

Enterprise Newsletter

May 2021

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New €5m COVID-19 Online Retail Scheme

Applications sought from Irish-based retailers for grants of up to €40k

The scheme closes at 12 noon on Tuesday, 25 May 2021.

The new €5 million COVID-19 Online Retail Scheme is open to eligible Irish-owned retail enterprises that had 10 or more employees on or before 29 February 2020 (or have grown to this level since then) and have the potential to sustain or create jobs, generate growth in online transactions and with an ambition to internationalise their business in the future. Successful applicants will receive a grant ranging from €10,000 to a maximum of €40,000 - covering up to 80% of project costs.

[COVID-19 Online Retail Scheme](#)

Public Consultation on the Right to Request Remote Work

The closing date for submissions is this Friday, 7 May 2021.

The Tánaiste Leo Varadkar T.D. has launched a public consultation on the introduction of a statutory right to request remote work. This consultation will inform new legislation which is a key action under the National Remote Working Strategy, launched in January 2021. Currently in Ireland, all employees can request remote work from their employers but there is no legal framework around which a request can be made and how it should be dealt with by the employer. The background to this initiative is set out in the consultation paper, which also provides an opportunity to provide views on important relevant issues including:

- duration of service before having an entitlement,
- carrying out a risk assessment on a proposed remote working location,
- reasonable grounds for refusing a remote working request,
- the right of complaint,
- provision of necessary equipment,
- monitoring of activity by employers.

[Public Consultation on the Right to Request Remote Work](#)

Public Consultation on the transposition of Directive (EU) 2020/1828 on representative actions for the protection of the collective interests of consumers

The Department is currently seeking views from stakeholders and interested parties on the transposition of Directive (EU) 2020/1828 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2020 on representative actions for the protection of the collective interests of consumers and repealing Directive 2009/22/EC.

This Directive, which must be transposed by 25 December 2022 will provide tools for stopping illegal practices and facilitating redress for consumers where a number of them are victims of the same infringement of their rights, in a mass harm situation. No such system currently exists in Ireland.

The deadline for submissions is this Friday, 7 May 2021

[Public consultation on the transposition of Directive \(EU\) 2020/1828 on representative actions for the protection of the collective interests of consumers - DETE \(enterprise.gov.ie\)](#)

Prepared by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

Annual Employment Survey 2020 and Annual Business Survey of Economic Impact 2019

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment published the Annual Employment Survey 2020 and the Annual Business Survey of Economic Impact 2019. DETE co-ordinates these surveys of the client companies of the enterprise development agencies ([Enterprise Ireland](#), [IDA Ireland](#) and [Údarás na Gaeltachta](#)). The results are presented by company ownership in terms of Irish and foreign-owned firms.

The indicators collected include annual sales and exports and payroll, materials and services costs. Data collected in 2019 and 2020 is merged with results of previous surveys to provide trend data and indicators are available by ownership and sector and are used by the agencies in their annual reports and end-of-year statements.

Key results include:

- Employment in Enterprise Ireland, IDA and Údarás na Gaeltachta supported companies amounted to over 485,903 jobs in 2020, their highest ever level, accounting for one third of total business employment in Ireland.
- Total employment in agency client companies increased by 1.7% since 2019, an increase of 7,453 jobs.
- During 2019, sales, exports, value added, and direct expenditures in the Irish economy all showed strong growth for both Irish and foreign-owned companies.

Links to the reports:

- [Annual Employment Survey 2020](#)
- [Annual Business Survey of Economic Impact 2019](#)

For regular updates on statistics relevant to enterprise please see the DETE dashboard at the following link:

[DETE Data Dashboard](#)

The dashboard presents approximately **60 economic indicators** across the areas of jobs, enterprise, innovation, Brexit and COVID. The data is sourced from national and international sources such as the CSO and Eurostat, as well as from units across the Department for their respective Agencies and Offices.

NESC Wellbeing Survey

The Government has committed to developing a wellbeing framework for Ireland, looking beyond economic indicators to give us a more holistic picture of where we are and where we want to be as a society.

[The National Economic and Social Council](#) are seeking insights that will inform and shape the development of this framework. Whether as an individual or an organisation, you are encouraged to take part in the NESC's survey to help inform the framework. Find out more at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7SZHM57>.

