



An Roinn Fiontar,  
Trádála agus Fostaíochta  
Department of Enterprise,  
Trade and Employment

# Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

Draft Statement of Strategy 2024 -2025 for consultation June 2024

# Vision

We will make Ireland the best place to succeed in business across all parts of our country, with vibrant enterprises, more high-quality employment, growing trade, fair workplaces and higher productivity.

# Mission

We will lead on sustainable economic development through the creation and maintenance of high quality employment across all parts of our country: by championing enterprise; ensuring a competitive business base to incentivise work, sustainable enterprise, innovation and investment; strengthening global connections and trade; promoting fair and competitive markets, and responsible business practice; as well as safe, flexible and decent workplaces through the regulatory and enforcement work of the Department, its Offices and its Agencies.

# Values

As a Department, we foster a culture of accountability, efficiency, innovation and value for money, which is rooted in a public service ethos of independence, equality, integrity, impartiality, openness, fairness, dignity and respect. As Civil Servants, we espouse the highest standards of professionalism, honesty, objectivity and quality, which are central to fulfilling our roles in serving Government, the democratic system and the public.

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## Introduction

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment leads in advising on and implementing the Government's policies of stimulating the productive capacity of the economy and creating an environment which facilitates employment creation and sustainability. The Department is also charged with promoting fair competition in the marketplace, protecting consumers and safeguarding workers. Working with our Offices and Agencies, the Department's remit covers a wide range of activity including:

- Assisting entrepreneurs and businesses to create and sustain high quality employment across all regions , by developing a strong Irish owned enterprise base, attracting and retaining foreign direct investment and strengthening trade.
- Supporting SMEs and microenterprises to build capacity and to enhance resilience and cost competitiveness.
- Leading a whole-of-Government approach to developing a competitive environment for investment, productivity and sustainable jobs.
- Orienting policy to help enterprise reduce carbon emissions and resource use , meet the costs of decarbonisation, exploit the opportunities of the transition to a low carbon economy and to enable a decoupling of economic growth from resource consumption.
- Delivering on Ireland's ambition to be a digital leader through the effective negotiation and implementation of EU digital regulations and through supporting the digital transition of Irish enterprise.
- Assisting enterprise to undertake research and innovation which can maintain and create high quality jobs and contribute to building a better society.
- Promoting quality employment, positive workplace relations, well-functioning dispute resolution mechanisms, safe working environments and safeguarding workers' rights.
- Ensuring our business regulation facilitates sustainable investment and development, competition in the marketplace, high standards of consumer protection and corporate governance, and provides Ireland with a competitive advantage in the global market.
- Working ambitiously across Government with our EU and international partners to advance Ireland's interests, influence and values in our shared world.
- Ensuring best value for money and alignment of Departmental expenditure with policy priorities, informed by data, evidence and robust evaluation.

Since 2020, the Department has been working to achieve the commitments and priorities set out in the Programme for Government: ***Our Shared Future***. We implemented our 2021-2023 Statement of Strategy during a period of significant economic uncertainty arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and war in Ukraine, and we have progressed our strategic goals under the 2023-2025 Statement of Strategy, the ambitions of which are reviewed and refreshed in this current strategy. The Department's priorities are informed by Government's ***White Paper on Enterprise 2022-2030*** which sets out the priorities for Irish enterprise policy in the period to 2030. It provides a vision for Irish-based enterprise to succeed through competitive advantage founded on sustainability, innovation and productivity. Advancing the green and digital transitions in Irish enterprise is imperative. During the lifetime of the White Paper, the Department will work to deliver on our commitments in the Government's ***Climate Action Plans***. A central policy focus will be on transitioning to a low

carbon, sustainable economic model, both to meet our emissions abatement targets and to seize the economic opportunities arising. Integral to this focus will be the delivery of actions under **Powering Prosperity – Ireland’s Offshore Wind Industrial Strategy**. To progress the digital transition, **Harnessing Digital – the Digital Ireland Framework**, as well as the **National AI Strategy**, set out an ambition for Ireland to become a digital leader to ensure competitiveness, drive productivity and enable a decoupling of economic growth from unsustainable resource consumption. Our enterprise agencies will act as advocates for digital and green transformation, with the agenda being fundamental to their engagement with business.

