



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

White Paper on Enterprise

Implementation Plan: Update Report H2 2024

June 2025



Prepared by the Department of Enterprise,
Tourism and Employment.

Foreword

The fourth and final update report on the implementation of the White Paper on Enterprise marks the conclusion of the strategy's implementation period. When the White Paper on Enterprise 2022-2030 was published in 2022, Government sought to ensure that Ireland's enterprise policy was positioned to support the resiliency and recovery of Irish businesses post COVID-19. Through the White Paper's ambitions, Government also committed to pursuing the core elements which served Ireland's economy so well, and for so long. Our ambitions were that Irish-based enterprise would continue to thrive and succeed in delivering rewarding jobs and livelihood.

Through the White Paper on Enterprise Implementation Plan 2022-2024, Government outlined over 90 cross-government activities underpinning 40 ambitious initiatives, established to ensure the commitments set out in the White Paper were achieved over the course of the last two years. This fourth update report demonstrates the ultimate success in that effort. As of the end of 2024, 90% of these activities are now completed or are on track for completion. This is a testament to the collective efforts across whole-of-Government in ensuring the White Paper's vision of achieving competitive advantage founded on sustainability, innovation and productivity was realised.

This report details progress across the seven priority policy areas that were set out in the White Paper on Enterprise in 2022, showcasing the accomplishments made across Government, as well as through our enterprise agencies. Progress is also reported on the target metrics for the White Paper on Enterprise, which continued to demonstrate strong performance in meeting our targets. This includes the maintenance of full employment, more balanced growth with an increase in jobs and investments outside of Dublin, as well as increases in exports, digital adoption and productivity rates amongst Irish based enterprise.

In spite of this success, Government remains deeply aware of the various challenges facing businesses in Ireland today. These challenges also come at a time of great uncertainty within the global environment. It is for this reason that Government stated its ambition to develop Enterprise 2035 under the new Programme for Government, as a long-term ambition for enterprise growth and job creation over the coming decade. Enterprise 2035 will seek to ensure Ireland's economy, its businesses and its workers are appropriately positioned to navigate such challenges and are supported in the overreaching objective of promoting a resilient, sustainable and inclusive economic growth model. This ambition will once again require a united and collaborative effort from us all, and I look forward to engaging across Government, the enterprise sector and our society during the development of this next strategy.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter Burke".

Peter Burke TD.
Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment

Contents

1. Integrating Net Zero and Carbon Commitments.....	11
1.1 Develop a National Industrial Strategy for Offshore Wind Timeline	12
1.2 Embed Carbon Abatement into Enterprise Development Agency Operations	14
1.3 Integrate the Cost of Carbon into Enterprise Agencies' Project Evaluation Models	16
1.4 Design Decarbonisation Roadmaps for Industry and our Commercial Built Environment.....	17
1.5 Prioritise Financial Support for Green Investments.....	18
1.6 Develop Green Skills and Capacities Required for a Net Zero Economy	20
1.7 Promote the Development of the Circular Economy and Bioeconomy	22
2. Placing Digital at the Heart of Enterprise Policy.....	25
2.1 Support the Digital Transformation of Enterprise	26
2.2 Establish European Digital Innovation Hubs	27
2.3 Develop a Digital Portal for Enterprise	28
2.4 Drive Uptake of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools in Enterprise	29
2.5 Drive Digital Manufacturing Objectives Through Support for Industry 4.0.....	32
3. Advancing Ireland's FDI and Trade Value Proposition.....	35
3.1 Promote Open, Rules-Based and Sustainable Global Trade	36
3.2 Deepen Irish Participation in Global Value Chains	38
3.3 Promote Trade Opportunities	39
3.4 Transform the Sustainability Performance of the FDI Sector	40
3.5 Increase Investments in our Regions	41
3.6 Strengthen Collaboration between MNCs and SMEs.....	41
3.7 Enhance FDI Partnering in Research, Development and Innovation.....	42
3.8 Enable Digitalisation of our FDI Base.....	42
4. Strengthening the Irish-owned Exporting Sector	43
4.1 Support Entrepreneurship and Start-Ups	44
4.2 Develop Scaling Finance for Irish Firms	46
4.3 Enhance Scaling Capabilities and Skills	47
4.4 Accelerate the Export Growth of Irish Enterprise	50
4.5 Expand LEO Mandate to Develop the Export Potential of Irish Businesses	51
4.6 Support Market Diversification of Irish Firms	52
4.7 Transformation of Irish exporting base.....	56
5. Enabling Locally Traded Sectors to Thrive	57
5.1 Facilitate our Locally Trading Sectors to Navigate the Twin Transition	58

5.2 Support Small Firms in Energy Cost Reduction and Decarbonisation Investments	59
5.3 Assist Locally Traded Sectors in Increasing Digital Intensity	60
5.4 Enable Locally Traded Sectors to Capture e-Commerce opportunities through Digitalisation.....	60
5.5 Boost Social Enterprise Contributions to the Irish Economy and Society	61
6. Stepping Up Enterprise Innovation	62
6.1 Double Spin-outs and Enhance Research Commercialisation.....	63
6.2 Invest in Disruptive Technologies Innovation and Commercialisation	64
6.3 Strengthen Regional Smart Specialisations	64
6.4 Drive Innovation and Adoption of Modern Methods in Construction (MMC)	65
6.5 Pursue Frontier Technology Opportunities in the Space Sector	67
7. Building on Strengths and Opportunities.....	68
7.1 Develop a Coordinated National Approach to Clustering.....	69
7.2 Support Balanced, Sustainable Regional Development.....	70
7.3 Develop Ireland's National Hub Strategy	71
Appendix I Metrics and Targets	72

Introduction

This is the fourth update report detailing progress on implementation of the White Paper on Enterprise. The report, covering the second six months of 2024 represents the final bi-annual report under the White Paper on Enterprise Implementation Plan 2023-2024. The report details progress made on the 40 key initiatives that were identified and agreed upon as part of the Implementation Plan. In certain instances, updates related to early 2025 have also been provided, where appropriate, to reflect key progress on certain initiatives.

The White Paper on Enterprise 2022-2030 ('the White Paper') was published by Government in December 2022. It set out Ireland's medium-to long-term industrial strategy, with the vision for Irish-based enterprise to succeed and deliver rewarding jobs and livelihoods by increasing their sustainability, innovation and productivity. Work to achieve this is undertaken on a whole-of-Government basis through the pursuit of seven priority enterprise policy objectives:

1. Integrating decarbonisation and net zero commitments.
2. Placing digital transformation at the heart of enterprise policy.
3. Advancing Ireland's FDI and trade value proposition.
4. Strengthening the Irish-owned exporting sector.
5. Enabling locally trading sectors to thrive.
6. Stepping up enterprise innovation.
7. Building on strengths and opportunities.

In addition to the seven priority enterprise policy objectives, the White Paper also recognised the correct framework conditions must be in place to enable enterprise to thrive and deliver strong, sustainable economic growth and quality employment across Ireland. Key competitiveness conditions in this regard include infrastructure, the cost of doing business, skills and talent, access to finance, taxation, and regulation. Such conditions were beyond the direct purview of the Implementation Plan 2023-2024 but are reflected within wider cross-Government initiatives including Project Ireland 2040, Housing for All, Impact 2030 and others.

The 40 initiatives reported upon in this fourth update report are not exhaustive of all Government's activities over the course of 2023-2024, but rather they represent critical efforts being progressed across all seven priority policy objectives throughout the Government system. This includes activities within the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Ireland's enterprise development agencies (IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Local Enterprise Offices and Údarás na Gaeltachta), as well as other relevant Departments and public bodies.

To realise the vision set out in the White Paper, 15 key targets were also established, to be monitored across the lifetime of the strategy. These 15 targets

covering each of the White Paper's seven priority policy objectives, as well as an overarching target of maintaining full employment. Data detailing progress across each of these targets is also detailed within the update report, where updated information was available.

The Implementation Plan 2023-2024 identified 40 initiatives, with 93 underlying activities, across the seven priority pillars set out in the White Paper on Enterprise. As of the end of H2 2024, all 93 of these activities were undertaken. 77 activities are currently completed as of end H2 2024, with 7 activities on track for completion and 9 currently delayed against their intended targets but are expected to be completed during 2025 (see Figure 1). The status of individual activities across this report are detailed through a series of indicators, namely:

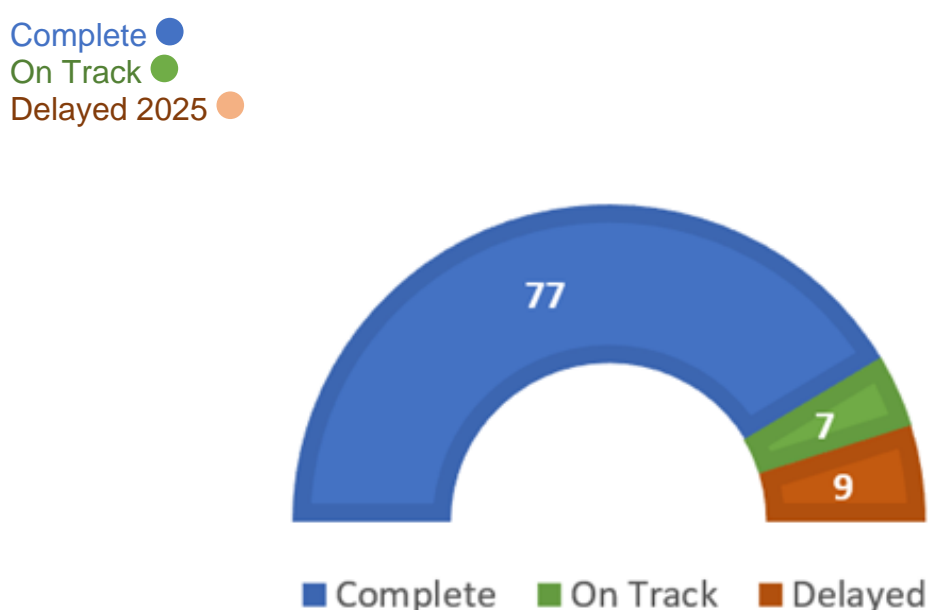


Figure 1: Status of the 93 activities across all 40 Implementation Initiatives

Activities contributing towards the 15 metrics set out in the White Paper continue to progress during 2024 and these are reported in Appendix 1, where data or provisional results are available. At the end of Q4 2024, the monthly unemployment rate for persons aged 15-74 years stood at 4.0%, remaining below the targeted ceiling of 5% and represents a level of employment consistent with full employment. This reflected a strong performance across the labour market during 2024, with the number of people employed in Ireland reaching 2.78 million in the final quarter of 2024. The total number of those employed in Ireland has increased by 400,000 compared to the pre-pandemic period. The employment situation also remains well-balanced regionally, with only one region exceeding the national unemployment level by more than 1 percentage point, as of end 2024. This region was The Border Region, which exceeded the national unemployment figure for the quarter by 1.3 percentage points.

Other key metrics also remained positive through 2024. This included continued year-on-year increases in IDA Ireland client expenditure, increases in the number of large Irish exporting companies and the number of High-Potential Start-Ups (HPSUs) supported by Enterprise Ireland, as well as productivity growth across Irish-owned enterprise. In terms of regionally balanced jobs and investments, the enterprise agencies continued to perform well against targets. 54% of all FDI investments were located outside of Dublin (against a 50% target over multiple years) as of end H2 2024. The Enterprise Ireland Annual Business Review 2024 indicated that, 64% of new jobs created in Enterprise Ireland-assisted firms were created outside of Dublin (against a 2 out of every 3 jobs target).

This update report showcases the accomplishments that have been made in the implementation of key initiatives across all priority policy objectives during the course of H2 2024:

- Launch of the 'Grow Digital' portal to help businesses map their digitalisation journey and identify the considerations to enhance their competitiveness and efficiency.
- Disbursement of over €1.9 million in funding under the four European Digital Innovation Hubs to help firms by providing access to research infrastructure, technical expertise and experimentation facilities.
- Achievement of end of 2024 targets set by our enterprise agencies on a range of measures including sustainability, digitalisation, export volume and diversification, as well as more balanced regional investment and jobs growth.
- Implementation of Powering Prosperity, with 40 actions outlined for 2024 and 2025 which will work towards achieving the ambitions set out in the strategy.
- Integration of carbon abatement factors into our enterprise agency delivery agreements, including embedding carbon abatement considerations into investment decisions.
- Launch of a Skills Action Plan designed to guide future activities in the Further and Higher Education sectors for offshore wind in Ireland.
- Publication of the National by-product criteria for greenfield soil and stone, to promote circularity in construction waste and materials.
- Publication of a report by the Expert Group on Global Value Chains, detailing recommendations on policy actions to enable business to build more resilient supply chains.
- Publication of a finance for scaling report, which details key recommendations designed to support high-potential firms to access scaling aid.

These achievements form a wider series of collective achievements accomplished during the lifetime of the White Paper on Enterprise implementation. Progress has been seen in terms of both the level of impact and the scale of achievement across Government. The extensive list of achievements in this regard include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Fiscal supports for decarbonisation continued to increase in both scale and scope, with the €300 million Environmental Aid programme increasing the pipeline of large decarbonisation projects. A total of 1,427 loans, amounting to €312.6 million, have now been approved under the €500m Growth and Sustainability Loan Scheme, whilst 479 projects have been approved under the Green Transition Fund amounting to €20.5 million in Government supports.
- Continued rollout of the Digital Transition Fund to help companies at all stages of their digital journey, with 558 companies in total approved for funding to the value of €46.15 million since the launch of the fund in 2022.
- Further Education and Training continued to provide training and upskilling opportunities in sustainable construction, engineering and renewable energy, with over 80 courses available in the Nearly Zero Emission Building (NZEB) Centres of Excellence located across the country, with over 6,935 enrolments by the end of 2024, compared with 4,452 at the end of 2023.
- The launch of the 'Grow Digital' portal which has had over 10,000 visits during H2 2024, offering free online assessments for businesses to help identify where they are on their digitalisation journey and what steps and digital tools they might consider using to enhance their competitiveness and efficiency.
- The launch and subsequent implementation of Powering Prosperity – Ireland's Offshore Wind Industrial Strategy, which seeks to build a successful, vibrant and impactful offshore wind energy industry in Ireland.
- The integration of carbon abatement within enterprise development agencies objectives, with emissions and the projected shadow price of carbon now calculated within investment decision appraisals.
- Publication of the "Roadmap for the Decarbonisation of Industrial Heat" which works to accelerate the decarbonisation of industrial heat by translating the policies in the Climate Action Plans and EU regulations into a clear and coherent decarbonisation pathway for businesses.
- Development of the Circular Economy and Bioeconomy progressed through the launch of initiatives such as the Food Waste Charter 2.0, the Bioeconomy Action Plan as well as a series of three criteria of strategic national decisions by the EPA to promote circularity in construction waste and materials.
- Establishment of four European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs) as part of the European Commission's Digital Europe Programme, support for digital transformation in SMEs and public sector organisations by encouraging the adoption of the latest advances in the key technologies of Cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and High-Performance Computing (HPC).

