

Next week in the Oireachtas



Statements will be heard in the Dáil next week following European Council Meeting. Further talks on the economy will commence on Wednesday and on Thursday. Amongst the items on the agenda in the Seanad next week include questions and answers on Junior Cert reform and the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy.

Brian Hayes TD Minister of State at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform delivers opening address at the PAI Conference Public procurement: eProcurement and eInvoicing

Opening his address, the Minister said that “transparent public procurement is critical to achieving more efficient allocation of resources through increased competition, and helping the government and taxpayers to realise budgetary savings” and in this regard, reform of public sector procurement “is central to the Government’s reform agenda”.

The Government, he added, wants to make eProcurement “the rule rather than the exception”. The introduction and promotion of new eProcurement practices in line with international best practice will lead to: clearer transparency and visibility, reducing risks and driving compliance; audit trails, providing greater control over procurement, and the proactive management and measurement of procurement performance, according to the Minister.

Taking account of the SME sector, he added, one government objective “is to encourage the opportunities (SMEs) to tender for public sector contracts and an important element for government in the roll out of eProcurement is to ensure that any

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From Right to Left: Vincent Campbell, Director, National Procurement Service, Office of Public Works; Billy Noone, former official at the National Public Procurement Policy Unit (NPPPU), Department of Finance; Alain Deckers, Head of Unit, DG Internal Market C4 European Commission; Brian Hayes TD, Minister of State at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform with Special Responsibility for the Office of Public Works; Edmund Gray, PEPPOL project technical lead in Ireland, IT Sligo; Padraig Harte, IT Sligo; and Don Bergin, Public Affairs Ireland

Lucinda Creighton elected Vice President of the European People’s Party

Minister for European Affairs, Lucinda Creighton TD, has been elected as Vice President of the European People’s Party (EPP), the largest and most influential European-level political party. The announcement was made following the EPP’s two day Congress in Bucharest, Romania yesterday. Ms Creighton secured the first of ten positions and fought off strong competition from other candidates including three EU Commissioners,

a German Government Minister and candidates representing the governing parties of Portugal, Sweden and Poland. Speaking in Bucharest, following her election Minister Creighton said: “This result is great recognition for the work we are doing. There is a really strong sense in the EPP of support for Ireland on our road to recovery. The position of Vice President presents a great opportunity to influence the biggest European party at the top level”. The newly elected President of the

EPP is Wilfried Martens, former Prime Minister of Belgium, while the role of Secretary General was won by Spanish politician and Member of the European Parliament, Antonio Lopez-Isturiz. José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, and Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, will both serve alongside Minister Creighton as ex-officio Vice Presidents of the EPP.



Public Affairs
Ireland
25 Mountjoy
Square East
Dublin 1

Tel: 01 8198500
Fax: 01 8944733
E: info@publicaffairsireland.com
www.publicaffairsireland.com
twitter.com/publicaffairsir



technology solution links up with suppliers to the procurement system". He added: "In arriving at a solution, the Irish Government is working with other EU Member States so that for the SME sector the solutions provide opportunities for them to access wider markets, as well as driving cost savings to their business with government."

Outlining some achievements to date, the Minister mentioned the national portal, e-Tenders, something that has proven "very successful". He also announced his intention to officially announce details of an upgrade to this portal.

E-invoicing, the Minister said, is a "flagship initiative for this Government and we are one of the lead countries piloting electronic invoicing across the European Union". The Government "shares the Commission's desire to see invoicing become the predominant method of invoicing by 2020 in Europe. Realising this

vision requires careful planning, and not just a technological solution, but also organisational and legal solutions that advantage and not disadvantage the private sector."

At the beginning of 2012, the Minister "prioritised resources for the National Procurement Service to conduct a Pilot Project on e-invoicing and one that would investigate the use of PEPPOL (Pan-European Public Procurement Online), a European Commission initiative to provide an infrastructure to facilitate cross border commerce including e-invoicing.

