

Commentary	3
Quarter 4 Measures	21
Disruptive Reforms	23
Pathways to Work	46
Access to Finance for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises	47
Building Competitive Advantage	49
Driving Entrepreneurship and Start-Up Companies	65
Assisting Indigenous Business to Grow	68
Developing and Deepening the Impact of Foreign Direct Investment	77
Supporting Employment at the Community and Local Level	80
Sectoral Opportunities	85
Ongoing Measures	101
Disruptive Reforms	103
Access to Finance for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises	112
Building Competitive Advantage	118
Driving Entrepreneurship and Start-Up Companies	139
Assisting Indigenous Business to Grow	141
Developing and Deepening the Impact of Foreign Direct Investment	148
Supporting Employment at the Community and Local Level	150
Sectoral Opportunities	158

Commentary

This is the fourth report of 2013 from the Monitoring Committee established by Government to monitor and drive implementation of the measures contained in the *Action Plan for Jobs 2013* (APJ 2013). It outlines progress made on measures due for completion in the fourth quarter of 2013. It also includes an update on measures described in the Plan as “ongoing in 2013” and provides a final assessment of the implementation of the APJ 2013.

The Monitoring Committee comprises representatives of the Department of the Taoiseach, the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, Forfás, and the Office of the Tánaiste.

The Government published the second in its multi-annual *Action Plan for Jobs* series in February 2013. This Plan, which contains 333 actions to be implemented in 2013 by all Government Departments and 46 agencies, builds on the progress made in 2012 and continues to improve supports for job-creating businesses and remove the barriers to employment-creation across the economy. These actions are additional to the 249 actions already implemented under *Action Plan for Jobs 2012*, and reported on by the Monitoring Committee in its previous four quarterly reports (see www.djei.ie). In a departure from the 2012 plan, *Action Plan for Jobs 2013* contains seven headline ‘Disruptive Reform’ measures – these are high-impact measures with highly ambitious deadlines, implemented in partnership with senior industry partners and selected because of their potential to have a significant effect on job-creation.

As the final review of the implementation of the Action Plan for Jobs 2013 in its entirety, this report also provides a synopsis of the implementation of the Plan as a whole over the year, and shows that 713 of the 758 measures committed to in the Plan have been delivered over the year giving rise to an overall implementation rate of 94%. As detailed below, 1 measure from Quarter 1, 6 measures from Quarter 2, 16 measures from Quarter 3, 20 measures from Quarter 4 and 2 “ongoing” actions have not been completed as scheduled.

Action Plan for Jobs 2013: Supporting economic growth and job creation

Overall, the 2013 Plan, the second instalment in an ambitious multi-year process, aims to create the environment where the number of people at work will increase by 100,000 by 2016, and will exceed 2 million people by 2020.

While unemployment remains high, there are signs of progress in the labour market. The latest data shows that there was an annual increase in employment of 3.2% or 57,900 in the year to the third quarter of 2013; some 92% of this increased employment is in full-time roles. Total employment now stands at 1,892,300 (seasonally adjusted), or 44,500 more people at work than when the Action Plan for Jobs process began.

The continuing scale of the challenge is evident with 276,600 persons unemployed in the third quarter of 2013. However, this represented a decrease of 40,200 or 12.7% in the number of people unemployed in the year and this builds significantly on the 1.1% decrease in unemployment seen in 2012. It is worth noting that this fall in unemployment over the year took place in the context of an overall increase in the labour force which grew from 2,148,800 in Q3 2012 to 2,164,300 in Q3 2013.

The growth in employment is being seen across a range of sectors, predominantly in the export-oriented sectors supported by the enterprise development agencies, as well as in tourism. There was also a moderate increase in the construction sector (4% or 4,300).

Employment grew in eight of the fourteen economic sectors over the year, with the greatest rate of decline recorded in public administration and defence (-3.8% or -3,800), but with rises in employment in other sectors targeted by the Action Plan for Jobs, particularly internationally traded services and manufacturing.

The Action Plan process is having a positive impact on the enterprise environment and job creation, which can be seen in the significant level of net job creation in the enterprise agencies client companies. In 2013, client companies of Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland created 5,442 and 6,570 new net jobs respectively; this represents the highest levels of net new job creation by agency client companies in over a decade.

Total employment at IDA client companies now stands at 161,112 people, the highest level in the history of IDA Ireland. New job announcements and investments by IDA client companies in 2013 included a number of companies with an established presence in Ireland such as Novartis, Salesforce, Deutsche Bank and eBay as well as first time investments by companies such as Tripadvisor and Airbnb.

Total employment in Enterprise Ireland client companies stands at 175,750; the highest level recorded in the last decade. 2013 saw a number of significant announcements by Enterprise Ireland client companies including the development by Glanbia of a world-class dairy facility in Kilkenny which will create over 1,600 direct and indirect jobs and contribute an estimated €400 million per annum to the economy.

Action Plan for Jobs 2013: Capturing the impacts for economic growth and job creation

The Action Plan for Jobs is a rolling plan and, above all, a plan that will be judged on its results and impacts. In this context, some early stage impacts are being seen linked to the implementation of measures in the Plan aimed at enhancing the operating environment for firms. For example:

- 2013 saw the highest number of net jobs created by client companies of Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland in a decade; 5,442 and 6,570 new net jobs respectively. Together

Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland were the lead actors on more than 60 of the Plan's 333 actions.

- The Gathering 2013 was extremely successful with CSO figures for the year showing that the target of attracting 325,000 additional overseas visitors in 2013 was exceeded. There were 6.986 million overseas visits to Ireland in 2013, an increase of 468,000 (7.2%) on the 2012 total. Employment in the Accommodation and Food Services sector increased by 14,200 or 12% to 133,300 in the twelve months to the end of September 2013; its highest level in Quarter 3 since 2007.

6 out of 10 hotel owners reported increased business as a result of The Gathering, according to a Tourism Barometer Survey undertaken in September 2013, and B&B Ireland reported that the Gathering had resulted in significant increased business. Total expenditure by overseas visitors in Ireland (excluding fares) for the first nine months of 2013 saw an increase of 13.3% on the same period in 2012, according to CSO figures. (Action 297)

- The County and City Managers Association have agreed in principle on a continuing role for the support of Gathering type/local community events. Fáilte Ireland has developed Gathering 'toolkits' to look at strategically important areas for tourism including Community Activation, Community event micro-funding and rolling out a volunteer ambassador programme. (Actions 298, 299)
- The decision to abolish the Air Travel Tax of €3 under Budget 2014 has seen a very positive response from airlines, with a total of 23 new services commencing in 2014, along with additional capacity on 21 existing routes from the four airports. The first 11 months of 2013 saw an increase of 4.1% for combined traffic at the three State airports over 2012. Transatlantic traffic at Dublin and Shannon airports over the Summer season 2013 increased by 20%, and this is likely to continue in 2014 with new services commencing to San Francisco, Toronto and Newfoundland. (Actions 163, 302)
- Funding of €104,000 was recently approved by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to fund 6 internships aimed at providing young graduates with research, editorial and data management skills in the Irish language digital humanities sector. (Action 229)
- The Irish Visa Waiver Scheme is having a positive impact on the numbers of visitors from the countries covered under the scheme. Figures from the Central Statistics Office indicate that there was approximately a 66% increase in the number of visitors from the countries involved in 2013 compared to 2010, the last full year before the introduction of the Programme. The list of countries covered by the scheme is reviewed on an ongoing basis informed by tourism and trade developments; in November 2013, the Minister for Justice and Equality added Thailand to the list of seventeen countries already covered by the Visa Waiver Programme. (Action 307)

- 34 new jobs were created by the Irish Maritime and Energy Cluster (IMERC), and research funding of €29 million was secured (€19 million from Science Foundation Ireland and €10 million from industry) to position Ireland at the forefront of marine renewable research globally. The IMERC expects to create upwards of 180 new jobs in 2014 on the construction of the Beaufort Laboratory, in skilled research jobs and in new company start ups. (Action 255)
- 105 new jobs were created in 2013 under Bord Iascaigh Mhara's seafood processing investment programmes (vis à vis its target of 40). (Actions 254, 255)
- Irish agri-food institutional researchers won €11.3 million in funding under the final EU-FP7 research call in 2013. (Action 106)
- A new innovative 'white cheese' tailored to the Middle Eastern market, and a second cheese product for the European market have been produced based on the results of ongoing research. (Actions 112, 264 & 265)
- 60% of food and drink exports in 2013 were supplied by companies who are verified members of Origin Green and the target is to increase this to 75% by end 2014. Launched in 2012, the Origin Green programme incorporates specific sustainability enhancing activities at farm and industry level. (Action 269)
- 43 projects were approved for funding under the Competitive Feasibility Funds calls in the first three quarters of 2013. These calls were made on both a sectoral and regional basis which included the North East, the Mid West and two separate national calls for aviation companies and female entrepreneurs.

Actions due in Quarter 4

In the fourth quarter of 2013, Departments and agencies were to deliver 140 measures under the Action Plan. Twenty of the measures due in Quarter 4 2013 have not been delivered on schedule, giving a completion rate of 86%. In delivering 120 fourth quarter measures under the Plan, the Government has, for example:

- As part of Disruptive Reform 1 – Big Data
 - Under Action 4, in October, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform attended the OGP London Summit Ireland and announced a suite of measures designed to provide major impetus to Open Data in Ireland; Ireland is expected to become a full member of the OGP by April 2014.
 - Under Action 6, Enterprise Ireland formally established a Technology Centre in Data Analytics, based out of UCD.

- As part of Disruptive Reform 2 – ICT Skills
 - Under Action 13, 84% of the 769 places available on ICT graduate conversion programmes have been filled to date and colleges are continuing to enrol students.
- As part of Disruptive Reform 6 – Energy Efficiency
 - Under Action 43, the revised National Energy Performance Contracting Policy Framework (EPC) was published prior to Christmas; it will assist public sector and commercial bodies to develop energy efficiency proposals with Energy Services companies.
- As part of Disruptive Reform 7 – National Health Innovation Hub
 - Under Action 50, work on establishing the National Health Innovation Hub has progressed; terms of reference setting out details of its mission, its functions and its key activities, and a proposed governance arrangement for a Hub have been developed.

And more broadly, in Quarter 4, for example:

- Under Action 62, a new pilot programme involving 1,000 SMEs will be launched in 2014, involving expert mentoring support to enhance the financial and business capacity of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).
- Under Action 91, the "Big Ideas" showcase took place on September 25th 2013, bringing together researchers, innovative companies and technology transfer professionals. 21 inventors pitched their new technologies to an audience of over 450 potential investors.
- Under Action 128, the Department of Education and Skills published their review of the apprenticeship system in Ireland on January 21st 2014. The Review is available at: www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Review-of-Apprenticeship-Training-in-Ireland.pdf
- Under Action 152, 147 schools have had broadband deployed to date under phase 2 of the national rollout of 100 Mbps broadband services
- Under Action 201, the Global Irish Economic Forum was held in Dublin Castle on October 4th-5th, and brought Members of the Global Irish Network together with members of the Government, presidents of third level institutions, members of the Opposition and domestic business leaders for two days of intensive discussion to support economic development in Ireland. Two new initiatives for the 2013 Forum were the hosting of regional roundtables in Cork, Galway and Belfast on October 3rd, and a major networking event on the morning of October 5th during which a number of Network members held a series of round table meetings with some 70 Irish SMEs.

- Under Action 212, IDA Ireland exceeded its 2013 target and won 164 new FDI investment projects for Ireland. Among the leading investments secured during the year were Deutsche Bank, Twitter, EMC, eBay, Salesforce, Novartis, Vistakon, Facebook, Zurich, Symantec, De Puy, Yahoo, Sanofi and Indeed.com. First time investments were secured from corporations across the portfolio including from Qualcomm, Airbnb, Tripadvisor, Regeneron, Huawei, FireEye, Grifols, Alexion and Acorn Direct Marketing.
- Under Action 213, IDA Ireland also exceeded its new jobs gross target for 2013; 13,367 new jobs were created by client companies; the net increase in employment was 7,071, the highest level of job creation in over a decade. Total employment at IDA client companies now stands at 161,112, the highest level in the history of IDA Ireland.
- Under Action 236, Ireland's National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) 2014-2016, 'Good for Business, Good for the Community', was approved by Government, following extensive consultation with, and contributions from, key stakeholders. The Plan sets out the key principles and objectives which underpin CSR in Ireland and highlights the benefits that can accrue to both businesses and communities through the adoption of good CSR practices.
- Under Action 257, three food related Ministerial Trade and Investment Missions were undertaken in Q4 2013, to the US, Japan and the Gulf States. The Japanese trip resulted in the opening of the Japanese market to Irish beef; this market is valued at €12-15 million. The trade mission to the Gulf States resulted in a €20 million investment by the Irish Dairy Board in a Saudi Dairy company, AL Wazeen; the opening of the Kerry Food and Ingredients development centre in United Arab Emirates (UAE); a €5 million contract signed by Biotecter Analytical Systems, a Cork based company, for water analysis equipment; and the announcement by Bord Bia of new offices in Dubai to support Irish food companies exporting to UAE.

However, as stated above, twenty of the measures outlined in the Plan have not been delivered on schedule:

- *Test, implement and deliver the new Integrated Licensing Application System – Actions 35 and 36.* Strict procedural timelines have impacted on the delivery date of the new Integrated Licensing Application System, but it is currently anticipated that a service provider could be appointed by Q2 2014, with the delivery of the overall service by Q3 2014. The Prior Information Notice in relation to the tendering process was published in early February 2014 and the necessary Statutory Instrument to provide for the Local Government Management Agency to proceed with the tender process was also signed in early February 2014.
- *Prepare a detailed proposal for Government consideration for the establishment of NHIH including services to be offered by NHIH, and secure Government approval based on NPT proposal – Action 51.* A Memorandum for Information was noted by Government in

January 2014 outlining proposals for next steps to be taken in the establishment of the National Hub.

- *Provide Pre-Service Training for 200 students at third level colleges in Discover Primary Science and Maths (DPSM) – Action 96.* DPSM training sessions were run with 87 undergraduates and 47 HDip Students in Marino College of Further Education in January 2013. Similar sessions with Froebel College students would normally have been run in Q4. However, because of the merger between Froebel and NUI Maynooth these have been deferred to Q1 and Q2 2014, at which stage the action of delivering pre-service training to 200 students will be complete.
- *Transfer the ePortfolio element of Discover Sensors Pilot Programme to relevant stakeholders – Action 97.* The intention was to transfer Scifolio from Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) to the Kildare and Wicklow Education & Training Board (formerly Kildare VEC) in 2013. However, on the basis of a request received from the Education & Training Board, SFI will continue to support Scifolio until the end of the current academic year (June 2014).
- *Publish the Health Information Bill to streamline the ethics approval process for health research not governed by statutory regulation and EU Law, and to provide a legal framework for the introduction of an individual identifier for use in the health system – Action 99.* Provisions enabling the introduction of a unique identifier system for (a) patients and (b) healthcare providers were originally intended for inclusion in the Health Information Bill. However, given the urgency associated with a Troika commitment, those provisions are now set out in a separate Health Identifiers Bill. The Bill was published in December 2013. It is the intention that the Health Information Bill, containing a number of provisions other than those related to the unique identifier system will be published by Q4 2014.
- *Develop shared services implementation solution for an IT based road management and utility licensing system to standardise approach for utilities – Action 157.* The initial pilot phase identified a number of technical and other issues that required to be addressed. Measures were taken to address this, and by end 2013, the IT system had been upgraded and finalised for deployment in local authority areas. Also, and with the assistance of additional staff, an agreed schedule was in place for the deployment of the system. In addition, the Department, in conjunction with the Local Government Efficiency Review Office (LGERO), is working on the establishment of a Road Management Office (RMO) by mid-2014. It is proposed that the RMO will deal with Pavement Management and Road Licensing in the first instance. The delivery of this shared service is progressing and will support Action 157.
- *Issue for consultation, a draft policy statement on new aviation policy to deliver competitive international access in terms of locations served, frequency of service and cost both in the short and longer term – Action 160.* A total of 74 submissions were received as part of the public consultation process that took place in 2013, and the draft

new aviation policy is scheduled to go before the Cabinet Committee on Economic Infrastructure in February 2014 with publication to follow shortly thereafter.

- *Amend the Health Act 2007 (Registration of Designated Centres for older People) Regulations, 2009 to progress the streamlining of certain administrative processes and other interactions with nursing home providers – Action 170.* Non-delivery of this action is due, in part, to a delay in completing the revision of the Health Act 2007 (Care & Welfare of Residents in Designated Centres for Older People) Regulations. It is expected that this will take place in Q1 2014.
- *Draft and publish a policy statement on entrepreneurship, including youth entrepreneurship – Action 175.* The Entrepreneurship Forum's Report, "Entrepreneurship in Ireland" was brought to Government and published in January 2014. The Report makes 69 recommendations. Many of the recommendations require Government action, but there are also recommendations aimed at businesses, entrepreneurs and industry representative bodies, to engage them in building a stronger entrepreneurial culture in Ireland. A cross-Governmental feasibility and operational assessment is now required and it is intended that the Policy Statement will be published during Q1 of 2014.
- *Achieve €500 million in R&D investment to have a total annual R&D spend by multinationals here of €1.7 billion by 2014 – Action 214.* R&D capital investment remains very strong. However, in 2013, IDA Ireland fell just short of its target to achieve €500 million in investments securing 93% of the target of R&D investments worth €467 million. This is a strong performance given the general market caution for large capital projects which includes significant R&D activities. RD&I remains significantly important to Ireland's FDI landscape embedding existing employment and putting in place the framework for future employment creation.
- *Publish the final report on the medium-term economic development of rural areas for the period to 2025 based on a national consultation of rural stakeholders including employers, unions, farm bodies, community organisation and the public sector – Action 223.* The draft report was submitted to the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government at the end of November for his consideration. The process has identified a diverse and complex series of issues and challenges to be addressed to support the future economic development of rural Ireland. It is hoped that the report will be published in Quarter 1 2014.
- *Establish Socio Economic Committees in certain local authority areas to bring greater coherence and oversight to the range of local and community development interventions locally and provide for a more effective matching of resources to locally identified priorities, including those interventions that focus on increasing people's work readiness and employment prospects – Action 224.* This action has been delayed due to necessary prioritisation given to the delivery of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 which contains important provisions in relation to placing Local Community Development

Committees (LCDCs) and the community elements of integrated Local Economic and Community Plans on a statutory footing. Draft Local Economic and Community Plans are expected to be in place across all areas by end 2014.

- *Local Authorities to publish revised economic development and jobs strategies – Action 225.* The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government is following up with Local Authorities as to the level of strategies developed or reviewed in 2013. Initial responses indicate that 67% are complete, with the remainder being completed shortly.
- *Finalise and publish the study examining the impact of volunteer-led youth provision being carried out by NUIM and UCC – Action 234.* The study of volunteer-led youth is currently being finalised and will be published in Q1 2014.
- *Complete a round of recruitment for ten new research posts in the Marine Institute – Action 258.* These are mainly specialist, externally funded posts to be recruited by the Marine Institute in the areas of oceanographic services and data modelling. As difficulties have arisen on the provision of the anticipated external funding, and no EU Funding Framework for the next seven years has been agreed at EU level at this point in the Marine area, these posts will not be filled in the immediate future but will be reconsidered when suitable external funding is identified.
- *Publish a Code of Practice for retrofitting energy efficiency measures in existing dwellings – Action 284.* At the request of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and SEAI, who are the main funding partners on the development of the Codes of Practice, the scope of the project was extended in 2013 to include an additional research item on the adequacy of ventilation in dwellings undergoing retrofits grant-aided under the Better Energy Homes scheme. Following delivery of the ventilation research in mid-January 2014, the definitive Code of Practice will be published by NSAI in February 2014.
- *Regarding the Producer Responsibility Initiative model in Ireland, analyse the consultants final report, consult with stakeholders and make recommendations to the Minister – Action 291.* In November 2013, the Minister published the reports on Tyres and End of Life Vehicles. The reports are subject to a period of consultation until January 31st 2014. The main review is at an advanced stage and it is expected that the final report will be published in the first half of 2014.

Action Plan for Jobs 2013: Delivery of “Ongoing 2013” Measures

As noted above, this Fourth Progress Report is the final one dealing with 2013 and thus provides an update on the actions described in the Plan as “Ongoing 2013.” All but two of these 166 measures have been delivered over the course of the year, giving a completion rate of 99% for those “Ongoing 2013” measures.

In progressing these “ongoing” actions over the last twelve months Government has, for example:

- As part of Disruptive Reform 1 – Big Data
 - Under Action 5, a Smart Futures STEM Careers Week took place from April 29th – May 3rd 2013, which featured live online events where students and guidance counsellors interacted with people working in STEM Industries such as cybersecurity, data analytics and computer forensics. Online chat was facilitated between students and experts, and a technology competition in association with the Coder Dojo was launched.
- As part of Disruptive Reform 2 – ICT Skills
 - Under Action 14, the Report of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN), ‘Addressing Future Demand for High-level ICT Skills,’ was published in November 2013, and noted the significant increase in output of computer graduates in Ireland that is occurring as a result of the implementation of the ICT Action Plan.
- As part of Disruptive Reform 6 – Energy Efficiency
 - Under Action 43, 21 exemplar energy efficiency projects are underway since June 2013, and have received supports from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) and the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, with a total of €440,000 in technical assistance committed across these projects.
- As part of Disruptive Reform 7 – National Health Innovation Hub
 - Under Action 48, Enterprise Ireland appointed a monitor for the Cork Demonstrator Project, which was established in Cork in 2012 to oversee a group of six initial industry-proposed innovation projects, and they will report any issues/learnings to the National Project Team (NPT) via the Enterprise Ireland representatives, in addition to ongoing review of performance by the NPT and the Project Steering Group.

And more broadly, over 2013, the Government has for example:

- Under Action 53, on foot of a joint Revenue and Department of Finance public consultation on “Taxation of Micro Enterprises,” nine of the ten tax measures to support SMEs which were announced in Budget 2013 have been completed.
- Under Action 129, the Momentum programme provided over 6,500 education and training places for the long-term unemployed in 2013.
- Under Action 133, in 2013, Údarás na Gaeltachta approved over 520 jobs, and €10 million in grants support, with a cumulative investment of in excess of €40 million anticipated across the Gaeltacht areas. 500 new jobs were created; and up to 1,000 places in a network of pre-school and after-school facilities were supported within the Gaeltacht.

- Under Action 153, legislation was enacted in December 2013 (The Water Services (No.2) Act) which established Irish Water as the national water services authority from January 2014. The roll out of the domestic metering programme and the associated customer service infrastructure, when fully operational, will create 1,600 jobs in relation to the metering programme and 400 jobs in the area of customer service and support. Currently, there are 871 people employed as part of the domestic metering programme and of these, 688 (79%) are from 'social inclusion' categories (SMEs; the Live Register; or those who are apprentices, graduates or school leavers).
- Under Action 197, ten Exploring Export Workshops were held in 2013 with 110 companies attending, in Dublin, Tralee, Castlebar, Athlone, Wexford, Galway, Limerick and Dundalk. Ten Export Awareness events were also held attended by 358 companies, and a successful 'Grow your Exports to the UK Market' event was held for Potential Exporter client companies in July with 42 companies attending a workshop with one-to-one meetings with Enterprise Ireland's UK team.
- Under Action 199, 26 trade missions/events were led at Ministerial level, including visits to Brazil, Russia, India, China, and other priority markets identified in the Government Trade Strategy.
- Under Action 205, the National Procurement Service's (NPS) efforts in 2013 to encourage SMEs to register on the Government's eTenders website have seen an increase of over 17,000 suppliers registered on the site in the past 12 months.
- Under Action 228, enterprise support funding under the Rural Development Programme was provided to 2,404 enterprises in 2013, resulting in the creation of 1,110 full-time jobs.
- Under Action 229, as part of the work being done to support initiatives in the Irish Language sector, more than 6,000 primary school children participated in the Scríobh Leabhar Scheme, while 11 Irish-language literature projects were assisted; funding was provided for 57 festivals and 10 drama companies; and more than €1m was provided for specialist third level courses in Irish in 2013, with further funding earmarked for 2014.
- Under Action 239, in 2013, 513 offenders were placed in training, education and employment through the Linkage Programme, which aims to support Probation Service clients to access appropriate training, education and employment, in order to support their reintegration into the community and to the workforce.
- Under Action 245, IDA Ireland has continued to actively encourage its client base to engage in high level R&D activities, and in 2013, DePuy (Ireland), announced its plans to invest in excess of \$36 million in an R&D programme; and Cook Medical officially opened its new state-of-the-art R&D Innovation Centre at its plant in Limerick, which represents an investment of €10 million.

- Under Action 252, in the food and drinks industry, Enterprise Ireland has supported 42 significant projects, including eight FDI projects. Between them these projects are committed to creating over 800 direct new jobs.

However, as stated above, two of the “ongoing” measures outlined in the Plan have not been delivered on schedule:

- *Progress the pending NTMA legislative changes – Action 66:* The Heads of Bill regarding the legislation to, inter alia, streamline the governance structures at the National Treasury Management Agency were approved by Government in April 2013 and are currently with the Office of the Attorney General. It is expected that the Bill will be published in March 2014 and that the proposals contained in the Bill will be implemented later this year.
- *Establish three new Technology Centres closely linked to the Government’s priority research areas of Connected Health, Data Analytics and Pharmaceutical Manufacturing and explore options in order to respond to industry needs for Technology Centres in Medical Devices and Dairy Technology – Action 86:* Two Technology Centres have been approved and established: one in Data Analytics and another in Pharmaceutical Manufacturing. Evaluations and assessment have been undertaken by Enterprise Ireland in relation to the needs for Technology centres in Medical Devices. A proposal for the establishment of a Dairy Processing Technology is currently being prepared and it is anticipated that the full proposal will undergo an evaluation during March 2014. However, there has been a slight delay in establishing the third Centre. The preparation and planning for the Technology Centre focusing on Connected Health is at an advanced stage, and approval for its establishment will be finalised by the Board in Q1 of 2014.

A further “ongoing” measure has not been delivered as set out in the Plan but delivery of the action was achieved through the application of a different enterprise support programme as below:

- *Promote the Innovation Voucher Scheme as a means of assisting SMEs who are interested in migrating their business to a cloud computing model – Action 330:* This action relates to provision of consultancy services on cloud computing to SMEs by private sector consultants. The Innovation Voucher initiative was developed to build links between Ireland's public knowledge providers (i.e. higher education institutes, public research bodies) and small businesses and it is therefore not an appropriate mechanism to support the procurement of consultancy from private sector consultants. However, Enterprise Ireland’s Strategic Consultancy Grant is appropriate in the case of SMEs that are Enterprise Ireland clients, which is likely to be the status of most of the applicants for Cloud consulting support. Under this grant, consultancy for strategic initiatives (such as cloud computing) is grant aided at up to 50% of the costs incurred in hiring a consultant, to a maximum grant amount of €35,000. This grant was presented as an option to companies looking to migrate to a cloud computing business model.

Update on actions delayed from Quarters 1, 2 and 3

Five of the six previously delayed Quarter 1 measures have now been completed (Actions 90, 104, 173 (2) and 333) and one measure outlined in the Plan for completion by the end of Quarter 1 remained outstanding as of end 2013:

1. *Complete the licensing process to enable development of the Atlantic Marine Energy Test Site (AMETS) at Belmullet – Action 103.* The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government is awaiting information regarding the project from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) and this is expected by early Q1 2014. Thereafter, the Department will be in a position to submit the AMETS project to the Minister of State for Housing and Planning for a decision on whether to consent or not under the Foreshore Act. Should a decision be taken to consent to the project, it is expected that the final stages of the process could be concluded by the end of March 2014. However, this timeframe could change should any unforeseen legal complexities arise.

In addition, as reported at the end of the second quarter, twenty of the measures outlined in the Plan for completion by the end of Quarter 2 were not delivered on schedule. While fourteen of these have since been delivered (Actions 28, 30, 84, 89, 162, 180, 224, 234, 237, 238 (2), 263 and 316), six measures due by the end of June 2013 are still outstanding at the end of Quarter 4. These are:

1. *Complete and publish the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDP) – Action 102.* The text of the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan has been finalised. The Plan was submitted to Government for approval in January and it is that the Plan will be published shortly.
2. *Publish the draft employment permits legislation to provide for more flexibility and targeted instruments in support of the economy's evolving skills needs – Action 145.* The Employment Permits Bill has been drafted and re-circulated for Ministerial Observations. The timing of the Bill's passage through the Oireachtas was adjusted during the Autumn session to reflect the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation's legislative priorities. Work is progressing on the drafting of Regulations. It is intended that the Bill will be published in Quarter 1 2014.
3. *Enact legislation to (i) put NewERA on a statutory footing, (ii) create a strategic investment fund (absorbing NPRF assets) with an Ireland-focused investment mandate, (iii) streamline governance processes in the NTMA. This will facilitate a redeployment of NPRF resources to areas of strategic importance – Action 150.* The Heads of Bill were approved by Government in April 2013 and are currently with the Office of the Attorney General. It is expected that the Bill will be published in March 2014 and that the proposals contained in the Bill will be implemented later this year.

4. *Continue to engage with the Attorney General's Office and to provide any assistance required to progress the drafting of the legislation with a view to having the Workplace Relations Bill published – Action 167.* The Workplace Relations Bill was approved for priority drafting by Cabinet in July 2012 and was included on the 'A' list for the Government's Autumn Legislative Programme 2013. It was not possible to achieve the target timescale of having the Bill published and enacted by the end of Q3 2013.

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has continued to engage with the Office of the Attorney General on an ongoing basis during Q3 and Q4 2013 to progress the drafting of the Bill. It is intended that the Bill will be published during Q1 of 2014 with a view to having the proposed new Workplace Relations structures in place during 2014.

5. *Identify relevant programmes, including management development programmes and Excellence Through People, and assess eligibility criteria in the context of extending the programmes to a broader cohort of firms – Action 244.* This action is inherently linked to Action 189 which relates to the development of sectoral strategies in the first instance. The joint EI/IDA Business Process Outsourcing and Medical Technologies strategies were both endorsed by the Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland Boards in December 2013. IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland will meet in Q1 2014 to develop an appropriate leadership and management development program including discussions on a Leadership 4 Growth programme specifically for the Medical Technologies sector. The Excellence Through People programme is currently available to both indigenous and foreign-owned firms.
6. *Complete the processing of the Bord Iascaigh Mhara licence application in respect of Galway Bay – Action 259.* Delays have been experienced in completing the scientific assessment of the application. An advisory report from the Marine Institute is expected by mid-February 2014. Following this, a revised timeline will be determined for the delivery of the measure in 2014.

Furthermore, twenty measures had not been fully delivered at the end of Quarter 3. Four of these measures have since been delivered (Actions 23, 89 (2) and 263), however; sixteen measures due by the end of September 2013 remain outstanding at the end of Quarter 4. These are:

1. *Establish an Energy Efficiency Fund to support innovative energy efficiency in the public and commercial sectors – Action 44.* The preferred partner for the establishment of the Energy Efficiency Fund has been selected and the legal due diligence procedures and contract negotiations are close to finalisation. The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and NewEra are working towards the formal establishment of the Fund which is expected to take place in Q1 2014.
2. **and 3.** *Agree and sign Ministerial Order for Codes of Practice relating to Sunday Working and the standardisation of benefits (i.e. overtime) with the goal of enhancing labour*

market competitiveness – Action 116. The Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation requested the Labour Relations Commission (LRC) to prepare the Codes of Practice in August 2012. Preparation of the Codes required the inputs of employer and employee representatives and this consultation phase proved difficult to progress, pending implementation of recommendations of Labour Court Review of Joint Labour Committees. These recommendations were published in October 2013 and Ministerial orders to give effect to the Codes are being finalised.

4. *Enact and implement the Valuations Bill in order to accelerate the revaluation of properties for commercial rates purposes* – Action 120. Significant progress has been made in the final quarter of 2013, on the drafting of amendments for Committee Stage, on the Valuation (Amendment) (No.2) Bill 2012 and it is expected that the Bill will be taken at Committee Stage in the Seanad in the first quarter of 2014. Subject to its successful passage through the Oireachtas, the Bill should be enacted in the first half of 2014.
5. *Publish legislation to provide, inter alia, for the merger of the National Consumer Agency and the Competition Authority to take advantage of the complementarities and interdependence between consumer and competition policies* – Action 127. In spite of substantial progress made, it was not possible to achieve the target timescale of having the Bill published by the end of 2013. The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has continued to engage with the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel and the Office of the Attorney General on an ongoing basis during Q3 and Q4 2013 to progress the drafting of the Bill. Work on the drafting of the Bill is at an advanced stage and it is intended that the Bill will be published in Quarter 1 2014.
6. **and 7.** *Complete passage through the Houses of the Oireachtas and signing of Regulations in support of the Employment Permits Bill 2013* – Action 145. The Employment Permits Bill has been drafted and re-circulated for Ministerial Observations. The timing of the Bill's passage through the Oireachtas was adjusted during the Autumn session to reflect the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation's legislative priorities. Work is progressing on the drafting of Regulations. It is intended that the Bill will be published in Q1 2014.
8. *Licence Phase 1 development and rollout of an IT-based road management and utility licensing system to standardise approach for utilities, including Irish Water, to improve efficiency* – Action 157. The initial pilot phase identified a number of technical and other issues that require to be addressed and which are likely to impact on the timescale for delivery of this action. Since becoming aware of these issues, the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport has met with the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) (managing the development of the system).

An approach has been agreed to facilitate the rollout of the full existing national standardised system to some Local Authorities commensurate with the necessary availability of broadband to support access to the centralised IT licensing system. A

number of actions have been taken to address the delay and additional resources have now been added to the LGMA project team. The target of starting live deployment from February 2014 onwards is still on schedule. The Department is engaging with the LGMA to ensure adherence with the agreed deliverables.

9. *Provide assistance with the passage of the Workplace Relations Bill through the legislative process to give effect to the new structures – Action 167.* The Workplace Relations Bill was approved for priority drafting by Cabinet in July 2012 and was included on the 'A' list for the Government's Autumn Legislative Programme 2013. It was not possible to achieve the target timescale of having the Bill published and enacted by the end of Q3 2013.

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has continued to engage with the Office of the Attorney General on an ongoing basis during Q3 and Q4 2013 to progress the drafting of the Bill. It is intended that the Bill will be published during Q1 of 2014 with a view to having the proposed new Workplace Relations structures in place during 2014.

10. 11 and 12. *Launch the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) website, establish all LEOs on an administrative basis, and enact legislation allowing for the dissolution of the County Enterprise Boards (CEBs) and the formal establishment of the LEOs – Action 173.*

In relation to the LEOs website, the creation of the gateway site and 31 sub-sites has been completed. Enterprise Ireland will commence training of CEB Webmasters by end-January and content migration to the LEO website will follow thereafter. The Government has decided that rather than opening LEOs on an administrative basis that all offices will be legally established and functional from a date in early April. This is dependent on the legislation passing through the houses of the Oireachtas, but once the legislation is in place it will facilitate the formal establishment of all the LEOs by early Q2 2014. In parallel to the legislative process all other practical issues are being progressed through the Implementation Working Group. The County Enterprise Boards (Dissolution) Bill, 2013 was approved by the Government and published in July, 2013. The Bill has completed its passage through the Seanad and is scheduled to be introduced 2nd Stage to the Dáil on 6th February.

13. *Roll out Competitive Regional Feasibility funds to the South West – Action 180.* A number of Competitive Feasibility Funds were rolled out over 2013 in the North East and the Mid West as well as specific calls in the aviation sector and for female entrepreneurship resulting in a total of 43 approvals. However, a specific call for the South West region (Cork and Kerry) was not held during 2013. Kerry was eligible to apply for the Mid West call and discussions are advanced in relation to having a call specifically for County Cork in Q1 2014

- 14.** *Agree modifications and plan of action to enhance existing programmes including management development programmes and Excellence Through People, to deliver to the needs of foreign owned firms – Action 244.* This action is inherently linked to Action 189 which relates to the development of sectoral strategies in the first instance. The joint EI/IDA Business Process Outsourcing and Medical Technologies strategies were both endorsed by the Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland Boards in December 2013. IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland will meet in Q1 2014 to develop an appropriate leadership and management development program including discussions on a Leadership 4 Growth programme specifically for the Medical Technologies sector. The Excellence Through People programme is currently available to both indigenous and foreign-owned firms.
- 15.** *Complete first round of recruitment (5 posts) in the Marine Institute in the areas of fisheries management, environment & food safety, oceanography, mapping and modelling – Action 258.* These are mainly specialist, externally funded posts to be recruited by the Marine Institute in the areas of oceanographic services and data modelling. Three posts have or are in process of being filled. As difficulties have arisen on the provision of the anticipated external funding, and no EU Funding Framework for the next seven years has been agreed at EU level at this point in the Marine area, the remaining posts will not be filled in the immediate future but will be reconsidered when suitable external funding is identified.
- 16.** *Bring a memorandum to Government on a proposal for domestic financing mechanism (PAYS) to stimulate Energy Efficiency projects in the domestic consumer market – Action 279.* Proposals have been received by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and these are currently being analysed. The Minister will bring forward a Memo for Government in Q1 2014.

Quarter 4 Measures

Disruptive Reforms

Disruptive Reform 1: Build on our existing enterprise strengths to make Ireland a leading country in Europe on “Big Data”

Background

The overall ambition of the disruptive reform is to “build on existing enterprise strengths to make Ireland a leading country in Europe in the area of Big Data and data analytics.” A number of significant initiatives and investments were progressed, in partnership with the enterprise sector, during 2013 and Ireland is in a strong position to realise the stated ambition of this disruptive reform.

Summary of Key Action to Date

All of the actions set out in the Action Plan for Jobs 2013 (APJ 2013) in respect of this disruptive reform have been completed. Among the key initiatives progressed were:

1. The establishment of a Taskforce on Big Data and Data Analytics

The membership of the Taskforce on Big Data and Data Analytics was formally announced by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in June 2013. Prior to the formal establishment of the Taskforce, an informal working party had met from April to June to undertake preparatory actions associated with the commitments for this disruptive reform in APJ 2013. The Taskforce is chaired by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (DJEI), and has representatives from Forfás, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Science Foundation Ireland (SFI), the Office of the Chief Information Officer, the Central Statistics Office and the National Standards Authority of Ireland as well as representatives from industry (Google, PCH International and Eishtec) and academia (the INSIGHT Research Centre and the CeADAR Technology Centre). The Taskforce met on four occasions in order to progress a number of the specific deliverables under this Disruptive Reforms, particularly those captured at points 2. and 3. below.