- Publication of the AI Standards and Assurance Roadmap detailing actions to support implementation of the Standards and Assurance aspects of the EU AI Act, ensuring that Ireland can safely unlock the potential that AI can provide.
- Increased support of Industry 4.0 to drive digital manufacturing objectives, including through various initiatives including our Technology Gateways, Irish Manufacturing Research Technology Centre (IMR), National Institute for Bioprocessing Research and Training. (NIBRT)'s Advanced Therapeutics and Digital Manufacturing Ireland (DMI).
- Launch of 'The Opportunities and Impacts of Digital Trade for Ireland', to support Irish policy and influence at the WTO, continued advocacy for open sustainable trade at EU Trade Policy Committee, EU Trade Council and WTO as well as progression across all seven pillars of the Trade & Investment Strategy.
- The development and launch of the Expert Group on Global Value Chains report, detailing analysis, findings and recommendations made by the Expert Group to solidify Ireland's position in Global Value Chains.
- The launch of the annual Trade Horizons Conference, as well as the undertaking of Ireland's inaugural Team Ireland Trade Mission Week (TITMW) to enhance bilateral ties and business opportunities between Ireland and partner countries.
- Enhanced sustainability performance of our FDI Sector, with the four-year sustainability targets set out in IDA Ireland's "Driving Recovery & Sustainable Growth 2021-24" strategy now being exceeded far beyond the strategy's initial targets set out.
- Increased investment and job growth in our regions to ensure a more regionally balanced economy, with the targets of over 50% of new IDA Ireland projects going to regions outside of Dublin, and over 2 in 3 jobs created in Enterprise Ireland client companies occurring outside of Dublin having both been exceeded.
- Enhancements in digitalisation and RD&I on a significant scale. IDA Ireland client companies have now committed to spending €4.8 billion on RD&I, representing 126% of the targeted €3.8 billion investment by year end 2024. Digital Manufacturing Ireland (DMI) also continued to assist Irish-based manufacturers access, adopt and accelerate new digital technologies. Over the period 2023-2024, there have been over 400 client engagements undertaken by DMI to support those companies commence or advance their digital transformation journey.
- Increased supports for entrepreneurship and start-ups, including in developing the pipeline of start-up companies, pre-seed start-up funding and high potential start-ups (HPSU) supports, as well as publication of a report on the use of finance as a catalyst to develop a scaling ecosystem in Ireland.

- Increased value and diversification of exports, supported by funding, capacity building and a series of export led events. Exports from Enterprise Ireland clients stood at €34.57 billion by end 2024, exceeding the €32 billion target.
- An expansion of the LEO Mandate to Develop the Export Potential of Irish Businesses, bridging the gap in supports for companies with 10-50 employees, through a series of grants, direct financial assistance, capability programmes and trade events, underpinned by the development of Enterprise Ireland and LEO websites to better signpost supports and services to businesses.
- Achievement of targets related to transforming our export base, including the 3-year target of 425 climate projects exceeded, the 3-year target of 400 digitisation projects exceeded, as well as the 3-year target of 300 significant R&D projects supported exceeded.
- Commencement of the €33.4 million KT Boost Programme to support the generation of spinouts and High Potential Start-Ups from research, the Innovators' Initiative call which supports four programmes in medtech, agritech, cybersecurity and digital health, as well as calls 6 and 7 of the Disruptive Technology Innovation Fund (DTIF) which have allocated €376 million of the €500 million fund to support collaborative enterprise-driven partnerships that develop, deploy and commercialise disruptive technologies to transform businesses with a particular focus in industrial research and SME participation.
- Achievement of our ambitions to support Irish based enterprise in working in the space sector as detailed under the National Space Strategy for Enterprise 2019-2025. A total of 116 companies have now benefited from engagement with the European Space Agency against a target of 100 firms.
- Successful delivery of the Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) Roadmap to aid the delivery of Government's ambition of high-quality affordable housing, as well as the launch of Construct Innovate to advance industry-led research prioritising solutions to housing delivery challenges which has now grown to some 94 associate members and 36 projects.
- Completion of all nine Building Better Business conferences across Ireland, which focused on supporting SMEs in navigating the green journey and boosting business performance through digital transformation while also hearing from indigenous businesses which have scaled and internationalised.
- Successful launch of the Online Retail Scheme, Small Firms Investment in Energy Efficiency Scheme (SFIEES) to help small firms to reduce carbon emissions, as well as the Government's SME Package, which increased the scope of supports for existing digitalisation schemes.
- Publication of Trading for Change: National Social Enterprise Policy 2024 – 2027, designed to cultivate and sustain a strong and impactful social enterprise sector in Ireland that enriches the social, environmental, and economic wellbeing of our communities.

1. Integrating Net Zero and Carbon Commitments

Placing our net zero ambitions at the centre of the White Paper ensured that Ireland's approach aligns with developments at EU level, where climate change response and the green transition are becoming key drivers of industrial policy. During the course of 2024, Ireland's Offshore Wind Industrial Strategy 'Powering Prosperity' was officially published. Implementation of the strategy also commenced, with many actions already completed or in progress by the end of 2024.

Government continued to translate national carbon budgets ambitions into operational carbon budgets for the enterprise development agencies, where carbon abatement was fully reflected in the enterprise agency Oversight and Performance Delivery Agreements (OPDA's) during 2024. The Economic Appraisal Model, part of a wider system of appraisal for investment projects by our enterprise agencies, was also updated to account for emissions into the model.

During 2024 the "Roadmap for the Decarbonisation of Industrial Heat" was published, with implementation on a series of enabling actions for accelerating decarbonisation of industrial heat to take place during 2025. Key policy interventions were also developed on the Commercial Built Environment Decarbonisation Roadmap, which will work towards decarbonising Ireland's commercial building stock. This Roadmap is expected to be completed in H1 2025, where implementation will commence thereafter. The Environmental Aid/Green Capital Grant, which targets industry emissions reduction from manufacturing combustion across Ireland's manufacturing sectors has already seen €41 million in funding. This funding covered 20 approved decarbonisation projects under the programme during H2 2024 and sits within a wider ringfenced fund of €300 million.

The Green Transition Fund which was launched in 2022 also continued to support a reduction in manufacturing combustion emissions from Ireland's industrial sector. Operating under Enterprise Ireland since 2022, the fund was extended to IDA Ireland during 2024. In H2 2024 alone, both enterprise agencies supported clients through an additional 93 projects with an associated spend of €8.2 million. The €500 million Growth and Sustainability Loan Scheme also continued to progress since its launch in 2023, with businesses availing of long-term finance to support productivity, as well as energy efficiency and sustainability investments. As of December 2024, a total of 1,427 loans have been approved under the scheme, amounting to €312.6 million and with an increasing number of participating finance providers supporting in 2024.

Progress continued on the implementation of the Food Waste Charter, with 65 Charter members now signed up by the end of 2024. National by-product criteria for greenfield soil and stone were published in August, the third in a series of strategic national decisions published by the EPA to promote circularity in construction waste and materials. This followed the 2023 publication of national by-product criteria for site-won asphalt and national end-of-waste criteria for recycled aggregates. Wider progress on our circular economy ambitions also progressed under initiatives such as the Green Enterprise fund and the Circular Economy Innovation Grant Scheme.

1.1 Develop a National Industrial Strategy for Offshore Wind Timeline

	<p>Q4 2023: Completion of Phase 1- Scoping / Consultation¹ ●</p> <p>Q2 2024: Finalisation and publication of Strategy ●</p> <p>Q2 2024: Commence implementation●</p>
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (Lead); Enterprise Ireland; IDA Ireland
Update	<p>The consultation phase engaged a wide range of key stakeholders from across Government and industry as well as a public consultation. This included the establishment of The Offshore Wind Industry Forum and a series of targeted regional workshops, including in Rosslare, Dublin, Shannon, Cork & Killybegs. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment also procured independent research on international best practice and completed a number of fact-finding missions to the UK.</p> <p>Powering Prosperity – Ireland’s Offshore Wind Industrial Strategy was successfully published in Q1 2024. The strategy focuses on four key pillars of; Offshore Wind Supply Chains; Research, Development, and Innovation; Balanced Regional Economic Development Opportunities; and Future Demand and End Uses for Offshore Renewable Energy. The strategy is available at: https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/publications/powering-prosperity.html</p> <p>The Implementation of Powering Prosperity actions are ongoing throughout 2025. A first implementation progress update report was published in April 2025. This report outlines the status of each of the Industrial Strategy’s 40 actions, providing detail on progress made by end of Q1 2025.</p> <p>Of the 40 actions, 38, are complete or in progress. Of these, 11 have been delivered as set out in the Strategy, with a further 3 completed by alternative means, or insofar as possible. A further 24 are currently in progress, though 5 of these are delayed. Of the final 2 actions, 1 is not yet initiated, and 1 will not be completed due to external circumstances.</p> <p>The report highlights the good progress made towards building capacity and capability along the supply chain, working with both domestic and international companies. In addition, DETE continues to take a strategic approach to international engagements working with likeminded countries, identifying opportunities for collaboration through initiatives such as the recent UK-Ireland 2030 Joint Statement, which committed both countries to developing and supporting an all-island supply chain for offshore wind, and progressing collaborative work with Scotland, in addition to developing plans for collaboration with Northern Ireland and Wales.</p>

¹ Refer to page 4 for guidance on status colours for activities across this report

Progress has also been made towards the establishment of an Offshore Wind Centre of Excellence, which is now being led by EI following an initial allocation of funding in Budget 2025. In recognition of the opportunity raised by ORE for economic development in coastal regions and adjacent rural communities, five of the Regional Enterprise Plans Steering Groups – South-East, South-West, Mid-West, West and North-West – identified offshore wind as a key opportunity area in their respective regions and have established offshore wind energy working groups to develop regional strategies to capitalise on the offshore wind opportunity.

Full details on the status of the implementation of Powering Prosperity's actions are available at [Powering Prosperity – Ireland's Offshore Wind Industrial Strategy Implementation Progress Report - DETE](#).

1.2 Embed Carbon Abatement into Enterprise Development Agency Operations

Timeline	<p>Q2 2023: Carbon abatement reflected in Enterprise Development Agency OPDAs ●</p> <p>Q4 2023: Agreed design of Enterprise Development Agency carbon budgets and timelines for different stages of implementation ●</p> <p>Q1 2024: Implementation of agreed Enterprise Development Agency carbon budgets using available data ●</p>
Responsibility	<p>Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (Lead); IDA Ireland; Enterprise Ireland</p>
Update	<p>Carbon abatement is now a core function of the enterprise development agencies Oversight and Performance Delivery Agreements (OPDA's). Profiles of agency client company emissions have been successfully mapped and identified for both Emissions Trading System (ETS) and non-ETS emissions.</p> <p>A pipeline of decarbonisation projects has been developed to decarbonise clients' operations in Ireland, with an initial focus on the highest impact projects across the largest emitters. This work is underpinned by an array of supports offered by the enterprise agencies to enable decarbonisation projects among their clients.</p> <p>The enterprise agencies are utilising the Climate Appraisal Model that was developed by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. This model is an updated model of the Economic Appraisal Model which was typically used for government financial support. Under this new appraisal model, emissions and the projected shadow price of carbon per tonne are now calculated as a cost, that could be avoided through decarbonisation.</p> <p>The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment is continuously re-evaluating the supports offered to ensure Ireland remains on a trajectory to achieve its binding emissions reduction targets for industry and the commercial built environment. The Department works closely and has ongoing engagement with the enterprise agencies to ensure that their internal abatement targets and strategies are aligned with achieving Ireland's binding national and European commitments.</p> <p>Following completion of work by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment on the integration of the cost of carbon into economic appraisal of projects, IDA Ireland introduced climate appraisal of capital-intensive project proposals from new and existing clients utilising an updated Economic Appraisal Model.</p>

	<p>During H2 2024, Enterprise Ireland's Sustainability team accelerated its decarbonisation programme, approving three significant Environmental Aid projects covering the drinks and cement sectors, resulting in a carbon reduction impact of 47,466 tonnes. A pipeline has been developed for further engagement during 2025, including nine projects which are expected to reduce carbon by 89,000 tonnes. This will include expanding coverage to the dairy sector. Enterprise Ireland engagement with large industrial clients continues to drive policy and enable deep decarbonisation projects.</p> <p>Enterprise Ireland focused on enhancing sustainability capabilities among clients through various initiatives, including Sustainability Kickstarter workshops, the Enterprise Ireland/Skillnet Sustainability Leadership Programme, and the Climate Planning Fund for Business, which funded 85% of projects aimed at creating sustainability plans. A new Sustainability Training Directory was also developed, and the Sustainable Enterprise webinar and podcast series featured client companies sharing their sustainability stories.</p> <p>In Q4 2024, Enterprise Ireland hosted its first-ever Sustainable Enterprise Summit, with over 500 industry leaders, policymakers, and sustainability experts. The summit highlighted the success of Irish companies across various sectors and provided practical insights into embedding sustainability within core business strategies.</p> <p>In 2023, Údarás na Gaeltachta and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Art, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media conducted discussions on setting targets to incorporate into its OPDA for 2024. During 2024, progress has been made in establishing baseline figures, with further progress expected to be completed during H1 2025.</p>
	<p>The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment sources data on the decarbonisation activities of Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland through the Quarterly Reporting Framework (QRF). The QRF has now collected data for seven quarters between 2023 and 2025, allowing for regular oversight of CO2 reductions, value for money and the number of projects being approved and drawn down across Environmental Aid, the Green Transition Fund and the now retired Sustainable Recovery Scheme.</p> <p>The Business Energy Supports Uptake reporting mechanism is undertaken monthly. Although it is less detailed than the QRF, this mechanism allows for a more regular update on uptake for a wider range of supports across Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, the Local Enterprise Offices and the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland. This includes the latter's new Business Energy Upgrades Scheme for Commercial Building Retrofits and energy efficiency measures.</p>

1.3 Integrate the Cost of Carbon into Enterprise Agencies' Project Evaluation Models

Timeline	Q4 2023: Cost of carbon included in agencies' assessments of support for capital investment projects, through implementation of the Climate Appraisal Model ●
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (Lead); IDA Ireland; Enterprise Ireland
Update	<p>The integration of emissions into the Economic Appraisal Model is now complete and is operational within the Enterprise Agencies since April 2024. The integration of emissions into the Economic Appraisal Model has been underpinned by collaboration across Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland, reviewing how the Economic Appraisal Model can be best structured, as well as agreeing upon appropriate values for integrating the shadow price of carbon into existing calculations.</p> <p>The Economic Appraisal Model will be updated during 2025 to reflect updates to the emissions parameters in line with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), as well as to integrate emissions data as it becomes available. Further bilateral meetings will be held between the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the enterprise agencies during 2025, to obtain feedback on the model's operation.</p>

1.4 Design Decarbonisation Roadmaps for Industry and our Commercial Built Environment

Timeline	<p>Q3 2023: Roadmap for Decarbonising Commercial Built Environment ●</p> <p>Q4 2023: Roadmap for Decarbonising Industrial Heat ●</p>
Responsibility	<p>Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (Lead); Department of Environment, Climate and Communications; IDA Ireland; Enterprise Ireland; Údarás na Gaeltachta; Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland</p>
Update	<p>The Commercial Built Environment Decarbonisation Roadmap will set out the key policy interventions to achieve the objectives set out for decarbonising Ireland's commercial building stock. In order to support businesses in decarbonising their premises, the roadmap will set out the state supports, regulations and enabling measures that will help drive the necessary changes in commercial heating systems, drive efficiencies and support the uptake of smart energy monitoring and operating technologies, which will all be required to meet the set targets. The roadmap will also align with the revised EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, approved in Q2 2024.</p> <p>Government will soon consider a draft Roadmap. Measures contained within the draft include preparing for the transposing of the revised EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, as well as steps to increase uptake by business of building upgrade supports such as the newly launched SEAI Business Energy Upgrades Scheme (BEUS), alongside communicating and raising awareness of the Roadmap to business, particularly SMEs and their commercial landlords.</p> <p>With the publication of the "Roadmap for the Decarbonisation of Industrial Heat" in H1 2024, the Industrial Heat Decarbonisation Working Group of the Heat and Built Environment Taskforce has proceeded to the Implementation phase of the Roadmap. The Roadmap consisted of a list of enabling actions for accelerating decarbonisation of industrial heat, including actions across the four main abatement technologies identified in the Roadmap - energy efficiency first principles, electrification of low temperature heat, and bioenergy technologies such as biomass and biomethane for medium and high temperature manufacturing processes.</p> <p>Throughout 2025 and beyond, the enabling actions are being progressed by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in collaboration with the relevant colleagues from other departments and agencies. Using the Roadmap actions as a basis, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment is working to assess what actions and measures can unlock further decarbonisation opportunities among industrial heat users. The enterprise agencies also continue to accelerate support for decarbonisation projects. This includes utilising the €300 million ringfenced fund announced alongside the launch of the Roadmap, enabling more businesses to switch to decarbonised and renewable energy solutions and energy management systems.</p>

1.5 Prioritise Financial Support for Green Investments

Timeline	Ongoing: Roll out of financial incentives for industrial decarbonisation including the Green Transition Fund●
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (Lead); Enterprise Ireland; IDA Ireland; Údarás na Gaeltachta
Update	<p><i>Environmental Aid/Green Capital Grant</i></p> <p>Government, through Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland, has to date successfully supported the decarbonisation of industry primarily through the Environmental Aid Scheme. The scheme targets industry emissions reduction from manufacturing combustion across Ireland's manufacturing sectors, including the cement, metals, food & beverage, pharmaceutical and chemicals sectors.</p> <p>The Environmental Aid programme has seen a continued pipeline of large decarbonisation projects, supported by the ringfenced fund of €300 million announced in June 2024. In 2024, €41 million was allocated towards 20 approved decarbonisation projects under the programme. The 20 projects are projected to abate over 70,000 tonnes of CO₂e, or approximately 1% of total industry emissions. A further pipeline of €64 million in approvals is projected between the two agencies for 2025.</p> <p><i>Green Transition Fund</i></p> <p>The Green Transition Fund was launched during 2022 and is designed to address manufacturing combustion emissions from Ireland's industrial sector by accelerating the uptake of carbon-neutral heating in manufacturing businesses.</p> <p>The Green Transition Fund has been operated by Enterprise Ireland since its launch in 2022. In Q3 2024, IDA Ireland also began to offer supports to their client base through the Capital Investment for Decarbonised Processes. With both enterprise agencies now actively offering support to their client base, an additional 93 projects were approved with an associated spend of €8.2 million during H2 2024.</p> <p>In total, 479 projects have been approved under the fund. This amounts to €20.5 million in government supports for businesses, where €9 million of this has been approved for the Capital Investment for Decarbonisation Processes with an associated CO₂ abatement of 19,000 tonnes.</p>

Timeline	Q2 2023: Launch of Growth and Sustainability Loan Scheme ●
Responsibility	Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland
Update	<p>The €500 million Growth and Sustainability Loan Scheme launched in September 2023 and has unlocked significant funding to enable Irish businesses to avail of long-term finance at a lower cost to expand, diversify, improve productivity, and invest in energy efficiency and sustainability.</p> <p>This scheme targets a minimum of 30% of the lending volume towards environmental sustainability purposes with the aim of encouraging SMEs to take positive actions in support of the policy goal of a climate-resilient economy. Participating finance providers include Bank of Ireland, AIB, Finance Ireland, PTSB and Close Brothers. As of December 2024, a total of 1,427 loans have been approved for the amount of €312.6 million.</p>

1.6 Develop Green Skills and Capacities Required for a Net Zero Economy

Timeline	Ongoing: Promote green skills within the Higher Education system to support a more sustainable enterprise sector●
Responsibility	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
Update	<p>The Springboard+ and Human Capital Initiative (HCI) Pillar 1 programmes which launched in Spring/Summer of 2024 continue to play a vital role in the green transition by providing funding to the Higher Education system in the areas of green skills.</p> <p>Under green skills and green skills-related areas, Springboard+ 2024 has 18 courses offering 553 places, while HCI Pillar 1 has 22 courses offering 507 places, a combined total of 1,060 places on 40 courses to be delivered by public and private higher education providers around the country for the 2024/25 academic year.</p> <p>HCI Pillar 3 was funded in 2020 over a five-year period to 2024, under which there are 12 projects related to green skills. These projects include but are not limited to REEdI- Rethinking Engineering Education in Ireland, Sustainable Futures, Digital Academy for Sustainable Built Environment (DASBE), Ireland's Knowledge Centre for Carbon and Climate and Resilient Design Curricula for 21st Century.</p> <p>To date, projects are exceeding targets, with more places and courses expected to be delivered and reported on within the lifetime of the project. Additionally, the Micro-Credentials Learner Fee Subsidy was launched in H1 2024, with an allocation of €9.7 million in funding under HCI Pillar 3 to subsidise fees for 13,763 learners across 650 micro-credential courses. Under Micro-Credentials Learner Fee Subsidy, there are 81 courses in green skills and green skills related areas, providing 1,755 places. A subsidy rate of 80% or 50% offer learners a unique opportunity to access high-quality education, fostering a culture of lifelong learning and upskilling.</p>

Timeline	2023 -2024: Develop full suite of green skills programmes ●
Responsibility	SOLAS
Update	<p>Further Education and Training continues to provide training and upskilling opportunities in sustainable construction, engineering and renewable energy with over 80 courses available nationwide in the Nearly Zero Emission Building (NZEB) Centres of Excellence located in City of Dublin ETB, Cork ETB, Laois and Offaly ETB, Limerick and Clare ETB Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB, and Waterford and Wexford ETB. By the end of 2024 there were 6,935 enrolments comparing with 4,452 at the end of 2023.</p> <p>Provision of training and upskilling in Green Skills also expanded, including training to develop sustainability awareness, climate justice as well as areas such as agriculture, art & design, biodiversity & the environment, tourism & hospitality, transport & logistics and accounting & business. Over 200 courses are available and delivered by the 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) nationwide.</p> <p>In 2024, Green Skills 2030, the 1st National Further Education & Training (FET) Strategy for the Green Transition, was developed by SOLAS in partnership with KPMG and in consultation with the 16 Education & Training Boards, public bodies, government departments, and key industry stakeholders. The strategy shapes a response and contribution of FET towards meeting Ireland's climate action targets to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030. Green Skills 2030 builds upon the Green Skills for FET 2021-2030 roadmap, created to present high-level actions for embedding green skills initiatives throughout the sector in response to policy requirements and actions/recommendations required in EU and national directives.</p>

Timeline	Q2 2023: Detailed Skills Assessment Report by Skills and Workforce Workstream ●
Responsibility	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (Co-Lead); Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (Co-Lead)
Update	<p>The detailed skills assessment report for offshore wind development, 'Building our Potential', was completed in H2 2023 and officially launched at the Wind Energy Ireland Annual Conference in January 2024. Commissioned by Greentech Skillnet in collaboration with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, and the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, this report aims to inform the ongoing planning process to address the skills requirements of the offshore wind sector.</p> <p>As part of a broader package, the report contributes to the development of a Skills Action Plan, which was launched in H2 2024. This Action Plan is designed to guide future activities in the Further and Higher Education sectors for offshore wind in Ireland, supporting the efforts of Workstream 8: Skills and Workforce, under the Offshore Wind Energy Programme.</p>

1.7 Promote the Development of the Circular Economy and Bioeconomy

Timeline	<p>Q2 2023: Launch of Food Waste Charter 2.0, with implementation and reporting covering the period through to the end-2024 ●</p> <p>Q3 2023: Launch national decisions on construction by-product and waste material to promote circularity ●</p> <p>Q4 2023: Review of Green Enterprise Fund Completed ●</p>
Responsibility	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Update	<p>The Food Waste Charter (Food Waste Charter 2.0) was launched successfully during 2023, calling on all businesses and State Agencies operating across the food supply chain to sign up. Implementation of the Food Waste Charter continued during the course of 2024. At year end there were 65 Charter members (24 at start of 2024), with representatives from across the supply chain – primary production, manufacturing & processing, retail & distribution, restaurants & food services. The Charter was showcased at a number of events hosted by the supporting State Agencies (BIM, Bord Bia, Enterprise Ireland, Failte Ireland and Teagasc). A Food Waste Charter Implementation Report focusing on the first year (June 2023 - June 2024) was published by the EPA in December. Reporting by members highlighted that businesses are at different stages of food waste prevention activity. While many are tracking food waste and undertaking initiatives to reduce food waste, many are not yet using the insights from monitoring food waste to identify appropriate interventions in waste generation hot spots. Stronger focus is therefore needed on evidence-led actions in targeted areas, informed by consistent measurement.</p> <p>Food Waste Charter Guidance for the Brewing Sector and the Distillery Sector were developed and published in December 2024. The Food Waste Measurement Protocol was trialled across a sample of businesses in each of these sectors, where the insights and learnings specific to food waste generation in these sectors were included in the ultimate guidance issued.</p> <p>The National by-product criteria for greenfield soil and stone were published in August 2024. This was the third in a series of strategic national decisions published by the EPA to promote circularity in construction waste and materials, following the publication of national by-product criteria for site-won asphalt (Nov 2023) and national end-of-waste criteria for recycled aggregates (Oct 2023). 2025 will see a focus on implementation, support and monitoring of the national decisions, as well as the exploration of opportunities in other sectors including the bioeconomy.</p>

Update

An analysis of funding sources for circular economy innovation was completed by the Environmental Protection Agency in 2024. A final decision on the Green Enterprise fund is pending. The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications announced in December 2024 that total funding of €650,000 was being awarded to 13 projects across Ireland under the Circular Economy Innovation Grant Scheme (funding call launched in June 2024). The purpose of the call is to support projects which work in the Circular Economy space, advancing the Circular Economy in Ireland and raising awareness of the need to transition to a Circular Economy.

Timeline	<p>Q2 2023: Publish Bioeconomy Action Plan ●</p> <p>Q2 2023 – Q4 2025: Implementation of Action Plan, including the Industry and Enterprise Pillar●</p>
Responsibility	<p>Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications; Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment</p>
Update	<p>The Bioeconomy Action Plan was published in Q4 2023. The plan's development was led by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the enterprise agencies also contributing to the development of the plan.</p> <p>The plan contains actions that the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment is implementing to support the development of the bioeconomy, encourage and support bio-based industries to undertake lifecycle analyses, develop a coordinated approach to bioeconomy investment to facilitate faster bioeconomy industrial development and to leverage existing innovation supports to generate valuable IPs.</p>
	<p>Progress continued on the delivery of the actions set out in the Bioeconomy Action Plan, which saw its first full year of reporting with biannual reporting taking place in Q2 and Q4 2024. Enterprise Ireland, InterTradelreland and the National Standards Authority of Ireland are leading on actions to support the development of the bioeconomy through a variety of initiatives, including RD&I & IP Strategy Supports as well as regional knowledge workshops.</p> <p>A lead initiative is CIRCBIO, funded through Enterprise Ireland and led by InterTradelreland's Synergy programme. CIRCBIO is a Circular Bioeconomy cluster that has carried out 38 collaborative projects with cluster members from 2021-2024.</p> <p>The current iteration of the Bioeconomy Action Plan will continue to support the development of the bioeconomy through the progression of actions, both ongoing and those to commence in 2025.</p>

2. Placing Digital at the Heart of Enterprise Policy

Ireland continues to work towards our ambition of becoming a digital leader, acknowledging the key role that digital technology will continue to play in shaping competitiveness and driving productivity. The Digital Transition Fund continued in its supports for companies, and especially SMEs, to advance in their digitalisation journeys during 2024. As of the end of 2024, 558 companies in total were approved for funding to the value of €46.15 million since the launch of the fund in June 2022. Following the successful establishment and operationalisation of the four European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs) in 2023, activity and engagement continued to rise during 2024. In H2 2024 alone, the EDIHs collectively supported 195 companies, predominantly SMEs, and 54 public service organisations.

The 'Grow Digital' portal was launched in H2 2024, where it has had over 10,000 visits during H2 2024. The portal supports businesses to help identify where they are on their digitalisation journey and what steps and digital tools they might consider using to enhance their competitiveness and efficiency. The AI Standards and Assurance Roadmap continued to progress following its publication in 2023. During 2024, NSAI continued to work on a range of engagements including engagements on AI Standards and implementation obligations under the EU AI Act.

The Implementation Group for the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs continued to progress in the ten areas of priority set out in the original report published back in 2022. This included on themes related to digital transformation, professional development in AI and supporting the enterprise sector through interlinking AI investment, talent and information. Wider initiatives on future skills also progressed, including the monitoring of uptake of AI tools across enterprise, with significant uptake across the enterprise sector experienced between 2023 and 2024.

Since 2013, the number of Technology Gateways has increased from 12 to 17, covering all regions of the country and sectors of the economy. These gateways are working across a range of sectors and cohorts of companies, providing knowledge, experience, funding support and innovation solutions to businesses. The programme has now completed over 1,450 projects in collaboration with local industry, at a value of over €12million. Irish Manufacturing Research Technology Centre (IMR), which engages stakeholders to develop an ambition and vision to support Manufacturing 5.0 for SMEs from 2025 to 2030 continued to enhance its impact on the sector, where Enterprise Ireland continues to work closely with IMR in developing a strategic plan that will support Manufacturing 5.0 for SMEs over the next 5-year funding phase, planned to commence in 2026.

The National Institute for Bioprocessing Research and Training (NIBRT)'s Advanced Therapeutics Extension was completed on time and on budget at the end of H1 2023, with the Advanced Therapeutics Extension was completed and officially opened in H1 2024. Digital Manufacturing Ireland (DMI) now has approximately 50 client digitisation projects underway in relation to digital transformation needs, also establishing cross-sectoral collaboration groups to take an industry-led approach to addressing manufacturing challenges and driving competitiveness.

2.1 Support the Digital Transformation of Enterprise

Timeline	Ongoing roll out of Digital Transition Fund to 2026 ●
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (Lead); Enterprise Ireland; IDA Ireland; Údarás na Gaeltachta
Update	<p>The Digital Transition Fund was established as part of the €85 million "Digital Transformation of Enterprise" measure in Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP). Funding is in place to help companies at all stages of their digital journey, with particular emphasis on SMEs – from simply bringing businesses online, to the digitalisation of products and business processes, as well as facilitating exporting and using digital technologies to develop new markets and business models. The Digital Transition Fund continued to be rolled out during 2024 with direct grant supports available from Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta through a range of digital offers. As of the end of 2024, 558 companies in total have been approved for funding to the value of €46.15 million since the launch of the fund in 2022.</p> <p>NRRP funding under the "Digital Transformation of Enterprise" measure also supports the Four European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIH's) established in 2023 (see 2.2 below). Of these, FxC and CeADAR are co-funded by the NRRP and the Digital Europe Programme, while DATA2SUSTAIN and ENTIRE are 100% funded by the NRRP.</p>

2.2 Establish European Digital Innovation Hubs

Timeline	Q4 2023: Ireland's EDIH programme will be operational by end of 2023 ●
Responsibility	Enterprise Ireland (lead); Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Update	<p>Further to the successful establishment of the four European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs) in 2023, as part of the European Commission's Digital Europe Programme, activity and engagement continued to rise across all 4 EDIHs during 2024. The EDIHs initiated and continued support for digital transformation in SMEs and public sector organisations by encouraging the adoption of the latest advances in the three key technologies of Cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and High-Performance Computing (HPC). During the second half of 2024, the EDIHs collectively supported 195 companies, predominantly SMEs, and 54 public service organisations. Over €1.9 million in funding was expended by the four EDIHs with the aim of helping companies through access to research infrastructure, technical expertise and experimentation in order that these organisations can 'test before invest'. As of end 2024, a total of 505 services to 337 companies (predominantly SMEs and start-ups) have been provided since the Hubs were established.</p> <p>The supports offered included digital maturity assessments, 'Test Before Invest' support, training and upskilling, networking and ecosystem activities and supports to find investment. Several key events were hosted including Data2Sustain's Industry Day, supported by the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN). This event took place in October 2024 at the AIM Centre in Sligo and attracted over 100 attendees from 37 companies along with 30 public sector and organisational representatives. The focus of the event was on advancing digitalisation and data-driven innovation, offering key insights on how digital technologies can drive business growth. Other key events included CeADAR's 'Empowering SMEs and PSOs to Use AI through the EDIH Programme' which took place in November 2024 and focused on supporting businesses and public service organisations to embrace digital and AI. In October, Data2Sustain hosted 'Smart Regions through the Use of IoT Technologies', which focused on how the Internet of Things (IoT) is helping to create smarter, more sustainable communities and improving local services and infrastructure. FactoryXChange, led by Irish Manufacturing Research (IMR), delivered several training and bootcamp style programmes at various locations around Ireland on the topics of digitalisation, ESG and the Corporate Social Reporting Directive (CSRD).</p> <p>The second half of 2024 concluded with exciting plans from the EDIHs for more SME and PSO support and the launch of new programmes and events that will continue to accelerate digital transformation during 2025.</p>

