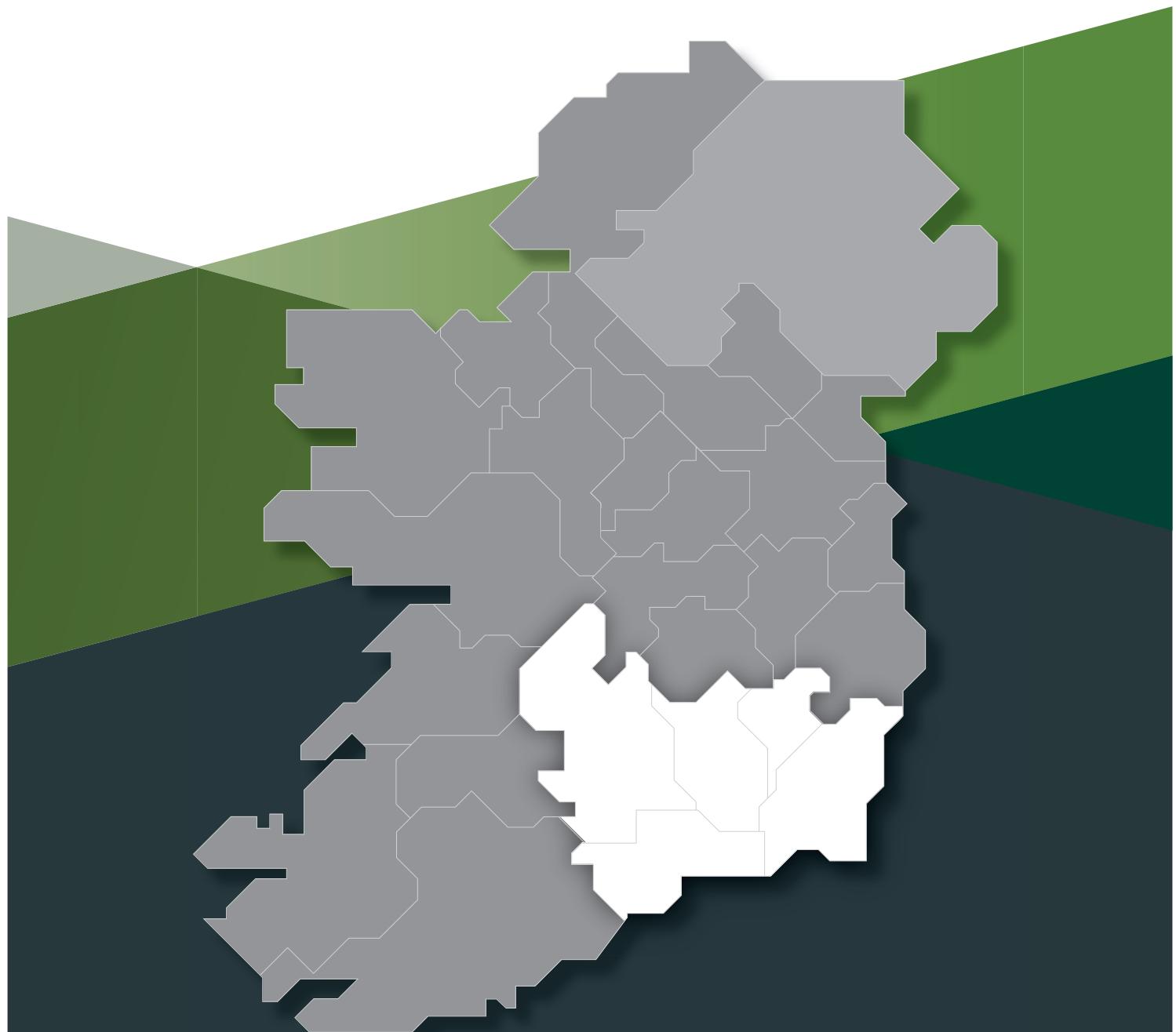




Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

SOUTH-EAST

Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 – First Progress Report



An initiative of the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation

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1. Introduction

The South-East Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 is one of nine regional enterprise plans launched in early 2019 by the Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation. The Plan was developed by regional stakeholders, and as a 'bottom-up' initiative, it complements national enterprise policies and programmes. The Plan is a 'live' agenda that allows new initiatives to be considered in addition to the strategic focus it currently contains.

The principle underpinning the Regional Enterprise Plans is collaboration between regional stakeholders on initiatives that can help to realise each region's enterprise development potential, adding value to the core activities being delivered by the enterprise agencies, LEOs and other bodies in the region.

Implementation of the Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 for the South-East is being delivered by the South-East Regional Enterprise Plan Steering Committee, which is chaired by Frank O'Regan. Alan Quirke and Richard Hickey of the South-East Development Office provided project management support to the initiative. The South-East Steering Committee has met on two occasions during 2019, and as part of the implementation process has formed smaller Working Groups to drive delivery of actions or groups of actions.

The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation has oversight of the nine Plans nationally, and in September 2019 facilitated collective engagement between the Chairs of the Steering Committees with the Minister for Business, Enterprise and innovation. This meeting provided an opportunity for updating on progress, sharing good practice, and identifying areas for potential inter-regional cooperation.

Climate Action Plan 2019 has tasked each of the Regional Steering Committees with considering 'Just Transition' as part of their ongoing agenda. On 8th November 2019, Just Transition was included as an Agenda item for the first time by the South-East Steering Committee and this facilitated a discussion on the topic. Just Transition will remain as a standing item on the Steering Committee's agenda.

The South-East Regional Enterprise Plan is focused around 5 Strategic Objectives to positively influence enterprise and job creation in the region. The South-East Plan is looking to enhance the existing environment for enterprise activity and company growth; establish the region as a place for talent and investment; develop a regional engagement strategy; make the region 'learning region' and develop the region that is attractive to both domestic and international visitors.

This Year 1 Progress Report details of the progress that has been made to date on the South-East Plan. It also reports on the outcomes from the Enterprise Agencies and LEOs' core activities in the region during the year. Of particular significance for the region in 2019 is that is close to €2.5 million (includes shared projects) has been secured across the South-East under the Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF) (detailed in Appendix 1).

Finally, overall employment creation and levels of unemployment continue on a positive track in the South-East. Since the first Regional Action Plan for Jobs was introduced in Q1 2015, 26,700 more people are in employment in the South-East, and the region currently has an unemployment rate of 6.8 percent, down from 11.7 percent in Q1 2015, which means that the region has still to reach the targets set out in relation to employment growth and the reduction in unemployment since 2015.

2. Enterprise Agencies and LEO activities in the South-East in 2019

In order to achieve the 2020 employment targets and maintain strong regional enterprise and job creation performance, the Strategic Objectives and collaborative actions identified for the South-East region in the Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 are complemented by the ongoing core activities of the Enterprise Agencies (IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland) and the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs).

Representatives of the Enterprise Agencies and the three LEOs are active members on the REP Steering Committee in the South-East and will continue to work with regional stakeholders on key regional enterprise ecosystem strengthening initiatives in the region in 2020.

The Enterprise Agencies each have corporate strategies which include national level objectives as well as frameworks for bespoke regional activities that support regional enterprise investment and development potential and leverage regional assets and opportunities.

IDA Ireland is currently completing work on its new five-year strategy which will focus on attracting foreign direct investment across all regions. Enterprise Ireland launched its regional plan 'Powering the Regions' in 2019, and in 2020, will commence the preparation of a new corporate strategy, the successor to 'Build Scale and Expand Reach 2017-2020.'

Over the course of 2019, the enterprise agencies and the LEOs have achieved impact in a number of areas as they continue to roll out their core activities across all of the regions. The following summarises some key results and developments during the year.

Enterprise Ireland Activities

During 2019, Enterprise Ireland published a new plan 'Powering the Regions' to accelerate growth throughout Ireland's regions. The plan is built on four key pillars, each of which support the nine Regional Enterprise Plans.

4 Key Pillars

1. Maximising growth of Enterprise Ireland clients in the regions
2. Strengthening regional infrastructure to maximise future growth of Irish enterprise in the regions
3. Support entrepreneurship in all regions
4. Work in collaboration to deliver regional growth

In 2019 16,971 new jobs were created by clients of Enterprise Ireland in all regions with 66% of this growth delivered outside of Dublin. Enterprise Ireland clients employed a record high of 221,895 during the year.

€24m was invested in 127 startups with 42% of these located outside Dublin.

During 2019, Enterprise Ireland ran a third competition for projects under the Regional Enterprise Development Fund. Minister Humphreys announced in January 2020 that under the fund 26 projects across every region were approved funding of over €40m and these will make an important contribution to the delivery of the Regional Enterprise Plans. This builds upon nearly €60m already approved under the Fund.

In December 2019, Ministers Humphreys and McHugh announced €4.6m in government funding under the Enterprise Ireland Regional Technology Clustering Fund to establish 12 technology clusters in partnership with the Institutes of Technology across the country.

In 2019, the Local Enterprise Offices also worked successfully with their clients to assist 162 companies transfer to Enterprise Ireland to help them scale.

In 2019, there were 19,868 people employed in 459 EI supported companies in the South-East, up 2.5% from 2018.

