ACTION PLAN FOR JOBS

2017

Third Progress Report

Contents

Commentary

This is the third quarterly Progress Report for the Action Plan for Jobs 2017 which outlines progress made on measures due for completion in the third quarter.

The Government published the sixth Action Plan for Jobs in February 2017. This Plan contains 164 actions and 430 measures to be implemented in 2017 by all 17 Government Departments and by 46 agencies under the remit of these Departments. It will build on the progress made since 2012 to improve supports for job-creating businesses and remove the barriers to employment creation across the economy. These actions are additional to the over 2,800 actions already implemented under Action Plan for Jobs 2012-2016, cumulatively, and reported on in previous quarterly reports (see www.dbei.ie)

The latest official statistics on employment and unemployment in Ireland (CSO QNHS Quarter 2 2017) show that total employment increased by 48,100 in the year to the second quarter of 2017, bringing total employment to 2,063,000. There was an increase in full time employment of 77,800 and decrease in part-time employment of 29,700. Over the period since the launch of the Action Plan for Jobs in quarter 1 2012, over 220,000 jobs have been created in the Irish economy. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for September 2017 was 6.1%, down from a high of over 15% in 2012. *(Following adjustments to create more up-to-date benchmarks this has been revised to 6.4% and subsequently decreased to 6.3% and 6.1% in October and November respectively)*.

Actions due in Quarter 3
In the third quarter of 2017, Departments and agencies were to deliver 48 measures under the Action Plan. Eight of the measures due in Quarter 3 of 2017 have not been delivered, giving a completion rate of 83.3%.

Note on Department names
Department names and measures have been updated to reflect the changes that occurred as a result of the rearrangement of Department functions in Q2 and Q3. Please see Glossary of Terms for updated Department names.

Measures not delivered as planned in Q3

As previously stated, eight of the Q3 measures outlined in the Plan have not been delivered on schedule:

- *Monitor data on lending to SMEs from both bank and non-bank sources, and demand from SMEs for credit to inform policy and ensure that viable SMEs can access appropriate finance. -* Action 62.

  H1 2017 Bank SME Credit and Lending Data for AIB and Bank of Ireland has been submitted to the Minister. Quarterly meetings with AIB and Bank of Ireland are currently being scheduled. PTSB lending data for 2017 is expected in Q4.

- *Ensure that viable SMEs continue to have access to appropriate alternative sources of finance.; Foster connectivity between investors in equity markets for SMEs by facilitating information sharing and co-investment while increasing awareness and improving the knowledge of financial providers about investment opportunities in SMEs. -* Action 63.

  A mapping review of access to equity finance in Ireland, with a focus on access by SMEs and issues relating to investor interest, was performed in June 2017. The findings of this review will inform the approach towards achieving greater connectivity.

- *Ensure that viable SMEs continue to have access to appropriate alternative sources of finance.; Develop an awareness campaign to improve SME knowledge of alternative finance options and the suitability of these for their business. -* Action 63.

  and

- *Improve the financial skills of Irish SMEs; Map the relevant financial training currently available in Ireland and its take-up -* Action 64.

  These actions are being incorporated into a broader initiative to develop a Business Advisory Hub as part of the development of Brexit mitigation measures.

- *Implement specific actions in Innovation 2020 which will support the development of excellent researchers, world-leading research teams, equipment and facilities across the public research system.; Increase the number of early career independent researcher awards (Starting Investigator Research Grant). -* Action 90.

  The 2017 Starting Investigator Research Grant (SIRG) call is planned to open in Q4 2017, with awards expected to be made in Q3 2018. For budgetary reasons, this call will not make sufficient awards to deliver a significant scale up of the SIRG programme. It is possible that this call will be delayed or cancelled pending signoff by SFI Board of SFI's annual plan 2018.

- *Support knowledge transfer by implementing a successor to the current Technology Transfer Strengthening Initiative, delivering on targets for the transfer of economically valuable research outputs to enterprise, from all publicly-funded research, through the knowledge transfer infrastructure supported by Knowledge Transfer Ireland (KTI), reviewing the operations of KTI, finalising and implementing a 2017-2021 strategy for KTI, and by establishing a KTI Industry Connectors group to increase quality engagement and collaboration between companies and publicly funded research and technology in the higher education sector.; Establish a Knowledge Transfer Ireland Industry Connectors group of research and technology domain experts to enable increased quality engagement and collaboration between companies and publicly funded research and technology in the Higher Education sector. - Action 95.*

The 2017-2021 Strategy for Knowledge Transfer Ireland has now been considered and endorsed by the Enterprise Ireland Board. Discussions will now take place between KTI and DBEI regarding sanction for additional KTI resources to implement this action.

- *Implement the Digital Strategy for Schools 2015 -2020 to enhance teaching, learning and assessment.; Upgrade primary schools to higher broadband speeds - some 800 by end 2016, and at least a further 300 by end of 2017. - Action 120.*

Some 120 schools have received the router upgrade in Q2 2017. Upgrades are ongoing and will be finalised by end Q4.

