA)

**Update: Complete**

The HSA has extended the scope of the Construction canteen Poster campaign to involve meetings and in many cases, site information sessions with the Contractor and their sub-contractors on site. While this is a very effective means of communication with a very wide range of sub-contractors, it takes much more time, hence the initiative has been extended into Q3 and Q4.

**Q2 Measure:** Social Media campaigns targeting sectors or specific Business Types through BeSMART to increase usage. (HSA)

**Update: Complete**

A successful Facebook BeSMART awareness campaign in June reached 29,494. Use of Twitter and Facebook is ongoing by the HSA in raising BeSMART awareness. This Action is not due to be completed until Q4. However, sufficient progress has been made in Q2, to show the Q2 aspect as complete.

**Q2 Measure:** Engagement with Insurance industry including CPD talks to the Insurance Institute of Ireland on BeSMART. (HSA)

**Update: Complete**

Engagement with insurance industry through talks and presentations is ongoing nationwide. This Action is not due to be completed until Q4. However, sufficient progress has been made in Q2, to show the Q2 aspect as complete.

**Action 139:** Increase the level of online applications and computerised applications and payment systems to reduce compliance burden for farmers from 70 per cent to 75 per cent for 2015 Basic Payment Scheme applications.

**Q2 Measure:** Per headline action. (DAFM)

**Update: Complete**

75% on line achieved in 2016 application period.

**Action 140:** Through the Corporate Social Responsibility Stakeholder Forum, progress the objectives of the National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility.

**Q2 Measure:** Commence development of a new Corporate Social Responsibility plan, in consultation with the CSR Stakeholder Forum, the Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, and relevant EU bodies. (DJEI)

**Update: Complete**

DG GROW (DG for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs), in cooperation with the Dutch EU Presidency, is convening a meeting of the High-level Group on Corporate Social Responsibility/Responsible Business Conduct (CSR/RBC). This meeting took place on 29 June 2016 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague, the Netherlands.

The objective of the meeting was to exchange views on the CSR/RBC process at the EU and Member State level, including the preparation of the draft EU CSR/RBC Action Plan. The meeting provided an opportunity to share key developments in the area and hear about other Member States' National Action Plans on CSR and/or Business and Human Rights. The outcome of the meeting will inform the development of Ireland's second National Plan on CSR.

## Finance for Growth

### Ensure viable SMEs can access appropriate finance

**Action 144:** Detailed data from AIB, Bank of Ireland and PTSB will be collated and examined, on a monthly basis, ensuring a more informed understanding of the SME bank lending environment.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (DoF, CRO)

**Update: Complete**

Figures to April 2016 received from AIB and Bank of Ireland analysed by both DoF and the CRO. Q1 Analysis sent to Minister for information. Quarterly meetings with both AIB and Bank of Ireland took place in March and again in June.

PTSB have recently joined this process are expected to fully come on board with monthly updates by the end of the year.

**Action 145:** Survey the demand for SME credit.

**Q2 Measure:** In addition to work carried out by the Central Statistics Office in this area, undertake two further SME Credit Demand surveys. (DoF)

**Update: Complete**

The Credit Demand Survey covering October 2015 to March 2016 was conducted between 1st April and 5th May. The final report was published, following approval from the Minister, on 10th June 2016. A further survey covering the period April to September 2016 will be carried out in Q4 following a tender process in Q3.

**Action 148:** Source additional funding to support the lending activities of the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland into the future.

**Q2 Measure:** Establish additional funding supports or expand existing funding facilities provided by multilateral institutions, the State and European Commission backed programmes. (DoF, SBCI)

**Update: Complete**

Additional funding of €200m was approved on January 22 2016 by the Council of Europe Bank, subject to completion of a legal agreement. These documents are still under negotiation with likely completion by beginning of July 2016 subject to provision of a Government Guarantee to CEB. A Note Programme has also been agreed with the NTMA for €250m, and will be available subject to completion of a ministerial guarantee. The guarantee was signed by the Minister for Finance on 14 June 2016. The SBCI continues to actively monitor its funding position, and seek appropriate sources of funding to meet its obligations. The SBCI has also established bilateral dialogue with the British Business Bank (now also a new member of NEFI) to discuss and share experiences of operating as national promotional institutions in a banking market that differs from that generally in place across Europe.

**Action 152:** Fully establish the European Investment Fund's European Angels Fund in the Irish market

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update: Complete**

Recognising the increasingly important role that Business Angels play in supporting our clients with both expertise and capital, Enterprise Ireland rationalised its Business Angel supports. In conjunction with existing partners, a new platform was created to both increase the amount of Angel investment and improve the overall capability of Angels to make informed investment decisions.

This €20m fund, with €10m coming from Enterprise Ireland and €10m from the European Investment Fund (EIF), was launched on 9 June by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

## Roll out, monitor and evaluate State supports for SMEs

**Action 153:** Develop an awareness campaign to promote and advocate membership of the Prompt Payments Code across business in Ireland.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (DJEI, IICM, Business Representative Bodies)

**Update: Complete**

A Request for Tender (RFT) issued on 1 July 2016.

## Continue to research/learn in the area of Finance for Growth

**Action 164:** Host policy conferences on finance for growth, at least one of which is to be held outside Dublin.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (DoF, SME State Bodies Group)

**Update: Complete**

Hosted Policy Conference for SME State Bodies Group on 23 May in the Department of Finance with three external speakers – John Phelan (HBAN), Shane Lanigan (BMS Finance) and Joe Wilde (MacDigital).

## Entrepreneurship

**Action 168:** Review the competitiveness of Ireland's mix of direct and indirect supports for entrepreneurs, as an input to the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and enterprise agencies' pre-Budget submission.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (DJEI)

**Update: Complete**

The DJEI Pre-Budget Submission includes a review of the supports that are essential to support entrepreneurship, diversification of international trade and exports and to support indigenous enterprise to scale and grow. These include measures to support investment through the EI and reduced Capital Gains Tax, measures to support export market diversification through support for innovation and measures to attract key skills and improvements to the Foreign Earnings Deduction schemes.

**Action 171:** Provide support directly to High Potential Start-Ups with early access to development programmes through the rollout of the pre-investment Sprint programme and the post-investment Accelerate programme.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update: Complete**

Building on the SPRINT programme launched by EI in December which targeted the digital content sector Enterprise Ireland has developed the programme to target other sectors. The objective of pre-investment SPRINT is to get Irish companies to product/market fit faster.

To complement the progression of companies on their export development journey Enterprise Ireland's Accelerate programme is focused on supporting companies with strong export growth and capabilities to accelerate their growth in export markets in a structured and sustainable manner.

To date in 2016, 29 companies have participated on the Sprint programme and a call for participants on the second programme is scheduled to open in Q3. There are a further 75 participants on Enterprise Ireland's Accelerate programme.

**Action 176:** Strengthen the levels of customer service through the Local Enterprise Offices.

**Q2 Measure:** Best Practice Customer Service Delivery Training. (EI/LEOs)

**Update: Complete**

Enterprise Ireland facilitated internal training for staff within the Local Enterprise Office network in 2015. This training was aimed at strengthening the levels of customer service through the network.

Building on this a pilot initiative commenced in Q2 with the objective of continuously monitoring customer satisfaction amongst the LEOs client base.

**Action 178:** Begin rollout of funding for the delivery of successful projects under the Local Enterprise Office Competitive Fund.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI/LEOs)

**Update: Complete**

On 1 June Enterprise Ireland announced the allocation of €5m in funding for local and regional initiatives to support new businesses and jobs across the country under the LEO Competitive Fund and the Community Enterprise Initiative.

This funding is the beginning of a new approach to supporting job creation initiatives at local and regional level in support of the Regional Action Plans for Jobs.

In line with the commitment in the Programme for Partnership Government to create jobs in every region of the country, this €5m allocation will support 'bottom up' projects where:

The Local Enterprise Offices will group together to create collaborative projects in their region and Community organisations will partner with other regional organisations to deliver new job creation projects. The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Competitive Fund aims to support LEOs to collaborate within their national network to fund initiatives focused on clearly defined opportunities, weaknesses or business challenges impacting micro-enterprise locally, regionally and nationally, in order to grow and sustain employment and scale micro-enterprise.

Under this fund, priority was given to new approaches that build on, and strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem throughout the country. A prerequisite for proposals was the need to demonstrate innovative solutions to fostering and creating employment.

A total of 50 applications were received in 2016 and following an assessment and evaluation process 16 projects reached the required standard. Enterprise Ireland has allocated a total of €1.5 million to these projects. The balance of available funding will be allocated over the lifetime of the fund.

**Action 187:** Identify best practice in the creation of spin-out companies from Higher Education Institutions.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI, HEIs)

**Update: Complete**

Enterprise Ireland has recently established a new team specifically charged with the creation of more Spinout HPSUs. This team operates at the very end of the research pipeline and will work closely with potential investors and the HPSU division to ensure that spinouts with market ready propositions receive investment and achieve HPSU status.

**Action 188:** Building on the successful third Level Student Enterprise Award Programme, target a greater number and more diverse group of student participants (Target 500) and enhance the quality of the applications contributing to a greater Entrepreneurial spirit in this student cohort.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update: Complete**

The Student Entrepreneur Awards are part of an ongoing drive aimed at tapping into the potential for students to turn entrepreneurial ideas into commercial businesses.

The objective is to encourage third level students to start their own business as a career option. With a total cash prize fund of €35,000 and expert mentoring, guidance and consultancy worth €30,000 from the blue-chip sponsors, the Awards provide a great platform for ambitious and enterprising third level students to build a viable and commercial business venture.

To attract a greater number and a more diverse cohort of applicant executives from Enterprise



Ireland presented details of the competition to all colleges and Institutions in advance of the first round closing date for the competition.

To enter the Awards, students were requested to submit a short video (by 17 March 2016) that captured their business idea and showed its commercial and export potential.

Shortlisted students were then required to develop a business plan demonstrating to the judges how viable and well researched their project is.

A dedicated website ([www.studententrepreneurawards.com](http://www.studententrepreneurawards.com)), Facebook page, twitter account and podcasts support the promotion of the Awards and the subsequent winners.

In total there were 500 eligible applications received from 28 of colleges / Institutes of Technology, including applications from multi-disciplinary teams within institutes and from cross college/Institute teams (i.e. whose members are from separate institutes).

Following an evaluation 10 finalists were selected by the judges for final judging and participation in the closing ceremony where the finalists presented their ideas to the judging panel at Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT), concluding with the Student Entrepreneur Awards ceremony.

Seven Awards were presented which included cash prizes ranging from €5,000 up to €10,000 and 3 types of consultancy support valued between €2,500 and €15,000.

Vincent Forde, a student from CIT on 9 June was announced winner of the Enterprise Ireland Student Entrepreneur of the Year Award and also named 'College Entrepreneur of the Year 2016'. His winning project 'Gasgon Medical', aims to deliver unique and innovative medical devices to improve patient safety and support medical professionals during common procedures. The company was founded when doctors from Cork University Hospital highlighted the valuable staff time that was being wasted while setting up and monitoring IV procedures.

The success of these awards can be seen in the number of companies arising from previous competitions which has led to the establishment of 22 companies and 4 High Potential Start Ups.

**Action 189:** Carry out a detailed evaluation of Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur Competition 2015.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update: Complete**

Supported by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation through Enterprise Ireland and the Local Enterprise Offices, the Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) competition is designed to seek out and support entrepreneurial talent across the country.

Following the second year of completion, a detailed evaluation of was undertaken by Enterprise Ireland and the final report was submitted to DJEI in June 2016.

**Action 191:** Assess the feasibility of moving to a nationally coordinated Local Enterprise Week.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI/LEOs)

**Update: Complete**

The feasibility of moving to a nationally coordinated Local Enterprise Week was evaluated by the Local Enterprise Offices, the recommendations arising from this evaluation were submitted to the LEO steering group at the end of June.

## Supporting Trade

**Action 221:** Continue to develop the coordinated approach to international messaging across Government, including through the regular updating of key messages and their communication by Ireland's Embassy network.

**Q2 Measure:** Update, on a quarterly basis, key messages for international audiences on Ireland's economic progress and our trade, tourism and investment strengths. (DFAT with relevant Departments and agencies)

**Update: On Schedule**

Key messages on Ireland's economic progress and trade, tourism and investment strengths are updated on a regular basis. The Q2 update is currently being finalised.

**Action 223:** Advance the Africa Strategy which provides a comprehensive framework for the development and management of Ireland's official engagement with Africa, through a clearly targeted engagement on trade and economic relations with Africa, including: a renewed Africa Ireland Economic Forum; the strengthening of our Embassies' trade promotion tools and capacities, in co-operation with the State agencies; and ongoing support to Irish business representative bodies and companies focused on doing business in Africa.