Recent EI announcements include:

- Carne – 250 jobs in Wexford

LEO Activities

In 2019, the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) continued to be the 'first stop shop' providing entrepreneurs with advice, guidance, financial assistance and other supports available to assist with starting or growing their own businesses, with 31 offices spread throughout the country the LEOs are truly operating at the coalface of job creation and regional development in Ireland, providing a 'signposting' service for all the relevant supports available through the state.

The LEOs offer grant aid to businesses employing less than 10 people in manufacturing and internationally traded services sectors which have the potential to develop into strong export entities. They approved 291 priming grants to new start-ups, 80% of the approvals were to companies regionally.

To assist in their remit of developing regional employment, the LEOs also offer 'soft' supports by way of training (85%) mentoring (75%) and targeted programmes such as LEAN for micro (90%)*. Participation in these has been successfully targeted by the LEO teams in each of the regions.

In particular, the LEO's have awarded €2.5m in funding to 16 successful applicants through the LEO Competitive Fund, applications were open to individual LEOs; collaborative projects between two or more LEOs; and LEOs working with other local groups like Chambers, Community Enterprise Centres, Education or training bodies, Local Authorities or colleges. All projects are aligned with the strategic objectives in the Regional Enterprise Plans and the ambitions in Future Jobs Ireland.

The LEOs supported 38,535 jobs across 7,400 client companies in 2019 of which there was an additional 148 companies outside of the Dublin region. 3,149 net jobs were created during the year and 78% of these were produced outside of the Dublin region with an even distribution across the regions. This is the 6th year of continuous employment growth for the LEOs since their inception in 2014. LEOs saw increases across all supports in 2019 including training, mentoring and funding. The number of those trained in 2019 was up 6.4% last year with 37,306 availing of training through their Local Enterprise Office. There was also an 10.5% increase in mentoring assignments completed, with 10,756 clients benefitting from LEO mentoring.

Over €20million was invested in LEO clients and start-ups last year, up from €18.2million in 2018.

There were an additional 360 net jobs created in the South-East in LEO supported companies in 2019.

*Shows the regional percentage of the overall excluding Dublin.

IDA Activities

IDA Ireland is the State's inward investment promotion agency. The mission of the agency is to partner with multi-national companies to win and develop foreign direct investment, providing jobs for the economic and social benefit of Ireland. Regional development is a key pillar of IDA's strategy.

Supporting the execution of the Regional Enterprise Plans across the country through our Regional Manager network and through working with strategic FDI stakeholders, has helped support and drive collaborative Regional enterprise objectives.

IDA Ireland concluded strategy, 'Winning: Foreign Direct Investment' 2015-2019 in December 2019. The Strategy set out ambitious targets to support the delivery of its mission to win and develop Foreign Direct Investment in Ireland. These targets included a focus on;

- Winning 900 new investments for Ireland
- Supporting clients in creating 80,000 new jobs
- Growing market share and helping maximise the impact of FDI investments
- Driving greater balanced Regional Development

For the first time, ambitious investment targets were set for each region. IDA targeted a minimum 30% to 40% increase in the number of investments for each Region outside Dublin.

Following the conclusion of 'Winning: 2015 - 2019, the key highlights and impact for Regional Development in Ireland are as follows;

- 516 investments overall were won across Regions over the past five years
- 50% uplift in investments for Regions recorded over the course of the five-year strategy
- Every Region delivered the five-year Strategy target of a 30-40% uplift in investments on previous Strategy
- 54,868 jobs were created outside of Dublin over the past five years
- 33,118 additional direct jobs (net) on the ground in Regions
- 57% of total FDI employment is now located in Regional locations

To deliver on these ambitious targets IDA Ireland has;

- Worked with public bodies and the private sector on regional action plans
- Worked with existing clients to retain and strengthen their presence in each region
- Increased Global Business Services and High-Tech Manufacturing investments
- Aligned IDA business sectors with regional strengths to develop sectoral ecosystems
- Worked more closely with EI and its client companies to identify synergies, enhance clusters, participate in site visits and maximise benefits for the region through the Global Sourcing Program
- Delivered property solutions in designated regional locations
- Increased IDA Ireland's regional footprint to adequately support the regional strategy

In addition to direct employment and skills transfer, IDA Ireland's client companies have a hugely positive effect on the local economy with over eight jobs being created for every 10 jobs in an FDI company. 50% of the €5.7bn in annual capital expenditure by IDA client companies occurs outside of Dublin. These investments have been won despite the demographical challenges that exist and international trends of greater urbanisation.

IDA Ireland is committed to playing its part in the economic development of Ireland's regions. However, winning investments is a challenge and will require a continued collaborative effort by all national and regional stakeholders.

Regional locations must continuously demonstrate the capability to deliver on a number of exacting criteria which generally inform the location decisions of multinationals.

An assessment of investments delivered for regions since 2015, would confirm the strategic importance of the following key criteria in actually influencing the investment decision;

- Critical mass in population
- The ability to attract and develop appropriate skills
- The presence of Third Level Institutes
- The existence of clusters of companies in specific industry sectors
- Regional Infrastructure
- Regional Place Making Strategies
- Availability of high spec standard manufacturing and commercial office properties

To support the delivery of IDA's current strategy and the attraction of investments into different parts of the country, a €150m property investment plan was announced in 2015. IDA Ireland's approach of developing strategic sites and developing advanced buildings has proven to be hugely successful. In 2019, IDA Ireland continued its building programme with the design and construction underway of advance buildings in Sligo, Dundalk, Athlone, Waterford, Galway, Monaghan and Limerick.

IDA Ireland is currently completing work on a new five-year strategy. This strategy will take account of the changing nature of work and the impact of technology on specific sectors. Profound changes are occurring in the world of work and this is already reflected in the jobs being created by the IDA Ireland client base. We can see an increasing complexity in the roles being created, technology skills becoming ubiquitous across roles, increasing demand for business professionals and a fall in the number of low-skilled jobs including back office support and basic manufacturing. This transition is likely to impact the nature and type of roles across the regions of Ireland.

Building on the success achieved to date, IDA will continue to collaborate with all stakeholders and parties in the regions to realise the economic potential and ambition of Ireland's regions under the Regional Enterprise Plans to 2020.

In 2019, the South-East has 70 IDA supported companies employing 12,213 people, up 1.5% from 2018.

Recent IDA announcements include:

- Grandpad – 75 jobs in Wexford
- Allstate Sales – 100 jobs in Waterford
- The Agora Companies – 135 jobs in Waterford
- Opus Funds Services – 100 jobs in Wexford
- AB Agri – 50 jobs in Kilkenny
- Emerald Contact Centre – 200 jobs in Waterford
- Security Risk Advisors – 52 jobs in Kilkenny
- ARTesyn Biosolutions – 50 jobs in Waterford

3. South-East Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 - Progress Report

SOUTH-EAST STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1:

Enhance the existing environment for enterprise activity and company growth; and build greater resilience into the regional economy.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:

Establish the South-East as a place of choice for talent and investment and market the region as such.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3:

Develop a regional engagement strategy that aligns with the Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) and highlights the critical infrastructural developments required to enhance the economic potential in the South-East.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4:

Make the South-East a 'learning region' with education, knowledge generation and exchange, and innovation as central activities that allow all to play a role in the economic, social and cultural development of the region.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5:

Develop a region that is attractive to both domestic and international visitors with a sense of place and connected tourist amenities.

2019 Highlights



An industry led engineering cluster ‘Engineering the South-East’ was formed and launched and a Chair was appointed.



An analysis of the regional economy “South-East: Economy at Glance” providing data on cost of living in the region was published.



www.irelandsoutheast.com has been launched which captures the stories of the businesses and people who are successful and also showcases the clusters of strength that the region has.



There was an increase from 32 participants in 2018 to 65 participants in 2019 in the EXPLORE programme.



Work commenced preparing the South-East Greenway which secured funding of €13m. The Bilberry to Waterford Ferrybank Greenway extension was also successful with €2.5m of funding secured.



Suir Blueway which includes 53km of walking cycling and watersport trails opened in May 2019.

Detailed Action Updates

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

1

Enhance the existing environment for enterprise activity and company growth; and build greater resilience into the regional economy.



Action 1:

Position the South-East as a region with formalised and vibrant economic industry-led clustering thus encouraging more employees/businesses to locate and relocate here.

Working Group Members:

Industry led with Ireland South-East Development Office and the enterprise development agencies (IDA, EI, LEOs); Local Authorities, Chambers, HEIs, ETBs, successful EI REDF projects and the relevant research centres in the South-East.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & is continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Sectoral ecosystems will be mapped in order to increase awareness of the South-East's economic strengths to attract and grow new investment, businesses and attract talent.
- Best practice template for regional cluster creation and governance to be developed.
- Appropriate sources of funding and industry leaders to be identified.
- Implementation of a branding and communications plan to deliver the key message of a South-East region with vibrant economic clusters.

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

- Crystal Valley ICT cluster continuing to promote the South-East as a region of strength for the ICT sector including hosting a successful careers event held in July in Waterford.
- An industry led engineering cluster 'Engineering the South-East' was formed and launched with the backing of key stakeholders including EI, IDA, Higher Education providers, and the Regional Skills Forum. Michael Carbery, Head of Innovation & Development Programmes with Keenan (Alltech Farming Solutions Ltd) has been appointed Chair. The cluster will focus activities on three main areas: skills; promotion and communications and innovation and received funding under the Regional technology Clustering Fund.
- A regional Financial Services cluster is in the early stages of meeting and forming the basis for establishing an organised cluster. Funding has been set aside by the five county councils to assist the formation of this cluster in 2020.
- The supports and resources for each sectoral ecosystem continue to be enhanced: Kinetic labs will provide science-based companies with lab space for product and process R&D; 3DWIT at SEAM will offer additive manufacturing training programmes to industry in the region; Insurtech Network Centre supports the development of the insurance and financial services sector.

