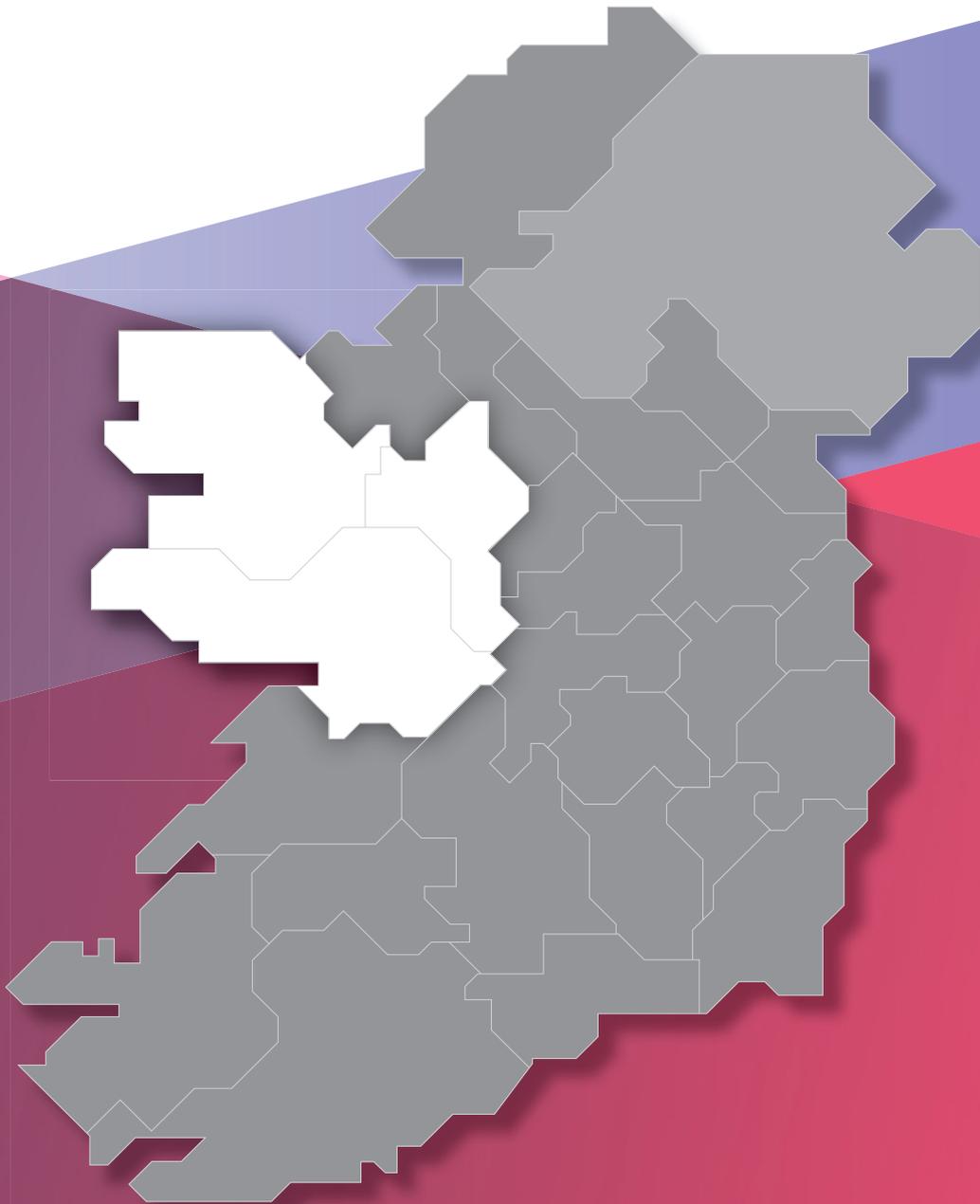




Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

WEST

Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 – First Progress Report



An initiative of the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Enterprise Agencies and LEO activities in the West in 2019	2
3. West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 – Progress Report	6
West Strategic Objectives	6
2019 Highlights	7
Detailed Action Updates	8
Strategic Objective 1	
Build greater capability within the Life Sciences sector to meet its future needs.	8
Strategic Objective 2	
Ensure the continued sustainable growth of tourism in the West, including maximising the opportunities for the growth of Business Tourism.	11
Strategic Objective 3	
Build on the West’s unique creative assets to realise increased employment and investment in the sector.	17
Strategic Objective 4	
Enhance the growth potential of an AgTech in the West.	20
Strategic Objective 5	
Align training provision to local and current future skills needs.	23
Strategic Objective 6	
Enhance the quality and availability of enterprise space in the West.	28
Appendix 1: Regional Funding approved for the West supported by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation	30
Appendix 2: Other Funding approved for the West	33
Project Ireland 2040 Funds	33
Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2019	34
Appendix 3: Brief profile and statistical snapshot – West	36
Appendix 4: Employment creation and unemployment - Progress against targets set to 2020	37



1. Introduction

The West 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 level 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 West is being delivered by the West Regional Enterprise Plan Steering Committee, which was chaired in 2019 by Gerard Kilcommins, VP Worldwide Vascular Operations, Medtronic. The West Steering Committee has met on one occasion during 2019, but as part of the implementation process has formed smaller Working Groups which have met on a number of occasions 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. 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. This item will be included as an Agenda item at future meetings of the West Steering Committee with the aim of facilitating a discussion on the topic and identifying actions to be developed.

The West Regional Enterprise Plan is focused around six Strategic Objectives to positively influence enterprise and job creation in the region. The West Plan is looking to build greater capability within the Life Science sector; ensure sustainable growth in tourism in the West; build on the West's unique creative assets to increase employment and investment; enhance the growth potential of the AgTech sector; and align training provision to local and current future skills needs.