- *Work with public and private sector stakeholders to identify and address skills training needs in traditional building skills and architectural conservation, in order to increase levels of verifiable competence amongst the construction workforce engaged in designing and carrying out repair, maintenance and upgrading of older building stock, to assist regeneration of our historic cities, towns and villages as attractive places to live and visit.;Commence implementation of the actions with stakeholders.- Action 164*

A number of key steps have been identified for DCHG to progress from ongoing discussion with stakeholders. A report is being prepared which will comprise a summary of these interrelated steps, recommend models for training provision and suggest an implementation framework. A draft of this report will be circulated to stakeholders in Q4 prior to completion.

Update on actions delayed in Quarter 1

As reported at the end of Quarter 1, there were 13 actions delayed. The following two

measures from this report have now been delivered:

- *Lead and implement an integrated communications plan for enterprise supports that increases awareness among all businesses of the broad suite of supports that are available and how to access them; develop an integrated communications plan - Action 21.*

DBEI has developed an integrated communications plan, with the following objectives; to coordinate the timing of the initiatives in question; to coordinate the messaging around each initiative; to raise awareness among businesses of how they can access the supports available to them.

- *Maximise the potential of the design sector to drive innovation and competitiveness; publish the report of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs on Design Skills for Enterprise and consider its recommendations* - Action 157

The report of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs on Design Skills for Enterprise has been approved by the EGFSN and has been published.

Update on actions delayed in Quarter 2

As reported at the end of Quarter 2, there were 18 actions delayed. The following two

measures from this report have now been delivered:

- *Lead and implement an integrated communications plan for enterprise supports that increases awareness among all businesses of the broad suite of supports that are available and how to access them; Implement the plan* - Action 21

DBEI has developed an integrated communications plan, with the following objectives:

   o To coordinate the timing of the initiatives in question;

   o To coordinate the messaging around each initiative;

   o To raise awareness among businesses of how they can access the supports available to them.

- *Develop and publish the 2017 Further Education and Training Services Plan which will provide detail of all SOLAS funded FET provision and funding provided to agencies and bodies to support the FET sector. The skills needs at national level will be informed by the recommendations of the National Skills Strategy and the regional skills needs identified by the Regional Skills Fora; publish the 2017 FET Services Plan* - Action 81

The 2017 FET Services Plan has been published on the SOLAS website and may be accessed at http://www.solas.ie/Pages/FETServicesPlan.aspx

Quarter 3 Measures

Responding to Brexit

Action 18: Provide specific support and advice to food and drinks companies on the impact of Brexit.

Q3 Measure: As per headline action. (DAFM and agencies)

Update: Complete

DAFM have carried out the following:

- The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine continued his engagement with EU counterparts when he met his Spanish and French counterparts the week beginning 17 July 2017. The purpose of the engagements was to inform them of Ireland's concerns, build alliances, and assess the degree to which other Member States would support our efforts to have the agri-food impacts of Brexit specifically and adequately taken account of in the negotiations.
- The Minister had a telephone conversation with Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Secretary of State Michael Gove on 5 July 2017 during which he raised the potential impact a 'hard Brexit' would have on the Irish food and drink industry.
- DAFM officials met with Italian officials on 6 July 2017 to discuss the above Brexit related issues.
- The Minister hosted a further meeting of the Department's Brexit Stakeholders Consultative Committee on 19 July 2017, at which the food and drinks industry was represented.

Driving Enterprise Growth

Action 21: Lead and implement an integrated communications plan for enterprise supports that increase awareness among all businesses of the broad suite of supports that are available and how to access them.

Q3 Measure: Implement the plan. (DBEI, relevant Departments and agencies)

Update: Complete

DBEI and its agencies, Enterprise Ireland and the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs), support businesses through a range of initiatives. The Department has now begun the process of implementing a communications plan to highlight this range of supports, with the following objectives:

- To coordinate the timing of the initiatives in question;
- To coordinate the messaging around each initiative.
- To raise awareness among businesses of how they can access the supports available to them.

Some being undertaken include:

DBEI:
- The Taking Care of Business event will bring up to 30 State bodies together to offer advice to small businesses. This is a free half day event which will allow businesses to meet experts from a range of public bodies. It is also an opportunity for small business owners to get advice on diversifying into new export markets in light of Brexit.

- The Department chairs the Communications Sub-Group of the Government's SME Access to Finance Initiative. Part of the Communications Sub Group's work, is the active promotion of the SME Online Guide to Funding Supports toolkit.

Agency Led
Enterprise Ireland
Enterprise Ireland launched its new Brexit awareness Campaign and on-line SME Brexit Scorecard and Toolkit in the first half of the year and it is being widely promoted. At the end of May 2017, Enterprise Ireland launched a new website and portal, www.leanbusinessireland.ie. The Lean Business Community brings together all the key elements supporting and building competitiveness in Ireland for companies large and small, across all sectors. This includes a number of government agencies – Local Enterprise Offices, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland, Universities and Institutes of technology, representative bodies including Ibec, ICBE, Lean Construction Ireland and consultants.