2.3 Develop a Digital Portal for Enterprise

Timeline	<p>Q4 2023: Digital Portal is live ●</p> <p>Q4 2024: Continuous development and refinement of portal ●</p>
Responsibility	<p>Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (Lead); Enterprise Ireland; IDA Ireland; Údarás na Gaeltachta; Local Enterprise Offices</p>
Update	<p>The 'Grow Digital' portal was launched in July 2024 and has had over 10,000 visits during H2 2024. The portal offers a free online assessment for businesses to help identify where they are on their digitalisation journey and what steps and digital tools they might consider using to enhance their competitiveness and efficiency.</p> <p>The Grow Digital Scorecard, as a key feature of the portal, additionally provides bespoke advice and information on potential supports and funding options available to firms. This resource provides the foundations wider engagement between businesses and Local Enterprise Offices, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Enterprise Ireland, and/or IDA Ireland.</p> <p>Resources are also available to businesses through the portal on the benefits of digitalisation, and a case study catalogue of digitalisation success stories, which it is intended will be expanded over time. Further information is available at: www.growdigital.gov.ie</p> <p>Following the successful launch of the Grow Digital portal in July 2024, refinement of content on the portal has commenced to ensure that content is continuously kept up to date, and the portal adjusted and simplified where required following feedback. In particular, further case studies will be added during H1 2025 to ensure a diverse range of sectors and digital solutions are included. Social Media promotion will also continue during 2025 with further promotional opportunities to be explored during the course of the year.</p>

2.4 Drive Uptake of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools in Enterprise

Timeline	<p>Q4 2023: Publish a Standards and Assurance Roadmap for AI ●</p> <p>Ongoing to Q4 2024: Implement the recommendations of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs ●</p> <p>Ongoing: Monitoring of uptake of AI tools as part of the EU Digital Decade to 2030 ●</p>
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Update	<p>The AI Standards and Assurance Roadmap was published by the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) in H2 2023. The Roadmap sets out a number of actions to support implementation of the Standards and Assurance aspects of the EU AI Act, ensuring that Ireland can safely unlock the potential that AI can provide. The Roadmap was developed by the Top Team on Standards for AI process, which is led by the NSAI and represents a collaborative effort based on input from various stakeholders and experts from across the Irish AI community, including industry, academia, civil society, the private and public sectors.</p> <p>During 2024, NSAI continued active participation in ISO/JTC1/SC42 (International committee for AI Standards) and CEN-CLC/JTC21 (European committee on AI Standards) and two out of five working groups at SC42 are now convened by Irish national delegates elected for a three-year term ending 2027. With its diversity and bench strength at national committee, Ireland was able to send two distinct delegations, one at European and another to ISO plenary simultaneously. The majority of delegates at the European meeting represented small and medium businesses. The delegates are engaged in working drafts of European AI standards as they are being readied to be shared with EC/JRC for first review. NSAI, with its national experts, will focus attention on the European standards especially those pertaining to Quality, Risk Management etc. as they move towards review as they may be prospective candidates in AI assurance. NSAI also contributed to working discussions in areas of the EU AI Act implementation obligations.</p>

The report on AI Skills was published by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs in June 2022. An Implementation Group was formed to take the ten recommendations in the report forward during 2023 and 2024 and consists of stakeholders responsible across each of the ten areas. Significant progress has been made on many of the recommendations set out in the report.

Since 2022, support for initiatives in AI in teaching, learning and assessment practices has been provided to HEIs by the HEA through the Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement (SATLE) Fund. This funding has been allocated under its themes of Digital Transformation as well as Academic Integrity (€7.7 million in 2022, €6.1 million in 2023, and €5 million in 2024).

The HEA has funded the development and national delivery of an open course in partnership with Trinity College Dublin, titled "Using GenAI in Teaching and Learning", which was rolled out in Q4 2024 with 58 participants from 22 HEIs. A self-study course off this content will be made available nationally during H1 2025 to further extend its reach and impact.

CCT College Dublin is providing a Higher Diploma in AI Applications as well as a re-validated Level 7 Diploma in AI, available for those looking to transition into a career in Artificial Intelligence in 2024. CCT has an internal professional development series in AI raising the awareness in assessments and continuing changes in the landscape of AI. A new micro credential certification in Applications of AI in the modern world is also currently under development.

IDA Ireland is focusing on integrating AI investment, talent and ecosystem information throughout its recent website rebranding exercise, and through its partnership with Silicon Republic and Microsoft/LinkedIn. Key deliverables included:

1. **Tech/AI Talent Content:** IDA Ireland launched a new podcast, video and article series with Silicon Republic called the Leaders' Room which features 'sit-down chats with the country managers of some of Ireland's leading sci-tech multinationals'.
2. **Client Investment Journeys:** IDA Ireland has created 35+ new client success stories that capture AI, technology & R&D in practice across the multinational services and manufacturing sectors.
3. **Labour Market Pulse:** IDA Ireland continues its on-going partnership with Microsoft/LinkedIn to develop Labour Market Pulse reports that capture trends in hiring across the Irish jobs market. A second AI themed report was launched in 2024 entitled: Ireland's edge: Reinventing work and unlocking talent potential through generative AI.
4. **AI Value Proposition:** IDA Ireland is working on a number of long-form value propositions articles that capture the strength of the AI talent ecosystem in Ireland. The first in this series is an article entitled Ireland's AI Hub, 2024.

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment continues to monitor the uptake of AI tools. The recent Eurostat eCommerce and ICT Survey shows that there has been an increase in SMEs overall use of AI from 8.0% in 2023 to 14.9% in 2024. This comprises of 11.8% of small enterprises compared to 5.3% in 2023; 24.9% of medium enterprises compared to 7.2% in 2023 and 50.8% of large enterprises compared to 36.3% in 2023.

The Refresh of the National AI Strategy was published by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in Q4 2024. It contains key updates on deliverables under Strand 3 of the National Artificial Intelligence Strategy for Ireland (Driving Adoption of AI in Irish Enterprise) including the development of a national campaign to raise awareness of the benefits of AI to enterprises and to examine options to expand CeADAR, the EI/IDA Technology Centre for Applied Data Analytics and Machine Intelligence.

2.5 Drive Digital Manufacturing Objectives Through Support for Industry 4.0

Timeline	Ongoing: Implementation of Industry 4.0 ●
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Update	<p>Digital transformation of the manufacturing sector remains a key priority for the Department of Enterprise, Trade, and Employment. Ensuring the resilience of this sector is essential to maintain employment and the productivity of this core component of our economy. While Industry 4.0 epitomises the drive towards the deployment of digital technologies underpinning step changes in productivity and efficiency, an expanded scope to include wider societal issues such as sustainability and the net zero agenda, human centric manufacturing perspectives, supply chain resilience and an emphasis on culture, skills and training, are the core focus of what is now termed Industry 5.0. Three core sets of activity have progressed during 2023 and 2024. The first of these is ongoing work of the enterprise agencies to deploy a suite of support mechanisms designed to develop and sustain the manufacturing enterprise base. Key support tools such as digital assessment and benchmarking, skills and training assessment, and sustainability mechanisms have been developed and join a suite of measures designed to enhance innovation, productivity, and the sustainability of the manufacturing base.</p> <p>The second distinctive activity of the enterprise agencies is to support the digital transformation agenda of manufacturing companies. This approach is strategic and takes into account the innovation profile of the company as well as training and talent, and sustainability and net zero targets. Support mechanisms administered by the enterprise agencies are tailored to companies depending on their specific needs and digital maturity levels.</p> <p>Collaborative innovation forms a third set of activity where companies are actively engaging with state supported infrastructure and programmes to develop their internal operations and commercial products and services. A growing cohort of manufacturing companies continue to engage with technology centres, technology gateways, and with National Institutes and centres of scale such as Tyndall, NIBRT and Digital Manufacturing Ireland. In addition to these core centres of activity, there are additional centres which have specialist capability with certain technology sets or in certain market sectors such as Artificial Intelligence, Software, Data Analytics, and with Dairy, Nutrition or Renewable Energy which serve the innovation agenda of companies. Furthermore, collaborative innovation programmes such as the Disruptive Technologies Innovation Fund and access to European funding programmes are also servicing further development and innovation functions within manufacturing companies across the enterprise sector.</p>

Timeline	Q3 2023: Commencement of further funding of technology gateways ●
	Ongoing: Further development of IMR Technology Centre ●
Responsibility	Enterprise Ireland
Update	<p>Since 2013, the number of Technology Gateways has increased from 12 to 17, covering all regions of the county and sectors of the economy. These Gateways operate in a range of sectors and work with companies from start-ups and SMEs through to Multinationals, providing knowledge, experience, funding support and innovation solutions. The latest funding call closed in Q1 2023 and received 17 applications. All 17 applications received were evaluated and subsequently approved for funding by the Enterprise Ireland Board in 2023 for an additional six years.</p>
	<p>Since May 2023, the programme has completed over 1,450 projects in collaboration with local industry, at a value of over €12million, €7.2million of which was contributed from industry.</p>
	<p>Irish Manufacturing Research Technology Centre (IMR) has been engaged widely with stakeholders to develop an ambition and vision to support Manufacturing 5.0 for SMEs from 2025 to 2030. During H2 2024, Enterprise Ireland agreed to a 1-year extension of the Centre's current phase of funding to facilitate continued development and thorough evaluation of IMR's next strategic scaled plan. Enterprise Ireland continues to work closely with IMR as the Centre develops a strategic plan that will support Manufacturing 5.0 for SMEs over the next 5-year funding phase, which is expected to be finalised and agreed by H1 2025 and is planned to commence in 2026.</p>

Timeline	<p>Q4 2023: NIBRT–Completion of Advanced Therapeutics extension●</p> <p>Q4 2023: DMI–Development of a pipeline of digitalisation projects for Ireland’s manufacturing sector ●</p>
Responsibility	<p>IDA Ireland; Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment</p>
Update	<p>The National Institute for Bioprocessing Research and Training. (NIBRT)’s Advanced Therapeutics Extension was completed on time and on budget at the end of H1 2023. NIBRT’s Advanced Therapeutics Extension was completed and officially opened in H1 2024.</p> <p>This extension has led to a significantly expanded institute that will deepen its research capabilities, underpinning continued competitiveness, capital investment, and job creation in the Biologics sector over the next 10 years. NIBRT continues to enhance its global reputation through strategic partnering and increasing the number of Principal Investigators it is hiring to build world-class research capabilities.</p> <p>Digital Manufacturing Ireland (DMI) is an Irish Government initiative, aligned with Government’s Industry 4.0 Strategy 2020-2025. It is supported by IDA Ireland and facilitates Irish based manufacturers (MNCs and SMEs) in accelerating their adoption of Digital Transformation and Sustainable Manufacturing Practices, including through upskilling and business supports.</p> <p>Digital Manufacturing Ireland has approximately 50 client digitisation projects underway in relation to digital transformation needs, with over 20 projects currently beyond the definition stage and are being progressed with DMI support. DMI, in its engagement with industry, has established several cross-sectoral collaboration groups designed to take an industry-led approach to addressing manufacturing challenges and driving competitiveness.</p> <p>As part of wider digitalisation efforts, IDA Ireland also utilises diagnostics tools (Advanced Manufacturing Diagnostic, Innovation Scorecard and Digitalisation Diagnostic for Services) to support its client base in Ireland to position themselves for future growth as technology adoption and digital transformation accelerate. Feedback has been provided to client companies during this process, and areas for further development around innovation, sustainability, talent development and digitalisation have been identified for improvements moving forward.</p> <p>IDA Ireland will continue to work with clients to develop roadmaps to address these areas, such as digitalisation transformation plans, talent development strategies as well as sustainability assessments and resultant action plans.</p>

3. Advancing Ireland's FDI and Trade Value Proposition

As a small open economy deeply embedded in Global Value Chains, FDI and Trade will remain central to Ireland's growth model and economic strategy. Ireland continued to advance its trade policy objectives through involvement in the EU and WTO, where Ireland continues to advocate for open sustainable trade.

A final report on 'The Opportunities and Impacts of Digital Trade for Ireland' was completed in H2 2024, which will inform Ireland's position on digital trade issues in EU Trade Policy, as well as the development of digital trade principles in the negotiations for a number of ongoing Free Trade Agreements.

Engagements at an EU level also continued to be advanced. This included formal meetings of Trade Council held in Brussels to discuss the future of EU trade policy, as well as the finalisation of the EU-Kenya Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and the EU-Angola Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreement (SIFA), which represented the first-ever EU agreement on investment facilitation and aims to stimulate foreign investments needed to achieve ambitions around the Sustainable Development Goals.

The implementation of the seven priority actions in the Trade & Investment Strategy 2022-2026 is overseen by the Trade & Investment Council. Work continued on a range of implementation measures during the course of 2024 including the publication of a report on Positioning Ireland within Global Value Chains (GVC) and Supply Chains, which will guide Ireland's position in GVCs. Ireland also had its second annual Trade Horizons Conference in July 2024, focusing on the value of 'Trade for a Sustainable Future'.

IDA Ireland and Digital Manufacturing Ireland (DMI) continued to promote the transformation of Ireland's FDI base to meet the twin transition, with sustainability investments and digitisation engagements continuing to perform strongly across the course of 2024. IDA Ireland secured 234 projects during 2024. 137 of these projects are planned for regional locations, representing 58% of total projects and ahead of the 50% target for new investments located outside of Dublin. For the period 2011-2024, regional projects accounted for 54% of total investments approved. 190 RD&I projects have also been approved as of year-end 2024, representing 112% above the target of 170 set by IDA Ireland. These account for client company spending commitments of €4.8 billion on RD&I, representing 126% of the 2024 yearend target of €3.8 billion in investment.

Since the launch of launch Digital Manufacturing Ireland (DMI) back in 2023, DMI has attracted strong industry interest. There were over 400 client engagements undertaken by DMI during the period 2023-2024, to support companies commencing or advancing their digital transformation journey. In 2024, there were 939 site visits to DMI, with 859 participants engaged with DMI across multiples of companies over the same period.