2. The completion of a mapping of infrastructure and initiatives supporting Big Data and Data Analytics in Ireland

To support the work of the Taskforce, Forfás undertook a mapping of infrastructure and initiatives in the area of Big Data and Data Analytics. The mapping covered three broad categories of information:

- Publicly funded R&D centres supporting Big Data and data analytics;
- Provision of higher education courses directly supporting Big Data and data analytics;
- Other projects and initiatives involving the public and private sector in Big Data and data analytics in Ireland.

The audit of activity is used as a resource within the Taskforce and is of relevance to a number of actions set out below, including the identification of pilot initiatives and issues associated with the wider ecosystem for Big Data and Data Analytics in Ireland (e.g. provision of education and training, R&D capacity etc.).

3. The identification of pilot projects to demonstrate the impact of Big Data and Data Analytics

A specific deliverable of the Taskforce was to identify at least two pilot initiatives whereby data analytics could be employed to address specific challenges delivering economic impact and/or improved public services. The Taskforce agreed criteria for the identification of pilot projects, the funding for which must come from existing funding lines and/or “own resources.” A wide search for potential pilots was coordinated by Forfás and involved significant engagement by Taskforce members including IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and Science Foundation Ireland. Following this search, the Taskforce identified two initiatives to be progressed:

- The first initiative relates to the application of Big Data in an agricultural setting and will explore the commercial impact of Big Data solutions aimed at optimising farming production;
- The second initiative relates to the use of data analytics to support policy-making in respect of labour market activation in Ireland.

The two initiatives involve multiple stakeholders and will be progressed during 2014 with lead institutions identified for each. The Taskforce will monitor progress closely and it is expected that there will be outputs and initial learnings from the pilots from mid-2014 onwards. Additional projects may emerge during 2014 on foot of the Taskforce’s engagement with stakeholders and the Taskforce will consider if it is appropriate to endorse these as pilot initiatives in addition to the initiatives identified above.

4. The launch of INSIGHT, the SFI supported research centre for data analytics

A major investment announced as part of the Big Data disruptive reform was the launch of INSIGHT, the SFI supported Centre for Data Analytics. The €88 million investment in INSIGHT represents the largest single investment in a research centre in the history of the state. The Centre will receive funding of €58 million from DJEI through SFI’s Research Centres Programme, along with a further contribution of €30 million from its industry partners.

INSIGHT brings together the expertise of 4 universities, 30 industry partners, and 200 researchers in one multi-location research centre. INSIGHT’s industry partners range from small Irish start-ups to established SMEs and large multinationals who will work on a range of projects to advance data analytics technologies in Ireland. These industry partners include RTÉ, The Irish Times, Cisco, Microsoft, Alcatel-Lucent, Santry Sports Clinic, the IRFU, Avaya, TE Labs, TreeMetrics, NitroSell, Avego, UTRC and Shimmer amongst others.

5. The launch of the Centre for Applied Data Analytics Research (CeADAR) Technology Centre

Complementing the SFI investment in research through INSIGHT and other groups, a significant investment has also been made through Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland in the industry-led technology centre, CeADAR, which aims to accelerate the development, deployment and adoption of Data Analytics technology and relevant innovations. CeADAR's initial agenda is based on technology challenges that have been identified by its industry members and including issues such as the design of intelligent analytic interfaces and data management techniques supporting analytics. CeADAR is managed by an Industry Steering Group which consists of the industry partners, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and representatives from the project research teams at University College Dublin (UCD), University College Cork (UCC) and Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT).

6. Preparations for Ireland's membership of the Open Government Partnership

In October 2013, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform provided detail on a number of initiatives around Open Data that are being progressed in the context of Ireland's intention to seek membership of the Open Government Partnership (OGP). The OGP is a global multilateral initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency by making more information available about their activities, empower citizens through increased civic participation, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. Ireland is expected to officially join the OGP in 2014, when it presents its action plan to the Steering Committee and endorses the Open Government Declaration. The specific initiatives on Open Data announced in October 2013 are set out in the progress report for Action 4 below.

7. Completion of a study of skills demand in Big Data and Data Analytics

A study on skills demand in the area of Big Data and Data Analytics was commenced by Forfás and the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) as per Action 11 of APJ 2013. The aim of the study is to forecast the annual demand over the period 2013-2020 for Big Data and Data Analytics and related roles across the Irish economy. It also provides recommendations aimed at industry, education providers and other stakeholders to ensure that the output of skilled professionals in the area of data analytics is matched to the needs of the enterprise sector in terms of both quantity and quality of output. The study has involved interviews and workshops with foreign owned and indigenous companies and other key stakeholders as well as a review of relevant international and domestic literature.

There has been regular interaction between the EGFSN and the Taskforce on Big Data with some common membership of both groups to ensure alignment of the Skills Study with the work of the Taskforce. The research work for the study was completed in 2013 and the EGFSN will issue its report and recommendations early in 2014.

Next Steps

The ambition associated with the Big Data disruptive reform will be progressed further during 2014 in the context of the 2014 Action Plan for Jobs. Key dimensions of the disruptive reform will continue to be in the areas of:

- Skills provision for Big Data and Data Analytics;
- Research and Development, aligned to the needs of industry, in areas of Big Data and Data Analytics;
- Government use of data analytics and steps to make Government data available to support economic and social objectives.

The specific details of steps to be taken in respect of this agenda will be set out in the Action Plan for Jobs 2014.

Action 4: Progress the development of Ireland's National Action Plan on Open Government Partnership (OGP)

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (DPER)

Update: Complete

The Open Government* Partnership (OGP) is a global initiative launched in 2011. Its aim is to secure commitments from governments to share more information about their activities. The intention is to increase civic participation in decision-making, fight corruption and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. To join OGP, countries must commit to uphold the principles of open and transparent government by endorsing the Open Government Declaration

Ireland is moving towards full membership of the OGP. The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform attended the OGP London Summit in late October 2013 and announced a suite of measures designed to provide major impetus to Open Data in Ireland.

Subject to Government approval, the Minister announced that Ireland commits to:

- Signing up to the G8 Open Data Charter: the primary international standard for Open Data
- Establishing an Open Data Board: to design and oversee effective governance of Open Data in Ireland
- Setting up an Open Data Implementation Group: to drive progress in making public sector data much more widely available and accessible; and
- Building an online Open Data Platform: to act as the primary source for public sector datasets.

Work is now underway to progress the drafting of Ireland’s first National Action Plan on OGP in close consultation with Government Departments and civil society interests. A finalised action plan will be presented to Government for approval in early 2014. Ireland is expected to become a full member of the OGP by April 2014.

* Open Government is a style of government where procedures and decision-making are open to public scrutiny. Its development has come with heightened awareness of integrity and ethics in public life.

Action 6: Through the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation we will further develop a critical mass of research activity and scale in the area of “Data Analytics, Management, Security and Privacy” in line with Government’s priority areas for R&D

Q4 Measure: Hosting approved and Centre established. (EI, IDA)

Update: Complete

The Technology Centre for Applied Data Analytics Research (CeADAR) was approved by Enterprise Ireland’s Board in October 2013. The industry-led technology centre is now established and is based out of UCD with partners UCC and DIT.

Three core research themes have been identified as the basis for CeADAR:

- Intelligent Analytic Interfaces
- Data Management for Analytics
- Advanced Analytics.

Action 7: Take action to put in place an integrated national High Performance Computing (HPC) facility that will support Big Data/Data Analytics.

Q4 Measure: Aim to maximise the synergies between ICHEC and other existing HPC service provision across the various higher education institutions, including support for Big Data/Data Analytics. (DJEI, DES, HEA, ICT research funding agencies)

Update: Complete

Funding for the Irish Centre for High-End Computing (ICHEC) for the period 2013-2015 has been arranged jointly by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (DJEI) and the Department of Education and Skills (DES). DJEI and DES will monitor the progress of this funding through regular meetings to ensure that synergies between ICHEC and other high performance computing services continue to be optimised.

Action 10: NSAI to identify appropriate mechanisms whereby Ireland can help to lead standards development activities linked to areas of data analytics/Big Data prioritised by the enterprise sector in Ireland; mobilise enterprise involvement in the appropriate working groups.

Q4 Measure: Focus Irish ICT formal standardisation activity on data analytics/ Big Data related expert groups and projects to support this disruptive reform. (NSAI and Industry)

Update: Complete

The international standardisation organisations' (International Organisation for Standardisation - ISO and International Electrotechnical Commission - IEC) Joint Technical Committee 1 (JTC 1) is the international standards development environment where experts come together to develop worldwide information and communications technology standards for business and consumer applications.

The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) focused its formal standardisation activity on the work of this group during the fourth quarter. An NSAI delegation, including the Chairman of the national ICT Standards Consultative Committee, attended the annual plenary meeting of the joint working group November 4th to 10th 2013. The Irish committee is continuing its work on the project for Data Management and Interchange and the newly established Study Group on Big Data.

Action 11: Undertake a detailed assessment of the demand for data analytics and related skills to build on existing estimates and to explore the precise qualifications required, map the skills needs against existing programmes and take action through existing mechanisms to address gaps between supply and demand

Q4 Measure: Produce final report with recommendations made to address any identified gaps between the supply and demand for data analytics and related skills. (Forfás, EGFSN)

Update: Complete

A final report on the assessment of the demand for data analytics and related skills including the framing of recommendations has been completed and was approved at the final meeting of the Steering Group on January 9th.

Presentations on the interim findings/conclusions of the research were made to the Big Data Taskforce, the EGFSN and to the Forfás Board in December.

Disruptive Reform 2: Make Ireland the most attractive location in the world for ICT Skills availability ensuring continued success of the ICT sector

Background

Building on Ireland's existing strengths in the area of ICT, this Disruptive Reform aims to build Ireland's ICT skills capability to the point that it is a unique selling point and makes Ireland a location of choice for mobile ICT investment and entrepreneurs to set up and grow ICT businesses.

Delivery of the actions under this Reform involved two key strands:

1. Building the domestic supply of graduates from the education system under the *Joint Government-Industry ICT Action Plan: Meeting the High Level ICT Skills Needs of Enterprise in Ireland* which was published in January 2012 and is being led by the Department of Education and Skills (D/ES). The Plan is a collaborative system-wide response, across Departments, agencies and the education and enterprise sectors aimed at increasing the domestic supply of high-level ICT graduates
2. Reforming the employment permit regime with the aim of attracting more people with ICT skills from abroad to work in Ireland. This work is being led by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (DJEI).

Summary of Key Action to Date

Building the Domestic Pipeline

The *ICT Action Plan* sets out a range of measures aimed at building the supply of ICT skills in short term through reskilling programmes, while in tandem building the longer term supply of high quality ICT graduates from the education system. Key deliverables under this work strand to date include:

- Building the mainstream output of Level 8 ICT graduates (Honours Bachelor Degree): The overarching target included in the *ICT Action Plan* is to double the output of Level 8 graduates from mainstream undergraduate ICT disciplines between 2011 and 2018. Since publication, significant progress in meeting the targets in the Plan has been achieved. Level 8 graduate output in 2013 is forecast to be more than 25% higher than in the baseline year 2011 and the Action Plan target of doubling level 8 graduate output by 2018 is now expected to be reached by 2015.
- Actions to increase the domestic supply of ICT graduates in the short term through conversion/reskilling programmes: The Disruptive Reform includes a target to provide an additional 2,000 honours level ICT graduate professionals in 2013 through reskilling opportunities and migration. Over 1,100 people graduated from the ICT conversion

courses and Springboard ICT programmes at Level 8 or higher during 2013. An additional 600 people graduated from Springboard ICT programmes at Levels 6 and 7.

Almost 1,500 places have been provided under two rounds of the ICT graduate skills conversion programme since 2012. The programmes, which are selected for funding following a competitive tender process, equip graduates with core computing and programming skills as well as with a range of specialisation in niche areas of growth potential. High level ICT upskilling opportunities are also being provided through the Springboard programme. Almost 5,600 people have enrolled on ICT programmes under the three rounds of the programme to date.

- Actions to increase mathematical proficiency of students leaving school and the number of students with strong maths skills progressing onto ICT undergraduate programmes: There has been a full roll out of Project maths and associated CPD for all teachers of mathematics at second level. Just under 26% of Leaving Certificate students took higher level maths in 2013, an increase of 58% since 2011. This compares to an Action Plan target of 30% of Leaving Certificate students taking higher maths by 2020. A two year, part-time, Level 8 postgraduate programme for ‘out-of-field’ teachers of mathematics is being provided, with over 300 teachers participating in each of the first two intakes of the programme (in 2012 and 2013).

Attracting Skills from Abroad

In April 2013, the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Richard Bruton T.D., announced a series of reforms to the employment permits system aimed at increasing Ireland’s attractiveness as a location for international mobile talent. The reforms delivered to date include:

- Changing about 100 of the current 192 rules
- Reducing the processing time by 33%
- Reducing the remuneration threshold in respect of the Work Permit EP for a limited number of categories to below the current level of €30,000 per annum.
- A range of initiatives with the Department of Justice and Equality (DJE) to increase the potential pool of employment permit applicants
- Improving customer service and communications through revised information on our website and through timesaving changes for employers
- Rollout of first iteration of eForm to reduce incidence of error by applicants, thus speeding up waiting times
- Transfer of call centre to Workplace Relations Customer Service Centre in Carlow, to free up staffing resources for processing.

The following reforms are underway:

- Streamlining the appeals process.
- Broadening and updating the Highly Skilled Occupations list and Ineligible Categories of Employment for Employment Permits list.

These improvements were introduced with a view to achieving a target of at least 700 additional successful applications in respect of IT skills by end March 2014, which would represent a 50% increase on the 1,183 Employment Permits issued for IT occupations in 2012. At the end of 2013, 1,451 Employment Permits have issued in respect of IT occupations, an increase of 268 in the year.

Next Steps

The Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation are jointly leading the process to develop a new *ICT Skills Action Plan* to be launched in early 2014 in tandem with the 2014 Action Plan for Jobs. The review is being informed by the EGFSN report on ICT skills demand which was published in November 2013. The scope of the revised Plan is being broadened to encompass measures to increase the supply of highly skilled ICT professionals from abroad as well as an increase the domestic supply of high level ICT graduates.

Improving domestic pipeline

Action 13: Continue delivery of all aspects of the current ICT Action Plan and development of new responses, actions and timelines in line with emerging needs.

Q4 Measure: Maximise uptake of places available on ICT graduate conversion programmes. (DES, HEA)

Update: Complete

84% of the 769 places available on ICT graduate conversion programmes have been filled to date and colleges are continuing to enrol students on these programmes.

Attracting necessary skills from abroad

Action 29: Review outcome of improvements to the employment permits application system.

On or before end Q1 2014 Measure: Conduct a review against the agreed performance indicators after 12 months or 1,000 permits issued (DJEI)

Update: Complete

A review of the impact of changes to the employment permits application system against agreed performance indicators was undertaken in December 2013 by DJEI with inputs from representatives of Forfás, IDA Ireland and SOLAS. The performance indicators relate to the number of permits issued to ICT professionals, achieving a decrease in processing permit times, and reductions in the number of incomplete applications received. The review indicates that:

- The targeted reduction of 33% in processing times for permits was achieved.
- There has been an increase in the number of permits issued to ICT professionals over the number issued in 2012.
- Reductions in the number of incomplete applications will need to be monitored over a period of time. An eForm for employment permit applications was introduced in October, 2013 and it is expected that this will result be a reduction in the number of incomplete applications received.

Disruptive Reform 3: Reduce the Administrative Burden on Business through the Introduction of an Integrated Licensing System

Background

As part of the Government's Action Plan for Jobs 2012 Forfás undertook a "Review and Audit of Licences" across key sectors of the economy assessing 159 licences. The report found that businesses had to apply for a multiplicity of licences across many licensing authorities imposing a significant administrative burden. The principal recommendation of the Review was that all relevant licensing authorities proceed towards the development of an integrated licensing application system; a one-stop application portal, amalgamating licence applications for business across government departments, agencies and licensing authorities.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs, chaired by the Taoiseach, agreed to proceed with the implementation of the recommendations in the report, including the introduction of an integrated licensing application system with a focus on the retail sector in the first instance incorporating up to 29 licences across 40 different licensing authorities.

This project is a major initiative within the APJ 2013 and is a reformative step in reducing the administrative burden and red tape for business. The delivery of an integrated licensing application service for business offers real potential to ease the process of starting up a business in Ireland and will significantly reduce the work involved in annual renewals of licences. It will also contribute to maintaining Ireland's position at the forefront of delivering advanced eGovernment services and using Information Technology to reduce costs for business and improve the delivery of services to business.

The new Integrated Licensing Application Service should provide significant savings for businesses and entrepreneurs across Ireland through the simplification of the process for applying for multiple licences. The Integrated Service should also provide productivity and efficiency gains in the public sector by streamlining the administration of licensing processes and the potential for more integrated inspection and compliance systems in the future and better application of risk-based enforcement.

This work is being led by Forfás and DJEI in partnership with the relevant government departments and licensing authorities and the City and County Managers Association (CCMA).

Summary of Key Action to Date

1. Establishment of a steering group to oversee the development and implementation of the pilot integrated licensing application system for the retail sector

Using the retail sector as a pilot, a steering group, chaired by the Minister of State for Small Business and comprising relevant stakeholders including licensing authorities, relevant Government Departments and agencies, was established to develop an integrated licensing application service. Key outcomes of the work of the Steering Group, in consultation with relevant public bodies and other stakeholders, include:

- Agreement by the licensing authorities with a remit in the retail sector on the key principles and parameters for the Integrated Licensing Application Service;
- As no additional Government funding was available for the delivery of this project, the Steering Group agreed to progress the development of the Integrated Licensing Application Service through an outsourced, ‘finance-design-build-operate’ model. The appointed service provider will recoup their investment through a fee/commission structure;
- Development and consideration of options for developing the Integrated Licensing Application Service either using an existing platform within the state sector or an outsourced provision of the solution; and
- Agreement to progress the option of an outsourced provision, through a finance-design-build-operate model based on the functional and legislative requirements of the service and the fact that there is no additional government exchequer funding available for the project.

2. Completion of a systems analysis and audit of the processes/applications requirements, statutory obligations and authorisation process of licences within licensing authorities

A number of studies have been undertaken in terms of:

- A review of the existing licensing processes;
- A review of the underpinning legislative requirements;
- An analysis of the total revenue generated from the licences and the number of transactions (applications and renewals) on an annual basis; and
- A collation of all the licence application forms as a PDF document.

A consolidated report has been prepared for the licensing processes and the legislative requirements and this will be attached to the request for tender (RfT) as background material as well as the licence application forms and an estimated global figure for the revenue stream and the number of transactions.

A cost benefit analysis will be completed as part of the tender process and the appointment of a service provider and will be based on the business model proposed in the successful proposal.

3. Defining the Integrated Licensing Application System

As the Steering Group agreed to the outsourced provision of an Integrated Licensing Application Service, Forfás with DJEI began the public procurement process in terms of developing an appropriate model for a market-led solution and a Request for Tender.

A contracting authority is required to manage this process overall and sign the contract with the appointed service provider. The County and City Managers Association (CCMA) agreed that the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) would act as the contracting authority for this Request for Tender.

As part of the development of the RfT, a detailed functional specification has been developed by Forfás and the LGMA in consultation with some of the key licensing authorities for the retail sector including the Revenue Commissioners and the Local Authorities.

4. Progress the building of the Integrated Licensing Application System, as part of the eGovernment Strategy

Forfás and DJEI have been working very closely with the Chief State Solicitor's Office (CSSO), the LGMA, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) and more recently with the Attorney General's Office in developing the Request for Tenders.

The Prior Information Notice in relation to the tendering process was published in early February 2014 and the necessary Statutory Instrument to provide for the Local Government

Management Agency to proceed with the tender process was also signed in early February 2014 by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government. Based on the potential value of the contract the tender is subject to European procurement directives. Following the open call for tenders through EU Official Journal it would take a minimum of three months to award a contract. These strict timelines will impact on the delivery date of the building, testing, and delivery of the Integrated Licensing Application Service.

Based on the above and subject to the designation of a lead Government Department within the coming weeks, a service provider could be appointed by Q2 2014 with the delivery of the solution by Q3 2014. The timeline for rollout is dependent on the outcome of the evaluation process itself and the participation of Licensing Authorities.

Next Steps

Next steps for the development and delivery of the Integrated Licensing Application System will be outlined in APJ 2014.

Action 35: Test and Implement developed Integrated Licensing Application System.

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (Steering Group Members, Forfás, DJEI, CCMA/Local Authorities, relevant Licensing Authorities)

Update: Delayed

Significant progress has been made on the development of the Integrated Licensing Application System. However, as outlined above, procedural timelines have impacted on the delivery date of the System. Based on the progress and timelines set out above, it is currently anticipated that a service provider could be appointed by Q2 2014, with the delivery of the overall service by Q3 2014.

Action 36: Deliver the Integrated Licensing Application System for the Retail sector

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (Steering Group Members, Forfás, DJEI, CCMA/Local Authorities, relevant Licensing Authorities)

Update: Delayed

Please see update provided for Action 35 above.

Disruptive Reform 4: Increase the number of businesses trading online

Background

A set of new integrated actions have been identified with the objective of encouraging at least 10,000 Irish-based small and medium businesses to become active online. A target of 2,000 Irish SMEs will be supported over 2013 and 2014 to develop their business by trading online.

These integrated actions will result in Irish business gaining competitiveness and growing by having access to new markets and a wider customer base. The net jobs gain envisaged under this programme will be 3,200¹.

Irish-based small businesses have for some time been exposed to various opportunities to go on-line and ultimately trade. Certain industry areas such as: travel, accommodation, electronic goods and services have been transformed by digital. To compete in these markets, a small business requires high levels of adoption of the internet. However in other sectors this level of adoption is absent. Notwithstanding the wide availability of supports, only circa 23% of Irish SMEs are trading on-line.

This initiative introduces a new financial incentive to encourage small business owners and managers to invest in transforming their business to incorporate an appropriate on-line trading component. The incentive applies at the point of investment for the business. It takes the form of an Online Trading Voucher/Grant of €2500 maximum in value which must be matched by the business applicant.

Summary of Key Action to Date

The initiative was developed by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) as part of the National Digital Strategy (NDS), published by government in July 2013. The adoption of digital by Irish small business to support economic growth and jobs is a key objective of the NDS and as such the alignment with the disruptive jobs initiatives championed by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation is clear.

Funding and resources for a full scale rollout of this initiative were not available in 2013. However funding has been secured within the 2014 allocation to DCENR, and the national rollout will take place during 2014. The following actions have taken place to date:

- A pilot implementation has been developed by DCENR in collaboration with the Dublin City Enterprise Board (DCEB). This pilot is underway and consists of the following:

¹ Based on analysis done by McKinsey that for every job the internet displaces it creates 2.6 jobs. This is an estimate based on international experience and cannot be construed as the definitive outcome of the

- The development of a robust and efficient application process which provided a basis for applicant selection while not adding substantial administrative burden to the applicant business
- A published call for proposals with eligibility criteria and reporting requirements so that an evaluation as to effectiveness of the voucher scheme can be made
- The development of an evaluation approach for applications where awards focus on businesses who demonstrate a significant potential for developing a capability to trade on-line
- An evaluation of applications based on the outcomes defined in their proposals with priority weighting given to businesses who aim to extend their customer base, start exporting and grow employment
- The development of company mentoring supports pre and post application
- The first call for proposals was made in Q3 2013 and 25 companies were selected to receive the first trading online vouchers. A second set of 25 companies will be selected in January 2014.
- A customised mentoring support workshop was organised by the DCEB for selected companies and was completed in December 2013.
- The Government's Stimulus Package is providing funding for a national rollout of the trading online initiative, commencing mid-2014.
- Evaluation of the pilot is underway. Some refinements will be implemented for the second round of vouchers in the pilot which will be rolled out in January 2014. The learnings from both rounds of the pilot will inform the full national rollout.

Next Steps

Following the completion of the second pilot, it is anticipated that the trading online vouchers scheme will be launched nationally in mid-2014. An awareness, training and promotion campaign will run in parallel. It will highlight, through case studies, the opportunities for all small businesses in Ireland to benefit from the efficiencies and business development possibilities using digital content and technology. Successful business who participated in the pilot phase will be profiled which will help to further enhance peer-to-peer promotion.

Disruptive Reform 5: Make it attractive for businesses to hire additional employees from the Live Register through the JobsPlus Initiative

Background

The aim of this Reform is to provide a simple, easily understood and attractive scheme that would encourage employers to recruit from the cohort of the long term unemployed.

While there was already a suite of measures that support employers to employ or provide for those on the Live Register, there had been low take-up of some schemes to-date. For that reason APJ 2013 provided for the replacement of the existing PRSI exemption and Revenue Tax Assist schemes by a simplified initiative *JobsPlus*.

Summary of Key Action to date

JobsPlus, administered by the Department of Social Protection, was launched on schedule by the Taoiseach, together with the Tánaiste, the Minister for Social Protection and the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in July 2013.

A particular consideration in developing *JobsPlus* was ensuring that the scheme was effectively designed and communicated so that it is taken up by employers and is operated in a user friendly manner. In this regard, the Department of Social Protection (DSP) consulted with industry and employer groups as well as with the industry partners on the draft design of the scheme. Arising from that consultation process, a number of changes were made to the draft design, in particular the application and approval process was streamlined to ensure that as much as possible of the process could be completed on-line.

JobsPlus consists of an employment grant paid monthly over two years in respect of employees hired from the Live Register. The scheme particularly aims to encourage employers to hire those that are long term unemployed, and in this context, there are two levels of payment:

- €7,500 in respect of recruits unemployed for more than 12 but less than 24 months
- €10,000 in respect of recruits unemployed for more than 24 months

The payment represents a saving of between 17% and 25% against typical starting salaries for the types of worker involved.

Employer and jobseeker interest in and demand for the scheme since its launch have been very positive. By the end of 2013, over 2,100 employers and 4,500 jobseekers had registered for the scheme. 3,600 employees have been approved as eligible for payment and 1,247 had been recruited and approved for payment and were either in payment (1,114) or in the process of being put into payment (133).

This run rate of applications is substantially up on the run-rate for the former PRSI exemption scheme. There are also encouraging indications that the scheme is having a positive impact for people that had been long-term unemployed; circa 60% of recruits under *JobsPlus* had been unemployed for more than 2 years and were thus attracting the higher rate of payment. As a result, the average claim amount is just over €9,000 (paid over two years).

Next steps

The take-up of the scheme is monitored by the newly appointed Labour Market Council which includes one of the industry partners among its members.

Initial approval for the new scheme provides for a review when it reaches a participation level of 2,000. This review will take place early in 2014, and proposals will be brought forward for its continuation and for any necessary changes to its operation at that stage. (Provision has been made in Budget 2014 to continue the scheme)

The use of a variant of the *JobsPlus* scheme to specifically targeted at young people as part of the Youth Guarantee was approved by Government in December. It is expected that this variant, which will allow young people under 25 years of age to qualify for the scheme at after four months of unemployment, will be launched by the end of Q2 2014.

Disruptive Reform 6: Transform Ireland into one of the most energy efficient economies in Europe by 2020

Background

This Reform involves delivery of a suite of actions which will contribute to making Ireland one of the most energy efficient economies in Europe by 2020, yielding a significant jobs dividend in a range of areas, including retrofitting, energy management services and the development and manufacturing of energy efficient products. Energy efficiency can also play a vital role in reducing the cost of energy for businesses and domestic consumers. The key deliverables under this reform are:

- The development of a new Energy Contracting Services Framework (formerly referred to as the Energy Performance Contracting Framework) which will serve as a standardised model for public sector and commercial organisations seeking energy efficiency solutions from Energy Services Companies.
- Identifying and supporting a number of Exemplar Projects that demonstrate the operation of the new Energy Contracting Services Framework and/or showcase the type of practical and innovative measures that can be replicated elsewhere to significantly improve energy efficiency in the public and commercial sectors.

- The development and introduction of the Energy Efficiency Fund that will support innovative energy efficiency projects in the public and commercial sectors.
- Issue a clear mandate to all public sector organisations with an annual energy spend of €500,000 or more, to go to the market to identify solutions for the delivery of energy reduction services.

Summary of Key Action to Date

1. The development of a new Energy Contracting Services Framework

A draft National Energy Services Framework was published for consultation in June. A presentation on the National Energy Services Framework was made to the General Construction Contracts Committee in July, with feedback received in September. The National Energy Services Framework was formally published in December 2013.

2. Identifying and supporting a number of Exemplar Projects

The first tranche of exemplar energy efficiency projects were launched in June 2013. Collectively, these 21 Exemplar projects, which involve both private and public sector entities, will invest up to €53 million in energy saving measures, resulting in annual savings of €7 million, and supporting over 500 jobs. The majority of the exemplar projects have completed Stage 3 (of 5) of the Framework and it is expected that they will move to procurement and contract implementation stages in the first half of 2014.

Exemplar projects receive supports in the form of training, networking and access to a panel of legal and technical experts to review and comment at key stages of the projects. In return, participating organisations committed to actively provide feedback on the use of the draft National Energy Services Framework. A total of €470,000 in technical assistance is committed across these projects.

3. Work to develop and introduce the Energy Efficiency Fund

The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) issued a call for Expressions of Interest in August 2013. Four responses were received by the deadline. Following an extensive evaluation process, SDCL were announced as the preferred applicant for the establishment of the Fund in November 2013.

It was originally envisaged under APJ 2013 that the Fund would be established in Q3 2013. However, significant progress has been made and, pending Government approval, it is intended that the Fund will be established in Q1 2014.

4. Communicate the Energy Contracting Services Framework and energy consumption reporting requirements to the public sector

All public bodies with an energy spend of over €500,000 a year are required to go to the market and seek energy saving services. The objective of this approach is twofold. Firstly, it

will help the public sector meet its energy and climate 2020 targets while driving demand for a nascent energy services market.

The Department wrote out to all public sector bodies in November 2013 in respect of their annual energy consumption reporting requirements. A report on energy consumption in the public sector is being developed and will be issued in early 2014.

Next Steps

The Department will continue to meet with industry partners throughout 2014, and will keep the Framework under active review, including the potential development for additional National Handbooks. Much of the focus in 2014 will turn to managing the exemplar projects already underway and bringing a further tranche through the development phase. The Department will also put in place appropriate governance structures to review and monitor progress against Action Plan for Jobs commitments and to address any policy issues that require resolution across Government. To that end, an important goal will be to embed and promote the principles developed in the Framework across the new institutional arrangements for procurement as manifest in the Office of Government Procurement. The Department will continue its engagement with Directorate-General for Energy and the European Investment Bank around the availability of additional funding into the Energy Efficiency Fund in 2014. DCENR will work closely with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) on the publication of the second public sector energy consumption report.

Action 43: Develop and introduce an innovative National Energy Performance Contracting Policy Framework (EPC) which will assist public sector and commercial bodies to develop energy efficiency proposals with Energy Services companies.

Q4 Measure: Revise National EPC Framework. (DCENR)

Update: Complete

The National Energy Services Framework which sets out the current roadmap through which energy efficiency projects and an Energy Performance Contracting process is being developed was published in December 2013.

Disruptive Reform 7: Establish a world renowned National Health Innovation Hub

Background

The overall ambition of this disruptive reform is to establish a world renowned Health Innovation Hub to drive collaboration between the health system and commercial enterprises leading to the development and commercialisation of new healthcare technologies, products, and services, emerging from within the health system and/or enterprise.

In order to drive this initiative, a National Project Team (NPT) was established which consists of a multidisciplinary team spanning the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (DJEI) and the Department of Health (D/Health) as well as executives from the Health Services Executive (HSE), Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and Science Foundation Ireland. The National Project Teams is chaired by Dave Shanahan (formerly Head of Global Life Sciences, IDA Ireland and now the Head of Strategic Health initiatives at Abbvie²).

As a precursor to the establishment of a National Health Innovation Hub (NHIH), a Demonstrator (pilot) project was established, based in University College Cork, to test on a small scale and at a regional level how a national Hub would work effectively.

Summary of Key Action to Date

1. Support the Cork Demonstrator Project for the Health Innovation Hub during 2013

In March, the Government agreed to support the 2013 operation of the Demonstrator Project for the Health Innovation Hub through:

- Financial support to be met in 2013 from within the existing Vote allocation of DJEI and
- In-kind support from the health system in 2013.

Key performance indicators for the Cork Demonstrator Project were finalised and agreed by the NPT in March. These indicators include, amongst others:

- Number of companies/projects supported by the Demonstrator;
- Identification of potential markets for new products/services/technologies; and
- Number and nature of products/services developed for commercialisation.

² Mr. Shanahan is also one of the six industry partners appointed by Government to assist with the implementation and monitoring of the Disruptive Reforms

2. Monitor and assess performance of the Cork Demonstrator Project throughout 2013 and use learnings to inform design of National Health Innovation Hub

The Demonstrator project brought together six innovative Irish healthcare companies with the health service. The companies were selected on the basis of their potential to deliver efficiencies into the health system and their fit with the broader reform of the health system, as well as the economic impact in terms of company growth, including export potential. A local Steering Committee provided updates to the NPT on the performance of the Demonstrator Project at each of its meetings during 2013.

An evaluation of the Demonstrator Project's performance was carried out in 2013 by way of a self-assessment. The assessment found that there is a demand from SMEs for enhanced clinical engagement with the healthcare system to support their development efforts, whether in manufacturing, digital technologies or services. The initiative demonstrated how aligning clinical delivery, academia and the business community can yield a new wave of innovation in health related commerce. The assessment also concluded that the Health Innovation Hub is an enabling infrastructure capable of expediting local innovation from SMEs and some multinationals in the healthcare space.

A second call for proposals was announced by the Demonstrator project in December 2013 seeking applications from companies or individuals whose products and innovations have the potential to positively impact the healthcare sector in Ireland.

3. Engage with relevant stakeholders in order to identify the critical areas of enterprise interest and health system needs in the context of the NHIH

Enterprise Ireland undertook an engagement exercise to assess the research and innovation needs of their clients. The Cork Demonstrator project initiated an additional call for proposals and this yielded further information on industry requirements for the National Hub. D/Health and the HSE continued to engage with relevant stakeholders to identify interest in engaging with the Hub and/or to identify critical needs in the health system. The HSE examined the outcome of consultations held by the Demonstrator Project to ascertain how it corresponds with the clinical and/or other requirements that might be identified by the HSE.

Feedback from enterprise and health system interests were discussed at NPT meetings during the year and key areas of focus for the NHIH were explored. Initial findings yielded a number of areas of enterprise interest and health system needs that will form part of the proposals for the establishment of the NHIH.

4. Identify appropriate model(s) for manifestation of NHIH including location, resourcing and governance arrangements

Two papers outlining options for establishing a presence for the National Hub were considered by the NPT at its meeting in November. Since the establishment of the Demonstrator, it has become evident that a physical presence adds necessary weight to the

existence of the Hub and, crucially, provides a locus for the activity in which the Hub will be engaged. Based on the learnings from the operation of the Demonstrator project, required resources for the operation of the NHIH have been considered and will ultimately depend on the way the Hub is organised. A proposed governance arrangement for a National Hub has been developed and considered by the NPT. Terms of reference for a National Hub have also been developed and address details of its mission, its functions and its key activities

5. Prepare a detailed proposal for Government consideration for the establishment of NHIH

A Memorandum for Information was submitted to Government for consideration and requested that the Government note progress to date on the operation of the Demonstrator project for the Health Innovation Hub. The Memorandum outlined proposals for next steps to be taken in the establishment of the NHIH.

Next Steps

Next steps for the establishment of a National Health Innovation Hub will be outlined in APJ 2014.

Cork Demonstrator Project

Action 48: Monitor and assess performance of the Cork Demonstrator Project throughout 2013 and use learnings to inform design of National Health Innovation Hub

Q4 Measure: Carry out evaluation of Demonstrator Project. (DJEI, D/Health, National Project Team)

Update: Complete

An evaluation of the Demonstrator Project's performance as a mechanism to accelerate the commercialisation of innovative solutions to deliver into the health system has been carried out by way of a self-assessment.

The assessment found that there is a demand from SMEs for enhanced clinical engagement with the healthcare system to support their development efforts whether in manufacturing, digital technologies or services. The initiative demonstrated how aligning clinical delivery, academia and the business community can yield a new wave of innovation in health related commerce. The assessment also concluded that the Health Innovation Hub is an enabling infrastructure capable of expediting local innovation from SMEs and some multinational companies in the healthcare space.

National Health Innovation Hub

Action 50: Identify appropriate model(s) for manifestation of NHIH including location, resourcing and governance arrangements.

Q4 Measures:

- Identify options for manifestation/location of the NHIH (e.g. single or multiple locations, virtual vs physical location) and conclude on optimum arrangements.
- Identify required resources for operation of the NHIH.
- Develop proposals for appropriate governance of the NHIH.
- Develop Terms for Reference for the NHIH.

(DJEI, D/Health, National Project Team)

Update: Complete

Two papers outlining options for establishing a presence for the National Hub were considered by the National Project Team (NPT) in November 2013.

Based on the learnings from the operation of the Demonstrator project, required resources for the operation of the National Hub have been considered. This will be dependent on how the Hub is organised.

A proposed governance arrangement for a National Hub has been developed and considered by the NPT, which concluded that a strong governance structure will be key to ensure that the requisite oversight, governance and accountability arrangements are in place for the National Hub, its funding and its activities, in order to achieve maximum impact from public monies being invested in the project.

Terms of reference for a National Hub have also been developed and address details of its mission, its functions and its key activities.

Action 51: Prepare a detailed proposal for Government consideration for the establishment of NHIH.

Q4 Measures:

- Prepare a detailed proposal for Government consideration for the establishment of NHIH including services to be offered by NHIH. (DJEI, D/Health, National Project Team)
- Secure Government approval based on NPT proposal. (DJEI, D/Health)

Update: Delayed

A Memorandum for Information was submitted to Government regarding progress to date on the operation of the Demonstrator (pilot) project for the National Health Innovation Hub (NHIH). The Memorandum included details of the interim review/self-assessment of the pilot project, which found that there is a demand from SMEs for enhanced clinical engagement with the healthcare system to support their development efforts, whether in manufacturing, digital technologies or services.

