

**EXPERT EVALUATION NETWORK  
DELIVERING POLICY ANALYSIS ON THE  
PERFORMANCE OF COHESION POLICY 2007–2013  
YEAR 1 – 2011**

**TASK 2: COUNTRY REPORT ON ACHIEVEMENTS OF  
COHESION POLICY**

**IRELAND**

**VERSION: FINAL**

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**A report to the European Commission  
Directorate-General Regional Policy**

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- BMW       Border, Midland and West Region
- CEB       County Enterprise Board(s)
- EC       European Commission
- ECB       European Central Bank
- EEN       Expert Evaluation Network
- ERDF      European Regional Development Fund
- ESF       European Social Fund
- ICT       Information Communication Technology
- IMERC     Irish Maritime and Energy Resource Cluster
- IMF       International Monetary Fund
- NDP       National Development Plan
- NSS       National Spatial Strategy
- OP       Operational Programme
- PRTL I    Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions
- RA       Regional Authority
- RTDI      Research, Technological Development and Innovation
- RPGs     Regional Planning Guidelines
- S&E      Southern and Eastern Region
- SEUPB    Special EU Programmes Body

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Regional disparities have been a persistent reality in Ireland for many years and since the 1950s successive governments have pursued policies designed to achieve “balanced regional development”. Membership of the European Union and subsequent access to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Funds also influenced and gave a strong impetus to Irish regional policy, especially in the western and north western periphery of the country. In view of emerging problems in the main urban concentrations, a new emphasis was given to “urban renewal” since the 1980s. Eight Regional Authority (NUTS III) regions were established in 1994. These still remain and have potential to play key roles. For the purpose of managing European regional and cohesion funds, two major NUTS II regions, the Border, Midlands and West Region (BMW) and the Southern and Eastern Region (S&E) were established in 1999. These have their own Regional Assemblies.

After a period of significant progress and export growth from the mid-1990s Ireland became unduly dependent from about 2001 on domestic demand, driven by lax lending policies and an unsustainable property boom. A severe economic downturn commenced in 2007. Gross Domestic Product and employment fell significantly and unemployment escalated. Tax revenue fell far behind government expenditure. In efforts to resolve the problem successive Budgets imposed large expenditure cuts and tax increases since 2008. Special loan assistance was sought in 2010 from the European Commission, European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and a range of conditions were attached to these loans. While Ireland’s debt to GDP ratio is likely to be stabilised over the next few years, the continuing retrenchment is having serious adverse effects in all regions.

Recent regional policy in Ireland is carried out in collaboration with the European Commission Directorate General for Regional Policy. Operating under the “Competitiveness and Employment Objective” and in line with the two Regional Operational Programmes the central areas of policy are the support of enterprise, including Research, Technological Development and Innovation (RTDI), innovation and investment, urban development, transport infrastructure, environmental and energy infrastructure and a number of “territorial development” programmes.

In relation to implementation of policy, the main focus of the ERDF expenditure has been on Enterprise and Innovation in the S&E Region and on Transport and Urban Development in the BMW. However, there are significant obstacles to progress. Apart from the cutbacks in government expenditure outlined above, the ERDF is now modest compared to previous periods and, in view of the apparent success up to 2001, Ireland was no longer eligible for support from the Cohesion Fund since 2003. In recent years weak demand and lack of government funding means that overall expenditure has fallen behind expectations. If the Operational Programme (OP) targets up to 2013 are to be achieved the expenditure pattern would need to improve significantly in both regions during the remainder of the period.

There is evidence of some positive achievements during 2010 but the results are mixed. Progress was made in both NUTS II regions especially in the Enterprise/Innovation policy area, transport and telecommunications infrastructure and in training. The Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTLTI) has been successful in furthering research and inter-institutional collaboration, including that in Northern Ireland. However, the key objectives and targets for new employment creation – a key element in achieving cohesion – have not been achieved. This is particularly obvious when employment and unemployment data is examined in the largely agricultural and rural regions. The economic downturn, cuts in expenditure and the current modest level of ERDF support are all contributory factors.

Mid-term evaluations of the BMW and S&E Regional Operational Programmes have been carried out since the last country report. A number of evaluations have also been completed in relation to Territorial Development programmes. These evaluations are generally favourable but a number of criticisms and recommendations for change are made. An “Economic Impact” study of the PRTLTI has also been completed. A number of evaluations illustrating best practice are examined.

