

# Building Ireland's Future

## The Role of the Professions

May 2018



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# About the Professional Bodies

This paper, *Building Ireland's Future – The Role of the Professions*, is a collaborative piece of work by 11 professional bodies that represent over 70,000 members and various professions:

- Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland
- Association of Optometrists Ireland
- CPA Ireland
- Engineers Ireland
- Institute of Directors (IoD) in Ireland
- Irish Dental Association
- Irish Pharmacy Union
- Irish Tax Institute
- Law Society of Ireland
- Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland
- Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland

The bodies and their members practise to the highest international standards in their fields, ensuring that public confidence and trust remains high in their respective professions.

With human capital, high-end skills and world class talent recognised as essential to Ireland's economic future, the professional bodies and their members also contribute in a significant way to the upskilling of Ireland's professions and the development of the future generations of human capital in Ireland.

Each of these representative bodies is committed to the highest international standards in education, life-long learning and professional development, while they also collaborate with academia and students to ensure that the next generation of Irish graduates is attracted to careers across the professions and has access to the highest standards of education and development at second and third level.

The professional bodies are continuously investing in Ireland's future by way of ensuring that the content, design and standards of their qualifications and professional development courses reflect the major global trends and changes that are set to impact Ireland, its people and its economy.

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Irish professional bodies have made a major contribution to the development of a continuous stream of trusted professionals in whom the Irish public and business can have confidence. Our professional qualifications are designed to world-class standards; we collaborate with Irish and international academia, international bodies, the State, industry, and key stakeholders in Ireland and globally to ensure that Irish professional qualifications meet the demands and needs of the public, industry and the State.

New research findings from a survey of senior executives at 50 multinational companies in Ireland make a compelling case for the value and importance of professional qualifications and professional standards in Ireland and their role in inspiring trust and confidence.

The research, undertaken by Behaviour & Attitudes from 26 April to 9 May 2018,<sup>1</sup> found the following:

- Professional skills and expertise emerged as the single most important factor when choosing a professional service provider in Ireland, on an entirely unprompted basis.
- Professional qualifications were viewed by the vast majority of multinational companies as inspiring trust (88%) and providing confidence in standards (94%) when recruiting or hiring services.
- The great majority of respondents (80%) equate professional qualifications/membership of professional bodies with “international best practice”.
- The majority of respondents considered professional body membership/professional qualification (70%), internationally recognised qualification (60%) and availability of professionally skilled people (82%) to be important factors when making recruitment/investment decisions.

## Creating public trust and confidence through standards

The public’s trust and confidence in the professionals who serve them is one of the most important and fundamental aspects of the work of professional bodies. The quality and rigour of the qualifications and the Codes of Conduct of Ireland’s professional bodies are the pillars upon which trust has been built between the public and members of the respective professions.

**“ The great majority of survey respondents (80%) equate professional qualifications/membership of professional bodies with “international best practice”.<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Irish Professional Bodies Survey, Behaviour & Attitudes, May 2018

<sup>2</sup> Irish Professional Bodies Survey, Behaviour & Attitudes, May 2018

Professional bodies promote excellence and knowledge through ongoing accredited professional development programmes, certification and adherence to membership Codes of Conduct. Such standards create benchmarks for members of the public to recognise and associate with highly skilled, experienced and trustworthy professionals.

### **Regulatory role undertaken by professional bodies**

Where the level of service provided by a member falls short of the expected standard, the public has the right of recourse to the regulatory functions provided by the professions. In the absence of these regulatory functions, in many cases it would fall to the State to establish and regulate standards across a range of services provided to members of the public.

### **Professional bodies meeting EU obligations and serving EU citizens**

Many professional bodies, including the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland, the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland, the Irish Tax Institute, Engineers Ireland, the Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Ireland and the Law Society of Ireland, have responsibilities in an EU context as the recognised regulatory bodies for their professions. These professional bodies are the “competent authorities” as listed in Directive 2005/36/EC on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and in the corresponding Irish Regulations, SI No. 8 of 2017.

EU rules provide for the mutual recognition of professional qualifications between Member States, and this is facilitated by the role and responsibilities of the “competent authorities”. In Ireland’s case, the existence, regulatory standards and contribution of the relevant professional bodies make this possible. Ireland’s professional bodies must take actions and decisions referred to in the Regulations, the Directive and the Implementing Regulation.

The SI also recognises, under Schedule 5, that many professions require precise knowledge of national law and that their provision of advice in respect of the law is a constant aspect of their professional activity. This speaks further to the importance of qualified individuals maintaining their membership of their respective professional bodies.

The State’s level of trust and confidence in the standards of Ireland’s professions is also evident in the fact that Irish legislation specifically lists the use of certain qualified professionals in an array of circumstances.

### **Regulated professions underpin the EU Services Directive and consumer rights**

The regulation of professions in Ireland and other EU Member States underpins the provision of trust and confidence to consumers and citizens, as provided for under the EU Services Directive.

The European Commission highlights how regulation of the professions can “help the consumer judge on the quality of a service”<sup>3</sup> and how “regulations clarifying the technical knowledge and competences which professionals available on the market should have, could provide consumers with the reassurances they need”.<sup>4</sup> Key

<sup>3</sup> Communication on Evaluating National Regulations on Access to Professions, COM (2013) 676 final, Brussels, 2 October 2013

<sup>4</sup> Citing Marc T. Law and Sukkoo Kim, “Specialization and Regulation: The Rise of Professionals and the Emergence of Occupational Licensing Regulation”, *Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 65, Issue 3 (2005), pp 723–56

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elements of the EU Services Directive<sup>5</sup> rely on the existence of regulated professions, as the Directive aims to strengthen the rights of consumers and businesses receiving services, deliver a higher quality of services and bring about enhanced information and transparency on service providers.

### Public trust and confidence built on professional subscriptions model

The trust and confidence in Ireland's professional bodies is built on their ability to make extensive investments in their regulatory regimes, independent complaints processes, initial professional development, lifelong learning programmes and international alliances. All of this is built on the foundations of a solid membership model that cross-subsidises the many and indeed necessary activities that enable the bodies to give assurances of high standards practised by Ireland's professions. Our professional subscriptions are at the core of enabling the investment that brings about a trusted professional regime where the public have recourse to disciplinary processes and regulatory regimes. The professional subscription has much "work to do" and covers a multiplicity of functions and activities undertaken by the professional bodies. They are central to the standards of Ireland's professions and to the levels of trust and confidence provided to the public, industry and the State.

### Prepared for the future and technological change

Professional bodies' investment in educational reforms and international peer reviews of our curriculums and professional development courses means that Ireland's professions can prepare for the transformative changes in technology that will impact Ireland. Our international alliances provide access to research on the best international practices and emerging global trends, while also allowing the exchange and sharing of knowledge on such matters.

Professional bodies' ongoing investment in education chimes with the priorities in the National Planning Framework, which states that "[i]n knowledge-based economies, education underpins growth as it is the main driver of technological innovation and productivity. Accessing a high standard of education is a priority now and in the future."

The opportunities and challenges that are part of building Ireland's future coincide with a period of rapid change and transformation. Population growth, economic expansion, urbanism, technological advances, renewable energy demands and changing healthcare needs place an increasing focus on the breadth of skills and innovation that will be not only central but necessary to deliver Ireland's rightly ambitious plan for the future.

### Project 2040 - the contribution of the professions

The importance of skills and human capital in Ireland's future journey has been emphasised in several recently published Government reports. *Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework*, *Project Ireland 2040: National Development Plan*, *Enterprise 2025*, *Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025* and *Winning: Foreign Direct Investment 2015-2019* all make the case for investment in talent, people, education and skills.

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<sup>5</sup> Directive 2006/123/EC on Services in the Internal Market



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Professional bodies and our members are a significant component of that skills supply and are deeply committed to playing our part in the societal wellbeing and economic progress of Ireland and its people. We also recognise and appreciate the importance of Project 2040 to our future journey and the need for its successful delivery. Our members, supported by their respective professional bodies, will draw on their qualifications and skills, continuous education and international expertise to contribute positively to the priorities in the plan.

Architects, engineers and chartered surveyors will be key to several strategic objectives in the National Development Plan, including “Compact Growth”, “Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources” and “Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Society”. Tax advisers, company directors, senior executives, accountants and lawyers with detailed knowledge of Government-led initiatives and day-to-day experience of Irish enterprises will work collaboratively to play their part in delivering “A Strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills”, while our pharmacists, dentists and optometrists will be the trusted and experienced medical talent that delivers “Access to Quality Health Services” to citizens in our cities and in the regions.

“Skills have become the global currency of the 21st century”, states the OECD Secretary-General, Ángel Gurría. He has recently stressed the role of human capital in Ireland’s economic future, stating that “companies need talent, human capital, too”. The European Commission in its report *Human Capital for Territorial Growth* says that “to build prosperous cities and regions, Europe needs to focus on its most precious asset: people and their skills, talents and ideas”.

### Export growth – the role of regulation and professional bodies

Professional bodies and regulated professions are key to Ireland’s ability to participate fully in the Single Market. Providing services in the EU is governed by the Services Directive, which demands a system of regulation in the case of professions. The general system of regulation of professional bodies facilitates the free movement of professionals across borders.

The advantages and value of those benefits must surely be evidenced by the depth of the concerns being expressed in the UK regarding the possible removal of mutual recognition from its professionals because of the country’s decision to exit the EU. The Confederation of British Industry<sup>6</sup> has spoken of the need to “ensure that firms can continue to provide professional and business services seamlessly across borders”, stating that mutual recognition, such as that of professional bodies, is “essential”.

Professional bodies provide the gateway for the export of services in many sectors, by way of recognised professional standards and the trust in them as “competent authorities” and their members. Mutual recognition is key to the growth of Ireland’s professions across borders. Our professional standards and regulations enable Irish firms and their employees with the skills, experience and legal recognition to export, tender for international contracts and serve global clients.

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<sup>6</sup> Confederation of British Industry, *Smooth Operations: An A-Z of the EU Rules that Matter for the Economy*, April 2018



### **Skills shortage - the role of regulation and mutual recognition**

Mutual recognition and standards across the EU, and internationally, also play a central role in attracting skills into Ireland. At a time when Ireland is experiencing a skills shortage in many areas, including engineering, construction, finance and medicine, the value of professional qualifications that are internationally recognised and supported by professional bodies cannot be overstated. Companies and organisations seeking talent know that internationally recognised professional qualifications help labour mobility and give confidence and trust to their recruitment process, a crucial factor when committing to expansion or investment. They can also be assured that talent recruited from other countries will have access in Ireland to a highly developed network of professional bodies with international alliances that uphold high standards of education, professional development and codes of practice. Membership of a professional body - with all that it offers - is also an important part of the support that must be given to Irish skilled emigrants whom we are seeking to attract home to meet our increasing skills shortage in key growth sectors.

### **Supporting sustainable regional development**

Ireland's professional bodies are conscious of the role that they play in supporting and developing professional skills and membership across the regions. By investing in regional structures and networks, online and blended learning, and flagship events in the regions, we are committing to the development and retention of professional skills and talent to serve the public, industry, FDI and academia across Ireland. The National Planning Framework highlights the importance of these supports, stating that “[o]pportunities for upskilling, including through blended on-line, part-time or outreach courses, will be important to securing and accessing employment within rural areas”.

### **Professions supporting the work of the Government and the State**

Professional bodies are not only committed to serving the public good but also deeply committed to supporting the State by engaging and working with the Government, the Oireachtas, State bodies and organisations, Government Departments, academic bodies, universities and schools, along with a wide range of relevant stakeholder bodies.

By sharing their experience, research, knowledge and insights, professional bodies and their members contribute in a significant, and highly practical, way to the development of policy and the administration of that policy across a wide range of areas. Participation in advisory groups to improve administrative processes and policy development; the publication of evidence-based research and studies; investment in campaigns and courses that bring about greater understanding and appreciation of new Government policies/legislation; participation in consultations; and investment in public information programmes to support Government initiatives are amongst the many steps undertaken by professional bodies to support the State.

### Professional subscriptions – the funding model that underpins education and standards

The majority of professional bodies are funded mainly through membership subscriptions. Without these subscriptions, the bodies involved would have limited funding to carry out the breadth of investment and programmes that underpin the education, professional development and regulation of Ireland's professions.

Many employers insist that their employees be members of a professional body, and in some circumstances more than one body, to ensure that they are properly qualified and maintain their professional standards and commitment to lifelong learning. They regard the subscription as a prerequisite for the job – in many cases specifying the condition in their job advertisements and often in the employee's contract.

**“94% of multinational companies felt that professional qualifications give them confidence in terms of the standards of individuals they are recruiting or hiring.”<sup>7</sup>**

In fact, an employer will often pay the professional subscriptions of its employees, so important is their membership of that professional body to the employer.

### The tax treatment of professional subscriptions – the key issue

The critical importance of professional bodies used to be fully reflected in Ireland's tax code. If an employer paid an employee's subscriptions to professional bodies, this was specifically excluded from the usual benefit-in-kind (BIK) rules,<sup>8</sup> so long as those subscriptions were “relevant to the business” of the employer.

However, that position was changed in Finance Act 2011. Since then, employers must collect employee BIK and pay 10.85% employer PRSI on professional subscriptions paid for their employees. This is unless they can demonstrate that the subscriptions would have been “wholly, exclusively and necessarily” incurred if the employees had paid the cost themselves. Revenue published guidance on its interpretation of the term “wholly, exclusively and necessarily”<sup>9</sup> as it applies to professional subscriptions. The guidance was recently updated (January 2018)<sup>10</sup> and now makes it clear that Revenue will consider the test to be met (so that no BIK is due) only if:

1. membership of the professional body is a statutory requirement for the role involved or
2. a practising certificate or licence is required to carry out the role or
3. the role requires a right to plead or be heard before a court/tribunal (and that right is available only through membership of the professional body).

<sup>7</sup> Irish Professional Bodies Survey, Behaviour & Attitudes, May 2018

<sup>8</sup> Section 118 (5E), Taxes Consolidation Act 1997

<sup>9</sup> Section 114, Taxes Consolidation Act 1997

<sup>10</sup> eBrief No. 4/2018 (previous guidance contained in eBrief No. 19/2011)

### **Tax legislation impacts those educating members to the highest international standards**

Legislation that results in such a narrow interpretation of professional subscriptions qualifying for BIK exemption effectively disqualifies thousands of members of professional bodies. It directly impacts those professional bodies that educate their members to international standards and that, through their codes of membership and conduct, hold their members to the strictest and highest international standards of best professional practice.

We firmly believe that it is time to positively encourage our skilled professionals to retain their membership and learn for the future and to actively encourage the next generation to pursue a career as a professional so that Ireland has a future supply of skills and talent.

In 2011, as a country, we were in a very different place, and we understood the need for the Government to have sought additional means of raising revenues. However, the economy has recovered and is primed for the next stage of growth, as recognised in several Governmental reports. These reports point to the importance of human capital, continuous learning and global standards.

### **Impact on professional development, regulation and professional standards**

Levying a tax charge on professionals' membership of their respective organisations is undisputedly a disincentive in terms of the promotion of professional education, professional standards and the professional bodies that invest in them and the development of a future supply of talent in areas already suffering a skills shortage.