The initiative demonstrated how aligning clinical delivery, academia and the business community can yield a new wave of innovation in health related commerce. The assessment also concluded that the Health Innovation Hub is an enabling infrastructure capable of expediting local innovation from SMEs and some MNCs in the healthcare space and that it can, with the right levels of support and orientation, work as a networked partner for development of products and services to the global health community.

Pathways to Work

Action 52: The Government will continue to roll out the Pathways to Work initiative, including the integrated Intreo service during 2013 and will publish quarterly targets by which to measure progress. The targets for 2013 will be published by the end of Q1 and will be reported on quarterly thereafter, starting with the publication of Q1 performance in Q2 2013.

Q4 Measure: Reporting on targets. (DSP)

Update: Complete

The Department of Social Protection has published quarterly performance targets for the achievement of the objectives set out in Pathways to Work, which are available on the Department's website. The published targets relate to areas such as the provision of training supports and delivery of the integrated Intreo service.

The third quarterly report was published in Q4 2013 and is available from the Department's website www.welfare.ie.

Access to Finance for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

Governance and Policy

Action 58: Monitor Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) uptake.

Q4 Measure: Request report from Revenue of the number of companies, if any, who have elected for REIT status. (D/Finance)

Update: Complete

There are two Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) in the market, Green and Hibernia. The total equity capital raised on flotation was €310 million (Green) and €365 million (Hibernia). No other companies have as yet elected for REIT status with Revenue.

Information and Skills

Action 59: Monitor the lending targets for the two pillar banks to €4 billion in 2013.

Q4 Measure: CRO Quarterly Reports. (Credit Review Office)

Update: Complete

The Credit Review Office's (CRO) twelfth quarterly report was published in September and is available on the CRO website, www.creditreview.ie.

CRO reports will now be produced twice per year with the next report due for publication in Q1 2014.

Q4 Measure: Meet with pillar banks. (D/Finance, Credit Review Office)

Update: Complete

The Department of Finance and the CRO hold regular scheduled meetings with AIB and Bank of Ireland. The purpose of this measure is to ensure that the banks are complying with their obligations to sanction an aggregate €8 billion credit to SMEs in 2013 and to discuss progress in relation to SME access to finance. Meetings were held with the banks on December 5th.

Action 60: Detailed data from the pillar banks will be collated and examined, ensuring a more informed understanding of the SME bank lending environment

Q4 Measure: Report on monthly returns from the pillar banks. (Credit Review Office, D/Finance)

Update: Complete

The CRO submitted monthly reports on the returns received from AIB and Bank of Ireland to the Department of Finance. An internal Department of Finance quarterly report on the figures was produced on December 6th.

Action 62: Examine the practical steps that can be taken in the short and medium term by the State to improve the financial literacy of our micro and small enterprises.

Q4 Measure: Implement recommendations from review. (State Bodies Group)

Update: Complete

The SME State Bodies Group has finalised a scheme to enhance the financial and business capacity of SMEs with the introduction of a new 2-day training programme with expert mentoring support. The programme will be launched on a pilot basis with 1,000 SMEs taking part in 2014.

Access to Funding Measures

Action 73: Develop proposals to incentivise dynamic companies who choose to continue to grow and build scale using the IPO route to raise development finance as an alternative to a trade sale exit.

Q4 Measure: Explore and assess actions and options to foster IPO route as an alternative to trade sales. (Sub group of State Bodies Group)

Update: Complete

In the recent Budget, the attractiveness of investing in Irish SMEs listed on the Enterprise Securities Market* (ESM) was enhanced through exempting investor transactions in ESM companies from stamp duty. This supports the implementation of the commitment to incentivise dynamic companies to grow through using the Initial Public Offering (IPO) route as an alternative to a trade sale exit. As part of their ongoing work programme, the SME State Bodies Group will continue to assess the potential for non-bank financing for SMEs, including IPOs.

* The Irish Stock Exchange's market for SME growth companies

Building Competitive Advantage

Research and Innovation to Drive Job Creation

Action 81: Establish a new Central Technology Transfer Office, based in Enterprise Ireland

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (EI with DJEI in conjunction with stakeholders including IUA)

Update: Complete

This deliverable was achieved in Quarter 3 2013. Dr. Alison Campbell was appointed as director of the Central Technology Transfer Office and she commenced her new position in Enterprise Ireland in September 2013. The appointment of Dr. Campbell will help to ensure that the research from Ireland's third level institutions is fully utilised, leading to further job creation and advancements in Irish industry's innovative capability.

The Central Technology Transfer Office will play a key role in the Irish innovation system by providing an interface between companies and the wealth of technology, skills and 'know how' available in the higher education system.

One of the many functions of the office is the provision of a central hub that will enable companies to explore, through a web interface, the research resources available to them throughout Ireland.

Action 82: Assign business mentors to Enterprise Ireland Commercialisation Fund projects and other relevant projects

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (EI)

Update: Complete

10 Mentors have been assigned to Enterprise Ireland Commercialisation Fund projects since June 2013. The evidence so far is that this is going well and will be a common support mechanism for Enterprise Ireland Commercialisation Fund projects in the future.

Action 87: Through Technology Ireland (TI), ensure enhanced coordination in the sustainability of existing, and planning of future, Research Centres and Technology Centres between SFI, EI, IDA and the HEA and, where appropriate, consider the merging of new or existing centres to form sustainable centres of scale, excellence and relevance to enterprise.

Q4 Measure: Use the findings of this pilot project to develop a framework for how research centres in the other priority areas should interact and collaborate to ensure they meet industry needs in a sustainable way. (DJEI through Technology Ireland)

Update: Complete

A pilot project in the area of Therapeutics to develop a consolidated branding and marketing approach for research centres operating in this priority area was undertaken during 2013. As a result of this pilot, the research centres involved in this project have committed to enhanced collaboration and coordination across a range of areas beyond the original remit of the project.

The success of the pilot demonstrates the added value that could be achieved by putting in place a framework for collaboration to happen between research centres clustered around the remaining 13 areas identified through the National Research Prioritisation Exercise. A draft framework to enhance cooperation amongst research centres operating around specific priority areas has been prepared, for discussion with the Technology Ireland group of enterprise funding agencies. A communications strategy to support the framework has also been developed.

Action 88: NSAI will support the implementation of the action plans for the Government's priority areas so that publicly funded research projects are aligned to and make competitive use of relevant international standardisation activity and that the opportunity for Irish-based researchers to input into emerging standards is maximised.

Q4 Measure: Provide access and support training to researchers participating in European and International standardisation expert groups. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

The NSAI continued to develop its contacts with Irish research centres, such as CURAM in NUI Galway, through offering support for their work by providing access to knowledge of standards. Promotions of standardisation activities were made at appropriate industry events such as MedInIreland in September and MedTech in October, where support and information was made available.

NSAI has also developed its website to provide information on standards to those involved in research and innovation particularly those interested in preparing applications for the Horizon 2020 programme – see also update provided for action 247.

Action 91: Bring together researchers, innovative companies and technology transfer professionals as part of the "Big Ideas" Showcase, the primary technology commercialisation event in Ireland.

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (EI)

Update: Complete

The "Big Ideas" showcase took place on September 25th 2013. 21 inventors pitched their new technologies to an audience of over 450 potential investors.

The aim of the event is to connect the inventors with the right investors and business partners to establish new companies and create high-value jobs. The inventors are researchers from higher education institutes who have used public-funding to develop innovative technologies including;

- Treatments for high-blood pressure, varicose veins and dementia
- Data security for documents stored in the cloud
- Smart paint that transforms any surface into a whiteboard
- Surgical innovations
- Safe, natural clean-up solutions for toxic dumps.

Action 95: Assess the feasibility of introducing a Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) type programme across Government to develop the concept of "Ireland as a Test-Bed."

Q4 Measure: Prepare a report for the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation on conclusions of the assessment. (DJEI, EI)

Update: Complete

A report on the feasibility of introducing Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) programme for Ireland was prepared by Enterprise Ireland in Quarter 4 of 2013. The report includes a review of SBIR type programmes in North American and Europe. It outlines feedback from extensive engagement with key stakeholders in Ireland and recommends a short, medium and long term model for SBIR in Ireland.

DJEI and Enterprise Ireland will continue to work on developing an SBIR model for Ireland in 2014, on the basis of the work carried out to date.

Action 96: Train 500 teachers and 200 pre-service teachers under Discover Primary Science and Maths Programme.

Q4 Measure: Schedule and run in-school Continuous Professional Development sessions for 500 teachers in approx. 70 schools. (SFI)

Update: Complete

The Discover Primary Science and Maths (DPSM) programme provides Continual Professional Development (CPD) training for primary school teachers. Welcome Back Packs which included a letter and wall planner were distributed to all primary schools in September. The online registration for CPD training places went live in the first week in September; 4,573 teachers from 375 schools have registered for DPSM whole-school CPD training.

203 workshops took place from September to December 2013 covering a total of 278 schools and 3,065 teachers. The CPD workshops last for two hours and instruct teachers on how to use the DPSM activities in the classroom, focusing on:

- Understanding the science behind each activity;
- How maths might be integrated; and
- The science learning objectives from the Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) curriculum.

There are over 100 DPSM activities and learning tools which support the learning objectives of the science (SESE) curriculum and details of these are available from www.primaryscience.ie/media/pdfs/dpsm_classroom_activity_teachers_guide.pdf.

Q4 Measure: Pre-Service Training of 200 students at third level colleges. (SFI)

Update: Delayed

Discover Primary Science and Maths (DPSM) offers teacher education in a range of contexts, including DPSM introductory days offered to pre-service teachers in the Colleges of Education. This collaboration with Froebel College and Marino College of Education facilitates DPSM in engaging with student teachers at the start of their careers

DPSM training sessions were run with 87 undergraduates and 47 HDip Students in Marino College of Further Education in January 2013. Similar sessions with Froebel College students would normally have been run in Q4. However, because of the merger between Froebel and NUI Maynooth these have been deferred to Q1 and Q2 2014, at which stage the action of delivering pre-service training to 200 students will be complete.

Action 97: Deliver Discover Sensors programme to 30 secondary schools, 200 teachers and approx. 3,000 pupils.

Q4 Measure: Delivery of Discover Sensors training Programme to 2nd and 3rd year BScEd Students NUI Maynooth and UL. (SFI)

Update: Complete

Discover Sensors is a pilot programme promoting inquiry based teaching and learning tools and techniques to Irish Junior Certificate science teachers. Over the course of 2013, the Discover Sensor Programme was delivered to 34 schools, 360 teachers and approximately 3,800 pupils.

Discover Sensors training was also delivered to BScED second and third year students in the University of Limerick and NUI Maynooth in Q2 and Q4.

Q4 Measure: Transfer of ePortfolio element of Discover Sensors Pilot Programme to relevant stakeholders.

Update: Delayed

The ePortfolio element of the Discover Sensors programme, *Scifolio*, is an online tool that enables students to build an online science portfolio - an ePortfolio. Students create a personalised ePortfolio relating to the *Course Work A* element of Junior Certificate science.

The intention was to transfer *Scifolio* from Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) to the Kildare and Wicklow Education & Training Board (formerly Kildare VEC) in 2013. However, on the basis of a request received from the Education & Training Board, SFI will continue to support *Scifolio* until the end of the current academic year (June 2014).

The transfer has been postponed to ensure uninterrupted support for the full academic year and to enable an assessment of the tool to be undertaken. Approximately 1,000 Junior Certificate students will present the *Course Work A* practical element of their Junior Certificate science exam on www.scifolio.ie to the State Exams Commission in 2014.

The commitment in the Action Plan is likely to be complete by the end of Q2 2014 (i.e. end of the academic year) following submission of the course work by students.

Action 98: Deliver the Smart Futures STEM careers promotional campaign material to 800 schools and double the number of students directly engaged with, via the Smart Futures Programme, to 2,500 students.

Q4 Measure: Promote careers in STEM through the Smart Futures initiative at key events/times throughout the year – BT young Scientist, Eircom Spider Awards, Summer Technology Competition to promote ICT, Smart Futures Careers Roadshow in Science Week, etc. (SFI)

Update: Complete

Smart Futures has directly engaged with over 28,000 students through campaign activities in 2013 in collaboration with Engineers Ireland STEPS programme. Key activities to promote

careers in STEM through the SMART Futures initiative have included:

- Participation at the BT Young Scientist exhibition in January 2013; in partnership with Engineers Ireland STEPS programme, volunteers provided careers advice at the SFI stand on Smart Futures;
- Smart Futures sponsored the Best Web App category at the Eircom Junior Spider Awards in March and participated in the event with an information stand on STEM careers;
- Participation at the Higher Options' exhibition at RDS and the Smart Futures Roadshows;
- A partnership with Crann and the Science Gallery for the Cool Jobs project involving over 250 transition year students;
- A Smart Futures STEM careers infographic poster which was sent to every secondary school and VEC in the country as part of Science Week;
- Approximately 600 Smart Futures branded careers talks given in 2013 delivering insights into working in engineering to primary and post-primary schools;
- Three initial Smart Futures volunteer training workshops which were carried out in October 2013 and resulted in 27 volunteers with pharma and medical devices backgrounds receiving communications training;
- In addition, Smart Futures STEM careers content was profiled in a special Science Week STEM supplement in the Irish Independent (125k circulation). Advertisements promoting Smart Futures resources and STEM careers content have featured in/on 25+ student, teacher, guidance counsellor and parent-focused magazines, e-Newsletters and radio stations, resulting in the engagement of approx. 49.6m readers/viewers/listeners over 2013;
- A STEM competition took place during the summer to encourage students to research the STEM career of their choice and use their digital skills to present their findings using animation, video editing, web design etc. This competition has been sponsored by supporting companies such as Microsoft, Ericsson, SAP, Cisco, HP, Openet and Storm Technology; and
- SFI had an increased presence at the BT Young Scientist in January 2014 which focused on promoting the Smart Futures Programme.

Action 99: Publish the Health Information Bill which will streamline the ethics approval process for health research not governed by statutory regulation and EU Law. It will also provide a legal framework for the introduction of an individual identifier for use in the health system.

Q4 Measure: Publish Health Information Bill. (D/Health)

Update: Delayed

Provisions enabling the introduction of a unique identifier system for (a) patients and (b) healthcare providers were originally intended for inclusion in the Health Information Bill. However, given the urgency associated with a Troika commitment, those provisions are now set out in a separate Health Identifiers Bill. The Bill was published on December 13th 2013.

It is the intention that the Health Information Bill, containing a number of provisions other than those related to the unique identifier system will be published by Q4 2014.

Action 100: Take steps to establish Clinical Research Facilities (CRFs) in Dublin, Cork and Galway and provide a collaborative framework to link all CRFs by 2016.

Q4 Measure: Progress the construction of the HRB Galway CRF in conjunction with NUI Galway and UCHG. (HRB)

Update: Complete

The contractor for the project came on site in September 2013 and work is progressing to plan. It is expected that the completion date will be Q1 2015.

Action 105: Complete an inventory and gap analysis of existing test bed infrastructure to enable the development of a full national requirements specification and to enable the efficient early development and trialling of smart grid/ smart cities technology concepts by the research and industry community. (SEAI)

Q4 Measure: Identify, assess and list the options available for ensuring that ongoing and adequate support (financial, policy, regulatory) is available to organisations and research agencies to encourage for the building of infrastructure necessary to enable the testing and development of the required smart grid technologies and services. (SEAI, EI, SFI)

Update: Complete

A stakeholder workshop was held in December to review and approve the drivers and priorities identified through the previous measures carried out under this action. Representatives of industry, research facilities, academia and funding agencies were in attendance. Discussions were held on identifying and establishing support mechanisms. Under the guidance of the steering group, a detailed national requirements specification document has been prepared and will be presented to government.

Action 108: Launch a joint SFI/Teagasc research project call involving scientists from both the traditional agriculture and food disciplines and scientists from other scientific and engineering disciplines (e.g. ICT and data analytics, sensors etc).

Q4 Measure: Commence review of full proposals through international peer review process. (SFI)

Update: Complete for 2013

Applications for the Future Agri-food Co-funded theme with Teagasc were received under the SFI Investigator 2013 Programme in March 2013. A total of 227 applications were received under the programme overall, of which 18 were made under the Future Agri-food theme. 77 applicants were subsequently invited to submit full proposals, including 5 under the Future Agri-food theme, and these are currently under international peer review. Following international review, a funding decision is anticipated in Q2 2014.

Action 110: Implement the new Teagasc 'Food Technology and Knowledge Transfer Strategy' to support competitiveness and innovation in food companies through five technology options (i.e. licence/patent applications, research updates, pilot facilities, technical expertise, and scientists/researchers).

Q4 Measure: Hold "Gateways" public events for food industry. (Teagasc)

Update: Complete

In 2013, two Gateways events were organised. The Q4 event which took place in October and was attended by approximately 150 delegates, focused on how small businesses can develop through innovation.

Since launching the Teagasc 'Food Technology and Knowledge Transfer Strategy' in 2012, Teagasc has undertaken a number of actions to meet its objectives:

- Teagasc was awarded funding of approximately €130,000 from Enterprise Ireland under the Technology Transfer Strengthening Initiative to facilitate the appointment of a Case Manager to evaluate and market technologies.
- It has joined technology transfer consortia in both University College Cork and Cork Institute of Technology which work to share best practice etc.
- It has also set up a Customer Relationship Management system which collates data on meaningful interactions between key researchers and industry. In Q4, all Teagasc key food researchers underwent training on managing customer relationships.

Action 112: Support industrial clients to develop a new ingredient process, building on their existing use of the Teagasc dairy dehydration pilot plant facility.

Q4 Measures:

- Perform experimental pilot plant trials/develop new processes.
- Complete functionality on ingredient developed on new process.

(Teagasc)

Update: Complete

Following successful completion of pilot trials, discussions are at an advanced stage with the industrial partner to conduct a large research programme with Teagasc to the value of €4.7 million over the next three years. As part of this, the company will rent a new self-contained customer unit to carry out the research that will be of benefit to the food industry in Ireland. This is part of a major investment by the company in Ireland, which would see a significant expansion and repositioning of their production facility in Ireland.

Action 114: Develop updated marine research and innovation plan for the period 2014-2020 “Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth: Integrated Marine Research and Innovation Plan 2014-2020”

Q4 Measure: Consult with wide range of relevant stakeholders to determine future research needs and to scope cross-agency collaboration mechanisms. (Marine Institute)

Update: Complete

Ongoing consultation has taken place with the Development Task Force and the Marine Coordination Group on future research needs and this work will continue into Q1 2014.

Q4 Measure: Finalise draft Integrated Marine Research and Innovation Plan (2014-20) for agreement by the Marine Co-ordination Group. (Marine Institute, Marine Co-ordination Group)

Update: Complete

The Marine Institute has compiled the relevant information on research priorities from current national policies and strategies and a draft Integrated Marine Research and Innovation Plan (2014-20) was presented to both the Marine Coordination Group Meeting in November and to the Development Task Force in December for review prior to further stakeholder engagement. Further relevant stakeholder consultation and cross-agency collaboration which will be undertaken in Q1 2014.

Improving Cost Competitiveness

Action 126: Compare consumer price levels and consumer price inflation in Ireland with prices in our key competitors; identify the primary drivers of price and inflation differentials and assess the impacts of cost of living in Ireland on labour costs and other business costs.

Q4 Measure: Submit final report to the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. (Forfás)

Update: Complete

The final report was approved by the Forfás Board in November 2013 and was subsequently submitted to the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. It is expected that the report will be published in early 2014.

Aligning Skills with Enterprise Needs

Aligning our education and training system with labour market needs is critical to the creation of job opportunities in Ireland

Action 128: Progress a review of the Apprenticeship Training Model through consultation with key stakeholders on options for change.

Q4 Measure: Prepare interim report arising from consultation. (DES)

Update: Complete

The Review Group has completed their review of the apprenticeship system in Ireland and presented their report to the Department of Education and Skills. The *Review of Apprenticeship Training in Ireland* was published by the Minister for Education and Skills on January 21st 2014 and is available from www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Review-of-Apprenticeship-Training-in-Ireland.pdf.

Skills required for the manufacturing sector

Action 137: Target the development of an Engineering Skillnet training network which can address demand for in-company training and upskilling for machinists.

Q4 Measure: Commence pilot operation of new Network, subject to assessment criteria applying to all new networks. (Skillnets)

Update: Complete

A new Engineering Skillnets Network was established in the summer of 2013 under the New Call for Networks issued in early 2013. This network has now applied for and been approved

for continued funding for 2014. Work continues with a number of existing Skillnets Networks who deliver training to engineering firms.

Action 139: Support places on taught postgraduate courses in disciplines relevant to manufacturing, particularly where key shortages have been identified. Address the current small scale but critical shortages in Validation engineering, Quality engineering, Polymer engineering, Automation engineering and Supply chain engineering (primarily at NFQ level 9) through upskilling employees in partnership with industry.

Q4 Measures:

- Based on priority and available financial resources in 2013, support places where feasible.
- Review the need for this measure in 2014 and plan resources accordingly. (Skillnets)

Update: Complete

Skillnets continues to work with the EGFSN to determine demand for the skills identified in the report as Skillnets research indicates the need is at Levels 6 and 7 (Higher/Advance Certificate and Ordinary Degree) rather than at Level 9 (Masters Degree or equivalent).

Action 141: Target low-skilled general operatives in the manufacturing sector through the Skills for Work (SFW) programme and wider VEC-delivered basic education programmes, building on progress made to date for workers in the food and beverage sector.

Q4 Measure: Identify other sectoral networks where this model can be mainstreamed. (Skillnets)

Update: Complete

Information has been disseminated to Skillnets Networks in relation to the supports available from the Skills for Work programme. Engagement is also underway with National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) in relation to providing additional, supporting information to networks on the wider range of support available for low-skilled workers.

Action 142: Examine the potential for a cost effective national manufacturing supervisory development programme, preferably leading to the award of a substantial qualification.

Q4 Measure: Conclude and recommend future direction and resources required. (Skillnets)

Update: Complete

An Expert Group has been established under the auspices of Quality & Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to draft a specification for the major award envisioned under this action. The Group met in December 2013 and is finalising a consultation document on the award which will be published in January 2014.

Following consultation a recommendation will be made to the Board of QQI for the new proposed award to be approved. Potential providers will then be in a position to develop and propose programmes to QQI for validation. The expectation is that a programme under this Award will be offered to participants from industry in 2014.

Action 143: Support specific technical manufacturing upskilling and learning for manufacturing excellence (lean), and review periodically how to maximise its impact in this area.

Q4 Measures:

- Identify and support (subject to available resources) the most effective models of delivery.
- Measure the specific impact of 'Lean' and disseminate. (Skillnets)

Update: Complete

There are a number of existing sources of data on the impact of Lean processes for business. Provision includes programmes in Lean, Six Sigma, green and black belt training. The provision also varies significantly in duration to respond to firms' requirements.

To emphasise the impact of Lean for SME businesses, a number of short case studies were prepared and disseminated to networks which are designed to attract the attention of SMEs to showcase that all businesses (whether in manufacturing or other sectors) can benefit from Lean. The intention is to add to this set of cases in Q1 2014 to continuously expand the range of examples available to demonstrate the wide applicability of Lean processes to businesses of all sizes and from all sectors.

Action 144: Promote STEM careers in relevant manufacturing sectors within the framework of Discover Science and Engineering in collaboration with manufacturing industry sectoral representative organisations, higher education institutions, SOLAS and relevant professional and trade organisations.

Q4 Measure: Introduce manufacturing STEM careers material and content into Smart Futures career campaign. (SFI with Smart Futures partners)

Update: Complete

Smart Futures is a national campaign promoting careers in science, technology, engineering

and maths (STEM) to second-level students in Ireland. It aims to encourage the consideration of the STEM areas, such as technology (e.g. gaming, cloud computing, cyber-security), engineering and energy (e.g. green technology), pharma and medical devices as potential career options. A new section on manufacturing has been added to www.smartfutures.ie. A careers profile template has also been supplied to manufacturing partners through the Manufacturing Development Forum group to help generate this content.

Infrastructure Investment to Underpin Employment Growth

Broadband

Action 152: Complete Phase 2 of the national rollout of 100 Mbps broadband services to second level schools.

Q4 Measure: Rollout complete. (DCENR, DES, HEAnet)

Update: Complete

All contracts have been signed and 147 schools have had broadband deployed to date.

Water Services

Action 156: Enact legislation to establish Irish Water as a statutory body

Q4 Measure: Enact Water Services (No. 2) Bill 2013. (DECLG)

Update: Complete

The Water Services Act 2013, enacted in March 2013, provided for the establishment of Irish Water as an independent subsidiary within the Bord Gáis Éireann Group and assigned the necessary powers to allow Irish Water to undertake the metering programme.

The Water Services (No.2) Act 2013, enacted in December 2013, established Irish Water as the national water services authority from January 2014.

Action 157: Prioritise the delivery of an IT based road management and utility licensing system to standardise approach for utilities, including Irish Water, to improve efficiency.

Q4 Measure: Develop shared services implementation solution. (DTTAS, LGMA, Local Authorities)

Update: Delayed

Shared services provide an opportunity to increase efficiency through the reorganisation and sharing of assets with others and an opportunity to minimise duplication of processes, accommodation and management effort across local authorities. As well as the potential for financial savings, shared services also can lead to service improvements, greater consistency and allow local authorities to concentrate on their core business.

The Department is working with the Local Government Efficiency Review Office (LGERO) to establish a Road Management Office (RMO) by mid-2014. This approach will provide for a single lead authority, supported by a Sectoral Standards Group with IT development and support from the LGMA. It is proposed that the RMO will deal with Pavement Management and Road Licensing in the first instance. The delivery of this shared service is progressing and will support the delivery of Action 157.

Transport

Action 159: Publish report of Competition Authority study into ports.

Q4 Measure: Finalise and publish Competition Authority study on ports. (Competition Authority)

Update: Complete

The Competition Authority published its study of competition in the ports sector in Ireland in November 2013 and its recommendations are being considered by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport.

Action 160: Ensure the new aviation policy to be developed during 2013 delivers competitive international access in terms of locations served, frequency of service and cost both in the short and longer term.

Q4 Measure: Issue draft policy statement for consultation. (DTTAS)

Update: Delayed

The draft new aviation policy is scheduled to go before the Cabinet Committee on Economic Infrastructure in February 2014 with publication to follow shortly thereafter.

A total of 74 submissions were received as part of the public consultation process that took place earlier in 2013. Substantial progress has been made on drafting the new policy document and it is anticipated that a draft National Aviation Policy Statement will be ready for publication early in 2014. There will be a further opportunity for stakeholder input at that point.

It is expected that the final policy document outlining the actions to be taken by Government to help sustain and develop the aviation sector, in order to create jobs and support business and tourism, will be published during the first half of 2014.

Action 164: Progress the introduction of a common visa waiver scheme between Ireland and the UK for tourists and business visitors.

Q4 Measure: Commence evaluation of the pilot programme with a view to introducing common visa programme in 2014. (D/Justice)

Update: Complete

In late 2013, both countries agreed to prioritise and focus resources exclusively on delivery of the main project, as engaging in a complex pilot project would have diverted resources away from the key objective and implementation of the commitment in line with the target date specified in the Action Plan for Jobs.

Reduce costs through sensible regulation

Action 168: Progress the very substantial reform of the Companies Acts, following publication of the Companies Bill in December 2012. This Bill will bring significant benefits to companies of all types throughout the country, and will be a key part of the Government's drive to make Ireland the best small country in the world in which to do business.

Q4 Measure: Assist in commencing Committee Stage. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

The Second Stage consideration of this Companies Bill in the Dáil was completed in April 2013 and Dáil Committee Stage was completed in November 2013.

Action 169: Examine the case for allowing companies to avail of audit exemption when two of the three criteria (thresholds on the number of employees/balance sheet total/annual turnover) are met rather than requiring companies to meet all three criteria.

Q4 Measure: Submit proposal to Minister. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

Recommendations regarding the policy and legal implications of any proposed change in the criteria for audit exemption were made to the Minister in Q4 2013 taking account of the outcomes of the public consultation and the Company Law Review Group Report.

Action 170: Progress the streamlining of certain administrative processes and other interactions with nursing home providers (as identified in the recommendations of the High Level Group on Business Regulation) without negatively impacting on the safety of residents.

Q4 Measure: Amendment to Health Act 2007 (Registration of Designated Centres for older People) Regulations, 2009. (D/Health)

Update: Delayed

The review and amendment of the Health Act 2007 (Registration of Designated Centres for older People) Regulations, 2009 was not completed in 2013. This is due, in part, to a delay in completing the revision of the Health Act 2007 (Care & Welfare of Residents in Designated Centres for Older People) Regulations. It is expected that this will take place in Q1 2014.

The amendments to the Care & Welfare Regulations have now been passed and while the reduction of the administrative burden was not the primary focus of the revisions, some reduction of administrative burden has been achieved through streamlining requirements regarding the central retention of information.

Action 171: Review the licensing regime for street furniture (e.g. tables and chairs and other equipment on the public footpath) in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Q4 Measure: Commence preparation of a report for publication in Q1 2014. (DECLG)

Update: Complete

Preliminary preparations have commenced with the development of a communications plan, involving consideration of the issues, public notification regarding the stakeholder consultation process, and initial consultations with the relevant stakeholder groups, in addition to local authorities. The review will be completed by September 2014.

Driving Entrepreneurship and Start-Up Companies

Building on the focused actions put in place during 2012, we will continue to develop Ireland as the place to start a business

Action 174: Review the mentoring services available to start-up and small businesses and identify any necessary action to be taken

Q4 Measure: Draft final report to be completed and submitted to DJEI. (DJEI, EI)

Update: Complete

A review of mentoring services available to start up and small businesses in Ireland has been undertaken. The results of the study and recommendations were presented to the Forfás Board in December 2013.

A draft report in relation to the mentoring services that are available to start-up and small businesses has been submitted to DJEI.

Action 175: Prepare a Government Policy Statement on entrepreneurship, including youth entrepreneurship.

Q4 Measures:

- Draft policy statement and submit to Government.
- Publish policy statement.

(DJEI)

Update: Delayed

To support the development of a National Entrepreneurship Policy Statement, a decision was taken to establish an independent Entrepreneurship Forum in May 2013 tasked with examining the current environment and policy framework and to make recommendations aimed at supporting entrepreneurship and business start-ups. The completion of the work of the Entrepreneurship Forum has resulted in a minor delay in developing the Government's Policy Statement. Nonetheless, it is felt that the insight, ideas and recommendations obtained from the Forum are a valuable contribution to the development of a better informed, focused and responsive Government Policy Statement.

The Entrepreneurship Forum's Report, *Entrepreneurship in Ireland* was brought to Government on January 21st and was published on January 23rd 2014. The Report makes 69 recommendations. Many of the recommendations require Government action, but there are also recommendations aimed at businesses, entrepreneurs and industry representative bodies, to engage them in building a stronger entrepreneurial culture in Ireland. A cross-

Governmental feasibility and operational assessment is now required to facilitate informed decision making on the recommendations of the Forum's report and their suitability for inclusion in the forthcoming National Entrepreneurship Policy Statement. It is intended that the Policy Statement will be published during Q1 of 2014.

Action 177: Establish the Insolvency Service of Ireland.

Q4 Measure: Insolvency Service of Ireland fully operational. (D/Justice)

Update: Complete

The Personal Insolvency Act 2012 provided for the establishment of the Insolvency Service of Ireland (ISI). The ISI was established by Ministerial Order in March 2013. The ISI began accepting applications for the three new debt solutions (Debt Relief Notice, Debt Settlement Arrangement, Personal Insolvency Arrangement) from September 9th 2013.

On December 3rd 2013, the new bankruptcy legislation took effect and completed the suite of solutions to restore insolvent people to solvency. Key features of this legislation include:

- Reduction in the length of bankruptcy from 12 years to 3 years;
- Transfer of the Office of the Official Assignee in Bankruptcy from the Courts Service to the ISI;
- The requirement for debtors to show they have made reasonable efforts to avail of a Debt Settlement Arrangement or a Personal Insolvency Arrangement in order to be eligible for bankruptcy.

While it is difficult to ascertain the likely demand on the new Insolvency Service, the tentative estimate of applications for the two main debt relief solutions – the Debt Settlement Arrangement and the Personal Insolvency Arrangement – is roughly 15,000 applications plus a further 3,000 to 4,000 applications for Debt Relief Notices in the first full year. Approximately 3,000 bankruptcy applications are expected during this time.

Action 178: Provide support for 155 high potential and early stage start-ups.

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (EI)

Update: Complete

This target has been exceeded; Enterprise Ireland supported more than 155 high potential start-ups in 2013.

Action 179: Launch a new round of the Competitive Start Fund targeted at a range of sectors.

Q4 Measure: Launch four calls during the year and report progress on a quarterly basis. (EI)

Update: Complete

A total of six Competitive Start Funds (CSFs) have been launched. This is a record number of such calls in a single year: four national CSFs, one CSF focused on female entrepreneurs, and one CSF focused on digital content.

Action 183: EI and IDA will work together via a range of specific events and initiatives to attract Inward Start-Ups and Emerging Businesses to Ireland.

Q4 Measure: Le Web Paris. (EI, IDA)

Update: Complete

During 2013, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland worked together at events in cities such as Berlin, Barcelona, London, Austin and San Francisco, in addition to the Le Web event in Paris during the week commencing December 9th 2013.

Le Web is an international conference aimed at technology-based companies. The participants are a mix of CEOs and founders of tech start ups together with a range of people from across the global technology industry, as well as related industries.

Action 185: Deliver world class management development modules with clients to accelerate the growth of start-ups.

Q4 Measure: Complete needs analysis in relation to the design and delivery of a further programme in this area. (EI)

Update: Complete

A needs analysis in relation to the design and delivery of a further programme in this area has been completed; the result of which was a start-up management development programme, SPRINT, which was unveiled at an event at the Web Summit in October. The initial pilot now has a full complement of 26 companies enrolled on the six month programme - with an initial start off day held on December 8th. The programme will be fully rolled out in January 2014.

Assisting Indigenous Business to Grow

Enhancing Indigenous Performance

Supporting Irish companies to build scale, to grow and internationalise remains central to our plans for recovery, growth and jobs in 2013

Action 188: Drive implementation of the Global Sourcing Strategy targeting the procurement of an additional €500 million of domestically sourced goods and services by FDI companies in Ireland.

Q4 Measures:

- Based on assessment of these referrals, target 120 client introductions to MNC Supply Opportunities in 2013.
- Appoint 25 MNC/Global Sourcing mentors to clients during 2013.

(IDA, EI)

Update: Complete

In 2013 over 130 Enterprise Ireland clients were introduced to MNC Supply/Technology Opportunities.

Enterprise Ireland currently has a panel of 388 business mentors; 66 of these have senior level experience of working in a multinational corporation (MNC). In 2013, 28 of these MNC mentors were appointed to assignments with 64 clients covering areas including selling into MNCs, marketing and international business development.

Action 189: Develop joint sectoral approaches for the support of selected growth sectors in Ireland. These will commence with Business Process Outsourcing, followed by Medical Technologies.

Q4 Measure: Following completion of sectoral strategies, determine and develop a joint response to the Leadership and Management Development needs identified. (IDA, EI)

Update: Complete

The joint IDA/Enterprise Ireland Business Process Outsourcing strategy was submitted to, and approved by, the Boards of IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland in December 2013. A meeting of the joint implementation team took place in January to agree the implementation plan and steps for 2014. The Agencies will work with stakeholders such as FAS/SOLAS, Skillsnet, the Contact Centre Management Association (CCMA), 3rd level institutes and the Business Process Outsourcing sector to discuss wider training needs. This

work will link into the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs.

The Medical Technologies strategy was also approved by the Boards of IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland last December. The Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland teams have met to discuss strategy implementation and identify needs. The plan is to hold a focus group with a select number of General Managers from key FDI client to assess leadership and management development needs identified.

Action 191: Progress the Pilot Industry-led Clustering Initiative launched in 2012 to ensure optimum implementation of their clustering projects.

Q4 Measure: Quarterly updates on progress against Phase 1 and Phase 2 clustering projects.

Update: Complete

The Pilot Industry-led Clustering Initiative aims to support time-limited clustering projects that will achieve measureable benefits to members of the clustering groups e.g. sectoral/sub-sectoral development initiatives, supply-chain optimisation, realising economies of scale, exploring market opportunities, capability development and convergence opportunities. Phase 1 of the initiative tests the viability of the project through a feasibility study and helps the cluster members decide if it is worthwhile progressing to Phase 2, which is the implementation of the project. Each Cluster must have a minimum of 5 businesses participating.

There are 20 projects included in the Phase 1 pilot and 5 projects in Phase 2.

Phase 1 update: To date, 15 clusters have submitted Feasibility Study Reports under Phase 1 and made a grant claim to Enterprise Ireland. Following approval by the Executive Committee to continue with the pilot, 11 clusters have applied for Phase 2 support. Recommendations for support will be submitted to Enterprise Ireland Investment Committee in January/February 2014. These projects, once approved, will continue until December 2015.

Phase 2 update: Five clusters were approved for support under Phase 2 in November 2012. Of these, two have disbanded and are not progressing with their intended projects. The remaining three are progressing at various levels of intensity. Enterprise Ireland is working closely with these Clusters and providing support where possible.

Q4 Measure: Review the initiative and assess options for further roll out. (EI)

Update: Complete

In August 2013, the Executive Committee of Enterprise Ireland (EI) reviewed the initiative and agreed, that as part of the continuation of the pilot, EI would offer the 20 groups that

had been approved for Phase 1 funding and had satisfactorily completed their feasibility study the opportunity to apply for funding at Phase 2 level. A total of 11 groups (from the original 20) applied for Phase 2 support. Consultations are still ongoing and options are being assessed in relation to further roll out with the groups prior to the Evaluation Panel recommending support to the Investment Committee.

Action 192: Support 800 participants on short course Management Development Programmes and 230 on long course Management Development Programmes.

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (EI)

Update: Complete

This action has been exceeded with a total number of 248 participants on the long course Management Development Programmes and 845 on the short course Management Development Programmes.

Enterprise Ireland continues to deliver its flagship Management Development programmes, i.e. International Selling, Leadership 4 Growth, Accelerated Growth Engagement and Strategic Leadership 4 CFOs and Excel Series. In addition to this, a number of new initiatives have been launched this year, for example, SPRINT, which is a 6 month programme specifically designed for companies in receipt of Competitive Start Funding. The programme aims to help these early stage companies to get to product/market-fit and paying customers quickly.

Action 193: Promote the greater utilisation of standards, emerging standards, and the standardisation process by companies through information events, a programme of standardisation initiatives for SMEs, and the greater use of the Your Standards, Your Say information portal.