This Year 1 Progress Report details of the progress that has been made to date on the West 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 in excess of €9.5 million has been secured for the West 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 West. Since the first Regional Action Plan for Jobs was introduced in Q1 2015, 41,800 more people are in employment in the West region and the region currently has an unemployment rate of 4 percent, down from 12.6 percent in Q1 2015.

2. Enterprise Agencies and LEO activities in the West 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 West 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 West 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, 15,256 people were employed in 429 Enterprise Ireland supported companies in the West, up 3% from 2018.

Recent EI announcements include:

- Joulica – 45 jobs in Galway
- Aerogen – 83 jobs in Galway

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 317 (net) new jobs created by companies supported by the three West LEOs (Galway, Mayo and Roscommon) during 2019. In total 3,406 people are employed in 685 LEO supported companies in the West.

*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 advanced 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.

Employment grew in IDA supported companies in the West by 5.1% during 2019, bringing the total number employed to 27,300 across 115 IDA client companies in the region.

Recent IDA announcements include:

- Meissner Filtration Products – 150 jobs in Mayo
- Valeo – 50 jobs in Galway
- Rent the Runway – 150 jobs in Galway
- The Knot Worldwide – 100 jobs in Galway
- Boston Scientific – 250 jobs in Galway
- Xperi Corporation – 50 jobs in Galway
- Fort Wayne Metals – 80 jobs in Mayo

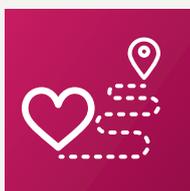
3. West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 – Progress Report

WEST STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1:

Build greater capability within the life sciences sector to meet its future needs.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:

Ensure the continued sustainable growth of tourism in the West, including maximising the opportunities for the growth of Business Tourism.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3:

Build on the West's unique creative assets to realise increased employment and investment in the sector.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4:

Enhance the growth potential of AgTech in the West.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5:

Align training provision to local current and future skills needs.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6:

Enhance the quality and availability of enterprise space in the West.

2019 Highlights



Under the third call of the €40 million Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF) there was a significant announcement for Galway with 5 projects for €9.6m approved.



The implementation of the West Region Audiovisual and Producers (WRAP) fund has led to multiple investments in new productions in 2018 - 2019 and associated employment including the film 'Calm with Horses' released in March 2020.



Scoping exercise for the AgTech sector in the West for the identification of companies in the region with limited interaction with the main enterprise support agencies was completed. The draft report has been completed and follow up activities have been initiated.



'Skills for Growth' initiative rolled out in the West Region with a total of 34 companies provided with skills audits in the West Region in 2019.



The Regional Skills Forum (RSF) Manager for the West region, in collaboration with local enterprise, supported the Galway Mayo Institute of Technology and the National University of Ireland Galway in securing 22 successful applications under Springboard+ 2019



The Western Development Commission (WDC) has carried out a survey of enterprise hubs. This has led to the identification of a range of hubs across the Atlantic Economic Corridor.

Detailed Action Updates

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

1

Build greater capability within the Life Sciences sector to meet its future needs.



Action 1:

Establish a panel of life science sector representatives to assess skills needs and to engage with the Regional Skills Forum (RSF) to explore relevant provisions.

Working Group Members:

IDA, LEOs, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Education and Training Boards (ETB), Regional Skills Forum (RSF)

Timeframe for delivery:

Q1 2019

Status:

Delayed

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Group established
- Mapping undertaken
- Increased take up of supports

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

A Group was established but has not undertaken the mapping exercise.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

The Group to be reconvened to begin work on the mapping exercise to provide for an increase take up of the available supports.

Action 2:

Identify opportunities to strengthen the life sciences innovation ecosystem and its connectivity within the region so as to drive increased take up innovation supports and programmes

Working Group Members:

Higher Education Institutes, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, LEOs, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Education and Training Boards (ETB).

Timeframe for delivery:

Q3 2019

Status:

Work commenced to continue in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Support and programme landscape in the region mapped; gaps identified

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

During 2019, Enterprise Ireland helped to strengthen the life sciences ecosystem in the West Region through

1. Commencement of construction of an extension of GMIT's iHub in Galway with €3m from Enterprise Ireland – most of the extension will support life science start-ups.
2. Approval to GMIT under the Regional Technology Clustering Fund to develop a Life Sciences Cluster in the Region <https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/News/PressReleases/2019-Press-Releases/Ministers-Humphreys-and-McHugh-announce-euro-4-6m-in-Government-funding-through-the-Regional-Technology-Clustering-Fund.html>
3. First successful regional applicant under the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Programme - <https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/News/PressReleases/2019-Press-Releases/Enterprise-Ireland-and-HSE-award-five-companies-innovation-contracts-to-address-diabetes.html>
4. Launch of the Health Innovation Hub Ireland in Galway – supported by DBEI and Enterprise Ireland <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/News-And-Events/Department-News/2019/September/16092019b.html>
5. Implementation of second BioExel Accelerator Programme at NUIG part funded by Enterprise Ireland and Western Development Commission.
6. €25.9m approved for five life science innovation leaders in Galway (and their consortia partners) under the second call of the Disruptive Technology Innovation Fund <https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/News/PressReleases/2019-Press-Releases/Minister-Humphreys-announces-%E2%82%AC65m-for-16-ground-breaking-projects-under-Disruptive-Technologies-Innovation-Fund.html>

There are many networking opportunities for the life sciences cluster in the region with several large conferences and networking opportunities throughout the year such as:

- **Medtech Rising** – Medtech Rising brings together the world's leading business leaders and international experts.
- **Medtech West Summit** – Medtech West Summit is an international conference focused on the transformational change taking place within medical device sourcing. Featuring a group of senior global leaders, the conference is a strong networking opportunity for sourcing and R&D leaders.
- **MedTech Brew** – Medtech brew is an informal regular networking event for the life sciences cluster in the region which brings together indigenous companies, academia and multinational companies to hear from an expert in a relevant field.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Enterprise Ireland to present the draft map of the life sciences eco system in Galway to the panel of life science sector representatives.

