



AHK

**Deutsch-Irische
Industrie- und Handelskammer
German-Irish Chamber
of Industry and Commerce**



The Team of the German-Irish Chamber wishes everyone a Merry Christmas!

Dear Members, Business Partners and Friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to our fourth and last Quarterly Review of the German-Irish Chamber of Industry and Commerce that will keep you up to date with the Chamber's most recent activities and upcoming events in the New Year.

Looking back to 2015, it has been extremely busy, eventful and exciting for us all, with a wide range of events, from state visits of the German President to Oktoberfest to our annual Xmas lunch.

Our work has also taken us regularly to Germany to promote Ireland and Germany's common interests and to continue building business relationships in the various fields.

As you have all seen in the country's most recent Budget announcement for 2016 – the Irish economy is again performing strongly. Now that the dust has settled on the Budget, it is a good time to take stock. Increasingly, the outlook for the Irish economy is looking more and

more benign. Experts and economists are in broad agreement that the national finances are now in a better state than at any time since the beginning of the crisis.

Details to the above and more topics are presented on the following pages.

We would also like to take the opportunity and wish you all and your dear ones a very happy Christmas. The German-Irish Chamber is looking forward to another exciting and successful collaboration with our members, business partners and friends in the New Year.

*Best Wishes,
Paul Lynam & Ralf Lissek
President & CEO
German-Irish Chamber of Industry and Commerce*

INSIDE THIS EDITION



Page 2 Enhancing the Case for Investing in Ireland; Innovative SAP Scheme



Page 3 German-Irish Pre-Web Summit Gathering; Supporting Passive House

Page 4 Finding solutions and opportunities for Ireland's small-scale wind industry; The Boys in Green can celebrate like no other nation

Page 5 EXIM Summit; Career Start 2016 in Dresden, Germany; The Value of Apprenticeships

Page 6 Membership Opportunities 2016, Xmas Lunch; Merry Christmas from the Chamber



Enhancing the Case for Investing in Ireland

INNOVATIVE SAP SCHEME

Now that the dust has settled on the Budget, it is a good time to take stock. Increasingly, the outlook for the Irish economy is looking more and more benign. Experts and economists are in broad agreement that the national finances are now in a better state than at any time since the beginning of the crisis.

The big challenge on Budget Day for the Government was to drive the recovery by instilling further confidence, by supporting job creation and by encouraging entrepreneurship. On many levels, the Budget was a success and it has the potential to support further growth. Overall, the Budget was business-friendly and the German-Irish Chamber believes that its pro-active measures will enhance the case for investing in Ireland. It is important that Ireland does everything in its power to maintain and further enhance its competitiveness in terms of its infrastructure and its people. As the economy continues to recover the challenges in the area of Infrastructure become more evident. This will be critical to sustain the future success in FDI in particular as other countries seek to address their tax rates to challenge our competitive advantage. The introduction of Knowledge Development Box and the 6.25% Tax rate is one such measure.

The Budget included cuts in the Universal Social Charge, a series of measures to improve the lot of entrepreneurs and the gradual introduction of a tax credit for the self-employed.

The Government's overarching commitment to lowering taxation on work is good news for Ireland's attractiveness as a location for investment. By reducing the tax burden across the board, the Government is sending a message that Ireland is competitive and wishes to incentivise people to take up employment, to create jobs and to invest in new businesses.

The Budget included some really worthwhile measures to support SMEs, which are playing a huge role in Ireland's recovery. These measures included an improved Capital Gains Tax Rate on the first Million, a new regime of SME tax credits and a significant decrease in motor tax levels for large commercial

vehicles. In particular, this latter measure will substantially reduce heavy operational costs for many emerging companies.

A vibrant labour force is a prerequisite for economic buoyancy and the Budget also sought to address this factor by seeking to encourage young parents, especially mothers, back into the workforce. Increases in child benefit combined with an expansion of the both the Early Childhood Education and the Community Childcare Subvention Programme will assist parents in returning to work.

The most prominent measure announced for businesses is the introduction of the Knowledge Development Box (KDB). The new KDB Corporation Tax rate of 6.25% for companies investing in R&D will significantly stimulate Irish innovation. Put simply, the KDB will improve our tax offering and will help Ireland to compete more effectively in a competitive international climate. Undoubtedly, the KDB will generate more R&D activity in Ireland and assist in the registering of intellectual property here. For multinationals looking to align their IP-related activities with a favourable tax regime, Ireland is a very attractive proposition.

