

Ireland's Action Plan to Promote Collective Bargaining 2026 – 2030

Empowering, Promoting and Protecting the
Industrial Relations Framework in Ireland

*Developed by the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment,
following consultation with ICTU and IBEC under Article 4 of the EU
Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages (November 2025)*

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FOREWORD

Taoiseach Minister Burke Minister Dillon.

An Taoiseach Micheál Martin TD

Ireland's industrial relations framework has long been a cornerstone of our social and economic progress. As we launch the Action Plan to Promote Collective Bargaining (2026–2030), we do so with a deep respect for the legacy of Ireland's commitment to employment rights and social partnership.

From the Conditions of Employment Act 1936, which laid the foundation for regulating working hours and conditions, to the Industrial Relations Act 1946, which established the Labour Court and formalised dispute resolution mechanisms, Ireland has consistently upheld the dignity of work and the rights of workers.

These landmark laws reflect our enduring belief that fair treatment in the workplace is essential to a just society. They also provided a framework for stable industrial relations that enabled enterprises to invest and plan with confidence.

This Action Plan builds on that legacy. It is a forward-looking strategy that strengthens our voluntarist tradition, supports constructive dialogue between employers and workers, and enhances the resilience of our economy through a range of actions aimed at encouraging, and promoting collective bargaining.

Collective bargaining is not merely a mechanism for negotiation—it is an important instrument for fostering trust, improving job quality, retaining jobs and ensuring that Ireland remains a leader in social cohesion and economic competitiveness.

The publication of this Action Plan is particularly timely, given the increased focus both domestically and across the European Union on improving our competitiveness and productivity as we confront the changes in the international economic landscape.

When collective bargaining functions well it creates a foundation of respect and stability that helps businesses attract and retain talent; adapt, innovate and respond more effectively to shifting markets, global competition, and the challenges of the new world of work such as new and emerging technologies.

I welcome this agreement between the social partners and Government which demonstrates the continued value of our ongoing engagement under the framework of the Labour Employer Economic Forum.

The Government continues to prioritise such constructive tripartite dialogue as a way of maximising common understanding and engagement between all sectors of society

as we tackle the many economic, social and environmental challenges facing the country.

Together, we reaffirm our commitment to a future where industrial relations continue to be guided by mutual respect, shared prosperity, and the principles of fairness that have shaped our nation for generations.

Mr. Peter Burke TD

Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment

As Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, I am proud to introduce Ireland's Action Plan to Promote Collective Bargaining, an initiative that reflects our Government's commitment to strengthening the industrial relations framework and enhancing the quality of working life across the country.

Ireland's success has long been built on collaboration—between government, employers and workers. Collective bargaining is a cornerstone of that collaboration. It empowers employees, fosters mutual respect and contributes to a fairer, more productive economy. This plan reflects our belief that collective bargaining, when pursued voluntarily and in good faith, is not just a mechanism for resolving disputes—it is a strategic tool for building resilient enterprises and a more equitable society.

The actions outlined in this plan are grounded in evidence, shaped by consultation and designed to be practical and impactful. Key actions include targeted measures to build capacity, raise awareness, modernise our institutions and ensure that our legal and policy frameworks remain fit for purpose. Crucially, the plan recognises the importance of voluntarism and social dialogue, which have long been the hallmarks of Ireland's approach to industrial relations. It also builds on the recommendations of the High-Level Working Group on Collective Bargaining and aligns with our obligations under the EU Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages.

I want to thank ICTU and Ibec for their continued partnership, and I look forward to working together to implement this plan in a way that strengthens our economy and improves working lives across Ireland.

Mr. Alan Dillon TD

Minister of State at the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment with special responsibility for Employment, Small Businesses and Retail and the Department of the Climate, Energy and the Environment with special responsibility for Circular Economy

As Minister of State for Employment, Small Business and Retail, I am proud to introduce this Action Plan to Promote Collective Bargaining. This is a milestone in strengthening Ireland's industrial relations framework and ensuring that our workplaces remain fair, inclusive, and competitive.

Collective bargaining is more than a process, it is a cornerstone of constructive engagement between employers and workers. It builds trust, improves working conditions, and supports resilience, particularly for small businesses. When implemented effectively, collective bargaining enhances job quality, reduces disputes, and fosters innovation across sectors.

This Action Plan reflects will embrace modern approaches to collaboration. Developed in partnership with our social partners, ICTU and Ibec, it sets out practical measures to empower workers, support employers, and strengthen institutions. It recognises the unique challenges and opportunities facing small businesses and the retail sector, ensuring that progress benefits all.

Our goal is clear: to create workplaces where dialogue drives productivity, fairness underpins growth, and collective bargaining delivers tangible benefits for workers, employers, and communities. I look forward to working with all stakeholders to implement this plan and to build a future where Ireland's industrial relations system remains a model of balance, partnership, and progress.

BACKGROUND

Ireland's settled industrial relations environment since the 1980s has been a cornerstone of its economic success, contributing significantly to growth in employment, real wages, and overall economic development¹. This underpinning framework, built on a collaborative relationship between employers and employees, contributed to the navigation of the challenges of the financial crisis and subsequently a global pandemic.

At the heart of this framework lies collective bargaining, which represent a central pillar of Ireland's industrial relations policy². Successive Governments have consistently been supportive of a voluntary system of industrial relations, premised upon freedom of contract and freedom of association. The collective bargaining system is underpinned by a range of statutory provisions designed to facilitate and assist the voluntary bargaining process, including the provision of the independent services of the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) and of the Labour Court. The *Programme for Government 2025- Securing Ireland's Future* lays out a clear commitment to supporting the central role of the Workplace Relations Commission and the Labour Court in industrial relations and employment rights³.

International research has highlighted the complexity and diversity of national bargaining systems across Europe and beyond⁴. Despite many differences, evidence has found that well-functioning collective bargaining systems can promote fair wages and decent working conditions, particularly in low paid sectors. These systems enable employers and employee representatives to find mutually beneficial solutions and establish a level-playing field for all companies and workers.

The Economic Case for Collective Bargaining

There is a compelling economic case for collective bargaining, especially when it is pursued on a voluntary basis. Various studies have established the vital role of voluntary collective bargaining in enhancing economic security, addressing power imbalances between employers and employees, thereby correcting any labour market inefficiencies⁵.