Ireland is out of step with other countries, such as the UK, Canada and Australia, which recognise the value of their professions and support professional membership in different ways through their tax codes.

We need to ensure that our qualified professionals continue to play their key role in assisting Ireland on its path to economic growth, to support indigenous Irish business and to help to attract continued foreign direct investment to Ireland. This has never been more important than it is now as we plan for the post-Brexit environment.

We firmly believe that continuing to impose an additional tax cost on the maintenance of professional competence and standards is counterproductive in the context of our economic strategy and stated Government policy. Ireland is at an important juncture in terms of writing the next chapter of its economic and societal journey. We know from research and reports both here and internationally that skills, talent and human capital will be central to that economic story.

The cost of reversing the tax imposition is to be determined, but when it was withdrawn in 2011, the estimated annual saving was €5m.

### **Conclusion**

The payment of a professional subscription, and the adherence to the ethical and professional codes of one's membership body, is a clear expression of a desire and commitment to keep professionally informed, educated, connected and knowledgeable and to practise to the highest standards of one's chosen profession. It is a statement of commitment to the highest international standards of practice, that best serve our country and its people.

We believe that the changes in Finance Act 2011 are a tax on education, professional standards, the development of competence and knowledge, and the dedicated effort to meet, and improve, national and EU standards in professional services that ultimately benefit the State and the general public.

A solid membership model enables professional bodies to cross-subsidise the programmes and activities that support professional competence, standards and regulation. Our professional subscriptions are at the core of enabling the investment that brings about a trusted professional regime that is central to the standards of Ireland's professions and to the levels of trust and confidence provided to the public, industry and the State.

**“ In the best interests of the development and standards of Ireland's professions, we ask that the tax treatment for professional subscriptions as previously provided for under the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 be restored in Finance Bill 2018.”**

We are, of course, available to you and your officials for further discussions or consultations on this matter.

# Chapter 1

## Professional Standards - Public Trust and Confidence



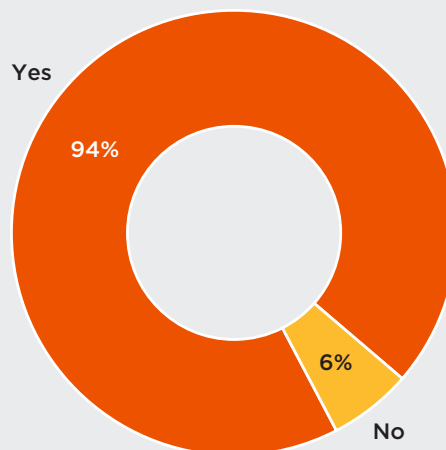
“ It [a profession] is a body of men and women identifiable by a reference to some register or record, recognised as having a special skill and learning some field of activity in which the public needs protection against incompetence, standards of skill and learning to be prescribed by the profession itself, holding themselves out as being willing to serve the public, voluntarily submitting themselves to self-imposed standards of conduct beyond those required by the ordinary citizen law, and undertaking to accept personal responsibility to those whom they serve for their actions and to their profession for maintaining public confidence.”

*Sir Edmund Liggins TD, President of the Law Society of England and Wales 1975-76, Annals of the Royal College of Surgeons of England (1976) Vol. 58*

## Creating public trust and confidence through standards

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### Providing confidence in standards



94% of senior executives in multinational companies felt that professional qualifications “give them confidence in standards”.

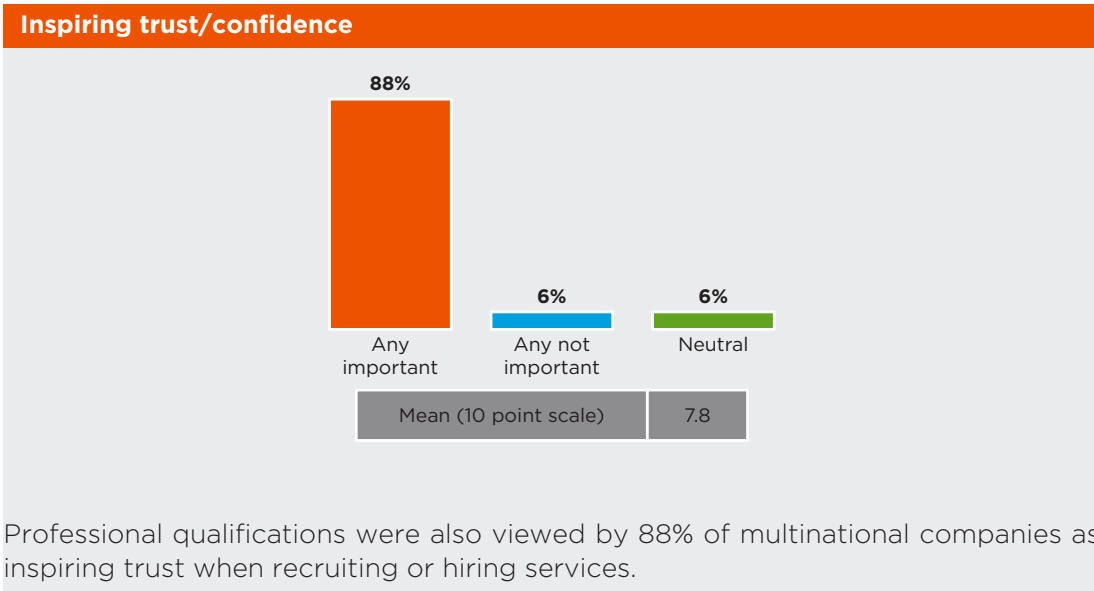
Ireland’s professional bodies promote excellence through ongoing accredited professional development programmes and certification. The programmes create benchmarks for members of the public to recognise and associate with highly skilled, experienced and trustworthy professionals.

Public trust and confidence is the hugely significant outcome of these rigorous standards and of the professional bodies’ Codes of Conduct. The Codes of Conduct of Ireland’s professional bodies are the foundation stone of the trust that has been forged between members of the respective professions and the public.

An organisation upholds the proper standards of professional practice and conduct. Adherence to the organisation’s Code of Conduct is an essential part of membership, and complaints of alleged professional misconduct are investigated and adjudicated upon by investigative and disciplinary panels established by the organisation’s regulatory regime.

## Importance of professional standards to Ireland

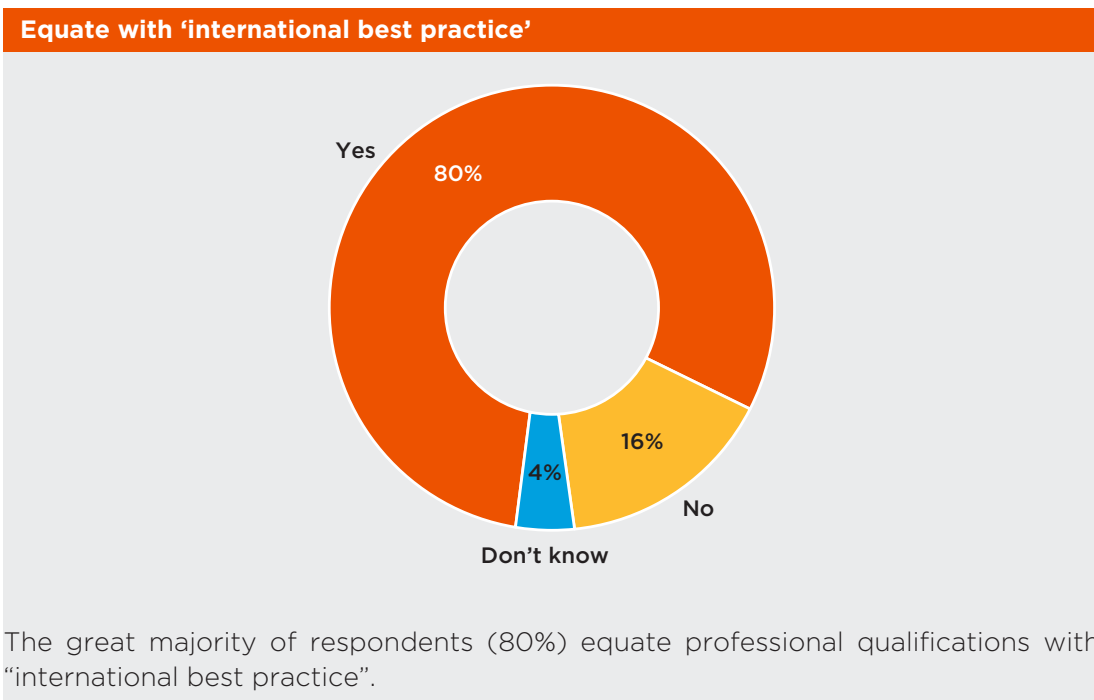
New research findings from a survey of senior executives at 50 multinational companies in Ireland make a compelling case for the value and importance of professional qualifications and professional standards in Ireland and their role in inspiring trust and confidence.



The research, undertaken by Behaviour & Attitudes from 26 April to 9 May 2018,<sup>1</sup> found the following:

**“ Professional skills and expertise emerged as the single most important factor when choosing a professional service provider in Ireland, on an entirely unprompted basis.”**

The majority of respondents considered professional body membership/professional qualification (70%), internationally recognised qualification (60%) and availability of professionally skilled people (82%) to be important factors when making recruitment/investment decisions.



<sup>1</sup> Irish Professional Bodies Survey, Behaviour & Attitudes, May 2018



## Protection of the public

Members of the public are protected in their interactions with members of professional bodies because a condition of their membership is that they abide by the relevant Code of Conduct. Typically, the Codes require members to behave with integrity and objectivity in their relationships with the public and to use their professional skills and experience judiciously in providing their opinions and advice in the legitimate interests of their clients.

The Engineers Ireland Code, for example, is divided into four parts:

1. Relations with Colleagues, Clients, Employers and Society in general
2. Environmental and Social Obligations
3. Maintenance and Development of Professional Conduct and Standards and
4. Enforcement Procedures and Disciplinary Action

all of which ensure that members adhere only to the highest standards of their profession.

A key element of accountability in the professions is the establishment and maintenance of a register of members of the relevant profession, which acts as a quality assurance mechanism for members of the public who may wish to engage their services. A falling short of the expected standard can result in suspension or erasure from the register of members. The Code of Conduct sets out the expected standard of conduct and ethics for admittance to, and retention of a member's listing on, the register of members.

One of the main benefits of the register is that members of the public and businesses are assured that they will receive services from a professional:

- whose competence to provide advice has been assessed by his/her peers
- who is bound by a Code of Conduct placing an onus on the professional to represent the best interests of the client and
- who is committed to maintaining his/her professional competence by undertaking lifelong learning.

In circumstances where the member has not operated in accordance with the Code of Conduct or has not maintained his/her professional competence, action can be taken by the professional body and sanctions applied, up to and including removal from the register of members.

Attainment of membership is a rigorous process and is a statement of members' professional knowledge, skills and expertise. Retention of membership is contingent on adherence to the Code of Conduct and commitment to maintaining professional practice and development.

## Chapter 1 | Professional Standards – Public Trust and Confidence

Irish professional bodies, in setting down the terms of membership, demand that education and standards are continuous. Members must adhere to a lifelong continuous education programme that is necessary for the continued use of the respective professional qualification.

These standards and codes provide accountability, transparency and reassurance to the public that a profession is appropriately regulated and its members are trustworthy.



The State's level of trust and confidence in the standards of Ireland's professions is evident in the fact that Irish legislation specifically lists the use of certain qualified professionals in an array of circumstances.

Example 1: The Building Control Act 2007 requires that Chartered Engineers, Chartered Surveyors or members of the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland deliver services covered under that act.

Example 2: Chartered Tax Advisers and members of the Law Society are amongst those professionals who can represent their clients in front of the Tax Appeals Commission.

### Professional bodies meeting EU obligations and serving EU citizens

Many professional bodies, including the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland, the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland, the Irish Tax Institute, Engineers Ireland, the Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Ireland and the Law Society of Ireland, have responsibilities in an EU context as the recognised regulatory bodies for their professions. These professional bodies are the “competent authorities” as listed in

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The SI also recognises, under Schedule 5, that many professions require precise knowledge of national law and that their provision of advice in respect of the law is a constant aspect of their professional activity. This speaks further to the importance of qualified individuals maintaining their membership of their respective professional bodies.

Professional bodies have acquired the trust and confidence of the public through their professional standards, high-quality service, public information campaigns and international alliances. We have outlined some examples below.

### Case Studies: Professional bodies acquiring public trust and confidence

According to the **Law Society of Ireland**, people turn to solicitors for help at critical points in their lives, so trust and confidence are paramount. RedC research, carried out in early 2016, showed that 80% of solicitors’ clients were satisfied with the overall service delivered by their solicitor, with only 13% stating that they were dissatisfied. In addition, 77% of solicitors’ clients were satisfied with the quality of advice offered by their solicitor, with only 12% indicating that they were dissatisfied.



### Case Studies: Continued

Members of the **Irish Pharmacy Union** provide convenient, accessible, cost-effective healthcare information and advice and immediate access to both over-the-counter and prescription medicines in every town, village and community in the country. Ultimately, the patients benefit as they receive the highest standard of pharmacy services.

Chartered Engineers have been assessed by their peers as professionals in their field, delivering the highest standards of quality, expertise and innovation to serve the needs of society while ensuring public health and safety. They adhere to the Engineers Code of Ethics in all areas of their engineering practice. The registered professional title is internationally recognised, and under Irish law, certain engineering work is reserved for Chartered Engineers.

According to **Engineers Ireland**, 77% of adults agree that engineers are essential to reduce risks to public health and safety, with agreement strongest amongst those with young children (81%) and people over 65 years of age (80%).

The **Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland (ACEI)** said that a survey<sup>2</sup> by Engineers Ireland revealed that 91% of the public see engineers as highly competent professionals and 90% trust engineers to tell the truth. The ACEI believes that its members are considered to be qualified, honest and reliable by the public.

### Case studies: Partnering with the public – information and education campaigns

Professional bodies often undertake information campaigns to ensure that members of the public understand the skills, quality and high standards of service provided by their profession. These campaigns are particularly pertinent when dealing with a topical issue, some examples of which are illustrated below.

The **Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland** ran a campaign to highlight the benefits of engaging a professional surveyor. The tagline “Check they’re Chartered” has become synonymous with high-quality, professional output in many sectors and has served to raise the awareness of the value of working with a professional surveyor.

The **Irish Pharmacy Union** launched a self-care initiative in January 2018 aimed at promoting the concept of self-care and the empowerment of consumers and patients in taking charge of their own health. As well as giving the public greater control of their own healthcare, adoption of self-care principles could help the State manage the financial challenges of an ageing population and strained healthcare budgets, according to the IPU.<sup>3</sup>

The **Irish Dental Association** is the main stakeholder involved in the annual mouth cancer awareness programme, which has won awards for its impact in raising awareness amongst the general public, other health professions and the dental team of the vital importance of early detection and prevention in addressing the rising incidence of mouth cancer in Ireland.

<sup>2</sup> “Engineering 2018: A Barometer of the Profession”, Engineers Ireland, 2018

<sup>3</sup> “Self Care – Taking Charge of Your Health”, IPU Review, March 2018

### Case Studies: Continued

The **Irish Tax Institute** participates in a stakeholder forum with Revenue on PAYE modernisation. Business readiness for the new regime is a major issue for Revenue, and the Institute has engaged extensively with Revenue to help raise awareness. It has released two videos for the public so far, with a focus on advice for small employers on preparing for the new regime, and will continue to do more as the January 2019 implementation deadline draws closer.

