

**Draft Minutes of Meeting No. 77
of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs
27th September 2018 at 3pm
Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, Kildare Street**

Present:	Tony Donohoe	Chair
	William Beausang	Department of Education & Skills
	Kathleen Gavin	Department of Education & Skills
	Alan McGrath	SOLAS
	Keelin Fagan	EI
	Ray Bowe	IDA
	Vivienne Patterson	HEA

Apologies:

Peter Rigney/ Laura Bambrick	ICTU
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**In Attendance
from Secretariat:**

Kevin Daly	DBEI
Alan Power	DBEI
Don O'Connor	DBEI
Niamh Martin	DBEI
Katherine Griffin	DBEI
Ruth Morrissy	DBEI

1. Minutes of EGFSN Meeting Number

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

2. Digital Economy

A discussion on the report took place following a presentation by Ruth Morrissy.

The Group welcomed the report. Much discussion took place. There was a view that there was a risk of underestimating the challenge and the impact of automation. Every sector is a technology sector. New technologies will disrupt current roles. These roles will be maintained but the tasks will change. The issue to be dealt with concerns the actions that should take place to ensure that all jobs/people in jobs can adjust to the new technologies.

It was acknowledged that much is already being done in this space to anticipate the changes caused by the disruption. Educational and training policies and strategies have been formulated to respond to the changing workplace. The National Digital Strategy will be a key piece of the Government response.

Action: It was recommended that the report should point out the range of initiatives already being carried out. It should point to the opportunities available to policy makers and employees. The part of the report detailing the impact of digital technologies should be expanded upon. It was questioned as to whether particular workstreams could be identified in the concluding chapter of the report. The Chair invited members to submit written comments. It is proposed that the report is redrafted by the Secretariat and then approved electronically by the EGFSN, before it is submitted to the National Skills Council at its next meeting on the 5th November 2018.

3. Implementation Review

Kevin Daly gave a presentation on his report and outlined the common features of successful implementation of previous EGFSN work.

Action: The EGFSN Secretariat will take these findings into account when designing future implementation governance structures.

4.a Construction proposal for 2019 Work Plan.

An update was provided at the EGFSN meeting.

It had been proposed that this study will review existing strategies and reports in relation to the skills needs of the construction sector and will examine the accuracy of the projections for future demand contained in these publications. Further to this, it was proposed that this study will analyse the recommendations to determine their efficacy in addressing the skills shortage and how appropriate actions can be successfully implemented.

The current proposal states there will be a focus on skilled professions/ craftspeople. Some discussion took place regarding the proposal. It was suggested that the EGFSN research should also address how skills development could improve productivity in the sector.

Action: It was recommended that the proposal for the research should be redrafted to include a focus on productivity and that this be resubmitted to the EGFSN for the 10th December meeting.

4.b SME Management Skills

The Secretariat updated the Group on the Proposal for the 2019 work plan.

The proposal has been submitted to the EGFSN in June 2018 as an important piece of work for the 2019 Work Programme.

It was explained that an application has been submitted for European Commission funding for the work (€150,000). The Chair explained that if the application is approved and the funding granted, the project will include a quantitative research piece.

Without the funding, the EGFSN secretariat will carry out the work in any event.

The Group welcomed the application for European funding and looked forward to it being successful.

Action: The Secretariat will continue to work on this proposal.

5. Brexit update

This study, after approval by the EGFSN in March, was published in mid-June. Following publication, the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation committed to pursuing the implementation of its recommendations, by working with the relevant stakeholders in the public and private sectors.

This work is now underway. DBEI has established a Brexit Oversight Implementation Group, consisting of a number of Government Departments and enterprise agencies, to actively pursue and monitor the implementation of the recommendations in the EGFSN study, and to maintain a watching brief on Brexit related skills needs more generally.

As part of the implementation process, DBEI is also engaging separately and bilaterally on a quarterly basis with stakeholders within the private representative and education and training sectors, to implement and monitor any recommendations that fall within their remit, and to elicit any feedback on Brexit related skills issues that should be considered in the Government's Brexit response. The findings from these engagements are being fed back into the work and deliberations of the Brexit Oversight Implementation Group.

Supported by its Secretariat, this Group will be working towards the compilation on a quarterly basis of a detailed implementation report, for submission to the subsequent National Skills Council, and to any relevant cross Government Brexit committees, to help inform the State's Brexit response.

One of the recommendations within the EGFSN report is for the establishment of a National Logistics and Supply Chain Skills Group. This will act as a sub-group of the overarching Brexit Oversight Implementation Group (on which its chair, from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, is represented). DTTAS, DBEI, as well as logistics and supply chain industry representatives, are in the preliminary stages of establishing this group, which will aim at creating a coordinated approach from the logistics and supply chain sectors to the resolution of skills deficits within such activities, and promotion of career opportunities in their associated roles.

6. ICT Action Plan

An update was provided. The report is at an advanced stage. It was described as an effective response to the EGFSN demand forecast, and will set appropriate targets. The subsequent meeting of the steering group, which will consider the latest draft, will take place in October. The objective is that the final plan will be approved at the National Skills Council in early November.

7. Design

The EGFSN Secretariat updated the members on this item. Following the publication of 'Winning by Design' in November 2017, the EGFSN has been monitoring the implementation of the Design Skills Report Action Plan and all the 8 recommendations are progressing.

The Chair noted that awareness of the report has steadily increased.

8. Hospitality Skills Oversight Group Two Year Review

The group was informed that the report was published on 19th September. A new group is being established with Fáilte Ireland in the Chair. The EGFSN would feed into the work of the group when appropriate but the EGFSN secretariat would not be involved in its administration.

9. Communications Strategy

The EGFSN Secretariat outlined the new Communication strategy developed to promote the key messages of the EGFSN.

The Group welcomed the development of the strategy and agreed that alternative methods of presenting information to the EGFSN's audience should be proactively considered. Mention was made of the plan to redesign the EGFSN website and it was noted that any rebranding should acknowledge the role of the National Skills Council.

Any Other Business/Next Meeting Date

The Secretariat asked DES representatives to submit the National Skills Council 2019 calendar of meetings to it as soon as it was prepared so that EGFSN meetings can be scheduled appropriately.

The Chair closed the meeting and confirmed that the next meeting of the Group will take place on 10th December 2018. Further details will follow.

*Niamh Martin
Skills & Education Unit
October 2018*