- Three funding applications from the region were submitted for Enterprise Ireland's Regional Technology Clustering Fund.
- Funding applications were also submitted to Enterprise Ireland's Regional Enterprise Development Fund that would further enhance the sectoral ecosystem if approved.
- The branding and marketing of the South-East as a region with vibrant economic clusters is now much enhanced with the launch of www.irlandsoutheast.com which presents 6 clusters of strength: Engineering; Life Sciences; Financial Services; ICT; Agri; and Creative.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Work will continue to support and enhance the existing clusters, 'Crystal Valley Tech' and 'Engineering the South-East'. This will include developing bespoke careers events and continuing the engagement between industry and the education and training providers through the Regional Skills Forum.
- The formation of the Financial Services cluster will be progressed with a Chair and a cluster manager to be appointed in 2020.
- Discussions to begin with key stakeholders around the opportunity to form a cluster for the Life Sciences sector.
- Appropriate sources of funding will continue to be sourced to enhance the sectoral ecosystem and strengthen the resources and supports offered to companies in each industry.
- Depending on the results of funding applications submitted in 2019, work will begin on embedding those projects into the existing regional ecosystem.

Action 2:

Explore the potential for current employees as well as entrepreneurs and SMEs to work entrepreneurially with multinational enterprises and large indigenous businesses in the region to identify challenges and solutions to their business processes, product and service offerings, leveraging the existing enterprise support activity in the region.

Working Group Members:

ISEDO, SEBIC, SE LEOs, EI, IDA, Industry, Chambers, HEIs, Research centres, NDRC@Arclabs and Regional incubation spaces

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- All stakeholders to agree an outline for the project and a way forward at the beginning of the project Secure participation of a number of MNEs and Irish owned large enterprises in an audit of existing and likely challenges
- Mapping of potential opportunities and actual cross-over between these challenges and existing capacity and capability in the South-East
- Potential funding sources identified and project underway

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

- Based on initial stakeholder discussions at the outset of this action it was decided that for the action to progress effectively funding would be required.

Funding for this action was applied for to the European Union's Structural Reform Support Programme. The support requested would seek to work with key private and public stakeholders in the region to undertake a regional case study of intrapreneurship, to identify characteristics of successful intrapreneurs, understand obstacles and develop an implementation-focused workplan with key stakeholders which will seek to boost this activity in the region. Having a workplan to boost the levels of intrapreneurship will increase the opportunity for innovation and diversity in firms and widen the range of export products and markets. This will increase the competitiveness of companies in the region, combat regional economic disparity, and provide resilience against future economic shocks such as Brexit.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

If funded, the intrapreneurship project in 2020 will consist of:

1. Preparation and Research I – (Deliverable: Initial Scoping Report)
 - » Writing of project plan.
 - » Desk research on regional, national and EU context.
 - » Identification of key stakeholders and initial engagement.
2. Research II (Deliverable: Detailed Research Findings Report)
 - » Seminars and exchanges with best practice case studies across EU.
 - » Interactive workshops focus groups and stakeholder meetings.
3. Initial Diagnostic (Deliverable: Report)
 - » Comparing companies in the region with no identified intrapreneurs with companies who have successfully fostered intrapreneurs
4. Action Plan (Deliverable: Development of an Action Plan)
 - » Identification of specific actions and required policy support instruments and structures to address challenges facing intrapreneurship.
 - » Delivery of test interventions via focus groups and agencies
 - » Development of an intrapreneurship action plan with an associated toolbox for companies and agencies.
5. Evaluation & Dissemination (Deliverable: Evaluation Report)
 - » Support in ex post evaluation of the action plan after 1 year.
 - » Dissemination of learnings nationally and across EU.

Action 3:

Develop a Smart Region initiative that uses technology as a vehicle for regional cohesiveness and enhanced impact in support of sustainable, coherent and inclusive economic development across the South-East.

Working Group Members:

CEDRE, WIT; ISEDO; Local Authorities, Ireland South-East Development Office, Local authority broadband officers, Enterprise Ireland, IDA, HEIs, Chambers of Commerce, Crystal Valley Tech, Teagasc, Regional Technology Gateways, incubators and accelerators, research groups, and the South-East Regional Skills Forum.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- The setting up of an integrated, collaborative and cooperative South-East Smart Region working group that includes a balanced combination of relevant rural and urban stakeholders.
- The publication of South-East Smart Region Joint Action Plan.
- The submission of proposals to Project Ireland 2040 and Horizon Europe – the next research and innovation framework programme to secure funds to implement the South-East Smart Region initiative.
- The commencement of the implementation of the South-East Smart Region initiative in 2020.
- Regional applications to the Disruptive Technologies Innovation Fund.

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

Since the publication of the South-East Regional Enterprise Strategy in Q1 2019, CEDRE (WIT) has performed a lot of research and analysis on the concept of Smart Region. The difficulty is that currently there are very few published actuations of the Smart Region concept in Europe. Therefore, the development of the Smart Region concept for the South-East has been based on research and analysis of Smart Cities, and more recently, on Smart Villages.

Another compounding factor is that, even at the city-level, there is lack of clarification as to what exactly is meant by Smart City. Practical applications and examples range from small cost-effective information sessions with citizens to mega-capital investments concerning Smart Architecture to solving environmental issues to Smart Travel to Smart Mobility and Smart Health issues.

The small amount of information concerning Smart Regions brings us into a realm of investments that currently is not feasible at South-East regional level. However, it is clear that Smart Cities, Smart Villages and therefore Smart Regions will be strategic areas for funding within Horizon Europe. It is also evident that progress within these domains is driven by well-articulated regional and/or metropolitan policies for innovation and sustainable regional growth.

Therefore, there is a need to reconsider, and indeed more accurately inform regional policy makers and implementers, other relevant stakeholders and citizens about the Smart Region concept and to determine an agreed and workable policy and implementation plan.

Sources of funding to progress the Smart Regions concept:

Currently there are two funding avenues being considered for Smart Region South-East (i) The Regional Technology Cluster Fund (RTCF) (an Enterprise Ireland initiative). CEDRE has been involved in preparing the South-East Regional Innovation Cluster Ecosystem (SERICE) and (ii) CEDRE is involved in preparing a proposal for the DT-ICT-09-2020 Call = Boost Rural Economies Through Cross-sector Digital Platforms.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Revised time frame for delivery:

- Complete the Smart Region analysis – Q1 2020
- Workshop involving the South-East County Executives, Directors of Services Economic Development & Planning, and Directors of Services Housing Services – Q1 2020
- Define and articulate a South-East Smart Region policy – end Q2 2020
- Agree and resource two (or three) South-East Smart Region pilot projects – start of Q3 2020
- Implementation of the South-East Smart Region pilot projects – Q3 and Q4 2020 and Q1 2021
- Measurement and evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation of the South-East Smart Region pilot projects – Q2 2021
- Decision on follow-on South-East Smart Region pilot projects – Q2/Q3 2021

Action 4:

Key stakeholders in the region will collaborate to drive regional green projects of scale; to promote and apply for green funding sources on a regional basis; and to ensure that the region has a pipeline of skills which can avail of emerging opportunities in the sector.

Working Group Members:

Ireland South-East Development Office with Local Authorities, 3CEA, Tipperary Energy Agency, Irish BioEconomy Foundation, Industry, Research Institutes, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Teagasc, Regional Skills Forum, ETBs, HEIs.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Mapping of LEO clients in the region in the green economy was completed leading to a funding application for the LEOs 'Green for Micro' project which aims to assist enterprises incorporate sustainable practices to assist them in transitioning to a Low Carbon Economy focused on water, energy, waste, procurement and transport in collaboration with 3 Counties Energy Agency.

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

- The 3CEA have developed a new strategy that incorporated the inputs of multiple stakeholders in the region.
- 3CEA are continuing work on multiple projects that strengthen the region's response to climate change, such as the 'Driving Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) Efficiently Into Brexit' Project and the work they are carrying out in relation to the region's solar opportunities.
- The Irish Bioeconomy Foundation in Lisheen is continuing to increase awareness of new technologies and establish mutually beneficial business relationships both nationally and within the region.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- 3cea partnering with 5 LEO in SE Region on Green4Micro project
- Successful funding to support sustainable actions in Micro SMEs
- Supports to identify and implement project

Work starting January 2020

- Undertaking a mapping of the green economy in the region
- Present the sector clearer as a sector of opportunity for the region
- Work with Regional Skills Forum and other key stakeholders on the skills needs for the sector
- Continue to support funding applications
- The region is also seeking to take part in The Bio-based Industries Consortium (BIC) will launch a new 'digital' bioeconomy platform for regions and industry in early 2020. The concept is based on a digital, partnering platform where regions and industry can make contact based on mutual interest.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

2

Establish the South-East as a place of choice for talent and investment and market the region as such.



