

Oireachtas Update



On Wednesday in the Dáil the Social Welfare Bill 2014 will reach the Report and Final Stages.

On Tuesday in the Seanad statements are to be made on 'Government Geoscience Initiatives from Industry Support to Education'. The following day in the Seanad statements will be made on the 'Action Plan for Jobs 2014'.

Regarding Committee Meetings, on Tuesday the Joint Committee on Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht will be scrutinizing EU legislative proposals, with representatives from Bord Iascaigh Mhara and the Irish Seaweed Research Group from NUI Galway taking part. During that same meeting, the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, Alan Kelly TD, will also be discussing his Department's future plans.

European Commission Investment Plan

The European Commission has announced plans of a public-private €315 billion plan for investment projects that is aimed to boost the European economy and create more jobs to get more people back into work in Europe. The Commission have already identified over a thousand projects for the investment plan. The investment plan will be composed of a €21 billion fund with €16 billion in guarantees from the EU and another €5 billion coming from the European Investment Bank. It is hoped that private investors will fund the additional investment.

The plan will be built around three main stages: the initial tranche will be the European Fund for Strategic Investment (EFSI); the foundation of a creditable project plan with a strategy to get investments where money is needed; and a strategic outline to remove regulatory bureaucratic red-tape and make Europe more attractive for investment.

European Commission approves Irish budget

The European Commission has approved and endorsed Ireland's budget for 2015. However, the European Commission have warned Ireland on its high level of debt. The EU believes that Ireland should be using its economic recovery to speed up the reduction of debt to Gross Domestic Product ratio. Furthermore, Ireland was found to be one of the five EU Member States fully compliant of the Stability and Growth Pact. The other four Member States fully compliant are: Germany, Slovakia, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

All 18 euro zone countries budgets have been endorsed with the exception of Greece and Cyprus who are still in a bailout programme. However, the Commission has warned seven Member States that they are at risk of non-compliance with the Stability and Growth Pact. These Member States are Belgium, Spain, France, Italy, Malta, Austria and Portugal.

EU Parliament backs measure to split Google

The European Parliament has overwhelmingly backed a measure to split search engine services from commercial services. Members of the European Parliament backed the resolution with a resounding 384 votes for the measure to 174 votes against the resolution.

This resolution will heavily impact internet and search engine provider Google. Google dominates the internet search market in Europe, controlling over 90 percent of the market. However, the EU cannot force Google to break-up; it can pass anti-trust regulations as a next step which will force Google to re-evaluate how they operate and work in Europe. The EU has been investigating Google in an anti-trust inquiry since 2010.

In addition to this measure, Germany and France have asked the EU to consider implementing new competition rules that it would make it easier for to EU to regulate Internet companies.

Social Housing Strategy 2020: Support, Supply and Reform

The Government has announced a six-year social housing plan entitled 'Social Housing Strategy 2020: Support, Supply and Reform'. The premise behind the plan is to build 35,000 new social housing units that will come to the cost of €3.5 billion by the year 2020.

This plan will also establish a new housing assistance payment for over 75,000 households. This will be done in the aim that they will rent their homes in the private sector. 50,000 of the 75,000 households currently receive rent supplement. Thus, this new housing assistance payment is hoped to remove the barrier where people refuse employment because it would meant they would lose their rent supplement.

Alan Kelly TD, Minister of the Environment, Community and Local Government, has described 'Social Housing Strategy 2020' as the first comprehensive housing plan since 1995.

PAI Blog

PAI taking part in St. Vincent de Paul Food Appeal: Read [here](#)

Update on the annual HR Conference, taking place in Dublin on December 10th, 2014: Read [here](#)

DAIL

Tuesday December 2nd

2.00 p.m.
Questions (Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government)

3.15 p.m.
Leaders Questions

3.36 p.m.
Questions (Taoiseach)

4.36 p.m.
-Order of Business
- Motion re Financial Resolution for Committee Stage of the Health Insurance (Amendment) Bill 2014 (without Debate) (Department of Health)
- Motion re Committee Membership Changes
- Statutory Instrument on Horse and Greyhound Racing Fund (Back from Committee) (Without Debate)