Overall, the measures implemented in Budget 2016 should be welcomed by the Irish business community and by the taxpayer because they will create jobs, promote investment and improve consumer spending. Foreign Direct Investment is crucial to the Irish economy and the measures in the Budget to reduce the tax burden and to bolster Ireland's talented workforce will enhance Ireland as a location of choice for international investors. At the same time, Ireland's commitment in the Budget to legislate for Country by Country Reporting will guarantee an open, transparent and accountable tax regime. Ultimately, this too will benefit Ireland's international reputation and lead to even more outside investment.

Paul Lynam & Ralf Lissek

President & CEO

German-Irish Chamber of Industry and Commerce



INNOVATIVE SAP SCHEME TO FUND IRISH LEAVING CERTIFICATE STUDENTS IN THIRD-LEVEL

Irish Leaving Certificate students are being offered a fantastic opportunity to simultaneously combine academic studies and industry experience with the leading business software company, SAP in Germany. The dual study concept means that students, who will be paid a generous monthly study stipend, will regularly switch from their academic studies at a leading German University to practical training at SAP's Headquarters in Walldorf, Germany.

This innovative scheme is part of an expansion of SAP's German-based vocational training programme. The leading software firm runs this programme in association with Baden Wurttemberg Technical University (DHBW).

The German-Irish Chamber of Commerce is working closely with SAP in helping them to create awareness among suitable Leaving Cert students from the class of 2016 with an interest in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) sector, but also is helping to generate media coverage about this unique project.

Students will enrol in a 3 year (level 8) Bachelor of Science Degree (B. Sc.) in Business Information Technology and graduates typically find careers in the areas of Software Development, Service & Support, Product Management and Consulting. Students will need a minimum B2 result in the Leaving Certificate in German and should be interested in developing their German language skills to fluency.

The good news for prospective students is that SAP Ireland will sponsor the students through their degree programme. SAP will pay the students a monthly study stipend of €950 per month in year 1 rising to €1275 in year 3. Additionally, SAP will provide travel allowance and also accommodation to the students.

This innovative programme underlines once more SAP's commitment to Ireland.

The German-Irish Chamber is delighted to support SAP in this initiative. We are urging any student due to complete their Leaving Certificate in 2016 with an interest in a career in the technology sector and with a solid knowledge of the German language to contact us without delay.

For further information, please contact nicole.jung@german-irish.ie



GERMAN-IRISH PRE-WEB SUMMIT GATHERING

In November, Dublin hosted the Web Summit, which is the largest technological conference in the world. The event saw more than 30,000 conference participants from right across the globe gather in Dublin and the German-Irish Chamber was fully immersed in the action. In order to welcome the over 130 visiting German start-ups in Dublin, the Chamber hosted a very successful and enjoyable German-Irish Pre-Web Summit Gathering at the Liquor Rooms. This relaxed social occasion provided the visiting German start-ups with the opportunity to network with Irish tech companies.

Some of the German and Irish start-ups that attended the Chamber's Pre-Summit Gathering included:

- Rhebo Industrial Protector, a company founded in 2014 by a team of seasoned IT security experts, which monitors and ensures the continuous, correct, and predictable operation of real-time Industrial Control Systems;
- Vizzlo, a company which specialises in creating individual business graphics to short-circuit time spent on making graphics for business presentations;
- Kenkodo, the manufacturers of an innovative product that empowers people to positively influence and predict their well-being and health through metabolism analysis, which combines personal lifestyle and body tracking data with cutting-edge blood analytics; and
- Clappifieds.de, a classifieds marketplace for Apple devices which currently operates within Germany, Austria and Switzerland and plans an international roll-out shortly.

Arising from this successful Web Summit, the German-Irish Chamber looks forward to the development of strong business relationships and future collaborations between German and Irish operators in the technology sector.



SUPPORTING PASSIVE HOUSE

Passivhaus (Passive House) is a building concept that has its origins in Germany and has become increasingly popular in Belgium, Austria, Scandinavia and other countries. Put simply, Passive House refers to a rigorous, voluntary standard for energy efficiency in a building, reducing its ecological footprint. It results in ultra-low energy buildings that require very low levels of energy for space heating or cooling.

