

Oireachtas Update



In Dáil Éireann this week, the Communications Regulation (Postal Services) Amendment Bill 2015 will reach the Second Stage. This bill relates to the planned introduction of a national postcode system, by which each postal address in the Republic will be assigned a seven-digit code that will aid in the correct deliverance of mail. Mainly, the Bill is concerned with ensuring that the roll-out of these codes is in compliance with Data Protection legislation. Specifically, s.66C “confirms that the Postcode Contractor, Minister and value added resellers may process personal data for purposes related to or connected with a legitimate postcode activity”.

On Wednesday in the Seanad, Second Stage talks will commence on the National Minimum Wage (Low Pay Commission) Bill 2015. The Bill will amend the National Minimum Wage Act 2000 with an aim to the establishment of a Low Pay Commission, which should report to the Minister with recommendations regarding the national minimum wage.

Wednesday will also see the meeting of a select Finance Sub-committee, which will discuss the Consumer Protection (Regulation of Credit Servicing Firms) Bill 2015, a Bill which will amend the Central Bank Act 1942, Central Bank Act 1997, the Central Bank (Supervision and Enforcement) Act 2013 and the Consumer Credit Act 1995. By doing so it “provides for the protection of certain borrowers who are parties to credit agreements”.

Referenda results returned Saturday

The results from Ireland’s two most recent referenda were announced at 7pm on Saturday 23 May. The Thirty-fourth Amendment of the Constitution (Marriage Equality) Bill 2015 had a turnout of 60.5 per cent. The referendum passed at 62.07% Yes to 37.93% No. Highest percentages of Yes votes were seen in all areas of Dublin, with each constituency following through on the predicted 70+% Yes vote.

Roscommon-South Leitrim was the only county to reject the Bill, with 51.4% voting No. Taoiseach Enda Kenny made reference to the notable youth mobilisation around the referendum, saying there was a “palpable movement” for people to turn out to vote.

The turnout for the Thirty-fifth Amendment of the Constitution (Age of Eligibility for Election to the Office of the President) Bill 2015 was marginally smaller, however, the margin by which it failed is notably larger. The Bill was

Benign conditions are better for reforms, says Katainen

EU commissioner with responsibility for jobs, growth, investment and competitiveness, and also the European Commission vice-president, Jyrki Katainen has said that Ireland should tread carefully when it comes to increasing public spending and cutting taxes.

Instead, he proposed a retained focused on “structural reforms” and “fiscal consolidation”; he believes the emphasis should be on continuing to reduce the public debt, despite the country’s economic performance being so positive.

Speaking ahead of a visit to Dublin and Belfast, he advised the Government that it was “easier to consolidate the budget now than in bad economic times”.

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New grant for research on World Heritage Sites announced

Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys TD announced last week that there would be a new grant available for archaeological research on both existing World Heritage Sites and sites on the Irish Tentative List, which could possibly be accredited by UNSECO in the future.

The grant of €13,000 was awarded to the Royal Irish Academy (RAI)'s Standing Committee for Archaeology. Minister Humphreys stressed the importance of such sites, not only for their "special cultural significance", but also for the fact that a "UNSECO accreditation can greatly help boost tourism".

She went on to say that, following the research, a catalogue of important sites will be provided to the National Monuments Service within the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, in order for the NMS to make sure the appropriate protections are extended to any new sites.

MEP Kelly calls for "strong harmonisation" in TTIP talks

In April, PAI Economic consultant Tom Ferris [wrote](#) about the possible impact the EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Agreement (TTIP) could have on Ireland. Last week, Fine Gael MEP Séan Kelly emphasised the importance of harmonisation of business regulations. The main aim of the TTIP is to boost growth in the SME sector, however, bureaucratic red tape is a worry.

Kelly said that "[a]n ambitious but calculated EU trade agreement with the US will tear down trade barriers, open up investment opportunities, boost EU exports and particularly benefit SMEs ... However, for SMEs currently trading with the US, complying with technical rules and regulations is cited as the most pressing concern". Therefore, greater harmony should be aimed for when dealing with trade deals for SMEs.

Mr Kelly, did however, note that the trade ties between the US and Ireland are strong, and will remain so, with or without the TTIP.

Minister Howlin confirmed for PAI's Lobbying Conference

Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Brendan Howlin TD has been confirmed to join the esteemed panel of speakers at Public Affairs Ireland's conference on Lobbying and Lobbying Regulation, which will take place Thursday 25 June 2015, in Dublin's Westin Hotel.