Q4 Measures:

- Hold at least one standards/certification information event per quarter with a focus on SMEs.
- Conduct promotion campaign (mailings, web, media) encouraging the use of the 'Your Standards Your Say' internet portal.

(NSAI)

Update: Complete

The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) hosted a forum for quality consultants providing the opportunity to receive information updates on certification issues and the

next revision of the international quality management system standard ISO 9000. A presentation was also made on the NSAI web portal 'Your Standards, Your Say' which allows users to comment on standardisation work as it progresses through the various stages until adoption. The web portal is continuously promoted on the NSAI website and e-zine.

In conjunction with Quality Ireland and Sligo IT, the NSAI hosted the event 'Quality in Ireland' on October 15th 2013 which was attended by in excess of 100 SMEs. The topics covered in the event ranged from quality management systems certification to product certification for businesses.

Action 194: Complete the programme of evaluations of agency programmes to determine their appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness, and draw out lessons for tailoring interventions. The evaluations to be undertaken in 2013 will focus on capability-building and business development programmes operated by Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland.

Q4 Measure: Complete report on draft findings of additional programme evaluations completed by end of year. (Forfás)

Update: Complete

Over 2013, Forfás undertook evaluations of agency programmes focused on Business Development, incorporating the following areas: employment and capital grants; productivity; internationalisation; leadership/management development and training; and environmental efficiency. A Steering Committee, chaired by Forfás, with representation from DJEI, DPER, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and independent evaluations expertise (University of Limerick) meets regularly to consider progress and findings of individual programmes as they reach interim and final stages.

The Steering Committee met on October 24th and November 14th to consider the draft findings of the following programme evaluations:

- EI Internationalisation Supports (2005-2010)
- EI Going Global Programme (2009-present)
- Enterprise Ireland Lean Business Offerings (2009-present)
- Enterprise Ireland e-Business Management Initiative 2006-2011
- Review of Business Mentoring services 2013 (see action 174, APJ 2013)

These evaluations findings have been completed in line with the project plan and reported to the Steering Committee.

Assisting Indigenous Businesses to Trade

Trading is central to the growth of indigenous firms and we will continue to help and support companies to navigate the challenges inherent in entering new markets

Action 196: Design and develop a pilot to increase Global Business Links for client companies that will focus on delivering scaled client-buyer introductions during 2013.

Q4 Measure: Pilot the Global Business Links initiative. (EI)

Update: Complete

The pilot of the Global Business Links initiative has been completed with a select number of clients targeting the UK and US markets. The programme will be fully launched in 2014.

Action 201: Continue to utilise the Global Irish Network to support economic development in Ireland which will provide:

- Access to key decision makers for the Government and agencies;
- Mentoring and assistance for Irish companies through the Global Irish Contacts Programme;
- Support for sector specific initiatives (such as The Gathering Ireland and Succeed in Ireland) and for Trade Missions;
- IDA Ireland will continue to engage with members of the network who have put themselves forward as advocates for FDI to help win new investments for Ireland.

Q4 Measure: Deliver Global Irish Economic Forum in Dublin in October 2013 with a strong focus on job creation. (DFAT, relevant Departments, agencies and members of the Global Irish Network)

Update: Complete

The Global Irish Economic Forum, held in Dublin Castle on October 4th and 5th, brought Members of the Global Irish Network together with members of the Government, Ministers of State, senior officials, presidents of third level institutions, members of the Opposition and domestic business leaders for two days of intensive discussion to support economic development in Ireland.

In order to improve engagement with the SME sector in Ireland, two new initiatives for the 2013 Forum were the hosting of regional roundtables in Cork, Galway and Belfast on October 3rd, and a major networking event on the morning of October 5th during which a number of Network members held a series of round table meetings with some 70 Irish SMEs. These events provided mentoring opportunities for Irish companies.

Q4 Measure: Provide update on the Global Irish Contacts Programme. (EI)

Update: Complete

The Global Irish Contact programme, which connects the Diaspora with companies seeking to expand internationally, continued to be rolled out in 2013. The target of 70 engagements with members of the Global Irish Contacts programme was achieved. In addition, an Enterprise Ireland Industry Event was held as part of the 2013 Global Irish Economic Forum. The event took the form of a series of Round Table discussions which were sectorally based, matching relevant Global Irish Network members with Irish SME companies in a focused but open discussion. Feedback from both the Global Irish Network and Irish company participants was very positive.

Q4 Measure: Continue to engage with network of Advocates for FDI and report. (IDA)

Update: Complete

In Europe, IDA Ireland continued to engage with Diaspora advocates throughout 2013, predominantly with those located in the priority markets of Germany, France and the UK, by facilitating networking engagements with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade across Europe to widen support for the Connect Ireland programme with key advocates.

IDA Ireland executives renewed membership to networking business groups for advocates in Germany, Belgium, and Luxembourg, all led by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. In North America, IDA Ireland has regular on-going interactions with Diaspora advocates and will maintain these interactions. IDA Ireland will continue to engage with Diaspora advocates in 2014 and will equally support collaboration with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade advocates and the wider Team Ireland group on both the business development potential and profile raising opportunities for Ireland.

Action 202: In cooperation with all relevant Departments and agencies, carry out a short and focused review of the Government Trade Strategy, 'Trading and Investing in a Smart Economy'

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (DFAT and DJEI)

Update: Complete

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has coordinated this review in cooperation with the Review Group, comprised of the relevant Departments and State agencies. The Review Group has met on five occasions and has agreed a stabilised text under each of the headings as agreed in the Terms of Reference:

- A summary overview of the current global economic and trade environment;

- A review of the current numerical targets outlined in the Strategy;
- A review of the sectors identified by the Strategy;
- An examination of the current designation of 27 countries as ‘Priority Markets’ under the Strategy; and
- An examination of the 25 Action Points, with a possible focus on improving coordination, reporting and accountability mechanisms.

As part of consultation with private sector interests, a session at the Global Irish Economic Forum in October 2013 focussed on trade, tourism and investment opportunities. A Working Group on “Ireland’s Trade, Tourism and Investment Strategy - Toward a Renewed Approach”, chaired by Stan McCarthy, CEO of Kerry Group, produced recommendations. A progress report to the meeting of the Export Trade Council in November 2013, by the Chairman, An Tánaiste, Eamon Gilmore T.D., also involved private sector participation.

The Review is in the process of being finalised and it is envisaged that it will be presented in early 2014.

Maximising Procurement Opportunities

Public procurement presents a particular opportunity for new and established SMEs to grow employment

Action 206: In the context of the reform of public procurement and the establishment of the National Procurement Office, continue to prioritise the reduction of barriers to entry for SMEs in competing for procurement opportunities.

Q4 Measure: Continue to identify remaining barriers to SME access to procurement and seek solutions to overcome these barriers. (DPER, NPS, DJEI)

Update: Complete

Reform of public procurement is one of the major projects of key strategic importance in the Government’s Public Service Reform Plan. The State spends around €9 billion on goods and services each year. This represents a very significant portion of overall spending and it is, therefore, essential that the public service achieves maximum value for money and operational efficiency in its approach to public procurement.

The Government has set the procurement reform programme a cash savings target of up to €500 million over 3 years. While the savings target is significant, it is achievable but requires restructuring and reform to achieve it.

Whilst savings are the primary focus of the new Office of Government Procurement (OGP), the Office is equally committed to the implementation of the recently agreed EU legislation

in the area of public procurement which gives Member States greater flexibility in relation to encouraging SME participation in public procurement processes. These reforms include:

- Acceptance of self-declarations until the award stage and the promotion of e-procurement with mandatory electronic availability of procurement documents;
- Except in justified cases, turnover requirements are to be explicitly limited to two times the estimated contract value;
- Contracting Authorities will now have to comply or provide explanations in relation to the division of contracts into lots;
- Member states will be required to provide the Commission with detail on SME participation. Such monitoring can support consistent application across all Member States and ensure that the objective of greater SME involvement is being delivered.

It is the intention of the OGP to transpose these EU reforms as soon as possible. These measures will improve SME access to public procurement opportunities.

Action 208: Examine the potential, in compliance with EU Treaty Principles and Directives, for developing an approach for the inclusion of social clauses in suitable procurement contracts.

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (DPER, NPS)

Update: Complete

A social clause requiring that a certain percentage of the work carried out as part of a contract is undertaken by those recruited from the ranks of the long-term unemployed and apprentices is being piloted on the Devolved Schools Programme being administered by the National Development Finance Agency on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills. The tender on the first bundle of schools to be awarded through the framework of contractors set up to deliver the Programme is currently being evaluated.

Once the contracts are underway, the performance of the contract requirements will be evaluated and amended as necessary before being implemented on the €1.5 billion Public-Private Partnership (PPP) element of the Stimulus Programme.

Action 209: Examine possible approaches for enabling access for SMEs to opportunities arising under capital investment projects.

Q4 Measures:

- Examine capital investment projects associated with the National Development Finance Agency (NDFA) programme. (EI)
- Engage with key departments and organise 2 EI buyer/client events. (EI with relevant Departments)
- Organise one EI event with NDFA. (EI with NDFA)

Update: Complete

Enterprise Ireland ran two collaborative projects with the National Development Finance Agency (NDFA) in 2013 focusing on the Schools Bundles projects. Enterprise Ireland is increasing its engagement with the NDFA in 2014 and will focus on both the Schools Bundles and the Healthcare projects.

In addition, a number of events were hosted by the NDFA in partnership with Enterprise Ireland, providing a platform for construction suppliers and enterprises to learn more about the schools building programme and to meet with the five shortlisted contractors on the programme. Attending companies found out how to become a sub supplier through a series of short 5 minute 'pitch' meetings. They also were provided with information on local business supports through the Enterprise Board network and Chambers Ireland network. Attendees were also provided with information on topics such as the Pathways to Work initiative from the Department of Social Protection including the Jobs Ireland Services and to check eligibility for the JobsPlus scheme.

Action 210: Build on the Procuring Innovation initiative established in 2012 by expanding the number of projects participating on the scheme.

Q4 Measure: Increase the number of projects by at least 4 in 2013. (EI)

Update: Complete

Procuring innovation projects have been extended out to an additional 4 contracting authorities. Enterprise Ireland has also increased its collaboration with both the Railway Procurement Agency (RPA) and ESB under the procuring innovation initiative.

Action 211: Support Irish companies seeking to participate in procurement contracts overseas through assisting them in identifying opportunities and capability building.

Q4 Measure: Organise client events with UN, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (ERDB) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) during 2013. (EI)

Update: Complete

Enterprise Ireland organised both domestic and overseas events with the International Financial Institutions. Two events were organised in Ireland and two events were organised overseas. The November event hosted by Enterprise Ireland focused on Business Opportunities with the World Bank Group.

Developing and Deepening the Impact of Foreign Direct Investment

Action 212: Work to win another 132 new FDI investment projects in 2013.

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (IDA)

Update: Complete

IDA Ireland exceeded its target in 2013, with 164 projects won for Ireland. Of these, 78 came from companies investing in Ireland for the first time (a rise of 18% on the previous year), with 59 expansions and 27 RD&I projects. Among the investments secured during the year were Deutsche Bank, Twitter, EMC, eBay, Salesforce, Novartis, Vistakon, Facebook, Zurich, Symantec, De Puy, Yahoo, Sanofi and Indeed.com. First time investments were secured from corporations across the portfolio including from Qualcomm, Airbnb, Tripadvisor, Regeneron, Huawei, FireEye, Grifols, Alexion and Acorn Direct Marketing.

Action 213: Target 13,000 new gross jobs yielding approximately 6,000 net new jobs.

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (IDA)

Update: Complete

In 2013, 13,367 new jobs were created by client companies. When job losses are taken into account, the net increase in employment was 7,071, the highest level of job creation in over a decade. Total employment at IDA Ireland client companies now stands at 161,112, the highest level in the history of IDA Ireland. The job performance took place against a particularly challenging European economic environment, but leaves IDA Ireland on track to fulfil and exceed targets set under its Horizon 2020 strategy.

Action 214: Achieve €500 million in R&D investment to have a total annual R&D spend by multinationals here of €1.7 billion by 2014.

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (IDA)

Update: Delayed

R&D capital investment remains very strong. However, in 2013, IDA Ireland fell just short of its target to achieve €500 million investments securing 93% of the target of R&D investments worth €467 million. This is a strong performance given the general market caution for large capital projects which includes significant R&D activities. RD&I remains significantly important to Ireland's FDI landscape, embedding existing employment and putting in place the framework for future employment creation.

Action 216: Develop joint sectoral approaches for the support of selected growth sectors in Ireland. These will commence with Business Process Outsourcing, followed by Medical Technologies.

Q4 Measure: See Action 189 (IDA, EI) - Following completion of sectoral strategies, determine and develop a joint response to the Leadership and Management Development needs identified

Update: Complete

The joint IDA/Enterprise Ireland Business Process Outsourcing strategy was submitted to, and approved by, the Boards of IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland in December 2013. A meeting of the joint implementation team took place in January to agree the implementation plan and steps for 2014. The Agencies will work with stakeholders such as FAS/SOLAS, Skillsnet, the Contact Centre Management Association (CCMA), 3rd level institutes and the Business Process Outsourcing sector to discuss wider training needs. This work will link into the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs.

The Medical Technologies strategy was also approved by the Boards of IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland last December. The Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland teams have met to discuss strategy implementation and identify needs. The plan is to hold a focus group with a select number of General Managers from key FDI client to assess leadership and management development needs identified.

Action 220: Encourage Irish-based multinational enterprises to avail of access to national and international standardisation committees that NSAI can facilitate in order to establish a valuable local expertise and source of advance market and technology intelligence.

Q4 Measure: Focus advertising initiative on standards participation. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

Using testimonials from business owners NSAI ran a media campaign on radio and on-line targeting business owners and decision makers on the benefits of involvement in and implementation of management quality systems standards including Excellence Through People, food safety and product standards.

Q4 Measure: Increase awareness of the benefits of standardisation through the e-Communications programme. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

NSAI disseminated its e-zine to in excess of 10,000 recipients in November to promote the benefits to business operators of participating in standardisation activities and certification of standards for quality managements systems, food, Excellence Through People and forestry management.

Action 221: IDA Ireland will continue to engage with members of the Global Irish Network who have put themselves forward as advocates for FDI to help win new investments for Ireland.

Q4 Measure: Continue to engage with network of advocates for FDI and report. (IDA)

Update: Complete

In Europe, IDA Ireland continued to engage with Diaspora advocates throughout 2013, predominantly with those located in the priority markets of Germany, France and the UK, by facilitating networking engagements with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade across Europe to widen support for the Connect Ireland programme with key advocates. IDA Ireland executives renewed membership to networking business groups for advocates in Germany, Belgium, and Luxembourg, all led by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

In North America, IDA Ireland has regular on-going interactions with Diaspora advocates and will maintain these interactions. IDA Ireland will continue to engage with Diaspora advocates in 2014 and will equally support collaboration with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade advocates and the wider Team Ireland group on both the business development potential and profile raising opportunities for Ireland.

Action 222: Convene a third Global Irish Economic Forum in October 2013.

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (DFAT)

Update: Complete

The third Global Irish Economic Forum took place in Dublin Castle on October 4th and 5th,

2013. Members of the Global Irish Network joined members of the Government, Ministers of State, senior officials, presidents of third level institutions, members of the Opposition and domestic business leaders for two days of intensive discussions.

The format of the Forum consisted of a mixture of plenary sessions, panel discussions and working groups. Two new initiatives for the 2013 Forum were the hosting of regional roundtables in Cork, Galway and Belfast on October 3rd, and a major networking event on the morning of October 5th during which a number of Network members held a series of round table meetings with some 70 Irish SMEs.

Under the chairmanship of a Global Irish Network member, each working group was asked to produce 2 -3 specific proposals for innovative ideas linked to the priority challenges in the Action Plan for Jobs. In total, 64 recommendations arose from the working groups across a range of themes.

Supporting Employment at the Community and Local Level

Action 223: Prepare a report on the medium-term economic development of rural areas for the period to 2025 based on a national consultation of rural stakeholders including employers, unions, farm bodies, community organisation and the public sector.

Q4 Measure: Publish Final Report. (DECLG)

Update: Delayed

The Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA) was launched in October 2012. The aim of the Commission is to carry out an extensive public consultation and research exercise on the future economic potential of rural Ireland and how best to channel funding and resources between 2013 and 2025. The most significant element of the Commission's work was the extensive consultation process, conducted between January and June of 2013, and consisting of three different elements (i) a series of public meetings, (ii) meetings with relevant stakeholders and experts, and (iii) a written submission process that involved the completion of an online questionnaire and/or written submissions.

The draft report was submitted to the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government at the end of November for his consideration. The Minister has been briefed by the Chair of the Commission on the general themes that are emerging from the work of CEDRA. The process has identified a diverse and complex series of issues and challenges that the Commission considers should be addressed to support the future economic development of rural Ireland. It is hoped that the report will be published in Quarter 1 2014.

Action 224: Establish Socio-Economic Committees in each local authority area to bring greater coherence and oversight to the range of local and community development interventions locally and provide for a more effective matching of resources to locally identified priorities, including those interventions that focus on increasing people’s work readiness and employment prospects.

Q4 Measure: Establish Socio Economic Committees in remaining local authority areas. (DECLG)

Update: Delayed

This action has been delayed due to necessary prioritisation given to the delivery of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 which contains important provisions in relation to placing Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) and the community elements of integrated Local Economic and Community Plans on a statutory footing.

Notwithstanding this, there was good progress over Q4 in relation to the establishment of frontrunner (pilot) LCDCs:

- The LCDCs in Dublin City, South Dublin County Council, North Cork, Mayo and Leitrim have all held meetings.
- The remaining frontrunner areas –, Limerick, Galway, Offaly, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown and Roscommon – will hold their initial LCDC meetings in February 2014.

It is anticipated, now that the Local Government Reform Act 2014 has been enacted, LCDCs in the remaining local authority areas will be established and hold their first meetings in April and May 2014. They will assume responsibility for local development programme oversight from July 2014, with the transfer of management responsibility for the D/ECLG Local and Community Development Programme. Draft Local Economic and Community Plans are expected to be in place across all areas by end 2014.

Action 225: Review implementation of the local government sectoral strategy to promote employment and support local enterprise, “Supporting Economic Recovery and Jobs – Locally”.

Q4 Measure: Local Authorities to publish revised economic development and jobs strategies. (DECLG)

Update: Delayed

The *Supporting Enterprise, Local Development and Economic Growth: Analysis of Local Authorities for 2012* report states, inter alia, “local authorities have a general power of ‘competence’ to promote their local area [and that this] is generally achieved through the development of economic strategies for local areas, including branding of towns and cities

as part of tailored investment or tourism strategies”.

The *2011 Analysis of Economic Templates: Report to the County and City Managers Association Enterprise Strategy Steering Group* reports that 123 such strategies/plans in respect of policy development (local strategies/plans put in place that support economic development, including economic strategy, County/City Development Plans, zoning, business improvement districts, etc.) were undertaken in 2011.

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government is following up with local authorities as to the level of strategies developed or reviewed in 2013. Initial responses indicate 67% are complete, with the remainder being completed shortly.

Action 231: Develop a new Youth Policy Framework which will, inter alia, review youth funding schemes to ensure that youth work and the non-formal education sector contribute effectively to youth employment, including skills development and experiential learning opportunities for individuals and groups of young people.

Q4 Measure: Develop scope of the Youth Policy Framework and consultation process with a view to developing the policy framework and accompanying implementation plan in 2014. (DCYA)

Update: Complete

Work is at a preliminary stage in the development of the Youth Policy. This is being carried out with the assistance of the National Youth Work Advisory Committee; comprising Government Departments, State Agencies and Youth Work interests. The new Youth Policy will focus on ensuring greater coherence, connectivity and coordination of policy and provision for young people aged 10 – 24 years, and will articulate and advance the policy objectives of Government and in particular, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) in relation to youth. A strong focus of this policy will be placed on the contribution of youth provision in enhancing the employability of young people.

This Policy will aim to:

1. Enhance the development, participation and support of young people in the 10 – 24 years age range;
2. Be responsive to current and emerging issues such as youth unemployment, social inclusion, etc; and
3. Provide greater co-ordination and coherence in youth service provision and related services for young people across departments, agencies and sectors;

The development of this policy will comprise a consultation process with stakeholders and young people and will be further progressed and finalised in 2014.

Action 234: Facilitate the increased participation in volunteering opportunities by unemployed people. Such volunteering provides significant opportunities to provide and derive skills, experience and develop new competences which can assist people, including young people, in gaining a foothold in the labour market.

Q4 Measure: Finalise and publish the study examining the impact of volunteer-led youth provision being carried out by NUIM and UCC. (DCYA)

Update: Delayed

The Q4 measure to finalise and publish a study of volunteer-led youth provision is delayed. It is currently being finalised and will be published in Q1 2014.

Action 235: Provide over 6,000 after school child-care places targeted at primary school children whose parents have taken up employment opportunities.

Q4 Measure: Final rollout of the full 6,000 places. (DCYA, DSP, DES)

Update: Complete

The national roll-out of the 2013 School Age Childcare scheme, implemented by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs on behalf of the Department of Social Protection, was completed in October 2013. The scheme provided up to 6,000 subsidised after-school places for qualifying parents entering employment. As demand for the places was low, the number of places under the scheme has been reduced in 2014 to 600 and arrangements to introduce a new scheme, offering up to 1,800 part-time childcare places to qualifying CE participants, are at an advanced stage.

Action 236: Develop and publish a National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility, highlighting the role that enterprises can play in supporting employment and local communities

Q4 Measure: Seek Government approval and publish National Plan. (DJEI, other relevant Departments and agencies and business representatives)

Update: Complete

Ireland's National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) 2014-2016, *Good for Business, Good for the Community*, was submitted to Government for approval following extensive consultation with, and contributions from, key stakeholders. The Plan sets out the key principles and objectives which underpin CSR in Ireland and highlights the benefits that can accrue to both businesses and communities through the adoption of good CSR practices.

The objectives set out in the National Plan on CSR will be delivered progressively over the period to 2016 through a collaborative approach with the business sector. However, a number of priority actions for 2014 are identified, including the establishment of a CSR Stakeholder Forum, which will play a key role in monitoring the progress of the Plan.

The Plan, which was approved by Government, will be available on the website of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

Action 240: Through the Equality Authority, run a programme of activities to promote the employability of groups that have experienced labour market disadvantage related to discriminatory grounds (e.g. age, race, family status, disability etc). This will include specific streams for developing the equality capacity of employers, vocational education and training providers and labour market providers.

Q4 Measure: Highlight equality tools for vocational education and training providers in the annual Equality Mainstreaming in Further Education and Training conference. (Equality Authority)

Update: Complete

The conference 'Mainstreaming Equality: Making it Real' was held on October 22nd in Dublin Castle. 140 participants attended, and the materials on 'Positive Duty: An Opportunity for Equality Mainstreaming' were launched and disseminated.

Sectoral Opportunities

Manufacturing

Action 247: Encourage more manufacturing companies to avail of the access to national and international standardisation committees that NSAI can facilitate in order to establish a valuable source of advance market and technology intelligence to support their RD&I activities.

Q4 Measure: Focused advertising (radio, web) initiative on standards participation. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

Using testimonials from business owners, the NSAI ran a media campaign on 3 radio stations and on-line which targeted business owners and decision makers on the benefits of being involved in and implementing quality management systems standards, Excellence Through People, food safety and product standards.

Q4 Measure: e-Communications programme to increase awareness of the benefits of standardisation. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

NSAI used the social media site LinkedIn and its e-zine distribution to promote events such as the National Manufacturing Exhibition and Conference held on November 21st 2013, at which NSAI provided a speaker on the advantages of being involved in development of standards and beneficial business and trade effects of implementing management, manufacturing and product standards.

Q4 Measure: Develop a pilot 'standards audit' to accompany applications for FP7 or national RDI programme support. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

NSAI developed a pilot audit and mapping for Healthcare Standards. The web-based information resource allows users to 'research' standards and standard developments in the healthcare area and is available from www.n Sai.ie/Medical-Device-Standards.aspx.

A second web page has been developed for information on those standards of interest in research and innovation aimed at supporting organisations in making applications for the Horizon 2020 research programmes and is available from www.n Sai.ie/Our-Services/Standardization/Research-and-Innovation.aspx. Information about this website was disseminated at the Enterprise Ireland launch of Horizon 2020 on December 10th 2013.

Action 249: Embed structured cross agency and cross sectoral collaborative approaches to stimulate the potential for identifying and realising 'new' areas of opportunity at an early stage, including the establishment of focused working groups across the agencies and across existing sectoral departments to strengthen knowledge sharing, solidify the opportunities in new convergent areas and to identify policy requirements (barriers and enablers).

Q4 Measure: IDA will continue to work closely with EI on the high level management group and other in the exploration of mutual objectives. (IDA, EI)

Update: Complete

In 2013, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland continued to closely collaborate on a series of client priorities, including the research agenda via programmes such as Technology Centres and Innovation Partnerships.

The IDA Ireland/Enterprise Ireland Senior Management team continues to look at ways of embedding structured cross agency and cross sectoral collaborative approaches, including in the areas of global sourcing, joint sectoral strategies and overseas entrepreneurs/emerging businesses.

Action 251: Recruit a cohort of manufacturing champions in Ireland and take steps to promote careers in manufacturing.

Q4 Measure: Introduce content and resources on an on-going basis about careers relevant to STEM sectors in manufacturing with partners on www.SmartFutures.ie, the STEM careers awareness campaign aimed at second-level students in Ireland. (SFI)

Update: Complete

Smart Futures is a national campaign promoting careers in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) to second-level students in Ireland. It aims to encourage the consideration of the STEM areas, such as technology (e.g. gaming, cloud computing, cyber-security), engineering and energy (e.g. green technology), pharma and medical devices as potential career options. A new section on manufacturing has been added to www.smartfutures.ie. A careers profile template has also been supplied to manufacturing partners through the Manufacturing Development Forum group to help generate this content.

Q4 Measure: IDA will continue to build on the work of the Manufacturing Study. (IDA)

Update: Complete

IDA has been directly involved in the Manufacturing Forum under the direction of DJEI. The Forum includes representatives of the Manufacturing sector. In addition, IDA Ireland is

working on the manufacturing Step-Change initiative, which was a key component of the Forfás report on Manufacturing, by building up of an expertise in-house in relation to lean manufacturing, using the Enterprise Ireland experience as a base model. IDA Ireland has also championed the manufacturing agenda through articles in international publications including 'Industrial Engineer' and 'Industry Week' in the US.

Agriculture, Food and Marine

Action 254: Continue to work with 18 seafood companies on their investment programmes to create up to 40 further jobs in 2013, bringing the cumulative number of jobs created since 2010 to 240 under BIM business development programmes.

Q4 Measure: Increase raw material, new species and foreign landings. (BIM)

Update: Complete

Foreign Landings: Landings by Spanish vessels into Castletownbere continued in Q4. A local processor is preparing the hake, megrim and witches landed for sale to a major retailer in the Spanish market. The company has engaged 15 extra workers to handle this business.

Increase raw material: For the last quarter of 2013 there was an average of 10 tonnes/per week of raw material coming from the Spanish vessels into the south west for processing and this business is expected to grow further in 2014.

New species: Blue whiting for human consumption is a relatively new concept. To ensure that this species was suitable for processing and could be marketed for human consumption markets, Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) in conjunction with the Seafood Development Centre (SDC) undertook successful technical engineering trials over the first half of 2013. Previously this product was not processed in Ireland and had been used for fishmeal only. Development work on the blue whiting project continued in Q4 involving assessment of options for developing consumer ready formats and kitchen trials on new product developments. This project will continue to evolve in 2014.

Q4 Measure: Assess innovation, product development work through the Seafood Development Centre. (BIM)

Update: Complete

The Seafood Development Centre is integrated with BIM's business planning services to ensure Irish seafood companies are provided with all necessary business development and innovation services. The supports provided enable companies to develop, test, and launch a range of new seafood products.

Examples of projects carried out in Q4 include ongoing work with a whitefish processor on

developing its product range. The outcome in Q4 has been that the company has succeeded in having a range of its products listed in Tesco, UK. Further developments underway in Q4 included trials using new technology to enhance product shelf life.

To enhance professionalism and business skills in the seafood sector, the BIM Graduate Development Programme provides graduates with a nine month placement in the SDC followed by a six month period in a seafood company. Under the 2012/2013 round, three graduates were placed in seafood companies bringing a culture of innovation, new ideas and technological skills. Two of these have remained in the seafood sector and a new cohort of three graduates was taken on in the SDC in September. These will be placed in seafood companies between April and October 2014.

Q4 Measure: Achieve operational efficiencies through Lean and Green Seafood business. (BIM)

Update: Complete

In Q4, BIM recruited 12 firms for the Green Seafood Business programme. BIM has worked with Bord Bia to devise a method by which companies successfully completing the Programme will be eligible to comply with the Origin Green initiative.

Q4 Measure: Ensure capital investment for value add development in place. (BIM)

Update: Complete

During Q2, applications from 25 seafood companies were received under the 2013 Seafood Processing Scheme. Of these 21 companies proceeded to partially implement their investment plans totalling €4 million. A number of the companies impacted by the financing and time constraints have reapplied for support under the 2014 Programme and these applications are currently being assessed. In addition, there are 9 projects under the 2013 Investment for value add development in Seafood Scheme. The total project spend under the scheme was €236,195.

Each of these schemes supports companies in the development of new innovative seafood products. Some examples of the type of projects supported by the SDC under these schemes include:

- Fastnet Catch, Cork: This company was seeking to expand their existing product range and produced a new gluten free cod and hake fish cake with a range of flavours including garlic, herbs etc.
- Irish Atlantic Sea Salt, Cork: This company undertook a feasibility study on developing a new Irish sea salt product infused with a range of seaweeds.

- Sofrimar Ltd., Wexford: This company developed a whelk meat product in brine in a jar for the French market and a cooked whelk meat product for the Japanese market.

Action 257: Roll out a schedule of food related Ministerial Trade and Investment Missions and continue with technical and diplomatic efforts to improve trade and access for agri-food products.

Q4 Measure: Following EU Presidency, undertake a Ministerial trade mission. (DAFM)

Update: Complete

Three Ministerial trade missions were undertaken in the final quarter of 2013 to Japan, US and Gulf States. In conjunction with ongoing technical and diplomatic efforts to improve trade and access for agri-food products, these trade missions led to a number of significant outcomes for the agri-food sector in Ireland.

The Taoiseach-led trade mission to Japan in December resulted in the opening of the Japanese market to Irish beef; this market is valued at €12-15 million. The trade mission to the US in November focused on foreign direct investment and the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine had a number of meetings with key companies in this regard. On a separate but related issue, the U.S. announced that it is changing the regulations which restricted the importation of beef from the European Union due to BSE. It is a first step in moving to opening the U.S. market to exports of Irish beef.

The trade mission to the Gulf States (Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates (UAE)) resulted in:

- An announcement by the Irish Dairy Board of a €20 million investment in a Saudi Dairy company, AL Wazeen, which will result in the importation of significant volumes of Irish milk powders to Saudi and the production of approximately 20,000 tonnes of a 'white cheese' specific to the region, using new technology developed by Teagasc;
- The opening of the Kerry Food and Ingredients development centre in UAE which will cater for the specific consumer demands and tastes in the Middle East North Africa and Turkish markets;
- A €5 million contract signed by Biotecter Analytical Systems, a Cork based company, for water analysis equipment;
- The purchase of 13 mares/foals valued at €250,000 in recent Goffs sales and the announcement of a joint race with the Jabel Ali Race course;
- During the trade mission a number of Irish suppliers including Keoghs and Donnelly's products obtained product listings in an additional leading retailer in UAE; and
- Bord Bia announced the opening of new offices in Dubai to support Irish food companies exporting to UAE.

Action 258: Using externally-funded research contracts, fill up to 15 new research posts in the Marine Institute (in the areas of fisheries management, environment & food safety, oceanography, and mapping & modelling).

Q4 Measure: Complete 2nd round of recruitment – 10 posts. (Marine Institute)

Update: Delayed

These are mainly specialist, externally funded posts to be recruited by the Marine Institute in the areas of oceanographic services and data modelling. Three posts have been, or are in the process of being filled. As difficulties have arisen on the provision of the anticipated external funding, and as no EU Funding Framework for the next seven years has been agreed at EU level at this point in the Marine area, the remaining posts will not be filled in the immediate future but will be reconsidered when suitable external funding is identified.

Action 261: Progress the SmartBay marine technology test and demonstration facilities in Galway Bay by preparing for the installation of a fibre optic cable from An Spidéal to an underwater hub that links to the unique ¼ scale ocean energy test facility to develop research and commercial opportunities in the technology and energy sectors.

Q4 Measure: Issue Invitation To Tender for installation of cable and ancillary works in 2014. (Marine Institute)

Update: Complete

Six Invitations to Tender were issued in 2013 relating to the 'test and demonstration' platform and four Invitations to Tender relating to the system were issued. These included ductwork and drilling contracts for the onshore portion of the cable; connectors, cable end equipment; the trunk cable and cable termination. The project remains on schedule and on budget.

Action 262: Build on positive engagement with key dairy industry players to optimise industry expansion capability in 2013.

Q4 Measure: Provide an update on progress and plans by end 2013. (EI)

Update: Complete

Enterprise Ireland continues to engage with the key dairy industry players to ensure the optimum configuration of new capital formation to deal with increased milk supply post 2015, and has brought forward a number of strategic investments, notably from Glanbia Ingredients, Kerry and Dairygold, to give effect to this.

Action 264: Teagasc will work with the Irish Dairy Board to develop and launch a new cheese product.

Q4 Measure: Commercial launch. (Irish Dairy Board and commercial partner)

Update: Complete

In Q4, the Irish Dairy Board (IDB) launched a new €20 million investment in Saudi Arabia involving the production of a cheese developed under the Teagasc-IDB partnership. The cheeses will be made using a pioneering technology developed by the IDB and Teagasc. The technology allows innovative milk protein ingredients to be recombined for fresh white cheese production. Fresh white cheese is hugely popular in the Middle East. The facility will also include an Innovation Hub for the continued research and development of ‘white cheese’ technologies.

A second cheese has been commercialised with an Irish company. This cheese won a major award at an international cheese competition in 2013 and will be launched in the German market in June 2014.

Action 265: Teagasc and industry partner to develop a new dairy ingredient/process.

Q4 Measure: Perform laboratory and pilot scale trials. (Teagasc)

Update: Complete

Intensive laboratory and pilot scale trials were completed in 2013 and a new product has been transferred to the industry partner.

Action 268: Increase new product development (NPD) and sales volume from innovation initiatives such as BIM Seafood Centre, Teagasc Food Technology Centre and foresight4food.

Q4 Measure: Progress new market development in China/ Asia. (BIM)

Update: Complete

An Bord Iascaigh Mhara visited a China seafood exposition during November to work with three Irish seafood joint ventures, Ocean Jade, Atlantic Gold, and Errigal/CKI, that are working to expand their operations in the Chinese and Asian markets. Work on developing the Chinese and Asian markets for boarfish products was also carried out in association with Bord Bia.

Action 269: Work to achieve the target of 75% of food and drink exports being supplied by companies participating in the 'Origin Green' sustainability charter by the end of 2014.

Q4 Measure: 60% of exports covered by member companies. (Bord Bia)

Update: Complete

By end 2013, 60% of food and drink exports were from companies that are verified members of Origin Green sustainability programme.

Action 270: Initiate a new application phase of the FoodWorks programme in 2013 to support a further cohort of new food entrepreneurs.

Q4 Measure: Stage 4 will complete with most viable projects chosen for next stage (5 – robust business plans) which will run into 2014. (Bord Bia)

Update: Complete

FoodWorks 2 is a structured year long programme to deal with the lack of high potential start-up (HPSU) entrepreneurs in the food and drink sector. It involves the selection and assessment of projects/products/entrepreneurs from a consumer, technical and commercial perspective to mentor and develop those projects which are most likely to succeed.

Projects which successfully reach Stage 4 in the process receive a feasibility grant and a suite of business, mentoring and innovation supports to enable them to progress their business idea. From Stage 4, 11 feasibility studies were completed and presented. Of these, 5 participants were selected for Stage 5 which aims to develop investor ready business plans.

Action 271: Advance 10 further food industry co-opetition projects.

Q4 Measure: Three projects introduced or progressed. (Bord Bia)

Update: Complete

Three food industry co-opetition projects were introduced and/or progressed during Quarter 4:

- A business referral programme was introduced in November to reward businesses which refer business to a new supplier encouraging inter-business co-opetition;
- The Bord Bia Sustainable Dairy Assurance Scheme was launched. This Scheme was developed in cooperation with milk producers, processors and regulatory authorities and a number of dairy cooperatives are funding this project; and
- A group of companies in the potato industry are working collaboratively on securing funding for advancing a business development initiative.

Action 274: Progress new industry-led Dairy Processing Technology Centre with a clear commercialisation agenda and launch Phase 2 of Food for Health Ireland (FHI).

Q4 Measure: Launch Call for Proposals for New Dairy Processing Technology Centre. (EI)

Update: Complete

A call for Expressions of Interest for the research community to respond to the strategic research agenda agreed by the dairy industry was launched by Enterprise Ireland in August. The call closed on October 9th. Four proposals were received and these were reviewed by a panel of expert international reviewers in November. The panel also included representatives from the dairy companies as well as Enterprise Ireland and the relevant state agencies/departments. Recommendations from the panel will be used to shape the next phase of the process which is a full proposal call.

Action 275: Encourage a high level of adoption of the internationally recognised Food Safety System Certification (FSSC) by Irish food producers, suppliers, and exporters.

Q4 Measure: Regional promotional event for food companies. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

The NSAI held an event for quality management consultants on November 27th, where the benefits to business of implementing the globally recognised Food Safety System Certification (FSSC) ISO 22000 were presented.

Additionally, contacts were made with the newly established Irish Water, who now take up responsibility for national implementation of standards for water as a food product.

Green Economy

Action 278: Conduct research to commence benchmarking employment numbers in the Green Economy.

Q4 Measure: Finalise and produce preliminary study of employment numbers in the Green Economy. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

Comprehensive data-gathering on the Green Economy in Ireland is challenging, in particular as it is a dynamic area covering a range of sectors. A number of publications to date have provided a range of estimates of employment in the Green Economy in Ireland. However, the purpose of this action is to develop a better understanding of benchmarking employment in the sector in Ireland, in particular given that work on an agreed definition of 'green employment' is on-going at EU and international levels.

