

SPRING 2019 REFORM BAROMETER – IRELAND

European Semester - Overall assessment of 2018 cycle

	To what extent do you agree with these statements:		Detailed comments
1.	The National Reform Programme submitted by your Government (March 2018) is appropriate.	To a large extent	It identifies many of the capacity constraints faced by business but doesn't place sufficient focus or priority on key areas such as education and innovation performance.
2.	The Commission's country specific recommendations for your country are appropriate.	To a large extent	Increased focus is needed on blockages to infrastructure and housing delivery and in support for increased funding for higher education
3.	The Commission assessment of reform implementation the year before is appropriate.	To a large extent	Support assessment of significant progress
4.	The Commission assessment of excessive imbalances (in-depth review) is appropriate.	To a large extent	Some imbalances exist but significant progress has been achieved

Assessment of Country Specific recommendations 2018 in detail

		Q1: The recommendation is:	Q2: implementation on effort is:	Detailed comments
CSR 1	Achieve the medium-term budgetary objective in 2019. Use windfall gains to accelerate the reduction of the general government debt ratio. Limit the scope and the number of tax expenditures, and broaden the tax base. Address the expected increase in age-related expenditure by increasing the cost-effectiveness of the healthcare system and by pursuing the envisaged pension reforms.	Important	Satisfactory	
CSR 2a	Ensure the timely and effective implementation of the National Development Plan, including in terms of clean energy, transport, housing, water services and affordable quality childcare.	Extremely important	Unsatisfactory	Many blockages not addressed for delivery of infrastructure
CSR 2b	Prioritise the upskilling of the adult working-age population, with a focus on digital skills.	Extremely important	Mixed	Lack of funding for higher education is a significant challenge
CSR 2c	Address age-related Expenditure	Important	Satisfactory	

		Q1: The recommendation is:	Q2: implementation on effort is:	Detailed comments
CSR 3a	Foster the productivity growth of Irish firms, and of small and medium enterprises in particular, by stimulating research and innovation with targeted policies, more direct forms of funding and more strategic cooperation with foreign multinationals, public research centres and universities.	Extremely important	Unsatisfactory	Public innovation investment needs to be increased more rapidly
CSR 3b	Promote faster and durable reductions in long-term arrears, building on initiatives for vulnerable households and encouraging write-offs of non-recoverable exposures.	Important	Satisfactory	

Reform Progress in your Member State in 2018

How would you assess reform progress in 2018, for the following broad areas:

Taxation and Public Finances	Satisfactory
Business environment (regulation/access to markets)	Mixed
Labour market	Mixed
Innovation and skills	Mixed
Access to finance and Financial stability	Satisfactory

Is there any example of an economic reform, specific to your country that BusinessEurope could highlight in its 2019 Reform Barometer?

Coordination of a new long-term spatial plan with a new public capital investment plan is a significant innovation which should lead to more effective delivery of public capital investment.

Reform priorities for 2019

	I. Policy Area	II. Concrete Recommendations	III. Are the proposed recommendations already in the agenda of your Government?
Priority 1	Labour supply measures for specific groups (older workers, women...)	Increased funding for higher education. Address childcare costs in order to support increased female participation.	no
Priority 2	R&D and Innovation	Significant increase in public funding for innovation	no
Priority 3	Making work-pay: interplay of tax and benefit system	Increase incentive to work through reduction in marginal tax rate and entry point to the marginal rate of income tax	yes
Priority 4	Public investment	Speed up delivery and remove blockages to capital projects	yes
Priority 5	Quality of fiscal institutions and budgetary framework	Speed up delivery and remove blockages to capital projects	yes