

# Manufacturing in Ireland 2023

Unlocking Ireland's manufacturing potential for the next manufacturing evolution

Schneider Electric case study 2023



## Leading the way in digital transformation in manufacturing

**“We’re constantly innovating to develop smart digital products and solutions that will help our customers to manage assets, increase performance and maintain reliability, while also reducing their energy consumption, costs, and carbon footprint.”**

### A strategy of innovation and growth

Chris Collins, Ireland Country Managing Director at Schneider Electric, speaks about how the company is supporting industries in digital transformation and energy management.

The process of digital transformation is happening across a wide range of industries globally today, and none more so than in manufacturing. Digitisation has the power to reshape how products are produced, how services are delivered, and how net-zero goals can be achieved.

One such company leading the way in digital transformation is Schneider Electric. As a global leader in digital automation and energy management, Schneider Electric helps customers develop and execute sustainable strategies and business models that meet their net-zero ambitions.

Chris Collins says, “Schneider Electric has had a presence on the island of Ireland since 1984 and in 1994, we acquired a company called APC and its Galway manufacturing facility. So, we have a long history in Ireland. We currently employ approximately 400 people across Ireland with offices in Kildare, Galway, Cork and Belfast. And our customers range from commercial buildings, healthcare and life sciences to data centres, renewable energy sources, food and beverage, and manufacturing.”

According to Chris, there are many benefits to digitising manufacturing operations, “We’re constantly innovating to develop smart digital products and solutions that will help our customers to manage assets, increase performance and maintain reliability, while also reducing their energy consumption, costs, and carbon footprint.

**We understand the importance of smart solutions for manufacturing because we use them ourselves in our own manufacturing plants and facilities.**

“For example, our fully digitised site in India has achieved a 30% reduction in energy costs and expects full return on investment in two years!”

Chris adds, “Another benefit of digitising is less downtime for manufacturing facilities. For example, when we apply our AI solutions to businesses’ manufacturing processes, we can give them an insight into where they’ll have issues or breakdowns in the future. So that helps to minimise downtime because they’re able to address issues before they happen.”







## Thriving environment

While Schneider Electric is a French multinational, and Chris is originally from the US, he strongly feels Ireland is a favourable hub for growing a business and has a resilient manufacturing industry. “Ireland has such a rich business environment. The education of Ireland’s workforce is second- to-none. Ireland has a network of Technological Universities that are developing a skilled workforce, and in places like Cork and Galway, there is already a strong focus on industrial and manufacturing-related degrees.

**“I think the country has done a fantastic job of creating the right workforce, the right training, and the right tax incentives. Ireland is also on-track to become carbon-neutral by 2050, making it an even more exciting place for businesses to develop.**

Regionally, Ireland’s global positioning has proved to be an asset, and the IDA has done a fantastic job of recruiting foreign direct investment into the country.”

Chris continues, “There is a thriving manufacturing community in Ireland. In addition to Schneider Electric’s operations and facilities, our Maynooth and Galway sites are surrounded by manufacturers and specialist engineering companies covering different sectors, from medtech to semiconductors and more. These businesses contribute heavily to local employment, attracting skilled workers and helping to improve the local economy in the process.”



## Support

However, Chris highlights there are also challenges, “One big challenge, not just in manufacturing but in all industries, will be based around our need to keep building out infrastructure, making sure that we have power availability, and clean, renewable power for our data centres, manufacturing centres, and our hospitals. We need some planning reforms that will allow us to move faster on infrastructure build-out.”

Chris says the Irish manufacturing community will also need support and funding from the Government, if they’re going to meet their commitments laid out in Ireland’s climate action plan to achieve net zero by 2050.

Particularly as Schneider Electric’s own research revealed that 85% of Irish business leaders believe the current energy crisis will hinder their CO2 emission reduction goals.

“Our approach is in line with Ibec’s own policies to support Ireland’s energy security and infrastructure, while investing in new technologies. We also acknowledge the need to ensure that manufacturers can absorb and mitigate rising energy costs at a time when they’re facing exceptional price increases and competitive pressures.

“At Schneider Electric, we’ve identified a direct link between lower energy use and decreased Co2 emissions. We’ve committed to carbon neutrality in our operations by 2030, and that starts with the digitisation of our own factories. By incentivising manufacturers to digitise and monitor their energy usage, we will see more and more of them lowering their emissions. This, in turn, will lower their overall energy costs and provide a useful boost to the bottom line in these challenging times.”

**Chris Collins**

**Ireland Country Managing Director at Schneider Electric**



## About Ibec

Ibec is Ireland's largest lobby group and business representative. We campaign for real changes to the policies that matter most to business. Policy is shaped by our diverse membership, who are home grown, multinational, big and small and employ 70% of the private sector workforce in Ireland.

With 39 trade associations covering a range of industry sectors, 6 offices around Ireland as well as an office in Brussels. With over 300 employees, Ibec communicates the Irish business voice to key stakeholders at home and abroad. Ibec also provides a wide range of professional services and management training to members on all aspects of human resource management, occupational health and safety, employee relations and employment law.

## Ibec Trade Associations

### Representing your industry

Representing your industry Ibec understands that every business is different. There are the general issues which face all businesses operating in Ireland and then there are the issues specific to individual sectors or categories of the economy. To reflect the distinct interests of all our members, there are 39 business associations within the Ibec group. Ibec's trade associations identify and champion issues of importance to their respective members and provide great knowledge sharing, networking, and training for all these industries.

Ibec's trade associations are strong brands in their own right and those that represent the manufacturing sector include:

- BiopharmaChem Ireland
- Irish MedTech Association
- Technology Ireland
- Property Industry Ireland [Building Materials Federation]
- Engineering Industries Ireland
- Food Drink Ireland
- Drinks Ireland

**#ManufacturinginIreland**  
**[www.Ibec.ie/manufacturinginireland](http://www.Ibec.ie/manufacturinginireland)**



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