

Legislative Monthly Newsletter

January 2021

Irish Political Developments



See [here](#) for Covid-19 guidelines



Further commercial rates packages [announced](#)



Government approves [next steps](#) for e-scooter and

Making Remote Work: National Remote Work Strategy

The [Strategy](#) is an ambitious vision for the future of work in Ireland and the potential to transform the workplace into one that supports quality of life, inclusion and regional development.

To ensure that remote work is a permanent feature in the Irish workplace, the strategy is divided into 3 Pillars that aim to:

1. Create a conducive environment
2. Develop & leverage remote work infrastructure
3. Build a remote work policy & guidance framework

You can read more about this [here](#) and check out the [Chambers Ireland press release here](#).

The National SME & Entrepreneurship Growth Plan

The [National SME and Entrepreneurship Growth Plan](#) was published by An Tánaiste Leo Varadkar in January and maps out an ambitious strategic blueprint for the SME sector.

Short-term deliverables (less than 1 year)

- all Government departments utilising the SME Test
- an analysis of existing network and clustering programmes
- the establishment of a Single SME Portal.

Medium-term deliverables (1-3 years)

- developing tailored supports for digital exports
- exploring new ways to incentivise and de-risk the Exporter Journey for SMEs through trade missions and a State-backed export credit insurance scheme
- publication of an SME Cost Index
- embedding the 'Think Small First' principle

Long-term deliverables (3+ years)

- enabling micro and start-up enterprises to become digital exporters

Oireachtas Business

Recently discussed / considered Bills & Acts

- Public Service Pay [Bill](#) 2020 (Dáil)
- Personal Insolvency (Amendment) [Bill](#) 2020 (Seanad)
- Investment Limited Partnerships (Amendment) [Bill](#) 2020 (Dáil)
- Finance [Bill](#) 2020 (Seanad)
- Planning and Development, and Residential Tenancies, [Bill](#) 2020 (Dáil)
- Organisation of Working Time (Amendment) (Carry over of Annual Leave) (Covid-19) [Bill](#) 2020 (Dáil)
- Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [Bill](#) 2018 –


Consultations

Chambers Ireland past submissions


- Chambers Ireland [submission](#) to the Workplace Relations Commission on the Right to Disconnect
- Chambers Ireland [submission](#) to Fingal County Council on Dublin Airport's North Runway

Upcoming submissions for January & February


- Review of the [National Development Plan](#)
- Public Consultation on [Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan](#)
- Public Consultation on the [Employment Investment Incentive \(EII\)](#)
- Public Consultation on a [Micro-generation Support Scheme \(MSS\) in Ireland](#)



Key priorities of the Portuguese presidency of the council of the EU



Commission sets out key actions for a united front to beat COVID-19



Implementing the protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland :

Brexit

Commission reorganises the “Task Force for Relations with the United Kingdom” into the “Service for the EU-UK Agreements”

The conclusion of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement on 24 December 2020 means that the very successful mandate of the Task Force for Relations with the United Kingdom (UKTF) will come to an end. The UKTF will cease to exist on 1 March 2021.

To support the efficient and rigorous implementation and monitoring of the Agreements with the UK, the European Commission has decided to establish a new Service for the EU-UK Agreements (UKS). The UKS will be part of the presidential services' Secretariat-General and will be operational as of 1 March 2021. The mandate and duration of the newly created service will be reviewed on a continuous basis. The UKS will closely cooperate with the HRVP.

Michel Barnier will become Special Adviser to President von der Leyen as of 1 February 2021. He will advise the President on the implementation of the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement and provide expertise in view of the finalisation of the EU's ratification process of the [EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement](#).

Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič, the Vice-President in charge of interinstitutional relations and foresight, has been appointed as the Member of the Commission to co-chair and represent the European Union in the Partnership Council, established by the [EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement](#).

European Council Updates

Video conference of the members of the European Council, 21 January 2021 : [conclusions](#)

- Borders need to stay open to ensure the functioning of the Single Market. No indiscriminate travel bans should be imposed. However, measures restricting non-essential travel on the EU may be needed to contain the spread of the virus and new virus variants.
- Leaders want vaccinations to be accelerated. In this respect, commitments on deliveries made by companies must be restricted.
- Also reaffirmed that vaccines should be distributed on a pro/rata population basis.
- EU leaders condemned the detention of Russian opposition politician, Alexi Navalny and called for his release.
- The full conclusions of the meeting can be accessed [here](#),

In other news

- Ireland set to receive over €1 billion from the [Brexit Adjustment Reserve](#) to counter the adverse economic and social consequences.
- The €20 million [Ideas Powered for Business SME Fund](#) is now available for businesses to help develop their intellectual property strategies at national & EU level.
- Commission study finds [positive impact of trade agreements on agri-food sectors](#).
- Commission signed a new initiative with the UN Capital Development Fund to unlock the [potential of digital finance](#) to benefit more than 60,000 women, youth and entrepreneurs across African, Caribbean