

# Brexit Supports: Scorecard



The **Brexit SME Scorecard** online tool has been designed to stimulate companies into thinking about the key areas that may be impacted in their business because of Brexit and to self-assess their level of preparedness. Using the 'Brexit Scorecard' online tool micro and smaller businesses can self-diagnose whether they are ready for Brexit. By answering a series of questions online under six key business pillars a comprehensive report is automatically generated which serves as a prompt and discussion document for business owner / managers to consider as part of their planning for Brexit. The report provides companies with a benchmark in terms of their level of preparedness against best practice and signposts them to a range of supports, resources and information available via Local Enterprise Offices.

The Brexit SME Scorecard is a starting point to help businesses to begin preparing a strategy and ready their teams in terms of planning and shining a spotlight on some of the key operational areas that may be exposed.

You can access the Scorecard at [www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie) or [www.prepareforbrexit.ie](http://www.prepareforbrexit.ie)

For further information please contact your Local Enterprise Office – [www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie)

# Brexit Supports: Mentoring



The **Brexit Mentor Programme** is designed to support LEO clients identify key areas of exposure because of Brexit and assist Owner / Managers in developing robust strategies to address issues and maximise potential opportunities. The Programme matches up the knowledge, skills, insights and entrepreneurial capability of experienced business practitioners with small business owner/managers who need practical and strategic one to one advice and guidance on planning for the impact of Brexit. The mentor contributes independent, informed observation and advice to aid decision making.

All applications for mentor assistance are dealt with individually and must be preceded by the business completing the Brexit SME Scorecard to assess the key needs of the business to determine the most essential mentoring objectives.

## Who Qualifies?

The Brexit Mentor Programme is open to both new and existing businesses located within the LEO area.

## The Role of Mentor

Mentors provide Enterprise Ireland and LEO Clients with advice and guidance based on their own commercial experience. They are not consultants. Mentors are CEOs, senior executives, entrepreneurs & founders with international, commercial export business development experience. They volunteer to advise and guide our client companies, with the key objective of accelerating growth and building client capability.

Their role is to:

- Listen, advise and provide direction to support analysis & assessment of impacts
- Help the promoter identify potential risks and opportunities of Brexit
- Discuss solutions and innovative ways of improving business activity
- Help with the decision-making process and provide support to progress actions
- Share experience and knowledge
- Advise on scenario planning, situation assessment and impact evaluation [contingency plans to sustain and grow business].

# Brexit Supports: Mentoring



## Areas of mentor advice in terms of the impact of Brexit typically include:

<b>Business Strategy</b>	Advise businesses to <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Undertake Situation Analysis,</li><li>• Develop new strategies to address implications to current business strategies, priorities and operations models,</li><li>• Implement Action Plans.</li></ul>
<b>Financial Planning</b>	Advise businesses to <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examine the impact of currency fluctuations,</li><li>• Review supplier costings,</li><li>• Review existing customer pricing models</li><li>• Assess impact of additional administration costs such as customs, tariffs, tax etc. to supply chains,</li><li>• Identify new capital requirements,</li><li>• Establish equity and credit needs.</li></ul>
<b>Sales &amp; Marketing</b>	Advise businesses to <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assess the impact on current sales and marketing plans,</li><li>• Undertake customer needs analysis to determine effects on key customers,</li><li>• Undertake competitor analysis,</li><li>• Evaluate changes to value proposition.</li></ul>
<b>Market Research</b>	Advise businesses to <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish requirement to develop New Markets,</li><li>• Examine opportunities for New Product Development.</li></ul>
<b>Intellectual Property &amp; Compliance</b>	Advise businesses to understand <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Impact of new product standards and regulations,</li><li>• Are there potential consequences to the validity of trademarks [EU trademarks], designs and possibly copyrights?</li></ul>
<b>Supply Chain Management</b>	Advise businesses to understand <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are the potential impacts of:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• regulatory changes,</li><li>• increased compliance checks,</li><li>• new documentation/licenses application procedures,</li><li>• rules of origin principles.</li></ul></li></ul>

# Brexit Supports: Lean for Micro



**Lean for Micro** is designed to encourage Local Enterprise Office clients to adopt Lean business principles in their businesses to increase performance and competitiveness. Applying LEAN principles to your business will help to build resilience so that you are better positioned to cope with the challenges and opportunities of Brexit. Across the world business owners and managers are using LEAN tools and techniques to address competitiveness issues within their business and build the capability of their people to identify issues and improve their operations.

