

## GOING DIGITAL

### E-merge

The E-Merge programme provides £2,500/€2,800 fully-funded consultancy support to help businesses develop online sales and eCommerce solutions. It is available to companies with less than 250 staff operating in either the manufacturing or tradeable services sectors. **Apply through [intertradeireland.com](http://intertradeireland.com)**

### Trading Online Voucher Scheme

The Trading Online Voucher Scheme is designed to assist small businesses with up to 10 employees to trade more online, boost sales and reach new markets. It offers financial assistance of up to €2,500 with co-funding of 50% from the business along with training and advice to help your business trade online. The vouchers are targeted at businesses with the following profile:

- Limited or no e-commerce presence;
- 10 or less employees;
- Turnover less than €2m;
- Applicant business must be trading for at least 6 Months
- Business must be located in the area covered by the LEO to whom they make their application i.e. LEOs cannot accept applications from businesses located outside their jurisdiction.

### Online Retail Scheme

The purpose of this competitive fund is to enable Irish-owned retailers to enhance their digital capability and to develop a more competitive online offer that will enable an increase in their customer base and build a more resilient business in the domestic and global marketplace, both online and offline. It offers successful applicants a grant ranging from €10,000 to a maximum of €40,000 - covering up to 80% of project costs. Current criteria include employing at least 10 employees on a full-time equivalent basis on or before 29 February 2020 or has grown to that level since then. It is intended to introduce a new round of the Online Retail Scheme in 2022.

### Digitalisation Voucher – Enterprise Ireland

This is available to companies to access independent technical or advisory services support related to the current and future operations of your business. The voucher covers services from an approved service provider up to a value of €9,000. A maximum daily rate of €900 per day applies. It is open to companies that operate within the manufacturing or internationally traded service sectors who employed 10 or more full time people on their payroll on the 29th of February 2020 or employed 10 fulltime staff at the time of application. Companies must have suffered, or be projected to suffer, a 15 per cent or more reduction in actual or projected turnover or profit as a result of COVID-19 outbreak or have had a significant increase in operational costs as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

## LOW COST LOANS

### COVID-19 Credit Guarantee Scheme

The COVID-19 Credit Guarantee Scheme facilitates the provision of liquidity and working capital to businesses with an initial focus on term and working capital loans. The scheme is available through participating lenders.

- Loans from €10,000 to a maximum of €1,000,000 per borrower
- Terms of between 3 months up to 5.5 years
- Loan amounts of up to €250,000 are available unsecured (unless it is a requirement of the product feature e.g. asset finance, invoice discount facilities)
- Up to 12 months interest and / or capital moratoria are possible under the Scheme - these remain at the discretion of the participating finance provider
- The Scheme will permit the refinance and rollover of debt incurred as a result of COVID-19: e.g. COVID-19 related expenses that were initially funded through short term/temporary facilities such as overdrafts

### Brexit Impact Loan Scheme

Eligible Brexit-impacted businesses can apply for loans for liquidity/working capital or investment purposes under this new scheme for SMEs, farmers and fishers. Loans range from €25,000 to €1.5m and are available for longer terms than under its predecessor i.e. up to six years. These loans are offered at lower interest rates than other similar lending in the market, and loans of up to €500,000 are available unsecured. Loans can be used for 100% refinancing of existing Brexit Loan Scheme loans or refinancing of existing short-term credit, up to a maximum of 30% of the new loan.

### Microfinance Ireland Brexit Business Loan

This loan is designed for small businesses whose turnover is currently or potentially impacted by Brexit by a minimum of 15%, or has a short-term cashflow requirement, and are unable to secure finance from banks and commercial lending providers. It applies to any business (Sole Trader, Partnership or Limited Company) with less than 10 employees and annual turnover of up to €2m. Loans may be used for short-term working capital and/or required business changes as a result of Brexit.

- Loan Terms from 6 months to 3 years (shorter terms depending on purpose)
- Interest rate of 4.5% APR if submitted through the Local Enterprise Office Network or other referral partners or 5.5% APR if you apply directly
- Fixed repayments with no penalty for early repayment

### Microfinance Ireland COVID-19 Business Loan

This loan is designed for small businesses which have been impacted by COVID-19 resulting in a reduction of 15% or more in turnover or profit and are unable to secure finance from banks and commercial lending providers. Loans

## LOW COST LOANS

can be used for working capital or changes required by the business to manage COVID-19.