Small and micro enterprises constitute the majority of businesses in Ireland and provide much valued employment in communities across the country. To support these enterprises, we will work to deliver on the **Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Policy Statement 2024 – 2030** which emphasises the LEOs role as the first stop shop for all businesses and outlines how the LEOs foster a strong entrepreneurial culture and promote enterprise nationally. The Policy Statement also details how the work of the LEOs will adapt to contribute to the implementation of five of the priorities of the White Paper on Enterprise – decarbonisation, digitalisation, increasing exporters, enabling the locally traded sector to thrive, and stepping up enterprise innovation.

We will work to reduce the regulatory burden and red tape faced by SMEs and further embed the principle of “think small first” in policy making across Government. The **SME Test** will be applied to all new major measures that are considered by Government. It will be extended and applied to any new policies, legislation (primary or secondary), or regulatory compliance requirements. We will issue new guidelines on the SME Test and will work with other Departments to ensure the SME Test is an integral part of policy making.

Ireland’s connectedness to the EU agenda and internationally is of fundamental importance. We will continue to advocate at EU level for policy and regulation that is pro-enterprise, pro-trade and pro-consumer and that promotes an innovation-friendly economy. We will implement the **Trade and Investment Strategy 2022-2026: Value for Ireland, Values for the World** to enhance the positive contribution that trade and investment can make to our economic development. Ireland’s response to changing globalisation patterns and associated market and supply chain fragmentation will be flexible and agile while providing continuity and stability as an investment destination of choice. We continue to support the post-Brexit implementation of trading arrangements between the UK and the EU to ensure Ireland’s trade and investment interests are pursued to best advantage.

Successful enterprise policy requires an integrated, whole-of-government approach. We are working to ensure that essential framework conditions are in place to support our policy ambitions and to contribute to the development of a stronger enterprise ecosystem. There are a number of cross-cutting issues that will be crucial to position Ireland for the challenges and opportunities ahead, ranging from infrastructural investment and taxation to regulation and talent.

Over the lifetime of this Strategy the Department will continue to-deliver positive workplace relations, robust enforcement of employment rights, a safe working environment and a responsive economic migration policy aligned with the needs of the economy. The Department will continue to develop and implement legislation to enhance Ireland’s business regulatory environment and attractiveness as a location which facilitates enterprise and entrepreneurship, while also providing appropriate safeguards for stakeholders. This work will take into account the impact of any new legislation on SMEs.

The Department is committed to engaging directly with the business community, employer and employee representative organisations, and other stakeholders in all parts of the country to assist us in identifying, understanding and developing policy responses to the opportunities and challenges in our economy. We have established a number of fora to facilitate consultation, engagement and partnership. This strategy has also been developed in the context of our role in contributing to progressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals in areas including employment, safe and secure working environments, fostering innovation and encouraging companies to adopt and report on sustainable practices.

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## Guiding Principles

In a dynamic environment, globally and domestically, we will be guided by five over-arching principles to steer delivery of our Strategy.

### **Strengthen Ireland's economic position**

In line with the ambitions of the *White Paper on Enterprise 2022-2030*, we will prioritise actions that enable strong, resilient growth and maintain full employment. We will build on enterprise strengths and opportunities through clustering, Smart Specialisation and Regional Enterprise Plans, strengthening our exporting sectors by building the pipeline of new exporters and enabling our locally trading sectors to thrive.

### **Future-proof enterprise for sustainable growth**

Sustainable growth can only be realised through delivery of responsive policies, guidance and supportive programmes to help businesses to meet the challenges of the climate crisis mitigation and adaptation, to accelerate digital transformation, and to develop the resilience and agility required to respond to the shocks and uncertainty which are increasingly becoming a feature of the global economy.

Our success in strengthening enterprise driven research, development and innovation will directly impact on Ireland's ability to create and maintain a thriving and prosperous economy, to sustain full employment, to develop the products and services that can deliver a low carbon economy and society, and to maximise the opportunities of digital transformation for all.