¹ (Preliminary text from upcoming paper by Dermot Coates and Martina Lawless: The role of pro-productivity policies: The Experience of Ireland.

² The 2015 Industrial Relations Act defines collective bargaining as comprising voluntary engagements or negotiations between any employer or employers' organisation on the one hand and a trade union of workers or an excepted body of employees on the other, with the object of reaching agreement regarding working conditions or terms of employment, or non-employment, of workers.

³ [Programme for Government 2025 - Securing Ireland's Future](#), pg 17.

⁴ [Negotiating Our Way Up: Collective Bargaining in a Changing World of Work, OECD, 2019.](#)

⁵ [Economic Security Series: Part 3 Collective Bargaining, Tom McDonnell, Nevin Economic Research Institute, April 2024.](#)

Further evidence-based research from Eurofound highlights the wide-ranging positive impacts of collective bargaining across multiple dimensions of working life in the EU, including in establishing and maintaining a baseline standard for job quality.⁶ It can play a central role in shaping fair wages, regulating working time, and improving employment conditions. Findings from the UCD Working in Ireland Survey, 2021: Job Quality in Ireland also highlight the critical role that a robust framework for promoting collective bargaining can have not only in establishing minimum standards of employment but also in enhancing enterprise competitiveness.⁷ Moreover, the survey underscores that high levels of union coverage, accompanied by flexible models, such as decentralised collective bargaining systems, can positively impact firm productivity⁸. The National Competitiveness and Productivity Council acknowledges that the mobilisation of human capital can become a key driver of productivity and innovation⁹. This involves integrating employee insights, skills, and knowledge into enterprise-level decision-making. Collective bargaining and workers' voice are key tools for enabling this integration¹⁰.

Wider Benefits for Society

Ireland, like many other EU and OECD countries faces a complex mix of challenges and opportunities arising from an increasingly uncertain global landscape and ongoing demographic shifts. Collective bargaining has a strong potential to generate innovative practices and provisions in negotiations between employers and workers' representatives while addressing these rapid societal changes¹¹.

Most importantly, collective bargaining practices also have proven effective in tackling inequalities and improving welfare and well-being outcomes for wage earners¹². Beyond these direct benefits, collective bargaining also fosters stable labour relations and industrial peace¹³.

⁶ [Collective bargaining | Eurofound.](#)

⁷ [Job Quality in Ireland: First Findings from the UCD Working in Ireland Survey, 2021, Geary & Wilson, December 2023.](#)

⁸ [Job Quality in Ireland: First Findings from the UCD Working in Ireland Survey, 2021, Geary & Wilson, December 2023.](#)

⁹ [Ireland's Competitiveness Challenge 2025 - July 2025](#), pg 69.

¹⁰ [Negotiating Our Way Up: Collective Bargaining in a Changing World of Work, OECD, 2019.](#)

¹¹ [Industrial Relations and Social Dialogue, Moving with the times: Emerging Practices and Provisions in Collective Bargaining, Eurofound, 2022](#), pgs 25 – 26.

¹² [Economic Security Series: Part 3 Collective Bargaining, Tom McDonnell, Nevin Economic Research Institute, April 2024](#), pg 2.

¹³ [Negotiating Our Way Up: Collective Bargaining in a Changing World of Work, OECD, 2019](#), pgs 26, 64.

Collective bargaining, when implemented effectively and in good faith, should be seen not as a cost but as a strategic investment with clear, far-reaching benefits for all parties involved.

Rationale for an action plan

The Programme for Government commits to publishing an action plan on the promotion of collective bargaining by the end of 2025, in line with the EU Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages¹⁴. The preparation of the action plan is cognisant of the requirements of the Adequate Minimum Wage Directive (EU 2022/2041) which was published on 19th October 2022 and was transposed in Ireland by 15th November 2024¹⁵. The Directive aims to ensure that workers across the European Union are protected by adequate minimum wages allowing for a decent living wherever they work. The requirements of the Directive are grounded in respect for national competences and traditions, social partners' autonomy and the freedom to engage in collective bargaining¹⁶. It requires Member States, inter alia, with the involvement of the social partners, to promote collective bargaining through a range of actions including the development of this action plan¹⁷ where the collective bargaining coverage rate is less than 80%.

In January 2023, the Danish government issued a claim in the Court of Justice of the European Union against the European Parliament and the Council to annul the Minimum Wage Directive, stating that the Directive infringes on the principle of Article 153(5) Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union¹⁸. The outcome of the case is awaited with much interest across Member States, notably to see if it will be influenced by a legal opinion issued by Advocate General (AG) Emiliou earlier in January¹⁹. The Irish Government has committed to an Action Plan in the Programme for Government 2025, and subsequently reaffirmed its commitment to developing the action plan in close collaboration with the ICTU and Ibec, regardless of the outcome of the CJEU ruling.

The Action Plan on Competitiveness and Productivity, published in September 2025, reinforces the need to invest in the engagement skills of social partners (ICTU,

¹⁴ [Programme For Government-Securing Irelands Future](#), pg 17.

¹⁵ [Directive - 2022/2041 - EN - EUR-Lex](#).

¹⁶ [Directive - 2022/2041 - EN - EUR-Lex](#).

¹⁷ That is where the collective bargaining coverage rate is less than 80% as in Ireland.

¹⁸ Case [C-19/23](#): Action brought on 18 January 2023 — Kingdom of Denmark v European Parliament and Council of the European Union.

¹⁹ [Opinion of advocate general Emiliou delivered on 14 January 2025](#).

representing workers and IBEC representing employers) to drive productivity and transformation, including a series of capacity building actions to support dispute avoidance and resolution²⁰. Crucially, it also underscores the need to develop collective bargaining in a way that will contribute positively to economic performance and social well-being, while supporting competitiveness and driving productivity²¹. Complementing these actions, the *Government Action Plan on Market Diversification* (August 2025) underscores the commitment at cross-governmental level to commit to engage fully on the implementation of the Action Plan on Collective Bargaining, with an objective to enhance domestic readiness for economic engagement and partnership.

