Oireachtas Update

This week in Dáil Éireann, the Seanad’s amendments to the Workplace Relations Bill 2014 will be discussed. This bill provides for the resolution, mediation and adjudication of disputes and complaints within the workplace, and the establishment of the Workplace Relations Commission.

On Wednesday in the Seanad, the Legal Services Regulation Bill 2011 will be a point of discussion. This Bill will see the establishment of a Legal Services Regulatory Authority and a Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal.

Thursday will see a meeting of the Sub-Committee on Human Rights relative to Justice and Equality Matters, whose agenda is the ratification of UN Conventions.

Public Sector pay restoration talks begin

During the height of the Irish economic emergency, the Government introduced financial emergency legislation which led to cuts in public sector earnings. As Ireland is no longer in financial emergency, the current Government will gradually restore earnings to their previous level. It is expected that the plan will be spread over two years.

Talks will begin this week on public sector pay restorations; it is believed that the Government will allocate between €250m to €300m, giving each of the 300,000 public servants a gross increase of around €800.

While some Ministers have called for an increase in productivity in line with these increased, unions have said that productivity has already increased significantly. Under the Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements, productivity was raised by measures such as the introduction of longer working weeks.

Construction sector activity increases for the twentieth consecutive month

In March, the Ulster Bank construction purchasing managers’ index (PMI) reported a reading of 52.9; in April, that figure stood at 57.2. This is its highest level to date. This marks the twentieth month in which there has been expansion.

There are three main sub-sectors measured—commercial sector, housing sector, and civil engineering—all saw an increase for the first time. The increase in the commercial and housing sectors was marked, while the civil engineering sector grew slightly, following two months of decrease.

In response to this increased activity, employment in the sector grew to deal with the increased demand. Businesses in the sector reported that client confidence was growing, and that this contributed to the activity increase. Simon Barry, chief economist of Ulster Bank Ireland, noted that “it will be important to continue to track activity patterns in the months ahead for confirmation that the regained momentum evident in April will be sustained”.

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ESRI’s next director announced

Prof Alan Barrett, currently the head of economic analysis division at the ESRI, will replace Prof Frances Ruane as the director. The ESRI and MERC conducted an international search for a candidate, before returning with a decision that Prof Barrett was best for the position.

He is an adjunct professor with Trinity College Dublin, and a member of the Irish Fiscal Advisory Board. He has previously worked on long-term policy issues at the Department of Finance. Speaking at the announcement, he said: “I look forward to continuing the work of Prof Ruane in advocating strongly for evidence-based policymaking”.

Prof Frances Ruane has held the post since 2006. Mr Laurence Crowley, Chairman of ESRI’s council, paid his respect to her. “The Council is grateful to Professor Ruane for her outstanding leadership over the last eight years, which has seen the Institute build and broaden its research capacities”.

Chairman of An Post resigns

Mr Christoph Mueller, former CEO of Aer Lingus, announced last week that his appointment at Malaysia Airlines had been brought forward to 1 May, and he asked to be relieved of his duties. He was appointed by former Minister for Communications Pat Rabbitte in 2013.

Current Minister for Communications, Alex White TD, accepted Mueller’s resignation on Thursday 7 May “with regret”. Mr Mueller also left his position on the board of Tourism Ireland recently, meaning he no longer has any position on the boards of State bodies.

The Public Appointments Service (PAS) will soon advertise for the position.

PAI BLOG

Calorie-count legislation, and what it means for the restaurant industry

By Adrian Cummins and Kristina Sheahan, RAI

Read Here

Family Change in Ireland

By Dr Geoffrey Shannon

Read Here
### Dáil

**Tuesday 12 May**
- 2.00 p.m. Questions (Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform)
- 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
- 5.54 p.m. Workplace Relations Bill 2014 - (Amendments from the Seanad) (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)
- 7.30 p.m. Private Members Business - (Sinn Féin)
- 9.00 p.m. Dáil Adjourns

**Wednesday 13 May**
- 9.30 a.m. Questions (Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)
- 10.45 a.m. Workplace Relations Bill 2014 - (Amendments from the Seanad) Resumed (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)
- 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
- 2.39 p.m. Morning Business Continued
- 7.30 p.m. Private Members Business - (Sinn Féin)
- 9.00 p.m. Dáil Adjourns

**Thursday 14 May**
- 9.30 a.m. Questions (Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine)
- 10.45 a.m. Workplace Relations Bill 2014 - (Amendments from the Seanad) Resumed (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)
- 12.00 noon Leaders Questions
- 12.21 p.m. Order of Business
- 12.41 p.m. SOS (1 hour)
- 1.51 p.m. Topical Issues
- 5.30 p.m. Dáil Adjourns

