

Oireachtas Update



In Dáil Éireann this week, the Second Stage of the Thirty-fifth Amendment of the Constitution (Age of Eligibility for Election to the Office of President) Bill 2015 will be on the agenda Monday and Tuesday.

In the Seanad, the Thirty-fourth Amendment of the Constitution (Marriage Equality) Bill 2015 will reach the Second stage.

Wednesday and Thursday will see a public committee on the role of the media during the property boom in the lead-in to the banking crisis (2002-2007) and any changes in approach after the crisis. Monday's agenda includes a joint committee meeting regarding the minimum wage.

Annual Inflation up in both EU and Euro zone

According to the statistical office of the European Union, Eurostat, inflation in the Euro area has increased to 0.3%, up from 0.6% in January. The annual inflation of the European Union has also risen, in February of this year it was 0.2%, compared to 0.5% in January.

Ireland was one of twenty member states with a negative annual inflation rate, remaining at -0.4% through January and February 2015. The lowest rates were seen in Greece at -1.9%, Bulgaria at -1.7%, and Lithuania at -1.5%.

Irish NTMA auctions €500m in Treasury Bills

On 20 March, The National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA) announced that it had completed the third and final early repayment of the IMF loan facility.

The repayment, which is paid in Special Drawing Rights (SDR), amounted to SDR 5.2bn, and brings cumulative repayments to approximately SDR 15.7bn to date. This is representative of a payment of over €18bn, or 81% of Ireland's €22.5bn original loan facility. This repayment discharges IMF principal repayment obligations, which were originally to fall due from July 2015 to January 2021.

Ireland has repaid the greater part of the loan, leaving a balance of only SDR 3.8bn.

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Oireachtas Banking Inquiry commence media module

The Oireachtas Banking Inquiry will commence a media module this week, as part of their context hearings. The hearings will examine the role the media played in the property boom leading up to the banking crisis, and also the change in approach during the crisis.

Chairman Ciaran Lynch said: "In particular, we will consider the role in mainstream media for scepticism about the sustainability of the housing boom or the strength of the broader economy; potential conflicts of interest among media organisations; the promotion of property ownership over other forms of tenure; and the prevailing view that there would be a soft landing."

The schedule includes academics Julian Mercille (UCD) and Harry Browne (DIT), as well as Tim Vaughan, editor of the Irish Examiner, and Tom Murphy, chief executive of the Irish Examiner.

On Thursday, 26 March, the committee will hear from Gerry O'Regan (former editor of the Irish Independent), Michael Doorly (former financial director, and now company secretary at Independent News & Media), Maeve Donovan (former managing director The Irish Times), Geraldine Kennedy (former editor of The Irish Times), Ed Mulhall (former head of news and current affairs), and Paul Mulligan, (head of commercial operations at RTÉ).

PAI conference on Data Protection to take place 25 March

Seamus Carroll, of the Department of Justice, will join Data Protection Minister Dara Murphy T.D. and Data Protection Commissioner Helen Dixon at the PAI conference on Data Protection, taking place this Wednesday, 25 March. Mr Carroll will speak about the EU General Data Protection Regulation, a key regulation which will have direct consequences for all organisations involved in the collection and processing of data.

PAI BLOG

Ensuring Irish Agriculture can adapt to a changing climate

By Stephen Flood

Read [here](#)

What is a Focused Policy Assessment?

By Tom Ferris

Read [here](#)

