

Minutes for NCPC Meeting 109

Meeting: National Competitiveness and Productivity Council No 109
Venue: IDA Ireland Headquarters, Dublin 2
Date: 8.30 am – 10.30 am, Thursday 20 October 2022

Members Present:

Dr Frances Ruane, Chair
Ciarán Conlon, Director of Public Policy, Microsoft, Ireland
David Hegarty, Assistant Secretary, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Laura Bambrick, Head of Social Policy & Employment Affairs, ICTU
Jim Woulfe, Chief Executive, Dairygold Co-operative Society Limited
Jeremy Godfrey, Chair, Competition and Consumer Protection Commission
Fergal O'Brien, Executive Director, Lobbying and Influence, Ibec
Neil McDonnell, Chief Executive, ISME
Michael Taft, Research Officer, SIPTU

Advisors Present:

John Shaw, Department of the Taoiseach
Maria Graham, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Cian O'Lionain, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
Liam Coen, on behalf of Andrew Munro, Department of Justice
Colin Menton, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Evin McMahon, on behalf of Paul Bolger, Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
Niall Egan, Department of Social Protection
John McCarthy, Department of Finance

Apologies

Martin Shanahan, Chief Executive, IDA Ireland
Leo Clancy, Chief Executive, Enterprise Ireland
Patrick Walsh, Managing Director of Dogpatch Labs
Margot Slattery, ISS World Service, Global Head of Diversity and Inclusion
William Beausang, Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
Garret Doocey, Department of Transport
Sinead McPhilips, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Secretariat

Dermot Coates
Linda Kane
Rory Mulholland
Patrick Condon
Karen Hogan

	Action
<p>109.1 Chair's Introduction, Minutes & Matter Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Chair opened the meeting. ▪ The minutes from NCPC meeting 108 were approved. ▪ David Hegarty provided an update on the progress of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment's new White Paper on Ireland's enterprise policy. ▪ The Chair updated on the NCPC's invitation to participate in the EU's Technical Support Instrument. This will involve working with the OECD looking at "Strengthening pro-productivity policies through enhanced NPBs capabilities and performance". The French coordinators have also invited Germany, Finland and Portugal to participate. Each country must apply for funding using a common template and the EU closing date is the 31st October 2022. A further update on this project will be given at the December Council meeting. 	
<p>109.2 Ireland's Competitiveness Challenge 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Chair opened this agenda item and stated the aim is to discuss this years' experience of preparing and publishing the Challenge report as well as media engagement of the report. ▪ The Chair also raised the question of how the Council should respond to the Government's response. <p>Members Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Members noted that the process worked well this year and were in favour for the timeline of meetings throughout 2022. ▪ Members were supportive of the summer meeting of the Council being held in the month of July to allow for a more advanced draft to be circulated and discussed. ▪ Members then discussed methods in which the NCPC and Competitiveness Challenge publication could make more of an impact: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide briefing to an Oireachtas Committee and/or provide briefing to parliamentary parties ○ Liaise with the research service in the Oireachtas ○ Work to spread NCPC message to schools and universities through engagement 	<p>Secretariat to consider the feedback and revert to the Council</p>

<p>109.3 Productivity Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This agenda item featured two presentations on productivity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ First, Sean O’Boyle presented on the CSO work on productivity statistics. ○ Then, Martina Lawless presented on ESRI Productivity Research. ▪ Members noted the importance of gaining insight into the differing productivity levels across the foreign vs domestic firms. 	
<p>109.4 Work Plans Q4 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Chair stated that the objective of this agenda item is to discuss with the Council the Work Plan options for the remainder of 2022. ▪ The proposed Bulletin topics for remainder of 2022 are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Climate Action Plan - Targets for the Enterprise Sector ○ Competitiveness perspective on upcoming policy developments: White Paper on Enterprise and/or a Living Wage ○ Constraints on Indicators ○ National Claims Information Database (NCID) ▪ Dermot Coates noted that it was likely that only one further Bulletin would be completed this year. He also raised the prospect of a future paper (in 2023) on the Carrying Capacity of the State which would further develop a theme addressed in the Competitiveness Challenge report. ▪ The Secretariat will aim to further progress analysis and update at the next meeting of the Council. ▪ The planning for Ireland’s Competitiveness Scorecard 2023 was discussed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The question for the Council is: ‘Are they happy with the publication schedule and the remaining topics?’</i> ▪ <i>The question for the Council is: ‘is the approach used in the 2020 Competitiveness Scorecard still fit for purpose?’</i> <p>Members Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Members were broadly in favour of the upcoming schedule, and some expressed the view that the Carrying Capacity paper should be a priority going forward. ▪ One member noted that NCPC Bulletins could be a useful tool to benchmark Ireland’s performance in comparison to other similar EU countries. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Members noted that it is too early in the process to do a Bulletin on the NCID data or a Living Wage. ▪ Members were in support of the current design of the 2023 Competitiveness Scorecard. 	
<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Secretariat will share CSO and ESRI slides from the productivity discussion. ○ Date for the next Council meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 8th December 2022 @ at 8.30am 	