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Commentary

This is the second 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*. It outlines progress made on measures due for completion in the second quarter of 2013. In addition, it provides an update on what activity has taken place over the year to date on the actions described in the Plan as “ongoing in 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 this year. This Plan, which contains 333 actions to be implemented in 2013 by all Government Departments and 46 agencies, will build on the progress made in 2012 and continue 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 – 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. In the first three months of the year, 144 (96%) of the actions committed to, were delivered as planned.

Actions due in Quarter 2

In the second quarter of 2013, Departments and agencies were to deliver 180 measures relating to 135 of the Action Plan’s 333 actions. Some 20 of the measures due in Quarter 2 of 2013 have not been delivered on schedule, giving a completion rate of 89%. In delivering 160 second quarter measures under the Plan, the Government has, for example:

- As part of Disruptive Reform 1 – Big Data
 - Established a joint Industry-Government Big Data Task Force to progress the Disruptive Reform – Action 1
 - Identified and mapped the key enterprise and academic expertise for the core areas of Data Analytics, Management, Security and Privacy – Action 8
- As part of Disruptive Reform 2 – ICT Skills
 - Maximised uptake of places available on ICT graduate conversion programmes – Action 13

- Completed research and consultation on addressing the demand for high-level ICT skills across all sectors of the economy in Ireland – Action 20
- Designed an e-form to reflect the changes being made to the rules and criteria of the employment permit schemes – Action 21
- As part of Disruptive Reform 3 – Integrated Licences
 - Using the retail sector as the pilot activity, established a steering group comprising relevant stakeholders including licensing authorities, and relevant Government Departments and agencies and the Office of the Data Commissioner; complete and agree the Statement of Objectives, scoping, project plan and work programme for 2013 – Action 31
- As part of Disruptive Reform 4 – Trading Online
 - Consulted with representatives of the digital industry in Ireland to establish the contribution which those companies can make to the design and implementation of the Trading On-Line initiative – Action 37
- As part of Disruptive Reform 5 – JobsPlus
 - Designed the detailed operational arrangements for the initiative and launched the new scheme by the end of June 2013 – Action 41
- As part of Disruptive Reform 6 – Energy Efficiency
 - Published the National Energy Services Framework, and identified, evaluated and selected exemplar projects – Action 43
 - Agreed the detailed fund design for an Energy Efficiency Fund to support innovative energy efficiency in the public and commercial sectors – Action 44

And more broadly, in Q2 Government has for example:

- Undertaken a survey of demand for SME credit – Action 61
- Recruited additional reviewers for the Credit Review Office – Action 64
- Established the BlueBay Ireland Credit Fund (SME Credit Fund) – Action 66
- Agreed to re-align the majority of competitive public research funding around 14 priority areas of research over the next five years – Action 77
- Held ‘Gateways’ public events for the food industry – Action 110
- Completed the IT infrastructure to support the commercial leases database – Action 118
- Commenced the process of mapping future broadband investment – Action 151

- Showcased the first “advance” Local Enterprise Office (LEO) in Fingal County Council, launched the LEO Branding/Logo, and published the Framework Service Level Agreement – Action 173
- Implemented the European-wide Structured Dialogue Consultation Process with young people based on the theme of social inclusion and quality work provision – Action 232
- Developed a Volunteering Programme for the Gathering Ireland 2013 – Action 234
- Launched a National Step Change Initiative to strengthen Ireland’s manufacturing base, focused on capability building and enabling companies to take one step up to drive enhanced productivity and competitiveness; to internationalise; to deepen engagement in innovation and to collaborate to compete – Action 243

However, as stated above, 20 of the measures outlined in the Plan have not been delivered on schedule:

1. *If viable, commence planning and consultation on the development of a ‘trusted partner’ registration system for the Employment Permits applications process - Action 28.* The viability of the ‘trusted partner’ approach is currently under consideration. Assessment will run into Quarter 3 in order to consider further the IT requirements. However, this will not affect the implementation of changes earmarked for Quarter 3 and 4 under the Action Plan for Jobs (if the concept is considered viable).
2. *Arrange temporary inter-organisational secondments to improve staff awareness between DJEI and DJE of the schemes to access the State i.e. employment permit versus visa - Action 30.* The potential for inter-organisational secondments is being explored. It is important to ensure all new processes and rules with regard to employment permits have been finalised and implemented before secondments begin; otherwise the learning achieved through a secondment arrangement will become quickly dated.
3. *Progress the Industrial Development (Science Foundation Ireland) Bill 2012 to enable SFI to fund applied research – Action 84.* This Bill was debated at, and completed, Select Committee stage on June 11th. However, due to pressure of other Oireachtas business, Report Stage for this Bill is now listed for September 2013.
4. *Establish new National Support Structure to reflect EU Horizon 2020, the successor to the FP7 Framework Programme for Research – Action 89.* The establishment of the National Support Structure was dependent on the outcome of the committee arrangements for Horizon 2020 which were not settled until late June 2013. However, preparations are now underway under the coordination of Enterprise Ireland, in consultation with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, regarding the establishment of the National Support Structure for Horizon 2020.
5. *Complete and publish the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDPP) – Action 102.* The text of the OREDPP is at an advanced stage. Consideration is now being

given to the approach to be taken to the timing of its publication on which a decision is expected in the next week.

6. *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.* In spite of significant progress on this commitment, it has not been possible to meet the Quarter 2 target for publication of the Bill. A final draft of the Employment Permits (Amendment) Bill 2013 is expected shortly, with a view to making it ready for publication as early as possible. Progress also continues to be made on the parallel development of necessary Regulations which will be required upon enactment of the Bill.
7. *Implement expansion of the call-centre to improve the employment permits system and the supporting policies and procedures – Action 147.* Plans to extend call-centre hours are at an advanced stage with the National Employment Rights Authority. However, full implementation will require further development of the call-centre's processes and ICT systems. Implementation will now take place in Quarter 3.
8. *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 on April 16th and are currently with the Office of the Attorney General for drafting. It is Government's intention that the proposals contained in the Bill will be effected later this year.
9. *Examine bus market to open PSO routes post 2014 – Action 162.* The National Transport Authority is proceeding with its work for a statutory consultation on potential opening of Public Service Obligation (PSO) bus routes post 2014.
10. *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 Summer Legislative Programme 2013. Drafting of the Bill has been taking place and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has engaged with the Attorney General's Office to progress the drafting during Quarter 2 2013. Enactment of the Bill will necessitate amendments to approximately 22 primary Acts, 12 specified parts or sections of Acts and 71 Statutory Instruments. It has not been possible to meet the Quarter 2 target for the publication of the Bill. However, the Minister is committed to the publication enactment of the legislation as early as possible, with a view to having the proposed new Workplace Relations structures in place from 2014.
11. *Roll out Competitive Regional Feasibility funds to the Mid West – Action 180.* The purpose of the Competitive Start Fund is to accelerate the growth of start-up

companies that have the capability to succeed in global markets. Following the successful execution of two Competitive Feasibility Fund calls for the South East and North West Regions in 2012, Enterprise Ireland is rolling out the model to the other Regions to help accelerate entrepreneurship development at local level. To date in addition to those listed above regional funds have been rolled out in the West, the Midlands and most recently in the North East Region. As part of this initiative, Enterprise Ireland is scheduled to undertake a Competitive Feasibility Fund for the Mid-West Region in November. In advance of the Mid-West Region Competitive Feasibility Fund being launched, Enterprise Ireland will launch a Competitive Feasibility Fund targeting the Aviation Sector in the Mid-West region (running from July – September). In addition a Competitive Start Fund for the Aviation Sector with a focus on the Mid-west region will be launched in December.

- 12.** *Establish Socio-Economic Committees in a small number of frontrunner 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.* Ten Local Authority Areas have been selected for the establishment of 'Frontrunner' Socio-Economic Committees (SECs). These areas include: Dublin City Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, South Dublin County Council, Cork County Council, Limerick City and County Councils, Galway County Council, Mayo County Council, Roscommon County Council, Leitrim County Council and Offaly County Council. Preparatory work is underway in all ten areas. It is anticipated that frontrunner SECs will be established in these areas in July 2013.
- 13.** *Roll out additional guidance to staff working in local Employment Offices, to increase awareness and uptake of the Voluntary Work Option scheme – Action 234.* The relevant Interdepartmental Group (IDG) met in May to discuss these issues. As a result of this, a circular detailing the Voluntary Work Option scheme and an application have been developed. These have been sent to the IDG for observations and recommendations. The IDG will meet in Quarter 3 and following their feedback, further work will be undertaken to roll out guidance to staff in the local employment offices regarding the updated Voluntary Work Option Scheme. While awaiting a conclusion from the IDG, all Department of Social Protection local offices have been reminded of the existing guidelines for jobseekers seeking to partake in voluntary work, to increase staff awareness of the option.
- 14.** *Support the OPC in drafting and subsequent publication of the legislation aimed at easing the regulatory burden on co-operative societies and making it easier to run a co-operative as an alternative form of enterprise organisation – Action 237.* The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation worked closely with the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel in the drafting of the Friendly Societies and Industrial and Provident Societies (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill and the drafting was completed on

July 2nd. As such, it was not possible to achieve the Quarter 2 target date for publication of the Bill. It is anticipated that the Bill will therefore be published in Quarter 3.

- 15. and 16.** *Bring to Government and publish the Forfás report on Social Enterprise – Action 238.* A report on Social Enterprise was completed by Forfás in Quarter 4, 2012. The final report contains over twenty recommendations on fostering the development of the sector. The report is being prepared for submission to Government by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and will be published imminently.
- 17.** *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.* Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland have been engaged in the development of sectoral strategies (see Action 189) which will facilitate the identification of relevant programmes to deliver to the needs of foreign owned firms (as appropriate). While Action 189 has now been delivered, Action 244 which was contingent on the finalisation of the sectoral strategies will not be completed until Quarter 3. Notwithstanding this delay on the overall Quarter 2 commitment, the National Standards Authority of Ireland promoted and delivered a conference and workshop on *Organisational Development & Growth* in May which was attended by 80 delegates. Presentations and case studies were provided by leading proponents of *Excellence Through People* (ETP). Specific radio advertisements on the benefits of certification and ETP were broadcast as part of a national advertising campaign.
- 18.** *Complete the processing of the Bord Iascaigh Mhara licence application in respect of Galway Bay – Action 259.* Bord Iascaigh Mhara has submitted an application for an aquaculture licence for the cultivation of finfish near Inis Oirr in Galway Bay. The technical and scientific analysis of this application and its Environmental Impact Statement is currently being considered under the provisions of the 1997 Fisheries (Amendment) Act, and is unlikely to be completed before Quarter 4 2013.
- 19.** *Technical Advisory Committee to finalise farm standard for the dairy sector and submit to Irish National Accreditation Board – Action 263.* The draft standard has been developed with industry and other stakeholders. A delay has arisen as industry requested that individual audits be conducted at each cooperative prior to submission to the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB), rather than basing the standard on the pilot audits as originally intended. This increased the required number of audits from 2 to 44. These will be organised and assessed over the summer by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) prior to finalisation and submission to the INAB for accreditation. It is expected that this process will now be completed in Quarter 4 2013.
- 20.** *Commission research into existing methods used to assess and upgrade the energy performance of historic buildings – Action 316.* The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is currently promoting best practice and providing training seminars in upgrading traditionally built buildings to ensure that they are not damaged by

inappropriate works. The training element is linked to advanced craft skills development in the built heritage conservation sector with the potential for employment and career development opportunities in the energy efficiency sector. In 2013, the Department aims to develop specific research which will contribute to more skilled expertise in this area and the creation of jobs in this specific growth area, potentially in partnership with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) and the Department of Energy, Communications and Natural Resources. The Department has requested a meeting with key partners as a necessary step towards developing the terms and criteria for specific research in this area and agreeing engagement with partners for a joint programme. Key actions, including the seeking of tenders for the research element, are planned for mid Quarter 3.

“Ongoing” actions to be delivered throughout 2013

The Action Plan contains some 164 measures that are described in the plan as “ongoing in 2013.” Although not specifically due in the last quarter (or any specific quarter), Departments and Agencies with responsibility for actions listed as “ongoing in 2013” are obliged under the Plan to report progress on them to the Monitoring Committee for this and the quarter four report. As of the end of June, progress is being made on all 164 of these measures. In progressing these “ongoing” actions the Government has, for example:

- Continued to fund research excellence in underpinning platform technologies and sciences of relevance to Data Analytics, Management, Security and Privacy through open competitive calls – Action 5
- Monitored and assessed performance of the Cork Demonstrator for the National Health Innovation Hub. This has brought together six innovative Irish healthcare companies with the health service by providing dedicated contact points, facilitated project management, office space, advice and access to the hospital and primary care system – Action 48
- Implemented the publicity strategy for the Microenterprise Loan Fund which includes a national and local radio advertising campaign, presentations at business events and dissemination of brochures – Action 63
- Established three new Technology Centres closely linked to the Government’s priority research areas of Connected Health, Data Analytics and Pharmaceutical Manufacturing and explored options in order to respond to industry needs for Technology Centres in Medical Devices and Dairy Technology – Action 86
- Progressed the review of the Apprenticeship Training Model with Phase 2 of the review announced in May – Action 128
- Attracted early stage high growth companies to Ireland – Action 190

Recent announcements of investments won by the Division include:

- 10Gen which is to create 60 jobs in Dublin with the establishment of its European headquarters;
 - Etsy, Inc., the leading online marketplace for handmade and vintage items, is to establish a new EMEA headquarters in Dublin;
 - Loop1 Systems Inc. which is to create 17 new jobs in Cork with the establishment of a sales, customer support and technical centre providing training and professional services to multinational companies using the SolarWinds Suite of software;
 - Whitehouse Analytical Labs, an analytical testing facility, has chosen Ireland for its first round of international expansion, and is to create 35 new jobs in Cork;
 - IMSTech GmbH, a provider of manufacturing solutions for the life sciences sector, is to establish a research and manufacturing competency centre in Cork with the creation of 35 highly skilled jobs.
- Rolled out the 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. In Quarter 2, Trade Mission/events have included Ministerial led Trade Missions to Turkey, Poland, Czech Republic, Canada, and Pennsylvania, USA – Action 199

Update on actions delayed in Quarter 1

As reported at the end of the first quarter, six of the measures outlined in the Plan for completion by the end of Q1 were not delivered on schedule. While three of these have since been delivered (measures 173b, 173c and 333), three measures due by the end of March 2013 remained undone at the end of June. These are:

1. *Regarding the Copyright Review, complete evaluation and analysis following extensive consultation work undertaken and prepare final report for Government – Action 90.* In view of the number of submissions received (in the region of 180) and the complexity of many of the issues raised, it was not possible to meet the second quarter target for completion of the Report. However, evaluation and analysis of the submissions received has now been completed by the Committee and work on the final Report is an advanced stage. It is now anticipated that the report will be completed by end July 2013.
2. *Complete the licensing process to enable development of the Atlantic Marine Energy Test Site (AMETS) at Belmullet – Action 103.* A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is required due to the decision of the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to propose the designation of the ‘West Connacht Coast’ site as a Special Area of

Conservation (SAC) in respect of the Bottlenose Dolphin. While the designation has yet to be confirmed – and may this may take several months – the site enjoys protection from the date of its proposed designation. Accordingly the consent authority is required to complete an Appropriate Assessment of the proposal. This cannot take place in the absence of the NIS, which is awaited from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

3. *Publish the general scheme of a Bill to integrate the foreshore consent process under the Foreshores Act 1933 with the existing on-land planning system – Action 104.* The draft General Scheme was circulated to the relevant Government Departments for comment in early July and the Department is now considering those comments.

Early impacts of actions taken in 2013

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:

- *Update the application criteria for employment permits to reduce processing time by 33% - Action 25:* Indicative results show improvements in batch processing times for Employment Permits: Green Card Employment Permits at 3 working days, Intra Corporate Transfers Employment Permits at 4 working days, and Work Permit Employment Permits now at 11 working days.
- *Simplify the labour market needs test – Action 26:* The labour market needs test i.e. the requirement for advertising with the Department of Social Protection’s employment services (previously referred to as FÁS) has been reduced from 8 weeks to 2 weeks and the requirement to advertise in a national newspaper has been reduced to 3 days. Whereas before, there was a further requirement to advertise in a local newspaper there is now an option to advertise in a local newspaper or on a jobs website for 3 days. These developments have been well received by industry.
- *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 – Action 85:* The largest ever State/industry co-funded research investment in Ireland was made earlier this year with the announcement of seven world class research centres of scale. €200 million of Irish exchequer funding will be invested through Science Foundation Ireland, coupled with over €100 million in cash and in-kind contributions from industry partners. The funding will be provided over the next six years with a mid-term review. Thus far 156 industry partners are connected to the centres, spanning multinationals and SMEs, including Cisco, Hewlett Packard, Microsoft, Medtronic, GSK, Pfizer, Eli Lilly, BT, Kerry Group, The Irish Times, ESB, Alere, RTE, Intune

Networks, Intel, IBM, Roche, UTRC Ireland and many more. The major investment by industry indicates a major endorsement of Ireland's research capability.

- *Train 500 teachers and 200 pre-service teachers under Discover Primary Science and Maths Programme – Action 96:* In June 2013, 491 primary schools across Ireland received an Award of Science & Maths Excellence as part of the Discover Primary Science and Maths programme. The Awards of Science & Maths Excellence recognise the achievements of primary school children and teachers in the application of science and maths in the classroom. To qualify for an Award, schools were required to keep a log of five activities relating to science and maths undertaken throughout the academic year. Schools were awarded credit for visiting Discover Science Centres; inviting speakers to the school to talk about science, engineering and maths; hosting a science event; incorporating maths into their science learning and participating in the Greenwave initiative.
- *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 – Action 98:* The Smart Futures programme is a co-ordinating a national awareness campaign to “encourage the take-up of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and communicate the variety of career opportunities to second level students, teachers and parents.” Through initiatives such as the STEM Careers Weeks the number of students directly engaged with has more than quadrupled, increasing from 1,300 in 2012, to approximately 4,500 in 2013 (to date). A STEM careers video series was launched, which saw panels of STEM experts including representatives from Microsoft, HP, DPS Engineering, Mainstream Renewable Power, CISCO, SAP, Nuritas, CPL, CRANN and CLARITY answering student career questions (with over 3,000 views to-date). Careers materials (posters, leaflets) were sent to 850 secondary schools throughout the country.
- *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 boot camps during 2013 – Action 181:* Over 120 new business ventures successfully completed the first Enterprise Ireland New Frontiers Programme in February 2013. Following a competitive process, 150 potential entrepreneurs were offered a place on the intensive six-month core element of the Programme in 2012 which focuses on developing the person as an entrepreneur and bringing their business idea to fruition. They were provided with the practical skills needed to run a business and challenged to realise their goals. To date, 120 have successfully developed their ideas and launched their business start-ups, the remainder continue to work with New Frontiers to further their business idea.
- *Build on positive engagement with key dairy industry partners to optimise industry expansion capability in 2013 – Action 262:* Through Enterprise Ireland, the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation is part-funding a project supporting the development

of Glanbia Ingredients Ireland Limited (GIIL)'s world-class dairy facility in Belview, on the Kilkenny/Waterford border. In April, the Taoiseach unveiled details of Government support for GIIL which the company announced will create over 1,600 direct and indirect jobs and contribute an estimated €400 million per annum to the economy - with particular benefit to farm families and rural communities. This announcement will further secure Ireland's standing as a world-leader in the dairy industry. Food is Ireland's number one export sector and critically important to our economy and export-led growth.

- *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 - Action 320:* Since its establishment in mid-2012, the Digital Games Clustering Development Team has provided a forum in which industry members can engage with the Training and Higher Education sectors on the design and delivery of appropriate games development courses. While the Team is approaching its task from a national perspective, developments continue at individual college and company level. For example, thirteen students from Ballyfermot College have been selected to take part in 'The Bridge', a programme which is based in the Guinness Enterprise Centre and designed to create a real world commercial experience that immerses graduates in live projects in the animation and games industries. The Bridge initiative is a collaboration between Ballyfermot College, the Guinness Enterprise Centre, Dublin Business Innovation Centre, and creative industry companies Havok, JAM Media, Brown Bag Films and Riot Games. It is supported by the Irish Film Board, Screen Training Ireland and Enterprise Ireland. The initiative aims to nurture key talent for current and future industry needs in the area of animation, games and related areas like VFX (visual effects) and to provide participants with workplace and industry experience that would otherwise take many years to gain.

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 reach 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 1.1% or 20,500 in the year to the first quarter of 2013, bringing total employment to 1,845,600. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased from 14.1% to 13.7% over the first quarter while the number of persons unemployed fell by 6,600 also on a seasonally adjusted basis.

Quarter 2 Measures

Disruptive Reforms

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

Action 1: Establish a joint Industry-Government Big Data Task Force to progress the Disruptive Reform.

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

Update: Complete

To progress this Disruptive Reform, it was agreed to form an ad hoc working party as a precursor to the establishment of the formal Industry-Government Taskforce on Big Data and Data Analytics. The working group comprised the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation as Chair, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Social Protection, the Department of Health, Forfás, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Science Foundation Ireland and three industry partners (or nominees).

Three meetings of the working party took place during May and June to begin the process of fact-finding across the public and private sectors on initiatives already taking place in this area and to commence deliberations on the role that the Industry-Government Taskforce could play with regard to the pilot initiatives and other steps to help realise the ambition of this Disruptive Reform.

Following these meetings, it was agreed that the membership of the taskforce would consist of a core group (approximately 10 members) with the flexibility to co-opt additional members from the public and private sector to reflect specific areas of focus and sectoral expertise. The Taskforce is chaired by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. Other members of the core group include:

- Senior officials representing the Central Statistics Office, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Science Foundation Ireland, National Standards Authority of Ireland
- Chief Information Officer, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
- Government appointed Industry Partners – Liam Casey, John Herlihy, Heather Reynolds

To ensure balanced representation across industry, Government and research system, it is envisaged that a number of other appointments will be made to the Taskforce in the context of the Big Data pilot projects that are established. The first formal meeting of the taskforce was scheduled to take place on July 18th.

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

Q2 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

During Quarter 2 Enterprise Ireland completed a map of the research system in this space with Science Foundation Ireland and IDA Ireland. The enterprise agencies will cross check Enterprise Ireland/IDA Ireland client research needs with the map in collaboration with Science Foundation Ireland.

Q2 Measure: Assess the current strategic research needs and gaps for each of the two core areas through liaison with IDA, EI and other agencies. (EI, IDA, SFI)

Update: Complete

In April, Enterprise Ireland focused on assembling information on client needs from the recent Data Analytics Technology Centre documents. This research provided a good insight into industry needs in this area. Activity in relation to the action during May involved the validation of client needs with Enterprise Ireland sectors. Further activity under this action includes the assembly of client needs with IDA Ireland input and communication of the outputs to Science Foundation Ireland.

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.

Q2 Measure: Invite further Irish based industry and public body participation in NSAI national ICT and JCT1 international expert groups in related fields. (NSAI and Industry)

Update: Complete

The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) engaged with delegates at a number of seminars/events on possibilities for participation in the international expert groups. These included:

- The NSAI Standards Conference in February, as an associated event of the Presidency of the Council of the EU.
- The IDC Virtualisation and Cloud Conference on May 2nd.

- The Fujitsu Innovation Gathering in Croke Park on May 30th.
- Irish Internet Association Adopting the Cloud regional seminars, the first of which took place in Galway on May 30th.
- NSAI/Irish Security Innovation Network seminar 'Business Case for adoption of Standards'

The NSAI attended Forfás seminars on Big Data/ Data Analytics to listen to the various expert groups and relate their requirements to international standards work underway.

Similarly, the NSAI attended site visits to a number of companies, including Alcatel-Lucent, Dell, and Intel, to obtain their expert view on the level of engagement required. Additionally, there a number of new industry members on NSAI committees including Certification Europe on the IT Security Sub-committee and Dell on the IT Management and Governance Standards Consultative Committee.

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.

Q2 Measure: Maximise uptake of places available on ICT graduate conversion programmes. (DES, HEA)

Update: Complete

The promotion of the places available to graduate jobseekers on ICT conversion courses is ongoing. A campaign of radio and website advertisements ran over the first half of 2013 to promote the programmes due to commence in the spring and early summer.

As part of the ICT Action Plan almost 1,500 places have been provided for graduate jobseekers under the two rounds of the ICT graduate conversion programmes that have been issued to date. More than 400 people have already graduated from these programmes and a further 300 are due to graduate before the end of this year.

In addition, more than 3,700 people have enrolled on ICT programmes under the first two rounds of the Springboard reskilling initiative and a further 2,000 ICT Springboard places have been made available under the third phase of Springboard which was launched in June 2013.

Action 17: Improve awareness of the conversion course initiatives amongst companies and jobseekers

Q2 Measure: Ensure that the launch of new conversion course initiatives are highlighted in the national media. (DES, HEA)

Update: Complete

Springboard 2013 was launched on June 21st in Government Buildings. There was a strong media presence and the launch was covered by both broadcast and print media.

The launch included a focus on individual success stories, with three Springboard graduates who were formerly unemployed but are now back to work with the help of a new Springboard qualification speaking at the launch. Also speaking at the launch in support of Springboard was Joe Hogan, a member of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs and Founder and Chief Technology Officer of OpenNet, a fast-growing software development company that now employs over 1,000 people globally.

Q2 Measure: Disseminate information on calls and launches of programmes to enterprise agencies and representative bodies. (DES, HEA, DJEI)

Update: Complete

Information on the launch of Springboard 2013 was circulated to the enterprise agencies and business representative organisations. The relevant bodies were invited to the launch and Enterprise Ireland issued a press release welcoming the new round of the Springboard programme.

The Springboard independent panel, which decided on the courses to fund under the initiative in 2013, now includes representatives of Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland. These roles act as a conduit for awareness raising within the agencies, particularly in relation to communication between the agencies and enterprise, both foreign and Irish owned.

Q2 Measure: Disseminate information on calls and launches to the Department of Social Protection. (DES, HEA, DSP)

Update: Complete

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) and the Department of Social Protection (DSP) worked closely to clarify income support arrangements for jobseekers in advance of the launch of Springboard 2013.

Information on courses and income support available to DSP clients is being disseminated to local DSP offices. A circular was issued by DSP to all local offices and Intreo Centres to

coincide with the launch of Springboard 2013.

A dedicated bespoke application form has been designed for jobseekers supported under the Part Time Education Option of the Back to Education Programme which is available in all DSP local offices and Intreo Centres and online on the Springboard website.

Additionally, in 2012, the HEA and DSP made joint presentations on Springboard to DSP local and regional office Managers which has enabled a greater awareness and understanding of the Springboard programme.

Action 18: Promote ICT professionalism through use of the European e-Competence Framework at an EU and national level.

Q2 Measures:

- Encourage and coordinate a continued strong Irish participation in CEN Workshop on ICT Skills. (NSAI)
- Align national standards and certification work with the programme of the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs to launch in March. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

Supported by the European Commission, CEN, the European Committee for Standardisation, is undertaking a project to develop a competency framework for the IT industry supporting educational courses and employers. Its work can be reviewed at www.ecompetences.eu.

Several major publications have been issued by this Working Group, which has a significant Irish participation but has not to date been closely linked to national initiatives in the same field. Arising from the inclusion of this Disruptive Reform area in the 2013 Action Plan for Jobs, the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) has established closer contact with this CEN Working Group, supporting its activities and seeking to introduce the project participants to their counterparts working in other related initiatives under this reform.

The NSAI has met with the Convenor of CEN Workshop on ICT Skills regarding the preparations for consideration of upgrading of the CEN Workshop status to full CEN Technical Committee status. This would facilitate the development of a CEN work programme for Technical Reports; Technical Specifications and European Standards in the area of European e-Competence Framework for ICT Practitioners.

Ongoing communications have taken place with Forfás, the Health Services Executive, the Irish Computer Society and Quality and Qualifications Ireland in respect of an e-Competence Framework for ICT Practitioners, inviting those organisations to meet with the CEN workshop group participants from Ireland and engage together in progressing the overall project.

The Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs is an EU wide multi-stakeholder partnership helping to address a shortfall in the number of European citizens with ICT professional skills and to exploit the employment creation potential of ICT. There has been some discussion in relation to aligning national standards and certification work with the programme through the mechanism of the European e-Competency Framework. This work will continue in 2013.