Local Enterprise Offices
Earlier this year a series of marketing and awareness campaigns were implemented, ranging from financial supports for start-ups, to training and mentoring, trading online vouchers and scaling and growing businesses. The LEOs have also made the online Brexit Scorecard and Toolkit available to their clients and micro and local enterprises generally. A key element of the Scorecard is a report on next steps for businesses to take and supports available. In addition the LEOs run a competition for Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur, entries to which are currently being accepted for the 2018 award.

Ploughing Championships
A number of the DBEI's agencies exhibited at the 2017 Ploughing Championships in September, reaching an audience of almost 300,000 people.

Growing and scaling enterprise

Action 24: Strengthen the potential of Local Enterprise Offices to support jobs and start-ups at local level.

Q3 Measure: Scope out an appropriate Customer Relationship Management System for use across the LEOs. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

Enterprise Ireland and the LEOs have worked together to scope out a Customer Relationship Management System (CRMD) for use across the LEOs. A working group was established amongst the LEOs to facilitate the development of the project and a meeting between Enterprise Ireland's IT team and CRMD project management group has taken place. The need for external IT expertise to develop a comprehensive suite of IT requirements for the new systems was identified and to this end a tender document has been developed to progress this further. The Customer Relationship Management System project has progressed and has been endorsed by the County & City Management Association.

Action 29: Generate closer links and business opportunities between Irish-owned and foreign-owned enterprises to achieve increased global sourcing sales.

Q3 Measure: Deliver an enhanced cross-agency 2017 Global Sourcing Trade Mission to Ireland which will build on the success of the 2016 mission and will be held in a number of regional locations. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

A two-day (17 – 18 May 2017) Trade and Investment Mission to Dublin, Cork and Galway was a joint Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland 'Global Sourcing' initiative, with the aim of creating business opportunities for Irish-owned companies with multinationals (MNCs) based in Ireland. The May event was the fourth national Trade and Investment Mission in Ireland. As part of this mission over 470 one-to-one meetings were scheduled between 167 Enterprise Ireland clients and 115 IDA Ireland companies over the course of the two days. This provided MNCs with direct access to potential suppliers, as well as raising awareness of the innovative capabilities of Irish SMEs across a range of sectors. These meetings were also invaluable to Irish companies seeking credible access to procurement teams in global MNCs.

Action 30: Develop a new website to drive operational excellence and sustained competitiveness building capability for companies in Ireland through the provision of information and advice.

Q3 Measure: As per headline action. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

The Lean Business Ireland website (https://www.leanbusinessireland.ie) was launched by the Minister of State for Employment and Small Business on the 31 May 2017 in Croke Park, Dublin.
The website brings together "One Stop Shop" information and resources for Lean activity in Ireland, to drive operational excellence and to support the drive for competitiveness.
The site includes information on supports that are available for companies in Ireland, for clients of Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, and the LEOs. It brings together academic research and identifies supports available from the Lean service providers directory, the Lean education providers directory and a series of case studies outlining the stories of companies as they take active steps to improve their own competitive capabilities by developing their people and processes. Information and educational materials are shared on the site to help people develop their understanding of Lean and how it can help them develop. The website was co-created by Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Ibec, ICBE, Consultants Forum, Industry representatives (Dawn Farm Foods, Lufthansa Airmotive, DELL) and Academia (UL, Waterford Institute of Technology, Trinity College Dublin) and will continue to be developed, as required.

Supporting Entrepreneurship

Action 48: Promote and facilitate increased provision of education and training opportunities related to entrepreneurship and identify best practice education and training on entrepreneurship within further education and training provision.

Q3 Measure: Commence entrepreneurship summer camps in the HEIs. (DES)

Update: Complete

Entrepreneurship summer camps commenced in 19 Higher Education Institutions across the country during Q3. A total of 985 post primary school students undertook these programmes.

Ensuring Finance for Growth

Action 62: Monitor data on lending to SMEs from both bank and non-bank sources, and demand from SMEs for credit to inform policy and ensure that viable SMEs can access appropriate finance.

Q3 Measure: Collate and monitor data on lending to SMEs from both bank and non-bank sources and report on this issue to the relevant Cabinet Committee. (DoF)

Update: Complete

H1 data collated and presented to Senior Officials Group on 5 September 2017.

Delivering Skills for a Growing Economy

Action 71: Q3 Measure: Make available a new Framework for Modern Foreign Languages at Junior Cycle to schools to increase the range and quality of languages which can be taught. (DES)

Update: Complete

The Minister for Education and Skills launched the new Junior Cycle specification, Modern Foreign Languages, on 4 September 2017.

Action 72: Implement the ICT Skills Action Plan 2014 – 2018 through strengthened collaboration between Government, the education system and industry and as part of the goal of making Ireland the most attractive location in the world for ICT skills and ability.