DAIL

Tuesday 24 March	Wednesday 25 March	Thursday 26 March
2.00 p.m.	9.30 a.m.	9.30 a.m.
Questions (Minister for Defence)	Questions (Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform)	Questions (Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)
3.15 p.m.	10.45 a.m.	10.45 a.m.
Leaders Questions	Thirty-fifth Amendment of the Constitution (Age of Eligibility for Election to the Office of President) Bill 2015 - Second and Remaining Stages (Resumed) (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)	Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill 2015 - Second Stage (Resumed) (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)
3.36 p.m.		Statements on the Dairy Sector (Resumed) (Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine)
Questions (Taoiseach)		12.00 noon
4.36 p.m.	Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill 2015 - Second Stage (Resumed) (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)	Leaders Questions
Order of Business		12.21 p.m.
Motion re Repeal of Obsolete Pre-Lisbon Measures (Referral to Committee without Debate)	Statements on the Dairy Sector (Resumed) (Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine)	Order of Business
	12.00 noon	Motions re Freedom of Information Act 2014 (back from Committee) (without Debate)
Motions re Freedom of Information Act 2014 (Referral to Committee without Debate)	Leaders Questions	Order of Business
	12.21 p.m.	Morning Business Continued
5.06 p.m.	Order of Business	4.42 p.m.
Post European Council Statements (to conclude within 85 minutes)	12.51 p.m.	Topical Issues
Topical Issues	SOS	5.30 p.m.
Thirty-fifth Amendment of the Constitution (Age of Eligibility for Election to the Office of President) Bill 2015 - Order for Second Stage and Second Stage (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)	1.51 p.m.	Dáil Adjourns
	Topical Issues	Friday 27 March
	2.39 p.m.	10.00 a.m.
	Morning Business Continued	Higher Pay and Wealth Commission Bill 2014
7.30 p.m.	7.30 p.m.	Thirty-fourth Amendment of the Constitution (Peace and Neutrality) Bill 2014
Private Members Business - Motion re Water Charges (Technical Group)	Private Members Business - Motion re Water Charges (Technical Group)	2.00 p.m.
9.00 p.m.	9.00 p.m.	Dáil Adjourns
Dail Adjourns	Dáil Adjourns	

SEANAD

Tuesday 24 March	Wednesday 25 March	Thursday 26 March
12.00 noon	10.30 a.m.	10.30 a.m.
Commencement Matters	Commencement Matters	Commencement Matters
1.00 p.m.	12.00 noon	12.00 noon
Order of Business	Order of Business	Order of Business
	1.15 p.m.	1.15 p.m.
Motion regarding proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council repealing certain acts in the field of police cooperation and judicial cooperation in criminal matters – Referral to Committee without debate	Thirty-fourth Amendment of the Constitution (Marriage Equality) Bill 2015 - Second Stage (Department of Justice and Equality)	Children and Family Relationships Bill 2015 – Committee Stage (Department of Justice and Equality)
		Friday 27 March
2.15 p.m.		10.30 a.m.
		Order of Business
Children and Family Relationships Bill 2015 - Second Stage (Department of Justice and Equality)		11.45 a.m.
		Children and Family Relationships Bill 2015 – Report and Final Stages
		Thirty-fourth Amendment of the Constitution (Marriage Equality) Bill 2015 - Committee and Remaining Stages
		Motion regarding Statement of Information for Voters on the Thirty-fourth Amendment of the Constitution (Marriage Equality) Bill 2015 - Without debate (Department of Justice and Equality)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday 24 March

Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 1.30 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the General Scheme of the National Minimum Wage (Low Pay Commission) Bill 2015

Session A: 1.30 p.m.
[Super Junior Minister of State for Business and Employment]; and

Session B: 1.45 p.m.
[Representatives of Migrant Rights Centre; National Women's Council of Ireland; Eurofound; Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice and ICTU]; and

Session C: 2.45 p.m.
[Representatives of IBEC; ISME; RGDATA; Irish Hotels Federation; Restaurant Association of Ireland and Retail Excellence Ireland]

Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Bord Iascaigh Mhara's Annual Report 2013 [Representatives from Bord Iascaigh Mhara]

Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 2.15 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Health and Children (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 3.30 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Pre-Legislative Scrutiny on the General Scheme of the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill 2015 (resumed) [Dr. Pat Kenny, School of Marketing, Dublin Institute of Technology; Mr. Barry Dooley, Chief Executive, Association of Advertisers in Ireland; Mr. Padraic White, Chairperson, Responsible Retailing of Alcohol in Ireland and Mr. James Doorley, Deputy Director, National Youth Council of Ireland]

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 5.15 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Wednesday 25 March