Action 3:

Improve the delivery to Life Sciences start-ups in areas such as enterprise space, finance and mentoring.

Working Group Members:

Life Sciences working group (IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, LEOs, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Education and Training Boards)

Timeframe for delivery:

Q2 2020

Status:

Work carried in 2019 to be continued in 2020 with additional input from the panel of life science sector representatives

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Increased take up of supports

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

- Important achievement in 2019 with five regional clients – Bluedrop Medical, Perfuze, Vetex Medical, Capri Medical and Vivasure – securing significant investment under Horizon 2020 to develop their life science ventures eg: https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/commission-awards-more-eu278-million-75-start-ups-and-smes-set-shape-future-2019-dec-05_en&pk_campaign=rss_page
- With the conclusion of the second cohort of the BioExel Accelerator Programme, 14 early stage startups received seed funding and were included in a Life Sciences Investor Showcase of more than 20 regional startups and attended by 100+ in Galway in Q4 2019. Led by NUIG Technology Transfer Office.
- Significant announcement for Galway with 5 projects approved €9.6m under REDF 3 - <https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/News/PressReleases/2020-Press-Releases/Minister-Humphreys-announces-over-%E2%82%AC40m-for-26-Projects-to-drive-job-creation-in-the-regions.html>

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Work carried in 2019 to be continued in 2020 with additional input from the panel of life science sector representatives

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

2

Ensure the continued sustainable growth of tourism in the West, including maximising the opportunities for the growth of Business Tourism.

**Action 1:**

Business Tourism Training

Working Group Members:

Fáilte Ireland

Timeframe for delivery:

2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Net Promotor Score
- Tie in with annual business won/conversion for Galway, with Galway Convention Bureau.

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

The activity under this action includes winning business by maximising opportunities from familiarisation trips and site visits as well as developing experiences and extending the season. Fáilte Ireland are also providing the following business supports:

- Business Operations Excellence
- Sales Skills and Marketing Excellence
- Brexit Response Programme

Business Tourism Training:

Galway Convention Bureau are currently writing and business tourism strategy for Galway 2020-2023. One of our recommendations is a training programme for the industry to get 'Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Events (MICE) Ready' covering the points indicated this has been discussed with Fáilte Ireland and will be implemented. In the meantime opportunities for training has been taken at the likes of Meet In Ireland Business Tourism 2020 plans launch where a slot on Sales Process training will be given.

Developing Experience

This is a multi-organisation effort from Local Authority, to Fáilte Ireland to Galway Convention Bureau we have identified some gaps in the market for some product experiences and approached business however funding to upgrade existing experiences needs to be communicated to grass roots and people who have the potential to make it effort. A clear strategy around this is needed.

Extending the Season

This came out as an industry challenge at our Association of Irish Professional Conference Organisers (AIPCO) conference in Donegal last year. The top five challenges identified on the day have been examined by Ireland's Business Tourism Working Group (BTWG). Established in 2007, the role of the Business Tourism Working Group is to work through challenges facing the industry, determining best practices and providing solutions for implementation and change.

The BTWG is made up of represented bodies of the Business Tourism industry: Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, Irish Tour Operators Association (ITOA) Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE), AIPCO, Irish Hotels Federation (IHF) venues, universities and convention bureaux. The BTWG have come up with a set of actions and a plan however these have not been finalised as an implementation process for the actions needs to be agreed upon.

- New Emerging Markets Readiness
- Fáilte Ireland Accredited Service Excellence

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Engage Business Tourism division in Fáilte Ireland, and Galway Convention Bureau and members, on industry training and setting KPIs. (this work is ongoing within Fáilte Ireland and the Convention Bureau, a process will be established for reporting this back to this group).

Action 2:

Support Fáilte Ireland in the delivery of and implementation of Visitor Experience Development Plans under the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands brands.

Working Group Members:

Fáilte Ireland, Local Authorities, Waterways Ireland, OPW, Coillte

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Publication and implementation of a series of Visitor Experience Development Plans
- Publication and implementation of the Shannon Tourism Masterplan
- New product development

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

Fáilte Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way team have the following progress to report in terms of Visitor Experience Development Plan (VEDP) activity in the area (please note there are no VEDPs progressing as of yet in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands):

Connemara Coast & Aran Islands

Visitor Experience Development Plan (VEDP) – Launched in March 2018, implementation is being driven by the Connemara and Aran Islands Tourism Network (CAITN), actively meeting on a quarterly basis and working through short term and medium-term actions of the VEDP designed to extend the season.

Capital funding for new and existing visitor attractions committed in 2018 under New Horizons Capital scheme. A VEDP B2B Buyer Roadshow was scheduled for end November 2019, and a group of 25 strategically positioned tourism businesses is currently undergoing a Modular Activation Programme which began in September 2019 and concluded in February 2020.

A new suite of 17 new saleable experiences have been developed and key accounts across the area are reporting a 5% increase in occupancy in 2019 compared to 2018.