Action 20: Undertake a study into “Addressing the demand for high-level ICT skills across all sectors of the economy in Ireland”. The primary objective will be to forecast the demand for high-level ICT skills over the period 2013-2018. A related secondary objective is to identify and advise on any additional tailored measure(s) to retain and attract high-level ICT talent to Ireland

Q2 Measure: Complete research and consultation. (Forfás, EGFSN)

Update: Complete

As part of the research consultation process, structured interviews were completed with 38 FDI and indigenous ICT companies and with 22 key stakeholders. Two workshops with a wider range of stakeholder participants were held in Dublin on February 20th 2013 and in Cork on March 31st 2013. An ICT skills demand forecasting model was developed which factors in expert analysis of global ICT expenditure and developments, adapted to capture the export nature of the Irish ICT sector as well as the local consumption of ICT technology and services. The final report of this work is scheduled for delivery in Quarter 3 2013.

Attracting necessary skills from abroad

Action 21: Introduce a unified employment permits application e-form, which will ultimately make it easier for clients to complete, resulting in greater accuracy and better data quality.

Q2 Measure: Design an e-form to reflect the changes being made to the rules and criteria of the employment permit schemes. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

The design of the eForm has been completed and the form is now under development. It will be circulated to industry for feedback prior to finalisation. It is envisaged that the eForm will be rolled out in Quarter 3 in accordance with the commitments set out in the Action Plan for Jobs.

Action 22: Align and update the employment permits regime on an on-going basis with EGFSN findings, industry feedback and labour market trends

Q2 Measure: Establish a formalised and evidence-based procedure for reviewing the employment permits eligible and ineligible occupations lists. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

The employment permit IT system has been modified to use 'SOC' codes, a comparative data model for occupation types which will result in improved data gathering.

New employment permits eligible and ineligible occupations lists have been formalised, based on findings from the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs and input from other Government Departments.

Action 25: Reduce the wage threshold limit, where appropriate, for work permits in key skills areas (e.g. ICT graduates and technical sales with non-EEA language skills)

Q2 Measure: Assess impact of changes. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

Following consultation with stakeholders in Quarter 1, wage thresholds were reduced moderately for certain occupations experiencing a severe skills shortage. The changes were announced by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and the Minister for Education and Skills on April 10th.

The Ineligible Categories of Employment for Employment Permits list of occupations was updated to cater for particular shortages in relation to specialist language support and technical or sales support with fluency in a non-European Economic Area language (in a role that commands an annual remuneration of at least €27,000 per annum) in respect of those companies that have formal support from the State's enterprise development agencies.

The changes announced in April are now operational. While it is still somewhat early to assess to extent of the impact of these measures, indicative results do not show any negative impacts. The changes have been well received by industry.

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.

Q2 Measure: If viable commence planning and consultation on the development of a 'trusted partner' registration system. (DJEI)

Update: Delayed

The viability of the 'trusted partner' approach is currently under consideration. Assessment will run into Quarter 3 in order to consider further the IT requirements.

However, this will not affect the implementation of changes earmarked for Quarter 3 and 4 under the Action Plan for Jobs (if the concept is considered viable).

Action 30: Develop a communications campaign in order to present clear options as to the available entry channels to the State, i.e. employment permit versus visa.

Q2 Measure: Ensure common information is available across DJEI and DJE websites. (DJEI and DJE)

Update: Complete

Frequent and ongoing meetings take place between the Departments of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and the Department of Justice and Equality to ensure both Departments' systems complement each other. Improved information on employment permits and visas is available on both websites.

Q2 Measure: Arrange temporary inter-organisational secondments to improve staff awareness between DJEI and DJE of the respective schemes. (DJEI and DJE)

Update: Delayed

The potential for inter-organisational secondments is being explored. It is important to ensure all new processes and rules with regard to employment permits have been finalised and implemented before secondments begin; otherwise the learning achieved through a secondment arrangement will become quickly dated.

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

Action 31: Using the retail sector as the pilot activity, establish a steering group comprising relevant stakeholders including licensing authorities, and relevant Government Departments and agencies and the Office of the Data Commissioner; complete and agree the Statement of Objectives, scoping, project plan and work programme for 2013

Q2 Measure: As per headline action. (Forfás, DJEI, Steering Group Members, enterprise representatives)

Update: Complete

A cross-Government Steering Group chaired by the Minister for Small Business, John Perry, T.D., has been established. The first meeting of the Steering Group was on March 12th, at which the principles and key parameters for the Licensing Application System were agreed by the licensing authorities. At the second meeting of the Steering Group on April 29th, the Group considered options for developing the platform, either using an existing platform within the state sector or an outsourced provision.

The Group agreed to progress the option of outsourced provision, through a design-build-finance-operate model to meet the deadline of delivery of an Integrated Licensing Application System by the end of October 2013.

Action 32: Carry out a systems analysis and audit of the processes/applications requirements, statutory obligations and authorisation process of licences within licensing authorities relating to the Retail Sector in the first half of 2013, to include a cost benefit analysis and the timeframe for delivery in the context of any legislative changes necessary.

Q2 Measure: As per headline action. (Forfás, DJEI, relevant Licensing Authorities)

Update: Complete

A number of studies were undertaken to review the licensing processes and the underpinning legislation for the 36 core licences that are being considered in the first phase of this project. This included a preliminary cost benefit analysis, systems analysis and audit exercise with the relevant licensing authorities which have informed the Request for Tender for the provision of a Licence Service Concession.

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation together with Forfás are working closely with the Chief State Solicitor's Office in the drafting of the Request for Tender.

The cost benefit analysis will be finalised following the tender process and the appointment of a service provider, and will be based on the business model proposed in the successful proposal.

Action 33: Define the Integrated Licensing Application System, with input from the licensing authorities by mid 2013, to include:

- Technical Infrastructure Design
- Detailed Systems Design
- Security and Risk Analysis

Following the completion of the above, DJEI and Forfás, as necessary, to bring a proposal to Government on funding requirements.

Q2 Measure: As per headline action. (Steering Group Members, Forfás, DJEI, CCMA/Local Authorities, relevant Licensing Authorities)

Update: Complete.

The Steering Group considered the different options available and decided that the Integrated Licensing Application System would be best progressed by a finance-design-build-operate model. The functional specification has been defined by the Steering Group and will be outlined in the Request for Tender (RFT). The RFT will invite companies in the marketplace to: finance the up-front development, design, build and operate the system with a service fee then levied on the licensing authorities. Subject to sign-off from the Chief State Solicitor's Office, the RFT will be issued to the market during July 2013.

Disruptive Reform 4: Increase the number of businesses trading online

Action 37: Consult with representatives of the digital industry in Ireland to establish the contribution which those companies can make to the design and implementation of the Trading On-Line initiative.

Q2 Measure: As per headline action. (DCENR, DJEI, Forfás, IPSO)

Update: Complete

A steering group has been established to drive delivery of this initiative with the involvement of Louise Phelan, PayPal and Sean O'Driscoll, Glen Dimplex Group. The first scheme trial, based in Dublin, will incorporate support from the Dublin Chamber, PayPal, Google and Facebook.

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

Action 41: Design the detailed operational arrangements for the initiative and launch the new scheme by the end of June 2013.

Q2 Measure: As per headline action. (DSP)

Update: Complete

The JobsPlus scheme was launched by An Taoiseach on July 8th 2013. The scheme provides for a payment to an employer of €7,500 or €10,000 over two years when they recruit from the Live Register. The scheme was designed following feedback from employers and is designed to be accessible and user friendly for employers seeking to hire people that have been on the Live Register for more than 12 months under the scheme. Further details are available at www.jobsplus.ie.

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 Services Framework (formerly Energy Performance Contracting Framework), which will assist public sector and commercial bodies to develop energy efficiency proposals with Energy Services companies.

Q2 Measure: Publish National Energy Services Framework. (DCENR)

Update: Complete

The National Energy Services Framework sets out the current roadmap through which energy efficiency projects and an Energy Performance Contracting process will be developed. The Framework will serve as a standardised model for public sector and commercial organisations seeking energy efficiency solutions from Energy Services Companies. A draft version of Framework is available online for consultation along with comprehensive supporting material, which will inform the final Framework.

Q2 Measure: Identify, evaluate and select exemplar projects. (DCENR)

Update: Complete

The first tranche of exemplar energy efficiency projects to be supported by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) were announced by the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources on June 19th. Collectively these 22 Exemplar projects which involve both private and public sector entities such as the Health Services Executive,

University College Cork and Roadstone, will invest up to €55 million in energy saving measures, resulting in annual savings of €7 million, and supporting over 500 jobs. Exemplar projects receive additional 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 must commit to actively provide feedback on the use of the Framework.

Action 44: Establish an Energy Efficiency Fund to support innovative energy efficiency in the public and commercial sectors.

Q2 Measures:

- Stakeholder engagement. (NewERA, DCENR)
- Detailed fund design agreed. (NewERA, DCENR)

Update: Complete

There was extensive stakeholder engagement and consultation with the financial community, including potential investors and fund managers, as part of the process to design the Energy Efficiency Fund which will provide project lending for energy efficiency works in the public and commercial sectors. The final details underpinning the Fund's establishment were agreed by Government on June 19th and a Call for Expressions of Interest to establish the Fund is expected to issue imminently.

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 National Energy Services Framework (formerly Energy Performance Contracting 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.

Q2 Measures:

- Projects to complete first structured phases of framework (up to procurement preliminaries). (SEAI)
- Initiate procurement for early group of demonstration exemplars. (SEAI, Contracting Authorities)

Update: Complete

The exemplar energy efficiency projects announced in June 2013 projects (see update under Action 43 above) have completed the first structured phases of the framework. A first meeting of the exemplar collective recently took place, which addressed issues of commonality and the Framework process in greater detail.

As part of the exemplar project initiative, selected projects receive additional 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. Good progress is being made by all exemplar projects with a number of them well advanced through the technical assessment pre-procurement phase. Given the mix of projects, it is anticipated that the projects will proceed at varying rates. This is to be expected, as the basis for the exemplar approach is to road test the concepts under development through the Framework.

Action 46: 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.

Q2 Measure: Publish National Energy Services Framework (formerly Energy Performance Contracting Framework). (DCENR, SEAI)

Update: Complete

The National Energy Services Framework sets out the current roadmap through which energy efficiency projects and an Energy Performance Contracting process will be developed. The Framework will serve as a standardised model for public sector and commercial organisations seeking energy efficiency solutions from Energy Services Companies.

A draft version of Framework is available online for consultation along with comprehensive supporting material, which will inform the final Framework.

Q2 Measure: Communicate framework's existence to public sector bodies. (DCENR)

Update: Complete

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 development of the National Energy Services Framework is a vital first step in this process. Likewise, the creation of an Energy Efficiency Fund to finance such projects. A letter will issue to all public sector bodies reminding them

of the Government Decision as soon as the Call for Expressions of Interest in the Fund is published.

The National Energy Efficiency Action Plan to 2020, which was launched by the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in February, outlines the plan to develop the National Energy Services Framework. In addition, public sector bodies have been made aware of both the Framework and the Fund as part of the development and consultation processes undertaken for both of these initiatives.

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.

Q2 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 first quarterly report was published on the Department's website on June 28th and is available from www.welfare.ie/en/downloads/PTW%20Performance%20Report%20Q1.pdf

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.

Q2 Measure: Seek EU approval on the Employment Investment and Incentive Schemes measures. (D/Finance)

Update: Complete

The Department of Finance lodged the application for approval on the Employment Investment and Incentive Schemes measures with the European Commission on June 5th 2013.

Action 57: During Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the EU, ensure access to finance for SMEs is appropriately pursued.

Q2 Measure: Discuss non-bank funding issues at Informal Ecofin meeting on 12/13 April. (D/Finance)

Update: Complete

An EU Presidency Issues Paper was presented at Informal Ecofin and in conjunction with a presentation from Commissioner Barnier on the Green Paper on Long-Term Financing of the European Economy, formed the basis for discussion on the options for the financing of growth and jobs in Europe. The Presidency Issues Paper suggested that the Ecofin Council seek to progress this issue and asked them to consider establishing a High Level Expert Group to assist them in this key policy area.

At its meeting on May 24th, the Ecofin Council agreed the mandate of the newly established High Level Expert Group on Long Term Finance and SME's. This Group will focus its work on concrete capital market instruments to stimulate and permanently diversify SME and mid-cap financing and the financing of infrastructure projects. In this context, it will also investigate the role of multilateral and national development/public investment institutions in catalysing private finance. The Group is co-chaired by John Moran (Secretary General, Department of Finance) and Alberto Giovannini (CEO, Unifortune) and will produce an interim report in July and a final report in the Autumn.

The Group consists of 18 members drawn from EU institutions, national finance ministries, state development/business banks and the financial industry. The first meeting was held on June 19th in Brussels.

Q2 Measure: Discuss access to finance issues at Informal Competitiveness Council 2/3 May (DJEI)

Update: Complete

Access to finance was one of three key SME topics discussed at the Informal Competitiveness Council in early May. Ministers heard a presentation from a leading academic on access to finance, Professor Josh Lerner, Harvard School of Business.

A break-out session on Access to Finance came to a number of conclusions that were reported on to the Competitiveness Council on May 29th 2013. These included:

- SME finance is only half of the picture, the other half is raising demand, which will only be done once growth picks up again. In a muted economic climate, it is rational for firms to be cautious and roll back in investment.
- The onus is on policymakers to create a policy environment focused on growth in which entrepreneurs can have the confidence to take risks, to invest, and to create jobs.
- Entrepreneurs and businesses also have a responsibility, namely to increase their financial literacy and learn about new financing methods.
- Banks need to be held accountable to fulfil their original role in playing intermediary between savers and investors. Public guarantee schemes have proven successful to mitigate some banks' new risk-aversion but are largely insufficient and in the long-run also not sustainable because it is not the role of the public sector to shield banks from all risks.

Information and Skills

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

Q2 Measure: CRO Quarterly Reports. (Credit Review Office)

Update: Complete

The Credit Review Office (CRO) quarterly report for Quarter 1 2013 was published on June 14th 2013. The main points in the CRO report are:

- Both banks are targeted with sanctioning €4 billion each in 2013 and at the end of Q1 both banks' sanctions were at or near where they would be expected to meet the target.
- Q1 2013 was the best Q1 sanctioning performance in the three years of monitoring Q1 figures. 33% of the sanctions in Q1 2013 are reported as new lending

- The decline in both banks overall SME balances is tailing off, and both bank's SME balance sheets show some sporadic growth in the past months.
- Banks are lending to low/medium risk SMEs; but both banks appear to be now more supportive of SME/Farm credit requests. The CRO considers that the presence of the Office is playing a part in this.
- The CRO observes more appeals requests for credit for working capital increases and business investment in response to improving confidence in the economy.
- Property related debt overhang continues to be a major issue. The CRO considers it to be vitally important that banks uncouple these when assessing credit requests for SMEs and farmers to ensure that viable or potentially viable business are supported.
- The CRO expresses concerns on the small number of active banks and other lenders currently supplying new credit to the SME sector. The CRO also foresees increasing challenges to refinance existing debt, and meet new lending demands from borrowers currently banked with non-trading banks and banks which are strategically exiting the Irish SME lending market.
- As many of these refinancing requests will exceed the current CRO limit of €500,000, the CRO has requested that this upper threshold for appeals be increased to €3 million.
- Numbers remain low with only 367 applications for review received to date (44 in the quarter); and
- The CRO has upheld appeals in 55.3% of cases with €16.8 million of credit being made available to SMEs and farms and 1,297 jobs protected.

Q2 Measure: Meet with pillar banks (D/Finance, Credit Review Office)

Update: Complete

The Department of Finance and the Credit Review Office hold regular scheduled meetings with the pillar banks. The purpose of this measure is to ensure that the pillar banks are complying with their obligations to sanction an aggregate €8 billion credit to SMEs in 2013. A meeting was held with the pillar banks on May 27th.

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

Q2 Measure: Report on monthly returns from the pillar banks. (Credit Review Office, D/Finance)

Update: Complete

The pillar banks have submitted their monthly and quarterly lending returns to date, which have been analysed and reported by the Department of Finance and the Credit Review Office to ensure that the banks are on course to achieve their targets

The banks also meet with the Department of Finance and the Credit Review Office on a quarterly basis to discuss progress. The monthly management meetings with the pillar banks also provide a forum for the issue of SME lending to be raised by the Department.

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

Q2 Measure: Undertake survey of demand for SME credit. (D/Finance)

Update: Complete

A survey of demand for SME credit for the period October 2012 to March 2013 was undertaken by Red C. The survey was published in June 2012 and the main findings were as follows:

- Credit demand from the SME sector remains low with 40% of SMEs having requested at least one type of bank finance in the period October 2012 to March 2013. However, this does indicate a marginal increase from 39% in September 2012 and 38% a year ago, following the gradual stabilisation of business performance among SMEs in Ireland.
- While difficult trading conditions remain for many SMEs, there are continued improvements in turnover performance when correcting for seasonal variations. This improvement is mainly driven by medium-sized companies.
- The overall decline rate for loan applications remains at 19% which is equivalent to September 2012 but lower than the 23% decline rate recorded a year ago. However, the survey points to an increasing proportion of applications being approved fully, rather than partial approval.
- A significant improvement is registered in the perception of whether banks are lending to the SME sector. 47% of respondents now believe that the banks are indeed lending to SMEs - up from only 39% in September 2012.

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.

Q2 Measure: Review current financial literacy provisions and make recommendations for improvements where appropriate. (State Bodies Group)

Update: Complete

An initial paper outlining the extensive range of existing supports in relation to the area of financial literacy and listing a set of proposed actions for improvement has been compiled by the Department of Education and Skills. This will form the basis for further discussion within the SME State Bodies Group with a view to identifying relevant actions to improve the financial literacy of micro and small enterprises. These actions will be implemented where appropriate in Quarter 3 and Quarter 4.

Access to Funding Measures

Action 64: Recruit six additional reviewers for the Credit Review Office.

Q2 Measure: Process of recruitment to be completed. (Credit Review Office)

Update: Complete

The Credit Review Office recently appointed 12 assistant reviewers through a public procurement process.

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.

Q2 Measure: SME Credit Fund operational. (NPRF)

Update: Complete

The BlueBay Ireland Credit Fund (SME Credit Fund) which is targeted at SMEs and mid-sized corporates in Ireland was established on May 31st with the National Pensions Reserve Fund (NPRF) signing a commitment letter.

The NPRF Unit in conjunction with the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA) Legal

Unit and supported by third party legal advisors has coordinated the NPRF's input into the drafting process for all legal documentation in relation to the SME Credit Fund.

BlueBay has established an office in Dublin and is currently developing a pipeline of potential loan transactions. It is expected that the Fund will close and be launched in the coming weeks.

The NPRF intends to publish a report regarding the investments made under the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF) programme in July and January each year, commencing in July 2013.

Governance and Policy

Action 71: Launch a new Seed and Venture Capital scheme providing €175 million of Exchequer funding over the period to 2018, with a target to leverage €525 million of private sector investment for early stage and growth companies.

Q2 Measure: Launch the new Seed and Venture Capital Scheme. (EI)

Update: Complete

In May 2013, the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation launched a new €175 million Seed and Venture Capital Scheme 2013-2018 aimed at providing additional funding, through Enterprise Ireland, for high-growth innovative Irish companies with the potential to generate large amounts of additional export sales and grow jobs in fast-growing sectors including ICT, life sciences, high-tech manufacturing and the green economy.

At the launch of the Scheme, the Minister issued the first call for Expressions of Interest from venture capital funds seeking investment. The overall target is to leverage an additional €525 million in funding from the private sector, which will mean a total of €700 million available for investment over the lifetime of the Scheme. It is expected that the average initial venture investment in a company made by the funds targeted under this call could be of the order of €2 million.

This first call for expressions of interest will see Enterprise Ireland committing up to €100 million to venture capital funds targeting investment in the wider ICT and life sciences sectors. It is expected that over the lifetime of the scheme it will benefit hundreds of Irish companies, generate substantial additional export sales and support significant additional job creation. Further expressions of interest will be issued over the next two years.

Action 76: Introduce a Code of Conduct on prompt payments to improve cash flow between businesses and take steps to raise awareness of this Code of Conduct.

Q2 Measure: Finalise and publish Code of Conduct. (Business Representative Bodies)

Update: Complete

The development of a prompt payments charter/code of conduct is being delivered by the business representative bodies with support from the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. The text for this code has now been agreed by the business representative bodies and was published in a press release from the Minister for Small Business on July 1st which is available on the Department's website.

The Department will continue to work with the business representative bodies and to liaise with the other relevant stakeholders, including the banks and the Irish Credit Management Institute, on this initiative.

Building Competitive Advantage

Research and Innovation to Drive Job Creation

Action 77: Drive implementation of the recommendations of 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.

Q2 Measure: Secure Government approval for 14 Action Plans. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

In order to provide a mechanism through which research funders can focus their attention and funding on the 14 Priority Areas, 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, e.g., the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine chaired the working group for the food related Priority Areas; the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland chaired the groups for Marine Renewable Energy and Smart Cities and Smart Grids; and sectoral experts from the enterprise agencies chaired the remainder of the groups.

The Action Plans represent the detailed blueprint for actions to be taken by funding Departments and agencies to re-align the majority of competitive public research funding around the priority areas over the next five years. Each Action Plan includes a vision, key objectives and specific actions along with timelines and those responsible for leading and supporting delivery of the action. As well as aligning funding to the 14 areas, the actions identify wider eco-system or framework conditions that need to be addressed to allow investment in the priority area yield the optimum return.

Government approval for the web publication of the 14 Action Plans was secured on June 25th 2013.

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. The PAG will oversee monitoring of implementation of the Action Plans.

Action 78: Adopt a statement of Ireland's goal for national science, technology and innovation (STI) policy and underpinning objectives.

Q2 Measures:

- Finalise a statement of Ireland's goal for national STI policy and underpinning objectives. (Prioritisation Action Group, DJEI, Forfás)
- Secure Government approval for statement. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

The Report of the Research Prioritisation Group recommended that the Government should set a new overriding national objective to accelerate the delivery of specific economic outcomes from Ireland's investment in research. In the context of the Government Decision of February 21st 2012 to implement the recommendations contained in the Report, it was agreed that research prioritisation is the Government's priority overarching science, technology and innovation (STI) policy goal.

This was reaffirmed in the Government Decision of June 25th 2013 which gave approval for the web publication of a range of underpinning objectives in the form of i) detailed Action Plans for the 14 Priority Areas identified for investment by the Research Prioritisation Group, and ii) a Framework of Metrics and Targets to monitor STI investment.

The 14 Action Plans, and the Framework of Metrics and Targets were published in July 2013 accompanied by a statement from the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and the Minister of State for Research and Innovation.

Action 79: Agree a framework for monitoring the impact of state investment in R&D and track that impact over time.

Q2 Measures:

- Develop a framework for monitoring the impact of state investment in R&D. (Prioritisation Action Group, DJEI, Forfás)
- Secure Government approval for framework. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

A detailed Framework of Metrics and Targets to monitor the impact of science, technology and innovation (STI) investment has been developed on foot of a recommendation in the Report of the Research Prioritisation Steering Group.

The Framework of Metrics and Targets will firstly monitor the impact of public STI investment in broad terms, and secondly, monitor the impact of the implementation of Research Prioritisation on the 14 Priority Areas. The purpose of setting targets is twofold: to

stretch the public enterprise support system in order to maximise the impact of public investment in research and development; and to assess the success over time of the implementation of Research Prioritisation.

The Framework comprises three levels of targets - Overarching National Targets; Departmental/Agency-level Targets; and Priority Area Targets.

The inclusion of Overarching National Targets acknowledges the fact that investment in research contributes directly to performance at the aggregate national level. The national targets also serve as the basis for establishing the targets for the agencies and include a stretch element in order to influence behaviour of research funders.

Specific targets and deliverables for each of the funding agencies and Departments are included in the framework and play a pivotal role in the implementation of research prioritisation. They will feed into both the national targets and the targets for the Priority Areas and they also include targets for the implementation of the recommendations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the STI system. Their purpose is to convey clearly the requirements of Departments and agencies and to guide them in establishing internal priorities and in developing their programmes and instruments.

The Priority Area targets are intended to assess the effectiveness of each Action Plan in exploiting the opportunity that was identified in each Priority Area as part of the National Research Prioritisation Exercise. To accomplish this assessment, a core set of fundamental metrics – including total employment, productivity and value added - is applied in each of the 14 Priority Areas. This will allow for assessment of how well these sectors are performing relative to the overall economy, and secondly, it will enable comparisons of performance between the 14 Priority Areas.

All of these targets are underpinned by a wide range of 79 monitoring metrics covering the enterprise support environment – these are at varying levels of granularity and include inputs, outputs and outcomes. These metrics are to be monitored annually as part of the assessment framework for the national targets. For example, if a national target is not achieved, then the monitoring metrics will facilitate the diagnosis of the failure in the system.

The Prioritisation Action Group will oversee monitoring of indicators and targets in the Framework.

Government approval for the web publication of the Framework of Metrics and Targets to monitor the impact of STI investment was secured on June 25th 2013.

Action 84: Enact Industrial Development (Science Foundation Ireland) Bill 2012 to enable SFI to fund applied research.

Q2 Measure: Progress legislation through the Houses of the Oireachtas. (DJEI)

Update: Delayed

The Industrial Development (Science Foundation Ireland) (Amendment) Bill 2012 was debated at, and completed, Select Committee stage on June 11th. However, due to pressure of other Oireachtas business, Report Stage for this Bill is now listed for September 2013.

Action 85: Through SFI, provide support to at least five new Research Centres. Collectively, these will involve Government investment of at least €100m.

Q2 Measure: Once awards have been formally agreed with the relevant HEIs, launch individual centres. (SFI)

Update: Complete

In February 2013, the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and the Minister of State for Research and Innovation announced a landmark investment by the Government in scientific research which is closely aligned to industry and enterprise needs, job opportunities and societal goals.

Under this investment, €200 million of Irish exchequer funding will be invested in seven world class research centres of scale. The new funding will be delivered through Science Foundation Ireland's (SFI) Research Centres Programme coupled with over €100 million in cash and in-kind contributions from industry partners, making it the largest ever combined state/industry co-funding announcement of its kind in the research field in Ireland. The funding will be provided over the next six years with a mid-term review.

Thus far 156 industry partners are connected to the centres, spanning multinationals and SMEs, including Cisco, Hewlett Packard, Microsoft, Medtronic, GSK, Pfizer, Eli Lilly, BT, Kerry Group, the Irish Times, ESB, Alere, RTE, Intune Networks, Intel, IBM, Roche, and UTRC Ireland.

The 7 research centres mark a new collaborative approach and bring together multidisciplinary teams comprising 800 scientists from across Ireland's leading higher education and research institutions and interacting with 156 industry partners. The 7 centres are:

- **MaREI** - Marine Renewable Energy: Ireland is one of the best locations in the world in terms of marine renewable energy resources. This centre will look to generate energy technologies for industry from wave, tidal and floating wind devices.
- **AMBER** - Advanced Materials and BioEngineering Research Centre (engineered

materials/nanotechnology/): AMBER will deliver world-leading research across a number of key enterprise sectors, most notably ICT, industrial technology and medical devices and delivery systems. Ireland is currently ranked 6th globally in nanotechnology and 8th in materials science.

- **APC** - Alimentary Pharmabiotic Centre (food for health/functional foods): The APC will address important issues such as disease prevention, healthy ageing and improved population health in general. Ireland is currently ranked 2nd in the world in probiotics research.
- **I-PIC** - Irish Photonic Integration Research Centre: Photonics which is the generation, manipulation and utilisation of light, is an important enabling technology that underpins many areas such as future networks, communications systems and medical devices.
- **INFANT** (perinatal translational research): The research at this Centre will focus on fast-tracking discoveries relating to most complications of pregnancy and new born babies and service a huge societal and economic need globally.
- **SSPC** - Solid State Pharmaceutical Centre (drug synthesis/crystallisation): This centre will develop new mechanisms and better control processes to produce new and improved drug formulations and safe medicines.
- **INSIGHT** (Big Data): – this centre will support the development of breakthrough data analytics technologies to make Ireland a global leader in this rapidly expanding area.

The press launches for each individual Research Centre began on June 21st and will continue throughout 2013, as dates are finalised to accommodate the Research Centres, Industry Partners, Ministers and other key stakeholders.

Action 89: Develop a strategy to maximise benefit for the enterprise sector, and jobs in Ireland, from participation in the EU Horizon 2020 (successor to FP7, commencing Jan 2014). We will set targets for enterprise participation in the programme and we will adapt the support structure to assist researchers/enterprises gain maximum benefit from the programme.

