

# ACTION PLAN FOR JOBS 2014



Third Progress Report

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## Commentary

This is the third report of 2014 from the Monitoring Committee established by Government to monitor and drive implementation of the measures contained in the *Action Plan for Jobs 2014*. It outlines progress made on measures due for completion in the third quarter of 2014. The Monitoring Committee comprises representatives of the Department of the Taoiseach, the Office of the Tánaiste, the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The high-level goal of the Action Plan for Jobs, first introduced in 2012, is to create the environment where the number of people at work will have increased by 100,000 by 2016, and will have reached 2.1 million people by 2020.

The Government published the third in its multi-annual *Action Plan for Jobs* series in February this year. This Plan, which contains 385 actions to be implemented in 2014 by all 16 Government Departments and by 46 agencies, will build on the progress made in 2012 and 2013 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 over 500 actions already implemented under *Action Plan for Jobs 2012* and *2013* cumulatively, and reported on by the Monitoring Committee in its previous ten quarterly reports (see [www.djei.ie](http://www.djei.ie)).

Six of the seven Disruptive Reforms introduced in 2013 are being progressed further in 2014 as these are multi-annual initiatives (Big Data/Analytics; ICT Skills; Integrated Licensing Application Service; Trading Online; Energy Efficiency; and National Health Innovation Hub). The Jobs Plus initiative, launched in 2013, has already been mainstreamed and has proven particularly impactful. Three new Disruptive Reforms have been introduced in 2014: Entrepreneurship; Winning Abroad; and Manufacturing: National Step Change. In total, there are nine Disruptive Reforms to be advanced in 2014.

### Actions due in Quarter 3

In the third quarter of 2014, Departments and agencies were to deliver 100 measures relating to 84 of the Action Plan's 385 actions. Some 88 of the measures due in Quarter 3 of 2014 have been delivered, giving a **completion rate of 88%**.

In delivering 88 third quarter measures under the Plan, the Government has, for example:

#### As part of Disruptive Reform 1 – Entrepreneurship

- Launched two programmes to support Youth/Graduate Entrepreneurship; a competitive Youth/Graduate Entrepreneurship Fund to complement the new LEOs/Microfinance Youth Programme, and rolled out "Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur" competition which involves a total fund of €2 million.

- Developed a strategy targeted at increasing the number of mobile medical device opportunities relocating to Ireland.
- Reviewed initiatives including the Start Your Own Business (SYOB) initiative, Employment Investment Incentive (EII), and Seed Capital Scheme (SCS), and announced amendments where appropriate as part of Budget 2015.

**As part of Disruptive Reform 2 – Winning Abroad**

- Developed and implemented both National and International Programmes of Events for the Year of Irish Design 2015 to showcase the very best of Irish design, through signature events on the island of Ireland, and also in prestigious partner venues in international capitals of design and commerce.
- Critically analysed the Foreign Earnings Deduction (FED) and announced a number of amendments as part of Budget 2015 to encourage SMEs to expand into new foreign markets.

**As part of Disruptive Reform 3 – Manufacturing: National Step Change**

- Established a cross-agency working group to engage with manufacturing firms in order to identify research interests and infrastructural requirements in the manufacturing sector, which resulted in industry recommending a Discrete Manufacturing concept.

**As part of Disruptive Reform 4 - Big Data and Data Analysis**

- Issued a targeted call for Innovation Vouchers in the area of data analytics, to promote the benefits of data analytics to smaller companies who may not have considered its value in their existing business models.
- Launched an Open Data Portal, developed as the primary source of public sector databases.

**As part of Disruptive Reform 7 – Trading Online**

- Launched a national trading online voucher scheme, which will target the distribution of 1,000 vouchers to Irish SME's in 2014, and which involves all 31 Local Enterprise Offices (LEO).

**And more broadly, in Q3 Government has for example:**

- Concluded the final phase of the 100Mbps schools broadband programme, and provided connections to 249 second level schools.
- Launched a new pilot initiative involving State funding of €11.7 million, in collaboration with the Mayo Clinic in the United States, to source international technologies which can

serve as the basis of new start-up companies in Ireland, and which will see the commercialisation of up to 20 novel medical technologies in Ireland over the next 5 years.

- Announced 50 new enterprise-academia research partnerships, involving funding of some €5.7 million, through the Irish Research Council's Enterprise Partnership Scheme; this marks the engagement of the 250<sup>th</sup> company with the Scheme.
- Developed a new national manufacturing supervisory development programme (NFQ Level 6) in order to meet manufacturers' requirements for upskilling operatives for those supervisory roles in the sector.
- Established the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Stakeholder Forum under the National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility, which will explore the potential to further promote, and increase the level of awareness and implementation of CSR.
- Facilitated the promotion of the new Erasmus+ programme by Léargas (the National Agency in Ireland for Erasmus+) to over 30 youth organisations and to Education and Training Board Youth Officers, with the aim of promoting mobility and learning opportunities in the youth work sector, and take up of EU funding mechanisms available.
- Progressed work on increasing access to formal and informal educational, recreational and cultural activities and resources; increasing people's work readiness and employment prospects; and supporting enterprise start-ups through the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP), with the completion of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) Framework document.
- Hosted a seminar with the Irish Stock Exchange (ISE) to engage with key stakeholders and identify possible solutions, and any systems and/or regulatory obstacles to the establishment of an efficient mini bonds market in Ireland.
- Enabled the adoption of a Framework for Building Control Authorities by the City and County Management Association, which will add clarity, efficiency and consistency to building control activities across the local government sector.
- Jointly launched the British-Irish Visa scheme with the UK, whereby tourist and business travellers granted either an Irish or UK visa will be able to travel freely within the Common Travel Area (CTA) on a single visa.
- Progressed further the rollout of a National Postcode system including the launch of a new website, [www.eircode.ie](http://www.eircode.ie) to provide information around Postcode design, the uses and benefits of the national postcode, and to help businesses to plan for the new system.

However, **12** of the 100 Q3 measures outlined in the Plan have not been delivered on schedule:

- *Develop and implement a pilot ‘execution focused’ programme for HPSUs post their seed investment round to support and accelerate their development and growth - Action 15.* Substantial work has been undertaken by Enterprise Ireland on the assessment of the detailed needs of companies in this very early stage of their growth. The development of an approach to support these High Potential Start-Up companies and accelerate their development and growth, is nearing completion. Enterprise Ireland will commence the implementation of a pilot in Q4 with roll-out of the full program in 2015.
- *Prepare Heads of a new Data Sharing and Governance Bill designed to deliver improved digital transactional services – Action 71.* A decision to undertake a significant public consultation exercise on the proposed Data Sharing and Governance Bill has necessitated postponing the drafting of the Heads of Bill, which is now expected to take place in Q4.
- *Deliver the Integrated Licensing Application Service for the retail sector - Action 75.* This action was delayed primarily due to the public procurement requirements as a result of the scale of the service to be provided by the market. A number of steps were taken in 2014 to comply with public procurement requirements including the signing into law of a Statutory Instrument (S.I. No. 83 of 2014) and a tendering process for a Single Supplier Framework Agreement for the provision of an Integrated Licensing Application Service. Contract conclusions for the tender commenced at the end of September and are scheduled to be completed by the end of October 2014. This timeframe allows for delivery of an Integrated Licensing Application Service by the end of Q4 2014.
- *Publish revised guidelines to support road management and utility licensing - Action 105.* Following the outcome of consultations over the summer with Local Authorities, draft guidelines are currently being revised. The revised guidelines will then be circulated to utility companies and other stakeholders in November, prior to finalisation and publication.
- *Advertise the selection of Local Development Strategies (LDS) under the 2014-2020 Programme - Action 119.* The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government is proposing to implement a number of changes to the way in which LEADER is delivered in the next programme period. These changes are complex and have emerged from the challenges faced during current programme implementation; they are centred primarily on the need to ensure programme implementation is more efficient and effective from a management perspective. In this context the Department has decided to delay the LDS selection process in order to ensure that the systems for the delivery of the LEADER elements of the RDP are robust and effective before the selection process is launched. It is envisaged that the selection process will begin before end of Quarter 4 2014.

- *Seek expressions of interest from sectors and industry groups that wish to support and have critical mass to participate early in the commencement of the new apprenticeship model - Action 168.* An implementation plan for the recommendations of the Review of Apprenticeship Training in Ireland was published by the Minister for Education and Skills on 30 June 2014. The Plan sets out how a new Apprenticeship Council will make a call for proposals from consortia of employers and education and training providers for the development of new apprenticeships. The Minister sought nominations from the relevant stakeholders to participate in this Apprenticeship Council however there were delays in receiving those nominations. The membership has now been finalised and the Minister intends to formally announce the Council's membership in early November 2014. As a result of the delays in finalising membership of the Council, the "call for proposals" will now be made late in Q4.
- *Finalise the integrated language curriculum for infants to second class - Action 177.* The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) is currently finalising the specification for the primary integrated language curriculum for infants to second class. A public consultation on the draft integrated curriculum was held in Q2 and Q3 2014. The findings from the consultation process are informing the finalisation of the integrated curriculum. The NCCA is also working with specific schools to address particular issues that arose during the consultation process. The necessity of addressing all of the issues arising from the consultation process, and working through specific issues with sample schools, means that the final integrated language curriculum will not be available until 2015.
- *Benchmark internationally and define best practice on enhanced engagement between HEIs and enterprise in consultation with appropriate stakeholders - Action 183.* Research has been undertaken by the HEA on global enterprise engagement and skills strategies. However, this has revealed significant complexity in development of international benchmarking and definition of best practice, arising from differences in national policies and infrastructure, and variations in the approach to indicators of performance. Consultation on this matter has taken place between the HEA and education and enterprise partners. The next major stage is to undertake a further consultation exercise on a draft strategy in order to secure maximum buy-in from key stakeholders to the strategy. The Department of Education and Skills now expect the enterprise engagement strategy to be finalised and published in Q1 2015.
- *Process revised legislation on Credit Guarantee Scheme to enactment - Action 208.* Government approval for the revision of existing legislation was received in Q2 2014 (June). The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation is working with the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel on drafting revised legislation and the Bill is on the A list of the Government's legislative programme for this Autumn.
- *In the area of Beef Genomics, develop sexed semen project proposal; achieve agreement with partners, including AI companies and Sexing Technologies; and roll-out 2014 project*



*deliverables* - Action 276. Discussions are continuing between AI companies and Sexing Technologies on establishing commercial arrangements to have this technology ready for the 2015 AI breeding season. These discussions are commercially sensitive. A further research project on how this technology performs at farm level is also being planned for 2015, which will involve the Irish Cattle Breeding Federation, Teagasc and partner AI companies.