He also established a National e-invoicing Forum to inform the pilot, and, inform the roll out of e-invoicing for the public sector. Ireland is also a key contributor to the EU National Stakeholder Forum on e-invoicing. The pilot aimed to adopt e-invoicing for the public sector using an open, competitive and transparent infrastructure which included proper governance. The technical

lead for the Irish pilot project was Edmund Gray, from Sligo IT, who also spoke at the conference. The seven Service Providers that took part in the Pilot Project signed a Governance agreement, which assured interoperability between the service providers.

This project project, according to Minister Hayes, "has proven that suppliers can send invoices electronically to Government agencies irrespective of the formats used by the Government Agency or the supplier." In conclusion, Minister Hayes that "sometimes something that sounds simple, such as receiving an invoice electronically, can, when you explore the issues involved, become very complex". However, "by adopting the PEPPOL infrastructure as a means of transport for e-invoices into the public sector we are providing a solution that benefits private and public sector alike."



Public Affairs Ireland Professional Development Presents



Ireland's EU Presidency

Special Half-Day Seminar, Friday 9 November 2012, 9am to 1.30pm

Topics Include:

The main policy issues expected to arise

The liaison and coordination demands internally (across Departments) and externally (with other Member States and the EU institutions) to ensure effective handling of those policies

The distinction between Ireland as President (seeking consensus/agreement) and Ireland as Member State (defending our national position)

Communication requirements nationally and at EU level

Resource requirements, including staffing provision, at a time of national Budget constraints

On January 1 2013, Ireland will undertake the 6-month Presidency of the European Council for the seventh time, coinciding with the 40th Anniversary of Ireland's accession to the EU. Cyprus will assume the Presidency immediately preceding us with Lithuania assuming the Presidency directly after us.

The forthcoming Presidency will be crucial in demonstrating Ireland's ability to manage the agenda of the EU in light of the current difficult times, and in the context of a newly revived debate on the future of Europe. Therefore, it is essential that our term in office is well-designed and effectively executed. But what will the Presidency mean for those working in the various government departments and agencies in addition to non-public-service bodies that have close EU involvement?

Against this background, Public Affairs Ireland is organising a tailored, focused and practical seminar that will address the main policy, institutional and logistical challenges that will arise. This seminar is taking place less than two months before the start of the Presidency, offering a final opportunity to evaluate the preparations currently in place to meet the expected challenges.

A smooth transition from the current Cypriot Presidency to the next Presidency 'trio' (Ireland, Lithuania and Greece), whose 18-month work programme is being prepared with Irish inputs, is in the pipeline but it is now time to take stock and put the finishing touches to our contribution to the contingency programme.

Please click [here](#) for more information or call us on 01 819 8500.

Dáil

October 23	October 24	October 25
<p>2pm Questions (Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government)</p> <p>3.15pm Leaders Questions</p> <p>3.36pm Questions (Taoiseach)</p> <p>4.36pm Order of Business</p> <p>5.06pm Topical Issues Ombudsman (Amendment) Bill 2008 Amendments from the Seanad (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform) Europol Bill 2012 Second Stage (resumed) (Department of Justice and Equality)</p> <p>7.30pm Private Members Business</p>	<p>10.30am Leaders Questions</p> <p>10.51am Order of Business Statements post European Council Meeting (to conclude in 85 minutes if not previously concluded) Statements on the Economy (Department of Finance)</p> <p>1.30pm SOS</p> <p>2.30pm Questions (Minister for Justice and Equality)</p> <p>3.45pm Topical Issues</p> <p>4.33pm Morning business continued</p> <p>7.05pm Motion re: Smithwick Tribunal (to conclude in 25 minutes if not previously concluded) (Department of Justice and Equality)</p> <p>7.30pm Private Members</p>	<p>10.30am Leaders Questions</p> <p>10.51am Order of Business Motion re: Houses of the Oireachtas Commission Funding (without debate) Statements on the Economy (resumed) (to conclude at 4.30 pm if not previously concluded) (Department of Finance)</p> <p>4.30pm Topical Issues</p> <p>5.18pm Questions (Minister for Children and Youth Affairs)</p>