5.06 p.m.
Topical Issues

5.54 p.m.
- Motion re Intellectual Property (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2014 (to conclude within 1 hour) (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)

- Intellectual Property (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2014 - Order for Report, Report and Final Stages (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)

- Garda Síochána (Amendment) (No 3) Bill 2014 - Second Stage Resumed (Department of Justice and Equality)

7.30 p.m.
Private Members Business: Motion re Funding of Health Services

9.00 p.m.
Dáil Adjourns

Wednesday December 3rd

9.30 a.m.
Questions (Minister for Finance)

10.45 a.m.
- Motion re Amendments for Report Stage of the Social Welfare Bill 2014 (to conclude within 1 hour) (Department of Social Protection)
- Social Welfare Bill 2014 - Order for Report, Report and Final Stages (Department of Social Protection)

12 noon
Leaders Questions

12.21 p.m.
- Order of Business
- Motion re Supplementary Estimates (referral to committee) (without debate)

12.51 p.m.
SOS (1 hour)

1.51 p.m.
Topical Issues

2.39 p.m.
- Social Welfare Bill 2014 - Report Stage Resumed (Department of Social Protection)
- Intellectual Property (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2014 - Report Stage (Resumed if not previously concluded) (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)
- Customs Bill 2014 - Order for Second Stage and Second Stage (Department of Finance)

6.00 p.m.
Statements Opposing Domestic Violence

7.30 p.m.
Private Members Business: Motion re Funding of Health Services

9.00 p.m.
Dáil Adjourns

Thursday December 4th

9.30 a.m.
Questions (Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport)

10.45 a.m.
Water Services Bill 2014 - Order for Second Stage and Second Stage (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)

12 noon
Leaders Questions

12.21 p.m.
Order of Business

1.00 p.m.
- SOS (60 mins)
- Water Services Bill 2014 - Second Stage (Resumed) (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)

8.00 p.m.
Dáil Adjourns

Friday December 5th

10.00 a.m.

Water Services Bill 2014 - Second Stage (Resumed if not previously concluded) (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)

8.00 p.m.

Dáil Adjourns

SEANAD

Tuesday December 2nd

2.30 p.m.
Order of Business

Estimate provision for the Horse and Greyhound Racing Fund allocation for 2015 – Back from Committee without debate (Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine)

3.45 p.m.

Statements on "Government Geoscience Initiatives from Industry Support to Education". (MoS Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources)

Matters on the Adjournment

Wednesday December 3rd

10.30 a.m.
Order of Business

11.45 a.m.
Statements the Action Plan for Jobs 2014 (Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)

1.15 p.m.

Motions regarding Standing Orders 82(B) and 82(C) concerning attendance by committee members at meetings of the Committee of Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Seanad CPP)

3.00 p.m.

Private Members Business - Defamation (Amendment) Bill 2014 – Second Stage (Senator John Crown)

Matters on the Adjournment

Thursday December 4th

10.30 a.m.
Order of Business

11.45 a.m.

Finance Bill 2014 – Second Stage (Minister for Finance)
Matters on the Adjournment

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday December 2nd

1.30 p.m.

Committee Room 2, Leinster House

Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Joint)**AGENDA:**

Private Meeting

2.15 p.m.

Committee Room 4, Leinster House

Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht (Joint)**AGENDA:**

(i) Scrutiny of EU legislative proposals: Schedule B: COM(2014)267; COM(2014)544; COM(2014)617;

(ii) Developing the Seaweed Industry in Ireland including the feasibility of developing seaweed farms [Representatives from Bord Iascaigh Mhara and the Irish Seaweed Research Group, NUI Galway]; and

(iii) Engagement with the Minister on future plans for the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government [Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government]

3.45 p.m.

Committee Room 3, Leinster House

Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Joint)**AGENDA:**

(i) Forthcoming EU Council Meeting of Agriculture and Fisheries (AGRI FISH); and

(ii) Sea Fisheries Sustainability Impact Assessment

[Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine]

4.15 p.m.

