



Note of the Enterprise Forum, Wednesday, 18 June 2025

Meetings are held under Chatham House rule

Attendees

Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment	Peter Burke TD
Minister of State for Employment, Small Business and Retail	Alan Dillon TD
Minister of State for Trade Promotion, Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation	Niamh Smyth TD
Secretary General, DETE	Declan Hughes
DETE officials	Dermot Mulligan, Ronnie Downes, Yvonne White, Brian Walsh, Ross Church, Sarah Brown, Dermot Coates, Manus O'Donnell, Ruairi Vickery, Alan Power, Garrett O'Grady, Niamh Martin, Marian Cassidy and Amanda Shiels. Ministerial Advisors: Jenny McCormack, Brian Keegan, Laura Mannion Forum Secretariat: Susan McNamee, Corinna O'Brien
Enterprise Ireland	Donal Leahy
IDA	James Farrell
LEOs	Seamus Doran
American Chamber of Commerce	Colm O'Callaghan
British Irish Chamber of Commerce	Paul Lynam
Business in the Community Ireland	Tomás Sercovich
Chambers Ireland	Shane Hughes
IBEC	Fergal O'Brien, Sharon Higgins
Irish Exporters Association	Simon McKeever
Retail Excellence	Jean McCabe
RGDATA	Tara Buckley
SFA	David Broderick
The Family Business Network	John McGrane

Item 1: Welcome and opening remarks

- The Minister for ETE, Peter Burke TD, opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees both in the room and online.
- The minutes from the Enterprise Forum meeting of 3 April 2025 were approved.

Item 2: Budget 2026 – Tour de Table

- Minister Burke invited each Member to participate in a ‘tour de table’ discussion on their budget requests along with any labour market and skills issues of concern. Issues raised include the following:
 - Energy costs, employment costs and the cost of doing business.
 - Support for businesses in areas such as decarbonisation and digitalisation.
 - Review Taxation system – Capital Gains Tax is a concern SMEs, R&D Tax Credits, PRSI and Benefits in Kind.
 - Review of commercial rates system
 - Support for Business who hire part time employees in full time education to help the employers / students.
 - Support for vulnerable job seekers / disabilities.
 - Infrastructure improvements for future growth (transport, housing, security of energy and water supplies, policing in towns and cities), planning, enhance regional attractiveness (more vibrant town centres).
 - Consolidate Tax and Employment Law
 - The importance of the SME test
 - Develop talents and skills (particularly R&D skills, Communication and Leadership skills).
 - Skills gaps in digital and AI.
 - Sector specific supports/study (engineering, apprenticeships, PHD Researchers).
 - Importance of BioPharma and MedTech.

Item 3: US/IRL trade agreements / tariffs.

- The Assistant Secretary of Trade Division spoke on the current tariff situation with the US and gave an update to members on the Government Trade Forum which took place on April 4.
- The following issues / concerns were raised:
 - Ireland’s exposure to EU’s trade response measures.
 - Potential for any escalation to have tax implications.
 - Market diversification support and advisory services.
 - Importance of keeping our economy competitive.

Item 4: Horizontal Single Market Strategy

- Officials from the Department's Internal Market and Strategic Resilience Unit gave a presentation on the Horizontal Single Market Strategy, which was published on 21st May 2025.
- Slides from the presentation are to be circulated amongst forum members after the meeting.

Item 5: Update on Responsible Business Forum Subgroup Meeting

- The Assistant Secretary of Trade Division gave an update on the Responsible Business Forum and reiterated the importance of keeping the overall Responsible Business initiatives streamlined and packaged together.
- The Responsible Business Forum, a sub-group of the Enterprise Forum, held its first meeting of 2025 on 21 May

Item 6: Update on Cost of Business Advisory Forum

- An official from the Department's Economic and Tax Policy Unit gave an update on the newly implemented Cost of Business Advisory Forum. Going forward the intention is to have meetings specific to several themes such as costs, employment visas, energy etc).
- Members mentioned that it would be valuable to have the Legal Services Regulatory Authority or The Law Society included as the cost of legal services will come up and that insurance should also be included. Members were informed that both legal and insurance would be added in the future.
- Membership was queried and EF members were assured that the CoBAF secretariat is working to ensure the relevant people attend each meeting.

Item 7: AOB

Next Meeting

- Slides on Single Market Strategy to be circulated to Forum members.