



Minutes of the 446th NESC Council Meeting (in person), 29th Sept 2022 @ 10am

Hibernia Centre, Dublin Castle

Attendance: John Callinan, Liz Canavan, Gerard Brady, Hubert Fitzpatrick, Ian Talbot, Seán Healy, Nat O'Connor, Brid O'Brien, Jerry Mac Evilly, Karen Ciesielski, Caroline Whyte, TJ Flanagan, Damian McDonald, David Hergarty (DBEI), Matt McGann (DoF), Dave Dillon (DSP), Graham Doyle, Diarmuid Torney, Chris Van Egeraat, Colin Scott, Jasmina Behan (DPER) and Barry Vaughan (DoT).

Secretariat: Larry O'Connell, Helen Johnston, Cathal FitzGerald, Damian Thomas, Anne-Marie McGauran, Jeanne Moore, and Edna Jordan.

Apologies: Patricia King, John Enright, Seamus Coffey, Niamh Moore Cherry, John Hogan (Matt McGann attending), Orleigh Quinn (David Hegarty attending), John McKeon (Dave Dillon attending), and David Maloney (Jasmina Behan attending).

- 1. Administration.** The minutes of the June 2022 meeting were agreed. The Chair acknowledged the great service of Patricia King to the Council, the trade union movement and the country.
- 2. Economic Resilience and Vulnerability.** Key issues raised included the framing of the paper; implementing policy solutions (short-termism and the need for focus on medium and long-term policy, lack of implementation, capacity to make changes, the need to gain community buy-in, how to push change without engendering disequilibrium); measuring progress (lack of evaluation, definition of progress, improving measurement, need for investment in our statistical infrastructure); fiscal issues (resilience of the financial system, fiscal stability and debt); enterprises and regions (role of medium-sized enterprises, regional variation in resilience); vulnerability (its dynamic nature, known and unknown vulnerabilities, links between economic and social vulnerability, environmental vulnerabilities); and social dialogue and the capacity of the current social dialogue to adequately identify and address policy problems. The Secretariat will come back with elaborations on these issues.
- 3. Private rental sector.** Issues raised included supply (need to increase supply in this and other housing sectors to meet demographic pressures, how to increase supply with small landlords leaving the sector and a negative financing environment, unintended consequences of regulation, variation between small and large landlord supply); tax treatment of landlords (favourable changes for landlords should be linked to better conditions for tenants, the difficulty of balancing this, more favourable tax treatment for landlords would go against the principle of horizontal equality in income taxation, the need to focus on landlord asset accumulation as well as income, the danger of squeezing out REITS, linking tax treatment to pension provision, problems with Section 23); weaknesses of disadvantaged communities living in the PRS (migrant communities in ghettoised rented accommodation, concern about older people reliant on the PRS, social housing in the PRS is not a good long-term solution but changes in this will take a long time to achieve, and how HAP problems mirror rent supplement problems); energy efficiency (proportion of tenants in energy poverty, danger of decreased supply due to new BER requirements, split incentives to invest in energy efficiency in PRS), and other issues (Ireland is not out-of-line with many EU countries, the PRS cannot be a second class sector to live in, do DAFT statistics on vacancies reflect the true number of properties to rent). The Secretariat will finalise this by written procedure.
- 4. Agriculture and Just Transition Working Group.** An update was provided on the group's work. Issues raised included the data cited, the need for the transition to be effective and fair, fear of the transition, the importance of food production, the impact of the age of farmers on the pace of transition.
- 5. The next meeting will take place on Thursday, 15th December 2022.**