

Chambers Ireland Chamber Network Report 2016

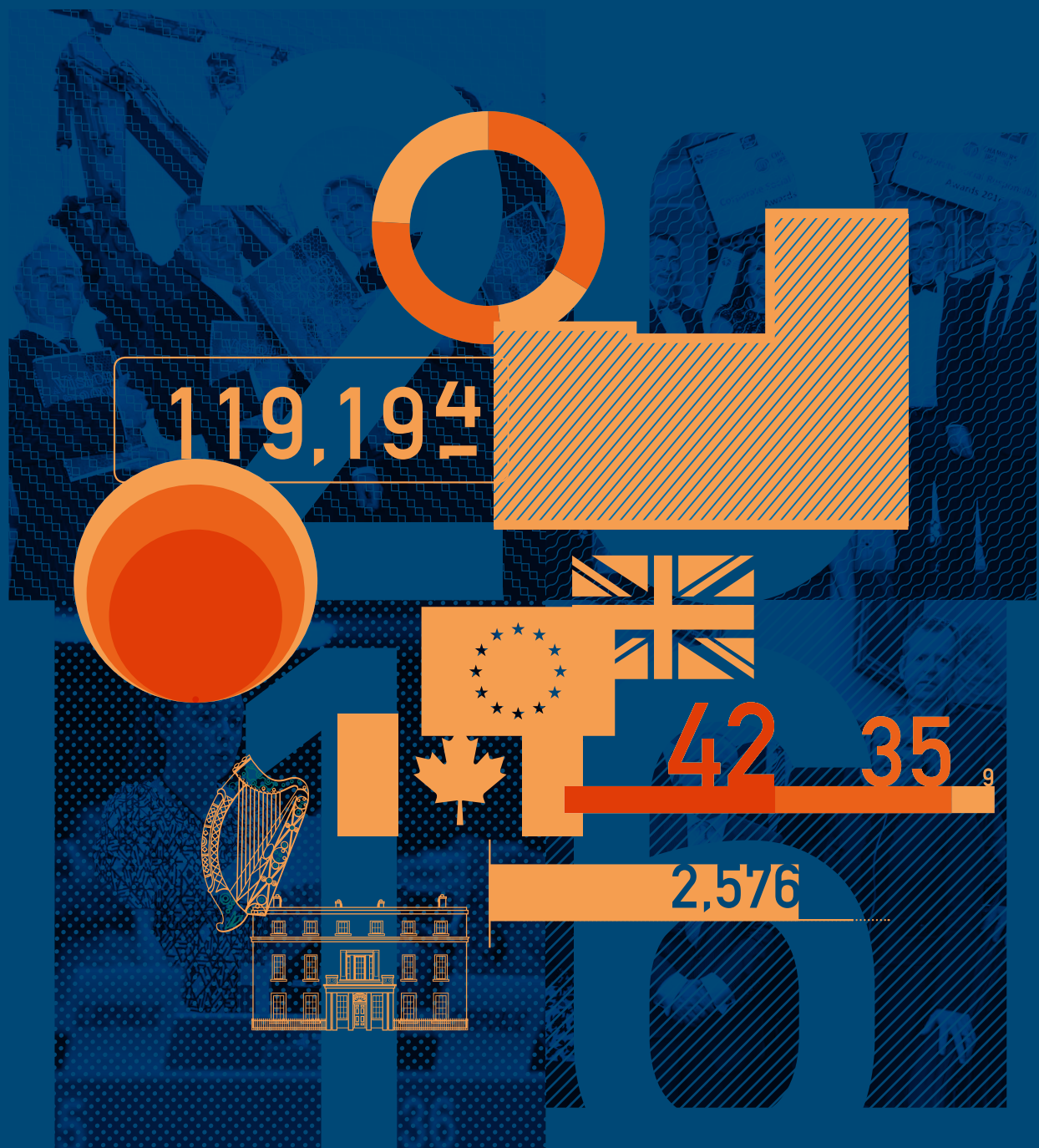


TABLE OF CONTENTS

2016 at a Glance	2
President's Statement 2017	4
Chief Executive's Review of 2016.....	5
Affiliated Chamber Locations	6

CHAMBER DEVELOPMENT

Regional initiatives within the Chamber Network.....	8
Growing Chamber Membership.....	10
Engagement	12
Chamber Network Representation	14

POLICY

Policy Priorities 2016	16
Vision 2021	18
External Representation.....	19
Budget 2017	20
Submissions to Consultations 2016.....	22
Policy Councils	24
Lobbying Act	25
Mediation Scheme	26
The General Data Protection Regulation	28

INTERNATIONAL

Chambers Ireland Trade Policy 2016	30
Chambers Ireland Trade Policy into 2017.....	31
Influence in Europe.....	32
Network Trip to Brussels & European Parliament of Enterprises	33
Global Influence	36

MEDIA & EVENTS

Website.....	38
Social Media.....	39
Publications	40
2016 Events	41

SERVICES & CONTACTS

Other services	45
External Representation.....	47
Board of Directors	48
Chambers Ireland Team	49

2016 AT A GLANCE

2

Ian Talbot, Chief Executive Chambers Ireland along with representatives from the Irish Chamber Network launching "A Vision for 2021 – A Manifesto for Ireland's Future from the Irish Chamber Network".



Representatives from the Chamber Network at the launch of the Pre-Budget 2017 Submission outside Government Buildings.



Fingal County Council were awarded Local Authority of the Year at the 2016 Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government (ELG) Awards. Pictured (L-R) Ian Talbot, Chief Executive of Chambers Ireland, Paul Reid, Chief Executive Fingal County Council, Damien English TD - Minister of State for Housing and Urban Renewal, Niamh Boyle, President Chambers Ireland, Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Daragh Butler, Cllr. Anne Devitt FCC and Cllr. Kieran Dennison.

Speakers from the 'Making the EU work for Irish Business' hosted by Chambers Ireland in Hibernia Club, St. Stephens Green, May 2016. Front L-R: Noelle O'Connell, Executive Director of European Movement Ireland, Prof. John O'Brennan, NUI Maynooth, Lucinda Creighton, Former Minister for European Affairs. Back L-R: Ian Talbot, Chambers Ireland, Graham Stull from the European Commission Representation in Ireland, Ben Butters, Director of Policy with Eurochambres.





The Award for Outstanding Achievement in CSR was presented to ESB at the 2016 Chambers Ireland Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Awards. Pictured (L-R) Ian Talbot, CEO of Chambers Ireland, Mr. Damien English T.D. Minister of State for Housing and Urban Renewal, Anne Cooney, Group Corporate Social Responsibility Coordinator, ESB, Sarah Claxton, Employee Engagement, Diversity & Communications Lead, ESB, Pat Naughton, Executive Director Group People and Sustainability, ESB and Mike Jones, Business Development Director, BAM Ireland.

Andrea Carroll, South Dublin Chamber MEPE for Ireland speaking at the European Parliament of Enterprises October 2016.



Pictured at Eurochambres Invest Week (L-R) Lúcio Mauro Vinhas de Souza, Team Leader of Economics Team, EPSC, EC, Ian Talbot, Chief Executive, Chambers Ireland and Arnaldo Abruzzini, CEO, EUROCHAMBRES



Chamber Network Delegation to Brussels for the European Parliament of Enterprises (EPE) pictured with Mairead McGuinness MEP & Vice-President of the European Parliament in October 2016.

President's Statement 2017



Firstly I would like to say what an honour and privilege it is for me to have been appointed as President of Chambers Ireland at our AGM last September. On behalf of us all, I thank Clive Bellows for his exceptional leadership as President for the preceding two years and for passing on a very stable organisation to face into the challenges ahead. I also welcome the members who joined the board for the first time this year.

2016 is likely to forever be remembered as a watershed year for international trade globally. The potential ramifications for Ireland of events such as the historic vote UK vote to leave the EU, the election of President Trump with a clear desire to make disruptive change to the nature of America's trading relationship with the rest of the world and the increasing global voter angst about the benefits of globalisation are significant. A priority for us as an organisation will be to strongly represent the concerns and needs of Irish businesses at home and abroad as the various issues evolve. During 2016 we put in place very strong alliances on these topics with relevant organisations such as Eurochambres, the British Chambers of Commerce and the International Chamber of Commerce to ensure that our voice is heard as these transformative events evolve. I would also like to acknowledge the vital relationship we put in place at the start of 2016 with the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry which took on more significance than any of us could have anticipated at the time.

Building on our policy work in 2016, the need for increased emphasis on the development of infrastructure and the continued improvement in Ireland's competitiveness will be critical elements of our engagement with Local and National Government in 2017. The need to deliver a realistic National Planning Framework capable of delivery for our long term economic wellbeing will be an essential deliverable in this regard and we ask all Chambers to contribute

to and disseminate our policies and materials during 2017. The strength and USP of our network is our geographic coverage and our 2016 network-wide campaigns in advance of General Election 2016 and Budget 2017 were particularly effective. As a network we are successfully using social media to support our campaigns and we will look to delivering further on this in the coming year.

Another focus of attention for our board during 2016 and for our future strategy is building the strength and critical mass of our network. Any organisation is only as strong as our people and we have some wonderful people within our organisation nationwide. A significant development we have identified is the increasing incidence of groups of Chambers coming together on regional specific policy matters creating a much more powerful message and impact (page 8–9). We strongly support initiatives that strengthen our voice through collective action and collaboration.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Board members for the hard work and support and also to acknowledge the continued hard work and dedication by the staff of Chambers Ireland. We share a positive outlook for 2017 and plan to build on the success of 2016. A strong board with active contributing members is vital so when our AGM rolls around again on 26 September 2017 we look forward to new nominees coming forward. These will supplement the existing board and help us to drive the organisation forward into an uncertain future with renewed dedication to promote the interests of our members and to be a strong voice for the Irish business community at every possible opportunity.

Niamh Boyle

President, Chambers Ireland

Chief Executive's Review of 2016



The strength of the Chamber Network lies in how we can work together to represent every town, city and region across Ireland. The purpose of this annual report is to demonstrate some of the highlights and range of activities undertaken during the year.

2016 was an exceptionally eventful year in global politics the implications of which will present many challenges both globally and domestically in the years to come. While there is no doubt that the future will be challenging for the Irish economy, Chambers Ireland remain very positive about the year ahead. We are facing a period of uncertainty but with the right economic policies and effective future planning Ireland can be in a strong position to face the challenges.

The General Election in early 2016, the subsequent lengthy period of Government formation negotiations and the path towards Budget 2017 provided a Network opportunity to showcase a strong policy platform and unified voice representing businesses across Ireland. "A Vision for 2021, a manifesto for Ireland's future from the Irish Chamber Network" was presented to candidates in constituencies across the country. A coordinated campaign ensured that voice of business across Ireland was heard in advance of General Election 2016. Later in the year, the Network strength was again displayed in the delivery of a strong pre-budget submission and promotional campaign in the lead up to Budget 2017 and we welcomed the inclusion of several of our keys asks in the Minister's speech on Budget day in October.

Engagement with the political system on the issues that matter to Irish business, local and national is a central part of how Chambers represent the interests of members. We are proud to have recorded the country's largest number of returns submitted to the Lobbying Act Register since it was established in late 2015. The Chamber Network registered a total of 322 returns over the three recording periods in 2016.