In delivering on this action, DJEI met with Central Statistics Office (CSO) and worked in tandem on collecting information regarding benchmarking employment in the Green Economy. The Department also consulted with relevant stakeholders such as Enterprise Ireland, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Forfás, and the Green IFSC. A desk review of previous studies on green employment in Ireland and other countries was conducted.

The preliminary study sets out the issues around data collection and describes key Green Economy sectors in Ireland and the jobs which are being created, sustained or transformed in those sectors. It provides guidance for future work in benchmarking green employment in Ireland. The Department will continue to develop this area of work in conjunction with other stakeholders as resources allow.

Action 280: Advance the potential to export surplus Renewable Energy. The Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources will sign a Memorandum of Understanding with his UK counterpart on co-operation on Energy matters. Agreement on an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) would facilitate the development of major windfarms in Ireland for export of wind energy to the UK. The Agreement will also require resolution of significant regulatory and technical issues and is likely to be substantially progressed in 2013.

Q4 Measure: Substantially progress tasks to facilitate the signing of a potential IGA in Q1 2014. (DCENR, DECC (UK))

Update: Complete

In line with the quarterly commitment, further progress on the Irish side was made in Q4 in relation to facilitating the signing of a potential Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA). Specifically, following presentations on cost-benefit analysis (CBA) to the relevant Senior Officials Group and Cabinet Committee, the Ireland-UK Steering Group met in November, with a Developer Day. At the Steering Group, Ireland made clear the requirement for clarity on the quantity of power to be procured by the UK, the proposed regulatory approach, and the structure of contract for difference and resultant financial flows, ahead of signing an IGA.

The impact of these factors on the fundamental economics of the shared project were stressed, and the importance of taking account of the distribution of costs, benefits and risk across two jurisdictions and the developers, to realise the mutual benefits sought, was emphasised. At the Developer Day, presentations were made on realising mutual benefits, coordination, planning, and the Ofgem regulatory consultation. Developers indicated a willingness to coordinate for planning the transmission asset (in economic terms a natural monopoly).

DCENR submitted an informal response to the Ofgem regulatory consultation in January.

The key point made, supported by rigorous economic analysis, was the relationship between the regulatory approach, risk distribution, the cost of delivery for the Irish developers and the resultant size of the mutual benefit to be shared between Ireland and the UK. DCENR favoured a regulatory approach that minimises the cost of delivery and maximises the mutual benefit to be shared. Ireland and the UK held a focussed CBA meeting, also in January. The UK shared its conceptualisation of the costs and benefits of renewable energy trading at that meeting. This discussion will be further developed at the next Ireland-UK Steering Group.

Action 284: Continue to review and upgrade the energy performance standards of buildings in keeping with the standards of the most advanced EU Member States in order to ensure progress towards low energy, low carbon economy and promote innovation and deployment of energy efficient building components and systems.

Q4 Measure: Publication of a Code of Practice for retrofitting energy efficiency measures in existing dwellings. (DECLG)

Update: Delayed

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government has accepted delivery of the Code of Practice and is satisfied that the terms of reference have been met in full by the consultants (Building Research Establishment).

At the request of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and SEAI, who are the main funding partners on the development of the Codes of Practice, the scope of the project was extended in 2013 to include an additional research item on the adequacy of ventilation in dwellings undergoing retrofits grant-aided under the Better Energy Homes scheme. Following delivery of the ventilation research in mid-January 2014, the definitive Code of Practice will be published by NSAI in February 2014.

Q4 Measure: Commence review of “Building Regulations Part L – Conservation of Fuel and Energy - Buildings other than dwellings ” and accompanying Technical Guidance Document L. (DECLG)

Update: Complete

The review is currently underway and will be completed by mid-2014 paving the way for new Part L Regulations and accompanying Technical Guidance Document L to be in place by Q4 of 2014.

Action 285: Promote the adoption of the ISO 14001 Environmental Management System standard and/or the ISO 50001 Energy Management System standard by Irish based companies.

Q4 Measure: Support other Agencies and Trade bodies in promoting the benefits of ISO 14001 & ISO 50001 to all industry sectors. (NSAI and other Agencies and Trade Bodies)

Update: Complete

The NSAI promoted and participated in the National Manufacturing Conference and Exhibition which was held on November 21st 2013. The NSAI with other agencies provided speakers for the event, distributed information and met with small and medium size business owners to explain the benefits of participation in standardisation activities and implementation of quality management systems for manufacturing processes, including ISO 14001 on environmental management and ISO 50001 on energy management, as well as certification of management systems and products.

Action 286: Develop an Irish Standard on Energy Efficiency Design Methodology to support the development of the Green Economy and better improve industry energy consumption efficiencies.

Q4 Measure: Development of draft document for public consultation, with a view to publication of the standard in 2014. (NSAI, SEAI)

Update: Complete

The NSAI has developed the draft Irish Standard document on Energy Efficiency Design Management during 2013, which will be launched for public consultation in Q1 2014, with publication during 2014.

Action 291: Review the Producer Responsibility Initiative model in Ireland to ensure, inter alia, that specific waste stream re-use, recovery and recycling targets are achieved at the most efficient cost to stakeholders, whilst maintaining a high level of environmental compliance. This will ensure that Ireland continues to be well placed to meet our increasingly challenging domestic and broader EU recovery and recycling targets in specific waste streams efficiently and effectively in the medium to long term.

Q4 Measure: Analyse the consultant's final report, consult with stakeholders and make recommendations to the Minister. (DECLG)

Update: Delayed

In November 2013, the Minister published the reports on Tyres and End of Life Vehicles. The

reports are subject to a period of consultation until January 31st 2014.

These reports are the priority reports in the Producer Responsibility Initiative (PRI) Review process and the consultants were asked to complete them ahead of the main PRI review report. This is because:

- Ireland is not meeting its targets under the ELV Directive for the recycling and recovery of End of Life Vehicles;
- From January 1st 2015, more stringent targets will come into force; and
- Urgent action is required to avoid infringement proceedings being taken against Ireland.

Despite the existing regulatory structure and the operation of the compliance schemes in the tyre waste stream, there are still major problems in this area, and major deficiencies in the current system which must be tackled as a matter of urgency.

While attending to these priorities, the main review is at an advanced stage and it is expected that the final report will be published in the first half of 2014. The final report will be wide ranging and include segments on packaging, farm plastics, batteries, information and awareness, enforcement, competition in the compliance schemes, and possible new areas that might be covered by Producer Responsibility agreements.

Tourism

Action 304: Work with tourism businesses, particularly SMEs, to improve their e-capacity to transact and sell, focusing on the source markets with the best prospects.

Q4 Measure: Provide tailored business supports to tourism enterprises to allow maximum advantage of the market exposure afforded by the internet to drive business, including through websites and social media. (Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Complete

In excess of 3,600 tourism businesses availed of web supports. Approximately 600 businesses engaged in Fáilte Ireland's Sales Connect initiative which is designed to help businesses sell to Ireland's four key overseas markets – Germany, France, United States and United Kingdom.

- A National Web Test was completed with key businesses to review web presence and identify areas of strength and weakness that can be acted upon.
- A Web Internationalisation Programme was completed to enhance domestic practitioners' presence and performance in key overseas markets.
- Webinars and web tutorials were delivered to keep industry up to speed on topical developments in the online world (e.g. social media)

- WebCheck supports ensured individual businesses received tailored action plans from independent mentors to help improve their online performance.

Retail Sector

Action 309: Establish an Interdepartmental Group to consider further possible measures to assist the retail sector.

Q4 Measure: Submit report to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery & Jobs on the Group's conclusions. (DJEI, Forfás and relevant departments)

Update: Complete

An Interdepartmental Group was established in May 2013 to consider possible measures which could be included in the 2014 Action Plan for Jobs to assist the Retail sector. The Interdepartmental Group held consultations with Retail representative bodies and other stakeholders, and received a range of submissions and suggestions from them.

These proposals were assessed by the Interdepartmental Group and, in accordance with the Group's Terms of Reference, a short report was prepared for the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs in December 2013, outlining the actions recommended for implementation in the context of the 2014 Action Plan for Jobs.

The 2014 Action Plan for Jobs is being finalised and will include a number of actions to support the Retail sector.

Creative Services

Action 312: Roll-out further cultural digitisation initiatives and leverage our unique cultural offerings, especially in the context of The Gathering Ireland 2013, the Decade of Centenaries and Ireland's EU Presidency.

Q4 Measure: Creation of up to 300 direct/indirect jobs arising from 3 year refurbishment programme for the National Gallery of Ireland. (See 317.1). (DAHG, National Gallery of Ireland)

Update: Complete

The refurbishment of the National Gallery of Ireland is an ongoing 3 year multiannual project. Following the initial phase of works at the National Gallery which involved the replacement of the Dargan Wing Roof, a major programme of works relating to the refurbishment of the Historic Wings is planned. The necessary tendering process for these refurbishment works was undertaken in 2013 and a contract has been recently awarded to the Main Contractor. Over the lifetime of this project, 300 direct and indirect jobs may be realised in the building, construction and services sectors.

Action 314: Provide support for Built Heritage projects through the Structures at Risk Fund.

Q4 Measure: Applications for grant drawdowns assessed and funding released. (DAHG and Local Authorities)

Update: Complete

Conservation works to forty-three structures in both private and public ownership across the country were part-funded through the Structures at Risk Fund in 2013. A total of €470,760 was awarded through this fund. The total expenditure on these works in 2013 was €1,028,000. The 2010 Department of Finance Infrastructure Investment Priorities report noted that each €1 million investment in construction projects sustained between 8 and 12 jobs. A new €5 million Built Heritage Jobs Leverage Scheme launched in December 2013 will ensure that at least €10 million is invested in protected structures in 2014, with a commensurate increase in jobs in the construction sector.

Action 317: Create up to 300 direct/indirect jobs arising from the 3 year refurbishment programme for the National Gallery of Ireland, commencing in 2013.

Q4 Measure: As per headline action (See 312.4). (DAHG, National Gallery of Ireland)

Update: Complete

The refurbishment of the National Gallery of Ireland is an ongoing 3 year multiannual project. Following the initial phase of works at the National Gallery which involved the replacement of the Dargan Wing Roof, a major programme of works relating to the refurbishment of the Historic Wings is planned. The necessary tendering process for the refurbishment works was undertaken in 2013 and a contract has been recently awarded to the Main Contractor. Over the lifetime of this project, 300 direct and indirect jobs may be realised in the building, construction and services sectors.

Action 318: Continue to increase the profile of the Craft Sector in Ireland through the involvement of the Crafts Council of Ireland in a number of key initiatives.

Q4 Measure: Host National Craft and Design Fair. (Crafts Council of Ireland)

Update: Complete

The National Crafts & Design Fair, which was held in the RDS, Dublin in December 2013, is widely recognised as one of Ireland's premier annual consumer showcases of craftwork. Over 500 designers, artists, craftspeople and artisan food producers participated, representing an impressive selection of Irish gifts. The Design & Crafts Council of Ireland hosted daily craft demonstrations and a curated display featuring craft gifts from over 70 selected makers. Sales figures for the event were reported to be ahead of 2012.

International Education Services

Action 325: Undertake a short focused review of the International Education Strategy

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (DES with relevant Departments and agencies)

Update: Complete

A review of the International Education Strategy was completed at the end of 2013. Following Ministerial consideration early in the year, it is expected that it will be published in Q1 2014.

Cloud Computing

Action 326: Treble the number of Enterprise Ireland client companies providing services from cloud computing platforms from 80 to 250.

Q4 Measure: As per headline action. (EI)

Update: Complete

This target has been achieved. Enterprise Ireland's Cloud Series continues to deliver workshops, consultancy and awareness for companies making the transition to cloud based services. In addition, the Cloud Computing cluster group is developing a toolkit for cloud transition.

Action 328: Provide forums for the purpose of promoting the cloud computing standard, SWiFT 10, and discussing cloud computing and issues related to standards.

Q4 Measure: Host conferences, "road shows," demonstrations and other promotional events in various venues. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

NSAI promoted the cloud computing standard, SWiFT 10, through a series of road shows organised by the Irish Internet Association in Dublin, Cork and Galway. NSAI promoted the events through its website and LinkedIn. At the events, NSAI staff members facilitated discussions and participated in break-out sessions on the benefits of standardisation, the existing standard and SME case studies. 300 copies of the SWiFT 10 standard were distributed at no cost at these events.

Ongoing Measures

Disruptive Reforms

Disruptive Reform 1: Build on our existing enterprise strengths to make Ireland a leading country in Europe on “Big Data”

Action 5: Through the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation we will further develop a critical mass of research activity and scale in the area of “Data Analytics, Management, Security and Privacy” in line with Government’s priority areas for R&D

Ongoing Measure: Continue to fund research excellence in underpinning platform technologies and sciences of relevance to Data Analytics, Management, Security and Privacy through open competitive calls. (SFI, EI, other research funders as appropriate)

Update: Complete for 2013

- SFI has continued to fund research in underpinning platform technologies and sciences of relevance to data analytics, big data, management, security and privacy through open competitive calls.
- Furthermore, in 2013 SFI announced the funding of INSIGHT, a major Data Analytics Research Centre that spans four higher education institutes (HEIs) and has approximately 30 industry partners. SFI committed €42 million in funding over a 6 year period (2013-2019) with industry providing a further €32 million in both cash and in kind contributions.
- SFI is also running a number of programmes that provide funding opportunities in the area of data analytics, management, security and privacy such as:
 - SFI’s Investigator Programme (IvP) which funds outstanding people with innovative ideas and strategic partnerships. Proposals submitted to the IvP 2013 call are currently under review with a funding decision anticipated in Q2 2014.
 - SFI’s Technology Innovation Development Award (TIDA) Programme which is designed to enable researchers to focus on the first steps of an applied research project that may have a potential commercial benefit if further developed. Eighty one proposals have been recommended for funding and Letters of Offer were issued in November 2013, three of which are in the priority area of data analytics, management, security and privacy.
 - SFI’s Industry Fellowship Programme which is designed to promote the exchange of people at all levels between academia and industry in Ireland and abroad. Twenty one proposals have been recommended for funding and Letters of Offer were issued in November 2013, one of which is in the priority area of data analytics, management, security and privacy.

- SFI's Research Centres Spokes Programme was launched on September 13th 2013 with a submission deadline of November 8th 2013. This programme is a vehicle to enable the addition of new industrial and academic partners and projects to the current cohort of SFI Research Centres (which include INSIGHT). Eleven applications were received and eligible applications will be internationally peer-reviewed for scientific impact and excellence.

SFI's 2013 Research Centres call was launched on September 13th 2013. It will fund a set of world-leading, large-scale research centres and provide major economic impact for Ireland. Ten themes were selected and a number of these provide the underlying architecture for Data Analytics or have significant data acquisition and analysis requirements. Thirteen pre-proposal applications were received and all eligible applications will be sent for international peer review, in advance of the pre-proposal panel meeting in January 2014. The deadline for submission of full proposal applications from all shortlisted applicants will be in April 2014 with a funding decision anticipated in Q4 2014.

Ongoing Measure: Incorporate the Data Analytics, Management, Security and Privacy areas into careers promotions/awareness initiatives such as Smart Futures. (SFI)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Smart Futures STEM Careers Week took place from 29th April – May 3rd 2013. This featured live online events where students and guidance counsellors interacted with people working in STEM Industries such as cybersecurity, data analytics and computer forensics to answer their career questions. The website also features a series of four videos profiling people working in science, technology, engineering and maths. These included an ICT focus. Online chat was facilitated between students and experts working in companies such as CISCO, SAP and Microsoft, providing an important industry-education engagement opportunity. A technology competition in association with the Coder Dojo was launched to encourage students to use their summer holidays to work on technology projects such as websites, games and apps.

Data Analytics, Management, Security & Privacy were also incorporated into events such as the STEM Careers Roadshow, the Digital Schools (Business & Technology) supplement and the App4Gaps competition. Industry representative bodies such as PharmaChem Ireland, the Royal Society of Chemistry, ICT Ireland, the Irish Software Association, Irish Medical Devices Association and Engineer's Ireland are continuing to support the Smart Futures programme. These groups are providing sector specific data on skills requirements and access to people working in the various STEM areas to take part in online events.

Action 8: Complete mapping exercises to explore in detail links between enterprise and academic expertise in various applications of data analytics.

Ongoing Measure: Building on the national research prioritisation exercise, identify and map the key enterprise and academic expertise for the core areas of Data Analytics, Management, Security and Privacy. (EI, IDA, SFI)

Update: Complete for 2013

During August and September 2013, Enterprise Ireland consulted with its own staff and client companies in each of the core areas of data analytics, management, security and privacy to identify and map the key enterprise and academic expertise. On October 16th, there was a multi-agency workshop on these areas and the information and feedback from Enterprise Ireland clients was shared and combined with IDA Ireland's feedback.

Action 9: Provide funding for the platform science and technology areas underpinning data analytics.

Ongoing Measure: Continue or extend funding of current research activity of excellence to meet needs or run a new thematic call for new areas of need (identified through 7 above). (SFI, EI, other research funders as appropriate)

Update: Complete for 2013

In order to extend and strengthen the funding for the platform science and technology areas underpinning data analytics, plans are underway to build on recent investments e.g. INSIGHT Centre, through the SFI Research Centres Spokes Programme. This programme was launched on September 13th 2013 and is a vehicle to enable the addition of new industrial and academic partners and projects to the current cohort of SFI Research Centres, thereby allowing these Centres to expand and develop in line with new priorities and opportunities. This will ensure that the Research Centre retains its ability to do cutting edge research, and its industrial relevance, and so enhance its sustainability.

The Spokes programme also provides a vehicle to link together, in a meaningful and relevant way, different Research Centres. The Programme has been designed to deliver excellent basic, oriented research results and discoveries in targeted projects associated with SFI Research Centres and hence will deliver significant economic and societal impacts during the lifetime of the programme. The deadline for submission of applications to the Spokes 2013 Fixed Call programme was November 8th 2013. Eleven applications were received. All eligible applications will be sent for international peer review, in advance of the panel meeting in Q1 2014. Projects funded through the SFI Spokes Programme will be of outstanding research quality and intellectual breadth, thus aligning with and adding value to

the current objectives of the SFI Research Centres and areas of strategic opportunity for Ireland, as outlined in the report of the National Research Prioritisation Exercise (NPPE). In addition to providing new opportunities to strengthen initiatives in data analytics projects, it will strengthen and compliment on-going research and infrastructure funding underpinning data analytics, such as that currently in train with the Irish Software Engineering Research Centre, LERO and Ireland's High Performance Computing Centre, ICHEC.

Ongoing Measure: Continue to fund research excellence in underpinning platform technologies and sciences of relevance to Data Analytics, Management, Security and Privacy through open competitive calls. (SFI, EI, other research funders as appropriate)

Update: Complete for 2013

Through open competitive calls SFI has continued to fund research excellence in underpinning platform technologies and sciences of relevance to Data Analytics, Big Data, Management, Security and Privacy.

Furthermore, in 2013 SFI announced the funding of INSIGHT, a major Data Analytics Research Centre that spans four higher education institutes (HEIs) and has approximately 30 industry partners. SFI committed €42 million in funding over a 6 year period (2013-2019) with industry providing a further €32 million in both cash and in kind contributions.

SFI is also running a number of programmes that provide funding opportunities in the area of data analytics, management, security and privacy (see Action 5 for details).

Disruptive Reform 2: Make Ireland the most attractive location in the world for ICT Skills availability ensuring continued success of the ICT sector

Improving domestic pipeline

Action 13: Continue delivery of all aspects of the current ICT Action Plan and development of new responses, actions and timelines in line with emerging needs.

Ongoing Measure: Further roll out of Project Maths, professional development opportunities for teachers and the ongoing implementation of a new National Numeracy and Literacy Strategy. (DES)

Update: Complete for 2013

Project Maths

All five strands of Project Maths were rolled out to all schools in September 2012. It will be June 2017 before the first students who have studied Project Maths for their entire school careers finish school.

In November 2013, research carried out by the National Foundation for Education Research (NFER) on the implementation of Project Maths found that students at both Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate appear to be performing well in many aspects of the revised syllabus, in particular in Strand 1 (statistics and probability). Performance is lowest in Strand 5 (functions) and Strand 4 (algebra). These findings are consistent with those from other assessments such as the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the state examinations.

National roll-out of workshops, school visits, modular courses and the post-graduate diploma in mathematics for out of field teachers form the core of the mathematics continuing professional development (CPD) programme and these continued during 2013.

National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy

Activities carried out over 2013 to support the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, included:

- Broadcasting of a series of programmes supporting literacy in co-operation with NALA;
- Working with libraries;
- Ongoing reform in initial teacher education and curriculum, including primary Irish and English, beginning work on primary mathematics, Junior Cycle reform and work on the senior cycle sciences;
- Roll out of school self-evaluation; and
- A continuing national programme of professional development for primary and second level teachers.

Action 14: Promote the ICT Action Plan as a collaborative response by Government Departments, State agencies and industry to address skills shortages and build Ireland's ICT skills capability

Ongoing Measure: Raise awareness of the ICT Action Plan and the steps being taken to improve the supply of high level ICT Skills for enterprise. (DES, HEA, DJEI, IDA, EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

The development and implementation of the ICT Action Plan as well as the roll-out of the two rounds of the ICT conversion courses have been highlighted in a number of press releases and speeches both in Ireland and as part of EU events held during 2013.

In addition, through company meetings and their ICT newsletters, IDA Ireland has highlighted the ICT Action Plan and the collaborative approach between Government and the private sector to building the ICT skills base in the country.

The EGFSN report 'Addressing Future Demand for High-level ICT Skills' published in November 2013, noted the significant increase in output of computer graduates in Ireland that is occurring as a result of the implementation of the ICT Action Plan. The findings of the EGFSN report are informing the development of a new ICT Action Plan, which is due to be launched in early 2014. The development of the new Plan is being led jointly by the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation with inputs from the relevant agencies and enterprise representatives.

Action 19: Increase the percentage of students taking the Higher Level Mathematics examination in Leaving Certificate to 30% by 2020.

Ongoing Measure: Continue roll-out of Project Maths (including extensive continuing professional development for maths teachers). (DES)

Update: Complete for 2013

Please see update at action 13 above.

Ongoing Measure: Implement the recommendations of the Project Maths Implementation Support Group on industry-education stakeholder partnership. (DES)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Group's actions are largely implemented. The Group continues to meet to provide support on mathematics actions. There were 13 high level recommendations with a number of detailed sub-recommendations. A brief commentary on each is set out below:

- Roll-out of project maths: Rollout to all mainstream schools of all 5 strands;
- Time spent on mathematics: Circular 25/12 recommended that all schools offer a maths class every day;
- Primary: A Bridging Framework between primary and post-primary has been developed and is available on the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment's website, www.ncca.ie;
- Junior Cycle: Recommendations regarding teacher deployment are addressed in circular 25/12;
- Transition Year: Recommendations addressed in circular 25/12;
- Third level entry processes: Although some parts of the recommendation have not been progressed, there is more general overarching work on transitions taking place within the Department of Education and Skills which largely supersede them. Bonus points are implemented on the basis recommended i.e. encouraging students who might otherwise take ordinary level to remain at higher level;

- Build awareness of Project Maths: Extensive communications have taken place with stakeholders;
- Awareness measures: A number of these awareness measures have been taken and they are subject to ongoing review and updating;
- Careers: SFI Discover (the successor body to Discover Science and Engineering) continues to implement a range of measures to support careers;
- Qualifications of Teachers: Two rounds of the state-funded post-graduate diploma in mathematics targeted at ‘out-of-field’ mathematics teachers have commenced, and actions relating to the Teaching Council continue to be progressed;
- Curricular reform and other supports: Projectmaths.ie has extensive resources available for students and teachers;
- Supporting High Achievers: A range of student competitions are in place; and
- Research and evaluation: Interim and final research reports prepared by National Foundation for Educational Research and available at www.ncca.ie.

Ongoing Measure: Continue bonus points scheme by third level institutes. (Third Level Institutes)

Update: Update: Complete

The bonus points scheme continues to be implemented by third level institutes. It is proposed that a review of this system will be carried out in 2014.

Ongoing Measure: Continue ongoing implementation of Literacy and Numeracy Strategy which provides for an increase in the amount of time spent teaching maths in primary schools by 70 minutes per week, as well as a range of other measures to promote improved performance in this area. (DES)

Update: Complete for 2013

Please see update at action 13 above.

Attracting necessary skills from abroad

Action 28: Consider the development of a ‘trusted partner’ registration which will provide for the pre-registration of prospective employers which will speed up the processing of applications (by removing the need for duplicated provision of employers’ credentials with each permit application), reduce the ongoing administrative burden on employers and provide greater assurance and clarity to employers in terms of the Employment Permits applications process.

Ongoing Measure: Implement changes as necessary. (DJEI)

Update: Complete for 2013

Implementation of the necessary changes to the Employment Permits processes to facilitate a ‘trusted partner’ registration system commenced in Q3 and continued during Q4. The necessary tasks have been identified for completion before trial registration. The technical aspects of the scheme’s implementation have been finalised, and a bilateral meeting with IDA Ireland to discuss rollout to IDA Ireland clients in the first instance was held in January.

Disruptive Reform 6: Transform Ireland into one of the most energy efficient economics in Europe by 2020

Action 43: Develop and introduce an innovative National Energy Performance Contracting Policy Framework (EPC) which will assist public sector and commercial bodies to develop energy efficiency proposals with Energy Services companies.

Ongoing Measure: Support exemplar projects. (SEAI, DCENR)

Update: Complete for 2013

There are 21 exemplar energy efficiency projects underway since June 2013; 11 of the projects are in public sector organisations such as the Health Services Executive, and 10 involve private sector companies such as Roadstone.

Exemplar projects receive supports in the form of training, networking and access to a panel of legal and technical experts to review and comment at key stages of the projects. In return participating organisations committed to actively provide feedback on the use of the draft National Energy Services Framework. The majority of the exemplar projects have completed Stage 3 (of 5) of the Framework and it is expected that they will move to procurement and contract implementation stages in the first half of 2014. Exemplars attend regular workshops, with a total of €440,000 in technical assistance committed across these projects.

Action 45: Identify, and support through the Energy Efficiency Fund, up to 20 demonstration projects, drawn from the public and private sectors, which will act as exemplars with regard to:

- the operation of the new EPC Framework, and
- the type of practical and innovative measures that can be replicated elsewhere to significantly improve energy efficiency in the public and commercial sectors.

Ongoing Measure: Support exemplar projects. (SEAI)

Update: Complete for 2013

Please see update at action 43 above

Disruptive Reform 7: Establish a world renowned National Health Innovation Hub

Cork Demonstrator Project

Action 48: Monitor and assess performance of the Cork Demonstrator Project throughout 2013 and use learnings to inform design of National Health Innovation Hub

Ongoing Measure: Monitor performance of the Cork Demonstrator on the basis of grant approval. (EI, Other appropriate agencies)

Update: Complete for 2013

The current funding period for the Cork Demonstrator Project will end in July 2014 and a final report will be submitted to the National Project team (NPT). The performance of the Demonstrator is being monitored on an ongoing basis throughout the grant period. Key performance indicators for the Cork Demonstrator Project were finalised and agreed by the NPT in March. These indicators include, amongst others:

- Number of companies/projects supported by the Demonstrator;
- Identification of potential markets for new products/services/technologies; and
- Number and nature of products/services developed for commercialisation.

In addition to ongoing review of performance by the NPT and the Project Steering Group, Enterprise Ireland has appointed a monitor for the Demonstrator and they will report any issues/learnings to the NPT via the Enterprise Ireland representatives.

Ongoing Measure: Assess performance of the Cork Demonstrator through feedback from funding agencies and the Steering Group. (DJEI, D/Health, National Project Team)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Government established a NPT in 2012 to oversee the establishment of the Health Innovation Hub. As a precursor to the wider national programme, a Demonstrator site was established in Cork in 2012 to oversee a group of six initial industry-proposed innovation projects, and to inform the work of the NPT in the development of the HIH. The work of the Cork Demonstrator site is being funded through a grant from Enterprise Ireland and through in-kind support from the health system.

The Steering Committee meets to review progress on each of the six industry projects on a regular basis. The NPT met 5 times during 2013 and an update on the performance of the Cork Demonstrator Project was provided by the Steering Group at each meeting. The updates raised a range of issues which informed NPT discussions and feedback to the Demonstrator project.

Access to Finance for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

Governance and Policy

Action 53: Implement and monitor the 10 Point Tax Plan for the Small and Medium Enterprise Sector as announced in Budget 2013.

Ongoing Measure: Seek European Commission approval to extend the general rate and Young Trained Farmers rate of stock relief.

Update: Complete

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is working to progress this measure. However, it should be noted that the general rate does not require European Commission approval.

Ongoing Measure: Complete a joint Revenue and Department of Finance public consultation on "Taxation of Micro Enterprises." (D/Finance)

Update: Complete

Nine of the ten tax measures to support SMEs which were announced in Budget 2013 have been completed. In relation to the final measure, taxation of micro-enterprises, the Revenue Commissioners and D/Finance have decided, following a public consultation on the issue, not to proceed any further at this stage. As part of its ongoing and continual review of the administrative burden, however, Revenue will examine in more detail a number of the suggestions from the aforementioned consultation process.

Action 55: The SME Funding Consultation Committee will continue in 2013 to engage intensively in proactively addressing issues associated with SME funding and financing in conjunction with relevant stakeholders.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (SME Funding Consultation Committee chaired by D/Finance)

Update: Complete for 2013

The SME Funding Consultation Committee is chaired by the Department of Finance (D/Finance) and has representatives from the relevant public bodies and business representative organisations as well as banking representatives. The role of this Committee is to work on solutions for the key issue of funding for SMEs.

There was continued consultation over Q4 with the business representative organisations as well as representatives of the banking sector on the development of a new work programme and working procedures for the Committee to be rolled out in 2014. The 2014 work programme will include organising and promoting a series of nationwide regional road shows on SME Access to Finance as well as assisting in the roll out of the communication strategy.

Action 56: The newly established Local Enterprise Offices will function as a First Stop Shop for the provision of information and advice for small business, as well as continuing to assist micro enterprises in relation to accessing loan finance from the Microenterprise Loan Fund.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (Local Enterprise Offices)

Update: Complete for 2013

Assistance to micro enterprises in relation to accessing loan finance from the Microenterprise Loan Fund is currently a function of the County Enterprise Boards (CEBs). The Boards have been actively supporting their enterprise clients throughout the year in relation to the Fund.

The CEBs have also been providing wider advice and supports to micro enterprises, including direct grant aid and general business advice and information. In addition, the CEBs offer targeted training, such as mentoring support, 'start your own business' courses, and other courses.

The formal establishment of Local Enterprise Offices requires the enactment of legislation and this is due to be passed during Q1 of 2014. However, this has not detracted from the delivery of the supports envisaged under this Action through the CEB structure.

Information and Skills

Action 61: Survey the demand for SME credit. Actively encourage a broad programme of research that will benefit from the data collected to date.

Ongoing Measure: Undertake SAFE Surveys of demand for credit. (Central Bank)

Update: Complete

The European Central Bank published Surveys on the Access to Finance of SMEs in the Euro Area (SAFE) in April and November 2013. These covered the periods October 2012 to March 2013 and April to September 2013 respectively.

Both of the SAFE surveys published in 2013 found that Irish SMEs reported an overall increase in turnover, in common with Germany, Belgium, Austria and Finland. Additionally, in a measure of the general economic outlook as it impacts the availability of external financing, the survey published in April found that Ireland showed the second best improvement and overall position (behind Germany).

In addition, independent surveys of demand for SME credit were undertaken by Red C on behalf of the Department of Finance. The survey covering the period October 2012 to March 2013 was published in June and the survey covering the period April – September 2013 was published in December.

Access to Funding Measures

Action 63: Promote awareness and understanding of the full range of Government supported funding programmes and incentives in place to meet the financing needs of the SME sector, including through online resources, a credit and lending newsletter and a publicity campaign for the Microenterprise Loan Fund

Ongoing Measure: Implement Publicity Strategy. (Microfinance Ireland)

Update: Complete

Microfinance Ireland (MFI) drafted a publicity strategy in Quarter 1 2013. The publicity strategy is being implemented on an ongoing basis and includes a national and local radio advertising campaign, presentations at business events and dissemination of brochures.

As of September 30th 2013, €1.62 million in loans had been approved to 107 microenterprises, supporting 237 jobs (of which 118 are new jobs) since the launch of MFI in October 2012.

Action 65: Implement, as appropriate, the recommendations arising out of the Credit Review Office assessment process.

Ongoing Measure: Implement appropriate recommendations. (D/Finance, Credit Review Office)

Update: Complete for 2013

In line with the recommendation arising from the Credit Review Office (CRO) assessment process, the CRO recently appointed 12 assistant reviewers through a public procurement process and the threshold for loan appeals to the CRO was increased in October 2013 (from €500,000 to €3 million).

The implementation of further revisions to the CRO is being considered, as appropriate.

Action 66: The National Pensions Reserve Fund will support the delivery of a range of Funds aimed at assisting economic growth and employment in Ireland. In January 2013 the NPRF announced that it will invest up to €500m in three new SME funds which will make up to €850m available for SMEs through the provision of equity, credit and restructuring/recovery investment. The NPRF will continue to work on supporting the delivery of additional Funds to complement those already announced and provide financing for SMEs. D/Finance will work to enact legislation to create a strategic investment fund with an Ireland-focused mandate, facilitating the redeployment of NPRF resources.

Ongoing Measure: Deliver additional SME Financing Funds. (NPRF)

Update: Complete

The National Pensions Reserve Fund (NPRF) Commission has made a number of commitments to investments in Ireland, including a substantial number of co-investments, which will deliver additional financing to SMEs (detailed in the table below). These commitments are within the twenty percent limit on Irish exposure which the Commission has determined to be the appropriate level given the Fund's current investment mandate under the NPRF legislation.

In addition to the commitments set out in the table below, the NPRF has provided a stand-by credit facility for the N11 and Schools Bundles 3 Public-Private Partnership projects.

Investment	NPRF Commitment Capital (€m)	3 rd Party Capital (€m)	Total project size	Multiple of NPRF Commitment
Innovation Fund Ireland	125	125	250	2x
Local Venture Capital Funds	69	320	389	5.5x
Irish Corporate Bonds	79	-	79	1.0x
Irish Forestry	36	187	223	6.2x
Irish Infrastructure Fund	250	66	316	1.3x
SME Equity Fund: Better Capital	50	50	100	2.0x
SME Equity Fund: Cardinal Carlyle	125	100	225	1.8x
SME Credit Fund: BlueBay	200	250	450	2.3x
Irish Water	250	-	250	1.0x
Total Committed	1,182	1,030	2,212	
Expected commitments of NPRF	81	368	449	5.5x
Total Commitments	1,263	1,398	2,661	2.1x

Ongoing Measure: Pending NTMA Legislative Changes. (D/Finance)

Update: Delayed

The Heads of Bill regarding the legislation to, inter alia, streamline the governance structures at the National Treasury Management Agency were approved by Government in April 2013 and are currently with the Office of the Attorney General. It is expected that the Bill will be published in March 2014 and that the proposals contained in the Bill will be implemented later this year.

Action 67: Facilitate, where necessary, the partnership between Silicon Valley Bank and the NPRF.

Ongoing Measure: Agreement on collaboration between Silicon Valley Bank and NPRF was announced in June 2012, aimed at supporting the technology innovation sector in Ireland. Partnership will be facilitated as suitable investments arise. (NPRF, D/Finance)

Update: Complete for 2013

The National Pension Reserve Fund (NPRF) closed on a multi stage transaction with the SVB Capital and Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) in 2012. Following on from this and the commitment by SVB to lend \$100 million to Irish companies, SVB's dedicated Ireland manager has been operating in the Irish market for most of 2013.

To date, SVB has had some 29 company engagements, issued 10 term sheets and closed 5 deals. These loans total \$22 million across five companies employing in excess of 300 staff. SVB has built a strong pipeline of further transactions in Ireland.

Action 70: Launch a number of funds under the Development Capital Scheme to provide a total of €225 million in funding to mid-sized indigenous firms, to target the development of a strong indigenous sector.

Ongoing Measure: Report on progress. (EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

Following commitments made under the Development Capital Scheme through Enterprise Ireland to three successful fund managers, the first of these funds was launched by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation on November 4th 2013.

The MML Growth Capital Ireland Fund closed at €125 million in total, with a €25 million commitment from Enterprise Ireland under the scheme with the balance of funding committed by Allied Irish Bank, the European Investment Fund, GoldPoint Partners, New York and two United States subsidiaries of the Cigna Corporation. The MML Ireland team is now actively seeking to identify suitable investment opportunities.

The second and third of these Development Capital Funds were finalised in 2013. These two funds will be formally launched by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation as soon as practical in Q1 2014.

Action 72: Implement the Innovation Fund Ireland Scheme with a view to increasing the number of Fund Managers locating in Ireland in 2013.

Ongoing Measure: Report on progress. (EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

Through the Enterprise Ireland commitments, three funds have established a presence in Ireland and are actively looking for investment opportunities.

Building Competitive Advantage

Research and Innovation to Drive Job Creation

Action 77: Drive implementation of the recommendations the Research Prioritisation Steering Group and associated metrics and targets in order to re-align the majority of competitive public research funding around the priority areas of research over the next five years by adopting the action plans for each of the 14 priority areas and monitoring their implementation.

Ongoing Measure: Monitor implementation of Action Plans. (Prioritisation Action Group, DJEI, Forfás)

Update: Complete for 2013

In order to provide a mechanism through which research funders can focus their attention for funding the 14 Priority Areas identified through the NPPE, Action Plans have been drawn up to identify actions to be taken by relevant research funders and other actors. A number of working groups were established by the Prioritisation Action Group (PAG) and charged with developing the Action Plans. These groups were chaired by key agencies and Departments involved in delivering research for the particular Priority Area.

The Action Plans represent the detailed blueprint for actions to be taken by funding Departments and agencies to realign the majority of competitive public research funding around the priority areas over the next five years.

To oversee their implementation in a holistic manner, each Action Plan has now been assigned a Champion who, in almost all cases, chaired the relevant working group which developed the Action Plan. An effective quarterly reporting methodology has been set up and progress against actions is on track. The PAG continues to oversee monitoring of implementation of the Action Plans.

Action 80: Progress implementation of the systemic recommendations in the Report of the Research Prioritisation Steering Group to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the STI system; report progress through PAG annual review.