The German-Irish Chamber has actively promoted the Passive House concept for many years in the framework of the Energy Efficiency Export Initiative. We will host a conference and trade mission from Germany on the topic of "Low Energy Buildings" featuring passive house technology in April 2016. In addition, we are investigating the possibility of organising a study tour to Germany for Irish architects, construction companies and other stakeholders in early 2016. These projects are taking place against the background of the recent (controversial) decision by Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council to include Passive House as a mandatory standard in its Development Plan. As a result, some other Irish county councils are also strongly considering this for their own regions.

In 2006 together with SEAI we brought an Irish delegation to the Passive House Conference in Germany; in 2007 we organised a five-day training course for Irish practitioners in Ireland and Germany, for which two of the trainers were Susanne Theumer from Passive House Institute in Darmstadt and Tomas O'Leary, who designed the first passive house in Ireland; in 2014, an Irish passive house featuring German technology was one of the five best-practise projects selected as part of our "Showcase – Made in Germany" event.

In Ireland, the Passive House Association of Ireland (PHAI) is a catalyst for the increased awareness of the opportunities and benefits of low energy design based on the Passive House principles, across the Irish construction industry as a whole. Passive House design is seen as a specifically proven successful way of designing such buildings. The German-Irish Chamber is a strong supporter of the Passive House Association of Ireland and the Chamber was delighted to participate in the PHAI's most recent major conference in November.

The See the Light Conference 2015 was held in Cork and was attended by a cross-section of attendees from industry, academia and local authorities. Many delegates at the conference used the opportunity to showcase newly launched products or services. The conference enabled the German-Irish Chamber to build relationships with key stakeholders in the passive house scene, such as the PHAI, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and SEAI, and to meet potential Irish distributors for highly energy efficient products and technologies from Germany, such as insulation, building materials and efficient heating systems.



Recent Activities



FINDING SOLUTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IRELAND'S SMALL-SCALE WIND INDUSTRY

The small-scale wind market is gaining more and more attention in Ireland, as the role of micro-generation in the energy mix is growing in importance.

The German-Irish Chamber of Commerce have organised a special event for June 2016 for eight German wind industry companies to create dialogue and to find new business partners in this emerging market.

As part of this one-day conference in the Heritage Hotel in Carlow, scheduled to take place on Tuesday 16th June 2016, German and Irish expertise in the area of small-scale wind and micro-grids will be brought together to explore mutually beneficial business opportunities.

The German companies, who offer innovative high quality small-scale wind technology and solutions, will be available to travel to Irish workplaces nationwide to explore co-operation opportunities in the days following the conference, from Wednesday 17th to Friday 19th June.

German companies with the following product portfolio will come to Ireland:

- small-scale wind plants (up to 50kW)
- small-scale hybrid plants, e.g. solar and wind
- storage technologies
- Solutions for installation, maintenance and monitoring
- small-scale wind and micro-grid related technologies

If you have any queries about this forthcoming conference, please do not hesitate to contact Aideen Keenan, Head of Marketing, at 01-6424300.

THE BOYS IN GREEN CAN CELEBRATE LIKE NO OTHER NATION

Both Irish and German football supporters are relishing the prospect of this summer's European football championships finals in France. Ireland and Germany had squared off in the Euro qualifying Group D. On a memorable night in the Aviva Stadium in October, Shane Long's goal gave Ireland a surprise victory over Germany and put the Boys in Green back in contention for qualification to France.

Ultimately, however, Germany topped the qualification group and the Irish team were edged out of an automatic qualification spot by Poland. In the play-offs, Ireland faced Bosnia with the winner of the two-legged tie guaranteed a place in the finals. Irish qualification was secured via two goals from Jon Walters in the Aviva, following a draw in Bosnia.

Ireland's qualification was enthusiastically welcomed not just in Ireland, but in Germany. The influential German football magazine 11Freunde could not contain its joys that Ireland had qualified.

Irish football fans are noted across the continent for their good behaviour and for their good humoured support for their team. The German football magazine paid a strong tribute to the Irish supporters and welcomed the fact that they would be participating in this summer's football finals. The author Alex Raack maintained that it was a "stroke of good fortune" that Ireland had qualified. In the wake of the terrorist attacks in Paris, Raack argued that the world needs "joy, dancing, singing" and that is exactly what the Irish fans will bring to France next summer.