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Public Hearing on the role of the media during the property boom in the lead-in to the banking crisis (2002-2007) and any changes in approach after the crisis
Session A: 9.30 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.
[Dr. Julien Mercille, University College Dublin];
Session B: 11.45 a.m. - 1.45 p.m.
[Mr. Harry Browne, Dublin Institute of Technology]; and
Session C: 2.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m.
[Mr. Tom Murphy, CEO and Mr. Tim Vaughan, Editor, Irish Examiner]

Transport and Communications (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Governance at RTÉ and policies and procedures in place in order to prevent political bias in their programming and reporting [Representatives from RTÉ]

Foreign Affairs and Trade (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: The ongoing Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone [Her Excellency Dr. Sinéad Walsh, Ambassador of Sierra Leone and Liberia]

Human Rights relative to Justice Matters (Joint sub) CR2, LH 2000 10 a.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Social Protection (Select sub) CR3, LH 2000 1 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2015 [Minister of State at the Department of Social Protection]

European Scrutiny - Finance and Public Expenditure (Joint sub) CR4, LH 2000 2 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Justice, Defence and Equality (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 2.30 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Session A: 2.30 p.m.
(i) The recently published Annual Policing Plan 2015, any changes implemented and future plans for the force [Garda Commissioner];
(ii) The work of Forensic Science Ireland [Director General, Forensic Science Ireland]; and
Session B: 4.30 p.m.
Motion re: Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council repealing certain acts in the field of police cooperation and judicial cooperation in criminal matters

Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 2.45 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Public Service, Oversight and Petitions (Joint) CR3, LH 2000
(a) 4 p.m. (P)
(b) 4.30 p.m. (T)
AGENDA:
(a) Private; and
(b) Public Petitions received

Public Expenditure and Reform (Select sub) CR4, LH 2000 4.15 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Motions re. Freedom of Information Act 2014 (Effective Date for Certain Bodies) Order 2015, Freedom of Information Act 2014 (Exempted Public Bodies) Order 2015 [Subject to referral by Dáil Éireann][Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform]

Thursday 26 March

Health and Children (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Session A: 9.30 a.m.
Drug addiction and recovery models [Professor Joe Barry, Chair of Population Health Medicine, Trinity College Dublin; and Mr. Gerry McAleenan, Head of Services, Soilse]; and
Session B: 11.15 a.m.
Pre-Legislative Scrutiny on the General Scheme of the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill 2015 (resumed) [Ms. Suzanne Costello, CEO, Alcohol Action Ireland; Ms. Evelyn Jones, Chairperson, National Off-Licence Association; Mr. Ross MacMathuna, Director, Alcohol Beverage Federation of Ireland; Mr. Padraig Cribben, CEO, Vintners' Federation of Ireland and Mr. Donall O'Keefe, CEO, Licensed Vintners Association]

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Public Hearing on the role of the media during the property boom in the lead-in to the banking crisis (2002-2007) and any changes in approach after the crisis (resumed)
Session A: 9.30 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.
[Mr. Michael Doorly, former Financial Director Irish News and Media and Mr. Gerry O'Regan, former Editor of Irish Independent];
Session B: 11.45 a.m. - 1.45 p.m.
[Ms. Maeve Donovan, former Managing Director and Ms. Geraldine Kennedy, former Editor, Irish Times]; and
Session C: 2.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m.
[Mr. Ed Mulhall, former Head of News and Current Affairs and Mr. Paul Mulligan, Head of Commercial Operations, RTE]

Education and Skills (Select sub) CR4, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Teaching Council (Amendment) Bill 2015 [Minister for Education and Skills]

Public Accounts CR1, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: (i) Business of the Committee; and
(ii) Dublin Docklands Development Authority Annual Report and Financial Statements 2013 [Officials from the Dublin Docklands Development Authority and from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government] http://www.enterpriseireland.com/EI_Corporate/en/Publications/Reports-Published-Strategies/2013-Annual-Report-and-Accounts-English.pdf

Friday 27 March

European Union Affairs (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 2.15 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) [Ms. Cecilia Malmström, Commissioner for Trade, European Commission]



Public Affairs Ireland Data Protection Conference 2015

*Data Protection in 2015: the current state of
play and the prospect for reform*

Wednesday, 25th March 2015

The Westin Hotel

Dublin 2

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