

**Draft Minutes of Meeting No. 90
of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs
24th February 2022 – MS Teams**

Present:	Tony Donohoe	Chair
	David Hegarty	DETE
	Jonathan McMillan	EI
	Breda O'Toole	IDA
	William Beausang	DFHERIS
	Vivienne Patterson	HEA
	Joan McNaboe	SOLAS
	Shauna Dunlop	SOLAS
	Stephanie O'Brien	DFHERIS
	Emma Kinsella	DFHERIS
	Aisling Soden	IDA

Apologies:	Laura Bambrick	ICTU
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In attendance:	Laura Reznikova	OECD
	Bart Staats	OECD
	Ana Gomez Sanchez	OECD

Secretariat:	Marcus Breathnach	DETE
	Ruth Morrissy	DETE
	Don O'Connor	DETE
	Alan Power	DETE
	Rhodri Lloyd	DETE
	Harry Williamson	DETE
	Jesse Carley	DETE

1. Introductions, Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

2. OECD Skills Strategy Ireland- EGFSN Engagement with OECD officials

The chair thanked the OECD team for giving a generous amount of time this morning, noting the importance of engaging with the EGFSN as a group and beginning a discussion.

Emma Kinsella introduced the project as a review of Ireland's skills strategies and underlined the desire for a group discussion.

Bart Staats introduced the OECD approach to the project, which has been applied in 20 countries

Inputs

Whole of government approach

Mapping of skills system

Stakeholder Engagement- very important role in this project

Use International best practises and facilitate peer learning

Outputs

Policy priority identification- what should the country focus on

Tailor policy recommendations- very granular, set the direction for skills policy

Raising awareness of the importance of skills

Review how Nat Skills Strategy 2025 might need to be adapted

4 main phases

-Scoping

-Assessment

Has started already, collecting info to map skills system and assess key challenges- main round of consultations in June, meetings and public consultation

-Recommendation

Draft and test policy recommendations- workshops and bilateral meetings

-Publication and Launch

Timing seems right for this report, lots of support and interest in the project from stakeholders

Questions were asked about the level of direct engagement that is planned with enterprises. It was confirmed that each of the main rounds of consultations will involve business of different sizes and sectors in regionals workshops- organised by the regional skills fora. The public consultation will also allow other actors in Ireland to share their views on the priority areas and skills needs.

Direct engagement will be achieved through the active engagement of stakeholders in workshops. Final recommendations should emerge already supported by the stakeholders. The recommendations will be concrete and actionable, with an emphasis on ensuring that something will happen. Aim is to become more and more granular throughout the process, tailoring it to the needs of Ireland. In previous projects we have seen the recommendations adopted very quickly into national skills strategy.

Looking at OECD data and EU data (labour force surveys, lifelong learning) also hope to use national data surveys- asked respondents to highlight interesting data sources. Also look at innovative approaches to gauge skills needs, Burning Glass data.

The project team will identify specific enterprises within the regions to engage with, but there will also be wide ranging surveys available for engagement with the broader stakeholder group. The project team is not concerned that anyone will be overlooked but still working out the details at this point.

4 priority areas

1. Securing balance in skills through a responsive and diversified supply of skills
2. Fostering greater participation in lifelong learning
3. Strengthening governance across a joined-up skills ecosystem

4. Leveraging skills to drive innovation and strengthen the performance of firms

The chair thanked the presenters and wished them success on the commencement of the project, looking forward to furthering engagement over the life of the project.

3. AI Skills

After the presentation of the report in the previous meeting, the group requested changes to the style of presentation and more concrete linkages to existing strategies and broader applications to industries.

Don O'Connor took the comments from the December meeting and changed the structure of detailed recommendations to broad themes and objectives (linked to AI strategy) and then made a shorter list of direct recommendations.

The group agreed that their comments had been addressed and approved the report for publication.

4. BioPharma Skills Update

It was agreed at December meeting to make this a report for 2022. The industry has expanded in Ireland since the last report in 2016, employing 72,000 highly skilled people with a strong regional spread.

It was emphasised that this is a very important sector, and that a granular and specific understanding of the skills requirement is needed, not just a general 'roles needed' in a low, middle, and high growth profile. We want to be able to go to education and training providers with a specific list of roles and skills that will be needed to fuel the growth of the sector.

The secretariat will re-examine the documentation, ensuring it has no gaps, and go to tender as soon as possible. The aim is to come back to the EGFSN with the report before the end of the year.

5. AOB

The chair thanked the members for their participation and ended the meeting.

EGFSN Secretariat

February 2022