Action 1:

Develop and implement a branding and marketing strategy that promotes the region as a great place to live, work, and invest using multiple marketing channels.

Working Group Members:

ISEDO; Local Authorities; EI; IDA; LEOs; Chambers; Regional Skills Forum; HEIs; Cluster groups.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Delivering regional value propositions aimed at attracting talent
- Marketing campaigns aimed at securing second site locations
- Communicating the region's vibrant clusters to potential investors
- Promoting the region's strong tourist product.
- Explore the opportunity of using the region's commuters to attract new business to the region.

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

- Good progress has been achieved in 2019 in developing and implementing a branding and marketing strategy that promotes the South-East region as a great place to live, work, and invest using multiple marketing channels.
- An analysis of the regional economy "South-East: Economy at a Glance" was published in February and again in July with updated economic information.
- A new website www.irelandsoutheast.com has been launched which captures the stories of the businesses and people who are successful here. It also showcases the clusters of strength that the region has.
- The new website was accompanied by a short video that captures the mix of high-end industry with the quality of life benefits the region offers.
- The website and video are currently being promoted by an extensive digital marketing campaign designed to promote the attractiveness of the region for talent and investment to a wide audience, both in Ireland and internationally.
- The Ireland South-East Development Office has continued to generate positive PR content in relation to the region, securing coverage in local and national papers such as the Sunday Business Post.
- An event was held in Trinity College's Science Gallery in Dublin to promote the region as a great location for talent and investment in the ICT sector. The event was well attended, and it is planned to host further events in Dublin in 2020.

- The regional tourist product offering is being strengthened by the collaborative activity of the 5 county tourism officers and Fáilte Ireland as is detailed further in Objective 5 below.
- Crystal Valley Tech held a very successful careers event in Waterford, showcasing available jobs in ICT and Life Sciences in the region.
- Kilkenny LEO are hosting a careers event in Kilkenny at Christmas 2019 showcasing all available jobs in Kilkenny.
- A brochure “Why move to the South-East” was developed that outlined all the benefits of a move to the region and was made available at the above careers events and at a EURES careers event in London.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Continuation of the digital marketing strategy with a focus on maintaining contact with people who may be interested in moving to or investing in the region through newsletters and events.
- Hosting events outside the region with specific sectoral focus to highlight the advantages of investing in the South-East.
- Working in collaboration with the organized clusters such as Crystal Valley Tech and Engineering the South-East so that a unified and cohesive regional value proposition is communicated from all stakeholders.
- As the regional tourism product is developed then marketing support to promote it will be put in place in 2020.

Action 2:

Work with key stakeholders to strengthen the South-East's value proposition as a first choice or second site location for companies wishing to locate outside Dublin and other cities.

Working Group Members:

Ireland South-East Development Office with EI, IDA, and Local authorities

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & is continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Hosting events outside the region that promote the South-East as a great place to work and invest.
- Mapping the available commercial property within the region.
- Mapping the skills availability within the region.
- Mapping up-to-date information on cost of living factors such as housing and childcare costs.

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

- An event was held in Trinity College's Science Gallery in Dublin to promote the region as a great location for talent and investment in the ICT sector. The event was well attended, and it is planned to host further events in Dublin in 2020.
- As part of this event a database was gathered of over 100 people who can now be engaged with about the benefits of the South-East as a location for investment.
- A mapping of the key available commercial properties took place with the links to these properties made available on the website www.irelandsoutheast.com
- Funding for the skills mapping project was achieved through the Local Enterprise Office competitive fund as part of the Initium start-up project.
- Mapping up-to-date information on cost of living factors such as housing and childcare costs was published in the 'South-East: Economy at a Glance' document and is also made available throughout the website.
- Two regional LEO projects received funding that will further enhance the region's value proposition as a first-choice location for investment, those are:
 - » The Initium South-East project is an innovative series of start-up programmes led by the South-East LEOs, Enterprise Ireland, and the Ireland South-East Office in partnership with South-East BIC and IT Carlow which aims to animate, develop and support the creation of 40 new specialised Start Up companies in the South-East.
 - » The Incrementum South-East project is a targeted business development programme for the LEO Portfolio of clients over 10 employees which aims to increase their engagement in R&D and Export Activity.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Future events are planned for outside the South-East that will have a sectoral focus and will raise the profile of the region as a viable second site location.
- Further mapping of the available commercial property in the region will take place and improvements will be made to the promotion of these properties.
- The skills mapping component of the South-East LEOs Initium project will be carried out in 2020.
- Mapping up-to-date information on cost of living factors such as housing and childcare costs will continue with the possibility of a third 'Economy at a Glance' publication to be explored for mid-2020.

Action 3:

Pilot a Town Renewal Project. Incorporating Actions 3.1 and 3.2: Baseline Audit and Targeted campaign to increase activity on main streets of towns.

Working Group Members:

Local Authorities, ETBs

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & is continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Towns selected are:

Waterford

- Tramore >10k pop.
- Cappoquin <10k pop.

Tipperary

- Tipperary Town
- Carrick On Suir

Wexford

- Enniscorthy
- New Ross

Kilkenny

- Kilkenny >10k pop.
- Callan <10k pop.

Carlow

- Tullow
- Bagenalstown

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

Tramore

A Town Centre Management Group was established involving statutory, business and local community groups. This group prepared a Town Centre Management Plan which set out objectives including addressing the perceived lack of a town centre, way finding and quality of public realm issues. The Tramore scheme is predicated on several pillars including creating a destination town centre, simplifying way finding and improving accessibility. With a main street raising at a grade of 1:10 and a narrow streets network the solution involved several integrated moves. This includes a traffic management plan discouraging non destination traffic in the town centre and setting up a clearly legible circulatory route around the town. The calmed traffic allows shared space and with some terracing encourages activity from the adjoining premises to spill out onto the street. The scheme is seen as the catalyst for the redevelopment of Tramore.

Cappoquin

- As a collaborative effort between Cappoquin Community Development Company and Waterford City and County Council, in 2019 a number of vacant properties on the Main Street (5 in total) have been CPO'd or have been acquired via agreement with a view to re-invigorating them as sustainable commercial and residential spaces
- LEO Waterford is providing supports to a craft collective which is about to locate itself in a previously vacant property in the town centre
- A grant of €100,000 has been acquired via the Town and Village Renewal Scheme to undertake improvement works to the town centre public realm

Kilkenny

- KCC are leading on the development of 2 major areas of the City, namely 1. the regeneration of the Abbey Quarter (AQ) site; and 2. The development of a significant new neighbourhood area (for up to 2,500 new homes over the next 10 years) in the Breagagh Valley in the Western Environs.
- The AQ presents a once in a life time opportunity to redevelop a significant brown field site in the heart of Kilkenny City.
- Kilkenny CoCo (KCC) has secured over €6m in funding under the URDF for a number of 'shovel ready' public realm, community and cultural infrastructure projects that are essential to stimulate and enhance commercial development on the AQ.
- The overall extent of the AQ Masterplan area is circa 20 acres, approximately half of which was purchased by KCC when Diageo made a commercial decision in 2012 to move its operations to Dublin after 300 years of brewing in Kilkenny.
- The AQ is a strategic City centre site, steeped in heritage and partly bounded by the City Wall and the River Nore. The AQ is accessed off Ireland's Medieval Mile (a unique discovery trail running through the heart of Kilkenny City), and will be seamlessly integrated into the City with the development of new streets, squares, parks and a riverside walkway.

Callan

In 2017, KCC embarked on a town centre renewal process in line with the framework for town centre renewal developed by the Dept. of Business, Enterprise and Innovation. This process involved stakeholder engagement, a health check, establishment of a town team and the development of a town action plan. This is a blue print for town centre regeneration and development for implementation by the Callan Town team with its sectoral champions and supported by KCC, KLP and other agencies. One of the key actions in the plan was around the need to address high vacancy rates in town centre properties some of which are near to dereliction. The objective being to bring properties back into residential and other uses.

Tipperary Town

The process of revitalisation of Tipperary Town has commenced. In September 2019 Carmel Fox was appointed as chair of the Tipperary Town Revitalisation process by Damien English T.D., Minister of State with special responsibility for Housing and Urban Development. Ms Fox has recently met with many stakeholders in the town as part of the first phase of engagement and consultation. At the outset of the meetings Ms Fox explained that these meetings were an opportunity to seek consensus on how the process of revitalisation would take place, so that when the important work of planning commenced, it was clear how it would happen and who would be involved.

Carrick-on-Suir

An application was made under REDF for a digital hub to support remote working and second centre activity in the town. Consultants were also appointed to look at an outer link road to link the Dungarvan regional road to N24 to reduce pressure of traffic in the town centre and to facilitate the regeneration of Main Street.

Carlow: Tullow and Bagenalstown

Carlow County Council engaged the services of Spatial Insights to develop a Town & Village 'Framework and What's Next For' report for Tullow & Bagenalstown. This process is now completed and has fed into funding proposals under the Ireland 2040 RRDF Funding and Town & Village Renewal Funding. The reports feature a variety of action points which support the development of the Towns in partnership with the Local Authority.