Q3 Measure: Roll out new ICT places. (DES)

Update: Complete

Springboard+ 2017 which incorporates the ICT skills conversion programme was launched during Q2. Under Springboard+ 2017 a total number of 2,957 ICT places will be provided. 962 places will be on part-time Springboard courses, 1,171 places will be one year full-time ICT skills conversion courses and 824 will be two years part-time ICT skills conversion courses. Roll out of these courses is ongoing in higher education institutions across the country.

Action 73: Create a greater diversity of learning opportunities beyond school through competitive calls for Springboard courses.

Q3 Measure: Roll out Springboard+ 2017. (DES)

Update: Complete

Springboard+ 2017 which incorporates the ICT skills conversion programme was launched during Q2. Under Springboard+ 2017, 6,471 places will be provided on 198 courses in higher education institutions across the country. Roll out of these courses is ongoing.

Action 75: Implement the objectives in the Action Plan for Education 2016-2019.

Q3 Measure: Publish 2017 progress reports for Q1, Q2 and Q3. (DES)

Update: Complete

The Action Plan for Education 2017 Quarter 2 Progress Report was published on the DES website in July.

Promoting Innovation

Action 83: Build Intellectual Property Capability and strengthen Intellectual Property Management in indigenous enterprise by developing a new financial support to assist SMEs and developing an approach for measuring Intellectual Property activity in the firm base.

Q3 Measure: Develop an approach for measuring and monitoring the progress of Intellectual Property activity in the firm base. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

Enterprise Ireland has developed an approach for measuring and monitoring the progress of Intellectual Property activity in the firm base. Data will be collected from Enterprise Ireland client companies annually, through our Annul Business Review, and will provide details on the number of companies with Intellectual Property (IP) and the type of IP that they have.

Action 87: Increase collaboration between enterprise and the health sector leading to the development and commercialisation of new healthcare technologies, products and services and to facilitate the health system to find efficiencies and improvements through Health Innovation Hub Ireland by selecting and supporting projects emerging from open and focused calls that create solutions to identified problems/challenges.

Q3 Measure: Develop and launch a Health Innovation Hub Ireland Health Innovation Education Programme. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

As part of the Health Innovation Hub Ireland (HIHI) strategy, HIHI is developing a suite of educational products designed to address the challenge of creating a culture of innovation in the health service through roadshows, innovation workshops and a medical innovation diploma.
Education roadshows publicising the work of HIHI and highlighting the importance of innovation in healthcare were launched in September 2017. HIHI is currently developing an educational syllabus, with workshops and academic courses becoming available in 2018. Additionally, HIHI is coordinating a project, through the School of Pharmacy, UCC and UH Kerry, related to delivering CPD training to pharmacists and physiotherapists in the asthma management space.

Action 90: Implement specific actions in Innovation 2020 which will support the development of excellent researchers, world-leading research teams, equipment and facilities across the public research system.

Q3 Measure: Design a successor to the PRTLI Cycle 5. Design a new, competitive-based approach to investment in excellent researchers, world-leading research teams, equipment and facilities across the public research system. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

An outline proposal for a successor to Cycle 5 of the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions, has been developed by DBEI working in close cooperation with the Department of Education and Skills. The most pressing need identified is to address the reduction in enrolments of PhDs and Research Masters. In the context of Budget 2018, the Government announced that €7.5 million would be made available through DBEI in 2018 to commence a new programme specifically aimed at increasing the enrolment of PhD and research masters students. This particular programme is to be rolled out through Science Foundation Ireland and further detail on the programme will be provided by SFI in the coming months.

Action 90: Implement specific actions in Innovation 2020 which will support the development of excellent researchers, world-leading research teams, equipment and facilities across the public research system.

Q3 Measure: Continue to scale up the Future Research Leaders awards. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

Five Future Research Leader (FRL) awards resulting from the 2016 call were made in Q2 2017. SFI continued during the period to scale up the FRL awards launching the 2017 FRL call in March 2017. 12 applications have been submitted following this call.

Action 91: Ensure RDI supports meet enterprise needs and are readily accessible by finalising a review and streamlining the range of State financial aid for RDI and by promoting the benefits of carrying out RDI including raising awareness to increase the level of collaboration across all sectors.

Q3 Measure: In the context of the review, consider streamlining enterprise RDI support programmes to ensure their comprehensiveness and complementarity. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

Following a review of Enterprise Ireland's in-company RDI support, as part of the process of streamlining the range of State Financial Aid, a new client offering was approved for implementation by the Board of Enterprise Ireland. To outline changes and to promote the benefits to companies of undertaking Research, Development and Innovation, Enterprise Ireland will in H2 2017 launch a new communications campaign.

IDA have developed a new infographic on Irish RD&I and training supports available to FDI companies that span the funding ecosystem in order to raise awareness among industry. IDA is actively marketing the range of supports available. IDA has developed internal policy and guidance associated with certain new EU funding streams in order to streamline the company application and

approval process and convey consistent messaging on application requirements.

