

Minutes

Retail Forum Working Group Future of Retail – Digitalisation and Skills Meeting 2 28 April 2022

CHATHAM HOUSE RULES APPLY

Attendees: Appendix A

Next meeting: 10am, Friday 20 May 2022

Minutes: The minutes from this meeting are to be agreed under Silence Procedure and will be available on www.enterprise.gov.ie

Objective: The **Future of Retail – Digitalisation and Skills** working group is tasked with identifying a set of achievable actions to feed into a Retail Action Plan that will be presented to the Minister for Retail, Damian English T.D. at the Retail Forum meeting on 08 June 2022.

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed the members of the working group and thanked them for their participation.

The focus of meeting was to discuss the draft actions.

Action 1: Niamh Martin, DETE provided update on the work being done by the Logistics and Supply Chain Skills Group on career path mapping. Diagram/table will be shared with WG members.

- Discussion ensued regarding how to raise awareness of careers- agreed that more than leaflets were required to animate opportunity in the sector.
- A Transition Year programme was suggested.
- The use of social media was considered important.
- Fáilte Ireland has developed 10 occupational profiles for the tourism and hospitality sector.

Action: Regional Skills Fora to send in Fáilte Ireland information on occupational profiles.

Action Ongoing

Action 2: This links in with Action 6. An inventory of skills and training courses is being compiled by the Retail Forum Secretariat and will be shared with WG members for further input.

Action: Training List to be circulated with WG

Action Ongoing

Action 3: Mr Don O'Connor, DETE of the Leading the Way implementation Group spoke about the work being done to develop an Online Management Skills Assessment Tool and a Central Repository of Information on Management Training and Education. He invited the WG members to feedback on the online tool.

Action: Email to issue to WG inviting feedback on online tool.

Action Complete

Action 4: Niamh Martin, DETE updated the WG on the IUA Micro credentials Innovate Project. The project focuses on the development of short courses that will result in a micro credential (a record of learning) in the HE sector.

Action: Email micro creds leaflet to WG members. Circulate information on forthcoming Micro Cred Innovate workshops taking place.

Action Complete

Action 5: Discussion took place on the appropriateness of micro creds for the retail sector – there was a view that certification for basic skills in technology and customer service is required while higher level skills in new technologies and management development training is also welcomed by the sector.

- It was suggested that certification in the FE sector might be more appropriate.
- WG was informed that there is a built -in system of accreditation under RPL (recognition of prior learning) but recognised that further awareness of these courses could be raised
- 16 ETBs provide FE training that can be accessed by the retail sector
- A range of Skillnet courses available too

Action: Consider opportunities for Industry to work with the ETBs to develop specific retail courses and examine existing certification opportunities across the Higher and Further Education sector for retail businesses and their workers.

Action 6: Actions 1 and 2 relate to the skills mapping.

Action: Training list to be circulated to WG members.

Action Ongoing

Action 7: Action 7 is about exploring ways to ensure that retailers with demonstrable and proven potential develop and grow capacity selling online.

- Identifying the number and type of retailers that have capacity to grow is important but hard to quantify
- Defining what is 'proven potential' is important.
- Consideration should be given to hosting a workshop with retailers to scope out a set of criteria

Action: Workshop to focus on setting criteria for new digital scheme to be considered as an Action in the Retail Action Plan

Action Ongoing

Action 8: Action 8 is about Identifying level of digitisation (technology) in retail businesses.

- Labour intensive industries in Ireland such as health and retail are expanding their digital usage but a large part of their workforces aren't using digital technology in their processes, products or business models (see report attached)

- Funding for business (not retail specific) through the Digital Transition Fund will be available from mid-2022

Action: Explore funding support for businesses to deploy basic technologies to support their business processes.

Action Ongoing

Further comments:

- An action on the development of transition year programme suggested following the first WG meeting has been removed as it has been incorporated into Action 1 regarding career-path mapping.
- An action on further categorising the retail sector identified as a possible action following the first WG meeting has been removed following discussion.
- Based on the discussion at the meeting, additional comments are highlighted in yellow in the table on draft actions below.

2. Draft Actions

	Lead	Action	Detail	Timeline
1.	DETE Working Group Members Regional Skills Fora/	Consult with Logistics and Supply Chain Skills group/Hospitality skills group regarding career-path mapping.	The Logistics and Supply Chain Skills group/Hospitality skills group have developed career path illustration/maps to convey what a career in the sector looks like. Explore ways to promote interest in working in the retail sector amongst TY students – a career-path map would help.	Short-term
2	Working Group Members DETE	Map out the mentoring Schemes that exist for the retail sector.	To promote retail as a career of choice.	Short-term
3	DETE Working Group Members	Identify opportunities for the retail sector in relation to Leading the Way	Engage with SME Management Skills Implementation Group. to see potential benefits for retail.	Short-term

4.	DETE	Invite Irish Universities Association to present to the Working Group on the development of Micro-credentials	Micro credentials are being developed for other sectors.	Short-term
5.	Regional Skills Fora/ICTU Working Group Members Irish Universities Association, SOLAS, FE, Education and Training Boards	Explore accreditation/certification opportunities for retail businesses and their workers. Consider opportunities for Industry to work with the ETBs to develop specific retail courses Explore Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) initiatives for retail		Medium-term
6.	DETE Working Group Members	Map existing skills training for the retail sector	There is a need to identify and raise awareness of existing training available to those working in retail and who wish to work in retail.	Medium-term

DRAFT Digital Actions:

	Lead	Action	Detail	Timeline
7.	Working Group Members	Explore ways to ensure that retailers with demonstrable and proven potential develop and grow capacity selling online. Workshop to focus on setting criteria for new digital scheme to be considered as an Action in the Retail Action Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and quantify the no and types of retailers that have capability to increase online trading but currently don't meet the eligibility requirements for the ORS 2. Examine how TOV or ORS is currently not delivering for retailers 	Medium-term

			and could be improved upon.	
8.	Working Group Retail Representative bodies, Members DETE	Identify level of digitisation (technology) in retail businesses. Explore funding support for businesses to acquire basic technologies to support their business processes.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retail sector to identify scale of EPOS Systems in use in active retail enterprises in Ireland. 2. Determine if there are any existing suitable Schemes (National Digital Strategy, LEOs) or incentives to upgrade EPOS systems and if not, what would be needed? 	Medium-term

Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment

May 2022

Appendix A

Digitalisation and Skills Working Group

Attendance List:

Organisation	First Name	Surname
Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment Chair)	Deborah	Dignam
Chambers Ireland	Shane	Hughes
BWG	Cathy	Kearney
CSNA	Vincent	Jennings
Retail Excellence	Duncan	Graham
Retail Ireland Skillnet	Róisín	Woods
ICTU	Gerry	Light
Regional Skills For a	Natasha	Kinsella

Apologies:

Organisation	First Name	Surname
Chambers	Shane	Conneely

DETE Officials	First Name	Surname
	Helen	Keane-MacDonough
	Niamh	Martin
	Mary	Cullen
	Susan	McNamee
	Maedhbh	Cronin
	Marc	McEntegart
	Don	O'Connor
	Sandra	Mullen