



Department
for Business
Innovation & Skills

Enterprise Bill: summary factsheet

The Enterprise Bill will cement the UK's position as the best place in Europe to start and grow a business, and will make sure everyone who works hard has the opportunities to succeed.

The Enterprise Bill contains measures to:

- set-up a Small Business Commissioner;
- extend the Business Impact Target to include regulators;
- support a positive shift in the way regulation is delivered by regulators through the Growth Duty and Regulators' Code ("the Duties");
- simplify the Primary Authority scheme;
- introduce of a target for the total number of apprentices working in public sector bodies;
- prevent misuse of the 'Apprenticeship' term;
- introduce a legal obligation for insurance claims to be paid within a reasonable timeframe;
- allow the Valuation Office Agency to share business rates information about properties and ratepayers with local government;
- reform the Business Rates Appeals system;
- update the Industrial Development Act 1982; and
- cap exit payments for public sector workers.

Small Business Commissioner

The Bill contains measures to:

- establish a statutory Small Business Commissioner to empower small businesses to resolve disputes and avoid future issues through general advice and information;
- enable the Small Business Commissioner to handle complaints by small business suppliers about payment matters arising with larger businesses which they supply;
- support the government's ambition to make the UK the best place to grow a business;
- contribute to ensuring the business environment in the UK helps small businesses to thrive and grow, to help support the UK economy;
- facilitate better understanding among small businesses of where to seek support when they have issues or disputes with other businesses;
- help small businesses to take action to deal with disputes more quickly and cheaply than going to court; and
- promote culture change on late payments.

Business Impact Target

The Bill contains measures to:

- extend the Business Impact Target to include the actions of national regulators;
- provide a wider focus for the government to reduce regulatory burdens on businesses, enabling them to free up resources and boost productivity;
- ensure that there is even greater transparency around the impact of regulation on business;
- enable regulators to contribute to the government's deregulation target of £10bn of regulatory savings during the current Parliament; and
- provide greater incentives for regulators.

Growth Duty and Regulators' Code ("the Duties")

The Bill contains measures to:

- require regulators to produce an annual performance report setting out the effect that the Duties have had on the way they have exercised their functions;
- require regulators to obtain the views of business on the effect that the Duties have had, and to include them in the annual performance report; and
- require a regulator to provide information that a Minister may request from time to time relating to the effect that the Duties have had on the way they exercised their functions and the views of affected businesses.

Primary Authority

The Bill contains measures to:

- widen access to more small businesses and simplify access to advice for trade association members;
- enable national regulators to support Primary Authority partnerships alongside local authorities and to issue advice and guidance to businesses;
- reduce the uncertainty faced by businesses working across the four UK nations as a result of increasing devolution through introducing mechanisms to help regulators recognise advice issued in other nations;
- extend the scheme to other regulatory areas which stakeholders have asked to be brought into scope;
- help businesses by removing regulatory burdens, reducing compliance costs through improved regulatory advice and reducing time and costs caused by inconsistent enforcement; and
- provide small businesses with easier access to tailored advice with reduced administration.

A target for the number of apprentices in public sector bodies

The Bill contains measures to:

- increase the number of apprenticeships in the public sector;
- provide a power for the Secretary of State to set targets for public sector bodies in relation to the number of apprentices they employ in England;
- require the public bodies to have due regard to any targets set on them and to report annually on progress against meeting those targets;
- increase the number of apprenticeships in the public sector; and
- help meet the government's commitment to deliver 3 million apprenticeships within this Parliament.

Preventing misuse of the ‘Apprenticeship’ term

The Bill contains measures to:

- create an offence for a person, in the course of business, to provide or offer a course or training as an apprenticeship if it is not a statutory apprenticeship;
- strengthen and protect the reputation of the apprenticeship brand for training providers, employers and apprentices;
- protect the reputation of training providers, employers who offer statutory apprenticeships and apprentices who join those apprenticeships, by maintaining their standards and ensuring that statutory apprenticeships are not confused with lower quality training;
- ensure a “level playing field” and fairness in the market to the benefit of training providers, employers and individuals; and
- give employers more confidence that they are investing in high quality apprenticeships.

Introduction of a legal obligation for insurance claims to be paid within a reasonable timeframe

The Bill contains measures to:

- introduce into every contract of insurance a requirement on the insurer to pay sums due within a reasonable time;
- ensure that the law incentivises insurers to pay within a reasonable time, and to promote payments within a reasonable time;
- give policyholders a legal right to enforce prompt payment of insurance claims; and
- provide for limited compensation to be payable by an insurer where a policyholder suffers additional loss because of the insurer's unreasonable delay in payment.

Valuation Office Agency to share business rates information about properties and ratepayers with local government

The Bill contains measures to:

- reduce the administrative burden in the business rates system by creating an information gateway between the Valuation Office Agency, local government and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, which will allow for the legal and safe transfer of business rates information; and
- make sure ratepayers no longer have to give largely the same information to local government as they do to the Valuation Office Agency.

Reform of the Business Rates Appeals system

The Bill contains measures to:

- benefit businesses by making the system more transparent and easier to navigate;
- ensure that businesses can be confident that their valuations are correct and that they are paying the right amount of business rates; and
- introduce a reformed appeals system built around three stages – ‘check, challenge, appeal’.

Updating the Industrial Development Act (IDA) 1982

The Bill contains measures to:

- introduce a new section enabling the Secretary of State to make grants or loans towards the cost of improving electronic communications facilities in any area of the UK; increase the project threshold for providing financial assistance to businesses under section 8(8) of the IDA from £10 million to £30 million, before a resolution of the House of Commons is required;
- enable the government to support the roll-out of communications networks and services across Great Britain, including remote areas, for commercial purposes; and
- enable the government to provide more timely business support and reduce uncertainty in providing valuable investment to UK businesses.

Public Sector Employment: Restrictions on Exit Payments

The Bill contains measures to:

- stop six-figure pay outs to the best paid public sector workers by placing a limit on the value of exit payments individuals can receive (for example a cash lump sum or employer-funded contribution to early access to pension);
- cap all types of payments related to exits, including voluntary and compulsory redundancy and severance payments. This will apply broadly across the public sector as defined by the list of public sector bodies set down by the Office of National Statistics (although some bodies may be exempted); and
- enable a waiver to be made in exceptional circumstances subject to approval by the relevant Minister.