Clew Bay, Co Mayo

The first phase commenced in Q1 2019 with community briefings held in Westport, Clare Island, Inishturk, Mulranny and Louisburgh with an attendance of 150+. Second phase of theme validation with community and working group in November 2019. VEDP due to be completed by end 2019 and launch in early 2020.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Continue to support Fáilte Ireland in the delivery of and implementation of Visitor Experience Development Plans under the Wild Atlantic Way and develop additional Visitor Experience Development Plans for Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.

Connemara Coast & Aran Islands

Following the VEDP B2B Buyer Roadshow in November 2019, a group of 25 strategically positioned tourism businesses are undergoing a Modular Activation Programme which will conclude in 2020.

Clew Bay, Co Mayo

VEDP completed in 2019 to be launched in early 2020.

Action 3:

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:

Local Authorities; Leader companies; LEOs; Fáilte Ireland; Industry

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

<p>Status:</p> <p>Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020</p>
<p>What were the milestone(s) for 2019?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding applications for the development of greenways/blueways • Workshops to stimulate the business environment
<p>What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Galway and Mayo both received funding for extensions to existing greenways in the last round of Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS) funding 60% grant aid. • Fáilte Ireland Workshop for Local Authorities that applied for Greenways funding scheduled to take place in Waterford in November 2019. • Moycullen to Galway Greenway funded from DTTAS. • Athlone – Galway Greenway working group set up – in process of developing code of best practice for dealing with land owners when developing a greenway. Office open in Ballinasloe library dealing with queries. • North West Regional Assembly has an ongoing European project called ‘Our Way’ looking at the development of Greenways in North West. • Fáilte Ireland are just at Final Draft stage of a ‘Tourism Masterplan for the Beara Breffni Way’. Final report due December 2019. • Community Group working on the Bearna Greenway met with City Council representatives to progress the project. • Fáilte Ireland are in the early stages of scoping for a Wild Atlantic Way Coastal Trail.
<p>What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?</p> <p>Engage Fáilte Ireland’s activities division and key partners to explore feasibility of one shared plan for this regional area.</p>
<p>Action 4:</p> <p>Establish a plan for the sustainability of the Galway Convention Bureau Develop a model for sustaining the Galway Convention Bureau, including securing any necessary funding or resources.</p>
<p>Working Group Members:</p> <p>Galway Convention Bureau, Fáilte Ireland, Local Authorities, WDC</p>
<p>Timeframe for delivery:</p> <p>Q2 2019</p>
<p>Status:</p> <p>Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020</p>
<p>What were the milestone(s) for 2019?</p> <p>Additional financial and personnel resources secured</p>

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

Fáilte Ireland have appointed EY to undertake and review of the Convention Bureau of Ireland, the process has just started but they will be looking at the structure and sustainability of the convention bureau model in Ireland.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Engage Galway Convention Bureau as lead partner, with support from existing funding partners, membership, and potential additional sources of support.
- Establish system of reporting status and progress to this group.

Action 5:

Secure conference/convention bookings from multinationals in the region. Approach MNCs based in the region, with a view to pitching for the West as a destination for companies' global conferences.

Working Group Members:

Fáilte Ireland, Galway Convention Bureau, Local Authorities, Western Development Commission

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2019

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Leads generated

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

As part of our Business Tourism strategy one of our recommendations is more knowledge-based bidding. After research funded by Fáilte Ireland it was agreed the number one knowledge hub to focus on for Galway would be the Med Tech industry. A lot of the buyer contacts in the corporate multinationals are based outside of Ireland. A researcher will examine potential international conferences in the industry the we may match to a local ambassador from Galway.

Galway's main focus is association conferences followed by Corporates conferences.

GCB launched and PR campaign earlier this year search for ambassadors. This is part of our overall strategy and will be rolled out further in the coming months.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Engage Fáilte Ireland's Business Tourism division (Meet in Ireland) and Galway Convention Bureau as lead partners to drive this forward through Conference Ambassador Programme and Corporate Ambassador Programme
- Explore distribution of excursion programmes/spin off leisure visits out through region

Action 6:

Develop a suite of new and improved experiences for Mayo and Roscommon outside of the high season

Working Group Members:

Fáilte Ireland, private tourism operators, Local Authorities.

Timeframe for delivery:

2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Quantity of experiences on offer; extension of the season.
- Increase in the number of visitors to Mayo and Roscommon outside of the high season

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

- Fáilte Ireland’s Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands team working on developing comprehensive suite of new saleable experiences on an ongoing basis.
- Experiences are being audited and tested, and providers getting training and mentoring from Fáilte Ireland to improve the quality of the product and their sales capability to grow their international sales.
- Experiences are being fed into B2B distribution channels to tour operators by Fáilte Ireland and overseas B2C campaigns via Tourism Ireland. There is a plan to incorporate experiences into domestic campaigns under Discover Ireland in 2020.

A comprehensive update on types of saleable experiences generated can be provided at a later meeting if required.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Audit and report of existing saleable experiences
- Encourage new experience development by operators and support through training programmes
- Maintain database of product emerging for reporting back to this group through lifetime of the Plan.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

3

Build on the West's unique creative assets to realise increased employment and investment in the sector.

**Action 1:**

Form a project team for the creative economy (business/education/public sector) to develop and implement a plan to achieve enterprise and employment growth in the creative sector.