Ongoing Measure: Progress implementation of the systemic recommendations in the Report of the Research Prioritisation Steering Group to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the STI system. (Prioritisation Action Group, DJEI, Forfás)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Prioritisation Action Group (PAG) agreed that, as part of the work programme for 2013, further progression of the 13 Systemic Recommendations contained in the report of the Research Prioritisation Steering Group, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the

science, technology and innovation (STI) system, would be addressed. A number of these have since been addressed and significant progress has been made, such as:

- Forfás have completed an evaluation of research, development and innovation (RD&I) programmes which will ensure continued relevance and clarity of purpose, that programmes have sufficient scale, and that unnecessary duplication is avoided. The evaluation was presented at the PAG meeting in November.
- A national inventory of all significant publicly funded infrastructure and equipment has been completed by the Higher Education Authority (HEA).
- One of the recommendations is that a consistent quality framework should be developed for postgraduate education and training incorporating the Structured PhD model. In this context, the HEA have circulated an engagement document on a doctoral education framework. The key aim of the framework is to enable excellence in all forms of doctoral education and recognition of the different models of doctoral education in the system. The Framework will seek to bring together national policies and guidelines, together with European and international standards, principles and guidelines.

Action 85: Through SFI, provide support to at least five new Research Centres of major scale. This will involve Government investment of over €150 million and will leverage an industry contribution in excess of 30%. This will bring the total new centres investment to in excess of €200 million.

Ongoing Measure: Ensure Intellectual Property agreements are put in place with company partners and cost-share commitments are being met. (SFI)

Update: Complete

On February 25th 2013, Science Foundation Ireland announced the funding of seven new Research Centres with a Government commitment of funds of €200 million over six years. This funding is augmented with an additional €100 million in cash and in-kind contributions from over 150 industry partners. The Letters of Offer for these Centres were issued in May and June, with start dates for the Centres of June 1st or July 1st.

The host universities of the Research Centres are in the process of putting Intellectual Property (IP) agreements in place with their respective industry partners. This will be an ongoing process for 6 years as new companies engage with the Centres. To date 50 agreements have been signed. SFI is monitoring the status of the contract negotiations on an ongoing basis. Before details of these agreements are finalised, the default position is that all new IP will be owned by the higher education institute (HEI).

With respect to cost-share, each funded proposal contained letters of support from the industry partners of the Research Centres, clearly stating their contribution to the centre, in terms of cash and in-kind contributions. Starting in 2014, each Centre will report on an

annual basis the actual cost-share contributions that it received for the previous year, as well as the committed cost-share contributions for the year ahead. SFI will monitor these cost-share contributions to ensure that a Research Centre's obligation of reaching a minimum of 10% cash and 30% overall cost-share (cash and in-kind) is maintained.

Action 86: Establish three new Technology Centres closely linked to the Government's priority research areas of Connected Health, Data Analytics and Pharmaceutical Manufacturing and explore options in order to respond to industry needs for Technology Centres in Medical Devices and Dairy Technology.

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

Update: Delayed

Significant progress has been made in relation to this Action. Two Technology Centres have been approved and established: one in Data Analytics and another in Pharmaceutical Manufacturing.

However, there has been a slight delay in establishing the third Centre. The preparation and planning for the Technology Centre focusing on Connected Health is at an advanced stage, and approval for its establishment will be finalised by the Board in Q1 of 2014.

Evaluations and assessment have been undertaken by Enterprise Ireland in relation to the need for Technology centres in Medical Devices. A proposal for the establishment of a Dairy Processing Technology is currently being prepared and it is anticipated that the full proposal will undergo an evaluation during March 2014.

Action 93: Continue to work with Enterprise Ireland and other relevant bodies to identify possible collaborations with enterprises and/or to act as a test bed for trialling new and innovative products and solutions.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline Action. (D/Defence)

Update: Complete

Through its membership of the Irish Maritime and Energy Resource Cluster with Cork Institute of Technology and University College Cork the Naval Service is involved in the SFI funded Marine Renewable Energy Ireland Research Centre (MaREI). This is a €27 million project which involves 48 industry partners and which aims to accelerate Ireland's development as a global leader in marine renewable energy (including offshore wind, wave and tidal).

Action 94: Continue, with the assistance of Enterprise Ireland, to work with research institutions to explore possible collaborations and/or research partnerships which can qualify for international research funding (e.g. European Space Agency and Horizon 2020).

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

Update: Complete

The Defence Organisation was part of three consortia being promoted by Enterprise Ireland for research funding under the EU 7th Framework Programme (FP7). One of these consortia was successful in competing for funding under the FP7.

The Defence Organisation had to withdraw from the FP7 European Consortium project DRIVER, a project that aims to drive innovation in crisis management in Europe, as the skills required to remain in the consortia were outside the remit of the Organisation. However, they will continue to work with Enterprise Ireland in bidding for future FP7 projects.

Ireland is involved in a Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear project in the European Defence Agency. Two Irish entities Aquila Bioscience Limited and NUI Maynooth competed for and won contracts worth in excess of €153,000.

Action 100: Take steps to establish Clinical Research Facilities (CRFs) in Dublin, Cork and Galway and provide a collaborative framework to link all CRFs by 2016.

Ongoing Measures:

- Monitor the work programme, funding, and governance structures for all CRFs. (HRB)
- Continue to develop an appropriate collaborative model between the HRB CRFs initially, and with other Clinical Research Centres nationally in the longer term. (HRB with the support of CRF directors)

Update: Complete for 2013

There are five clinical research facilities (CRFs) in Ireland; three of which are funded by the Health Research Board (HRB) in Galway, Cork and Dublin.

All three of the HRB funded CRFs are progressing their work programmes. The Wellcome Trust-HRB-CRF at St James's Hospital was opened by An Taoiseach in May 2013 and an interim review of the work programme has been completed for the HRB CRF Galway.

Principles for a collaborative model have been developed by the HRB and the five national CRF directors. An award for a Development Lead to develop a business plan based on the model has been made.

*The two other CRFs are based in Dublin: the Royal College of Surgeons Clinical Research Centre at Beaumont Hospital, and the University College Dublin Clinical Research Centre at Mater Misericordiae University Hospital and St. Vincent's University Hospital.

Action 101: Take steps to establish a national biobanking system and support infrastructure by 2016

Ongoing Measure: Discussion on the most appropriate model and cost structure to allow the research community preserve and access biosamples and their associated data. (HRB, Funding Agencies, D/Health)

Update: Complete for 2013

Work is underway on this action - issues requiring clarification are being worked through by the Health Research Board and the relevant funding agencies.

Action 104: Integrate the foreshore consent process under the Foreshores Act 1933 with the existing on-land planning system.

Ongoing Measure: Progress legislation through the Houses of the Oireachtas. (DECLG)

Update: Complete for 2013

The General Scheme of a Bill was approved by Government in July 2013 and was published on the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government's website on October 21st 2013. As part of the process of progressing the legislation through the Houses of the Oireachtas, the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht subjected the General Scheme to pre-legislative scrutiny at meetings on November 12th and 19th 2013 and Department officials appeared before the Committee at its meeting of November 19th. The Bill is scheduled to be published in the Spring/Summer 2014 session of the Oireachtas.

Action 106: Support Irish research institutes, HEIs and food businesses to work together to leverage increased non-Exchequer funding for the agri-food sector through EU and international research policy and funding vehicles such as ERA-NETs, Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs), EU-Food KIC (Knowledge Innovation Communities) and European Innovation Partnership "Agricultural Productivity & Sustainability".

Ongoing Measure: Implement relevant National Research Prioritisation Exercise Action Plans. (DAFM)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is championing the implementation of Action Plans for two of the priority areas identified through the National Research Prioritisation Exercise:

- Sustainable Food Production and Processing
- Food for Health

The Department has established a working group which is developing Strategic Innovation-led Research Agendas (SIRAs) for both priority areas. The first draft documents are due in Q1 2014.

Ongoing Measure: Fund relevant ERA-NETS. (DAFM)

Update: Complete for 2013

European Research Area Networks (ERA-NETS) aim to support cooperation and the coordination of research activities carried out at national or regional level across the EU. During 2013, DAFM issued an award of €100,000 under RURAGRI ERA-NET.

In addition, DAFM initially pledged up to €450,000 to facilitate Irish research institutional involvement in a Call under the WoodWisdom ERA-NET+. Following evaluation, it is likely that €356,000 will be committed to allow UCD and NUI Galway to partake in successful project awards which will be undertaken by trans-European consortia. The final decision will likely be announced in early 2014. DAFM also pledged funding of €250,000 to enable Irish researchers to join international consortia to compete for funds under the Animal Health and Welfare ERA-NET (ANIHWA).

Ongoing Measure: Lead Irish involvement in 2 JPIs (FACCE & HDHL), the GRA and Agri EIP. (DAFM)

Update: Complete for 2013

DAFM continued to lead Irish representation at meetings of the:

- Joint Programming Initiative on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change (FACCE JPI)
- Joint Programming Initiative on A Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life (HDHL JPI)
- Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability European Innovation Partnership (Agri EIP)
- The Global Research Alliance on agricultural greenhouse gases (GRA GHG)

In January 2013, the Department committed €415,000 for Irish participation in the FACCE JPI International Mitigation Call via the Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Research Initiative for Ireland. Three proposals with Irish involvement have emerged from this process following the selection meeting in November, with the projects due to start in early 2014. Teagasc will co-ordinate one project involving UCD and international partners from Germany, France, Belgium, Spain, UK and the New Zealand.

Teagasc contributed to the development of the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) for Agriculture Productivity and Sustainability, including the organisation of a major conference, in association with UCD, in June.

Ongoing Measure: Undertake food business engagement seminar and other activities to increase business involvement in bid for an EU-Food KIC. (Teagasc)

Update: Complete for 2013

During 2013, Teagasc participated at all levels of management of the Food Knowledge and Innovation Community (Food KIC) consortium, including on the European Strategy Board, UK-Ireland Regional Board, on the Management Team and at Working Groups. As part of this brief, a UK-Ireland Food Business Innovation Summit was organised in May. Over 300 people attended the event with significant industry representation.

At the end of June, the EU Commission announced that a FoodKIC would be called for in 2016. Work continues on preparing the FoodKIC proposal with partners UCC, UCD, and 12 Irish-based food companies progressing the formation of a UK-Ireland co-location centre.

Action 107: Implement the Agri-food and Forestry Graduate Development Programme funded via Food Institutional Research Measure (FIRM), Stimulus and the Council for Forest Research and Development (CoFORD).

Ongoing Measure: Monitor progress on the conduct of the research and delivery of the planned outputs. (DAFM)

Update: Complete for 2013

DAFM continues to monitor progress on the Agri-food and Forestry Graduate Development Programme. The focus is on effective implementation and on delivery of a range of 'soft' skills to these PhD students to complement their technical/scientific abilities with the business attributes necessary for industry. DAFM also met with the project leaders in November to consider future funding of the project post-May 2014.

Action 109: Implement a new Irish Research Council/DAFM/Industry collaborative programme to have a cohort of Masters research students employed for a 18 – 24 month period in agri-food companies

Ongoing Measure: Monitor awards made under the 2012 pilot programme. (IRC, DAFM)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Irish Research Council's (IRC) Employment-Based Postgraduate Programme is a new initiative providing Masters and PhD researchers with an employment-focused educational experience. The programme is open to all disciplines, however a number of other research funding agencies and Departments are partnering with the IRC on the programme, and awards will be made in these specific sectoral areas.

The 2012 programme funded 36 Postgraduate students, including 2 in conjunction with DAFM. Awards made under the 2012 pilot programme are being monitored by the IRC and under the terms and conditions of the awards, the researcher, the academic supervisor and the employment mentor are required to submit an annual joint progress report to the Council for each academic year of the award. Copies of the project annual reports that relate to DAFM will be sent to the Department for feedback and views, where appropriate.

Action 111: Following on from FIRM pre-commercialisation funding, initiate a new research programme to increase the value of meat processing by-product and waste streams.

Ongoing Measure: Continue collaborative research project with major meat industry player. (Teagasc)

Update: Complete for 2013

A collaborative research project involving Teagasc and a major meat industry company is underway.

This confidential project focuses on developing strategies for recovering value from the meat processing chain. The project is ongoing and will conclude in 2014.

Ongoing Measure: Continue dialogue with meat industry regarding researchable opportunities in this area. (Teagasc)

Update: Complete for 2013

Discussions have been held between IBEC and meat industry representatives regarding possible opportunities for increasing value from meat processing streams. A collaborative research project (Innovation Partnership) is ongoing in this area.

Teagasc facilitated the demonstration of enzyme hydrolysis process with potential for recovery of value from meat processing streams to industry, with representatives from the main companies. They also arranged for CORE, a Danish process control and optimisation company, to visit Ireland to discuss potential EU collaboration and process systems of relevance to major industry players. This was followed up with industry discussions on processing and subsequent analysis of products.

In addition, ReValueProtein, a large multidisciplinary project is exploring Irish meat

processing streams for the recovery of high value protein based ingredients for food and non-food uses. This project is funded through the Food Institutional Research Measure (FIRM) and is being led by Teagasc in collaboration with UCC, UCD, Dublin, NUI Galway and the Institute of Technology in Tallaght.

Action 113: Provide research and policy support initiatives to support the implementation of the Government's existing Marine Research and Innovation Plan 'Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth – An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland'.

Ongoing Measure: Provide support for the work of the Harnessing our Ocean Wealth Development Task Force-Integrated Enterprise Strategy. (Marine Institute and DAFM)

Update: Complete for 2013

During 2013 detailed work on the establishment of the Development Task Force (DTF) was undertaken resulting in its initial meeting towards the end of the year. The DTF comprises representatives from the private sector and the state agencies and has started to progress four key enterprise related actions outlined in Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth. It has established four sub-groups each concentrating on supporting the delivery of an individual action.

In addition to policy support, progress has been made in Q4 on the necessary research supports for Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth. In November 2013, following an international peer-reviewed selection process, eight marine foods and marine biotechnology related projects were approved for funding under the FIRM programme (see also update for Action 273 below). The funding, totalling €4.5 million will generate knowledge that will be accessible to Irish firms seeking to generate greater value from marine bio-resources in developing food and health related products. The projects will employ 23 Post-Doctoral and PhD researchers.

Improving Cost Competitiveness

Action 121: Enact the Legal Services Bill to deliver a more efficient, transparent and competitive legal services sector in Ireland and reduce costs for the enterprise sector.

Ongoing Measures:

- Progress completion of Committee stage of the Legal Services Regulation Bill.
- Progress Bill through the Houses of the Oireachtas.

(D/Justice)

Update: Complete

The list of proposed Committee Stage Amendments has been developed. Committee Stage resumed in January 2014 and will complete in February 2014. Enactment of the Bill is expected in the first half of 2014.

Action 122: Review and implement (as appropriate) the procedural reforms recommended by the Legal Cost Working Group to make the operation of the courts more efficient and to reduce costs. This will include an examination of the potential to expedite the roll out of case management as currently used in the Commercial Court.

Ongoing Measure: Progress further review of the procedural reforms in the context of the Legal Services Bill. (Courts Service)

Update: Complete for 2013

Rules to facilitate case management of non-jury and chancery proceedings in the High Court are currently before the Superior Courts Rules Committee.

Rules to facilitate case management of non-jury and chancery proceedings in the High Court are currently before the Superior Courts Rules Committee and the Courts Service's input is, effectively, completed.

The report of the Working Group on Medical Negligence and Periodic Payments, which includes draft rules in this regard, has been provided to the Minister for Justice and Equality and the preparation of legislation for the provisions contained therein is pending. These provisions will allow the Rules Committees prescribe pre-action protocols. The Courts Service has submitted the Heads of Bill, as well as some ancillary legislative amendments outlined in the report, to the Department of Justice and Equality for consideration. These are being considered for inclusion in the Legal Services (Regulation) Bill.

Action 123: Ireland is ranked 15th out of 183 countries in the World Banks “Doing Business” Index 2013. Despite Ireland’s relatively strong overall position, Ireland’s performance on some of the metrics that comprise the index vary considerably. Analysis shows that there is particular scope for improvement in relation to:

- Getting Electricity (95th out of 183 countries);
- Registering Property (53rd);
- Enforcing Contracts (63rd);
- Dealing with Construction Permits (106th); and
- Trading Across Borders (28th).

Ongoing Measure: Put in place a process on the key actions required to enhance Ireland's competitiveness ranking in the World Bank's 'Doing Business' index with the goal of implementing impactful reforms. (DJEI, Forfás and relevant bodies)

Update: Complete for 2013

A paper on Ireland's competitiveness position was presented to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs in May 2013, which facilitated a discussion on actions necessary to improve Ireland's position in the World Bank's 'Doing Business' rankings.

Forfás shared details of the analysis outlining how improvements in Ireland's ranking can be achieved. A series of follow up meetings, providing the various implementing Departments with further background on the Forfás work, have also been undertaken. Responsibility for developing actions to improve Ireland's rankings rests with the relevant individual Government Departments or State Bodies. Forfás also submitted its report to the World Bank, highlighting a range of methodological issues and providing updated accurate metrics where relevant.

This is an ongoing action and work on identifying and delivering tangible measures to improve Ireland's ranking in the World Bank index will continue in 2014.

In addition, Forfás is working in conjunction with DJEI and D/Finance in relation to the draft Doing Business 2014 report to ensure the accuracy of the data in respect of Ireland.

Aligning Skills with Enterprise Needs

Aligning our education and training system with labour market needs is critical to the creation of job opportunities in Ireland

Action 128: Progress a review of the Apprenticeship Training Model through consultation with key stakeholders on options for change.

Ongoing Measure: Progress review of the Apprenticeship Training Model. (DES)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Review Group has completed their review of the apprenticeship system in Ireland and presented their report to the Department of Education and Skills. The *Review of Apprenticeship Training in Ireland* was published by the Minister for Education and Skills on January 21st 2014 and is available from www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Review-of-Apprenticeship-Training-in-Ireland.pdf.

Action 129: Provide 6,500 education and training places for the long-term unemployed under the Momentum programme; monitor implementation of programme to ensure achievement of objectives.

Ongoing Measure: Monitor implementation of programme to ensure achievement of objectives. (FAS, DES)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Momentum programme will have provided over 6,500 places in 2013. As of December 10th 6,127 places had been filled and an additional 100 places are still open for filling in January 2014.

Continual monitoring of all contracts is ongoing. To date, 49 formal monitoring events have been conducted. Formal monitoring, informal monitoring and project management will continue for the duration of the programme.

Action 133: Údarás na Gaeltachta will address the skill needs of enterprises under its remit by continuing to review needs and ensure that relevant training and education initiatives are supported. It will continue to support and stimulate local community development initiatives in order to build on the strengths and capacity of community enterprise and its contribution to the economy.

Ongoing Measure: Provide funding for third-level courses in Irish. (DAHG)

Update: Complete for 2013

Údarás na Gaeltachta continues to fund a range of accredited programmes for third-level education in association with certain Institutes of Technology and universities. These programmes have an industry focus in areas of immediate relevance to the creation of job opportunities in those sectors where Gaeltacht enterprises and development initiatives demonstrate competitive advantage; including the digital media and language services sectors.

Ongoing Measure: Provide training grants to industry for upskilling of workers in Gaeltacht areas. (Údarás na Gaeltachta)

Update: Complete for 2013

Údarás na Gaeltachta continues to support dedicated in-company training development programmes which seek to build capacity and develop new skills within the enterprise base to improve sustainability, innovation and expansion into new markets.

Update: Complete for 2013

An tÚdarás continues to fund a range of enterprise and development initiatives with a focus on employment creation and enterprise development. Activities undertaken/progressed in 2013 include:

- Approval of €10 million in grants support with a cumulative investment of in excess of €40 million anticipated across the Gaeltacht areas and the creation of 520 jobs.
- Funding provided to support up to 1,000 places in network of pre-school and after-school facilities within the Gaeltacht in order to ensure that employment opportunities are availed of.
- Progressing investments and initiatives in the area of tourism such as:
 - Commencement of work on the Teach an Phiarsaigh Project (€4.2 million), following allocation of €2 million from Commemorative Fund announced for Budget 2014.
 - Development of eight pipeline projects with a view to developing new tourism products/activities where Ireland and Gaeltacht can gain comparative advantage (e.g. in food, culture, activity breaks, events and festivals).
 - The Wild Atlantic Way Gaeltacht Training Programme was also successfully rolled out.
- Arising from Údarás na Gaeltachta/ Failte Ireland/ VEC cofunded training programmes in Marine and Countryside Guiding (Level 6), supporting the development of employment in the recreational and tourism sectors. Up to ten potential start-ups have emerged with part-time and full-time employment for up to 20 people.

Skills necessary to drive enterprise, trade and export sales

Action 134: Consider the development of a Foreign Language Education Policy with 5-10 year vision to ensure an integrated and coherent approach to language learning and cultural awareness across the continuum of primary, secondary and third level education.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (DES)

Update: Complete for 2013

The current focus at primary level is on the development of an integrated language curriculum for Irish and English. This development has been prioritised in the context of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy.

At junior cycle post primary, work is ongoing in relation to the development of new specifications in English and Irish. The new specification for English should be available for schools to implement from September 2014 and the Irish specifications will be available from September 2015 for implementation from September 2016. A new short course in

Chinese is being developed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). It should be available for schools, if they so choose to consider it as part of their junior cycle programme from September 2014.

In the context of the development of new specifications for modern languages in junior cycle of post-primary education, the NCCA will prepare a background report which sets in context the role of modern languages in the junior cycle curriculum. This will be prepared in 2014 for consultation with the key stakeholders. The findings of this consultation will feed into a foreign language policy that is being worked on by the Department. Implementation of the specifications for modern languages will commence in schools in September 2017. This work is part of the implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle which was launched by the Minister for Education and Skills in October 2012.

Skills required for the manufacturing sector

Action 136: Assess the potential for increasing the supply of polymer technicians, including pooling resources for the associated equipment requirements.

Ongoing Measure: Implement Action Plan items as agreed. (Skillnets)

Update: Complete for 2013

Implementation of the plan continues. The Springboard programme being implemented by Plastics Ireland has recruited 30 participants and is now being delivered. This programme will run until May 2014 and will include a 6 month placement at the conclusion of the taught element in May.

The programme will allow entrants to gain the necessary technical skills to help secure employment in the plastics manufacturing/medical device industries as a technician/apprentice technician in polymer processing.

Action 141: Target low-skilled general operatives in the manufacturing sector through the Skills for Work (SFW) programme and wider VEC-delivered basic education programmes, building on progress made to date for workers in the food and beverage sector.

Ongoing Measure: Advise the co-ordinating VEC for Skills For Work to seek to implement this recommendation with other VECs operating SFW. (DES, VECs)

Update: Complete for 2013

The 2013 Service Level Agreement between the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and the National Coordinating Education and Training Board (ETB) states that coordinators should have regard to recommendations in the Action Plan for Jobs as they pertain to the

Skills for Work (SFW) programme, e.g., to prioritise those working in the manufacturing sector. In this regard specific tutor/student workplace material has been developed to support the ongoing needs of the wide range of workers attending SFW courses. The final funding letter to the National Coordinating ETB in 2013 has emphasised the importance of adhering to the Action Plan for Jobs in their programme planning processes.

In 2013, four new learner resource manuals pertaining to the food and beverage sector as well as on health & safety and understanding IT were published. The Health & Safety in the Workplace manual and Understanding IT are relevant to all sectors. These materials may be used as a resource when promoting SFW to companies. Sample copies of the worksheets are available on www.skillsforwork.ie and potential companies may review these worksheets prior to engaging with the SFW programme.

Regular meetings of the SFW National Advisory Group (representing DES, CCEOA and the SFW National Coordinator) are held. ETBs and Regional coordinators are advised on the actions agreed regarding the promotion of the SFW Programme and target groups by the SFW National Coordinator, who also provides up to date information on SFW activities including, recruitment strategies, participant numbers, progression and budget reports.

The National Coordinating ETB has:

- Identified manufacturing companies nationally and locally to promote SFW;
- Revisit companies previously involved in SFW;
- Prioritised employees/companies at risk of redundancy or closing down;
- 161 participants from the food and beverage sector and 329 participants from the manufacturing sector have participated on the Skills for Work programme in 2013.

Ongoing Measure: Collect better data on profile of participants in SFW in order to enable better evidence-based policy decisions. (DES, VECs)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Skills for Work database currently collects participant profile information such as gender, age, educational attainment, job type, number of courses attended, accreditation achieved, union referral, and company details.

This data allows analysis of gender ratio of learners, age profile, the accreditation achieved, and the types of industry participating, which can illustrate the benefits of the programme as well as identifying target groups.

The SFW database has expanded its information gathering system to include better evidence-based details on participant profiles and employment sectors. To date, 161 participants from the food and beverage sector and a further 329 participants from the

manufacturing sector have participated. The Regional Coordinators have also been requested to document the names and responses of companies from the manufacturing sector who have been approached as part of the SFW promotional strategy.

Ongoing Measure: NALA and AONTAS to work with the co-ordinating VEC in promoting SFW and wider VEC-delivered basic education programmes as options for low-skilled operatives in the manufacturing sector. (DES, VECs, NALA, AONTAS)

Update: Complete for 2013

NALA and AONTAS are working with the National Coordinating Education and Training Board to develop promotional strategies for the SFW programme and basic education programmes to attract the low-skilled operatives in the manufacturing sector.

The SFW National Advisory Group has met with NALA, AONTAS, ICTU and Forfás to agree strategies to support the ongoing promotion and delivery of SFW. AONTAS has included a link to the Skills for Work website via the AONTAS website. SFW Programme updates have been provided for ETBI Adult Literacy Forum meetings.

AONTAS and NALA are also currently working with the Department of Education and Skills on the European Agenda for Adult Learning to increase awareness of adult learning as part of lifelong learning at both national and local levels.

The SFW National Advisory Group is also due to meet with IBEC early in 2014.

Infrastructure Investment to Underpin Employment Growth

Water Services

Action 153: Progress the actions set out in the Water Sector Reform Implementation Strategy to ensure the transition from the 34 Local Authorities to Irish Water will lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness as economies of scale are exploited.

Ongoing Measure: Delivery of the water sector reform implementation strategy in partnership with key programme stakeholders. (DECLG)

Update: Complete for 2013

Legislation was enacted in December 2013 (The Water Services (No.2) Act) which established Irish Water as the national water services authority from January 2014. The water sector reform implementation strategy is being rolled out under a range of work streams which involve local authority, Departmental and Bord Gáis personnel. Irish Water has commenced recruitment for the permanent organisation.

The roll out of the domestic metering programme and the associated customer service infrastructure is leading to considerable new employment opportunities; when fully operational there will be 1,600 jobs in relation to the metering programme and 400 jobs in the area of customer service and support.

Currently, there are 871 people employed as part of the domestic metering programme and of these, 688 (79%) are from 'social inclusion' categories (SMEs; the Live Register; or those who are apprentices, graduates or school leavers). This surpasses the target, announced by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government in February 2013, that 25% of the jobs were to come from these categories. 52 jobs have been created so far through the opening of Irish Water's customer contact call centre.

It is estimated up to 2,000 additional jobs (including high end engineering jobs) could be sustained in construction if investment in the sector increased from current levels to a minimum of €600 million per annum.

Action 154: Prioritise reducing the leakage levels in urban centres to improve efficiencies and reduce the need for new capital investment.

Ongoing Measure: Continue to prioritise water conservation projects under the Water Services Investment Programme 2010-2013. (DECLG, (Irish Water from 2014 onwards))

Update: Complete for 2013

Total expenditure on water conservation projects in 2013 was €43.5 million. At the end of Q3, 150 water conservation projects were in progress (planning, procurement, or construction stage) and 67 projects were complete. Returns for Q4 2013 are awaited.

Ongoing Measure: Begin roll-out of National Metering Programme. (DECLG)

Update: Complete for 2013

The roll-out of the National Metering Programme commenced in August 2013.

Ongoing Measure: Development of Capital Investment Plans by Irish Water. (DECLG)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Capital Investment Plan for Irish Water 2014-2015 is currently being developed. It is one element of the wider water sector reform programme. It is expected that the Capital Investment Plan will be completed early in 2014. Irish Water has been actively engaging with local authorities in order to progress their capital investment plans.

Action 155: Develop a water regulatory framework that reduces inefficiencies in the capital and operational costs of water services infrastructure and ensures that water services charges are fully cost reflective and passed on to all customers in a fair and transparent manner.

Ongoing Measure: Progress programme of work in line with implementation strategy. (DECLG)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Water Sector Reform Implementation Strategy is focused on ensuring that appropriate policy and legal frameworks are in place for Irish Water and the water sector. A key objective is to rationalise the cost of the current service delivery and ensure more efficient operation of water services by moving from 34 local authorities to a single body; following enactment of comprehensive legislation, Irish Water became the national water services authority from January 1st 2014.

In addition, the Water Services (No. 2) Act 2013 provides that the Commission for Energy Regulation will be the economic regulator for services provided by Irish Water. It will be a matter for the Commission for Energy Regulation in due course to satisfy itself in relation to the appropriateness of costs incurred in the operation of Irish Water as part of the process of setting the tariffs for both the domestic and non-domestic tariffs in the future. It is envisaged that the Commission will engage in public consultation as part of this process.

Action 157: Prioritise the delivery of an IT based road management and utility licensing system to standardise approach for utilities, including Irish Water, to improve efficiency.

Ongoing Measure: Road Management (Pavement Management) current phase 2/3 development and rollout. (DTTAS, LGMA, Local Authorities)

Update: Complete

Significant progress was made in the areas of software upgrades and enhancements together with new procedures and processes for monitoring and tracking road condition. This included:

- March/April – software functionality upgrades to include bridges, and accidents, as well as improved editing, reporting and analysis tools.
- September/October – completion of Road Condition Guidelines enhancement, software enhancement (including mobile App) as well as testing and trialing in a number of local authorities.
- Progress was also made in data gathering by local authorities.
- 4 local authority sites (Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Cork County Council,

Cork City Council and Sligo County Council) participated in Pilot testing during Q3 and Q4 2013.

- Following these pilot tests, the software was upgraded and finalised for deployment in local authority areas.
- A Schedule was agreed for the wider deployment of the system to 30 local authorities and utilities in 2014. Additional LGMA staff have been put in place to help progress this task supported by the contracted system developers.
- Note: A phased approach to deployment of the system in “Waves” will be used. This allows for targeted training and support to sites. A “Wave” will typically consist of 3 local authority sites.

Transport

Action 161: Develop a land transport (road and rail) strategic investment framework to decide what investment will be required out to 2025 to facilitate easy access to markets and the mobility of the workforce.

Ongoing Measure: Establish the evidence base for future investment. (DTTAS)

Update: Complete for 2013

Work to develop a land transport strategic investment framework is well advanced with a view to public consultation on a draft framework at end Q1 2014 and expected completion by mid-2014.

Action 162: Review public transport regulation with a view to reform that will reduce costs via increased competition.

Ongoing Measure: Implement recommendations of Taxi Regulation Review Report 2011. (DTTAS, NTA)

Update: Complete for 2013

The National Transport Authority (NTA), which is the lead agency for implementation of the recommendations of the Taxi Regulation Review Report 2011, is progressing the majority of the actions recommended in the report; more than 50% of these have been delivered.

The Taxi Regulation Act 2013, which was enacted on October 23rd 2013, upon commencement, will enable implementation of key enforcement measures in the Review.

Action 163: Support initiatives that aim to improve air access to West Coast USA and other locations of high strategic importance for trade, investment and tourism (e.g. China, India).

Ongoing Measure: Continue to encourage links to strategic locations in discussions with airlines. (DTTAS)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport continues to encourage airlines to provide connections to strategic locations. The necessary legislative framework, through air transport agreements, is in place to facilitate airlines wishing to develop links to these locations. There have been a number of positive developments in this regard:

- Aer Lingus are to commence direct services from Dublin to San Francisco in April 2014 (five flights a week) and from Dublin to Toronto in March 2014 (daily flights in Summer 2014 and three flights per week for the Winter season).
- From January 2014 the frequency of Aer Lingus flights to New York and Boston from Shannon is set to double and year round coverage to the United States will be resumed.
- Air Canada Rouge will operate the Dublin and Toronto route on a year-round basis from May 2014.
- WestJet are commencing a new service from Dublin to Newfoundland for summer 2014.
- American Airlines, United and US Airways added new services during summer 2013 and Aer Lingus has also increased capacity from the US.
- US Airways extended its summer services from Charlotte to Dublin and from Philadelphia to Shannon by one month until October 2013.
- Etihad increased its capacity by 35% on its service from Abu Dhabi to Dublin by deploying a Boeing 777-300ER on the route since July 2013.

Ongoing Measure: Continue to work closely with airlines, ferry companies, ports and airports in terms of cooperative promotional campaigns to drive demand for services from key overseas tourism markets. (Tourism Ireland)

Update: Complete for 2013

Tourism Ireland continues to work with carriers to promote direct and convenient access to Ireland. In particular, the agency aims to optimise the performance of existing routes and target key decision makers in key airlines to encourage further route development.

As part of its overall promotion of the Gathering Ireland 2013, Tourism Ireland highlighted the good value fares on offer to Ireland throughout the year.

Reduce costs through sensible regulation

Action 166: Once the new Government Policy Statement on economic regulation is complete, responsibility for commencing implementation will move to the relevant Government Departments to initiate and progress during 2013. Overall strategic coordination of implementation will be overseen through Cabinet Committee structures.

Ongoing Measure: Implement new policy statement. (Relevant Government Departments)

Update: Complete for 2013

A number of actions have been taken forward by the relevant Departments, agencies and regulators in line with the policies and commitments set out in the Government's Policy Statement on Economic Regulation:

- Work to develop the draft new aviation policy is well advanced and the legislative requirements to give effect to the proposed restructuring of the institutional arrangements for regulation of the aviation sector in Ireland are currently being explored with a view to having draft Heads of Bill prepared by mid-2014.
- The establishment of a Rail Regulator is on track, subject to review by Parliamentary Draftsman regarding any requirement for primary legislation.
- As part of the Fourth Programme of Law Reform, the Law Reform Commission has commenced examination of the issue of regulatory and enforcement powers of regulators

Ongoing Measure: Strategic coordination and oversight. (Government via Cabinet Committees)

Update: Complete for 2013

Implementation of actions outlined in the statement has commenced including the Law Reform Commission's Fourth Programme of Law Reform commitment to examine the issue of regulatory and enforcement powers of regulators.

Follow up on departmental implementation of actions has also commenced and feeds into the Action Plan for Jobs 2014. An Annual Progress Review through Cabinet Committees is intended to take place in Q3 2014.

Action 172: Take steps to improve the quality and accessibility of Regulatory Impact Analysis (RIAs) conducted on domestic and EU policy/legislative proposals by publishing RIAs as part of the legislative programme and making them available on the Oireachtas website.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (Relevant Government Departments)

Update: Complete for 2013

Regulatory Impact Analysis (RIA) is a tool used for the structured exploration of different options to address particular policy issues. It is used where one or more of these options is new regulation or a regulatory change and facilitates the active consideration of alternatives to regulation or lighter forms of regulation. RIA is used by all Government Departments and Offices.

RIAs carried out as part of the development of legislative proposals are typically made available on the Oireachtas website in tandem with the publication of the relevant Bill. Work is ongoing to improve the quality, accessibility and availability of regulatory impact analyses carried out.

Driving Entrepreneurship and Start-Up Companies

Building on the focused actions put in place during 2012, we will continue to develop Ireland as the place to start a business

Action 176: Consider options with regard to extending benefit cover to the self-employed based on recommendations of a working group on this issue.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (DSP)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Advisory Group on Tax and Social Welfare has submitted its report on extending benefit cover to the self-employed to the Minister for Social Protection. The report has been published and consideration is being given to the report and next steps.

Action 181: Support 100 projects through New Frontiers – Ireland’s national entrepreneur development programme delivered at local level by the Institutes of Technology, and work with a range of other entrepreneur bootcamps during 2013.

Ongoing Measure: Deliver 9 Programmes throughout the year in 13 Institutes of Technology to support 100+ potential new business start-ups. (EI)

Update: Complete

New Frontiers is Ireland’s national entrepreneur development programme that is delivered at a local level by the Institutes of Technology. Nine New Frontiers programmes were delivered by 14 Institutes of Technology (IoTs) in 2013. The number of IoTs has increased from 13 to 14 as the Institute of Art, Design & Technology is now part of the National

Programme after being awarded funding by Enterprise Ireland to run a joint programme with Dublin Institute of Technology. In excess of 100 potential new business start-ups have been supported.

Action 182: Support the work of the 2012 appointed new International Start-up Ambassadors and appoint additional ambassadors in new geographic/sectoral areas as required.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

In 2012, Enterprise Ireland initiated a new International Start-up Ambassadors initiative. This utilises the services of credible entrepreneurs with strong links to Ireland who are willing, on a pro bono basis, to use their time, networks and credibility to promote the advantages of Ireland as a location for start ups and entrepreneurs. Enterprise Ireland continues to work actively with these ambassadors

A new start-up ambassador, Eamon Eastwood, was appointed during November 2013, with a focus on Australia.

Action 184: Implement a range of Female Entrepreneurship Initiatives during 2013 following on from the launch of a new programme in 2012.

Ongoing Measures:

- Ongoing promotion of female entrepreneurship through a series of events and seminars.
- Work with women in business networks on a series of business development agendas

(EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

A number of initiatives and events have been rolled out in 2013 to support Female Entrepreneurship and business development agendas in this area. These include:

- Women Mean Business Awards and Conference
- Image Magazine Women in Business Awards
- Network Ireland National Conference and Awards

Action 185: Deliver world class management development modules with clients to accelerate the growth of start-ups.

Ongoing Measure: Deliver Accelerated Growth Engagement programme. (EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Accelerated Growth Programme was piloted in 2012 with 27 CEOs/owner managers. It expanded significantly in 2013 and currently has a further 41 CEOs participating in a 24 month engagement designed to address the needs of companies at different stages of the growth path.

The programme involves global best practice in leadership/team building, sales/marketing and raising/managing finance leading to the development and testing of an individual Business Growth Action Plan. A dedicated Business Coach and the company's Development Adviser also support the CEO to refine and implement their Growth Action Plan.

Follow-on funding, where appropriate, along with the full range of Enterprise Ireland services will be offered to all Accelerated Growth companies with a particular focus on strengthening their engagement with our overseas offices.