Prepared by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

First meeting of the Regional Enterprise Plan National Oversight Group

The Department's Ministers of State Damien English T.D. and Robert Troy T.D., have convened the first meeting of the Regional Enterprise Plans National Oversight Group. The Group has been established by the Department, to guide and oversee preparation of the new Regional Enterprise Plans to 2024 at the national level. Following development of the new Plans, the Group will oversee implementation through to 2024.

The Oversight Group which will meet quarterly, includes the Chairpersons of the nine REP Steering Committees, regional Programme Managers, and representatives of Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, local enterprise offices, the City and County Managers Association, Regional Assemblies, Fáilte Ireland, as well as officials from the Department of Rural and Community Development and Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

The development of Regional Enterprise Plans to 2024 delivers an important component in the Programme for Government commitment to adopt a coherent policy approach to the enterprise needs of every part of Ireland. As a 'bottom-up' initiative, led by industry Chairpersons from the region, the Plans also complement national level enterprise policies and programmes.

[Regional Enterprise Plans](#)

Webinar: Irish Innovation in Connected Health, Wellbeing and Aging

When: Tuesday, 11 May at 11.00am to 11.45am

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the role of digitalisation across health systems and health data had already become a high priority for societies across the world. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the role played by data and digital technologies in connected health, wellbeing and design of age-friendly technologies for community services.

At Knowledge Transfer Ireland's May webinar, you will hear how businesses and researchers can collaborate to advance new technologies and address societal challenges in this space.

Speakers:

- **Martha Cahill:** National Contact Point for Health, *Horizon Europe*
- **Margaret Curran:** Manager, *Caredoc*
- **Suzanne Smith:** Research Centre & Living Lab Manager, *NetwellCASALA*, Dundalk Institute of Technology

[Register here](#)

Webinar: Stakeholder forum on proposal for a Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive

When: Wednesday, 12 May at 11am to 12 noon

The Minister for Trade Promotion, Digital and Company Regulation, Robert Troy TD, will host a webinar to inform stakeholders about the details of the Corporate Sustainability Directive. The webinar will include presentations by the EU Commission on the [proposal](#) and Business in the Community Ireland.

Rules for the disclosure of non-financial information by certain large companies, including environmental reporting, have been in effect in Ireland since 2017 through the EU's Non-financial Reporting Directive (Directive 2014/95/EU).

Under the European Green Deal, the EU is seeking to further enhance the disclosure by companies on sustainability matters such as climate and environmental data. Additional information can be found [here](#).

[Register for the webinar](#)

Webinar: Enterprise Ireland's Technology Insights - Process Monitoring and Automation for SMEs

When: Thursday, 13 May from 11.00am to 11.45am

Process monitoring and automation are the principle means of reducing production costs, improving process continuity and product quality. The availability of low-cost, smart sensors make process monitoring a compelling, low-risk opportunity for many industries. It is the basis for both predictive maintenance, and real-time process control.

Monitoring and sensor technologies are components of automated processes, which serves to reduce waste, improve quality of work and provide a basis for continual improvement. Automation and process monitoring technologies are readily accessible to organisations of all sizes and underpin competitiveness in terms of cost and quality. This webinar will explore the methods and technologies required for implementing or enhancing monitoring and automation in SMEs.

[Register for the webinar](#)

Webinar: Working from Home - Managing Ergonomic and Psychosocial Hazards

When: Thursday, 20 May at 11:00am

The Health and Safety Authority is hosting a webinar on 20 May for employers and employees on managing ergonomic and psychosocial hazards while working from home.

[Register for the webinar](#)

Prepared by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

Webinar: Knowledge Connects - How companies can tap into a €1 billion resource

When: Tuesday, 25 May from 12.00 to 1.00pm

In association with The Sunday Times, [Knowledge Transfer Ireland](#) (KTI) hosts Knowledge Connects, a conversation with some of Ireland's pioneering businesses on how companies of all sizes can leverage the R&D available from third level institutions and other public research organisations to effectively innovate and grow.

Join Sunday Times Business Editor **Brian Carey**, KTI Director **Alison Campbell**, Head of Digital Industries at Siemens Ireland **Domhnall Carroll**, Director of Innopharma Technologies **Sean Costello** and Founder & CEO of Kastus **John Browne** as they discuss R&D in association with the third level, how it works and how Irish companies of all sizes can avail of this resource.

In the panel discussion, KTI will outline the role they play and how they can help your business to harness innovation to deal with the post-pandemic world and prevailing market conditions. KTI acts as a signpost, pointing companies of all shapes and sizes in the right direction and providing various tools to help them on their R&D journey.

[Register for the webinar](#)