LEAN is about being effective and efficient - doing things quicker, better, cheaper... together. Lean strives to stamp out waste and to continually improve.

LEAN requires that individuals, teams and the entire organisation remain continuously focused on the customer, adopting a practical approach to increasing value to the customer by the relentless elimination of every form of unnecessary waste.

LEAN is a way of thinking and acting that enables people to drive the organisation forward. It increases capability and capacity, and is the catalyst for innovation.

LEAN helps ensure flexibility, responsiveness, efficiency, innovation and by continuously listening to the customer allows companies to compete and win on merit.

The Local Enterprise Offices recognise the importance of the development of management skills for people managing their own micro or small enterprises. It also recognises the very substantial improvements in productivity and profitability that can result from the application of LEAN principles in a business and aims to support managers in effectively embracing LEAN methodologies in their businesses.

The LEO Lean for Micro business programme helps to:

- Identify issues and potential improvement areas
- Provide support to implement change
- Achieve savings and improvements in capability and capacity to deliver

Under the programme companies can avail of 5 days' consultancy from a Lean Expert [Qualified Practitioner] from the EI approved lean consultancy panel who will work with the company to introduce lean principles, undertake a specific cost reduction project and assist the company in benchmarking performance.

For further information please contact your Local Enterprise Office –  
[www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie)

# Brexit Supports: Co-Innovate Programme Nurturing ideas – Growing success



In an ever changing and increasingly competitive marketplace, innovation is integral to business growth and success. With Co-Innovate, you can learn about the benefits of innovation, identify opportunities for growth in your business and create a vision to make it happen.

The Co-Innovate programme is a cross border research and innovation [R&I] initiative funded under the European INTERREG VA Programme. The programme brings together key development agencies to deliver a programme aligned with each government's strategic priorities. In Northern Ireland key elements of Co-Innovate will be delivered by Enterprise NI and its member Local Enterprise Agencies. In the **Border Region of Ireland** this support will be delivered by the **Local Enterprise Offices in Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan and Louth.**

It is widely recognised that innovation is a critical driver to competitiveness and growth. The aim of this initiative is to increase business expenditure on research and innovation and grow the number of firms innovating. The Co-Innovate programme targets SMEs in the manufacturing and tradable services sector, providing education and capability development support tailored to company needs.

There are Five Strands to the programme:

- **Strand 1** – An SMEs first formal engagement with the Co-Innovate programme will be to undertake a newly developed R&I diagnostic toolkit the '**Innovation Ready Reckoner**'. This diagnostic will assess your company's current position in terms of innovation. A series of workshops delivered by Innovation Experts familiar with the challenges facing SMEs will be delivered. These workshops are designed to demystify innovation and help you understand how it can drive your business forward.
- **Strand 2** – Successful companies will undertake a detailed **Business Status Review**. After a selection process, companies will progress to a comprehensive Innovation Audit.
- **Strand 3** – Enterprise-specific action plans will be designed for each company progressing to Strand 3. These action plans will concentrate on developing Research & Innovation capabilities. Up to 10 days intensive mentoring will be provided to address specific challenges.
- **Strand 4** – Companies will have the opportunity to engage in a cross-border R&I partnership involving their company, a research institute and an intern over a 12-month period;
- **Strand 5** – Sector-specific networks and partnerships involving enterprises and research institutes will be established.

For further information please contact your Local Enterprise Office –  
[www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie)

# Brexit Supports: The Enterprise Europe Network



The Enterprise Europe Network helps businesses innovate and grow on an international scale. It is the world's largest support network for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with international ambitions. It assists Irish companies to make the most of business and technology opportunities in the EU and other major global markets

The Local Enterprise Offices through their partnership with the Enterprise Europe Network, can support SMEs in becoming more knowledgeable and competitive in global markets, leading to greater international business opportunities. We can help you do business in Europe and beyond. Through our network you'll get the specialist support you need.

The Enterprise Europe Network is active in more than 60 countries worldwide and brings together 3,000 experts from more than 600-member organisations – all renowned for their excellence in business support. Enterprise Europe Network Member organisations include chambers of commerce and industry, technology centres, research institutes and development agencies. All members of the Enterprise Europe Network are linked through powerful databases, designed to assist in sharing knowledge and sourcing technologies and business partners across all Network countries.