SFI collaborates with other research stakeholders to streamline the national enterprise RDI support system. For example, the review process for the SFI Research Centres programme took place in early 2017. This Research Centres review process included input from IDA Ireland, the Health Research Board, Enterprise Ireland, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine. SFI also partners with other funders, for example, SFI's Technology Innovation Development Award (TIDA) is run in partnership with Enterprise Ireland. Review panel meetings for the most recent call of TIDA took place in Q3.

Action 93: Drive research and innovation in advanced manufacturing by developing the necessary research skills and capacity and by progressing the identified need for Research Technology Organisation support.

Q3 Measure: Develop research skills and capacity in the key area of advanced manufacturing to improve Irish competitiveness including through the Research Centre and Research Centres Spokes programmes. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

In May 2017, SFI announced that it will invest €72 million over the next six years in four new world-class SFI Research Centres in Ireland.

The following two Research Centres are directly applicable to the area of advanced manufacturing:
  - Smart manufacturing IT and industrial automation systems, led by Prof Conor McCarthy, University of Limerick;
  - Innovative techniques and processes in Additive Manufacturing, led by Prof Denis Dowling, UCD.

Additionally, two new SFI Research Professors in the field of Manufacturing Competitiveness relocated to Ireland in 2016 (Prof. Paul Weaver, UL and Prof. Fengzhou Fang, UCD).

Action 94: Drive EU and international research collaboration to maximise the impact of investment in research and innovation including through new international research partnerships, securing €12 million in product development contracts for Irish based companies from the European Space Agency, and by Enterprise Ireland continuing to lead the national drive to secure €1.25 billion in funding for Irish companies and academics by 2020.

Q3 Measure: Provide funding to enable the I-LOFAR Consortium to join the International LOFAR Telescope. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with Trinity College Dublin effective 1 July 2017. I-LOFAR was switched on by the Minister of State for Training, Skills, Innovation, Research and Development on 27 July. Funding was provided to Trinity College Dublin in August 2017.

Ireland is on track for the national target of €1.25bn drawdown in Horizon 2020 funding. As of May 2017 the total national drawdown was €424m. Enterprise Ireland is continuing to lead the national drive in this regard.

Stimulating Regional Growth

Regional Enterprise Development

Action 96: Progress the implementation and monitoring of the Regional Action Plans for Jobs, including promotion of cross regional collaboration and of best practice exemplars. In particular the Regional Action Plans for Jobs will respond proactively to economic developments that have specific impacts on regions, such as Brexit and the Border region, through facilitating and encouraging the development of collaborative initiatives in the areas of entrepreneurship, capability development and mentoring, together with sector and cluster initiatives that could be successful in competitive calls for funding.

Q3 Measure: As per headline action. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

All regional plans are being implemented and progress reported. Q2 2017 employment data shows positive employment growth across 6 out of 8 regions. Only 2 regions have an unemployment rate more than 1% above the State average of 6.4% (Midlands: 8.3% and South East: 8.1%). Cross-regional collaboration and sharing of best practise has been supported through the creation of a network for committee Secretariats and Programme Managers, and cross-regional presentations at committee meetings. Brexit has been a standing item on the agenda for all regional APJ implementation committee meetings. Regional Skills Fora have been established in all regions, and Fora managers have worked closely with implementation committees in each region to collaborate on initiatives to assess and deliver employers' local skills requirements.

Innovative and collaborative initiatives to support employment and economic growth have been facilitated through the first round of the Enterprise Ireland Regional Development Fund. All Regional committees have been involved and supported in developing applications for funding. The closing date for the first call under this €60m Fund was 18 August. A second call will be rolled out by Enterprise Ireland on 8 January 2018 with a closing date of 2 March 2018 for applications.

Supporting Jobs for Rural Communities

Action 100: Launch and implement the Action Plan for Rural Development, with over 200 actions across Government which will maximise the potential for jobs and economic and social progress in rural areas.

Q3 Measure: Publish Progress Reports on the implementation of the Action Plan for Rural Development on a bi- annual basis. (DRCD)

Update: Complete

Realising our Rural Potential, the Government's Action Plan for Rural Development was launched on 23 January 2017. The Action Plan contains 276 actions for the delivery across Government, State agencies and other bodies over the next three years to support the economic and social progress of rural Ireland.

The Action Plan states that progress reports will be published every 6 months and the first formal progress report was duly published in August 2017. The Report outlined the progress in relation to

all the actions due for implementation in the first six-months of the Action Plan and showed that delivery was well on track. Of the 276 Actions in the Action Plan, 227 were either due for delivery in the first half of 2017, or highlighted activity taking place in the first half of 2017. 220 of these 227 actions were either completed on schedule or were in progress. A further seven actions due for delivery in the first half of 2017 were delayed.

Improving the ease of doing business

Action 106: Provide updates each quarter on progress achieved towards the Government's commitment to make all licensing, authorisation, certification, permit application, and payment-taking procedures for business fully available online on a progressive basis by November 2017.