Seanad

October 23	October 24	October 25
<p>2.30pm Order of Business</p> <p>3.45pm Statements and Questions and Answers on Junior Cert Reform and the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy [Minister for Education]</p>	<p>10.30am Order of Business</p> <p>11.45am Health Service Executive (Governance) Bill 2012 - Report Stage [Minister for Health]</p> <p>4.30pm Private Members Business [Labour Senators]</p> <p>6.30pm Motion regarding the Smithwick Tribunal (Amendment to terms of reference - to conclude within 25 minutes) [Minister for Justice and Equality]</p> <p>7pm Statements on Social Protection (Resumed) [Minister for Social Protection]</p>	<p>10.30am Order of Business</p> <p>11.45am Statements post European Council Meeting – 18/19 October, 2012 [Minister of State for European Affairs]</p>

Committee Meetings

October 23	October 24	October 25
<p>2pm Agriculture, Food and the Marine Committee Room 3, Leinster House AGENDA: Review of "Food Harvest 2020" (resumed) [Representatives from Irish Dairy Board and Bord Bia]</p> <p>2.15pm Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht Committee Room 4, Leinster House AGENDA: (i) Election of Chairman; (ii) Scrutiny of EU legislative proposals: COM(2012)141; COM(2012)221; and COM(2012)242; and (iii) Maintaining and enforcing regulations in the Building Sector [Building Regulations Advisory Board]</p> <p>1.30pm Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation Committee Room 2, Leinster House AGENDA: (i) Scrutiny of EU legislative proposals: COM(2011)778 and COM(2011)779 [Officials from the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation]; and (ii) The Irish-US Economic Relationship 2012 - Report findings [Mr Peter O'Neill, President, American Chamber of Commerce Ireland]</p>	<p>10am Education and Social Protection Committee Room 3, Leinster House AGENDA: Minimising Unemployment – Reviewing the Community Employment Scheme (i) Officials from the Department of Social Protection; and (ii) SIPTU]</p> <p>2pm Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform Committee Room 4, Leinster House AGENDA: 2013 Allocations for public expenditure – (i) Finance Vote Group [Minister for Finance]; (ii) Office of Public Works (OPW) [Minister of State at the Departments of Finance and of Public Expenditure and Reform]; and (iii) Public Expenditure and Reform Vote Group [Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform]</p> <p>2pm Justice, Defence and Equality Committee Room 2, Leinster House AGENDA: National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Bill 2012 [Minister for Justice and Equality]</p> <p>9.30am Transport and Communications Committee Room 4, Leinster House AGENDA: Developments in relation to Bus Éireann's national bus routes and the impact that the renewal of Public Service Obligation Contracts may have on public and private bus services [Representatives from Bus Éireann; National Transport Authority; and the Coach Tourism and Transport Council of Ireland]</p>	<p>10am Education and Social Protection Committee Room 3, Leinster House AGENDA: Engagement with Mr Gordon Clark, Chairman Designate, Qualifications and Quality Assurance Authority of Ireland</p> <p>2pm Finance (Sub-Committee) Committee Room 3, Leinster House AGENDA: Fiscal Responsibility Bill 2012 [Minister for Finance]</p> <p>9.30am Health and Children Committee Room 2, Leinster House AGENDA: Children and youth issues [Minister for Children and Youth Affairs]</p> <p>11.15am Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement Committee Room 4, Leinster House AGENDA: Community-based restorative justice programmes in Northern Ireland [Ms Debbie Watters, Assistant Director, Northern Ireland Alternatives; and Mr Harry Maguire, Acting Director of Community Restorative Justice Ireland]</p> <p>10am Public Accounts Committee Room 1, Leinster House AGENDA: (i) Business of the Committee; and (ii) 2011 Appropriation Accounts of the Comptroller and Auditor General: Vote 36: Defence - Review of allowances [Secretary General, Department of Defence]</p>

Education & Training

Public Affairs Ireland provides a range of training courses and seminars on public affairs and regulatory matters. Both our training courses and seminars are taught by leading experts in each relevant discipline, who bring a sharp practical focus to our events.

Please click here for a schedule of our Autumn/Winter 2012 events, or call on 01 819 8500 for more information.