3.1 Promote Open, Rules-Based and Sustainable Global Trade

Timeline	<p>Q1 2024: Finalise and publish report on 'The Opportunities and Impacts of Digital Trade for Ireland', to support Irish policy and influence at WTO ●</p> <p>Q1 2024: Successful advocacy for open sustainable trade at EU Trade Policy Committee, EU Trade Council and WTO Ministerial Council with ratification of new EU Free Trade Agreements and successful outcome of WTO MC-13 ●</p> <p>Q2 2024: Progress all seven priority actions in the Trade & Investment Strategy ●</p>
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Update	<p>Indecon International Consultants were selected to undertake a review of the opportunities for Ireland in Digital Trade. The project commenced in May 2023 where the final report was completed in H2 2024. The report includes an analysis of international digital trade and its evolution, and will inform the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment position on digital trade issues in EU Trade Policy. It is expected the findings will also support Ireland's wider engagement with EU counterparts regarding the development of digital trade principles in the negotiations for a number of ongoing Free Trade Agreements.</p> <p>An informal meeting of EU Trade Ministers (attended by senior officials from the various member states rather than Ministers) was held in October 2024, where EU-ASEAN, EU-China and the bloc's investment protection policy were discussed. The formal meeting of Trade Council was held in Brussels in November where the future of EU trade policy and the outcome of the US Presidential elections were the main focus of discussions.</p> <p>In July, the EU-Kenya Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) entered into force, representing a key milestone in the EU-Kenya Strategic Partnership., In September the EU-Angola Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreement (SIFA) also entered into force. This was the first-ever EU agreement on investment facilitation and aims to stimulate foreign investments needed to achieve ambitions around the Sustainable Development Goals.</p> <p>In October 2024, the EU and Canada adopted a Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) on the professional qualifications of architects - the first bilateral MRA for professional qualifications to be concluded by the EU. Whilst in December, the European Commission announced that it had concluded negotiations with Mercosur on the EU-Mercosur Agreement. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment continues to seek clarifications from the European Commission on matters relating to the environment, biodiversity and sustainability provisions. In advance of receiving the additional clarifications, Ireland's position on the EU-Mercosur Agreement remains as clearly outlined in the Programme for Government 2025.</p>

The implementation of the seven priority actions in the Trade & Investment Strategy 2022-2026 is overseen by the Trade & Investment Council. Work continued on a range of implementation measures during the course of 2024, with further implementation of these actions set to continue during 2025. Key updates for 2024 are detailed as follows:

- Support for Ireland's Economic and Trade 'Ecosystem': The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment continued to work on strengthening Ireland's domestic ecosystem, working with EU and international partners, strengthening our alliances to shape emerging policies, regulation and international agreements that impact Ireland's economic and business environment, as well as our competitiveness.
- Review and Refresh the Local Market Teams: 2023 reporting from the Local Market Teams (LMTs) and Regional Market Teams (RMTs) was presented to the Trade & Investment Council, where it was discussed and approved with recommendations to be implemented moving forward.
- Positioning Ireland within Global Value Chains (GVC) and Supply Chains: A final report from the Expert Group on Global Value and Supply Chains summarising the analysis along with policy recommendations made to solidify Ireland's position in GVCs was presented to the Trade & Investment Council where a version of the [report was published in November 2024](#).
- Communicating Ireland's Interests as a Trading Nation: A communications and engagement policy entitled 'Ireland's Values as a Trading Nation' was approved by the Trade & Investment Council in Q3 2023 and is currently being implemented to ensure Ireland's interests as a trading nation are communicated effectively.
- Maximising Ireland's return from EU Free Trade Agreements: A policy brief was delivered at the Trade & Investment Council on the key findings of a report developed on Ireland's utilisation of Free Trade Agreements, where it is intended that a version of this report will be published in H1 2025.
- Team Ireland - Trade Mission Week: A report on Ireland's inaugural Team Ireland Trade Mission Week in South Korea was brought to the Trade & Investment Council in H1 2024 and is detailed further in Section 3.3. Reaping the Benefits of the EU Single Market: The Single Market Enforcement Taskforce (SMET) was set up in 2020, to strengthen the implementation and enforcement of Single Market rules on the ground. Officials from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment have actively engaged in the SMET since its inception.

3.2 Deepen Irish Participation in Global Value Chains

Timeline	Q4 2024: Review report published and next steps confirmed●
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Update	<p>An expert group on Global Value Chains (GVCs) was established to provide fresh perspectives in understanding business-business relationships, mechanisms for increasing efficiency, productivity, competitiveness, entrepreneurship, and SME growth within GVCs.</p> <p>A report summarising the analysis and findings of the Expert Group along with recommendations made by the Expert Group to solidify Ireland's position in GVCs was developed during 2023 and presented to the Trade & Investment Council in April 2024.</p> <p>The final report of the Expert Group on Global Value Chains was launched by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment in November 2024. The report details recommendations on important policy actions to enable business to build more resilient supply chains with Government support. This includes the need for regular monitoring of trade dependencies; partnering with industry and international partners to stress test supply chains; focused advisory supports to assist companies in their risk assessment; regular stakeholder dialogue; continued advocating for open international markets and ensuring world-class trade facilitation systems.</p> <p>The Expert Group also stressed in the report, that in order to support effective participation in global value chains, enterprises need continued long-term investment in the innovation system, infrastructure, strategic sectors, leadership and skills, digital capabilities and sustainable production methods in order that companies can remain flexible and agile to the international environment.</p>

3.3 Promote Trade Opportunities

Timeline	<p>Q3 2023: High-level Trade Conference ●</p> <p>Q3 2023: First Team Ireland Trade Mission week ●</p> <p>Q4 2023: Review of first Team Ireland Trade Mission week by Trade and Investment Council ●</p>
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Update	<p>The second annual Trade Horizons Conference was held in Dublin Castle in July 2024 and focused on the value of 'Trade for a Sustainable Future'. This conference included speakers from the OECD and WTO and featured panel discussions focusing on trade and sustainability.</p> <p>The second annual Trade Horizons Conference achieved full attendance with over 300 participants, including national and international business leaders and other key stakeholders. The conference was well received by those in attendance with a number of follow-up engagements having taken place.</p> <p>Discussions are now ongoing regarding the planning of the next Trade Horizons Conference to take place in 2025, which will be a co-branded event with the Department of Foreign Affairs and will focus on Africa.</p> <p>Following the successful inaugural Team Ireland Trade Mission Week (TITMW) to South Korea in 2023, TITMW are now intended to be completed on an annual basis to different locations. Work is underway to plan the next Team Ireland Trade Mission in 2025, where a destination is to be finalised by the Trade and Investment Council in H1 2025.</p> <p>A report on Ireland's inaugural TITMW in South Korea was presented and discussed at the Trade & Investment Council meeting in April 2024. The Team Ireland Trade Mission Week can be considered a success with tangible achievements identified as a direct result of this initiative, and overall feedback being overwhelmingly positive. These outcomes include South Korea's parliament agreeing to complete the process allowing market access for Irish beef imports and securing an exemption from K-ETA for Irish travellers, enabling Irish citizens to travel visa-free to South Korea.</p> <p>Other significant deliverables are individual Memoranda of Understanding (MOU's) signed between Korean and Irish businesses, and long-term relationships being established which are expected to lead to further future business opportunities between the two countries over time.</p>

3.4 Transform the Sustainability Performance of the FDI Sector

Timeline	<p>Q4 2023: Promote a coherent suite of advisory and financial supports for FDI clients to achieve their carbon reduction and net zero ambitions ●</p> <p>Q4 2024: Achieve 60 sustainability investments in the period 2021 to 2024 ●</p>
Responsibility	IDA Ireland
Update	<p>IDA Ireland has a suite of advisory and financial supports to enable FDI clients achieve their carbon reduction and net zero ambitions. The Green Capital Grant Support Programme, DEEDS Advisory Framework and bespoke Value Propositions have enabled the delivery of positive environmental change across the portfolio of clients with the primary focus of carbon abatement investment in energy efficiency, process electrification and on-site renewable energy generation.</p> <p>The four-year sustainability targets set out in IDA Ireland's "Driving Recovery & Sustainable Growth 2021-24" strategy have now been exceeded. 93 sustainability investments have been supported since 2021, representing 155% of the strategy target. Client expenditure of €247 million over this time will lead to a total emissions reduction of 75,630 tCo2.</p> <p>31 sustainable investments have been secured during 2024. These projects focused on carbon abatement and building Ireland's green economy capabilities.</p> <p>This brings total sustainable investments during under the 2021-2024 IDA Ireland strategy to 93, against a strategy target of 60 investments for 2021-24 (155% of target).</p>

3.5 Increase Investments in our Regions

Timeline	<p>Q4 2024: At least half of all FDI investments for 2021-2024 to locations outside Dublin ●</p> <p>Q4 2024: Progress the delivery of 19 advanced building solutions in regional locations and the development of strategic landbanks for utility intensive investments ●</p>
Responsibility	IDA Ireland
Update	<p>In 2024, IDA Ireland secured 234 projects, 137 of which are planned for regional locations (58%). This brings total regional investments to 529 against a target of 400 under the 2021-2024 IDA Ireland strategy (132% of regional target). Regional projects accounted for 54% of total investments approved during the same period, exceeding the minimum 50% target.</p> <p>As of end of H2 2024, IDA Ireland's Property Division has completed eleven Advanced Building Solutions (ABS) in 7 locations across 4 regions. There are two ABS under construction in Cavan and Letterkenny ABS. The remaining ABS projects are at various stages of design, planning, procurement and site selection.</p> <p>IDA Ireland continues to develop properties under the Regional Building Programme and as such, has announced an ambitious pipeline of projects for delivery during the lifetime of the current strategy, Adapt Intelligently. This includes a number of properties that were not completed during the Driving Recovery & Sustainable Growth Strategy in key regional locations. 12 buildings will be completed in this strategy cycle.</p>

3.6 Strengthen Collaboration between MNCs and SMEs

Timeline	Ongoing to Q4 2024: Implementation of Global Sourcing Initiative to contribute to a 20% uplift in IDA client expenditure in Ireland by Q4 2024 ●
Responsibility	IDA Ireland; Enterprise Ireland
Update	<p>IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland are working closely together on assisting Enterprise Ireland clients to gain access to the buyers and supply chain decision makers of multinationals with operations in Ireland.</p> <p>Enterprise Ireland has had positive engagement with IDA's largest clients in verticals such as life sciences and technology to discuss opportunities for Irish owned companies. Follow- up introductions between Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland clients have been made, which will lead to opportunities for local sourcing throughout 2025.</p> <p>Two successful supplier day events were held in regional locations during H2 2024, focused on the Life Sciences and Green Economy sectors.</p>

3.7 Enhance FDI Partnering in Research, Development and Innovation

Timeline	Q4 2024: Deliver 170 additional RD&I investments, and cumulative RD&I investment of €3.8 billion, by client companies in the period 2021-2024●
Responsibility	IDA Ireland
Update	<p>Against the target of 170 additional RD&I investments, 190 RD&I projects have been approved as of year-end 2024 (112% of target).</p> <p>The approved projects are of significant scale, with client companies committing to spending €4.8 billion on RD&I, representing 126% of the targeted €3.8 billion investment by year end 2024.</p>

3.8 Enable Digitalisation of our FDI Base

Timeline	Q4 2024: Engage 400 companies to commence their digitalisation journey with awareness and advisory assistance ●
Responsibility	IDA Ireland, Digital Manufacturing Ireland
Update	<p>Digital Manufacturing Ireland (DMI) was formally launched in March 2023 to enable Irish-based manufacturers access, adopt and accelerate new digital technologies.</p> <p>Since its official launch, DMI has attracted strong industry interest, with 2,229 site visits undertaken in 2023. These visits incorporated meetings for companies to learn about the capabilities of DMI and/or Digital Transformation opportunities in general. In 2024, there were 414 site visits to DMI (mostly repeat visits from companies on project opportunities). There were also 298 participants with DMI across multiples of companies over the same period, where participants are defined as contributing and/or availing of services from DMI.</p> <p>Over the period 2023-2024, there have been over 400 client engagements undertaken by DMI to support those companies commence or advance their digital transformation journey. These engagements have occurred via bilateral projects, across DMI's collaboration groups e.g. VCMG (Visual Cognitive Manufacturing Group) and the Human Centric Manufacturing, via international engagements and via client itineraries to DMI. The increase in client engagements reflect the value clients place on DMI support services in this critical area of Digital Transformation.</p>

4. Strengthening the Irish-owned Exporting Sector

The White Paper on Enterprise recognises that enabling the Irish-owned enterprise sector to fulfil its export potential in diversified global markets will provide Ireland with a strong domestic growth engine. To that end, Enterprise Ireland (EI) and Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) have continued their activity in supporting start-ups and providing entrepreneurs and managers with the skills and training they need to scale business into international markets.

Work continued during 2024 to further develop the pipeline of start-up companies in Ireland, supporting budding entrepreneurs in starting and scaling their businesses. These included LEO programmatic supports through the Start Your Own Business Programme, The New Frontiers Programme as well as 'Start up Moments' campaigns to highlighting companies start up journeys. Seed focused support for business were, both in terms of funding and capacity building supports.

During the course of 2024, Enterprise Ireland approved 90 new High Potential Start Ups (HPSU) from across the food, industrial technology & services sectors. 68% of these approvals in the Technology & Services sector. In addition, 38 follow-on investments were approved in 2024 for existing HPSU clients. In July 2024, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment published a report in July 2024 on the use of finance as a catalyst to develop a scaling ecosystem. This report contained recommendations designed to support high-potential firms to access scaling aid, where an implementation group was formed in H2 2024 which is tasked with developing concrete actions to deliver on the recommendations of the report.

The Leadership 4 Growth and Go Global 4 Growth (now called Dynamic Leadership Roadmap to Growth) programmes were both successfully redesigned in 2024, leveraging feedback from stakeholder engagement consultations to ensure a more refined and enhanced approach to supporting companies in scaling. Enterprise Ireland continued to build on its range of supports for exporting firms into international markets, including a Trade Mission week to New York, supporting Digital Irish Start Up Week and running programmes to support capital raising and growth through acquisitions. Wider events during the course of the year spanned global markets, including the UAE, India & Bangladesh, Poland, the UK and Singapore. This is in addition to over 50 events held as part of the St Patrick's Day series of events, which spanned 17 countries and supported over 350 clients.

These and other such measures continued to bear fruit, with latest 2023 results from the Annual Business Review (ABR) indicating a number of clients achieving scale at the sales milestones of €10 million, €20 million and €50 million marks. Overall, exports from Enterprise Ireland clients were €34.57 billion in 2023, already exceeding the 2024 target of €32 billion. 29% of these exports (€9.97 billion) were to the UK with 71% of exports going to destinations outside the UK (€24.6 billion).

Enterprise Ireland has also continued extensive engagement with client companies on sustainability and climate issues. The 3-year target of 425 climate projects was achieved in 2024, with 114 climate projects delivered alone during H2 2024.