When the Local Property Tax (LPT) regime was introduced in 2013, the Institute carried out an extensive public information campaign to support the Government and inform the Irish public and employers about their new LPT obligations. An area of its website was dedicated to promoting Government and Revenue information on LPT, as well as providing its own explanatory guide, information bulletins and FAQs. The Institute also dedicated significant resources to a public media campaign to raise awareness about the tax. Revenue publicly acknowledged and thanked the Institute for the contribution it made to the effective implementation of LPT.

### International Alliances – furthering trust

Alignment with international bodies ensures that members of professional bodies meet not just national but also global standards. This helps to raise confidence in the professions, as the public are assured that members' experience and professional development are grounded in global standards and best practice, ensuring that cutting-edge technologies and best practice are employed by professionals while the highest standards are maintained.

Some of the professional bodies' alliances are summarised below.

- The **Irish Pharmacy Union** is a member of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), the global federation of national associations of pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists. FIP is a non-governmental organisation with official relations with the World Health Organization.
- The **Irish Dental Association** is an active member of the Council of European Dentists and the World Dental Federation, both of which develop and promote the highest ethical and professional standards, which the Association promotes to the profession in Ireland.
- The **Irish Tax Institute** is part of the 30,000-strong international global CTA network and a member of the Confédération Fiscale Européenne, the European umbrella body for tax professionals.
- The **Institute of Directors** engages with international organisations – the Financial Reporting Council, the European Confederation of Directors Associations and the European Commission.



- The **Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland** is closely affiliated with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and a member of the International Property Measurement Standards Coalition – a coalition of over 80 global organisations working together to agree a common method of measurement.
- The **Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland** is a member of the European Federation of Consulting Engineering Associations and the International Federation of Consulting Engineers.
- **Engineers Ireland** is a signatory to a range of international agreements to help members to study and work globally. There are two key areas of focus – mutual recognition of accredited educational qualifications and bilateral recognition of professional engineering titles.
- The **Law Society** is an active member of the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe, with its nominees playing a key role in policy discussions at a European level, as well as building important alliances with its European partners.
- The **Association of Optometrists** is a board member of the European Association of Optometrists and is a member of and carries out the secretariat duties of the European Academy of Optometry and Optics.
- The **Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland** engages and participates with the following EU and international organisations: the Architects' Council of Europe, the European Network of Architects' Competent Authorities and the International Union of Architects.

Through their high levels of professionalism, global alliances and global standards, and trusted membership registers, the professional bodies can give assurance and trust to the public, be they employers, citizens, investors, industry or the State. This trust can be maintained only as long as the quality of the skills and standards of the membership are overseen by the professional bodies and members remain aligned to those bodies.



## Chapter 2

# Building Ireland's future – Professional skills and talent



**“ The development of human capital is central to Ireland’s success and our economic and social development. The availability of well-educated, skilled talent is a fundamental driver of national competitiveness at both national and regional level.”**

*– Project Ireland 2040: Building Ireland’s Future,  
National Planning Framework<sup>1</sup>*

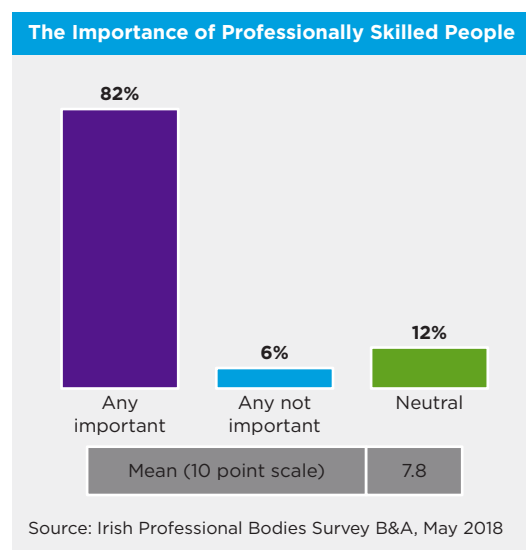
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<sup>1</sup> *Project Ireland 2040: Building Ireland’s Future, National Planning Framework, Government of Ireland, 2018*



National and international reports give much evidence of the fact that human capital and skills are amongst the most critical pillars of any successful economy and a priority in the design and development of future economic plans.

“This is evidenced in our research, which found that 82% of senior executives in multinational companies felt that the availability of skilled people is an important factor when deciding whether to invest in Ireland.”



The two major strategic plans for Ireland's future – *Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework*<sup>2</sup> and *Project Ireland 2040: National Development Plan*<sup>3</sup> – also highlight skills and human capital as amongst the leading priorities when it comes to “Building Ireland's Future”. Other Government reports, including *Enterprise 2025* and *Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025*,<sup>4</sup> also point to the necessary economic ingredient that is human capital.

International organisations including the OECD have also pointed the way. Speaking in Ireland in March 2018, the OECD Secretary-General, Ángel Gurría,<sup>5</sup> stressed the important role of human capital in economic progress, stating that “companies need talent, human capital, too”.

The European Commission has also put a spotlight on human capital and education. In its report *Human Capital for Territorial Growth*<sup>6</sup> it says that “to build prosperous cities and regions, Europe needs to focus on its most precious asset: people and their skills, talents and ideas”. Policy makers, academics, businesses and international organisations, it says, are increasingly recognising that human capital is an essential societal asset and that we must spend more – and intelligently – on education and skills development.

It is against this backdrop that this chapter highlights the role of Ireland's professional bodies in developing human capital across many sectors. For decades now, Irish professional bodies have been educating, developing and expanding the knowledge of Ireland's skilled professionals. Professionals who, through their world-class qualifications, continuous learning, collaboration and expanding international alliances, have become a central part of the human talent chapter in Ireland's economic story.

<sup>2</sup> *Project Ireland 2040: Building Ireland's Future, National Planning Framework*, Government of Ireland, 2018  
<sup>3</sup> *Project Ireland 2040: National Development Plan 2018–2027*, Government of Ireland, 2018  
<sup>4</sup> *Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025*, Department of Education and Skills, 2016  
<sup>5</sup> Speech by OECD Secretary-General at the launch of OECD Ireland Report, Dublin, March 2018.  
<sup>6</sup> *Human Capital for Territorial Growth*, JRC Conference proceedings, European Commission, Brussels, October 2016



In this chapter, we look at the extensive work undertaken by professional bodies to develop Ireland's professional talent pool. We give evidence of the influence and impact of that work by showing how:

1. Ireland's professional qualifications are designed to world-class standards, strengthening Ireland's supply of talent and human capital
2. Collaboration with industry, academia and the State ensures the delivery of professional qualifications in Ireland that reflect the needs of Irish industry and the Irish economy
3. Investment in lifelong learning and development by professional bodies ensures that Irish professionals are learned and knowledgeable on important developments in their specialist areas
4. Participation by professional bodies in international alliances gives members access to global research and allows them to share international best practice and innovations for the benefit of Irish citizens and the Irish economy
5. International alliances and internationally recognised qualifications can
  - a. help address the deficit of skills and talent that are needed in many growing sectors of Ireland's economy and
  - b. help Irish professions seeking export markets and tendering for international business contracts
6. Ireland's professional bodies are investing in new courses and re-designing educational curriculums to prepare Ireland's professions for a changing world including technological advancements

## 1. Professional qualifications designed to world-class standards

**“ Education has been critical to Ireland’s transformation over recent decades. Education, training and life-long learning are key enablers, around which personal fulfilment, a fair society and a successful nation revolve. All are central to sustaining economic success and building strong communities.”**

*– Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework<sup>7</sup>*

Ireland’s professional bodies’ investment in education and professional standards chimes with the vision in Ireland’s National Planning Framework,<sup>8</sup> which states that “in knowledge-based economies, education underpins growth as it is the main driver of technological innovation and productivity. Accessing a high standard of education is a priority now and in the future”.

The country’s supply of trusted world-class talent and human capital who practise to the highest international standards across a range of professions is made possible by the rigorous, respected and globally recognised education regimes that are designed and implemented by Ireland’s leading professional bodies.

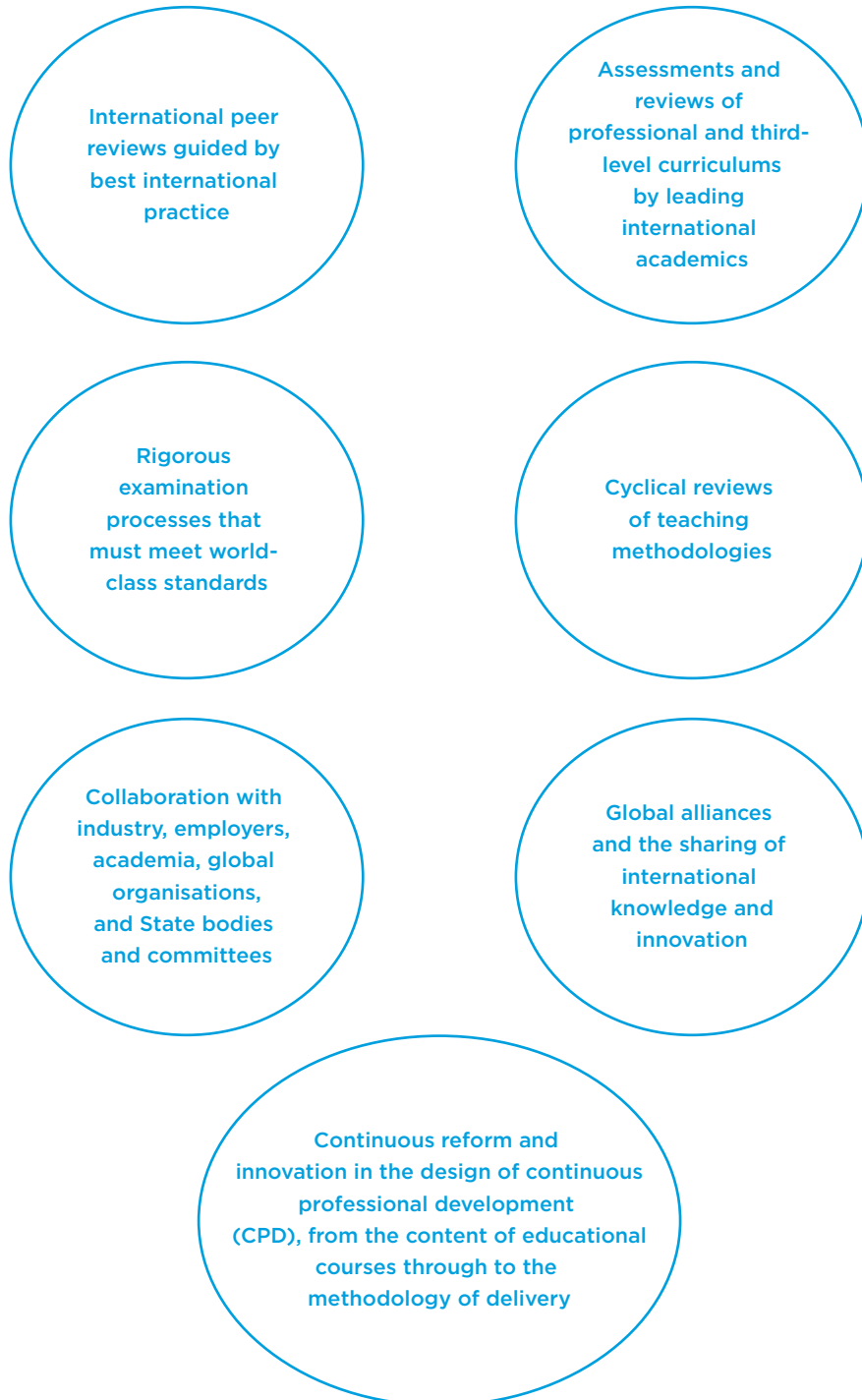
The depth, detail and structure of Ireland’s professional qualifications result in those qualifications being recognised as the international hallmark of quality and best practice in many areas.



<sup>7</sup> Project Ireland 2040: Building Ireland's Future, National Planning Framework, Government of Ireland, 2018

<sup>8</sup> Project Ireland 2040: Building Ireland's Future, National Planning Framework, Government of Ireland, 2018

The quality and high standard of Irish professional qualifications are the result of significant investment by professional bodies in the following:



Through global alliances, international collaboration and global membership bodies, the Irish professional bodies not only set rigorous standards but also ensure that those standards are the highest quality both domestically and internationally.

## Case Studies: Delivering world-class standards in education

### **Irish Tax Institute – working with Australian academics to deliver world-class standards**

The Irish Tax Institute commissioned an independent external review of its Chartered Tax Adviser (CTA) programme in 2016. The purpose of this review was to benchmark the programme against international standards and to ensure that the qualification continues to meet the ever-changing needs of the tax profession. The Institute worked with Professor Dale Pinto, University of Curtin, Western Australia, who examined the teaching, delivery and assessment methods. Over the past year, the Institute has been implementing changes to its programme that will enhance the skills and knowledge of the next generation of CTAs.

As part of this review, the Institute is committed to ensuring that its CTA programme and range of post-qualification development programmes for members will meet the learning needs as the future of the profession evolves. It has been working closely with members to focus on their specific needs in a changing environment, impacted by global and technological changes.

### **Engineers Ireland – working with international academia and industry to deliver world-class education**

Engineers Ireland is at the heart of setting, maintaining and monitoring educational and professional qualifications for professionals. It ensures that higher-education institute engineering courses in Ireland remain relevant to the changing needs of industry and the Irish economy.

The Accreditation Board of Engineers Ireland is responsible for accrediting engineering degree programmes in 7 Irish universities and 14 Institutes of Technology. Engineers Ireland has currently accredited over 100 engineering programmes, with each subject to a rigorous process of evaluation in compliance with international standards and aligned to the EU Professional Qualifications Directive.

### **CPA Ireland – contributing to the development of the education standards for professional accountants**

CPA Ireland, as a founding member of the International Federation of Accountants, plays an active role in the development of the profession both nationally and internationally. Its education and training committee considers and responds to all consultations regarding modification of extant International Education Standards (for professional accountants) and proposals for the introduction of new ones.

Through its structured support for academic research the Institute ensures that its education and training programme is informed with insights from the forefront of the body of knowledge relevant to the accountancy profession.



## 2. Collaboration with industry to ensure that qualifications reflect the changing needs of Ireland's economy

“...employers and education providers working closely together to facilitate lifelong learning and continuous development, as well as creating new pathways and opportunities to meet ongoing skills demands, is of fundamental importance.”

– Individuals & Worker Representatives,  
*Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025*

Ireland's professional bodies are deeply committed and dedicated to collaboration with industry, academia and employers. This is in sync with the approach promoted in *Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025*, which states that the talent of our people “will thrive through the strength of relationships and transfer of knowledge between employers, education and training providers”.

### Case Study: Collaboration is key to meeting industry needs

#### Engineers Ireland – partnering with industry on Ireland's changing needs

Engineers Ireland, responding to industry needs, has developed partnerships with key engineering-led employers and industry bodies such as Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the National Institute for Bioprocessing Research and Training, which is the world-class institute that provides training and research solutions for Ireland's bioprocessing industry and for Siemens. The purpose of these partnerships is to assist engineers to up-skill or re-skill, comply with best-practice standards and develop new specialist skills for the digital economy.