- *Evaluate the Pilot Programme in the four Dublin Local Authorities on the Irish Home Energy Rating BER Database Tool* - Action 331. It is envisaged that the Pilot Programme will be complete in November and the evaluation of the pilot will be available shortly thereafter.
- *Publish a new Aviation Policy Statement* - Action 367. A draft National Aviation Policy was published on 21 May 2014, and submissions/comments were invited up to 31 July. Over 70 submissions were received and are currently being reviewed. The Aviation Policy will be adopted and published before the end of 2014.

### Update on actions delayed in Quarters 1 and 2

**7 of the 20 measures outlined in the Plan that were delayed for Q1 and Q2 have now been delivered.** These are:

- *Publish the National Entrepreneurship Policy Statement* - Action 1.
- *Consult around the development of a National Intelligent Transport Systems Strategy* – Action 106.
- *Roll-out HAP Wave 1 in 6 local authorities (in addition to Limerick)* – Action 201.
- *Develop a pilot bank referral programme for Microfinance Ireland (MFI)* - Action 209.
- *Develop a project brand and marketing/communication material including website on Ireland's expertise in the provision of public agri-food support services* – Action 271.
- *Introduce commencement orders as necessary for the aviation services centre in Shannon, on enactment of the Shannon Group Bill* – Action 368.
- *Appoint a CIO for the Irish health care system to lead eHealth Ireland* – Action 379.

**13 measures, however, remain delayed:**

- *Develop a strategy to support and develop commercial accelerators in the entrepreneurial ecosystem* – Action 11. Significant progress has been made on the development of a strategy to support and develop commercial accelerators in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, in tandem with the development of Enterprise Ireland's

Strategy; EI has also focused on identifying and developing appropriate supports to implement this strategy.

- *Roll-out Competitive Regional Feasibility Funds to the South East – Action 14.* Given the strength of the Agri-food and related sectors in the South East, EI decided to run the South East CFF sequentially rather than simultaneously with their national Agri-food CFF. The Agri-food €250,000 Fund was launched on 23 September, and the new €200,000 CFF for the South East will be launched in Q4 2014.
- *Launch a pilot entrepreneurship internship programme whereby a young person interested in starting their own business can shadow an entrepreneur – Action 16.* A suitable structure for the proposed programme is currently being developed. Dublin Business Innovation Centre will select companies in October 2014, participants will be selected in November by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, and the 10 week programme will commence as soon as a participant is matched with a company. It will be completed by Q1 2015.
- *Build upon and roll-out a LEAN Start Initiative to micro manufacturing firms, providing guidance on Lean, facilitating self-assessment and signposting to other relevant services/training – Action 50.* Enterprise Ireland and the LEOs are examining those micro manufacturing firms that will benefit from a Lean initiative, with EI providing strategic guidance to those firms on the Lean principles; this will be rolled out in Q4 2014.
- *Enact the Legal Services Bill to deliver a more efficient, transparent and competitive legal services in Ireland and reduce costs for the enterprise sector – Action 98.* The Legal Services Bill Committee Stage in the Dáil was completed in February 2014, the Report Stage began in July, and preparations are advanced for its resumption. The intention is to complete the passage of the Bill so that the new Legal Services Regulatory Authority can come into operation early in 2015.
- *Establish an Independent Economic Regulator for the Rail Market (assignment of additional functions to the Railway Safety Commission) – Action 108.* Drafting of the legislation providing for the establishment of an Independent Economic Regulator for the Rail Market is now underway, and it is anticipated that the Regulator will be established in Q4 2014.
- *Publish Bi-annual Strategic Investment Portfolio Reports – Action 211.* The Bi-annual Strategic Investment Portfolio Report will not be published until the commencement of the recently enacted NTMA (Amendment) Act and the approval of the report by the new governance arrangements under the Act.
- *Publish the general scheme of a planning bill to implement planning provisions of Mahon Tribunal and Publish a policy statement on planning outlining an overarching planning policy – Action 306.* The General Scheme for Planning and Development (No. 2) Bill is currently scheduled to go to Government for approval.

- *Approve and sign the Commencement Order for Construction Contracts Act legislation* Action 328. Implementation of this critical piece of commercial legislation encompasses a range of challenges to ensure stakeholder buy-in and maximum benefits for the construction industry. In order to ensure that there is no potential for conflict between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's role in publishing public works contracts and the appointment of adjudicators to payment disputes which may arise under those contracts, the Government has agreed to transfer the functions under the Act to the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. It is expected that the Act will be implemented in full by Spring 2015.
- *Work with retail representative bodies to ensure that they are fully aware of the NAMA guidelines* – Action 345. This action was delayed pending the outcome of a recent Supreme Court case concerning the interpretation of a lease which contained an upward only rent review clause. Following the conclusion of that case, the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation is now reviewing how best to proceed with the Q2 commitment.
- *Establish the board and governance framework for eHealth Ireland to drive implementation of the Government's eHealth Strategy* – Action 379. It has now been decided that eHealth Ireland will be established initially within the HSE and on an administrative basis. Within the HSE, eHealth Ireland will be overseen by a Committee (rather than a Board) and its Terms of Reference are currently being finalised. It is expected that the Committee will be in place by the end of 2014.
- *Establish (initially within HSE) an entity called eHealth Ireland in line with strategy* – Action 379. The governance arrangements for eHealth Ireland have been agreed within the HSE management structures, and the HSE expects a Committee to oversee the operation of eHealth Ireland to be in place by the end of 2014.
- *Establish first eHealth ecosystem meeting and requisite longer term supporting structures* – Action 379. A major industry engagement exercise is currently being undertaken by the HSE focussing on industry input into the HSE ICT strategy due for publication in the coming period. The Chief Information Officer/Chief Officer eHealth Ireland will work with the Department of Health and other stakeholders to establish an eHealth ecosystem. A consultation event on the development of an Irish eHealth ecosystem is scheduled for late November.

## Quarter 3 Measures

## 2. Disruptive Reforms in 2014

### 2.1 Entrepreneurship

**Action 2:** Review and consider further amendments to the Start Your Own Business (SYOB) initiative during 2014.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (D/Finance, Revenue)

**Update:** Complete

Based on the review, no amendments are being made to this scheme pending the first set of figures becoming available on the level of take-up.

**Action 3:** Review and consider further amendments to the Employment Investment Incentive (EII) during 2014.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (D/Finance, Revenue)

**Update:** Complete

Based on the review, a number of amendments to the scheme were announced as part of Budget 2015.

**Action 4:** Review and consider further amendments to the Seed Capital Scheme (SCS) during 2014.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (D/Finance, Revenue)

**Update:** Complete

Based on the review, a number of amendments to the scheme were announced as part of Budget 2015.

**Action 6:** Increase volunteerism for one-to-one mentoring. Seek volunteer entrepreneurs through industry representative body networks to act as 'buddy mentors' to startups.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (DJEI and Enterprise Agencies)

**Update:** Complete

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation is engaging with a number of industry

representative body networks i.e. Engineers Ireland, Institute of Chartered Accountants Ireland, Institute of Directors in Ireland, Chambers Ireland and the British Irish Chamber of Commerce. This engagement is with a view to establishing the levels of willingness and appetite among their members to act as mentors to start-ups and existing micro and small businesses on a volunteer basis. In tandem, the newly established National Mentoring Review Working Group will assess the willingness and level of engagement of any volunteer individuals identified and to ensure that the expectations of both mentors and mentees are realised. This will initially be done on a pilot basis and will include training for the mentors and also putting out a call for mentees that may wish to avail of this volunteer service. The recently launched National Entrepreneurship Policy Statement also has a specific focus on actions to develop entrepreneurship networks and mentoring.

**Action 14:** Build on the success of the Competitive Feasibility Funds and launch regionally targeted Funds in 2014 (Cork region, South East, North East and Mid West regions) and roll out Competitive Regional Feasibility funds to companies that produce products and services directed for sale to the wider Agricultural Sector.

**Q3 Measure:** Roll out Competitive Regional Feasibility to the North East. (EI)

**Update:** Complete

A new €200,000 Competitive Feasibility Fund was launched by the Minister for Business and Employment on Tuesday 7 October 2014.

The Competitive Feasibility Fund (CFF) for the North East provides successful applicants with funding of up to €25,000. This support is to assist the new start-up company or individual entrepreneur to investigate the viability of a new growth-orientated business proposition, to be located in the North East Region, which has the potential to become a High Potential Start-Up. The fund will provide financial assistance 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. The Fund is open to applications from the ICT, Industrial, and Food sectors including the following subsectors: Internet; Games; Software as a Service (SaaS); Cloud Computing; Enterprise Software; Telecoms; Lifesciences; Cleantech; and Industrial Products. It will remain open to applicants until November 4<sup>th</sup> 2014.

In addition to the Q3 commitment of rolling out the Competitive Feasibility Fund to the North East, Enterprise Ireland's national Agri-food €250,000 Competitive Feasibility Fund was launched by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. The fund will support new start-up companies or individual entrepreneurs to investigate the viability of a new significant growth oriented business or proposition in the agri-business sector.

**Action 15:** Develop and implement a pilot ‘execution focused’ programme for HPSUs post their seed investment round to support and accelerate their development and growth.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update:** Delayed

Substantial work has been undertaken by Enterprise Ireland on the assessment of the detailed needs of companies in this very early stage of their growth. The development of an approach to support these High Potential Start-Up companies and accelerate their development and growth is nearing completion.

Focus groups, a client survey and a working group have been engaged on proposals for post seed fund options. This has become a more substantial action than was previously envisaged and is likely to involve significant reorganisation of staff and responsibilities with involvement of business coaches and a management development program for newly funded HPSUs.

Enterprise Ireland will commence the implementation of a pilot in Q4 with roll-out of the full program in 2015.

**Action 17:** Establish a competitive Youth/Graduate Entrepreneurship Fund to complement the new LEOS/Microfinance Youth Programme as a next step in a progressive support structure to promote and support start-ups by young entrepreneurs.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update:** Complete

Enterprise Ireland (EI) launched two programmes to support Youth/Graduate Entrepreneurship. “Ireland’s Best Young Entrepreneur” was launched nationally in May by the Taoiseach and the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. The competition will be run by the new Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) and has a total fund of €2m. The aim of the initiative is to encourage and support a culture of entrepreneurship among young people in Ireland, to promote entrepreneurship as a career choice, and to encourage the establishment and development of new innovative businesses by Ireland's young entrepreneurs. The competition has attracted over 1,000 project applications from across the country. Applications received through the individual county competitions are currently being evaluated. A number of counties have completed this process and have announced the successful projects. The regional and national competitions will be finalised in November/December 2014.

The Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation launched Enterprise Ireland’s Graduate

Competitive Start Fund on 17 June, with applications being sought from 9 July. This new initiative is aimed at recent graduates with a promising start-up business proposition. Each of the fifteen successful businesses will receive funding of up to €50,000 for a 10% equity stake in the business. The fund aims to enable the businesses achieve “product-market fit” [i.e. validate that there really are customers who are prepared to pay for the product or service]. The fund is targeted at graduates active in Manufacturing and Internationally Traded Services in sectors such as the following: Internet; Games; Apps; Cloud Computing; Enterprise Software; Lifesciences; Food; Consumer Products; Medical Devices, and e-Health.

Enterprise Ireland received 76 applications by the call close on Wednesday 23 July. Following a two phase assessment process 15 projects were identified for funding. The investments were approved by Enterprise Ireland on 29<sup>th</sup> August.

**Action 24:** Develop and implement a strategy targeted at increasing the number of mobile medical device opportunities relocating to Ireland.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI, IDA)

**Update:** Complete

Enterprise Ireland (EI) has developed and commenced the implementation of its strategy targeted at increasing the number of mobile medical device opportunities relocating to Ireland. EI’s efforts to promote Ireland as a start-up location for medical technology companies are enhanced by the globally recognised strength of the ecosystem here. One particular driver of opportunity is the speed of EU regulatory approval versus that applying in the US and other parts of the world. This is driving early stage technologies and businesses toward Europe in an effort to accelerate the commercialisation of their offering while awaiting US market approval. In response to this, EI has recently interviewed a number of domain experts (pathfinders) in the greater Boston region to lead a targeted 6 month campaign to identify early stage opportunities that would be appropriate targets to set up operations in Ireland. A group from the world renowned "Partners Healthcare" hospital system was successful in securing this contract. The group commenced their work on 1 October.



## 2.2 Winning Abroad

**Action 28:** Critically analyse the Foreign Earnings Deduction (FED) with a view to adapting it if necessary to encourage SMEs to expand into new foreign markets.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (D/Finance, Revenue)

**Update:** Complete

Based on the review, a number of amendments to the scheme were announced as part of Budget 2015.

**Action 35:** Issue a new call under the Graduates for International Growth (G4IG) Programme (25 companies).

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update:** Complete

Enterprise Ireland's Graduates 4 International Growth (G4IG) programme aims to assist companies with ambitious growth plans in key markets to acquire a graduate market research resource and possible future business development capability. Companies supported under the programme will create one or more entry level graduate market researcher position(s).

A call for company applications under the G4IG programme was launched in March 2014. Following assessment and approval in May/June, 26 companies with 29 graduates have been approved support and are in the process of recruitment.

**Action 42:** Develop and implement a work programme to deliver the Year of Irish Design 2015.

**Q3 Measure:** Agree draft International Programme of events. (DCCoI, EI, DJEI, DFAT)

**Update:** Complete

**Q3 Measure:** Agree draft National Programme of events. (DCCoI, EI, DJEI)

**Update:** Complete

An identity has been created for this initiative which has now been named Irish Design 2015 (ID2015). A programme of events and activities has been developed in collaboration with partner organisations to showcase the very best of Irish design, through signature events on the island of Ireland, and also in prestigious partner venues in international capitals of

design and commerce. Themes of the national and international programmes include:

- Commercialisation & Internationalisation;
- Education, Enterprise & Innovation;
- Advocacy & Engagement;
- Communication & Promotion; and
- Legacy, Infrastructure & Disruptive Reform.

Highlights of the national programme include:

- Commissioned exhibitions;
- International exhibitions hosted by ID2015;
- Conferences and events;
- Regional activities throughout the island;
- National design enterprise and education initiatives; and
- Design Innovation Fund.

Highlights of the international programme include:

- Trade missions; and
- International Trade Fund.

## 2.3 Manufacturing: National Step Change

**Action 63:** Engage with manufacturing firms to assess the business case for further public and/or private investment in applied research infrastructure and core operational funding to support high value manufacturing sectors with the greatest potential for economic impact. Assess the business case for large scale public and/or private investment in quasi-industrial, pilot-scale demonstrator production capabilities.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (IDA, EI)

**Update:** Complete

An EI, IDA cross agency working group was established to identify the industry research interests and the infrastructural requirements. A cohort of industry (EI, IDA clients) was analysed to better understand their interests and a concept to develop a Centre in Discrete (Advanced) Manufacturing was proposed by industry. Following this industry

recommendation, an additional body of work is scheduled to evaluate this Discrete Manufacturing concept in more detail. Findings from this analysis should provide industry recommendations on how a centre could be delivered and its areas of focus. This may lead to a further action in this area in the 2015 Action Plan for Jobs.

### 3. Progressing the Disruptive Reforms from Action Plan for Jobs 2013

#### 3.1 Big Data and Data Analytics

**Action 66:** Support the further scaling-up of the CeADAR Technology Centre including the appointment of an industry-experienced Director to the Centre.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI, IDA)

**Update:** Complete

The CeADAR Technology Centre was established in Q4 2013 and is hosted in University College Dublin, with collaborating research partners University College Cork and Dublin Institute of Technology. The centre is one of fifteen technology centres supported under the joint Enterprise Ireland/IDA Technology Centre Programme. It conducts short applied research projects on three core research themes identified by industry; Intelligent Analytic Interfaces, Data Management for Analytics, and Advanced Analytics.

To support the further scaling-up of the CeADAR Technology Centre a number of significant appointments have been made to the management team during 2014. A Centre Director with a strong industry background was appointed in Q1 2014 to lead and develop the centre. In Q2 the appointment of an independent Industry Chairperson and two new steering committee members has strengthened the governance structures and industry focus of the centre. In collaboration with Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland, the Centre has continued to develop its industry membership base, which has doubled in 2014.

**Action 67:** Issue a targeted call for Innovation Vouchers in the area of data analytics.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update:** Complete

Enterprise Ireland manages the Innovation Voucher Scheme, enabling SMEs and micro businesses to commission small pieces of research with a €5,000 voucher, redeemable in the higher education research system. At relatively low cost, this scheme has become an

important mechanism in helping smaller companies solve a business problem or take the first steps into R&D. In parallel with the Government's Big Data Disruptive Reform Agenda, aimed at exploiting the employment potential of data analytics and Big Data, it was decided that Innovation Vouchers could be a useful mechanism for promoting the benefits of data analytics to smaller companies who may not have considered its value in their existing business models.

On 26 June 2014 an Innovation Voucher Call with a special emphasis on Data Analytics was advertised in national media informing companies of the opportunity and requesting applications to the scheme. The Innovation Voucher Call opened for applications on 17 September.

**Action 70:** Launch an Open Data initiative, which will include the establishment of an Open Data portal to act as the primary source of public sector datasets, in the context of Ireland's membership of the Open Government Partnership.

**Q3 Measure:** Build, launch and populate an Open Data portal as the primary source of public sector datasets. (DPER, Implementation Group on Open Data, Departments and Agencies)

**Update:** Complete

The Open Data Portal (<http://data.gov.ie/>) was launched by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform on 22 July 2014. Work is also ongoing on the further development of the portal.

**Action 71:** Further strengthen the mechanisms for data sharing and the use of data analytics across Government by enacting the required legislation, setting up a platform to facilitate data analytics within Government and taking steps to strengthen further Ireland's National Data Infrastructure.

**Q3 Measure:** Prepare Heads of a new Data Sharing and Governance Bill designed to deliver improved digital transactional services. (DPER)

**Update:** Delayed

A decision to undertake a significant public consultation exercise on the proposed Data Sharing and Governance Bill has necessitated postponing the drafting of the Heads of Bill, which is now expected to take place in Q4.

### 3.3 Integrated Licencing Application Service

**Action 75:** Deliver the Integrated Licensing Application Service for the retail sector.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (DJEI/ Forfás, LGMA, Steering Group, Relevant Licensing Authorities.)

**Update:** Delayed

This action was delayed primarily due to the public procurement requirements as a result of the scale of the service to be provided by the market. A number of steps were taken in 2014 to comply with public procurement requirements:

- A Statutory Instrument (S.I. No. 83 of 2014) was signed by the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government in February 2014 to extend the powers of the LGMA so that they could act as the Contracting Authority for this Service on behalf of the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation;
- A Request for Tender for a Single Supplier Framework Agreement for the provision of an Integrated Licensing Application Service, signed-off by the Chief State Solicitor's Office, was issued through etenders and in the EU Official Journal on 21st February 2014 with a closing date of 17th April 2014.

The tenders received have been evaluated and the evaluation panel has recommended that a contract be awarded. The LGMA, as contracting authority, has written to the successful tenderer to inform them of the outcome of the competition. Contract conclusions commenced at the end of September and for completion by the end of October 2014. This timeframe allows for delivery of an Integrated Licensing Application Service by the end of Q4 2014.

### 3.4 Trading Online

**Action 78:** Launch National Scheme targeting the distribution of 1,000 vouchers in 2014.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (DCENR, DJEI, LEOs)

**Update:** Complete

The trading online voucher scheme was launched nationally on time on 1 July 2014. The national launch followed the successful completion of a number of small scale pilots conducted in late 2013 and early 2014 and the allocation of funding by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR)

The national rollout of the scheme involves all 31 local Enterprise Offices (LEO). Each LEO is

responsible for promoting the scheme and accepting applications from small businesses in their local catchment area. Before the launch, representatives from all LEO offices were provided with training and materials. This support will help the LEO teams to engage with their local small businesses and help these businesses get the most from the voucher scheme co-investment in their business.

DCENR is working in collaboration with Enterprise Ireland who will centrally manage the operations of the voucher scheme including geographic allocation and payments and audit. At this early stage, reports on the market demand from the LEOs suggest that the scheme is likely to be over-subscribed in 2014 and that the 1,000 voucher target is likely to be exceeded.

## 4. Competitiveness

### 4.1 Institutionalising the Drive for Competitiveness

**Action 89:** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs, and other Cabinet Committees as appropriate, will monitor progress on competitiveness issues identified by the National Competitiveness Council and others and consider further actions to improve Ireland's international competitiveness and consider initiatives to make it easier to do business in Ireland. The Cabinet Committee(s) will be supported by the relevant Senior Officials Group and the APJ Monitoring Committee in this work.