4.1 Support Entrepreneurship and Start-Ups

Timeline	<p>Ongoing to Q4 2024: Strengthen the pipeline of entrepreneurs and start-ups through the Start your own Business Programme, New Frontiers and FoodWorks, targeting increased participation ●</p> <p>Ongoing to Q4 2024: Support 60 companies annually through the HPSU pre-seed offer ●</p> <p>Ongoing to Q4 2024: Support 90 new HPSUs at seed stage with risk capital annually ●</p>
Responsibility Update	<p>Enterprise Ireland</p> <p>During H2 2024, work continued to develop the pipeline of start-up companies under three main areas:</p> <p>(a) The LEO Start Your Own Business/Entrepreneurship programme continues to support budding entrepreneurs in setting up new businesses and develops a pipeline of potential start-up companies. During 2024, the LEO's delivered 359 Start Your Own Business programmes which were attended by 5,125 participants.</p> <p>(b) The New Frontiers Programme supports ambitious founders of early-stage businesses over three phases. In H2 2024, 113 entrepreneurs commenced Phase 2 of the New Frontiers Programme. Phase 2 is a full-time six-month intensive commitment for participants which are offered through a competitive selection process. Participants are learning to develop and validate business propositions, working on their capacities as founders.</p>

	<p>c) Media Campaigns. Enterprise Ireland launched the "Start-Up Moments" campaign in H1 2024 which aimed to promote the role of Enterprise Ireland at all stages of the start-up journey, using 8 client case studies. The campaign launched in February with a second burst in May throughout national and regional media: radio, press, digital and social media. Results since show that over 944,000 adults heard the radio ad once with 361,000 listens via digital audio. Digital results were also strong with 437,000 social impressions, 361,000 video views and 556,000 digital impressions. In November 2024, a tactical radio, print and largely digital campaign was launched to promote the Pre-Seed Start Fund to early-stage founders and drive applications. This campaign ultimately delivered 750,000 digital impressions and 1.5 million social impressions.</p> <p>d) The Food Works programme completed its 11th year in 2024. This is a 10-month tri-agency investment accelerator programme designed to support food and drink start-ups. 9 companies completed the programme during 2024, which concluded with a live investor pitch day held at Enterprise Ireland offices. Participating companies are eligible to apply for Enterprise Ireland HPSU feasibility grant funding, where a total of €200,292 in grant funding was approved to participants in 2024.</p> <p>In 2024, Enterprise Ireland approved 69 new Pre-Seed Start Fund (PSSF) proposals for funding. These early-stage companies were onboarded as Enterprise Ireland clients across all High Potential Start Ups (HPSU's) sectors - Food, Fintech, ICT and ILS. 35% of the approvals made were from companies outside Dublin, with 30% of them female led. In addition, 16 PSSF funded companies went on to receive HPSU funding during 2024. In H2 2024 specifically, 13 of these companies completed the second Prep4Seed programme (delivered by Business Innovation Centres in collaboration with EI) representing the industry sectors of ICT, Food, Fintech, Gaming and Sustainability. Furthermore, in H2 2024 a new pilot capability-building programme was launched to support new PSSF clients in achieving company development milestones and getting an understanding of investor expectations.</p> <p>In 2024, Enterprise Ireland approved 90 new High Potential Start Ups (HPSU). The 90 HPSU approvals were across the food, industrial technology & services sectors, with 68% of the approvals in the Technology & Services sector. Of the 90 HPSUs approved, 26% of these were female led. In addition, 38 follow-on investments were approved in 2024 for existing HPSU clients.</p>
--	---

4.2 Develop Scaling Finance for Irish Firms

Timeline	<p>Q3 2023: Delivery and publication of Report from the Finance for Scaling Working Group ●</p> <p>Q4 2023: Analyse recommendations of the Working Group report, and develop implementation plan ●</p>
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Update	<p>In response to challenges for scale ups in accessing finance in Ireland, a Finance for Scale Ups (FSU) Working Group was established with the aim to develop a report detailing actionable recommendations to support high potential firms to access scaling finance. This was reflective of the fact Ireland, and the wider EU, continues to lag behind in terms of access to finance when compared with other regions.</p> <p>The FSU Working Group have now completed this report, which was published by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment Peter Burke, T.D in July 2024.</p> <p>The report makes 3 key recommendations designed to support high-potential firms to access scaling aid, namely: to ensure that scaling finance is available by introducing and promoting funds that will provide scaling finance options to founders and start-ups; to investigate options for pension fund and institutional investor participation in scaling equity funds and encourage corporate venturing in Ireland; and to review the State's tax model and design instruments that incentivise investment into scaling companies.</p> <p>Following publication of the report on the use of finance as a catalyst to develop a scaling ecosystem in Ireland during H1 2024, work on the implementation of the report commenced in H2 2024. An Implementation Working Group and a High-level Implementation Oversight Group were both established, where these inter-departmental and inter-agency Groups are working to develop concrete actions to deliver on the recommendations of the report.</p> <p>The work of these Groups is supported by a research consultancy project to assess the market for scaling finance, which commenced in December 2024, as well as by an Expert Advisory Panel of stakeholders with specific expertise and experience relevant to the implementation objectives.</p>

4.3 Enhance Scaling Capabilities and Skills

Timeline	<p>Q4 2023: Redesign leadership programmes that support scaling including the Leadership 4 Growth and Go Global for Growth to meet the changing needs of scaling companies ●</p> <p>Q4 2023: Expand programme of events and number of participants availing of strategic funding upskilling initiatives so that more business owners have access to advice on how to rapidly scale a business and source the most appropriate funding based on their business needs ●</p> <p>Ongoing: Continue to support the scaling of Irish companies through initiatives such as the Job Expansion Fund, the Capital Investment Initiative and tailored company expansion packages to contribute to the overall White Paper target of a 50% increase in the number of large Irish companies by 2030 ●</p>
Responsibility	<p>Enterprise Ireland</p>
Update	<p>Both the Leadership 4 Growth and Go Global 4 Growth (now called Dynamic Leadership Roadmap to Growth) programmes were successfully redesigned, largely driven by feedback derived from stakeholder engagement and evaluations conducted during 2023 and 2024. The subsequent partnership tendering process was completed by the end of Q3 2024, with IESE Business School selected. Recruitment for the Leadership for Growth program began in Q4 2024. Key updates are:</p> <p>Leadership for Growth: cohort 1 commenced in Dec 2024. 35 CEOs are participating in the programme, with 11 female CEOs, representing the highest percentage females participating in the Leadership for Growth programme to-date.</p> <p>Dynamic Leadership, Roadmap to Growth: recruitment for cohort 1 was completed in December 2024, where the programme started in January 2025. There are 52 senior leader participants, of which 19 are female. This represents the highest percentage of female executive participation to-date.</p>

	<p>Enterprise Ireland completed a series of events in H2 2024 to support scaling amongst clients. These events included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New York Trade Mission with Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment Peter Burke TD. The trade mission commenced with an event hosted by Citi Ventures and Citi Investment Bank and included a Tour of Citi Cybersecurity Fusion Centre and an afternoon Networking Session hosted by Citibank. Four scaling companies attended a breakfast event with an audience of investment funds who had an interest in investing in Irish companies with the opportunity to pitch to the attendees and a number of Venture Capital firms invited by Enterprise Ireland's New York office. • Digital Irish Start Up Week New York - 17 client companies attended a Fundamentals of Capital Raising Workshop prior to Digital Irish Start Up Week, this included a Pitch Session with the Mentor Network to get "Pitch Ready", where participating companies had the opportunity to publicly pitch to the New York business diaspora. • Fundamentals of Capital Raising Workshop and Pitch Session with the Mentor Network, set up to prepare clients in advance of attending Techcrunch Disrupt in San Francisco and Slush in Finland. • Growth Through Acquisitions a 2-day programme for 26 Enterprise Ireland client companies which provided practical strategies for topics including target identification, funding the acquisition and post-merger integration. <p>Accelerating the export growth and diversification strategies of Irish companies continued to be a priority focus during 2024. Results from the 2023 Annual Business Review (ABR) show an increase in the number of clients achieving scale at the following sales milestones: €10m, €20m and €50m. Enterprise Ireland's ABR of clients' exports in 2024 is due to commence in early 2025.</p>
--	---

Timeline	<p>Q1 2024: Complete OECD-led study on incubation and acceleration programmes to support internationalisation of HPSUs ●</p> <p>Q4 2024: Launch new policy on incubation and acceleration programmes that will increase the internationalisation of HPSUs ●</p>
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Update	<p>The OECD-led study and accompanying report seeks to identify international best practice in terms of incubation and acceleration programmes in promoting the exporting and internationalisation scale-up of start-ups. This OECD report, "Supporting start-up globalisation in Ireland through incubation and acceleration" which was commissioned by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment was published in November 2024. It sets out an assessment of Ireland's startup support system and provides recommendations that will help to inform future policy direction.</p>
	<p>The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment has since commenced the process of developing a new policy on incubation and acceleration programmes that will increase the internationalisation of start-ups with a view to publishing during H1 2025. The policy statement will respond to the recommendations of the OECD and outline the guiding principles underpinning the actions that Government will take to foster the internationalisation of start-ups and to improve Ireland's international reputation as a location of choice for start-ups.</p>

4.4 Accelerate the Export Growth of Irish Enterprise

Timeline	<p>Q4 2024: The total value of exports reported by Enterprise Ireland client companies on an annual basis to reach €30 billion by 2024, and updated accordingly following periodic review ●</p> <p>Q4 2024: The value of Enterprise Ireland client companies' exports going to destinations outside of the UK market will represent 70% of total exports ●</p>
Responsibility	Enterprise Ireland
Update	<p>In 2023, Exports from Enterprise Ireland clients were €34.57 billion, exceeding the Enterprise Ireland 2024 target of €32 billion. (Enterprise Ireland Annual Business Review 2023). Accelerating the export growth and diversification strategies of Irish companies continued to be a focus for Enterprise Ireland during H2 2024, where the 2024 ABR process is to commence in H1 2025.</p> <p>Of the €34.57 billion in exports from Enterprise Ireland clients during 2023, 29% of exports (€9.97 billion) were to the UK and 71% of exports were to destinations outside the UK (€24.6 billion) (Enterprise Ireland Annual Business Review 2023). During 2024, Enterprise Ireland continued to target growth in the UK, North America and Eurozone, the 3 largest export markets in terms of value for Enterprise Ireland clients. 2024 export figures will be calculated in the 2024 ABR process which is set to commence in H1 2025.</p>

4.5 Expand LEO Mandate to Develop the Export Potential of Irish Businesses

Timeline	Q1 2023: Launch pilot of new LEO/Enterprise Ireland framework to extend direct financial assistance to small companies in the manufacturing and internationally traded sectors to become export-ready ●
Responsibility	Local Enterprise Offices; Enterprise Ireland; Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Update	<p>The LEO Framework for companies employing more than 10 and fewer than 50 full time employees with international ambition was launched in Q1 2023. The framework supports the extension of direct financial assistance to small companies in the manufacturing and internationally traded sectors to become export ready. The framework launch has been supported, through bringing together the Enterprise Ireland Regional Teams and the corresponding LEO teams to share knowledge and experience and case studies and develop working relationships to best support client engagement, development and support. A business case was developed by Enterprise Ireland with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, to outline the rationale and a roadmap to deliver on an increase in the number of first-time exporters.</p> <p>All Enterprise Ireland critical roles pivotal to shaping the New Exporter agenda have now been appointed, with recruitment on-going for a USA-based role. In H2 2024, a new four-stage 'Get Exporting' Accelerator pilot programme was launched to simplify the export journey, helping companies succeed in their first export market. The first three phases have now been completed; with 302 companies participating at regional export-readiness assessment clinics and 126 companies on export development workshops up to February 2025 to drive their export ambition. The final stage of the programme is now running with 60 companies participating in an 'In Market Visits' phase to validate their export plan up to May 2025. A new 'Get Exporting' Accelerator Programme is currently in development and due to go to tender in June 2025. Taking the learnings from the pilot, the new programme will further support non-exporting and early-stage exporters build the capability and skills to achieve export success.</p>

4.6 Support Market Diversification of Irish Firms

Timeline	<p>Ongoing to Q4 2024: Deliver digital sales and marketing capability programmes to support clients to reach new markets and customers, in addition to its Market Discovery Fund, Enterprise Ireland will also undertake the Strategic Marketing Review and Digital Marketing Review ●</p> <p>Ongoing to Q4 2023: Launch the Post Brexit: Market Growth & Diversification Grant to support firms impacted by Brexit to identify new market opportunities, develop a market entry plan and grow exports in markets outside of the UK ●</p> <p>Q2 2023: Develop proposal for a new targeted approach to increase the number of first-time exporters to contribute to the Government's target of growing Irish-owned exporters by 2,000 by 2030 ●</p> <p>Q4 2024: Co-ordinate and promote over 100 trade events in key international and local markets annually in 2023 and 2024 to give clients the opportunity to connect with existing and new customers, access key decision makers, increase sales in international markets and exchange ideas ●</p> <p>Q4 2023: A new Enterprise Ireland website will be launched to better signpost relevant supports for Enterprise Ireland and provide an enhanced customer experience for client companies, international partners and customers ●</p> <p>Ongoing to Q4 2023: Enterprise Ireland and Local Enterprise Offices to target the delivery of 200 new exporters per annum by end 2023 ●</p> <p>Q4 2024: A LEO website review to be completed as part of the wider LEO digital transformation plan ●</p>
Responsibility	Enterprise Ireland

<p>Update</p>	<p>Enterprise Ireland's Sales and Marketing client support programmes experienced significant engagement and growth in 2024. For the year, over €7.1 million has been allocated to 229 clients through various marketing support initiatives to enhance their international sales and marketing capabilities both online and offline. These initiatives include the Strategic Marketing Review, Digital Marketing Capability, Digital Marketing Assessment, and the Marketing Discovery Fund. By year end 2024, the Enterprise Ireland Market Research Centre (MRC) had completed approximately 1,625 client research assignments. Additionally, the Digital Marketing Unit conducted three regional in-person Digital Marketing workshops in Kilkenny, Limerick, and Dublin during the same period, attracting 350 clients.</p>
	<p>The Post-Brexit Market Growth (PBG) & Diversification grant concluded in December 2023. In a follow-up survey the final return rate for the survey outreach was 81% response rate with 44 Enterprise Ireland clients, 9 of which were joint EI/Bord Bia clients. A summary of the results was:</p> <p>Market Entry Plans: 77% of companies have already entered or plan to enter the target markets identified for PBG support within 2 years. An additional 16% of companies plan to enter these markets sometime in the near future.</p> <p>Top Target Markets: The top three regions are Europe, North America, and the Middle East & India.</p> <p>Impact of Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 34% developed a strategic approach to enter new markets. ➤ 24% achieved market diversification. ➤ 21% built capability within their teams by working with expert consultants. ➤ 20% reduced reliance on the UK market. <p>Key Challenges Identified: Resources, including staff and finance, were identified as the main challenges for companies.</p>

	<p>The 'Get Exporting' Accelerator was successfully launched in September 2024 to increase the number of first-time exporters, with the first two phases now completed. Phase 1 focused on raising export awareness and in Phase 2, 263 companies participated in regional export assessments driving export ambition. Phase 3 is currently on-going in 2025, with 120 companies attending export workshops and outputting an export plan upon completion. This phase will conclude in Q1 2025, with Phase 4 running from February–May 2025. During 2024, 133 new exporters were achieved (61 Enterprise Ireland clients & 72 Local Enterprise Office clients). Overall, 788 New Exporters have now been achieved against the 2030 target of 2,000.</p> <p>There have been more than 100 trade events that have taken place between 2023 and 2024. Some of the events that take place in Ireland are also focussed on overseas markets.</p> <p>Enterprise Ireland's programme of Trade Missions and events are important gateways to international markets; promoting opportunities for Irish enterprise globally, whilst also highlighting the innovation that Irish companies are bringing to international markets. A series of key events, including trade missions and other programmes focused on helping clients on their export journey were delivered during 2024. These included ministerial led trade missions and events to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) UAE promoting Irish healthcare innovation to UAE and the wider Middle East Region. (b) India & Bangladesh promoting opportunities for Irish companies doing business in the region. (c) Poland promoting high tech construction industry opportunities. (d) London Annual Financial Services Dinner, which took place with over 80 guests from Irish fintech sector, as well as the UK's leading banks, financial institutions and investment funds. (e) Enterprise Ireland delivered the Food Innovation Summit in Dublin where over 400 senior leaders were brought together from the food and drink sector, including innovation experts, policymakers and stakeholders across the research systems. (f) New York and Boston, to boost trade relationships and promote world class Irish companies in the United States. (g) The west coast of the USA, to deepen relationships with leading US tech and entertainment firms, engage with industry leaders, and to strengthen Ireland's foothold in the US market. (h) Singapore Fintech Festival, the world's largest fintech trade event. The mission promoted Ireland as a centre for excellence and innovation for regtech, fintech and financial services, showcased nine Enterprise Ireland clients, and celebrated Irish fintech and financial services companies' success across the Asia Pacific market. <p>In addition, Enterprise Ireland hosted over 50 events as part of St Patrick's Day Series of events, these spanned across 17 countries and supported over 350 clients.</p>
--	---