Q2 Measure: Ascertain final content of, and budget for, Horizon 2020 following completion of negotiations. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

The budget for Horizon 2020 was dependent on agreement of the EU's Budget for the period 2014-2020 (the Multiannual Financial Framework), which was agreed in late June. A budget of €70 billion was agreed for the programme. Minister of State for Science and Technology, Seán Sherlock, T.D., in welcoming the programme, estimated that Ireland can now target up to €1 billion in research funding over the next six years under the programme.

Q2 Measure: Establish new National Support Structure to reflect Horizon 2020. (DJEI in consultation with relevant Departments and agencies)

Update: Delayed

The establishment of the National Support Structure was dependent on the outcome of the committee arrangements for Horizon 2020 which were not settled until late June 2013.

However, preparations are now underway under the coordination of Enterprise Ireland, in consultation with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, regarding the establishment of the National Support Structure for Horizon 2020.

Action 92: Co-host 3 international conferences with the European Commission, providing opportunities to showcase:

- Ireland's international profile in nanotechnology;
- The research capacity of Ireland's SME base;
- Ireland's strong performance at regional level in Framework Programme 7 (FP7).

Q2 Measure: As per headline action. (EI, FP7 National Support Structure)

Update: Complete

Enterprise Ireland co-hosted 3 international conferences with the European Commission, providing opportunities to showcase Ireland's international profile in nanotechnology, the research capacity of Ireland's SME base and Ireland's strong performance at regional level in Framework Programme 7 (FP7).

The three events, which are detailed below, all took place in June, with approximately 2,500 delegates in attendance in total.

- The Euro SME 2013 conference in Dublin Castle on June 11th-12th focussed on SME aspects of Innovation, Growth and Jobs and considered the role of the SME in:
 - The Europe of 2020, and its envisaged smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive economy, where research and innovation are at its very core.
 - The Innovation Union, as one of the flagship initiatives supporting the implementation of the EU2020 strategy.
- The Week of Innovative Regions in Europe (WIRE IV) conference in Cork addressed the Innovation Union context of the 'Capacities' work programme, especially that of the Research Potential Programme, with emphasis on research and innovation as key drivers of competitiveness, jobs, sustainable growth and social progress.
- The Euro Nano Forum 2013 took place in the Dublin Convention Centre on June 18th,

with its main focus on the commercialisation of nanotechnology, exploiting its potential for new applications, pushing it from an enabling technology through to development and on to end product use.

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”.

Q2 Measure: Review SBIR in other countries. (DJEI, EI)

Update: Complete

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) is the name given to programmes supporting pre-commercial procurement. It is about the procurement of R&D, of feasible solutions rather than the procurement of specified products and services.

SBIR programmes originated in the USA but have been widely adopted in other countries. They are specifically designed to give government an active role in the innovation process and at the same time to support SMEs that want to innovate but don't have the financial means to do it. The SBIR programme finances the early stage of an innovative product or service development.

To date Enterprise Ireland and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation have carried out desk research on similar schemes in the US, the UK and the Netherlands. The schemes differ in their design, budget and operation in different countries. Enterprise Ireland has engaged with leading influencers in the UK who are involved in the UK scheme with a view to meeting with them before the end of Quarter 3.

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

Q2 Measure: Evaluation of Learning Logs from 400 plus schools which receive Award of Science & Maths Excellence. (SFI)

Update: Complete

The Award of Science and Maths Excellence recognises those primary schools that excel in their levels of participation in Discover Primary Science and Maths programme by meeting a range of pre-determined criteria as follows:

- Provide evidence of participating in the Greenwave Project.
- Complete two other hands-on activities; one relating to the energy and forces strand and one to the materials strand of the curriculum and show how maths was integrated into the activities.

- Have a science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) speaker visit the school or undertake a visit to a Discover Science and Engineering approved Discover Centre.
- Hold or attend a science event, for example a Science Week event.
- Complete an activity relating to the Engineer's Week 2013 theme 'Engineers, bringing dreams to life through curiosity and invention.'

Schools can apply for an Award of Science & Maths Excellence online from January each year. This is a way of getting the students and teachers to record their work and show how much they have completed during the year.

Primary schools submit logbooks outlining the work undertaken. Following the submission and review of logbooks, 491 primary schools across Ireland received an Award of Science and Maths Excellence in June 2013. In addition, with support from Abbott, 60 primary schools received €100 towards science equipment for the classroom.

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

Q2 Measures:

- Completion of the current pilot of Discover Sensors project. (SFI)
- Delivery of Continuous Professional Development sessions to 30 schools and 200 teachers (Kildare VEC, Louth VEC, Co. Cork VEC, and Co. Kildare Sec School group). (SFI)

Update: Complete

Discover Sensors is a pilot programme promoting inquiry based teaching and learning tools and techniques to Irish Junior Certificate science teachers. The project involves teachers from four project groups (Kildare Vocational Education Committee (VEC), Louth VEC, Co. Cork VEC and six schools from Co. Kildare). The pilot project has had a number of outputs as follows:

- A Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme comprising eight sessions which has been evaluated positively by the National Centre for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching and Learning (NCE-MSTL).
- The Discover Sensors Framework of inquiry based teaching and learning was developed by science teachers for science teachers in conjunction with the Centre for the Advancement of Science and Mathematics Teaching and Learning (CASTeL). The framework is fundamental to the Discover Sensors project.
- A host of practical Assessment for Learning tools and techniques for all Junior Certificate curriculum topics.

- Key learnings to inform the new Junior Certificate from piloting www.scifolio.ie (an ePortfolio assessment tool) with 45 teachers in Kildare VEC.
- A cohort of 15 trained facilitators.
- An online teacher forum/community of practice has been established with 1,097 teachers registered and over 100 threads of conversation/sharing of information.
- A partnership with BScEd students in NUI Maynooth to ensure that the Discover Sensors resources are used as an integral element of their course.
- CPD sessions delivered to 35 teachers in Louth VEC in April.
- CPD sessions delivered to 35 teachers from Kildare secondary schools in April.
- CPD sessions delivered to 50 teachers from Cork VEC in March.
- ePortfolio training element of Discover Sensors Programme delivered to 35 teachers from Kildare VEC schools.
- Approximately 1,000 Junior Certificate Students will present the *Course Work A* practical element of their Junior Cert Science Exam on www.scifolio.ie to the State Examinations Commission in 2014.

Additional sessions will be delivered to teachers in Kildare and Cork in September.

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.

Q2 Measure: Activate STEM careers awareness promotional campaign to focus on CAO Change of Mind dates – student competition, online video series profiling STEM sector, radio campaign and publications will be sent to all second level schools. (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 tech), pharma and medical devices as potential career options. Through the website www.SmartFutures.ie it provides online resources to students, teachers, parents and guidance counsellors, to help raise awareness of career opportunities in these areas, as well as to help stimulate an interest in STEM subjects in secondary school and at third level. It is supported by partners such as ICT Ireland, the Irish Medical Devices Association (IMDA), the Irish Software Association and the Engineers Ireland's STEPS to Engineering programme.

During the second quarter of 2013, the Smart Futures initiative promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) careers to second level students has carried out a number of promotional/engagement activities in advance of CAO Change of Mind dates, including the STEM Careers Week held from April 29th to May 3rd. The details and metrics of those activities are listed below:

- The number of students directly engaged with since 2012 has more than doubled, increasing from 1,300 to approximately 5,675 in 2013 (to-date).
- A STEM careers video series was launched, which saw panels of STEM experts including representatives from Microsoft, HP, DPS Engineering, Mainstream Renewable Power, CISCO, SAP, Nuritas, CPL, CRANN and CLARITY answering student career questions (with over 3,000 views to-date)
- Media coverage of the STEM Careers Week included 3 articles in national newspapers, 2 pieces on national television, 7 online articles and 4 radio pieces. A promotional campaign also ran on three radio stations over a two week period. The cumulative circulation figure of this was approx. 3.9 million readers, listeners, viewers.
- During the STEM Careers Week, the Smart Futures website recorded over 3,000 visitors and over 7,000 page-views.
- During Quarter 2, Smart Futures exhibited at the Coder Dojo conference and the Irish Science Teachers Association (ISTA) conference. Over 2,500 teachers, parents and mentors have been engaged with through the programme to-date in 2013.
- A STEM competition was launched on April 29th, encouraging 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. Their sponsorship has included prizes, funding and work experience places for the winners. The competition closes on August 30th next.
- Careers materials and competition posters were sent to over 800 schools.

Action 102: Finalise the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDPP) and related Strategic Environmental Assessment and Natural Impact Assessment; this will provide a clear framework for Marine Renewable Energy development

Q2 Measure: Completion and final publication of OREDPP. (DCENR, SEAI)

Update: Delayed

The text of the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDPP) is at an advanced stage. It is expected that the OREDPP will be finalised and published in Quarter 3.

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)

Q2 Measures:

- Catalogue all relevant existing infrastructure (communities, buildings, laboratories, equipment, test facilities, etc) and identify all relevant research currently being undertaken these key areas. (SEAI)
- Compile a directory of companies and organisations already involved in the development or manufacture of products and services in the smart grid / smart city arena. (SEAI, EI)

Update: Complete

Following a competitive tender process, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) has appointed URS Ireland, a technical consulting company, to assist with the delivery of the measures identified under action 105.

A list of the existing infrastructure, current research and companies relating to smart grids and smart cities has been compiled and is being catalogued against the drivers / technologies framework developed in Quarter 1.

The inventory has been designed to be dynamic and will be refreshed and updated on a regular basis.

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.

Quarter 2 Commitment: Review pre-proposals received through international peer review process and invite successful candidates to full proposal stage

Update: Complete (and ongoing to Q3)

Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) and Teagasc have teamed up to launch a strategically important Research Funding Call for 'The Future Agri-Food.' This collaboration agreement aims to strengthen and accelerate research and innovation in Ireland's agri-food sector which employs in the region of 150,000 people here. SFI and Teagasc have agreed to jointly fund research grants between scientists from the agriculture and food disciplines and scientists from other scientific and engineering disciplines.

Agri-food is Ireland's largest indigenous industry having delivered a record €9 billion in exports in 2012, a significant achievement considering the fiscal difficulties experienced

globally. The National Research Prioritisation Exercise identified a number of areas, including Agri-Food and Food for Health, which can offer the greatest economic and enterprise potential for Ireland. The joint initiative aims to bring a broad range of disciplines and technologies to bear on strengthening innovation in the agri-food sector and to offer opportunities to scientists in a wide range of disciplines including genomics, robotics, material science, nanotechnology, immunology and ICT. The convergence of this broad range of disciplines will help underpin the profitability, competitiveness and sustainability targets set out in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's 'Food Harvest 2020' strategy. This agreement will prepare the Irish scientific community to compete, lead and win in relevant EU Horizon 2020 funding programmes and other relevant international funding.

Applications were received for the Future Agri-Food co-funded theme with Teagasc in the Investigator 2013 Programme in March 2013. A total of 227 applications were received, 18 of which were relevant to the Future Agri-Food theme. Proposals are currently under-review and a decision is anticipated in early 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.

Q2 Measures:

- Jointly agree content and focus of further call. (IRC, DAFM)
- Launch and actively promote further call. (IRC, DAFM)

Update: Complete

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 Scheme itself is open to all disciplines, however a number other research funding agencies and Departments are partnering with the IRC on this call, and awards will be made in these specific sectoral areas, e.g. agri-food.

The pre-call for the 2013/2014 employment based Postgraduate Programme has been announced, with the call going live later this month, and both will be actively promoted.

The IRC will be partnering with Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, the Higher Education Authority, IBEC and the co-funding agencies and departments to hold briefing sessions for interested SME/multinational companies and higher education institutes and will continue to work with existing companies who are in receipt of IRC awards to build on their research activity. The promotional campaign includes social media, web based promotional activity. It is expected that awards will be made by the end of Quarter 4.

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).

Q2 Measure: Hold "Gateways" public events for food industry (Teagasc)

Update: Complete

Building on the Technology Gateway events held in May and December 2012, a third Gateway event for the food industry was held in May 2013 which coincided with the UK – Ireland Food Business Summit. A further Gateway event focused on SMEs is planned for October 2013.

Q2 Measure: Implement CRM (Client Relationship Management system) for managing interactions with client food companies. (Teagasc)

Update: Complete

All Teagasc Client Relationship Managers (CRM) have attended two workshops given by experts in CRM systems which were held in December 2012 and February 2013. Based on the workshops, client relationship management processes are being gradually implemented.

In parallel, external consultants are finalising CRM software specifically tailored for Teagasc food researchers. This will be presented to Teagasc management in Quarter 3 for approval for further in-house or external development. It is envisaged that the software will be piloted and tested before eventual roll-out.

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.

Q2 Measure: Provide research support for targeted, jobs-focused initiatives aligned to the food-related Priority Areas of the Research Prioritisation framework (Marine Institute and DAFM)

Update: Complete

The Marine Institute and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), have agreed to jointly fund a competitive call for research projects targeting the industry-defined marine food themes set out in Food Research Ireland. These themes included innovation, processing technologies, food and health, and food safety and quality, and are designed to assist in meeting the Food Harvest 2020 seafood targets.

The call was launched by DAFM in March and closed in early May. The proposals received

are currently undergoing evaluation by a panel of national and international reviewers

A further research initiative in support of the aquaculture sector is currently being developed, with a view to finalisation in Quarter 3.

Improving Cost Competitiveness

Action 115: Assess the impact of reforms to sectoral wage-setting mechanisms (Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2012) in terms of promoting labour market competitiveness.

Q2 Measures:

- Review wage developments and labour cost competitiveness in relevant sectors. (Forfás and DJEI)
- Submit a final report to the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. (DJEI and Forfás)

Update: Complete

Under Ireland's Memorandum of Understanding with the Troika, Ireland is required to "report to the staff of the European Commission, the IMF, and the ECB on the impact on the labour market of reforms to sectoral wage-setting mechanisms." This review was completed by Forfás and submitted to the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. It has subsequently been forwarded to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform for onward transmission to the Troika.

Forfás' key conclusion is that it is too early to assess the full impact of the reforms on the labour market. In part, this is because insufficient time has passed since enactment to confirm any effects of the reforms on wage data.

However, it is also clear that the passing of the legislation is only one key milestone in the reform process – a number of other important stages are still in train. The successful and timely conclusion of these stages is essential to achieving successful reforms.

More time is needed to definitively test the impact of the new wage setting framework. This study could be repeated in due course when sufficient data is available for analysis (i.e. approximately 18 months after all elements of the reform process have been completed).

Action 117: Assess the potential for further actions to support improvements in labour market competitiveness.

Q2 Measures:

- Form the steering group to oversee the project and finalise a terms of reference. (Forfás)
- Submit a final report to the Minister of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. (Forfás)

Update: Complete

As one of the major cost components for firms, labour costs are a key determinant of both firm-level and national competitiveness. A Steering Group was formed including Forfás, the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, the Department of Social Protection, and the Department of Finance.

The Report aims to ensure that labour market policy and regulation, and the taxation and social welfare systems support competitive labour costs and job creation. The Report focuses on a number of key issues, specifically:

- Reductions in high replacement rates;
- Reform of the sectoral employment agreements;
- Modifications to the national minimum wage (NMW);
- Labour tax competitiveness.

The Report analyses the relevant data under each heading, placing Ireland's performance in an international context and proposing a series of recommendations to enhance performance. The Report is complete and has been submitted to the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

Action 118: Ensure that the commercial leases database is established and fully operational in 2013.

Q2 Measures:

- Cooperation with Revenue Commissioners in relation to data for inclusion on database. (Property Services Regulatory Authority)
- Complete IT infrastructure to support the commercial leases database. (Property Services Regulatory Authority)
- Completion and submission of necessary returns. (Property Service Providers)

Update: Complete

The relevant data for inclusion in the commercial leases database has been received from the Revenue Commissioners by the Property Services Regulatory Authority (PRSA). The IT infrastructures to underpin the database have been finalised and are in place. It is intended that the database will be launched in autumn 2013.

The information that will be initially included in the database will cover some 16,039 commercial properties leased in the period January 2010 to end-May 2013. Following initial publication, the database will be brought up to the then current date and will be updated on a weekly basis. The information which will be published initially in respect of these 16,039 properties will include the following:

- The address and description of the commercial property;
- The date of the lease of the property;
- The term of years of the lease;
- The rent payable in respect of the property.

Under the Property Services (Regulation) Act 2011, tenants are required to make a statutory return to the Authority and furnish the following additional information in respect of leases entered into after April 3rd 2012:

The commencement date of the lease;

- The capital consideration (if any) to be paid by the tenant or landlord in respect of the commercial property;
- The frequency of the rent review in respect of the property;
- The particulars relating to who is liable in respect of the rates, insurance, service charges and repairs in respect of the property;
- The net floor area, per each floor, of the property;
- The particulars (if any) relating to rent-free periods, fitting out time allowed, fit out allowances and capital contributions in respect of the property;
- The particulars relating to any break-clause in the lease; and
- The certificate identification number of the stamp certificate.

As at mid-June 2013, the Authority had received only 201 such returns. In order to ensure that tenants comply with their statutory obligations, the Authority will be using the new database to write to all tenants and direct that they furnish the necessary information to the Authority without delay. On receipt of this additional information it will be entered on the system and made available to members of the public on request and on payment of a fee.

Action 119: Complete a review of the Rent Review Arbitration Code to consider the effectiveness of the code in resolving disputes over rent reviews, and the degree to which stakeholders are making use of the code.

Q2 Measure: Consider information received on foot of consultation. (DJE)

Update: Complete

As part of the activities to inform the review of the Rent Review Arbitration Code, the Department of Justice and Equality invited stakeholders to make submissions on their experience of the use and operation of the Code. The information was sought by June 7th in line with the target of completing the review by the end of July 2013.

As part of the consultation process direct contact was made with entities represented on the Working Group which drew up the Code, and a notice was placed on the Department's website inviting other stakeholders with relevant experience to engage in the review process. However, the response level was very low and is unlikely to facilitate an assessment of the effectiveness of the Code in resolving disputes relating to rent reviews.

Action 123: Ireland is ranked 15th out of 183 countries in the World Bank's '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).

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.

Q2 Measure: Prepare a paper to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Renewal and Jobs on the actions necessary to improve Ireland's competitiveness rankings with a view to agreeing actions, lead actors and timelines for delivery in 2013. (DJEI, Forfás and relevant bodies)

Update: Complete

A paper on Ireland's competitiveness position was presented to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs in May, 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.

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.

Q2 Measure: Develop terms of reference for the report. (Forfás)

Update: Complete

Despite consumer price deflation, Ireland remains amongst the most expensive countries in the euro area. Lowering the cost of living would have an impact on Ireland's overall competitiveness – particular through the impact lower consumer prices would have on wage demands and labour costs. Lower consumer costs also improve real living standards. Terms of reference have been finalised for this study. The final report will:

- Examine how consumer price levels in Ireland compare with prices in our key competitors;
- Examine how inflation in Ireland compares with inflation in our key competitors;
- Identify the primary products and services driving inflation in Ireland and highlight the drivers of comparative price differentials between Ireland and our key competitors;
- Provide a high level assessment of the implications of high consumer prices and inflation for Ireland's national competitiveness with a specific focus on their impact upon wage levels in Ireland;
- Discuss the factors that determine and influence price differentials or that are relevant in the consideration of price differentials;
- Identify sectors which would benefit from more detailed future studies.

The final report is to be submitted to the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in Quarter 4 2013.

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 130: Continue to implement the pilot ManagementWorks project providing a range of training and development programmes to help SMEs to improve their performance through seeking to build their managerial capability; evaluate pilot to ascertain strengths and weaknesses.

Q2 Measure: Complete pilot of ManagementWorks project. (Skillnets)

Update: Complete

The pilot of the ManagementWorks programme concluded in May 2013.

There were 608 participants on the ManagementWorks programmes delivered as part of the pilot phase which commenced in September/October 2012. Within the participating companies on the pilot phase, 15 full-time and 41 part-time jobs were created over the period.

An independent evaluation of the pilot programme is underway and is expected to be concluded in July.

Action 131: Promote and support the adoption of structured upskilling and development systems for existing staff within a Human Resource management system in particular Excellence Through People (ETP).

Q2 Measure: Deliver a National Conference on 'Change Management' with ETP as an integral tool for National Competitiveness, in conjunction with external expertise in event management. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) delivered a Conference and Workshop on Organisational Development and Growth on May 15th 2013. This event was organised in conjunction with Trigraph and was attended by 80 delegates from around the country. Presentations and case studies were provided by leading proponents of Excellence Through People and facilitated workshops addressed areas of:

- Business Planning and Continuous Improvement;
- Effective Communications and People Engagement;
- Leadership and People Management;

- Planning of Learning and Development;
- Evaluation of Learning and Development;
- Human Resources.

Action 132: Progress the legislation providing for the establishment of SOLAS and complete implementation of the framework for the future management and development of the Vocational Education and Training sector in Ireland.

Q2 Measure: Progress the legislation through the Houses of the Oireachtas. (DES)

Update: Complete

The Further Education and Training Bill 2013 was published in January this year. The Bill, among other things, provides for the establishment of SOLAS, the dissolution of FÁS and the transfer over time of the FÁS training division to the Education and Training Boards that will be established following the commencement of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013.

The timing for establishment of the new authority is dependent on the enactment and entry into force of this legislation. The Bill has passed all stages in both houses of the Oireachtas and is expected to be enacted shortly.

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.

Q2 Measure: Implement Action Plan items as agreed. (Skillnets)

Update: Complete

The delivery of the action plan is proceeding as planned. An application for Springboard funding by Plastics Ireland has been approved and will assist in addressing the deficit identified in this action.

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

Q2 Measure: If feasible, commence a new network Development phase with interested parties. (Skillnets)

Update: Complete

The Skillnets new call for networks process concluded during this quarter. An application to promote a new engineering sector network was approved. Subject to contracts being agreed, work will continue in Quarters 3 and 4 to support the development of this network.

Skillnets participated in a meeting with the Manufacturing Development Forum during the quarter to clarify some of the needs of the sector. Engagement is also ongoing with existing networks to address the in-company training demand and the demand for the upskilling of machinists.

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.

Q2 Measure: Identify scale of supply and demand in these skills shortage areas through collaboration with named parties. (Skillnets)

Update: Complete

The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) identified very small numbers for the different specialisms mentioned. Discussion with Skillnets networks in the manufacturing sectors suggest that these gaps are identifiable at lower levels on the National Framework of Qualifications but that there is little evidence of demand for Level 9 programmes in this regard.

Institutions including the University of Limerick and several Institutes of Technology have qualifications or modules which address these issues but demand from industry has been weak. Skillnets will continue to gather information in this regard including engaging with the EGFSN to farther clarify whether a substantive need exists at Level 9.

Action 140: Promote engagement by manufacturing SMEs in the Irish Research Council's (IRC) Employment-Based Postgraduate Programme and Enterprise Partnership Scheme.

Q2 Measure: Targeted promotion of IRC Schemes to manufacturing SMEs in advance of calls for applications issuing. (IRC, EI)

Update: Complete

In order to raise the profile of the scheme amongst all SMEs, the Irish Research Council briefed a meeting at Enterprise Ireland which encompassed all their Development Advisors

who engage directly with SMEs. In addition to the standard promotion routes, more targeted promotion will take place when the pre-announcement of the next call takes place in July.

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.

Q2 Measure: Conduct research on what has been effective for the food and beverage sector in this area. (Skillnets)

Update: Complete

Feedback from the food and beverage sector (and from other sectors) suggests that the skills gap covers a range of skills issues including literacy, numeracy and entry level IT deficits in relation to their application in a work environment.

Manufacturing firms report, through existing networks, that low or lower-skilled general operatives require a range of learning interventions to address communication skills, appreciation of best practice and basic industry processes and skills as relevant. It would appear that this need is, in some cases, broader than the current Skills for Work programme and that additional discussion is required to establish the best means of delivering this action.

A new network has been approved for the Food and Drinks industry which will, subject to contracts being agreed, commence training in Quarter 3. This network plans to deliver a number of programmes designed to enhance the skills of low-skilled general operatives.

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

Q2 Measure: Establish, through research and collaboration, the current provision. (Skillnets)

Update: Complete

Following consultation and research, it is clear that while there is a wide range of supervisory development programmes available in the market, there is no award for those in full time work which could be described as a 'substantial qualification' in this area. There is a view that such a programme would be valued by both firms and employees.

Work in Quarter 3 will include specifying the purpose and learning outcomes of such a programme prior to engaging with potential providers on effective solutions. It is anticipated that most, if not all, of the modules required already exist. The challenge will be to bring the relevant modules together into one award.

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

Q2 Measure: Quantify and analyse the level of this type of training already underway. (Skillnets)

Update: Complete

There is a wide variety of training offered in relation to operational excellence in the manufacturing sector. Provision includes programmes in Lean, Six Sigma, green and black belt training. The provision also varies significantly in duration to respond to firms' requirements.

A tool for assisting firms to benchmark their performance in relation to operational excellence was launched during the quarter by the Irish Medical Devices Association (IMDA) through the Life Sciences Skillnet, which funded the development of the tool.

Skillnets participated in a meeting with the Manufacturing Development Forum during the quarter, which discussed how SME firms (particularly those with less than 50 employees) could be encouraged to engage with operational excellence models in greater numbers.

Revise employment permit schemes to provide for better support of the economy's evolving skills needs

Action 145: Enact employment permits legislation to provide for more flexibility and targeted instruments in support of the economy's evolving skills needs.

Q2 Measure: Publish draft Bill. (DJEI)

Update: Delayed

In spite of significant progress on this commitment, it has not been possible to meet the Quarter 2 target for publication of the Bill. A final draft of the Employment Permits (Amendment) Bill 2013 is expected shortly, with a view to making it ready for publication as early as possible.

Progress also continues to be made on the parallel development of necessary Regulations which will be required upon enactment of the Bill.

Action 147: Improve information on DJEI website to better explain the employment permits system and the supporting policies and procedures.

Q2 Measure: Implement expansion of the call centre. (DJEI)

Update: Delayed

Plans to extend call-centre hours are at an advanced stage with the National Employment Rights Authority. However, full implementation will require further development of the Call Centre's processes and ICT systems.

Implementation will now take place in Quarter 3.

Action 148: Develop and strengthen coherence between the employment permit regime and visa regime.

Q2 Measure: Ensure common information is available across DJEI and DJE websites. (DJEI and DJE)

Update: Complete

Information on the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation's website (www.djei.ie/labour/workpermits) has been overhauled and made more understandable, including cross-referencing with the Department of Justice and Equality's website/information.

Frequent and ongoing meetings took place between Departments to ensure that both systems complement each other. The Department of Justice website has also been updated.

Actions to support inter-sectoral mobility

Action 149: We will enhance mobility between the public and private sectors for mutual benefit by:

- Allowing civil servants to take a career break to work in the private sector;
- Introducing a swap scheme between the public and private sectors.

The career break scheme will be amended to allow civil servants take up alternative employment in the private sector for up to three years. This initiative is aimed at broadening the skills base and building capacity for a more effective Civil Service and will promote better communication and understanding between the private and public sector.

The Swap Scheme will be based on 12 month placements designed to enhance communication between the Civil Service and the private sector and to provide for staff development opportunities through new work experiences and project-based assignments.

Q2 Measure: As per headline action. (DPER)

Update: Complete

Civil Service Career Break Scheme

The Scheme was amended to allow civil servants take up employment in the private sector for up to three years. The Circular was published on February 22nd 2013.

The rationale for the revision of the Scheme was to give civil servants the opportunity to broaden their skills base, acquire new competencies and gain experience by working in the private sector to the benefit of the Civil Service on their return. The revised Scheme continues to allow civil servants apply for a career break for the purpose of self-employment.

Key changes to the Scheme included:

- A career break can now be taken for the purpose of taking up employment in the private sector (subject to terms and conditions) for a period of not less than six months and not more than three years.
- Staff can apply to take up to a maximum of 3 career breaks which when aggregated do not exceed the new limit of 12 years in total.
- When applying for a career break for the purpose of self-employment or employment in the private sector, details of the employment must be submitted as part of the application. Career breaks can be refused if there is a potential or existing conflict of interest between the activity/employment that the civil servant is proposing to engage in and their position in the Civil Service.

Civil Service/Private Sector Staff Exchange Scheme

A circular issued earlier this year to all Departments setting out the terms and seeking applications for the Civil Service/Private Sector Staff Exchange Scheme.

