



# Submission by Chambers Ireland to the Revenue Commissioners regarding the Statement of Strategy 2023-2025

February 2023

Chambers Ireland is an all-island business organisation with a unique geographical reach. Our members are the Chambers of Commerce in the cities and towns throughout the country – active in every constituency. Each of our member Chambers are central to their local business community and all seek to promote thriving local economies that can support sustainable cities and communities. We welcome the opportunity to contribute on behalf of our Network to the Revenue Commissioners' Statement of Strategy 2023-2025.

The ability of the Revenue Commissioners to respond flexibly to the threats posed by COVID-19 was exemplary. The flexibility that the service delivered was fundamental to the success of our national response to the economic threats caused by the pandemic. This ability to respond and adapt to challenges posed was laudable, and we look forward to seeing such flexibility being imbedded a core feature of the new Strategy. Throughout the crisis, novel policies, such as the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme, Stay & Spend, and Debt Warehousing, were administered effectively and efficiently. The ability to evolve goal-orientated strategies was essential to ensure that these schemes and provisions were actioned without delay, despite the challenges the pandemic presented, was commendable and will strengthen the institution of the Revenue Commissioners into the future.

Chambers Ireland agrees with the core values (respect, professional, collaboration, agility, and integrity) of the Strategy Statement of 2021-2023. We accordingly support these being carried over to the Strategy Statement for 2023-2025. In addition, as a business organisation with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals at the heart of our policy priorities, we would like to see Revenue's Carbon Reduction Roadmap given particular emphasis in the new Strategy. This will play an important role in delivering on our environmental commitments as set out in the Government Climate Action Plan 2023.

As members of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), many of our members help facilitate cross-border trade and are tasked with issuing trade documentation such as Certificates of Origin. We additionally provide export information services on an ad-hoc basis and are

proponents of regulatory environments which accommodate open, free trade. Given that trade is a cornerstone of our operations, we would like the Strategy Statement to include an emphasis on implementing customs controls in a manner that supports trade with our global partners, while managing compliance risk and tackling illegitimate trade in an effective manner.

In our view, a digital transition is paramount to achieving an optimised, efficient service which will also help the State meet its Climate Goals. In terms of efficiency, this will be pivotal in the areas of process automation, digitalisation and personalisation of services. It will also be important considering the role the Revenue has in relation to our National Data Infrastructure. However, we will also need to ensure that cybersecurity is adequate at a national level when considering digitalisation. It is critical that an adequate cybersecurity strategy is in place at a national level in order to protect critical or sensitive data.

Related to technology integration is the ability to share data. It would be of significant benefit if our data holdings could be leveraged effectively. This would expedite processes effectively while ensuring the service optimises the administrative burden on taxpayers. In line with our earlier point regarding the flexibility of the Revenue Commissioners during COVID-19, effective data-sharing will be pivotal to successfully deal with challenges caused by unprecedented geopolitical events which may hinder the operation of the service.

Finally, at a high level, collaboration should feature as a general principle in the new Strategy Statement. It is important that Revenue considers the views of stakeholders when informing policy. Similarly, we support Revenue's collaboration with other departments of the civil service; such as with the Department of Finance where it provides analysis on the adaptation of the State's taxation framework.