	<p>The new Enterprise Ireland client website successfully launched on schedule in H2 2023. This better signposts relevant supports available to Enterprise Ireland clients and provides enhanced customer service, as well as further amplifying the positive impact of the new Enterprise Ireland corporate branding, which was launched in H1 of 2023. The site was given a completely new structure which put the user at the centre of the experience, providing clients and stakeholders with easy access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources for starting, scaling up, and achieving sustainability. • Innovation, capability, market access support and guidance on securing funding. • News, insights, and market reports to keep informed.
	<p>By the end of H1 2024, 133 first time exporters have been delivered against the target of 200 for the full year 2024. 61 of these exporters are from Enterprise Ireland and 72 are from the LEOs.</p> <p>In 2024 a new exporters department was established in Enterprise Ireland to increase the number of new exporters. A new four-phase 'Get Exporting' Accelerator programme launched in September 2024. The Accelerator aims to simplify the export journey, helping companies succeed in entering their first export market. The first two phases have been completed during 2024, which saw 263 companies participate in regional export assessments to driving their export ambition.</p>
	<p>The LEO Digitalisation Project to develop a new client relationship management system progressed well during 2024. The LEO website review included a review of content, logo and branding, updates to scheme changes and new marketing campaigns arising from improvements to green and digital schemes. This review was successfully completed in H2 2024.</p>

4.7 Transformation of Irish exporting base

Timeline	<p>Ongoing to Q4 2024: Support 425 climate projects between 2022 and 2024, to enhance the sustainability and competitiveness of the Irish exporting base ●</p> <p>Ongoing to Q4 2024: Support 400 digitalisation interventions between 2022 and 2024 to enable the digital transformation of Irish exporters ●</p> <p>Ongoing to Q4 2024: Support 300 significant R&D projects (defined as projects with a value in excess of €100,000) between 2022 and 2024 to drive the competitiveness of Irish companies in international markets●</p>
Responsibility	Enterprise Ireland
Update	<p>Enterprise Ireland has continued intensive engagement with client companies on sustainability and climate issues during 2024, with awareness campaigns, targeted sectoral meetings and leadership programmes and workshops being utilised as part of this engagement process.</p> <p>The 3-year target of 425 climate projects was achieved in 2024, with 114 climate projects delivered alone in H2 2024, an increase of 23 from H1 2024.</p> <p>A target of 200 climate projects has been set for 2025. These initiatives will continue to progress during H1 2025 as Enterprise Ireland continues to collaborate with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, as well as other partners to raise awareness of these offers to the Enterprise Ireland client base.</p> <p>Enterprise Ireland continued to work on encouraging and supporting digital technology adoption amongst client companies during 2024. This included supporting clients in strategic development plans and incentivising projects in digitalisation strategy & roadmap development, digital marketing capability development and digital process innovation projects, as part of the suite of wider interventions. A highlight in this period was the launch of a new digital support to promote cybersecurity. The Cybersecurity review grant had 146 applications approved in 2024.</p> <p>The 3-year target of 400 digitisation projects has now been achieved with a total 573 projects supported to date. 184 of these projects were achieved during the course of 2024.</p> <p>Enterprise Ireland continues to advance the development of research and innovation capability in Irish enterprise. By the end of H2 2024, 336 significant R&D projects were approved against the 3-year target of 300, of which 113 were achieved in 2024.</p>

5. Enabling Locally Traded Sectors to Thrive

Locally traded enterprises remain vital to the economic and social fabric of towns and villages across Ireland. They furthermore underpin regional development and balanced employment across Ireland. In this regard, work continued during 2024 to ensure that small firms and locally traded sectors were supported in navigating various challenges including the twin transitions, supporting them in increasing digital adoption to enhance productivity, as well as reducing their energy and carbon emissions.

During the course of 2024, Enterprise Ireland continued to support firms in building their online business capabilities', through a range of measures provided. The Energy Efficiency Grant (EEG) supported companies in reducing carbon emissions and associated energy costs. Through the Local Enterprise Offices, over 280 applications were supported during 2024, whilst The Green for Business grant also experienced a strong take-up with 877 approvals during the course of 2024.

Through the Governments SME package, an initiative aimed at reducing costs for small and medium sized businesses, the range the criteria for Digital for Business supports was expanded to support an increasing number of firms. The Grow Digital Voucher was also expanded, doubling to €5,000. These measures alongside other efforts will ensure the target in the National Digital Strategy of 90% basic digital intensity for SMEs is met by its 2030 target date.

The review of social enterprise in Ireland was completed in 2023 and ultimately helped inform the 2024 publication of Trading for Change: National Social Enterprise Policy 2024 – 2027. The new National Social Enterprise policy seeks to help cultivate and sustain strong and impactful social enterprises in Ireland. During H2 2024, various actions on the implementation of the policy commenced, including the formation of a Stakeholder Engagement Group which will provide oversight for the policy's implementation.

5.1 Facilitate our Locally Trading Sectors to Navigate the Twin Transition

Timeline	<p>Q4 2023: Publication of Report to provide a clear evidence base for addressing the priority productivity challenges of the locally traded sector, particularly around climate action and digitalisation ●</p> <p>Q1 2024: Launch Implementation Plan to address the priority productivity challenges of the locally traded sector, particularly around climate action and digitalisation ●</p>
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Update	<p>The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment initially intended to commission a research study to establish the extent to which the locally trading enterprise sector is engaging with digitalisation and decarbonisation.</p> <p>Engagement with the CSO to source data on the locally traded sector continued during 2024 in this regard. Upon further analysis of the data from CSO, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment is currently considering a policy response to the productivity challenge in the locally traded sector (including an external research study report, which is now expected to commence in H2 2025).</p> <p>The launch of an implementation plan has not commenced as the most appropriate policy intervention is still under development, as detailed above. Once this is completed, implementation planning will commence, which is expected in 2026.</p>

5.2 Support Small Firms in Energy Cost Reduction and Decarbonisation Investments

Timeline	<p>Q2 2023: Launch the pilot of the Small Firms Investment in Energy Efficiency Scheme (SFIEES) to help small firms to reduce carbon emissions ●</p> <p>Q4 2023: Evaluate the pilot of SFIEES with a view to mainstreaming in 2024 ●</p>
Responsibility	Enterprise Ireland - Centre of excellence; Local Enterprise Offices; Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment; Údarás na Gaeltachta
Update	<p>The Energy Efficiency Grant (EEG) was launched in 2023 and provides businesses with capital investment to reduce carbon emissions based on energy efficiency projects. The rationale of the scheme is to support companies to reduce their carbon emissions and overall energy costs by accelerating the adoption of low carbon technologies or processes. In June 2024, its grant rate increased from 50% to 75% and the maximum grant amount doubled to €10,000. This initiative was intensively promoted and gained significant traction in the second half of the year, resulting in a provisional 2024 performance of 280 client approvals.</p> <p>The review of the Energy Efficiency Grant (EEG) informed the changes made during H1 2024. In April, additional funding was made available to Local Enterprise Offices for a top-up payment of the EEG for businesses in the hospitality and retail sectors, with changes made to the eligible expenditure under the EEG. In June, further improvements were made, increasing the maximum amount available to €10,000 to all sectors and a reduction in the business contribution rate from 50% to 25% for all businesses.</p> <p>Provisional data from the Enterprise Ireland Centre of Excellence indicates 280 Energy Efficiency client approvals and 877 Green for Business approvals in 2024, along with 290 Digital for Business participants and 2,327 Trading Online Vouchers approved. As the Green for Business and the Digital for business schemes are prerequisites for the Energy Efficiency Grant and the Grow Digital Voucher respectively. There has been a strong pipeline for the uptake of these grants. The Trading Online Voucher closed to new applications in December 2024 but was replaced with the Grow Digital Voucher which was introduced in September 2024.</p>

5.3 Assist Locally Traded Sectors in Increasing Digital Intensity

Timeline	Q4 2023: Launch of new scheme and funding to support locally traded sectors, in conjunction with the development of the Digital Portal ●
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Update	Under the Government's SME Package, in May 2024 changes were made to the Local Enterprise Office digitalisation schemes. Firstly, the eligibility criteria for Digital for Business consultancy scheme was widened to make businesses with up to 50 employees eligible for the scheme, regardless of sector. Secondly, the Trading Online Voucher scheme was renamed Grow Digital Voucher and was doubled to €5,000. The eligible expenditure modernised to include a wide variety of digital interventions, to support businesses on their digitalisation journey, and to contribute to the target in the National Digital Strategy of 90% basic digital intensity for SMEs by 2030.

5.4 Enable Locally Traded Sectors to Capture e-Commerce opportunities through Digitalisation

Timeline	<p>Q2 2023: Launch Online Retail Scheme call for 2023 to enhance retailers' online capability and presence so as they can best exploit new opportunities and attract new customers ●</p> <p>Q4 2024: Completion of a full programme review of the Online Retail Scheme. The review will establish the Scheme impact over all calls with a view to potentially mainstreaming the Scheme as an ongoing Enterprise Ireland support ●</p>
Responsibility	Enterprise Ireland
Update	<p>The objective of the Online Retail Scheme (ORS) 2023 was to enhance online capability/ skills and attract new customers for Retail businesses. The scheme was launched in April 2023 with a €3.4 million budget allocation and closed for applications in May 2023. 151 applications were received, where a total of €2.28 million of grant funding was offered to the 98 successful applicants by Q3 2023. The percentage of successful applicant companies based outside of Dublin was 79%, with almost half of total successful applicants being first time recipients of the ORS funding. The claim process commenced in Q4, where a total of €1.8 million has been disbursed to 85 companies.</p> <p>A full review of the Online Retail Scheme was completed and final report issued to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in June 2024. The review established the Scheme's impact including evaluation of progress against objectives, effectiveness for stakeholders, economic impact, value for money and highlighted impactful case studies.</p>

5.5 Boost Social Enterprise Contributions to the Irish Economy and Society

Timeline	<p>Q2 2023- Publication of OECD review of Social Enterprise in Ireland ●</p> <p>Q2/3 2023 - Public consultation on the new National Social Enterprise Policy ●</p> <p>Q4 2023 - Publication of the new Social Enterprise Policy ●</p>
Responsibility	Department of Rural and Community Development
Update	<p>The review of social enterprise in Ireland was published by the OECD in November 2023 and can be accessed on the OECD library webpage. The review helped inform policy makers on a range of topics pertinent to the social enterprise sector in Ireland and supported the Department of Rural and Community Development's work on a new National Social Enterprise Policy.</p>
	<p>A public consultation on the new National Social Enterprise Policy was launched by the Minister of Rural and Community Development in December 2023. The submissions received assisted in informing the new National Social Enterprise Policy published in 2024.</p>
	<p>The public consultation to inform the new Social Enterprise Policy closed in January 2024. This was then analysed by the Department of Rural and Community Development, where further policy development was required during H1 2024 to take account for feedback received during the consultation.</p>
	<p>Trading for Change: National Social Enterprise Policy 2024 - 2027 was published in July 2024. During H2 2024, work commenced on a number of the actions contained in the new policy. The 6th National Social Enterprise Conference was held in November 2024, organised by a consortium of social enterprise organisations. Work also progressed on the establishment of the Stakeholder Engagement Group, which will provide oversight for the policy's implementation. This group will hold its first meeting in H1 2025, where it is anticipated the group will comprise of representatives from relevant government departments/agencies as well as social enterprise stakeholder groups.</p>

6. Stepping Up Enterprise Innovation

Stimulating innovation, and expanding innovation capacity, is critical to enhancing enterprise productivity and enabling enterprise to avail of new opportunities and enter new markets. The €33.4 million KT Boost Programme commenced in 2024 and supports the next generation of spinouts and High Potential Start-Ups from research. The KT Boost Programme was designed to sharpen emphasis on spinouts and HPSUs from the research system and enterprise engagement. As part of the KT Boost programme commencing, wider activities with the KT community were undertaken during 2024.

The Innovators' Initiative also continues to support specific sectors of economic importance. Four new programmes progressed during 2024, focused on the areas of medtech, agritech, cybersecurity and digital health. Each of the four programmes has now recruited its first cohort of professionals for entrepreneurial education and training.

Further funding was rolled out under the Disruptive Technologies Innovation Fund (DTIF), which seeks to support collaborative enterprise-driven partnerships that develop, deploy and commercialise disruptive technologies to transform business. Over €376 million has now been allocated to the 105 collaborative research projects by the end of H2 2024, with a total of 397 organisations involved across these projects. DTIF Call 7, which was a rolling call, launched in May 2024 and closed in Q2 2025 with a further call expected later in 2025.

The first phase of the allocation of the €117 million European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) commenced, with Technology Gateways, Knowledge Transfer (KT) Boost, and Innovators' Initiative now fully operational. Construct Innovate, Ireland's industry-led construction Technology Centre, was launched in 2022 and continued to grow in its impact and influence. The Centre has grown to 93 associate members during 2024, with two industry research seed funding calls of up to €50,000 per project now approved across 36 projects. An additional €5 million in core funding was announced by the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment, to enable Construct Innovate to undertake a programme of housing research over the next four years. The Built to Innovate initiative also continued to support the productivity and innovation capabilities of the domestic residential sector, with 35 companies and 68 approvals supported under Built To Innovate up as of the end of 2024.

Irish companies and research institutions continue to engage and benefit from engagements with the European Space Agency (ESA) to pursue opportunities in the space sector. As of year-end 2024, 34 companies and 7 Research Performing Organisations have won contracts with the European Space Agency (ESA) during the course of the year. The total value of these contracts is estimated at €24.5 million, with a total number of companies benefiting from engagement with ESA now standing at 116, exceeding the 2025 target of 100 companies.

6.1 Double Spin-outs and Enhance Research Commercialisation

Timeline	<p>Q1 2024: Complete awards to universities and commence the KT Boost Programme ●</p> <p>Q1 2024: Commence Innovators Initiative ●</p>
Responsibility	Enterprise Ireland (Lead); Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Update	<p>To support the generation of spinouts and High Potential Start-Ups from research, Enterprise Ireland launched two new European Regional Development Fund initiatives during Q1 2023.</p> <p>The €33.4 million KT Boost Programme was formally launched by and commenced in January 2024. The KT Boost Programme is co-financed by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the ERDF Southern, Eastern & Midland Regional Programme 2021-27 and the Northern & Western Regional Programme 2021-27. New resources funded under the programme were initiated during 2024, with many now operational at institutional level and others currently in progress.</p> <p>The KT Boost Programme was designed to sharpen emphasis on spinouts and HPSUs from the research system and enterprise engagement. As part of the KT Boost programme commencing, wider activities with the KT community were undertaken during 2024. This included the establishment of a spinout manager forum which met in H2 2024 and has the aim of building strong working relationships, address any issues or gaps, and work towards achieving spinout and HPSU targets.</p> <p>Following an Innovation Offices Directors meeting in H2 2024, the establishment of an enterprise engagement forum was proposed and is now scheduled to formally convene in early 2025.</p> <p>The Innovators' Initiative call was launched in Q1 2023 and closed in Q2 2023. Eleven eligible applications were received and evaluated. Four of these eleven applications were recommended and approved for funding. The four programmes each address a specific sector of economic importance. These consist of medtech, agritech, cybersecurity and digital health. All four applications approved for funding were operational as of 2024. Each of the four programmes has recruited its first cohort of professionals for entrepreneurial education and training. Fifty participants completed their onboarding and immersion phases in Cybersecurity, Medical Device, AgriFood Technology and Digital Health. Regular monitoring and progress meetings with the Regional Assemblies commenced during 2024, to manage the ERDF co-funding aspect. Regular best practice meetings with the programmes leadership teams have also commenced during the year, to facilitate continuous improvement.</p>

6.2 Invest in Disruptive Technologies Innovation and Commercialisation

Timeline	Q4 2023: Announce results of Call 6 of DTIF, which closes in Q2 2023 ●
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Update	The Disruptive Technology Innovation Fund (DTIF) is a €500 million challenge-based Fund established under Project Ireland 2040. The Fund supports collaborative enterprise-driven partnerships that develop, deploy and commercialise disruptive technologies to transform businesses with a particular focus in industrial research and SME participation. Over €376 million has been allocated to the 105 collaborative research projects by the end of H2 2024, with a total of 397 organisations involved in these projects, which will see Ireland's excellent research base working with industry to create truly game-changing solutions and help to create the jobs of the future. Call 7, which is a rolling call, was launched in May 2024 and was open to applicants via the online application form on the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment website until Q2 2025. A further call is expected to be opened later in 2025.