The Scheme is based on placements for periods from 3 to 12 months designed to enhance communication between the civil service and the private sector and to provide for staff development opportunities through new work experiences and project-based assignments.

Nineteen applications were received for the Scheme and so far, 4 potential swaps have been identified. The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform continues to liaise with IBEC to match civil service applicants with private sector counterparts.

Where exchanges can be agreed, placements will be arranged directly by the civil service and the private sector employers involved.

Infrastructure Investment to Underpin Employment Growth

Delivering competitively priced world class infrastructure and related services is critical to support enterprise development, competitiveness and job creation

Action 150: 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.

Q2 Measure: Enact legislation. (D/Finance)

Update: Delayed

The Heads of Bill were approved by Government on April 16th and are currently with the Office of the Attorney General for drafting. It is Government's intention that the proposals contained in the Bill will be effected later this year.

Broadband

Action 151: Progress a national mapping exercise, which will determine where State intervention is required, progress a State Aids application in respect of that intervention, and commence work on the requisite procurement process to deliver the State intervention.

Q2 Measure: Appoint consultants to assist with mapping, State Aids application and procurement. (DCENR)

Update: Complete

Following a competitive tendering process, the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources appointed Prisa Consulting on May 8th 2013 and the process of mapping future broadband investment has commenced. This process is an important pre-requisite for State Aids approval and will define the full extent to which the State will need to invest.

Transport

Action 162: Review public transport regulation with a view to reform that will reduce costs via increased competition.

Q2 Measure: Examine bus market to open PSO routes post 2014. (DTTAS, NTA)

Update: Delayed

The National Transport Authority is proceeding with its work for a statutory consultation on potential opening of Public Service Obligation (PSO) bus routes post 2014.

Action 165: Prepare a new Government Policy Statement on economic regulation.

Q2 Measure: Adopt and publish policy statement. (Government)

Update: Complete

The Government Policy Statement on Economic Regulation has been approved and published in line with Quarter 2 commitments.

Reduce costs through sensible regulation

Action 167: Publish and enact legislation to complete the reform of the State's Workplace Relations Services. This will deliver modern, user-friendly, world-class workplace services by replacing the current complex system involving five separate bodies with a new more efficient and effective two tier structure resulting in better business regulation and employer/employee relations.

Q2 Measure: 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. (DJEI)

Update: Delayed

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 Summer Legislative Programme 2013.

Drafting of the Bill has been taking place and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has engaged with the Attorney General's Office to progress the drafting during Quarter 2 2013. Enactment of the Bill will necessitate amendments to approximately 22 primary Acts, 12 specified parts or sections of Acts and 71 Statutory Instruments.

It has not been possible to meet the Quarter 2 target for the publication of the Bill. However, the Minister is committed to the publication enactment of the legislation as early as possible, with a view to having the proposed new Workplace Relations structures in place from 2014.

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.

Q2 Measure: Assist in completing Second Stage in the Dáil. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

The Second Stage reading of the Bill commenced on April 23rd 2013 and was completed on April 25th 2013. Committee Stage is expected to commence in the autumn.

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 173: Launch the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) that will provide support to micro-enterprises through Local Authorities, and establish a Centre of Excellence for Micro-enterprise and Small Business within Enterprise Ireland that will be a key integrating resource for the LEO network.

Q2 Measure: Draft legislation in conjunction with the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to dissolve CEBs and transfer their functions to Enterprise Ireland. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

Priority drafting of the County Enterprise Boards (Dissolution) Bill, 2013 commenced in February 2013 and involved extensive consultation with the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel, the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The draft Bill has been finalised and will be published following Government approval.

Q2 Measure: Initiate the phased roll-out of the supports to be delivered by the EI Centre of Excellence to the LEOs. (EI)

Update: Complete

In December 2012, Enterprise Ireland established a new Micro Enterprise and Small Business Division, incorporating a Centre of Excellence to provide support to entrepreneurs and small business as part of the execution of micro enterprise policy. The Centre of Excellence for Micro-enterprise and small business will have a key role to play in enhancing the supports provided by the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) network to Micro-enterprise and small business throughout the country.

Among the key functions of the Centre of Excellence are:

- Lead role within Enterprise Ireland for the development and review of the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with each County/ City Council;
- The review and benchmarking of the services and supports available from each LEO to promote best practice across the network;
- The development of standardised financial and non-financial support instruments (including application, evaluation and approval documents, information modules regarding the micro-finance fund, etc);

- To work in conjunction with LEOs to design and deliver appropriate national training and management development programmes at local level;
- National website designed specifically for micro-enterprise, incorporating online self-assessment tools, signposting to other State Services, benchmarking, how-to guides etc;
- Training to be organised for LEO staff;
- Audit and spot checks of expenditure to be carried out, including evaluation and approval committee approvals;
- Research of International Best Practice in micro-enterprise support;
- Development of national sectoral policies for micro enterprise;
- Development and roll out of various competitive funds.

The Centre of Excellence will work on delivering these functions on an on-going basis. The main focus at present is on the developing capability building programme for LEO staff.

Q2 Measure: Announce “advance” LEOs. (DJEI, EI, Local Authorities)

Update: Complete

On May 20th, the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Minister of State for Small Business showcased the first “advance” LEO in Fingal County Council. The Ministers launched the LEO Branding/Logo and published the Framework Service Level Agreement at the same time. They also announced details of the new LEO system aimed at delivering improved supports in a better location, to more businesses, and ultimately create more jobs.

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

Q2 Measure: Develop Terms of Reference to set out objectives and scope of the evaluation and initiative research/analysis (early Q2). (DJEI, EI)

Update: Complete

A Terms of Reference has been drafted and includes inputs from stakeholders, following a workshop chaired by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

The review will be led by Forfás with support from Enterprise Ireland and officials in the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

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

Q2 Measure: Conduct a consultation process with relevant stakeholders. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

A Public Consultation process was completed on June 7th. 74 submissions were received from entrepreneurs, business organisations, members of the public and academics.

The Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and innovation has also established an Entrepreneurship Forum, under the chairmanship of Sean O' Sullivan, Managing Director, Avego, to provide advice on matters of policy in the area of entrepreneurship and to provide input for consideration to the Government's Policy Statement.

Action 177: Establish the Insolvency Service of Ireland.

Q2 Measure: Design of regulatory and IT frameworks. (DJE)

Update: Complete

The Insolvency Service of Ireland was established on March 1st 2013. Regulations governing the authorisation of Personal Insolvency Practitioners and Authorised Intermediaries have been published and the supporting IT frameworks have been designed. The IT frameworks for prospective Personal Insolvency Practitioners and Authorised Intermediaries to apply for authorisation are operational. The IT framework for persons to make applications for the various debt resolution measures are at User Acceptance Testing stage.

The making of the comprehensive Regulations required under the Personal Insolvency Act 2012, including those governing the authorisation of Personal Insolvency Practitioners and Authorised Intermediaries is ongoing with final publication to follow enactment of the Courts and Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2013 in July.

Action 180: Expand the Competitive Feasibility Fund piloted in three regions during 2013.

Q2 Measure: Roll out Competitive Regional Feasibility funds to the Mid West. (EI)

Update: Delayed

The purpose of the Competitive Start Fund is to accelerate the growth of start-up companies that have the capability to succeed in global markets. Following the successful execution of two Competitive Feasibility Fund calls for the South East and North West Regions in 2012, Enterprise Ireland is rolling out the model to the other Regions to help accelerate entrepreneurship development at local level. To date in addition to those listed above

regional funds have been rolled out in the West, the Midlands and most recently in the North East Region. As part of this initiative, Enterprise Ireland is scheduled to undertake a Competitive Feasibility Fund for the Mid-West Region in November.

The objective of the Competitive Feasibility Fund for the Mid-West Region is to assist a new start-up company or individual entrepreneur to investigate the viability of a new growth orientated business proposition to be located in the Mid- West Region which has the potential to become a High Potential Start Up (HPSU).

The objective of the grant is to provide the necessary information to enable the promoter (and Enterprise Ireland) to reach firm conclusions regarding the project's viability and set out investor ready plans and financials associated with developing and commercialising the innovative product or service on international markets.

In advance of the Mid-West Region Competitive Feasibility Fund being launched, Enterprise Ireland will launch a Competitive Feasibility Fund targeting the Aviation Sector in the Mid-West region, (running from July – September).

In addition a Competitive Start Fund for the Aviation Sector with a focus on the Mid-west region will be launched in December.

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

Q2 Measure: Commence a Silicon Valley oriented development programme for High Potential Start-Ups. (EI)

Update: Complete

Following an EU tender process, the US Market Access Centre was selected as the programme provider of Access Silicon Valley, which is a phased programme to support Irish technology companies to successfully enter the US market.

The US Market Access Centre is based in Silicon Valley and has developed and delivered similar programmes over the last 17 years assisting non US technology companies to enter the US market.

The programme was launched by An Taoiseach in Silicon Valley on March 22nd. The Phase One boot-camp was held in Dublin from April 28th to 30th and involved 26 Enterprise Ireland clients. In total, 18 companies from the original 26 were considered appropriate to participate in the next phase of the programme which involves intensive mentoring and a 10 day itinerary in the market. Six companies travelled to the US in June and initial feedback is extremely positive.

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 186: Hold a second call for proposals for the Community Enterprise Centre (CEC) Management Development Scheme to support a further 10 managers during 2013.

Q2 Measure: Review and approve proposals. (EI)

Update: Complete

The Community Enterprise Centre Scheme has provided significant funding to facilitate the development of community enterprise centres, which are aimed at providing a physical and human support network for emerging entrepreneurs and micro-industry nationwide.

The first call for proposals under the Community Enterprise Centre (CEC) Management Development Scheme was undertaken in 2012 and supported 37 new managers.

A further call for proposals for the CEC Management Development Scheme closed on April 4th 2013. This was followed by the approval of 10 managers on May 31st, which included 9 new approvals with one additional year's funding for a manager approved in 2012.

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.

Q2 Measure: Agree strategies, including determining the Leadership and Management Capability needs of these sectors. (IDA, EI)

Update: Complete

The Joint EI/IDA Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) strategy has been completed. The strategy document will be presented to the Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland Boards in September.

Both teams from Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland have worked over the past 3 months to review the current status of the indigenous and multinational BPO sector and to investigate ways in which Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland can leverage their partnership approach to increase employment in the sector over the next 3-5 years. The work has involved an extensive review of market information, reports, company profiles, industry inputs/views as well as interviews with a representative sample of companies from the sector, both indigenous and MNC.

In addition, a strong industry group of 13 key clients in the BPO sector has completed Phase 1 of the Cluster Group Initiative focussed on the identification of opportunities in the UK and USA markets. Phase 2 of the collaboration is now underway to look at opportunities for common branding and collaborative working.

As winning domestic business is key to this sector, contact has been established with the main pillar banks and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in relation to opportunities in the Public Procurement External Service Delivery Strategy.

The joint EI/IDA Medical Technology strategy will be presented to both Executives in September, with a subsequent presentation to be made to the next scheduled Board meeting of each Agency.

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

Q2 Measure: Quarterly updates on progress against Phase 1 and Phase 2 clustering projects. (EI)

Update: Complete

The Pilot Industry-led Clustering Initiative aims to support time limited clustering projects that will achieve measurable benefits by addressing the needs of participating companies, e.g. sectoral/sub-sectoral development initiatives, supply- chain optimisation, realising economies of scale, exploring market opportunities, capability development and convergence opportunities.

Two workshops took place in April and May. The first related to advice on the Enterprise Ireland grant claim process and the second was a best practice facilitation workshop for the Phase 2 participants.

Feedback from participants has been excellent both on the principle of having the workshops as well as the material covered which included a strong role play element in the Best Practice facilitation workshop.

The Phase 1 projects are progressing at different paces. Of the 20 approved, approx 6 are approaching completion and have indicated that they will apply for Phase 2. Similarly, progress on the Phase 2 projects varies from cluster to cluster. One of the clusters, Consulting Ireland, recently launched its offer on June 4th. The main objective of this cluster is to assist companies to win increased international business and compete successfully with our other European and global partners. The particular focus will be on new and emerging markets, many of which are funded by the International Financial Institutions.

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.

Q2 Measure: Hold at least one standards/certification information event per quarter with a focus on SMEs. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

In Quarter 2, the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) participated in the organisation of the SMEST *SME and Standardisation Conference* - which took place in Brussels on May 28th during the Irish Presidency and was addressed by the Minister of State for Small Business.

NSAI worked closely with both the Irish Small and Medium Enterprises Association (ISME) and the Small Firms Association (SFA) to ensure the conference was aligned to Irish interests and that there was a particularly strong Irish participation. NSAI arranged for SME businessman Diarmuid Cahalane, founder, Open Innovation Partners, to be one of the industry speakers and facilitated the attendance of the Presidents of both ISME and SFA at the event with a view to arranging follow-on events through ISME and SFA regionally in Ireland using some of the relevant content.

Additionally, NSAI operates an SME Portal on its website which is dedicated to promoting the importance of standards for SME competitiveness.

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 195: Design and implement a pilot Internationalisation Expansion Initiative to support the acceleration of company traction in overseas markets. The initiative will have the goal of enabling qualifying companies to research, evaluate and plan the development of market entry strategies in new geographic markets.

Q2 Measure: Commence the Pilot Initiative focused on enabling companies to research, evaluate and plan market entry strategies in new geographic markets. (EI)

Update: Complete

Enterprise Ireland's pilot Internationalisation Expansion Initiative aims to assist qualifying companies to research, evaluate and plan the development of market entry strategies in new geographic markets. The focus of this initiative is to increase the success of companies in establishing a sustained market position in new geographic markets.

Following the design phase, the pilot initiative was launched in May as scheduled and is currently underway. In total, 10 Enterprise Ireland client companies are participating in the pilot which is expected to be completed in July. Three of these 10 companies have been approved for financial support under the scheme by Enterprise Ireland's Investment Committee, with work underway with the remaining seven companies involved in the pilot. The pilot will be completed during Quarter 3, following which the initiative will be formally launched. Feedback to date from participants involved in the pilot has been positive.

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.

Q2 Measure: Design and develop a pilot to increase Global Business Links. (EI)

Update: Complete

Enterprise Ireland has commenced the design of its Global Business Links initiative. This initiative is focused on delivering scaled client-buyer introductions for client companies and thereby increasing Global Business Links for client companies which ultimately will result in increased export sales. The service will be delivered through specialist in-market providers and business leads specialists. This service will be grant-aided in certain circumstances based on specific criteria.

The initiative, as scheduled, will be piloted in Quarter 3 and launched in Quarter 4.

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.

Q2 Measure: Use the EU Presidency period to communicate positive messages on Ireland to international and domestic audiences. (All Government Departments)

Update: Complete

Across the numerous events for the Irish Presidency including the opening ceremony on December 31st, key speeches to the European Parliament, major Presidency press conferences, the Taoiseach, Tánaiste and Government Ministers included Ireland's economic recovery in their key messaging.

Promotional messaging visuals were developed for use in EU Presidency meetings in Dublin and overseas. With the vast majority of the 800 Irish events taking place in Dublin Castle, of particular note was the rolling on-screen presentation in the Castle that displayed a range of

evidence regarding Ireland's economic recovery along with other key statistics regarding our profile in the world and industries in which Ireland is a leader.

Overseas, the Embassy network was very active in leveraging the EU Presidency to promote key economic messages to media and influential audiences, hosting Presidency launch press conferences and conducting an extensive programme of TV, radio and newspaper interviews.

As part of the Presidency, a series of press trips were organised so that leading international publications could be briefed on Ireland's plans for the Presidency as well as the current status of our economic recovery. These visits including 65 leading Brussels based correspondents, a group of London correspondents and a delegation from the Japanese press. These visits and the programme of high-level briefings these visits received resulted in considerable positive international media coverage of Ireland.

International interviews and article requests were facilitated where possible and a number of op-eds by Irish Ministers were placed worldwide, including an article by the Tánaiste on the Irish economy that was placed in quality newspapers in 15 countries with a combined print circulation of almost 3 million.

To mark our EU Presidency and to highlight our digital industry, a promotional gift of an eBook 'A History of Ireland in 100 Objects' was distributed through our Embassy network around St Patrick's Day and was downloaded by over 34,000 people globally.

The Irish EU Presidency website received over 500,000 visits during the six months with 1,500,000 page views including information on Ireland's economy that was regularly updated. For the meeting of European Economic and Finance Ministers in April, a bespoke cross-agency video was developed and shown specifically on Ireland's recovery for the over 300 international media that travelled for that event alone. This video has now been used for a variety of events through the Irish global network.

A poll in April of visiting delegates recorded a 97% satisfaction rating (Good or Very Good) with their visit to this country of which 37% had not visited Ireland before.

Maximising Procurement Opportunities

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

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

Q2 Measure: Review progress on Procuring Innovation Initiative and consider how best to extend the scheme. (DJEI, EI)

Update: Complete

Enterprise Ireland met with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in March to review progress to date on the Procuring Innovation Initiative which was introduced in 2012, and to consider how best to extend the Initiative. Case studies have been developed on the two most advanced projects - ESB eCars and the Railway Procurement Agency projects. Other projects are at an earlier stage.

Discussion on widening the procurement of innovation in the public sector also took place at the first meeting of the newly established High Level Group on SME Access to Public Procurement in early July. A number of ideas have been identified for further exploration over the coming months.

Developing and Deepening the Impact of Foreign Direct Investment

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.

Q2 Measures:

- Focus advertising initiative on standards participation. (NSAI)
- Increase awareness of the benefits of standardisation through the e-Communications programme. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

An advertising campaign on standards ran over a 5 week period commencing in April 2013, on Radio One, Today FM, Newstalk and 4FM.

Advertising in respect of standardisation participation was based on testimonial from the companies Dromone Engineering and Open Innovation Partners.

An eZine promoting the role of standardisation was distributed to 11,300 recipients and resulted in positive feedback and interaction. Content included:

- New Standardisation – Get involved in the work activity of CEN and ISO
- The Role of Standards in Research and Innovation.

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.

Q2 Measure: Commence preparation of a report supporting the medium-term economic development of the Rural Areas for the period to 2025. (DECLG)

Update: Complete

The initial findings from the national consultation were presented at the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas Conference on June 10th. These initial findings are available on www.ruralireland.ie.

The drafting of the final report is now underway and it will be presented to the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government in October 2013. Government will then give due consideration to the findings and make decisions regarding the appropriate actions to be taken.

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.

Q2 Measure: Establish Socio Economic Committees in a small number of frontrunner local authority areas. (DECLG)

Update: Delayed

10 Local Authority Areas have been selected for the establishment of 'Frontrunner' Socio-Economic Committees (SECs). These areas include: Dublin City Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, South Dublin County Council, Cork County Council, Limerick City and County Councils, Galway County Council, Mayo County Council, Roscommon County Council, Leitrim County Council and Offaly County Council.

Preparatory work is underway in all 10 areas. It is anticipated that frontrunner SECs will be established in these areas in July 2013.

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

Q2 Measure: Commence Review. (DECLG)

Update: Complete

The review has commenced, with stakeholders (e.g. Business Representative Associations, Local Development Partnerships, Social Partners etc.) being invited on May 10th 2013 to input into the review with particular regard to the Strategy’s impact on businesses and enterprise in terms of jobs supported, retained and created, as appropriate, and cost savings.

Action 232: Use the Youth Programme developed under Ireland’s Presidency of the EU to focus on the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people and to maximise the potential for youth policy to address the goals of Europe 2020 with specific regard to youth unemployment.

Q2 Measure: Implement the European-wide Structured Dialogue Consultation Process with young people based on the theme of social inclusion and quality work provision. (DCYA)

Update: Complete

As part of the Irish EU Presidency’s Youth Programme, consultations took place with young people and youth organisations across the 27 Member States on the theme of social inclusion and quality youth work. The results of this dialogue identified the areas of employment, education, participation, welfare, support services, youth organisations and quality youth work as central to the social inclusion, development and well-being of young people.

Q2 Measure: Host the 1) European Youth Conference; and 2) Directors General of Youth meeting to consider findings from the Structured Dialogue process and the priority themes of the Irish Presidency. (DCYA)

Update: Complete

Building on the findings from the Structured Dialogue process, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs hosted an EU Youth Conference on Social Inclusion in March 2013 in Dublin. Almost 250 people from across the EU attended the Conference, with 109 young people and youth representatives and 65 Ministry officials participating in workshops. It showcased the talent and innovation of Ireland’s young people and the voluntary youth sector. Almost 100 young people were involved in supporting the Conference, acting as

volunteers, guest MCs and speakers, and providing inputs through arts and drama presentations. Over the three days, information stands showcased the work underway in youth programmes provided by the voluntary youth sector in communities throughout the country.

The conclusions from this Conference informed EU Council Conclusions on the Contribution of quality youth work to young people's development, well-being and social inclusion (adopted by the Council on May 16th 2013). They will also inform the structured dialogue consultations with young people during the Lithuanian and Greek Presidencies.

The meeting of the Directors General for Youth, hosted by the Department on May 13th 2013, explored the personal, social and economic impact of youth work. Key messages emerging include the need for :

- Prompt implementation of the Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning including the recognition of skills acquired by young people in their engagement in youth work through a common recognition system, and
- Well-evidenced outcomes for young people which articulate the value of youth work to others e.g. employers, business community, other Ministries etc.

Q2 Measure: Progress Ireland's Presidency priorities in the area of Youth through Council Conclusions to be adopted by the European Council of Youth Ministers. (DCYA)

Update: Complete

Council Conclusions, adopted by the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council on May 16th 2013 propose actions that will maximise the potential of youth policy in addressing the goals of Europe 2020. A second set of Conclusions, also adopted on May 16th 2013, highlight the importance of quality youth work as a tool for engagement with, and development of, young people.

These conclusions include a concrete set of measures aimed at raising the profile of youth work at EU level and mainstreaming youth work into broader EU policy responses to youth employment and social inclusion.

Q2 Measure: Hold a round-table event exploring the contribution of youth work to youth employment comprising national and European partners. (DCYA)

Update: Complete

As a follow-up to these Conclusions, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs hosted a two day informal expert roundtable on June 20th and 21st which considered the contribution of youth work to youth employment.

The outcome of the meeting, the Dublin Declaration, recognises the challenges facing young people in Europe as a result of the lack of jobs and work experience, as well as the challenges posed by the widening gap between skills being sought by certain employers and those held by many prospective employees. It also recognises that youth work can play a highly-relevant role in developing young people's skill-sets, in particular with respect to 'soft' skills such as learning to learn, social and civic competence, leadership, communication, teamwork, and entrepreneurship – all of which are highly-valued and sought-after by employers. The Declaration in particular notes the centrality of the role of quality youth work in the implementation of the Youth Guarantee by Member States.

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.

Q2 Measure: Convene an Interdepartmental Group to explore opportunities for involvement of unemployed people in volunteering and identify any barriers that might need to be addressed. (DJEI, DSP, DCYA, DECLG, DTTAS)

Update: Complete

An Interdepartmental Group involving the above Departments met to explore the issues relating to the current levels of participation in volunteering by unemployed people, particularly young people, and to consider if there are any barriers to their participation in such volunteering activity.

While the Voluntary Work Option Scheme which allows those who are unemployed to undertake voluntary activity while retaining social welfare payments subject to certain conditions already exists, there is a low take-up of the scheme amongst those who are unemployed.

The Group also considered the capacity of voluntary organisations to absorb additional potential volunteers.

There were no particular barriers identified which are currently preventing those who are unemployed from participating in volunteering activity. However, there may be potential for action in some areas, such as:

- Simplifying the form for the Voluntary Work Option scheme to make it easier unemployed persons and volunteering organisations to complete;
- Promoting greater awareness of the potential volunteering opportunities which currently exist;
- Using the matching service of Volunteer Ireland to increase the participation of

unemployed people in volunteering activity on a regional and local basis.

The Interdepartmental Group will meet again to consider these issues further.

Q2 Measure: Seek input from key stakeholders (e.g. Volunteer Ireland, National Youth Council, etc) on how to facilitate the increased take-up of volunteering by unemployed people. (DJEI, DSP, DCYA, DECLG, DTTAS)

Update: Complete

Inputs were sought from Volunteer Ireland and the National Youth Council in late 2012. Desk research was subsequently carried out by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation on volunteering schemes in other jurisdictions, most notable Scotland. Examples of successful volunteering efforts in an Irish context in recent years have also been collated (e.g. Special Olympics, Tall Ships Race, The Gathering, etc.)

The key issue for the Inter Departmental Group to consider is how best to target volunteering opportunities at people who are unemployed.

Q2 Measure: Roll out additional guidance to staff working in Local Employment Offices, to increase awareness and uptake of the Voluntary Work Option scheme. (DSP)

Update: Delayed

The relevant Interdepartmental Group (IDG) met in May to discuss these issues. As a result of this, a circular detailing the Voluntary Work Option scheme and an application have been developed. These have been sent to the IDG for observations and recommendations. The IDG will meet in Quarter 3 and following their feedback, further work will be undertaken to roll out guidance to staff in the local employment offices regarding the updated Voluntary Work Option scheme.

While awaiting a conclusion from the IDG, all Department of Social Protection local offices have been reminded of the existing guidelines for jobseekers seeking to partake in voluntary work, to increase staff awareness of the option.

Q2 Measure: Consider the potential for pre-registration of voluntary bodies to speed up application process under the Voluntary Work Option scheme. (DSP)

Update: Complete

As part of the discussions of the Inter Departmental Group referenced above, the Group considered approaches to streamline the application process under the Voluntary Work Option scheme including the possibility of enabling pre-registration of voluntary bodies.

Q2 Measure: Develop a Volunteering Programme for the Gathering Ireland 2013. (Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Complete

Working with Volunteer Ireland, the Gathering has recruited 86 volunteers for five locations - Cork, Killarney, Limerick, Galway and Sligo - who commenced work on May 25th 2013. Further volunteers are currently being recruited to bring the total number to 120. The programme is due to run until October with volunteers approaching overseas visitors and advising them on how they can participate in Gathering events in the local area.

Q2 Measure: Launch and implement the National Quality Standards for Volunteer-led Youth Groups. (DCYA)

Update: Complete

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs launched these Standards on March 4th 2013. Information sessions have been provided to the voluntary and Education and Training Boards (formerly VEC) sectors. The purpose of these standards is to improve the quality of the programmes and activities provided by volunteers for young people and to support volunteers in improving the way these programmes are planned and delivered, thus resulting in better outcomes for young people. The standards are being implemented on a phased basis throughout 2013 with engagement of all youth groups from January 2014.

Q2 Measure: Maximise the potential of European Youth Week to enhance volunteer involvement in youth work organisations, services and youth activity groups. (DCYA)

Update: Complete

The themes for youth week were Social Inclusion, Citizenship and Participation. The 'Youth Day' event, hosted by Léargas on May 25th in Croke Park, marked the start of European Youth Week in Ireland. Some 300 people attended including young people, volunteers, and youth workers. The event featured an exhibition by youth groups, workshops, and performances and was a celebration of the quality of Irish youth projects and of international youth work. The Eurodesk relays also hosted a number of events around the country such as information evenings on European Voluntary Service.

Voluntary Service International (Ireland) represented Irish youth projects at events staged in Brussels to mark the 25th anniversary of EU youth programmes. A volunteer youth ambassador from Ireland attended the youth festival –'YO Fest' in Brussels on May 30th and 31st, highlighting the value of volunteering and encouraging other young people to become volunteers in youth organisations, services etc at local, national and European levels.

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

Q2 Measure: Pilot of scheme in selected DSP INTREO offices. (DCYA, DSP, DES)

Update: Complete

The Department of Social Protection and the Department of Children and Family Affairs have completed the preparatory arrangements for the new school-age childcare scheme. The scheme has been introduced on a pilot basis in seven Local Office areas. A further phased roll out is planned in advance of the programme being launched on a national basis in September 2013.

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.

Q2 Measure: Consult with relevant stakeholders to scope out a National Plan. (DJEI, other relevant departments and agencies and business representatives)

Update: Complete

In relation to the scoping out of a National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has consulted with Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI), as the main stakeholder representing business CSR activity in Ireland.

The broad parameters of the National Plan have been agreed and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation will be consulting with a number of relevant Government Departments and the main business representative organisations, as well as continuing engagement with BITCI, during Quarter 3 on the exact content of the Plan.

Action 237: Publish legislation aimed at easing the regulatory burden on co-operative societies and making it easier to run a co-operative as an alternative form of enterprise organisation.