## 3. Lifelong learning – the continuous journey that is education

Ireland's professional bodies invest heavily in lifelong learning, continuously testing knowledge, skills and experience to ensure that members can deliver the highest standards of service to the public, industry, employers, investors and the State.

The professional bodies are continuously developing programmes to meet the future needs of the economy and the fast-changing global trends that are emerging from the adoption of technology, digitalisation, cybersecurity, urbanisation, population growth, the development of smart cities, Brexit, global tax reform, stricter corporate governance, and the growth of renewable energy and low-carbon environments, as well as the emerging advancements in optometry, dentistry and pharmacy.

Objective 31 in the National Planning Framework<sup>9</sup> points to the importance of programmes for lifelong learning, especially in areas of higher education and further education and training where skills gaps are identified.

<sup>9</sup> *Project Ireland 2040: Building Ireland's Future, National Planning Framework*, Government of Ireland, 2018

## Case Studies: Developing skills through lifelong learning

### **Institute of Directors in Ireland – educating directors and executives on “asking the right questions”**

The economic crisis has taught us that the standard of governance and oversight of all types of businesses irrespective of their size needs to be best in class. The Institute of Directors' focus on improving the governance standards of both directors and boards increases the oversight and accountability of businesses, which ultimately assists in the success of those businesses. Continual, lifelong learning builds confidence, and the training that the IoD provides affords company directors and senior executives the confidence to ask the right questions, to seek out the right information, to challenge, to drive a vision and viewpoint, and to hold management accountable.



### **Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland – contributing to education on Nearly Zero Energy Buildings**

The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI) recognises that the built environment has a major impact on the sustainability of global systems. The RIAI assists members in placing environmental, social and economic sustainability at the core of their professional responsibilities to ensure that sustainable design is part of normal practice.

The RIAI is committed to the:

- Contribution to the implementation of agreed national and international measures in support of sustainable development, working with other interested organisations.
- Development of professional techniques to enable the implementation of this policy by its members, providing practical support to them in their work.



### Case Studies: Continued

- Education of RIAI members and architectural students.
- Promotion of sustainability in the built environment amongst the public, clients and partners in the construction sector.

The RIAI contributes to education on Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) in the following ways:

- Promoting courses and qualifications in the area of Nearly Zero Energy Buildings
- Offering members the opportunity to apply for RIAI Environmental Accreditation on completion of full-or part-time education
- Hosting a Special Award: Sustainability as part of the RIAI Annual Architecture Awards and an RIAI Student Award for Sustainable Design
- A founder member of the Irish Green Building Council (IGBC)
- Supporting and participating in the IGBC's ongoing ECCoPro project to develop a common NZEB accreditation for professionals in the construction industry
- Participating in the a number of European-funded projects focused on NZEB including MEnS (via DIT) and PROFTRAC.

#### **Irish Tax Institute – promoting understanding of Revenue's Audit Code**

The Irish Tax Institute engages with Revenue on issues relating to the effective administration of the tax system, including Revenue audits. Institute representatives were instrumental in the development of Revenue's 2010 Code of Practice for Revenue Audits through direct bilateral work with Revenue and through the Tax Administration Liaison Committee (TALC). This collaboration between Revenue and the professions is an ongoing process, and a new Code of Practice was issued in 2017.

The Institute published *Revenue Audits and Investigations – the Professional Handbook* following the issuance of the 2010 Code, and a second edition is due to be published in May 2018. These practical companion texts are essential in helping Irish businesses, tax professionals and the wider public to navigate this vital area of tax administration. *Irish Tax Review*, the Institute's technical journal, provides insights from practitioners throughout the year.

#### **The Law Society of Ireland – a lifecycle approach to education**

The Law Society runs courses for those seeking to become solicitors ("trainees") and for qualified solicitors through its dedicated law school in Dublin. It runs continuing professional development (CPD) courses and post-qualification diploma and certificate courses for solicitors. The Society also administers a number of external and course-related examinations.

Courses are offered through a mixture of on-site and blended learning formats, in addition to publicly accessible massive open online courses (MOOCs) on a wide range of legal subjects.

## Case Studies: Continued

### **Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland – research into the future needs of the profession**

The Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland regularly commissions research into the future needs of the profession involving detailed qualitative and quantitative analysis. The results of this research help to inform the development of CPD and training programmes for established professionals and are also shared with the Society's academic partners to inform the delivery of education to students at third level.

### **Irish Dental Association – publisher of the peer-reviewed academic journal on dentistry**

The Irish Dental Association is the main provider of CPD and education for the dental profession. It publishes the highly regarded, peer-reviewed *Journal of the Irish Dental Association* and a suite of other clinical guidance and best-practice advice.



### **CPA Ireland – first accountancy body in Ireland or the UK to commit to mandatory CPD**

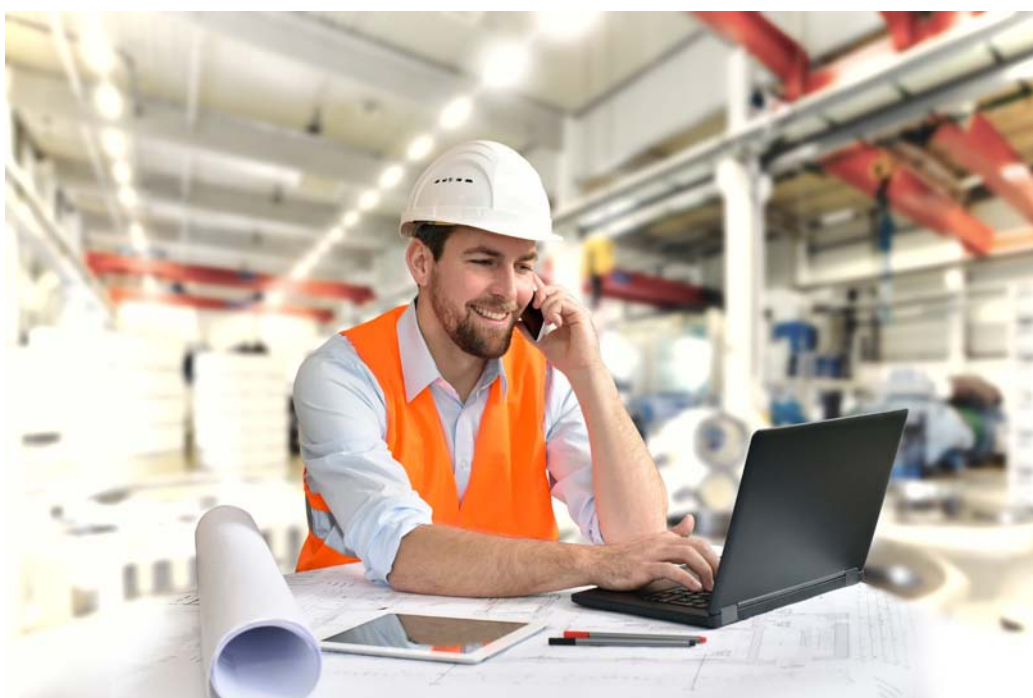
Over 25 years ago CPA Ireland members signed up to a commitment to mandatory CPD. The Institute's long tradition in the design, development and delivery of CPD ensures that it is relevant to the needs of the profession. This ensures that its members are at the leading edge of their profession.

## Case Studies: Continued

The annual programme is designed following extensive research and ranges from one-hour programmes to advanced programmes included at Level 8 in the National Framework of Qualifications. Given that members are networked throughout Ireland and over 40 countries worldwide, it is essential that CPD is accessible. The main methods of access are through classroom-based courses, online and webinars.

### **Engineers Ireland – externally and internationally reviewed CPD programme**

The Engineers Ireland Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Accredited Employer Standard is supported by the Department of Education and Skills. The standard is promoted amongst engineering-led organisations and assists them with attracting and retaining talent and carving out a competitive advantage. Organisations also use the standard as a hallmark of quality when tendering for projects. Over 170 organisations across all sectors of engineering have successfully achieved the standard since its inception.



Its accreditation programme for engineering courses in third-level colleges is externally reviewed and validated because Engineers Ireland is a signatory to the following international accords, which independently validate the standard of its engineering education and training; validate the competence of its engineers; and facilitate mobility of engineers into Ireland to fill skills gaps:

- Washington Accord: recognition of academic programmes which deal with the practice of engineering at the professional level
- Dublin Accord: recognition of academic programmes/qualifications that underpin the educational base for Engineering Technicians

### Case Studies: Continued

- Sydney Accord: recognition of academic programmes dealing with engineering technology
- Seoul Accord: (associate member) recognition of professional computing and information technology academic degrees.

#### **The Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland – collaborating to create relevant third-level courses**

The Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland has co-developed courses with Engineers Ireland in Designing for Safety in Construction and Project Supervisor Design Process. Both of these courses are accredited modules on the DIT Master's in Sustainable Infrastructure.

## 4. International alliances – providing insight into emerging global trends

The National Development Plan 2018–2027<sup>10</sup> says that our future growth necessitates a sharp focus on ensuring that Irish-based enterprises, indigenous or multinational, are increasingly innovative, productive and competitive in international markets.

Our international alliances and membership of a wide range of global bodies across many sectors equips Ireland's professions with world-class skills, knowledge and expertise so that they can make a significant contribution to building Ireland's innovative capacity and competitive position.

Membership of professional bodies and consequently international alliances gives Ireland's professions access and exposure to the best-in-class research and standards in the world. They can exchange and share knowledge on emerging trends, legislation, technological developments and research in areas that are central to our economic success, from healthcare and engineering through to financial services and construction.

### Case Study: Providing insight into emerging global trends

#### **CPA Ireland – founding member of the International Federation of Accountants**

CPA Ireland is a founding member of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), which comprises over 175 members and associates in more than 130 countries and jurisdictions, representing almost 3 million accountants in public practice, education, government service, industry and commerce.

A CPA Ireland member is a current board member of IFAC. The Institute is also a member of Accountancy Europe and the Edinburgh Group. Through these bodies Ireland has a strong voice in the development of the profession and thought leadership in professional practice.

<sup>10</sup> Project Ireland 2040: National Development Plan 2018–2027, Government of Ireland, 2018

## 5. a) Closing the skills gap – professional standards and alliances help Ireland recruit talent

*Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025*<sup>11</sup> points out that “as we move into recovery, skills shortages are now emerging in certain areas and occupations, for instance in advanced manufacturing and Information Communications Technology (ICT)”. According to the strategy, there are skills shortages for professionals and associate professionals across sectors in the areas of ICT, science and engineering.

There are also talent shortages in construction (surveyors), which began to exhibit a skills shortage in 2014. In summary, the greatest skills shortages are amongst professionals and associate professionals.<sup>12</sup>



### The work of professional bodies in addressing skills shortages

While professional bodies are undertaking significant investment in terms of promoting careers and professions to the next generation of third-level and second-level students in Ireland (see Chapter 5, “Educating the next generation”, p. 59), there are immediate skills gaps that need urgent attention.

At a time when Ireland is experiencing a skills shortage in many areas – including engineering, construction, finance and healthcare – the value of professional qualifications that are internationally recognised and supported by professional bodies cannot be overstated. Companies and organisations seeking talent know that internationally recognised professional qualifications help labour mobility and give confidence and trust to their recruitment process, a crucial factor when committing to expansion or investment. They can also be assured that talent recruited from other countries will have access in Ireland to a highly developed network of professional

<sup>11</sup> *Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025*, Department of Education and Skills, 2016

<sup>12</sup> *Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025*, Department of Education and Skills, 2016



bodies with international alliances that uphold high standards of education, professional development and codes of practice. Membership of a professional body – with all that it offers – is also an important part of the support that must be given to Irish skilled emigrants whom we are seeking to attract home to meet our increasing skills shortage in key growth sectors.

## 5. b) International alliances and mutual recognition – key for exports

The international recognition that comes with professional qualifications is also essential for Irish companies tendering for major international contracts and for Irish companies exporting their services to other countries, an important factor in a new, post-Brexit landscape.

Professional bodies and regulated professions are key to Ireland's ability to participate fully in the Single Market. Providing services in the EU is governed by the Services Directive, which demands a system of regulation in the case of professions. The general system of regulation of professional bodies facilitates the free movement of professionals across borders.

The advantages and value of those benefits must surely be evidenced by the depth of the concerns being expressed in the UK regarding the possible removal of mutual recognition from its professionals because of the country's decision to exit the EU. The Confederation of British Industry has spoken of the need to “ensure that firms can continue to provide professional and business services seamlessly across borders”, stating that mutual recognition, such as that of professional bodies, is “essential”.



Professional bodies provide the gateway for the export of services in many sectors, by way of recognised professional standards and the trust in “competent authorities” and their members. Mutual recognition is key to the growth of Ireland's professions across borders.

Our professional standards and regulations enable Irish firms and their employees with the skills, experience and legal recognition to export, tender for international contracts and serve global clients.

Knowledge, innovative capacity and world-class qualifications not only allow Irish professions to serve industry and employers at home but also enable Irish companies to export and trade their services in global markets, tender for large-scale international contracts and secure new customers. Ireland's excellence in engineering, architecture, financial services, fintech and life sciences is due in no small way to the talented human capital behind these sectors, talent that itself is built on world-class educational qualifications and innovative lifelong learning programmes which are continuously being reviewed and reformed to ensure that "team Ireland" is best in class.

### **Case Studies: Participation in international alliances brings benefits for Ireland**

#### **Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland – global alliances key to skills mobility**

The Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI) is partnered with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), the global body for the profession, and its members enjoy international professional recognition that has led to the generation of business in Britain, Northern Ireland and worldwide. The recognition of this global standard will remain important post-Brexit for recognition in major EU and international markets. In addition, clients and their advisers coming to Ireland seek professional identifiers that they know and trust.

Through its links with the RICS, those who are members of the SCSI achieve both a national and a global standard of excellence. As prospects have improved for the construction profession in recent years, there is some evidence that Chartered Surveyors who emigrated to areas such as Australia and the Middle East are now returning to Ireland to take up roles in construction firms here. However, the surveying profession remains buoyant in these regions too, and so while some overseas professionals are returning to Ireland, there is still a need to address skills shortages through the education, training and development of students and professionals in Ireland.

#### **Engineers Ireland – signatory to international accords which encourage skills mobility**

The registered professional title of Chartered Engineer (CEng) is recognised internationally as the title to be used by professional engineers who are members of Engineers Ireland and has the same status as the professional engineering titles used in other countries. For example, in the US and Canada the title Professional Engineer (PE) is used, in Japan the title is Registered Engineer (RE), in Australia and New Zealand the title is Chartered Professional Engineer (CPEng), while the UK uses the title CEng, as we do.

Engineers Ireland is a signatory to international accords which independently validate the standard of its engineering education and training, attest to the competence of its engineers and facilitate mobility of engineers into Ireland to fill skills gaps.