This action plan is also informed by the work of the High-Level Group on Collective Bargaining which was formed in consultation with the employer and union participants of the Labour Employer Economic Forum (LEEF)²². The group explored mechanisms that would enhance existing industrial relations frameworks with a view to encourage greater collective bargaining coverage in Ireland. The final High Level Group's Report was published on 5th October 2022 and contained key recommendations for the betterment of several cross-cutting areas across the industrial relations framework in Ireland. The Group emphasised that the report, and the recommendations it contains should not be considered as the end of a process, but as one element of what will be ongoing efforts to improve the system of industrial relations in Ireland²³. The High-Level Group's view was that future efforts, such as in this action plan, should be focused on attempting to resolve any differences through structured engagement between the parties, in line with Ireland's voluntarist tradition, rather than through recourse to the adversarial common law system²⁴.

In summary, the action points outlined in this document have been shaped by the views of various policy documents including the *Programme for Government* and the Final Report of the LEEF *High-Level Working Group* and also provides consideration to the *Action Plan on Competitiveness and Productivity* and *Action Plan on Market Diversification*. It also draws from the valuable feedback received through the Department's public consultation, which ran from April to May 2025²⁵. There has also been a process of engagement with ICTU and IBEC to develop this Government plan. While it has not been possible to meet all of the aspirations of those engaged in the process, the Action Plan which has been prepared represents a solid commitment

²⁰ [Action Plan on Competitiveness and Productivity, September 2025](#), pg 10.

²¹ [Action Plan on Competitiveness and Productivity, September 2025](#), pg 18.

²² [final-report-of-the-leef-high-level-working-group-on-collective-bargaining.pdf](#)

²³ [final-report-of-the-leef-high-level-working-group-on-collective-bargaining.pdf](#)

²⁴ [final-report-of-the-leef-high-level-working-group-on-collective-bargaining.pdf](#)

²⁵ [Consultation on Ireland's action plan on the promotion of collective bargaining.](#)

to working together on a series of actions over the next few years to further support collective bargaining.

The action points contained in this document address four core themes:

- *Empowering and encouraging*
- *Promoting*
- *Protecting*
- *Supporting the Industrial Relations Institutions.*

This Action Plan is grounded in the current economic and social landscape and aims to identify measures that will enhance collective bargaining in ways that contribute positively to business and society, while supporting competitiveness and driving productivity.

Structure of document

This Action Plan begins by examining the economic rationale for collective bargaining, highlighting how a stable industrial relations landscape delivers tangible benefits for workers through enhanced terms and conditions, and for employers (regardless of size), for example by increases in productivity. It also underscores the broader societal gain, such as reduced workplace disputes and tackling inequality across the board.

Section 1 focuses on deepening our current understanding of the impact of collective bargaining by undertaking targeted research and through systematically addressing existing data gaps.

Section 2 addresses the ongoing decline in trade union membership, including targeted actions to reverse this trend through robust capacity-building initiatives. This section also explores innovative methods to recognise and encourage best practices in collective bargaining, such as awards to incentivise positive engagement.

Section 3 broadens the focus to encompass policy measures that advance collective bargaining without resorting to immediate legislative change. This includes a strong emphasis on public awareness campaigns, the strategic use of policy levers such as tax incentives, and a review of the work carried out by the Joint Labour Committees (JLCs) in fostering constructive dialogue and sectoral agreements.

Section 4 contains actions that will safeguard the collective bargaining framework. Measures range from reinforcing mediation processes during workplace disputes to

a review of existing legislation and exploring increased rights for employee representatives.

Section 5 contains targeted actions to advance the capacities of the WRC and Labour Court, including the adoption of digital innovations, enhanced resourcing (such as the appointment of technical assessors) and a thorough review of the ERO/SEO mechanisms to ensure these systems remain fit for purpose.

The final section establishes the implementation framework, underscoring the centrality of social dialogue as well as the collaborative approach adopted by the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment to date in developing this Action Plan. It also emphasises the necessity of a mid-term review in 2028 to ensure the actions contained in this document remain effective and responsive to the evolving needs of our stakeholders.

1. Understanding Collective Bargaining and its impacts

Context

While some research has been undertaken, a comprehensive understanding of collective bargaining dynamics in the EU would be supported by additional evidence gathering at sectoral and national levels. The data gap presents a challenge for policymakers, researchers, and social partners seeking to analyse developments, innovations, and the evolving nature of collective agreements across Member States²⁶.

In Ireland, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) offers some insights into trade union membership levels disaggregated by gender, age and broad economic sector through its quarterly Labour Force Survey²⁷. At an international level, ILOSTAT, the statistical database of the International Labour Organization (ILO) provides comprehensive and comparable labour statistics from over 230 countries and territories. While both the CSO and ILOSTAT provide indicators on trade union density and industrial action, the utility of such data sources is constrained. CSO data on trade union density lacks sufficient sectoral representation. There is also a lack of data on sectoral agreements in Ireland, as employers are not obliged to register collective agreements. In practice, information on such agreements in Ireland can only be determined by examining Registered Employment Agreements (REAs), although only a small proportion of agreements are registered in this manner with the Labour Court²⁸.

ILOSTAT's data on collective bargaining coverage provides some information on collective bargaining coverage rates but requires updating. Challenges include inconsistencies in national reporting methods, limited sectoral breakdowns, and risks of double counting, particularly where agreements are extended administratively or overlap across sectors²⁹.

²⁶ [Industrial Relations and Social Dialogue. Moving with the times: Emerging Practices and Provisions in Collective Bargaining, Eurofound, 2022.](#)

²⁷ [Labour Force Survey \(LFS\) Time Series - CSO - Central Statistics Office.](#)

²⁸ Section 7 (1) of the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2015 states the Court shall establish and maintain a register of employment agreements, which is available [here](#).

²⁹ [Industrial Relations Data \(IRdata\) - ILOSTAT.](#)

Finally, the OECD/AIAS ICTWSS Database is a comprehensive dataset that tracks the structure and evolution of collective labour relations across OECD and EU countries. However, it is also subject to limitations. For instance, the most recent collective bargaining data for Ireland in the ICTWSS database dates back to 2017, hindering real-time analysis of recent developments³⁰.