In an article that has gone viral on the internet, Raack wrote "Celebrations, dancing, singing – who can do these better than the Irish, who on Monday qualified for Euro 2016 in France itself? Ironically in France, which so shortly after the attacks is still covered with a leaden seriousness, a seriousness that will accompany the tournament next year? The qualification of the Irish is a godsend. The Boys in Green can celebrate like no other nation, always peaceful, always sympathetic and emphatic, with an infectious, childlike joy."

Football fans in Ireland and Germany have a lot to look forward to this summer on and off the pitch. With a bit of luck, both teams will perform strongly and, more importantly, fans from both countries will help generate goodwill and will celebrate in the true spirit of sportsmanship.



EXIM SUMMIT

Croke Park was the venue for the very successful EXIM Summit on November 18th. Over 280 companies were represented at this prime event for the Export-Import Industry, including the German-Irish Chamber of Commerce.



With our strong interest in trade facilitation, the German-Irish Chamber is keenly aware that the continued growth of the export-import sector is at the cutting edge of Ireland's economic recovery. The EXIM Summit provided a great platform for businesses we represent to find new trade opportunities and to build new relationships.

Speakers at the Summit addressed the current rapid growth in the export-import sector, shared knowledge about emerging markets and heard about pitfalls to avoid. There were also encouraging projections about what the future holds for Irish exporters and importers.

The conference featured an expo, workshops, meet the buyer sessions and networking opportunities. The conference was opened by the Tánaiste, Joan Burton, and was also addressed by the economist, Jim Power, and Martin Davidian, the Managing Director of Sales for FedEx Express.

THE VALUE OF APPRENTICESHIPS

On 30th September, German-Irish CEO, Ralf Lissek, addressed an IBEC seminar on the importance that Germany places on dual vocational education and the lessons that Irish businesses could draw from this. According to Ralf, one of the big differences between Germany and Ireland's corporate cultures is in education. Two-thirds of people entering the German labour market do so through an apprenticeship, not with a degree. The system provides young people with routes into 350 different professions, giving three years of practical training at participating companies.

Ralf spoke about how apprenticeships are driving the vibrant finance and insurance sectors in Germany and providing a steady flow of well-qualified and new staff. Apprenticeships make it cheaper to employ entry level candidates while giving young people valuable real-world experience. Not that many jobs really require a degree to perform them – Ireland's vast funds administration sector, could benefit hugely from apprentices.

The German-Irish Chamber consults regularly with Government and with key players in the Irish labour market, such as IBEC, on the issue of apprenticeships. In a subsequent interview with the Irish Independent, Ralf spoke about the need for "a mind-set change." He said that "Irish parents need to understand that their son or daughter working as an insurance officer in an apprenticeship at an IFSC institution has a very good job, even though they don't have a degree."

KARRIERESTART (CAREER START) 2016 IN DRESDEN, GERMANY



The leading trade fair for training, jobs and new business owners in Saxony will take place next year and the German-Irish Chamber will be there.

Our recruitment team is currently preparing to exhibit at the KarriereStart, one of the most famous trade fairs in Germany. This trade fair will take place in Dresden from 22 to 24 January 2016.

The motto of KarriereStart for 2016 is "Create your own Future" and the Chamber is looking forward to participating in this event, as a means to enlarge our network of contact and to expand our recruitment services so we can help our client companies identify competent new personnel.

The KarriereStart operates on the basis of bringing together under one roof people with a wide range of expertise in many different areas of the employment market. This provides a perfect opportunity for identifying qualified personnel to meet the varying demands of diverse businesses.

The KarriereStart has established a strong reputation and at last year's fair over 435 exhibitors presented their services. Altogether, a massive 32.000 visitors attended last year's event. The attendance at this year's trade fair is expected to exceed previous records for attendance and the hosts of the trade fair, ORTEC Messe und Kongress GmbH, expect 2016 to be their most successful event yet.

The German-Irish Chamber is honoured to participate in this event and we are proud to be of assistance to our clients companies in meeting their labour market needs.