**Q2 Measure:** Consult with relevant stakeholders and deliver a revised Africa Ireland Economic Forum; including events to engage Irish business representative bodies and relevant companies. (DFAT with relevant Departments and agencies and the private sector)

**Update: On Schedule**

The revised Africa Ireland Economic Forum took place in Dublin on June 16 and 17 and brought together business and policy makers from Ireland and Africa to hear about the opportunities for enhanced trade and investment between Ireland and Africa.

## Procurement Opportunities

**Action 229:** Raise awareness of the new Procurement Directives to bring about a more consistent approach to procurement throughout the State making it easier for SMEs to deal with procurers.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (DPER/OGP)

**Update: Complete**

Information sessions on the new Directives have been delivered to professionals across the Public Sector together with additional intensive training for key staff across the OGP and the Health, Local Government, Education and Defence sectors.

**Action 230:** Issue updated General Guidelines on Public Procurement, which will be an active guidance document that will constantly be updated to reflect current procedures and policy.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (DPER/OGP)

**Update: Complete**

A comprehensive review of the existing General Guidelines on Public Procurement has taken place and is being updated to reflect the provisions of the new EU Procurement Directives transposed into Irish law on 5 May. An Information Note on the main changes brought about by the new Public Procurement Directive will issue on the OGP website in September.

**Action 231:** Participate at “Meet the Buyer” events in conjunction with InterTradeIreland.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (DPER/OGP)

**Update: Complete**

A "Meet the Buyer" event took place on 8 June in Belfast and was attended by over 120 Public Sector buyers and over 500 suppliers across the island of Ireland. A second “Meet the Buyer” event is scheduled for October in Dublin.

**Action 234:** Revise standard template documents so that all contracting authorities can issue tenders in a similar fashion which will facilitate SME participation through the reduction of administrative burden.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (DPER/OGP)

**Update: Complete**

The suite of template documents used in tendering and contracting for goods and services has been amended by the CSSO to reflect the new rules including the introduction of the European Single Procurement Document (ESPD).

## Stimulating the Domestic Economy

### Agri-food

**Action 239:** Secure access to new third country markets for Irish meat and dairy products while maintaining access to existing markets.

**Q2 Measure:** Per headline action. (DAFM)

**Update: Complete**

The DAFM market access team continued to engage closely with industry, Bord Bia, DFAT and the Commission to identify and develop new third country markets including hosting a quarterly market access working group meeting. A week-long South Korean beef inspection visit was facilitated in May 2016, although various steps remain to be completed before access will be granted. Beef access to Canada was also completed with more than 20 Irish beef plants now listed to export beef there. Market access engagement with other third Countries including China, Vietnam and Thailand is ongoing. Maintaining access to existing markets continues to be a key part of the work of the market access team and the Department’s veterinary services.

**Action 240:** Roll out a schedule of outward and inward trade visits at Ministerial level to promote agri-food exports in key markets.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (DAFM, EI, Bord Bia)

**Update: Complete**

Bord Bia accompanied by two DAFM senior officials led a trade mission to Iran in April. Both officials met with senior official in the Iranian Agriculture Ministry. These officials also travelled to Turkey and met with senior officials in the Turkish Agriculture Ministry. The schedule of trade missions to be undertaken by the Minister for the rest of 2016 is currently being finalised and presented to the Minister for sign-off.

**Action 241:** Support the expansion of the alcohol beverages and prepared consumer foods industry.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (DAFM, EI, Bord Bia)

**Update: Complete**

This multi-annual action is on schedule to be completed in line with Food Wise 2025. Programme of verification visits by Revenue to protect the GI status of Irish Whiskey and Irish Poitín and by DAFM to protect the Irish Cream GI is on target.

DAFM continues to fund lean manufacturing, leadership programmes and innovation vouchers managed by Enterprise Ireland for prepared consumer food companies and has engaged with ISIF on financing requirements of the alcohol beverages and prepared consumer foods sectors.

**Action 242:** Establish a Centre for Consumer Insights to support market prioritisation strategies and market decision making through provision of consumer insights in specific regional and country markets.

**Q2 Measure:** Opening and launch the Centre for Consumer Insights. (Bord Bia)

**Update: Complete**

The Centre for Consumer Insights will be opened in June with 'public' launches planned for September.

**Action 243:** Support a further cohort of new food entrepreneurs under Food Works and promote market outlets for food start-up companies.

**Q2 Measure:** Hold recruitment 'boot-camp' for Food Works 4 programme participants to screen for suitability (scalable, export potential, technologically innovative business based on consumer and market insights). (Bord Bia/Teagasc/EI)

**Update: Complete**

Food Works Bootcamp was held on the 26 and 27 May at Johnstown House, Enfield, Co. Meath. Eighteen companies participated. The two intensive days included industry pitches, interview for selection to Food Works and workshops run by Bord Bia, EI and Teagasc.

**Q2 Measure:** First workshop of Food Works 4- target 10-12 participants. (Bord Bia/Teagasc/EI)

**Update: Complete**

Nine companies have been selected for Food Works 2016. The first workshop took place on the 14 June and was held in Bord Bia. In addition to industry speakers, a Bord Bia consumer insight specialist brought them through the branding process. This was followed by their first of eight mentoring sessions on the 15 June.

**Action 244:** Attract graduate talent into the sector through the Bord Bia Marketing Fellowship and Food Marketing Graduates to improve export sales.

**Q2 Measure:** Recruit 20 Marketing Fellows for 8th Programme. (Bord Bia)

**Update: Complete**

20 Marketing Fellows recruited and commenced the 12 month programme on 8 June 2016.

**Action 245:** Continue the successful Food Academy initiative (which is run in conjunction with retail outlets) to nurture start-up food businesses through workshop style training and assistance with routes to market.

**Q2 Measure:** Organise/host 12 x trading manager one-to one-familiarisation meetings. (Bord Bia, EI/LEOs)

**Update: Complete**

21 companies graduated from the Food Academy Advance programme and each would have had one-to-one meetings with relevant SuperValu personnel.

**Action 247:** Implement the undergraduate Language Bursary Programme to improve the language proficiency of agri-food sector graduates from key degree programmes.

**Q2 Measure:** Finalise programme structure and promotional materials for UCD Agri-Business Programme. (Bord Bia)

**Update: Complete**

Ongoing programme in place with UCD on a trial basis until the middle of 2017.

**Action 249:** Develop additional commercial project proposals, with the relevant Government agencies, to deliver knowledge transfer on Ireland's sustainable food production systems to international customers.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (SFSI)

**Update: Complete**

Sustainable Food Systems Ireland (SFSI) has developed a pipeline of projects internationally, for training and consultancy services, based on Ireland's expertise in sustainable agriculture and food. Projects in development include those funded directly by governments overseas and by international funding agencies. Projects won in 2016 include consultancy in export competitiveness (Kosovo) and food safety training (Saudi Arabia).

**Action 250:** Further develop proposals for a Food Innovation Hub at Teagasc Moorepark campus to promote greater collaboration between industry and public research and deliver a step change in innovation activity in the food industry.

**Q2 Measure:** Outline plans for potential dimensions and calculate rental charges. (Teagasc)

**Update: Complete**

A Business Plan for the development, including dimensions and rental charges, has been submitted to DPER. The implementation of the action is dependent on receiving sanction from DPER to secure the necessary capital.

**Action 253:** Drive the implementation with client food and drink companies of: approved projects and new investments; the innovation and research development agenda; and the management capability and competitiveness agenda.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update: Complete**

The agri-food sector is Ireland's largest indigenous industry, directly and indirectly employing over 230,000 people. The sector is continuing to perform extremely well, increasing exports by 51% since 2009 to reach a record value of €10.8 billion in 2015. The strongest categories in terms of export growth were beverages (+10%), beef (+6%), and seafood (+4%). The sustained growth in exports of Irish Whiskey, up by an estimated 18%, was the most significant driver in the beverages category. The growth in dairy exports, up 4%, occurred in the face of an exceptionally adverse trading environment and reflects the strong growth in the volume of specialist nutrition powders (infant formula), which increased by 25% overall and by 40% to China alone.

Each year, Irish food and drink is exported to over 175 markets around the world; Ireland is the largest net exporter of beef in the EU and the Northern Hemisphere, exporting nearly 90% of what we produce each year; We produce over 10% of the world's infant formula and Irish Whiskey is now the fastest growing spirit category in the world. We also produce 50% of the world's cream liqueurs.

Continuing its support for the food and drink sector Enterprise Ireland in Quarter 2 approved capital investments which included a number of significant capital projects (i.e. valued in excess of €500,000) Research & Development, and Innovation projects. Quarter 2 also saw the approval and launch of the Meat Technology Centre (see action 252). The current investment pipeline is strong.

Enterprise Ireland's Capital projects help companies undertake ambitious company expansions that will create employment and grow sales in international markets;

Research and Development projects aim to develop novel products and services with a clear competitive advantage in their target market while Management Development Programmes for Managers and Client Companies supports the development of strong leadership in client companies.

These investments will enable companies to increase employment through sustainable and substantially increased sales. Innovation Projects introduce companies to the research expertise in Irish Higher Education Institutes with the aim of generating innovative technologies leading to job creation.

## Marine

**Action 255:** Implement the 24 actions identified in the National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development.

**Q2 Measure:** Per headline action. (DAFM)

**Update: Complete**

The Aquaculture & Foreshore Management Division continues to work to reduce the backlog in Aquaculture Licence applications consistent with available resources and legislative requirements.

**Action 256:** Strengthen support for the enterprise dimension of the Irish Marine and Energy Resource Cluster, to add to the training, research, industry and naval capabilities currently in place.

**Q2 Measure:** Per headline action.. (DAFM)

**Update: Complete**

Specific Targets for 2016 are detailed below along with Q1/16 Progress:

- Work with the design team to bring the IMERC Innovation Hub building to planning following funding from the Government's Capital Plan commitments: Ongoing.
- Ensure full occupancy in The Entrepreneur Ship, with 22 desks rented to start-ups and touch down companies.:Full occupancy
- Develop and implement enterprise support capabilities for the Cluster, including IdeaGen with Enterprise Ireland and the LEOs, and scoping a world first 'blue growth' maritime accelerator with relevant partners: Status Application submitted to Enterprise Ireland for 'Blue Growth' maritime accelerator on 31 March. IdeaGEN with Enterprise Ireland took place on 16 May as part of Mechathon Programme. The Entrepreneur Ship Mentor Panel, offering business advice and support met with companies in The Entrepreneur Ship in Q1.
- Collaborate with the Emerging Sectors team of the IDA to identify and target touch down companies and potential anchor tenants for IMERC: Engaged with the IDA Emerging Sectors team to plan the visit of three potential touch down companies scheduled to visit Ireland in Q2.

## Tourism

**Action 260:** Help Ireland's South, East and Midlands achieve international "stand-out" via the Ireland's Ancient East brand and build on the region's comparative advantage in built and cultural heritage.

**Q2 Measure:** Work with the domestic tourism trade and other stakeholders to ensure that they understand the key facets of the Ireland's Ancient East brand and can leverage it to grow their businesses. (Fáilte Ireland)

**Update: Complete**

Several information sessions were held to help the tourism trade and others develop their awareness and understanding of the Ireland's Ancient East brand.

**Action 261:** Through the Wild Atlantic Way, deliver balanced and sustainable revenue and jobs growth with greater geographical and season spread and benefits to local communities in the West of Ireland.

**Q2 Measure:** Identify new opportunities to create new and improved Wild Atlantic Way experiences for visitors. (Fáilte Ireland)

**Update: Complete**

Rolling experience development programme in place.

**Q2 Measure:** Engage local communities in interpretation projects in association with the Heritage Council, Local Authorities, Údaras na Gaeltacht, the Office of Public Works and the National Parks and Wildlife Service, which will highlight the distinctive Irish Cultur. (Fáilte Ireland with others)

**Update: Complete**

Rolling experience development programme in place.

**Action 263:** Events Ireland, which is part of Fáilte Ireland and is tasked with growing overseas arrivals through sports, business and other events tourism, will increase sports tourism overseas arrivals by rolling-out an Event Ambassador programme and, in partnership with key stakeholders, identifying, bidding and ultimately hosting suitable internationally mobile events.

**Q2 Measure:** Identify and build a pipeline of relevant and appropriate bid-worthy events for Ireland through collaboration with strategic partners. (Fáilte Ireland)

**Update: Complete**

Year to date lead generation targets have been achieved.

## Retail

**Action 273:** Establish a Working Group within the Retail Consultation Forum to identify how training programmes which are particularly relevant to the retail sector can be expanded or newly introduced to enhance the skills profile of the sector.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (Retail Consultation Forum)

**Update: Complete**

At the second meeting in 2016, the Retail Consultation Forum set up a Working Group on Retail and Skills with the objective of identifying the concerns of the retail sector with regard to skills needs, training and retention of employees. The Group will be asked to identify initiatives to address these concerns and make recommendations to the Retail Consultation Forum for the implementation of such initiatives. Membership of the Working Group will be drawn from within the Retail Consultation Forum, relevant Government Departments and skills providers.