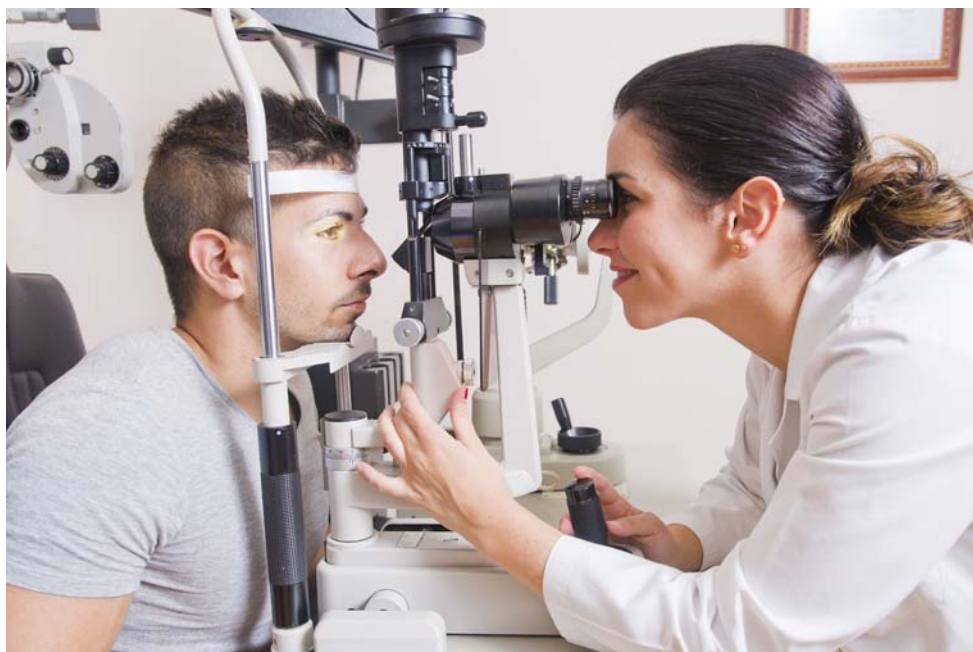
## Case Studies: Continued

### **The Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland – creating courses for member and industry needs**

The Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland has developed bespoke, graduate development and leadership courses for engineering and other employees in the consulting engineering sector. These are specifically designed to meet the requirements of member firms and facilitate graduates and others to apply their learning in work environments.

### **Association of Optometrists Ireland – harmonising clinical and optical practice across Europe**

The Association of Optometrists Ireland (AOI) is a board member of the European Council of Optometry and Optics and makes regular submissions to the EU. It is also a member of and carries out the secretariat duties of the European Academy of Optometry and Optics, which aims to promote eye health to the public across borders and to harmonise clinical and educational standards of optometric and optical practice throughout Europe.



The AOI Fellowship examinations are recognised by CORU (the statutory regulator) as being the qualification required for entry to the Register of Optometrists, which is a requirement to practise as an optometrist in Ireland.

CPD is a statutory requirement for optometrists and the AOI delivers a range of CPD, including distance learning, workshops and lectures, to members. AOI members are supported in the development of a CPD portfolio in the format required by the regulator (CORU). In addition, the AOI runs regular specialist courses on areas of optometric practice relevant to the profession. Members of the AOI also have access to professional indemnity insurance and a suite of services that includes fitness-to-practise support and mediation services with members of the public. AOI members also have access to best-practice guidelines developed by the Association.

## 6. Professional bodies – equipping the professions and Ireland for future changes and advances

To future-proof our competitiveness, we must develop a skills base that will move Ireland to the forefront of digital and innovative activity. Access to new technologies, knowledge and skills is crucial if Ireland is to develop its value-added segments and knowledge-intensive products and services.

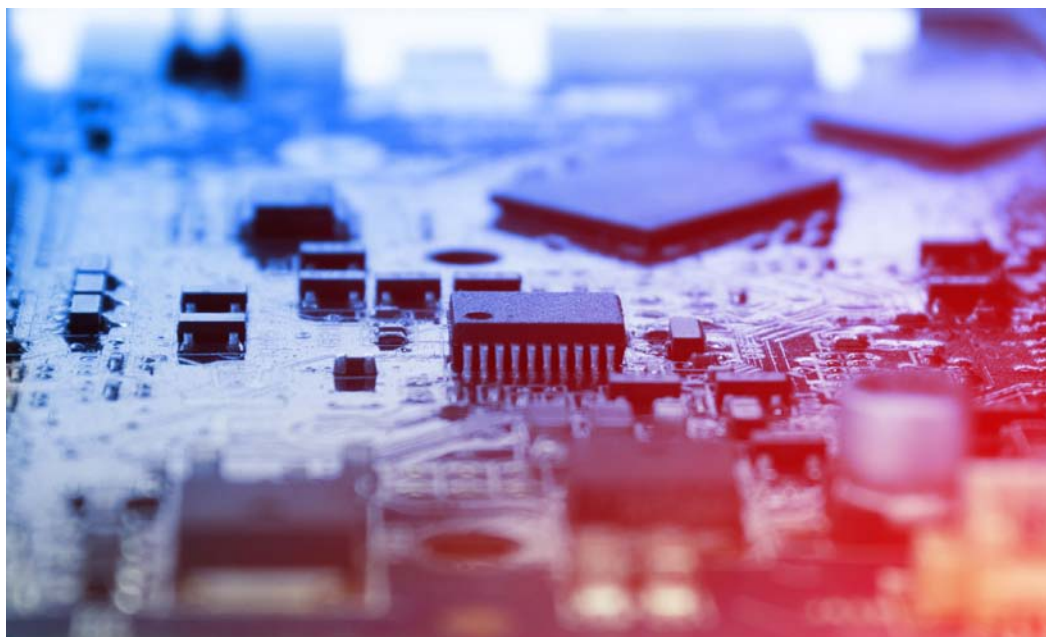
### Preparing for the future

The professional bodies and their members are dedicated to shaping Ireland's future. As stated in the National Development Plan, “our future success rests on ensuring our readiness for a changing world and the continued successful development of the knowledge economy”.<sup>13</sup>

Professional bodies are constantly reviewing and reforming their education and lifelong learning programmes to ensure that they reflect the huge changes unfolding in the world which are impacting Ireland's economy and its citizens.

The professional bodies invest time and resources in collaborative and partnership projects, to develop further understanding of the future needs of the country. This includes collaboration and sharing of knowledge with the State, industry, employers and sister organisations across the world. The investment is to ensure that Irish professions are focused not just on today's high standards but also, just as importantly, on the demands and needs of tomorrow's world.

The professions' commitment to the future – be that in business, financial services, healthcare, environmental science, architecture, construction or engineering – is evident in their investment across their entire suites of education and lifelong learning activity. This includes reforming and refining education curriculums and professional development courses to reflect the demand for new skills and innovation.



<sup>13</sup> *Project Ireland 2040: National Development Plan 2018–2027*, Government of Ireland, 2018

## Case Studies: Preparing Ireland's professions for a changing world

### **Irish Tax Institute – working in partnership with Revenue on technological change**

Technology and its rapidly changing capacities are very much at the centre of Ireland's tax administration system. Technological developments and their ability to drive change and behaviour are understood and appreciated by both Revenue and tax professionals.

The Irish Tax Institute has invested in education programmes and information campaigns, in addition to working in partnership with Revenue, to ensure that Ireland's Chartered Tax Advisers and the wider tax community are equipped for the transformation that technology is bringing to tax administration.

In 2012, Revenue began the introduction of a new mandatory electronic reporting regime for the financial statements of large companies in Ireland, using a new technology language commonly known as iXBRL. The Irish Tax Institute worked with its members and with Revenue, preparing tax advisers for the new regime. The Institute has encouraged members to attend Revenue roadshows on iXBRL filing; participated in a special TALC committee on iXBRL since 2012; and issued multiple bulletins to members at each stage of the roll-out of iXBRL informing members of what is required for compliance, as well as addressing common issues and queries. The Institute is also a member of Business Reporting Ireland Limited, which seeks to improve awareness of the use of iXBRL technology.

### **Society of Chartered Surveyors of Ireland – embracing technological change to improve Ireland's energy performance**

The Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI) has recognised the influence of technological advances, such as the introduction of Building Information Modelling and regulation such as Nearly Zero Energy Buildings. These developments are rapidly changing the roles of all professionals in the built environment. Without a professional body in place to deliver lifelong learning to its professionals, many could be left behind, delivering projects at a sub-standard level or even exiting the industry, thereby exacerbating the skills gaps that already exist.

The SCSI runs an annual technology roadshow to highlight recent and forthcoming technological advances in its industry to point out strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. In 2018, the SCSI will host a national "prop-tech and smart construction" conference. The conference will focus on three key areas: innovation, market knowledge and experience.

### **Dentists – embracing scientific advances and developments**

The Irish Dental Association stresses that lifelong learning is vitally important given the rapid rate of scientific development and advances in patient care techniques, equipment and care pathways. The fact that the profession is predominantly private practice provided and the potential isolation of practitioners make peer activity particularly important.

## Case Studies: Continued



### **The Institute of Directors in Ireland – promoting new standards of governance**

The Institute of Directors (IoD) is facilitating business leaders to prepare for change and for the future. The IoD recognises the increased demands placed on directors driven by a greater emphasis on corporate governance standards and a higher regulatory compliance burden. IoD programmes provide a benchmark of the professional knowledge and experience required to meet and exceed shareholder expectations. The IoD has conducted research on areas that are central to the future work of its members, including cybersecurity and the General Data Protection Regulation.

### **Directors – preparing Irish businesses for change**

The Institute of Directors highlights that demographic and technological changes are transforming the world of business. Company directors and senior executives who commit to and engage in continuous and lifelong learning are equipping themselves to re-skill and up-skill to succeed in the new economy. There are many beneficiaries of business leaders' lifelong learning: the individuals themselves, the organisations for which they work, the economy to which they contribute and wider society, which ultimately reaps the benefits of a well-educated business sector.



## Case Studies: Continued



### **Law Society – supporting the financial services sector**

The Government has targeted the creation of 10,000 new jobs within the sector as part of IFS2020, a strategy for Ireland's international financial services (IFS) sector 2015–2020, and through the Finuas Networks Programme, to maintain Ireland's position as a major IFS centre through investment in the specialist skills and expertise of its workforce.

Key areas of Finuas training and education include banking and asset financing, corporate treasury, fund and investment management, structured financing and securitisation, fintech and international financial services law.

The Law Society of Ireland Finuas Network supports these aims by promoting and supporting the continued development of member companies, as well as developing the skills of existing staff and expanding the pool of high-value, specialised and market-appropriate skills within the industry.

### **Engineers – embracing new global environment practices**

Engineers Ireland's Strategy 2017–2020 is focused on building, growing and diversifying courses of increasing relevance for members and for society. These courses are in areas such as agri-food, life sciences, manufacturing and ICT. In 2018 it is focusing on developing new learning opportunities for engineers working in energy and environment.

This strategic approach for 2018 is aligned with Project Ireland 2040 and Ireland's transition to a low-carbon and climate-resilient society. The skill, talent and professional expertise of its member engineers across the island of Ireland will be integral to the fulfilment of these projects.

## Case Studies: Continued

### **The Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland – promoting the use of BIMM to members**

The Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland promotes the use of Building Information Modelling and Management (BIMM) in its members firms. It also works with organisations such as the Construction IT Alliance to assist in the ongoing implementation and utilisation of BIMM and related technologies, which are key to the future of the engineering and built-environment industry.

### **Pharmacists – working to ensure future safety in medicines**

The Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU) has established the IPU Academy to provide continuing education to pharmacists. The IPU Academy offers face-to-face training around the country, online learning, webinars and podcasts to assist pharmacists in keeping up to date and completing their CPD portfolios. The IPU had almost 5,000 attendances at IPU Academy learning events in 2017, covering subjects from paediatrics and oral chemotherapy to drug interactions and diabetes.

### **CPA Ireland – developing the accounting and finance professionals**

Accounting and finance professionals are in short supply in the economy. *Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025* identified this as an issue. It advises that “[t]he availability of skilled talented people is one of Ireland's key international differentiators in the attraction of foreign direct investment”. The Exchequer would not be able to fund the initial and continuing professional development of the range and quantity of professionals required unless it diverted resources from other necessary projects. However, the Institute makes a major contribution in this regard and has trained over 1,000 newly qualified professional accountants in the last decade, with a further 1,000 currently in training.





## Professional bodies – supporting the strategic objectives of Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025<sup>14</sup>

Drawing on the OECD skills framework, Ireland's skills strategy for the next ten years will prioritise progress on the following outcomes:

Government objective	The work of professional bodies	Examples of work undertaken by professional bodies
<p><b>Objective 1</b> Education and training providers will place a stronger focus on providing skills development opportunities that are relevant to the needs of learners, society and the economy</p>	<p>Ireland's professional bodies are continuously collaborating with industry, academia, employers, and international bodies and organisations to ensure that their qualifications and lifelong learning offerings reflect the changing needs of Ireland's economy.</p>	<p><b>Engineers Ireland's</b> strategic approach for 2018 is aligned with the Project Ireland 2040 objective for Ireland to transition to a low-carbon and climate-resilient society. It is hosting energy-related courses in 2018 for its members, including: "Ireland's Energy Security in the Context of Brexit and the Renewable Energy Transition"; "Introduction to Energy Market Fundamentals and Emerging Trends"; and "Electric Vehicle Charging for Sustainable Developments".</p> <p>Since 2012, the <b>Irish Tax Institute</b> worked with its members and with Revenue, preparing tax advisers for a new electronic reporting regime using a new technology language commonly known as iXBRL. The Institute encouraged members to attend Revenue roadshows on iXBRL filing; participated in a special TALC committee on iXBRL since 2012; and issued multiple bulletins to members at each stage of the roll-out of iXBRL informing them of what is required for compliance, as well as addressing common issues and queries. The Institute is also a member of Business Reporting Ireland Limited, which seeks to improve awareness of the use of iXBRL technology.</p> <p>The <b>Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI)</b> is closely affiliated with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), providing its members with access to a global network and international best practice. The RICS's upcoming World Built Environment Forum Summit will explore the future of "smart cities". Such events help to ensure that SCSI members have access to international solutions and best practice, which sees them work towards the National Planning Framework's two strategic outcomes of "High-Quality International Connectivity" and "Compact Growth".</p>

<sup>14</sup> Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025, Department of Education and Skills, 2016, p. 11