These limitations underscore the need for more timely, granular, and nationally validated data sources to support evidence-based policymaking in industrial relations. The below actions will deepen the understanding and demonstrate the broader positive impact of collective bargaining in an Irish context. The evidence-based insights will inform policy and highlight the role of industrial relations in economic resilience and social cohesion.

Actions

Action Item	Lead	Key Stakeholders	Time line	Resources Required	Success Indicators
1. Conduct comprehensive research on the coverage and impacts of collective bargaining in an Irish context, including case studies and an assessment of the direct and indirect costs and opportunities associated with limiting industrial disputes, particularly through collective bargaining.	DETE, ICTU and Ibec	WRC, Labour Court, Academic/ research institutions	Q4 2025 – Q2 2026	€45,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed, reliable and up to date report providing evidence-based insights into collective bargaining trends and insights into the direct and indirect costs and benefits associated with collective bargaining.

³⁰ [OECD/AIAS ICTWSS database | OECD](#).

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established database on workplace disputes and its cost impacts.
<p>2.Collaborate with the WRC, Labour Court, and ICTU and Ibec to quantify and communicate the economic and societal value of collective bargaining.</p>	DETE, ICTU and Ibec	WRC, Labour Court	Q1 – Q3 2026	Policy and operational staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well understood metrics which measure the impacts of collective bargaining
<p>3. Collaborate with academic and policy researchers to ensure a consistent and robust flow of evidence-based research and data to inform policy decisions across the broader industrial relations landscape.</p>	DETE, ICTU and Ibec, WRC	CSO, Academic and other research institutions	Ongoing	<p>Policy and operational staff</p> <p>Financial resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing engagement on policy relevant research

2. Empowering and Encouraging

Context

At national level, work is underway to capture appropriately trends in the collective bargaining space. For example, it has been observed that trade union membership in Ireland, and across Europe, has seen a decline over the years. According to the CSO Labour Force Survey, the proportion of the national workforce in unions or trade union density stood at approximately 22% in Ireland in Q2 2024³¹. This is a significant drop from the 1980s when around 60% of the workforce were union members. Estimates put declining collective bargaining coverage at 43% in 2021³².

The reasons for the decline in membership may be explained in terms of structural shifts in employment from traditionally unionised sectors, the growth in atypical and precarious forms of employment, employer preferences not to recognise unions for the purpose of negotiating employees' terms and conditions of employment and insufficient resources in organising and mobilising workers to join trade unions.³³

The European Commission, in collaboration with the Social Partners, is developing a Quality Jobs Roadmap, a strategic initiative expected to be published by end of 2025 aimed at promoting decent work, fair transitions, and stronger social dialogue across the EU. The Roadmap will consist of measures to support collective bargaining and forms part of a broader commitment under the Pact for European Social Dialogue, signed in March 2025, and includes the Quality Jobs Act which was announced in September 2025. The Pact commits to revitalising social dialogue through actions like appointing a Social Dialogue Envoy and supporting labour market restructuring. These efforts reflect a renewed EU push to strengthen collective bargaining and improve job quality across Member States. As these initiatives are progressed, employees and their representatives have been named as key stakeholders in several of its major legislative initiatives, outlined in the table below:

³¹ [Labour Force Survey \(LFS\) Time Series.](#)

³² [Union Voice in Ireland: First Findings from the UCD Working in Ireland Survey, Geary & Belizon, 2022](#) pp.13.

³³ [Union Voice in Ireland: First Findings from the UCD Working in Ireland Survey, Geary & Belizon, 2022](#) pp.5.

The Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive,
The Corporate Due Diligence Directive
The Just Transition Fund.
Directive 2002/14/EC on a general framework for informing and consulting employees in the European Community.
Directive 2009/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 May 2009 on the establishment of a European Works Council or a procedure in Community-scale undertakings and Community-scale groups of undertakings for the purposes of informing and consulting employees.
Council Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work.
Directive 96/71/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 1996 concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services.

The data available lacks the granularity required to form a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of the collective bargaining backdrop or to pinpoint the exact areas where declines in union membership are particularly pronounced. Critical dimensions such as sectoral, occupational, or regional variations are not captured in existing datasets. Without more granular data, efforts to address challenges or seize opportunities within the collective bargaining landscape are inherently constrained for policymakers and for social partners.

Despite these data limitations, some indication has also been provided of a latent demand for union representation. Research indicates that four in ten non-union workers would be willing to vote in favour of establishing a union in their

workplace³⁴. Interestingly, young workers were found to be open to seeking union representation, suggesting a generational shift towards greater representation³⁵.

Capacity building will also be a strategic enabler for encouraging collective bargaining practices and equipping social partners to engage effectively in new and evolving areas of dialogue, such as sustainability, responsible business conduct, and due diligence. It will also ensure that there are strong skills available to all parties to support industrial dispute resolution. The challenges of the new world of work, including the challenges of new technology, new ways of working, and sustainable practices provide the context for the emerging skill needs.

Targeted capacity building initiatives can have wider benefits such as improving membership bases of social partner organisations, enhancing human and administrative capabilities, promoting process-oriented competencies e.g negotiation and dispute resolution and empower organisations to develop and adapt in face of emerging challenges. The initiatives outlined below include a strategic combination of financial incentives, knowledge-building exercises, timely identification and recognition of good practices and the delivery of tailored, high-quality training programmes that will respond to the evolving needs of social partners.

Capacity building must be demand-driven. Social partners are uniquely positioned to assess and articulate their own developmental needs and priorities, an approach that fosters ownership, and ensures that empowerment efforts are aligned with the practical realities of those directly involved in collective bargaining processes. The value of shared skills development is also recognized and will be supported in the Plan.