There has been a sustained effort to increase our engagement at EU level in recent years. Representatives from the Chamber Network participated at the 2016 European Parliament of Enterprises and also held a series of engaging meetings with EU policymakers in Brussels. Read more about the EPE and Network engagement on page 33. As Deputy President of Eurochambres, I have worked closely over the past year with our European partners and ensured that Irish business concerns were on the agenda at European Chamber meetings. It is planned to build on the success of this engagement during 2017 and to develop new opportunities for the Chamber Network to engage strategically with European policy makers and business groups to ensure that the voice of the Irish business community is heard at EU level. This is more important than ever in the context of the complex Brexit negotiations facing the UK and the EU and the ongoing uncertainty around the consequences of an eventual UK withdrawal.

Chambers Ireland will continue to work on behalf of our members in 2017 to ensure that our policies reflect the needs of the Irish business community and to continue to engage at political level to ensure policies and plans are implemented. It is likely to be another extremely eventful year domestically and internationally and we will be seeking to prioritise the topics that matter most for our members. All relationships are two way and I ask you all to engage with us and our activities and to input to and leverage our policy platform, communications resources and positive public engagement, adapting it for local lobbying and media purposes, so that we all get the most out of our collective membership. We look forward to working together throughout 2017!

Ian Talbot

Chief Executive, Chambers Ireland

Affiliated Chamber Locations





CHAMBER DEVELOPMENT

Regional initiatives within the Chamber Network

2016 was an important year for regional initiatives and saw increased cooperation taking place within the Chamber Network.

The Chamber Network is Ireland's largest business representative organisation. With 46 accredited Chambers around Ireland, businesses in the Chamber Network are widely representative across the country. Chambers Ireland supports regional Chamber activities across the Chamber Network which promotes the economic and social development of communities in order to make them a better place to work, live and do business. Chambers are aware of the challenges that face businesses in cities, towns and rural areas of Ireland. It is the Chamber Network's first priority to try and address those issues on a local, regional and national level.

Regional Chambers have a distinct role and function for the Chambers involved and provide an equally valuable role for Chambers Ireland. Regional Chamber meetings provide Chambers Ireland with valuable feedback into national policy and national lobbying strategy. Regional Chamber meetings also provide the opportunity for Chambers to discuss issues which are of importance to the whole region and to form a unified voice when lobbying nationally.

In 2016, the Chamber Network submitted more lobbying returns than any other business organisation in the country. This is representative of the fact that Chambers Ireland and local Chambers are working hard to promote the long term development of the regions. For further details of Lobbying activity please see page 25.

Chamber representatives across the country also play a key role in the Action Plan for Jobs (APJ) Regional Implementation Committees which focus on the potential within regions as key contributors to Ireland's national growth and the creation of employment. The Regional APJ seeks to deliver a series of actions by 2017 and acts as a further catalyst for increased cooperation within regions. For details of Network representation on APJ see page 14.

Groupings with particular lobbying profiles in 2016 include:

Atlantic Economic Corridor

The Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) is an initiative of affiliated Chambers along the entire western seaboard (Shannon, Ennis, Tralee, Galway, Roscommon, Mayo, Leitrim and Sligo) with a collective membership 2,725 companies employing 80,000 people. The AEC's mission is to realise the hidden, untapped opportunity to bring jobs and investment to the region and develop a 'city of scale' effect in the AEC to rival the economic powerhouses of Dublin and Cork. In 2016, representatives of the Chambers along the AEC lobbied various Government departments as well as the Minister of State for Regional Development, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Western Development Commission, Northern and Western Regional Assembly, South-West Regional Authority and Local Authorities along the western seaboard to promote and seek support for the AEC Strategy and Work Programme.

N4/N5 Lobbying Group

In 2016, Chambers of Commerce along the N4 and N5 worked together to raise awareness of the need for investment in the roads connecting the midlands to the North West of Ireland. Representatives from Chambers in Longford, Athlone, Mayo, Mullingar, Sligo, Carrick-On-Shannon, Donegal, Roscommon with the support of Chambers Ireland presented their case at a meeting in Buswell's Hotel. The group highlighted the issues to the

Pictured L-R: Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness, Ian Talbot Chief Executive of Chambers Ireland, An Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD, Ann McGregor, Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Minister for Foreign Affairs Charlie Flanagan.



several TDs and Senators and Government Ministers in attendance, particularly the need for upgrading to motorway status in certain section of the roads and that constant postponement of improvement works are hampering economic development in the region. The Chamber representatives also met with Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Shane Ross TD and Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, Denis Naughten TD.

Cork Regional Chamber

Cork Regional Chamber is combined of affiliated Chambers including Cork, Cobh, Mallow, Midleton and West Cork. The Chamber has continued lobbying for the timely implementation of Flood Relief Schemes in areas affected by flooding events across the city and county. In February 2016, representatives of Zurich Insurance visited Fermoy to assess the recent completion of the flood relief scheme in the town. This meeting, which was facilitated by Cork Chamber, was attended by Conor Healy, Cork Chamber CEO, local businessman Michael Hanley representing Fermoy Enterprise Board, engineers from the OPW and Cork County Council and a representative from McCarthy Insurance Group.

Other Network Developments

Chambers Ireland is delighted to support the following initiatives which increase the strength and spread of the Network.

County Kildare Chamber

North Kildare Chamber and Newbridge Chamber have merged to create County Kildare Chamber. The final agreement that was signed off by the two mediation teams on 22nd December 2016 and represents a roadmap for other counties to follow suit. The County Kildare Chamber will be the one voice representing business in Kildare and it will have the best potential to deliver greater benefits, greater strength in

representation and more effective networking to the members throughout County Kildare.

The County Meath Association of Chambers and Business Councils

The County Meath Association of Chambers and Business Councils is a volunteer-led organisation whose objective is to make County Meath the No.1 place in Ireland to do business. Launched in April 2016 affiliated Chambers include Kells and Navan Chambers. Through the Association they intend that the individual Chambers will communicate and work closely together, and support each other's events, and consequentially benefit the local economy and the local communities.

Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry

On 4 July 2016, Chambers Ireland and the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry announced a strengthening of cooperation between the two organisations, which represent the all-island business community. The launch of the formal affiliation between the two Chambers took place at a side event following the North South Ministerial Council at Dublin Castle attended by An Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD, Minister for Foreign Affairs Charlie Flanagan and Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness. This affiliation provides a new structure to help improve engagement between the business communities North and South. Strengthening cooperation also allows for development of common business related policy positions reflecting the many similar challenges and opportunities facing Chamber member businesses on both sides of the Irish border. This new relationship is timely as the business community on the island needs a strong voice during the uncertainty arising from Brexit.

CHAMBERS NETWORK

Growing Chamber Membership

In response to feedback from the Chamber Network, Chambers Ireland undertook two new projects in 2016 including the creation of a Membership Video and undertook Membership Training to further assist affiliated Chambers in developing their membership.

Membership Training

In March 2016, Membership Training was held in Citywest presented by Mark Levin entitled *Using All of Your Resources to Grow Your Chamber*. This was attended by a variety of Chambers from across the Network and addressed a wide range of topics including:

- Understanding the value of membership
- Creating a customised value statement for your Chamber
- Identifying and understanding the reasons why a prospect did not join your Chamber and how to overcome them
- Making the most of your recruitment opportunities
- Increasing Member Engagement and Participation
- Keeping those members you work so hard to recruit

The training was very beneficial to Chambers who attended and resources were also made available to those who were unable to attend.

Representatives from the Chamber Network who attended the Membership Training Day in Citywest



The training was “easily implementable” – it surprised me to learn that “there are common problems among all chambers no matter what size”

Colm O'Connor
South Dublin Chamber


Jenny Beresford
Dungarvan & District Chamber

Very enjoyable and worthwhile presentation, Mark Levin was highly recommended and lived up to his reputation. I would certainly recommend him to a colleague. It is important for any organisation and especially a chamber to constantly re-evaluate itself and its approach to existing and new members. The main piece of information I received and will act on going forward is to create a positive experience for members and to vary my approach depending on the needs of individual members.

Membership Video

Chambers Ireland worked with Media Connect to develop a Membership Video to show companies the benefits of Chamber membership. The video was launched at the Membership Training Day and is a great resource for the Chamber Network and a useful tool for membership recruitment and engagement within the Chamber.

These steps will help your Chamber make the most of the Membership Video:

1. Show at Chamber events and as part of Chamber membership recruitment
Including a video in a presentation is a great way to keep your audience more focused and engaged with the overall content of a presentation. This video provides a great introduction to the Chambers Network for new and potential members.
2. Share on social media & engage with Chambers Ireland on social media
*B2B and B2C marketers all over the world say video is in the top 3 most effective social media marketing tactics*¹. Follow us and engage with us on YouTube, Twitter and LinkedIn.
3. Share with Chamber members via email or E-Newsletters
*Using the word “Video” in an email subject line boosts open rates by 19%, click-through rates by 65% and reduces unsubscribes by 26%*². Click the image below to link to the Membership video
4. Embed the video on your own Chamber website
Use YouTube to add the video to your own website.
 - a. When viewing the video on YouTube Under the video, click **Share** 
 - b. Click **Embed**
 - c. From the box that appears, copy the HTML code
 - d. Paste the code into your blog or website HTML

Further information and resources on Chamber Membership are available on the Members Section of the Chambers Ireland website www.chambers.ie

Chambers Ireland continues to support Chambers with Membership resources including:

- Policy Outputs and Inputs
- PR Support
- Twitter and Chambers Ireland Website
- Events
- Publications
- Representation
- Support



Video still from the Chambers Ireland Membership Video

Chambers Ireland

Engagement

Chambers Ireland (CI) engages with the key figures in Government and Local Authorities all over Ireland on behalf of the Chamber Network. Engagement with relevant stakeholders is key to the Chamber Network's success and also key to the success of each individual Chamber. During 2016 CI engaged with many public representatives on a variety of issues and topics.

Key campaigns included:

- Through the Chamber Network election manifesto and campaign Chambers Ireland (CI) encouraged and supported Chambers to engage directly with local public representatives on priority issues for business in advance of the **2016 General Election**.
- As negotiations on the formation of Government took place CI contacted the two main parties, Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil highlighting the key issues of concern to business and urging the development of a programme for Government that supports economic growth and job creation. On the announcement of the **Programme for Partnership Government**, CI contacted the new Government Ministers and newly elected public representatives to flag the priorities of the Chamber Network and arranged introductory meetings to discuss areas where the Network priorities overlapped with commitments in the Programme for Government.
- In advance of **Budget 2017**, CI made a submission to the Department of Finance and followed up by contacting relevant Ministers, Oireachtas Committee members and opposition Finance and public expenditure spokespersons with Budget 2017 Submission and Network priorities. This led to a series of pre-budget meetings with Ministers and opposition TDs.
- In November 2016, CI briefed the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation on the impact of **Brexit** with particular emphasis on jobs. Ian Talbot, Chambers Ireland Chief Executive raised the risks Brexit presents for business, the potential opportunities for Irish business, proposals for mitigation and the need for Government, public and private sectors to work together collectively to identify the core risks to Ireland. A transcript of the Committee meeting is available online.





