

Terms of Reference - Just Transition Commission

1. Establishment

- 1.1 The Just Transition Commission (Commission) is established on an administrative basis by Government Decision 30 April 2024.
- 1.2 The mission of the Just Transition Commission is to support the Government in its responsibility to provide that Ireland's transition to the National Climate Objective has regard to the requirement for a just transition to a climate neutral economy, which endeavours, in so far as practicable, to maximise employment opportunities, and to support people and communities that may be negatively affected by the transition. The Commission will be a public voice on planning for just transition, leading in developing a shared understanding, and identifying the challenges, solutions and opportunities for Ireland.

2. Functions of the Just Transition Commission

- 2.1 The functions of the Just Transition Commission are:
 - **To prepare and analyse strategic evidence-based research in relation to just transition:** to anticipate and inform long-term climate policy and investment planning, including focusing on the potential impacts, risks and opportunities arising from the climate transition for different sectors of both the economy and society, including the social, economic and employment impacts of this change and the policy responses required.
 - **To evaluate, advise, and comment on** policy planning and implementation and progress on the application of Ireland's just transition principles into national and sectoral climate policies, based on high-quality, evidence-based analysis.
 - **To provide strategic advice and engagement on just transition:** the Commission will support the National Dialogue on Climate Action, as well as any dialogues on climate/just transition matters within individual sectors, in engagement on the implementation of climate programmes agreed by Government.
 - **Sectoral or regional engagement and road-mapping:** the Commission may, on its own initiative, or at the request of the Government, undertake proactive engagement with particular communities, sectors or regions facing specific acute or long-term challenges arising from the transition, and advise Government on strategic co-ordination by the agencies of the State, on any interventions or targeted supports which may be helpful to address the challenges being faced by that community, sector or region.

3. Work Programme

- 3.1 The work programme for the first term of the Commission shall include, but may not be limited to:
- An analysis of the potential impacts on Ireland's workforce, and policy implications, of achieving the statutory 2050 climate neutrality objective; including examining the potential overall employment implications, which sectors of the economy may be most adversely impacted, which sectors may be expected to see significant employment growth in the decades ahead; and an examination of the geographic distribution of these impacts.
 - An assessment of the degree to which climate action policies already reflect the principles of Ireland's Just Transition Framework, taking account of the policy framework and sectoral emissions ceilings set out in the Climate Action Plan, and advice on any opportunities for strengthening both the principles themselves and the application of the principles into sectoral policies.
 - Advice on the strengthening of the local and community dimensions of just transition and strengthening engagement with vulnerable cohorts into Ireland's climate engagement activities, in particular the National Dialogue on Climate Action, as well as sectoral dialogues.
 - Recommendations on a set of just transition indicators to support measurement of progress, over time, in achieving a just transition.

4. Membership and Chairperson

- 4.1 The number of Members, appointed on a part time basis only, shall be comprised of not fewer than eight and not more than ten ordinary Members (excluding the Chair). Appointments to the Commission may be for a term of up to three years, renewable once.
- 4.2 The Minister who holds responsibility for climate policy shall make appointments to the Commission based on objective criteria, with due regard for the benefits of diversity, including on the basis of gender. The composition of the Commission should be balanced, so that the views of members represent a diverse group of stakeholders.
- 4.3 The Minister may appoint one member each from the five pillars of social dialogue, comprised of the Agriculture pillar, the Community and Voluntary pillar, the Employer pillar, the Environment pillar and the Trade Union pillar.
- 4.4 The remaining members shall be recruited through a competitive process to supplement delegated members and to represent a range of expertise and perspectives including human rights and equality, skills development, rural and community development, social inclusion, the green economic transition, and youth perspectives.
- 4.5 The Chair shall be appointed by the Minister either from amongst the appointed members or through a separate competitive recruitment process.
- 4.6 The Chair shall be independent of the Government and is responsible for determining the work programme of the Commission, in consultation with the Members, and for the discharge of this work programme, in conjunction with the secretariat.

- 4.7 The Minister may decide to appoint one or more deputy chairs from amongst the Members as required, subject to ultimate accountability remaining with the Chair.
- 4.8 Members and the Chair shall be suitably qualified persons, (for example, but not limited to individuals who have a direct experience of policy issues from a business or societal perspective or in academia).
- 4.9 All appointments to the Commission shall be approved by the Government.
- 4.10 Commission Members shall receive a fee and expenses.

5. Independence of Commission

- 5.1 The Commission is an independent body and shall perform its duties in an objective, neutral and fully independent manner, free of any expressed ideology or political position.
- 5.2 The Commission shall have functional autonomy and shall be responsible for the management and direction of its own work programme, save where requested by Government to undertake proactive engagement with particular communities, sectors or regions facing specific acute or long-term challenges arising from the transition. The work programme will be shaped by the Chair, in consultation with Members and with the assistance of its Secretariat.
- 5.3 The Commission shall develop a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government, through the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, outlining the operational relationship between the Commission and the Government, including the provision of secretariat, financial and operational resources to the Commission.
- 5.4 The Commission shall produce independent high-quality, evidence-based analysis on just transition challenges and opportunities and shall report to the Government through the Minister with responsibility for climate policy and make this analysis available to the public to inform policy development across government.

6. Advisory Representatives

- 6.1 The following Departments may attend Commission meetings in an advisory capacity:
 - Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine
 - Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
 - Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
 - Department of Finance
 - Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
 - Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
 - Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform
 - Department of Rural and Community Development
 - Department of Social Protection

- Department of Taoiseach
 - Department of Transport
- 6.2 The Commission may invite additional Government Departments and Agencies to attend Commission meetings in an advisory capacity where appropriate.
- 6.3 When necessary, alternates may attend on behalf of advisory representatives, with the prior agreement of the Chair.

7. Relationship with other bodies

- 7.1 The relationship between the Commission and Climate Change Advisory Council will be subject to a Memorandum of Understanding between the two bodies.
- 7.2 The Commission may coordinate its work programme with other advisory bodies to ensure appropriate complementarity, taking account of the Commission's work programme set out in section 3.

8. Meetings and Procedure

- 8.1 Subject to the requirements of this Section, the Commission shall regulate its own procedures.
- 8.2 The quorum for a meeting of the Commission shall be not less than six members at the meeting.
- 8.3 The Commission will seek to reach decisions by consensus. Where this is not possible, decisions shall be determined by a simple majority of votes of the members present and, if voting is equally divided, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote.
- 8.4 The Chairperson may at any time call a meeting of the Commission or shall call a meeting of the Commission at any time when requested to do so in writing by any five members of the Commission.
- 8.5 Views expressed by the Commission in publications or by any Member of the Commission speaking on its behalf, shall not be understood as representing the views of the Minister who holds responsibility for climate policy or any Member of the Government.
- 8.6 The disclosure of information, except in the exercise of their duties, obtained by any member of the Commission or any committee or consultative group appointed by it, shall be prohibited.
- 8.7 The Commission shall keep the Minister who holds responsibility for climate policy informed of its activities on a regular basis and the Chairperson shall be afforded the opportunity to present the key findings and recommendations of its work to the Minister, at minimum on an annual basis.

9. Secretariat

- 9.1 The secretariat to the Commission shall be provided by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications.
- 9.2 Communication between the Government, Ministers, Government officials and the Commission, save for when the Chair directly engages with such parties, shall be conducted through the Secretariat.

April 2024