## Construction and Housing

**Action 280:** Implement the Construction Contracts Act.

**Q2 Measure:** Construction Contracts Act, 2013 comes into force. (DJEI)

**Update: Complete**

The former Minister of State for Business and Employment signed the Construction Contracts Act 2013 (Appointed Day) Order 2016 (SI No 165 of 2016) on the 13 April 2016. The Construction Contracts Act 2013 will apply to applicable construction contracts entered into after the 25 July 2016.

**Action 281:** Publish the 2016 National Statement of Projected Supply and Demand.

**Q2 Measure:** As per headline action. (Housing Agency, DECLG)

**Update: On Schedule**

The 2016 National Statement of Projected Supply and Demand is being finalised and will be published shortly.



**Action 285:** Facilitate emerging and developing construction sector businesses to adopt best practice and build in quality and safety aspects of their products and services to comply with building regulations and gain market share.

**Q2 Measure:** To further disseminate standards to the engineering profession and construction sector generally, the National Standards Authority of Ireland will configure a range of packages of 25, 50, 75, 100 or more standards, all with flexible choice, to be made available at advantageous rates (NSAI)

**Update: Complete**

NSAI standards sales have launched sales of user tailored packages of standards. This marketing change allows buyers to select and purchase a number of their relevant standards for less than it would cost to buy each standard individually. NSAI is further exploring the development of customised industry specific packages with NSAI's on-line distributor.

## New Sources of Growth

### Digital Economy

**Action 290:** Carry out a detailed evaluation of the operational aspects and enterprise impacts of the Trading Online Voucher Scheme.

**Q2 Measure:** Complete the evaluation of the enterprise impacts and publish a report. (DCENR)

**Update: Complete**

This report is complete and was published by DCENR in May, 2016

### International Financial Services Strategy

**Action 293:** Implement the 2016 actions under IFS2020, including:

**Q2 Measure:** Report quarterly to Government on progress with implementing IFS2020, and subsequently publish quarterly progress report. (IFS 2020 Public Sector High Level Implementation Committee)

**Update: Complete**

With the appointment of the new Minister of State for Financial Services, the implementation of the IFS2020 Strategy remains a Government priority. The Public Sector High Level Implementation Committee has considered the Q1 and Q2 Progress Reports at its quarterly meetings. The Progress Reports will now be brought to Government for noting, following which they will be published.

The Q2 Progress Report confirms continued progress and momentum during the quarter. At end Q2 2016, all ten headline actions set out in the IFS2020 Action Plan 2016 remain broadly on course. Following the 7.4% growth in employment in the IFS portfolios of EI and IDA in 2015, the IFS2020 Strategy remains firmly on track to reach its ambitious growth target of 10,000 net new IFS jobs by end-2019.

Building on the success of the inaugural European Financial Forum (EFF) on 27 January 2016, which attracted over 600 delegates from 27 countries, it has been confirmed that the second annual European Financial Forum will take place on 24 January 2017. EFF2017 will be run under the new IFS Ireland Banner Brand as a flagship initiative to support the ambitious IFS2020 job creation target. The IFS Ireland Banner Brand, and associated website [www.ifsireland.com](http://www.ifsireland.com), continues to be deployed at both domestic and overseas IFS promotional events.

Q2 2016 has seen a particular focus on measures that deepen the reach of the IFS2020 Strategy into all IFS subsectors. In addition to the FinTech and Payments Working Groups, two new industry working groups for international banking and international insurance have been established. The various working groups continue to liaise with the public sector to advance the IFS2020 agenda. The Education and Skills Liaison Forum also met in Q2 2016, the second such meeting of this Forum. This particular meeting of the Forum considered the issue of diversity and inclusion as a source of competitive advantage for IFS companies.

**Action 296:** Support the implementation of IFS2020, by driving International Financial Services skills development through the delivery of actions contained within the Finuas Networks Programme Strategy.

**Q2 Measure:** Commence delivery of International Financial Services Training Programmes through Finuas Networks Programme. (Skillnets, DES, D/Taoiseach)

**Update: Complete**

Programmes continue to be rolled out as per the Finuas 2020 Strategy, which is fully aligned with and supports implementation of the IFS2020 Action Plan 2016.

## Aviation

**Action 297:** Establish a framework for implementation of the relevant actions in the National Aviation Policy.

**Q2 Measure:** Establish a National Aviation Development Forum to coordinate the promotion of the aviation industry in Ireland. (DTTAS)

**Update: Complete**

The National (Civil) Aviation Development Forum and its Terms of Reference have been established and consists of a) its Steering Committee made up of key players in industry along with relevant agency and Government representation and b) four Working Groups to examine areas of specific interest. These Groups are a) Leasing and Finance b) Growing Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) and related enterprise c) Regulatory Framework and d) Training, Skills and Education. The NCADF website is available at [www.dttas.ie/NCADF](http://www.dttas.ie/NCADF) for further information.

## Audio-Visual

**Action 301:** Commission an economic analysis of the current value of the audio visual industry in Ireland, to assess the scale, strengths and contribution of the sector in terms of economic activity and employment levels and its potential to expand further.

**Q2 Measure:** Commission economic analysis report. (DAHG/DCENR and others)

**Update: Complete**

A request for tenders to carry out the study is currently being issued.

## **Ongoing Measures**



## Disruptive Reforms

### Step-Up in Enterprise Skills Supply

**Action 1:** Develop new apprenticeships to meet the skills demands in a range of sectors and update existing apprenticeships.

**Ongoing Measure:** Develop the 25 category 1 proposals, recommended by the Apprenticeship Council, into new apprenticeships in response to proposals from key sectors of the economy. (Apprenticeship Council, SOLAS, HEA, DES, employers and education bodies)

**Update: On Schedule**

The Apprenticeship Council continues to work with the consortia to develop the category 1 proposals into sustainable apprenticeships. Up to ten are at an advanced development stage and may be in a position to move to enrolment in 2016. The remaining category one apprenticeships will move to enrolment in 2017.

**Ongoing Measure:** Engage with Category 2 and 3 proposers to consider the advancement of their proposals. (Apprenticeship Council, SOLAS, HEA, DES, employers and education bodies)

**Update: On Schedule**

The Apprenticeship Council has provided feedback to category 2 and 3 consortia in relation to the development of their proposals.

The Programme for Government commits to providing a total of 31,000 places by 2020 on existing and new apprenticeships. SOLAS and the Apprenticeship Council are preparing a 3 year plan to deliver on the Programme for Government commitments, which will include managing the pipeline of new apprenticeships already identified by the Apprenticeship Council, including those in categories 2 and 3 and looking at the timing and nature of new calls for proposals.

**Action 2:** Establish a network of Regional Skills Fora to foster greater engagement between the education and training system, employers and other local stakeholders in building the skills needs of their regions.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DES, HEIs, ETBs, Skillnets, employers, EI, IDA, SOLAS, HEA, LEOs)

**Update: Complete**

A network of 9 Regional Skills Fora has been established. In May 2016 Regional Skills Fora Managers were appointed in each Region to lead on the work of each Forum. Each Regional Skills Fora Manager will be a member of the Regional Implementation Group for the Regional Action Plan for Jobs in their Region. As a communication/information tool for employers, learners, education and training providers, the Regional Skills Fora Website was launched 17th May 2016.

**Action 3:** Launch the single ICT website portal through industry and agencies working together to attract international technical talent.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (EI, DJEI, IDA, DFAT)

**Update: Complete**

Tech/Life Ireland, a new national initiative to brand Ireland as a top destination to pursue a career in technology was launched on 27 June by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Tech/Life Ireland is funded by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and will be delivered in partnership with Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and the tech industry to help attract up to 3,000 top tech professionals to Ireland each year.

Tech/Life Ireland is a focused international marketing initiative with a dedicated website, [www.techlifeireland.com](http://www.techlifeireland.com), to attract talented and experienced tech experts to Ireland and to promote top tech career opportunities here.

The initiative uses digital and social media to showcase the unrivalled lifestyle, tech environment and job opportunities available in Ireland. Initial target markets include countries in Central and Southern Europe. These have been identified based on detailed analysis of talent movement, local search activity and consultation with recruitment professionals from industry.

## Stimulating Regional Growth

**Action 4:** Progress the implementation and monitoring of the Regional Action Plans for Jobs, including the identification of examples of best practice of cross-agency collaboration and promotion of peer learning.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DJEI, relevant public bodies)

**Update: On Schedule**

All 8 Regional Action Plans have now been published and the focus has shifted to implementation and monitoring of the Plans.

Each Plan is being overseen by a Regional Implementation Committee, with membership drawn from industry, local authorities, enterprise Agencies, education sector and other key stakeholders and agencies.

Meetings of Implementation Committees took place in March/April with further meetings taking place in June. A key focus of these meetings was the identification of best practice initiatives across each region. A key area of focus for the June meetings was the review of draft Progress Reports for the Regional Action Plans.

The first Progress Reports on the implementation of the Plans, covering the period to end-June 2016, are currently being developed and will be completed and published in Q3 2016.

**Action 8:** Deliver on the target of achieving a minimum 30 per cent to 40 per cent increase in the number of investments for each region outside Dublin over the lifetime of the IDA strategy Winning: Foreign Direct Investment 2015-2019.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (IDA)

**Update: On Schedule**

IDA has set itself ambitious targets via its five year strategy, Winning: Foreign Direct Investment 2015-2019, in relation to the regional dispersal of FDI investments and is fully focused on the achievement of the targets with the support of other stakeholders.

The investments to be delivered under the strategy will be a combination of new name investments, expansion from existing companies in Ireland and R&D investments. This strategy was launched in the first quarter of 2015 and the 2015 Employment Survey shows all regions making gains. In 2015, 53% of all jobs created by IDA clients were based outside of Dublin, compared to 49% in 2014.

Some regional wins in 2015 and 2016 include: Wayfair, Galway (160 jobs); Kelton Tech, Drogheda (100 jobs), Facebook, Meath (115 jobs), Apple, Athenry (200 jobs) and €850m investment; Northern Trust, Limerick (300 jobs), Pramerica, Donegal (330 jobs), Agora, Waterford (100 jobs), Zimmer, Galway (250 jobs/€51m investment), Abec, Fermoy (100 jobs), Shire, Meath (400 jobs/€400M investment), First Data, Nenagh (300 jobs), Opko Health, Waterford (200 jobs) and NexVet, Tullamore (30 jobs), and Patterson Pumps, Mullingar (28 jobs).

**Action 9:** Following on from the identification of regional locations requiring property solutions:

Construct three advance technology buildings in Sligo, Castlebar and Tralee for marketing to clients; and Commence the process of providing three new advance buildings in Limerick, Dundalk and Galway.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (IDA)

**Update: On Schedule**

Sligo, Castlebar and Tralee were identified for the delivery of Advanced Technology Buildings (ATB) to support FDI clients in 2016. The ATB's in Sligo and Castlebar are currently under construction and on schedule to be completed by November 2016. The design for the Tralee ATB is complete. Planning has been received and we are due to appoint a suitable contractor in June/July 2016, subject to the completion of a competitiveness tendering process.

Dundalk AOB (Advanced Office Building), Galway ATB and AOB were identified for delivery to support FDI clients in 2017.

- Dundalk AOB - A Design Team has been appointed and design is in process.
- Galway AOB – Planning has been obtained. The proposed delivery of the AOB will be under the Public Private Partnership model. The Phase 2 tender process has commenced.
- Galway ATB – The ATB is at concept stage and a design team is being appointed.
- Limerick AOB – Design team appointed and design is currently underway. Expected to lodge planning in Quarter 4 2016.

**Action 12:** Support the creation of 500 new jobs and continue to support existing jobs in Údarás na Gaeltachta client companies in the Gaeltacht, including through supports for post- research/pre-commercialisation units in the life sciences, food and business support services and creative enterprises sectors, and ongoing support for community development initiatives.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DAHG, ÚnaG)

**Update: On Schedule**

Job approval target on schedule. The Agency continues to fund a range of community and local development programmes which have as their objective the creation of greater skills and capacity at community level in a range of enterprise and language planning initiatives

**Action 13:** Develop advanced property solutions for innovative companies in the Gaeltacht seeking to move from the incubator phase to market.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DAHG, ÚnaG)

**Update: on Schedule**

On Schedule to be completed. An tÚdarás continues to focus a range of support initiatives with an emphasis on capacity building and capital investment to facilitate property solutions.

**Action 16:** Continue to implement the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme, which as the primary social inclusion programme of Government, has a strong focus on community activation, social inclusion and community development, while also prioritising those hardest to reach.

**Ongoing Measure:** Address any issues that emerge from the six month and annual review process to ensure the Programme is targeting those most in need. (DECLG, Pobal, LCDCs)

**Update: On Schedule**

Programme Implementers (PIs) are in the process of submitting their mid-year review to the relevant Local Community Development Committee (LCDCs) for review and approval. The Department has a mechanism in place to monitor progress and to be kept informed of issues that arise. Any issues will be considered and addressed by the Department over the coming months to ensure that the Programme continues to assist those who are hardest to reach.