Q2 Measure: Support the OPC in drafting of the Bill and subsequent publication. (DJEI, OPC)

Update: Delayed

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation worked closely with the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel in the drafting of the Friendly Societies and Industrial and Provident Societies (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill and the drafting was completed on July 2nd.

As such, it was not possible to achieve the Quarter 2 target date for publication of the Bill. It is anticipated that the Bill will therefore be published in Quarter 3.

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.

Q2 Measures:

- Publish Report. (Forfás)
- Bring Forfás report to Government. (DJEI, Forfás)

Update: Delayed

A report on Social Enterprise was completed by Forfás in Quarter 4 2012. The final report contains over 20 recommendations on fostering the development of the sector in Ireland covering areas such as:

- policy development;
- capacity development;
- improved access to public procurement;
- measures to improve access to finance;
- leadership development;
- harnessing of community support; and
- improved governance within social enterprises.

The report is being prepared for submission to Government by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation prior to publication.

Sectoral Opportunities

Manufacturing

Action 243: Launch a National Step Change Initiative to strengthen Ireland's manufacturing base, focused on capability building and enabling companies to take one step up to drive enhanced productivity and competitiveness, to internationalise, to deepen engagement in innovation and to collaborate to compete.

Q2 Measure: As per headline action. (DJEI, EI, IDA, Forfás)

Update: Complete

The National Step Change Initiative was announced by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation on April 22nd 2013 as part of the launch of a Manufacturing Strategy prepared by Forfás.

The initiative is being implemented by the enterprise development agencies, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland. It comprises three programmes which will be extended to the full range of manufacturing companies and involves the roll out of an Enterprise Ireland initiative to apply Lean principles, the expansion of a key management development programme and the expansion of an Innovation Voucher programme. An extensive promotional programme will be put in place to highlight the expansion of these support mechanisms.

Action 244: Review and enhance (if required) existing programmes including management development programmes and Excellence Through People, to deliver to the needs of foreign owned firms (as appropriate), taking into account sectoral strategies to be developed elsewhere in this Action Plan.

Q2 Measure: Identify relevant programmes and assess eligibility criteria in the context of extending the programmes to a broader cohort of firms. (EI, IDA, NSAI)

Update: Delayed

Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland have been engaged in the development of sectoral strategies (see Action 189), which will facilitate the identification of relevant programmes to deliver to the needs of foreign owned firms (as appropriate).

While Action 189 has now been delivered, Action 244 which was contingent on the finalisation of the sectoral strategies will not be completed until Quarter 3.

Notwithstanding this delay on the overall Quarter 2 commitment, the National Standards Authority of Ireland promoted and delivered a Conference and Workshop on Organisational Development and Growth in May. This event was attended by 80 delegates and involved

presentations from leading proponents of Excellence Through People (ETP). Specific radio advertisements on the benefits of certification and Excellence Through People were broadcast as part of a national advertising campaign.

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).

Q2 Measure: Determine the emerging manufacturing needs of the Pharmaceutical Industry and plan appropriate programmes. (IDA, SFI)

Update: Complete

The creation of the Pharma Manufacturing Technology Centre (PMTC) by Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland has provided a detailed description of needs from the pharma manufacturing industry. This will be regularly updated by the PMTC industry steering committee.

In addition, the National Institute for Bio-Processing Research and Training (NIBRT) has a revamped board and scientific advisory board derived from industry, which is compiling a detailed description of needs for the biopharma manufacturing industry. This list of needs will be fed into IDA Ireland and Science Foundation Ireland by NIBRT. (See also update provided on the ongoing measures under Action 245)

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.

Q2 Measures:

- Focused advertising (radio, web) initiative on standards participation. (NSAI)
- e-Communications programme to increase awareness of the benefits of standardisation. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

An advertising campaign on standards ran over a 5 week period commencing in April 2013, on Radio One, Today FM, Newstalk and 4FM. Advertising in respect of standardisation participation was based on testimonial from the companies Dromone Engineering and Open Innovation Partners.

An eZine promoting the role of standardisation was distributed to 11,300 recipients and

resulted in positive feedback and interaction. Content included:

- New Standardisation – Get involved in the work activity of CEN and ISO
- The Role of Standards in Research and Innovation

Action 248: Support manufacturing companies with precision measurement or demanding process measurement challenges through expertise from the National Metrology Laboratory.

Q2 Measure: Develop, market and deliver a suite of technical measurement-related training modules to companies. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

The National Metrology Laboratory offers measurement and calibration training in its purpose-built laboratory in Glasnevin. A suite of measurement-related training modules have been developed and the programme is being promoted via flyers and website. Full details are available on the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) website.

Five training courses (both in NSAI and in-company) have been delivered to date, with 22 delegates attending. A full schedule of courses in metrology and calibration is in place for 2013.

The National Metrology Laboratory is currently finalising a comprehensive proficiency testing scheme for industrial labs. The first of the proficiency testing schemes is due to commence in early Quarter 3 2013.

Action 250: Promote relevant Enterprise Ireland funds to indigenous manufacturing start-ups which will facilitate feasibility, prototype development and market testing.

Q2 Measure: As per headline action. (EI)

Update: Complete

Enterprise Ireland continues to encourage new innovative start-ups in manufacturing offering a suite of financial offers. A specific Competitive Start Fund for manufacturing will be launched by Quarter 4. As part of the overseas entrepreneurship programme, projects with high level manufacturing potential are actively targeted. Activity is ongoing in relation to this action.

Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Action 253: Attract graduate talent into the sector through the Bord Bia Marketing Fellowship which will employ 25 new graduates on over 100 business development projects in 2013.

Q2 Measure: Up to 20 places awarded for the 2013/2014 cohort. (Bord Bia)

Update: Complete

Twenty-five graduates have been offered for the 2013/2014 Bord Bia Marketing Fellowship.

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.

Q2 Measure: Continue effective business planning with the companies. (BIM)

Update: Complete

As part its suite of business development programmes, Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) launched the Collective Route to Market Scheme at the beginning of 2013. This Scheme aims to promote greater collaboration within the sector and to support the establishment of appropriate joint venture operations and partnerships. Between four and six Seafood Collectives are expected to apply for financial and business development support under this scheme during 2013.

As part of this initiative BIM organised an industry conference, 'Irish Seafood – Becoming a Global Player' in March. This was attended by 100 representatives from the seafood and financial sector, with speakers from New Zealand, Canada, the Netherlands and from Ireland providing an overview of recent developments and future trends and perspectives on the global market.

Q2 Measure: Increase raw material, new species and foreign landings. (BIM)

Update: Complete

Increase raw material: Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) has applied for an aquaculture licence to develop an organic salmon farm on the leaside of Inis Oírr in Galway Bay. The proposed farm, if licensed, will produce up to 15,000 tonnes of organic salmon every year, worth €102 million annually. A decision on the licence application will be made by the Minister later this year.

BIM has commenced technical work on further sites off the west coast and further licence applications are expected by the year end.

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 BIM in conjunction with the Seafood Development Centre 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. This development will provide employment opportunities.

Ireland's Boarfish quota of 56,666 tonnes is 2/3 of the international total allowable catch (TAC). This product has previously being used for fishmeal and BIM is working with a number of seafood companies, to develop around 15, 000 tonnes of the product by 2015 for human consumption in China and Africa. Technical work was undertaken in Quarter 2 to evaluate prospects for producing minced products from boarfish. Trials to date indicate success and market options are to be investigated.

Foreign Landings: To date in 2013, approximately 35,000 tonnes of blue whiting from Norwegian vessels has been landed into Killybegs. Also in Quarter 2 landings of hake and megrim from Spanish vessels are being processed in Castletownbere for sale in Europe.

Q2 Measure: Assess innovation, product development work through the Seafood Development Centre. (BIM)

Update: Complete

The Seafood Development Centre (SDC) is integrated with , Bord Iascaigh Mhara's (BIM) 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. For example, over the past number of months the SDC has assisted a new company to develop and launch a new innovative range of sea vegetable and seaweed-based ready-meals from a locally sourced raw material. This company has secured contracts with major multiple stores. BIM has also assisted a company to produce and launch a range of herring products for initial distribution to retail outlets in the south west with a view to extending to national distribution in the future.

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 current round, three graduates have now been placed in seafood companies bringing a culture of innovation, new ideas and technological skills.

Q2 Measure: Ensure capital investment for value-add development in place. (BIM)

Update: Complete

During Quarter 2, applications were received from 25 seafood companies under the Seafood Processing Measure for investments of €9 million on a range of projects to add value and create jobs. The projects are currently being assessed.

The 18 companies already supported are on target to deliver 32 jobs by end of Quarter 4. In addition, new investment programmes by further seafood companies will generate a further 70 jobs in 2014.

Also in Quarter 2 funding of €5 million was announced for the seafood industry for a range of 150 environmental, quality and local employment support programmes. In excess of 1,000 boats can benefit from these schemes which are based on the strategic management of the marine resource.

Action 256: Work to secure adequate funding for the agri-food sector through a reformed CAP policy framework that contributes to the twin goals of competitiveness and sustainability.

Q2 Measure: Achieve inter-institutional political agreement on CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) reform by end June 2013. (DAFM)

Update: Complete

Following detailed discussions and negotiations over the past number of months, political agreement on the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) between the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission, reached on June 26th. The agreement marks the first time that a major reform of the CAP has been secured with the involvement of the European Parliament, and represented the successful achievement of Ireland's objective of an overall political accord before the conclusion of its Presidency of the EU.

Action 259: Progress the development/licensing of large scale Deep Sea finfish aquaculture sites in line with the road map set out in Food Harvest 2020 Milestones report.

Q2 Measure: Complete the processing of the BIM licence application in respect of Galway Bay. (DAFM)

Update: Delayed

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) has submitted an application for an aquaculture licence for the cultivation of finfish near Inis Oirr in Galway Bay. The technical and scientific analysis of this application and its Environmental Impact Statement is currently being considered under the

provisions of the 1997 Fisheries (Amendment) Act, and is unlikely to be completed before Quarter 4 2013.

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.

Q2 Measure: Award contract for specialist engineering project management support, following public procurement. (Marine Institute)

Update: Complete

Following a competitive tendering process, the contract for specialist engineering project management support was signed with Mallin Ltd. in late May 2013.

Action 263: Optimise dairy sector's export and investment potential through the introduction of a sustainability and quality programme for the dairy sector.

Q2 Measure: Technical Advisory Committee to finalise farm standard and submit to INAB (Irish National Accreditation Board). (Bord Bia)

Update: Delayed

The draft standard has been developed with industry and other stakeholders. A delay has arisen as industry requested that individual audits be conducted at each cooperative prior to submission to the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB), rather than basing the standard on the pilot audits as originally intended.

This increased the required number of audits from 2 to 44. These will be organised and assessed over the summer by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) prior to finalisation and submission to the INAB for accreditation. It is expected that this process will now be completed in Quarter 4 2013.

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

Q2 Measure: Optimise cheese product at commercial scale. (Teagasc and commercial partner)

Update: Complete

The optimisation of cheese prototypes at commercial scale has been progressed over Quarters 1 and 2 and the overall project is on schedule.

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

Q2 Measure: Six individual and six syndicated foresight4food projects initiated. (Bord Bia)

Update: Complete

Nine individual projects and eleven syndicated foresight4food projects have been initiated over Quarter 2 2013.

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.

Q2 Measure: Offer further workshops to all other registered companies; support companies in the development of their plans (Bord Bia)

Update: Complete

Origin Green is a sustainability programme 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 is holding 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 are also working with companies to develop their plans. To date, a total of 260 companies have signed up for the Origin Green Programme. Of these, 20 companies are verified members of Origin Green, 48 companies have submitted their plans and 192 companies are at the workshop/plan development stage. Full details on the programme and member companies can be found at www.origingreen.ie.

In addition, Bord Bia, in partnership with the Irish food and drink industry, plans to recruit 10 experienced and talented executives as Origin Green Ambassadors to build trade awareness globally of Ireland's Origin Green programme. They will take part in the Bord Bia Origin Green Ambassador programme, a new two-year MSc. in Business Sustainability awarded by UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School. and will be paid an annual bursary of approximately €30,000. Interviews to select the Green Ambassadors are scheduled to take place in mid-July.

Q2 Measure: 40% of exports covered by member companies (Bord Bia)

Update: Complete

Based on company data, Bord Bia, estimates that 55% of food and drink exports are from fully verified member companies.

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

Q2 Measure: Recruitment, interview and selection complete. (Bord Bia)

Update: Complete

Food Works 2 was launched on March 26th and the final date for receipt of applications was April 29th. Interviews with shortlisted applicants took place and the selection process is now complete. Thirteen applicants were selected and twelve have confirmed participation.

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

Q2 Measure: Three projects introduced or progressed. (Bord Bia)

Update: Complete

Four food industry co-opetition projects have been introduced and/or progressed during Quarter 2.

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

Q2 Measure: Information campaign to food companies initially in the beef and dairy sectors about FSSC. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

A mail shot of the brochure detailing the Food Safety System Certification (FSSC), was distributed to approximately 350 primary food producers in the Beef and Dairy sectors. The brochure is available on the National Standards Authority of Ireland website.

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.

Q2 Measure: Meet according to agreed schedule. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

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 Quarter 1 of this year and comprises six industry representatives and as well as representatives from public sector. Other relevant industry practitioners and stakeholders are invited to meetings to discuss thematic areas as required.

In line with the Quarter 2 commitment, the first meeting of the Committee took place in May 2013 and examined the area of green products and services. Actions identified at the meeting are being pursued by the relevant Departments and agencies. The second meeting of the Committee took place on July 18th with a focus on the potential for waste as a market for enterprise opportunity. At least one further meeting of the Consultative Committee will take place in the autumn.

Action 277: Monitor and Report progress on Delivering Our Green Potential to the Cabinet Committee on the Green Economy.

Q2 Measures:

- Consult relevant Departments, Agencies and Stakeholders. (DJEI)
- Collate case studies from Industry, Public Sector, Research and Industry Clusters, as appropriate. (DJEI, DECLG and other relevant departments and agencies)

Update: Complete

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.’

Delivering the individual commitments, which are outlined in ‘Delivering our Green Potential’ requires a whole of Government approach to maximise the growth and employment potential of the Green Economy.

A progress report on developments in the Green Economy in Ireland since the publication of

the Policy Statement is currently being prepared with a view to presenting it to the Cabinet Committee on Climate Change and the Green Economy in Quarter 3.

Case studies and updates on policy in diverse sectors of the Green Economy are currently being collated in conjunction with industry and Government Departments and agencies.

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

Q2 Measure: Consult with relevant Departments, Agencies and Stakeholders to gather data. (DJEI)

Update: Complete

A number of publications to date have provided a range of estimates of employment in the Green Economy in Ireland. The purpose of this action is to develop an understanding of benchmarking employment in the sector in Ireland, in particular given that work on an agreed definition of 'green employment' is ongoing at EU and international levels.

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has met with Central Statistics Office (CSO) and are working with that Office on collecting information regarding benchmarking employment in the Green Economy.

In conjunction with the CSO, the Department has consulted with relevant stakeholders such as Enterprise Ireland, 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, is also underway.

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.

Q2 Measure: Establishment of Task Group. (NSAI, SEAI)

Update: Complete

The Irish Standard on Energy Efficiency Design Methodology has now been launched as a National Standards Authority of Ireland project which will lead to a full national standard under the number IS399 in due course.

An IS399 Committee (Energy Efficiency Design Methodology Project Group) has been established as foreseen in the Quarter 2 commitment. Membership of the working group on energy efficient design methodology include Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland and the following:

- **Industry Representatives:** Astellas Ireland, Boston Scientific, Intel Ireland, Diageo Engineers Ireland, Kerry Group, Roadstone wood.
- **Engineering Design and Energy Management Companies:** FDT Consulting Engineers, PM Group, DPS Engineering, Jacobs Engineering, Industrial Utilities, Energy Point Consulting, EPO Ltd.

The first meeting of the Energy Efficiency Design Methodology Project Group took place in May 2013 and a schedule of meetings was agreed to the end of the year.

Action 287: Reduce the number of waste regions from ten to three.

Q2 Measure: Adoption of new regional structure by Local Authorities. (DECLG)

Update: Complete

The County and City Managers Association has confirmed the composition of the three new Waste Management Planning Regions (WMPRs) provided for in A Resource Opportunity - Waste Management Policy in Ireland. The new WMPRs correspond with the regional structures set out in the Government's Action Programme for Effective Local Government.

Action 288: Develop waste plans for the three new regions reflective of national waste policy and the waste hierarchy as set out in the Waste Framework Directive. The regional plans will also reflect the new regulatory regime which will be applied to waste collection, especially in terms of ensuring that prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery are favoured over disposal of waste to improve Ireland's waste management performance.

Q2 Measure: Identification of lead authorities in each region. (DECLG)

Update: Complete

The County and City Managers Association has ratified Dublin City Council, Mayo County Council and the Tipperary-Limerick consortium as the Lead Authorities for their respective Waste Management Planning Regions.

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.

Q2 Measure: Subject to Government approval, publish the Strategy for the Construction sector. (DJEI, Forfás)

Update: Complete

The Forfás strategy and outlook for the construction sector was approved by Government. The Forfás work acknowledges that the construction sector has been a significant contributor to the economy and society and continues to be vital to Ireland's future growth. The report's recommendations cover five key themes: removing obstacles and restoring confidence in the domestic market; driving further internationalisation; embedding competitiveness and innovation; ensuring the sector is skilled to deliver; and transforming governance.

Q2 Measure: Identify actions to be taken and by whom, arising from Government consideration of the draft strategy. (Relevant Government Departments)

Update: Complete

Following consideration of the Forfás report, Government has discussed a range of actions to be taken and these will be set out in a statement of actions which recognises the role Government can play in supporting the sustainable growth of the sector.

Action 294: Better cross-Government co-ordination of action on the property market will be progressed under the active leadership of the Department of Finance.

Q2 Measure: Establish cross-Government Governance structure and Cabinet committee reporting system. (D/Finance)

Update: Complete

An Inter-Agency Property Group, chaired by the Department of Finance and with membership from the relevant Government Departments and agencies, has been established. Two meetings of the Group had been held by end Quarter 2 and the work programme for the Group has been agreed, with three separate work-streams looking at demand and supply, funding and structural issues in the sector.

A number of other activities in relation to the property market are being undertaken including an analysis of the residential property market by the ESRI on behalf of the National

Asset Management Agency.

The work of the Inter-Agency Property Group will be considered by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs.

Tourism

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.

Q2 Measure: Gathering Legacy Proposals developed. (Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Complete

The Gathering Project Team, together with Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland, will be working to optimise the legacy of The Gathering in various ways over the next 12 months into early 2014. One of the main successes of The Gathering has been the mobilisation of local communities and a significant legacy will be maintaining that wider engagement in tourism by communities.

Retail Sector

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

Q2 Measures:

- Convene first meeting of relevant Departments and agencies and agree Terms of Reference for the Group's work and schedule of meetings. (DJEI, Forfás and relevant departments)
- Consult with representatives of the Retail sector. (DJEI, Forfás and relevant departments)

Update: Complete

The first meeting of the Interdepartmental Group (IDG) on the Retail sector was held on May 21st 2013, involving a range of relevant Departments and State Bodies. The Group is chaired by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

The IDG agreed its Terms of Reference and a work programme at the first meeting, and subsequently met with the main bodies representing the retail sector on June 25th and with

other stakeholders, including practitioners, business representative bodies, workers representatives and the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOUE) on July 11th. These parties were invited to provide written submissions in advance of the meetings and outlined at the meetings the key measures they believe the Government should take to support the retail sector.

Creative Services

Action 311: During Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the EU, promote Irish arts and artists via Presidency Culture Programme.

Q2 Measure: The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht has put in place an extensive Culture Programme embracing all Member States and some significant third countries. The heightened platform of Irish culture in Europe also serves to benefit other sectors including tourism and industry. The Department works on a cross agency basis and on a close basis with the Embassy network. (DAHG)

Update: Complete

The international element of Culture Connects, the Culture Programme to mark Ireland's Presidency of the Council of European Union during the first 6 months of 2013, focused on Member States and priority countries, including Russia, Australia and China. 197 separate projects have been supported covering all 26 Member States and 11 other key territories, including Australia, Russia and Hong Kong.

The Culture Connects programme covers all art forms and provides a key platform to highlight the strength of Ireland's creative and artistic sector. Highlights of the Culture Programme have included: the opening concert in Brussels by The Gloaming, the Irish Chamber Orchestra in Berlin, the Eileen Gray exhibition in Centre Pompidou, Paris and the Changing States exhibition of Frances Bacon and contemporary artists in the Bozar Art Gallery in Brussels.

Audience attendance has been strong and feedback and media coverage on Ireland's Culture Programme has been very positive. In Berlin, for example, there were more than 1,200 attendees at the opening concert, visitor numbers to the Changing States art exhibition in Brussels have exceeded 8,000 and Centre Pompidou will attract approx 500,000 visitors during the period of the Eileen Gray exhibition.

Q2 Measure: Bring together over 400 performing arts practitioners from across Europe (including Ireland) over 4 days providing opportunities for Irish companies to network and create potential performance possibilities across Europe. (DAHG, Arts Council)

Update: Complete

The Project Arts Centre, Dublin hosted the Dublin meeting of the international network for contemporary performing arts (IETM) in April 2013. Over 500 professionals from over 50

countries attended, including directors, managers, staff and artists from theatre and dance companies of the highest international standing, venue and festival programmers, international cultural organisations, training and information centres, and funders and networks.

This was the first time IETM was hosted in Dublin. The meeting's core focus was on networking and relationship building between international performing arts professionals. It also provided an opportunity for Dublin to showcase local artists, local cultural organisations and the city itself. IETM Dublin 2013 was an initiative of the Arts Council in partnership with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. It was produced by Project Arts Centre and supported by Fáilte Ireland.

Q2 Measure: Delivery of 90 events around Ireland with festivals, Local Authorities, arts organisations and youth arts groups working in tandem with EU partners (Arts Council)

Update: Complete

In the six month Presidency period, through the funding support of the Culture Programme, the Arts Council delivered 509 events throughout 28 County and City Council areas. These events and projects involved high levels of community participation.

Through the Culture Programme, many festivals and projects have been able to expand their activities thus generating additional employment opportunities in the sector. Many had involvement of European artists, thus assisting in local tourism spend and engagement in local communities, bringing with it local employment.

A long term objective and focus of the Culture Programme funding concerns the sustainability opportunities offered for the sector into the future through the networking and engagement of European counterparts, as well as the synergies arising from the events during the Presidency.

The National Cultural Institutions delivered a series of European focused projects and exhibitions with the support of the Culture Programme - ranging from the 'Analysing Cubanism' exhibition at the Irish Museum of Modern Art and the Crawford Museum, to the Masterworks Concert Series at the National Concert Hall as well as the exhibition curated by the National Archives and the Royal Irish Academy marking the 40th anniversary of Ireland's accession to the then EEC.

Q2 Measure: Successful delivery of events taking place in Dublin during the EU Presidency. Production of EU Presidency Culture Programme publication "Culture Connects" and implementation of cultural events in Ireland during the Presidency. (DAHG, Arts Council, Cultural Institutions)

Update: Complete

The Culture Connects publication produced and launched in January 2013 outlining the Culture Programme of events taking place in Ireland during the six month Presidency period. 2,000 copies were produced and distributed across cultural institutions, local authorities and arts organisations.

The Programme continued to provide information throughout the Presidency around the various events taking place.

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.

Q2 Measure: Development of www.irishgenealogy.ie as a virtual entry point and a portal for genealogical records and resources in Ireland, as a roots tourism initiative. (DAHG, Cultural Institutions)

Update: Complete

The new web portal enables visitors to the site to search genealogy records from a number of online sources, such as the Census 1901 and 1911 records, with a link going directly to the results of the search.

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

Q2 Measure: Assess applications and offer grants. (DAHG and Local Authorities)

Update: Complete

Through the Structures at Risk Fund, funding from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is directed to protecting built heritage. Small but targeted heritage grants incentivise job rich investment in existing assets and protect the value of those assets. Built heritage conservation work is labour intensive, uses high-end craft and professional skills with much of the materials required for the work sourced locally.

The Structures at Risk Fund 2013 is now operational with 45 projects approved via local government.

Action 316: Provide support for pilot actions to upgrade energy efficiency in historical public buildings.

Q2 Measure: Commission research into existing methods used to assess and upgrade the energy performance of historic buildings. (DAHG)

Update: Delayed

The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is currently promoting best practice and providing training seminars in upgrading traditionally built buildings to ensure that they are not damaged by inappropriate works. The training element is linked to advanced craft skills development in the built heritage conservation sector with the potential for employment and career development opportunities in the energy efficiency sector.

In 2013, the Department aims to develop specific research which will contribute to more skilled expertise in this area and the creation of jobs in this specific growth area, potentially in partnership with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) and the Department of Energy, Communications and Natural Resources.

The Department has requested a meeting with key partners as a necessary step towards developing the terms and criteria for specific research in this area and agreeing engagement with partners for a joint programme. Key actions, including the seeking of tenders for the research element, are planned for mid Quarter 3.

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.

Q2 Measure: Develop an appropriate model for a national games centre which will bring together students, games developers and entrepreneurs. (DJEI, Games Clustering Development Team)

Update: Complete

The Digital Games Clustering Development Team, which comprises representatives of industry, Government Departments and agencies, has been considering how it can best develop an appropriate model for a national games centre which will bring together students, game developers and entrepreneurs. Three initiatives have been formulated by the Team.

- The first initiative envisages the provision of an incubator space in which start-up games companies can work in collaboration with the established games sector, 3rd level institutions, multinational tech industry. It is proposed that the incubator space will be administered and managed by Games Ireland, the representative body of the games industry, initially for a two year period, with matching funding provided by Government.

- In accordance with the second model, students would be expected to develop an idea and then make contact with the games industry for support; the idea being that they are located in a work space, or 'hot house,' which is populated by the game industry for a period of between three to six months. During this period the students receive mentoring from industry experts.
- The third initiative is to develop a mentoring programme which will provide students with access to professional advice on workflows, project management, professional development and an awareness of current requirements in the games industry. This programme would have an advantage in that it would provide valuable access to industry experts and require limited commitment from such experts as the expectations and goals of the programme are agreed at the outset.

These three initiatives are being examined in further detail from the point of view of costs, time commitments required from industry, location of space, etc., so that the team can finalise its recommendations and submit a report to Minister Bruton in the autumn.

Aviation Services

Action 321: Support the development of an International Aviation Services Centre (IASC) in Shannon.

Q2 Measure: Appoint CEO to Shannon Airport Authority (interim IASC). (DTTAS)

Update: Complete

The Board of the Shannon Airport Authority announced the appointment of Mr. Neil Pakey as Chief Executive on May 21st 2013 and he took up that position on June 10th. Mr. Pakey will also serve as Chief Executive of the new Shannon entity to be formed from the merger of Shannon Airport Authority with a restructured Shannon Development (see update below).

Q2 Measure: Transfer Shannon Development's enterprise and tourism functions to IDA/Enterprise Ireland and Fáilte Ireland. (DJEI, DTTAS)

Update: Complete

The transfer of Shannon Development's tourism functions to Fáilte Ireland was completed in June 2013. To date, 17 staff members working in the tourism area of Shannon Development have transferred to Fáilte Ireland. Transfer of Shannon Development's enterprise support functions, together with 7 associated staff, to the IDA and Enterprise Ireland was also completed in June 2013. A total of 26 Shannon Development staff have been redeployed to a number of other State agencies in the Shannon region (e.g. Revenue Commissioners, Irish Aid, Limerick City/County Councils).

To date, a total of 75 staff (from a total of 113 serving) in Shannon Development have either taken voluntary redundancy or have been transferred to the national tourism and enterprise agencies or to other public bodies in the Limerick/Shannon area or are retiring.

Q2 Measure: Decision on corporate structure in place to support development of an aviation cluster in Shannon and preparation of legislation to establish IASC. (DTTAS, DJEI)

Update: Complete

The corporate structure for the proposed new Shannon entity will be incorporated in the Bill to establish the new entity on a statutory basis. It is expected that the Bill will be published in the autumn with a view to enactment by year end.

Cloud Computing

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

Q2 Measure: Convene a joint meeting with the Irish Software Information Network on the business case for the adoption or development of standards and on security issues. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

A Seminar on the Business Case for the Adoption of Standards was hosted by Internet Security Innovation Network and National Standards Authority of Ireland, on April 25th 2013. The seminar focused on the value of standards to Irish software and technology organisations. It gave an insight into how the adoption of standards can become a unique selling proposition in the business model and that in an ever-increasing competitive global market place; standards are becoming a significant component of the business proposition.