**Q3 Measure:** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs, and other Cabinet Committees as appropriate, will monitor progress on competitiveness issues. (D/Taoiseach, DJEI/Forfás, All Departments)

**Update:** Complete

Competitiveness is a key national priority and remains a standing item on the agenda of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs. At its most recent meeting in September 2014, the Committee considered a report which focused on improving the 'Ease of Doing Business' as a means of supporting competitiveness. Cabinet Committees were restructured in September 2014 to better reflect the Statement of Government Priorities and this provides a mechanism to address key competitiveness challenges.

**Action 90:** Government will, on a quarterly basis, consider a report on competitiveness prepared via the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (DJEI, Cabinet Committee, Government)

**Update:** Complete

In September 2014, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs considered a report which focused on improving the 'Ease of Doing Business' as a means of supporting competitiveness. The European Commission's annual Competitiveness Report, which was published on 11 September, highlights the link between the quality of public administration and competitiveness, for example through having predictable regulatory frameworks and more streamlined and simpler procedures. The EU report contains a "Public Administration Scoreboard" which includes a series of tables benchmarking Member States' performance in areas such as user-centricity of eGovernment services, time required to start a company, cost to start a company, Government procurement as a driver of innovation, etc. Ireland is better than the EU average in most cases, but there is scope for improvement.

The report to the Cabinet Committee outlined examples of actions being taken, or which are planned across Government Departments to improve the ease with which businesses can transact with the public sector. The report was subsequently submitted to Government for consideration.

## 4.2 Improving Cost Competitiveness

**Action 93:** Identify any sheltered areas of the economy where competition is restricted and undertake analyses or studies in such areas where appropriate.

**Q3 Measure:** Consider whether analyses or studies of such areas are important and identify which to prioritise. (Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)

**Update:** Complete

In respect of the identification of sheltered areas of the economy where competition is restricted, the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has approved a study for prioritisation following a rigorous scoping process undertaken by the Competition Authority.

## 4.3 Infrastructure Investment to Underpin Employment Growth

**Action 99:** Conclude national mapping exercise which will determine where the State intervention is required. Progress State Aids application in respect of proposed intervention and the requisite procurement.

**Q3 Measure:** Publish outcome of mapping process for public consultation on target areas and implementation strategy. (DCENR)

**Update:** Complete

The national mapping exercise is now complete, with publication and public consultation on its findings imminent.

In April 2014 Government approval was secured to pursue a more ambitious, longer term, future proofed State intervention than that set out in the National Broadband Plan 2012 with the objective of dealing definitively with the connectivity challenge in rural areas. Work is continuing on an appropriate intervention strategy in this regard and it is expected that this will be available for public consultation in Q2 2015.

**Action 102:** Conclude final phase of 100Mbps schools broadband programme

**Q3 Measure:** Provide 100Mbps connectivity to 272 second level schools. (DCENR, DES)

**Update:** Complete

Provision has been made for 100Mbps connectivity for all 272 schools. 249 connections have been completed, with the remaining school connections to be made pending the completion of building work at individual schools. The connections for these schools will be completed as and when each school advises that they are in a position to accept the connection.

**Action 105:** Prioritise the delivery of a single national IT-based road management and utility licencing system

**Q3 Measure:** Map Road Licensing system enhancement to support other licences and permits to commence in Q3 for implementation Q1 2015. (DTTAS, LGMA, Local Authorities)

**Update:** Complete

There are a number of additional miscellaneous licences/permits required under the road legislation, for example, permits for scaffolding, hoardings, skips, mobile cranes and abnormal loads. Work has commenced on mapping the processes involved, and these are in



the process of being signed-off by the sector. Development will then commence to incorporate these licenses into the current system for deployment in Q1 2015.

**Q3 Measure:** Publish revised guidelines to support road management and utility licensing. (DTTAS, LGMA, Local Authorities)

**Update:** Delayed

Following the outcome of consultations over the summer with Local Authorities, draft guidelines are currently being revised. The revised guidelines will then be circulated to utility companies and other stakeholders in November, prior to finalisation and publication.

**Q3 Measure:** Implement a local authority shared services implementation solution. (DTTAS, LGMA, Local Authorities)

**Update:** Complete

The Road Management Shared Services Office (RMO) is now operational following the completion of a bidding process in July 2014. Four staff are currently assigned to the RMO, the work of which will be scaled up over the coming months. The RMO is part of the drive by local authorities to achieve increased efficiencies and operational cost savings from reducing resources while facilitating a multi-agency approach to tasks. It is a 'Centre of Excellence' as regards all aspects of road management systems dealing with pavement management and road licensing in the first instance, and extending to other areas over time. It will support the work of local authorities.

**Q3 Measure:** Speed Limits IT Rollout (phased). (DTTAS, LGMA, NRA, Local Authorities)

**Update:** Complete

A MapRoad Mobile APP is now available to Local Authority staff for the capturing on site of speed limit signpost locations. This APP will also record attribute information for each sign; speed value(s), size, picture. The Pavement Management System browser includes tools for the direct import of this data from the APP as well as the tools to allow the user create speed zones within the road network. All the data is gathered to a central hosted location and can be made available to other stakeholders.

## 4.4 Reduced Costs through Smart Regulation

**Action 107:** Implement Actions as outlined in the Government Policy Statement on Economic Regulation - published July 2013

**Q3 Measure:** Develop and Implement Memoranda of Understanding for sharing of services. (DCENR, DTTAS, DECLG)

**Update:** Complete

Actions have been taken across a number of areas:

In Broadcasting/Communications, BAI and ComReg are developing a Memorandum of Understanding in relation to shared services.

In the Energy sector, the establishment of an independent economic regulatory function for water services within the Commission for Energy Regulation is presented as a 'model which will be used by Government when establishing new independent regulatory functions in the various sectors'<sup>1</sup>.

In relation to outsourcing, the CER has contracted its IT Operations to an external service provider. This service provider supports all day-to-day operations of IT. CER also outsources day-to-day handling of customer complaints with energy suppliers and network operators. This allows CER to concentrate on more complex complaints between customers and supplier/network operators.

The CER interacts with a number of other governmental bodies for which it has Memoranda of Understanding including:

- Irish Competition Authority;
- Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland;
- Health and Safety Authority (25 June 08 – revised 26 Feb 2014);
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)(3 Sept 13);
- An Bord Pleanála (8 Feb 13);
- Commissioner for Irish Lights (15 April 2013);
- Irish Aviation Authority (26 Feb 2014);
- Air Accident Investigation Unit (7 Feb 2013);

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<sup>1</sup> Government Policy Statement on Sectoral Economic Regulation, 2013

- Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland (7 Feb 2013);
- Marine Casualty Investigation Board (15 April 2013);
- National Standards Authority of Ireland (16 April 2013);
- Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation on Common Arrangements for Gas (5 Feb 2008);
- Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation on Single Electricity Market (23 August 2004); and
- The Electro-Technical Council of Ireland Limited (ETCI) (30 April 2009).

The Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) has been established as the regulator for public water and wastewater services, in line with the Government Policy Statement on Economic Regulation. The CER has also outsourced a number of its operations to external service providers including IT Operations and day-to-day handling of customer complaints.

**Q3 Measure:** Annual review of progress through Cabinet Committees and Memorandum for Government. (Government)

**Update:** Complete

A review of progress on the implementation of the actions outlined in the Government Policy Statement took place at the Senior Officials Group on Economic Infrastructure in May 2014.

A review of progress at political level through the Cabinet Committee on Economic Infrastructure and Climate Change and Government is expected during Quarter 4.

Note: Another Q3 measure under Action 107 from the Government Policy Statement on Economic Regulation is to publish a new Aviation Policy Statement (see Action 367 below).

**Action 111:** Enhance the effectiveness of the Early Resolution Service in resolving disputes/complaints without recourse to costly adjudication or inspection.

**Q3 Measure:** Examine the recommendations of the external evaluation of the Pilot Early Resolution Service and implement changes aimed at maximising its effectiveness. (DJEI)

**Update:** Complete

The Pilot Early Resolution Service (ERS) was independently evaluated in 2013. The evaluation made a number of recommendations aimed at maximising the effectiveness of

the ERS. The recommendations of the evaluation report have been fully considered by the Labour Relations Commission and DJEI.

Insofar as is practicable at this stage, recommendations in the evaluation have been implemented. However, some of the recommendations will require legislative change and these will be progressed when the Workplace Relations Bill, which was published on 30th July last, is enacted.

Some examples of the non-legislative recommendations that have been implemented include the following:

- The workplace relations website [www.workplacelrelations.ie](http://www.workplacelrelations.ie) now incorporates a Decisions and Determinations Database which enables the Case Resolution Officers to access and use published first instance decisions to help with reality and checking of complainants regarding their complaints, as recommended in the external evaluation;
- Two surveys have been carried out with employers, employees and their representatives who use the service in order to assess their satisfaction with the service provided, their willingness to use the service again and the extent to which the service provided and the outcome achieved has helped with workplace relations. These will help to improve the management information systems to ensure delivery of a cost effective service; and
- The Labour Relations Commission, which currently provides the Early Resolution Service has a formal customer complaint system in place, as recommended in the external evaluation. The learnings from reviewing complaints are fed back into the ERS in order to continuously improve the service where appropriate.

**Action 113:** Investigate the potential for introducing a unified employment permit and visa applications system

**Q3 Measure:** Working Group to liaise with consultants appointed to conduct BPR on EP Section. (D/Justice and Equality, DJEI)

**Update:** Complete

Currently there are two processes which a non-EEA national from a visa required country must go through before they can come to work in Ireland. S/he must obtain an employment permit from the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and also a visa from the Department of Justice and Equality. These two processes are sequential and the sequential nature of the process delays it. A Working Group has been set up to investigate the potential for introducing a unified employment permit and visa application system. No changes in policy responsibilities are contemplated, nor would they be appropriate.

Consultants were appointed by a public procurement process to conduct a Business Process

Review (BPR) on the Employment Permits Section and work began on this BPR on 1 September 2014. In the context of the BPR which is being carried out on Employment Permits Section in Q4 2014, the consultants have been asked to examine the options emerging from this Working Group on a Unified System and report on the impact of these options on the Employment Permits system. Interviews have taken place with almost all of the employment permits staff in relation to the BPR on the Employment Permits section. In relation to the Permits and Visa Unified application system the relevant parties are senior officials in the Department of Justice and and senior officials in the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation. Meetings with these officials have taken place. Other interviews planned to take place shortly include interviews with relevant officials in the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation.