### **Protect consumers and safeguard workers**

During a time when many households are concerned about the cost of living, it becomes increasingly important to give consumers more choice, information and protection and to ensure that markets work fairly and effectively. We will maintain an agile, efficient regulatory regime that promotes fair competition for both businesses and consumers; and we will safeguard strong, transparent consumer rights to ensure value for money, quality customer care and protection from unsafe products.

At the outset of this strategy, we have more people employed in the country than at any other point in the history of the state. Our aim is to continue to create the conditions for good quality, high productivity jobs. We will build on our progress to date to improve terms and conditions for workers. We will lead by example, supporting our staff to develop their potential in a changing workplace. We will maintain a company law framework that facilitates enterprise and safeguards stakeholders such as employees, creditors and the State.

### **Advance responsible trade and enterprise**

Values based trade is a key tenet of our national *Trade and Investment Strategy 2022-26 'Value for Ireland, Values for the World'*. We will retain our strong commitment to open and inclusive trade with the WTO at the core of a rules based multilateral system, while promoting our values in relation to human rights, environment and climate, social and labour rights, sustainable development and gender equality.

At home, we will continue to build a regulatory environment to reinforce positive and responsible business behaviours. We will work to deliver strong accountability and transparency frameworks, including through corporate sustainability reporting.

### **Deepen and extend our international relationships**

Ireland's openness to trade, investment, people and ideas has long been integral to our national prosperity. Sustaining our valuable international connectivity is an increasing priority in a time of global relationship challenges.

Foreign direct investment and trade will remain key elements of our growth model and economic strategy. Our response to changing globalisation patterns and a fracturing trading landscape will be flexible and agile, while providing continuity and stability as an investment destination of choice. We will encourage Irish businesses to take full advantage of the EU Single Market and to strike out for global markets by fully utilising the extensive network of EU Free Trade Agreements. We are committed to furthering Ireland's pivotal role within the EU's Single Market and to shape a competitive EU industrial policy, solidifying Ireland's position as a dynamic hub for enterprise innovation and attracting inward investment.

We will strive to build the alliances necessary to advance our interests and defend our positions in the EU, in particular by leveraging our Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2026. We will continue to develop our deep and positive relationship with the UK.



## Human Rights and Equality Public Sector Duty

In accordance with section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014 all public bodies in Ireland have responsibility, under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty or Public Sector Duty, to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, customers, service users, and everyone affected by their policies and plans.

In line with our obligations under the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014, the Department is committed to ensuring our policies, procedures and services comply with requirements in the areas of human rights and equality. Over the lifetime of this Strategy the Department will map out the human rights and equality obligations relevant to the Department's functions, the services we provide. As part of this we will engage with our stakeholders and service users and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC).

As an organisation, we recognise that our people are our greatest asset and we aim to attract and retain the talent required to deliver on the Department's strategic agenda. We want to ensure that all staff and customers feel welcomed in this Department, that staff are empowered to achieve to their full potential, and that access to services, opportunities, and career development is available on an equal footing to everyone. The Department's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) Statement embeds ED&I into our way of doing business, while our ED&I Strategy sets out our plan to achieving a culture of inclusion, fairness and respect for all staff and customers of the Department. This vision will be realised through actions under four goals: of achieving a positive workplace culture of support and inclusion; staff who are highly skilled in managing diversity; equality of opportunity for all staff, and; equality in access to services for our customers.

During the lifetime of this strategy we will:

- Promote and foster our human rights and equality duty and report on progress in our Annual Report.
- Maintain an ED&I staff 'Advisory Group' as a key source of staff input and feedback on ED&I issues.
- Participate regularly in external programmes to support equality of career opportunity for persons with disabilities, including the WAM (Willing, Able and Mentoring) and OWL (Oireachtas Work and Learn) programmes, as well as exploring broader inclusivity partnerships such as the Open Doors initiative and becoming a 'JAM card friendly' organisation.
- Improve the inclusive environment of our Department through the work and programmes of our new Organisational Culture team
- Continue to engage with the Irish Centre for Diversity to maintain our 'Investors in Diversity' EDI Mark as a measure of our progress to foster equality, diversity and inclusion across the Department.

Throughout the Department's broad remit, we continue to value and promote equality, inclusiveness and human rights through our development of policy and legislation and through our active participation in international organisations and multilateral fora.