Peter Byrne, Chief Executive of South Dublin Chamber, Helen Downes, Chief Executive of Shannon Chamber, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation, Mary Mitchell O'Connor TD and Ian Talbot, Chief Executive of Chambers Ireland

- In 2016, Chambers Ireland continued engagement on **Irish Water**. In November, Ervia representatives briefed Chambers Ireland patrons on Irish Water infrastructure projects with particular emphasis on the Water Supply Project Eastern and Midlands Region.
- Chambers Ireland holds a quarterly **Chamber Executive forum** for all Chamber Executives. The forum is designed to give Chief Executive's an opportunity to discuss issues that may be affecting their Chamber or the Network as a whole. This includes both issues that may be occurring on a Local or National level. It is also an opportunity for Chambers to come together once a quarter to give feedback to Chambers Ireland's public affairs staff about policy priorities and raise general topics of interest. The forum in addition to this, gives Chambers an opportunity to share ideas with other Chamber staff members. This is a valuable session as attendees can help each other to grow their Chambers by sharing ideas. Along with in-house discussions, Chambers Ireland organises a key influence or policy maker to address Chamber Executives on current issues. The Chamber Executive forum (CE Forum) is the most informative and engaging event that Chambers Ireland run for Chambers on quarterly basis.

In December, the CE Forum was hosted by AIB Head Office and provided an opportunity for Chamber Executives to meet with representatives from AIB management and AIB local Market Leaders. AIB Chief Economist Oliver Mangan presented on Brexit. Paul Hogan, Senior Planning Advisor, Department of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government gave a presentation on the National Planning Framework (NPF) followed by question and answer session. The CE Forum was invited to dinner in Dail Eireann by Dara Calleary T.D.

- Between September and October 2016, Chambers Ireland released a **National Survey** to the Chamber Network. The survey received 253 responses in total and identified the three biggest challenges for economic development in 2016 as; Domestic demand, labour costs - with access to finance and lack of skilled workers carrying equal weight as third biggest challenge. The responses from the survey were then used as part of the wider Eurochambres survey.



Representatives from the Chamber Network at the launch of the Pre-Budget 2017 Submission outside Government Buildings.

Chamber Network Representation

Chambers Ireland works with local Chambers around the country to seek nominations for

- Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs)
- Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs)
- Education and Training Boards (ETBs)
- Action Plan for Jobs (APJ)
- Regional Skills Fora (RSF)

In the event that a nominee is no longer available to attend meetings during term of each council then Chambers Ireland will coordinate a replacement nominee with the Chamber and the Local Authority.

Strategic Policy Committees

- assist the Council in the formulation, development and review of policy;
- reflect the major functions or services of a local authority;
- are tailored to the size, membership and administrative resources of the Council ;
- have one third of their membership drawn from sectors relevant to the work of the Committee.

Local Community Development Committees

Chambers Ireland and Chambers are involved in the work of local communities all over Ireland. As Chambers are working on behalf of their business and local communities, the role of LCDCs in local communities is at the heart of Chamber's policy. Chambers around Ireland have representation on LCDCs and believe that they bring a voice which is widely representative of the local business community in towns and cities.

Education and Training Boards

ETBs are statutory authorities which have responsibility for education and training, youth work and a range of other statutory functions. ETBs manage and operate second-level schools, further education colleges, multi-faith community national schools and a range of adult and further education centres delivering education and training programmes.

Education and Training Boards have a distinct role to play in terms of delivery of services to support Economic Development in their ETB Area. A strong relationship with businesses through the Chamber Network is vital to ensure the appropriate nature of provision and the success of ETB services.

Action Plan for Jobs

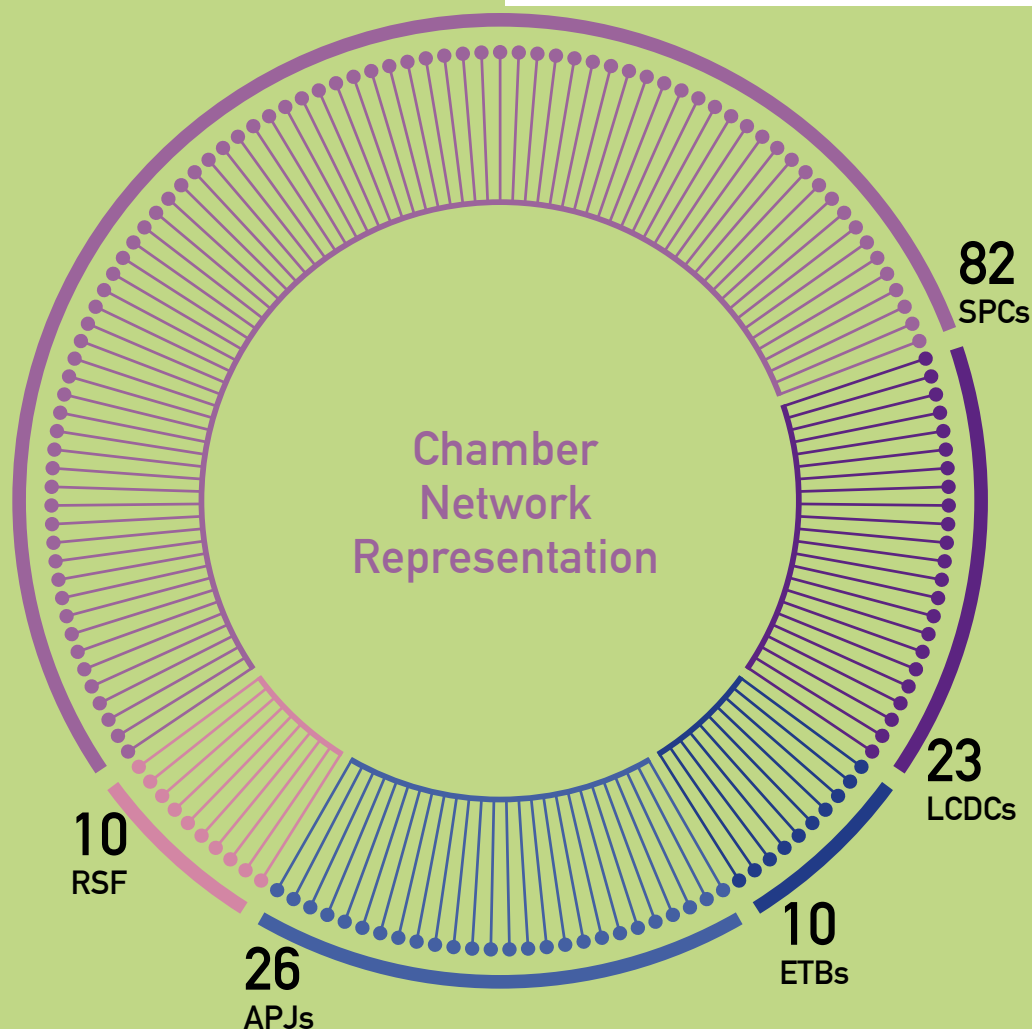
The Action Plan for Jobs is the Government's key policy tool to support enterprise growth and job creation in the country. In 2016, the Government introduced a series of regional Action Plans to accelerate the pace of jobs growth in the regions. The Chamber Network plays a key role in supporting enterprise development within each of the regions guided by the actions and timeframes outlined in the individual Regional Plans. In collaboration with local Chambers, Chambers Ireland nominated one representative per Chamber per county to serve on each of the 8 regional implementation committees which meet 2/3 times per year.

Regional Skills Fora

The Regional Skills Fora was created as part of the Government's National Skills Strategy to provide an opportunity for employers and the education and training system to work together to meet the emerging skills needs of their regions. More structured engagement on the skills agenda and the work of the Fora will contribute to better outcomes for learners and support enterprise development.

The Fora provide:

- a single contact point in each region to help employers connect with the range of services and supports available across the education and training system
- more robust labour market information and analysis of employer needs to inform programme development
- greater collaboration and utilisation of resources across the education and training system and enhancement of progression routes for learners
- a structure for employers to become more involved in promoting employment roles and opportunities for career progression in their sectors



POLICY

Policy Priorities 2016

Chambers Ireland developed the policy priorities for 2016 following consultation with the Public Affairs Forum, the three Policy Councils and the regional Chambers.

The agreed policy priorities for 2016 were:

- Maintaining Competitiveness of Irish Business
- Education & Skills
- Investment in infrastructure
- Housing
- Support SMEs and Entrepreneurship
- Access to Affordable Childcare
- Local Government
- EU Policy priorities

Chambers Ireland issued a quarterly policy priorities document to stakeholders which set out our policy goals for each quarter and listed a range of research, lobbying and communication activities to achieve these goals.

Maintaining Competitiveness of Irish Business

In all of the policy areas in which we work, Chambers Ireland strives to enhance the competitiveness of Irish business and the competitiveness of Ireland as a destination in which to do business. Issues around competitiveness permeate all of the other areas we work on and it is of primary importance to Chambers Ireland in our lobbying efforts.

In 2016 some of the activities we engaged on in relation to enhancing competitiveness were active participation with the National Competitiveness Council and the Advisory Group on Small Business as well as incorporating competitiveness into all areas of policy in which we work. We were also very pleased to be invited to join the Labour Employer Economic Forum. Through our engagements we discussed competitiveness and other issues with An Taoiseach, An Tánaiste, Ministers for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform and several other Cabinet members and Ministers for State.

Key activities in relation to our policy priorities for 2016 included:

Education & Skills

- **September** - Meeting with Solas to discuss new Apprenticeships and Traineeship programmes and engagement with business community.
- **November** - Met with Department of Education on the progression of the Regional Skills Fora
- **November** - Coordinated a meeting between the Chamber representatives on each of the Regional Skills Fora and the Chambers Ireland Employment, Workplace and Skills Policy Council.
- **December** - Participated in a workshop consultation with the Department of Education and Skills on a Further Education and Training Framework for Workforce Development.

Investment in infrastructure

- **January** – Meeting with the Director and a Senior Policy Analyst of the National Economic and Social Council on their study “Developing a New Approach to Infrastructure Policy”.
- **September** - Meeting with Minister Naughten on Chamber Network priorities in the area of Communications, Energy and Climate Change
- **November** – Ervia representatives briefed Chambers Ireland patrons on Irish Water infrastructure projects with particular emphasis on the Water Supply Project Eastern and Midlands Region.
- **December** - Presented at the N4 Lobbying Group meeting in Buswells
- **December** - Made a submission to the Northern Ireland Planning Commission in support of the North-South Interconnector

Housing

- **May** - Submission to the Dáil Committee on Housing and Homelessness

Support SMEs and Entrepreneurship

- **September** - Meeting of Advisory Group on Small Businesses at DJEI. Discussion of priorities for Action Plan for Jobs 2017
- **November** - Attended meeting of Advisory Group on Small Business with Minister Pat Breen, Dept Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. CI highlighted need for a balance between business and consumer in online contracts and lack of application of SME Test to legislation.
- **November** – Participated in DJEI review of R+D tax credits, outlined need for tax credits to be usable by SMEs.

Access to Affordable Childcare

- **January** - Mark O’Mahoney participated in the Start Strong event on childcare and early education policy.

Local Government

- **February** - Ratepayers and Local Government Policy Council. Emailed all Chambers seeking to extend membership of Ratepayers Policy Council and Employment Policy Council. 2 new members have been added to these Councils to date. Chambers Ireland also issued a local government engagement pack to the Chamber Network and carried out research on the rates harmonisation process.

EU Policy priorities

- **May** - Chambers Ireland hosted an EU Policy Event – Making the EU Work for Irish Business. (This is discussed on page 32)
- **July** - Submission to the European Commission on the “Proposal to Introduce a Services Passport and Address Regulatory Barriers in the Construction and Business Services Sector
- **October** - Irish Chamber Network Trip to Brussels European Parliament of Enterprises in Brussels. Engagement with Minister for EU Affairs Dara Murphy on same (see page 33)
- **November** - Launched EES2017 survey results with pitch to the media, press release for the Chamber Network and general media release

POLICY

Ian Talbot, Chief Executive Chambers Ireland along with representatives from the Irish Chamber Network launching "A Vision for 2021"



Vision 2021

In advance of General Election 2016 Chambers Ireland published an election manifesto, 'Vision 2021', which outlined the policy priorities of the Chamber Network. This election came at an important moment for Ireland's economy and 'Vision 2021' highlighted the areas of utmost importance to the Irish business community and required from the next Government in order to ensure continued growth.