Q3 Measure: Provide updates each quarter on progress achieved by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine towards the Government's commitment to make all licensing, authorisation, certification, permit application, and payment- taking procedures for business fully available online on a progressive basis by November 2017. (DBEI)

Update: Complete – Quarterly updates for the following Departments were received: DAFM, DCHG, DCCAE, DCYA, DoF, DoH, DHPLG, DJE, DBEI and DTTAS.

DAFM has initiated an IT project, "ALF" (applications, licences and forms), to provide a custom online portal for licence and registration applications. The design phase of ALF is complete and development was due to begin at the start of October. Completion of the first phase is expected by the end of November 2017. The focus in this first phase is "level one" forms. Further phases are planned for immediate progression thereafter, for example in phase two, integration with the Department's financial system, SAP, to accept credit card payments.
The Animal Health section has provided the first licence examples to help pilot the initial deployment. The model is "self-service", i.e. once the ALF system has been deployed, the potential is there for rapid expansion as relevant business areas can instantly make available, or amend, forms online. The link to ALF could be placed on the website Licences.ie.

DCHG is in the initial stages of developing an e-licensing system for applications for licences for various activities under the Wildlife Acts. Progress will be contingent on the completion of a major consolidation of IT services due to be completed by end 2017. DCHG has yet to provide a list of the licences they issue.

DCCAE has identified 14 licences to achieve the Government's commitment to make all licensing, authorisation, certification, permit application, and payment-taking procedures for business fully available online as relevant on a progressive basis by November 2017. As of Q3 2017, either the application forms, licences, permits or payment process for 12 of these are now online and progress is continuing to have the application form and guidance for two others completed.

DCYA operate an online application system for licensing childcare facilities.

DoF through the Revenue Commissioners has identified 88 licences to achieve the Government's commitment to make all licensing, authorisation, certification, permit application, and payment-taking procedures for business fully available online on a progressive basis by November 2017. As of Q3 2017, 84 of the licence categories can be renewed online. The exceptions are: three Tobacco related licences and the Passenger Vehicle Licences. In view of the small numbers of licensees

involved (two for Tobacco related licences and 29 for Passenger Vehicle Licences) online facilities are not planned for these licences at this time.

DoH has identified 52 licence/permits. Of these, 42 are now fully available online and a further six are on schedule to be online by the end of Q4 2017. Three of the remaining four are being assessed. The final one is not economically viable to move to an online procedure.

DHPLG has identified 11 relevant licensing, authorisation, certification, permit application and payment-taking 'procedures' to be made available online. As of Q3 2017, seven of these procedures are now online with plans in place for another four to move online by Q1 2018. A full list of all the licences issued by the local authorities has not yet been provided.

DJE has identified 64 licences/permits under Action 106. 47 are now either online or expected to be online by the end of 2017. A proposal to develop an online licensing system is under consideration which would bring another 10 licences online.

DBEI has identified 45 licences, authorisations, certifications and permits which are provided to business. 16 of these are available online. In relation to the remaining 29, detailed plans to put 13 services online have been developed. Development has completed on two licences and these are expected to be online, pending agreement on the MOU with the Online Payment Service Provider. DBEI is continuing to liaise with the service providers in its business units, offices and agencies to address progress on 16 other services which due to legislative restrictions prevent provision of the service online , or due to current requirements for hearings in person.

DTTAS has identified 32 licences and permits to achieve the Government's commitment to make all licensing, authorisation, certification, permit application, and payment-taking procedures for business fully available online on a progressive basis by November 2017. As of Q3 2017, 15 of these licences are now online, and progress is continuing to have the remainder online by November.

Action 110: Create awareness of the benefits of standards to Irish businesses particularly in relation to improving competitiveness, and reach out to industry and researchers to engage in international standardisation activities related to future manufacturing technologies for businesses of all sizes.

Q3 Measure: Publish and promote a new code of practice for slating and tiling to reflect current best practice for the building sector. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

NSAI published the new Slating and Tiling – Code of Practice – S.R. 82:2017 on 12 July 2017. The Code is currently being promoted by interested parties including concrete manufacturers, Homebond and engineering professionals pending the launch of the NSAI promotions campaign planned for September to include dissemination through social media and trade publications. The Code is also under consideration by DHPLG to reference the Code in the next revision of Technical Guidance Document C which can be used to demonstrate how requirements of building regulations can be achieved in practice.

Realising the Digital Economy Opportunities

Action 120: Implement the Digital Strategy for Schools 2015 -2020 to enhance teaching, learning and assessment.

Q3 Measure: Develop the pilot for the localised UNESCO ICT Competency Framework and ensure that the eLearning planning resource reflects the framework's requirements. (DES)

Update: Complete

The Digital Learning Framework for Schools was published in September 2017, and is available to all schools. A trial in 50 schools will be undertaken in the 2017-18 school year, to allow the tool to be measured and adapted, and ensure appropriate supports are available to all schools.

Action 120: Implement the Digital Strategy for Schools 2015 -2020 to enhance teaching, learning and assessment.