Working Group Members:

Western Development Commission (WDC), Údarás na Gaeltachta, LEOs

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Commencement of plan to achieve sector growth in value and employment
- Identification of key steps/plan to achieve sector growth in value and employment
- Implementation of the plan

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

- The Regional Creative economy team (via the WDC) have engaged with regional stakeholders including: TG4, WRAP fund, NUIG and Galway 2020 etc.
- From this process the Western Development Commission requested in November 2019 and accepted nominations from stakeholders to the west Regional Advisory Group.
- The creative economy team have engaged with inviting attendees and met with TG4 and Galway 2020 so far.
- It is intended that the composition of the regional advisory group and subsequent terms of reference will be in place before December

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

The WDC have issued a tender for support services to implement the Regional Advisory Group for the Creative economy in January 2020. This support will:

- Conduct a desktop review to provide an initial summary overview of the creative economy (CE) with an emphasis on the three counties, Galway, Mayo and Roscommon.
- Support the WDC in its task to facilitate the establishment and implementation of a high level, industry led regional advisory group (RAG), for the three county regions (Galway, Mayo, and Roscommon).
- Provide a final written report on the RAG findings to inform future actions in developing the growth of the CE in the three-county region.

The final RAG findings should be available by Q2/Q3 2020

Action 2:

Develop a programme to increase scale of companies in the Creative Sector. This action will focus on developing the business capability and acumen of small companies and sole traders in the creative sector, with a view to increasing scaling potential and resilience.

Working Group Members:

WDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, LEOs, ETBs

Timeframe for delivery:

Q2 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Programme developed and delivered.
- Growth of creative sector companies.

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

- The implementation of the West Region Audiovisual and Producers (WRAP) fund has led to multiple investments in new productions in 2018 - 2019 and associated employment.
 - » 10 productions invested in by the WDC /WRAP fund to a total of approx. €445K leveraging €3.5m in total investment in the productions e.g. 'Calm with Horses' released March 2020 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xbrj1wDI3iM>

Approved for Region under REDF Jan 8th 2020, a creative incubation and co-working space. CREW - The Region developed a Creative Enterprise West (CREW) programme through ComhOibriu CLG in partnership with WDC, GMIT and the Galway Film Centre. CREW will target the Digital Creative sector and will build on WDCs research in the Creative Industries sector and government policy through the following five actions:

- Dedicated Digital Creative Hub with links to the 101 Digital Hubs along the AEC
- Bespoke enterprise supports for the digital creative sector
- The creative Network of Practice Community
- International Market Development
- Training and Education

Updated figures for the impact of the WRAP fund in the region (Galway, Mayo and Roscommon):

- 10 investments in the region in question 2018-2019,
- €445,864 invested to date (disbursed)
- €3.5m in total regional investment leveraged by this
- As 'Calm with Horses' was released on 13th March 2020, sales and employment figures are pending

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

In 2020, the growth strand of the regional creative economy development initiative will look to build on the above scaling initiatives and add more from the RAG priorities in Q3.

Action 3:

Develop an umbrella brand for the promotion of the West region creative sector.

This action proposes to achieve for the creative sector in the West region what the Wild Atlantic Way has achieved for tourism along the Atlantic coast – a branding proposition that brings together existing assets and which will feed into diverse placemaking and regional promotion initiatives

Working Group Members:

WDC, Údarás na Gaeltachta, LEOs, Enterprise Ireland

Timeframe for delivery:**Status:**

Delayed

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Development of brand

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

The initial priority of this will be reviewed as part of the RAG consultation in Q2 2020

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

The RAG will advise on whether the need and realization of a creative region brand is possible. In part the discussion will be had with the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) team as they have indicated the need to have the AEC region review the need to be considered a creative region.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

4

Enhance the growth potential of an AgTech in the West.

**Action 1:**

Conduct a scoping exercise for the AgTech sector in the West region.

This exercise will explore the supply side of the sector (what is out there and what do companies need?), and the demand side (what opportunities exist in the marketplace?) as a basis for the development of a 'plan of action' for the sector.

Working Group Members:

AgTech 'Forum'/Working Group - Teagasc, Leader, Enterprise Ireland, Local Enterprise Offices and Bord Bia.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2019

Status:

Work commenced & completed in 2019

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Increased interaction with Government agencies from AgTech clients or businesses

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

This action is complete. The LEOs and Enterprise Ireland took to the lead in carrying out the scoping exercise to gauge the amount of activity in this sector throughout the region. The draft report has been completed and follow up activities have been initiated.

A key element of the scoping exercise was the identification of companies in the region that had to date only had limited interaction with the main enterprise support agencies. Discussions were held with several companies to outline possible supports for growth and development plans.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Each of the LEOs and Enterprise Ireland are mindful of the need to engage with as many of the businesses active in this sector as possible throughout the region. The focus in 2020 will be on identifying opportunities for increased engagement and a higher uptake of current available support.

Action 2:

Identification of best practice in enhancing capability and strengthen the AgTech network by identifying an Enterprise Champion.

Working Group Members:

AgTech 'Forum'/Working Group

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2019

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Case studies and models of best practice examined and explained within Ireland and overseas.
- Increased take up of programmes/funding mechanisms for companies in the AgTech sector

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

The LEOs in the West Region conducted an exploratory visit to Agritechnica 2019, the world's leading agri trade fair with several clients. This visit was particularly important from the perspective of raising awareness of industry trends, introducing participants to potential international customers and identifying industry benchmarks in terms of standards of production and product display.

Visit conducted, with the focus on learning about innovation and opportunities from international agri companies.

The visit further highlighted the potential associated with the development of a strong 'Irish AgTech' brand, especially from the perspective of how it would give smaller companies a clear understanding of the standards required to succeed on an international basis.

The visit also highlighted the need to consider how best to build a regional AgTech cluster. This would require leadership from both the enterprise agencies and key personnel from within the sector itself.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Agritechnica runs every two years. The LEOs will either plan to attend the next trade fair in 2021 and begin generating interest among clients, making it an established event. Or based on client feedback, another suitable trade fair will be identified to travel to in 2020.

LEOs will run local AgTech themed events to foster a network in the region.