Synopsis of Manifesto for Ireland's future from the Irish Chamber Network

The role of the next Government will be one of stewardship of the economy.

Maintain a broad tax base

The next Government must avoid repeating mistakes of the past and should ensure a broad tax base by maintaining or expanding user-based taxes and charges. These charges are progressive and encourage sustainability.

Maintaining Competitiveness of Irish Business

The next government must be vigilant of rising business costs that could potentially undermine competitiveness. Unless there is a clear and compelling case for increases in the National Minimum Wage, restraint should be exercised.

End Tax Discrimination of the Self-Employed

The USC for self-employed should be brought in line with that of PAYE workers and the inequitable tax credit system must be changed to allow self-employed to avail of a tax credit similar to the PAYE worker. We also support the introduction of a Social Protection Net for the self employed and entrepreneurs.

Support for Irish SMEs to Export

The next Government should do more to encourage and support our Irish SMEs to become more outward looking. We must foster the development of a new generation of indigenous companies that are internationally-focused and export-ready.

Childcare

A significantly higher level of Government investment in early childhood education and care is essential. This must come with a greater emphasis on educational quality levels within the childcare sector. The Government must also address the need for after-school services for children. We would like to see a national policy to ensure the effective provision of accessible after-school care.

Education and Skills

The next Government must develop a strategic plan to ensure that the education system supports economic development and the skills needs of the economy. Ireland must continue to develop a range of apprenticeship programmes that will help meet the future labour market needs of industry. We would like to see the National Training Fund refocused to address the skills mismatches in the economy and should focus on the training of SMEs. The Government must focus investment in STEM, encourage students to engage with STEM subjects from an earlier age and aim to be a world leader in STEM education by 2021.

External Representation

Housing

There are currently 12 Government agencies involved and having responsibility for housing. The next Government must establish greater policy coherence at a national level through the establishment of a single overarching body which links all these disparate agencies together and which can focus on resolving short term issues and plan for long term housing demands. Ireland must increase private and public housing supply to meet the demand in our urban areas.

National Planning Framework

The next Government must publish the National Planning Framework with clear commitment to have the Framework in place by the end of 2017 and to ensure political and governmental, nationally and locally, to its implementation.

Investing in our Future

Energy, Water, Transport and Broadband are all central to our future economic growth and require strategic investment to face the challenge of imbalanced growth. The next Government must increase investment in these areas and implement a strategy to support economic development in all regions.

National Infrastructure Commission

The establishment of a National Infrastructure Commission; an independent body that would depoliticise nationally important capital investment decisions. This would provide future Governments with independent verification that specific projects are being commissioned in the national interest and de-politicise essential infrastructure projects.

International Trade and the Global Economy

Trade and investment has never been more important for the Irish and European economy. It is essential for future trade that Ireland remains in the heart of Europe and the global economy. For the EU to remain strong it must build relationships with new markets. Ireland must continue to support the development of an ambitious trade agenda to open new markets to Irish business.

Chambers Ireland Public Affairs team represents the Irish Chamber network on various governmental working groups, committees and advisory groups:

- DJEI Advisory Group on Small Business
- DJEI Retail Consultation Forum and working group on Retail and Town Centre Renewal
- DJEI CSR Stakeholder Forum
- Department of Finance, Office of Government Procurement, SME working group
- Department of Taoiseach Brexit Group
- Department of Education Regional Skills Fora Advisory Group
- DJEI Prompt Payment Code Committee
- Participated in National Economic Dialogue
- Participated in All-island Civic Dialogue
- Employers Disability Information Service – Consortium member
- Commission on Energy Regulation (CER)
- Non-Domestic Water User Group
- National Waste Prevention Committee
- National Planning Framework Advisory Group



Budget 2017

Budget 2017 was the second expansionary budget since the onset of the recession with Government indicating in advance that it would have €1.3bn to spend with €500m in cuts and an increased tax revenue of €195m.

Chambers Ireland Pre-Budget submission recommended government to focus on three key areas based on feedback received from the Chamber Network:

1. Supporting growth
2. Where we need to invest
3. Securing our future

Under each of the headings above, Chambers Ireland outlined policy proposals for Government to consider and repeatedly called for the implementation of all of these proposals in engagement with Government representatives throughout the year as well as in lobbying activities.

Many of the Chambers Ireland recommendations were included in the budget, in particular the reduction of Capital Gains Tax to 10%, the introduction of Childcare subsidies, the Budget Stabilisation fund and increased investment in education and skills. However we were disappointed at the lack of measures introduced to support businesses.

The table below provides an overview of our recommendations against the content of the budget.

Despite some welcome steps, we believe there are a number of areas where the budget did not go far enough.

- On Housing, we were disappointed not to see our recommendations considered and we are concerned that the implementation of the 'Help to Buy' scheme is premature given the lack of adequate supply of new housing. While Minister Noonan outlined that he believes encouraging demand will increase the supply of housing, we have in previous submissions warned against this policy based on evidence from abroad of the effects these schemes have on driving up house prices.
- There were many remarks on prudence and caution on not repeating the mistakes of the past in today's speeches; however the expression by Minister Noonan of the Government's intent to phase out the USC would be to erode the tax base in a manner reminiscent of Ireland's previous mistakes. We cannot afford to forget that we are hugely exposed to external shocks and that great uncertainty looms ahead for many businesses in the face of Brexit negotiations set to begin in March 2017. We must not excessively erode the tax base now or in future budgets.
- We were surprised and disappointed by the failure of Government to address the sustainability of Ireland's pension model in this Budget. We had called for a number of measures related to pensions such as incentives to encourage enrolment in private sector pensions and increasing the cost effectiveness of pension schemes for SMEs. We have also highlighted that the current public sector pension model is unsustainable and called for a review of this. Action is required on pensions in the immediate term or we will be unable to fund our future pension requirements.



Representatives from the Chamber Network at the launch of the Pre-Budget 2017 Submission outside Government Buildings.

Chambers Ireland's Pre-Budget Submission

Budget 2017

Ensure equity in tax credits by ending discrimination of the self-employed	✓	The Earned Income tax credit for the self employed will be brought closer in line with that of the PAYE worker, an increase by €400 will make the total €950 for the self employed
Reduce the marginal tax rate to below 50%	✓	The reduction in USC brings the marginal tax rate below the current 49.5% for PAYE workers
Reduce the capital gains tax 10%	✓	Reduction of the 20% rate of Capital Gains Tax to 10% on disposals of qualifying assets up to a limit of €1 million in chargeable gains
Retain the 9% VAT rate for the hospitality and tourism sector	✓	This was delivered
Support employee share ownership by changing tax treatment and mandatory application to all employees	✓	SME focussed share-based ownership incentive scheme for 2018. In planning stages, discussion with European Commission on this
Maintain the 12.5% Corporate Tax rate	✓	This was delivered
Prioritise rollout of the National Broadband Plan	✓	An additional €5m for the National Broadband Plan is to be allocated, bringing the total allocation to €15m to expedite procurement process
Introduce a package of incentives to increase the uptake of low emission vehicles	✓	Tax relief on Electric Vehicles will be extended, as will VRT for hybrid vehicles and there will be relief from carbon tax for biomass fuels
Need to prioritise steady state maintenance of our road infrastructure	✓	€390m for roads funding and 3 new major PPP roads projects will commence
Invest in the electrification of Ireland's public transport and licenses taxi fleet	✓	This has been identified as a "key priority in the Government's capital plan", but no specific measure mentioned yet
Increase the capital allocation to the Dept of Education and Skills	✓	€9.5bn makes for a 16% increase in total education expenditure. A total of €36.5m will go to higher and further education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide direct subsidies to childcare providers in the form of means-tested capital grants • Introduce childcare subsidies conditional on educational quality standards being met 	✓	A Single Affordable Childcare Scheme will be introduced: means-tested subsidies based on parental income for children aged six months to 15 years, and universal subsidies for all children aged six months to three years. Subsidies to be paid to Túsla registered childcare centres.
Establish a budget stabilisation fund from general Government revenue surpluses	✓	To be established

Submissions to Consultations 2016

- **Low Pay Commission** on the National Minimum Wage, on the preponderance of women in low paid jobs and on sub minima rates. In these submissions we called for wage restraint, highlighted the importance of competitiveness and proposed alternatives to address the high cost of living, such as childcare provision.
- **Irish Water** consultation on the emerging investment plan for 2017 to 2021.
- **DJEI** consultation on the UL report on Zero Hour Contracts. Our position is that the UL report's recommendations exceeded its original terms of reference and that many of the recommendations were not practical for implementation in many businesses structures due to the need for flexibility.
- **EU Commission** on the Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base. We argued that the CCCB will not be an effective tool against aggressive tax planning and that corporation tax must remain the responsibility of each individual member state.
- **Department of Foreign Affairs** consultation on the Working Outline of Ireland's National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights. The Department hosted a morning consultation event in Iveagh House on 22nd January. We welcomed proposals within the outline of the Plan to create a tool-kit for business that includes SME-friendly templates for human rights policies and descriptions
- **DJEI** consultation on the European Commission proposed directive on certain aspects concerning consumer contracts for the supply of digital content
- **EU Commission** consultation on non binding guidelines or methodology for reporting non-financial information
- **EU Commission** submission on the future of trade relations with Australia and New Zealand. We outline the opportunities for trade between EU and Australia and potential positive impacts of an EU-New Zealand trade deal, while also highlighting the priorities for an SME friendly trade agreement.
- Submission to the **Department of Education and Skills** on the statement of strategy for 2016 to 2018. Future skills needs, focusing on innovation, prioritising early years education were some of the key points raised in this submission.
- Submission to the **U.S. Department of Transportation** in support of Norwegian Airline International's Foreign Carrier Permit for new flight routes linking Cork Airport to Boston and New York.
- Submission to **The Committee on Housing and Homelessness** prior to the completion of the Housing Action Plan by the **Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government**. Chambers Ireland put forward a number of policies which would contribute to alleviating the housing shortage and the homelessness crisis.