- Business loans from €5,000 to €25,000
- First 6 months – 0% interest and zero repayments
- Repayments will commence in month 7 for the remaining period of your loan
- Interest rate after the first 6 months will be: a reduced interest rate of 4.5% APR if submitted through the Local Enterprise Office Network (or other referral partners) or 5.5% APR if you apply directly
- Loan terms typically up to 3 years
- No fees or charges
- Fixed repayments with no penalty for early repayment

### Microfinance Ireland Electric Small Public Service Vehicle Loan

The eSPSV Business Loan is designed for owners of Small Public Service Vehicles (SPSV) such as taxis, hackneys, and limousines who are replacing their vehicle with an electric/hybrid model and are availing of the eSPSV Grant Scheme 2021.

- Business Loans from €5,000 to €25,000
- Interest rate of 4.5% APR if submitted through the LEO network or other referral partners or 5.5% APR if you apply directly
- Loan terms up to 5 years
- No fees or charges
- Fixed repayments with no penalty for early repayment

## OPTIONS FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

### Back to Work Enterprise Allowance

This scheme offers support for people who are long-term unemployed and who are interested in self-employment as a route to entering the labour market. It is payable to self-employed individuals for a 24-month period from the commencement of their new business. All eligible participants will receive their full period of entitlement of 24 months. This includes anyone who contacted the Department of Social Protection to temporarily suspend their allowance while their business closed during the pandemic. Individuals in receipt of the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance can also receive the Enterprise Support Grant. This grant offers up to €2,500 over the first two years of a new business and assists with the early business start-up costs.

### Enterprise Support Grant

This Grant is available to assist eligible self-employed recipients who close their COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment. It is a grant of up to €1,000 to restart your business if it was closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If you claimed the grant in 2020 but found yourself back on the COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment, you can access the €1,000 grant for a second time if you close your COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment.

### JobsPlus

JobsPlus is a subsidy paid to employers who recruit long-term unemployed people for new positions in their workplace. Employers can avail of JobsPlus when filling new positions or positions that arise as a consequence of natural turnover and receive a subsidy of €7,500 or €10,000 per employee. The value of the grant is dependent on the age of the new employee and their duration of unemployment, over a two-year period of employment. Those under 30 years of age can now avail of the support after 4 months, having previously been 12 months. Time spent in receipt of the PUP can be counted for the purposes of eligibility for unemployed individuals.

### Work Placement Experience Programme

WPEP is a work placement scheme to provide work experience to jobseekers who have been unemployed for more than six months, including time spent on the PUP. All participants are paid €306 per week plus any social welfare increases for qualified adults and children. All placements will provide training opportunities and participants will be provided with opportunities to undertake accredited training as part of the programme. Options include a new Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) accredited work placement award which will be delivered by the Education and Training Boards at levels 3, 4 and 5. The intention is to provide quality and valuable work experience to unemployed persons.

### Community Employment and Tús

The Community Employment (CE) and Tús programmes are designed to help people who are long-term unemployed (or otherwise disadvantaged) to get back to work by offering part-time and temporary placements in jobs based within local communities. Participants can take up other part-time work during their CE placement. The duration of placements are 12 months, with some exceptions. Participant wage rates are determined by the underlying social welfare entitlement.

## YOUR FINE GAEL TEAM IN LIMERICK CITY

### Senator Maria BYRNE

E: maria.byrne@oir.ie

### Kieran O'DONNELL TD

E: kieran.odonnell@oir.ie

### Mayor Daniel BUTLER

E: daniel.butler@limerick.ie

### Cllr Dan McSWEENEY

E: dan.mcsweeney@limerick.ie

### Cllr Olivia O'SULLIVAN

E: olivia.osullivan@limerick.ie

### Cllr Michael MURPHY

E: michaelmurphygouig@eircom.net

### Cllr Michael SHEAHAN

E: michael.sheahan@limerick.ie

### Mep Seán KELLY

E: sean.kelly@europarl.europa.eu

### Mep Deirdre CLUNE

E: Deirdre.clune@europarl.europa.eu

### Cllr John EGAN

E: johneganabington@gmail.com

### Cllr Gerald MITCHELL

E: Gerald.mitchell@limerick.ie

### Cllr Sarah KEILY

E: sarah.keily@limerick.ie

# A GUIDE FOR BUSINESS 2022

## Know Where You Stand

Many businesses or people looking to start a business miss out on government help - e.g. the free of charge Green for Micro programme or the €2,500 Trading Online Voucher. I hope you find this guide helpful. It provides the latest information since the publication of Budget 2022. We want to help businesses still struggling with the effects of COVID-19 and Brexit and also help those businesses looking to grow.