Among the other speakers will be Mr Justice Daniel O'Keefe, Lobbying experts Prof Gary Murphy and John Devitt, newly-named Head of Lobbying Regulation Sherry Perreault, and more to be confirmed.

For more information on the conference, visit our website, or contact 01 819 8500.

New Appointments are Eircom

Eircom have announced that Huib Costermans, formerly CFO of KBN, will now hold the position of Chief Financial Officer.

The Communications giant also announced that former Regional Vice President for Processes and Systems at T-Mobile in the Czech Republic Erik Slooten would be taking up the role of Chief Information Officer.

The announcement was made in a press release on 18 May 2015.

PAI Blog

DNA sampling of convicted criminals and the DNA database

read Maureen O'Sullivan's article [here](#)

Junior Cert reform: a practitioner's perspective

read Moira Leydon's article [here](#)

Rent Certainty versus Rent Supply

read Stephen Faughnan's article [here](#)

European Commission forecasts continuing economic growth in Ireland

read Tom Ferris's article [here](#)

Repossession: What's happening, and how to deal with it

read David Hall's article [here](#)

2015 will be a time of great change for dispute resolutions

read PAI's conference report [here](#)

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DÁIL

Tuesday 26 May

Wednesday 27 May

Thursday 28 May

2.00 p.m.	9.30 a.m.	9.30 a.m.
Questions (Minister for Justice and Equality)	Questions (Minister for Children and Youth Affairs)	Questions (Minister for Health)
3.15 p.m.	10.45 a.m.	10.45 a.m.
Leaders Questions	Health (General Practitioners Service) Bill 2015 - Order for Report, Report and Final Stages (Department of Health)	Communications Regulation (Postal Services) (Amendment) Bill 2015 - Second Stage (Resumed, if not previously concluded) (Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources)
3.36 p.m.	Communications Regulation (Postal Services) (Amendment) Bill 2015 - Order for Second Stage and Second Stage (Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources)	Industrial Relations Bill 2015 - Second Stage (Resumed if not previously concluded) (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)
Questions (Taoiseach)	Statements re 5th Report of the Constitutional Convention (Voting Rights) (Resumed if not previously concluded) (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)	Statements re 5th Report of the Constitutional Convention (Voting Rights) (Resumed if not previously concluded) (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)
4.36 p.m.	Order of Business	Statements re Social Welfare Support to Business, Enterprise and Job Seekers. (Department of Social Protection)
5.06 p.m.	Topical Issues	12.00 noon
5.54 p.m.	12.00 noon	Leaders Questions
Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) (Amendment) Bill 2014 (Seanad) - Order for Report, Report and Final Stages (Department of Justice and Equality)	Leaders Questions	12.21 p.m.
Statements re 5th Report of the Constitutional Convention (Voting Rights) (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)	12.21 p.m.	Order of Business
7.30 p.m.	Order of Business	Motion re The Orderly and Proper Regulation of Unregistered Companies (Back from Committee) (without Debate) (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)
Private Members Business (Fianna Fáil)	12.51 p.m.	Motion re Ratification of the Statute of the International Renewable Energy Agency (Back from Committee) (without Debate) (Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources)
9.00 p.m.	SOS (1 hour)	12.41 p.m.
Dail Adjourns	1.51 p.m.	Morning Business Continued
	Topical Issues	4.42 p.m.
	2.39 p.m.	Topical Issues
	Morning Business Continued	5.30 p.m.
	7.30 p.m.	Dáil Adjourns
	Private Members Business (Fianna Fáil)	
	9.00 p.m.	
	Dáil Adjourns	

SEANAD

Tuesday 26 May

Wednesday 27 May

Thursday 28 May

2.30 p.m.	10.30 a.m.	10.30 a.m.
Commencement Matters	Commencement Matters	Commencement Matters
3.30 p.m.	11.30 a.m.	11.30 a.m.
Order of Business	Order of Business	Order of Business
Motion regarding the Companies Act 2014 (Section 1313) Regulations 2015 – Referral to Committee without Debate	12.45 p.m.	12.45 p.m.
4.45 p.m.	National Minimum Wage (Low Pay Commission) Bill 2015 – Second Stage (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)	Statue Law Revisions Bill 2015 – Second Stage (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform)
Customs Bill 2014 – Second Stage (Department of Finance)	4.30 p.m.	3.00 p.m.
7.00 p.m.	Statements on Health Services for People with Intellectual Disabilities (Department of Health)	Children (Amendment) Bill 2015 – Committee Stage (Department of Children and Youth Affairs)
Statements on the National Drug Strategy (Minister of State Aodhán Ó Riordáin)	5.30 p.m.	
8.30 p.m.	Private Members Business – Motion	
Seanad Adjourns	7.30 p.m.	
	Seanad Adjourns	