- Submission to **DJEI** on the review of the time provided for under Section 279 of the Companies Act 2014 recommending an extension of Section 279 of this act as a measure to maintain Ireland's international competitiveness as a location for FDI and demonstrate support for the companies already located here in relation to their international accountancy requirements.
- Submission to **the Valuation Office** on their Statement of Strategy 2017-2019 in which we recommended a number of measures to improve the efficiency and speed of valuations.
- Submission to the **Department of Finance** on the Taxation of Share Based Remuneration suggesting measures which would make these schemes more accessible and attractive to SMEs.
- Submission to the **Department of Education and Skills** on technology enhanced learning from a business perspective.
- Submission to the **Low Pay Commission** on the preponderance of women in low paid jobs and on sub minima rates in which we proposed policies to address the high cost of living, such as childcare provision.
- Submission to **DJEI** on Department's Statement of Strategy. We suggested policies which the Department could implement to improve SME productivity and also called for the Department to deliver on the Regional Action Plans for Jobs, suggesting ways to improve upon existing plans.
- Submission to **Department of Tourism Transport and Sport** on Department's Statement of Strategy. We highlighted the need to increase our investment in transport, especially our road network.
- Submission to **Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government** on Department's Statement of Strategy. In this submission we proposed policies which would contribute to alleviating the housing shortage. On Water Chambers Ireland voiced support for domestic water charges and suggested that these be based on consumption.
- Submission to **DJEI** on Action Plan for Jobs. We highlighted initiatives that are particularly relevant to SMEs such as the need to improve SME training to enhance productivity and we proposed an export working capital guarantee scheme for SMEs.
- Submission to **Department of Public Expenditure and Reform** on the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 on measures to improve the current system.
- Submission and presentation to the **Joint Oireachtas Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation** on the **Economic Impact of Brexit on Jobs Investment and Steps to Mitigate These Risks**.
- Submission to the **Planning Appeals Commission Northern Ireland** in support of the construction of the **North South Interconnector** as a means to strengthen and improve energy security, supply and cost in both countries.
- Submission to **Revenue** on PAYE modernisation



Policy Councils

Chambers Ireland currently has three policy councils which feed into Chambers Ireland's policy work and help to inform us of key developments and policy issues in the broad areas they cover. Policy planning is crucial to the national lobbying campaigns and numerous submissions that Chambers Ireland makes to Government each year. The Councils are made up of Chamber executives, Chamber members and experts in the relevant fields.

The three Policy Councils are outlined below;

The Corporate Social Responsibility Council

Chambers Ireland's CSR Council is focused on developing and promoting best practice in Corporate Social Responsibility. The Council works to highlight the potential of CSR among SMEs in particular and aims to harness the combined resources of the group's expertise to support best practice in CSR in Ireland.

The Ratepayers and Local Government Policy Council

The key services and infrastructure under the remit of local government are of significant importance to Irish business and the business community are one of the primary sources of funding for Local Authorities through commercial rates and other charges. The purpose of the Local Government and Ratepayers Policy Council is to drive the policies of Chambers Ireland on behalf of our members in relation to local government as we seek to represent the business interests of our members across the country, feeding back into the policy making that affects them. The Council meets to discuss a wide array of policy topics of importance to local businesses, local government and local economic development.

The Employment, Workplace, and Skills Policy Council

Chambers Ireland's Employment, Workplace and Skills Policy Council covers a broad range of workplace and skills issues which with the aim of identifying policies that will increase employment in Ireland. The Council works on issues related to employment and skills which are of importance to Irish business and the Chamber Network and meets to discuss a range of policy areas such as future skills needs, labour activation requirements and employment regulation, among others.

Lobbying Act

The Regulation of Lobbying Act commenced on 1st September 2015. For the first four return periods Chambers in the Network have been active in submitting returns to the online Register of Lobbying, www.lobbying.ie.

The Chamber Network's lobbying activities take place through direct communications and meetings, through engagement with Oireachtas Committees, through engagement with policy makers and at times through our representation at departmental working groups and committees.

Chambers Ireland and the broader Chamber Network have regularly engaged with designated public officials around the country over the first four return periods and this is represented in the data below. With a total of 489 returns for the first four return periods, the Chamber Network has recorded the country's largest number of returns submitted to the Lobbying Act Register.

The Chamber Network submitted returns on a wide range of relevant matters with a focus on public policy or programme and matters involving public funds.

The data compiled here represents the lobbying activities undertaken by the Chamber Network with designated public officials around the country during the first four return periods.

Important dates

1st January 2017 Enforcement provisions commenced. Part 4 of the Regulation of Lobbying Act outlines enforcement provisions, which came into effect on 1st January 2017.

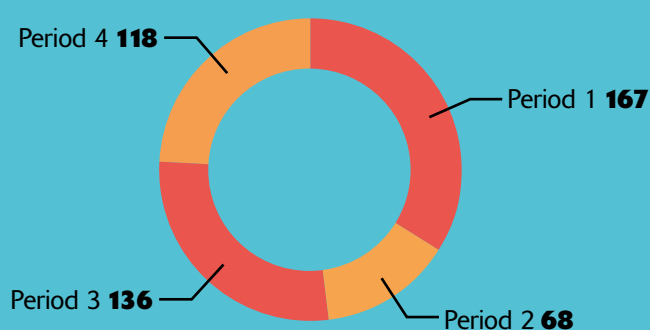
2017 Deadlines

21st May 2017 Returns due for period
1st January–30th April

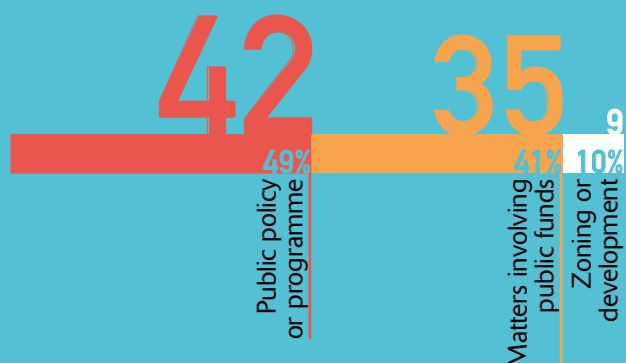
21st September 2017 Returns due for period
1st May–31st August

21st January 2018 Returns due for period
1st September–31st December

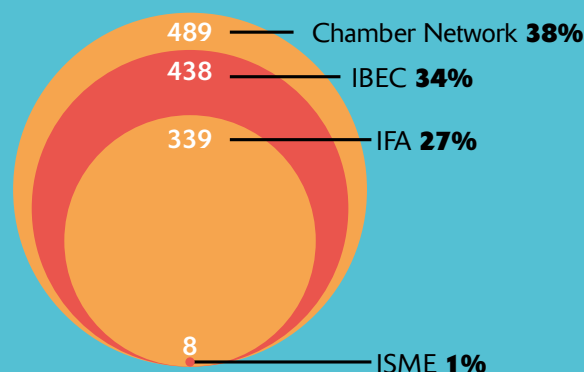
Chamber Network Returns since September 2015



Relevant Matters – Covered by Lobbying Activities



Organisation Comparison Number of returns by organisation



Mediation Scheme

Chambers Ireland has been promoting alternative dispute resolution and mediation as the most effective and efficient option when it comes to resolving disputes amongst businesses.

A significant benefit offered by mediation in commercial disputes is cost-effective access to justice. It is precisely for this reason that mediation can be so beneficial to businesses, particularly SMEs who often don't have the same resources as larger corporations. Additionally, using mediation to resolve disputes can also help preserve business relationships, and encourage dialogue between parties in a way that litigation cannot.

As part of work in promoting mediation, Chambers Ireland took part of a European wide project entitled "Mediation Meets Judges", which ran from 2014 to 2016 and focuses on the promotion of mediation in civil and commercial disputes and the increase of judicial referral of disputes to mediation by informing judges about the benefits of mediation and giving them practical tools to be used when referring parties to mediation. As part of this project, Chambers Ireland consulted with our stakeholders in the legal and mediation community to discuss how businesses could be encouraged to consider mediation as their first port of call when resolving disputes.

From these discussions, the *Business and Commercial Mediation Pilot Scheme* was launched on the 1st September 2015 by a cross section of bodies (Chambers Ireland, the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, the Law Society, the Bar Council of Ireland and the Mediator's Institute of Ireland) with the objective of promoting the use of mediation as a cost and resource efficient way for businesses to resolve commercial disputes.

Our experience in promoting mediation to business has taught us that one of the most significant challenges to getting more businesses to consider mediation is the need to change their behaviour when it comes to resolving disputes. For many their instinct continues to be that litigation should be the first course of action, rather than using alternative methods like mediation. Therefore, increasing education and raising awareness about the benefits of mediation is one of the primary objectives of Chambers Ireland. In order to bridge this knowledge gap and increasing awareness of the benefits of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms among the business community, Chambers Ireland, supported by our colleagues in the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, Mediators' Institute of Ireland and the Law Society, worked with our Chamber Network to organise briefings for business.



In February 2016, one such mediation briefing was held as part of the regular “Learn at Lunch” event hosted by Waterford Chamber of Commerce. The event was also supported by Dungarvan and West Waterford Chamber. Chairperson of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators Ireland, Anne-Marie Blaney was joined by Dungarvan based engineer and mediator Siobhan Fahey, who spoke on the benefits of mediation for commercial businesses. On the importance of mediation, Waterford Chamber CEO Nick Donnelly said: “This Scheme is hugely beneficial to the business community and can be given due consideration when matters of conflict arise, be it defamation and debt resolution, employment disputes or boardroom, partnership and shareholder disputes. It is cost effective and the whole process will only take up to eight weeks.”

Additionally, Tralee Chamber Alliance, in conjunction with Bill Holohan of CI Arb Ireland, also hosted a briefing for businesses on the benefits of mediation. Chief Executive Kieran Rutledge noted, “A lot of members were unaware that Mediation was an option for them so it was great to get a clear insight from Bill Holohan on the matter. His presentation was excellent with lots of stories from his past experiences of mediation matters and it certainly provided food for thought”.

Chambers Ireland will be continuing our work to promote alternative dispute resolution to the Chamber Network and to Irish SMEs. We will also be asking the next Government to publish the long overdue Mediation Bill, which should go some way to increasing the use of mediation in resolving business disputes. Should you be interested in learning more about ADR and mediation or in referring a dispute to our Business and Commercial Mediation Scheme, please visit the Chambers Ireland website where you can download a referral form or contact mediation@chambers.ie.



Anne Marie Blaney, Chairperson for CI Arb Ireland and Siobhan Fahey, Chartered Engineer and Chartered Arbitrator. Who both presented at the 2learn at Lunch” edition briefing jointly hosted by Waterford Chamber and Dungarvan and West Waterford Chamber

The General Data Protection Regulation

In response to the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Chambers Ireland produced a number of resources on the GDPR and data protection more generally to highlight the impact of the new legislation on Chambers and their members including:

- A Guide for Data Controllers
- Responsibilities for Data Controllers
- Data Protection and Direct Marketing Communications
- New Data Protection Rules

On 15 December 2015, negotiations between the EU Commission, the European Parliament and the EU Council concluded with agreement being reached on the new GDPR. The aim of the revised Data Protection Regulation is to strengthen protection of fundamental data protection rights across the EU as well as remove barriers for businesses and allow them to make the most of the opportunities of the European Digital Single Market. The Regulation will be directly applicable in all EU Member States from 2018 and will not require national parliaments to implement the legislation.

The key features of the GDPR are as follows:

- **One-stop shop** – businesses will have a single supervisory authority, which will be the authority of the jurisdiction where they have their main establishment;
- **Increased territorial application** – companies based outside the EU will be subject to the GDPR when offering services in the EU;
- **Privacy by design** – data protection safeguards must be built into products and services from the outset and apply by default;
- **Accountability** – controllers will be responsible for demonstrating compliance with data protection rules;
- **Proportionality** – a risk based approach will apply to implementation of privacy by design, including an obligation to undertake impact assessments in certain circumstances;
- **Increased focus on processing activities** – the processing activities of both controllers and processors will be subject to increased focus, with greater emphasis on documented procedures and records;
- **Data Protection Officers** – companies will be required to appoint a dedicated data protection officer, with certain exceptions;
- **Data transfers** – the focus on the adequacy of protection in the importing jurisdiction, which was the focus of the recent Schrems decision of the European Court of Justice, will be continued;
- **Increased fines** – companies breaching data protection rules could be fined up to 4% of annual turnover (according to the Parliament website);
- **Data portability** – data subjects will be given the ability to transfer data easily between service providers;
- **A duty to report breaches** – national supervisory authorities and impacted individuals will have to be informed of serious data breaches.