For more information, pls contact: nicole.jung@german-irish.ie

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCH



Audi
Vorsprung durch Technik



IRISH HEART
FOUNDATION

The German-Irish Chamber's Annual Christmas lunch took place in the fine surroundings of the Conrad Hotel on 11th December. This event has traditionally been one of the highlights in the Chamber's social calendar and this year proved to be no different.

As always, the event was an enjoyable and relaxed occasion and it allowed friends of the Chamber to gather in a convivial atmosphere and to exchange seasonal pleasantries while enjoying a scrumptious meal. The lunch was kindly sponsored by Audi and the German-Irish Chamber is grateful to Audi for their support for this event and their ongoing friendship.

Alongside the seasonal fun that the lunch encompasses, guests also listened to a hugely informative and thoughtful presentation from this year's guest speaker, Mr. Christian Gussen (Managing Director Audi by Volkswagon Group Ireland).

This year, the charity that the German-Chamber of Commerce has nominated to benefit from our Christmas lunch, is the Irish Heart Foundation, a very active and hardworking national charity, which is fighting heart disease and strokes. The Irish Heart Foundation is doing significant work in improving the cardiovascular health of people living in Ireland so they do not experience disability or die from preventable heart, stroke and other blood vessel diseases.

The Chamber would also like to thank everyone who attended the Christmas lunch, which was our last event of 2015. We look forward to working with everyone in 2016 and to enjoying many more business and social occasions.

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

On behalf of our President, Paul Lynam, our Chief Executive, Ralf Lissek, and all of our Councillors and staff, we would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our members, business partners & friends and their families a very happy and enjoyable Christmas.

We are grateful for your continued support throughout 2015. The Chamber is only as strong as its membership and through your active commitment and participation in events, the Chamber has had another successful year, working to the benefit of the wider business community in Ireland and Germany.

We look forward immensely to continuing to work closely with all our existing members in 2016 and to welcoming new members into our extended business family. We already have a lot of exciting events planned for 2016 and we will be striving to expand even further trade between Germany and Ireland and to assist companies in their search for new business opportunities and business partners in both countries.

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!

Frohe Weihnachten & einen guten Rutsch ins neue Jahr!



JOINING OR RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP

The German-Irish Chamber is now inviting members to renew their membership subscription for 2016. We are also extending a warm welcome to new members to join us.

As a member of the German-Irish Chamber, you and your company will be part of a powerful network of German and Irish companies operating across all sectors of business. Membership is open to all registered companies engaged in business between Germany and Ireland. You choose which type of membership is appropriate for your organisation.

The German-Irish Chamber offer packages to suit

- Irish companies (up to 30 employees) located in the Greater Dublin Area;
- Irish companies (up to 30 employees) located outside Dublin Area;
- Corporate membership (100+ employees);

We open doors for you...

1. 8 Complimentary events (**access to over 50 events annually**)
2. Reduced prices **for our DEinternational consultancy services from our in-house experts on recruitment, tax/legal services, PR, advertising, marketing, accounting services and event management**
3. Premium Executive networking opportunities **and knowledge exchange seminars**
4. First-hand expertise and information **from keynote guest speakers through our events, exhibitions, trade missions and projects as well as great opportunities to expand your network. We organise on average 7 Trade missions a year**
5. Lobbying **on your company's behalf**
6. Individual Introductions **to your business partners & potential new clients**
7. Meet German business delegates **looking for agents/suppliers in Ireland**
8. Listed as a member in the German-Irish Business Yearbook (**circulation 5000**) - **Membership Directory, space for advertisements**
9. Complimentary copy of the Membership Directory **and other publications of the German-Irish Chamber**
10. Free cross culture seminar on the differences **between Ireland and Germany**
11. **Through our associated partnerships, you benefit by securing the best rates for your own corporate hospitality eg. The chamber are a member of Howth Golf Club & Stephen's Green Hibernian Club**
12. **Utilise our network to gain from our 300 members and 2000 client contacts**
13. **Create synergies through our unique 3 pillar set up - 1) Membership, 2) Governmental representative, 3) Service provider**

The Chamber is your gateway to business worldwide...

You will have access to international expertise - the Chamber is part of a network of 130 offices in over 90 worldwide

For further information, please contact our Membership Manager, Helen Dunne at 01- 6424311.