Assisting Indigenous Business to Grow

Enhancing Indigenous Performance

Supporting Irish companies to build scale, to grow and internationalise remains central to our plans for recovery, growth and jobs in 2013

Action 187: Expand the Enterprise Ireland Mentor Programme and develop different cohorts of mentors (e.g. mentors for commercialisation of research, mentors for public procurement, mentors for internationalisation) drawing on Global Irish Contacts Programme.

Ongoing Measure: In 2013, more than 300 mentors will be appointed to provide tailored advice and guidance to Enterprise Ireland clients. (EI)

Update: Complete

As at the end of December 2013, 462 mentors have been appointed to Enterprise Ireland clients; 21 of these assignments were in the area of public procurement and 11 related to research commercialisation.

Action 188: Drive implementation of the Global Sourcing Strategy targeting the procurement of an additional €500 million of domestically sourced goods and services by FDI companies in Ireland.

Ongoing Measures:

- 100 (Phase 1, 2013) referrals to Global Sourcing by IDA Executives of procurement prospects.
- Host a series of MNC Networking events to build engagement with the Strategy.

(IDA, EI)

Update: Complete

In 2013, over 100 IDA Ireland clients identified as having potential for procurement prospects were referred to Enterprise Ireland. In 2013, over 130 Enterprise Ireland clients were introduced to MNC Supply/Technology Opportunities.

IDA Ireland undertakes the Annual Business Survey of Economic Impact (ABSEI) annually in conjunction with Forfás and the other enterprise agencies. The ABSEI provides data on sales, exports, direct expenditure in the Irish economy, R&D spend and R&D employment in IDA Ireland assisted clients. The information collected in the survey assists IDA Ireland to measure the positive impact of Foreign and Irish owned companies in the economy. The data in the ABSEI survey is from the previous year, as with most economic data, there is a need to wait until the year end for companies to provide the data.

The ABSEI survey was used to provide information on the above action as it is the most meaningful way of capturing this information. The latest (2012) ABSEI survey available shows that purchases of goods and services by IDA Ireland clients increased by 6% or €777 million between 2011 and 2012.

A number of events have been held throughout the year to drive the implementation of the Global Sourcing in Ireland, these events included Med in Ireland and International Markets Week.

Action 190: Attract overseas entrepreneurs and foreign direct investment from emerging businesses to Ireland.

Ongoing Measure: Participate in a joint marketing strategy in key target markets including the US, UK and Europe (Berlin, Barcelona, London, Austin, San Francisco, Paris). (IDA, EI)

Update: Complete

During 2013, IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland worked together at events in cities such as Berlin, Barcelona, London, Austin and San Francisco and also the Le Web conference in Paris.

Ongoing Measure: Target support for 15 overseas entrepreneurs. (EI)

Update: Complete

Enterprise Ireland has supported 16 overseas entrepreneur's projects throughout 2013.

Ongoing Measure: Attract 20 foreign direct investments from emerging businesses (IDA)

Update: Complete

IDA Ireland set a goal in its Horizon 2020 strategy to attract fast growth companies to Ireland. IDA Ireland won 27 investments from fast growth companies in 2013.

Assisting Indigenous Businesses to Trade

Trading is central to the growth of indigenous firms and we will continue to help and support companies to navigate the challenges inherent in entering new markets

Action 197: Embed the Potential Exporters Division as a new way of engaging with Irish companies.

Ongoing Measures:

- The Potential Exporters Unit will build on the programme of activity undertaken during 2012 and will hold a series of Get Export Ready Workshops throughout the country to encourage more companies to consider exporting.
- Support mentoring, business advocate support and financial support will be provided to companies - 300 significant development engagements to be supported in 2013.

(EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

Ten Exploring Export Workshops were held in 2013 with 110 companies (151 people) attending. These took place in Dublin (3), Tralee, Castlebar, Athlone, Wexford, Galway, Limerick and Dundalk. In support of these workshops, ten Export Awareness events were also held attended by 358 companies (421 people). A successful 'Grow your Exports to the UK Market' event was held for Potential Exporter client companies in July with 42 companies attending a workshop with one-to-one meetings with Enterprise Ireland's UK team. A final Exporting workshop took place in Dublin on December 10th with 17 companies participating.

The Potential Exporters Division is ahead of target regarding company engagements on their exporting agenda with the number standing in excess of 300 engagements.

Action 198: Continue to develop a co-ordinated approach to reputation-building efforts across Government, including regularly updating key messages on Ireland's economic recovery and their dissemination via Ireland's Embassy Network overseas. Utilise Ireland's EU Presidency to get across positive messages on Ireland to an international audience, including via the www.eu2013.ie website.

Ongoing Measures:

- Continued implementation of co-ordinated effort, as outlined above, on an ongoing basis. (DFAT, Relevant Departments and agencies)
- Continue the work of the Inter-departmental Communications Group. (D/Taoiseach, Relevant Departments and agencies)

Update: Complete for 2013

Work to enhance Ireland's reputation overseas was implemented throughout 2013, taking particular advantage of opportunities arising from Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of the year and the announcement of Ireland's exit from the EU/IMF programme in December. The Embassy network was active in communicating specific key messages on Ireland's economic recovery to international audiences through engagement with over 1,150 representatives of international media organisations and through newspaper articles and interviews worldwide which reached over 53 million people. The work of the Embassy network on reputation-building also included more than 660 engagements to promote Ireland's economic position to office-holders internationally, supporting some 136 high-level visits with a significant economic and promotional dimension across 52 countries, and more than 730 specific engagements to promote trade and investment.

Promotional messaging visuals were developed for use in EU Presidency meetings in Dublin and overseas. The Embassy network was very active in leveraging the EU Presidency to promote key economic messages to the media and influential audiences, hosting Presidency launch press conferences and conducting an extensive programme of TV, radio and newspaper interviews. An op-ed by the Tánaiste on the Irish economy was placed in quality newspapers in 15 countries with a combined print circulation of almost 3 million people. Substantial visits of Brussels-based and London-based media linked to our Presidency were organised with the assistance of the Embassy network resulting in considerable positive international media coverage of Ireland. A gift to mark our EU Presidency and for St Patrick's Day of 'A History of Ireland in 100 Objects' has been downloaded by over 34,000 people globally.

The main focus of the Inter-Departmental group in 2013 was to contribute to a whole-of-Government approach to maximising the positive reputational benefits to Ireland arising from key events and initiatives, including the Taoiseach's visits to the World Economic Forum, the United States, Japan and the Gulf, the Dublin Web Summit and f.ounders, the

Gathering 2013 and the Ministerial St. Patrick's Day Programme.

The Group also supported a whole-of-Government approach to monitoring trends in Ireland's reputation which included convening a seminar on Ireland's international reputation, with expert input from academics and from Ireland's diplomatic missions overseas. Indicators confirm that in 2013 Ireland continued to enhance its reputation as a country for trade and inward investment, and as a tourist destination. The 2013 Country Rep Trak index shows Ireland improved to 12th overall (up from 15th in 2012, and 17th in 2011). Ireland also continued to improve in its rankings as a location for investment and business. The IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook 2013 showed Ireland ranked 17th overall, up from 20th in 2012, and 24th in 2011. The World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Index 2013 showed Ireland improving by two positions to 27th overall. The IBM Global Location Trends report 2013 ranked Ireland as the world's top ranking country for investment, while the influential Forbes magazine ranked Ireland first in the world for business in 2013.

Action 199: Roll out a schedule of Trade Missions and events focused on the priority markets identified in the Government Trade Strategy and targeting sectors of particular relevance to Irish companies. At least 15 of these Missions will be led at Ministerial level.

Ongoing Measure: Carry out Missions. (DJEI, DFAT, EI, DTTAS, Tourism Ireland, DES, DAFM, Bord Bia)

Update: Complete for 2013

In March 2013, the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade along with the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation launched the year-long programme of Ministerial events targeting trade and investment for Ireland in 2013. This was added to as the year progressed and opportunities arose.

Over the course of 2013 26 missions/events were led at Ministerial level, including visits to all of the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India, China) and other priority markets identified in the Government Trade Strategy.

Over the final quarter of 2014, Ministerial led Trade Missions/trade events were organised to Russia, the US, Australia, Brazil, the UK, South Africa, Nigeria, India and Japan.

Ongoing Measure: Suitable tourism material will be provided to Ministers travelling overseas with a particular focus on exploiting any opportunities to promote "The Gathering Ireland 2013." (DTTAS, Tourism Ireland)

Update: Complete

All available opportunities to promote Ireland as a holiday destination are availed of during Ministerial trips overseas through close collaboration between Ireland's overseas Embassy

network and Tourism Ireland.

In 2013 a number of tourism related events were attended by Ministers travelling overseas and were used to highlight the Gathering Ireland 2013. Further opportunities will be availed of during the early months of 2014.

Action 200: Develop and implement local, country-specific market plans in priority markets as provided for in the Government Trade Strategy under the auspices of the Export Trade Council, with a particular focus on high-growth markets.

Ongoing Measure: Implement and report on local market plans through Export Trade Council. (DFAT)

Update: Complete for 2013

Under the Government's Trade, Tourism and Investment Strategy, 27 priority markets have been identified for the integrated promotion of trade, tourism and investment. In each market, Ireland's Ambassador chairs the local market team, which consists of Embassy staff and representatives of the relevant State agencies present in the market. These integrated market teams submit detailed annual local market plans outlining how they will grow trade, tourism and investment between Ireland and the market in question to the Export Trade Council (ETC). Local Market Plans for 2014 and implementation reports for 2013 are presently being received and will be presented at the upcoming ETC meeting on February 6th 2014.

Ongoing Measure: Tourism Ireland will continue to review its tourism marketing strategy in all main markets and revise as appropriate. (Tourism Ireland)

Update: Complete for 2013

Tourism Ireland undertakes regular reviews of all main overseas target markets to ensure it maximises all opportunities for tourism growth. For example, the recommendations arising from major reviews of the United States and the Great Britain markets (which were completed in 2012) informed marketing decisions for the 2013 season and have been implemented throughout the year. Reviews of the German and French markets completed late in 2013 have similarly informed all relevant marketing decisions for 2014 and will also be implemented in full in the markets this year.

Maximising Procurement Opportunities

Public procurement presents a particular opportunity for new and established SMEs to grow employment

Action 204: Improve the capacity of SMEs to tender for public sector contracts, including through collaborative approaches.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (NPS, EI, ITI)

Update: Complete for 2013

The National Procurement Service (NPS) is actively encouraging SMEs to form consortia to tender for large public sector contracts. All procurement documentation has been amended to ensure that provision is made to allow the formation of consortia to enable competitive tendering for larger public procurement contracts. In addition, the NPS constantly examines strategies that would allow for the greater use of 'lots' during the competitive process thus encouraging greater participation by SMEs.

The NPS continues to facilitate training workshops and seminars for SME suppliers throughout the country. These sessions are conducted in association with InterTrade Ireland's 'Go to Tender' programme. NPS also hosted two major 'Meet the Buyer' events – in Belfast in September and in Dublin in October 2013 in conjunction with its partner organisations. Each of these events was attended by over 500 delegates.

Action 205: Continue to encourage SMEs to register on the Government's eTenders website to enable forthcoming procurement opportunities to be brought to their attention.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (NPS, EI, Small Business Representatives)

Update: Complete for 2013

The National Procurement Service (NPS) actively advertises eTenders through various publications and other media to encourage SMEs to register the site. The NPS also takes part in 'meet the buyer' events to demonstrate the system to suppliers. Enterprise Ireland similarly continues to encourage SMEs to register on eTenders to enable forthcoming procurement opportunities to be brought to client companies' attention.

On average 1,200 new suppliers register on eTenders every month, which demonstrates that the marketing and promotion undertaken is effective. There are currently 87,347 suppliers registered on the site. This is an increase of over 17,000 in the past 12 months.

Action 207: Encourage contracting authorities to make use of the new functionality in the Government's eTenders web portal to reduce the administrative burden on companies participating in public procurement, including accepting tender bids online.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (NPS)

Update: Complete for 2013

The National Procurement Service (NPS) provides training free of charge to Contracting Authorities using eTenders. This training not only includes how to post a tender but also, inter alia, how to use the electronic tender box, the eAssessing and eAwarding modules, as well as how to use the contract management module to manage contracts. They also provide training on how to run mini-competitions where framework agreements have been awarded through the system. Training is also made available, when requested, to contracting authorities who wish to use the eAuction functionality.

The NPS always encourages Contracting Authorities to use electronic tendering as opposed to asking for paper-based tenders. Electronic tendering will become the norm under the new EU Procurement Directives.

Developing and Deepening the Impact of Foreign Direct Investment

Action 215: Drive implementation of the Global Sourcing Strategy targeting the procurement of an additional €500 million of domestically sourced goods and services by FDI companies in Ireland:

- 100 (Phase 1, 2013) referrals to Global Sourcing by IDA Executives of procurement prospects;
- Based on assessment of these referrals, target 120 client introductions to MNC Supply Opportunities in 2013;
- Appoint 25 MNC/Global Sourcing mentors to clients during 2013;
- Host a series of MNC Networking events to build engagement with the Strategy.

Ongoing Measure: See Action 188. (IDA, EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

- In 2013, over 100 IDA Ireland clients identified as having potential for procurement prospects were referred to Enterprise Ireland.
- In 2013, over 130 Enterprise Ireland clients were introduced to MNC Supply/Technology Opportunities.

- Enterprise Ireland currently has a panel of 388 business mentors; 66 of these have senior level experience of working in a multinational corporation (MNC). In 2013, 28 of these MNC mentors were appointed to assignments with 64 clients covering areas including selling into MNCs, marketing and international business development.
- A number of events have been held throughout the year to drive the implementation of the Global Sourcing in Ireland, these events included Med in Ireland and International Markets Week.

Action 217: Attract overseas entrepreneurs, and foreign direct investment from emerging businesses, to Ireland

Ongoing Measure: Attract 20 foreign direct investments from emerging businesses (IDA)

Update: Complete

IDA Ireland set a goal in its Horizon 2020 strategy to attract fast growth companies to Ireland. IDA Ireland won 27 investments from fast growth companies in 2013.

Ongoing Measure: Participate in a joint marketing strategy in key target markets including the US, UK and Europe (Berlin, Barcelona, London, Austin, San Francisco, Paris). (IDA, EI)

Update: Complete

During 2013, IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland worked together at events in cities such as Berlin, Barcelona, London, Austin and San Francisco and also the Le Web conference in Paris.

Ongoing Measure: Target support for 15 overseas entrepreneurs (EI)

Update: Complete

Enterprise Ireland has supported 16 overseas entrepreneur's projects throughout 2013.

Supporting Employment at the Community and Local Level

Action 227: Through the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP), continue to work towards: Increasing access to formal and informal educational, recreational and cultural activities and resources; and increasing people's work readiness and employment prospects and support for enterprise start-ups through a particular focus on work readiness and employment prospects and through careful analysis of the Programme outputs and impacts. Current validity of the LCDP objectives and/or outcomes and their compatibility with the Programme for Government will be examined.

Ongoing Measure: Monitor Programme Beneficiary Participation Rates against the targets set for the Programme in 2012. (DECLG, Pobal, Local Development Companies)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) provides employment supports, training, personal development/capacity building and other supports for the harder to reach in the most disadvantaged areas in society.

In 2012, over 47,000 persons were engaged with directly as part of the delivery of the programme, exceeding the 2012 target of 36,000.

In addition to direct engagements, other services delivered include outreach services and dissemination type actions where persons are signposted to other services and activities. The target number of engagements for 2013 is circa 44,000 and as of the end of Q3 2013 engagements totalled over 32,500. Final output data in relation to the 2013 targets set for the LCDP in 2013 will be available in Q1 2014. The programme performed very well despite a reduction in funding in 2013.

The current programme comes to an end at the end of 2013. A successor programme is currently being designed based on; inter alia, the main findings of the Mid-Term Review of the Programme. The funding provided in 2014 will be used to increase access to formal and informal educational activities and resources, and to increase people's work readiness and employment prospects. For example, some 14,000 people who are distanced from the labour market will receive direct one-to-one labour market training and supports through the Programme in 2014.

Action 228: Continue to support job creation in rural communities through the Rural Development Programme, primarily through continued focus on enterprise generation and development in rural communities.

Ongoing Measure: Continue delivery of the Axis 3 and Axis 4 elements of the current round of the Rural Development Programme via the Local Development Companies. (DECLG)

Update: Complete for 2013

The programme period for the current round of the Rural Development Programme is from 2007 to 2013 but the expenditure period will run to the end of 2015. Enterprise support funding under the programme was provided to 2,404 enterprises in 2013, resulting in the creation of 1,110 full-time jobs.

Action 229: Pursue initiatives in the Irish Language sector including: an internship scheme for Irish language graduates; supports for Irish language arts, publishing, creative writing and other schemes; funding of third level courses in Ireland with a view to promoting employment opportunities in translation, interpretation and associated areas.

Ongoing Measure: Provide an internship scheme for Irish language graduates. (DAHG)

Update: Complete

The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht provides funding to Fiontar in Dublin City University for initiatives which support the status of Irish as an official and working language of the European Union. The initiatives funded include Clár Aimhirgín, an internship programme for Irish language graduates to upskill in the areas of terminology and place names.

There are 6 interns currently working on the programme and these will continue until mid-2014. The funding of up to three more internships in 2014 is under active consideration. In addition, the recent announcement of funding of €1.5 million for www.duchas.ie (the digitisation of part of the National Folklore Collection) will create 3 full time jobs and 3 internships over the next three years.

Ongoing Measure: Provide supports for Irish language arts, publishing, creative writing and other schemes. (DAHG, Foras na Gaeilge and Údarás na Gaeltachta)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG) provides support and funding to initiatives to promote Irish language arts, publishing and creative writing, including:

- Funding of 57 festivals and 10 drama companies.
- Grants provided to 15 publishing companies, employing 12 staff (not including the owners, authors or editors), resulting in the publication of over 100 books (including e-books); granting of 9 commissions and access for 8 new writers to the apprenticeship (mentoring) scheme.

- More than 6,000 primary school children participated in the Scríobh Leabhar Scheme, while 11 Irish-language literature projects were assisted.
- Support was provided to employ 19 officers on a local basis to promote the Irish language under Scéim Phobal Gaeilge.
- 5 translators are working on material in the areas of post-primary Mathematics and Art to provide textbooks for the Irish-medium education sector.
- 7 full-time and 26 part-time tutors are on contract to provide specialist courses to the public sector.
- 2 part-time staff provide a short translation service to the public sector through the helpline Freagra.
- 2 external full-time and 16 external part-time staff are working on the New English/Irish Dictionary project.

Ongoing Measure: Provide funding for third-level courses in Irish with a view to promoting employment opportunities in translation, interpretation and associated areas. (DAHG)

Update: Complete for 2013

Just over €1 million was provided for specialist third level courses in Irish in 2013 with further funding earmarked for 2014. Proposals regarding the future of the Irish language derogation in the EU are being considered by DAHG in consultation with the Department of the Taoiseach and other stakeholders. It is estimated that the ending of the derogation has the potential to lead to the creation of up to 180 highly skilled jobs in EU institutions.

Ongoing Measures:

- Strengthen RD&I capacity of Gaeltacht companies.
- Support entrepreneurs and start-up businesses and assist indigenous business to grow in Gaeltacht areas.
- Support high growth potential in various sectors, including cultural tourism, renewable energy, coastal resources and the arts in Gaeltacht areas.

(Údarás na Gaeltachta)

Update: Complete for 2013

Údarás na Gaeltachta provides a range of supports and funding to support enterprise development in the Gaeltacht region, including:

- Targeting and supporting key manufacturing companies with a view to achieving greater levels of engagement in RD&I.

- Continuing to fund a range of enterprise and development initiatives with a focus on employment creation and enterprise development and is focused on the provision and promotion of supports for indigenous start-ups.
- Continuing to co-fund, with Ealaín (na Gaeltachta) Teo, a wide range of traditional and contemporary Gaeltacht based language, arts, writing and other initiatives.
- Co-funding two specific training programmes in Marine and Countryside guiding (Level 6) which will support the development of employment in the recreational and tourism sectors. Similiar initiatives are to be rolled out over next eighteen months in other Gaeltacht areas.

Action 230: Continue to support and stimulate local community development initiatives in Gaeltacht areas to build on the strengths and capacity of community enterprise and its contribution to the economy.

Ongoing Measure: Provide financial support to Gaeltacht co-operatives and community development organisations. (Údarás na Gaeltachta)

Update: Complete for 2013

Údarás na Gaeltachta 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. (see updates provided for ongoing Actions 133 and 229 above)

Action 233: Identify ways in which the youth sector can contribute to the Government's objectives regarding young people and employment and explore the potential to secure EU funding to support the youth sector's contribution to preventing youth unemployment and exclusion, in particular for young people facing multiple barriers to labour market entry.

Ongoing Measure: Continue to collaborate with related Government Departments with regard to the contribution youth work provision can make to enhance young people's opportunities for employment. (DCYA, DSP)

Update: Complete for 2013

The DCYA has developed a comprehensive plan detailing how the youth work sector could contribute to the implementation of the Youth Guarantee if resources were made available for this purpose and have submitted this plan to the Youth Guarantee Interdepartmental Group of which the DCYA is a member. This plan is informed by a comprehensive mapping exercise of the youth work sector carried out by the DCYA and relates to three areas of

focus which the youth work sector could further maximise:

- Working with young people not in education, employment or training;
- Ensuring effective information provision and outreach to young people on employment and training issues; and
- Developing volunteering opportunities within the youth sector.

DCYA have also submitted plans to the European Social Fund (ESF) managing authority in the Department of Education and Skills, seeking funding to support the youth work provision which enhances the employability of young people under the new round of ESF funding 2014 - 2020.

Action 234: Facilitate the increased participation in volunteering opportunities by unemployed people. Such volunteering provides significant opportunities to provide and derive skills, experience and develop new competences which can assist people, including young people, in gaining a foothold in the labour market.

Ongoing Measure: Ensure youth funding provision continues to recognise the significant input for volunteer-led provision for young people. (DCYA)

Update: Complete for 2013

DCYA have ensured that the area of volunteering in youth work continues to be developed. This is done through the provision of funding, implementation of standards and development of research in the area of volunteering in youth work. The DCYA submissions for funding as part of the Youth Guarantee implementation and the new round of ESF funding, emphasises maximising the potential of volunteering opportunities within the youth sector which currently involves 40,000 volunteers.

Such volunteering opportunities can be developed in two ways; first, in engaging unemployed young people to volunteer in youth work provision whereupon they can build up expertise and experience to enhance their employability; and second, in proactively engaging adult volunteers with industry relevant skills to volunteer in youth work activities whereby young people receive practical advice and mentoring in key areas of business and industry which can increase their employment prospects.

Action 238: Publish the Forfás report on Social Enterprise and identify actions to be taken by way of follow-up on the report's findings.

Ongoing Measure: Follow up on actions. (Relevant Government Departments)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Forfás report on Social Enterprise was published by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in July 2013. In October 2013, an Interdepartmental Committee was convened by Minister of State Seán Sherlock, T.D. with responsibility for Research and Innovation at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation to consider the recommendations of the Forfás report. In December the committee met with the Social Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Taskforce to gain the views of the sector, and to achieve consensus on approaches to developing the social enterprise sector. The group was represented at the 'Have Your Say' EU Social Enterprise conference in Strasbourg in January, and Minister of State Seán Sherlock also attended. The committee met in January 2014 to further consider the recommendations of the Forfás report and the needs of the sector, and it is intended that firm actions will be agreed early in 2014. The group is scheduled to reconvene in February.

Action 239: Through the Probation Service, continue to partner with Community Based Organisations (CBOs) to help offenders improve their prospects of employment in the labour market. This will be achieved through assisting offenders to acquire skills, vocational training and qualifications, as well as facilitating work referral and placement.

Ongoing Measure:

- Business plans submitted in October.
- Review of outputs and outcomes in conjunction with Regional Managers for previous year.
- Feedback from Regional Managers and Probation Service Representatives.
- Funding agreed with Department.

(Probation Service)

Update: Complete for 2013

The providers of training and supports to offenders, funded by the Department of Justice and Equality, submitted business plans outlining the agreed programmes and outputs to be provided over 2013. This assists offenders to address the specific training they require, in order to support their reintegration into the community and to the workforce.

In particular, funding to the Irish Association for the Social Integration of Offenders (IASIO) supports the delivery of the Linkage Programme to offenders. The aim of the Linkage programme is to support Probation Service clients to access appropriate training, education and employment. Data from January to December 2013 indicates that 513 offenders were placed in training, education and employment through the Linkage Programme.

Action 240: Through the Equality Authority, run a programme of activities to promote the employability of groups that have experienced labour market disadvantage related to discriminatory grounds (e.g. age, race, family status, disability etc). This will include specific streams for developing the equality capacity of employers, vocational education and training providers and labour market providers

Ongoing Measures:

- Provide technical support on equality mainstreaming for providers of further education and training and labour market programme providers.
- Provide a programme of equality supports to providers of further education and training.

(Equality Authority)

Update: Complete for 2013

Following an open call for proposals in June to the further education and training sector, 12 applications were approved for funding in July. The successful providers are implementing a range of equality projects with a focus on building organisational capacity to mainstream equality into how programmes are designed and delivered at an institutional level. The projects commenced at the start of the 2013/2014 academic year and will run for approximately 6 months, scheduled to finish in July 2014. The providers receiving funding are:

- Co. Clare VEC Adult Education Service
- Longford Women's Link
- Cavan VEC Adult Education Service - Cavan Monaghan ETB
- Colaiste Dhulaigh College of Further Education
- Cavan Institute
- Dun Laoghaire VEC
- Co. Limerick VEC
- St. Catherine's Community Services Centre
- Co. Dublin VEC
- Westmeath VEC
- FESS (Further Education Support Services) in cooperation with Co. Cavan VEC and Co. Wicklow VEC; and
- Aontas

In addition, the Equality Authority's annual conference, 'Mainstreaming Equality: Making it Real,' which was held in October and attended by 140 participants, was targeted at providers of further education and training, those involved in designing and delivering labour market programmes and groups representing the nine grounds covered by the equality legislation.

Ongoing Measure: Implement a programme of sectoral projects with employers and trade union networks to enhance equality competency. (Equality Authority)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Equality Authority has established a panel of experts who can provide equality supports directly to workplaces, with a particular focus on the SME sector.

Contracts have been finalised with six projects approved for funding under the ‘Call for Proposals for Equality Mainstreaming Projects’. All projects are now underway and Interim Reports are due in January 2014 in each case. The organisations funded are:

- Immigrant Council of Ireland for a project focused on the delivery of diversity and anti-racism training and development diversity strategies by public transport providers in Dublin;
- See Change – The National Stigma Reduction Partnership for a project relating to challenging discrimination experienced by people with personal experience of a mental health problem in the workplace setting;
- Irish University Association’s Equality Network for a project to embed best practice in inclusive employment procedures for people with disabilities working in or who wish to work in the University sector;
- Cavan County Council and Cavan Community Forum for a project to produce high impact audio visual training resources for use in Cavan County Council and Cavan based community and voluntary workplace settings;
- Galway Traveller Movement for a project to promote equality mainstreaming in enterprise development, employment services and vocational training as it is one of the primary access routes to employment for Travellers; and
- Congress and BeLong To Youth Services for a project to promote workplace equality for LGBT Young Adults by transferring a successful equality awareness raising approach from the education sector into the workplace.

Sectoral Opportunities

Manufacturing

Action 245: Undertake a concerted effort to encourage more manufacturing companies to engage in RD&I (with a particular focus on the cohorts with relatively lower take-up to date).

Ongoing Measure: Determine the emerging manufacturing needs of the Pharmaceutical Industry and plan appropriate programmes. (IDA, SFI)

Update: Complete for 2013

A detailed description of needs for bioprocessing research in the pharmaceutical sector has been determined, compiled and supplied to Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) and the other enterprise agencies. SFI defined the themes for both the SFI 2013 Research Centres and the SFI 2014 Investigator Programme Calls based on gap analysis.

Manufacturing Competitiveness was selected as a theme in the SFI 2013 Research Centres and the SFI 2014 Investigator Programme call; two pre-proposal applications were received under the Research Centres call.

A concerted effort has also been taken by IDA Ireland to increase the level of investment and the number of companies investing in R&D within the engineering, industrial and clean technology portfolio. This was evidenced in 2013 with a number of larger investments by companies. There will be continued progress on this agenda in 2014.

Ongoing Measure: IDA will continue to encourage its companies to engage in high level RD&I activities. (IDA)

Update: Complete for 2013

IDA Ireland actively encourages its client base to engage in high level R&D activities to further embed existing employment and put in place the framework for future employment creation.

In December 2013, DePuy (Ireland), one of the DePuy Synthes companies of Johnson & Johnson, announced it is plans to invest in excess of \$36 million in a R&D programme. The new programme is designed to build core competencies in the areas of advanced processing technology, new materials development and advanced process implementation for the DePuy Synthes group of companies.

Cook Medical officially opened its new state-of-the-art R&D Innovation Centre at its plant in Limerick in December 2013. The Innovation Centre together, with the expansion of cleanrooms, packaging, storage and other facilities, represents an investment of €10 million. This commitment to R&D and a growing product pipeline has increased staff by 100 over the past two years.

These announcements complement IDA Ireland's strategy to promote transformation within existing client companies.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

Research, development and innovation (RD&I) continue to be a key focus of discussions with Enterprise Ireland manufacturing companies. In 2013, Enterprise Ireland's Research and Innovation Unit, in consultation with sectoral teams, completed more than 30 one-to-one meetings with manufacturing clients to discuss their specific research needs and the relevant resources available through Enterprise Ireland, including direct R&D support and/or collaboration with the public research system.

As part of the development process for Enterprise Ireland's 2014-2016 strategy, Enterprise Ireland met with a group of engineering clients to discuss their needs, including in relation to RD&I and a number of follow-on client meetings have been arranged for Q1 2014.

In addition, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland hosted a Technology Centre Expo in November 2013 in Dublin with close to 500 attendees. A key objective of the Expo was to increase the awareness of the Centres and their research capacity to new industry members, particularly Enterprise Ireland clients. Manufacturing and Materials research was one of the key themes of the event.

Action 246: Engage with manufacturing firms to determine and define specific needs at a research programme level, particularly firms in sectors that would benefit from increased participation.

Ongoing Measure: IDA will continue to encourage its companies to engage in high level RD&I activities. (IDA)

Update: Complete

IDA has encouraged its clients to engage in high level RD&I activities; examples of RD&I activities being undertaken are included in Action 245 above.

In addition, IDA Ireland has conducted a survey of key clients to determine their interest with manufacturing R&D, assessing their interest in university collaboration and their priorities for applied versus fundamental research. This survey has been provided to SFI and other agencies and may influence policy decisions on public investment in R&D that could influence increased company engagement.

IDA Ireland has inputted to a review of recent SFI research centre call in Advanced Manufacturing and other thematic areas, advising SFI on what proposals are most likely to lead to strong engagement by industry.

In 2014, IDA Ireland is to conduct a survey of clients to obtain detailed description of needs for research in discrete manufacturing, with particular focus on medical technologies manufacturing.

Action 251: Recruit a cohort of manufacturing champions in Ireland and take steps to promote careers in manufacturing.

Ongoing Measure: The Manufacturing Development Forum, in association with the other players, will develop a suite of key messages to raise the profile of manufacturing; will identify a group of 'Champions' to become the public faces of manufacturing in Ireland at events and for media purposes; and will work to promote careers in the sector. (DJEI, IDA, EI, SFI with Manufacturing Development Forum)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Manufacturing Development Forum and the other relevant bodies have developed key messages to promote the sector. The Forum itself has taken on the 'Champions' role by promoting manufacturing at a number of events. In addition, discussions are underway on the possible formation of an industry-led Manufacturing Association. This initiative is being explored at present with relevant interested parties. These initiatives will also assist in the promotion of careers in the sector. In this regard, a process to add to the section on career opportunities in the manufacturing section on the Smart Futures career website has already been initiated.

Agriculture, Food and Marine

Action 252: Support 18 significant food and drink industry investments including up to 5 additional FDI projects, to achieve the objective of 750 overall new jobs.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (EI)

Update: Complete

Enterprise Ireland has supported 42 significant projects to date, including eight FDI projects. Between them these projects are committed to creating over 800 direct new jobs.

Action 255: The Irish Maritime and Energy Resource Cluster (IMERC) will facilitate development of upwards of 20 new jobs in 2013 through its research and commercial cluster environment in its Ringaskiddy campus.

Ongoing Measures:

- Provide commercial and incubation units to host client companies including start ups.
- Attract FDI clients to incorporate in Ireland and locate on the IMERC campus.
- Work with academic partners to win new funds to recruit new researchers to the Halpin Research Centre and the Beaufort Laboratory.

(IMERC)

Update: Complete for 2013

The original job creation target has been exceeded with the delivery of 34 new jobs by IMERC partners in new start up companies and from a new FDI client in 2013.

Also in 2013, €19 million was awarded by SFI to the new Centre for Marine Renewable Energy Ireland (MaREI), with a further €10 million by industry partners. In 2014, this project which is led by the Beaufort laboratory, will support up to 150 construction jobs plus a number of other skilled jobs on the campus.

The Halpin Centre for Research and Innovation at the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI) was launched by the Minister of State for Research and Innovation in May 2013. The Centre which undertakes research, development and innovation activity in the Maritime Safety and Security, Maritime Education and Training and Shipping Transport and Logistics areas now employs 9 staff and researchers and this will grow further over the next number of years.

Action 257: Roll out a schedule of food related Ministerial Trade and Investment Missions and continue with technical and diplomatic efforts to improve trade and access for agri-food products.

Ongoing Measure: Continue technical and diplomatic efforts to improve market access and trade. (DAFM)

Update: Complete for 2013

Ongoing technical and diplomatic efforts were made in 2013 to improve market access and trade. These included:

- A commercial and technical delegation to Gulf States led by Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine;

- Received a Japanese Government audit team in advance of beef market opening there;
- The organisation of a training seminar for meat companies targeting the US market following the lifting of a beef ban in the US;
- Participation in a BSE Working Group in China as part of effort to access the Chinese beef market;
- Hosting Korean government officials to assure them of highest standards of Irish pigmeat (and beef) industry.

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine facilitated two successful Vice Ministerial visits from China in May and June of this year. One of the key outcomes of these visits is the Memorandum of Understanding between Teagasc and the Chinese Academy of Agriculture Sciences in relation to joint research between both institutes. In addition, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade hosted the Vietnamese Vice Minister for Agriculture for a week-long visit in 2013.

Agreement has also been reached on a certificate for the direct export of horses, born and bred in Ireland, to China. This will reduce significantly the costs associated with the export of horses, which currently have to be sent via the Netherlands.

Action 260: Progress determination of aquaculture licence applications and renewals having regard to full compliance with environmental requirements.

Ongoing Measure: Complete Appropriate Assessment in respect of Bays designated by National Parks Wildlife Service as Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas. (DAFM, Marine Institute, National Parks and Wildlife Institute)

Update: Complete for 2013

Appropriate Assessments have been completed in respect of Dundalk Bay, Castlemaine Bay, Donegal Bay, Lough Swilly and Roaringwater Bay. These bays are designated by National Parks Wildlife Service as Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas.

Action 262: Build on positive engagement with key dairy industry players to optimise industry expansion capability in 2013.

Ongoing Measure: Continue to promote a collaborative approach by key players. (EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

Enterprise Ireland continues to work closely with the key dairy industry players in Ireland, bringing forward a number of strategic investments in 2013 for Glanbia Ingredients Ireland, Dairygold and Kerry.

Action 269: Work to achieve the target of 75% of food and drink exports being supplied by companies participating in the ‘Origin Green’ sustainability charter by the end of 2014.

Ongoing Measure: Offer further workshops to all other registered companies; support companies in the development of their plans. (Bord Bia)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Origin Green sustainability programme was launched in June 2012. Under this programme, companies are required to develop a plan setting out their individual targets in a specified set of areas such as energy, waste, and emission reductions. Plans are independently approved and monitored by the internationally-renowned SGS to provide assurance to existing and prospective customers of the company’s sustainability credentials.

Bord Bia holds a series of workshops for food and drink companies to raise awareness of the programme and to provide information on the process for participating in the ‘Origin Green’ sustainability charter. They also work with companies to develop their plans. In Q4, five workshops were run for over fifty companies and some thirty companies were assisted in the production of their plans.

To date, a total of 299 companies have signed up for the Origin Green Programme. Of these, 37 companies are verified members of Origin Green, 49 companies have submitted their plans and 213 companies are at the workshop/plan development stage. Full details on the programme and member companies can be found at www.origingreen.ie.

Action 272: Achieve by end 2013, completion by 90 food companies of the Lean Manufacturing programme and of the Leadership4Growth programme by 50 CEOs/CFOs from the food sector

Ongoing Measure: Continue to promote Lean and Leadership/Management Development in Food Sector. (EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

Enterprise Ireland continues to promote Lean and Leadership/Management Development in the Food Sector through their website, marketing collateral, their capability and mentoring department and directly through the client’s Development Advisor.

The Lean Business offer has become a core Enterprise Ireland offer to help client companies address their competitiveness challenges in a practical and positive way. It provides for a three tiered response that is suited to the stage of development of clients, helps them tackle competitiveness issues across their businesses and helps them develop a sustained in-house culture of continuous improvement. Food clients have engaged very strongly on the Lean agenda.

Action 273: Work with Research Performing Organisations to progress the 55 agri-food and forestry research projects awarded in late 2012.

Ongoing Measure: Monitor start up, progress on the conduct of the research, and eventual delivery of the planned outputs through desk evaluation, on-site visits and workshops, seminars, as relevant. (DAFM)

Update: Complete for 2013

The focus of attention to date has been on ensuring that the projects successfully get off the ground. Work has commenced on all projects which were funded in late 2012 and progress is assessed and monitored via desk evaluation of progress reports and on-site inspections. Following on from the awards made in late 2012, an additional 12 awards were made in 2013 to the value of €6.3 million.

In addition, 52 new projects were awarded funding of approximately €26 million in November 2013 following the Call for Research Proposals under the FIRM, Stimulus and Competitive Forestry Research for Development (CoFoRD) programmes that was issued in March. These new awards will provide direct employment opportunities for up to 89 contract researchers and a further 81 research opportunities for post-graduate students over the lifetime of these projects. They also address the priorities identified by the DAFM hosted, industry-led, research advisory groups and set out in the Food Research Ireland and SSAPRI* strategic research agendas.