What does this mean for your business?

Although the GDPR will not come into effect until early 2018, organisations and businesses should start to consider the impact of the new legislation on their businesses as soon as possible. This review should address both existing data protection processing activities and additionally the impact of the Regulation on new policies and procedures. Project plans should reflect that data protection can no longer be viewed primarily as an IT or compliance issue, but that appropriate solutions must encompass management, innovation, technical, legal and regulatory considerations.

With the significant increase in the financial sanctions arising from data protection breaches, the risk of not taking steps to prepare for the aforementioned changes is considerable, reinforcing the point that ultimate responsibility for data protection compliance rests firmly at management and board level.

More Information

- GDPR and general Data Protection Resources are available on the Member Section of our website www.chambers.ie
- Please also visit the website of the Data Protection Commission at www.dataprotection.ie

**An Coimisiún
Cosanta Sonraí**



**Data Protection
Commissioner**

INTERNATIONAL

Chambers Ireland Trade Policy 2016

Promoting the opportunities for business through increased transatlantic trade was amongst our top priorities throughout 2016. Our focus had been to push for an SME – friendly trade deal between the EU and the United States but the somewhat surprising outcome of the UK referendum followed by the election of Donald Trump changed that focus.

Since negotiations for a trade deal between the United States and the European Union were announced in 2013, Chambers Ireland has advocated for an ambitious trade agreement that would drive growth, increase investment and lead to the creation of jobs. Ireland, due to the strong trading relationship it currently enjoys with the United States, would benefit more than double any other EU member state. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), between the EU and Canada, was signed on the 30th October 2016. The EU-Canada trade deal promises to remove over 99% of tariffs between the EU and Canada and will create sizeable new market opportunities for Irish business. This next step of the agreement to be ratified by the European Parliament and parliaments in all 28 member states, including Ireland.

However, the efforts made by both the European Commission and by member states to support increased transatlantic co-operation in trade and investment have been negatively impacted by the political events of the past 12 months. In June 2016, the UK voted to leave the European Union, and this decision will almost certainly have negative consequence for the Irish economy, particularly our SME exporters.

Given the close economic and political ties between Ireland and the UK and the uncertainty that a British exit will bring about, the Irish government took a strong public position throughout the Referendum campaign, highlighting their preference for the UK staying within the EU. Since the result was announced in June, the Irish government has acknowledged that major challenges lie ahead for the EU, the UK and for Ireland, with much attention required on ensuring that any adverse effects on our economy, free movement of people, goods and services on these islands are avoided. Additionally, Government has stressed the importance of ensuring stability and progress in Northern Ireland is maintained. The loss of the UK from the EU may also pose a number of threats to the EU's future trade agenda.

In addition, the election of Donald Trump as the next US president is also likely to have an enormous impact on global trade policy. Since his election in November, President Trump has withdrawn from the Trans Pacific Partnership (a trade deal finalised by President Obama in 2015) and has indicated his intention to punish US companies who base their operations overseas and introducing heavy tariffs on Chinese goods entering the United States. Any US shift in trade and tax policy could have a major impact on small economies like Ireland. Protectionism, which drives market turbulence, will have impacts on global economy and will hurt exporters. Following on from the UK decision to leave the EU, Irish business will need to find alternative markets to the UK for the products. Should the TTIP trade negotiations be continued, a trade deal with the US would be helpful for Irish businesses, particularly SMEs who need replacement markets post Brexit. Although TTIP was not an election issue in the same way that the TPP was, it would be fair to assume that since the Trump administration plans to abandon the TPP agreement, then it would be unlikely that they would continue to negotiate for a deal with the European Union.

Chambers Ireland Trade Policy into 2017

With severely diminished support for TTIP and the UK committing itself to a “hard” Brexit, (which may result in them leaving the Single Market and the Customs Unions), economies like Ireland are left severely exposed, with access to new markets curtailed and the prospect of new investment likely to be much more limited in the future.

In the face of such risks, what can Irish business do to prepare for and mitigate against these threats? While it may not be possible to shield the Irish economy from the consequences of growing protectionism and the loss of the UK from the Single Market, we can take some steps to protect business from the full impact of these risks.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade recently held a consultation on its new trade, tourism and investment strategy, “Trading Better”. As part of the Chamber Network’s submission, Chambers Ireland urged Government to prioritise maintaining the competitiveness of our economy and by rapidly investing in infrastructure. Furthermore, in the wake of Brexit, increased resources should be allocated to the objective of diversification of export markets in the short term. Ireland’s exporters are reliant on a relatively small number of countries, and with increased uncertainty as to trading conditions in the future, it is crucial that the objective of market diversification for SME exporters is both given attention and resources by Government in this strategy.

Government can also support business by introducing financial supports for exporting SMEs, like an Export Working Capital scheme, which provides additional trade finance to SMEs wanting to process new orders or service new clients. Last of all, our elected representatives must continue to support the European Commission’s trade strategy. As Ireland is a small open economy, our exporters and investors will only grow if the EU continues to pursue ambitious trade and investment agreements that will give increased and cheaper access to growing markets

For more information on our work to promote trade and investment on behalf of Irish business, please visit our website at www.chambers.ie



(L-R) Arnaldo Abruzzini, CEO, EUROCHAMBRES; Ian Talbot, Chief Executive, Chambers Ireland; and Lúcio Mauro Vinhas de Souza, Team Leader of Economics Team, EPSC, EC



Influence in Europe

As part of our work representing the interests of Irish business, we work closely with Eurochambres - The Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Founded in 1958 it forms one of the key pillars of business representation to the European Institutions. It voices the interests of over 19 million member enterprises in 45 European Countries through a network of National, regional and local Chambers. The mission of Eurochambres is to represent, serve and promote European Chambers of Commerce and Industry, strengthening the voice and position of European Chambers as significant, respected, valued influencers of European affairs on all major economic issues.

Chambers Ireland has representatives on a number of policy committees established by Eurochambres, including; *Trade and Investment Committee*; the *Better Regulation Committee*; the *SME Policy Committee*; and the *EU Single Market Committee*. Chief Executive of Chambers Ireland, Ian Talbot, was appointed Deputy President of Eurochambres in 2015 and is the Chairperson of the Eurochambres Finance and Economy Committee.

This committee focuses on a number of areas of importance to Irish business, including access to finance, Capital Markets and the Common Consolidated Tax Base.

Our Work in 2016

In 2016, we identified a number of key areas that required our focus. These included;

- Completing the Single Market
- Better Regulation
- Helping more SMEs to export
- Promoting the need for increased trade and investment

Making the EU Work for Irish Business

In collaboration with Eurochambres, Chambers Ireland hosted 'Making the EU Work for Irish Business' on the 12th May in St. Stephens Green Hibernian Club to discuss how EU policy works, and in some cases does not work, for Irish business. As part of the event, there were two panel discussions on a broad range of EU policy issues. Guest speakers included Ben Butters, Director of Policy with Eurochambres, Lucinda Creighton, Former Minister for European Affairs, Noelle O'Connell, Executive Director of European Movement Ireland, Graham Stull from the European Commission Representation in Ireland and Prof. John O' Brennan, NUI Maynooth. The key points of discussion throughout the event included many positive benefits for business, particularly SMEs and the untapped potential to be gained from membership of the single market. Also discussed was the need for investment, the threat of growing extremism in European politics, on both the left and right and how this will impact European institutions. (Please see photos of the event on page 42)

Into 2017

Preparing Irish business for the consequences of a UK exit from the EU will be top of our agenda in the months and years ahead. At this stage, it remains to be seen what UK exit from the EU will mean for Irish business, for our land border with Northern Ireland and for trade with the UK. Therefore, in the interim, we must focus our attentions on the areas of policy we can influence that will drive Ireland's competitiveness in the years ahead. In order to advance these goals, our objective is to work with chambers and policy makers across the EU and in Brussels to ensure that Irish business interests are taken into consideration in the wake of UK Prime Minister Theresa May triggering Article 50.

Network Trip to Brussels & European Parliament of Enterprises

A delegation from across the Irish Chamber Network travelled to Brussels on the 12th October to meet with Irish diplomats and key officials from the European Commission. As part of the same trip to Brussels, the delegation, including representatives from the Irish business community, also participated in the European Parliament of Enterprises (EPE) in Brussels on 13th October.

Chambers Ireland works with a network of European Chambers of Commerce to ensure that the voice of the Irish business is represented at European level. A core part of this work is to monitor and influence legislation debated and agreed so that Irish business can provide input on any regulatory changes that may impact them in the future. In the post-Brexit climate, it is now more important than ever for Irish business to engage with the European Union.

Represented by Chambers including Athlone Cork, Fingal Dublin, Galway, North Kildare, Shannon, South Dublin, Waterford and Wexford Chambers the Irish Chamber Network delegation met with the Irish Ambassador to the European Union, representatives from the Irish Regions Office and representatives from DG Trade, DG Growth and the Executive Agency for SMEs (EASME).

The Chamber Network visit to Brussels informed our delegation of the necessity of trade deals like TTIP and CETA progressing if European business is to remain competitive and the importance of the Irish business community clearly communicating to stakeholders that Ireland will remain a strong partner in Europe. Irish business leaders from across the Chamber Network have forged stronger relationships with colleagues in the European Commission, the Irish Regions Office, the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the European Union, our elected representatives and business leaders from across Europe. These relationships will be instrumental to ensuring that the priorities for Irish business are advanced at EU level, including;

- Keeping Ireland competitive
- Promoting the need for an ambitious trade strategy- including links
- Completing the Single Market
- Preparing for the exit of the United Kingdom from the EU
- Addressing skills gaps and shortages
- Promoting sustainable business practices

European Parliament of Enterprises

The European Parliament of Enterprises (EPE) is organised by Eurochambres, with the support of the European Parliament once every two years with the objective of bridging the gap between the EU institutions and entrepreneurs.

Network Trip to Brussels & European Parliament of Enterprises cont.

The event allows business people from all over Europe to become Members of the European Parliament of Enterprises (MEPEs) for one day, giving them a unique insight into how one of the most powerful bodies in Europe goes about their decision making process. The Irish MEPEs participated in debates and votes held on issues including trade, the Single Market, sustainability and skills.

During the event, members of the Irish delegation were invited to address on the Parliament on two matters of interest to Irish business. Representing South Dublin Chamber, Andrea Carroll spoke during the debate on sustainability and how this principle did not just apply to environmental issues and said "Sustainability is not just about green issues but applies to all businesses, who need to consider the economic, social and environmental sustainability of their business. The EU must acknowledge that there are limits to growth in our society and use initiatives such as the circular economy package to lead on this issue without creating a significant regulatory or administrative burden for SMEs."

Following on from that President of the Wexford Chamber of Commerce, Karl Fitzpatrick spoke to the Parliament on the subjects of skills and cited the need to bring the teaching of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) to the forefront of our education curricula as it is anticipated that 50% of all jobs in the EU will be in these fields going into the future. Embellishing on this point, Mr. Fitzpatrick identified the integration of educational play based activities, at each tier of the education system, as being pivotal to developing the STEM skill-set that will be necessary to fulfil these positions. Additionally, he spoke on the need to introduce more apprenticeships, stating that "The creation and rollout of enhanced apprenticeship programmes will be one of the key solutions to alleviating the youth unemployment problem, which is so prevalent across Europe. By creating a better balance between the theoretical and practical based element of education programmes, learning would be greatly enhanced."