The significant challenges outlined in the 2010 country report persist. The economic and social situation has deteriorated further in most regions of Ireland. Further domestic cuts in expenditure in 2011 and proposed for 2012 and subsequently are likely to reduce demand and employment in the economy further. A strong re-invigorated regional and Cohesion Policy, with adequate funding, is now more critical than ever.

## 1. THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The main features of the national socio-economic situation and the nature and scale of regional disparities identified in the 2010 country report were as follows:

National Difficulties 2007–2009:

- Significant economic down-turn in the economy since 2007;
- Decline in GDP per head;
- Tax revenue inadequate to meet increased government expenditure;
- Collapse of major lending institutions;
- Excessive borrowing of funds, risk-taking and collapse of large property firms;
- A series of harsh budgets since 2008 with significant tax increases and cuts in public expenditure (See Annex 1);
- Deterioration of public services;
- Significant declines in employment in all sectors;
- Particular contraction in construction employment;
- Significant increase in unemployment, especially youth unemployment and long-term unemployment;
- Continuing decline in house prices;
- Large numbers in negative equity and in mortgage arrears;
- Significant numbers of vacant houses and apartments arising from over-supply;
- Further increase in national debt payable to the European Commission, ECB and IMF, arising from bank recapitalisation.

Since 2006 the growth rate of GDP deteriorated and both the employment and unemployment rates worsened in Ireland. From an average GDP per capita growth rate of 3.6% per annum over the period 2000–2006 – almost treble the EU27 growth rate, Eurostat data suggests that Ireland's GDP per capita declined by 7.6% between 2008 and 2009 – well in excess of the EU27 average decline (Table 1 in the Excel file). The available regional data also show that GDP per capita deteriorated significantly in both NUTS II regions between 2006 and 2008. While recent regional data are not yet available, data at a national level confirms that GDP per capita fell by a further 3.1% between 2009 and 2010 (Central Statistics Office, 2011).

One of the most important indicators of progress in an economy is the availability of sustainable jobs. Employment in Ireland was at its peak in June 2007 with a total of 2.1 million jobs. Table A shows the changes over the three year period December 2007 to December 2010. During this brief period overall employment fell by 315,600. Males were worst affected with a loss of 240,700 jobs or 19.8% (because of the loss of jobs in construction and manufacturing as noted below). Female job losses amounted to 74,800 or 8.1%. The long-term decline in agricultural employment continued and service jobs, increasing consistently over several decades, fell by 87,100 in the three year period.

However, the main losses occurred in industry and in particular in construction. By late 2010 construction employment had fallen to 109,900 from a peak of 269,900 in June 2007. Since 2007 alone male employment, falling by almost 60%, accounted for the majority of the losses. Furthermore, a range of activities linked to or dependent on construction were also adversely affected. These included manufacturing, the wholesale and retail trade, finance, insurance and real estate activities as well as accommodation and food services. Female job losses were severe in a number of these areas (Drudy and Collins, 2011; Central Statistics Office, 2011a).

**Table A – Employment and Unemployment in Ireland, 2007–2010**

	2007	2010	% Change
Employment by main sector (thousand)			
Agriculture	113.8	85.0	-25.3
Industry	548.0	348.4	-36.4
Services	1,477.0	1,389.9	-5.9
Total	2,138.8	1,823.2	-14.8
Construction Employment (thousand)			
Male	250.2	102.9	-58.9
Female	13.5	7.0	-48.1
Total	263.7	109.9	-58.3
Unemployment (000s)			
Male	64.8	203.5	214
Female	36.2	95.6	164.1
Total	101.0	299.0	196.0
Rate	4.5	14.1	
Long-Term Unemployment (thousand)			
Male	21.9	115.7	428.3
Female	7.5	38.3	410.7
Total	29.4	153.9	423.5
Rate	1.3	7.3	
Youth Unemployment Rates			
Male 15–19 years	13.3	43.1	224.1
Male 20–24 years	8.3	32.3	289.2
Female 15–19 years	9.9	31.3	216.2
Female 20–24 years	6.3	21.0	233.3
Total 15–19 years	11.7	37.1	217.1
Total 20–24 years	7.4	26.6	259.5

Note: Table compares Q4 2007 to Q4 2010. Source: CSO QNHS on-line database.