*Maria*

## Senator Maria BYRNE

Mannixville, O'Connell

Avenue, Limerick

☎ 061 310 860

☎ 087 349 8603

Seanad Éireann, Leinster House,

Kildare Street, Dublin 2.

☎ 086 830 0951

✉ maria.byrne@oireachtas.ie

📱 @MariaByrneLimerick

📱 @maria16byrne

📱 Maria Byrne

📱 senator\_mariabyrne

**FINE GAEL** 

## TAXATION

### Income Tax

Under the **Tax Credit system**, Tax Payable = Gross Tax minus Tax Credits. Gross tax liability is calculated on your total income by applying 20% to income up to your standard rate cut-off point and 40% on the remainder. The standard rate cut-off point has been increased by €1,500 in Budget 2022:

- from €35,300 to €36,800 for single individuals and
- from €44,300 to €45,800 for married couples / civil partners with one earner.

Your Tax Certificate will show the annual value of all your **Tax Credits** and the equivalent weekly or monthly amount which are subtracted from this gross liability to yield the tax payable. Budget 2022 has increased tax credits as follows:

- An increase in the Personal Tax Credit from €1,650 to €1,700
- An increase in the Employee Tax Credit from €1,650 to €1,700
- An increase in the Earned Income Credit from €1,650 to €1,700

### Universal Social Charge

USC is a tax payable on your total income, including things such as employment income, taxable employer benefits, self-employed income, rental income, share option gains, dividend income. Budget 2022 announced that the ceiling of the 2% USC band will increase by €608 to €21,295 in 2022. The USC Rates & Bands from 1 January 2022 will be:

- Incomes of €13,000 are exempt. Otherwise:
- €0 – €12,012 @ 0.5%
- €12,013 – €21,295 @ 2%
- €21,296 – €70,044 @ 4.5%
- €70,045+ @ 8%
- Self-employed income over €100,000: 3% surcharge

## GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES AND RELIEFS

The **Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS)** is a flat-rate subsidy paid to qualifying employers experiencing a 30% reduction in turnover or customer orders. It is based on the numbers of paid and eligible employees on the employer's payroll and charges a reduced rate of employer PRSI of 0.5% on wages paid which are eligible for the subsidy payment. At present, it is envisaged that the EWSS will remain in place in a graduated form until the 30th of April 2022.

### Commercial Rates Waiver

The targeted rates waiver remains in place for the first three months of 2022. This covers ratepayers in the hospitality sector such as hotels, restaurants and pubs as well as the arts and entertainment sector. Contact your local authority for more information.

### Tax Warehousing

Tax warehousing allows you to defer paying some of your eligible tax liabilities until you are in a position financially to deal with the debt.

The period during which tax debts may be warehoused is in place until 31 March 2022 and tax debts can then be 'parked' interest-free until 31st March 2023. At that point the warehoused debt may be paid in full without incurring an interest charge or can be paid through a tailored phased payment arrangement at a significantly reduced interest rate of 3% per annum. This compares to the standard rate of 8% or 10% per annum that would otherwise apply to such debts.

Any tailored phased payment arrangement will take account of the taxpayer's particular financial circumstances and can be extended over a longer timeframe as required provided current liabilities continue to be paid as they fall due.

### Covid Restrictions Support Scheme (CRSS)

To qualify a business must be required to either prohibit or significantly restrict customers from accessing your business premises to acquire goods or services, with the result that the business either has to temporarily close or to operate at a significantly reduced level. Following changes announced in late December, CRSS is being made available to those businesses (hospitality and indoor entertainment) that have been significantly restricted from trading. The turnover reduction criteria has been increased from no more than 25% of 2019 turnover to no more than 40% of 2019 turnover. New businesses established between 13 October 2020 and 26 July 2021 are now eligible to apply for the scheme.

Eligible businesses can make a claim to Revenue for a payment known as an Advance Credit for Trading Expenses (ACTE). An ACTE is payable for each week a business is affected by the restrictions. The ACTE is equal to 10% of the average weekly turnover of the business in 2019 up to €20,000, plus 5% on turnover over €20,000. The ACTE is subject to a maximum weekly payment of €5,000.

Businesses that have qualified for CRSS in respect of a period of restrictions will, in certain circumstances, be eligible to claim an additional week of support under the scheme – a "restart week" – where the business is recommenced on the lifting of Covid restrictions. The purpose of the additional week of support is to assist businesses with the costs of recommencing after a period of restrictions.