The Enterprise Europe Network can support you to:

- Innovate
- Access Finance
- Get worldwide advice
- Find Trusted Partners
- Move into New Markets
- Grow and Scale

EEN is co-financed under "COSME" – an EU funding programme designed to encourage the competitiveness of European enterprises. Services are tailored to SME's but are also available to all other businesses, universities and research centres.

To access your local EEN advisor please contact your Local Enterprise Office – [www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie)

# Brexit Supports: Technical Assistance for Micro-Exporters



The **Technical Assistance for Micro-Exporters (TAME)** grant supports LEO clients to explore and develop new export market opportunities. This scheme is a matched-funding opportunity with up to **€2,500** available to eligible businesses. Under the scheme costs incurred when investigating, researching and accessing export markets can be part funded.

## Typical costs eligible for support include:

- Participation at trade fairs and shows covering Trade Show Exhibitor costs including rental/fees relating to space/stands;
- Participation at international trade networking events organised through the Enterprise Europe Network;
- Development of specific Marketing Materials aimed at exploring new export markets;
- Translation, e.g. of existing material (booklets, webpages, etc. for export markets);
- Development of export related websites;
- Investigation of new internal or external processes to develop export business, e.g. new business model or the carrying out of non-regulatory technical requirements;

## Projects eligible for support include:

- Enterprises not employing more than 10 people;
- Enterprises located within the geographic location of the Local Enterprise Office
- Enterprises operating in the commercial sphere
- Enterprises must demonstrate a market for their proposed product/service
- Enterprises engaged in manufacturing or internationally traded services
- Innovative businesses with prototype products
- Enterprises must not have received any funding for this proposal from any other source

# Brexit Supports: Technical Assistance for Micro-Exporters



## Grant Terms:

- The maximum grant allowable under a Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters' Grant is €2,500 and the maximum support level is 50% of eligible costs.
- Applications must be made prior to any expenditure being incurred
- Payments will be made to approved projects on receipt of proof of payment of all qualifying and approved expenses.
- Successful applicants should consider using an Enterprise Ireland Mentor to develop an export/marketing plan
- Clients cannot receive more than one Technical Assistance for Micro Exporter's Grant per year.

To apply for Technical Assistance for Exporters' Grant or for further information please contact your Local Enterprise Office – [www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie)

# Brexit Supports: Trading Online Voucher Scheme



The **Trading Online Voucher Scheme** (ToV) supports small businesses to trade online and boost their sales. This scheme is a matched-funding opportunity with up to **€2,500** available to eligible businesses.

This is an initiative under the Government's National Digital Strategy, designed to support small Irish businesses to trade online by offering them training coupled with a financial incentive to develop their trading online capability. Irish consumers spend around €850,000 per hour online, 24 hours a day, up to 70% of which goes overseas. Companies that remain offline are missing out on the opportunity to be part of Ireland's growing digital economy.

## Why avail of the Voucher?

You can grow your business with help from this Government grant scheme, designed to assist small businesses. As well as financial assistance of up to €2,500 it offers you training and advice to help your business trade online. Participating in this scheme can make the process of trading online much easier for you.

Making informed decisions is vital for all business, so the free help and training provided by your local enterprise office puts you in a position to decide what is best for your business.

Cutting the cost of developing your online trading capacity by up to 50% can make the investment very affordable.

You can participate in information sessions designed to cover various topics, including developing a website, digital marketing, social media for business and search engine optimisation. The information provided is impartial and will help you decide on what trading online options, are right for your business with further information on them available through your Local Enterprise Office.

To qualify for the scheme, businesses must have:

- no more than 10 employees;
- less than €2m in turnover;
- be trading for at least 12 months and
- be in the region of the local enterprise office to whom they are applying.

[additional T&Cs apply].

For many businesses, the question is not whether to trade online, it's how to start. Thousands of small businesses have found answers to that question and a helping hand to take that step through the **Trading Online Voucher Scheme**.

Contact your Local Enterprise Office for further information –  
[www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie)

# Brexit Supports: Microfinance Ireland



**Microfinance Ireland** offers loan funding up to €25,000 to both new and existing small businesses in the Republic of Ireland. The **Local Enterprise Office** works with you to apply for loans which can be used to fund start-up costs, working capital, purchase of stock, equipment, machinery, vehicles, business expansion etc.