<p>Action 3:</p>
<p>Develop a ‘plan for action’ for the sector.</p>
<p>Working Group Members:</p>
<p>AgTech ‘Forum’/Working Group</p>
<p>Timeframe for delivery:</p>
<p>Q4 2019</p>
<p>Status:</p>
<p>Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020</p>
<p>What were the milestone(s) for 2019?</p>
<p>Increased scale and job numbers for existing AgTech companies and increased numbers of startups in the AgTech industry</p>
<p>What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?</p>
<p>As part of the scoping exercise a series of actions have been identified. These are detailed below.</p>
<p>What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify a suitable international trade fair to bring agri-business clients to in order to increase the level of innovation and opportunities in the sector. 2. A national committee to be formulated to drive coordinated action on the ‘AgTech in Ireland’ brand. 3. Identify best practice internationally (e.g. New Zealand) and learn how Ireland as a whole can position itself as a leader in AgTech. 4. Identify opportunities to apply for REDF – Stream Three clustering initiatives and EU funding programmes.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

5

Align training provision to local and current future skills needs.

**Action 1:**

Progress the development and roll-out of a 'Skills for Growth' initiative in the West Region.

Working Group Members:

Regional Skills Forum, and partners including Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Education and Training Board, and Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2019

Status:

Work commenced & completed in 2019

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Number of enterprises audited

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

A total of 34 companies were reached with skills audits in the West Region for 2019.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain:

- Information will be aggregated by Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) in SOLAS and national/regional level analysis should be available in early 2020.
- For 2020, the West Regional Skills Forum aims to reach 50 companies in the West with skills audits and progress Skills for Growth with our partners.

Action 2:

Develop a panel of business representatives to engage with second level students.

Working Group Members:

Individual Educational Institutions and Education and Training Boards, LEOs

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Working group consists of Galway Roscommon ETB and Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim ETB, GMIT and TBD from NUI Galway. The plan was to:

- Focus on Transition Year students,
- Build on existing career guidance programmes,
- Link in to potential future careers events for 2nd level students in Galway (i.e. Galway Advertiser 'Pathways' event) [by Q1 2020],
- Seek ambassadors from the RSF members [by Q4 2019] to engage with schools for a roadshow [from Q1 2020] and
- Create interesting marketing materials e.g. on apprenticeships [by Q4 2019]

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

As timeframe for delivery is Q4 2020 workplan being undertaken in 2020.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Seek ambassadors from the RSF members to engage with schools for a roadshow during 2020
- Create marketing materials for the engagement

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

Status:

Work commenced & completed in 2019

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Number of successful applications

- Working group consisted of West Regional Skills Forum (WRSF) in partnership with GMIT NUI Galway additional GMIT/NUI Galway staff members and members of WRSF
- Completed for 2019 already.

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

The Regional Skills Forum Manager for the West Region, in collaboration with local enterprise, supported the Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) and the National University of Ireland Galway (NUI Galway) in preparing 43 applications under Springboard+ 2019 in order to increase provision of programmes for upskilling and reskilling within the region. Of these, 22 applications were successful:

- Higher Diploma in Science - Computing (Data Analytics)
- Bachelor of Engineering Degree (Add-on) in Manufacturing Engineering
- Certificate in Blockchain for Business
- Certificate in Business Analytics
- Certificate in Climate Resilience for Business
- Certificate in Culinary Skills
- Certificate in Digital Media and Marketing
- Certificate in Digitalisation for SMEs
- Certificate in Family Business
- Certificate in Greening Enterprise Skills
- Certificate in Information Technology Project Management
- Certificate in Network Cybersecurity
- Certificate in Science in Machine Learning
- Certificate in Sustainable Building Technology
- Quality for the Medical Device Industry
- Bachelor of Arts in Culinary Arts (consortium)
- Higher Diploma in Applied Science (Software Design and Development Industry Stream)
- Diploma in Change Management
- Diploma in Learning and Development
- Diploma in Technology Enhanced Learning
- MSc in AgInnovation
- Specialist Diploma in Medical Device Science

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Will be repeated for 2020 Springboard+ process through provision of information on company/industry skills needs Q4 2019/Q1 2020 (skills audits, roundtables etc.).

Action 4:

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:

Education and Training Board, Regional Skills Forum.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2019

Status:

Work commenced & completed in 2019

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Increase in the number of participants

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

Working Group: WRSF in partnership with Galway, Roscommon ETB (GRETB) and Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB (MSLETB) plus their respective team members. WRSF supports outreach to new companies and provides funding, GRETB/MSLETB recruit participants and deliver courses. Successfully doubled the number of participants in 2019 to 87 across Galway and Mayo. Many of these participants have gone on to undertake further training.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

EXPLORE will continue in 2020.

Action 5:

Communicate to employers the services available through Regional Skills Forum to assist with resolution of emerging skills needs.

Working Group Members:

Regional Skills Forum (RSF) and other stakeholders

Timeframe for delivery:

2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Increased number of engagements

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

- Three Regional Skills Forum meetings with employers and education providers in 2019, two in Galway and one in Mayo.
- Sponsored second level careers event held by GMIT, NUI Galway and the Galway Roscommon Enterprise and Training Board (GRETB) to communicate to enterprise and their team members the services offered by the Regional Skills Forum and those of local education and training providers
- To present a coordinated approach, education and training providers collaborated on a joint leaflet which explains the higher/further education system and which is co-branded with the logos of all the providers. Similarly, the West Regional Skills Forum Manager supported these providers to co-produce a booklet of case studies of their engagement with companies in the region to inspire more enterprises to engage.
- The Sales Professionals Working Group reignited in the West
- Presentation of the Regional Skills Forum to clients of the Local Enterprise Office, Enterprise Ireland etc
- Three events held in Q4 2019 to engage businesses and promote Regional Skills West.
- Development of videos to promote work of Regional Skills West
- The West Regional Skills Forum website has had some updates with more to come.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- A launch event for the booklet and leaflet will be held at the end of February 2020.
- Continued development of videos.
- Continued networking and events.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

6

Enhance the quality and availability of enterprise space in the West.