Wexford: Enniscorthy and New Ross

- Consultation meetings were held in Enniscorthy by WCC with the Enniscorthy Town Team and Tidy Towns Association and RIAI.
- Create awareness of initiative for public realm and target vacant units
- RIAI consultation and report on Enniscorthy town having won national tidy towns competition to have RIAI assign resource to review the town
- LEO data analysis of Enniscorthy and New Ross socio economic characteristics completed
- Vacant Homes strategy by WCC housing completed.
- Funding scheme promoted for adaptation of properties in towns to residential units
- New Ross painting scheme 2019 implemented
- Templeshannon regeneration strategy for enniscorthy launched
- Renovation of key landmark building courthouse in Enniscorthy
- Announcement of funding New Ross town centre for 3 tourism projects to revitalise town and public realm
- Establish town team for New Ross

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Tramore

The project has received funding from the 2018 Urban Regeneration and Development Fund under the National Development Plan 2017- 2027 and works are set to commence on site in January 2020 and will be completed in approximately 12 months.

Cappoquin

- Working Group preparing a report to be complete by Feb 2020
- Working Group aim to progress the pilot scheme through the planning process to detail design and cost evaluation stage

Kilkenny

- KCC are now progressing to plan for phase 2 of the redevelopment of the AQ.

Callan

- There needs to be a private and public approach to dealing with such areas and we look forward to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Governments response to the findings of the pilot project in early 2020.
- KCC is currently in negotiations with the Augustinian Order around the transfer of its Friary building at Mill Street Callan to KCC for use as a community facility. It is expected that this transfer will take place in early 2020 after which time KCC will develop plans for its adaptive reuse as a public library, creative arts and community space. This again is considered to be essential to provide town centre amenities and services to improve the overall attractiveness of the area for residential use. Overall the Town Action plan works as a blueprint to focus all stakeholders actions towards real positive outcomes for Callan.

Tipperary Town

Next Steps in the process:

- Introductory meetings with stakeholders were held on 25th and 26th November;
- A Stakeholder Workshop planned for the 11th December 2019;
- The creation of a Stakeholder Consultative Group to work with the independent chair;
- The commencement of the Town Centre Health Check by Alison Harvey, Heritage Council, early January 2020. Ms Harvey plans to work closely with the Stakeholder Group;
- Recruitment and appointment of a Project Manager in early 2020. Ms Fox stated that once appointed, the project manager will report to her and the Stakeholder Consultative Group in the preparation of a 3-year Action Plan and the office would be located close to town centre.
- Secondly, an application was successfully made by Tipperary Co Council under the REDF fund to develop an 10,000 sq ft. remote working hub in Tipperary Technology Park in Tipperary town. This proposal will refurb and upgrade an existing but under-utilised facility and will bring to market up to 40 flexible hot desks and co-working spaces, office space with the capacity to house 60 employees as well as 2 meeting rooms, a training room and associated communal facilities.

Carrick-on-Suir

- Work will continue on delivering a digital hub to support remote working and second centre activity in the town and to reduce pressure of traffic in the town centre and to facilitate the regeneration of Main Street.

Carlow: Tullow and Bagenalstown

- This process has fed into funding proposals under the Ireland 2040 RRDF Funding and Town & Village Renewal Funding. The spatial insights reports feature a variety of action points which support the development of the Towns in partnership with the Local Authority and these actions will continue to be implemented in 2020.

Enniscorthy and New Ross

- Initial consultation in Enniscorthy completed will be replicated in New Ross.
- Work with chamber to establish a town team in New Ross.
- Commission audits of both main streets in Enniscorthy and New Ross by Q2 in 2020.
- ETB Training numbers for Enniscorthy and New Ross by Q2 in 2020.
- Target New Ross and Enniscorthy under vacant homes strategy.
- Part 8 Templeshannon project amend options report and traffic management system for approval, elements of public realm design gone to tender e.g. bridge at Slaney street.
- Renovate market square offices key public realm in the town of Enniscorthy.
- Target properties vacant under audit for reuse in positive ways e.g. new funding announcement for project on the Quay in New Ross.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE**3**

Develop a regional engagement strategy that aligns with the Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) and highlights the critical infrastructural developments required to enhance the economic potential in the South-East.

**Action 1:**

Ensure that the region's priorities are aligned among the five counties of the South-East and that the region speaks with one voice on issues relating to critical infrastructure of strategic regional importance at key fora such as the RSES and the Project Ireland 2040 frameworks.

Working Group Members:

Ireland South-East Development Office, Local Authorities

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & is continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- The five counties of the South-East coordinating and agreeing on the key strategic objectives and associated enabling infrastructure for the region.
- These regional priorities will be communicated effectively and cohesively externally.
- Economic data for the South-East also being developed and communicated broadly.

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

- The five local authority CEOs meet on a bi-monthly basis to agree discuss the key strategic objectives and maintain efforts towards achieving them. Joint CEO submissions were developed around:
 - » Waterford airport
 - » Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
 - » IDA Ireland Strategy
 - » CIE Strategy
- The Ireland South-East Development Office (ISEDO) has been set up to assist in working towards those objectives.
- Regional economic data is being continually monitored by ISEDO and has been published in the **South-East: Economy at a Glance** publication.
- Political and stakeholder engagement has continued with clearly defined ambitions for the region being articulated.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Continued engagement between the five local authority CEOs
- Continued monitoring and analysis of regional economic data
- Publication of an agreed vision for the South-East regional economy

Action 2:

The South-East will seek to increase National/EU and private investment for strategically important projects at the regional level which will continue to improve the environment for economic growth.

Working Group Members:

Ireland South-East Development Office & Local Authorities

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & is continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Applications from the South-East submitted to:

- Urban Regeneration and Development Fund
- Rural Regeneration and Development Fund
- Climate Action Fund
- Disruptive Technologies Fund
- Enterprise Ireland's Regional Enterprise Development Fund
- Funding for Greenway/Blueways/ and Trails under the Department of Transport, Tourism, and Sport
- Action Plan for Rural Development fund

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

- Mapping of regional funding landscape was undertaken
- Coordination of meetings with funding applicants were undertaken
- Funding applications were supported. For example:
 - » Joint LEO funding by the 5 LEOs and ISEDO – successful for 3 projects
 - » EI REDF Projects – ISEDO supported a number of individual project applications
 - » Greenway Funding Application – ISEDO worked with local authorities on funding applications - successful on 2 projects
 - » RRDF projects – ISEDO worked with local authorities on funding applications
 - » URDF projects – ISEDO worked with local authorities on funding applications
 - » EU SRSP – ISEDO directly applied for EU funding
 - » SFI Discovery – ISEDO supported CALMAST funding application
 - » DTIF – Presentations made to WIT research
 - » Waterford airport – regional submission prepared

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Continued coordination of meetings with regional funding applicants and support for applications
- Further review of European funding landscape to identify more opportunities

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

4

Make the South-East a 'learning region' with education, knowledge generation and exchange, and innovation as central activities that allow all to play a role in the economic, social and cultural development of the region.

**Action 1:**

As part of the Skills for Growth initiative the Regional Skills Forum will assist local enterprises identify their skills' needs through a variety of audit tools to ensure that the region has the effective use of skills to support economic and social prosperity. Once skill needs have been identified, Regional Skills Fora will link companies with the education and training providers best suited to responding to identified skills need.

Working Group Members:

RSF, and partners including EI, IDA Ireland, ETB, and DEASP

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2019

Status:

Work commenced & was completed in 2019

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Overall, the level of awareness of what the publicly funded education and training providers can do for industry has increased.

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

- Skillnets – supported their funding applications. Extensive referral of companies to regional Skillnets (Waterford Chamber Skillnet, Carlow Kilkenny Skillnet, Wexford Chamber Skillnet, Tipperary Chamber Skillnet).
- 'Professional Graduate Programme' Higher Diploma in Business in Professional Development (60 credits at Level 8) – IT Carlow MANUFACTURING SECTOR
- 'ICT Skills – Serialisation' by WWETB under Strand II of 'Skills to Advance' PHARMA SECTOR
- MIG Welding for new employees by WWETB under Strand II of 'Skills to Advance'. ENGINEERING SECTOR
- 'Step Up and Grow' Management Development Programme by WWETB, KCETB & Tipp ETB under SOLAS Innovation Funding – proposal developed. SME MANUFACTURING
- Laboratory Analyst L7 Apprenticeship in WIT Started in Sept 2019. PHARMA & LIFESCIENCE SECTOR
- Supervisory Management course for SMEs developed by Tipperary ETB. SMEs MULTISECTOR
- Bespoke Engineering short courses for MSD Carlow (operators engineering principles) and Burnside Group (PLC training). IT Carlow Engineering Department. ENGINEERING SECTOR
- Supervisory Training course (part time, 5 weeks) for Cartoon Saloon in Kilkenny by KCETB. CREATIVE ARTS SECTOR
- Microsoft Skills to Advance Traineeship (16 weeks, 1 day per week) by Tipperary ETB. ICT SECTOR
- New Certificate in Engineering for General Operatives proposed. SE ETBs ENGINEERING SECTOR.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

The Regional Skills Forum will continue to assist local enterprises identify their skills' needs through a variety of audit tools to ensure that the region has the effective use of skills to support economic and social prosperity.

Action 2:

Double the number of participants on the EXPLORE programme over the 2018 figure. The EXPLORE programme is designed to address the need for enhanced digital skills among older workers in manufacturing sectors within the region.

Working Group Members:

RSF; HEIs; Industry

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & is continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Further developing digital skills for operatives in manufacturing.

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

- The three ETBs in the South-East have delivered this programme in 2019 and it is projected that 64 people from 22 companies will complete the programme in 2019. This is on target for the year. Very positive feedback from employers.
- There was an increase from 32 participants in 2018 to 65 participants in 2019 in the EXPLORE programme.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

SERSF would like to see greater uptake by employers for this free programme in 2020.

Action 3:

Support education and training providers in preparing applications under Springboard+ 2019 in collaboration with local enterprise in order to increase provision of programmes for upskilling and reskilling within the region.

Working Group Members:

RSF, HEIs.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q2 2019

<p>Status:</p> <p>Work commenced & completed in 2019</p>
<p>What were the milestone(s) for 2019?</p> <p>Supporting Springboard+ applications and linking HEIs to industry needs</p>
<p>What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?</p> <p>Springboard+ Courses Approved: 37 part time courses across IT Carlow (13), WIT (14) and LIT Tipperary (10). ALL SECTORS</p>
<p>What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?</p> <p>Continue to support Springboard+ applications and link HEIs to industry needs</p>
<p>Action 4:</p> <p>Support all actions in the Regional Enterprise Plan where linkages to Education and Training Providers are required.</p>
<p>Working Group Members:</p> <p>RSF and other stakeholders</p>
<p>Timeframe for delivery:</p> <p>Q4 2020</p>
<p>Status:</p> <p>Work started in 2019 & is continuing in 2020</p>
<p>What were the milestone(s) for 2019?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing action with multiple components, see below for examples• It was agreed that Actions 4 & 5 would be combined
<p>What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?</p> <p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalised & presented study of ICT Sector in South-East to the SERSF• Launched new engineering cluster 'Engineering the South-East' on 20th June 2019. Building the capacity of 'Engineering the South-East' cluster incl funding applications.• Supported ETBs in the region to promote 'Skills to Advance' – attended a number of industry briefing sessions.• Working closely with 'Crystal Valley Tech' ICT cluster to consider skills needs.• Applied Artificial Intelligence Forum & Technical Conference, Lyrath Hotel, Kilkenny March 1st, 2019. Co-sponsored by SERSF.• Survey of Financial Services companies in South-East.• Workshop for Education & Training Providers (HE, FET & Skillnets) to improve collaboration – 15th November 2019.• 'Careers of the Future 2019' Showcase event 22nd October 2019 – industry highlighting careers to 40 careers guidance counsellors from across the South-East.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Focus for 2020

1. Effective Research & Labour Market Information to Inform Programme Development
 - » Skills Audits across targeted sectors – at least 10 per sector (70 over year)
 - » Research – identify two sectors for more detailed research.
 - » Feedback from external data sources to education & training providers.
 - » Encourage sectors to proactively gather regional data on skills & training needs.
2. Help Employers Connect with the Range of Services & Supports Available
 - » Host & support a number of Industry specific events to promote available training & education opportunities.
 - » In collaboration with existing clusters, facilitate engagement by education & training providers.
 - » Regular & timely communications with employer about available training & education opportunities.
 - » Develop a series of Case Studies to highlight opportunities to employers.
3. Greater Collaboration and Utilisation of Resources across Education & Training
 - » More coherent promotion of education & training provision across HE and FET
 - » Regional promotion of current / new education & training:
 - » Springboard & Human Capital Initiative solutions from Higher Education
 - » Further Education & Training (FET) through 'Skills to Advance'
 - » Regional Skillnets offerings to industry.
 - » NEW: Supervisory Practice / Management Development from FET and HE with clear demonstration of progression paths.
4. A Structure for Employers to become more Involved in promoting Employment Roles and opportunities for Career Progression in their Sectors.
 - » Through existing and new clusters.
 - » Better presentation of education & training to support career progression.

Action 5:

Communicate to employers the services available through Regional Skills Forum to assist with resolution of emerging skills needs. (This action is merged with Action 4 above and will no longer be reported on separately)

Working Group Members:

RSF and other stakeholders

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & is continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

As for Action 4 above

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

As for Action 4 above

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

As for Action 4 above

Action 6:

Enterprise-led employment initiative targeted at Unemployment Blackspots

Working Group Members:

Waterford and Wexford Education Training Board, Kilkenny and Carlow Education Training Board; Tipperary Education Training Board, Department of Employment and Social Protection, regional employers, Ireland South-East Development Office, Mid-West Enterprise Plan Manager.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & is continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Waterford and Wexford

- Fund an LTI in BallyBeg, Waterford City. It was expected to provide training for up to 16 unemployed people.
- Fund an LTI in Manor St John, Waterford City. The LTI was expected to provide training in catering support at level 4 for up to 14 people.
- Fund an LTI in Courttown, Wexford. This LTI was expected to provide training in employability skills at level 4 to up to 18 unemployed people.

Carrick-on-Suir

- In Carrick-on-Suir, 14 courses in Adult Literacy ran in 2019.
- 15 courses were run through TETB part-time accredited programme, Back to Education Imitative.
- EHA Primary Certification in Food Safety was run for a number of groups who were able to secure employment in food preparation.
- A total of 422 adult learners took part on TETB Courses in Carrick-on-Suir in 2019.

Tipperary Town

- A total of 779 learners participated in TETB education and training programmes in 2019.
- In Tipperary Town, 17 courses in Adult Literacy ran in 2019.
- 10 courses were run through TETB part-time accredited programme, Back to Education Imitative.
- TETB Training Services provided 15 courses in 2019 with 203 learners in attendance. There were 7 courses operating from Carrick and Suir and 8 courses from Tipperary Town.

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

Waterford and Wexford

- The three LTI's has developed close links with the hotel, restaurant and horticulture industry with associated employment opportunities.
- Each learner completes a work experience module as part of their course
- The WWETB Adult literacy Service delivered additional supports in the identified unemployment blackspots – examples include:
 - » ICT for traveller women (Ballybeg, Waterford)
 - » Family learning in Portlaw National School, Co. Waterford
 - » Maths and ICT in the Portlaw Community Facility
 - » ESOL family learning in Kilmuckridge, Co. Wexford
 - » Traveller programmes in Dungarvan (Co. Waterford), Taghmon and Drumgoold (Co. Wexford)

Tipperary

In 2019, the Tipperary Education and Training Board (TETB) successfully secured the permission from the Department of Education of Skills for the appointment of a full-time Co-ordinator of the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS) in Carrick-on-Suir Further Education and Training (FET) Centre. This appointment was made in September. The role includes Management of the FET Centre and engagement with key stakeholders in the area with responsibility for the unemployed and the provision of education and training courses to meet identified employer needs.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Waterford and Wexford

- WWETB intends applying for continued funding for the three LTI's under the FARR process.
- At present, a review process is underway to examine if there are other opportunities for the LTI's to explore for 2020.
- WWETB Literacy services will continue their supports in these areas.

Tipperary

- TETB will continue to respond to the needs of the blackspot areas to identify courses where training and further education will enhance the skills of learners to gain employment. Course provision will provide education and training in areas which respond to DEASP and Employers requests. A similar number of learners will be facilitated in 2020 across a variety of career clusters.
- It is planned to develop a Further Education and Training (FET) Centre in Tipperary Town with a similar Management structure to Carrick-on-Suir.

Action 7:

Roll out the pilot careers initiative, first initiated for Carlow, at a regional level to improve the promotion of careers in a number of key sectors; and continue to promote STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Maths) subjects in a holistic manner so that a positive attitude towards STEAM is generated.

Working Group Members:

CALMAST, HEIs, ETBs, Chambers, Industry

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & is continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- STEM engagement forum
- Maths week
- Science week
- Bealtaine Festival
- Engineers Week
- Robert Boyle Summer School
- SciFest
- Lismore Heritage Centre

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

STEM Engagement in the South-East 2019

Calmast held a Regional STEM Forum of stakeholders in April presenting a model of coordinated cooperative STEM promotion for the region. Great progress has been made in the area and funding of €150,000 has been granted by Science Foundation Ireland to advance this cooperative approach over the period 2020/21. The project is building a hub and local clusters to deliver STEM engagement locally leveraging the considerable but dispersed and often disjointed resources available. Calmast with 20 years of experience across all areas of STEM acts as the hub supporting local clusters which bring schools, industry and business, public services and community groups together. Through the Waterford City Cluster working with Waterford Council, Eirgen, Bausch & Lomb, Sanofi, all secondary schools were involved in a sustained engagement programme with Transition Years who then worked with primary schools bringing overall involvement to around 2,000 pupils. Additional funding will have to be secured to deliver this programme across the region.

In the last year there was considerable activity here are some key events:

Maths Week

Maths Week took place in October 2019. It was founded by and is coordinated by Calmast with partners across the island. Mathematics underpins all areas of science, technology and engineering and related fields such as financial services. A proficiency in mathematics is important across almost all jobs and numeracy is important for citizens to fully engage in society. Maths Week promotes a positive attitude towards mathematics, shows the importance and applications of mathematical thinking in jobs and in life and promotes problem solving.

Science Week

There was a lot of engagement during Science Week with a number of festivals running in the South-East. South-East Science Festival run by Calmast and including events in Lismore, Dungarvan, Carrick-on-Suir, Clonmel, Kilkenny, Graiguenamanagh, New Ross, Wexford. Over 12,000 participated. www.calmast.ie

Eureka Festival run by IT Carlow. www.eurekafestival.ie

WexSci – Wexford Science Festival run by Wexford County Council culminating in the large WexSci expo at County Hall. www.wexfordsciencefestival.ie

Teagasc Festival of Farming and Food also ran events in the South-East from Oakpark, Carlow, Kildalton Co Kilkenny and Johnstown Castle Co Wexford.

Bealtaine Festival Celebrating the LivingEarth

This event celebrates biodiversity, environment and natural heritage in the South-East. Founded by Calmast in 2006 it is a partnership of bodies interested in natural heritage. This year the festival was extended in partnership with IT Carlow and with funding from WIT/ITC Sesame fund to develop cross-institutional projects and initiatives. Events took place in Carlow, Wexford, Tipperary and Waterford. Over 3,000 participated in events.

Engineers Week

Engineers Week events were delivered at IT Carlow and Waterford IT in March. The Engineers Ireland South-East Region also ran events and funded events at WIT. In addition, a special Women in STEM Event attracted 1200 at the WIT Arena.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

All of the above events are annual events and work will continue on these in 2020.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

5

Develop a region that is attractive to both domestic and international visitors with a sense of place and connected tourist amenities.

**Action 1:**

Develop an agreed regional identity that aligns and sits within the Ireland's Ancient East brand

Working Group Members:

South-East Regional Tourism Working Group (WG) is made up of representatives from Ireland South-East Development Office, Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Officers from each local authority as well as the Regional Enterprise Plan Industry Champion, Liam Griffin.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work commenced & completed in 2019

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Increased collaboration on a regional basis: to bring together the 5 counties to ensure a more coordinated approach.

Development of a plan around regional tourism priorities which aims to deliver on the objectives:

- To support and amplify the Ireland's Ancient East brand by building the differentiating appeal of the region for national and international visitors, positioning the region as the place to go to be alive outside, enjoy fine food inspired by nature, discover great castles, houses and gardens and experience Ireland's rich history and vibrant culture
- To ensure a co-ordinated approach to tourism growth and development by motivating and mobilising all those involved, creating connections and networks and aligning efforts
- To drive sustainable growth in the tourism sector in the region and support the delivery of outstanding visitor experiences

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

- Increased regional collaboration: The 5 tourism officers of the local authorities have significantly increased their collaboration and are now meeting regularly.
- Buy-in from Fáilte Ireland: Fáilte Ireland have bought into the regional process and have facilitated a number of workshops with the working group to identify priorities.
- Work on plan for regional priorities: A work plan on regional priorities is being finalized which identifies specific actions and responsible actors.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

The working group workplan on regional priorities will be finalized by the end of 2019. Specific actions will be identified and worked on throughout 2020. A key element of the workplan will revolve around securing industry buy-in to the regional work plan.

Action 2:

Continue the work to roll out an integrated network of greenways, blueways and key trails that stretch across the entire region and connect to networks outside of the region.

Working Group Members:

Special Projects Office, Ireland South-East Development Office

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & is continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Finalisation and launch of Suir Blueway
- Shortlisting of South-East Greenway and to Waterford Ferry Bank Greenway Applications for National Greenway Fund
- Successful site visits of National Greenway Fund project assessment team
- Ongoing preparation work for Rosslare to Waterford Greenway

What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?

- Suir Blueway opened in May 2019 which includes 53km of walking, cycling and watersports trails.
- Application for South-East Greenway Successful - €8m secured from National Greenway Fund and remaining €5m allocated from Wexford, Kilkenny and Waterford Councils.
- Application for Bilberry to Waterford Ferrybank Greenway extension was also successful - €2.65m was secured under the National Greenway Fund.
- Work commenced in preparation of South-East Greenway - site investigation contract commenced along the route in October 2019.
- Work commenced in preparation of animation of business opportunities of South-East Greenway

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- South-East Greenway - Tendering for works and the commencement of construction on site (May / June 2020). The South-East Greenway is scheduled to open in Autumn 2021.
- Rosslare Harbour to Waterford Greenway - Submission of application for development consent & Procurement of detailed design, tendering and construction management services.
- Work will intensify on animating the business opportunities of the network of Greenways, Blueways and Trails across the South-East in conjunction with South-East Regional Tourism Working Group and industry stakeholders.

Appendix 1: Regional Funding approved for the South-East supported by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation

Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF)

The Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF) was launched in May 2017 with the overarching aim of driving enterprise development and job creation in each region throughout Ireland.

Administered by Enterprise Ireland, it supports new collaborative and innovative initiatives that can make a significant impact on enterprise development in the region/across regions, or nationally. Just under €100m has been approved across 68 projects nationally.

Over the three calls under the REDF, the South-East Region secured funding of over €7.5 million across eight projects:

REDF Call	Project	Location	Description	Grant amount
1	Insurtech Network Centre DAC	Carlow	Support Tech Solutions to the Global Insurance Services Sector	€1,439,832
1	ThreeD DAC	Waterford	3D Manufacturing Facility	€1,303,556
2	Crystal Valley Tech DAC	Waterford, Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary	ICT Industry Cluster	€215,919
2	Incupharm DAC	Waterford, Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary	Lab Facilities for Life Science Sector	€799,212
2	National Design Innovation HUB DAC	Carlow, Kilkenny	Enterprise Development Hub	€1,843,320
3	National Design Innovation HUB DAC	Carlow / Laois	The project involves a dedicated approach to entrepreneurship and ecosystem development in Rural Towns & Villages	€396,800
3	South-East Economic Development Office	Waterford	The overall aim of this project is to create a Lean Industry 4.0 facility (LI4)	€1,342,751
3	The Tradebridge Collaboration DAC	Wexford	This project creates new opportunities for EI & LEO clients to generate export sales and to open opportunities for the three South-East Ports	€247,827
				Call 1 Total €2,743,388
				Call 2 Total €2,858,451
				Call 3 Total €1,987,378
				Grand Total €7,589,217

Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF) successful Call announcement dates:

REDF Call 1: 4th December 2017

REDF Call 2: 3rd December 2018

REDF Call 3: 8th January 2020

Regional Technology Clustering Fund

Under Project Ireland 2040 Government identified an ambition to build sectoral clusters of Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) at regional level. This ambition will be delivered through initiatives supporting the development of business-led clustering of competitive advantage.

As one of the Government initiatives in this area, a multi-annual fund for Regional Technology Clustering was announced in Budget 2019. An initial €2.75 million budget will be administered by Enterprise Ireland on behalf of the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation to support this initiative. This will be in the form of a competitive fund open to the Institutes of Technology (IoT) / Technological Universities (TU).

Applicant Name (Correct Legal Entity Name)	Stream	Project Summary	Fund awarded (€)
Carlow IT	1	Development of an industry-led Engineering Cluster to expand capability and competitiveness in the South-East of Ireland.	€377,520
Total			€377,520

Regional Technology Clustering Fund successful announcement date:
4th October 2019

Funding under LEO Competitive Fund

The LEO Competitive Fund is to encourage LEO projects aligned with the pillars of Future Jobs Strategy and the Regional-Enterprise-Plans. It supports LEOs to collaborate within the network and enterprise eco-system.

Project & Summary	Lead Local Enterprise Office	Partners collaborating in the project	Funding
The Initium South-East project is an innovative series of start-up programmes led by the South-East LEOs, Enterprise Ireland, and the Ireland South-East Office in partnership with South-East BIC and IT Carlow which aims to animate, develop and support the creation of 40 new specialised Start Up companies in the South-East.	Carlow	Ireland South-East Office, IT Carlow, South-East BIC	€114,482
The Incrementum South-East project is a targeted business development programme for the LEO Portfolio of clients over 10 employees which aims to increase their engagement in R&D and Export Activity.	Carlow	South-East BIC, IT Carlow, Enterprise Ireland, Ireland South-East Office	€130,838
The Green for Micro project aims to assist enterprises incorporate sustainable practices to assist them in transitioning to a Low Carbon Economy focused on water, energy, waste, procurement and transport.	Kilkenny	3 Counties Energy Agency	€100,000
Total			€345,320

LEO Competitive Fund successful announcement date:
4th October 2019

Appendix 2: Other Funding approved for the South-East

Project Ireland 2040 Funds

In 2018, the Government launched Project Ireland 2040 and committed €4 billion in funding under the Rural regeneration and Development Fund, Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, Disruptive Technologies Innovation Fund and the Climate Action Fund. The four funds are a major innovation in Project Ireland 2040 and rather than allocating funding in a ‘business as usual’ way to Government Departments, money was allocated competitively to the best projects, which leverage investment from other sources thereby ensuring that the impact of this investment goes further.

Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)

As part of Project Ireland 2040, the Government has committed to providing an additional €1 billion for a new Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) over the period 2019 to 2027. Initial funding of €315 million is being allocated to the Fund on a phased basis over the period 2019 to 2022. The Fund will provide investment to support rural renewal for suitable projects in towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000, and outlying areas. It will be administered by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

The new Fund provides an unprecedented opportunity to support the revitalisation of rural Ireland, to make a significant and sustainable impact on rural communities, and to address depopulation in small rural towns, villages and rural areas. It will be a key instrument to support the objectives of the National Planning Framework, and in particular to achieve Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities – one of the National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF.

