The Departments of Environment, Community and Local Government and Agriculture, Food and the Marine, in conjunction with the European Commission, are finalising the text of the Rural Development Programme, and expect to begin the LEADER Local Development Strategy selection process in the coming weeks.

This process will be made up of two stages. The first will be a call for Expressions of Interest to design and implement LEADER Local Development Strategies for the 2014-2020 programme period. Any entity which can demonstrate a large amount of community participation and which has a coherent vision for community and local development in their area can enter. In stage two, applicants successful in stage one are invited to submit a Local Development Strategy for their area. It is expected that participants will take a minimum of six months to prepare these, but they can submit their strategies sooner for assessment if desired.

There is no limit to the number of Groups that can express an interest from a given sub-regional area. Expressions of Interest and Local Development Strategies will be assessed by an independent Evaluation Committee made up of an independent chair, officials from both Departments involved and external local development experts.

On Wednesday and Thursday in the Dáil, the Order for Second Stage and the Second Stage of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill 2015 will take place.

In the Seanad, the Gender Recognition Bill is at Committee Stage on Tuesday and the Garda Síochána (Amendment) (No. 3) Bill 2014 is passing through its Second Stage on Wednesday.

On Tuesday the Joint Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation will be scrutinising EU legislative proposals in relation to imports. The topics of women entrepreneurship and the balanced regional development of entrepreneurial hubs will also be on the agenda.

The Department of Social Protection has launched two new programmes for young jobseekers; First Steps and JobsPlus Youth.

First Steps provides work placements of either six or nine months in duration for people aged 18 to 25. Participants work for four days per week and on the fifth day it is expected that they undertake employment search activities. Participants receive an allowance of €50 per week in addition to any existing social welfare payments. JobsPlus Youth is an expansion of the JobsPlus employer incentive scheme. Employers will receive cash grants to assist with wage costs when hiring young people from the Live Register.

Youth unemployment stood at 21.6% at the end of 2014.
Cabinet has signed off on new alcohol bill proposals

A range of proposals designed to reduce alcohol consumption in Ireland have been agreed by Government. These measures aim to help Ireland to cut alcohol consumption to the OECD average by 2020 and to mitigate the negative effects of alcohol on Ireland’s health and economy. The proposed Public Health (Alcohol) Bill 2015 will be published in the coming months and it is hoped that it will become law by the end of 2015.

The issue of alcohol misuse has been debated since 2009 when the Working Group on a National Substance Misuse Strategy was established. The proposals which form the basis of the Bill to be drafted include: provisions to prevent the sale of very cheap alcohol; health labelling and warnings on products including calorie counts; new enforcement powers for Environmental Health Officers to police and enforce the separation of alcohol within stores when Section 9 of the Intoxicating Liquor Act 2008 is commenced by the Department of Justice; and the empowerment of Environmental Health Officers to police minimum unit pricing, health labelling, marketing and advertising, as well as other measures of the Bill.

A number of other measures related to marketing, advertising and sponsorship will be subject to a three-year review; restrictions on the advertising and marketing of alcohol from 2016 will come in including a broadcast watershed on television and radio, and further restrictions on cinema and outdoor advertising; it will be illegal to advertise or market alcohol in a manner that is appealing to children; and, there will be legal regulation of sports sponsorship.

Data Protection Conference: Ireland’s priorities, the sign of things to come, and achieving compliance

Minister of State, Dara Murphy, who holds special responsibility for European Affairs and Data Protection, is to open the March 25th 2015 conference on data protection in Dublin. Data Protection Commissioner, Helen Dixon, will be speaking about the remit and focus of her office. Expert speakers will be analysing the new EU General Data Protection Regulation; giving advice on how to achieve data protection compliance; discussing the question of ‘Who judges how much information is too much?’; and outlining the data protection landscape for 2015.

