Regulatory Reform in Ireland Should Help Sustain Growth

Following Ireland’s remarkable economic performance in the 1990s, regulatory reform is helping to manage the consequences of fast growth and to sustain growth into the future.

Ireland is among several OECD countries to have requested a review by the OECD of its national regulatory practices and domestic regulatory reforms. This review is now complete and will be presented to the media by Sally Shelton-Colby, OECD Deputy Secretary General, on Tuesday 24 April at 10 a.m. at the Press Center, Government Buildings, Merrion Street, Dublin 2, Ireland.

Regulatory reform in Ireland began later than in many countries, but is now moving ahead on a broad front. Reform is opening up important infrastructure and policy bottlenecks to further growth, promoting efficiency improvements that can help manage inflation, and establishing a more competitive and flexible economy that can innovate, adapt and prosper as the sources of its current prosperity change.

Yet the reform agenda is still long. Bottlenecks in physical infrastructure are constraining growth, as are labour shortages, and public sector capacities. Weak competition in key sectors is a risk to future performance. While recognising the substantial progress made in recent years, this report calls for a more coherent and determined approach to regulatory reform.

The review presents an integrated assessment of regulatory reform in framework areas such as the quality of the public sector, competition policy and enforcement, and market openness. It also contains chapters on sectors such as telecommunications, electricity, gas, and legal services, and an assessment of the macroeconomic context for reform. The policy recommendations present a balanced plan of action for both short and longer term based on best international regulatory practices.

The report will be published on the OECD’s Online Bookshop and available to accredited journalists through the OECD’s password-protected website at 10 a.m. on 24 April 2001. Journalists in Asia/Pacific time zones will be allowed advance access, on request, to an electronic version of this report by e-mail under embargo 12 hours ahead of release time. Journalists in other time zones will be allowed advance access to an e-mail version of the report 4 hours ahead of release time. E-mail versions of the report will be sent on request only. Requests to receive the report by e-mail under embargo or to obtain a password to access the website should be sent by fax or e-mail to Nicole Le Vourch (nicole.levourch@oecd.org) or Sonia Primot (sonia.primot@oecd.org) in the Media Relations Division (fax: 33 1 45 24  80 03).

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