Committee Room 1, Leinster House

Health and Children (Joint)**AGENDA:**

Ambulance Service Review by the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) [Mr. Phelim Quinn, CEO, HIQA; Ms. Mary Dunnion, Acting Director of Regulation; and Mr. Marty Whelan, Head of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement]

Wednesday December 3rd

9.30 a.m.

Committee Room 2, Leinster House

Justice, Defence and Equality (Joint)**AGENDA:** Proposals to address aggressive begging from a public order perspective [Representatives from the Licensed Vintners Association]**10.15 a.m.**

Committee Room 4, Leinster House

Transport and Communications (Joint)**AGENDA:** Addressing the issue of petrol stretching [Officials from the Revenue Commissioners; and Representatives of the Consumers' Association]**10.30 a.m.**

Committee Room 3, Leinster House

Members' Interests of Dáil Éireann (Select)**AGENDA:** Private Meeting**11 a.m.**

Committee Room 1, Leinster House

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint)**AGENDA:** Private Meeting**1 p.m.**

Committee Room 3, Leinster House

Education and Social Protection (Joint)**AGENDA:** Studying at University through on-line learning, including Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) [Trinity College Dublin; Dublin City University; and Open University]**2 p.m.**

Committee Room 4, Leinster House

Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint)**AGENDA:** Pre Legislative Scrutiny on the General Scheme of the Sale of Loan Books to Unregulated Third Parties Bill 2014

Session A: 2.30 p.m. [Officials from the Department of Finance]; and

Session B: 4 p.m. [Representatives of Free Legal Advice Centres (FLAC) and MARS Capital Ireland]

2.30 p.m.

Committee Room 1, Leinster House

Foreign Affairs and Trade (Joint)**AGENDA:** Human rights situation and access to justice in Guatemala [Dr. Claudia Paz y Paz Bailey]**2.30 p.m.**

Committee Room 2, Leinster House

Justice, Defence and Equality (Select)**AGENDA:** 2014 Supplementary Estimates for Public Services – Vote 35 (Army Pensions); and Vote 36 (Defence) [Minister for Defence]**4 p.m.**

Committee Room 3, Leinster House

Public Service, Oversight and Petitions (Joint)**AGENDA:** (i) Public Petition received; and

(ii) Investigation into US Military and CIA use of Shannon airport and Irish airspace (Public Petition No P00072/12) (resumed) [Secretary General, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade]

5.30 p.m.

Committee Room 1, Leinster House

Health (Select sub)**AGENDA:** Health Insurance (Amendment) Bill 2014 [Minister for Health]**6 p.m.**

Committee Room 3, Leinster House

Members' Interests of Seanad Éireann (Select)**AGENDA:** Private Meeting

Thursday December 4th

9.30 a.m.

Committee Room 2, Leinster House

Health and Children (Joint)**AGENDA:** Session A: 9.30 a.m.

Deep Brain Tissue Treatment [Dr. Tony O'Connell, National Director of Acute Services, HSE]; and

Session B: 11.30 a.m.

Report on Best Practice Access Guidelines: Designing Accessible Environments – Access to Independence [Irish Wheelchair Association]

9.30 a.m.

Committee Room 3, Leinster House

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint)**AGENDA:** Private Meeting**10 a.m.**

Committee Room 1, Leinster House

Public Accounts**AGENDA:** Account of the Receipt of Revenue of the State collected by the Revenue Commissioners in the year ended 31 December 2013 [Officials from the Office of the Revenue Commissioners]**11 a.m.**

Committee Room 4, Leinster House

Global Taxation (Joint sub)**AGENDA:** Private Meeting**2 p.m.**

Committee Room 3, Leinster House

European Union Affairs (Joint)**AGENDA:** (i) EU Investment Package; and (ii) European Semester: Annual Growth Survey 2015

[Ms. Barbara Nolan, Head of Representation, European Commission Office Ireland; and Mr. Patrick O'Riordan, European Semester Officer, European Commission Office Ireland]

2 p.m.

Committee Room 4, Leinster House

Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint)**AGENDA:** Fiscal Assessment Report - November 2014 [Representatives of the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council]

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