



**An Roinn Fiontar,  
Trádála agus Fostaíochta**  
Department of Enterprise,  
Trade and Employment

# **SME and Entrepreneurship Taskforce**

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment,  
Kildare Street, Thursday 11 May 2023, 2.30-4pm

## **Attendees**

### **DETE:**

Minister Simon Coveney  
Minister Dara Calleary  
Minister Neale Richmond  
Pauline Mulligan  
Jean Carberry  
Ciara O'Sullivan  
Bernadette Hawkes  
Michael Clifford  
Phylis Kelly  
Mary Delaney

### **Taskforce Members:**

Leo Clancy  
Kevin Buckley  
Paula Fitzsimons  
Ciaran Murtagh  
John Donoghue  
Erik Jentetics  
Carol Lynch  
Veronica Murphy  
Oonagh O'Hagan  
Oliver Tattan  
Elaina Fitzgerald  
Gina Quin  
John Magee  
Anne Cusack  
DC Cahalane  
Helen Ryan  
Patricia Callan  
Neil McDonnell  
Ian Talbot  
David Broderick

**Other Government and Agency Officials:**

Tom Cusack  
Donal Leahy

**Secretariat:**

Karen Hynes  
Patrick Sinnott  
Laura Byrne  
Hazel Carroll  
Tim Luby

## Opening Remarks

Opening the second Taskforce meeting of the year, Minister Coveney welcomed the addition of five new members; John Donoghue, Erik Jentetics, Carol Lynch, Veronica Murphy, Anne Cusack and acknowledged the significant contribution from those who had stepped down since January.

Minister Richmond welcomed the Head of the Local Enterprise Office Network as a permanent member of the Taskforce.

**Leo Clancy, CEO of Enterprise Ireland (EI)** provided an overview of Enterprise Ireland's strategy for start-ups and scaling Irish companies to achieve leading positions in global markets. Ireland already has a strong base of global companies with good levels of entrepreneurial activity. There are increasing numbers of innovative high potential start-ups achieving early-stage scaling and accessing global finance. However, it is acknowledged that there is potential to achieve more by encouraging higher levels of ambition and risk-taking and encouraging founders to scale firms internationally.

The presentation encompassed the opportunities and challenges currently facing Irish enterprises and Enterprise Ireland's strategy to address those.

**Bernadette Hawkes of Finance for Growth Policy and State Aid Unit – DETE** presented an overview of the Government's interventions in the area of public equity finance, challenges in the current environment for start-ups and scaling and work underway in the Department to help address those challenges.

**Taskforce Commentary:**

The Taskforce acknowledged the renewed objectives of the Government and Enterprise Ireland to accelerate indigenous enterprise growth and the recent expansion of the Local Enterprise Office framework.

Other issues discussed included: the need to investigate potential barriers scaling; de-risking investment in high potential companies to allow for growth; supporting companies to access expertise to enable them to grow internationally; developing measures that will accelerate the market readiness of start-ups; export supports for companies that are not in the manufacturing and internationally trading sectors;

## **Closing Remarks**

Minister Coveney thanked everybody for their engagement and views and proposed that the next meeting of the group would discuss potential budgetary measures to address the issues that had been raised. The next meeting would be scheduled for early July.