

5th March 2024

PRESS RELEASE: NCPC Welcomes Publication of “An Assessment of the Cumulative Impact of Proposed Measures to Improve Working Conditions in Ireland” Report

The National Competitiveness and Productivity Council (NCPC), welcomes the publication of ‘*An Assessment of the Cumulative Impact of Proposed Measures to Improve Working Conditions in Ireland*’ published today, 5th of March 2024.

In its ***Ireland’s Competitiveness Challenge 2022*** report, the Council recommended that an assessment be undertaken of the combined impact of the various measures proposed to improve working conditions in Ireland, within a comparative EU framework. The Council is pleased that the Government accepted this recommendation in November 2022 and that the comprehensive assessment has been published today.

Commenting on the publication of the report, the Chair of the Council Dr. Frances Ruane stated:

‘This is a valuable and evidence-based analysis which was undertaken on a cross-Departmental basis and which will inform public policy-making in this space. I welcome the collaborative approach across multiple Departments as this is very important for ensuring that such issues are considered from a variety of perspectives’.

Over the last number of years, the Government have introduced or progressed several initiatives to improve working conditions in Ireland, including progress towards introducing a living wage, auto-enrolment retirement savings scheme, the right to request remote work, sick pay legislation and improvements to parent’s leave and parent’s benefit.

The Council supports the extension of employment rights in the interests of a more inclusive economy and promoting quality employment. These changes are crucial to improve working conditions and to bring Ireland into line with other OECD and EU countries. However, the Council is cognisant that these measures also represent a significant cost to employers, which could be particularly burdensome for SMEs. The study provides an overarching assessment of the potential impacts – both costs and benefits – accruing to employers and employees on foot of these measures.

The Council notes the response of Government today to the published analysis. The Council also notes the accompanying suite of measures intended to assist businesses in adjusting to these increased costs as well as more generally to improve cost competitiveness of firms, including changes to Energy Efficiency grants, an enhanced SME test and a commitment to review the threshold for Employer PRSI contributions. The Council will consider this response in the preparation of its 2024 Competitiveness Challenge report to be published in June.

The Council's vision is a society underpinned by a competitive and productive economy that delivers sustainable economic growth and benefits all of society, allowing for continued improvements in living standards. Creating a comprehensive framework for managing major adjustments is especially important in light of the changes ahead with the digital and green transitions and associated with the new ways of living and working that accelerated during the pandemic.

The link to the publication can be found [here](#).