For more information on this conference, or to make a booking, please visit: http://www.publicaffairsireland.com/conferences

PAI Blog

*Do we need Social Partnership?* : Read [here](#)

*Welcome to February at Public Affairs Ireland* : Read [here](#)
### Dail

**Tuesday 10 February**
- **2.00 p.m.** Questions (Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht)
- **3.15 p.m.** Leaders Questions
- **3.36 p.m.** Questions (Taoiseach)
- **4.36 p.m.** Order of Business
- **5.06 p.m.** Topical Issues
  - Motion re Standing Orders (Banking Inquiry) (to conclude within 25 minutes)
  - Redress for Women Resident in Certain Institutions Bill 2014 - Order for Report, Report and Final Stages (Department of Justice and Equality)
- **7.30 p.m.** Private Members Business Motion re Childcare (Fianna Fáil)
- **9.00 p.m.** Dáil Adjourns

**Wednesday 11 February**
- **9.30 a.m.** Questions (Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform)
- **10.45 a.m.** Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2014 (Seanad) - Second Stage (Department of Education and Skills)
- **12.00 noon** Leaders Questions
- **12.21 p.m.** Order of Business
- **12.51 p.m.** SOS (1 Hour)
- **1.51 p.m.** Topical Issues
  - Motion re Appointment of Ombudsman for Children (Department of Children and Youth Affairs)
  - Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2014 (Seanad) - Second Stage Resumed (Department of Education and Skills)
- **2.39 p.m.** Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill 2015 - Order for Second Stage and Second Stage (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)
- **7.30 p.m.** Private Members Business Motion re Childcare (Fianna Fáil)
- **9.00 p.m.** Dáil Adjourns

**Thursday 12 February**
- **9.30 a.m.** Questions (Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)
- **10.45 a.m.** Valuation (Amendment) (No.2) Bill 2012 (Seanad) - Second Stage (Department of Finance)
  - Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill 2015 - Second Stage Resumed (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)
- **12.00 noon** Leaders Questions
- **12.21 p.m.** Order of Business
- **12.51 p.m.** Valuation (Amendment) (No.2) Bill 2012 (Seanad) - Second Stage (Department of Finance)
- **4.42 p.m.** Topical Issues
- **5.30 p.m.** Dáil Adjourns

### Seanad

**Tuesday 10 February**
- **2.30 p.m.** Commencement Matters
- **3.30 p.m.** Order of Business
  - Motion regarding the adoption of new standing Order 103N and the amendment of Standing Order 90 (Seanad CPP)
- **4.45 p.m.** Gender Recognition Bill 2014 – Committee Stage (Department of Social Protection)

**Wednesday 11 February**
- **10.30 a.m.** Commencement Matters
- **12.00 noon** Order of Business
- **1.15 p.m.** Garda Síochána (Amendment) (No. 3) Bill 2014 – Second Stage (Department of Justice and Equality)
- **3.30 p.m.** Betting (Amendment) Bill 2013 – Committee Stage (Department of Finance)
- **5.30 p.m.** Private Members Business - Motion re Housing Policy
- **7.30 p.m.** Seanad Adjourns

**Thursday 12 February**
- **10.30 a.m.** Commencement Matters
- **12.00 noon** Order of Business
- **1.15 p.m.** Motion regarding the appointment of the Ombudsman for Children (Minister for Children and Youth Affairs)
- **2.00 p.m.** Irish Collective Asset-Management Vehicles Bill 2014 – Committee and remaining Stages (Department of Finance)
Tuesday 10 February

12 noon
Transport and Communications (Joint)
CR4, LH
AGENDA: Engagement with Mr. Pádraig Ó Riordáin, Chairman Designate, Dublin Airport Authority

1.30 p.m.
Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Joint)
CR2, LH
AGENDA: (i) Scrutiny of EU legislative proposals: the tariff treatment for goods originating from Ecuador; Schedule B: COM(2015)38 Proposal re. the suspension of customs duties applicable to imports of certain heavy oils and other similar products
(ii) Women Entrepreneurship, Women the Tech Industry, Skill Needs and Balanced Regional Development of Entrepreneurial Hubs (resumed)
Session A: 1.30 p.m. [ISME; Startup Ireland; and IDA Ireland; Session B: 2.45 p.m. [Ms. Niamh Bushnell, Dublin Commissioner for Startups; and Ms. Anna Porter, Young Scientist]

2 p.m.
Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Joint)
CR3, LH
AGENDA: Potential difficulties and price volatility facing the Dairy Industry in 2015 (resumed) [Representatives from Banking and Payments Federation; AIB; Bank of Ireland; and Ulster Bank]

2 p.m.
European Union Affairs (Joint)
CR1, LH
AGENDA: United Kingdom: Possible Exit from the European Union (commonly referred to as ‘BrExit’): An identification of the critical issues for Ireland [Mr. Colm McCarthy, Economist, University College Dublin]