### Temporary Reduction in the VAT rate

The VAT rate for the tourism and hospitality sector was reduced from 13.5% to 9% in November 2020. Budget 2022 has confirmed that this rate will continue until the end of August 2022.

## GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES AND RELIEFS

### Remote Working Relief

An employer can pay up to €3.20/day free of all tax to e-workers, and Benefit In Kind does not apply to employer-provided equipment or broadband services. In addition, an e-worker can claim Tax Relief at their top rate on 30% of vouched expenses on heat, light, broadband for those days spent working from home.

### Employment Investment Incentive Scheme

The EIS aims to incentivise private investors to make equity investments in qualifying Irish SME companies. Investors can obtain income tax relief of up to 40% to a maximum investment of €250,000 for an investment of 4 years or more (there is also the potential to obtain relief on investments up to €500,000, but the term must be at least 7 years).

Budget 2022 improves the EIS in three ways:

- Expansion of EIS to Limited Partnership Agreements as well as Designated Investment Funds (DIFs)
- Investors will be able to access the income tax relief at the time of making the EIS investment
- Relaxation of the rules around the so called "capital redemption window" to encourage investors to invest in multiple funding rounds with the same company without triggering a clawback of the tax relief

### Tax Credit for Digital Gaming

This new relief will support digital games development companies by providing a refundable corporation tax credit for expenditure incurred on the design, production and testing of a game. The relief will be available at a rate of 32% on eligible expenditure of up to a limit of €25 million per project. The scheme must be notified to and approved by the European Commission prior to commencement.

### ENTERPRISE INFORMATION CENTRE

You can contact the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment's Enterprise Information Centre for information on the government supports available to businesses and enterprises.  
**Tel: +353 1 631 2002 Email: infobusinesssupport@enterprise.gov.ie**

### YOUR LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

Your Local Enterprise Office is the best place to start for anyone seeking information and support on starting or growing a business in Ireland. The **Limerick Local Enterprise Office** is available at **7-8 Patrick St, Limerick, V94 XF67 Tel: 061 557499 and www.localenterprise.ie/Limerick/** and the **Tipperary Local Enterprise** at: **Tipperary Civic Offices, Limerick road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, E45 A099 Tel: 0818 06 5000**

## VOUCHERS AND FUNDS

### Lean for Micro

LEAN for Micro is available to companies with up to 10 employees to help build resilience within small companies. Businesses can avail of consultancy support with a LEAN Expert or help to implement new remote working and physical distancing guidelines.

### Brexit Planning Voucher

InterTradeIreland offers 100% financial support up to €2,250 (inclusive of VAT) towards professional advice in relation to Brexit matters. This support can help your business get advice on specific issues such as movement of labour, goods, services and currency management. Businesses must be trading across the border (NI/ROI), employ less than 250 employees and have an annual turnover of less than €50m. **Apply through intertradeireland.com**

### Sustaining Enterprise Fund – Enterprise Ireland

Funding from €100,000 up to a maximum of €800,000 is available to eligible companies through a combination of repayable advances, grant aid, equity or loan note. A non-repayable grant of up to 50% of a funding package (up to €200,000) is available. Companies which employ 10 or more full-time employees and are operating in the manufacturing and internationally traded services sectors on 29th February 2020 or at time of application are eligible for the SEF. Companies must have experienced, or be projected to experience, a 15% or more reduction in actual or projected turnover or profit as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak or have had a significant increase in operational costs as a result of COVID-19.

### Accelerated Recovery Fund – Enterprise Ireland

This Fund is designed to help companies embrace digital and climate change transformation as they recover from the impact of COVID-19. Eligible companies can apply for support for the implementation of an Accelerated Recovery Plan. The minimum eligible expenditure to support the implementation of the business plan is €150k. The maximum support that can be approved by Enterprise Ireland is €1.8 million per undertaking. Eligibility criteria are similar to the Sustaining Enterprise Fund.

### LEO Mentoring and Training

Local Enterprise Offices provide a wide range of high-quality training supports which are tailored to meet specific business requirements. Whether it is starting a business or growing a business there is something suitable for everyone.

The LEOs' Mentor Programme matches up the knowledge, skills, insights and entrepreneurial capability of experienced business practitioners with small business owner/ managers who need practical and strategic one-to-one advice and guidance. The mentor contributes independent, informed observation and advice to aid decision making. All applications for mentor assistance are dealt with individually and are preceded by a business needs analysis to assess the needs of the business and determine the most imperative mentoring objectives.

