



CREATING JOBS

Long-term economic recovery can only be secured through the creation of good jobs and the development of an innovative indigenous enterprise sector.

Our priority is the creation of decent jobs with decent pay and to deliver for our Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) sector. There are 192,000 small- and medium-sized businesses across the State, employing over 860,000 people; these businesses are the driving force of economic activity in the State.

We will set ambitious targets for regionally balancing foreign investment and delivering an integrated enterprise policy that maximises the growth potential of domestic entrepreneurs and businesses.

The Department of Finance have forecast increases in employment based on expected growth in core domestic demand for the period from 2017 to 2021 of 187,969 jobs. These jobs will be created regardless of policy changes. Our jobs plan will mean ultimately in the region of 250,000 jobs will be created.

We will use the budget room available over the next five years to invest heavily in capital projects, to deliver tens of thousands of jobs and to fill infrastructural needs in water, housing, schools, health, broadband and transport. Our current spending will also create jobs in frontline services and act as a stimulus for job creation in the private sector.





COMMITMENTS

INVESTING IN JOB CREATION

- Our significant investment in infrastructure and public services, such as in housing, health and education, will deliver 250,000 jobs over the next five years.
- We will open up public procurement to small businesses, maximising this annual €12 billion stimulus for domestic businesses.
- We will attach social clauses to public works contracts.
- We will establish a review of compliance and enforcement of labour and employment obligations attached to public works contracts.
- We have included in the rural Ireland section of this manifesto and in the launch of our West of Ireland policy a series of jobs initiatives which aim to address the historical regional imbalance in job creation.

JOB CREATION THROUGH TAX AND LEGISLATIVE REFORMS

- We will abolish upward-only rents.
- We will ease administration of the tax system for businesses by simplifying filing arrangements for Corporation and Income Tax and by ending delays in VAT registration.
- We will extend Startup Refunds for Entrepreneurs (SURE) to the self-employed.
- We will support Ireland's microbreweries by extending tax relief for beer production.
- We will double the Trading Online Voucher Scheme and develop an inter-departmental strategy to develop an ambitious e-Commerce plan, increasing the number of indigenous small businesses trading online.
- We will initiate an inter-departmental review, led by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, to consider a fairer system for calculating commercial rates for small businesses.

JOB CREATION IN THE ARTS AND TOURISM SECTORS

- We will increase funding to the Arts Council by 45% over the lifetime of the next government and ensure all grants and awards are made fairly and transparently. We will ensure through this funding, and through investment in community development programmes, that the arts play a key role in creating employment and recreation in communities, particularly in rural Ireland.
- We will support better pay for musicians, writers, visual artists, actors and those involved in set productions through engagement with the Irish Writers Union, the Musicians Union of Ireland, Equity, the Playwrights and Screenwriters Guild and all other relevant bodies.
- We will support artists, as the essential component of the arts world, in their lobbying for a better return from publishing and distribution companies, to make the arts a viable employment option.
- We will maintain film relief as a way of supporting the Irish film industry.
- We will maintain the 9% VAT rate for the tourism and hospitality sector.

PROTECTING JOBS THROUGH CREDIT SOURCES AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

- We will implement in full the Construction Contracts Act to protect sub-contractors.
- We will critically engage with the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) to ensure Irish microbusinesses, cooperatives and social enterprise actors can access much needed financial supports.
- We will advocate for strengthened European Union supports for the social and cooperative economy and for investment in the area of 'Green Growth'.