Dublin jobs the target of final Action Plan

Today, January 25, the Government will launch its eighth and final Regional Action Plan for Jobs for the Dublin area. The plan aims to deliver a 10 to 15% growth in employment, accounting for 66,000 jobs between 2016 and 2018.

The 2012 Action Plan for Jobs for the region saw an increase of 64,000 jobs; this is still below the 90,000 lost during the crash. Dublin’s workforce growth is steadily increasing. Areas such as technology, finance, tourism and retail will be a focus. Some emphasis will be put on making Dublin into a “smart city”. “A smart city uses information and communication technologies (ICT) to enhance quality, performance and interactivity of urban services, to reduce costs and resource consumption and to improve contact between citizens and government.”

The following areas are provided for in the Plan:
• As with other plans, it aims to increase the volume of start-ups setting up business, and surviving, by 25%;
• IDA Ireland will attempt to attract foreign investment;
• Upskilling and Innovation will be supported;
• Tourism is projected to grow by 7%;
• An expansion of the audio-visual sector in the city is proposed; and
• Dublin will be promoted as a “great place to live and work”.

As with the previous seven plans, these figures are only projections. They rely heavily on the level of engagement and collaboration from the community.

Speaking at the announcement, An Tánaiste, Joan Burton TD said, “Dublin as the capital city and only city over 1 million population is a real driver of economic growth for Ireland. Getting the jobs market right in Dublin is crucial to our overall economic health as a country. The city suffered badly during the crash … but we have made up major ground since we launched our Action Plan for Jobs” in 2012.

Data breaches reported in one-third of organisations

Last month, the Irish Computer Society carried out a survey which found that one-third of data protection professionals had had a data breach in the last year.

Nearly half (45%) of respondents said that “employee negligence” was the biggest threat to data safety and security.

Over half (57%) said that they believed that formal training was required for the best approach. Since last year, 56% of respondents had received training that met the requirements of their organisations. Only 40% have taken measures to adapt to the forthcoming Data Protection Regulation.

Full survey results will be available at the Association of Data Protection Officers’ National Data Protection Conference, which takes places this Wednesday and Thursday, January 27 and 28.
Funding announced for art programmes in 2016

The Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys TD announced last Thursday, January 21, that €400,000 of funding will be available to arts organisations in 2016.

It is a part of the Department's Small Capital Grants Scheme. The funds will be allocated to over sixty organisations. The maximum grant available will be €10,000. One stipulation, according to the Department’s website, is that “Projects funded under the Scheme must seek to meet a specific cultural need to support the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in the delivery of its objective to nurture and develop Irish artistic and creative talent and enhance access to the arts.”

Previous successful projects include Graffiti Theatre Company, Fighting Words, Children's Books Ireland, An Táin, and 61 other projects, details of which can be found on the Department’s website.

At the announcement, Minister Humphreys said, "While the amounts involved are relatively modest, the grants themselves can make a huge difference to the individual organisations. This small grants scheme is a very important way of providing direct support to local arts groups, which contribute so much to the vibrancy of communities nationwide".

Application forms for the Scheme will be available on the Department website.

Wright reappointed to ESB Board

Last Tuesday, January 19, Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Alex White TD gained approval from Government to reappoint Noreen Wright to her position on the Board of ESB for a second term in office.

Ms Wright is a barrister. She joined Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE), with their legal team, in 1976. She remained there until 2001. She has also held a number of public appointments in the North.

She will take up her position on the Board of ESB as a Ministerial nominee, effective as of June 28 of this year.

Minister White said, “Ms Wright's reappointment will provide continuity in an organisation that plays an important role in the Irish energy market.”
This week at Public Affairs Ireland

On the Blog

3Ts Ramp up Campaign for Suicide Prevention Authority
Noel Smyth
Read here

Another step on the road to the Electoral Commission
PAI Editor Shauna Nimmo
Read here

Does a Flat Tax have any future in Ireland?
Tom Ferris
Read here

Getting the most from the Government’s Capital Investment Plan
Tom Ferris
Read here

The Homelessness Emergency
Fr Peter McVerry
Read here

Training

No-nonsense Project Management
Tuesday 26 January
9am to 4pm
PAI Main Office
For more info, see here

Certificate in Regulatory Investigations, Inspections and Prosecutions
Day one: Tuesday 26 January
9.30am to 4.30pm
PAI Main Office
For more info, see here

Managing Difficult Staff & Dealing with Conflict
Thursday 28 January
9am to 4pm
PAI Main Office
For more info, see here
**Tuesday 26 January**

2.00 p.m.
Questions (Minister for Defence)

3.15 p.m.
Leaders Questions

3.36 p.m.
Questions (Taoiseach)

4.36 p.m.
Order of Business
Motions re changes in Standing Orders (without Debate)

5.06 p.m.
Topical Issues
Technological Universities Bill 2015 - Order for Report, Report and Final Stages
(Department of Education and Skills)

7.30 p.m.
Private Members Business - (Fianna Fáil)

9.00 pm
Dáil Adjourns

**Thursday 28 January**

9.30 a.m.
Questions (Minister for Children and Youth Affairs)

10.45 a.m.
Technological Universities Bill 2015 - Report and Final Stages (Resumed to adjourn at 12 noon if not previously concluded)
(Department of Education and Skills)

Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions) Bill 2012 (Seanad) - Report and Final Stages (Resumed if not previously concluded)
(Department of Justice and Equality)

Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Bill 2015 (Seanad) - Second Stage
(Department of Justice and Equality)

Medical Practitioners (Amendment) Bill 2014 (Seanad) - Second Stage
(Resumed if not previously concluded)
(Department of Health)

Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2016 - Order for Second Stage and Second Stage
(Department of Health)

12.00 p.m.
Leaders Questions

12.21 p.m.
Order of Business
Motion re Planning and Development (Amendment) Regulations 2016
(back from Committee) (without Debate)
(Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)

Motion re Companies Act 2014 (back from Committee) (without Debate)
(Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)

Motion re Health and Social Care Professionals (back from Committee)
(without debate)
(Department of Health)

12.41 p.m.
Morning Business Continued

4.42 p.m.
Topical Issues

5.30 p.m.
Dáil Adjourns

**Wednesday 27 January**

9.30 a.m.
Questions (Minister for Justice and Equality)

10.45 a.m.
Technological Universities Bill 2015 - Report and Final Stages (Resumed to adjourn at 12 noon if not previously concluded)
(Department of Education and Skills)

Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions) Bill 2012 (Seanad) - Order for Report, Report and Final Stages
(Department of Justice and Equality)

Medical Practitioners (Amendment) Bill 2014 (Seanad) - Second Stage
(Department of Health)

12.00 noon
Leaders Questions

12.21 p.m.
Order of Business
Motion re Association agreement between the EU and its Member States and Central America (Back from Committee) (without Debate)
(Department of Foreign Affairs)

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 - (Fianna Fáil)

9.00 p.m.
Dáil Adjourns
**Tuesday 26 January**

2.30 p.m.
Commencement Matters

3.30 p.m.
Order of Business

4.45 p.m.
Road Traffic Bill 2016 – Committee Stage
(Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport)

6.00 p.m.
Credit Guarantee (Amendment) Bill 2015 – Second Stage
(Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)

7.30 p.m.
Cross party motion regarding a review of Local Government arrangements
(Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)

9.00 p.m.
Seanad Adjourns

**Wednesday 27 January**

10.30 a.m.
Commencement Matters

11.30 a.m.
Order of Business

12.45 a.m.
Tributes to former Senator Brian Friel

2.30 p.m.
Public Transport Bill 2015 - All Stages
(Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport)

4.00 p.m.
Private Members’ Business

6.00 p.m.
Horse Racing Ireland Bill 2015 – Second Stage
(Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine)

Seanad Adjourns

**Thursday 28 January**

10.30 a.m.
Commencement Matters

11.30 a.m.
Order of Business

Motion regarding the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005
(Section 95(3)) (Variation of title: Optician) Regulations 2016 – Back from Committee debate
(Department of Health)

Motion regarding the Planning and Development (Amendment) Regulations 2016 – Back from Committee without debate
(Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)

Motion regarding the Companies Act 2014 (section 1313) Regulations 2016 – Back from Committee without debate
(Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)

12.45 p.m.
Credit Guarantee (Amendment) Bill 2015 – Committee Stage
(Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)

2.30 p.m.
Energy Bill 2016 – Order for Second Stage and Second Stage
(Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources)

Seanad Adjourns
Tuesday 26 January

Foreign Affairs and Trade (Select)
CR3, LH 2000 11.45 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: The Association Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, on the one hand, and Central America on the other. [Minister of State with Special Responsibility for ODA, Trade Promotion and North South co-operation Development]

European Scrutiny - Finance and Public Expenditure (Joint sub) CR4, LH 2000 1.30 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Joint)
CR2, LH 2000 1.30 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: (i) Motion re: Companies Act 2014 (Section 1313) Regulations 2016 [Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation] (ii) The impact and opportunities in relation to The Transatlantic, Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) [Representatives of Trócaire; ATTAC Ireland; Irish Cancer Society; Slow Food Ireland] and; (iii) Scrutiny of EU legislative proposals:

Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Joint)
CR3, LH 2000 2 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint)
CR4, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Overview of the Banking Sector and issues relating to the Central Bank [Prof. Philip Lane, Governor]

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint)
CR1, LH 2000 4 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Wednesday 27 January

Transport and Communications (Joint)
CR4, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: ComReg's regulatory role in the electronic communications markets, particularly regarding broadband and mobile phone coverage. [Representatives from ComReg]

European Union Affairs (Joint)
CR2, LH 2000 12.15 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: The European Year of Development 2015 [Mr. Johnny Sheehan, Project Coordinator, Dóchas]

Education and Social Protection (Joint)
CR3, LH 2000 1 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Engagement with Mr. David Begg, Chairperson Designate, The Pensions Authority

Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht (Joint)
CR2, LH 2000 2.15 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: (i) National Cultural Institutions Act 1997 (Section 44)(Variation of Indemnity Amount) Order 2016 [Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht]

Public Service Oversight and Petitions (Joint)
CR3, LH 2000 4 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Public Accounts
CR3, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: (i) Business of the Committee; and (ii) 2014 Annual Report and Appropriation Accounts of the Comptroller and Auditor General:
  a. Vote 29: Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
  b. Chapter 13: The Development of Eircode, the National Postcode System [Officials from the Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources]

Thursday 28 January

Health and Children (Joint)
CR2, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Session A: 9.30 a.m.
  Engagement with Professor Ursula Kilkelly, Chairperson Designate, Oberstown Detention School; and Session B: 11.30 a.m.
  Motion re: Proposed approval by Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann of the draft Regulations on the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (Section 95(3)) (Variation of title: Optician) Regulations 2016

Public Accounts
CR3, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: (i) Business of the Committee; and (ii) 2014 Annual Report and Appropriation Accounts of the Comptroller and Auditor General:
  a. Vote 29: Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
  b. Chapter 13: The Development of Eircode, the National Postcode System [Officials from the Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources]