

Microfinance Ireland

Report on The Microenterprise Loan Fund Scheme As of the 30th September 2023



An Roinn Fiontar,
Trádála agus Fostaíochta
Department of Enterprise,
Trade and Employment



Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil 
Local Enterprise Office

Overview of the Microenterprise Loan Fund Scheme

The Microenterprise Loan Fund, administered by Microfinance Ireland was established as part of the Government's Action Plan for Jobs and forms part of a suite of financial programmes provided through the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment to assist businesses of different sizes and at different stages of development across all industry sectors.

The purpose of the Fund is to provide loans of €2,000 up to €25,000 to Micro-enterprises, both startups and existing businesses with viable businesses, who cannot obtain funding through traditional sources. (Microenterprises are defined as businesses with less than 10 employees and /or Turnover <€2m

Fund Performance Summary: 1st October 2012 to 30th September 2023

As at end September 2023, Microfinance Ireland has been in business for over 10 years. In this time, it has delivered the following key results:

- ✓ **10,638 Applications received.**
- ✓ **€82.0M Value of loans approved**
- ✓ **10,339 Net jobs supported in 4,979 micro-enterprises.**
- ✓ **47% Approval rate**
- ✓ **€73.4M Value of loans drawn**
- ✓ **4,458 Loans drawn.**
- ✓ Average Loan size of **€16.4K**
- ✓ **81%** approvals granted to businesses employing **3 people or fewer.**
- ✓ **42%** of approvals granted to start-ups (in business for less than 18 months)
- ✓ **Wide geographic coverage:** 22% of loans granted to Dublin, 78% to the rest of Ireland

Successful applicants by sector YTD 2023

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE; REPAIR OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES (20%)	MANUFACTURING (11%)
OTHER SERVICES (10%)	PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC & TECH ACTIVITIES (9%)
ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD ACTIVITIES (8%)	HUMAN HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK ACTIVITIES (7%)
CONSTRUCTION (7%)	ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT SERVICES. ACTIVITIES (7%)
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION (5%)	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION (4%)
EDUCATION (4%)	AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY & FISHING (3%)
TRANSPORT/STORAGE (3%)	OTHER (1%)

Assessing applications efficiently:

- ✓ **10,585** Applications processed to full assessment.
- ✓ **53** Applications in progress at reporting date
- ✓ Endeavour to process complete applications within **10 days.**

Promotion and performance of the Fund during 1st January 2023 to 30th September 2023

Key performance indicators YTD 2023

- ✓ **767** Applications received.
- ✓ **€5.1M** Value of loans approved
- ✓ **459** Jobs supported in **344** micro-enterprises.
- ✓ **46%** Approval rate
- ✓ **€4.8M** Value of loans drawn
- ✓ **311** Loans drawn.
- ✓ Average Loan size of **€14.9K**
- ✓ **92%** approvals granted to businesses employing **3 people or fewer**.
- ✓ **40%** of approvals granted to start-ups (in business for less than 18 months)
- ✓ **Wide geographic coverage:** 22% of loans granted to Dublin, 78% to the rest of Ireland.

Key performance indicators Qtr. 3 2023

- ✓ **254** Applications received.
- ✓ **€1.5M** Value of loans approved
- ✓ **130** Jobs supported in **101** micro-enterprises.
- ✓ **39%** Approval rate
- ✓ **€1.6M** Value of loans drawn
- ✓ **97** Loans drawn.
- ✓ Average Loan size of **€15.2K**
- ✓ **95%** approvals granted to businesses employing **3 people or fewer**.
- ✓ **46%** of approvals granted to start-ups (in business for less than 18 months)
- ✓ **Wide geographic coverage:** 22% of loans granted to Dublin, 78% to the rest of Ireland.

During the 3rd quarter, MFI continued to engage in a range of Marketing and PR initiatives.

Radio Advertising:

We ran a local and national radio advertising campaign in April 2023 in order to drive awareness and generate lending opportunities. We will run another radio campaign in October.

Digital Advertising /social media:

We continue with ongoing promotion through our social media channels, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn to maintain strong brand awareness with digital advertising campaigns primarily focussed on Google and Facebook.

During the 3rd quarter, Microfinance Ireland conducted a survey of those who registered on our website but had not yet applied for a loan. We are using the feedback received to tailor our ongoing marketing practices.

Events/Webinars/Sponsorships:

We continue our representation at in person events including presenting at a number of local Chamber of Commerce events to broaden awareness. We have also hosted a number of webinars outlining the funding options both on a stand-alone basis and in collaboration with the Local Enterprise Office network.

We have continued to be represented at the Building Better Business organised by the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment.

During Q3 we supported the National Startup Awards 2023 and the Emerging New Business category in the Small Firms Association National Small Business Awards.

Performance:

Q3 was in line with budget but marginally behind 2022. For the year-to-date application numbers are trending c. 5% ahead of 2022 with the value of applications at a similar level to 2022.

Our approval rate year to date is running at c. 45% which is slightly lower than 2022 and reflects an increase in the number of applications received that had to be withdrawn due to incomplete documentation.

Applications from Start Ups accounted for c. 50% of all applications and c. 38% of business funded in the period.

In the year to date, applications from Female business owners accounted for 34.2% of all applications which is similar to the % of Female applicants in 2022.

Microenterprise Loan Fund Scheme Analysis

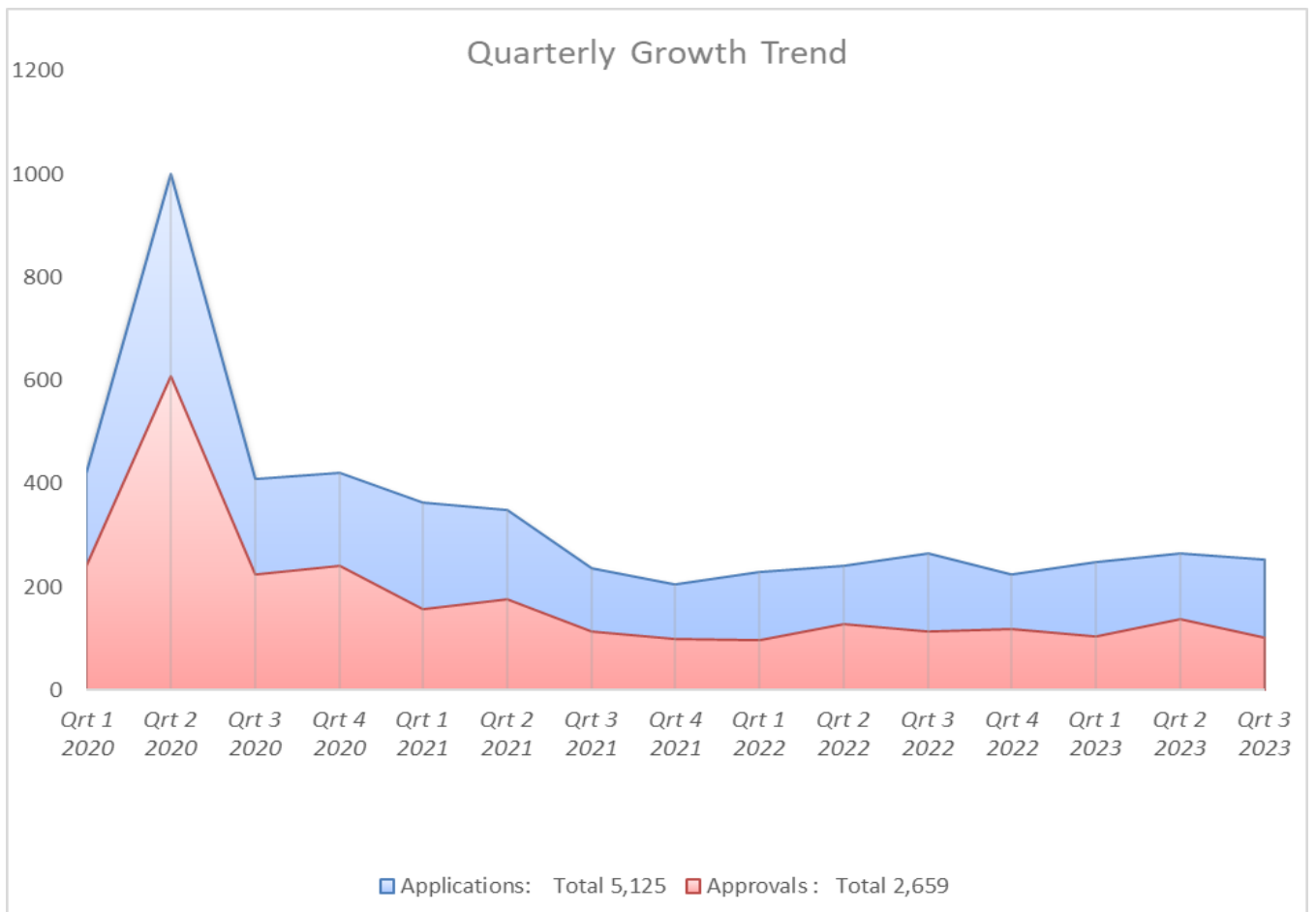
January 2020 – September 2023

	2020	2021	2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Total 2023
Total Applications No.	2,202	1,153	959	248	265	254	767
Total Applications Amt.	€51.794M	€19.837M	€16.873M	€4.225M	€4.568M	€4.014M	€12.807M

	2020	2021	2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Total 2023
Applications Processed	2,212	1,171	961	225	263	261	749
Approved	1,229	545	458	105	138	101	344
Approval Rate	56%	47%	48%	47%	50%	39%	46%
Approved (€'000)	€27.432M	€8.537M	€6.931M	€1.515M	€2.095M	€1.538M	€5.148M
Loans Drawn	1,114	547	401	86	128	97	311
Loans Drawn (€'000)	€24.805M	€8.783M	€6.004M	€1.289M	€1.911M	€1.584M	€4.784M
Loans Declined	581	409	335	65	63	84	212
Loans Declined (€'000)	€12.299M	€7.194M	€6.073M	€1.088M	€1.183M	€1.468M	€3.739M

Quarterly Growth Trend

Application and approval activity levels by Quarter are displayed in the graph below:



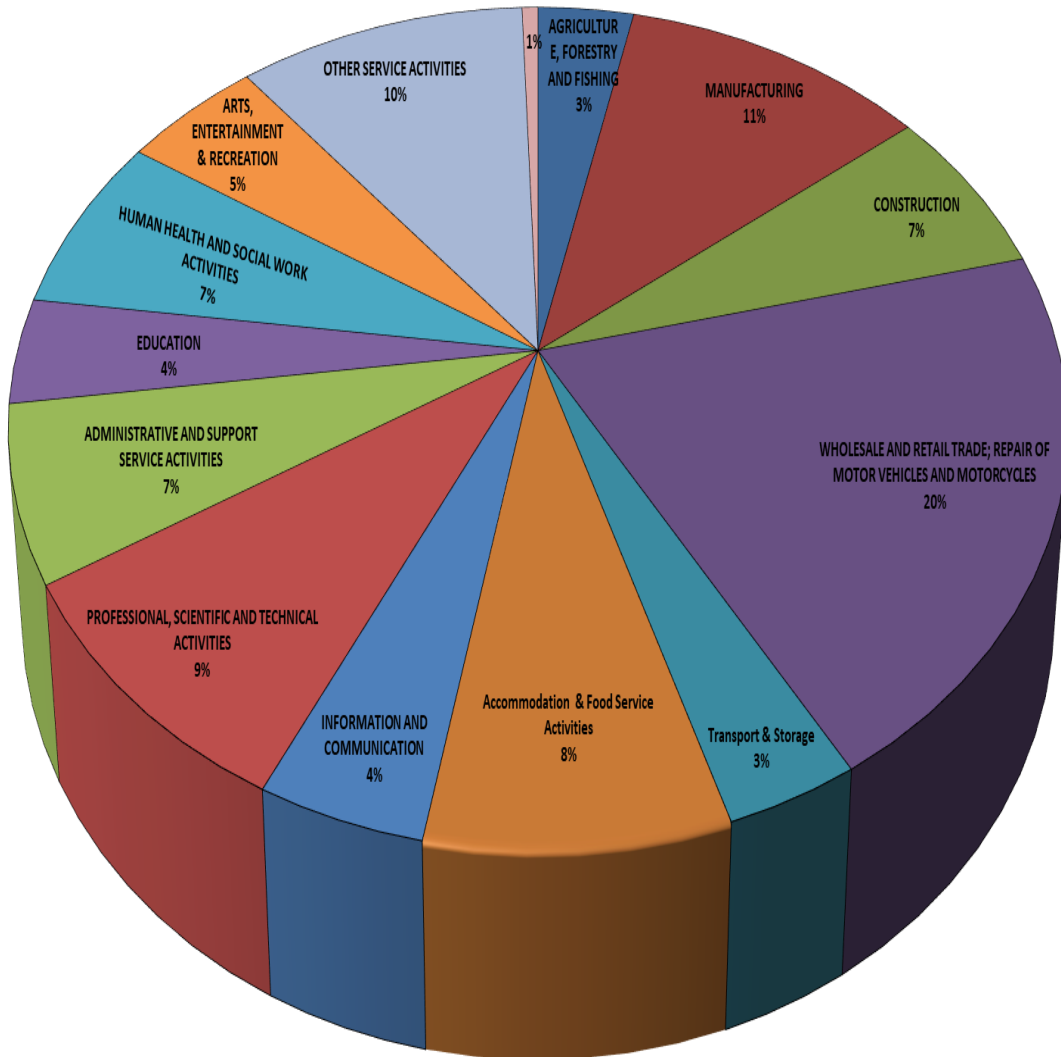
Number of Loans by Sector

Number of Loans							
	2020	2021	2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Total 2023
Wholesale and retail trade; Repair of motor	253	97	96	25	27	18	70
Accommodation and food service activities	168	62	41	7	13	7	27
Construction	110	46	38	8	10	5	23
Manufacturing	93	52	50	15	13	10	38
Other services	139	56	42	9	11	16	36
Professional, scientific & tech activities	81	42	39	7	13	11	31
Art, entertainment and recreation	57	26	22	4	8	5	17
Administration & support ser. Activities	54	28	25	9	12	2	23
Transport/storage	36	32	19	4	5	3	12
Information and communication	54	14	22	4	3	8	15
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	45	32	16	2	8	2	12
Human, health and social work	56	28	29	10	7	7	24
Education	44	22	14	1	8	5	14
Others	39	8	5	0	0	2	2

Values of Loans by Sector

Value of Loans							
	2020	2021	2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Total 2023
Wholesale and retail trade; Repair of motor	6,696	1,594	1452	398	489	261	1148
Accommodation and food service activities	3,836	1,134	724	99	196	124	419
Construction	2,416	757	620	125	163	107	395
Manufacturing	2,164	859	759	221	194	204	619
Other services	1,777	649	575	91	102	165	358
Professional, scientific & tech activities	1,737	616	503	100	158	122	380
Art, entertainment and recreation	1,296	332	324	54	118	89	261
Administration & support ser. Activities	1,165	393	251	139	192	45	376
Transport/storage	754	535	363	54	98	55	207
Information and communication	1,416	280	367	61	50	121	232
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	1,062	602	283	34	107	46	187
Human, health and social work	1,064	397	482	124	77	92	293
Education	936	279	158	15	151	90	256
Others	1,113	110	70	0	0	17	17

Loans by Sector YTD



Approvals by Size of Borrower

Loans were approved to micro-enterprises with the following number of jobs at time of approvals:

No. of Employees	2020	2021	2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Total 2023
1	473	297	289	74	94	70	238
2-3	401	173	118	21	30	26	77
4-5	177	43	31	5	4	2	11
6-9	178	29	19	5	10	3	18
10			1	0			0
Total No. of Loans	1229	542	458	105	138	101	344

Approvals by Loan Size

From 1st January 2020 to 30th September 2023, loans were granted in the following size range.

Loans by Size							
Euro	2020	2021	2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Total 2023
≤50k	288						
≤25k	306	183	122	23	38	32	93
≤20k	145	65	79	13	22	15	50
≤15k	164	119	100	27	34	18	79
≤10k	164	83	71	27	21	17	65
≤5k	162	95	86	15	23	19	57
Average Loan Size	€22.3K	€15.6K	€15.1K	€14.4K	€15.2K	€15.2K	€14.9K

Purpose for which Microfinance Loans were granted.

The following data is captured at the date of Drawdown's. This data is only available from Qtr. 1 2021

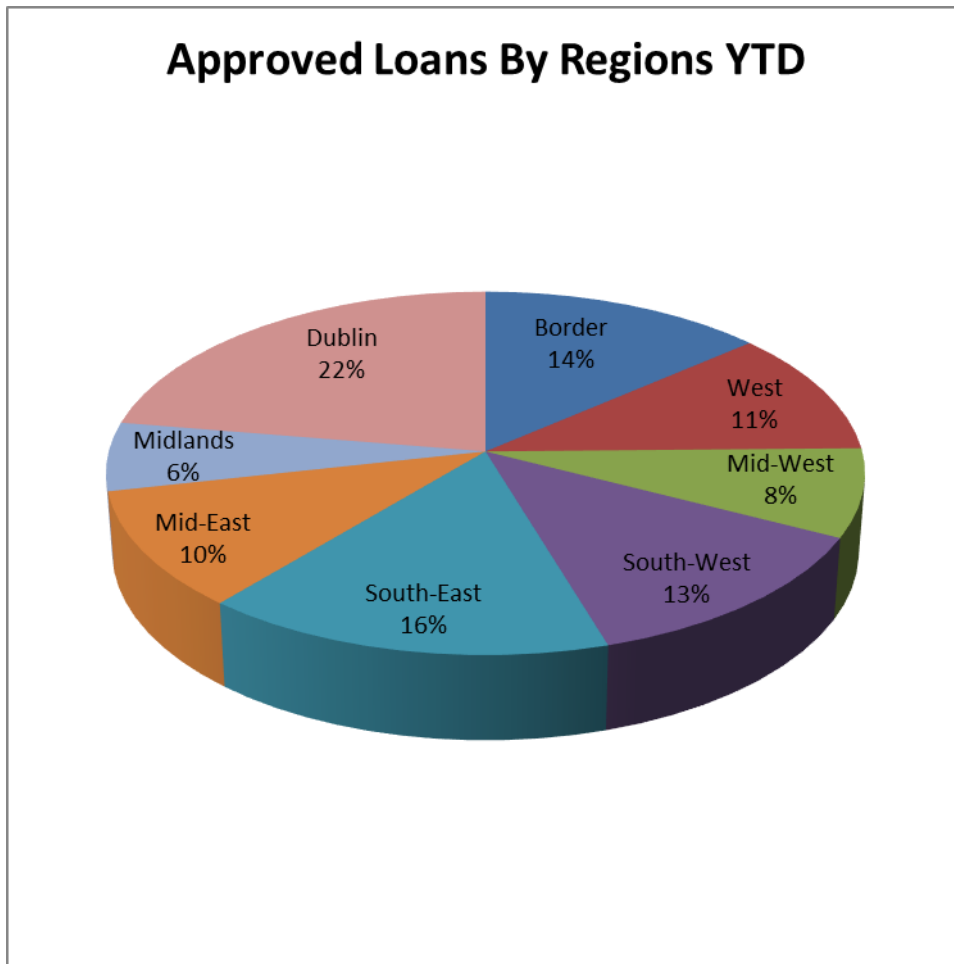
Number of Loans							
Purpose	2020	2021	2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Total 2023
Working Capital		181	136	27	32	25	84
Tangible and Intangible Assets		207	138	16	52	38	106
Mixed Financing for tangible, intangible assets and working capital		159	127	43	44	34	121

Value of Loans							
Purpose	2020	2021	2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Total 2023
Working Capital		2,890	1,980	402	458	365	1,225
Tangible and Intangible Assets		3,448	2,129	298	785	639	1,722
Mixed Financing for tangible, intangible assets and working capital		2,445	1,895	589	668	580	1,837

Geographical Analysis of Approval – from 1st January 2023 to 30th September 2023

Geographical Spread							
County	Received YTD	Approved Q1	Approved Q2	Approved Q3	Approved Q4	Approved YTD	Approved Amount 2023 €000
Dublin	191	24	31	22		77	1,155
Cork	58	9	10	8		27	434
Galway	50	10	10	5		25	370
Kildare	38	4	6	2		12	177
Meath	37	6	7	5		18	227
Wexford	35	2	4	7		13	205
Tipperary	29	4	4	6		14	218
Clare	27	5	6	4		15	229
Kerry	25	5	8	4		17	256
Wicklow	24	3	2	1		6	61
Waterford	24	2	5	4		11	178
Mayo	22	2	4	2		8	130
Louth	22	5	6	2		13	208
Donegal	22	4	2	7		13	206
Limerick	19	1	4	7		12	190
Westmeath	18	2	4	3		9	155
Kilkenny	17	2	6	3		11	176
Sligo	15	1	4	1		6	48
Carlow	15	1	3	1		5	54
Roscommon	15	2	3			5	85
Cavan	14	3	3	1		7	118
Laois	13	3	1	2		6	60
Monaghan	12	2	1	2		5	58
Longford	11	1	3			4	39
Offaly	8	2	0			2	40
Leitrim	6	0	1	2		3	71

Approval by Business Sector January 2023 to September 2023



Demographical Analysis

Approved Applications	2020	2021	2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Total 2023
Start Up	233	214	191	36	57	46	139
Existing	996	331	267	69	81	55	205
Female	340	168	166	33	45	46	124
Male	889	377	292	72	93	55	220
No. of Ltd Co.	620	179	170	36	47	45	128
No. of Unltd Co.			1				
No. of Sole Traders	567	350	273	67	91	55	213
No. of Partnerships	42	16	14	2		1	3
Youth (Aged 18-25)	11	33	9	1	5	0	6

Source of Loan Referrals

Channels	2020	2021	2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Total 2023
LEO	523	249	220	60	64	54	178
Direct	666	285	224	44	72	44	160
Bank	25	9	12		1	2	3
Údarás	1	1	0				0
ILDN		1	2	1	1	1	3

Appeals Process

The purpose of the Microfinance Ireland appeals process is to support an applicant who wishes to have a review of an MFI decision to declining a loan application.

MFI will appoint an Appeal Assessor to carry out an independent review of the original loan decision. The assessor who was involved in the original decision will not be involved in the appeals process. The outcome of this review is communicated in writing to the applicant within 15 business days of receipt of the written appeal. The credit decision of the Appeal Assessor is independent of MFI management and is final. There have been 19 appeals in 2023 and 3 of these cases have been approved on appeal. These figures are included in the YTD approval figures.

Complaints

No complaints were received by the business in Quarter 3 2023.

Business Failures

YTD 2023, 68 businesses of our borrowers have failed. While any business failure is regrettable, it was anticipated from the outset that a not insignificant proportion of projects supported by the Microfinance Ireland might fail. It is a feature of microfinance (given the higher risk profile) that even with strong business supports, failures will occur.

On an ongoing basis, Microfinance Ireland, in conjunction with other agencies, works with every customer at risk to minimise business failure.