Action 1:

Publish a regional enterprise space audit

Working Group Members:

Local Authorities, Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) Officers, Department of Rural Community Development (DRDC)

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2019

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Audit to be published

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

- Audit for Roscommon completed and Mayo substantially completed.
- Galway audit currently being carried out and nearing completion.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain:

- Galway audit has been completed for the towns of Gort, Ballinasloe, Tuam, Clifden, and Athenry. Notably this work is ongoing and data will require regular updating.
- Launch of interface expected by end of Q2 2020. Interface will allow interested parties to search for enterprise space based on a range of criteria including location, size, and type.
- Update of enterprise space data and addition of further towns.

Action 2:

Work with the owners/managers of existing enterprise space to assess and address the facilities and functionality of current enterprise spaces.

Working Group Members:

Local Authorities, AEC Officers, LEOs, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2019

Status:
Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020
What were the milestone(s) for 2019?
Assessment complete and gaps identified
What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?
Identification of gaps in spaces identified as part of enterprise space audit has not been progressed as there are remaining towns to be audited across the AEC. However, the Western Development Commission (WDC) have carried out a survey of enterprise hubs and held consultations with same. This has led to identification of a range of hubs across the AEC.
What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Galway: this may extend out after the completion of Action 1 as there needs to be engagement with owners/managers on the required improvements • WDC to hold consultation in March 2020 to agree on classification categories for hubs in the region. • Investigate feasibility of funding for hub improvements. • WDC to launch AEC hub booking system by end of Q4 2020.
Action 3:
Network/connect existing enterprise spaces to other business supports.
Working Group Members:
Local Authorities, Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) Officers, LEOs, Enterprise Ireland.
Timeframe for delivery:
Q2 2020
Status:
Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020
What were the milestone(s) for 2019?
Network established; potential for common/linked supports mapped
What progress was made in reaching the milestone(s) in 2019?
AEC/WDC held consultations in Limerick and Sligo for hub managers in November 2019
What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?
<p>This action needs to be activated with the Local Authorities to confirm if the networking/connection is being checked as part of the audit of Action 1.</p> <p>Consultants now preparing AEC hub strategy with view to launch May 2020.</p> <p>Networking for hubs in the AEC to be facilitated.</p>

Appendix 1: Regional Funding approved for the West 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 West region secured funding of just over €16.7 million across nine projects:

REDF Call	Project	Location	Description	Grant amount
1	BIA Innovator Campus CLG	Galway	Regional food workspace	€2,466,148
2	Galway City Innovation District CLG	Galway	Co-working and event space	€2,487,400
	Midc Páirc Na Mara	Galway	Marine Innovation and Development Centre	€2,000,000
	The Burren Lowlands CLG	Galway, Clare	An enterprise platform which will create a focus point for the development of activities to create and attract additional jobs to this area	€182,786
3	Comhoibriú CLG	Galway	Centre of Excellence providing coworking space, incubation and accelerator programmes, training and outreach services	€2,694,833
	Galway City Innovation District (GCID)	Galway	Support export oriented fast-growth tech companies	€1,205,833
	Galway Technology Centre DAC	Galway	Facility for tech and digital enterprises in the Region.	€4,023,400
	SCCUL Enterprises CLG Galway	Galway	Enterprise centre to support Start-ups, SMEs and Social Enterprises.	€1,239,408
	Grow Remote CLG	Galway	Remote working Hub	€449,442
			Call 1 Total	€2,466,148
			Call 2 Total	€4,670,183
			Call 3 Total	€9,612,915
			Grand Total	€16,729,249

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 (€)
Galway-Mayo IT (A)	1	The Wood and Furniture Manufacturing Cluster will help the sector to scale rapidly and sustainably. It will help businesses to improve competitiveness, productivity and collaboration; develop and adopt innovative technologies; efficiently create novel products and services; and enhance access to talent, R&D capacities and international supports.	€363,671
Galway-Mayo IT (B)	1	The MedTech and Life Sciences Cluster will enable SMEs to scale rapidly through increased engagement in research, development and innovation activities and the efficient creation of novel products and services. It will help them to capitalising on future trends, especially in Digital Health, and to adopt innovative technologies.	€363,671
Total			€727,342

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
This project seeks to address the challenges of moving micro-enterprises to more sustainable and lower carbon operations. It aims to intensively engage with micro-enterprises to develop a tailored Carbon Impact Assessment which will identify opportunities to both increase competitiveness and introduce new processes and technologies, thus driving an innovation agenda.	Mayo	IT Sligo	€210,466
Total			€210,466

LEO Competitive Fund successful announcement date:
4th October 2019

Appendix 2: Other Funding approved for the West

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	Beal a'Mhuirtead Enterprise/Digital Hubs	Mayo	€795,062
	Indoor Sports Facility	Mayo	€2,100,000
	An Spideal digital/incubation space	Galway	€548,887
	Residential Education Centre	Galway	€1,728,000
Call 1 Subtotal			€5,171,949
RRDF Call 2	Regeneration Loughrea, Breaking Through	Galway	€1,628,879
	Áras Scéalta an Atlantaigh – Visitor Centre and Tourism Hub	Mayo	€1,879,350
	Ballintubber Abbey Culture and Heritage Visitor Centre	Mayo	€2,677,352
	Clew Bay Coast	Mayo	€1,924,800
	Life Sciences Innovation Hub and Soft-Landing Space	Roscommon	€2,751,544.16
Call 2 Subtotal			€8,982,575.16
Call 1 & 2 Total			€14,154,524.16