## Our Strategic Goals

### Our Strategic Goals

- Goal 1: Sustain full employment and ensure strong regional economic development.
- Goal 2: Advance the green and digital transitions to ensure the competitiveness and sustainability of Irish-based enterprise.
- Goal 3: Promote safety, better pay and conditions, good quality jobs, gender equality and inclusivity in the workplace.
- Goal 4: Enhance our business regulatory environment and Ireland's attractiveness as a place to do business.
- Goal 5: Deepen and extend Ireland's global business and trade in a responsible, fair and sustainable manner supportive of high living standards and grow further the all-island economy.
- Goal 6: Build an innovative, inclusive and agile Department with a strong public service ethos driving effective and responsible policy implementation.

## Goal 1: Sustain full employment and ensure strong regional economic development.

### How we achieve this

- Implement Government's White Paper on Enterprise to build the resilience and sustainability of our economy. Support Ireland as a location for foreign direct investment (FDI), including through growth and transformation of existing investments, continuously adapting and evolving Ireland's FDI value proposition including reflecting Ireland's net zero ambitions, and exploiting emerging opportunities.
- Engage with stakeholders and across Government to drive National Development Plan delivery and align investment to deliver a globally competitive economic and enterprise development ecosystem. Implement the Regional Enterprise Plans and contribute to the first revision of the National Planning Framework to ensure balanced economic development in all parts of the country, including regions that may be experiencing specific development challenges.
- Implement the actions contained in the Local Enterprise Office Policy Statement, reaffirming the LEOs as the first stop shop for businesses in Ireland.
- Strengthen linkages between foreign and Irish-owned firms, developing stronger ecosystems to help local firms to embed themselves in the value chains of FDI intensive sectors. Continue engagement through Stakeholder Fora, encouraging discussion of strategic issues impacting enterprises. Help Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to start up, scale and access international markets to maximise growth opportunity.
- Ensure that Irish SMEs can access finance, including microfinance, loan guarantees, and seed and venture capital.
- Enable locally trading firms, including co-ops, to thrive.
- Broaden and deepen innovation capability across the enterprise sector, in particular the innovation performance of our SMEs and foster good design as an integral part of bringing new products and services to market.
- Ensure balanced regional economic development from offshore wind, to achieve its potential as a driver of economic development in coastal regions and communities.
- Promote construction sector innovation and modern methods to accelerate delivery of high quality, environmentally sustainable and affordable housing.
- Progress Ireland's National Space Strategy for Enterprise to further expand our space-active industry, in the context of the sector's global growth in economic value.
- Build on Ireland's enterprise strengths and potential by leveraging clustering policy and implementing Ireland's Smart Specialisation Strategy, supported by the rollout of European Regional Development Fund programmes.
- Continue to engage at EU level to ensure the Department maximises the opportunities available under the EU State Aid rules.

**Outcome:** Full employment in all parts of the country, underpinned by a competitive and conducive environment with a resilient, innovative, productive and sustainable enterprise base.

## Goal 2: Advance the green and digital transitions to ensure the competitiveness and sustainability of Irish based enterprise.