## GOING GREEN

### Green for Micro

This is a free-of-charge programme, available to companies with up to 10 employees. Two days of mentoring with a specialist Green Consultant is available, including recommendations on specific changes which your business can implement. The consultant will prepare a detailed Green for Micro Report on your business. It is particularly suited to businesses in construction and the built environment, retail, manufacturing, textiles and fashion, food, electronics, plastics, and packaging.

### Climate Toolkit 4 Business

A new dedicated website [climatetoolkit4business.gov.ie](https://climatetoolkit4business.gov.ie) allows businesses to input some simple information and get an estimate of your carbon footprint and a personalised plan to reduce it.

### Energy Audit

Your business may be eligible for a €2,000 voucher towards the cost of a professional energy audit. An energy audit can be useful for businesses to save money and energy. An energy audit may be carried out on buildings, processes, or systems and it is a three-step process which involves preparation, a site visit and reporting. The audit report that compiles the findings will help you to understand:

- how much energy your business uses
- the equipment and processes that use the most energy
- what actions you should take to save energy, and their estimated cost and impact

**Find out more and apply through SEAI.**

### EXEED Certified grant

SEAI provides grant support for projects which are following the EXEED Certified standard for Excellence in Energy Efficient Design. Small companies can receive up to a 70% grant for pre-investment professional services to implement EXEED processes and up to a 50% grant for eligible expenditure to implement EXEED processes.

### Support Scheme for Renewable Heat

This grant scheme is designed to promote the adoption of renewable heating systems by commercial, industrial and agricultural users not covered by the emissions trading system. The Scheme will support an installation grant and/or on-going operational support. The installation grant provides funding of up to 30%. **Find out more and apply through SEAI.**

### Electric Vehicles

SEAI provides grant supports towards the purchase of new N1 category electric vehicles for business. N1 category vehicles are typically small goods carrying vans with a technically permissible maximum mass not exceeding 3500kg. A maximum grant of €3,800 is available for qualifying N1 category EVs when purchased commercially. Approved EVs with a list price of less than €14,000 will not receive a grant. This grant applies to new vehicles only.

### Accelerated Capital Allowances for energy efficient products and equipment

Accelerated Capital Allowances allow businesses to reduce your taxable profits by the full level of expenditure on energy efficient equipment in the year the investment is made. **More information is available on Revenue.ie**

## APPRENTICESHIPS AND TRAINEESHIPS

To employ apprentices, you can apply to be approved as a national apprenticeship employer. Once approved, you can advertise your apprenticeship vacancies on the Government website [apprenticeship.ie](https://apprenticeship.ie)

There are a range of apprenticeship options in the traditional craft trades but now there are also apprenticeships in hairdressing, insurance, hospitality, ICT, sales and biopharma.

### Employer Grant for Apprentices

Effective from January 2022, this payment to employers of €2,000 per apprentice per year is available for those apprenticeships which are not eligible for the payment of off-the-job training allowances. Its introduction means that, for the first time, employers of all apprentices will now have access to financial support, either through direct payment of allowances to apprentices or through the new employer grant. Two payment points are planned per year- June and December. SOLAS will process payments in 2022, before the system migrates in 2023 to the National Apprenticeship Office.

### Traineeships

A Traineeship combines learning in the classroom and experience in the workplace to improve employment outcomes for participants and increase retention and productivity in the sector. Traineeships can give employers access to a pipeline of learners who are developing cutting edge skills and gaining on-the-job experience in relevant sectors. Over 75 programmes are available nationally in a range of industries.

As a partner employer, you can help shape future Traineeship courses by identifying skills needs and contributing to the design and content of the programme. To find out more about becoming a partner employer with your local ETB, contact the contact the Further Education and Training Director at your local ETB (Limerick and Clare; Limerick Office; 061442100/ Ennis Office; (065) 6828107/6824928// [icetb.ie](https://icetb.ie) & Tipperary ETB Administrative Office, Nenagh (Head Office) 067-31250, Church Rd, Nenagh North, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary. Tipperary Education and Training Board ([etb.ie](https://etb.ie))).

### MICROFINANCE IRELAND

You can contact Microfinance Ireland for information on loans available to start-up and existing microenterprises. Microfinance Ireland is available at **Tel: 01 2601007 and <https://microfinanceireland.ie/contact-us/>**