³⁴ [Union Voice in Ireland: First Findings from the UCD Working in Ireland Survey, Geary & Belizon, 2022.](#)

³⁵ [Union Voice in Ireland: First Findings from the UCD Working in Ireland Survey, Geary & Belizon, 2022.](#)

Actions

Action Item	Lead	Key Stakeholders	Timeline	Resources Required	Success Indicators
4. Develop capacity-building programmes .	DETE	ICTU and Ibec	Programme to be developed in 2026 and rolled out to 2029.	Competitiveness Fund [other potential resources – NTF and Skillnet]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of joint training programmes delivered % of staff in main trade union bodies and HR professionals holding a relevant qualification/ accreditation in a newly established national programme.
5. Develop a competitive call for funding productivity agreements' outcomes.	DETE	ICTU and Ibec	Q3 2026 – Q3 2029	Policy and operational staff (legal and technical experts) Competitiveness funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Call Developed No of applications received and processed No of projects funded
6. Conduct exploratory research, including a Regulatory Impact Assessment and SME test, regarding the potential of the introduction of a pilot to	DETE/OG P/DPER		Q3 2026- Q3 2029		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot concluded Learnings identified

include collectively bargained agreements as a weighting in a public procurement project.					
7.Sponsor a Best Practice Award to recognise excellent practices in collective bargaining.	DETE and other industry bodies (contingent on interest received)	ICTU and Ibec, CIPD	Q1 2026 – Q1 2028	Administrative staff Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of nominations received across sectors • No of expressions of interests received/participating organisations

3. Promoting Context

The continued success of Ireland’s industrial relations system in serving the public good is rooted in the cooperative engagement of the social partners and the strength of the voluntarist framework³⁶. However, the substantial increase in the body of employment legislation focused on individual employment rights is perceived to have given rise to a form of ‘regulated voluntarism’³⁷. The LEEF High Level Working Group in its final report reaffirmed that any efforts to resolve differences between employers and worker representatives must remain fully aligned with Ireland’s long-standing voluntarist tradition³⁸.

The actions in this chapter focus on promoting collective bargaining practices across all sectors and demographics, without resorting to extensive legislative intervention. The section also places particular emphasis on workers in precarious forms of employment, who often engage in non-standard forms of employment and are less likely to have access to collective bargaining³⁹.

Ireland’s current competitiveness model is not predicated on low pay but rather on high skills and high-quality jobs. Collective action by government, employers and unions continues to be relevant in strengthening the quality of jobs in Ireland, especially for workers in precarious, low-paid employment. A significant number of workers now occupy a “grey zone” between the legal definitions of employee and self-employed, where genuine ambiguity surrounds their employment status⁴⁰. To address this, Ireland has commenced work to transpose the EU Directive on

³⁶ Minister Leo Varadkar, T.D., 30/03/2021, [High Level Working Group convened to review collective bargaining and the industrial relations landscape in Ireland - DETE](#).

³⁷ [An Opportunity to Review and Reframe Collective Bargaining and The Industrial Relations Regime, Dr Damien Thomas, National Economic and Social Council, October 2022](#), Section 10.

³⁸ [final-report-of-the-leef-high-level-working-group-on-collective-bargaining.pdf](#), pg 8.

³⁹ [Negotiating Our Way Up: Collective Bargaining in a changing world of work, OECD \(2019\)](#), pg 13.

⁴⁰ [Negotiating Our Way Up: Collective Bargaining in a changing world of work, OECD \(2019\)](#), pg 13.

Improving Working Conditions in Platform Work⁴¹. The Directive represents a major step forward in tackling informal work in the Platform economy and aims to ensure that the employment status of individuals working through digital labour platforms is correctly classified and they enjoy appropriate rights and protections.

Actions

Action Item	Lead	Key Stakeholders	Timeline	Resources Required	Success Indicators
8. Launch targeted awareness campaigns on collective bargaining.	WRC, DE TE, ICTU and Ibec	Workers and Employers and ICTU and Ibec	Q1 2026 – Q4 2028	Operational Staff IT Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of campaigns held (online vs in person events) Regional/sectoral spread of campaigns held
9. Develop, publish and disseminate a Code of Practice on Collective Bargaining	ICTU and Ibec with WRC	ICTU and Ibec	Ongoing	Policy and Operational Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of code in partnership with ICTU and Ibec
10. Commit to engaging with ICTU and Ibec on digital and physical access subject to agreed criteria	DE TE	Workers and Employers and ICTU and Ibec	Q1 2026 – Q1 2028	Policy and legislative resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement on digital and physical access reached subject to agreed criteria.
11. Examine the role of Joint Labour	DE TE and other	Labour Court	Ongoing	Administrative staff and legal experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of active JLCs and

⁴¹ [Directive \(EU\) 2024/2831 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2024 on improving working conditions in platform work \(Text with EEA relevance\).](#)

Committees (JLCs) in government-funded sectors	Government Departments				frequency of negotiation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of EROs • Positive Labour Court Reviews
12. Liaise with the Department of Finance on a proposal to re-introduce tax relief for trade union subscriptions	DETE, D/Finance	ICTU and Ibec	Q3 2025 – Q3 2028	Policy and legislative resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impactful mechanism developed
13. Explore the use of alternative tax options to promote collective bargaining	DETE, D/Finance	Revenue	Q3 2026-Q3 2029	Policy and legislative resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impactful options developed

4. Protecting Context

The industrial relations framework in Ireland is underpinned by Article 40 of the Irish Constitution that guarantees the right of citizens to form associations and unions. Employees have the right under the Constitution to join, or not join, a trade union of their choice. Freedom of association and the right to organise and bargain collectively are also guaranteed in a number of international instruments which the State has ratified and which it is, therefore, bound to uphold under international law. Finally, there is no requirement on employers to recognise trade unions for the purpose of collective bargaining.

The Final report of the LEEF⁴² High Level Working Group on Collective Bargaining emphasised the importance of respecting the autonomy of the social partners and continuing to build relationships of trust, confidence, and mutual respect between employers and workers and their representatives at national, sectoral, and local level⁴³.

No lacuna in law was identified in the work of the group in respect of protections for employees or employers. Section 8(2) of the Industrial Relations (Miscellaneous) Provisions Act 2004 states that an employee will not be victimised on account of being or not a member of a trade union or engaging in any activities on behalf of a trade union⁴⁴. 'Victimise' is any act which adversely affects the interests of the employee (not including dismissal). Additionally, Section 6(2) of the Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977 explicitly provides it is automatically unfair to dismiss an employee for being a member of a trade union or engaging in union-related activities, regardless of the employee's length of service.

