

Note on the ENTERPRISE FORUM
of Wednesday 29 June 2022

Attendees:

Leo Varadkar (Chair) - Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Damien English - Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail
Robert Troy - Minister of State for Trade Promotion, Digital and Company Regulation
American Chamber of Commerce - Colm O'Callaghan
Business in the Community Ireland - Tomas Sercovich
Chambers Ireland – Ian Talbot & Shane Conneely
Construction Industry Federation - Sean Downey
Enterprise Ireland - Leo Clancy & Donal Leahy
Ibec - Danny McCoy, Fergal O'Brien, Paul Kelly, Pat Ivory, Neil Willoughby, Neil Walker, Pauline O'Flanagan, Arnold Dillon, Patricia Callan, Conor Minogue, Elizabeth Bowen, Linda Stuart Trainor
Irish Pharmaceutical Healthcare Association - Bernard Mallee
Irish Exporters Association - Simon McKeever
InterTradeIreland - Margaret Hearty
Local Enterprise Office Network - Padraic McElwee
Retail Excellence Ireland - Duncan Graham
The Family Business Network - John McGrane
DETE - Orlaigh Quinn, Secretary General, Ronnie Downes, Jean Carberry, Pauline Mulligan, John Newham, John Hughes, Eugene Lennon, Cathy Madden, Bernadette Hawkes, Kevin Daly, Maedhbh Cronin, Brendan Kilpatrick, Fiona Kilcullen, Phyllis Kelly, Mary Cullen, Susan McNamee, Sinéad O'Brien, Matt Lynch, Adviser to Tánaiste, Stephen Foley, Adviser to Minister English

Minutes from the meeting of 22 February 2022 were approved.

Item 1: Updated Terms of Reference, Membership, and welcome to new Members

- The Tánaiste welcomed all attendees and the new Members individually. The updated Terms of Reference and Membership were approved by silent procedure.

Item 2: Enterprise Policy White Paper

- A presentation was given by the Department's Enterprise Strategy Unit; the Enterprise Policy White Paper (EPWP) will explore high level strategic policy issues in the context of the current global challenges and opportunities for the economy and society. These include the legacy from the pandemic, the acceleration of pre-existing trends, the vulnerabilities in the enterprise sector, the increasing urgency to decarbonise industry, digital transition, the geopolitical tensions, war in Ukraine and a fragmenting globalisation risk.
- The Enterprise Policy White Paper will examine what needs to be done to meet our employment objectives, drive indigenous enterprise nationally, integrate the decarbonisation imperative into enterprise policy, and align these with Sustainable Development Goals. A public consultation to inform the development of the White Paper will to be launched on Friday 1st July.

- Members welcomed the development of the White Paper and the importance of both economic and societal factors.

Item 3: Ukraine impacts and mitigation measures

- The Forum recognised the ongoing situation in Ukraine and the wider international effects. Ireland's humanitarian efforts were noted, notwithstanding challenges of accommodation with the increase in numbers seeking asylum. Sanction packages have been imposed, with details on sanctions and queries updated regularly on the website: (<https://www.enterprise.gov.ie/en/Publications/EU-Trade-Sanctions-in-Response-to-Situation-in-Ukraine-.html>).
- DETE provided the Forum with an update on the intended extension of the EU State Aids Framework, the Temporary Crisis Framework (TCF), which enables Member States to use the flexibility foreseen under State Aid rules to assist the economy in the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- The range and importance of Schemes already in existence, details are available at <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/What-We-Do/Supports-for-SMEs/Energy-supports/>.
- A National Energy Security Framework has been established to assess contingency planning and supply issues, the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications are leading on this initiative (gov.ie - [National Energy Security Framework \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)).
- Members of the Forum updated on the specific impacts on their sectors

Item 4: UK Northern Ireland Protocol Bill: Initial responses

- An update was given on developments in relation to the UK Northern Ireland Protocol Bill and the specific concerns regarding businesses on the border. It was noted that protecting the integrity of the single market is vital, that most businesses have adapted and there are potential opportunities also.
- The Tánaiste observed that normal trade continues, and that there is a need for strategic patience with no negative escalation and thanked everyone for their input.

Item 5: AOB

- An Update on Department Legislation was given.

Item 6: Date of next meeting of Enterprise Forum

- The next meeting is provisionally scheduled for September, and the Secretariat will notify details closer to that time.