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday 26 May

Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 1.30 p.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Session A: 1.45 p.m.
 Engagement with Dr. Nael G. Bunni, Chairman Designate, Panel of Adjudicators required under the Construction Contracts Act, 2013;
 Session B: 2.15 p.m.
 The All Island Economy (Resumed) [Representatives of NERI; Warwick Business School; and Economic Modelling and Development Strategies]
 Session C: 3.30 p.m.
 The All Island Economy (Resumed) [Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation]
 Session D: 5.45 p.m.
 Regulations in draft - Companies Act 2014 (Section 1313) Regulations 2015 [Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation]

Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Overview of the 2015 Country Specific Recommendations [Mr. Pierre Moscovici, European Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs]

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 3.30 p.m.
 AGENDA: Private Meeting

Environment, Community and Local Government (Select sub) CR4, LH 2000 4.15 p.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Environment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2014 [Minister of State at the Department of the Environment with Special Responsibility for Housing, Planning and Coordination of the Construction 2020 Strategy]

Wednesday 27 May

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Witnesses before the Banking Inquiry
 Session A: 9.30 a.m.
 [Mr. Tony Grimes, former Director General, Central Bank of Ireland];
 Session B: 2.30 p.m.
 [Ms. Mary Burke, Central Bank of Ireland/IFSRA]; and
 Session C: 4.15 p.m.
 [Mr. Con Horan, Central Bank of Ireland/IFSRA]

Transport and Communications (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
 AGENDA: The cessation of peat briquette production at the Bord na Mona factories at Littleton and Derrinlough [Representatives from Bord na Mona]

Foreign Affairs and Trade (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Trade between Ireland and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (resumed) [Enterprise Ireland]

Justice, Defence and Equality (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Insolvency Service of Ireland (ISI) [Mr. Lorcan O'Connor, Director, ISI]

Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 2.30 p.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Response to the Joint sub-Committee on Fisheries Report on Promoting Sustainable Rural Coastal and Island Communities in particular on the Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGS) [Officials from Bord Iascaigh Mhara]

Finance (Select sub) CR4, LH 2000 5.15 p.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Consumer Protection (Regulation of Credit Servicing Firms) Bill 2015 [Minister for Finance]

Thursday 28 May

Health and Children (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Session A: 9.30 a.m.
 The current work and future plans for the Office of the Ombudsman for Children [Dr. Niall Muldoon, Ombudsman for Children]; and
 Session B: 11.15 a.m.
 Recognition of Deafblindness as a distinct disability [Ms. Laura English, Ann Sullivan Centre; Dr. Sandra Cummings, Irish Society of Hearing Aid Audiologists; and Ms. Carol Brill, Advocate]

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Witness before the Banking Inquiry
 Session A: 9.30 a.m.
 [Mr. Patrick Neary, former CEO, Irish Financial Services Regulatory Authority]; and
 Session B: 2.30 p.m.
 [Mr. Patrick Neary, former CEO, Irish Financial Services Regulatory Authority]

Public Accounts CR3, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)
 AGENDA: (i) Business of the Committee; and
 (ii) 2013 Annual Report and Appropriation Accounts of the Comptroller and Auditor General:

a. Vote 37: Social Protection;
 b. Chapter 10: Regularity of Social Welfare Payments;
 c. Chapter 11: Control of Supplementary Welfare Allowances;
 d. Chapter 12: Farm Assist;
 e. Social Insurance Fund 2013.
 [Officials from the Departments of Social Protection and from Public Expenditure and Reform]

Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 11 a.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Opportunities to enhance health service provision through north south cooperation [Minister for Health]

European Union Affairs (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 2 p.m.
 AGENDA: Private Meeting

Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 2.30 p.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Overview of the Banking Sector in Ireland (resumed) [Mr. Patrick Honohan, Governor, Central Bank of Ireland]

Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Select sub) CR3, LH 2000 3.15 p.m. (T)
 AGENDA: Motion re. Proposed Ratification by Ireland of the Statute of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) [Minister of State at the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources]



Public Affairs Ireland

The Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015

*What are the implications for
political lobbying in Ireland?*

Thursday, 25th June 2015

The Westin Hotel

Dublin 2

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