6.3 Strengthen Regional Smart Specialisations

Timeline	Q4 2023: Implement first phase of allocation of €445 million of ERDF Funding for regional enterprise development and innovation initiatives ●
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (Lead); Smart Specialisation National Steering Group
Update	<p>The first phase of the allocation of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) commenced during 2023. Four programmes are being co-funded under the ERDF over a 7-year period. The budget allocation for the three research and innovation programmes over the 7-year period is €117 million. These three programmes, Technology Gateways, Knowledge Transfer (KT) Boost, and Innovators' Initiative, have been launched and all are now fully operational, with the first intake of participants under the Innovators' Initiative onboarded in Q3 2024.</p> <p>The 4 programmes under the Innovators' Initiative are:</p> <p>BioInnovate - focusing on needs-led, innovation training for the medical device sector.</p> <p>FAST-IP - (Food, Agriculture and Sustainable Technology Innovation Programme) - focusing on sustainable food systems and ag-tech.</p> <p>Cyber-Innovate - focusing on cybersecurity entrepreneurship and innovation across information technology, operational technology, the Internet of Things and cyber-physical systems.</p> <p>DigiBio - focusing on need identification and validation in digital health.</p>

6.4 Drive Innovation and Adoption of Modern Methods in Construction (MMC)

Timeline	<p>Q2 2023: Delivery of MMC Roadmap for publicly procured residential construction ●</p> <p>Q4 2023: Launch of Construct Innovate industry outreach and engagement programme and completion of Housing for All priority research programme ●</p> <p>Q4 2023: Completion of first phase of MMC Demonstration Park ●</p>
Responsibility	<p>Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment; Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science</p>
Update	<p>In July 2023, Government published the Roadmap for Increased Adoption of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) in Public Housing Delivery, to enable the embedding of innovative methods into the Government's public housing programme. A range of actions from the Roadmap were incorporated into the Government's Housing for All Plan and initiatives across procurement, training, business development and data gathering have been progressed and tracked under the Plan. The MMC Leadership and Integration Group, chaired by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, has been established to oversee the delivery of the roadmap actions. Further policy initiatives to support MMC under the new programme for government are under consideration for 2025.</p>

	<p>Construct Innovate is Ireland's industry-led construction Technology Centre and was launched in December 2022 with the support of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment through Enterprise Ireland. The Centre has grown to some 94 associate members. The Centre has completed two industry research seed funding calls, where a total of 36 projects has been approved with funding of up to €50,000 per project under these calls. In addition, the Centre's Work Ready Graduate Programme was established in September 2024, to oversee graduate placements in industry.</p> <p>In H2 2024, Construct Innovate was allocated an additional €5m in core funding by the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment to enable it to undertake a programme of housing research over the next four years.</p> <p>The National Demonstration Park for MMC, which is being developed by Laois-Offaly ETB at the National Construction Training Campus at Mount Lucas, will enable exploration, demonstration and a better understanding and awareness of the latest MMC technologies and offsite building systems. Construction of building units will begin in H2 2025.</p>
--	--

Timeline	Q4 2023: Provide a range of lean, innovation and productivity advisory and financial assistance to home builders, general contractors, and offsite manufacturers with ambition to adopt modern methods of construction ●
Responsibility	Enterprise Ireland
Update	<p>The Built to Innovate initiative was launched in 2022 with the aim of increasing the productivity and innovation capabilities of the domestic residential sector. There have been 35 companies with 68 approvals supported under Built To Innovate up to the end of 2024.</p> <p>The primary focus of Built To Innovate is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Provide productivity and innovation funding to increase the Pre-manufactured Value (PMV) of housing delivery and to improve offsite production efficiency. (ii) Provide funding to support the implementation of Lean site processes. <p>Built To Innovate funding to date is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Over 50% RoI Timber Frame primary structure offsite production has been approved significant productivity and innovation funding packages. Timber Frame is the market leader in offsite primary structure manufacturing. - Significant productivity funding packages have been provided to Builders/Developers & Main Contractors who delivered circa 10% of 2024 apartment and housing scheme completions. Introductory productivity funding has been provided to companies who delivered a further circa 13% of 2024 apartment and housing scheme completions. - A programme to promote the increased use of lean site process in publicly funded residential developments commenced in 2024 and will continue in 2025. <p>During 2024, Enterprise Ireland continued to actively promote a range of financial and advisory supports to the construction sector, with presentations to sector stakeholders to highlight these new offerings. In 2024, Enterprise Ireland also hosted a series of events titled 'Homebuilding 2030: Our Journey to World Class Delivery'. This consisted of four client events inviting industry leaders to partake in a sector specific series of workshops, talks and visits to explore this vision of world class delivery.</p>

6.5 Pursue Frontier Technology Opportunities in the Space Sector

Timeline	Q4 2023: Achieve 100 Irish based companies working with the European Space Agency (ESA) ●
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment; Enterprise Ireland
Update	Latest figures available to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment as of Q4 2024 indicate that 34 companies and 7 Research Performing Organisations have won contracts with the European Space Agency (ESA) in 2024, with a total value of €24.5 million. The total number of companies benefiting from engagement with ESA as of Q3 2024 stands at 116, exceeding the target set out in the National Space Strategy for Enterprise 2019 – 2025 (100 companies). Additional ESA contracts are expected to be awarded to Irish companies during the course of 2025.

7. Building on Strengths and Opportunities

The White Paper on Enterprise commits to building on areas of existing expertise and future potential. In this regard, progress continued in building upon Ireland's distinctive areas of competitive advantage, enhancing resiliency in the face of global uncertainty whilst positioning Ireland to take advantage of emerging opportunities.

Work has continued on developing the National Clustering Programme by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. Following the announcement of funding of €384,000 to advance the initiative during 2025, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment anticipates launching a pilot National Clustering Programme in 2025, with funding for a number of pilot national clustering organisations.

Following the first call of the Smart Regions Enterprise Innovation Scheme announced in 2023, the scheme, which is co-funded under the European Regional Development Fund received a number of project submissions which have been approved for funding. These first approved projects under Call 1 are expected to be publicly announced in H1 2025.

The development of the first National Hub Strategy is now at an advanced stage and expected to be published during H1 2025. This strategy is focusing on the areas of community, remote-working and enterprise, and seeks to identify ways of leveraging and supporting the national hub network.

7.1 Develop a Coordinated National Approach to Clustering

Timeline	<p>Q3 2023: Devise a National Clustering Programme ●</p> <p>Q4 2023: Commence implementation with the target to fund five National Cluster organisations under the Programme by 2025 ●</p>
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Update	<p>Work has continued on developing the National Clustering Programme by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.</p> <p>In March 2024 the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment engaged TCI to undertake a Peer Review of the draft National Clustering Programme. TCI is a not-for-profit international network of clustering experts of which the Department is a member.</p> <p>As part of the Peer Review the Department held a one-day workshop in Q2 2024, facilitated by three international TCI experts, in Trinity College Dublin. It was attended by over 70 stakeholders from the Irish clustering ecosystem, from industry, academia and Government. The results of the workshop fed into the final TCI Peer Review report, which was delivered at the end of July 2024.</p> <p>Work continued further during H2, with particular reference to securing dedicated funding of €384,000 in the Revised Estimates for 2025. This enables the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment to move ahead with a pilot National Clustering Programme. It is proposed to fund a number of pilot national clustering organisations in H2 2025.</p> <p>The Programme for Government 2025, “Securing Ireland’s Future”, provides for five new cluster organisations to facilitate collaboration and collective action among related companies, as well as partnerships with higher education institutions and public sector bodies under a new National Clustering Programme. It is proposed that there will be a number of pilot national clustering organisations in H2 2025.</p>

7.2 Support Balanced, Sustainable Regional Development

Timeline	<p>Q2 2023 and beyond: First call under the ERDF for regional enterprise development to be held, with further calls on an annual basis or every nine months, depending on demand ●</p> <p>Q4 2023: Completion of all nine Building Better Business conferences ●</p>
Responsibility	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment; Enterprise Ireland
Update	<p>The first call under the Smart Regions Enterprise Innovation Scheme was announced in October 2023 and remains open for applications. The Scheme, co-funded under the European Regional Development Fund, supports local enterprise infrastructure projects, innovative clusters, programmatic supports to business, and feasibility and priming for early-stage project development. Enterprise Ireland has been assisting a number of projects in preparing applications throughout 2024, where a range of projects have been approved for funding by end of 2024. The first approved projects under Call 1 are expected to be publicly announced in H1 2025.</p> <p>All nine planned Building Better Business conferences successfully took place across the country during 2023. The events focused on supporting SMEs in navigating the green journey and boosting business performance through digital transformation while also hearing from successful indigenous businesses which have scaled and internationalised. The events were held in the North-West (Donegal), Midlands (Laois), Mid-West (Limerick), Mid-East (Kildare), South-East (Waterford), North-East (Louth), West (Mayo), South-West (Cork) and Dublin.</p>

Timeline	Ongoing to 2030: Offer qualifying businesses and companies from various sectors a range of incentives and supports to start up, develop, expand or locate in a Gaeltacht region ●
Responsibility	Údarás na Gaeltachta
Update	Údarás na Gaeltachta has approved 9 projects to date in H2 2024, to incentivise its client companies to commence their green, lean and digital journeys. This is in addition to the 27 projects approved during 2023. A tender scope is being prepared for the implementation of An Ghaeltacht Ghlas to manage engagement with business, communities and other key stakeholders to raise awareness of the challenges and opportunities in the green sector, and to carry out further baseline research related to CO2 emissions.

7.3 Develop Ireland's National Hub Strategy

Timeline	Q4 2023: Publication of Ireland's National Hub Strategy ●
Responsibility	Department of Regional and Community Development (Co-Lead); Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (Co-Lead)
Update	<p>The development of the first National Hub Strategy, led by the Department of Rural and Community Development working with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the Western Development Commission, is at an advanced stage.</p> <p>The Strategy is focusing on the areas of community, remote-working and enterprise and will identify ways of leveraging and supporting the national hub network. The draft Strategy is expected to be finalised during Q2 2025 and published shortly afterwards.</p>

Appendix I Metrics and Targets

Target 2030	Parent Strategy	Metric	Baseline	H2 2024 Update	Source
Employment					
Maintain full employment (unemployment below 5%)		Standard measure of monthly unemployment (persons aged 15-74 years)	4.4% (October 2022)	4.0% (Q1 2025)	CSO Labour Force Survey
Integrating decarbonisation and Net Zero commitments					
35% Emissions reductions from Industry by 2030	Climate Action Plan	Million Tonnes CO ₂ equivalent	6.95 MtCO ₂ eq. (2018) †	6.29 MtCO ₂ eq (2023 provisional)	EPA (2024) Provisional Emissions Data 1990 – 2023
45% emissions reductions from Commercial Built Environment by 2030	Climate Action Plan	Million Tonnes CO ₂ equivalent	1.55 MtCO ₂ eq. (2018) †	1.41 MtCO ₂ eq (2023 provisional)	EPA (2024) Provisional Emissions Data 1990 – 2023
Placing digital transformation at the heart of enterprise policy					
90% of SMEs at basic digital intensity by 2030	Harnessing Digital: The Digital Ireland Framework	SMEs with at least a basic level of digital intensity	64% (2021)	85% (2022)*	Digital Economy and Society Index 2024 - Ireland
Advancing Ireland's FDI and trade value proposition					
20% increase in IDA Ireland client expenditure in Ireland by 2024	IDA Ireland Strategy 2021-2024	Direct Economy Expenditure by Foreign owned firms	€29 billion (2020) ‡	33% increase to €38.6bn (2023)	DETE Annual Business Survey of Economic Impact
At least half of all FDI investments (400+) from 2021- 2024 to locations outside of Dublin	IDA Ireland Strategy 2021-2024	FDI Investment in regional locations	-	54% (H2 2024)	IDA Ireland

Target 2030	Parent Strategy	Metric	Baseline	H2 2024 Update	Source
Strengthening the Irish-owned exporting sector					
2.5% average annual growth in Irish-owned enterprise productivity by 2024	Enterprise Ireland Strategy 2022-2024	Value added per person employed	1.8% (2017-2020) (Enterprise Ireland Annual Business Review) §	4% (2023) (Enterprise Ireland Annual Business Review 2023)	DETE Annual Business Survey of Economic Impact
50% Increase in the number of large Irish exporting companies (150 companies) by 2030		Number of large Irish exporting companies (250+ employees)	104 Companies (2021) (Enterprise Ireland Annual Business Review)	123 Companies (2023) (Enterprise Ireland Annual Business Review 2023)	DETE Annual Business Survey of Economic Impact
2,000 additional Irish-owned exporters by 2030	SME & Entrepreneurship Growth Plan	Number of Irish-owned exporting firms	9,167 (2017) ¶	9,670 (2022). Increase of 503 over 5-year period	CSO
Over two-thirds (30,000) of new jobs created in Enterprise Ireland assisted firms will be outside of Dublin	Enterprise Ireland Strategy 2022-2024	Employment in Enterprise Ireland Supported firms outside Dublin	-	64% of total job growth outside of Dublin (AES 2024)	Enterprise Ireland Annual Business Review
Enabling locally trading sectors to thrive					
1% average annual increase in multifactor productivity growth in domestic sectors of the economy by 2025	Future Jobs Ireland 2019	Multifactor productivity growth for Economic sectors dominated by domestic and other enterprises (AAGR)	-0.2% average annual rate (2016-2019) #	-2.8 year on year rate: Q4 2023-Q4 2024 ^	CSO

Target 2030	Parent Strategy	Metric	Baseline	H2 2024 Update	Source
Stepping up enterprise innovation					
Gross (public and private) Expenditure on R&D 2.5% of GNI* by 2030	Impact 2030	GERD as a % of GNI*	2.15 as a % GNI* (2020)	1.80% as a % of GNI* (2023)	Budget 2024: Economic & Fiscal Outlook
20% Increase in the number of High-Potential Start-Ups (HPSUs) supported by 2024	EI Strategy 2022-2024	High-Potential Start-Ups supported	82 HPSUs (2021)	90 HPSUs (2024)	Enterprise Ireland Annual Business Review
Building on strengths and opportunities					
Five National Cluster Organisations funded under a new National Clustering Programme by 2025		National Cluster Organisations funded under a new National Cluster Programme	National Cluster Programme to be established 2023	National Cluster Programme to be established 2025	National coordination body
Regional employment – Unemployment not to exceed one percentage point above national unemployment rate in any region		Standard measure of quarterly unemployment (persons aged 15-74 years)	Less than 1% above national average in every region (October 2022)	The Border Region +1.3pp (5.3%) from the quarterly national average. (Q4 2024)	CSO Labour Force Survey

† Baseline 2018 figures have been restated due to revisions in the national energy statistics provided to the EPA by SEAI

* Most recent comparable data available, the next release is 2024 data due later in 2025

‡ Baseline total IDA client expenditure for 2020 was restated to €29 billion, up from the previously reported figure of €27.9 billion.

§ Baseline growth rate has been restated from 3.6% in the White Paper on Enterprise, to reflect Enterprise Ireland 2022-2024 Strategy, target to be reviewed in 2025

¶ Irish-owned Enterprise Agency Clients

^ Data sourced from CSO Productivity in Ireland Series (April 2025), a Frontier Series Output. Available at: Productivity in Ireland Quarter 4 2024 - Central Statistics Office

Baseline annual productivity growth has been restated from -0.6% average annual rate (2016-2019) in the White Paper on Enterprise, to reflect revised estimates to annual productivity over the period by CSO

Prepared by the Department of
Enterprise, Tourism and Employment
gov.ie



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland