

Cost of Business Advisory Forum

Terms of Reference

The Chairs Role and Purpose of The Forum

The establishment of a **Cost of Business Advisory Forum** is a commitment in the current [Programme for Government](#), under ‘*Securing Ireland’s Future - Supporting Small Business, Hospitality and Retail*’.

The Chair will act as an impartial conduit to facilitate tri-partite collaboration between enterprise/industry representative bodies, State agencies and the Government departments.

This Forum will provide a platform for the purpose of discussing concerns and suggestions regarding the cost of doing business in Ireland and regulatory issues that impact upon the enterprise sector at a local and national level.

The Forum will specifically focus on non-wage related costs of doing business.

The Forum will be non-binding and consultative in nature.

Representation

Membership of the Forum includes nominees of various enterprise representative bodies (Appendix A).

Officials from Government Departments, relevant State agencies, enterprise and industry representatives shall be invited to attend and participate in these discussions as appropriate to the specific agenda of each meeting.

Tasks

The Cost of Business Advisory Forum will:

- (i) Act as a consultative body for businesses to provide input to public policymaking with regard to the cost of doing business and for the assessment of the impact of regulatory and administrative burdens.
- (ii) Generate a report which will be presented to Government and outline a set of policy and administrative changes to improve the cost burden for businesses particularly small enterprises in Ireland who are adapting to altered economic or geo-political circumstances.

Meeting Schedule, Agenda and Secretariat

The Forum will consist of up to approximately eight meetings to be held over the period from June 2025. The first meeting will be convened by the Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, at 15:00 on 11th June 2025.

Additional ad hoc meetings may also be scheduled by agreement of the members.

- The input of each Forum meeting shall feed in towards the generation of the final report presented to Government.
- The Secretariat and administrative support will be provided by the Enterprise Strategy Unit, of the Economic and Climate Division in the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment.
- The Terms of Reference for the Forum will be uploaded to a website along with membership details. Minutes will be uploaded once signed off at meeting, in compliance with the Lobbying Act and Transparency Code.
- Meetings will operate under Chatham House rules.

Appendix A

Chaired by:

Chair: Kevin Foley

Vice-Chair: Ronan Byrne

Secretariat to the Forum:

Linda Kane, Head of Secretariat

Dr. Dermot P. Coates, Former Head of Secretariat

Sarah Brown

Erika Valiukaite

Patrick Connolly

Forum Members¹:

Alliance for Insurance Reform, Brian Hanley, Chief Executive Officer

American Chamber of Commerce, Colm O'Callaghan, Director of Public Affairs and Advocacy

Banking and Payments Federation Ireland, Gavin Purtill, Director of Regulation Supervision

Brokers Ireland, Rachel McGovern, Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Chartered Accountants Ireland, Crona Clohisey, Director of Members and Advocacy

Convenience Stores and Newsagents Association, Vincent Jennings, Chief Executive Officer

Dublin Chamber (Nominee of Chambers Ireland), Aebhric McGibney, Director of Public & International Affairs

Institute of Advertising Practitioners, Siobhán Masterson, Chief Executive Officer

Insurance Ireland, Moyagh Murdock, Chief Executive Officer

Irish Business and Employers Confederation, Sharon Higgins, Executive Director Membership and Sectors

Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Liam Berney, Senior Industrial Officer

Irish Exporters Association, Simon McKeever, Chief Executive Officer

Irish Farmers Association, Director, Tadhg Buckley, Director of Policy and Chief Economist

Irish Petrol Retailers Association, Orla Allen, Director of Communications

Irish Small and Medium Enterprises, Neil McDonnell, Chief Executive Officer

Irish Tax Institute, Anne Gunnell, Director of Tax Policy and Representations

Irish Tourism Industry Confederation, Eoghan O'Mara Walsh, Chief Executive Officer

Law Society of Ireland, Dr. Brian Hunt, Director of Policy,

Restaurants Association Ireland, Adrian Cummins, Chief Executive Officer

Retail Excellence, Jean McCabe, Chief Executive Officer

Retail Grocery Dairy and Allied Trades Association, Tara Buckley, Director General

Retail Ireland, Irish Business and Employers Confederation, Arnold Dillon, Director

Retailers Against Smuggling, Phillip Craddock, National Spokesperson

Small Firms Association, David Broderick, Director

¹ Relevant colleagues may attend from the organisations listed. The circulation list may be broader than the membership group to include others in these listed organisations.

State Agencies and Regulators

Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Gavin McGrath, Commercial Operations Executive
Central Bank of Ireland, Patrick Haran, Senior Advisor
Companies Registration Office, Maureen O'Sullivan, Registrar of Companies
Competition and Consumer Protection Commission, Brian McHugh, Chairperson
Commission for Communication Regulation, David O'Connell, Senior Manager, Strategy, Economics and Research
Commission for the Regulation of Utilities, Karen Trant, Director of Customer Policy Protection and Legal and Karen Kavanagh, Director Network and Economic Regulation
Enterprise Ireland, Jennifer Melia, Chief Executive Officer
Environmental Protection Agency, David Flynn, Director, and Brian Meaney, Programme Manager
Eirgrid, Margaret McCarthy, Head of Group Regulation
ESB Networks, Stephen O'Connor, Managing Director
Fáilte Ireland, Jenny De Saulles, Director of Sector Development
Gas Networks Ireland, Richard Sharp, GNI Customer Manager
Health and Safety Authority, Eiblin O'Leary, Programme Manager, Senior Management Team
IDA Ireland, Michael Lohan, Chief Executive Officer
Injuries Resolution Board, Rosalind Carroll, Chief Executive Officer
InterTradelreland, Martin Robinson, Director
Local Enterprise Office Network, Kieran Comerford, Head of Economic Development
Maritime Area Regulatory Authority, Eoin Leahy, Director of Policy and External Affairs
National Standards Authority of Ireland, Kevin Ryan, Certification and Inspection Officer
Office of the Planning Regulator, Gary Ryan, Director of Planning Reviews
Office of the Revenue Commissioners, Sarah Cahill, Principal Officer, Policy Legislation
Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland, Fergus Sharkey, Head of Business Supports
The Bar of Ireland, Stephen Lowry, Director of Communications and Public Affairs
Uisce Éireann, Justin Johnston, Strategy, Resilience and Regulation Director

Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment

Secretary General, Declan Hughes
Assistant Secretary General, Gary Tobin

Government Departments Advisors

Department of An Taoiseach
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment
Department of Finance
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science
Department of Health
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration
Department of Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation
Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht
Department of Social Protection
Department of Transport