**Q3 Measure:** Interim Report by Working Group. (DJEI, D/Justice and Equality)

**Update:** Complete

The Interim report by the Working Group was completed by end Q3, and gives the background to the impetus to investigate the potential for having a unified visa and permits system for the State, in the context of the reform of the Public Service and the commitment in the PSA that “efficiencies need to be maximised and productivity in the use of resources greatly increased”. The Report also provides details on the relevant legislative, IT and staffing parameters within which each system currently operates.

## 4.5 Supporting Competitive Regions

**Action 116:** Develop integrated local economic and community plans, to promote economic and community development in each local authority area.

**Q3 Measure:** Make Regulations and issue Guidance regarding the preparation of community elements of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). (DECLG)

**Update:** Complete

The Guidance document has issued to key stakeholders for proofing, and will issue in the form of a Ministerial Direction in accordance with the provisions of section 128E(3) of the Local Government Act 2001, which must be complied with by every Local Community Development Committee, once key stakeholders confirm that they are content with the final proof.

**Q3 Measure:** Make Regulations and issue Guidance regarding preparation of the economic elements of the LECP. (DECLG)

**Update:** Complete

The Guidance document has issued to key stakeholders for proofing, and will issue in the form of a Ministerial Direction, in accordance with the provisions of section 66H(3) of the Local Government Act 2001, which must be complied with by every local authority, once key stakeholders confirm that they are content with the final proof.

**Q3 Measure:** Each LCDC to commence preparation of the community elements of a Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). (DECLG, LCDCs)

**Update:** Complete

LCDCs have commenced preparatory work on the development of the community elements of the Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs). Regulations will be made placing the development of LECPs, including their community elements, on a statutory footing.

**Q3 Measure:** Each local authority to commence preparation of the economic elements of a LECP. (DECLG, Local Authorities)

**Update:** Complete

Local authorities have commenced preparatory work on the development of the economic elements of Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs). Regulations will be made placing the development of LECPs, including their economic elements, on a statutory footing.

**Action 119:** Develop LEADER elements of the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme to address Priority 6 of the Union priorities for rural development i.e. promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

**Q3 Measure:** Advertise the selection of Local Development Strategies (LDS) under the 2014-2020 Programme. (DECLG)

**Update:** Delayed

The implementation of the LEADER elements of the Rural Development Programme 2014 – 2020 requires a detailed selection process to be undertaken in order to select the most appropriate and effective Local Development Strategies based on the needs identified by interested Local Action Groups in each area designated under the Programme.

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government are proposing to

implement a number of changes to the way in which LEADER is delivered in the next programme period. These changes are complex and have emerged from the challenges faced during current programme implementation; they are centred primarily on the need to ensure programme implementation is more efficient and effective from a management perspective. These changes will also support the aim of Government to ensure that funding for local development is more coordinated at a local level and to ensure that the impact of all funding delivered to a particular sub regional area for local development is maximised in an environment of continuing resource limitations.

In this context the Department has decided to delay the LDS selection process in order to ensure that the systems for the delivery of the LEADER elements of the RDP are robust and effective before the selection process is launched. It is envisaged that the selection process will begin before end of Quarter 4 2014.

## 4.6 Research and Innovation to Drive Job Creation

**Action 121:** Continue to drive implementation of research prioritisation through the Government's Prioritisation Action Group.

**Q3 Measure:** Initiate an Independent Assessment of Progress in the Implementation of Research Prioritisation. (DJEI/Forfás, Prioritisation Action Group)

**Update:** Complete

The independent assessment of progress has been initiated. The Terms of Reference for the assessment have been approved by the Prioritisation Action Group and a distinguished panel of independent experts has been appointed to undertake the review. The panel, which comprises seven distinguished individuals, including three international experts, will convene for a two-day meeting in December. During the meeting it will consult with stakeholders and review progress on implementing Research Prioritisation to date. It will also consider, inter alia, further actions necessary to realise the vision of Research Prioritisation. Following the meeting, the Panel will prepare a report containing its findings and setting out its recommendations for further actions. The report will be available in Q1 2015.

**Action 124:** Launch the cTTO industry portal incorporating searchable licensing opportunities from Ireland's HEIs in order to increase the visibility of research opportunities to industry.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (cTTO/EI)

**Update:** Complete

The central Technology Transfer Office (cTTO) was formally launched as Knowledge Transfer Ireland (KTI) along with its web portal ([www.knowledgetransferireland.com](http://www.knowledgetransferireland.com)) in the Convention Centre Dublin on 28 May 2014 by Richard Bruton T.D., Minister for Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation. The KTI web portal offers a range of resources for industry, investors, policy makers and researchers. It provides an overview of Ireland's research landscape and also enables users to obtain a detailed picture of the research capabilities of Ireland's universities, institutes of technology and other major research centres. The web portal provides commercial enterprises and public sector entities with a single powerful resource to leverage the potential of Irish research and innovation.

Drawing on multiple databases, the KTI portal provides:

- Unrivalled access to >160 technologies available for licensing;
- Research specialists and research facilities to optimise R&D opportunities and overcome challenges;
- Technical advice on IP, licensing and commercialisation;
- Direct links to key contacts at the technology transfer offices (TTOs) and experts within the research sector.

**Action 125:** Provide a suite of model agreements and supporting guidance notes for business in order to ease the interaction between industry and HEIs, for inclusion in IP Protocol.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (cTTO/EI)

**Update:** Complete

The KTI web portal, launched in the Convention Centre Dublin on 28 May 2014, contains a range of resources for industry, investors, policy makers and researchers. Resources include a step-by-step guide, which explains what can be expected throughout the interaction process, is supported by check-lists and questionnaires to help prepare for meetings with the technology transfer offices (TTOs) and researchers. The web portal includes a series of KTI Practical Guides to contracts which have been designed to make the process of



contracting between business and the research base simple and understandable.

The suite of model agreements in the web portal include:

- Confidential Disclosure Agreement
- Model Licence Agreement (exclusive and non-exclusive)
- Model Option Agreement
- Model Evaluation Agreement
- Model Material Transfer Agreement.

**Action 134:** Commence pilot initiative to source international technologies which can serve as the basis of new start-up companies in Ireland.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (EI)

**Update:** Complete

One of the key aims of the Government's Action Plan for Jobs is to put in place measures aimed at making it easier to commercialise and ultimately create jobs from ideas developed through publicly-funded research. On 10 April an innovative agreement was signed by the world-renowned Mayo Clinic and Enterprise Ireland (EI) in the presence of the Taoiseach and the Minister for Health. The agreement officially launched a new EI pilot initiative to source international technologies which can serve as the basis of new start-up companies in Ireland. The collaboration between EI and Mayo Clinic will see the commercialisation of up to 20 novel medical technologies in Ireland over the next 5 years with the aim of creating several high value medical technology spin-out companies. This will further enhance Ireland's reputation as a location for commercialising advanced medical technologies with the aim of encouraging more high-value companies to establish in Ireland and creating high value jobs for this economy.

Funding of up to €11.7m will be provided through EI's Commercialisation Fund for the co-development and licensing of novel medical technologies developed at Mayo Clinic U.S. into Ireland where they will be commercialised. This will involve further development and validation of the technologies by research teams in Irish Higher Education Institutes, and introductions to investors to bring the technologies to market.

The first project is currently under way in NUI Galway where, taking a device patented by the Mayo Clinic for the treatment of acute pancreatitis, a team led by Dr. Mark Bruzzi of NUI Galway aims to design and develop a prototype device for human clinical use. Investors are currently advising the team at NUI Galway on the establishment of a spin-out company around this technology.

**Action 146:** Enhance the participation of SMEs and micro-businesses in the IRC Enterprise Partnership Scheme (EPS) and thus cultivate enterprise focused researchers in the formative years of their research careers.

**Q3 Measure:** Review process complete and funding decisions made. (IRC)

**Update:** Complete

In June 2014, the Minister for Education and Skills announced 50 new enterprise-academia research partnerships with funding of some €5.7 million through the Irish Research Council's (IRC) Enterprise Partnership Scheme. The funding of 50 new awards marked the engagement of the 250<sup>th</sup> company with the Scheme. The 50 awards involve research in key areas such as Big Data and ICT, Nanoscience, Energy, Drug development and pharmaceutical processes, Road Safety and Suicide Prevention. The Scheme has seen a consistent increase in the number of SMEs engaging in collaborative research with academic institutions; indeed, this year, the number is almost double that from multinational corporations.

**Action 157:** Support medical device innovation and research to reduce lead time to market for new and innovative products by assisting with the introduction of a regulatory quality management system in one innovation centre.

**Q3 Measure:** Through engagement in Q1 and Q2 develop knowledge of compliance with I.S. EN ISO 13485 quality management system standard by delivering education/training to one innovation centre carrying out work on medical devices. (NSAI)

**Update:** Complete

The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) has been working with University College Cork since the start of 2014 to support and assist with the introduction of standard I.S. EN ISO 13485 - the required regulatory quality management system for medical devices.

The collaboration to date has identified a number of issues and certain obstacles to be overcome before the site would be in a position to be fully certified to the standard. NSAI continues to assist and a full evaluation of this pilot project on the introduction of the regulatory standard will be carried out as part of the deliverable for Q4.

## 4.7 Aligning Skills with Enterprise Needs

**Action 158:** Introduce a further iteration of the Momentum programme providing opportunities for approximately 6,000 unemployed persons, with at least 2,000 places ring-fenced for under-25s.

**Q3 Measure:** Complete evaluation of first programme – including outcomes. (DES, SOLAS)

**Update:** Complete

A further round of Momentum was launched in September 2014. The Momentum Contractor Procedures make provision for the requirement that 2,000 of these places will be made available to individuals under 25 years of age. The evaluation of the first round of Momentum has been completed bar the inclusion of certain statistical data in the final report. The report will be ready for circulation imminently.

**Action 163:** Develop and commence delivery of a new national manufacturing supervisory development programme leading to a major award at Level 6 on the NFQ to meet manufacturers' requirements for upskilling operatives for those supervisory roles in the sector.

**Q3 Measure:** Subject to the procedures of QQI, have the award approved and added to the directory of awards at Level 6 on the NFQ. Encourage and facilitate training providers to develop and accredit programmes suitable for the delivery of the new Award. (Skillnets)

**Update:** Complete

The award has now been approved by QQI, and Skillnets are in discussion with two Institutes of Technology with the intention of having programmes validated for this award.