Government objective	The work of professional bodies	Examples of work undertaken by professional bodies
<p><b>Objective 2</b> Employers will participate actively in the development of skills and make effective use of skills in their organisations to improve productivity and competitiveness</p>	<p>Ireland's professional bodies work closely with employers and industry to ensure that we have a future supply of highly educated professionals who practise to a global standard.</p>	<p><b>Engineers Ireland</b> is at the heart of setting, maintaining and monitoring educational and professional qualifications for engineers. It ensures that higher-education institute engineering courses in Ireland remain relevant to the changing needs of industry and the Irish economy.</p> <p>The Accreditation Board of Engineers Ireland is responsible for accrediting engineering degree programmes in 7 Irish universities and 14 Institutes of Technology. Engineers Ireland has currently accredited over 100 engineering programmes, with each subject to a rigorous process of evaluation in association with international industry (e.g. French aeronautical companies) and international academia from as far away as Korea, Turkey and the United States.</p> <p>Since its foundation the <b>Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI)</b> has committed itself to supporting the education of architects and the evolution of the architectural profession in Ireland.</p> <p>Consequently, the accreditation of courses and qualifications in architecture and architectural technology is one of the RIAI's most critical tasks. The purpose of accreditation is to ensure, in the interests of students, the public and the architectural profession, that the range of skills and the standard of performance attained by students graduating from a programme are adequate with regard to the design, technical and professional skills and ethical formation required for competent architectural practice.</p> <p>The accreditation process involves an objective assessment of the programme, including the curriculum, assessment and actual learning outcomes achieved by graduates.</p>
<p><b>Objective 3</b> The quality of teaching and learning at all stages of education and training will be continually enhanced and evaluated</p>	<p>Substantial financial and human resource investment in the quality of teaching and learning is made by Ireland's professional bodies. The professional bodies, on a continuous and cyclical basis, engage international academia and international industry figures to review their education processes and their education regimes to ensure they meet future global demands and trends, meet best international practice and reflect the highest standards of industry.</p>	<p>The <b>Irish Tax Institute</b> commissioned an independent external review of its Chartered Tax Adviser (CTA) programme in 2016. The purpose of this review was to benchmark the programme against international standards and to ensure that the qualification continues to meet the ever-changing needs of the tax profession. The Institute worked with Professor Dale Pinto, University of Curtin, Western Australia, who examined the teaching, delivery and assessment methods.</p> <p>The Institute has been working closely with members to focus on their specific requirements for a changing environment, impacted by global and technological changes.</p> <p><b>Engineers Ireland</b> is a signatory to the following international accords, which independently validate the standard of its engineering education and training, validate the competence of its engineers and facilitate mobility of engineers into Ireland to fill skills gaps: the Washington Accord, which is the recognition of academic programmes that deal with the practice of engineering at the professional level; the Dublin Accord, which is the recognition of academic programmes that underpin the educational base for Engineering Technicians; the Sydney Accord, which is the recognition of academic programmes dealing with engineering technology; the Seoul Accord (associate member), which is the recognition of professional computing and information technology academic degrees.</p>

Government objective	The work of professional bodies	Examples of work undertaken by professional bodies
<p><b>Objective 4</b> People across Ireland will engage more in lifelong learning</p>	<p>Thousands of members from across the professional bodies in Ireland must engage in lifelong learning. CPD is relevant to emerging issues of the future and flexible in terms of timing and geographic reach.</p> <p>Through online learning and new technology in education, the professional bodies are continuously expanding their reach and encouraging participation amongst members and the wider public.</p>	<p>A free MOOC (massive open online course) was provided by the <b>Law Society</b> on Employment Law in the Digital Age. Over 3,209 participants from 29 countries took part.</p> <p>The <b>Irish Tax Institute</b> made a major investment in its ICT systems and introduced online CPD available to SMEs and members across Ireland. With 55% of Institute members based in the regions, this allows them to access live webcasts and watch recorded seminars on-demand in their own time. This strategy is bringing regional reach through technology and ease of access.</p>
<p><b>Objective 5</b> There will be a specific focus on active inclusion to support participation in education and training and the labour market</p>	<p>The professional bodies have a range of programmes aimed at giving opportunities to those from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, including those in disadvantaged areas.</p>	<p>The <b>Law Society</b> founded highly successful initiatives such as the Street Law programme, which equips trainees to teach a legal course to students in Dublin-based DEIS schools. This year, 40 Professional Practice Course 1 (PPC1) trainees provided this course to 500 school students. The course helps students realise the relevance of law for them, and also encourages them to consider the possibility of a legal qualification in their future.</p> <p>The <b>Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI)</b> partnered with Limerick Institute of Technology on the development of a level 9 apprenticeship titled Senior Quantity Surveyor and it is also supporting Ballsbridge College of Further Education's level 6 apprenticeship in Real Estate. Apprenticeship initiatives will help to support the industry by providing opportunities for students from a wider variety of socio-economic backgrounds to enter the profession and will also allow opportunities for re-skilling and up-skilling of professionals from other industries.</p> <p>The <b>Irish Tax Institute</b> launched a third-level scholarship in 2007, designed to give financial support to enable students to achieve their primary degree in universities such as UCD, TCD, UL, UCC and NUIG. Many of the scholars have gone on to pursue very successful careers in tax. Ten scholarships have been awarded so far and the support from the scholarship allowed students not only to access third-level education but also to attain their professional qualification in tax. The Institute is currently supporting four scholars in their degree programmes, in UL, UCC and UCD.</p>

Government objective	The work of professional bodies	Examples of work undertaken by professional bodies
<p><b>Objective 6</b> We will support an increase in the supply of skills to the labour market</p>	<p>Increasing Ireland's supply of talent and world-class skills in certain industries is a key mission of professional bodies in Ireland.</p> <p>Professional bodies are putting a huge effort into encouraging people to pursue professional careers and enhance Ireland's skill base by promoting the career options.</p> <p>Professional bodies are also designing and developing courses that are more accessible to students from all backgrounds.</p> <p>Participation by professional bodies in recognised global standards through membership of international professional bodies is also a hugely important part of attracting talent from overseas.</p> <p>The value of professional qualifications that are internationally recognised and supported by professional bodies cannot be overstated. Companies and organisations seeking talent know that internationally recognised professional qualifications help labour mobility and give confidence and trust to their recruitment process, a crucial factor when committing to expansion or investment.</p>	<p>The <b>Engineers Ireland</b> STEPS programme – a funded partner of Science Foundation Ireland – encourages primary and post-primary students to explore the world of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), while also promoting engineering as a career choice. STEPS is also funded by the Department of Education and Skills and a number of major engineering employers.</p> <p>In 2016, Engineers Ireland member volunteers registered with STEPS donated 14,692 hours to the programme (activity worth an estimated €242,000), delivering more than 73,000 direct engagements with students, teachers and parents throughout the year.</p> <p><b>Irish Tax Institute</b> members voluntarily visit secondary schools to raise early awareness of the career as a tax professional. They give informative career talks and answer any questions about a career in tax. At third-level, the Institute sponsors economic debates held by high-profile university societies such as the Phil, TCD, and the L&amp;H, UCD.</p> <p>The <b>Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland</b>, as mentioned above, partnered with educational institutes to develop apprenticeship programmes.</p>

The work of professional bodies is also underpinned by national and international research, international evaluation and benchmarking, and is promoted and available to professions across all cities and regions of Ireland, through technology, online learning, blended learning, regional structures, branch networks and regional events.

# Chapter 3

## Our role in modern infrastructure – Project 2040



Professional bodies and their members are acutely aware of the supportive and dynamic role they can play in the successful delivery of the Government’s National Development Plan 2018–2027<sup>1</sup> (NDP). The plan is quite rightly an ambitious one, that aims to “drive Ireland’s long term economic, environmental and social progress across all parts of the country over the next decade”.

Thousands of members in our professional bodies will draw on their qualifications and skills, global knowledge, experience and innovative capacity to make a significant and positive contribution to the delivery of many of the 10 National Strategic Outcomes in the NDP.

Highly qualified architects, engineers and Chartered Surveyors who practise to international standards will be central to the success of important objectives, including “Compact Growth”, “Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources” and “Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Society”. Our tax advisers, lawyers, accountants and company directors with detailed knowledge and experience of business will be key to delivering “A Strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills”, while our pharmacists, dentists and optometrists will be the trusted and experienced healthcare professionals that deliver “Access to Quality Health Services”.

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<sup>1</sup> *Project Ireland 2040: National Development Plan 2018–2027*, Government of Ireland, 2018



### Case Studies: Irish professions supporting the National Development Plan

#### Chartered Tax Advisers – helping Irish enterprises to focus on innovation

One of the major goals in the National Development Plan<sup>2</sup> is to create 660,000 extra jobs by 2040. The Government is confident that this is achievable but stresses that it will necessitate “a sharp focus on ensuring Irish-based enterprises, indigenous or multinational, are increasingly innovative, productive and competitive in international markets”.

Thousands of tax advisers work with our Irish SMEs and multinationals every day, highlighting and helping them to avail of important Government reliefs such as the R&D tax credit, the EIS and KEEP. Such measures, if taken up by businesses, play no small role in helping them to improve their productivity, innovative capacity and ability to attract talent and to expand. Funding for the Seed and Venture Capital Scheme will support technology start-ups and early-stage companies with high growth potential across the regions.

Chartered Tax Advisers work with State bodies such as Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland to ensure that Irish start-ups and established businesses are making the right decisions for their future, from investment in research to accessing the right types of funding for their business models. Well-informed company directors, supported by the Institute of Directors, with a deep understanding of governance and other boardroom issues also help to guide Irish companies on best boardroom practice and responsible decision making.



2 *Project Ireland 2040: National Development Plan 2018–2027*, Government of Ireland, 2018



### Case Studies: Continued

The National Development Plan acknowledges the role of these R&D funds and tax reliefs, highlighting the need for “strengthened investment in research and development... particularly in relation to regional enterprise development”. The National Development Plan also highlights the importance of regional development in terms of “driving competitiveness and export diversification”, a crucial objective in light of Ireland’s Brexit challenges.

#### **Chartered Tax Advisers – working with SMEs on Brexit preparations**

Tax advisers and business advisers will also play a critical role in assisting Irish SMEs to prepare for Brexit, a stated “Initial Brexit Priority Investment Action” in the National Development Plan. Tax advisers working with SMEs will guide and support businesses that wish to avail of key Government Brexit initiatives such as the €300m Brexit Working Capital Loan Scheme, longer-term loan finance measures and INTERREG Research and Innovation Strand.

The NDP in its section on “Planning and Investing for the Implications of Brexit” highlights the importance of cross-border partnerships and deepening the economic, social and cultural ties that have been established for so long. The Irish Tax Institute has been working with its sister Institute, the Chartered Institute of Taxation, in London and Belfast to provide free events and briefings on the many tax and customs implications of Brexit for business.



#### **The Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland – minimising the impact of Brexit on businesses**

Many multinational surveying organisations have offices in both the UK and Ireland. Therefore Brexit will have a direct impact on how they operate their businesses. To help minimise the impact, the SCSi works closely with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) to ensure that all surveying professionals reach a global standard to allow for greater mobility of staff.

### Case Studies: Continued

The SCSi is also working closely with RICS colleagues in Northern Ireland to help ensure continuity in service, standards, communication and education delivery to firms located both sides of the border. As the SCSi is partnered with the RICS, the global body for the profession, members have enjoyed professional recognition and have therefore generated business in the UK, Northern Ireland and worldwide. This global standard will remain important post-Brexit for recognition in major EU and international markets. In addition, clients and their advisers coming to Ireland seek professional identifiers that they know and trust.

#### **The Law Society of Ireland – a new era in conveyancing**

The Law Society's e-Conveyancing Task Force, in line with the Government's Construction 2020 priority, is advancing a secure, paperless, electronic, end-to-end, pre-sale to post-completion, conveyancing process. The proposal will ultimately facilitate the business of land transfer quickly and efficiently.

This exciting initiative will complement the rapid and successful roll-out of electronic and online services such as the Property Registration Authority's landdirect.ie, the Revenue Online Service and proposals for e-stamping, all of which have been embraced by solicitors.

#### **Engineers Ireland – supporting changes in energy and water management practices**

Energy: In 2012, EU legislation mandated that large enterprises must complete an energy audit every four years. To respond to the demand for Energy Auditors, Engineers Ireland is delivering an Association of Energy Engineers Certified Energy Auditor course.

Water Management: One of the National Policy Objectives in the NDP is to ensure the efficient and sustainable use and development of water resources and water services infrastructure in order to manage and conserve water resources in a manner that supports a healthy society, economic development requirements and a cleaner environment.

Engineers Ireland has developed a suite of wastewater training courses based on the success of a "Water Loss and Leakage Management" course held for the first time in November 2017. This type of training supports initiatives such as the critically important Leakage Reduction Programme – a national programme of works put in place by Irish Water aiming to reduce the amount of treated water lost through leakage from 47% to 38% by the end of 2021, saving 180 million litres of water every day.

### Case Studies: Continued



#### **Engineers, architects and Chartered Surveyors – delivering environmental and infrastructural solutions**

By 2040, it is expected that an additional one million people will live in Ireland two-thirds of whom will work here. Engineers, architects and Chartered Surveyors will be required to deliver innovative, environmentally friendly solutions that are necessary to meet large-scale changes in urban areas and in the regions. It is of paramount importance that the country has not only the necessary capital infrastructure to meet economic demand in the coming years but also a plentiful supply of highly skilled and qualified human capital to deliver world-class infrastructural change.

#### **A low-carbon economy – professions play their part**

The international experience, standards and knowledge of Ireland's engineers, architects, Chartered Surveyors and consultant engineers will play a major role in delivering successful and impactful climate change projects in the years ahead. Transitioning to a low-carbon and climate-resilient society and achieving sustainable mobility are vital strategic outcomes identified in the National Planning Framework. This reflects the Government's 2014 National Policy Position on Climate Action and Low-Carbon Development, which establishes the fundamental national objective of achieving transition to a competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050.

### Case Studies: Continued



#### Healthcare services in the community

Increasing the capacity of primary care is a key objective in the National Development Plan. Provision of primary care centres on a national basis to match population changes, including new builds and refurbishments of existing buildings, is essential, while expanding the provision of community diagnostics and minor surgery. Our dentists, pharmacists and optometrists will play a central role in ensuring that there is a supply of highly qualified and skilled healthcare talent to serve the needs of the public.



# Chapter 4

## Building the regions – A sustainable plan



**“ While Dublin is at the forefront of international competition for mobile, inward investment, the potential of other locations must be harnessed.”**

*Project Ireland 2040: Building Ireland's Future,  
National Planning Framework<sup>1</sup>*

Our professional bodies are highly committed to supporting the development of professional skills and standards across Ireland, key drivers of future growth and investment.

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<sup>1</sup> *Project Ireland 2040: Building Ireland's Future, National Planning Framework*, Government of Ireland, 2018

## Chapter 4 | Building the regions – A sustainable plan

By investing in regional structures, networks, online learning, technology and flagship events across the regions, the professions are committing to the development and retention of professional skills and talent to serve the public, industry, FDI and academia across Ireland. The National Planning Framework<sup>2</sup> highlights the importance of these supports, stating that “opportunities for upskilling, including through blended on-line, part-time or outreach courses, will be important to securing and accessing employment within rural areas”.

The National Development Plan<sup>3</sup> also puts a spotlight on the role of talent in developing the regions. As part of its focus on “Enterprise, Innovation and Skills” it stresses that “the way in which skills and talent are nurtured, developed, deployed and retained is central to both national and regional ambitions”. Such ambitions include improvements to regional employment and productivity rates, the latter also highlighted in the OECD’s recent country report on Ireland.

Regional branches and networks amongst professional bodies have been established to provide a more local liaison for members in the relevant area. This activity means that members’ interests at a local level are represented and considered.



Education courses and CPD events are held in towns and cities across Ireland to ensure that all members, across all geographic regions, can attend them. To guarantee constant connectivity and engagement throughout Ireland, the organisations now offer webinars, live webcasts and on-demand online seminars to ensure members can always avail of the professional development programmes, regardless of their location.