**Action 16:** Continue to implement the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme, which as the primary social inclusion programme of Government, has a strong focus on community activation, social inclusion and community development, while also prioritising those hardest to reach.

**Ongoing Measure:** Consult with key Departments i.e. DES etc. to agree referral protocols. (DECLG, Pobal, relevant Departments)

**Update: On Schedule**

The Department has an agreed referral Protocol in place with DSP. Initial contact has been made with SOLAS (DES) and this contact will be progressed in Q3, through on-going consultation.



## All Government Transactions with Business Online by 2017- Reducing Red Tape

**Action 20:** Provide updates each quarter on progress achieved towards the Government's commitment to make all licensing, authorisation, certification, permit application, and payment-taking procedures for business fully available online on a progressive basis by November 2017.

**Ongoing Measure:** Provide regular updates through the appropriate Cabinet Committee structures on progress by all Departments to achieving compliance with the requirement of making all licensing and authorisation procedures available online by November 2017. (DJEI)

**Update: On Schedule**

Contact is ongoing with Departments to achieve the Government's commitment of making all licensing and authorisation procedures available online by November 2017.

## National Clustering Initiative

**Action 25:** Develop the first statutory National Climate Change Adaptation Framework to provide a strategic policy focus to ensure adaptation measures are taken across different levels of Government to reduce Ireland's vulnerability to the negative effects of climate change and avail of any positive opportunities that may arise.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DECLG)

**Update: On Schedule**

A public consultation on developing Ireland's first National Climate Change Adaptation Framework was concluded recently: the submissions received will feed into the on-going development of the Framework. Function will be transferring to Department of Communications, Climate Change and Natural Resources.

**Action 26:** Develop Sectoral Adaptation Plans, which will specify the sector specific adaptation policy measures required to enable adaptation to the effects of climate change and the achievement of the National Transition Objective set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DECLG, other relevant Departments)

**Update: On Schedule**

DECLG chairs a National Steering Group on adaptation which is enabling the relevant sectors to continue their work on developing draft plans in line with the objectives set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015. Given the important role of local government in contributing to this response, DECLG is engaging closely with the sector to ensure appropriate guidance is provided and capacity is strengthened. To this end, Local Authority Adaptation Strategy Development Guidelines were published in June and a number of training sessions and workshops will be held over the coming months.

Function will be transferring to Department of Communications, Climate Change and Natural Resources

**Action 28:** The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland will work with enterprise, the development agencies and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation to realise the potential for enterprise and jobs growth identified in its report Ireland's Sustainable Energy Supply Chain Opportunity, by addressing barriers to supply chain growth in the sector, fostering growth by developing local capacity to capture export opportunities and assisting a favourable environment for FDI.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (SEAI, EI, IDA, SFI, DJEI)

**Update: On Schedule**

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland has been working with Enterprise Ireland and the IDA in several areas to develop local capacity and build on the work completed as part of the Supply Chain Study. In particular, work was carried out to expand the supply chain of local companies that can supply goods and services for the ocean energy sector and an updated database will be launched in 2016. SEAI also supported 2650 jobs in 2015 in the sustainable energy sector through local home and community energy retrofits across the country and maintains a register of 16,000 energy efficiency and renewable products from 250 suppliers. SEAI also worked with 300 SMEs to improve their profitability and helping them to reduce their energy costs and with over 150 of the largest energy using companies in helping them to manage their energy use and remain competitive. SEAI also developed the next phase of energy management and energy efficiency design standard. A full outline of the 2015 achievements can be found at this link.

[http://www.seai.ie/News\\_Events/Press\\_Releases/2016/SEAI-Achievements-Statement.html](http://www.seai.ie/News_Events/Press_Releases/2016/SEAI-Achievements-Statement.html)

SEAI is continuing to work with EI and IDA to further develop supply chain opportunities over 2016.

**Action 29:** Following on from work completed in 2015 the Inter-Departmental Committee will agree a programme of activity to promote Ireland's value proposition as an Energy Innovation Hub to entrepreneurs, investors, businesses and research organisations both at home and abroad.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (IDC, DCENR, DJEI, relevant Departments and agencies)

**Update: On Schedule**

The focus of the work of this group in 2015 was the development of promotional material for use by its members in the context of promoting Ireland as an Energy Innovation Hub. A six page brochure was prepared and the IDC members agreed to promote this material through its marketing channels. This promotional work is an on-going activity for the relevant stakeholders.

A website hosted by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland has also been established: [www.energyinnovationhub.ie](http://www.energyinnovationhub.ie).

In addition, as part of the St. Patrick's Day activities in 2016, the brochure was circulated to all the embassies to promote Ireland's capability in this area.

**Action 30:** Building on the Report of the Inter-Departmental Group on Smart Ageing, map out and implement a programme of actions and proposed timelines.

**Ongoing Measure:** Report periodically on progress on implementation to the relevant Cabinet Committee.. (D/Taoiseach, DJEI, DoH, other relevant Departments and agencies)

**Update: On Schedule**

A Senior Official Group on Smart Ageing has been established to drive implementation of the recently produced programme of actions. Progress on implementation will be reported to the Cabinet Committee on Economy, Trade and Jobs in due course.

## Driving Intellectual Property in Enterprise

**Action 35:** Work towards completion of the implementation of the new European Patent system and the Unified Patent Court to provide an alternative patenting option for industry.

**Ongoing Measure:** Continued active participation in negotiations to complete the “patents package” comprising the Unitary patent and the Unified Patent Court with a view to having the system operational during 2016. (DJEI/Patents office)

**Update: On Schedule**

Work by the two Committees established to oversee the implementation of the patents package is on-going and well advanced with a target to have the Court operational on a provisional basis later this year and fully operational by early 2017.

## Increasing Labour Market Participation

**Action 37:** Continue the development and reform of the State’s public employment services to help ensure that the number of people on the Live Register is reduced as the economy recovers and the labour market responds flexibly and efficiently to employment growth.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DSP)

**Update: On Schedule**

DSP is continuing to implement the measures contained in Pathways to Work 2016-2020 launched in January 2016.

**Action 38:** Promote and support development of the “Skills to Work” brand to increase awareness of re-skilling options for jobseekers.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DES, DSP, D/Taoiseach, SOLAS, HEA, Skillnets)

**Update: On Schedule**

Work on “Skills to Work” is ongoing. The various stakeholders were represented at Career Zoo earlier this year.

**Action 39:** Lead and coordinate the actions of the Steering Group to ensure implementation of the Protocol between the Department of Social Protection and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, the aim of which is to maximise recruitment from the Live Register by enterprise development agency client companies.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline measure. (DJEI, supported by DSP and the enterprise development agencies)

**Update: On Schedule**

DJEI continues to drive this process through the Steering Group. The Steering Group met on 29 February. The Steering Group decided to organise an Employment Forum at Dublin Castle which took place on 18 May. This event brought together the key players to the Protocol at national, regional and local level. The meeting was a useful opportunity to update these key players on recent new government strategies and the new Programme for Government while facilitating the exchange of best practices and discussions on how to maximise recruitment from the Live Register in an improved labour market.

**Action 41:** Fund locally delivered courses for women which will comprise a series of training opportunities on self-development and work related skills to assist a return to the labour market and promoting entrepreneurship.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DJE)

**Update: On Schedule**

Under the previous Equality for Women Measure 2009-2013, the Department employed an external service provider to administer funding to similar projects. However, it was found not feasible to employ a similar approach under the new programme on the grounds of value for money. The Department is currently in the process of setting up a centralised departmental unit to replace the external service provider and it is envisaged that calls for proposals for both strands of the Equality measure will issue during Q3 2016.

**Action 42:** Implement the Government's Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DJE)

**Update: On Schedule**

The Implementation Group continues to meet to oversee implementation. Further meetings are planned for September and November 2016 and an annual report on implementation will be published.

## Delivering Skills for a Growing Economy

**Action 47:** Finalise and publish the new National Skills Strategy. The new strategy will set out the framework for the period to 2025 for how Ireland can continue to develop relevant skills and ensure that our supply of skills is activated and effectively used.

**Ongoing Measure:** Commence the implementation of actions and recommendations. (DES, DJEI, DSP, SOLAS, HEA, education and training providers, employers)

**Update: On Schedule**

Implementation of actions and recommendations of the National Skills Strategy has commenced and is now ongoing.

**Action 48:** Implement the Strategy for Higher Education Enterprise Engagement, including enhanced communications, comprehensive employer access to skills and research development opportunities in Higher Education and Training, and embed entrepreneurship as a core feature of Higher Education and Training.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DES, HEA, HEIs)

**Update: On Schedule**

Actions from the Enterprise and Engagement strategy have been rolled into the implementation of the National Skills Strategy. The National Skills Strategy provides for a revised skills architecture including employer involvement in a new National Skills Council, increased employer engagement in developing relevant skills, the preparation of an Entrepreneurship Education Policy Statement and the completion of the HEInnovate Country review.

**Action 49:** Continue to progress the reconfiguration of the higher education system envisaged by the National Strategy for Higher Education, through the further development of regional clusters of higher education institutions and implementation of the revised higher education landscape.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (HEA, DES)

**Update: On Schedule**

The HEA has recently led on a consultation process regarding progressing in developing the regional clusters and future priorities, particularly in the context of the development of the new Regional Skills Fora being led by DES and also in the broader context of economic and enterprise policy which has a strong regional development focus (e.g. Regional Action Plans for Jobs and Innovation 2020). Further work will be undertaken in 2016 in reviewing and developing policy in this area.

The Technological University process is in place. The Strategy recommended significant reforms of the IOT sector to position the sector to meet national strategic objectives. In particular, the Strategy recommended consolidation within the sector and a pathway of evolution for those consolidated institutes of technology, to allow them to demonstrate significant progress against robust performance criteria and to apply to become Technological Universities. The Technological Universities Bill was published in December 2015 and this Bill was at Report Stage at the time of dissolution of the previous Dáil in February 2016. The first Government Legislative Programme of this new Partnership Government was published on 8 June 2016, and the Technological Universities Bill has been restored to the Dáil Order Paper at Committee Stage.

Two Technological University consortiums (Dublin and Munster) completed stage 3 end-2014, a stage 1 expression of interest submitted by Connacht-Ulster Alliance and approved by Minister in October 2015, and with regard to the Technological University for the South-East, consisting of Institute of Technology, Carlow (ITC) and Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT), following the publication of the Kelly report in 2015, a preliminary facilitation process which was underway since September 2015, has recently been completed and a Report of the process was received by the Department on 13 May 2016. There was strong engagement in the process by both parties. This facilitation process has been an important building block in terms of building trust between the parties and in developing a strong working relationship between the Presidents and Chairs of both institutions. As part of this process, the Presidents of the two institutions have jointly developed an initial work-plan to support the development of a joint TU proposal.

In addition to this both Institutions made a recent joint presentation and submission to the Higher Education Authority, seeking funding to underpin the next phase of engagement. Arising from the submissions received and subsequent detailed presentations made to the HEA, the TUSE project has been allocated a ring-fenced sum of €1.445 Million in 2016 to support the further development of the project.

**Action 62:** Review the status of recommendations made in reports of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, including 2015 reports on the Freight Transport, Distribution and Logistics sector and the hospitality sector, with a view to progressing implementation of the recommendations and, in particular, those that require prioritisation.

**Ongoing Measure:** Contact parties responsible for implementing recommendations and seek update on progress. (DJEI)

**Update: Complete**

The Secretariat to the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) conducted desk-based research on the status of recommendations made by the Group in sectoral reports since 2008, including more

recent reports on the Freight Transport, Distribution and Logistics sector and the Hospitality sector (it was not necessary to contact individual parties for updates).

The objectives of the review were to:

1. Identify progress which has been made generally in implementing recommendations; and
2. Identify and prioritise key outstanding recommendations which it is considered are still important to progress.

Thirteen sectoral reports published by the EGFSN between 2008 and 2015 were reviewed in this exercise. There were a total of 109 high-level recommendations in these reports.

A presentation on the work carried out was made to the EGFSN at its meeting on 15 June.

At its next meeting in September 2016, the Expert Group will consider the steps to be taken to progress this work further.

**Action 63:** Deliver a strengthened Communications Strategy for the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, which will result in more effective dissemination of information on the skills needs of the economy through improved engagement with education and training providers and other key stakeholders.

**Ongoing Measure:** Implement actions arising from the review of the Communications Strategy. (EGFSN, DJEI)

**Update: On Schedule**

The actions to be implemented arising from the review of the Communications Strategy will be delivered in the second half of the year.

**Action 65:** Implement the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-19, including funding and actions targeting increased access and participation in higher education by mature and part-time students.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DES, HEA, HEIs, other stakeholders)

**Update: On Schedule**

A steering group, chaired by the Department of Education and Skills, has been established to monitor the implementation of the National Access Plan. The Steering Group met for the first time in May 2016.

