



*YOUR ESSENTIAL WEEKLY GUIDE TO LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS IN IRELAND*

## Oireachtas Update



Wednesday and Thursday will see Dáil discussions regarding the Health (General Practitioner Service) Bill 2015 which provides for free GP access to those over the age of 70, and those under the age of 6.

In the Seanad, the Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2015 reaches Second Stage discussions; this Bill will be the legislative basis for the introduction of the Back to Work Family Dividend, to help jobseekers with families and lone parents to return to work.

Thursday's committee meetings will see the meeting of the Transport and Communications Joint committee, which will examine the general scheme of the Roads Bill 2014, which is to provide for the dissolution of the Railway Procurement Agency and the transfer of its functions and staff to the National Roads Authority.

## TNPF report shows waiting list numbers at all-time high

The National Purchase Fund last week released figures on both Inpatient and Outpatient waiting lists in public hospitals.

Outpatient reports found that, for the first time, outpatient waiting lists had grown to exceed 400,000. At the end of March 2015, the number of those awaiting outpatient appointments reached 405,501. Of those, 184,529 had been waiting for more than six months.

The amount of patients awaiting inpatient treatment is also on the rise, with 21,710 on the waiting list as of March 2015.

## First Quarter shows positive growth

Ibec published its Q1 Economic Outlook yesterday, April 12 2015. The report shows positive growth for Ireland, which is projected to continue.

The GDP forecast for the year is 5.4%, up from the Q4 2014 forecast of 4.8%. Unemployment is projected to fall below 9%. Ibec Head of Policy and Economist, Fergal O'Brien commented that this growth would "translate into pay increases across the economy" in time.

Ibec presented five priorities in the report: reduction of marginal tax rate; stopping the penalising of entrepreneurs; increasing capital investment; emphasise the importance of education and research, and; review public sector pay, without compromising the productivity improvements.



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## Fianna Fáil announce Moore St regeneration

Following the Government's purchase of 14–17 Moore St in late March, Fianna Fáil has published The Moore St Area Renewal and Development Bill.

Inspired by the urban regeneration of Temple Bar, the Bill aims to create a historical quarter surrounding the 1916 monument at 14–17.

Currently, most of the property on Moore St is owned by Chartered Land, a company which has planning permission for a shopping centre which stretches from O'Connell St to Moore St. However, the property is under the control of NAMA. This means that the Government has powers of compulsory purchase on the property, which includes the National Monument.

Senator Darragh O'Brien said that the Bill would "regenerate and preserve the entire area", not just the Monument. A Dublin-based Fianna Fáil team have been drafting the Bill since last summer, during which time they consulted with groups that were representative of other stakeholders; the plan is supported by the 'Save 16 Moore Street Committee'.

## Seanad reform committee present recommendations

Late last year, the Taoiseach established the Working Group on Seanad Reform. Its principal focus is reform of the Seanad and its electoral system, within existing constitutional parameters. It aims to examine the role of the reformed Seanad in the political process, and the powers and functions which it would have.

Last week, they presented their report to the Government, who have previously indicated it will act on the recommendations the group would make. It is expected that the report will contain new criteria for the operation of the panel system, wherein there must be representation from five sectors in the Seanad.

## PAI BLOG

### ***Macra na Feirme announce new President-elect***

*By PAI*

Read [here](#)

### ***IMF views the Irish Economy***

*By Tom Ferris*

Read [here](#)

## DAIL

**Tuesday 14 April**

No Dáil debates scheduled

**Wednesday 15 April**

2.30 p.m.

Questions (Minister for Children and Youth Affairs)

3.45 p.m.

Topical Issues

4.33 p.m.

Leaders Questions

4.54 p.m.

Order of Business

Health (General Practitioner Service) Bill 2015 - Order for Second Stage and Second Stage (Department of Health)

7.30 p.m.

Private Members Business - Motion re Fair Pay, Secure Jobs and Trade Union Recognition (Sinn Féin)

9.00 p.m.

Dáil Adjourns

**Thursday 16 April**

9.30 a.m.

Questions (Minister for Health)

10.45 a.m.