IDA Ireland also stresses the importance of regional development and the role that human capital and talent plays in it. It is aiming for a 30% to 40% increase in

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<sup>2</sup> *Project Ireland 2040: Building Ireland's Future, National Planning Framework*, Government of Ireland, 2018

<sup>3</sup> *Project Ireland 2040: National Development Plan 2018–2027*, Government of Ireland, 2018



the number of investments for each region outside Dublin in its strategy *Winning: Foreign Direct Investment 2015–2019*. These targets have been developed by taking into account the key factors, that are crucial to attracting and retaining FDI, one of which is “the ability to attract and develop appropriate skills (talent)”<sup>4</sup>. Also critical to the expansion of regional communities will be good housing, environmental planning and access to high-quality healthcare, areas in which professions will play no small part.

### Growing our regions

The Government’s National Planning Framework<sup>5</sup> places a great deal of emphasis on the forecasted growth of Ireland’s towns and cities and the infrastructure consequently required. While the Government’s analysis has found that Dublin must remain the epicentre for commercial activity, a “regional parity” is considered to be a “more credible, reasonable and viable alternative scenario”<sup>6</sup> than a regional dominance approach.

Taking this projected growth into account, it is vital that the professional bodies are supported in their work with members and their clients who serve the public and industry in their regions.

#### Case studies: Examples of regional activity

Each professional body has a unique regional and/or national network, which allows it to serve its members’ needs accordingly, while supporting the local communities too.

The majority of the members of the **Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI)** are employed in SMEs throughout the country, while a large proportion of members are employed by large national and multinational firms. The SCSI is represented by four Regional Committees in the North East, West, South and South East.

The Regional Committees ensure that members’ interests at a local level are represented, and their function is also to assist in the provision of CPD and training around the country.

The SCSI also partners with Institutes of Technology in the delivery of CPD and has recently held CPD events in GMIT and Letterkenny IT.

A total of 55% of the **Irish Tax Institute’s** membership is based outside Dublin, providing expertise and advice to Irish SMEs and multinationals. To reflect the strength of the regional activity, the Institute’s Branch Network mirrors Revenue’s structure, with networks in the South West, East South East, Border Midlands West and Dublin regions and for the Large Cases Division.

This structure is unique to the Institute and enables members in each region to communicate with their counterparts in Revenue on important tax administration issues in their region.

4 *Winning: Foreign Direct Investment 2015–2019*, IDA Ireland, 2015

5 *Project Ireland 2040: Building Ireland’s Future, National Planning Framework*, Government of Ireland, 2018

6 *Project Ireland 2040: Building Ireland’s Future, National Planning Framework*, Government of Ireland, 2018

### Case Studies: Continued

According to the *Engineering 2018* report by **Engineers Ireland**, a large percentage of engineers in Ireland are located in the five cities of Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford and the surrounding areas in the regions: 58% of engineers are based in these five cities and counties, while the remaining 42% are in rural areas. There is a particular concentration of ICT engineers (38%) in Dublin City and County, but the remainder are geographically spread across Ireland.

Engineers Ireland is built on a network of regional branches, engineering divisions and societies that facilitate knowledge sharing among the engineering community in a way that is relevant, flexible, accessible and local. Its member engineers provide jobs and career opportunities within local economies, enabling them to be thriving communities to live and work in.



The **Institute of Directors (IoD)** is a nationwide organisation. While the majority (76%) of its 2,760 membership is based in Dublin and Leinster, a primary objective for the Institute is to increase engagement with its membership outside Dublin. It offers practical supports to regionally based members through its website, including access to a variety of governance codes, a monthly e-zine, online resource updates, webcasts of IoD events and updates on applicable legislation and regulatory change.

### Case Studies: Continued

The **Irish Pharmacy Union** has a region-based structure, with eight regional associations all represented in the national organisation.

The support that the **Irish Dental Association** offers is primarily delivered through its network of eight branches and its organisation of regular events at regional level.

Members of the **Association of Optometrists Ireland** are based throughout the whole of the country and are a primary port of call for emergencies. Their regional representatives advise on business matters and new EU/Government directives among other items.

Approximately 40% of solicitors practise outside Dublin City and County, in in-house, public sector and private practice settings. As a sector, legal services contribute €1.7bn in revenue to the Irish economy, employing over 18,000 people across the State.

Practices, urban and rural, support local economies through employment, the purchasing of services and ensuring that the economic and social fabric of the community is supported. A total of 29 Bar Associations – supported by the **Law Society of Ireland** – work to represent the profession, providing vital information and training at a county and regional level to their members.

The regional aspect of the National Development Plan is very important to members of the **Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland (ACEI)**, who are based all over the country. Supporting the regions is important to the ACEI, and it does this by providing courses on a regular basis outside of Dublin, providing presentations via simultaneous video link for courses and addressing specific regional needs as issues arise.

The majority of **CPA Ireland** members are outside the greater Dublin area, and they support all sectors of the economy, both private and public, ranging from start-ups to SMEs to large multinational corporations. Additionally, the Institute ensures that both its initial and its continuing professional development programmes are accessible nationwide.

The **Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland** has members throughout the country and a number of regional networks with links to universities and business groups.

Having a professional body supporting a national network of its professionals is essential to the Government's plans for regional development. Without sufficient skilled professionals, regional development projects will be slow to get off the ground.

## Chapter 4 | Building the regions – A sustainable plan

Delivery of these strategic projects will require engineers, surveyors, architects, solicitors, accountants, directors, tax advisers – all professionals who are required throughout the lifecycle of projects, from conception to delivery and ongoing management.

As the regional cities and towns expand, they will need further healthcare services for the communities, including dentists, pharmacists and optometrists.

Professional bodies not only fully support the regional development plan, they will be at the heart of it.





# Chapter 5

## Educating the next generation



### Preparing students for the professional world they are about to enter

Ireland's professional bodies are intensively engaged in preparing thousands of students for the fast-changing professional world they are about to enter.

We are conscious at all times of the Department of Education and Skills' list of objectives and actions<sup>1</sup> on what Ireland's talent should be recognised for and work to this agenda in designing and preparing our curriculums, qualifications and exam processes.

**“ Professional bodies bridge the gap between academia and professional practice, ensuring that graduates from third-level courses meet the current and future skills needs of employers and the economy.”**

<sup>1</sup> Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025, Department of Education and Skills, 2016, p. 68



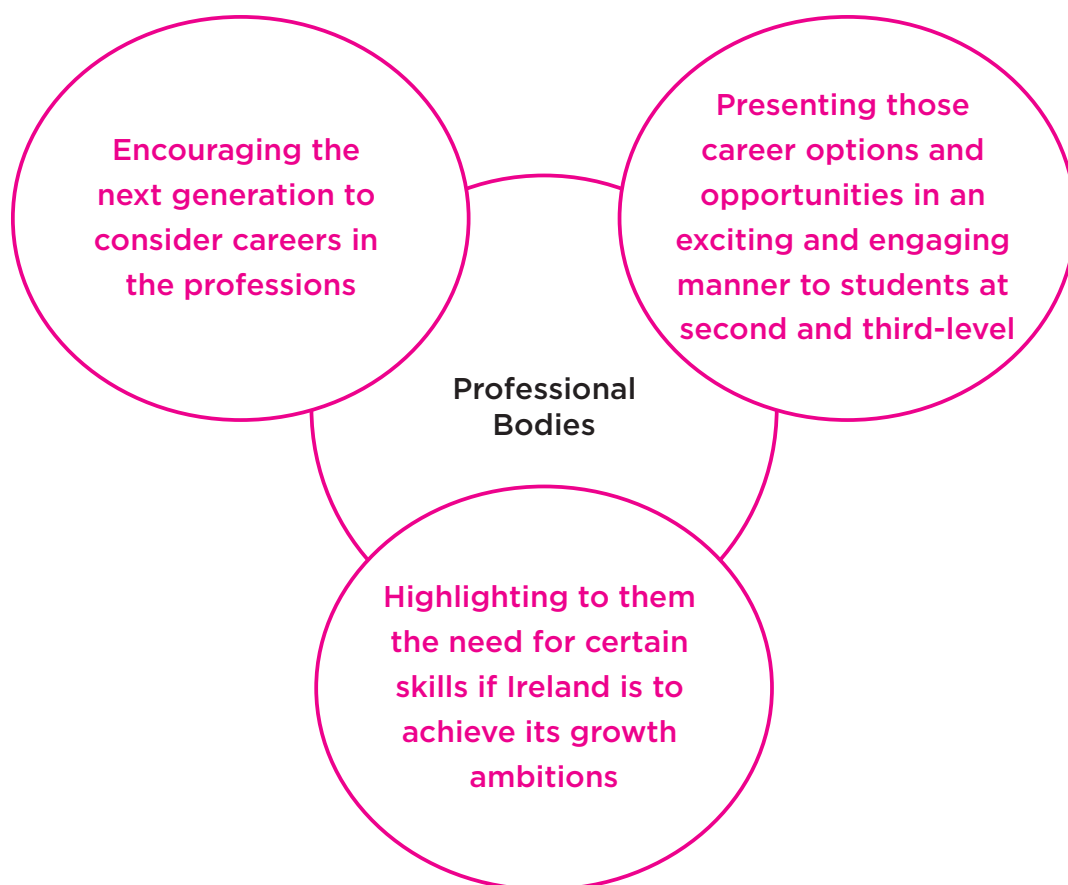
For example:

Department Objective: The quality and relevance of our education and training base, which is responsive to the changing and diverse needs of our people, society and the economy – see Chapter 2, section “Professional bodies – equipping the professions and Ireland for future changes and advances”, p. 38.

Department Objective: The strength of relationships and transfer of knowledge between employers, education and training providers, and all sections of society, and the resulting impact on how people are prepared for life and work – see Chapter 2, section “Professional bodies – equipping the professions and Ireland for future changes and advances”, p. 38.

Department Objective: The quality of our workforce – a nation of people armed with relevant knowledge, entrepreneurial agility and analytical skills – see Chapter 2, section “Lifelong learning – investing in knowledge and standards”, p. 28.

**Promoting exciting careers and encouraging the future supply of talent by:**



### Case Studies: Third-level involvement

Depending on the profession involved, third-level students may have already chosen their profession and be pursuing it as their bachelor's degree. If this is the case, the relevant professional bodies are often involved in the third-level programmes at various stages.



The **Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI)** has an Education Partners Committee with members representing all Institutes of Technology and universities that deliver SCSI-accredited courses. This committee fosters close links between academia and industry to help ensure that the workforce of the future is fully prepared for the profession.

The SCSI has partnered with Limerick Institute of Technology on the development of a level 9 apprenticeship titled Senior Quantity Surveyor, and it is also supporting Ballsbridge College of Further Educations' level 6 apprenticeship in Real Estate. Apprenticeship initiatives will help to support the industry by providing opportunities for students from a wider variety of socio-economic backgrounds to enter the profession and will also allow opportunities for re-skilling and up-skilling of professionals from other industries.

Initiatives such as the apprenticeship provide a unique model partnering industry and academia in the delivery of third-level qualifications. They also provide an "earn and learn" model so that those who may not have previously considered third-level education can have access to further study.

### Case Studies: Continued

The Accreditation Board of **Engineers Ireland** is responsible for accrediting engineering degree programmes in Irish universities and Institutes of Technology. Accreditations are awarded to programmes assessed as meeting the academic standard required for each of the registered professional titles awarded by Engineers Ireland, i.e., Chartered Engineer, Associate Engineer and Engineering Technician. Engineers Ireland has accredited over 100 engineering programmes, with each subject to a rigorous process of evaluation.

At third level, undergraduates currently studying an accredited engineering programme can avail of free Engineers Ireland membership.

Engineers Ireland works with students to progress their careers through its advocates programme within the higher-education institutes and direct linkages with industry through its Connect events and other outreach activities. Its Young Engineers Society is a special-interest group for young engineering professionals through which they can network with other young engineers of all disciplines at events organised by the society.

Undergraduate courses, post-graduate courses and CPD ensure that architects and architectural technologists are educated to the highest standard. The **Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI)**, as the competent authority, maintains standards of third-level education for the profession. Specifically the RIAI has addressed, amongst other items, changes in technology, demographics and climate.

The **Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU)** exists to mentor the next generation of pharmacists. The IPU has a close working relationship with the three Schools of Pharmacy in Ireland. It gives presentations annually in each school on the role of the community pharmacist, the IPU, and the supports available for career and professional development.

Community pharmacists play an integral role in the education of pharmacy undergraduates, providing placements for students to gain practical experience during the 3rd, 4th and 5th years of the 5-year integrated Masters in Pharmacy programme.

Continuing professional development courses and its Diploma centre represent the main post-graduate educational activities of the **Law Society of Ireland**. Diplomas are offered in areas such as Construction Law, Aviation Leasing and Finance, Corporate Law and Governance. The Society's offerings provide a professional focus and practical insight into legal areas key to the economy.

The Society partners with the University of Northumbria on a Master's in Advanced Legal Practice, a Master's in Employment Law and Practice and a PhD Programme, where the Irish legal qualifications count towards the majority of credits.

The **Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland (ACEI)** works with higher-education institutions and other professional bodies (DIT and Engineers Ireland in particular) to promote and support initiatives at all educational levels.

### Case Studies: Continued

The **Irish Tax Institute** has created a number of initiatives to encourage graduates to pursue a career in tax – “Your Take On Tax”, the “Fantasy Budget” and the Hunt Scholarship are all fantastic opportunities for students who are considering a career in tax and wish to become a Chartered Tax Adviser (CTA).

The Institute visits universities and careers fairs to raise awareness of the job opportunities available in the tax profession.

**CPA Ireland** ensures that access to its initial professional development programme is available nationwide through its network of Approved Educators from both the private and the public sector. The programme is available online and classroom based. In 2017 CPA Ireland and the Dublin Institute of Technology launched a joint Master’s in Applied Accounting (Level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications). This unique and innovative programme facilitates students studying simultaneously for a master’s degree and professional qualification. The Institute also sponsors prizes for excellent performance and scholarship for undergraduate third-level students as a way of promoting the profession.

CPA Ireland is a member of a number of academic research networks, such as the International Association for Accounting Education and Research. The annual conference for the Irish Management Accounting Research Network is hosted by the Institute; and it also sponsors research bursaries for the Irish Accounting and Finance Association.

### Case Studies: Second-level involvement

At second level, students are considering prospective career options, especially from transition year (TY) on. This is an ideal time for professional bodies to reach out and highlight the advantages of their profession. Many professions offer a transition year programme to coincide with the students’ work experience placements and give them a real-life workplace experience. Other bodies provide input into the national second-level curriculum to address a particular skills shortage or enhance the current offering.

Legal education and information beyond trainee level is achieved through the **Law Society of Ireland’s** initiatives such as the Street Law programme, which equips trainees to teach a legal course to students in Dublin-based DEIS schools. This year, 40 Professional Practice Course 1 (PPC1) trainees provided this course to 500 school students. The course helps students realise the relevance of law for them, and also encourages them to consider the possibility of a legal qualification in their future.

The Law Society also runs a dedicated TY Programme, exposing participants to the legal profession, the courts and current-day legal issues.

### Case Studies: Continued



The Architecture and Public Affairs Committee of the **Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI)** has nominated four architects to work with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and four art teachers to develop lesson task sheets with architectural learning outcomes. The sample lesson task sheets will be available for art teachers across Ireland to download from the NCCA website.