Two working Groups have also been established to focus on specific issues contained in the National Access Plan. The Working Group on initial teacher education met for the first time in July 2016. The Working Group on Non-Completion in Higher Education will meet for the first time in autumn 2016.

A call for proposals is currently being developed which will invite proposals from clusters of Higher Education Institutions to address some of the key actions in the Plan. It is anticipated that funding will be allocated to the selected projects in Q4 2016.

## Increasing ICT Skills

**Action 69:** Provide support to institutions in delivering in excess of 20 Summer Computing Camps to encourage second-level students, including those targeted by the access programmes of institutions, to consider ICT careers, through the Information Technology Investment Fund, and the Higher Education Institutions will continue to support Coder Dojo in provision of space, administrative supports and mentoring strategies.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (HEA)

**Update: Complete**

An allocation of €80,000 has been provided to 16 Higher Education Institutions (€5,000 per institution) in 2016 for the purpose of running a total of 35 individual computer camps and Coder Dojos. Reports are received from each of these institutions detailing the subjects covered, duration of the camp, age range of target students and number of students.

**Action 70:** Provide support to Higher Education Institutions to continue to implement retention supports for ICT students through the Information Technology Investment Fund.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (HEA)

**Update: Complete**

Funding was provided to 22 Higher Education Institutions for retention initiatives. Each institute returned a report detailing trends they have recorded leading to retention issues, development of plans to counter these trends and their outputs

## Innovation

**Action 85:** Increase awareness of supports and ensure maximum use of publicly-funded research, by the promotion and showcasing of available research, development and innovation supports to enterprise through the Knowledge Transfer Ireland website and other opportunities at a regional and national level.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (KTI/EI with all funders, IDA, SFI and other relevant stakeholders)

**Update: On Schedule**

The Knowledge Transfer Ireland (KTI) website hosts information aimed at increasing awareness of supports and encouraging the use of publicly-funded research. Knowledge Transfer Ireland's website is updated on a regular basis and provides links where appropriate to information on innovation on external sites.

**Action 87:** Further drive industry-academic collaboration and exploitation of Intellectual Property (IP) from the public research system through active promotion of the resources and know-how available to facilitate this, through Knowledge Transfer Ireland.

**Ongoing Measure:** Further support enterprise to engage with the publicly funded research base and to access IP including model agreements, practical guidelines and improved information on expertise within the public research system. (KTI/EI)

**Update: On Schedule**



Knowledge Transfer Ireland (KTI) has range of resources available on its website to support enterprise to engage with the publicly funded research base and to encourage companies to access IP including model agreements, practical guidelines and improved information on expertise within the public research system.

In January 2016 the “IP Protocol 2016” was widely disseminated and made available on Knowledge Transfer Ireland’s website; in addition a “Practical Guide to IP & Confidentiality” was also made available on the website.

The website is updated regularly, one such example was the updating of licensing opportunities during Q2.

In addition to the online promotion of IP resources available through the KTI portal, KTI undertook roadshows during Q2 to explain IP protocol to companies and advisors. A Practical Guide to Model Collaborative Agreements is available, and has been disseminated at these events.

**Action 89:** Ensure that all relevant research funding programmes incentivise collaboration between research performing institutions and centres in order to maximise impact.

**Ongoing Measure:** Clusters of research and technology centres with complementary research agendas will be identified and incentivised to collaborate for greater overall impact. (SFI, EI)

**Update: Complete**

SFI is making progress on this action. The Spokes programme is in place to facilitate and incentivise these collaborations.

Enterprise Ireland's Innovation Partnership Programme, which includes participation by SFI client companies, encourages Irish-based companies to work with Irish Research Institutes for their mutual benefit. Companies benefit through access to expertise, resources, processes, services and in the generation of knowledge, and the Institutes through the development of skills, IP and publications. 15 innovation partnerships have been approved to date.

**Action 93:** Ensure a strategic approach to the development of existing and new research infrastructure programmes.

**Ongoing Measure:** Review and optimise the rollout of access policies to maximise enterprise use of, and partnerships in, research infrastructure. (HEA, HEIs, Research Funders)

**Update: On Schedule**

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has commenced work internally on scoping out the parameters of Cycle 6 of the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions and will shortly be producing a discussion paper and commence consultation with key stakeholders. To optimise infrastructure access (and related policies), the HEA is engaging a service provider to upgrade the Large Items of Research Equipment database to a managed online system to which institutions will have access. Institutions will be required to regularly update the database and confirm (on an annual basis through governance statements) that the system is updated regularly.



**Action 99:** Develop and operate the Regional Innovation Process to foster peer-to-peer interactions and SME-HEI linkages (people, resources, training and research).

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update: On Schedule**

The Regional SME Innovation Forum is a focused initiative to foster regional collaboration between industry and the higher education sector, on the innovation agenda. The process brings local SMEs together at a regional Higher Education Institute (HEI) location to discuss the innovation challenge and drives industry/academic linkages.

Enterprise Ireland on the 10 March held a SME Regional Innovation Forum in University College Cork.

This, the fourth Regional SME Innovation Forum event, aimed to facilitate learning between SMEs in the south region on their innovation journey, and to strengthen the links between companies and their local Higher Education Institutes (CIT, UCC & Teagasc).

The event informed attendees of local SMEs experiences of innovation, and how institutes in the locality could assist with the wider research agenda for SMEs.

Enterprise Ireland; Knowledge Transfer Ireland; CIT; UCC; and Teagasc also attended affording attendees the opportunity to discuss with them their broad innovation agendas and engage on the opportunity to collaborate.

The benefits of the Regional Innovation Process for both participating companies and Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) is evident, supporting the proposal to scale this process to a national level.

## Design for Innovation

**Action 116:** Continue to promote Ireland as a source of internationally competitive design and creative, innovation-led companies.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update: On Schedule**

Enterprise Ireland, DJEI and the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland are working together to promote Ireland as a source of internationally competitive design and creative, innovation-led companies.

Showcase, Ireland's boutique tradeshow which is focused on exploring the best of Ireland's design and creativity continues to grow in international reputation as a source of innovative and design led consumer gifts and products.

The 2016 event involved over 450 exhibitors including leading Irish designers and manufacturers and the very best emerging home grown creative talent.

Enterprise Ireland will continue to seek opportunities to promote Irish design as part of their programme of trade missions overseas.

**Action 117:** Promote product design and design thinking as part of management capability in client companies via existing supports.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update: On Schedule**

Enterprise Ireland is promoting product design and design thinking as part of management capability in client companies via existing supports. Innovation Vouchers are currently being used by companies to connect to and use the Enterprise Ireland funded Design Gateway at Carlow IT to develop products & services with improved user experience.

## Competitiveness

### Institutionalising the Drive for Competitiveness

**Action 120:** The National Competitiveness Council's priority issues for sustainable competitiveness over the short and medium term will be brought to Government. Individual Government Departments will respond and bring forward proposals as appropriate to enhance competitiveness. This work will be overseen by the relevant Cabinet Committees.

**Ongoing Measure:** Respond and bring forward appropriate proposals to address priority issues identified by the NCC to enhance competitiveness. (D/Taoiseach, all Departments)

**Update: On Schedule**

The NCC Ireland's Competitiveness Scorecard 2016 was published in July. This report was considered at a recent Senior Officials Group and Cabinet Committee on Economy, Trade and Jobs. Many previous recommendations by the NCC are being progressed by individual Departments and reported on as part of the APJ process.

### Reducing the Cost of Doing Business

**Action 124:** Ensure that the commitments and targets set out in the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan are adhered to.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DCENR and relevant Departments)

**Update: On Schedule**

DCENR continues to work with Departments to monitor progress – this process will also inform the development of the next Action Plan to be published by April 2017.

**Action 125:** Publish and implement the Public Sector Energy Action Plan.

**Ongoing Measure:** Implement the Action Plan. (DCENR and relevant Departments)

**Update: On Schedule**

The Strategy for Public Sector Energy Efficiency identifies where most potential exists for further energy efficiency gains across the public sector. It will provide the framework, guidance, support and further impetus to help all public sector bodies take the further steps needed to meet the 2020 targets. The strategy is currently (July) being reviewed by senior management in DCENR prior to being submitted to Government.

**Action 127:** Review the National Energy Services Framework to ensure adequate expertise and best practice models are available to organisations wishing to pursue energy efficiency projects.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DCENR, SEAI)

**Update: On Schedule**

SEAI has revised and reinvigorated its technical assistance support offering for energy saving projects, to be launched in early July 2016. SEAI and DCENR are reviewing the current support model with a view to developing a more interactive support model in 2017.

**Action 128:** Provide €55 million in Exchequer supports to further stimulate energy saving activity in the residential and community sectors.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DCENR, SEAI)

**Update: On Schedule**

In 2016 nearly €62m in Exchequer funds has been allocated to the Better Energy Programme. Since the re-launch of the Better Homes scheme in early 2015, applications for grants have increased by 50%. The Better Energy Communities scheme continues to attract significant interest, with more than €20m in grants allocated in 2016. The Warmer Homes scheme continues to play a pivotal role in combating energy poverty and a new “Warmth & Wellbeing” pilot programme has just been launched which will see deep energy efficiency upgrades provided to people suffering from acute respiratory conditions. It is estimated that some 2310 jobs will be supported by the Better Energy Programme in 2016.

**Action 130:** Ensure the implementation of Regulating for a Better Future across Departments, building upon recent progress and completing outstanding actions. Actions will focus on enhancing national competitiveness and securing Ireland's ongoing economic recovery.

**Ongoing Measure:** Engage with the EU-wide full regulatory framework review of communications policy. (DCENR)

**Update: On Schedule**

EU level public consultation completed and impact assessment in preparation. Review is due for publication by the European Commission in September 2016.

## Investing in Economic Infrastructure

**Action 131:** Progress project priorities in the Greater Dublin Area to address congestion in 2016.

**Ongoing Measure:** Continue the rollout of the Luas Cross City infrastructure track laying works. (NTA)

**Update: On Schedule**

This project is ongoing and on schedule to be completed by end 2017.

## Easier to do Business

**Action 136:** Further promote and expand the small business, construction and agribusiness sections of BeSMART.

**Ongoing Measure:** Present/ demonstrate BeSMART at 30+ relevant Nationwide events (Feb – Nov). (HSA)

**Update: On Schedule**

To date 19 Nationwide events have been completed where BeSMART was presented/ demonstrated

## Finance for Growth

### Ensure viable SMEs can access appropriate finance

**Action 147:** In line with the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland Business Plan, deliver the balance of the original €800 million of funding in the SBCI to the SME market by end of 2016, subject to demand.

**Ongoing Measure:** Continue to put in place loan facilities with new and existing on-lender providers of finance to Irish SMEs in order to provide better SME financing options and greater competition. (SBCI)

**Update: On Schedule**

An additional €40m loan facility was signed with First Citizen in April 2016. Six on-lenders are now operational in the market, and detailed discussions are on-going with a number of potential bank and non-bank on-lenders. A further announcement of a new on-lender is expected in Q3 2016. €791m of the original €800m of funding is now committed to on-lenders

Based on the latest data available at 31st December 2015, €172m has been lent through on-lenders to final beneficiary SMEs. An update on SME lending volumes to 30 June 2016 will be published with the SBCI Annual Report in Q3 2016.

**Action 150:** As part of the ongoing implementation and deployment of capital in line with the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund Investment Strategy, the fund will continue to examine ways to support non-bank alternative providers of finance to SMEs in the Irish market both directly as part of its SME strategy, and also indirectly via other strategies including food and agri, real estate and venture capital.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (ISIF)

**Update: On Schedule**

By end 2015 the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund committed €2.2bn to Irish investments with €1bn drawn and total €5.4bn capital committed to Ireland including third party capital. A copy of the recently published update on economic impact contains detail on commitments to the end of 2015 and is available at <http://www.isif.ie/news/press-releases/isif-publishes-economic-impact-report-for-2015/index.html>.

A further €250m has been committed in first half of 2016, including €30m to two non-bank SME Funds (Causeway Capital partners & BMS Finance), approx. €70m in VC deals (SVB & Atlantic Bridge), and also a €25m commitment to Ardstone and €45m to MilkFlex.

- Causeway Capital Partners I LP is a new €60m Dublin based private equity investment fund targeting fast-growing small and medium businesses in Ireland and Britain. ISIF is a cornerstone investor of the fund, investing alongside AIB and a number of private investors. To date, the fund

has completed significant investments in Irish SMEs – BB’s Coffee and Muffins and Bizimply.

- BMS Finance (Ireland) is a new €30m fund providing venture debt loans of €500k to €5m to SMEs in Ireland. The fund will be managed by BMS who have been providing growth loans to UK SMEs since 2004 and currently manage a similar fund on behalf of the British Business Bank.