Arising from these job losses, unemployment increased from 101,000 or 4.5% in December 2007 to 299,000 or 14.1% in December 2010. Male unemployment was 17.3% compared to 10.1% for females. The total unemployment rate had been a mere 4.3% in April 2002 and only 4.5% in December 2007 immediately before the economic crisis. This illustrates the remarkable and rapid change which occurred in recent years and demonstrates the danger

of over-reliance for employment on one particular volatile sector such as domestic construction. It should be noted that net out-migration re-commenced in 2009 after a period of significant net in-migration since 1996. In 2010 net out-migration (34,500) was at its highest since 1989 at the end of the last recession. Irish nationals constituted a large group of emigrants in 2009 and 2010 (18,400 and 27,700 respectively). However, return migration to the 12 new accession states was also significant (30,100 in 2009 and 19,100 in 2010) (Central Statistics Office, 2010). In the absence of this out-migration from the country, the unemployment rates above would be much higher.

One particular concern is the significant increase in long-term unemployment i.e. unemployed for more than one year. In December 2010 long-term unemployment accounted for 51.5% of total unemployment compared to 22.2% two years earlier. Within three years both male and female numbers increased fivefold and the long-term rate rose from 1.3% to 7.3%. A further concern is the extent of youth unemployment and the dramatic increase in this in recent years. By the end of 2010, the unemployment rates for males in the 15–19 and 20–24 age groups ranged from 32 to 43% while rates for females range from 21 to 31% (see Table A)

#### *Regional Disparities since 2007*

As illustrated in the 2010 country report, the BMW region has consistently lagged behind the S&E region on a range of indicators e.g.:

- Lower GDP;
- Depressed productivity;
- Heavy reliance on traditional sources of employment;
- Undue reliance on construction employment;
- Greater employment losses;
- Higher Unemployment;
- Lower rate of innovation and slow transition to high value economic activities;
- Low level of urbanisation.

The S&E region, despite a range of advantages, had similar characteristics:

- A diverse set of NUTS III regions, some with high dependence on traditional sources of employment;
- Undue reliance on construction employment;
- Significant job losses;
- Increasing unemployment;
- Unemployment black spots in the main urban centres;
- Traffic congestion especially in the Dublin area;
- Inflationary tendencies in the Dublin area.

Table B provides data on regional employment change since 2007. The rate of employment loss was much worse in the BMW Region (16% compared to 14.3%) although the absolute

losses were very high in the S&E region. These disparities are most obvious when data is examined at NUTS III (Regional Authority) level. For example, the heavily agricultural and rural Border and Midlands regions within the BMW suffered employment losses ranging from 17% to 20% during the short three year period, while within the S&E region, the most urbanised Dublin region and the more diverse agricultural and rural South East lost 16.2% and 16.6% respectively.

**Table B – Regional Employment Change in Ireland, 2007–2010 (thousand)**

	2007	2010	% Change
NUTS II			
BMW Region	553.0	464.3	-16.0
NUTS III			
Border	222.4	184.4	-17.1
Midlands	125.4	100.4	-19.9
West	205.2	179.6	-12.5
NUTS II			
S&E Region	1,585.8	1,358.9	-14.3
NUTS III			
Dublin	626.8	525.4	-16.2
Mid East	254.3	232.2	-8.7
Mid West	172.2	150.0	-12.9
South East	226.3	188.6	-16.6
South West	306.2	262.6	-14.2
<i>National Total</i>	<i>2,138.8</i>	<i>1,823.3</i>	<i>-14.8</i>

Note: Table compares Q4 2007 to Q4 2010. Source: Central Statistics Office QNHS on-line database

**Table C – Regional Unemployment rates in Ireland, 2007–2010**

	2007 (%)	2010 (%)	Change 000s
NUTS II			
BMW Region	4.9	14.4	49.5
NUTS III			
Border	5.9	13.3	14.3
Midlands	4.8	15.9	12.6
West	3.9	14.7	22.6
NUTS II			
S&E Region	4.4	14.0	148.5
NUTS III			
Dublin	4.3	12.7	48.3
Mid East	3.5	12.7	24.4
Mid West	5.0	16.9	21.4
South East	5.0	18.1	29.7
South West	4.3	12.8	24.6
<i>National Total</i>	<i>4.5</i>	<i>14.1</i>	<i>198.0</i>

Note: Table compares Q4 2007 to Q4 2010. Source: Central Statistics Office QNHS on-line database



Unemployment data in Table C reflects the employment losses outlined in Table B. However, again an examination of the data at NUTS III level shows that the highest rate of unemployment in the country in December 2010 was in the South East, closely followed by the Mid West (both within the S&E region) while the highest rate recorded in the BMW was in the Midlands region.

#### *National and Regional Changes in the Recent Past*

The most recent data on GDP provided by the Central Bank of Ireland suggest some improvements in relation to a number of indicators. For example, national GDP fell by 7% in 2009 but by only 0.4% in 2010 and grew by 1.3% in the first quarter of 2011 and by 1.6% in the second quarter (Central Statistics Office, 2011b). The Balance of Payments current account changed from a deficit of EUR 4.7 billion in 2009 to a surplus of EUR 761 million in 2010 (Central Bank of Ireland, 2011). The rate of employment contraction also reduced. However, the rate of unemployment continued to increase throughout 2010 and into 2011.

At a regional level the socio-economic situation remains problematic. Employment losses have continued throughout 2010 and into 2011 in both BMW and S&E NUTS II regions. In this brief period employment in the BMW region contracted by 4% and in the S&E region by 2.5%. All NUTS III regions (mostly rural) in BMW lost jobs. Within the S&E region only the Mid West (mainly rural with one small city) recorded a gain. Therefore, using employment change as an indicator the BMW region continues to under-perform. See Table D.

**Table D – Regional Employment Change in Ireland, 2010–2011 (thousand)**

	2010	2011	% Change
NUTS II			
BMW Region	480.1	461.1	-4.0
NUTS III			
Border	187.8	183.2	-2.4
Midlands	108.2	101.6	-6.1
West	184.0	176.2	-4.2
NUTS II			
S&E Region	1,377.6	1,343.1	-2.5
NUTS III			
Dublin	540.3	515.1	-4.7
Mid East	230.9	229.3	-0.7
Mid West	147.9	152.2	2.9
South East	189.8	188.2	-0.8
South West	268.7	258.4	-3.8
<i>National Total</i>	<i>1,857.6</i>	<i>1,804.2</i>	<i>-2.9</i>

Note: Table compares Q1 2010 to Q1 2011. Source: Central Statistics Office QNHS on-line database

The unemployment problem has also deteriorated at a regional level, with the BMW region increasing to 14.9% and the S&E region to 13.8%. At the lower NUTS III level the largely rural Midlands and West in BMW have rates of 16.4% and 16% respectively while the peripheral

South East in S&E, despite a minor improvement in the twelve month period, has still the highest rate of unemployment in the country (17.2%). Overall however, the BMW fares worst. See Table E.

**Table E – Regional Unemployment rates in Ireland, 2010–2011 (%)**

	Mar-10	Mar-11
NUTS II		
BMW Region	12.8	14.9
NUTS III		
Border	11.2	13.1
Midlands	14.8	16.4
West	13.3	16.0
NUTS II		
S&E Region	12.9	13.8
NUTS III		
Dublin	11.0	12.5
Mid East	13.1	12.7
Mid West	14.9	15.5
South East	17.4	17.2
South West	12.1	13.6
<i>National Total</i>	<i>12.9</i>	<i>14.1</i>

Note: Table compares Q1 2010 to Q1 2011. Source: Central Statistics Office QNHS on-line database

Apart from the above indicators, interviews carried out and questionnaires completed in the BMW and S&E regions, in selected Regional Authorities and in the Western Development Commission suggest significant potential for regional development. However a range of serious continuing challenges persisted in all regions throughout 2010 and into 2011. See Annex 2 for further details. In the BMW region these include:

- The economic downturn and cuts in expenditure – both scale and duration since 2008 and continuing in 2011;
- Declining public sector activity with little prospect of reversal before 2015;
- Low value added and depressed productivity;
- Low incidence of high value added activities;
- Weak demand and consumer spending and reduced access to credit.

In the S&E regions the recent challenges include:

- Current economic climate and cuts in budgets affect the delivery of the various schemes to support innovation;
- Initiatives that could support and strengthen the Gateways in order to implement the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) are severely curtailed by budget cuts;
- Uncertainty and lack of funding have hampered further development of public transport systems. While major progress was achieved under the 2000–2006 National

Development Plan in Dublin, there is a deficit in other Gateway cities and interconnections between cities;

- Innovation policy development tends to be written at national level and does not take sufficient account of the various challenges at local and regional level which need to be overcome;
- Reduced budgets for government departments and agencies which impact adversely on funding for co-financed ERDF initiatives.