### Seanad

**Tuesday 12 May**
- 2.30 p.m. Commencement Matters
- 3.30 p.m. Order of Business
- 4.45 p.m. Statements on ‘Alcohol Consumption in Ireland’ (Minister for Health)
- 6.15 p.m. Seanad Adjourns

**Wednesday 13 May**
- 10.30 a.m. Commencement Matters
- 11.30 a.m. Order of Business
- 12.45 p.m. Statements on Early Childcare (Minister for Children)
- 3.00 p.m. Legal Services Regulation Bill 2011 (Department of Justice and Equality)
- 5.30 p.m. Private Members Business – Motion
- 7.30 p.m. Seanad Adjourns

**Thursday 14 May**
- 10.30 a.m. Commencement Matters
- 11.30 a.m. Order of Business
- 12.45 p.m. Children (Amendment) Bill 2015 – Second Stage (Department of Children and Youth Affairs)

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**Tuesday 12 May**

**Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 1.30 p.m. (T)**

AGENDA: The All-Island Economy [Representatives of The Centre for Cross Border Studies, InterTradeIreland, Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency, Border Development Corridor Steering Committee, and Mr. Michael Burke - Independent Economist]---

Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)

AGENDA: Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine - Six-Monthly Report on EU Developments July to Dec 2014 [Officials from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine]

Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 2.15 p.m.

AGENDA: Private Meeting

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 3.30 p.m.

AGENDA: Private Meeting

**Wednesday 13 May**

**AGENDA: Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)**

AGENDA: Witnesses before the Banking Inquiry Session A: 9.30 a.m.

[Mr. Tom Parlon, Director General, & Mr. Liam Kelleher, former Director General, Construction Industry Federation];

Session B: 11.30 a.m.

[Mr. Patrick Davitt, Chief Executive, Institute of Professional Auctioneers and Valuers]; and

Session C: 2.30 p.m.

[Mr. Pat Cullen, Managing Partner, Deloitte Ireland & Mr. Gerry Fitzpatrick, Partner Head of Audit, Deloitte Ireland]

**Justice, Defence and Equality (Select) CR2, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)**

AGENDA: Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) (Amendment) Bill 2014 [Minister for Justice & Equality]

**Transport and Communications (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)**

AGENDA: Briefing on the Draft Public Transport Bill 2015 [Representatives from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the National Transport Authority]

**Foreign Affairs and Trade (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)**

AGENDA: The ongoing persecution of Christians [Representatives from Trócaire; Church in Chains, Open Doors Ireland and Bishop John McAreavey]

**Education and Social Protection (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 1 p.m. (T)**

AGENDA: Up-date on the Family Income Supplement (including the transition of single parents to the payment) [Officials from the Department of Social Protection]

**Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)**

AGENDA: Overview of the Banking Sector in Ireland (resumed) [Mr. Jeremy Masding, Group Chief Executive Officer, Permanent TSB]

**Health and Children (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 2.30 p.m. (T)**

AGENDA: Report of investigation into maternity services in Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise [Mr. Phelim Quinn, Chief Executive Officer, Permanent TSB]

**Health (Select sub) CR2, LH 2000 5.15 p.m. (T)**

AGENDA: Health (General Practitioner Service) Bill 2015 [Minister of State for Primary and Social Care]

**Thursday 14 May**

**Health and Children (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)**

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]

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)

AGENDA: Witnesses before the Banking Inquiry Session A: 9.30 a.m.

[Dr. Laurence Crowley, former Governor, Bank of Ireland & Mr. Richard Burrows, former Governor, Bank of Ireland]; and

Session B: 2.30 p.m.

[Mr. Terence O’Rourke, former Managing Partner KPMG & Mr. Paul Dobey, Partner KPMG Financial Services]

**Human Rights relative to Justice and Equality Matters (Joint sub) CR4, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)**

AGENDA: Ratification of UN Conventions [Dr. Eilíonóir Flynn, National University of Ireland Galway]

Public Accounts CR3, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)

AGENDA: (i) Business of the Committee; and

(ii) Comptroller and Auditor General Appropriation Accounts 2013

a. Vote 7: Office of the Minister for Finance

b. Chapter 1: Exchequer Financial Outturn for 2013

Health and Children (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)

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]

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)

AGENDA: Witnesses before the Banking Inquiry Session A: 9.30 a.m.

[Dr. Laurence Crowley, former Governor, Bank of Ireland & Mr. Richard Burrows, former Governor, Bank of Ireland]; and

Session B: 2.30 p.m.

[Mr. Terence O’Rourke, former Managing Partner KPMG & Mr. Paul Dobey, Partner KPMG Financial Services]

**Human Rights relative to Justice and Equality Matters (Joint sub) CR4, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)**

AGENDA: Ratification of UN Conventions [Dr. Eilíonóir Flynn, National University of Ireland Galway]
Public Affairs Ireland

The Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015

What are the implications for political lobbying in Ireland?

Thursday, 25th June 2015
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