### How we achieve this

- Contribute to Ireland’s 2050 carbon neutrality ambition, while strengthening the resilience of our enterprise base, by developing and implementing policies and standards to deliver on the enterprise and non-residential buildings sectoral emissions ceilings in the Climate Action Plans.
- Embed decarbonisation measures into enterprise policy programmes and incentivise industry, with a particular focus on large emitters, to transition to more sustainable environmental practice, reduce carbon emissions, adapt to climate change, and exploit the opportunities of the low carbon economy, including renewable energy opportunities to address the twin challenges of security of supply and a competitive cost base.
- Assist SMEs to start their journey towards lower emissions, improved energy and resource efficiency and reduced environmental impact., Deliver the actions set out under *Powering Prosperity – Ireland’s Offshore Wind Industrial Strategy*.
- Build capacity of the LEO Network to ensure its services can meet the needs of its clients by implementing a digital transformation programme that will deliver several technology programmes, including a new Client Relationship Management System (CRMS).
- Progress the development of new EU and global standards including the objectives of the EU’s Standardisation Strategy and reflect the circular and waste economy strategies in the development of sustainable product standards.
- Implement the Net Zero Industry Act (NZIA) and oversee effective implementation and enforcement of EU Ecodesign requirements.
- Advocate at EU level for policy and regulation that promotes an innovation-friendly digital economy.
- Stimulate the digital transformation of manufacturing industry to achieve a competitive, innovation-driven manufacturing hub.
- Lead the cross-Government implementation of *AI – Here for Good*, the National Artificial Intelligence Strategy.
- Ensure that Coimisiún na Meán and the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission have resources to enforce the Digital Services Act.
- Facilitate increased digitalisation and improved productivity across all enterprise sectors through the continued rollout of the Digital Transition Fund and development of the Digital Portal to help businesses to self-assess their digital needs, as well as signposting to training, resources and funding options.
- Promote the European Digital Innovation Hubs as one stop shops to help the digitalisation of SME and the public sector.
- Deliver and implement a National Semiconductor Strategy in response to the EU Chips Act and corresponding international developments.
- Work with relevant Government Departments to clarify the position on energy connections and capacity for Data Centres in the near term (out to 2030) and on a medium-term approach for the period post 2030.
- Contribute to progressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), lead on ten SDG targets, and share responsibility for further targets.
- Lead by example in reducing emissions in our organisation by continuing with our Green Team Initiatives and implementing energy and water consumption saving projects. Continue work with the OPW particularly in the areas of energy conservation, waste generation and biodiversity.

**Outcome:** Alignment with the Climate Action Plan target of halving our overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, followed by a net zero economy by 2050, whilst mitigating the costs of decarbonisation and fostering opportunities for growth in the green economy. Progress towards Ireland becoming a leading digital economy to enhance productivity and the decoupling of economic growth from resource consumption.

### Goal 3: Promote safety, better pay and conditions, good quality jobs and inclusivity in the workplace.

#### How we achieve this

- Ensure that employment rights and labour market standards, are kept under review and updated to reflect national and international developments, including at EU, the Council of Europe, Court of Justice and International Labour Organisation level.
- Establish the Employment Law Review Group comprising expert stakeholders to help ensure that Ireland's employment-law framework remains fit for purpose and adapts to the evolving contemporary workplace. Engage with industry to promote best practice and monitor private sector progress in building diverse and inclusive workplaces.
- Manage an efficient employment permits system, maximising the benefits of economic migration and minimising disruption to Ireland's labour market, to ensure we have the essential skills and talent pool to support enterprise development.
- Implement outstanding actions from the Plan of Action for Collective Redundancies Following Insolvency.
- Implement measures to allow, but not compel, employees to stay in employment until State Pension Age via Employment (Restriction of Certain Mandatory Retirement Ages) Bill.
- Review the implementation of report of the Labour Employer Economic Forum on collective bargaining.
- Ensure that the Workplace Relations Commission and the Labour Court continue to provide a world-class workplace relations service and employment rights framework.
- Through the Construction Contracts Adjudication Service, ensure that sub-contractors can swiftly resolve payment disputes.
- Progress towards a National Living Wage (to be achieved by January 2026) and oversee sectoral wage setting in certain economic sectors.
- Provide support for the Low Pay Commission.
- Transpose the EU Directive on National Minimum Wage and Collective Bargaining and prepare Ireland's Action Plan.
- In order to increase labour market participation by people with a disability, engage with employers to raise awareness of the supports for employing a person with a disability.
- Ensure that a robust and effective occupational safety and health regime is in place for workers and assists employers in operating safe, productive and competitive businesses.
- Ensure Ireland has a strong chemicals and dangerous substances regulatory framework in place by leading across Government and working with stakeholders and industry.

**Outcome:** A policy, legislative and institutional framework which enables quality employment, good industrial relations and safe working environments, thereby assisting a strong economy and a fair society, balancing flexibility and security and providing protection for all employees.

## Goal 4: Enhance our business regulatory environment and Ireland's attractiveness as a place to do business.

### How we achieve this

- Ensure that corporate and regulatory policy and legislation is responsive and reflects international best practice so that Ireland can facilitate enterprise and entrepreneurship, while protecting employees, members and creditors with appropriate safeguards.
- Support the regulatory and enforcement bodies established under the Companies Act 2014 and ensure company law enables the bodies to undertake their statutory functions effectively.
- Ensure Ireland has an effective auditing and accounting regime in line with harmonised EU rules.
- Continue to enhance, modernise and develop consumer protection legislation so consumers can access cost-effective out-of-court dispute resolution processes.
- Facilitate the Injuries Resolution Board to resolve personal injury claims without the need for litigation, including by way of mediation, thereby reducing the costs of personal injury claims and facilitate reductions in insurance premiums.
- Provide a progressive intellectual property regime that stimulates economic growth by encouraging innovation and creativity across society, and which is responsive to the challenges and opportunities of a digital economy.
- Drive the advancement of effective intellectual property management policy and practices, exemplified by active engagement in appropriate international fora.
- Maintain a strong connection between enterprise and higher education to ensure that future skills need of business are met, including through upskilling.
- Continue to work collaboratively across Government and to engage with stakeholders to ensure that our taxation regime works for all businesses including self-employed sole traders, SMEs and large multinationals.
- Lead across Government on the development of evidence and data-based policy recommendations that will contribute to a competitive environment for investment, productivity, entrepreneurship and employment, drawing on the work and recommendations of the National Competitiveness and Productivity Council.
- Implement effective business regulation and reduced administrative burdens, through the development of policy that is evidence-based and involves public consultation and impact analysis. We will enhance, promote and monitor the application of the SME Test across Government on new policies, primary/secondary legislation and regulatory compliance requirements.
- Continue structured engagement with a wide range of stakeholder bodies and representative organisations.
- Promote a coherent and effective regulatory framework to maintain Ireland's position as a leading digital regulatory hub in the EU.
- Lead the cross-Government implementation of the EU Artificial Intelligence Act, including its measures to support innovation in SMEs.

**Outcome:** *A business environment facilitating investment and development, competition in the marketplace, and high standards of consumer protection and corporate governance.*

## **Goal 5: Deepen and extend Ireland’s global business and trade in a responsible, fair and sustainable manner supportive of high living standards and grow the all-island economy.**

### **How we achieve this**

- Work with our EU and international partners and build and strengthen alliances to shape emerging policies, standards, regulation and international agreements that impact Ireland’s economic and business environment.
- Promote free, open trade to support Ireland’s economic model within a dynamic, competitive EU and to protect critical supply chains, advocate for new EU Free Trade Agreements and for maintaining and deepening transatlantic trade relations.
- Work across Government and with our EU partners to identify and remove barriers to trade, particularly in services, to secure a fully functioning EU Single Market for the benefit of our exporters, businesses and other consumers.
- Strengthen cross-border trade and foster opportunities for North-South collaboration to enhance the all-Island economy, deliver on Shared Island objectives, and support economic growth in strategic border locations, including through business supports provided by Intertrade Ireland.
- Ensure that Ireland’s position on all trade deals supports the transition to a sustainable global economy and takes account of the needs of developing countries, especially Least Developed Countries, in the EU and global trading system.
- Support the implementation of the EU-UK trading arrangements, as set out in the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement, to ensure Ireland’s interests are protected and that the impacts of Brexit on businesses are mitigated.
- Implement the Government’s Trade and Investment Strategy 2022-2026, *Value for Ireland, Values for the World*, overseen by the Trade and Investment Council.
- Assist enterprise to enter and benefit from international markets and to expand into new markets by taking full advantage of the EU Single Market and the network of EU Free Trade Agreements.
- Work with our agencies as part of Team Ireland abroad, in the context of the Government’s Global Ireland 2025 Strategy, to promote our exports and highlight Ireland’s attractiveness for investment and innovation, to capitalise on global shifts in business models and emerging disruptive technologies and attract the next wave of technology and business activity.
- Advance Ireland’s economic and trading interests in multilateral contexts, including the WTO and the OECD, and work jointly with the EC and EU Member States to ensure that the WTO is at the heart of a global, rules-based, multilateral trading system.
- Ensure that Ireland has a robust legal and operational framework for regulating the export of controlled goods, in support of global security and introduce a mechanism to screen third country investment into Ireland.
- Implement UN and EU Trade Sanctions in support of international law and human rights.
- Promote responsible business practices and input into a second Business and Human Rights National Plan.