- Silicon Valley Bank to continue to collaborate with the ISIF, committing an additional \$100M to the Irish innovation sector. As part of their collaborative relationship, Silicon Valley Bank lends to Irish technology companies and the ISIF helps it to identify potential lending clients in these niche sectors and also invests in funds managed by SVB Capital.

- Atlantic Bridge III is a new €140m fund for technology companies with global market scalability. The Dublin based Fund will invest in up to 20 European companies, with investments already closing in seven companies. Atlantic Bridge III will focus on scaling Irish and European companies in high growth enterprise technology sectors such as Cloud, Big Data, Augmented & Virtual Reality software, Robotics and Internet of Things.

- Ardstone equity residential development fund has, to date, acquired sites with the potential to deliver up to 1,250 new homes.

- The MilkFlex Dairy Loan is a new €100m fund which will provide loans of €25k to €300k to dairy farmers in Ireland who are suppliers to Glanbia Ingredients Ireland. Rabobank, ISIF, Finance Ireland and Glanbia Co-Operative Society are investors in the fund, while Finance Ireland will originate the loans and manage all aspects of the fund. The fund was launched in March 2016 and had the potential to support over 1,000 dairy farmers enhancing the productive capacity of the sector.

Draper Esprit IPO - the ISIF made a £33m investment in the Draper Esprit IPO. The company’s shares are trading on both London’s AIM (ticker is GROW) and on Dublin’s ESM market (ticker is GRW). Draper Esprit plc was established to generate capital growth by funding and developing a portfolio of high-growth tech businesses. It has a Pan-European mandate but with focus on Ireland and UK and holds an existing portfolio of 24 technology companies (including 3 Irish companies). As part of the transaction Draper has committed to deploy at least a further £30 million into Ireland over the next 5 years and strengthen its presence here.

**Action 151:** Implement Enterprise Ireland’s Venture Capital and Development Capital Strategy.

**Ongoing Measure:** Implement Enterprise Irelands Venture Capital and Development Capital Strategy. (EI)

**Update: On Schedule**

A key part of the government’s Action Plans for Jobs has been increasing the level of funding available to growing and exporting Irish companies, supporting more of them to create the jobs we need.

In 2016, to support this Enterprise Ireland has progressed the establishment of a number of funds which received commitments under the Seed & Venture Capital Scheme (2013-2018).

Under the first call for Expressions of Interest, in which €109.5m was committed to funds targeting Series A funding in the general technology and Lifesciences sectors, three funds have been launched. Atlantic Bridge III, Fountain Healthcare Partners II and the Kernel Capital Growth Fund (ROI) II. These funds are now actively investing.

Enterprise Ireland continues to work with the remaining fund managers to launch their funds and it is expected that a number of other funds will be formally launched in the near term.

Under the second call for Expression of Interest, €65m was committed to funds targeting the early stage of company development. Legal Negotiations are continuing with a number of funds and it is expected that three of these funds will be launched shortly.

On 17 June, the €60m University Bridge Venture Capital Fund, the most recent fund announced under the scheme, was launched by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Mary Mitchell O'Connor, T.D.

Under the Development Capital Scheme, Enterprise Ireland continues to actively work with the three fund managers to promote and help our clients access these funds. The funds are active in the market and are seeing an increase deal flow pipeline across a range of sectors. The pace of investment is expected to continue into 2016.

### Roll out, monitor and evaluate State supports for SMEs

**Action 155:** The Prompt Payments Forum will examine further initiatives to drive a change in the payment culture in Ireland – for example promoting the relationship between responsible payment practices and the corporate social responsibility agenda.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DJEI)

**Update: On Schedule**

Work continuing with the Payments Forum on the development of new prompt payment initiatives.

**Action 156:** Having regard to emerging international best practice, and in the context of the EU Commission Action Plan on Building a Capital Markets Union, examine the impact of crowdfunding in an international context with a particular focus on State supports and regulatory regimes.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (SME State Bodies Group)

**Update: On Schedule**

The Department of Finance is currently undertaking a detailed analysis of crowdfunding and is engaging with the Central Bank of Ireland on the issue.

### Enhance awareness of State business supports

**Action 158:** Continue to implement the integrated communications strategy to increase awareness.

**Ongoing Measure:** Improve SME knowledge of the range of State supports for their businesses by engaging through their representative bodies and by participating at key events nationwide. (SME State Bodies Group)

**Update: On Schedule**

Outreach work in 2016 continues including with key representative bodies and agencies. Working with the DJEI communications team the calendar for 2016 is being put together, building on the knowledge gained from participating at over 50 events in 2015 and selecting events with the best value from attendance. Representatives have attended a number of events to date this year to promote the Supporting SMEs online tool and other supports such as the Credit Review Office, MicroFinance Ireland and the SBCI. Representatives from the Credit Review Office and the SBCI have also spoken at some of these events to further promote the supports and encourage SMEs to engage with them.

**Ongoing Measure:** The Advisory Group on Small Business will work to promote the Supporting SMEs on-line tool, which contains information on over 80 State supports for SMEs. (SME State Bodies Group)

**Update: On Schedule**

The SFA continue to promote the supports listed on the Supporting SMEs online tool in their weekly newsletters and at events.

**Ongoing Measure:** Continue to upgrade the Supporting SMEs Online Tool. (SME State Bodies Group)

**Update: On Schedule**

Over 90,400 sessions have been recorded on the Supporting SMEs online tool since its launch in May 2014. 20 new supports have been added to the Online Tool since it was launched. Working with the developer, the Online Tool has been upgraded to include a number of additional supports including 50 new county specific supports offered through the LEO and Local Authority networks. The Online Tool will continue to be updated with new supports and up to date information regarding the existing supports.

**Ongoing Measure:** Deliver new marketing and communications materials to ensure ongoing engagement with the Supporting SMEs Campaign. (SME State Bodies Group)

**Update: On Schedule**

New promotional materials will be developed to reflect the additional government supports. The most recent marketing burst of online media buying was in March 2016 with the click rate from display advertising continuing to improve since the first media campaign in September 2014. Billboard display ads and rich media formats are proving to be the most effective at reaching target audiences. This burst was again successful with an increase of traffic to the site seen throughout and following the campaign.

**Ongoing Measure:** Have a presence at key events across the Country to engage with SMEs and increase their knowledge of the range of supports available. (SME State Bodies Group)

**Update: On Schedule**

Continue to participate in a coordinated fashion (SBCI, MFI, CRO, Supporting SMEs Online Tool) at as many events for businesses across the State. Speaking slots and attendance will be coordinated in advance to maximise the potential of any engagement for companies but also reduce costs and overheads to the campaign.

23 Jobs Ambassadors have represented the Supporting SMEs campaign at events across the country this year and continue to be deployed where needed.

Outreach work had proven beneficial for this campaign, audience reaction at events is overwhelmingly positive, in particular in relation to the usefulness of the Online Tool. Analytics from the Online Tool also show that visits to the website increase when outreach work is undertaken.



## Engage with International Funding Institutions

**Action 159:** Ensure closer cooperation with other National Promotional Banks in developing initiatives to promote the financing of growth in Ireland.

**Ongoing Measure:** Participate in various National Promotional Banks or Institutions' network forums and develop and maintain strong bilateral relationships with key NPB/I relationships. (SBCI, DoF)

**Update: On Schedule**

SBCI continues to be active members of both the Network of European Financial Institutions for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (NEFI) (where SBCI became a full member in May) and the European long term investors association (ELTIA) – participating both at the physical meetings on market developments and specialist topics, while also participating on the very active online dialogue where specific knowledge and experience is shared. The support of these relationships with key national promotional entities has been and continues to be very useful as the SBCI leverages on their experience in products and platforms commonly available in Ireland. Bilateral communications have continued with EIB on potential products to be delivered under EFSI and how they might be adapted to the Irish market. The SBCI has also established bilateral dialogue with the British Business Bank (now also a new member of NEFI) to discuss and share experiences of operating as national promotional institutions in a banking market that differs from that generally in place across Europe.

**Action 160:** Continue work on the potential for use of the European Fund for Strategic Investments through the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland.

**Ongoing Measure:** Work closely with the European Investment Bank and the European Commission to develop Irish capability, projects and access to EFSI. (DJEI, DoF, SBCI)

**Update: On Schedule**

The SBCI has received approval from EIF for a counter guarantee for a fund of €100m for risk sharing products. A separate application process for their provision of an Innovfin counter guarantee structure is in progress with EIF. This support will be part of guarantees required as SBCI develops risk sharing capacity and capability. SBCI has opened discussions with a number of potential partner banks with regard to creating a pilot program for a guaranteed loan product. The timeline to market is under review.

A €200m financing facility for SBCI from Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) was formally approved at the CEB Advisory Council Meeting on January 22nd 2016. Negotiations on legal agreements are in progress. First drawdown under this facility is likely to be in Q3 2016.

**Action 161:** Continue our engagement with the European Investment Bank, European Investment Fund and Council of Europe Development Bank in developing and implementing mechanisms designed to maximise the provision of enhanced financing to SMEs.

**Ongoing Measure:** Maintain strong relationships with the European Investment Bank, European Investment Fund and Council of Europe Development Bank to maximise knowledge and access to capability and experience in implementation of SME access to finance enhancements. (DoF, DJEI, SBCI, ISIF, EI)

**Update: On Schedule**

The SBCI has received approval from EIF for a counter guarantee for a fund of €100m for risk sharing products. A separate application process for their provision of an Innovfin counter guarantee structure is in progress with EIF. This support will be part of guarantees required as SBCI develops



risk sharing capacity and capability. SBCI has opened discussions with a number of potential partner banks with regard to creating a pilot program for a guaranteed loan product. The timeline to market is under review.

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**Action 162:** Maximise our engagement with the relevant elements of the Multiannual Financial Framework.

**Ongoing Measure:** Maximise our engagement with the relevant elements of the Multiannual Financial Framework- e.g. Horizon 2020, COSME- so as to ensure there are no untapped or underutilised sources of framework or other funding available to the SME sector. (DJEI, DoF, SBCI, EI)

**Update: On Schedule**

Both through its business network memberships, its strong relationship with the EIB Group and domestic stakeholder relationships, the SBCI continues to keep in close contact and up to date on all the developments in this sphere. The SBCI is in regular contact with EIB/EIF on potential adoption and adaptation of product offerings for use by the SBCI under its mandate or in the wider Irish economic context seeking to address the best approach to put the necessary conduit framework in place to optimise funding and risk capital available under the EFSI – Juncker plan. The SBCI has also signed an MOU with the European Investment Advisory Hub for the development of technical and project supports from the EIB group to provide assistance to various economic sectors that may be underserved by existing domestic services.

## **Continue to research/learn in the area of Finance for Growth**

**Action 163:** Engage with the OECD to leverage their expertise around monitoring and evaluating policy initiatives.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DoF, SME State Bodies Group)

**Update: On Schedule**

DoF working with the OECD on the 2017 edition of the OECD Scoreboard on SME and entrepreneurship financing. Officials will attend the OECD WPSMEE Informal Steering Group on SME and entrepreneurship financing and country experts in September.

## Entrepreneurship

**Action 165:** Implement all the actions and report on progress under the National Policy Statement on Entrepreneurship so as to deliver on its objectives.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DJEI)

**Update: On Schedule**

Implementation of actions under the policy continues. So far 54 actions have been completed. Of the remaining actions, 28 are of an ongoing nature and the other 14 are due to be completed during 2016. The first annual progress report has been completed for 2015.

**Action 170:** Provide business development and financial supports to 185 high potential and early stage start-ups.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update: On Schedule**

Enterprise Ireland has approved financial support to over 100 Innovative High Potential Start-Ups\* and start-up companies year-to-date.

Included in these figures are startup companies supported under Enterprise Ireland's 2016 series of Competitive Start Fund (CSF) calls, of which there have been 6 to date. Two of the calls were open to all sectors while the others specifically targeted: Female; Regional; International, and FinTech entrepreneurs.

The purpose Enterprise Ireland's CSFs are to accelerate the growth of start-up companies that have the capability to succeed in global markets. The funds are designed to enable those companies reach key commercial and technical milestones.

\*A High Potential Start-Up (HPSU) is defined as a start-up venture that is: Introducing a new or innovative product or service to international markets; Involved in manufacturing or internationally traded services; Capable of creating 10 jobs in Ireland and realising €1 million in sales within three years of starting up; Led by an experienced management team; Headquartered and controlled in Ireland; Less than five years old from the date of company's registration.

**Action 173:** Ensure vacancies that occur at Head of Local Enterprise Office are filled in a timely fashion in accordance with the agreed recruitment protocol.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DECLG/LAs/EI/PAS)

**Update: On Schedule**

Filling of vacancies approved as they are requested by relevant Local Authorities.

**Action 174:** Initiate a detailed assessment of Local Enterprise Office performance potential and available resources in association with the Local Authorities.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (EI/LEOs)

**Update: On Schedule**

In 2014 the new network of 31 Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) was announced. The LEOs in turn were established, following the dissolution of 35 County Enterprise Boards, to deliver an improved system of local enterprise supports to start-ups and small businesses across the country.