2.15 p.m.
Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht (Joint)
CR4, LH
AGENDA: The work of the Pyrite Resolution Board and its Progress Report No. 3 (Pyrite Resolution Act 2013 (Section 9) [Representatives of the Pyrite Resolution Board]

6 p.m.
European Scrutiny - Finance and Public Expenditure (Joint sub)
CR4, LH
AGENDA: Private Meeting

7 p.m.
Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint)
CR4, LH
AGENDA: Pre-Ecofin Council Meeting [Minister of State at the Department of Finance]

Wednesday 11 February

9.30 a.m.
Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint)
CR3, LH
AGENDA: Public Hearing [Professor John FitzGerald on International, EU and domestic policy context]

9.30 a.m.
Transport and Communications (Joint) C R4, LH
AGENDA: Private Meeting

11.30 a.m.
Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Select sub)
CR4, LH
AGENDA: 2015 Revised Estimates for Public Services - Vote 29 (Communications, Energy and Natural Resources)

1 p.m.
Education and Social Protection (Joint)
CR3, LH
AGENDA: 1. 21st Century Universities – Performance & Sustainability [Irish Universities Association (IUA); Dr. Charles Larkin, Trinity College, Dublin]

2 p.m.
Justice, Defence and Equality (Select)
CR2, LH
AGENDA: Personal Insolvency (Amendment) Bill 2014 [Minister for Justice and Equality]

2 p.m.
Public Expenditure and Reform (Select sub)
CR4, LH
AGENDA: 2015 Revised Estimates for Public Services Session A: 2 p.m. Vote 13 (Office of Public Works) [Minister of State with special responsibility for the Office of Public Works]; and Session B: 4.30 p.m. Vote 11 (Public Expenditure and Reform); Vote 12 (Superannuation and Retired Allowances); Vote 14 (State Laboratory); Vote 15 (Secret Service); Vote 16 (Valuation Office); Vote 17 (Public Appointments Service); Vote 18 (Shared Services); Vote 19 (Office of the Ombudsman) [Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform; and Vote 39 (Office of Government Protection]

2.30 p.m.
Foreign Affairs and Trade (Joint)
CR1, LH
AGENDA: Meeting with His Excellency Dr. Gints Apals, Ambassador of the Republic of Latvia to Ireland

4 p.m.
Public Service, Oversight and Petitions (Joint)
CR3, LH
AGENDA: Equality and fairness regarding the raising of the State Pension age to 66 and beyond (resumed) (Public Petition No. P00033/13)[Mr. Fergus Whelan, ICTU]

Thursday 12 February

9.30 a.m.
Health and Children (Joint)
CR2, LH
AGENDA: Update on Health Issues [Minister for Health; Minister of State for Primary and Social Care; and Mr Tony O’Brien, Director General, Health Service Executive]

9.30 a.m.
Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint)
CR3, LH
AGENDA: Private Meeting

10 a.m.
Public Accounts
CR1, LH
AGENDA: (i) Business of the Committee; (ii) IDA Ireland 2013 Financial Statements [Officials from the Industrial Development Authority]; and (iii) Enterprise Ireland 2013 Financial Statements [Officials from Enterprise Ireland]

2 p.m.
European Union Affairs (Joint)
CR2, LH
AGENDA: United Kingdom: Possible Exit from the European Union (commonly referred to as ‘BrExit’): Decision-making in the European Union [Mr. Roland Freudenstein, Deputy Director and Head of Research at the Centre for European Studies; and Mr. Fabian Zuleeg, Chief Executive, European Policy Centre]
DATA PROTECTION CONFERENCE 2015

Horizon scanning for 2015 and the implications of Data Protection Reform

Wednesday, 25th March 2015

The Westin Hotel

Dublin 2

Confirmed speakers at this year’s event include:
Minister Dara Murphy TD, Helen Dixon, Data Protection Commissioner, Colin Rooney, Rob Corbet, Partners, Arthur Cox and Dr Eoin O’Dell, Trinity College Dublin

This year’s conference will focus on:

• Data Protection in Ireland and the Government’s key priorities for 2015
• The remit and focus of the Data Protection Commissioner
• The sign of things to come – the EU Regulation for General Data Protection – an update and implications for data controllers and individuals across Member States
• Achieving data protection compliance now and into the future – some practical guidance on meeting data protection obligations
• Smart Cities: The Privacy Challenges of the Internet of Things
• Data Protection - Key developments in 2014 and 2015 and how they affect you

Sponsored by:

ARTHUR COX

@publicaffairsir #datapro15