**Action 168:** Seek expressions of interest from sectors and industry groups that wish to support and have critical mass to participate early in the commencement of the new apprenticeship model.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (SOLAS, DES)

**Update:** Delayed

An implementation plan for the recommendations of the Review of Apprenticeship Training in Ireland was published by the Minister for Education and Skills on 30 June 2014. The Plan sets out how a new Apprenticeship Council will make a call for proposals from consortia of employers and education and training providers for the development of new

apprenticeships. The Minister sought nominations from the relevant stakeholders to participate in this Apprenticeship Council however there were delays in receiving those nominations. The membership has now been finalised and the Minister intends to formally announce the Council's membership in early November 2014. As a result of the delays in finalising membership of the Council, the "call for proposals" will now be made late in Q4.

**Action 169:** Complete the transfer of former FÁS training centres to new Education and Training Boards

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (DES)

**Update:** Complete

The remaining former FÁS training centres transferred to their relevant Education and Training Boards on 1 July 2014.

**Action 176:** Publish profile of graduate output from core higher education programmes across the spectrum of skills areas.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (HEA)

**Update:** Complete

Earlier in 2014, the Higher Education Authority (HEA) provided detailed statistics on graduate output across skills areas to the Labour Market Research Unit in SOLAS. Detailed information has now been published in the 2014 Report 'Monitoring Ireland's Skills Supply'. The Report is available at: [http://www.skillsireland.ie/media/15082014-Monitoring\\_Ireland's\\_Skills\\_Supply\\_%202014-Publication.pdf](http://www.skillsireland.ie/media/15082014-Monitoring_Ireland's_Skills_Supply_%202014-Publication.pdf)

**Action 177:** Finalise the integrated language curriculum for infants to second class.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (DES, NCCA)

**Update:** Delayed

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) is currently finalising the specification for the primary integrated language curriculum for infants to second class. A public consultation on the draft integrated curriculum was held in Q2 and Q3 2014. The findings from the consultation process are informing the finalisation of the integrated curriculum. The NCCA is also working with specific schools to address particular issues that arose during the consultation process. The necessity of addressing all of the issues arising

from the consultation process, and working through specific issues with sample schools, means that the final integrated language curriculum will not be available until 2015. The curriculum will be available to schools in Q3 2015 at the latest. It may be possible to have it available in Q2 2015.

**Action 179:** Roll out the new Junior Cycle English specification in schools.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (DES)

**Update:** Complete

The new Junior Cycle English specification has been implemented in all post primary schools for First Year students from September 2014. Dedicated Continuous Professional Development has been provided to teachers and school leaders by the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) and this support will continue during the academic year 2014/2015.

**Action 180:** Centrally develop short courses (including digital media literacy, programming and Coding and Chinese) and make available for use in schools from 2014.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (DES, NCCA)

**Update:** Complete

Short courses are available at [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie) for schools to include in their Junior Cycle programme for First Year students from September 2014. However, schools have been advised by the Department of Education and Skills to offer a small number of short courses only and to introduce such courses gradually.

**Action 183:** Develop and publish a strategy for enhanced engagement between HEIs and enterprise to include a framework of indicators for assessing HEI performance in this area. This strategy will include recommendations to ensure that priority skills needs can be responsively addressed within course provision.

**Q3 Measure:** Benchmark internationally and define best practice in consultation with appropriate stakeholders. (HEA, DES, DJEI/ Forfás, HEIs, industry, Enterprise Agencies)

**Update:** Delayed

Research has been undertaken by the HEA on global enterprise engagement and skills strategies. However, this has revealed significant complexity in development of international benchmarking and definition of best practice, arising from differences in national policies and infrastructure, and variations in the approach to indicators of

performance.

Consultation on this matter has taken place between the HEA and education and enterprise partners. The completed enterprise engagement strategy will document this issue as well as setting out next steps to further embed a global perspective when evaluating and developing our national strategy, policies and initiatives.

The next major stage is to undertake a further consultation exercise on a draft strategy in order to secure maximum buy-in from key stakeholders to the strategy. The Department of Education and Skills now expect the enterprise engagement strategy to be finalised and published in Q1 2015.

## 4.8 Supporting Competitiveness through Corporate Social Responsibility

**Action 191:** Explore the role which the Government's enterprise development agencies, such as Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland, can play in promoting CSR with client companies.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (DJEI)

**Update:** Complete

A key deliverable of the National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) was the establishment of the CSR Stakeholder Forum, which was established in June 2014. The Forum comprises senior representatives from the business sector, relevant Government Departments/agencies and the wider community. The Forum is a key vehicle to collaborate with relevant stakeholders to raise awareness of CSR and to encourage enterprises to develop and implement CSR policies and practices. Enterprise Ireland (EI) and IDA are members of the Forum.

In September, the Forum established four sub-groups to assist with progressing the objectives of the National Plan, one of which is to encourage enterprises to develop and implement CSR policies and practices, and mainstream them in to their core business operations. A further objective is to encourage more SMEs to build CSR capacity.

A number of EI and IDA client companies are already actively engaged in CSR and work will continue to increase further the level of awareness and implementation of CSR amongst a wider range of client companies.

## 5. Pathways to Work and Related Initiatives

**Action 198:** Promote mobility and learning opportunities in the youth work sector and take up of EU funding mechanisms available such as the new Erasmus+ Programme which aims to boost skills and employability via study, training, work experience and volunteering opportunities abroad.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (DCYA)

**Update:** Complete

The Department has facilitated promotion of the new Erasmus+ programme by Léargas (the National Agency in Ireland for Erasmus+) to over 30 youth organisations and to Education and Training Board Youth Officers. In addition, Léargas has delivered a number of information and application clinics to support youth projects in availing of this EU funding. It is anticipated that over 150 youth projects will avail of this funding in 2014.

**Action 202:** 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; increasing people's work readiness and employment prospects; and supporting enterprise start-ups.

**Q3 Measure:** Final agreement on Framework and Programme content. (DECLG, Pobal)

**Update:** Complete

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) Framework document has been completed. During Q4, a more detailed version of the Framework document inclusive of Programme indicators, following a consultation process with key stakeholders, will issue to coincide with Stage Two of the Procurement process.

**Q3 Measure:** National and regional events held to explain the new programme, processes and delivery approaches. (DECLG, Pobal)

**Update:** Complete

On 17 June 2014, a national event was hosted for the Local Authorities to give them an overview of the new programme (SICAP) and the procurement process. On 26 August 2014, a national event was hosted for key personnel in the Local Authorities, who will provide backup to the Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) to advise them on Stage Two of the SICAP procurement process.

## 6. Access to Finance for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

### 6.1 Increase New Lending from Banks to SMEs

**Action 205:** Detailed data from the pillar banks will be collated and examined, on a monthly basis, ensuring a more informed understanding of the SME bank lending environment, with a particular focus on new lending.

**Q3 Measure:** Report on data received from the pillar banks. (D/Finance, Credit Review Office)

**Update:** Complete

The data feeds into the Credit Review Office allowing it to monitor the lending of the two main banks on a monthly basis, and the CRO receives quarterly detailed updates on the change in balance sheet lending totals for the SME sector. The Credit Reviewer also publishes biannual reports with an analysis of the SME lending market based primarily on this data. His first review was published in March 2014 and his second review is due shortly.

The data is also used to direct the agenda for the quarterly review meetings with the banks. The key findings show an increase in SME lending and ultimately the findings lead into the formulation of actions under APJ 2015.

### 6.2 Increase Participation in Access to Finance Initiatives for SMEs

**Action 208:** Enhance the take-up and impact of the Credit Guarantee Scheme on foot of the 2013 review of the Scheme by implementing the appropriate recommendations.

**Q3 Measure:** Process revised legislation to enactment. (DJEI, OPC)

**Update:** Delayed

Government approval for the revision of existing legislation was received in Q2 2014 (June). The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation is working with the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel on drafting revised legislation and the Bill is on the A list of the Government's legislative programme for this Autumn.



### 6.3 Develop New Sources of Finance for SMEs

**Action 215:** Continue to engage at the EU level to ensure that the European Long Term Investment Funds are designed in law so that they can have the greatest potential benefit in terms of channelling productive investment to Irish enterprises.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline item. (D/Finance)

**Update:** Complete

Engagement in negotiations relating to European Long Term Investment Funds Regulation continues; the Trilogue negotiations are due to commence in October 2014, between the Council of Ministers, the European Parliament and the European Commission to agree the final text of the regulation.

**Action 218:** Explore the feasibility of developing a framework for a private placement market for Ireland

**Q3 Measure:** Establish stakeholder group and produce report on private placement market in Ireland. (D/Finance)

**Update:** Complete

International contact has been made and policy input has been given to various international fora. Private placement markets are being debated across the EU. In an economy like Ireland, there is a large crossover with retail bonds regarding the companies who could fund themselves through retail bonds or private placement markets. Work is ongoing to characterise the needs of such companies in Ireland and the market appetite for a private placement market in Ireland, and also how that would fit in with wider EU initiatives in this area.

**Action 219:** Work with the Irish Stock Exchange to establish a retail mini bonds market for Ireland.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (D/Finance, DJEI, EI, NPRF)

**Update:** Complete

The Department of Finance and the Irish Stock Exchange (ISE) hosted a seminar in September to explore possible solutions with key stakeholders, where it was agreed to identify any systems and/or regulatory issues that could be obstacles to an efficient mini bonds market in Ireland. The Department of Finance is maintaining ongoing dialogue with

the ISE, stockbrokers and other stakeholders in this regard, and contact has also been made with other Member States where a mini bond market has been created.

## 6.6 Enhance Research on SME Access to Finance

**Action 224:** Oversee a focused research programme on SME access to finance issues that will inform the on-going deliberations and policy actions of the Group during 2014.

**Q3 Measure:** The SME State Bodies Group in conjunction with the ESRI to host two research and policy seminars on the topic of Financing for Growth. (D/Finance, DJEI/Forfás, EI, NPRF, SME State Bodies Group)

**Update:** Complete

The first seminar took place on 26 June 2014, and involved the ESRI presenting a number of papers and outlining its research to date to the SME State Bodies Group. The second seminar, entitled 'Financing SMEs in Recovery', took place on 26 September 2014 in the ESRI. The Minister of State at the Department of Finance Simon Harris T.D. opened the seminar, which was well attended by representatives from across the public administration and banking sectors, as well as the SME representative organisations. The ESRI will shortly provide the Department of Finance with a paper drawing on its research to date in conjunction with some of the issues raised at the seminar.