Q2 Measure: Host an international standards meeting on sustainability for and by IT, including energy considerations for data centres, with appropriate side events and show-cases. (NSAI)

Update: Complete

The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) hosted the 2nd Plenary meeting of ISO/IEC JTC1/SC39 – Sustainability for and by Information Technology and its Working and Study Groups on May 20th, with delegations from Canada, China, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom, and United States present.

JTC 1 is the standards development environment where experts come together to develop worldwide information and communication technology standards for business and

consumer applications. Progress was made in developing a number of work items and further details are available on the NSAI website.

Action 331: Explore utilising InterTrade Ireland’s (ITI) “Fusion” Graduate Placement Programme to advance the potential for cloud computing opportunities for SMEs.

Q2 Measure: As per headline action. (ITI)

Update: Complete

InterTradeIreland is actively using the Fusion Programme to advance the potential for cloud computing opportunities for SMEs.

There are a number of companies coming through the Fusion programme from different sectors looking for a cloud computing solution and these have been facilitated with projects as part of the regular Fusion process.

Ongoing 2013 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 and 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: Ongoing

Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) has announced the funding of INSIGHT, a big data analytics centre including collaboration between four Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) and approximately 30 industry partners. SFI is committing €42 million over the next 5 years and industry is contributing an additional €32 million in cash and in kind contributions. The INSIGHT Centre will focus on harnessing Big Data to address research topics in areas such as chronic disease management and rehabilitation, novel personal sensing, connecting health and life sciences, smart enterprise, the future of news and media, the analytical society and discovery analytics.

SFI has also launched a number of programme calls to fund scientific research projects of excellence with impact in focused areas including data analytics, management, security and privacy as one of the 14 National Research Prioritisation areas and also encompassing the 6 underpinning platform science and technology areas. In addition, a number of key SFI programmes provide funding opportunities in the area of data analytics, management, security and privacy, including the:

- Investigator Programme which supports the development of world class research capability and human capital in areas of science, engineering and mathematics that demonstrably support and underpin enterprise competitiveness and societal development in Ireland.
- Technology Innovation Development Award: On the 23rd May 2013, SFI announced the results of the 2012 SFI TIDA Call. This included projects related to the commercialisation of research in the data analytics, management, security and privacy area.
- Research Centres Spokes Programme which is designed to promote the further development of SFI Research Centres to incorporate new areas of research and new industrial and academic collaborations. The Spokes programme will launch towards the end of 2013.

- Industry Fellowship Programme which is designed to promote the exchange of people at all levels between academia and industry.
- Research Professorship Programme which aims to support national strategic priorities by assisting research bodies in their recruitment of world-leading researchers for Professorial Chairs, or similar research leadership positions in targeted scientific areas.
- President of Ireland Young Researcher Award which works to recruit and retain outstanding young researchers. The award recognises outstanding engineers and scientists who, early in their careers, have already demonstrated or shown exceptional potential for leadership at the frontiers of knowledge.

Enterprise Ireland is also progressing this commitment as part of Action 6 which will see Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland establish an industry-led Technology Centre in Data Analytics, facilitating linkages between enterprise and academic research, identifying and addressing barriers to collaboration. The initial research phase of Data Analytics Technology Centre (CeADAR) was launched by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation on March 15th 2013.

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

Update: Ongoing

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.

The Smart Futures STEM Careers Week took place online on www.SmartFutures.ie from April 29th - May 3rd 2013. This featured live online events where students and guidance counsellors interacted with people working in STEM industries such as ICT, to answer their career questions.

In support of the STEM Careers Week, a series of four videos were launched on the Smart Futures website profiling people working in science, technology, engineering and maths, these included an ICT focus.

Science Foundation Ireland also put together a panel of experts working in cybersecurity, data analytics and computer forensics to answer questions from students about careers in this area. Online chat was facilitated between students and experts working in companies such as CISCO, SAP and Microsoft, providing an important industry-education engagement opportunity. This interaction allowed students to ask questions about 3rd level courses and Leaving Certificate subject choices and the benefits and opportunities open to them by

working in these areas.

In addition, the Smart Futures website featured guest blog post interviews with people working in the data analytics, management and security areas.

A schools competition open to all primary, junior cycle and senior cycle students was launched during the STEM Careers Week. This is a technology competition in association with the Coder Dojo network, which will encourage students to use their summer holidays to work on data analytics and technology projects such as websites, games and apps.

Continued support for the Smart Futures programme is coming from Industry representative bodies such as ICT Ireland, the Irish Software Association, Irish Medical Devices Association and Engineer's Ireland. These groups will provide sector specific data on skills requirements and access to people working in the various STEM areas to take part in online events.

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. (SFI, EI, other research funders as appropriate)

Update: Ongoing

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 development of the Research Centres Spokes Programme, which is to be launched later in 2013. The Spokes Programme is being designed to deliver excellent basic, oriented research results and discoveries in targeted projects and/or spokes associated with SFI Research Centres. Projects funded through this programme will thereby align with Centre research objectives and promote their future self-sustainability. Given the areas already supported by Centres, these projects will naturally align with areas of strategic opportunity for Ireland, as outlined in the report of the National Research Prioritisation Exercise, and with specific reference to data analytics.

Like the SFI Research Centres, the SFI Spokes programme will help link scientists and engineers in partnerships across academia and industry to address crucial research questions, foster the development of new and existing Ireland-based technology companies, attract industry that could make an important contribution to Ireland and its economy, and expand educational and career opportunities in Ireland in science and engineering.

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, in addition to providing new opportunities to strengthen initiatives in

data analytics. Implicitly, they will also strengthen and compliment on-going research and infrastructure funding underpinning data analytics.

Enterprise Ireland is also progressing this as part of Action 6 which will see Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland establish an industry-led Technology Centre in Data Analytics, facilitating linkages between enterprise and academic research; identifying and addressing barriers to collaboration. The initial research phase of Data Analytics Technology Centre (CeADAR) was launched by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation on March 15th 2013.

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

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

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: Ongoing

See update provided under Action 5 above.

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: Ongoing

The roll out of Project Maths is ongoing. All five strands of the syllabus were rolled out to students in first year and fifth year from September 2012. This summer students in mainstream schools at Leaving Certificate level sat examinations in strands 1-4 of the new syllabus and at Junior Certificate sat examinations in strands 1-2.

Since the launch of the National Strategy to improve Literacy and Numeracy in July 2011, there has been significant progress under many of the 41 actions and almost 180 sub-actions.

- The time spent on literacy and numeracy at primary level has increased and the revision of the English and Irish curricula is being prioritised in Junior Cycle Reform.
- Major changes are being made to initial teacher training and literacy and numeracy units are now in place in the National Teacher Induction Programme.
- School self-evaluation is being rolled out and new requirements on standardised testing, including the return of aggregate data to the Department of Education and Skills, have been implemented.
- A national programme of professional development for primary and second level teachers is underway. Since September 2012, the Professional Development Service for Teachers has provided a range of professional development on Literacy and Numeracy for over 7,500 teachers and principals at primary and post primary levels.
- The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA), has worked on the Family Project to support the objectives of the literacy and numeracy strategy. This is a weekly television programme, currently being broadcast, which showcases the educational tools and techniques that are available to all families. It demonstrates how families can work together to improve collective learning. NALA has also developed a website to help parents support their children's education; www.helpmykidlearn.ie is a website where parents can see that supporting a child's literacy and numeracy development is an easy and fun activity that can be integrated into any part of their day.

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: Ongoing

The implementation of the ICT Action Plan and the roll out of the ICT conversion courses have been highlighted in a number of press releases and speeches over the period - both in Ireland and at the launch of the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs, an EU initiative to increase the availability of highly skilled ICT practitioners to meet industry needs in Europe.

Progress on implementation of the ICT Action Plan has also been discussed with industry representatives as part of the bi-annual Department of Education and Skills Enterprise Engagement Forum. Additionally, 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 through company meetings and their Spring/Summer ICT newsletter.

Enterprise Ireland working at industry, has established the ITs Happening Here website to highlight job opportunities in Irish owned high-tech companies. Over 40 client companies are now posting jobs with over 120 vacancies currently advertised on the site. A training course in Drafting Job Specs for the Web was delivered by Social Talent for 16 industry participants in Digital Skills Academy in April.

Eight software client companies participated in a recruitment mission to Poland in May - Enterprise Ireland's Poland office arranged events in Warsaw and Gdansk. A further recruitment mission was undertaken to Spain in June, with the event organised by Enterprise Ireland's Madrid office. Enterprise Ireland is also engaging with the Irish Software Association's Talent for Growth working group and with Forfás on its study in relation to the Future Requirement for High Level ICT Skills Needs.

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

Ongoing Measures:

- Continue roll-out of Project Maths (including extensive continuing professional development for maths teachers). (DES)
- Implement the recommendations of the Project Maths Implementation Support Group on industry-education stakeholder partnership. (DES)

Update: Ongoing

The roll out of Project Maths is ongoing (see update under Action 13 above).

In terms of continued professional development (CPD) for maths teachers, over 300 students are on the first intake of the post-graduate course which began in September 2012 (at a cost of circa €1.8 million). A further course is scheduled to begin in September 2013 with capacity for over 400 teachers and provision has been made to allow for increased intake in 2013, if necessary. CPD in relation to Project Maths continues to be rolled out to mathematics teachers nationwide and will continue until at least the end of the academic year 2013/14.

The Project Maths Implementation Support Group on industry-education stakeholder partnership met on June 25th to discuss progress to date and next steps.

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

Update: Ongoing

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: Ongoing

The National Strategy to improve Literacy and Numeracy was launched in July 2011. In line with the Strategy, since January 2012, Irish primary school students have been spending an additional 70 minutes per week on mathematics. Work on revising the primary maths curriculum is due to start in the next year.

A recently published study, National Schools, international contexts: Beyond the PIRLS and TIMSS test results, from the Educational Research Centre, found that Irish national school students well on number and knowing but not as well on shape and space, measures and problem solving. This finding had been previously been highlighted in National Assessments and is reflected in the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy.

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 Services Framework (formerly Energy Performance Contracting Framework) 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: Ongoing

The first tranche of exemplar energy efficiency projects to be supported by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) were announced by the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources on June 19th. Collectively these 22 Exemplar projects, which involve both private and public sector entities such as the Health Services Executive, University College Cork and Roadstone, will invest up to €55 million in energy saving measures, resulting in annual savings of €7 million, and supporting over 500 jobs. Exemplar projects receive additional 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 must commit to actively provide feedback on the use of the Framework.

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 National Energy Services Framework (formerly Energy Performance Contracting 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: Ongoing

See update under 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 Measures:

- Monitor performance of the Cork Demonstrator on the basis of grant approval. (EI, Other appropriate agencies)
- Assess performance of the Cork Demonstrator through feedback from funding agencies and the Steering Group. (DJEI, D/Health, National Project Team)

Update: Ongoing

The objective of establishing a National Healthcare Innovation Hub (HIH) was originally set out in the Action Plan for Jobs 2012. The HIH, which is a joint initiative of the Department of Health and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (D/JEI) will serve to connect Irish based companies to the innovative capacity of the national healthcare system. The Hub will enable companies and healthcare professionals to work in a collaborative environment to develop novel technologies, products and services for the global healthcare market.

The Government established a National Project Team* (NPT) in 2012 to oversee the establishment of the HIH. 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 (detail below). The work of the Cork Demonstrator site is being funded through a grant from Enterprise Ireland.

To date, the work of the Demonstrator site in Cork has been facilitated by a very active Local Steering Committee from the outset of the project. The Committee, chaired by Professor John Higgins of Cork University Maternity Hospital and University College Cork, includes the senior management of the four Cork hospitals in addition to representatives of local industry, academic institutions and Enterprise Ireland.

Currently, the Demonstrator project has brought together six innovative Irish healthcare companies with the health service by providing dedicated contact points, facilitated project management, office space, advice and access to the hospital and primary care system in Cork. 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. The six companies and their innovative solutions are:

- Abtran (electronic GP referral system)
- Arann Healthcare (equipment sterilisation)
- Helix Health (electronic prescription service)
- Radisens Diagnostics (GPs processing blood tests directly)
- Rigney Dolphin (post discharge patient telephone follow up programme)
- Sláinte Healthcare (paperless clinical environment)

The Steering Group meets to review progress on each of the six industry projects on a regular basis, the most recent meeting took place on June 20th. The NPT continued to meet during Quarters 1 and 2 and an update on the performance of the Cork Demonstrator Project was provided by the Steering Group at each meeting. Detailed project plans are in place for each of the projects and milestones are being measured and assessed. The latest report from the Steering Group demonstrated that there has been good progress to date on each of the six projects.

D/JEI has also collated information from funding agencies regarding relevant health-related research projects supported by the State in recent years. This information was reviewed by the NPT at the last meeting. The Director of the Applied Research for Connected Health (ARCH) Centre, also updated the NPT on progress in the establishment of the Technology Centre in this priority area.

** The National Project Team, consists of a multidisciplinary team spanning the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and the Department of Health, as well as executives from the Health Services Executive, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and Science Foundation Ireland, and chaired by Dave Shanahan (formerly Head of Global Life Sciences, IDA Ireland and now the Head of Strategic Health initiatives at Abbvie - he is also one of the six industry partners appointed by Government to assist with the implementation and monitoring of the Disruptive Reforms).*

National Health Innovation Hub

Action 49: Engage with relevant stakeholders in order to identify the critical areas of enterprise interest and health system needs in the context of the NHIH.

Ongoing Measures:

- Engage with enterprise sector to raise awareness of the proposed NHIH and to identify likely areas of interest/focus from enterprise/research perspective; report to National Project Team on same. (EI, IDA, SFI)
- Engage with healthcare professionals in the Irish health system to identify likely interest in engaging with NHIH and/or to identify critical needs in the health system that could be addressed in context of NHIH; report to National Project Team on same. (D/Health, HSE)

Update: Ongoing

The National Healthcare Innovation Hub (HIH) is a joint initiative of the Department of Health and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, which will serve to connect Irish based companies to the innovative capacity of the national healthcare system. (See update under Action 48 above)

Initial discussions, with a limited number of Enterprise Ireland client companies, took place in May and June. Additional meetings will take place with client companies currently working with the Cork Demonstrator site in June/July. The Demonstrator site has also committed to running an additional call for proposals and this will yield additional information on industry requirements for the National Hub. The outputs of these meetings and, when available, the call will be collated and presented to the National Project Team that has been established to oversee the establishment of the National Hub in Quarter 3.

There has been extensive engagement with healthcare professionals as part of the ongoing work of the Demonstrator site based in University College Cork (UCC). The Department of Health, the Health Services Executive, and indeed the Demonstrator site, are currently examining options for wider engagement with health professionals as the initiative progresses.

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. (D/Finance)

Update: Ongoing

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: Ongoing

The joint Revenue and Department of Finance public consultation on the "Taxation of Micro Enterprises" has been completed and the results are being analysed with a view to deciding how this issue can be best progressed.

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: Ongoing

The SME Funding Consultation Committee is chaired by the Department of Finance and has representatives from the relevant public bodies and business representative organisations as well as banking representatives. The role of this Committee, which meets monthly, is to work on solutions for the key issue of funding for SMEs. The Committee last met on June 25th and a further meeting is scheduled for July 24th.

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: Ongoing

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). Upon dissolution of the CEBs, this function will transfer to Enterprise Ireland and will be delivered on Enterprise Ireland's behalf by the Local Authority in each Local Enterprise Office.

Another important function of the CEBs is to provide advice and supports to micro enterprises, including direct grant aid and general business advice and information. In addition, the CEBs currently offer targeted training such as mentoring support, Start your own Business courses and other courses. These are all ongoing activities and will transfer to the Local Enterprise Offices on their establishment.

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: Ongoing

The Survey on the Access to Finance of SMEs in the Euro Area (SAFE) for Quarter 1 2013 was published in April 2013. The Irish SMEs surveyed reported an overall increase in turnover, in common with Germany, Belgium, Austria and Finland.

In a measure of the general economic outlook as it impacts the availability of external financing, Ireland shows the second best improvement and overall position (behind Germany).

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: Ongoing

Microfinance Ireland drafted a publicity strategy in Quarter 1 2013 for the Microenterprise Loan Fund. 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 June 30th, €1.264 million in loans had been approved to 79 microenterprises, supporting 191 jobs.

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: Ongoing

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. 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: Ongoing

The Ireland Strategic Investment Fund will absorb the National Pensions Reserve Fund, and its resources will be channelled towards productive investment on commercial terms in the Irish economy.

An investment strategy is being developed which will address the sectors and range of assets to be considered for investment, including the potential delivery of additional SME Financing Funds, if appropriate.

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

Update: Ongoing

The Heads of Bill were approved by Government in April and the Bill is currently with the Office of the Attorney General for drafting.

The Bill will (i) establish NewERA on a statutory basis, (ii) reorient the National Pensions Reserve Fund into the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund and (iii) streamline the governance structures at the National Treasury Management Agency. It is Government's intention that the proposals will be effected 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: Ongoing

Silicon Valley Bank's (SVB) dedicated Ireland manager has been operating in the Irish market for a number of months and SVB recently closed its first new loan to an Irish software company since the announcement last summer. The National Pension Reserve Fund (NPRF) Unit understands that a number of other investments are at the Term Sheet stage and are likely to close in the next few months. The NPRF has committed a total of US\$50 million to two funds. Both of these funds are managed by the SVB.

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: Ongoing

Enterprise Ireland's Board made commitments to three Funds in December 2012 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.

As of June 2013, two of the funds are in the process of progressing with the necessary legal requirements and the other fund is currently raising capital. All three funds are progressing with hiring staff and establishing their offices.

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: Ongoing

On March 8th 2013, the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation issued a press release with the National Pension Reserve Fund announcing an Innovation Fund Ireland (IFI) investment in Highland Capital. A second fund identified under the second IFI call has just completed legal negotiations and an announcement is expected to be made in the near term.

Building Competitive Advantage

Research and Innovation to Drive Job Creation

Action 77: Drive implementation of the recommendations of 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: Ongoing

In order to provide a mechanism through which research funders can focus their attention and funding on the 14 Priority Areas, 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 were charged with developing the Action Plans.

Government approval for the web publication of the 14 Action Plans was secured on June 25th 2013.

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. The PAG will 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: Ongoing

The Prioritisation Action Group 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 would be addressed. A number of recommendations which aim to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the science, technology and innovation (STI) system have already been fully addressed as below.

- A detailed framework of metrics and targets to monitor the impact of STI investment has been developed and Government has endorsed the web publication of this framework.
- An Intellectual Property Protocol has been developed which aims to encourage more businesses to commercialise R&D by ensuring that they can access the results of state-funded R&D with greater ease and certainty.
- The Irish Research Council launched a new employment based postgraduate programme which will improve the alignment between the supply of trained researchers from academia and the demand for such skills from the enterprise sector.
- Science Foundation Ireland's recent Research Centre awards demonstrate a more industry focussed culture; involving the most extensive industry engagement seen yet in research centres with up to 150 industry partners and €100 million of industry investment.
- Forfás have completed an evaluation of research, development and innovation (RDI) programmes which will ensure continued relevance and clarity of purpose, that programmes have sufficient scale, and that unnecessary duplication is avoided.
- A national inventory of all significant publicly funded infrastructure and equipment has been completed by the Higher Education Authority.

The recommendation around the adoption of a stage gate approach to applications for funding (meaning that all applications for funding under the priority areas should be tested for economic impact as well as scientific excellence) is currently being focussed upon. The Prioritisation Action Group has discussed this matter at two of its meetings in 2013 and has set out the principles of a stage gate approach to evaluation. A peer learning work-shop for research funding Departments and agencies is to be convened with a view to discerning and disseminating best practice for stage gate evaluation.

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: Ongoing

The Connect Health Technology Centre (ARCH) was established and launched in June 2013, and R&D projects have been funded. In June Enterprise Ireland reviewed the project's progress on Connected Health and on Medical Devices, the outcomes of which will indicate how to proceed.

The Data Analytics Centre has been launched and projects have been funded.

The Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Technology Centre Hosting Call was launched in April (with call close in June) and projects have been funded.

The Medical Technology Centre is currently under development, ideally in collaboration with Science Foundation Ireland's plans to create a Medical Technology research centre which is expected to be delivered in late 2013 or early 2014.

Enterprise Ireland carried out a review of progress on the Dairy Centre in May, the outcomes of which will indicate how to proceed.

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: Ongoing

Through its membership of the Irish Maritime and Energy Resource Cluster with Cork Institute of Technology and University College Cork, the Department of Defence is involved in the Science Foundation Ireland funded Marine Renewable Energy Ireland Research Centre (MaREI). This is a €27 million project which involves 48 industry partners and 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: Ongoing

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.

In consultation with the Centre of Irish European Security, the Defence Forces participated in the European Consortium DRIVER; a project that aims to drive innovation in crisis management in Europe. The entire project was worth €3 million and the Defence Forces element is worth €176,532.

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: Ongoing

There are 5 clinical research facilities in Ireland; three of which are funded by the Health Research Board (HRB) in Galway, Cork and Dublin. All three CRFs are progressing their work programmes. The Wellcome Trust-HRB-CRF at St James's Hospital was opened by An Taoiseach in May 2013. An interim review of the work programme has recently been completed for the HRB CRF Galway.

The establishment of a collaborative network between HRB-funded and the two other existing CRFs is included in the Research Prioritisation Action Plans and the Jobs Action Plan. Principles for a collaborative model have been developed by the HRB and the 5 national CRF directors.

*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: Ongoing

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: Ongoing

The draft General Scheme of a Bill was circulated to Government Departments for comment in early July. The Department of Environment, Community and Local Government is now considering those comments.

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: Ongoing

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine has been tasked with 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 initiated the process through engaging the Prioritisation Action Group Working Group with a meeting held in May. This work will continue and likely involve developing Strategic Research and Innovation Agendas (SRIAs) for both priority areas.

Ongoing Measure: Fund relevant ERA-NETs. (DAFM)

Update: Ongoing

In 2012, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine committed funding for Irish participation in the following European Research Area Networks* (ERA-NETs); ICT-AGRI (€225,000), RURAGRI (€100,000), ERA-CAPS (€200,000), and WoodWisdom Net Plus (€450,000).

The Department has recently received an award under ICT-AGRI and is presently evaluating proposals received under a call under the WoodWisdom ERA-NET.

* ERA-NETs aim to support cooperation and the coordination of research activities carried out at national or regional level across the EU

Ongoing Measure: Lead Irish involvement in 2 JPIs (FACCE & HDHL), the GRA & Agri EIP. (DAFM)

Update: Ongoing

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine represents Ireland on the:

- Joint Programming Initiative on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change (FACCE)*
- Joint Programming Initiative on A Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life (HDHL JPI)
- Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability European Innovation Partnership
- The Global Research Alliance on agricultural greenhouse gases (GRA GHG)

In January 2013, the Department committed €415,000 for Irish participation in the International Mitigation Call and will announce awards under this Call later in 2013.

Ongoing Measure: Undertake a food business engagement seminar and other activities to increase business involvement in bid for an EU-Food KIC. (Teagasc)

Update: Ongoing

A Food Business Innovation Summit, with Ministerial level involvement, was held on May 29th. The event, which was hosted in Ireland, was organised by Teagasc and the Institute of Food Research, Norwich to discuss research and industry priorities in bid for an EU-Food Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC).

Over 300 people attended the event with significant industry representation. The Summit focused predominately on food research and innovation with a general consensus that there are a lot of common challenges and opportunities in the food arena in both countries and there could be considerable benefits from working together. A report is being compiled by the organisers of the event.

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: Ongoing

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine continues to monitor progress on the Agri-food and Forestry Graduate Development Programme. The Programme aims to provide students with both the relevant technical/scientific skills and knowledge and the business acumen and skills necessary for industry.

Action 109: Implement a new Irish Research Council/DAFM/Industry collaborative programme to have a cohort of Masters research students employed for an 18 – 24 month period in agri-food companies.

Ongoing Measure: Monitor awards made under the 2012 pilot programme. (IRC, DAFM)

Update: Ongoing

Awards made under the 2012 pilot programme are being monitored by the Irish Research Council. A copy of the two project annual reports will be forwarded to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine for feedback, 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: Ongoing

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: Ongoing

Teagasc arranged for CORE, a Danish process control and optimisation company, to visit Ireland to discuss potential research collaborations under the EU 7th Framework Programme and to discuss relevant process systems with meat industry companies. This visit led to follow-up discussions between CORE A/S and the meat industry companies.

Discussions are also ongoing with Enterprise Ireland on future research programme developments.

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 Measures:

- Provide support for the work of the Harnessing our Ocean Wealth Enablers Task Force on Marine Spatial Planning. (Marine Institute and DAFM)
- Provide support for the work of the Harnessing our Ocean Wealth Development Task Force - Integrated Enterprise Strategy. (Marine Institute and DAFM)

Update: Ongoing

Activity is underway. Two studies have been commissioned to support the work of the Task Force on Marine Spatial Planning. A desk study on National, International and EU Legal Instruments Relevant to the Development of a Marine Spatial Planning Framework in Ireland; and an Invitation to Tender to Carry out a Review of Marine Spatial Planning Best Practice of Relevance to Ireland.

Both will be delivered in Quarter 3 and will feed into the recommendations due to be submitted to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Marine Coordination Group in Quarter 4.

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. (DJE)
- Progress Bill through the Houses of the Oireachtas. (DJE)

Update: Ongoing

The Legal Services Bill commenced Committee Stage on July 17th 2013 with a view to enactment by year end.

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: Ongoing

Rules to facilitate case management of non-jury and chancery proceedings in the High Court are currently before the Superior Courts Rules Committee.

The report of the Working Group on Medical Negligence and Periodic Payments, which includes draft rules in this regard, has been furnished 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 Bank's '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).

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.

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: Ongoing

A paper on Ireland's competitiveness position was presented to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs in May, 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. Work will continue on this process of engagement in the second half of 2013.

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: Ongoing

Phase 2 of the review was announced on May 19th with the appointment of an independent steering group to progress a review of apprenticeship in Ireland through consultation with relevant stakeholders. Membership of the review group, which is expected to complete its work before the end of the year, draws on national and international expertise including academic, business, and employee interests.

The group will produce recommendations to the Department of Education and Skills on the future development of apprenticeship based on the consultation process with relevant interest groups. The review will have regard to existing education and training policy and, in particular, to national targets relating to second-level education and participation in higher education. It will focus on apprenticeship as a progression route from second level provision. It will also explore the potential for connections between work-based learning and other further education and training provision. This will encompass an examination of alternative methods of work-based education and training.

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: Ongoing

As June 7th 2013, there were 4,373 participants on Momentum projects. An additional 450 and 155 participants were due to start in June and July respectively; bringing the total number of participants to approximately 5,000. A further 256 participants are scheduled to commence programmes in September.

FÁS are currently working with other providers on a plan to provide the additional 1,200 places in September 2013. Significant monitoring of the service provision is ongoing and corrective actions are being applied where necessary. Payments are supported with evidence of service provision.

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: Ongoing

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: Ongoing

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.

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: Ongoing

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. 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

Further work in relation to modern languages in junior cycle will commence in 2014 for implementation by schools from September 2016. 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.

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 curriculum. This will be prepared in 2014 for consultation with the key stakeholders and will feed into a foreign language policy. Implementation of the specifications for modern languages will commence in schools in September 2016.

Skills required for the manufacturing sector

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: Ongoing

The 2013 Service Level Agreement between the Department of Education and Skills and the National Coordinating Vocational Education Committee (VEC) 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 on-going needs of the wide range of workers attending SFW courses. In 2013, three new learner resource manuals pertaining to the food and beverage sector, health and safety, and understanding IT have been published.

Having reviewed the Action Plan for Jobs, the Future Skills Requirements for the Manufacturing Sector 2012 report and Regional Labour Market Bulletins, the National

Coordinators agreed to:

- Identify manufacturing companies nationally and locally to promote SFW;
- Revisit companies previously involved in SFW; and
- Prioritise employees/companies at risk of redundancy or closing down.

Eight new manufacturing companies are engaging with 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: Ongoing

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 etc. which can illustrate the benefits of the programme, inform the ongoing development of the programme and well as supporting the identification of target groups.