Microfinance Ireland are there to support small businesses who may be having difficulty in accessing finance for either working capital or business expansion from Banks and other commercial lending providers.

If you are a small business based in the Republic of Ireland, with fewer than 10 employees and turnover up to €2m, you can apply for unsecured business loans of €2,000 to €25,000 for commercially viable proposals. Whether your business is set up as a Sole Trader, Partnership or a Limited Company, you are eligible to apply.

And that's not all! You can apply for an MFI loan through your Local Enterprise Office and avail of a 1% discount off the standard interest rate

## Key Facts:

- Loans range from €2,000 up to €25,000
- Loan terms from 3 up to 5 years
- Fixed monthly repayments
- Businesses from all sectors eligible to apply – [certain exceptions]
- Loans packages include:
  - Start-Up – loans to get your business up and running
  - Cash-flow – loans to support cashflow and day to day running of your business
  - Expansion Loans – available to develop and expand your business
  - Small Loans – for start-up and existing businesses with low funding requirements

# Brexit Supports: Microfinance Ireland



## Next Steps:

Your Local Enterprise Office can arrange a meeting for you with a Finance Mentor to help assist you:

- Complete the Application form
- With Business Advice
- Your Business Plan
- Submit your loan application to Microfinance Ireland

Microfinance Ireland works in partnership with the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs). The LEO will provide helpful assistance with the microfinance loan application process and assist businesses with training and guidance in preparing business plans along with mentoring support to help sustain the business and initial evaluation of the quality of business proposals for a loan application.

Microfinance Ireland is a not for profit lender established to deliver the Government's Microfinance Loan Fund Scheme under the Action Plan for Jobs.

Please note: Applications are processed by Microfinance Ireland and use their lending criteria. The Local Enterprise Office does not influence or assist in the decision process and cannot over-turn a decision made by the Microfinance Ireland.

Contact your Local Enterprise Office for further information – [www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie)



**Microfinance**  
**Ireland**  
Small Business Loans

# Brexit Supports: Training and Management Development



The Local Enterprise Office is the first stop shop for information and advice whether you are starting a business or growing a business. To assist the small business community in meeting the challenges of the Brexit, LEOs provide a wide range of high-quality training supports which are tailored to meet specific business requirements.

Early planning and preparation is a critical factor in a company's ability to respond to the business challenges that Brexit presents. The Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) provide an extensive range of training to local business communities to address these issues including:

- Brexit Information Seminars & Events
- One-to-one business consultations
- Scenario Planning Workshops
- Management Development Programmes

Contact your Local Enterprise Office for their latest training programmes and events schedule.



Oifig  
Fiontair  
Áitiúil

Local  
Enterprise  
Office

# SUPPORTS & SERVICES



*...Is spéis linn do ghnó*  
*...Let's talk business*



Ireland's European Structural and  
Investment Funds Programmes  
2014-2020  
Co-funded by the Irish Government  
and the European Union



European Union  
European Regional  
Development Fund



## Advising... Supporting... Developing...

- > We provide direct financial supports to micro businesses\*. Micro Enterprises are businesses with 10 or less employees.  
\*Eligibility criteria apply.
- > We advise on a range of alternative funding options available.
- > We offer business information, advisory services and enterprise support.
- > We deliver high-quality training to meet the needs of your business including; Start Your Own Business, Managing Your Business e.g. Marketing, Sales, Financial Management, Strategy and Business Planning.
- > We mentor you and your business with experienced experts.
- > We guide you to the services most relevant to support the growth and development of your business.
- > We give you advice on local authority regulations, planning, accessibility, environment, procurement, and other issues affecting your business.
- > We connect you with appropriate State resources for your business, including relevant agencies, such as:
  - Department of Social Protection: Enterprise Supports
  - Microfinance Ireland: Business Loans
  - Revenue: Seed Capital Schemes
  - Education and Training Boards: Business Courses
  - Skillnets' Training: Networks and Courses
  - Credit Review Office: when your bank has refused credit
- > We create progression pathways for high-potential companies to Enterprise Ireland.
- > We advise on local property solutions for start-ups and business expansions.
- > We organise key enterprise events.
- > We facilitate effective business networking.
- > We promote entrepreneurship education in the local community.
- > Our website **[www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie)** gives you access to online information about our supports and services.