As a result of this ongoing work, the RIAI was invited to attend an NCCA forum to initiate the review of the Senior Cycle Visual Art Curriculum (Leaving Certificate).

The RIAI has also published a new guide to support architectural practices who take on transition year students. The RIAI guide is a framework for a one-week transition year student placement in an architect's office. The intention is for these students to develop genuine skills in design development, research, and presentation techniques and to gain experience in a variety of industry applications.

"RIAI Shaping Space" is an architectural teaching resource for transition year art teachers. Its attraction is that it is designed to empower art teachers to deliver lessons with architectural learning outcomes without requiring the presence of an architect in the classroom.

To raise early awareness of the career as a tax professional, **Irish Tax Institute** members voluntarily visit secondary schools to give career talks and answer any questions about a career in tax. The initiative has been well received by students, career guidance teachers and parents.

The Institute has also launched a new competition, "FanTAXtic", this year for transition year students, which asks them to submit a short video presentation on the sugar tax, demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.



### Case Studies: Continued

**CPA Ireland** contributed to the review of the business studies Junior Certificate curriculum. Additionally, members on a voluntary basis visit second-level schools to promote a career in accounting and regularly support schools in the assessment of transition year projects.

The **Engineers Ireland** STEPS programme – a funded partner of Science Foundation Ireland – encourages primary and post-primary students to explore the world of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), while also promoting engineering as a career choice. STEPS is also funded by the Department of Education and Skills and a number of major engineering employers.



In 2016, Engineers Ireland member volunteers registered with STEPS donated 14,692 hours to the programme (activity worth an estimated €242,000), delivering more than 73,000 direct engagements with students, teachers and parents throughout the year, including during Engineers Week, the annual festival of engineering.

Another Engineers Ireland initiative is “Engineering Your Future”, a week-long, hands-on programme for transition year students who have an interest in science and maths. Hosted by a number of colleges around the country, the programme provides a week of exposure to the various engineering disciplines. Attending students, at least 50% of whom are female and 10% of whom must be from DEIS schools, gain a practical insight into engineering at third level and as a career – interacting with lecturers and graduates, taking part in workshops and meeting engineers during industry visits.

**“ During the recent economic crisis, education and training providers at all levels of education and in both public and private sectors, have demonstrated impressive responsiveness to the changing employment circumstances. Even with the welcome nascent recovery, it remains incumbent on all providers to maintain such agility and to mainstream good practices.”**

*– Ireland’s National Skills Strategy 2025<sup>2</sup>*

Through many initiatives at second and third level, professional bodies are reaching students at all stages of their education. Organisations such as Engineers Ireland and the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland have direct input into the third-level programmes, while the Irish Tax Institute encourages students pursuing business and non-business degrees to consider a career in tax once they graduate.

All organisations are passionate about maintaining the highest educational standards for the next generation of professionals and creating a talented and highly skilled future workforce for Ireland and its economy.

By placing a stronger focus on providing skills development opportunities that are relevant to the needs of learners, society and the economy as per the National Skills Strategy,<sup>3</sup> this will encourage greater entrepreneurship, drive innovation and growth, and create jobs in the wider economy.



<sup>2</sup> Ireland’s National Skills Strategy 2025, Department of Education and Skills, 2016

<sup>3</sup> Ireland’s National Skills Strategy 2025, Department of Education and Skills, 2016

# Chapter 6

## Professional bodies supporting the work of the State



Professional bodies and their members are committed to serving not only the public good but also the good of the State by participating and cooperating with the Government, the Oireachtas, State bodies and organisations, Government Departments, academic bodies and institutions, and a wide range of relevant stakeholder bodies in Ireland and internationally.

**“ Be it in pharmacy, dentistry, optometry, law, corporate governance, engineering, accountancy, architecture, construction or taxation, Ireland’s professional bodies have been committed to bringing their experience, knowledge, insights and expertise to policy-making and administration.”**



The scale of the contribution of professional bodies is reflected in the breadth of their work by them and their members, which includes:

- participating in working groups, advisory boards and advisory groups regarding the development of policy, legislation, administrative processes, standards and guidelines related to their areas of expertise,
- working in partnership with the State on emerging EU directives, international rules and global standards that are being implemented into Irish law,
- publishing research, reports, and studies in key priority areas for the Government,
- publishing hundreds of research and evidence-based consultations and submissions to Government Departments,
- cooperating with Oireachtas members and appearing before Oireachtas Committees,
- partaking in pilot programmes with Government Departments and agencies,
- leading the accreditation programmes with third-level institutions to guarantee educational standards,
- participating and engaging with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment to make relevant the curriculums for the future,
- rolling out public information and awareness campaigns on key Government initiatives,
- delivering up-to-date courses, seminars and events on new Irish, EU and international legislation and rule, e.g. GDPR and BEPS,
- providing free public events, guides and courses to bring public understanding and support for new Government initiatives and policies, e.g. STEM week,
- providing mechanisms for redress (Pyrite Registers, Landfill Register) and providing lower-cost dispute resolution measures including mediation, arbitration and conciliation.



### Case Studies: How professional bodies support the State

#### The Irish Pharmacy Union - leading the way in public education campaigns

The Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU) has undertaken several promotional campaigns and partnership projects to support Government ambitions and policy. These include campaigns on Understanding Dementia (HSE), Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD Ireland), Vaccination (HSE) and Antibiotic Awareness (HSE, ICGP, RCPI, RCSI).

Working with the State, the IPU assisted the Department of Health in drafting new Misuse of Drugs Regulations. It participates in the HSE seasonal influenza vaccination programme and it facilitates pharmacies in providing needle exchange in parts of the country where there is no HSE-led service.

The IPU also engages with consultations and policy development. In 2017, it made submissions to the Department of Health on Health Service Capacity, National Biosimilar Policy and Guidance on Cannabis for Medicinal Use. It is also working closely with the HSE on e-health issues, e.g. electronic prescribing, and electronic health records.



#### GDPR - delivering courses and seminars on new EU-led legislation and rules

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on 25 May 2018, and professional bodies are taking responsibility for educating members and ensuring that they are fully aware of what is involved. For example:

The **Irish Pharmacy Union** produced a Data Protection Guide for Community Pharmacy to assist pharmacists in complying with the EU GDPR.

The **Association of Optometrists Ireland** is currently helping members prepare for the EU GDPR directive.

The **Institute of Directors in Ireland** conducted member research projects on a variety of important topics that are timely and up to date, including the GDPR. The findings of such research projects serve to inform its members of how their peers are performing, and where their attention should be focused in respect of best practice.



### Case Studies: Continued



The **Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland** is currently delivering a range of training and learning in relation to the GDPR. Activities range from awareness building to workshop-style training.

The **Irish Tax Institute** has hosted two complimentary seminars; published an article in its quarterly journal *Irish Tax Review*; and covered the topic at its Annual Conference, as well as sending updates via regular e-bulletins.

The **Law Society of Ireland**, in conjunction with its Intellectual Property and Data Protection Committee, provides a free introductory course on the GDPR, in addition to a more detailed CPD offering. Resources are made available through its website and publications to assist solicitors in their firms as advisers to businesses.

“By empowering and enabling individuals and communities to make healthier choices, it will be possible to improve health outcomes, particularly for the next generation of citizens.”

- *Project Ireland 2040: Building Ireland's Future, National Planning Framework*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Project Ireland 2040: Building Ireland's Future, National Planning Framework, Government of Ireland, 2018*

### Case Studies: Continued

#### **The Institute of Directors in Ireland - bringing expertise to the State board appointment process**

The Institute of Directors (IoD) played a central role in the development of the current process of appointment to State boards when it proposed how the revised appointment process would be structured to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in 2014.

In addition, the IoD works closely with the Public Appointments Service (PAS) by providing a forum for the PAS to promote appointments to State boards to IoD members nationwide.

#### **The Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland - lending expertise to the housing agenda**

The Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland has brought its expertise to the housing agenda through its recent submissions and publications on the Vacant Housing Refurbishment Bill 2017 and The Real Costs of New Apartment Delivery. These submissions and reports help to inform agencies, institutions and members of the public on the key issues requiring consideration in a coherent manner backed up by the highest standards in research and assisted by global research from its sister organisation - the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.



### Case Studies: Continued

#### **The Irish Tax Institute – promoting understanding of tax policy**

The Institute designed and delivered a Certificate on Tax Policy to give stakeholders across Ireland an understanding of the tax policy of the State. It also jointly published *Irish Tax Policy in Perspective* with the Department of Finance. This unique title collated expert essays on the evolution of Ireland's tax policy.

#### **The Irish Tax Institute – bringing clarity and understanding to major tax developments**

PAYE Modernisation is due to go live in January 2019, and the Institute is currently engaged in a public information campaign to explain to employers and employees what is involved.

When the Local Property Tax (LPT) was introduced in 2013, the Institute carried out an extensive public information campaign to support the Government and inform the Irish public and employers about their new LPT obligations.

#### **The Irish Tax Institute – contributing to Ireland's work on global tax reform**

The Institute has contributed significant time and resources to the work of the OECD on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) and its implementation in Ireland. The Institute made 19 submissions to the OECD BEPS consultation process on behalf of Irish business and the tax profession.

Senior Institute delegations travelled for bi-lateral meetings with OECD leaders on both BEPS and issues of concern to Ireland regarding changes to the taxation of the digitalised economy. Institute representatives also attended public OECD meetings in Paris to articulate the concerns of businesses that operate in Ireland.

The Institute has participated in a number of public forums, both in Ireland and overseas, on the integrity and competitiveness of Ireland's international tax regime and has appeared before Oireachtas Committees to provide its perspective and feedback on the OECD and EU tax agenda, including the Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base, global effective tax rates, the EU Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive and US tax reform.

#### **Engineers Ireland – advising on the development of new technical standards**

Engineers Ireland members advise on the development of technical standards across a number of State agencies, including: the National Standards Authority of Ireland, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, the Commission for Regulation of Utilities and Quality and Qualifications Ireland.

The body also responds to Government and EU regulations, policy and initiatives. For example, in 2012, EU legislation mandated that large enterprises must complete an energy audit every four years. To respond to the demand for Energy Auditors, Engineers Ireland is delivering an Association of Energy Engineers Certified Energy Auditor course.

### Case Studies: Continued

#### **CPA Ireland - responding to insolvency issue**

The design and delivery, at short notice, of a programme supporting the training of professionals to become personal insolvency practitioners is a relatively recent example of CPA Ireland supporting State initiatives.

Given the level of indebtedness of many individuals following the recent economic crisis, this was essential to the successful launch of the Insolvency Service of Ireland. Other recent supports include the development of diploma programmes relating to the Companies Act 2014 and the adoption of FRS 100 to 103.

#### **The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland - responding to Government consultations**

The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI) engages with consultations and policy development in relation to housing, planning, fiscal, cultural and legislative matters. The RIAI participates in a wide range of industry bodies including: the Liaison Committee of the Building Industry; the Local Government Management Services Board; the Irish Agrément Board; the Construction Industry Council; and the Construction Industry Standards Committee.



### Case Studies: Continued

#### **The Law Society of Ireland - engaging with Government Departments and agencies**

A key strategic aim of the Law Society is to provide a strong voice in policy debate in order to inform decision-making on matters pertaining to the justice system and law reform. Contributions include:

- participation in consultation and working groups;
- in 2017, over 20 formal submissions to Government Departments and Ministers on legislative and policy reform - in areas of business law, intellectual property and tax law, as well as family and criminal law reform;
- appearances before Oireachtas Committees;
- a dedicated policy and law reform newsletter and microsite.

#### **The Association of Optometrists Ireland - working with the Government in the west of Ireland**

The Association of Optometrists in Ireland worked with various Government Departments to develop a scheme in the west of Ireland to eliminate the waiting list for cataract operations.

#### **The Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland - supporting Government policy**

The member firms of the Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland support Government policy, and the State and its citizens, by providing design excellence for projects in structural, civil, mechanical and electrical engineering and other projects in schools, housing, hospitals, transportation, water and other infrastructure.

#### **The Irish Dental Association - engaging with Irish and international stakeholders**

The Irish Dental Association engages in discussion with MEPs and the European Commission directly and via the Council of European Dentists, where it represents the perspective of the Irish healthcare system as part of the legislative and policy development process at EU level.



### Supporting an inclusive society

The professional bodies are also actively supporting the State in their mission to build an inclusive society through various educational initiatives.

Education is key to creating an inclusive society, particularly where people from disadvantaged backgrounds and underrepresented groups are equipped to participate fully in their communities, the workforce and wider society.



The European Commission<sup>2</sup> highlights that “Equipping people for employment is only part of the picture. Education has an equally important role to play in creating a better society. Well-educated people are less at risk of marginalisation and social exclusion. Effective education is about inclusiveness, ensuring every citizen has an opportunity to develop their talents and to feel part of a shared future.”

Inclusive education is a fundamental principle of our education system, according to *Ireland’s National Skills Strategy 2025*,<sup>3</sup> and the current system is addressing the needs of the wide diversity of children accessing the school system. Meanwhile, “[a] more joined up approach to social inclusion is currently under development to support the inclusion of children from disadvantaged backgrounds and underrepresented groups”.

The professional bodies, through a wide range of education initiatives, have given their support to children and young adults from different backgrounds and have been working to bring new skills and opportunities to those who most need access to such programmes.

<sup>2</sup> Education and Training Monitor, European Commission, November 2015

<sup>3</sup> *Ireland’s National Skills Strategy 2025*, Department of Education and Skills, 2016

### Case Studies: Professional bodies supporting an inclusive society

The **Law Society of Ireland's** Street Law programme equips trainees to teach a legal course to students in Dublin-based DEIS schools. This year, 40 Professional Practice Course 1 (PPC1) trainees provided this course to 500 school students. The course helps students realise the relevance of law for them, and also encourages them to consider the possibility of a legal qualification in their future.

The Access Scholarship Programme aims to assist students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds to gain access to professional legal education. Depending on applicants' individual circumstances, the Scholarship can assist with:

- reduced/waived FE-1 exam fees – up to a maximum of four full sittings,
- access to core texts related to FE-1 exams, through the Law Society of Ireland's library,
- reduced/waived Professional Practice Course fees,
- maintenance funding.

The society's diversity goals, and its corporate social responsibility activities also complement the above initiatives.

The **Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland** partnered with Limerick Institute of Technology on the development of a level 9 apprenticeship titled Senior Quantity Surveyor, and it is also supporting Ballsbridge College of Further Education's level 6 apprenticeship in Real Estate.

Apprenticeship initiatives will help to support the industry by providing opportunities for students from a wider variety of socio-economic backgrounds to enter the profession and will also allow opportunities for re-skilling and up-skilling of professionals from other industries.

The **Irish Tax Institute** launched a third-level scholarship in 2007, which is designed to give financial support to students to enable them to achieve their primary degree in universities such as UCD, TCD, UL, UCC and NUIG. Many of the scholars have gone on to pursue very successful careers in tax.

Ten scholarships have been awarded so far, and the support from the scholarship allowed students not only to access third-level education but also to attain their professional qualification in tax. The Institute is currently supporting four scholars in their degree programmes, in UL, UCC and UCD.

This investment in education and training by the professional bodies is central to building sustainable communities that promote inclusion and offer accessibility and opportunity at a high standard of education and employment.



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