The 31 Local Enterprise Offices are no longer independent agencies but rather offices within local authorities with policy direction and funding provided by Enterprise Ireland and the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

In early 2016 Enterprise Ireland set out Terms of Reference for the detailed assessment of Local Enterprise Office performance potential and available resources. Enterprise Ireland has been in contact with three of the Local Authorities to progress this initiative.

During Q2 an independent consultant was engaged to complete a detailed assessment of performance potential and available resources within agreed Local Enterprise Offices. This assessment is expected to be completed in Q3.

**Action 181:** Promote Ireland internationally as a start-up location and attract 15 new overseas start-ups to establish their business here.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update: On Schedule**

Enterprise Ireland launched an overseas specific Competitive Start Fund in March 2016 to attract potential entrepreneurs to set up in Ireland. The International Competitive Start Fund (CSF) specifically targeted manufacturing & internationally traded services start-ups that are based overseas but willing to relocate to Ireland.

The purpose of the Competitive Start Fund is to accelerate the growth of start-up companies that have the capability to succeed in global markets. The fund is designed to enable those companies reach key commercial and technical milestones.

Under the International Competitive Start Fund (CSF) Enterprise Ireland short-listed 16 projects whose promoters were invited to travel to Ireland to experience the start-up ecosystem and to pitch to the evaluation panel. The pitch took place on 1st June. Enterprise Ireland approved funding for 10 successful applicants.

The CSF was marketed in conjunction with Connect Ireland and Enterprise Ireland's overseas office network.

Enterprise Ireland continues to promote Ireland as an attractive start-up location and together Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland are piloting an initiative where IDA Ireland will target Enterprise Ireland High Potential Start Ups (HPSU) prospects in the USA.

**Action 186:** Continue to implement the Accelerator Development Strategy to increase the number of accelerators operating in the Irish market.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update: On Schedule**

The Action Plan for Jobs 2015 called on Enterprise Ireland to increase the level of start-up support in Ireland with one of the associated actions being a scheme to support commercially managed accelerators.

Accelerators can and do play a role in enhancing the start-up eco-system nationally and in supporting the early stage development of start-up companies leading to increased growth overtime.

In January 2016 the then Minister for Jobs, Enterprise Innovation, Mr. Richard Bruton T.D. launched a €3m Scheme to pilot an initiative to support a number of regional accelerators (outside of County Dublin) and issued an open competitive call for expressions of interest, for which the deadline for submissions was 31st March, 2016. Following this Enterprise Ireland reviewed the submissions.

The Scheme is funded under the €40m Fund established by Government to support regional economic development. All funding under the Scheme will be allocated on the basis of open competition.

An open competitive call for expressions of interest was issued in Q1 and closed on 31 March the assessment process is nearing conclusion.

**Action 193:** Implement the enterprise engagement strategy for higher education to include entrepreneurial education as an important part of the national framework for enterprise engagement.

**Ongoing Measure:** Implement the recommendations from the HEInnovate report. (DES, HEA, HEIs)

**Update: On Schedule**

Preliminary findings of the HEInnovate Country Review were disseminated at an event in DCU on 31 May 2016. The report is in the final stages of drafting and will be completed early Q3. The recommendations in the draft report are being considered and implementation of accepted recommendations will be progressed once the report is finalised.

**Action 194:** Undertake 16 workshops and one to one mentoring support under the Enterprise START programmes aimed at encouraging entrepreneurs with the potential to develop innovative export orientated projects.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update: On Schedule**

Enterprise Ireland's Get Export Ready Events 2016 are aimed at those thinking about either exporting for the first time or entering a new market, now or in the future. These events help participants to understand the steps they need to take to develop their export potential.

Participants have the opportunity to hear first-hand from other Irish companies their experience and business lessons learned as they successfully made the transition from selling domestically to exporting to world markets.

Enterprise Ireland and the Local Enterprise Office also outline the programmes they provide to support new and early stage exporters e.g. a range of information, training and financial products

that are designed to test the commercial or technical feasibility of a new export business ideas. Enterprise Ireland has in 2016 delivered 3 Export Awareness events which were attended by some 106 participants. In addition Enterprise Ireland held 3 mentor supported workshops with 43 participants. The series of export development workshops/ events will be concluded at the end of 2016.

## Driving Export Led Growth

### Manufacturing

**Action 216:** Progress the identified enterprise need for Research Technology Organisation support in the area of Advanced Manufacturing to include the delivery of manufacturing RDI in addition to the provision of training and services for the benefit of both indigenous and multinational companies.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (IDA, EI, SFI, DJEI)

**Update: On Schedule**

Discussions between DJEI and IDA Ireland, EI and SFI are underway aimed at responding to this enterprise need. These discussions include a review of a joint agency proposal for an Advanced Manufacturing Centre.

## Supporting Trade

**Action 220:** Recognising the importance of cross-border economic links on the island of Ireland and the supporting work of InterTradeIreland in this area, maintain focus on economic growth and job delivery through the North South Ministerial Council and continue outreach activities, including at a Ministerial level, to the Northern Ireland business community.

**Ongoing Measure:** Armagh North South Ministerial Council Secretariat to continue to work with Departments to explore priorities at their NSMC sectoral meetings, especially as they affect economic development, job creation and the best use of public funds. (DFAT, DJEI, ITI with relevant Departments and agencies)

**Update: On Schedule**

Ministers continue to discuss and explore opportunities and priorities for co-operation through the NSMC. A Paper on an ongoing review of existing North South work programmes and new sectoral priorities has been prepared for discussion at NSMC Plenary, in line with the Fresh Start Agreement of November 2015. These discussions will continue throughout the upcoming round of NSMC sectoral meetings against a commitment in A Programme for a Partnership Government to advance North South cooperation through the NSMC.

**Ongoing Measure:** Economic outreach activity and Ministerial engagement with the Northern Ireland business community will also continue to be a priority activity. (DFAT, relevant Departments and agencies)

**Update: On Schedule**

Outreach activity to the Northern Ireland business community has continued through the year. As well as attending events organised by key economic stakeholders, DFAT has facilitated a number of business engagements in Northern Ireland, including economic-themed dinners, bringing together business leaders, including CBI-NI, Chambers of Commerce, and the Institute of Directors. Ministerial engagements have focussed on the importance of building North South economic links and, in the lead-up to Brexit referendum, on the role UK EU Membership plays. These engagements have included addressing key influencers and the Derry Chamber of Commerce in the North West.

**Action 221:** Continue to develop the coordinated approach to international messaging across Government, including through the regular updating of key messages and their communication by Ireland's Embassy network.

**Ongoing Measure:** Develop and communicate messages aimed at attracting talent to Ireland. (DFAT with relevant Departments and agencies)

**Update: On Schedule**

DFAT has been liaising with D/JEI and relevant State Agencies following the launch in June of a new initiative – *Tech/Life Ireland* – aimed at attracting ICT professionals to come to Ireland to live and work. Messaging on this initiative has been incorporated into the key messages for that are to be circulated shortly.

**Action 222:** Develop and implement a programme of trade missions and other trade, tourism, investment and education events focused on key target markets, including exploratory and high potential markets as defined under the Review of the Government Trade, Tourism and Investment Strategy. A substantial number of these trade missions and related events will be led at Ministerial level.

**Ongoing Measure:** Implementation of trade mission programme and trade, tourism, investment and education events supported by the Embassy network. (DFAT, EI, other relevant Departments and State agencies)

**Update: On Schedule**

A draft programme of trade missions and other trade, tourism, investment and education events is being developed and rolled out.

**Action 223:** Advance the Africa Strategy which provides a comprehensive framework for the development and management of Ireland's official engagement with Africa, through a clearly targeted engagement on trade and economic relations with Africa, including: a renewed Africa Ireland Economic Forum; the strengthening of our embassies' trade promotion tools and capacities, in co-operation with the State agencies; and ongoing support to Irish business representative bodies and companies focused on doing business in Africa.

**Ongoing Measure:** Consult with our embassies and state agencies and develop and deliver supports for trade promotion activities. (DFAT with relevant Departments and agencies)

**Update: On Schedule**

Supports to our embassies and to Irish business representative bodies and companies to assist and promote Irish companies doing business in Africa continues. During the Africa Ireland Economic Forum, the Business Ireland Africa network will be launched with the support of DFAT.

**Action 225:** In line with previous Global Irish Economic Fora, Government Departments and state agencies will have a key role to ensure implementation of relevant recommendations and outcomes from the 2015 Global Irish Economic Forum.

**Ongoing Measure:** Implement Global Irish Economic Forum recommendations in line with 2016 delivery plan as agreed by Government. (DFAT, DJEI with relevant Departments and agencies and the private sector)

**Update: On Schedule**

Following approval by Government, the report of the 2015 Global Irish Economic Forum will be published and work will continue to advance the outcomes within the context of the relevant departmental initiatives and the Action Plan for Jobs 2016.

## Enhancing Collaboration between Irish and Foreign Owned Enterprises

**Action 226:** Progress implementation of the agreed Global Sourcing Strategy across Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland to increase global sourcing sales by Enterprise Ireland client companies by €100 million over three years.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (EI, IDA)

### **Update: On Schedule**

Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland continue to work closely to implement the Global Sourcing Strategy which aims to increase global sourcing sales by Enterprise Ireland client companies by €100 million over three years.

In Quarter 1 a joint agency meeting on Global Sourcing was held by Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland to review 2015 out turns and to agree the implementation of the 2016.

The Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Mary Mitchell O'Connor TD, on 18 May launched a two-day Trade and Investment Mission to Athlone, Sligo and Limerick.

This joint agency event was organised by Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland as part of their joint 'Global Sourcing' initiative. Its objective being to maximise sales opportunities for Irish SMEs with multinational companies (MNCs) based in Ireland.

This joint agency trade mission focused on helping both indigenous companies and foreign owned multinationals based in Ireland to explore what opportunities may be available to work together, generate new business and build on business partnerships across Ireland.

Highlighting the strong links that exist between MNCs and their Irish supplier base, the Trade Mission also introduced innovative Irish SMEs to the global multinational base in Ireland. Over two days and three locations, networking events, panel discussions and 356 one-to-one meetings took place between 180 Enterprise Ireland clients and 64 IDA clients. Evidence of the openness of indigenous companies and MNCs in the Regions to the Global Sourcing agenda.

These meetings are invaluable for Irish companies in terms of gaining credible access to procurement teams and decision makers in global multinationals. For MNCs, the Trade Mission raises awareness of the innovative capabilities and solutions provided by Irish SMEs across a wide range of sectors including ICT, Pharma, Biotech, Medical Devices, Consumer, Security and Engineering.

Since the Global Sourcing initiative began in 2012, 21 new contracts have been secured by Irish companies valued at €10.5m.

This year, IDA will hold over 20 one-to-one meetings with Irish companies to learn how their products or services may add value to an IDA sponsored multinational based in Ireland.



**Action 227:** Continue to identify opportunities to support investment and job creation in the Green Economy.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (EI, IDA)

**Update: On Schedule**

Strengthening the connections between Irish-owned firms and the foreign-owned base of companies in Ireland plays an important role in growing our enterprise base.

Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland continue to provide opportunities for Irish-owned firms to connect into global supply networks, which help to strengthen their capabilities, reputation and visibility on international markets.

Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland are continuing to drive collaboration on key priorities including maximising of procurement opportunities for Irish business through the Global Sourcing initiative. Enhancing collaboration between Irish and foreign owned enterprises.

One of the areas of potential opportunity lies within the green economy, where Enterprise Ireland continues to seek out opportunities to support investment and job creation.

Enterprise Ireland has to this end been involved in the development of an Ultra-Low Energy Cluster aimed at promoting the use of low energy technologies & products in construction.

Active programme of market engagement underway.

## Procurement Opportunities

**Action 232:** Engage with SME representative bodies, the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Enterprise Ireland and Inter-tradelreland through the SME working group to identify further measures to assist public sector procurement.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DPER/OGP)

**Update: On Schedule**

4 meetings with the SME representative bodies are scheduled for 2016.

**Action 236:** Increase registration by SMEs on e-tenders.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DPER/OGP)

**Update: On Schedule**

The OGP is continuing to promote the registration of SME's on the e-Tenders system in 2016 at events such as the Meet the Buyer one of which was held in June in Belfast and another of which is scheduled for October in Dublin.

**Action 237:** Publish pipelines of procurement activities on <http://www.procurement.ie> to inform SMEs of opportunities that will arise during the year.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DPER/OGP)

**Update: On Schedule**

The Schedule of Frameworks and Contracts is published on the eTenders website and is updated regularly.

