



An initiative of the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment

7th Meeting DETE Responsible Business Forum

Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, 23 Kildare Street, Room 110

29 October 2025 @12.30pm

Attendees:

Chair: Ronnie Downes, Assistant Secretary, EU & Trade Regulation Division

Forum Members:

American Chamber of Commerce	Jacob Whelan
Business in the Community Ireland	Marian Curry
Business in the Community Ireland	Laura Morrison
British Irish Chamber of Commerce	Aidan Finnegan
Chambers Ireland	James Kiernan
Construction Industry Federation	PJ Ryan
Enterprise Ireland	Jennifer McCormack
Enterprise Ireland	Alison Nolan
Gas Networks Ireland	Avian Egan
Irish Exporters Association	Simon McKeever
RGDATA	Tara Buckley

Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment:

Eoghan Richardson (Trade Compliance and Responsible Business Unit), Orla O'Brien (Data and Evaluation Unit), Osama Noujoum (Data and Evaluation Unit), Kyle Buttimer, Shane Lyons (Data and Evaluation Unit), Eve O'Riordan (Inward Investment Unit), Helen Pyke (Trade Compliance and Responsible Business Unit), Kate Burke (Trade Compliance and Responsible Business Unit) Jessica Flynn (Trade Compliance and Responsible Business Unit).

1. The Chair welcomed members to the seventh meeting of the Forum which focussed on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and provided an opportunity to identify barriers and enablers to integration of the SDGs in business, share best practice and insights, and explore opportunities for collaboration and innovation.
2. The agenda and previous minutes were agreed.
3. **SDG Overview:** A video presentation prepared by Fiona McManus (DCEE) outlined Ireland's role in shaping the 2030 SDGs and highlighted the importance of business alignment and public participation.

4. **DETE Contribution to SDGs:** Orla O'Brien presented on DETE's focus areas:
 - SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth
 - SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
 - SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production
5. **Chambers Ireland:** James Kiernan discussed initiatives such as the Sustainable Business Council, SDG toolkit, and National Sustainable Business Impact Awards. He noted declining business interest in SDGs and recommended stronger government support through strategy, incentives, and skills development.
6. **Business in the Community Ireland:** Laura Morrison highlighted benefits (global recognition) and challenges (superficial engagement) of SDGs. Recommendations included clearer prioritisation, CSO data sharing, and sectoral working groups.
7. **Gas Networks Ireland:** Avian Egan emphasised that SDGs must be fully integrated into business strategy rather than treated as an add-on.
8. Members raised key issues during the tour de table:
 - High compliance costs for SMEs and need for streamlined information.
 - Economic pressures shifting focus away from sustainability.
 - Need for clear government leadership and communication on SDG integration.
 - Concerns about methods of obtaining SDG "champion" status.
9. Members were informed of the upcoming launch of the **Responsible Business Compass** in November and encouraged to attend.
10. The Chair thanked attendees for their contributions and closed the meeting.