⁴² Labour Employer Economic Forum (LEEF) is made up of representatives from the government, employers and trade unions and is the structure for tripartite dialogue on economic and employment issues as they affect the labour market.

⁴³ [final-report-of-the-leef-high-level-working-group-on-collective-bargaining.pdf](#), pg 8.

⁴⁴ [Industrial Relations \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 2004, Section 8.](#)

However, further action is warranted to strengthen the framework in line with Article 4 of the Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages. Following public consultation on the Action Plan, a series of targeted actions are proposed to review, provide clarity and where necessary, amend existing legislative protections which support workers' rights to organise and bargain collectively.

While these actions may be some of the most demanding in terms of resource requirements and time commitment, they are pivotal in safeguarding employers and trade unions from any form of interference that could undermine their establishment, functioning or administration ⁴⁵. By committing to these measures, stakeholders reinforce the integrity of the industrial relations framework and lay the groundwork for a more resilient, fair, and collaborative workplace environment.

Actions

Action Item	Lead	Key Stakeholders	Timeli ne	Resources Required	Success Indicators
14. Assess the feasibility and impact of introducing mandatory mediation process between notification and industrial action.	DETE, WRC	This may need to be considered in consultation with WRC and ICTU and Ibec in terms of practicality	Q2 2026 - Q4 2028	Policy and legislative resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of mediation services by WRC No of days saved from industrial action as a result of WRC/LC intervention
15. Review the Unfair Dismissals Acts (UDA) through the Employment Law Review	DETE	Workers and ICTU and Ibec	Q2 2026 - Q4 2028		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timely completion of review by subgroup UDA review and any actions taken forward

⁴⁵ Art.4(c) and (d)Directive 2022/2041.

Group ⁴⁶ subgroup					
16. Commit to examining legal protections or scope of legal protections for trade union representatives.	DETE, WRC ICTU and Ibec	Workers and Employers	Q2 2026 – Q1 2028		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protections identified and progressed.

⁴⁶ [Employment Law Review Group Work Programme 2025-2026 - DETE](#) – the purpose of the group is to monitor, review, and advise on all aspects of employment and redundancy law, with a specific focus on promoting good workplace relations in the State, simplifying the operation of employment and redundancy law in the State, and ensuring that the State’s suite of employment rights and redundancy legislation remains relevant and fit for purpose and is updated to reflect international developments

5. Supporting the Industrial Relations Institutions

The last ten years in particular have seen an ongoing commitment to the support for employment protections. Initiatives in recent years have been used as models for other countries in dealing with evolving world of work. And further developments are planned for the years ahead to ensure that the laws are streamlined and fit for purpose.

The last ten years have also seen the development of new institutional structures to support employment rights and industrial relations.

The Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) and the Labour Court both play a central role in maintaining and promoting good industrial relations in Ireland. A pivotal aspect of the two institutions are their collective dispute mechanisms. The WRC offers conciliation services which are free, impartial and voluntary and if this does not resolve the matter in question, the Labour Court continues to be successful in assisting parties to resolve disputes, where they have done their level best to reach a settlement before coming to the Court and have volunteered to jointly seek the Court's opinion for the genuine purpose of achieving a resolution. In particular, section 14 of the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2015, which came into effect in August 2015, provides an improved framework for employees' right to engage in collective bargaining, providing a clear and balanced mechanism by which the fairness of the employment conditions of workers in their totality can be assessed where collective bargaining does not take place, by way of a request through the Labour Court.

The WRC exercises a number of supplementary, yet essential functions including encouraging compliance with relevant provisions of employment law, providing assistance in the drafting and publishing of Codes of Practice along with the social partners (thereby seeking to promote consistent practices across workplaces) as well as undertaking research and monitoring in the overall space of industrial relations.

As outlined previously, the Programme for Government contains a clear commitment to support the central role of the Workplace Relations Commission and the Labour Court in industrial relations and employment rights.

Examples of legislative mechanisms for supporting sectoral collective bargaining already exist, i.e. in the form of the legislation establishing Joint Labour Committees (JLCs)⁴⁷. The 2012 Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act⁴⁸ provide for the establishment of JLCs which are independent bodies made up of equal numbers of employer and worker representatives in a particular sector who come together voluntarily to negotiate collective agreements. JLCs can draft an Employment Regulation Order (ERO), setting out the employment conditions and minimum rates of pay for the sector they represent.

The main concerns raised by the High-Level Working Group⁴⁹ on JLCs was in relation to their robustness and effectiveness, both being heavily impacted by employer disengagement with the statutory mechanism, rendering an established JLC inoperable⁵⁰. Analysing the medium to long-term effects of JLCs, this is likely to be similar to that of the Minimum Wage since EROs amount to setting a binding pay-floor⁵¹. As a result, EROs play an important role in reducing inequalities as workers typically covered by EROs tend to be from disadvantaged groups e.g. migrant, young, women⁵². Additionally, wage or pay floors also have been found to reduce the imbalance in employment relations between firms and vulnerable groups in the workforce⁵³.

⁴⁷ [final-report-of-the-leef-high-level-working-group-on-collective-bargaining.pdf](#), pg 6.

⁴⁸ Amending the Industrial Relations Act 1946 – 2004.

⁴⁹ The High-Level Working Group was formed in March 2021 to review the collective bargaining landscape in Ireland and to make recommendations for improvement.

⁵⁰ [final-report-of-the-leef-high-level-working-group-on-collective-bargaining.pdf](#), pg 6.

⁵¹ [National Report: Collective bargaining and inequality in Ireland, Alexandre Ounnas, Decembr 2023](#), pg 42.

⁵² [National Report: Collective bargaining and inequality in Ireland, Alexandre Ounnas, Decembr 2023](#), pg 46.

⁵³ The Use of Wage Floors as Policy Tools, Paul Gregg, OECD Economic Studies, 2000, pg 136.

‘Sectoral Employment Order’ (SEOs) are another form of statutory wage setting mechanism established by the 2015 Industrial Relations Act which in addition to minimum pay rates may set out pension and sick pay schemes for a given economic sector, as well as a dispute resolution procedure. They provide for an independent assessment of pay rates in a proposed sector by the Labour Court, which considers the views of all interested parties with a view of ensuring industrial harmony and competitiveness.