The European Parliament of Enterprises gives Irish entrepreneurs a chance to see for themselves how policy decisions are influenced, while also giving them the opportunity to express their concerns about where they feel the EU can better support business, particularly when it comes to issues like trade, skills and competitiveness. Additionally, the results of votes taken on the day show that trade matters for ordinary business across the EU, with 94% of MEPEs voting in support of an effective EU trade policy and 95% feel SMEs should have a stronger say in such trade policy. These results show just how important trade is to business and agreements such as TTIP and CETA are vital for Europe to remain competitive globally.

For more information on our work at EU level, please visit our website at www.chambers.ie or follow us on Twitter @ChambersIreland.



Chamber Network Delegation to Brussels for the European Parliament of Enterprises (EPE) pictured with Mairead McGuinness MEP & Vice-President of the European Parliament in October 2016.



Global Influence

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) is a global organisation based in Paris which provides a forum for businesses and other organisations to examine and better comprehend the nature and significance of the major shifts taking place in the world economy.

The ICC's key areas of work include policy advocacy, promoting international trade and investment and working to fight corruption and piracy throughout the world economy. The ICC is a steadfast rallying point for those who believe that strengthening commercial ties among nations is not only good for business but good for global living standards and good for peace.

As the umbrella body for Chambers of Commerce in Ireland, Chambers Ireland acts as the Irish National Committee of the ICC, or ICC Ireland. The ICC provides us with valuable information throughout the year including the results of the World Economic Survey which measures economic outlook and expectations in the Eurozone.

At present, ICC Ireland is actively involved in several areas it has identified as being of importance to Irish businesses and the wider Irish economy; these are arbitration, customs and trade, taxation, digital economy, environment and energy, and corporate responsibility and anti-corruption.

Commission on Arbitration and ADR

The Commission on Arbitration and ADR is ICC's rule-making body and unique think tank in the field of international dispute resolution. The commission drafts and revises the various ICC rules for dispute resolution, including the ICC Rules of Arbitration, the ICC ADR Rules, the ICC Dispute Board Rules, and the ICC Rules for Expertise.

Commission on Customs and Trade Regulations

The central objective of the Committee on Customs and Trade Regulations is to overcome practical obstacles to the free flow of goods, services and investment across borders - in particular those related to customs policies and procedures.

Commission on Environment and Energy

The Environment and Energy Commission makes recommendations for business on significant regulatory and market issues concerning energy and environment. The Commission helps the ICC act as business's primary interlocutor and partner in key intergovernmental negotiations and dialogue, including at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, and the UN Environment Programme.

Commission on Corporate Responsibility and Anti-Corruption

A growing number of companies across the world increasingly recognize that doing business with integrity is the only right way of doing business. The ICC is on the forefront in the development of ethics, anti-corruption and corporate responsibility advocacy codes and guidelines, providing a lead voice for the business community in this rapidly changing field.

Commission on Digital Economy

The Commission on the Digital Economy seeks to realize the full potential of e-commerce by developing policy and practical tools that encourage competition, growth, predictability, compliance and the secured, free flow of information in cross-border trade, via the internet and information and communication technologies.

Commission on Marketing and Advertising

The Commission examines major marketing and advertising related policy issues of interest to world business via issues-specific task forces and working groups. Its mandate is to promote high ethical standards in marketing by business self-regulation through ICC international marketing codes.

ICC Ireland in 2016

Throughout the course of 2016, the team in ICC Ireland worked with our partner organisation in Paris to further the goals of the International Chamber of Commerce.

Trade Matters Campaign

At a time of growing populism and moves towards increased protectionism, the ICC, supported by ICC Ireland, launched a campaign to promote why trade matter to the global economy. The campaign focused on promoting how trade supports jobs, growth, small business and sustainable development. Evidence shows that protectionist policies are bad for economies in the long run. The ICC will be prioritising de-bunking these myths and promoting the benefits of increased trade in the months and years to come.

ICC Ireland Arbitration Committee Visit to Paris

In November, members of the ICC Ireland Arbitration Committee visited the ICC international Court of Arbitration and met with President of the Court, Alexis Mourre. They also received presentations on the ICC Commission on Arbitration and ADR and on the ICC International Centre for ADR. The event was moderated by the Secretary General of the ICC international Court of Arbitration, Andrea Carlevaris.

Observer Status at the UN

2016 was a landmark year for the International Chamber of Commerce where it was officially granted Observer Status by the United National General Assembly on the 13th December. This gives the ICC a unique platform to represent its members at world's greatest international forum. ICC is the only private-sector organisation to have been granted Observer Status at the General Assembly in the history of the United Nations. This achievement will—for the first time—provide a direct voice for business in the UN system to promote policies that foster sustainable & inclusive growth, job creation and economic cooperation.

Anti-Corruption and Ethics

Chambers Ireland has made a number of tools, developed in association with the International Chamber of Commerce, freely available on its website for companies who are interested in developing anti-corruption policies and developing responsible business policies. These tools include:

- An "Anti-Corruption Clause" for contracts
- Guidelines on Gifts and Hospitality
- A copy of International Chamber of Commerce Rules on Combating Corruption

For more information on the work of the International Chamber of Commerce, please visit their website at www.iccwbo.org

MEDIA & EVENTS

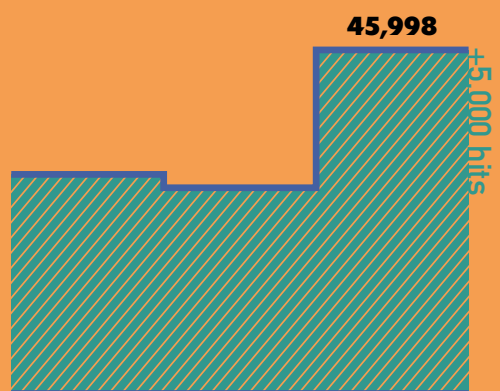
Website

The Chambers Ireland website is regularly updated with useful information for local Chambers, Chamber members and the general public. The website contains general information about Chambers Ireland and the Chamber Network. The features on the website include our policy priorities, publications, latest news, a gallery of images, and details of Chamber Services.

We regularly publish press statements, blog posts, along with our policy submissions and the latest copy of the quarterly InBusiness magazine. Details of upcoming events from across our Chamber network are also updated weekly and shared on social media. Anyone can sign up to our Monthly Ezine via the website. We send a short snapshot each month to our subscribers with highlights of our policy work and key activities on behalf of the Chamber Network.

Along with keeping Chambers and their members up to date with relevant information about the Network, the website is also an informative platform for members of the public who want to find out more information about the Chamber Network.

Website hits



Website individual page views

119,194

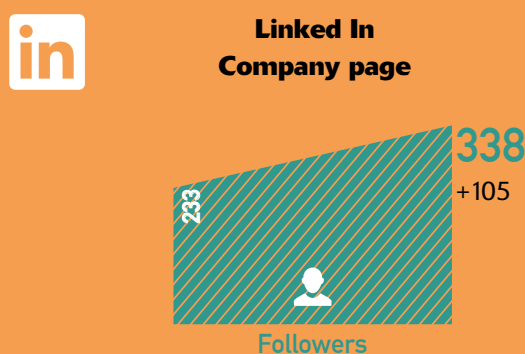
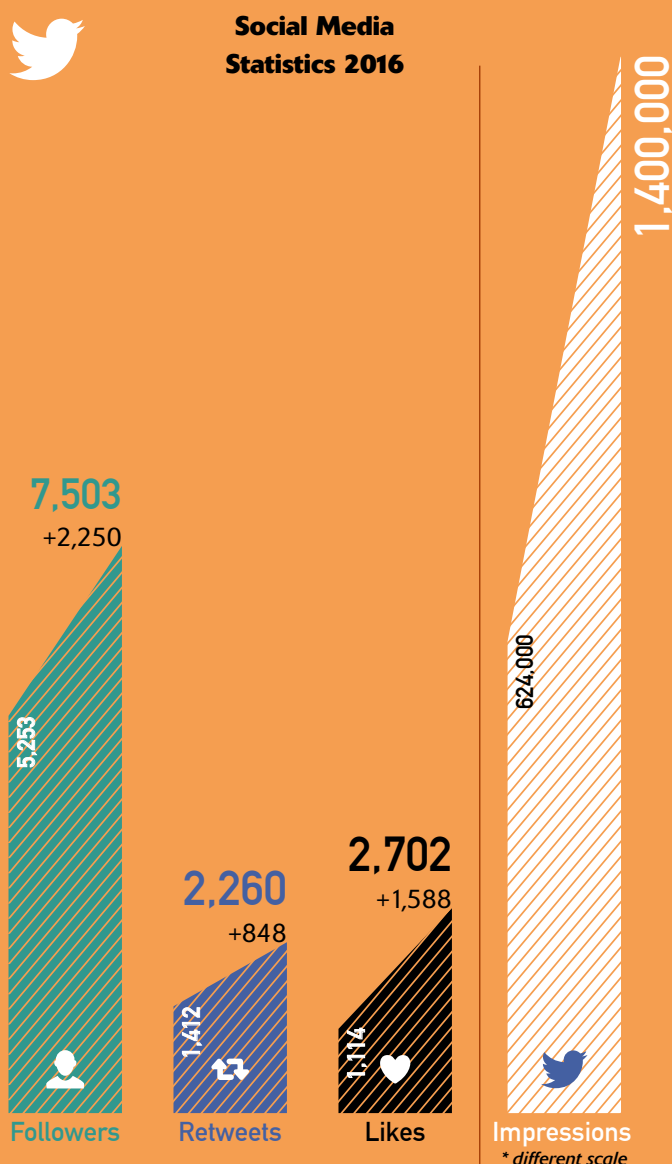
Monthly Ezine number of subscribers

2,576

Social Media

Chambers Ireland uses social media platforms to share news from the organisation, to promote the work across the Chamber Network and to engage with interested parties on issues of importance to the business community.

In 2016 Chambers Ireland developed social media strategies around key policy campaigns such as the Chamber Network manifesto for General Election 2016 and highlighting our key asks in advance of Budget 2017. We maximised our social media engagement through use of recognisable hashtags and sharing prepared social media posts and messages with the Network to strengthen the nationwide campaign. The CSR and ELG Awards are an important platform for maximising our following on twitter. Through use of hashtags and live tweeting both events were trending on twitter in Ireland on the night.





Publications

Chambers Ireland produces a range of publications that support our efforts to represent the interests of our members and to promote the range of work that takes place on behalf of business across the Chamber Network.

All publications can be viewed on the Chambers Ireland website as well as being available in print format.

Chambers Ireland published an annual Yearbook and four quarterly magazines called InBusiness. InBusiness magazine and Yearbook has a range of content relevant to Irish Chamber members and highlights the work Chambers do across the country. It also covers up-to-date and interesting business features and commercial profiles.

Copies of In Business magazine are distributed to all affiliated Chambers for circulation to members and can also be directly emailed to key contacts. The magazine can also be viewed on www.chambers.ie.

If you or your Chamber would like extra copies of these publications for your members, please email susan.mcdermott@chambers.ie for more information.

Publications in 2016

4 Quarterly
InBusiness Magazines 2016



**InBusiness
Yearbook 2016**

CSR
2016 Corporate
Social Responsibility
Awards Supplement

ELG
2016 Excellence
in Local Government
Awards Booklet

**Local Economic
Development
Guide**

**Workplace Relations:
Guide for Business**

2016 Events

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Awards



2019-2020

Making the EU Work for Irish Business



Excellence in Local Government (ELG) Awards



2019-2020

National Advisory Board



SERVICES & CONTACTS

Other services

Export Services

The facilitation of international trade continues to be an important part of Chambers' role in a globalised economy. The provision of export documentation services is a central function of the Chamber Network and one which has grown in importance as Irish companies seek to expand their export markets.