Call	Project	Location	Grant amount
RRDF Call 1	Borris Railway Viaduct	Carlow	€654,820
	Callan Town regeneration	Kilkenny	€561,750
	Thomastown Regeneration	Kilkenny	€2,080,486
	Johnstown Castle & Gardens	Wexford	€658,696
	Altmont House and Gardens	Carlow	€450,000
	Community Shops, Kilkenny	Kilkenny	€60,000
	Blackwater River Valley	Waterford	€128,842
	Esmonde Street, Gorey	Wexford	€95,224
	Market House, Gorey	Wexford	€429,145
	Enterprise Hub, New Ross	Wexford	€328,407
	Ferrycarraig and the Hook Peninsula	Wexford	€1,087,270
Call 1 Subtotal			€6,534,640
RRDF Call 2	Ireland's Global Garden – Mount Congreve Estate	Waterford	€3,726,000
	Wexfordia- the New Ross Tourism Transformation	Wexford	€5,560,000
Call 2 Subtotal			€9,286,000
Call 1 & 2 Total			€15,820,640

Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) successful Call announcement dates:
 RRDF Call 1: 14th February 2019
 RRDF Call 2: 6th November 2019

Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)

The €2 billion Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) is intended to drive regeneration and rejuvenation of strategic and under-utilised areas within Ireland's five cities, key regional drivers and other large towns. The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) has responsibility for implementing the fund, which has €100m available for expenditure in 2019 and an overall allocation of €550 million allocated to the fund up to the end of 2022. The fund will operate on a competitive, bid-based Exchequer grant basis, with proposals being required to demonstrate that they will be:

- Innovative and transformational urban regeneration projects;
- Public-sector led and with the option of community and/or private sector partners;
- Matched by at least 25 percent direct funding from other public and/or private sources;
- A minimum bid of €2m;
- A catalyst for development that would not otherwise occur; and
- Likely to leverage significant further public and private sector investment.

Call	Project	Location	Grant amount
URDF Cat A	Waterford City North Quays	Waterford	€6,000,000
	Trinity Wharf project	Wexford	€2,028,000
	Abbey Quarter	Kilkenny	€4,764,000
	Tramore Town Centre	Waterford	€1,350,000
	Liberty Square Thurles	Tipperary	€1,350,000
	Tipperary County Council (Clonmel)	Tipperary	€2,897,000
Total			€18,389,000

Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) successful Call announcement date: URDF Call: 26th November 2018

Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2019

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme is an initiative under the Action Plan for Rural Development and is part of a package of national and local support measures to rejuvenate rural towns and villages throughout Ireland through the Government's Project Ireland 2040 Rural Regeneration Programme. The Scheme is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and administered by the Local Authorities.

Local Authorities will be required to advertise for expressions of interest from towns/villages in their area and can select up to 12 proposals for development into detailed applications to be submitted to the Department by the end of June. Selection of projects will be by means of a competitive process, with the final project selection being made by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Project & Summary	Town	County	Funding
Development of the Community Hall and the old Coach House.	Ardattin	Carlow	€100,000
To construct a footpath and playground; the installation of school solar signs, street lights and painting works.	Hacketstown	Carlow	€99,727
Erect a monument to John Tyndall, renovate the existing playground, erect speed control signs and paint rails.	Leighlinbridge	Carlow	€100,000
Carry out works in the Community Hall, signage and a feasibility study.	Old Leighlin	Carlow	€99,964
Carlow Total			€399,692
Undertake a Town Health Check to assess the assets and needs of the town.	Castlecomer	Kilkenny	€20,000
Undertake a Town Health Check to assess the assets and needs of the town.	Goresbridge	Kilkenny	€20,000
Undertake a Village Health Check to assess the assets and needs of the Village.	Mullinavat	Kilkenny	€20,000
Provision of a looped walk, linear parking and lighting.	Slieverue	Kilkenny	€200,000
The Rower Public Realm improvement and safety works at the Rower.	Kilkenny	Kilkenny	€91,600
Undertake a Town Health Check.	Thomastown	Kilkenny	€20,000
Undertake a Town Health Check for Urlingford and Johnstown villages.	Urlingford-Johnstown	Kilkenny	€20,000
Kilkenny Total			€391,600
Servicing a site on Bunmahon beach, a trail extension continuing to an existing river walk, car park, playground and public lighting works.	Bunmahon	Waterford	€100,000
A facade renewal scheme for the main street.	Cappoquin	Waterford	€100,000
Provide a footpath and pedestrian bridge crossing the Anne River.	Dunhill	Waterford	€100,000
Re-surfacing of local road, upgrading of Astroturf surface, installation of a lawn bowling facility, cycle tracks and art work in the village.	Fenor	Waterford	€100,000
Install a new playground in the village.	Lemybrien	Waterford	€100,000
Waterford Total			€500,000
Refurbishment works on Ballindaggin Community Hall.	Ballindaggin	Wexford	€100,000
Development of an all-weather walkway, commissioning of heritage exhibits around the village, a feasibility study into 2 social enterprises and the purchase of equipment for Bridgetown Food Bank.	Bridgetown	Wexford	€99,820
Develop the park area with environmentally friendly lighting and children's play area.	Foulksmills	Wexford	€100,000
Develop a walkway from Kilmuckridge Village to Morriscastle Beach Resort, and develop a heritage trail along this path.	Kilmuckridge	Wexford	€200,000
Improve aesthetics at Rosslare Europort, prepare Economic Master Plan for the port hinterland.	Wexford Rosslare Harbour/Kilrane	Wexford	€191,386
Wexford Total			€691,206
South-East Grand Total			€1,982,498

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme successful announcement date:
1st November 2019

Appendix 3: Brief profile and statistical snapshot – South-East

Constituent counties	Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Waterford & Wexford	
Regional Population & change (1996-2016)	449,538 (1996): 581,615 (2016) increase of 132,007*	
GVA ¹ per person 2000 and 2015	€20,117: €33,039*	
Total in employment	195,900 ²	
Labour Force Participation rate	60.6% ³	
Unemployment rate	6.8 ⁴	
Unemployment blackspots ⁵	15 ⁶	
Percentage employed in Manufacturing: Services: Public sector	15%: 22%: 24% ⁷	
Educated to third level in South-East: State	38%: 45%*	
Third Level Students (full-time & part-time)	26,091*	
Number of enterprises (micro: small: medium: large) (2016)	24,594: 1,762: 224: 90*	
Number of Enterprise Ireland High Potential Start-Ups ⁸ (HPSUs) South-East: State (2019)	1: 91	
EI supported employment & no. client companies (2018 – 2019)	2018 Jobs: 19,388 Companies: 716	2019 Jobs: 19,868 Companies: 459
IDA supported employment & no. client companies (2018 - 2019)	2018 Jobs: 12,026 Companies: 68	2019 Jobs: 12,213 Companies: 70
LEO supported employment & no. client companies (2018 -2019)	2018 Jobs: 293 Companies: 987	2019 Jobs: 360 Companies: 971
Number of LEO Priming Grants ⁹ South-East: State (2019)	24: 291	

1. Gross Value Added (GVA) is the measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy.

2. CSO Labour Force Survey Quarterly Series Q4 2019

3. CSO Labour Force Survey Quarterly Series Q4 2019

4. CSO Labour Force Survey Quarterly Series Q4 2019

5. Unemployment Blackspots are defined as Electoral Districts with at least 200 people in the labour force and an unemployment rate of 27% higher.

6. Unemployment blackspots in the Region: Kilkenny (1), Tipperary (2), Waterford (9) and Wexford (3).

7. CSO Labour Force Survey Quarterly Series Q4 2019

8. HPSUs are start-up businesses with the potential to develop an innovative product or service for sale on international markets and the potential to create 10 jobs and €1m in sales within 3 years of starting up.

9. A Priming Grant is a business start-up grant, available to micro enterprises within the first 18 months of start-up.

* Latest available update

Appendix 4: Employment creation and unemployment - Progress against targets set to 2020

Target for South-East Region to 2020

Since the launch of the Regional Action Plan for Jobs (RAPJ) there has been an increase of 346,800 people in employment across the State since Q1 2015 to Q4 2019, with 222,600 people in the regions outside of Dublin entering employment in that period.

The RAPJ initiative was a central pillar of the Government's ambition to create 200,000 new jobs by 2020, 135,000 of which are outside of Dublin.

The new Regional Enterprise Plans to 2020 continue the focus on delivery to these targets:

- employment growth of between 10 and 15 percent; and
- an unemployment rate reduced to within one percentage point of the State average.

Utilising data from the CSO Labour Force Survey (LFS), the rate of growth and unemployment rates achieved for the South-East region during the period Q1 2015 up to Q4 2019 are as follows:

	Numbers Employed				Unemployment Rate	
	Q1 2015	Q4 2019	Change Q1 2015 to Q4 2019	Growth Q1 2015 to Q4 2019	Q1 2015	Q4 2019
South-East	169,200	195,900	26,700	15.9%	11.7%	6.8%
State	2,014,400	2,361,200	346,800	17.2%	10.5%	4.5%

Source: CSO Labour Force Survey, Q4 2019

The South-East is still to reach the target of having an unemployment rate reduced to within one percentage point of the State average.

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