The actions set out below aim to supplement existing protections and provide further supports to maximise employer participation in wage negotiations while respecting the voluntarist system that continues to date.

Actions

Action Item	Lead	Key Stakeholders	Timeline	Resources Required	Success Indicators
17. Invest in digitalisation and modernisation of IR institutions	WRC DETE	All workers and employers	Ongoing	DPER funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New or improved digital platforms or systems used by WRC/LC Reduction in processing time for WRC cases
18. Review and strengthen ERO ⁵⁴ /SEO ⁵⁵ mechanisms and enforcement	DETE		Ongoing	Policy and Operational Staff (including legal experts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in number of sectors covered by EROs/SEOs
19. Review the Code of Practice on the Duties and Responsibilities	WRC and ICTU and Ibec		Ongoing	Policy and Operational Staff (including Legal advisors, IR experts, HR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-quality guidance demonstrative of

⁵⁴ Employment Regulation Order

⁵⁵ Sectoral Employment Order

s of Employee Representative s				professionals, policy analysts) Facilitation resources for workshops	supporting skills development
20. Support the use of technical assessors in dispute resolution	DETE Labour Court WRC.	ICTU and Ibec	Q4 2026	Policy and Operational Staff (Legal advisors, IR experts) DPER Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour Court rules established for the use of technical assessors.
21. Encourage increased uptake of IR certification/ accreditation	DETE WRC ICTU and Ibec	ICTU and Ibec	Q3 2026 – Q1 2029	HR and IR professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uptake of any IR certification No of staff with IR qualification/ accreditation in employer organisations and representative bodies
22. Review the 1990 Code of Practice on Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures	WRC and ICTU and Ibec	All workers and employers	Q2 2026 – Q1 2028	Policy and Operational Staff (including Legal advisors, IR experts, HR professionals, policy analysts) Facilitation resources for workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful revision of code in collaboration with WRC and ICTU and Ibec

6. Implementation and Monitoring

To ensure the effective rollout of the above action points on collective bargaining measures, a structured implementation framework has been set out. Progressing these actions within the agreed timelines will require stakeholder engagement and the availability of resources, through the regular Estimates process. The implementation of this action plan will be overseen under the guidance of the Technical Subgroup of the LEEF Enterprise and Employment.

Regular monitoring will be conducted through dialogue with trade unions, employers, and relevant government bodies including the WRC to assess progress, identify challenges, and ensure compliance with legal and policy commitments. Key performance indicators will be developed to track outcomes, and periodic reviews will inform adjustments to strengthen the process and uphold transparency and accountability.

Monitoring framework and indicators

Target	Metric	Baseline	Source
Improve Collective Bargaining Coverage	National Collective Bargaining Coverage (estimates)	To be established by research conducted under part 1 of this plan	CSO DETE (through study)
Boost overall economic and societal value of collective bargaining to economy	No. of conciliation and mediation services undertaken by WRC		WRC
	Qualitative data on collective bargaining impacts at sectoral and enterprise levels (No. of collective agreements agreed at these levels).		DETE

	No. of JLCs		Labour Court
	No. of EROs		IR Unit
	No of SEOs		IR unit
	No of REAs		Labour Court
Reduction in Industrial Disputes	Total Days saved due to reduction in industrial disputes		CSO

7. Implementation Roadmap and the Role of Social Partners

The government is aware of the growing cost pressures that businesses contend with on a daily basis, particularly those driven by the rapid escalation in labour costs, wage growth and public policy measures designed to enhance the quality of employment in Ireland⁵⁶. While these developments reflect important social and economic objectives such as the promotion of decent work opportunities and quality employment standards, they also present real challenges for employers, notably in terms of cost management and administrative complexity.

In recognition of these challenges, the government remains committed to introducing the proposed measures on a phased basis to ensure that efforts to promote collective bargaining are carefully sequenced but also takes into account the timing and cumulative impact of other upcoming significant policy initiatives.

ICTU and IBEC, representing employers and workers, play a key role in the tripartite governance arrangements in place in Ireland, and in the governance of the employment relationship, as well as being key actors in industrial relation systems⁵⁷. This means they are best positioned to identify practical, balanced solutions that reflect the realities of workplaces and sector-specific challenges. Ireland's long-standing voluntarist approach to collective bargaining recognises that social dialogue thrives when built on mutual respect and as far as possible, non-legislative cooperation. Continuous engagement and collaboration with the social partners will be central to the development and delivery of this roadmap. Their deep expertise and lived experience have shaped this plan and will bring valuable insight to this action plan, ensuring that proposed measures are both grounded and achievable.

The Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment is firmly committed to a collaborative approach as a pathway to strengthen the legitimacy, effectiveness, and sustainability of the targets of this action plan, to deliver on the Government's

⁵⁶ [Ireland's Competitiveness Challenge 2025 - July 2025](#), pg 37.

⁵⁷ [Social partners | Eurofound](#).

Programme for Government objectives. We are also committed to applying the SME Test, where appropriate, in implementing these actions.

A formal review of the Action Plan will be conducted in **mid-2028** to track progress, to ensure continued relevance of each action, and to make any necessary adjustments in response to evolving labour market conditions and evolving collective bargaining landscape in Ireland.

LIST OF ACTION POINTS

1) Understanding Collective Bargaining and its impacts

Actions

Action Item	Lead	Stakeholders	Timeline	Resources Required	Success Indicators
Action Item	Lead	Key Stakeholders	Timeline	Resources Required	• Success Indicators
1. Conduct comprehensive research on the coverage and impacts of collective bargaining in an Irish context, including case studies and an assessment of the direct and indirect costs and opportunities	DETE, ICTU and Ibec	WRC, Labour Court, Academic/research institutions	Q4 2025 – Q2 2026	€45,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed, reliable and up to date report providing evidence-based insights into collective bargaining trends and insights into the direct and indirect costs and benefits associated with collective bargaining. • Established database on workplace disputes and its cost impacts.