Trade Documentation

What you are exporting and where you are exporting to will play a major role in determining the export documentation you require. Through their long-standing and acknowledged role in export documentation, all Chambers Ireland Accredited Chambers are equipped to provide professional advice to experienced and new exporters at every stage of the exporting process. Documentation is a key element and local Chambers can provide in-depth services for export and import documentation including:

International Trade

Export documentation has become increasingly complex given the integration of global supply chains and transnational corporate structures. Chambers Ireland and the Chamber Network have responded to this increased complexity by continually modernising and improving the Network's certification systems and processes. This work is carried out in tandem with a number of partner bodies that Chambers Ireland works with, such as the;

- **Eurochambres Customs and Trade Committee**

Eurochambres represents the wider European chamber network at EU level and works as an intermediary between business and EU institutions to shape trade and customs policy. The Trade and Customs Committee, comprised of experts in the field, discuss matters of policy and best practise from the perspective of the European business community.

ICC/WCF Certificate of Origin Council

Chambers Ireland works with the ICC to overcome practical obstacles to the free flow of goods, services and investment across borders - in particular those related to customs policies and procedures. Chambers Ireland works with the ICC year-round to establish greater consistency in export documentation requirements. This relationship is invaluable as Irish exporters expand into new markets in the Arab states and in Asia.

- **Customs Consultative Committee**

The Customs Consultative Committee is composed of representatives of trade organisations involved in the import/export business and Revenue. The Committee provides a forum for trade specialists to discuss new EU customs legislation and proposed procedures. In addition it gives the member organisations an opportunity to promote the advancement of simplification and facilitation of procedures with customs and other matters of mutual interest.

This work reflects the importance the Irish Chamber Network places on remaining at the forefront of international trade facilitation.



PENINSULA

Peninsula

Peninsula's primary objective is the prevention of problems in the HRM area, including breaking down and explaining the often difficult-to-understand world of employment legislation and business protection. This includes HR, health and safety and employee wellbeing.

Peninsula understands that it can be difficult for business owners and employers to keep up with legislation. For example, do you know the latest Employment Law updates? Are you sure you're meeting your Health & Safety responsibilities?

Specialist consultants ensure all the necessary systems and procedures are put in place to prevent you getting into difficulty. Peninsula has a proven approach to protect you, your livelihood and your business.

If problems do arise Peninsula is available 24/7 with practical advice to get you out of trouble as quickly as possible.

New employment legislation, contractual requirements and case law precedents are being introduced frequently, and employers are expected to implement them immediately. Peninsula can give your business a safer, more certain future by cutting through the bureaucracy and red tape that surround personnel and employment law.

Experienced teams will review your position and produce all of the documentation for a professional Personnel Management System, including management and employee handbooks to ensure that the organisation's rules and procedures are available to all. Terms and conditions are kept up-to-date to suit the client's needs and to take account of changes in legislation.

All advice given through the service is supported by an insurance indemnity, protecting your business against legal costs defending employment legislation claims and most unfair dismissal and unlawful discrimination awards.

How does Peninsula help your business?

- 24-hour a day, 365-days a year advice line
- Continuous updates on new EU and Government legislation in the area of HR
- A full face-to-face consultation service providing staff contracts of employment, employee handbooks for all staff, employers' reference manuals and all recording documentation, as well as full training for the nominated users of the system
- Management control systems
- Employment contracts and handbooks
- Recording and documentation systems
- Legislation updates

External Representation

Title of Forum / Working Group	Nomination
National Competitiveness Council	Ian Talbot
National Economic and Social Council	Ian Talbot
Department of the Taoiseach Brexit Working Group	Ian Talbot
Advisory Group on Small Business	Ian Talbot
Age Friendly Ireland Implementation Group	Ian Talbot
Enterprise Engagement Group	Ian Talbot
High Level Group on Business Regulation	Ian Talbot
Labour Employer Economic Forum	Ian Talbot
OGP Procurement Group	Ian Talbot
Prompt Payment Commission	Ian Talbot
Retail Consultation Forum	Ian Talbot
SIPO Lobbying Act Advisory Group	Ian Talbot
Skillnets Limited	Ian Talbot
SME Funding Consultation Committee and Equity Finance Sub-group	Ian Talbot
Employers Disability Information Service Consortium	Ian Talbot/Susan McDermott
Rural Monitoring Committee	James Kiernan
Eirgrid Consultative Forum	James Kiernan
CROLink	Tony Cuthbert
National Stakeholder Forum on CSR	Elisha Collier O'Brien
National Waste Prevention Committee	Elisha Collier O'Brien
Transparency International Advisory Group on the Integrity at Work Programme	Emma Kerins
Advisory Council to the Commission for Taxi Regulation	Mike Jones
An Bord Pleanála	Michael Leahy
Aquaculture Licences Appeals Board	Mario Minehane
Business in the Community Board	Aileen O'Toole
CSO Enterprise Statistics Working Group	Thomas McHugh
Customs Consultative Committee	Carol Lynch
Workplace Relations Commission	Pat Brady
European Economic and Social Committee	Thomas McDonagh
Southern and Eastern Region Operational Programme Monitoring	Thomas McHugh

CONTACTS

Board of Directors

Niamh Boyle

(President)

Managing Director,
The Reputations Agency

Siobhan Kinsella

(Deputy President)

Director of Learning and Development, CPL

Clive Bellows

(Immediate Past President)

Country Head,
Northern Trust

John Brophy

Centre Manager,
Fairgreen Shopping Centre, Carlow

Helen Downes

Chief Executive,
Shannon Chamber

Frank Greene

Senior Manager,
AIB Bank

Conor Healy

Chief Executive,
Cork Chamber

Rickard Mills

Founder & Principal,
Rickard Mills Ltd

Oliver Moylan

Managing Director,
Ennis Cash Company

John Hurley

Chief Executive,
Kilkenny Chamber

Allan Shine

Chief Executive,
County Kildare Chamber

Gerard O'Reilly

Partner, Corporate Finance,
Crowe Horwath

Margaret Brennan

Head of Sector Strategies and Specialists,
AIB

Stephen O'Leary

Managing Director,
Olytico

Harry Fehily

Managing Partner,
HOMS Solicitors

Ian Talbot

Chief Executive,
Chambers Ireland

Chambers Ireland Team

www.chambers.ie

@ChambersIreland

Ian Talbot

Chief Executive

ian.talbot@chambers.ie

+353 1 400 4300

Tony Cuthbert

Financial Controller

tony.cuthbert@chambers.ie

+353 1 400 4309

James Kiernan

Head of Relationship Management

james.kiernan@chambers.ie

+353 1 400 4327

Emma Kerins

International Affairs Executive

emma.kerins@chambers.ie

+353 1 400 4303

Carly Mooney

Administrator & Events Planner

carly.mooney@chambers.ie

+353 1 400 4300

Susan McDermott

Media and Communications Executive

susan.mcdermott@chambers.ie

+353 1 4004331

Leona Murphy

Relationship Development Coordinator

leona.murphy@chambers.ie

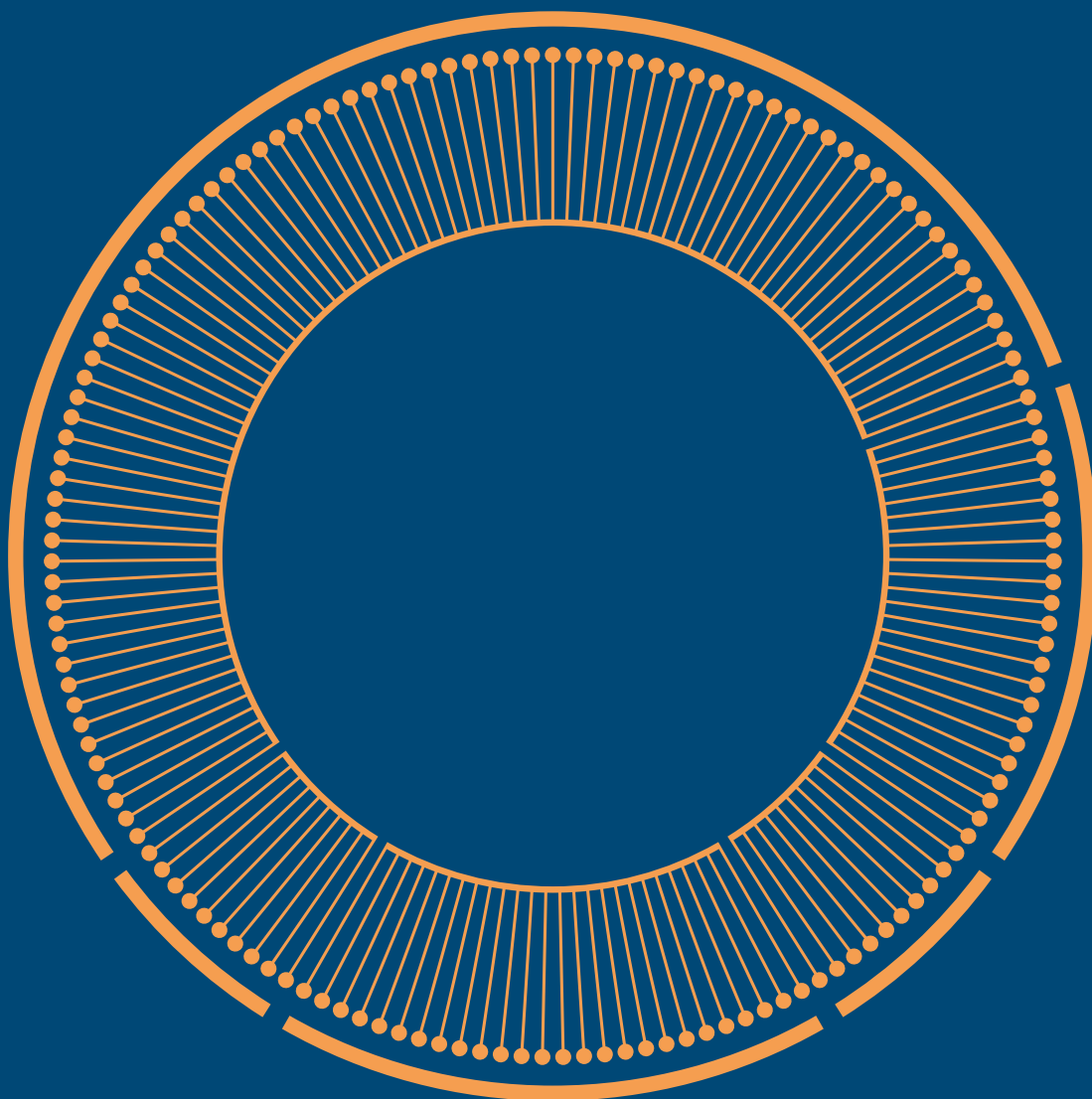
+353 1 400 4308

Elisha Collier O'Brien

Research & Policy Executive

elisha.collierobrien@chambers.ie

+353 1 400 4326



**CHAMBERS
IRELAND**
IN BUSINESS FOR BUSINESS

3rd Floor, Newmount House,
Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2, D02 DX26
+353 1 400 4300
www.chambers.ie
[@ChambersIreland](https://twitter.com/ChambersIreland)