## 7. Growing Irish Enterprise

### 7.1 Capability Building in Irish Enterprise

**Action 231:** Build on Phase 1 of the Pilot Industry-led clustering Initiative involving fifty companies.

**Q3 Measure:** Financially support a number of clusters initiated under the pilot phase to execute their clustering strategies. (EI)

**Update:** Complete

Enterprise Ireland (EI) launched a Pilot Cluster Programme in 2012 to develop the capability and capacity of industry clusters/networks by attracting private sector companies, investors, researchers and academia to maximise collaborative opportunities in the development of new products, processes, services or joint activities. To date, EI has supported 31 clusters between Phase 1 Feasibility Support and Phase 2 Implementation Stage, involving in excess

of 150 companies. The pilot Phase 1 Feasibility Project element is now complete. In 2014, 7 of the original Phase 1 feasibility clusters and 1 additional cluster were approved for Phase 2 Implementation funding. The eight clusters are in the following areas:

- BPO/Contact Centre Cluster (2 applications)
- Cloud Cluster
- Eat Well Food Services Network
- Passive/Low Energy Building Cluster
- Hydro Generation Cluster
- Supply Network Shannon
- Micro Electricity Generation Assoc (MEGA)
- PLATO Family Business

**Action 233:** Include the need to support and encourage companies to look at the potential of evaluating an Initial Public Offering (IPO) across relevant Client Management Development offerings

**Q3 Measure:** Ensure the knowledge and skills base of Chief Financial Officers is developed through the content and coaching elements of the Strategic Leadership 4 CFO Programme. (EI)

**Update:** Complete

The Strategic Leadership 4 CFO programme was designed in 2010 in response to the Innovation Task Force Report. The report stated the necessity for Ireland to develop a cohort of world-class, competent and confident CFOs with the skills to become business leaders in driving organisation performance in partnership with the CEO. The focus is therefore on building the confidence of the investment community in both repayment capacity and shareholder value creation within the company.

The 4th programme commenced in April 2014 and to date 81 CFOs have participated in the year long programme. The programme is run in partnership with Stanford University and Continuous Learning Group (CLG). The programme focuses on Strategy, Leadership and Strategic Finance. Each participant is supported by an experienced Business Advisor and Leadership coach. The programme includes a number of sessions on building Strategic Finance capabilities and skills including: Valuation, IPO, M&A and Exits, and these areas are further discussed during the individual sessions that the companies have with both their Business Advisors and Leadership Coaches throughout the programme.

## 7.2 Maximising Procurement Opportunities

**Action 240:** In consultation with the Chief State Solicitors Office, maintain and update the standard suite of tender and contract documentation for goods and services and encourage their wider use across the public service. This will bring about a more consistent approach to procurement which will assist SMEs in accessing procurement opportunities by reducing legal and administrative costs.

**Q3 Measure:** Issue Revise Suite of tender documentation. (OGP)

**Update:** Complete

The OGP and the Chief State Solicitor's Office are engaged in continuous review of the standard suite of documentation to reflect current developments both at home and abroad. The standard suite of documents reduce cost for SMEs and ensure procurement is carried out in a consistent manner.

**Action 243:** Following consultation with SME stakeholders, and in the context of the transposition of the new EU Procurement Directives, revise procurement Circular 10/10 in line with the on-going transposition of the Directives, to encourage greater SME access to procurement.

**Q3 Measure:** Revise Circular 10/10 as necessary and issue new guidance to Contracting Authorities. (OGP)

**Update:** Complete

Published Circular 10/2014. The new guidelines contained in this Circular are aimed at reducing the administrative burden for SMEs that want to tender for public contracts. They accelerate some of the key business-friendly initiatives included under the new EU Public Procurement Directive, currently being transposed including: the setting of relevant and proportionate financial capacity, turnover and insurance levels for tendering firms; the subdividing of larger contracts into lots, where appropriate, to enable SMEs to bid for these opportunities. The new guidelines also encourage SMEs to form consortia where they are not of sufficient scale to tender in their own right and to register on [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie) to ensure maximum exposure to tendering opportunities.

**Action 244:** Pilot informal procedures for engagement between tenderers and Contracting Authorities to provide clarity and advice in relation to criteria included in tendering notices.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (OGP)

**Update:** Complete

Pilot informal procedure is with the Chief State Solicitors Office for advice and clearance. The objectives of the initiative are to improve communications with suppliers and increase professionalism and consistency in relation to how procurement processes are carried out across the public service.

**Action 247:** Work to increase SME awareness of public procurement opportunities through the OGP, Enterprise Ireland and InterTradelreland.

**Q3 Measure:** Deliver workshops on Green Procurement and impact of EU Directives for SMEs. (InterTradelreland)

**Update:** Complete

The Go-2-Tender Training Programme run by Intertradelreland is for SMEs that are new to tendering or that wish to improve their basic tendering skills.

All Go-2-Tender training programme workshops now include training on Green Procurement under the topic of “Trends in Public procurement”.

The impact of EU public procurement directives is also addressed in the Go-2-Tender Training Programme under the topic “Understand the Market”. In particular, detailed information is provided on Circular 10/14 of the Office of Government Procurement. This circular strengthens measures aimed at facilitating SME participation in public procurement and implements many of the provisions of three EU Directives on public procurement which were issued in February 2014 and will have to be transposed into national legislation within two years.

## 8. Developing and Deepening the Impact of Foreign Direct Investment

**Action 258:** Undertake a critical analysis of the Special Assignee Relief Programme in 2014 with a view to adapting it if necessary.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (D/Finance, Revenue)

**Update:** Complete

Based on the review, a number of amendments to the scheme were announced as part of Budget 2015.

## 9. Sectoral Opportunities

### 9.1 Agriculture, Food and Marine

**Action 261:** Create over 100 new jobs in the seafood processing sector by end 2014.

**Q3 Measure:** Put investment in place in 24 companies. (BIM)

**Update:** Complete

Investment decisions in respect of 24 companies have been agreed and 20 of the companies will have investment plans in place by the end of the year.

**Q3 Measure:** Work with these companies on business planning & value adding activity. (BIM)

**Update:** Complete

BIM have been working with the companies on business development, scaling and value adding activity, on existing and new raw material and are developing an innovative range of smoked products for the Irish retail sector with the aim to diversify into European markets.

**Q3 Measure:** Develop route to market structures through collaborative working arrangement supported under BIM's Category management scheme. (BIM)

**Update:** Complete

This Category Management Scheme is being used to attempt to build consolidation in what is a fragmented domestic market and to use this effort to enhance supply chains while preventing a large number of potential suppliers undercutting competitors.

**Action 262:** Run a Food Academy to nurture start up food businesses through workshop style training and assistance with routes to market.

**Q3 Measure:** Launch Food Academy Advance with target of 8 participants. (Bord Bia, LEOs)

**Update:** Complete

Following the success of the Food Academy Start, companies who have secured local store listings through the Food Academy Start programme are undergoing a three month in-store trial which started in September 2014 to identify the best potential suppliers to progress to Food Academy Advance. It is envisaged that 25 Food Academy Start companies, rather than 8 as originally envisaged, will graduate onto the Food Academy Advance programme which is run in conjunction with Musgraves (Supervalu/Centra).

**Action 266:** Use the Bord Bia Food Graduate development programmes to attract graduate talent into the sector while improving sales and developing commercial marketing skills.

**Q3 Measure:** 20 Marketing Fellows commence 60 commercial assignments in 12 overseas markets. (Bord Bia)

**Update:** Complete.

21 Marketing Fellows started the new programme in Q3 2014, carrying out 61 assignments across 14 export markets.

**Q3 Measure:** Complete 4th (revised) Strategic Growth Programme with 27 participants. (Bord Bia)

**Update:** Complete

27 participants completed the 4th (revised) Strategic Growth Programme in July 2014.

**Q3 Measure:** 3rd Food Marketing Graduate Programme commences with a target of 15-20 graduate placements with 10+ food and drink companies in overseas markets. (Bord Bia)

**Update:** Complete

28 graduates, placed in 14 companies, started in Q3 2014, covering 6 markets in the European Union and North America.

**Action 268:** Support over 100 food SMEs through Teagasc Food SME Technology Support Programme and BIM Seafood Centre.

**Q3 Measure:** BIM to deliver to market a new composite blue whiting product. (BIM)

**Update:** Complete

The sample blue whiting product formats are being test marketed in China, and further refinement of the product will take place.

**Action 276:** Work with partners to implement a Beef Genomic scheme and roll out new sexed semen technology on dairy and beef farms.

**Q3 Measure:** (i) Develop sexed semen project proposal

(ii) Achieve agreement with partners, including AI companies and Sexing Technologies,

(iii) roll-out of 2014 project deliverables

(DAFM)

**Update:** Delayed

Discussions are continuing between AI companies and Sexing Technologies (US company) on establishing commercial arrangements to have this technology ready for the 2015 AI breeding season. These discussions are commercially sensitive. A further research project is also being planned involving ICBF, Teagasc and partner AI companies for 2015 on how this technology performs at farm level.

**Action 284:** Launch a sustainability and quality programme for the dairy sector and incorporate into Origin Green.

**Q3 Measure:** All dairy co-ops to have indicated their intention to participate. (Bord Bia)

**Update:** Complete

All Dairy co-ops have indicated their intention to participate in the programme.

**Action 285:** Appoint 10 Origin Green Ambassadors and assign to global food and drinks companies.

**Q3 Measure:** Ten Ambassadors commence global placement and rollout of trade



communications presentations. (Bord Bia)

**Update:** Complete

All ten ambassadors commenced the global placement. Seven of the same Ambassadors began second placements in major customers, while the remaining three have begun a programme of presentations to major target customers.

**Action 288:** Undertake an independent cost benefit analysis in the area of Agri-Taxation with a view to ensuring maximum benefit to the sector and to the wider economy and bringing forward recommendations for Budget 2015.

**Q3 Measure:** Jointly complete independent agri-taxation cost benefit analysis. (D/Finance, DAFM, Revenue)

**Update:** Complete

The independent cost benefit analysis on Agri-Taxation was completed and a number of measures were announced as part of Budget 2015 based on the recommendations in the report.

## 9.2 Green Economy

**Action 302:** Develop an internet resource, signposting the range of supports available to Irish enterprises to help them reduce energy, materials usage, water and waste, and develop new and innovative green products and services.