In summary, the socio-economic position of the Irish regions has deteriorated significantly since 2007 and this has continued throughout 2010. The most recent employment and unemployment data suggest that the difficulties have persisted into 2011. This is especially obvious in the BMW region and in particular in the rural and least urbanised areas. The S&E region, despite its more favourable position, still contains areas of persistently high unemployment and the South East Regional Authority area is particularly problematic. Interviews with and submissions by key personnel in the various regions confirm these findings. The general consensus is that retrenchment policies, including cutbacks in health services, education and social welfare, being pursued by the government in collaboration with the European Commission, ECB and IMF, are having serious economic and social effects, despite the undoubted potential for regional development. In the absence of counteracting measures and an improvement in external demand, there is little prospect of improvement in the foreseeable future.

## **2. THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY PURSUED, THE EU CONTRIBUTION TO THIS AND POLICY ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE PERIOD**

### **THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY PURSUED**

The main approaches in the past to regional development policy in Ireland were set out in the 2010 country report as follows:

- Regional policy in Ireland is initiated and framed in a national context after consultation with a range of national and regional institutions and agencies. However, decision-making and ultimate control is heavily centralised and a range of government Departments and national agencies play dominant roles in relation to regional development. In recent years ERDF support has facilitated and encouraged a number of important changes in approach, emphasising key elements of development.
- In response to serious concerns in the main urban centres since the mid 1980s the government introduced a range of “urban renewal” schemes throughout the country to encourage residential and office development via tax incentives. This policy had positive effects for a time in terms of physical change and renewal, but the impact on employment was modest and the “tax foregone” was significant. These schemes are now being phased out.

- In 2002 the government published a *National Spatial Strategy (NSS)* designed to develop nine “Gateways” and nine “Hubs” in the main urban centres (Government of Ireland, 2002). In 2007 the *National Development Plan 2007–13* gave a specific commitment to invest EUR 300 million in the Gateways and Hubs (Government of Ireland, 2007).
- In 2003 the then government proposed a “decentralisation programme” designed to re-locate public sector employees from Dublin to over 50 small and medium-sized centres throughout the country. This represented a broad “dispersal” policy and was, in effect, in conflict with the NSS. The policy was only partially implemented and in November 2011 the present government decided to abandon the remaining proposals in the programme.
- Recent regional policy in Ireland has evolved in collaboration with the European Commission Directorate General for Regional Policy. Operating under the “Competitiveness and Employment Objective” and in line with the two OPs the central areas of policy are the support of enterprise, including RTDI, innovation and investment, urban development, transport infrastructure, environmental and energy infrastructure and a number of “territorial development” programmes. The critical issue of competitiveness is also stressed by several national agencies such as the National Competitiveness Council and Forfas (National Competitiveness Council, 2010; Forfas, 2010). The NSS mentioned above and updated in October 2010, which focuses on urban development remains government policy. The update of the NSS again stresses the need to develop urban centres as well as rural regions as follows:

“Our major cities and urban areas have the capacity, potential and critical mass to be principal drivers of national economic development. Accordingly, investment must be coordinated to facilitate their development. At the same time, the sustainable exploitation of our stock of natural resources within the agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism and renewable energy sectors is vital in positioning rural regions as key contributors to long-term economic progress alongside further economic diversity in rural areas. The NSS promotes these objectives and advocates more sustainable settlement patterns in urban and rural areas to support their development” (Government of Ireland, 2010).

The foregoing update of the NSS also proposed that new Regional Planning Guidelines for the period 2010–2022 would be “utilised as the framework for monitoring the integration of national, regional and local planning, identifying key ongoing development potential and investment requirements”. This is a recognition of the long-standing and heavily centralized system in Ireland where regional and local bodies have little influence or executive power. See, for example, Moylan, 2011. Furthermore, it must be noted, as previously outlined in the 2010 country report to the Commission, that the EUR 300 million earmarked for the Gateways in the 2007 National Development Plan was deferred and replaced by a more modest Gateway Challenge Fund supported by the ERDF. A 2010 “Capital Review” made provision for a revised Fund of EUR 200 million but this will not be available until 2012 (Government of Ireland, 2010).