**Outcome:** *Grow and diversify our trade in a sustainable manner, generate new enterprise opportunities in an all-island economy, and pursue increased and new types of FDI investments.*

## **Goal 6: Build an innovative, inclusive and agile Department with a strong public service ethos driving effective and responsible policy implementation.**

### **How we achieve this**

- Continue to implement our People Strategy 2021-2024 and develop and launch its successor.
- Through our Enterprise Academy invest in learning and career development to support our staff to deliver the Department's mandate.
- Continue to embed our Blended Working Policy to fulfil our business objectives and provide staff with a positive work/life balance.
- Champion equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) for our staff and in the services we deliver as a Department, engaging with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and the Irish Centre for Diversity.
- As part of our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion we will continue to promote and support the employment of persons with disabilities in the Department we will develop supports to sustain a strong organisation culture, strengthen wellbeing and responsible business practices as part of our ambition to be an Employer of Choice.
- Address the Department's Gender Pay Gap through increasing supports and removing barriers to career progression and flexible working practices, informed by recent research carried out by the Department.
- Embed innovation into the work of the Department through facilitating workshops based on design thinking and innovation methodologies.
- Implement our ICT strategy to deliver stable, secure and scalable digital and data solutions and user-friendly public services.
- Implement our Communication Strategy 2022-2024 to support effective communication with our staff, stakeholders and the general public.
- Ensure best value for money and alignment of Departmental expenditure with policy priorities, informed by data, evidence and robust evaluation.
- Continue to demonstrate excellence in corporate governance to ensure transparency and value for money; through exercising appropriate oversight over the State Agencies and Offices that come within our remit, ensuring strong risk management, financial procedures and accounting and an independent internal audit function.
- Ensure that our buildings and services are safe and accessible, and streamline and enhance our accommodation to optimise space, future proof our buildings and deliver savings in energy usage and reduce carbon emissions.
- Ensure a safe and healthy working environment for all staff and visitors to the Department in compliance with statutory provisions, through the effective implementation of a Department Safety Statement and Safety Policy.
- Support a whole-of-government approach to strategic emergency planning through membership of the Government Taskforce on Emergency Planning.

**Outcome:** *A Department with staff who are innovative, flexible, responsive and agile, ensuring high standards of public service and corporate governance, and optimised resources to deliver our Strategy, Mission and Goals.*



## Measuring Success and Implementing this Strategy

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment Data Dashboard which can be accessed on our website [www.enterprise.gov.ie](http://www.enterprise.gov.ie) presents approximately 100 economic indicators across the areas of enterprise, trade and employment. A summary of UK and Northern Ireland data is also provided in the context of a focus on Brexit and its implications from an Irish trade perspective. The data is sourced from national and international sources such as the CSO and Eurostat, as well as from Business Units across the Department and our Agencies and Offices.

The strategic objectives, actions and outcomes outlined in this Statement of Strategy will inform and be reflected in the annual business and risk management plans produced by each Business Division in the Department and monitored by the Department's Management Board. These will contain specific targets which each Division will be expected to deliver each year, the aggregation of which should ensure that the commitments outlined in the Statement are met. The Management Board will keep these targets under review with formal assessment of divisional business plans twice-yearly. The Annual Report will detail the progress achieved each year on the strategic objectives and actions contained in this Statement of Strategy.

The White Paper on Enterprise includes 15 targets for enterprise policy in the period to 2030. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment is leading on developing consecutive two-year Implementation Plans of cross-government activity to implement the White Paper and deliver on these targets. The Implementation Plans set out how the various Government Departments, agencies and offices will deliver their respective commitments as timetabled deliverables, with the Department and its Offices and Agencies taking a lead role. Progress is reported on biannually to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Investment and is monitored on an ongoing basis via the associated Senior Officials Group. The biannual reports include updates on progress towards the 15 targets with new data under each of the measures included as it becomes available from the relevant sources.

The Public Service Performance Report provides citizens with clear and accessible information on how public funds were allocated, how those funds have been used and outlines the outputs and impacts of Departmental programmes. The Department reports against a range of indicators related to the three programmes of expenditure set out in its part of the Revised Estimate Volume. The Management Board will oversee and review these indicators as part of the Department's overall governance.