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: Ongoing

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) and AONTAS, the national adult learning organisation, will work with the coordinating Vocational Education Committee to develop promotional strategies for the Skills for Work programme and basic education programmes to attract low-skilled operatives in the manufacturing sector. The Skills for Work Advisory Group met with NALA on June 18th 2013.

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.

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: Ongoing

Legislation is currently being drafted which, upon enactment later this year, will establish Irish Water as the 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 will lead to considerable new employment opportunities in 2013 onwards (some 2,000 jobs when fully operational). 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 €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: Ongoing

Total expenditure on water conservation projects over Quarter 1 2013 totalled €4.296 million and the number of projects in progress was 28.

Ongoing Measure: Development of Capital Investment Plans by Irish Water. (DECLG)

Update: Ongoing

The Capital Investment Plan for Irish Water 2014-2015 is being currently developed. It is one element of the wider water sector reform programme. It is expected that that Capital Investment Plan will be completed in Quarter 4 2013.

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: Ongoing

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 later this year, Irish Water will become the Water Services Authority from January 2014.

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 licencing 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: Ongoing

As part of the Phase 2/3 development and rollout of an IT based road management system, the MapRoad PMS Browser and a MapRoad Mobile App for Android devices have been developed. These are being rolled out to the local authorities in conjunction with a training programme. A new central MapRoad licencing module has also been developed and is now being tested and rolled out to local authorities.

Further work to enhance the system is also progressing. Among the modules to be developed are:

- Integration with new MapRoad Licencing System for road openings.
- Financial Reporting on roads projects.
- MapRoad Mobile App to cater for rating of urban roads.

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: Ongoing

Work to develop a land transport strategic investment framework is advancing with a view to 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: Ongoing

The National Transport Authority (NTA), which is the lead agency for implementation of the recommendations of the Taxi Regulation Review Report 2011, is progressing all 46 actions recommended in the report; more than 50% of these have been delivered.

The legislative basis for many of the remaining actions concerning enforcement is provided for in the Taxi Regulation Bill, 2012, which was passed by Seanad Éireann on May 16th. Consideration of the Bill in Dáil Éireann commenced on May 14th and, due to other Government legislative commitments, will continue through into the Autumn Dáil session with enactment of the legislation envisaged in 2013.

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: Ongoing

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 recent developments in this regard*:

- American Airlines, United and US Airways are adding new services this summer and Aer Lingus is also increasing capacity from the US.
- US Airways have also announced plans to extend its summer services from Charlotte to Dublin and from Philadelphia to Shannon by one month until October 2013.
- Etihad intends to increase its capacity by 35% on its service from Abu Dhabi to Dublin by deploying a Boeing 777-300ER on the route from July 2013.
- 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 US will be resumed.
- Air Canada, which has operated a summer service between Dublin and Toronto since 2002, will operate the route on a year-round basis from May 2014 with its new Air Canada Rouge brand. The new service will be the first year-round link between Dublin and Canada.

* Estimates are that air capacity from North America to Ireland will show an increase of 24% for peak summer 2013 compared to 2012.

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: Ongoing

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 has been highlighting the good value fares on offer to Ireland this 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 Measures:

- Implement new policy statement. (Relevant Government Departments)
- Strategic coordination and oversight. (Government via Cabinet Committees)

Update: Ongoing

The Government Policy Statement on Economic Regulation has been approved and published in line with Quarter 2 commitments.

The relevant Government Departments will progress the implementation of the new Policy Statement and the strategic coordination of its implementation will be overseen through Cabinet Committee structures.

An update on the implementation of the Policy Statement, and oversight thereof, will be provided at the end of the year.

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: Ongoing

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 and 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: Ongoing

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. 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: Ongoing

New Frontiers is Ireland’s national entrepreneur development programme that is delivered at a local level by the Institutes of Technology. Based on the success of the first year of the programme, a further €12.65 million is being invested for the next three years of New Frontiers, which aims to develop sustainable businesses that will create jobs throughout the country.

The programme provides budding entrepreneurs with a package of supports including funding of €15,000, office space, mentoring and workshops to help accelerate their business development. The aim is to equip participants with the skills and contacts they need to successfully start and grow a company.

Nine New Frontiers Programmes will be delivered throughout the year in 13 Institutes of Technology to support 100+ potential new business start-ups, as per the commitment in the Action Plan for Jobs.

The programme is operational and a number of the Institutes have officially launched their 2013 programmes and have commenced the process of recruiting candidates for their individual programmes.

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: Ongoing

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 and is actively working to source a further two ambassadors

Following the appointment of the two additional ambassadors, Enterprise Ireland will review the extent to which there is a need to recruit further such ambassadors.

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. (EI)
- Work with women in business networks on a series of business development agendas. (EI)

Update: Ongoing

A key focus of Enterprise Ireland is to drive and support the development of a seedbed of new vibrant Irish enterprises by successfully harnessing the creativity and innovation of home grown entrepreneurs. State support for entrepreneurship, through Enterprise Ireland, is focused on the ongoing creation of new entrepreneur-led business entities with a solid base in innovation, intellectual capital and a capability of becoming internationally competitive within a short period of time.

Enterprise Ireland's general suite of financial and advisory supports is equally available to both men and women. However, State development agencies have a role to play in supporting female entrepreneurs who wish to grow their businesses. Enterprise Ireland launched two financial products in the last 12 months specifically focused on supporting early stage companies led by women. The response to both calls was overwhelming, with over 200 applications being received to the combined funds of €850,000. Thirty women entrepreneurs have accessed these funds.

In the past, the overall landscape of support for female entrepreneurship was run through non-tangible methods of support such as conferences and networking meetings. However, there has been a move for more action oriented mechanisms to support women to establish and grow sustainable businesses.

Following on from the launch of the new funding programmes in 2012, Enterprise Ireland has implemented a range of Female Entrepreneurship Initiatives during 2013. Enterprise Ireland sponsored Irish Tatler Business Academy, at the Convention Centre on April 8th, which was attended by 500 female delegates, proved to be successful in the promotion of Enterprise Ireland's Women in Business initiatives.

In May, Enterprise Ireland participated in the Women Economic Forum as part of Irish Presidency Conference in Dublin Castle and also in the All Ireland Conference for Female Entrepreneurship based in City Hall in Belfast which was attended by 200 delegates.

Enterprise Ireland continues to support the Going for Growth initiative, which was first rolled out in October 2007. The initiative was designed to be complementary to the role of the development agencies. The programme offers peer and mentoring supports and provides a support mechanism for female entrepreneurs with clear business growth aspirations.

Enterprise Ireland will continue to focus on funding women's initiatives in 2013 to help further bridge the divide. However the real sign of success is for female entrepreneurs to apply for Enterprise Ireland's main funds. Enterprise Ireland has seen a marked increase in female applications for early stage Competitive Start Fund rising from 14 in a normal fund call to 34 in its May call. Subject to budget approval, Enterprise Ireland plans to launch a women's Competitive Feasibility Fund in September, followed by a women's Competitive Start Fund in October 2013.

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: Ongoing

In 2012, Enterprise Ireland launched its Accelerated Growth Engagement pilot programme which focussed on helping revenue-generating start-ups to deliver best practice in the execution of their business plans.

There were 27 CEO participants on the pilot programme. The first part of the engagement which was focused around three education modules (leadership/team, sales and marketing, finance) was delivered by the Judge Business School at Cambridge University and supported by one to one and group business coaching. The second part of the engagement is intended to focus more on implementation of growth plans and the leadership development of the

CEOs and their teams.

Following the success of the 2012 pilot programme, Enterprise Ireland in 2013 rolled out a further 24 month Accelerated Growth Engagement programme. There are currently 41 new CEOs participating in the 2013 Accelerated Growth Engagement programme.

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: Ongoing

The Enterprise Ireland Mentor Network was established to help companies identify and overcome obstacles to growth. Mentors in Enterprise Ireland's network can provide tailored advice, guidance and support, to help companies accelerate growth and build management capability.

Mentors are senior executives, drawn from the private sector, with a proven track record in business. They act as a confidential sounding board, advising companies on key operational and strategic issues.

The Network is regularly refreshed with CEOs and senior executives with high levels of achievement and with proven skills in marketing, strategic development, organisation development, R&D, funding and first-time exporting across the software, services, life sciences, environment, food and consumer products sectors.

Companies approved for a Mentor assignment are presented with a shortlist of experienced suitable Mentors and the final choice of Mentor is the company's. If a company has a number of issues, for example in both finance and production, and needs different skills to overcome these issues, more than one Mentor can be involved in an assignment. Every effort is made to match the Mentor to the specific needs of the company.

In 2013, Enterprise Ireland aims to appoint more than 300 mentors to Enterprise Ireland clients. As at June 20th, a total of 155 mentors (52% of target) had been appointed to clients.

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. (IDA, EI)
- Host a series of MNC Networking events to build engagement with the Strategy. (IDA, EI)

Update: Ongoing

The Global Sourcing Strategy aims to secure the procurement of an additional €500 million of domestically sourced goods and services by foreign direct investment companies in Ireland. Enterprise Ireland in conjunction with IDA Ireland set a target of 60 referrals to Global Sourcing by the end of Quarter 2 - to date 115 referrals have been made and 66 of these multinational companies (MNC) have already been met by Enterprise Ireland.

A strong panel of mentors has been established and will be assigned to appropriate client firms. The first MNC mentor has now been appointed. In addition, in the year to date, 61 sub-supply or potential technology partners have been introduced to MNC clients.

To build engagement with the Global Sourcing Strategy, Enterprise Ireland has hosted a series of MNC Networking events. Five separate networking events have been held to date with the following MNCs/organisations: Google, Intel, ISPE, SAP, and Accenture.

Action 190: Attract overseas entrepreneurs and foreign direct investment from emerging businesses to Ireland.

Ongoing Measures:

- 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)
- Target support for 15 overseas entrepreneurs. (EI)
- Attract 20 foreign direct investments from emerging businesses. (IDA)

Update: Ongoing

IDA Ireland has broadened and deepened its portfolio embracing not just large multinational corporations (MNCs), but also working closely with fast growth companies who aspire to be the MNCs of the future.

IDA Ireland's Emerging Business Division has a team located in the US and Europe focussed on attracting these early stage high growth companies to Ireland. The team continues to win high value jobs in ICT, medical technologies, financial services and digital media.

The Emerging Business Division is on target to deliver 20 foreign direct investments in 2013. Recent announcements of investments won by the Division include:

- 10Gen which is to create 60 jobs in Dublin with the establishment of its European headquarters;
- Etsy, Inc., the leading online marketplace for handmade and vintage items, is to establish a new EMEA headquarters in Dublin;
- Loop1 Systems Inc. which is to create 17 new jobs in Cork with the establishment of a sales, customer support and technical centre providing training and professional services to multinational companies using the SolarWinds Suite of software;
- Whitehouse Analytical Labs, an analytical testing facility, has chosen Ireland for its first round of international expansion, and is to create 35 new jobs in Cork;
- IMSTech GmbH, a provider of manufacturing solutions for the life sciences sector, is to establish a research and manufacturing competency centre in Cork with the creation of 35 highly skilled jobs.

Enterprise Ireland continues to employ a range of promotional measures to generate interest amongst potential incoming start-ups. These include PR, sponsoring and attending at start-up related events, partnering with IDA Ireland and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, leveraging Irish networks, building relationships with people and organisations likely to refer start-ups to Enterprise Ireland. Five projects were secured during the first five months of 2013.

Discussions with incoming overseas entrepreneurs tend to extend over many months and there is always a considerable level of uncertainty until the last minute as to whether the projects will actually decide to come. While the level of enquiries and ongoing discussion is very promising, it is too early to predict the final outcome for 2013.

Additionally, IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland are working closely together on a number of joint marketing initiatives including Techcrunch in San Francisco in September 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 Measure: 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. (EI)

Update: Ongoing

The Potential Exporters Division in Enterprise Ireland holds a number of export events, workshops and programmes for new and early exporters. Enterprise Ireland can help companies develop the tools and techniques needed to succeed in export markets. Enterprise Ireland offers customised training and access to experts, matched to companies' level of export awareness. Availing of these supports will help companies to save time and money and increase their chances of export success.

Export Awareness events, which are short (typically two-hour duration) workshops, are run regularly in a number of locations around Ireland and are aimed at companies thinking of exporting for the first time.

Exploring Exporting is a series of further workshops, focused on helping first-time exporting companies become export ready. Topics include conducting market research, defining a company's export value-proposition, processes for exporting and the exportable offer. Business mentors are available to work with companies to identify the issues they need to address to become export ready.

To date in 2013, Export Awareness Events and Exploring Export Workshops have taken place in Dublin, Tralee, Castlebar, Athlone and Wexford.

Ongoing Measure: Support mentoring, business advocate support and financial support will be provided to companies - 300 significant development engagements to be supported in 2013. (EI)

Update: Ongoing

In 2012 Enterprise Ireland set up its Potential Exporters Division (PED) which is focused on supporting Irish companies that have limited engagement with the agency in terms of growing exports and associated jobs. The Division is focused on providing mentoring, business advocate support and financial support to relevant companies. During 2013 over 300 significant development engagements will take place with established Irish companies looking to enter overseas markets and targeting growth in exports.

As of June 2013, the Division had supported 147 individual client companies who are at various stages of export preparation. Companies engage with PED through workshops and awareness events and are supported in the development of a market plan for their priority target market. Advocates (short term consultancy support), Mentors (an experienced executive who can share their experience with a company), and financial supports that build capability to export are all available, on a business case basis, to assist companies.

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: Ongoing

The presentation of economic messaging was further enhanced over the first half of 2013 with the relevant output being regularly updated and real-time question and answer material provided on emerging issues. This messaging continues to be available throughout the Embassy network for daily use in a variety of contexts.

Specific key economic and promotional messages were developed in co-operation with the state agencies ahead of St. Patrick's Day promotional opportunities, particularly those directly linked to the Ministerial travel programme. Promotional DVDs and other material were also distributed to the Embassy network for use at St. Patrick's Day events worldwide.

Across the Ministerial travel programme and over the St Patrick's Day period, these materials supported the coordinated delivery of key messages in a range of settings, including:

- 180 diplomacy events involving over 85,000 attendees organised by the Embassy network, in coordination with IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and other relevant agencies.
- 101 further specific business events attended by over 8,500 Irish and international company representatives at which the Taoiseach, Tánaiste, Ministers and Embassy network participated, together with IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and other the relevant agencies.
- A range of articles and interviews in the international media.

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 Inter-Departmental Communications Group chaired by the Department of the Taoiseach focussed on a number of events with positive reputational potential for Ireland during Quarter 2 including the hosting of the G8 Summit in Lough Erne, visits to Ireland by the Prime Ministers of Canada and Japan and associated visiting media. A number of meetings were held to ensure a coordinated approach across Government and its Agencies to maximising the reputational and promotional benefits to Ireland arising from these high-profile events.

A Roundtable involving Communications Group members and other interested colleagues from Government Departments and Agencies was convened on July 11th to review the current status of Ireland's international reputation and the work that is being done across Government to promote Ireland and its reputation overseas across a range of markets and sectors.

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: Ongoing

On March 13th, 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.

Trade Missions/Events in Quarter 1 included a Trade visit to Germany by Minister of State for Research and Innovation in February and a Trade Mission to Texas by Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in March.

As part of the St. Patrick's Day 'Promote Ireland' programme 19 Government Ministers, travelled to 21 countries across North America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia for a series of trade, investment and tourism-focused programmes.

In Quarter 2, Trade Mission/Events have included Ministerial led Trade Missions to Turkey, Poland, Czech Republic, Canada, and Pennsylvania USA. These events have been led by the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Minister of State for Trade and Development, the Minister of State for Small Business, and the Minister of State for Primary Care.

Trade Missions are important to Irish companies seeking to increase exports, expand into new markets, and seal new contacts. For example, the Trade Mission to Turkey resulted in new deals in excess of €30 million being announced, while the Trade Mission to Poland and the Czech Republic resulted in over €17 million of new deals being signed.

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: Ongoing

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 during the St. Patrick's day period and were used to highlight the Gathering Ireland 2013. Further opportunities will be availed of over the remainder of 2013.

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: Ongoing

Under the Government 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, investment and tourism between Ireland and the market in question to the Export Trade Council. Local market plans for all 27 priority markets for 2013 were received and presented to the Council in February. Progress on the implementation of the market plans is reviewed by the Export Trade Council on a regular basis.

Some examples of the activities undertaken as part of the local market plans are provided below.

- In February, the Consul General in Shanghai delivered opening remarks at a media lunch to promote Irish food and beverages and tourism which was organised by Bord Bia and

Tourism Ireland. The CEO of Bord Bia also participated. The event attracted over forty journalists.

The Consul General separately hosted the CEO of Bord Bia at a dinner with representatives from meat importing companies, food service companies, a venture capital firm and food industry consultants.

- Also in February, the Ambassador in Beijing hosted the CEO of Bord Bia and high level guests from the Ministry of Agriculture, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Chinese Institute of Food Science and Technology and leading academics working in the areas of food science and nutrition.
- Following significant efforts by the Embassy in Canberra with Bord Bia and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine market access for Irish pigmeat exports to Australia was restored. Conservative industry estimates are that up to €20 million worth of Irish pork could be exported to Australia on an annual basis.
- In March this year, the Ambassador in Brazil led an IDA Ireland mission to Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. IDA Ireland held high level meetings with fund managers, investment banks and companies with a view to increasing Brazilian investment in Ireland.
- In April the Consulate in San Francisco reported on significant progress in the coordinated initiative by the Consulate, IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland to engage with Aer Lingus and California-based companies with a view to the restoration of a direct flight from the West Coast to Dublin. In June Aer Lingus announced that this route would be restored in 2014.
- In June, the Embassy in Ottawa supported the Enterprise Ireland trade mission of 15 companies led by the Minister for Trade and Development to Western Canada. The mission comprised companies in the engineering, construction, technology and recruitment sectors and particularly targeted the natural resources industry. As well as company meetings, the Minister had a series of high-level meetings with regional Government leaders. During the visit an Irish company secured a major 5 year contract with the Government of Alberta.

Ongoing Measure: Tourism Ireland will continue to review its tourism marketing strategy in all main markets and revise as appropriate. (Tourism Ireland)

Update: Ongoing

Tourism Ireland undertakes regular reviews of all main overseas target markets. For example, the recommendations arising from major reviews of the United States and the Great Britain markets (which were completed in 2012) are being implemented in these markets. Reviews of the German and French markets will be completed later in 2013.

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: Ongoing

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 InterTradeIreland's 'Go to Tender' programme. In addition to these focused sessions the NPS will also be hosting two major 'Meet the Buyer' events – Belfast and Dublin – in September and October 2013.

Enterprise Ireland considers there is a need among SMEs for training in Consortia and Partnership Building. Enterprise Ireland will put a programme of workshops in place in the second half of 2013 to address this. The first of these workshops will take place with a minimum of 10 clients in July.

Enterprise Ireland has also successfully worked on a one to one basis with clients and put clients together in consortia.

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: Ongoing

The National Procurement Service (NPS) continues to advertise eTenders in various publications and also encourages SME's to register on eTenders at various Meet the Buyer events. Enterprise Ireland similarly continues to encourage SMEs to register on eTenders to enable forthcoming procurement opportunities to be brought to client companies' attention. Enterprise Ireland has found that there is already strong registration by SMEs on the website.

Since the revamped eTenders system was launched in 2012 supplier registrations have increased by more than 12% from 70,000 to over 81,000.

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: Ongoing

The National Procurement Service (NPS) has continued to engage with buyers and contracting authorities by providing training to buyers and assistance to contracting authorities in getting the most benefit from the new eTenders system.

In the past number of weeks training has been held in Cork, Galway and Donegal. Meetings have also been held with a number of contracting authorities who want to expand their use of eTenders. One of these contracting authorities will use eTenders to hold an eAuction later this month. This will be the first of its kind using the new system.

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: Ongoing

The Global Sourcing Strategy aims to secure the procurement of an additional €500 million of domestically sourced goods and services by foreign direct investment companies in Ireland. Enterprise Ireland in conjunction with IDA Ireland set a target of 60 referrals to Global Sourcing by the end of Quarter 2 - to date 115 referrals have been made and 66 of these multinationals have already been met by Enterprise Ireland.

A strong panel of mentors has been established and will be assigned to appropriate client firms. The first MNC mentor has now been appointed. In addition, in the year to date, 61 sub-supply or potential technology partners have been introduced to MNC clients.

To build engagement with the Global Sourcing Strategy, Enterprise Ireland has hosted a series of MNC Networking events. Five separate networking events have been held to date with the following MNCs/organisations: Google, Intel, ISPE, SAP, and Accenture.

Action 217: Attract overseas entrepreneurs, and foreign direct investment from emerging businesses, to Ireland

Ongoing Measure: See Action 190. (IDA, EI)

Update: Ongoing

IDA Ireland has broadened and deepened its portfolio embracing not just large multinational corporations (MNCs), but also working closely with fast growth companies who aspire to be the MNCs of the future.

IDA Ireland's Emerging Business Division has a team located in the United States and Europe

focused on attracting these early stage high growth companies to Ireland. The team continues to win high value jobs in ICT, medical technologies, financial services and digital media.

IDA Ireland's Emerging Business Division is on target to deliver 20 foreign direct investments in 2013. Recent announcements of investments won by the Emerging Business Division include:

- 10Gen which is to create 60 jobs in Dublin with the establishment of its European headquarters;
- Etsy, Inc., the leading online marketplace for handmade and vintage items, is to establish a new EMEA headquarters in Dublin;
- Loop1 Systems Inc. which is to create 17 new jobs in Cork with the establishment of a sales, customer support and technical centre providing training and professional services to multinational companies using the SolarWinds Suite of software;
- Whitehouse Analytical Labs, an analytical testing facility, has chosen Ireland for its first round of international expansion, and is to create 35 new jobs in Cork;
- IMSTech GmbH, a provider of manufacturing solutions for the life sciences sector, is to establish a research and manufacturing competency centre in Cork with the creation of 35 highly skilled jobs.

Enterprise Ireland continues to employ a range of promotional measures to generate interest amongst potential incoming start-ups. These include PR, sponsoring and attending at start-up related events, partnering with IDA Ireland and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, leveraging Irish networks, building relationships with people and organisations likely to refer start-ups to Enterprise Ireland. Five projects were secured during the first five months of 2013.

Discussions with incoming overseas entrepreneurs tend to extend over many months and there is always a considerable level of uncertainty until the last minute as to whether the projects will actually decide to come. While the level of enquiries and ongoing discussion is very promising, it is too early to predict the final outcome for 2013.

Finally, both IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland are working closely together on a number of joint marketing initiatives including Techcrunch in San Francisco in September 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: Ongoing

In 2012, the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) performed very well despite a reduction in programme funding. Over 47,000 persons were engaged with through one-to-one LCDP interventions exceeding the 2012 target of 36,000.

Other services delivered through the LCDP also included 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 engagements to date in 2013 total almost 21,000.

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: Ongoing

The rate of aid for private promoters was increased in 2012 from 50% to 75% and this increased level of support has encouraged more applications for funding under the enterprise support measure.

Approximately 3,944 projects, focused on enterprise generation and development in rural areas, have been funded between 2009 and 2012 under the Rural Development Programme supporting over 3,000 enterprises and facilitating the creation of 1,809 full time positions

across a range of sectors including enterprises in the baked goods, furniture manufacturing and IT services and products sectors.

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: Ongoing

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. The current internship programme is due to end in 2014.

There are 6 interns currently working on the programme and 30 technical and administrative employees working on related projects.

Ongoing Measure: Provide supports for Irish language arts, publishing, creative writing and other schemes. (DAHG, Foras na Gaeilge and Údarás na Gaeltachta)

Update: Ongoing

The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht provides support and funding to initiatives to promote Irish language arts, publishing and creative writing, including:

- Taibhdhearc na Gaillimhe, the national Irish language theatre. In addition to providing a platform for the development of new plays in Irish, An Taibhdhearc provides training opportunities for young people in the theatre. An Taibhdhearc employs four full-time staff as well as part-time staff in the theatre and independent theatre companies as the need arises. The Department provides an annual grant towards the running costs of the theatre and a grant of €323,920 has been awarded in 2013.
- An Cumann Scoildrámaíochta which organises drama festivals for primary and secondary schools with the aim of promoting Irish language drama. The festivals are organised on a local and provincial basis with the provincial winners participating in an All-Ireland Drama Festival. Through their involvement with An Cumann Scoildrámaíochta, some 10,000 young people are afforded the opportunity to participate in Irish language drama annually. The Department provides an annual grant towards the running costs of the programme and a grant of €40,000 has been awarded in 2013.

Additionally, Údarás na Gaeltachta and Ealaín (na Gaeltachta) Teo continue to fund a range of Irish language arts, writing and other initiatives.

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: Ongoing

The provision of qualified persons with Irish language skills to meet recruitment needs in the EU institutions and in Ireland is being achieved through the Advanced Irish Language Skills Initiative, under which the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, in cooperation with the Higher Education Authority and other stakeholders, provides funding for a range of specialised third-level Irish language courses in Ireland in areas such as translation, interpretation, IT and law.

In addition, Údarás na Gaeltachta and Ealaín (na Gaeltachta) Teo provide funding and support for a range of Irish language arts, writing and other initiatives.

Ongoing Measure: Strengthen RD&I capacity of Gaeltacht companies. (Údarás na Gaeltachta)

Update: Ongoing

Research and Development (R&D) has become an increasingly important driver of potential growth for companies and represents an important indicator of economic impact. Údarás na Gaeltachta has focussed on increasing company investment in R&D in order to improve competitiveness. An tÚdarás, in co-operation with Enterprise Ireland, is committed to working with companies through the RD&I scheme, to strengthen the research and innovation base of the enterprise sector

Ongoing Measures:

- Support entrepreneurs and start-up businesses and assist indigenous business to grow in Gaeltacht areas. (Údarás na Gaeltachta)
- Support high growth potential in various sectors, including cultural tourism, renewable energy, coastal resources and the arts in Gaeltacht areas. (Údarás na Gaeltachta)

Update: Ongoing

Údarás na Gaeltachta is currently undertaking a wide range of enterprise and development activities in relation to the creation and development of micro and indigenous enterprises in growing and emerging sectors such as life sciences (biomedical and pharmaceutical),

information and communications technology, niche manufacturing (engineering and consumer goods), audio-visual and digital media, tourism, renewable energy, coastal resources and the arts and language-based enterprises.

Additionally, An tÚdarás' education and training strategy aims to ensure that a highly skilled workforce is available in the Gaeltacht. An tÚdarás provides funding to a number of third level institutions which have Gaeltacht areas within their catchment regions, for the provision of accredited diploma, higher diploma, degree and post-graduate courses.

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: Ongoing

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.

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: Ongoing

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs is continuing to collaborate with related Government Departments and with the youth sector on how youth work can enhance young people's employability, in particular its contribution to the implementation of the Youth Guarantee. The potential to secure EU funding to support such measures is also being explored.

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: Ongoing

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs continues to support volunteer-led youth organisations, local voluntary youth clubs and groups and a large number of staff-led youth projects whose programmes and activities are supported by a large volunteer base.

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: Ongoing

The providers of training and supports under the Department of Justice Training Workshop programme have submitted business plans outlining the agreed programmes and outputs to be provided over 2013. This Programme works to assist offenders address the specific training they require to support their reintegration into the community and to the workforce.

A funding agreement has been finalised with the Irish Association for the Social Integration of Offenders to provide a professional guidance and placement service specifically to support offenders to move into appropriate education, training and ultimately employment.

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 Measure: Provide technical support on equality mainstreaming for providers of further education and training and labour market programme providers. (Equality Authority)

Update: Ongoing

Following an open call for proposals in May, six projects were approved for funding in June 2013 to develop equality mainstreaming projects with a focus on improving access to the labour market for groups experiencing inequality. These 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.

The projects are due to complete within 1 year.

Ongoing Measure: Implement a programme of sectoral projects with employers and trade union networks to enhance equality competency. (Equality Authority)

Update: Ongoing

The Equality Authority is establishing a panel of experts who can provide equality supports

directly to workplaces, with a particular focus on the SME sector. The Panel will be operational in October 2013.

Ongoing Measure: Provide a programme of equality supports to providers of further education and training. (Equality Authority)

Update: Ongoing

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 will implement 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 organisations approved for 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
- Further Education Support Services in co-operation with Co. Cavan VEC and Co. Wicklow VEC
- Aontas

Projects will run for approximately 6 months from the start of the 2013/2014 academic year.