associated with limiting industrial disputes, particularly through collective bargaining.					
2. Collaborate with the WRC, Labour Court, and ICTU and Ibec to quantify and communicate the economic and societal value of collective bargaining.	DETE, ICTU and Ibec	WRC, Labour Court	Q1 – Q3 2026	Policy and operational staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well understood metrics which measure the impacts of collective bargaining
3. Collaborate with academic and policy researchers to ensure a consistent and robust flow of evidence-based research and data to inform	DETE, ICTU and Ibec, WRC	CSO, Academic and other research institutions	Ongoing	Policy and operational staff Financial resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing engagement on policy relevant research

**policy decisions
across the
broader
industrial
relations
landscape.**

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2) Empowering and Encouraging Actions

Action Item	Lead	Stakeholders	Timeline	Resources Required	Success Indicators
4. Develop capacity-building programmes.	DETE	ICTU and Ibec	Programme to be developed in 2026 and rolled out to 2030.	Competitiveness Fund [other potential resources – NTF and Skillnet]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of joint training programmes delivered % of staff in main trade union bodies and HR professionals holding a relevant qualification/accreditation in a newly established national programme.
5. Develop a competitive call for funding productivity agreements' outcomes.	DETE	ICTU and Ibec	Q3 2026 – Q3 2029	Policy and operational staff (legal and technical experts) Competitiveness funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive Call Developed No of applications received and processed No of projects funded
6. Conduct exploratory research,	DETE/OGP /DPER		Q3 2026- Q3 2029		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot concluded Learnings identified

<p>including a Regulatory Impact Assessment and SME test, regarding the potential of the introduction of a pilot to include collectively bargained agreements as a weighting in a public procurement project.</p>					
<p>7.Sponsor a Best Practice Award to recognise excellent practices in collective bargaining.</p>	<p>DETE and other industry bodies (contingent on interest received)</p>	<p>ICTU and Ibec, CIPD</p>	<p>Q1 2026 – Q1 2028</p>	<p>Administrative staff Public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of nominations received across sectors • No of expressions of interests received/participating organisations

3) Promoting Actions

Action Item	Lead	Stakeholders	Timeline	Resources Required	Success Indicators
8. Launch targeted awareness campaigns on collective bargaining.	WRC, DE TE, ICTU and Ibec	Workers and Employers and ICTU and Ibec	Q1 2026 – Q4 2028	Operational Staff IT Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of campaigns held (online vs in person events) Regional/sectoral spread of campaigns held
9. Develop, publish and disseminate a Code of Practice on Collective Bargaining	ICTU and Ibec with WRC	ICTU and Ibec	Ongoing	Policy and Operational Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of code in partnership with ICTU and Ibec
10. Commit to engaging with ICTU and Ibec on digital and physical access subject to agreed criteria	DE TE	Workers and Employers and ICTU and Ibec	Q1 2026 – Q1 2028	Policy and legislative resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement on digital and physical access reached subject to agreed criteria.
11. Examine the role of Joint Labour Committees (JLCs) in	DE TE and other Govern ment	Labour Court	Ongoing	Administrati ve staff and legal experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of active JLCs and frequency of negotiation No of EROs Positive Labour Court Reviews

government-funded sectors	Departments				
12. Liaise with the Department of Finance on a proposal to re-introduce tax relief for trade union subscriptions	DETE, D/Finance	ICTU and Ibec	Q3 2025 – Q3 2028	Policy and legislative resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impactful mechanism developed
13. Explore the use of alternative tax options to promote collective bargaining	DETE, D/Finance	Revenue	Q3 2026 – Q3 2029	Policy and legislative resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impactful options developed

4) Protecting Actions

Action Item	Lead	Stakeholders	Timeline	Resources Required	Success Indicators
14. Assess the feasibility of introducing mandatory mediation process between notification and industrial action.	DETE, WRC	This may need to be considered in consultation with WRC and ICTU and Ibec in terms of practicality	Q2 2026 - Q4 2028	Policy and legislative resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of mediation services by WRC No of days saved from industrial action as a result of WRC/LC intervention
15. Review the Unfair Dismissals Acts (UDA) through the Employment Law Review Group ⁵⁸subgroup	DETE	Workers and ICTU and Ibec	Q2 2026 - Q4 2028		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timely completion of review by subgroup UDA review and any actions taken forward
16. Commit to examining legal protections or scope of legal protections for	DETE, WRC ICTU and Ibec	Workers and Employers	Q2 2026 – Q1 2028		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protections identified and progressed

⁵⁸ [Employment Law Review Group Work Programme 2025-2026 - DETE](#)

**trade union
representatives.**

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5) Supporting the Industrial Relations Institutions

Actions

Action Item	Lead	Stakeholders	Timeline	Resources Required	Success Indicators
17. Invest in digitalisation and modernisation of IR institutions	WRC DETE	All workers and employers	Ongoing	DPER funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or improved digital platforms or systems used by WRC/LC • Reduction in processing time for WRC cases
18. Review and strengthen ERO⁵⁹/SEO⁶⁰ mechanisms and enforcement	DETE		Ongoing	Policy and Operational Staff (including legal experts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in number of sectors covered by EROs/SEOs
19. Review the Code of Practice on the Duties and Responsibilities of Employee	WRC and ICTU and Ibec		Ongoing	Policy and Operational Staff (including Legal advisors, IR experts, HR professionals,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-quality guidance demonstrative of supporting skills development

⁵⁹ Employment Regulation Order

⁶⁰ Sectoral Employment Order

Representatives				policy analysts) Facilitation resources for workshops	
20.Support the use of technical assessors in dispute resolution	DETE Labour Court WRC.	ICTU and Ibec	Q4 2026	Policy and Operational Staff (Legal advisors, IR experts) DPER Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour Court rules established for the use of technical assessors.
21. Encourage increased uptake of IR certification/ accreditation	DETE WRC ICTU and Ibec	ICTU and Ibec	Q3 2026 – Q1 2029	HR and IR professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uptake of any IR certification • No of staff with IR qualification/accreditation in employer organisations and representative bodies
22.Review the 1990 Code of Practice on Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures	WRC and ICTU and Ibec	All workers and employers	Q2 2026 – Q1 2028	Policy and Operational Staff (including Legal advisors, IR experts, HR professionals,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful revision of code in collaboration with WRC and ICTU and Ibec

				policy analysts)	
				Facilitation resources for workshops	