Q3 Measure: Improve broadband services to schools, allocate grants for ICT equipment and make available advice and support materials for schools. (DES)

Update: Complete

The ICT infrastructure Grant of €30m paid out in 2016-2017 has been reviewed and a similar scheme is currently being developed for the 2017-2018 school year, subject to budgetary allocations. All relevant Support Services have received training modules throughout Q2 and Q3 and training for DES inspectors is ongoing. Future training needs will be considered in the context of the roll out of other initiatives, particularly the Digital Learning Framework for schools, the expectation being that the Framework will identify further specific training needed.An Interdepartmental working group was established and work is ongoing to consider how to deliver enhanced broadband services to primary schools.

Action 124: Develop and roll out a strategy for eHubs for entrepreneurship, eWorking and business growth as part of county development plans, linking effectively with local enterprise stakeholders and enterprise agencies and support the development of ambitious and sustainable proposals for success in competitive calls for funding.

Q3 Measure: Work with ambitious local groups and centres to develop sustainable proposals that could be successful in competitive calls for funding as part of the DJEI Regional Fund Initiative and potential EU funding.

Update: Complete

Innovative and collaborative initiatives to support employment and economic growth in the regions have been facilitated through the first round of the competitive Enterprise Ireland Regional Development Fund. All Regional APJ implementation committees have been involved and supported in developing applications for funding. The closing date for the first call under this €60m Fund was 18 August. A second call will be rolled out by Enterprise Ireland on 8 January 2018 with a closing date of 2 March 2018 for applications.

Addressing New Labour Market Challenges

Action 137: Undertake an analysis and make a recommendation on the appropriate level of the national minimum wage.

Q3 Measure: As per headline action. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

The Low Pay Commission submitted its report and recommendations on the appropriate rate of the National Minimum Wage (NMW) to the Minister in July 2017. The report recommended increasing the NMW by 30 cent to €9.55 per hour. This was confirmed in Budget 2018.

Strengthening Clusters

Agri-Food and Marine

Action 142: Support a further cohort of new food entrepreneurs under Food Works and develop the Food Works Plus supports for those entrepreneurs continuing to pursue their ventures.

Q3 Measure: As per headline action. (DAFM)

Update: Complete

Almost 100 prospective participants for Food Works (FW) 2017/18 were met by the Food Works team in the March-August period 2017. From this group, participants for the Bootcamp were selected. Bootcamp took place on the 26 & 27 September 2017 and involved the FWs team, industry stakeholders and food entrepreneurs working together to select the strongest candidates for the new Food Works programme. The programme began on the 17 October and will run until June 2018. A maximum of eight projects are expected to participate on the programme.
A planning meeting for FW Plus 2018 activities took place on the 4 October 2017 with FW Alumni and the FWs team. Also, plans are being firmed up for the final FW Plus activity of the year - the year-end networking event (end November).

Retail

Action 154: Review the Energy, Waste and Water Cost Management Pilot Programme for the retail sector, with a view to mainstreaming the programme, to drive energy efficiency and cost reductions for the sector.

Q3 Measure: As per headline action. (DCCAE)

Update: Complete

A pilot programme of training and mentoring was tailored and delivered to the small retail sector. Uptake was however low. SEAI have since introduced an ongoing SME Smart Lighting Pilot Scheme in 2017 and have identified retail sector as a particular target. It is planned to develop further initiatives to raise awareness of energy efficiency potential in the commercial sector and to encourage and support businesses in improving energy efficiency from 2018. The areas of focus will be informed by research to be conducted in Q4 2017.

Action 156: Develop a pilot training programme to support retailers to scale up their online trading activity and expand into international markets.

Q3 Measure: As per headline action. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

In consultation with DBEI and DCCAE, Enterprise Ireland has developed a pilot scheme to support retail SMEs develop or enhance their online presence with a view to expanding internationally. Funding for the Scheme is under consideration by the DCCAE.

Design

Action 157: Maximise the potential of the design sector to drive innovation and competitiveness.

Q3 Measure: Develop a strategy and target for EU Funding through the integration and application of design- led innovation. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

Enterprise Ireland has developed a strategy to support the integration and application of design-led innovation amongst SMEs. As part of this strategy Enterprise Ireland has sought out international partners to collaborate with as part of EU funded projects.

Enterprise Ireland has, as part of a transnational group, applied for EU funding of over €1.5m under round two of the Interreg Atlantic Area programme[1]. The project team consists of government agencies and organisations from Ireland (Enterprise Ireland); the UK (NI; Scotland and Wales); France (Brittany); Spain (Galicia and Andalusia) and Portugal (Northern).

The overarching objective of this collaborative project[2] is to help strengthen design-led innovation by transferring models for programme design to support design-led innovation. As with Enterprise Ireland's, the other participating agencies in this project offer innovation support for SMEs.

Using shared programme models, each partner will support a minimum of 25 SMEs to use design and involve users in concept development and prototype testing. As such over 200 SMEs across the region will benefit from financial or mentoring support to incentivise the use of design for user-driven innovation. Based on past experience, it is anticipated that all SMEs will bring at least one product or service to market. Furthermore, the partner organisations will integrate design into their main SME support programmes ensuring long-term impact.