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 Commitment: IDA will continue to encourage its companies to engage in high level RD&I activities. (IDA)

Update: Ongoing

In addition to the activities detailed under the Quarter 2 update above for Action 245, IDA Ireland is continuing to encourage 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 late 2012, Stryker, a medical devices company, announced it is investing an extra US\$30 million in R&D activities to develop products and technologies which will reduce surgery time, increase operating room efficiency and improve accuracy and precision in neuro, spine, ear, nose and throat, arthroscopy, general surgery and total joint arthroplasty procedures. This announcement further compliments IDA Ireland's strategy to promote transformation within its existing client companies.

Ongoing Commitment: As per headline action. (EI)

Update: Ongoing

Enterprise Ireland has undertaken extensive reviews of its manufacturing clients' business plans and current market trajectories. This process has enabled Enterprise Ireland to make specific recommendations regarding R&D solutions and opportunities that are bespoke to the clients as well as detailing the financial and soft supports that Enterprise Ireland can deploy to help the company perform this R&D.

Enterprise Ireland has also mandated the R&D Advocates and the Enterprise Innovation Networks to engage extensively with manufacturing companies and these firms are actively informed of various R&D opportunities and Enterprise Ireland supports that can accelerate their growth.

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: Ongoing

IDA Ireland is continuing to encourage 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 (see also update on Action 245 above).

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: Ongoing

At a meeting of the Manufacturing Development Forum on June 28th last, a sub-group was set up to consider how a Communications Plan would be developed in relation to the promotion of careers in the manufacturing sector, and how the role of 'Champions' for the sector might be advanced. The sub-group will arrange meetings with Government Departments and agencies to promote and advocate some of the key recommendations in the Forfás Manufacturing Strategy.

A number of Forum members indicated at the June 28th meeting that they would be willing to act as champions for the sector. The sub-group will work with these members to progress the initiative. An update on the work of the sub-group will be provided at the next meeting of the Manufacturing Development Forum.

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: Ongoing

To date Enterprise Ireland has supported 18 significant investments, of which 3 are foreign direct investment projects. The most strategically significant of these projects is the Glanbia Ingredients Ireland project which in addition to direct jobs will provide an additional 1600 jobs in the wider economy.

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 Measure: Provide commercial and incubation units to host client companies including start ups. (IMERC)

Update: Ongoing

The funding for this initiative has been secured and the units will be delivered by Quarter 3. In advance of delivery of the units, three start-up companies and two foreign owned companies are currently being hosted by the National Maritime College of Ireland.

Ongoing Measure: Attract FDI clients to incorporate in Ireland and locate on the IMERC campus. (IMERC)

Update: Ongoing

A new foreign direct investment client, Sound and Sea Technology Ltd., was incorporated at the end of Quarter 2. The company currently employs two people and this will increase to four by year end.

Ongoing Measure: Work with academic partners to win new funds to recruit new researchers to the Halpin Research Centre and the Beaufort Laboratory. (IMERC)

Update: Ongoing

In February 2013, €25 million in funding was awarded by SFI to the new Centre for Marine Renewable Energy Ireland (MaREI). The project which is led by the Beaufort laboratory was launched on June 1st 2013 and recruitment is underway with up to 60 research posts to be filled. The project includes 48 industry partners from across the marine renewable energy supply chain.

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. It now employs 9 researchers and 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: Ongoing

Ongoing technical and diplomatic efforts have secured the opening of the Australian market to Irish pigmeat, the opening of the Iranian market to Irish beef and agreement on export certification.

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.

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.

Preparations are currently underway in relation to a Ministerial Trade Mission to Switzerland in July and the Gulf Region in October; which will also advance measures to improve market access and trade.

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: Ongoing

There are in the region of 91 bays/estuaries requiring Appropriate Assessments. To date assessments have been completed in respect of 5 bays and licence determinations have been made in respect of one of the 5 bays. The first licence determinations in respect of a Natura site have been made with over 40 licence determinations being made in respect of Castlemaine Harbour.

In parallel with the work in relation to 'Natura 2000' sites, significant progress was made in 2012 on licensing in non-Natura areas. 115 licence determinations were made in 2012, up from 6 in 2011, and depending on the availability of Appropriate Assessments and other measures it is expected that determinations in excess of this figure will be achieved in 2013.

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: Ongoing

Enterprise Ireland continues to build on the positive engagement with key dairy industry players to optimise industry capacity, capability and collaboration in 2013 and beyond.

In April of this year, the first significant strategic investment for Glanbia was completed and implementation has begun. Discussions continue with other major dairy processors in preparation for the increase in milk anticipated when quotas are removed, and further investments are in prospect between now and year end.

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: Ongoing

Enterprise Ireland continues to promote Lean and Leadership/Management Development in the food sector. 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, suited to the stage of development of clients, to help them tackle competitiveness issues across their businesses and to help them develop a sustained in-house culture of continuous improvement.

Food clients have engaged very strongly on the Lean agenda. By end June, Enterprise Ireland supported a total of 142 Lean investments by food client companies. These companies are indicating significant savings which is having the effect of ratcheting up their commitment to continuing to pursue the Lean agenda.

On the Leadership and Management Development side, Enterprise Ireland offers customised management development programmes, delivered in collaboration with leading international providers, to inspire business leaders, to equip them with the tools and techniques to operate more effectively and to build international scale.

Regarding the take-up and impact of Leadership and Management Development Programmes, 69 food clients have to date been supported by Enterprise Ireland to undertake one of the Leadership4Growth programmes and feedback from participants has been very positive.

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: Ongoing

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine continues to monitor progress on these 55 and other research projects via desk evaluation of progress reports and on-site inspections. The focus of attention to date on these 55 projects has been on ensuring that they get off the ground successfully.

The Department is also in the process of evaluating research project applications received on foot of its 2013 calls under its Food Institutional Research Measure (FIRM), Stimulus and Competitive Forestry Research for Development (CoFoRD) programmes.

Green Economy

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: Ongoing

Set within the overall context of 'Our Sustainable Future, A Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland', 'Green Tenders – An Action Plan for Green Public Procurement' aims to assist public authorities in successfully planning and implementing green public procurement policies and practices.

The action plan initially prioritised eight sectors – construction, energy, transport, food and catering services, cleaning products and services, paper, uniforms and other textiles and ICT. A Green Tenders Implementation Group (GTIG), co-chaired by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government is directly tasked with overseeing the implementation of the action plan. Members of the Group, each of which is responsible for the implementation of actions in their own area, have been asked to report on progress, including timelines for the delivery of key actions, in advance of each meeting. An updated progress report on all green public procurement (GPP) actions identified in the action plan will in turn be presented to the GTIG at each meeting.

To support Departments and agencies in making progress in their respective areas, a sub-group has been established to examine a range of issues around the implementation of actions including cost effectiveness, and in particular to identify “quick wins” for implementation. The sub-group has also undertaken research and analysis of the economic benefits and best practice of GPP both nationally and internationally. This report, which will support and facilitate the implementation of the action plan, will be presented to the subgroup and GTIG at their next meetings in Quarter 3 2013.

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. (SEAI)
- 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: Ongoing

To date, fifty companies, the majority of which are in the manufacturing, hospitality or tourism sectors, are registered for the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland’s (SEAI) Advice, Mentoring and Assessment Service. Of the 50 companies registered, 34 companies, with a combined energy spend of €5.7 million, have completed the Advice, Mentoring and Assessments process.

Approximately 15 Energy Management Action Programme training courses are to be provided over 2013. With an estimated 12 individuals attending each course, this amounts to approximately 180 individuals provided with Energy MAP training in 2013.

The SEAI continues to support and work with 160 Large Industry Energy Network companies in relation to energy management.

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: Ongoing

In the context of 2020 sustainability targets, trade and environmental policies are closely linked. As part of the Doha World Trade Organisation trade negotiations, the EU has pushed for more open trade in environmental goods and services such as renewable energy

products, waste water management and energy efficient construction services to encourage the spread of these new technologies around the world.

The September 2012 Summit of Asia-Pacific Economic (APEC) Leaders in Vladivostok endorsed a list of 54 environmental goods on which they committed to reduce the applied tariffs to 5% or less by the end of 2015. On February 5th 2013, the Commission presented Member States with an economic analysis of this list and potential benefits for the EU.

At the Informal Trade Ministerial Council in Dublin on April 17th, Ministers discussed promoting trade liberalisation in the green technology sector. The APEC list was also discussed in Geneva on May 8th with like-minded countries possibly interested in an eventual deal (EU, US, Switzerland, Canada, Japan, Hong Kong, Norway, Australia, New Zealand etc).

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: Ongoing

The National Waste Prevention Programme Plan (NWPP), which brings significant benefits to business in terms of reducing waste costs, is currently being renewed with a view to the launch of a public consultation in the third quarter of 2013 and publication by the end of 2013.

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.

Ongoing Measure: Participation of Local Authorities in Local Authority Prevention Demonstration scheme. (DECLG)

Update: Ongoing

The resource materials produced by local authorities to support SMEs to reduce and prevent are available on the Local Authority Prevention Network (LAPN)* website. The LAPN offered a free training course, which demonstrates how to carry out food waste assessments in local business and how to identify cost savings, to local authority staff over June and July 2013.

* The Local Authority Prevention Network (LAPN) is an initiative of the Environmental Protection Agency led National Waste Prevention Programme, 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: Ongoing

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 runs from June 4th to September 10th 2013. It is anticipated that this issue will be discussed at the next meeting of the Forum in the second half of 2013.

Construction and Property

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: Ongoing

In 2011, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (D/PER) 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.

On June 5th, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform announced details of additional capital investment of €150 million over 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. Funding will be mainly aimed at maintaining or improving existing assets.

The Department of Finance is chairing a Steering Group in the area of infrastructure finance attended by D/PER, the National development Finance Agency (NDFA), NewERA and the National Pensions Reserve Fund (NPRF). This group meets on a regular basis to (i) discuss progress on meeting the financing needs to deliver the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Programme announced by Government in July 2012 and (ii) identify and resolve bottlenecks and discuss potential sources of additional private sector financing.

The NDFA has also established a PPP Private Sector Debt Funding Working Group attended by D/Finance and private sector lenders and advisors with the objective of (i) improving the readiness of potential funders to fund the PPP Programme, (ii) build Programme momentum by establishing funding capacity for initial projects and expanding funding sources for later projects and (iii) expanding long term funding sources such as institutional investment.

Additionally, a European Investment Bank (EIB) High Level Working Group was established last year to identify and progress areas of EIB lending for Irish initiatives including EIB lending for the PPP programme and direct exchequer lending for the delivery of schools bundles.

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: Ongoing

The review of development management guidelines will commence in Quarter 3. It is expected that the updated development management guidelines will be published in draft later this year.

The updated guidelines will improve operation and efficiency of the development management system leading to more consistent application of planning law and policy across local authorities and greater certainty for users in terms of timelines and outcomes.

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: Ongoing

Scandinavian Transport Opportunities: A Market Study and Opportunity Seminar was undertaken in March for 9 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.

Benelux – Ireland Pharma Build Program: 21 clients participated in a market visit, led by the Minister of State for Trade and Development, on 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 UCB, Pfizer, GSK, Baxter, MSD and Abbott. 7 clients participated in a plant visit to Janssen Pharmaceuticals. A supporting trade dinner attended by 120 key Irish and Belgian pharmaceutical representatives was arranged by Enterprise Ireland.

Project Qatar: 3 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.

Trade Mission to Alberta, Canada - Oil, Gas, and Mining: A Trade Mission, led by the Minister of State for Trade and Development, was undertaken 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.

In addition, further meetings took place with the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, Calgary Economic Development and Edmonton Economic Development

Corporation. These meetings have created a network of decision-making contacts related to construction development in the Alberta Province.

Asian Development Bank: 5 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. Enterprise Ireland executives also attended a meeting with the ADB and are now in discussions with appropriate clients in terms of follow-up actions agreed with the ADB

Better Build Conference: 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.

In addition, a number of site visits to showcase best building practices were also arranged for visiting buyers. A follow-up programme is currently being undertaken by Enterprise Ireland to assess buyer feedback and interest.

Management Development: 11 construction and related companies are participating on Management Development Programmes, International selling and Management4Growth. 7 construction companies participated on the Pilot Building Information Management (BIM) Programme with initial workshop held in East Point. Further workshops and one to one consultancy are planned as part of the BIM programme. In addition, 14 clients attended two short course sessions while on Belgium Market Pharma sector visit.

Opportunity Seminars: 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 workshop on construction opportunities in Perth and Brisbane was held at Enterprise Ireland in advance of a Trade Mission in Quarter 4 which was attended by 31 clients. A series of one-to-one meetings were also held with attending clients and speakers to assess areas of interest for Enterprise Ireland clients and their ability to pursue opportunities presented.

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: Ongoing

A calendar of significant festivals and events forms 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 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.

As of end-June, over 4,000 “Gatherings” were confirmed on the official website with new events continuing to be added. Official overseas visitor statistics for the early part of the year indicates that the visitor and revenue targets for the year will be achieved.

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: Ongoing

Tourism Ireland is continuing the roll-out of a major consumer marketing campaign to promote Ireland and ‘The Gathering Ireland 2013’ in key markets across the world.

Tourism Ireland has been working to identify and engage 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 has been to encourage them to bring their own Gatherings to Ireland in 2013 and mobilise their networks to do the same.

Other target groups include tour operators, universities, and schools etc. Tourism Ireland continues to work to generate positive international publicity coverage for Ireland and ‘The Gathering’ worth more than €287 million a year in equivalent advertising value.

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 the National Food Tourism Implementation Framework. (DTTAS, Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Ongoing

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 is on individuals located along the route of the Wild Atlantic Way and the benchmarking programme will take place along the established driving routes of Norway in September.

The 2012 food ambassadors have been producing a range of new events such as Feast of The Chieftains within An Grianan Ailigh Fort in Donegal, and a Meath Food Series with over 30 food events to be held in the Boyne Valley area from June to September.

As a result of Fáilte Ireland’s food tourism development advisory supports, a Burren food trail and a programme of weekly food experiences and events from April to September was created, as a joint initiative of the Burren & Cliffs of Moher Geopark and the Burren Ecotourism Network.

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 will also be posting articles about their Irish food tourism experience.

Ongoing Measure: Promote a range of walking and cycling routes around the country. (DTTAS, Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Ongoing

Planning for a proposed Dublin-Galway cycle route is currently being carried out by the National Roads Authority (NRA) and National Transport Authority (NTA). Preliminary design work on the route will be completed in 2013. A section of the route from Ashtown to Castleknock is being constructed in 2013 with funding from DTTAS and the NTA. Decisions on the statutory approval and construction timelines will be taken during 2013, dependent upon the progression of the design work and funding profiles.

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 to identify both the potential market size for cycling in particular but also walking, equestrian, sailing 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 will be undertaken to identify priority actions to deliver on the identified market potential.

Ongoing Measure: Attract major events to Ireland. (DTTAS, Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Ongoing

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.

Upcoming major events directly supported include the Rock 'N' Roll Dublin Half Marathon taking place in August 2013, and the Grande Partenza of the Giro d'Italia in 2014. Other major 2013 festivals and events funded by Fáilte Ireland, which have scope to attract significant visitors include the Galway Arts Festival, Kilkenny Arts, the Dublin Horse Show, and the New Year's Festival.

Ongoing Measure: Attract major conferences to Ireland. (DTTAS, Fáilte Ireland)

Update: Ongoing

In 2013 to date, Fáilte Ireland is supporting 147 conference applications for bids, and marketing support for committed conferences. These conferences represent 80,000 international delegates and have a potential estimated business value of €107 million.

Some of the key international association and society conferences taking place in 2013 include: Healthcare Information and Management Systems (HIMSS) - 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 and Outcomes Research (3,500 delegates), and the European Association for Osseointegration (3,000 delegates).

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: Ongoing

Projects completed to date 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 re-developed Bundoran Waterworld.

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 full 2013 allocation of €19 million is expected to be drawn down to support projects underway at present.

Action 301: Continue to apply 9 per cent VAT rate in sectors benefiting the tourism industry in 2013.

Ongoing Measure: As per headline action (D/Finance)

Update: Ongoing

The 9% VAT rate, introduced as part of the Jobs Initiative in 2011 in sectors benefiting the tourism industry, applies until December 31st 2013.

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: Ongoing

In July 2011, following discussions with the airlines, the Minister for Transport, Tourism and

Sport advised the Government that the response from the airlines was disappointing and that the Air Travel Tax (ATT) should be retained.

The Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport has indicated that the offer to abolish the tax remains on the table. The purpose of the offer was to stimulate inbound tourist traffic and the response to date from airlines is deemed to be inadequate. The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport is continuing to monitor the capacity (routes and services) that is being made available by the airlines in relation to the offer.

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: Ongoing

Over €37 million has been provided in 2013 for the overseas promotion of Ireland as a tourist destination and Tourism Ireland’s global marketing campaign will reach up to 200 million people across the world this year. This activity includes 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 US have been factored into the marketing activity and the new Ireland.com website, which represents a complete redevelopment of Tourism Ireland’s online presence is being 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: Ongoing

Tourism Ireland continues to roll out the GB Path to Growth strategy which was developed in conjunction with industry partners and aims to return this, 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 have been featuring 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.

A number of high profile events took place in the UK around St. Patricks Day to highlight Ireland as a tourist destination and work to promote The Gathering is ongoing.

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: Ongoing

There has been some capital expenditure to improve the access for local people to the Clara Bog and Carrownagappul Bog. These are both designated Special Areas of Conservation. These small injections of funding have allowed the local communities to make greater use the local bogs as an asset/amenity for walking, cycling etc.

In addition, Údáras na Gaeltachta has co-funded two specific training programmes in Marine and Countryside Guiding (Level 6) which will support the development of employment in the recreational and tourism sectors. Similar initiatives are to be rolled out over 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, DJE)

Update: Ongoing

The Irish Short Stay Visa Waiver Programme was introduced in July 2011 and data from the Central Statistics Office indicates that the programme is having a positive impact. Visitor numbers between July 2011 and June 2012 visitor numbers from the countries covered by

the Programme grew by 21% over the preceding 12 months. Final data is not yet available for the following 12 month period.

The Programme is administered through the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service and the promotion of the scheme is being led by the relevant authorities such as the tourism bodies 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: Ongoing

The recommendations in the Report continue to be advanced by the Department and the Irish Film Board on an ongoing basis. The purpose of the report was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Irish industry and to recommend to government specific policies that will equip the industry to successfully enter the next phase of its growth from a predominantly domestic platform into international markets.

The policy recommendations in this report should enable the audiovisual industry to continue to develop with a distinctive and creatively-led Irish film, TV and animation industry while, at the same time, fulfilling its potential as a key pillar of Ireland's creative economy and emerging creative industries.

A mediator has recently been appointed to progress industrial relations issues within the Irish Film Production Sector. Work is continuing on the implementation of the recommendations set out in the report and an Interim Report will be prepared by autumn.

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 Measure: 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)

Update: Ongoing

The National Cultural Institutions delivered a series of European focused projects and exhibitions with the support of the Culture Programme - ranging from the 'Analysing Cubanism' exhibition at the Irish Museum of Modern Art and the Crawford Museum, to the Masterworks Concert Series at the National Concert Hall as well as the exhibition curated by the National Archives and the Royal Irish Academy marking the 40th anniversary of Ireland's accession to the then EEC. A number of further exhibitions and initiatives to focus on maximising a positive impression of the country internationally will be delivered over the rest of 2013.

Ongoing Measure: 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: Ongoing

A number of initiatives have been carried out in relation to the provision of reusable, open-linked, digital cultural content for the European Portal, including the launch of the on-line Decade of Centenaries project - Century Ireland - and the work to promote the digitisation of important Diaspora material, such as the material relating to the JFK 50 series of events being held to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the JFK visit to his ancestral home in New Ross, Wexford.

In addition, progress made on the preparatory work on the digitisation of the 1926 Census material and on the other historical records relating the societal changes in Ireland.

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 Measure: 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. (Arts Council)

Update: Ongoing

Festivals and similar events are an important vehicle for the Arts Council to support the arts nationwide. In addition to the cultural component, these festivals also make a significant economic contribution at both the local and national level. They also service to enhance Ireland's reputation internationally.

Over the summer a number of festivals, which are supported by the Arts Council, will be taking place across Ireland, including the Cork Midsummer Festival, the Boyle Arts Festival, the Kilkenny Arts Festival and the Galway Arts Festival,

Additionally, a wide range of traditional and contemporary Gaeltacht based arts initiatives are funded through Údarás na Gaeltachta and the Ealaín (na Gaeltachta) Teo.

Ongoing Measure: Invest €1.2m 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. (Arts Council)

Update: Ongoing

There are good economic cases for the Arts Council to support festivals, but it also goes beyond this in terms of cultural and economic boosts to local communities and art organisations.

Festivals supported include Galway Arts Festival, Cork Midsummer Festival, Kilkenny Arts Festival and O'Carolan Harp and Traditional Music Festival, amongst others who receive annual grants. Others receive funding through the Arts Council's festivals and events scheme. The Arts Council grants allow these festivals to take place while ensuring that the arts are promoted in local communities all over Ireland. The Arts Council also supports a wider range of smaller festivals across the country. Many of these festivals form important dates on the summer cultural calendar. This funding provides important local economic stimulus in terms of tourism and employment. These festivals also play an important role in terms of communities and the art experiences of those in attendance. The Arts Council remains dedicated to maintaining support for the arts and ensuring that events around the country.

Ongoing Measure: 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: Ongoing

The Arts Council recently announced the extension of its fundraising capacity-building initiative, RAISE: the Business of Arts Fundraising. This extension of RAISE will be open to any arts organisation, whether or not it is funded by the Arts Council.

The Council invited expressions of interest from organisations with the ambition and potential to raise €100,000 per annum of additional private investment.

Raise provides one-to-one professional advice and direct funding support to a limited number of selected organisations to properly resource fundraising capacity within the organisation over a two-year period. The award consists of professional support for the creation of a fundraising strategy through a group consulting process, recruitment and mentoring of a fundraising intern and funding for this intern, as entry level fundraiser, for a two-year period in total. The value of support provided to each organisation by the Arts

Council will be in the order of €30,000. It is planned that five organisations will be selected from those who submitted an expression of interest by June 28th 2013 and that the programme will commence in August 2013. Applications were open to all Arts Council funded and non-Arts Council funded arts organisations meeting the criteria.

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: Ongoing

There is an identified need for advanced skills and craft apprenticeships in this sector. Work is currently ongoing in regards to the establishment of a traditional building skills training and development programme to upskill the existing workforce to national standards (National Framework of Qualifications) via the Construction Industry Federation (CIF) register of heritage contractors. There is also work underway in relation to the potential expansion of the traditional skills apprenticeship scheme beyond the Office of Public Works (OPW).

Work has advanced to develop a collaborative approach between the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the OPW, CIF and local Government in advancing a focused pilot training standard in this area. A preliminary meeting is scheduled for July between all parties to advance matters.

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: Ongoing

The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is currently promoting best practice and providing training seminars in upgrading traditionally built buildings to ensure that they are not damaged by inappropriate works.

The training element is linked to advanced craft skills development in the built heritage conservation sector with the potential for employment and career development opportunities in the energy efficiency sector.

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: Ongoing

Since its establishment in mid-2012, the Digital Games Clustering Development Team (CDT) has continued to provide a forum in which industry members can engage with the training and higher education sectors on the design and delivery of appropriate games development courses.

In this regard, the CDT is currently formulating a proposal to apply to the US Fulbright Commission to fund the appointment of an industry advisor to work for a limited period of time (3 months) to ensure that the further education and higher education sectors are aware of the needs of the games industry. It is intended that the advisor will compile a report at the end of the term which will benchmark current courses, advise on the design and delivery of appropriate games development courses in various institutions, and advise on how best to enhance the interface between the games sector and the education sector.

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: Ongoing

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. Activities undertaken to date in 2013 in this regard, 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 international financial services sector from the Department of Finance to support refreshed initiatives

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 Measure: Continue the promotion of Ireland's international education offering, including the extensive use of social media channels. (EI)

Update: Ongoing

Ireland's International Education Strategy is presented in the "Building Global Relationships 2010-2015" plan released by the Department of Education and Skills in early 2010. The strategy articulates a vision to promote Ireland as a quality destination for international education and includes ten core actions including quality, immigration, and competitiveness.

Enterprise Ireland's role, through Education in Ireland - the new umbrella brand for marketing the Irish higher education and the English Language Sectors internationally - is the management of the brand and a development agenda with Higher Education Institutes to support the internationalisation agenda. The promotion of Ireland's international education, including the extensive use of social media channels, is an important activity in priority markets such as India, the United States, Malaysia and Gulf States.

The New Education in Ireland website (www.educationinireland.com) which was launched late in 2012 continues to receive positive feedback from users. Interactions with the brand through website and the various social media channels supported are constantly monitored and Enterprise Ireland reports over 856,000 interactions in 2013, up from around 30,000 this time last year.

Ongoing Measure: Deliver a range of overseas missions and events designed to increase the profile of the sector in key target markets during 2013. (EI)

Update: Ongoing

Enterprise Ireland has scheduled a number of overseas missions and events designed to increase the profile of the education sector in key target markets during 2013.

To date in 2013, Enterprise Ireland has delivered Ministerial led trade missions to India in February, China in March and the Gulf in April. A further four missions/trade visits are planned before year-end to Brazil in October, India in November, Canada in September and

Malaysia in July and December. .

In-market activities such as education fairs, PR promotion, and road shows continue in all other markets, particularly the United States.

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: Ongoing

A Cloud Awareness Campaign is being run jointly by Enterprise Ireland and the Irish Internet Association to highlight the potential of cloud computing for businesses. Microsoft is also a sponsor.

Awareness events were held on May 30th in Galway, followed by Dublin on June 6th and Cork on June 20th. A final event for 2013 will be held in Dublin in September.

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: Ongoing

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.

Contact has been made with the major cloud providers on how they can facilitate such migration and tailored advice will continue to be provided to organisations who seek it.

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: Ongoing

The Enterprise Ireland Innovation Vouchers initiative seeks to build links between Ireland's public knowledge providers and small businesses while creating in-company cultural shifts in

the approach to innovation.

Under the Action Plan for Jobs, Enterprise Ireland is seeking to promote the Innovation Voucher Scheme as a means of assisting SMEs who are interested in migrating their business to a cloud computing model.

Enterprise Ireland will focus on the potential use of Innovation Vouchers by companies in colleges that have a cloud computing capability which is available to support industry in the adoption of cloud within their businesses. Those colleges include the three participants in IC4 technology centre (Dublin City University, University College Dublin, Athlone Institute of Technology), Cork Institute of Technology Cork with its Masters in Cloud Computing, and the National College of Ireland with its Cloud Competency Centre.

The application of Innovation Vouchers for Cloud Computing is being promoted at Enterprise Ireland's Excel at Selling Workshops on Cloud Computing, at the Cloud Awareness seminars jointly conducted by Enterprise Ireland and the Irish Internet Association and via the Cloud Computing Cluster which is supported by Enterprise Ireland under the Cluster Initiative.

Companies are also being reminded of the possibility of collaborating and grouping their vouchers when working with the Institutes of Technology.

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: Ongoing

The Internet Growth Acceleration Programme (iGap) is targeted at Internet related companies with global growth potential and the ability to meet critical growth milestones.

The Programme design is specifically geared to add significant strategic and business value to companies in both Business to Business (B2B) and Business to Customer (B2C) markets with practical learning modules, support from implementation coaches, access to business advisors and industry networking. Industry experts and experienced Internet entrepreneurs cover topics including monetizing the business, revenue models, marketing, customer acquisition and retention and preparation for funding - all key elements of a business strategy for growing Internet companies. The current iGap programme was completed in May by 25 participants.

Enterprise Ireland is currently preparing a similar Initiative to accelerate the development of early stage companies in the Irish digital content and technologies sector. It is hoped to initiate this by December 2013.

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: Ongoing

Enterprise Ireland in 2013 will continue to promote Ireland as a centre of excellence in Information Security by providing support to Info Security Ireland (ISI) (an enterprise networking body) which promotes interaction with technology firms, academia and government, and promotes the industry worldwide by creating an awareness of Ireland's track record and capability in this field.

Info Security Ireland has completed a process of re-organisation which included the establishment of ISI as a limited company. A new management Board is in place. Enterprise Ireland supported seven ISI clients to attend the RSA Information Security Conference in San Francisco in February. Enterprise Ireland continues to support the Board of ISI in its work and will sponsor an ISI conference in the Autumn.