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	Ardaun Upgrade of Martins Roundabout	Galway	€2,703,000
	Cycling and Walking	Galway	€2,900,000
	Public realm plan - Market Square and Main Street	Roscommon	€780,000
	Ballina Innovation Quarter	Mayo	€3,217,000
	Castlebar Urban Greenway Link	Mayo	€938,000
Total			€10,538,000

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
Develop Ballygluinin Train station as a visitor's attraction.	Ballygluinin	Galway	€100,000
Install footpaths and associated works to connect vital community services.	Cheathru Rua	Galway	€80,000
Install a pedestrian crossing, new footpaths, tactile paving and public realm works.	Corofin	Galway	€100,000
Extend the footpath from the community centre to the national school and sports and recreation facilities.	Craughwell	Galway	€100,000
Upgrade and extend footpaths in four areas of the village.	Killimor	Galway	€100,000
Provide foot and cycle paths and refurbish a Green Space in the village centre.	Oranmore	Galway	€200,000
Provide a footpath to connect a number of the principal public facilities and services.	Tir an Fhia, Leitir Moir	Galway	€72,000
Galway Total			€752,000
Enhance the safety and accessibility of Ballycastle village.	Ballycastle	Mayo	€92,000
Village centre enhancements and public realm works.	Barnacarroll	Mayo	€100,000
Public Realm Enhancement Works.	Glencastle	Mayo	€100,000
Enhancement and public realm work.	Inver	Mayo	€40,000
Safety enhancements, visual upgrades, lighting and car park improvements.	Killasser	Mayo	€80,000
Public realm infrastructure upgrade including various village centre and heritage trail enhancements.	Killawalla	Mayo	€100,000
Extension to the existing Community Centre to incorporate a fully wheelchair accessible public toilet.	Killeen	Mayo	€56,000
Extension to Community Centre.	Kilmeena	Mayo	€78,400
Infrastructural and public realm works and the development of public amenities.	Roundfort	Mayo	€192,133
Mayo Total			€838,533
Development of a 'Hot Desk' facility in the local Community Centre and enhancement of the village.	Athleague	Roscommon	€100,000
Town centre enhancements.	Castlerea	Roscommon	€88,000
Installation of footpaths.	Creagh	Roscommon	€100,000
Provide car parking at Marion Community Hall and the construction of a footpath to Clooncan Bog Walk.	Gortaganny	Roscommon	€100,000
Improvement of the appearance and safety of Keadue Village.	Keadue	Roscommon	€100,000
Clearing and revamping of the old Canal Walk.	Rooskey	Roscommon	€100,000
Resurfacing car park, footpath, signage and refurbishment of amenity area.	Tulsk	Roscommon	€100,000
Roscommon Total			€688,000
West Grand Total			€2,278,533

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

Appendix 3: Brief profile and statistical snapshot – West

Constituent counties	Galway, Mayo and Roscommon	
Regional Population & change (1996-2016)	352,353 (1996): 453,109 (2016) increase of 100,756*	
GVA ¹ per person 2000 and 2015	€18,954: €29,677*	
Total in employment	222,100 ²	
Labour Force Participation rate	62.2% ³	
Unemployment rate	4.0% ⁴	
Unemployment blackspots ⁵	8 ⁶	
Percentage employed in Manufacturing: Services: Public sector	16%: 20%: 27% ⁷	
Educated to third level in West: State	46%: 45%*	
Third Level Students (full-time & part-time)	24,085 ⁸	
Number of enterprises ⁹ (micro: small: medium: large) (2016)	21,840: 1,416: 249: 28*	
Number of Enterprise Ireland High Potential Start-Ups ¹⁰ (HPSUs) West: State (2019)	14: 91	
EI supported employment & no. client Companies (2018 – 2019)	2018	2019
	Jobs: 14,812	Jobs: 12,343
	Companies: 707	Companies: 429
IDA supported employment & no. client companies (2018 - 2019)	2018	2019
	Jobs: 26,237	Jobs: 27,300
	Companies: 114	Companies: 115
LEO supported employment & no. client companies (2018 - 2019)	2018	2019
	Jobs: 321	Jobs: 317
	Companies: 669	Companies: 685
Number of LEO Priming Grants ¹¹ West: State (2019)	14: 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% or higher

6. Unemployment blackspots in the Region: Galway County (2), Mayo (5) & Roscommon (1)

7. CSO Labour Force Survey Quarterly Series Q4 2019

8. National University of Ireland, Galway (17,703) & Galway – Mayo Institute of Technology (6,382)

9. A **Small Enterprise** is defined as: an enterprise that has fewer than 50 employees and has either an annual turnover and/or an annual Balance Sheet total not exceeding €10m; A **Medium Sized Enterprise** is defined as: an enterprise that has between 50 employees and 249 employees and has either an annual turnover not exceeding €50m or an annual Balance Sheet total not exceeding €43m; A **large Enterprise** is defined as: an enterprise that employs greater than 250 employees, has either an annual turnover of greater than €50m or an annual balance sheet of greater than €43m

10. 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.

11. 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

Targets for the West 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 West 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
West	180,300	222,100	23.1%	41,800	12.6%	4.0%
State	2,014,400	2,361,200	346,800	17.2%	10.5%	4.5%

Source: CSO Labour Force Survey, Q4 2019

The West is currently performing ahead of the targets to end of 2020.

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