* Stimulating Sustainable Agricultural Production through Research and Innovation

Green Economy

Action 276: Establish and convene meetings of a Consultative Committee on Jobs in the Green Economy to identify opportunities for further job creation in the sector.

Ongoing Measure: Meet according to agreed schedule. (DJEI)

Update: Complete for 2013

As part of the Action Plan for Jobs, in 2012 the Government published a *Policy Statement on Growth and Employment in the Green Economy – Delivering Our Green Potential*. The Policy Statement envisaged the establishment of a Consultative Committee on Jobs in the Green Economy to identify emerging opportunities for Ireland in the Green Economy, to be chaired by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

The Committee was established in Q1 2013 and comprises six representatives each from industry and the public sector. Relevant industry practitioners and other stakeholders are invited to meetings to discuss thematic areas as required.

In line with the Q2 commitment in the 2013 Action Plan, the first meeting of the Committee

took place in May 2013 and examined the area of green products and services. The second meeting took place in July 2013 and examined the area of waste as a resource and the potential for cost reductions, growth and jobs. A further meeting took place in December 2013 to examine actions for inclusion in the Action Plan for Jobs 2014. Actions identified at the meetings are being pursued with the relevant Departments and Agencies.

Action 281: Implement the Green Public Procurement Action Plan to promote the development of a market for green products and services.

Ongoing Measure: Engagement with the new Central Procurement Office to ensure a coordinated approach to the implementation of Green Tenders that maximises opportunities for the development of new green product/service markets. (DECLG)

Update: Complete for 2013

The implementation of *Green Tenders – An Action Plan for Green Public Procurement* is ongoing through the Green Tenders Implementation Group (GTIG) co-chaired by DPER and DECLG. Members of the Group, each of which is responsible for the implementation of actions in their own area report on progress, including timelines for the delivery of key actions, in advance of each meeting.

The group has been supported by a sub group who examined a range of issues around the implementation of actions including cost effectiveness, and in particular to identify “quick wins” for the implementation. The sub group will make recommendations on how best to measure the achievement of our national green public procurement (GPP) target. Complementary work is currently being undertaken by the EPA to develop guidance on GPP and it is also engaging with the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) and other relevant stakeholders. The National Procurement Service which is now incorporated into the newly established OGP is a member of the GTIG. The GTIG will next meet in early 2014.

Action 282: Continue to promote energy and resource efficiency measures to cut costs for businesses.

Ongoing Measures:

- Work with 500 businesses in 2013 to help them identify and reduce their energy costs.
- Work with the 160 large firms in the Large Industry Energy Network (who together consume 60% of all industrial energy use) to promote best international practice in energy management and design.

(SEAI)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) continues to work with the SME sector through its ongoing programme of activities for SMEs including the Advice Mentoring and Assessment (AMA) programme, Small Business Training and Energy Map Training, and seminars and workshops.

Almost 150 businesses registered for the AMA, and reporting and mentoring is ongoing in this area but by far the biggest direct engagement was through the various seminars and workshops where over 450 businesses attended events promoting all the various energy management techniques. Over 500 businesses alone registered an interest in participating in the annual Energy Awards programme, the highest since its inception nine years ago. Numbers employed in this group was in excess of 70,000.

Through its Large Industry Energy Network (LIEN), SEAI continued to promote the best international practice through a series of special work groups, networking events and workshops. Its team of support managers continue to be active in assisting businesses in ISO 50001 registration and maintenance support. Of the 163 businesses active in the network almost 50% are now certified to the standard or working towards it. This is believed to be that highest penetration across the EU member states. These industries account for 25GWh of total primary energy requirements and 71% of the total industrial energy use in Ireland.

Action 283: Continue to look for international trade liberalisation in green goods, technologies and services in bilateral and multilateral trade agreements.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

This continues to be an important area for Ireland in any trade negotiations and related activities as international trade liberalisation in this sector will give Irish exporters and innovators of low carbon and environmental technologies and services better access to global markets. At the October 18th EU Trade Council, the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation highlighted to the EU Commission the importance of including this in their action strategy for world trade talks during 2014. At the Ninth WTO Ministerial meeting, the Minister met with other EU Trade Ministers, including those from Sweden, France, the UK and Denmark, to discuss how liberalisation policies might best be promoted both internationally through the WTO and in bilateral trade agreements being negotiated by the EU.

Action 289: Ensure continued and enhanced efforts by Government Departments, agencies, business representative associations and businesses themselves to grow awareness among all SMEs of how best to exploit waste management reduction processes and technologies.

Ongoing Measure: Continued promotion of National Waste Prevention Programme by the EPA. (DECLG)

Update: Complete for 2013

The initiatives* established under the National Waste Prevention Programme (NWPP) and supported by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continue to deliver substantive results on waste prevention and minimisation and also integrate a range of initiatives addressing awareness-raising, technical and financial assistance, training and incentive mechanisms.

During 2012 under the NWPP, the Green Business Initiative and the Green Hospitality Award programme realised actual and potential savings of €3 million and €6 million respectively.

The NWPP is currently being renewed with a view to the launch of a public consultation on a draft new plan in early 2014. It is intended that a finalised renewed plan will be published by end Q1 2014.

* These initiatives include BeGreen, the Green Business Initiative, the Green Hospitality Award, Packaging Waste Prevention Programme and Stop Food Waste

Ongoing Measure: Participation of Local Authorities in Local Authority Prevention Demonstration scheme.

(DECLG)

Update: Complete for 2013

In November 2013, South Dublin County Council joined the Local Authority Prevention Network (LAPN) bringing total number of local authorities involved in the initiative to 15. Also in November, the LAPN held a plenary meeting of participating local authorities and offered free training in Limerick, Galway and Dublin to local authorities on how end users, such as schools, businesses, institutions and homes can reduce their water usage. All resource materials produced by the local authorities to support SMEs to reduce and prevent waste are available on the LAPN website.

* The Local Authority Prevention Network (LAPN) is an initiative of the NWPP and involves working with local authorities to deliver resource efficiency and waste prevention initiatives at a local and grassroots level.

Action 290: Ensure that Ireland's negotiating position at EU level on the revision of waste targets is informed by consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

Ongoing Measure: Engagement with stakeholders through the National Waste Forum as proposals for revision of waste targets emerge. (DECLG)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government has notified the membership of the National Waste Forum regarding the consultation process initiated by the European Commission in relation to the Review of the European Waste Management Targets. The consultation period ran from June to September 2013. The Department will engage with the National Waste Forum as appropriate as proposals emerge in 2014.

Construction and Property

Action 292: Bring the draft Forfás strategy and outlook for the construction sector to Government for consideration and agree actions to be undertaken to meet the Government's objectives for the sector on foot of the report's recommendations.

Ongoing Measure: Commence implementation of the recommendations. (Relevant Departments and agencies)

Update: Complete for 2013

On foot of the work done by Forfás the Government, in July 2013, set out a suite of actions aimed at improving activity and employment levels in the construction sector and committed itself to work to help bring the sector back to more appropriate and sustainable levels. Significant progress has been made to date, including through measures introduced in Budget 2014, and this work will be further developed in 2014 as part of the Action Plan for Jobs.

Issues progressed during 2013 include preparatory work for a Register of Builders and Contractors; formal engagement with stakeholders on the review of the public works contracts; publication of the Commercial Leases Database on October 31st 2013; the appointment of an investment manager to the Energy Efficiency Fund at the end of November; and continued work by Enterprise Ireland to support and develop exports in the construction sector.

Action 293: Ensure that the current programme of capital investment is focused on maximising economic and social returns: Ensure that efforts being made to identify other potential sources of private investment, and how they will operate, are brought to a successful conclusion; and Prioritise other additional projects (including some which were

deferred) that will deliver productive returns to the economy as soon as financing options are identified.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (DPER)

Update: Complete for 2013

In 2011, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) carried out a comprehensive and broad ranging critical analysis of the capital expenditure framework which assessed current capacity and likely future demand for infrastructure across key sectors. This resulted in a new Medium Term Investment Framework from 2012 to 2016 of €17 billion.

The new Framework prioritised critical infrastructure required to best support economic growth and recovery, achieve the highest sustainable employment impact in the short to medium term, and/or meet urgent and compelling social needs. It prioritised the essential over the desirable and consequently a number of projects were deferred or cancelled. There would have to be a substantial improvement in our fiscal position to allow us to proceed with some of the large projects which were deferred. Nor is there any likelihood that we will be funding non-essential projects in the foreseeable future.

In 2014, DPER will be commencing a further review of the capital investment, to identify where further public investment is needed to help contribute to economic growth while continuing to provide social infrastructure. This will help the government to frame its next five year capital envelope out to 2019.

Over the course of 2013, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform announced details of additional capital investment of €150 million in 2013/2014 on projects in the schools, roads and energy efficiency sectors. The focus of this additional investment is on relatively small scale capital works that are labour intensive, can have an economic impact and will be spread throughout the country. An additional €50 million has been spent on roads maintenance during 2013 and spending will continue in the schools and energy efficiency sectors in 2014.

In Budget 2014, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform announced further investment of some €200 million from the proceeds of the National Lottery Licence transaction. This investment will be used to progress a number of additional projects and programmes in 2014 which will have an impact throughout the country. The breakdown of the funding is set out in the Revised Estimates for Public Services 2014 which was published in December 2013. It is important to note that Departments must ensure, as with all capital projects, that those to be funded through this additional investment are appraised in line with the processes set out in the Public Spending Code.

The exchequer capital programme is supplemented by the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Programme which was announced in July 2012 and is progressing well. There has been steady progress on the delivery of the project pipeline in line with the agreed timeframe.

Seven of the nine projects have issued to market.

A particularly positive and important development is that market sentiment is continually improving and the National Development Finance Agency (NDFA), report a very positive outlook for Stimulus Package funding. This package is estimated to support some 13,000 jobs in the construction sector. In order to ensure that there is a mechanism to deliver on this jobs related target, DPER have agreed with the NDFA and the Department of Education and Skills that the Devolved Schools Programme now includes two requirements:

1. 10% of the person-weeks involved in the on-site delivery of the project will be performed by individuals recruited from the ranks of the long-term unemployed; and
2. 2.5% of the person-weeks involved in the on-site delivery of the project will be performed by those engaged in apprenticeships.

There is active engagement with Intreo offices of the Department of Social Protection on the rollout of these clauses. This is an important pilot to road test the inclusion of such requirements in certain public works projects and will form the basis for the inclusion of such clauses in the €1.5 billion PPP element of the Stimulus Programme.

Action 295: The ongoing review of development management guidelines represents an opportunity to address inconsistencies, inefficiencies and lack of transparency within the planning system currently. In this context, we will ensure that: the process involves engagement with users of the system to facilitate necessary enhancements; the revised guidelines have adequate statutory underpinning to ensure that they are applied in practice and in a consistent manner; and where unnecessary constraints to development are identified that are outside the current scope of the development management guidelines, and require legislative change, they are urgently addressed.

Ongoing Measure: Prepare the updated development management guidelines for publication by the Minister in 2014. (DECLG)

Update: Complete

Preliminary preparations have commenced with the development of a communications plan including public notification. This will include a preliminary public consultation inviting submissions and suggestions to enhance the planning application process, including any necessary regulatory change. A consultation draft of the revised Guidelines, and any proposals for regulatory change, will be published in the first half of 2014, and the final Guidelines will be published, and any appropriate regulatory change made, by the end of 2014.

Action 296: Build on the work of Enterprise Ireland to date in driving further internationalisation within the sector through: actively promoting construction sector participation in management development and international marketing programmes; and rolling out workshops on legal and technical issues encountered by construction firms in overseas markets

Ongoing Measure: Provide updates against sub-headline actions. (EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

There was considerable activity over 2013 to support Irish based construction and building services companies to increase their international presence. These included a range of seminars/ conferences, training programmes, and market visits/trade shows, such as:

Market Visits and Trade Shows:

- 21 clients participated in a market visit to the Pharma Build programme event in Brussels to raise the profile of pharmaceutical engineering excellence in Ireland. Clients were assisted in the Market Tender Process at plants including Pfizer, GSK, Baxter and Abbott. A supporting trade dinner attended by 120 key Irish and Belgian pharmaceutical representatives was arranged by Enterprise Ireland.
- Three companies participated at Project Qatar Trade Fair in May which was organised around the forthcoming major infrastructure programme leading up to World Cup 2020, to showcase international capability to Qatari Authorities and procurement agencies. 70 key client and market contacts were established at a networking event organised by Enterprise Ireland.
- A Trade Mission was undertaken to Alberta to evaluate the opportunity for Irish companies in the Canadian natural resources industry. Meetings took place with Shell Canada, Stantec, Nexen Inc, to learn about their activities in Canada, their future pipeline of projects, their supply chain challenges and how they work with suppliers.
- Five construction and related sector clients participated in a Mission to the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Manila to meet with key project executives and to gain visibility on forthcoming capital investment programmes across the region.
- 13 client companies attended the Aquatech Exhibition in Amsterdam and participated in a series of one to one meeting with potential partners.
- A Market Study and Opportunity Seminar was undertaken in March for nine key construction sector clients on Swedish and Norwegian transport development opportunities which has expected investment in the coming years of €90 billion. One to one client meetings were held with Swedish Transport Authority, Stockholm Public Transport, Norwegian Public Roads Authority and Norwegian National Rail Administration.

Conferences, Workshops and Seminars:

- 30 Enterprise Ireland clients participated in the Better Building Conference in Croke Park in April. 60 buyers and influencers/specifiers from a number of key European markets including the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Benelux and Italy were facilitated to attend through Enterprise Ireland market offices. As well as a number of plenary sessions, over 220 one-to-one meetings were also arranged with the visiting buyers and client companies.
- A seminar on construction opportunities in Vietnam, Laos, and Myanmar, addressing legal and technical issues was held in Enterprise Ireland and follow-up work has now commenced on interest in a market study to these markets to assess opportunities.
- A client workshop was held in Dublin to deliver findings of commissioned research on emerging opportunities in Energy Efficient Buildings in the key European markets of the UK, France, Germany, Benelux and Scandinavia.
- A workshop highlighting opportunities for key cluster clients in the regulated and un-regulated Benelux Water & Waste Market, and attended by 19 client companies, was held in East Point. Key areas of opportunities were identified as well as potential areas for partnering with Benelux technology companies in third markets.

Training Programmes (first half of 2013):

- 11 construction and related companies participated on Management Development Programmes, International selling and Management4Growth.
- Seven construction companies participated on the Pilot Building Information Management (BIM) Programme.
- 14 clients attended two short course sessions while on Belgium Market Pharma sector visit.

Tourism

Action 297: Deliver The Gathering Ireland 2013; a yearlong programme of events, festivals and gatherings driven by arts, sports, business and community groups and supported by the Tourism Agencies with a target of attracting 325,000 additional visitors and €170 million in additional revenue.

Ongoing Measure: Marketing and Communication, Enabler Engagement and Festivals and Events Programmes rolled out over the course of the year. (DTTAS, Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Complete

A calendar of significant festivals and events formed the spine of The Gathering year, and the aim was to foster a multitude of grass-roots events around these festivals. A limited

amount of funding was allocated on a once-off basis for existing festivals and events to tailor their programme, or specific elements of their programme, around the themes of The Gathering 2013. In addition, a €2 million fund was established (€1 million contributed from the Exchequer and €1 million from IPB Insurance) to fund local Gathering events and activities. This scheme was administered by the City and County Councils based on agreed application criteria with a key factor being the capacity to attract overseas visitors.

Some 5,000 ‘Gatherings’ were confirmed on the official website. Overseas visits to Ireland in 2013 were up by 7.2% compared to 2012, with 468,000 additional visitors. 2013 was a record year for visitors from North America with total visit numbers up by 13.9% compared to 2012. 2013 also saw an encouraging uptake in the British market with visit numbers up by 5.6%. Independent research indicates that 250 – 275,000 of overseas visitors to Ireland travelled specifically because of a particular Gathering or because of ‘the Gathering’ initiative generally.

Action 298: Implement an overseas marketing and promotional campaign supported by the Tourism Marketing Fund and The Gathering budget to help achieve the targets for The Gathering Ireland 2013, while ensuring an on-going legacy in term of increased interest in visiting Ireland.

Ongoing Measure: Tourism Ireland to undertake an extensive programme of promotional activity across Great Britain, North America, Australia and other key markets to highlight “The Gathering Ireland 2013.” The campaign will be aimed at the millions worldwide of Irish descent but also at those who have other links or who simply hold an affection for Ireland. (Tourism Ireland, Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Complete

Tourism Ireland rolled-out of a major consumer marketing campaign to promote Ireland and ‘The Gathering Ireland 2013’ in key markets across the world.

Tourism Ireland identified and engaged with key ‘enablers’ overseas such as business networks, clans, cultural and sporting associations, Irish Clubs and societies and Influential members of the Irish Diaspora. The objective was to encourage them to bring their own Gatherings to Ireland in 2013 and mobilise their networks to do the same.

Other target groups included tour operators, universities, and schools etc. Tourism Ireland continues to work to generate positive international publicity coverage for Ireland and ‘The Gathering.’ It is estimated that over €75 million worth of global publicity was generated by The Gathering.

Action 299: Develop new tourism products/activities where Ireland can gain comparative advantage (e.g. in food, culture, activity breaks, events and festivals), including supporting major sports events and conferences for Ireland.

Ongoing Measure: Progress National Food Tourism Implementation Framework. (DTTAS/ Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Complete for 2013

There is significant progress on the delivery of the National Food Tourism Implementation Framework. Fáilte Ireland has selected eight new food ambassadors to join the Food Tourism Network Development programme, bringing the total number of food ‘champions’ to twenty two. These emerging food ‘champions’ will actively influence and shape the future of Irish cuisine and food tourism in their region. This year the focus was on individuals located along the route of the Wild Atlantic Way and the benchmarking programme took place along the established driving routes of Norway in September.

A number of the food ambassadors also represented Ireland on the national and international stage at industry events, in both speaking and networking capacities, as part of a drive to have Ireland represented on the culinary world stage.

In addition, close to seventy tourism businesses attended three interactive workshops in Sligo, Galway and the Burren giving them the opportunity to hear from experienced international food tourism experts; Rebecca LeHeup of The Huffington Post; Arlene Stein, Chair of the Terroir Symposium; and Valerie Howes, Food Editor of Readers Digest. The speakers from this event have also posted articles about their Irish food tourism experience.

To further support the industry, a new dedicated ‘Food Tourism in Ireland’ section was launched on the Fáilte Ireland corporate website with a range of tools and development guidelines for creating food tourism experiences.

Ongoing Measure: Promote a range of walking and cycling routes around the country. (DTTAS/ Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Complete for 2013

Planning for a proposed Dublin-Galway cycle route is currently being carried out by the National Roads Authority (NRA) and the National Transport Authority (NTA). The NTA is proceeding with the planning of the Dublin to Maynooth section of the route. Within this Dublin-Maynooth section, a stage of the route from Ashtown to Castleknock is being constructed in 2013 with funding from the NTA, and from DTTAS through the National Cycle Network (NCN) Programme.

The NRA is currently undertaking detailed route alignment and design work for the Maynooth-Galway section of the route. Within this section, the stage from the

Meath/Westmeath county boundary to Mullingar has recently been completed with funding under the NCN Programme.

The Department of Tourism, Transport and Sport (D/TTAS) providing €6.5 million under a second round of the NCN Programme funding for 2014 to 2016. Local authorities, in conjunction with key stakeholders, were invited to submit proposals by 15 November 2013. 39 applications from 28 authorities were received and are currently being assessed by an expert panel comprising representatives of D/TTAS, the NTA, the National Trails Office and Fáilte Ireland. Given limited funding it is anticipated that only 2-3 projects, or phases of projects, can be funded. A decision and announcement on the successful projects is expected in early 2014.

Fáilte Ireland is currently supporting the technical design of the Dublin to Galway Greenway and a number of key trails around the country such as the Lough Leane trail in Killarney, and the Connemara Greenway in Galway. These are projects of scale and singularity similar to the Great Western Greenway project in Mayo, with the capacity to generate significant income and employment locally.

Fáilte Ireland has also recently undertaken significant cycle and activity tourism market research in four of our key overseas markets and the domestic market to identify both the potential market size for cycling in particular but also walking, equestrian, sailing, angling and water-based activities in Ireland, and also consumer preferences in relation to the location and types of trails/ infrastructure which could attract visitors to Ireland. On the back of this research, a review of the National Trails Strategy is currently being undertaken to identify priority actions to deliver on the identified market potential.

Ongoing Measure: Attract major events to Ireland. (DTTAS/ Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Fáilte Ireland Events Ireland team continues to work in addressing enquiries and prospective queries from event organisers, with a view to welcoming major events which have the potential to deliver increased tourism numbers and significant economic benefit. Some of the key events which took place in 2013 include the finals of the Heineken Cup and Amlin Challenge Cup, and the Irish Open Golf Championship.

Some very significant events have been secured for 2014. In cooperation with the Northern Ireland Executive, the Grande Partenza of the Giro d'Italia cycle race will take place over three days in May 2014. The Croke Park Classic American Football game will take place between the University of Central Florida and Penn State University at the end of August.

Ongoing Measure: Attract major conferences to Ireland. (DTTAS/ Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Complete for 2013

Through the 2013 Financial Support Fund, Fáilte Ireland supported 213 conference applications for bids and marketing support for committed conferences (as of mid-December 2013). These conferences represent 131,000 international delegates and have a potential estimated business value of €179 million.

Some of the key international association and society conferences that took place in 2013 include: Healthcare Information and Management Systems World of Health IT Conference (2,800 delegates); Congress of the Federation of European Companion Animal Associations (3,000 delegates); International Pharmaceutical Federation Conference (3,000 delegates); European Congress of the International Society for Pharmacoeconomics & Outcomes Research (3,500 delegates); European Association for Osseointegration (3,000 delegates); and the World Congress of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences 2013 International Congress (1,900 delegates).

As of mid-December 2013, confirmed events, and events being bid for in 2014 involve 103,000 international delegates with a potential value of €144 million.

Action 300: Target capital investment in public tourism product and infrastructure under the capital budget of €19 million available to Fáilte Ireland in 2013.

Ongoing Measure: Complete/Progress projects already approved for investment under the Tourism Capital Investment Programme. (DTTAS, Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Complete for 2013

Projects completed in 2013, with support from Fáilte Ireland's Tourism Capital Investment Programme, include Athlone Castle, the Jackie Clarke Collection in Ballina, the Medieval Museum at the Waterford Viking Triangle, and the Riverside Improvements project and King John's Castle in Limerick.

There are a number of further major projects underway which, on completion, will provide a significant enhancement to Ireland's tourism product asset base and encourage job creation in the tourism industry. These include the Wild Atlantic Way, the Kilkenny Medieval Mile, and the Dublin. The 2013 allocation of €19 million has been drawn down in full to support projects underway at present.

Action 301: Continue to apply 9 percent VAT rate in sectors benefiting the tourism industry in 2013.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (D/Finance)

Update: Complete

The 9% VAT rate, introduced as part of the Jobs Initiative in 2011, continued to apply in sectors benefiting the tourism industry in 2013. The Minister for Finance announced the retention of the reduced rate of VAT for tourism related services in Budget 2014.

Action 302: Maintain the offer to abolish the remaining Air Travel Tax of €3 subject to acceptable commitments from the carriers to additional inbound flights.

Ongoing Measures:

- The Programme for Government includes a commitment to abolish the air travel tax as part of a deal with airlines to restore lost routes. The Department will continue to monitor airline capacity. (DTTAS, D/Finance)
- Airlines to show plans for significant increases in passenger numbers and routes to the satisfaction of the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport which would then notify the Department of Finance of same. (D/Finance)

Update: Complete

The Minister for Finance announced the abolition of the Air Travel Tax of €3 in Budget 2014. This measure will be brought about by Ministerial Order. It will come into effect from April 2014 and is part of a process aimed at generating new airline routes into Ireland. There has been a very positive response to the initiative from airlines so far with Ryanair and Aer Lingus both announcing details of new routes and increased services from Dublin, Shannon, Cork and Knock. A total of 23 new services have been announced commencing in 2014 along with additional capacity on 21 existing routes from the four airports.

Action 303: Use the Tourism Marketing Fund to support international marketing and advertising programmes, focusing on the four core markets (GB, USA, Germany and France).

Ongoing Measure: Tourism Ireland to continue to focus on the four most important markets which together account for almost three quarters of all visits to Ireland. The recommendations of the “GB Path to Growth” and the US “Make Ireland Jump Out” strategies will be implemented. A new suite of 30 websites (www.ireland.com) in 11 languages will be rolled out during 2013. (Tourism Ireland, Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Complete for 2013

Over €37 million was provided in 2013 for the overseas promotion of Ireland as a tourist destination and Tourism Ireland's global marketing campaign reached up to 200 million people across the world. This activity included TV, radio, print and online advertising, as well as direct market, publicity and promotions.

The recommendations of the recent market reviews in Great Britain and the United States were factored into the marketing activity, and the new Ireland.com website, which represents a complete redevelopment of Tourism Ireland's online presence, continues to be rolled out. The new site provides a brand new, one-stop shop for comprehensive information on all that Ireland has to offer potential holidaymakers. It was designed to harness the increasingly central role the internet plays in planning and booking holidays and the phenomenal growth of social media.

Action 305: Build on the work of the industry-led Tourism Recovery Taskforce, maximising the attractiveness of Ireland's overseas tourism offering, particularly by refining our communications, promotion and product with a view to enhancing our competitiveness to British holidaymakers and leisure travellers.

Ongoing Measure: Implement the recommendations of the GB Path to Growth strategy. A number of high profile events to take place around the St. Patrick's Day period to highlight attractions of Ireland as a tourist destination and continued promotion of The Gathering to take place in GB throughout 2013. (Tourism Ireland, Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Complete for 2013

Tourism Ireland continues to roll out the GB Path to Growth strategy which was developed in conjunction with industry partners and aims to return Ireland's largest tourism market to sustained growth. The plan targets a number of new consumer segments and aims to grow the number of British holidaymakers by 20% (that is, an additional 200,000 holiday visitors by 2016).

Tourism Ireland's 'Jump into Ireland' ads featured on TV channels in Great Britain reaching almost 20 million potential holidaymakers, on a mix of channels (Channel 4, Channel 5, Sky 1 and satellite channels). At the same time, Tourism Ireland targeted potential visitors through online activity, with video footage on popular websites. Final CSO figures for 2013 show that the number of visits to Ireland from GB increased by 5.6% compared to 2012.

Action 306: Identify potential employment opportunities in the recreational/amenity and tourism sectors arising from the restoration of bogs, including use of bogs by communities for local tourism initiatives, such as walks/guided tours of the bogs, focusing on their natural and cultural heritage.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (DAHG)

Update: Complete for 2013

Work has recently commenced on an application to the EU for the 2014 LIFE funding programme for a bog restoration project. It is not possible, at this stage, to calculate the employment potential of this project which will involve the restoration of a number of raised bog Special Areas of Conservation. The project will only go ahead if the application to the EU for funding is successful and this won't be known until early 2015. Essential detail about the amount of funding to be sought, the works that will be covered etc., has still to be decided. Such detail won't be finalised until closer to the deadline for submitting applications to the EU which is expected to be next September.

In addition, Údáras na Gaeltachta has co-funded two specific training programmes in Marine and Countryside Guiding (Level 6) which is supporting the development of employment in the recreational and tourism sectors. Similar initiatives are to be rolled out over the next eighteen months in other Gaeltacht areas.

Action 307: Strongly promote the Irish Visa Waiver Scheme.

Ongoing Measure: Promote the Programme on INIS and relevant Irish Embassy websites. (INIS, D/Justice)

Update: Complete for 2013

Figures from the Central Statistics Office indicate that there was a 38% increase in the number of visitors from the countries involved in 2012 compared to 2010, the last full year before the introduction of the Programme.

The Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service devised and implemented the administrative arrangements to facilitate the operation of the Irish Visa Waiver Programme. The promotion and marketing of the scheme is being led by the competent authorities such as Tourism Ireland and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Creative Services

Action 310: Continue to implement actions set out in the Creative Capital Report to double employment in the film and audiovisual sector by 2016.

Ongoing Measure: Continue to work closely with the Irish Film Board, the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland and TV broadcasters in implementing the 5 main recommendations and over 30 sub recommendations in the Report. The Implementation Committee will meet on a regular basis to oversee the implementation strategy. (DAHG, IFB, BAI)

Update: Complete for 2013

As recommended in the Creative Capital Report, the Section 481 Film Tax Relief Scheme was amended in the Finance Act (No2) of 2013 to bring forward the new regime for film tax reliefs to 2015, and also to extend the definition of 'eligible individual' in the scheme for film relief to include non-EU talent. In relation to training in the audiovisual sector, the responsibility for Screen Training Ireland (the main State training body in the sector) was transferred to the Irish Film Board from FAS.

Action 312: Roll-out further cultural digitisation initiatives and leverage our unique cultural offerings, especially in the context of The Gathering Ireland 2013, the Decade of Centenaries and Ireland's EU Presidency.

Ongoing Measures:

- National Cultural Institutions promoting a number of initiatives that will contribute to The Gathering Ireland 2013, the Decade of Centenaries and Ireland's EU Presidency. These will take place in 2013 in relation to both The Gathering and the EU Presidency and in the following years in relation to the Decade of Centenaries. (DAHG, Cultural Institutions)
- Continue to work with the National Cultural Institutions and other cultural bodies to provide reusable, open-linked, digital cultural content for the European Portal. (DAHG)

Update: Complete for 2013

- Material added to national cultural institutions websites includes digital versions of 70 volumes published by the Irish Manuscripts Commission on the IMC website.
- Material from Ireland recently added to the 'Europeana' portal includes:
 - Irish Film Institute (9 video objects)
 - Irish Traditional Music Archive (599 SOUND and VIDEO objects)

- National Print Museum (10 VIDEO objects)
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (40,542 IMAGE objects)

Action 313: Through the Arts Council, support over 50 venues, 200 festivals and 400 arts organisations in 2013 supporting employment in communities across the country.

Ongoing Measures:

- Continue to fund network of venues, festivals and arts organisations to ensure that they provide employment opportunities for both artists and other personnel locally as well as nationally.
- Invest €1.2 million in touring initiatives around Ireland in 2013, that will support box office and permanent and part-time staff in both the venues and those companies touring.
- Invest €1 million in the Raise Programme in organisations over a 2-year period to support both the employment of a number of fundraisers in the arts organisations and in developing fundraising and philanthropy strategies over 3 years.

(Arts Council)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Arts Council funded 452 individuals and 872 organisations in 2013 and will continue to fund within its budget remit a network of venues, festivals and arts organisations to ensure that they provide employment opportunities for both artists and other personnel locally as well as nationally. It is also to undertake a major review in 2014 to address how they plan, partner, promote, and provide for the arts including job creation and investment.

In 2013, the Arts Council announced the extension of its fundraising capacity-building initiative, RAISE: the Business of Arts Fundraising. This extension of RAISE is open to any arts organisation, whether or not it is funded by the Arts Council.

Action 315: Provide support for a Traditional Building Skills Initiative.

Ongoing Measure: Continue to provide support to the Traditional Building Skills Working Group initiative in order to mobilise cross-departmental and sectoral expertise and resources with regard to education and training under this initiative. (DAHG, OPW, CIF)

Update: Complete for 2013

A Traditional Building Skills Working Group initiative has been put in place in order to mobilise cross-departmental and sectoral expertise and resources with regard to education

and training. Through the Working Group, plans have been developed to initiate a pilot training scheme in conjunction with the Construction Industry Federation, SOLAS and local authorities in 2014.

Action 316: Provide support for pilot actions to upgrade energy efficiency in historical public buildings.

Ongoing Measure: Support and advise Local Authorities and other stakeholders regarding best practice in upgrading historic buildings. (DAHG)

Update: Complete for 2013

Research into Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings in Dublin City by Dublin City Council was part-funded under the Government Policy for Architecture Direct Grant-in-Aid scheme in 2013.

Action 320: Increase levels of collaboration between industry and HEIs/Training providers in the design and modification of courses, including the development and extended use of flexible internships as a key element of education and training for the games and digital media sector.

Ongoing Measure: Continue to provide a forum in which industry representatives can engage with the Training and Higher Education sectors on the design and delivery of appropriate games development courses. (DJEI, Games Clustering Development Team)

Update: Complete for 2013

During 2013, the Department continued to provide a forum, namely the Digital Games Clustering Development Team, in which industry representatives can engage with the training and higher education sectors on the design and delivery of appropriate games development courses.

A number of education initiatives were progressed during 2013 including internships, pilot Hothouse initiatives, an industry professional programme and the securing of a Fulbright Scholar for a Curriculum Review (September 2014) where a leading international games designer will meet with industry representatives and will then visit a number of educational institutions to assess and advise on course content.

International Financial Services

Action 323: Continue to implement the Strategy for the International Financial Services Industry in Ireland.

Ongoing Measure: Various actions as set out in the IFSC strategy. (D/Finance, other Departments and agencies)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Government's Strategy for the development of Ireland's International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) 2011 – 2016 was launched in July 2011. The Strategy aims to enhance the environment for the financial services sector in terms of skills availability etc. and aims to support the creation of 10,000 net new jobs in the sector over the lifetime of the Strategy. The IFSC Clearing House Group (CHG) actively monitors progress on implementation of the strategy.

Since its launch both the public and private sectors have been actively involved in executing the strategy across a broad front and considerable progress has been made to foster growth of business in Ireland as a global centre for international financial services (IFS). Activities undertaken in 2013, include:

- Legislation on 3rd country bank branches which was contained in the Central Bank (Supervision) Act, 2013 to build on international opportunities
- A focus on the IFS sector from D/Finance to support refreshed initiatives.
- Establishment of a secretariat led by D/Finance with DJEI, D/Taoiseach and IDA Ireland, to coordinate the CHG's strategic approach to IFS for 2014, create appropriate structures, review the IFSC strategy (under the Medium Term Economic Strategy) and develop work plans for sectoral-led sub-groups.

International Education Services

Action 324: Continue to implement the International Education Strategy, encouraging more students to study in Ireland, driving revenue, growth and jobs.

Ongoing Measures:

- Continue the promotion of Ireland's international education offering, including the extensive use of social media channels.
- Deliver a range of overseas missions and events designed to increase the profile of the sector in key target markets during 2013.

(EI)

Update: Complete

Promoting Ireland as a destination for higher education through the *Education in Ireland* brand on Social Media Channels is a key priority and considerable progress is being made. Interactions with the brand grew from over 1 million at end of September to under 1.5 million at the end of 2013. In addition, 50 'Education In Ireland Ambassadors' who are overseas students studying in Ireland have been signed up. It is intended that they would promote their student experience in their home country through a number of media channels. They have been given training on blogging, creating video and photography for on-line content in order to support brand messaging with their important testimonials.

Enterprise Ireland continues to work intensively and strategically with the sector to promote higher education institutes (HEIs) overseas. A trade mission took place to India in November and a delegation of 16 HEIs attended the Star Fair in Malaysia in December. Enterprise Ireland also attended the China-Ireland Joint Working Group on Education in Beijing on November 20th to support the international agenda in China.

Cloud Computing

Action 327: Heighten awareness of how business can use cloud computing for competitive advantage, using traditional and e-marketing seminars.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

Two sets of seminars were delivered in this area in 2013:

- Enterprise Ireland's Internet Marketing Unit delivered three seminars on eMarketing. These seminars will continue in 2014 as part of the Internet Marketing Unit's work programme.
- Irish internet Association (IIA) hosted four seminars on Cloud Awareness. These seminars were sponsored by Enterprise Ireland. The IIA is evaluating the impacts of the Cloud Awareness seminars to determine whether and how they might be enhanced.

Action 329: Through the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner (ODPC), continue to provide general advice to organisations on how they can fulfil their data protection obligations as they migrate to the use of cloud computing.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (ODPC)

Update: Complete for 2013

The Office of the Data Protection Commissioner (ODPC) has published general guidance for organisations on how to ensure compliance with their data protection obligations when moving to a cloud provider, which is available on the ODPC website www.dataprotection.ie.

The ODPC are continuing to engage with Departments and other entities with regard to the possibility of setting up a data clearance house, to avoid situations where there is a duplication of gathering personal details from the public. Work is ongoing and will continue during 2014.

The ODPC is also providing guidance to the private sector on the use of Cloud services and ensuring security for data transfer on an ongoing basis.

Action 330: Promote the Innovation Voucher Scheme as a means of assisting SMEs who are interested in migrating their business to a cloud computing model.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (EI)

Update: Complete for 2013 - Alternative programme applied to deliver on Action

The text of the original commitment suggests that the Innovation Voucher Scheme could be used to assist SME's that are migrating their business to a cloud computing model. The Innovation Voucher initiative was developed to build links between Ireland's public knowledge providers (i.e. higher education institutes, public research bodies) and small businesses. Therefore, it is not an appropriate mechanism to support the procurement of consultancy from private sector consultants.

This action relates to the provision of funding to SMEs interested in migrating their business to a cloud computing model. Enterprise Ireland's Strategic Consultancy Grant is appropriate in the case of SMEs that are Enterprise Ireland clients, which is likely to be the status of most of the applicants for Cloud consulting support. The Strategic Consultancy Grant is a tailored support, addressing individual SME needs and strategic initiatives (such as Cloud Computing). This scheme is grant aided at up to 50% of the costs incurred in hiring a consultant, to a maximum grant amount of €35,000. This grant was presented as an option to companies looking to migrate to a cloud computing business model.

Action 332: Assist early stage, high potential, Internet companies to grow their business. Enterprise Ireland will actively encourage participation by 20 companies in EI's 2012/2013 Internet Growth Acceleration Programme (iGap).

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action. (EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

Enterprise Ireland launched a start-up management development programme, SPRINT, at

the Dublin Web Summit in October 2013. SPRINT is based on the Internet Growth Acceleration Programme (iGap) and the pilot has a full complement of 26 companies enrolled on the six month programme which commenced in December.

Action 333: Promote Ireland as a centre of excellence in Information Security.

Ongoing Measure: Continue to provide support to Info Security Ireland (ISI) (an enterprise representative body) as it seeks to promote Ireland as a centre of excellence in Information Security. (EI)

Update: Complete for 2013

Good progress has been made in 2013 with two seminars held to promote greater networking by technology firms, academia and government in this field. These seminars are also helping to build the membership of the organisation. A group of 10 companies will attend the RSA Info-Security event, a major industry conference, in the US in February 2014 where they will participate in a joint Enterprise Ireland/IDA Ireland networking event to showcase Ireland's capability in information security.