**Q3 Measure:** Consult with relevant Departments/Agencies regarding requirements of signposting exercise. (DJEI)

**Update:** Complete

Research and consultation with relevant Departments/Agencies has taken place and a series of relevant links related to public supports available to enterprise to assist in greening business, reducing costs and improving competitiveness has been compiled. Work to launch the signposting page on the web is ongoing as part of the development of a new website for the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

**Action 303:** Review the potential for job creation through the greater use of waste as a resource in Ireland including through the preparing for reuse, recycling/reprocessing and recovery of waste and explore what additional actions are required to stimulate the further

development of indigenous recycling and recovery infrastructure

**Q3 Measure:** Engagement with waste management industry with a view to industry to developing a communication strategy to support/inform householders with regard to new provisions of the revised legislation. The role of the Department will be overseeing the process to ensure common content in terms of key messages to householders. (DECLG)

**Update:** Complete

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government has engaged with industry with regard to communicating the new provisions of the forthcoming legislation on household waste collection.

### 9.3 Construction and Property

**Action 310:** Establish new Regional Assemblies which will have the responsibility for preparing new Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies, replacing the previous Regional Planning Guidelines.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (DECLG)

**Update:** Complete

Following the enactment of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 the 8 regional authorities were dissolved on 1 June 2014 and their functions were transferred to either the Border, Midland and Western Regional Assembly or the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly. The 2 regional assemblies will undertake the functions of the regional authorities for a period of 6 months (to 31 December 2014) whereupon a new system of regional assemblies will come into effect. It is envisaged that this structure will be as follows:

- Eastern & Midlands Regional Assembly;
- Northern & Western Regional Assembly; and
- Southern Regional Assembly.

**Action 318:** Continue to implement the Public Capital Programme and outline public investment plans for 2015-2019.

**Q3 Measure:** Complete a review of planned capital spending for 2015-2019. (DPER)

**Update:** Complete

To end-September, 51% of the 2014 capital budget had been spent by Departments. This is

in line with spending trends from previous years and the Public Capital Programme is rolling out in line with expected timeframes. A review of the Public Capital Programme has been undertaken and the report of the review will be published before the end of the year. The three year expenditure ceilings for capital were published in the Book of Estimates on Budget Day alongside the current ceilings. The Report on the capital review will include capital ceilings out to 2020.

**Action 320:** Complete and implement the review of the public works contract.

**Q3 Measure:** Arising from the review bring proposals to Government and implement any agreed changes. (DPER)

**Update:** Complete

A detailed report is being completed for submission to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. This report will contain a series of recommendations for consideration by the Minister. Subject to the Minister's approval, these recommendations will be implemented on a phased basis commencing in early 2015.

**Action 325:** In conjunction with the County and City Managers' Association, work towards regional groupings of Building Control Authorities working to a common set of protocols adding efficiency, clarity and consistency to building control administration across the local government sector. This will also facilitate a risk-based approach by local authorities to their own independent inspection arrangements ensuring that resources are targeted and deployed effectively providing real and meaningful oversight of building activity. The move to regional/shared services approaches and the adoption of common IT and administrative procedures are necessary first steps towards the development of a unified national building inspectorate.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (DECLG, Local Authorities)

**Update:** Complete

The following deliverables are in place:

- A Framework for Building Control Authorities was adopted by the City and County Management Association on 17 July 2014 - this is the common set of protocols referred to and will add clarity, efficiency and consistency to building control activities across the local government sector;
- The online Building Control Management System is a nationwide ICT platform with risk management capability; individual building control authorities now have readily available data on all projects notified as commencing in their functional area and can identify risk

- and track progress; knowledge and oversight of activity has improved immeasurably;
- A dedicated support and development team (jointly funded by all building control authorities from commencement fees) to facilitate ongoing development and support; and
  - Standardised inspection templates have been developed.

**Action 331:** Oversee implementation by Local Authorities of a programme of works to improve the quality and enhance the energy efficiency of the existing Local Authorities housing stock.

**Q3 Measure:** Evaluate the Pilot Programme in the 4 Dublin Local Authorities on the IHER BER Database Tool (from the EU-funded EPISCOPE project) which collects and uses the data stored in the BER xml files to provide a suite of reports, tables, query functions and data analysis specifically focussed on the Local Authority Energy Retrofitting Programme. (DECLG, Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, South Dublin County Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, IHER Energy Services Ltd.)

**Update:** Delayed

It is envisaged that the Pilot Programme will be complete in November and the evaluation of the pilot will be available shortly thereafter.

## 9.4 Tourism

**Action 333:** Progress the introduction of Common Travel Area visa arrangements between Ireland and the UK for tourist and business visas.

**Q3 Measure:** Commence Common Travel Area visa arrangements between Ireland and the UK. (D/Justice)

**Update:** Complete

On Monday 6 October 2014 the Minister for Justice and Equality and United Kingdom Home Secretary jointly launched the British-Irish Visa Scheme. From late October Chinese tourist and business travellers granted either an Irish or UK visa will be the first who can avail of the new scheme.

**Q3 Measure:** Integrate promotion of the Common Travel Area visa arrangements in tourism and trade promotion programmes and activities. (D/Justice, DFAT, DJEI, other relevant Departments and agencies)

**Update:** Complete

The Department of Justice and Equality has been consulting closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Tourism Ireland on the promotion of the new Scheme in priority markets. A Joint Communications Package on the new Scheme has been agreed with the United Kingdom.

**Action 337:** Develop greater collaboration between Fáilte Ireland and Enterprise Ireland in a number of areas, including the fast growing English language training sector.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (Fáilte Ireland, EI)

**Update:** Complete

Fáilte Ireland and Enterprise Ireland (on behalf of the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs)) are finalising a protocol. The aim of the protocol, which is informed by the National Tourism Development Authority Act 2003, the Industrial Development (Enterprise Ireland) Act 1998 and the County Enterprise Boards (Dissolution) Act 2014, is to:

- Establish a structured link between the LEOs and Fáilte Ireland regarding the provision of information and guidance on measures in support of enterprise development;
- Provide for cooperation on awareness and promotion activities;
- Provide for an efficient and proactive customer service in response to LEO and Fáilte Ireland client queries;
- Provide for training and support of LEO staff on relevant Fáilte Ireland's services and vice versa;
- Provide for exchanges between the parties on the uptake and operation of the measures and levels of demand for information/guidance by clients of both parties; and
- Provide for periodic review of the operation of the protocol.

## 9.5 Retail Sector

**Action 348:** Progress the introduction of a National Postcode System in 2014, with a view to rolling out the system in the first half of 2015. The National Postcode System will improve logistics efficiencies for retailers, particularly facilitating on-line trading and reducing the risk of purchasing fraud.

**Q3 Measure:** Finalise Implementation Plan. (DCENR)

**Update:** Complete

The implementation plans for the Public Service Database updating, dissemination of postcodes to households/ business premises and the communication and awareness campaign have been fully scoped. The launch date will be agreed with Government and is targeted for the middle of 2015.

**Q3 Measure:** Establish website to provide information around Postcode design, the uses and benefits of the national postcode, and to help businesses to plan for the new system. (Postcode Management Licence Holder, DCENR)

**Update:** Complete

The Minister launched the new website [www.eircode.ie](http://www.eircode.ie) on 28 April 2014. The website was updated on 20 August 2014 to provide more detailed information; further information will be made available as the project progresses throughout the year.

**Action 351:** Examine further the potential for measures that could be taken by Local Authorities to address disincentives to town-centre shopping.

**Q3 Measure:** Explore with Local Authority representatives the potential to replicate measures which have been taken by Local Government bodies that are supportive of town centre shopping. (DJEI, CCMA, DECLG)

**Update:** Complete

In 2012, the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government published a Sectoral Strategy on Jobs, 'Supporting Economic Recovery and Jobs – Locally'. The document highlights the contribution made by Local Authorities to enterprise growth and job creation. In parallel, the County and City Management Association (CCMA) published a report which identified over 2,000 separate local activities in 2011 which had a positive impact on local development, economic recovery and enterprise. Many of these have a positive impact on town centre retailers. This Report was a first attempt to map the broad range of enterprise

supports delivered by local authorities and was accompanied by a searchable database detailing actions at individual Local Authority level. Case studies cited in this database can help to identify individual projects which can be replicated elsewhere or extended nationally.

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has had initial contacts with the Local Government Management Agency with a view to determining how to capture the best examples of measures which are supportive of town centre shopping from this database and replicate them in other Local Authority areas. The issue was also discussed in the Retail Consultation Forum meeting of 11 September. It was agreed that the issue will be considered in further depth at one of the next meetings of the Retail Forum, which will focus on the theme of Revitalising Town Centre Retail.

## 9.6 Creative Services

**Action 361:** Support the Historic Towns Regeneration Initiative, which is being run on a pilot basis in three towns - Youghal, Westport and Listowel - to support both tourism-related and conservation-related employment.

**Q3 Measure:** Complete works under oversight by local authorities. (DAHG, Fáilte Ireland, Heritage Council, Local Authorities)

**Update:** Complete

This pilot initiative has promoted heritage-led regeneration and continued use of vulnerable heritage buildings in the three participating towns; Listowel, Youghal and Westport. The initiative supported employment in each pilot town, with projects also assisting in the training of traditional skills and the creation of a skills base for future works.

## 9.7 Aviation Services

**Action 367:** Publish a new Aviation Policy Statement.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (DTTAS)

**Update:** Delayed

A draft National Aviation Policy was published on 21 May 2014, and submissions/comments were invited up to 31 July. Over 70 submissions were received and are currently being reviewed. The Aviation Policy will be adopted and published before the end of 2014.

## 9.8 International Financial Services

**Action 377:** Introduce Irish Collective Asset-management Vehicle (ICAV) legislation.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (D/Finance)

**Update:** Complete

Preparations are underway for the second and other stages of the passage of the Irish Collective Asset-management Vehicle (ICAV) Bill through the Oireachtas.

**Action 378:** Investigate ways to further develop the Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) model as appropriate.

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (D/Finance, Revenue)

**Update:** Complete

Potential avenues to further develop the REIT model have been identified, and preparations are under way to initiate detailed research into those specific options.

## 9.10 Smart Ageing

**Action 383:** Carry out a mapping exercise of the activity in Ireland, both in the economic and social spheres, to provide a baseline of the activity and to identify Ireland's strengths in Smart Ageing

**Q3 Measure:** As per headline action. (D/Taoiseach, DJEI/ Forfás, relevant Government Departments and Agencies)

**Update:** Complete

The Steering Group on Smart Ageing conducted a wide consultation process involving Government Departments, Enterprise Agencies, NGOs, universities, test bed and other relevant sources. A mapping of key initiatives identified throughout a broad range of sectors, including national and international policy initiatives, has been carried out.