## Stimulating the Domestic Economy

### Tourism

**Action 264:** Promote Irish art and artists worldwide. Develop the impact of Culture Ireland investment in the Irish arts sector globally, identify new markets for Irish work, and build awareness of the range and quality of work produced by Irish artists and companies in strategic international territories, working with Tourism Ireland and other State bodies.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DAHG, Culture Ireland)

**Update: On Schedule**

Over 450 events worldwide involving Irish artists and art organisations will be supported by Culture Ireland in 2016. Culture Ireland continues to focus on developing the impact of investment and raising awareness of Irish arts through strategic partnerships, special initiatives and promotion at key international festivals and arts markets.

**Action 265:** Support up to 300 individuals and over 500 organisations across a wide range of arts venues, festivals, arts organisations and touring initiatives around Ireland in 2016.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DAHG, Arts Council)

**Update: On Schedule**

On schedule - final figures will not be known until November.

**Action 266:** Continue to develop cultural digitisation initiatives in order to enhance Ireland's roots tourism offering.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DAHG, GRO, National Library and National Archives)

**Update: On Schedule**

Progress has been made by both the National Library of Ireland and the National Archives both of whom have made additional collections available on-line in 2016 as part of the 1916 Centenary commemorations programme. Work is ongoing in relation to making historic Civil register data of Births, Deaths and Marriages available online at [www.irishgenealogy.ie](http://www.irishgenealogy.ie)

**Action 267:** Develop further heritage tourism initiatives, including a programme of trailway development in National Parks and Nature Reserves, in partnership with key stakeholders. Collaborate with the relevant Departments and Agencies to ensure that National Parks, Nature Reserves, National Monuments and historic buildings contribute as signature experiences along the Wild Atlantic Way, in particular through the development of a national park trails network, so as to add to the attractiveness of these areas for tourists.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DAHG, Fáilte Ireland and National Trails Office)

**Update: On Schedule**

Ongoing. Discussions are continuing between DAHG and Fáilte Ireland on plans to develop and improve the visitor experience at the 6 National Parks and 5 Nature Reserves along the Wild Atlantic Way, taking account of the trails, visitor experience and digital audits previously carried out. DAHG has recently completed a strategic land acquisition to continue construction of the 28 km Fáinne na Locha (Lough Leane Looped Trail) at Killarney National Park. An Inter-Agency Group on Outdoor Recreation, chaired by DAHG and including representatives from Waterways Ireland, Coillte, Bord na Móna and OPW, is also examining potential project clusters.

**Action 270:** Support the major refurbishment programme for the National Gallery of Ireland and the development of a permanent exhibition space and interpretative centre at the GPO, the development of visitor facilities at Teach an Phiarsaigh, Ros Muc, the restoration of the Moore Street national monument as a 1916 Commemorative Centre and other investments as part of the Ireland 2016 Programme.

**Ongoing Measure:** Continuation of work on Projects. (DAHG , OPW, ÚnaG and NGI)

**Update: On Schedule**

The restoration of the Moore Street national monument as a 1916 Commemorative Centre and other investments as part of the Ireland 2016 Programme is delayed following a High Court Judgment.

Work is continuing on the National Gallery of Ireland project with a projected opening date of Q1 2017. Capital project at Teach an Phiarsaigh also on schedule.

## Construction and Housing

**Action 275:** Implement the relevant measures set out in the Social Housing Strategy 2020 to support the delivery of social housing.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DECLG and relevant Departments)

**Update: On Schedule**

Key milestones delivered as at end Q2 under the Social Housing Strategy 2020:

- On 2 February 2016 Government approved the over-arching principles to give effect to an affordable rental scheme. The Programme for Government commits to delivering the pilot scheme within the first 100 days of Government. The scheme is currently at an advanced stage of development..
- Approximately 4,000 build dwellings announced by the Minister since the Social Housing Strategy was launched have already been evaluated and issued with Stage 1 approval.
- A further streamlined mechanism of funding approvals on a pilot basis for social housing construction projects with a maximum all-in budget of less than €2m and up to 15 housing units was introduced.
- The prioritisation of funding for Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) based on agreed eligibility criteria commenced on 1 June.
- On 2 June 2016, the Minister directed housing authorities to prepare a summary of social housing assessments as at 21 September, 2016, and also signed Regulations prescribing the format of the summary, which will provide a count of all households qualified for social housing support. It is anticipated that the summary results will be available by end 2016.
- A new Tenant (Incremental) Purchase scheme was introduced in January 2016. Detailed guidance governing the scheme, including an information booklet for tenants was issued to all local authorities.
- New provisions were commenced 9 May 2016, under the Residential Tenancies (Amendment) Act 2015, to strengthen protections applying to tenancy terminations in order to guard against terminations on false grounds. These measures involve, inter alia, a landlord having to make a statutory declaration as to their intention to sell a property.
- Bundle 2 of the Social Housing PPP programme has been approved by the Minister. The sites will be announced shortly.

Implementation of the remaining relevant measures set out in the Social Housing Strategy 2020 will continue throughout 2016.

**Action 276:** Fund the delivery of 20,000 residential units on a commercial basis by end 2020.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (NAMA)

**Update: On Schedule**

NAMA has committed to fund the delivery of 20,000 residential units by YE2020, primarily in the Greater Dublin area, on a commercial and value maximising basis.

Delivery of end-Q1 2016:

- > 2,768 units completed (since early 2014)
- > 3,096 units under construction
- > 5,176 units - planning permission granted
- > 5,066 units - planning applications lodged
- > 6,627 units - planning applications to be lodged within 12 months

**Action 278:** Support the delivery of housing-related enabling infrastructure in large scale priority development areas, and roll out the Activate fund.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (ISIF)

**Update: On Schedule**

The ISIF supported Activate Capital is fully operational and has provided funding to three housing developments, which will see the construction of 800 housing units. The provision of housing related enabling infrastructure is being considered as part of the Government's Housing Action Plan to ensure it is part of an integrated set of Housing supply policies.

**Action 282:** Maintain the Home Renovation Incentive Scheme to support homeowners and legitimate businesses.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DoF)

**Update: On Schedule**

The Home Renovation Incentive is due to expire end 2016.

**Action 283:** Implement and monitor the Living City Initiative.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DoF)

**Update: On Schedule**

The Living City Initiative commenced 5th May 2015. As part of the programme for partnership in government, the Department is undertaking a review of the Living City Initiative and the conditions that apply to the size of properties in order to boost the attractiveness of the scheme, which will contribute to both built heritage and urban regeneration

**Action 285:** Facilitate emerging and developing construction sector businesses to adopt best practice and build in quality and safety aspects of their products and services to comply with building regulations and gain market share.

**Ongoing Measure:** Conduct an information campaign aimed at emerging and developing construction sector businesses on the benefits of standardisation and certification of construction products and services including CE marking. (NSAI)

**Update: On Schedule**

NSAI launched S.R. 54 Code of Practice - Methodology for the energy efficient retrofit of existing dwellings and the SEAI Energy Show in the RDS. The free technical guide provides best practice information to all contractors involved in the renovation of homes, including architects, engineers, and insulation installers. The launch was supported by a PR campaign across print, broadcast and social media.

NSAI Certification gave a talk organised by the RIAI at their Seminar on Product Certification for Architects and Architectural Technologists. It was attended by 50 Construction professionals

NSAI Standards organised a seminar on Business Information Modelling for the Construction Sector which was attended by 80 people from the Construction Industry.

## New Sources of Growth

### Audio-Visual

**Action 300:** Work with the Irish Film Board and other agencies to explore the capacity to expand the industry. Increase full-time employment equivalents in the film and audio-visual sector up to 1,000 jobs by supporting the Irish Film Board to fund at least 15-20 Irish feature films and develop creative co-production feature film opportunities for 5-10 creative co-productions. Overall, up to 32 projects will be supported, including feature documentaries, animation, TV Drama and short films.

**Ongoing Measure:** As per headline action. (DAHG, IFB)

**Update: On Schedule**

This ongoing action remains on schedule .

## Glossary of Terms

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| AIB       | Allied Irish Bank  |
| APJ       | Action Plan for Jobs   |
| BAI       | Broadcasting Authority of Ireland  |
| BPFI      | Banking and Payments Federation Ireland                                      |
| CBI       | Central Bank of Ireland  |
| COSME     | EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs                 |
| CRCI      | Clinical Research Coordination Ireland                                       |
| CRO       | Credit Review Office   |
| CSO       | Central Statistics Office  |
| CSR       | Corporate Social Responsibility  |
| daa       | Dublin Airport Authority   |
| DAFM      | Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine                               |
| DAHG      | Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht                               |
| DCCoI     | Design and Craft Council of Ireland  |
| DCENR     | Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources                   |
| DCYA      | Department of Children and Youth Affairs                                     |
| D/Defence | Department of Defence  |
| DECLG     | Department of Environment, Community and Local Government                    |
| DES       | Department of Education and Skills   |
| DFAT      | Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade                                      |
| DG GROW   | Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs |
| DoF       | Department of Finance  |
| DoH       | Department of Health   |
| DJEI      | Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation                                |

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| DJE         | Department of Justice and Equality          |
| DPER        | Department of Public Expenditure and Reform |
| DSP         | Department of Social Protection             |
| D/Taoiseach | Department of Taoiseach                     |
| DTTAS       | Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport  |
| ECB         | European Central Bank                       |
| EGFSN       | Expert Group on Future Skills Needs         |
| EI          | Enterprise Ireland                          |
| EIB         | European Investment Bank                    |
| EIF         | European Investment Fund                    |
| EFSI        | European Fund for Strategic Investments     |
| EPA         | Environmental Protection Agency             |
| ESB         | Electricity Supply Board                    |
| ESRI        | Economic and Social Research Institute      |
| ETB         | Education and Training Board                |
| FDI         | Foreign Direct Investment                   |
| FET         | Further Education and Training              |
| GEDI        | Global Entrepreneurship Development Index   |
| GDP         | Gross Domestic Product                      |
| GNP         | Gross National Product                      |
| GPO         | General Post Office                         |
| GRO         | General Register Office                     |
| HEA         | Higher Education Authority                  |
| HEI         | Higher Education Institutions               |
| HIHI        | Health Innovation Hub Ireland               |
| HPSU        | High Potential Start-ups                    |

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| HRB    | Health Research Board  |
| HSA    | Health and Safety Authority                                  |
| HSE    | Health Service Executive                                     |
| IBEC   | Irish Business and Employers' Confederation                  |
| ICT    | Information and Communications Technology                    |
| IDA    | Industrial Development Agency                                |
| IDC    | Inter-Departmental Committee                                 |
| IFB    | Irish Film Board   |
| IFS    | International Financial Services                             |
| IICM   | Irish Institute of Credit Management                         |
| IMDA   | Irish Medical Devices Association                            |
| INAB   | Irish National Accreditation Board                           |
| IoT    | Institute of Technology                                      |
| IP     | Intellectual Property  |
| IRC    | Irish Research Council                                       |
| ISIF   | Ireland Strategic Investment Fund                            |
| ISO    | International Organisation for Standardisation               |
| ITI    | InterTradeIreland  |
| JOC    | Joint Oireachtas Committee                                   |
| KTI    | Knowledge Transfer Ireland                                   |
| LA     | Local Authorities  |
| LCDC   | Local Community Development Committee                        |
| LEADER | Liaisons entre actions de developpement de l'économie rurale |
| LEO/s  | Local Enterprise Office/s                                    |
| LGMA   | Local Government Management Agency                           |
| LPC    | Low Pay Commission   |



|       |  |
|-------|--|
| LRC   | Law Reform Commission  |
| MNCs  | Multinational Corporations   |
| NAMA  | National Asset Management Agency                                     |
| NCC   | National Competitiveness Council                                     |
| NCCA  | National Council for Curriculum and Assessment                       |
| NGI   | National Gallery of Ireland  |
| NPB   | National Promotional Bank  |
| NSAI  | National Standards Authority of Ireland                              |
| NTA   | National Transport Authority   |
| OECD  | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development               |
| OGP   | Office of Government Procurement                                     |
| OPW   | Office of Public Works   |
| PAS   | Public Appointments Service  |
| PCI   | Pharmaceutical Ireland   |
| PIAB  | Personal Injuries Assessment Board                                   |
| PSO   | Public Service Obligation  |
| ptsb  | Permanent TSB  |
| QQI   | Quality and Qualifications Ireland                                   |
| RDI   | Research, development and innovation                                 |
| REACH | Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals |
| RP    | Research Prioritisation  |
| RPO   | Research Performing Organisations                                    |
| SBCI  | Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland                             |
| SEAI  | Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland                              |
| SFI   | SFI  |
| SFSI  | Sustainable Food Systems Ireland                                     |

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| SME   | Small and Medium Enterprise                       |
| SOLAS | An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna |
| SPV   | Special Purpose Vehicle                           |
| STEM  | Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics     |
| SVCS  | Seed and Venture Capital Scheme                   |
| UCD   | University College Dublin                         |
| ÚnaG  | Údarás na Gaeltachta                              |
| VAT   | Value Added Tax                                   |
| WDC   | Western Development Commission                    |
| WEF   | World Economic Forum                              |