Approval in principle has been given to this project with confirmation of approval expected from EU in Q4, 2017.

[1]INTERREG Atlantic Area is a European funding programme that promotes transnational cooperation among 37 Atlantic regions of five European countries. With a total budget of € 185M, being €140M of European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), this programme co-finances cooperation projects in the fields of Innovation & Competitiveness, Resource Efficiency, Territorial Risks Management, Biodiversity and Natural & Cultural Assets.
[2]This is a collaborative project involving members from Ireland (Enterprise Ireland); UK (NI; Scotland and Wales); France; Spain and Portugal.

Construction and Housing

Action 162: Prepare a strategy for the adoption of Building Information Modelling across the public capital programme and to mandate the manner in which it is to be adopted across the public sector.

Q3 Measure: Work with clients, industry associations and third level to promote the adoption of building information modelling as the operating norm across the supply and demand sides of the construction sector and develop the appropriate technical skills among clients in the construction sector as well as contracting bodies to advance the capability of the sector in Ireland leading to a more efficient industry focused on growth and export markets. (DBEI)

Update: Complete

The National BIM Council, convened by Enterprise Ireland, has developed a roadmap to digital transition for Ireland's construction industry to increase industry adoption of Building Information Modelling (BIM) in Ireland. The formation of the council is also a key measure in fulfilling Enterprise Ireland's obligations under the Construction 2020 strategy. In particular, to work with industry organisations to promote the use of BIM and develop the appropriate technical skills amongst Irish construction firms so that they can successfully compete in markets where BIM is widely adopted or is a requirement.

This roadmap is particularly timely following the recent publication of the EU BIM Task Group Handbook and is designed to complement its key recommendations. It also seeks to align with the GCCC position paper on a public sector BIM adoption strategy.

The Roadmap is currently in final draft pending publication until after the Government Contracts Committee for Construction (GCCC) launches its "A Public Sector BIM Adoption Strategy" paper which is being developed to embed an approach to BIM adoption in Government Departments and Contracting Authorities. Enterprise Ireland understands that publication of this paper is imminent.

Glossary of Terms

APJ	Action Plan for Jobs
BAI	Broadcasting Authority of Ireland
BIM	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
CIF	Construction Industry Federation
COSME	EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs
CRO	Credit Review Office
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
Daa	Dublin Airport Authority
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
DBEI	Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation
DCCAE	Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment
DCHG	Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
DCCoI	Design and Craft Council of Ireland
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
DEASP	Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DHPLG	Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government
DoF	Department of Finance
DJE	Department of Justice and Equality
DoH	Department of Health
DoD	Department of Defence
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

DTTAS	Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
DRCD	Department of Rural and Community Development
EGFSN	Expert Group on Future Skills Needs
EI	Enterprise Ireland
ERC	European Research Council
ETB	Education and Training Board
ETBI	Education and Training Boards Ireland
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FET	Further Education and Training
FP7	Framework Programme 7
GNP	Gross National Product
GRO	General Register Office
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HICP	Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices
HIHI	Health Innovation Hub Ireland
HPRA	Health Products Regulatory Authority
HPSU	High Potential Start-Ups
HRB	Health Research Board
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDA	IDA Ireland
IFB	Irish Film Board
IFS	Irish Financial Services
IFSC	International Financial Services Centre
IP	Intellectual Property
IRC	Irish Research Council
IRDG	Industry Research and Development group

ISIF	Ireland Strategic Investment Fund
ITI	InterTrade Ireland
IUA	Irish Universities Association
KDB	Knowledge Development Box
KTI	Knowledge Transfer Ireland
LAs	Local Authorities
LEADER	Liaisons entre actions de developpement de l'économie rurale
LEO/s	Local Enteprise Office/s
LGMA	Local Government Management Agency
LPC	Low Pay Commission
Mbps	Megabytes per second
NAI	National Archives of Ireland
NAMA	National Asset Management Agency
NCC	National Competitiveness Council
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NCDAF	National Civil Aviation Development Forum
NLI	National Library of Ireland
NPF	National Planning Framework
NSAI	National Standards Autority of Ireland
NSC	National Skills Council
NTMA	National Treasury Management Agency
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OGCIO	Office of the Government Chief Information Officer
OGP	Office of Government Procurement
OPW	Office of Public Works

PAYE	Pay As You Earn
PEIL	Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning
PPP	Public Private Partnership
Q	Quarter
R&D	Research and Development
RDI	Research, development and innovation
RSF	Regional Skills Fora
SBCI	Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland
SBIR	Small Business Innovation Research
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
SFI	Science Foundation Ireland
SFSI	Sustainable Food Systems Ireland
SI	Statutory Instrument
SICAP	Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme
SLMRU	Skills and Labour Market Research Unit
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SOLAS	An tSeribhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics
UN	United Nations
naG	Údaras na Gaeltachta
VAT	Value Added Tax
WEF	World Economic Forum
WRC	Workplace Relations Commission
WTO	World Trade Organisation

APJ Notes