Health (General Practitioner Service) Bill 2015 - Second Stage (Resumed if not previously concluded) (Department of Health)

Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) (Amendment) Bill 2014 (Seanad) - Second Stage (Department of Justice and Equality)

12 noon

Leaders Questions

12.21 p.m.

Order of Business

12.41 p.m.

Private Members Business - Motion re Fair Pay, Secure Jobs and Trade Union Recognition (Sinn Féin)

Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) (Amendment) Bill 2014 (Seanad) - Second Stage (Department of Justice and Equality)

Health (General Practitioner Service) Bill 2015 - Second Stage (Resumed if not previously concluded) (Department of Health)

4.42 p.m.

Topical Issues

5.30 p.m.

Dáil Adjourns

## SEANAD

**Tuesday 14 April**

No Seanad debates scheduled

**Wednesday 15 April**

2.30 p.m.

Commencement Matters

3.30 p.m.

Order of Business

4.45 p.m.

Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2015 - Second Stage (Department of Social Protection)

6.45 p.m.

Private Members Business

Seanad Adjourns

**Thursday 16 April**

10.30 a.m.

Commencement Matters

11.30 a.m.

Order of Business

12.45 p.m.

Valuation (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 2012 (Seanad) - Report Stage, Amendments from Dáil Eireann (Department of Finance)

1.30 p.m.

Roads Bill 2014 - Second Stage (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport)

Seanad Adjourns

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

## Tuesday 14 April

Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 1.30 p.m. (T)

AGENDA: (i) Session A: 1:30 p.m.

Engagement with Dr. Donal de Buitléir, Chairman Designate, The Low Pay Commission; and

(ii) Session B: 2:15 p.m.

Community Partnership Mobilisation Programme [Representative from Connect Ireland]

Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)

AGENDA: (i) Scrutiny of EU Legislative Proposals: Schedule A: COM(2015)41; and

(ii) Uncertainty faced by farmers regarding

eligibility of marginal land under the Basic Payment Scheme and issues concerning GLAS: Session A: 2.30 p.m.

[Representatives from Irish Natura and Hill Farmers Association and Irish Cattle and Sheep Farmers' Association (ICSA)]; and

Session B: 3.30 p.m.

[Representatives from Irish Farmers' Association (IFA) and Agricultural Consultants Association (ACA)]

## Wednesday 15 April

Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 12 noon (T)

AGENDA: Provision of insurance in areas at risk of flooding and subsidence

Session A: 12 p.m.

[Mr. Lawrence Owens, Cork Business Association; Mr. Conor Murphy, National University of Ireland Maynooth (NUIM); and Ms. Swenja Surminski, London School of Economics (LSE)] and;

Session B: 2.15 p.m.

[Officials from the Office of Public Works; and Representatives from Insurance Ireland]

Education and Social Protection (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 1 p.m. (T)

AGENDA: Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the General Scheme of Retention of Records Bill 2015 [Officials from the Department of Education and Skills]

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 2.30 p.m.

AGENDA: Private Meeting

Justice, Defence and Equality (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 3 p.m.

AGENDA: Private Meeting

## Thursday 16 April

Health and Children (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)

AGENDA: Session A: 9.30 a.m.

Intellectual disability and ageing, in the context of The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA) project, Trinity College Dublin [Professor Mary McCarron, leader of the research team for the

Intellectual Disability Supplement to the TILDA project]; and

Session B: 11.15 a.m.

Private Session

Public Accounts CR3, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)

AGENDA: (i) Business of the Committee; and

(ii) Management of a Cross-Border Broadband Initiative

Special Report 90: The Bytel Project [ Officials from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and the Special European Union Programmes Body ]

European Union Affairs (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)

AGENDA: United Kingdom: Possible Exit from the European Union (commonly referred to as 'Brexit'): Regional and Geopolitical Issues. [Professor Jennifer Todd, School of Politics and International Relations, UCD]

Transport and Communications (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 2.30 p.m. (T)

AGENDA: Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the General Scheme of the Roads Bill 2014 [Officials from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and Representatives from the Medical Bureau of Road Safety]



Public Affairs Ireland

# Industrial Relations Conference 2015

*Innovations in Workplace Dispute Resolution  
In Ireland*

Wednesday, 6th May 2015

The Westin Hotel

Dublin 2

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