The financial allocation (ERDF and ESF) to Ireland's two regions under the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective of the two OPs was a modest EUR 750 million for the entire funding period up to 2013. This represents only 0.05% of Ireland's GDP compared to 2% in the 1990s and 0.5% in the period up to 2006. The ERDF allocation of EUR 375 million to the two NUTS II regions over the seven year period was also modest in contrast to previous periods and in comparison with the EUR 184 billion of national exchequer funding originally proposed in the *National Development Plan* over the period 2007–13 (Government of Ireland, 2007). Much of this latter funding is now deferred in view of the recession.

Due to the economic turndown in Ireland the Irish government renegotiated the BMW OP with the EU Commission in 2009, resulting in a reduction in the Irish share of planned expenditure from 60% to 50%. Further changes were proposed by the OP Monitoring Committee in May 2011 although the overall strategic focus agreed originally remains unchanged. The proposed modifications are as follows:

- Increase the allocation to Enterprise and Innovation by EUR 5 million – from EUR 200 million to EUR 205 million;
- Reduce the allocation to the Environment and Energy category by EUR 15 million – from EUR 75 million to EUR 60 million;
- Increase the allocation to Transport/Urban by EUR 10.5 million – from EUR 178 million to EUR 188.5 million;
- Reduce the allocation to Technical Assistance by EUR 0.5 million – from EUR 4.5 million to EUR 4 million.

A number of amendments are also proposed to the performance indicators and targets proposed for a range of co-financed themes and sub-themes in the BMW OP (BMW Regional Assembly, 2011). A decision from the Commission is awaited. The BMW Regional Assembly has confirmed that a number of projects envisaged for 2010 under the OP have not proceeded due to a “re-prioritisation of public expenditure”. This entails a reduction in public expenditure available for pre-financing of projects earmarked for EU co-finance.

The S&E Regional Assembly has reported similar difficulties. For example, no new policy initiatives have been taken place since 2010. Planned projects such as the “Smarter Travel Scheme” have been deferred. Again, the budget reductions in government departments and state agencies have adversely affected the ability in this region to provide the necessary funding.

The continuing economic recession is therefore impacting adversely on the implementation of the OP in both NUTS II regions, and particularly in the BMW region, in view of the Irish government's reduced ability to co-finance expenditure for all planned schemes. This inevitably has an impact on the lower-level Regional Authority areas.

In summary, while Irish regional policy priorities in 2010 remained similar to those existing prior to 2009, the significant deterioration in government finances meant that negotiations

regarding the level and allocation of ERDF support were deemed necessary. The new government, in association with the European Commission, the ECB and IMF, is taking strong action to improve Ireland's financial position, mainly by cuts in expenditure and increased taxes. However, it seems clear that, unless significant counteracting initiatives are taken, implementing regional priorities and achieving "development" and "cohesion" in a real sense in and between regions will have a much longer time frame. In this context, ERDF support, although currently too small to make a major impact, has been, and will remain, critical in enabling some important regional development to take place.

## POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The main focus of ERDF allocations (i.e. "planned" expenditure) in the OPs for the 2007–13 period in both NUTS II regions was on the "enterprise/innovation" policy area with particular emphasis given to RTDI and linked activities. The enterprise/innovation category received an allocation of EUR 193.5 million or almost 54% of the total (See Table 3 in the Excel file). ERDF allocations were also made to road and rail transport (EUR 45 million and EUR 6.4 million respectively), to environmental and energy infrastructure (EUR 57.4 million) and to territorial development, including tourism, rehabilitation and social infrastructure (EUR 52 million).

As regards up-to-date implementation of planned expenditure, details are provided in Table F for the S&E and BMW regions. In the S&E region the actual expenditure of ERDF up to 2010 (EUR 123.7 million) as a proportion of that planned for the Programme period is 84.4%. It seems clear therefore that the entire ERDF allocation will be used within the OP period. The vast brunt of expenditure in the S&E was in the Enterprise and Innovation policy area with particular reference to investment in the PRTLl.

**Table F – The ERDF: Planned Expenditure 2007–13 and Actual Expenditure 2007–10 in the S&E and BMW Regions (EUR million) (Priority Categories revised)**

	S&E Region		BMW Region	
	Planned 2007–13	Actual 2007–10	Planned 2007–13	Actual 2007–10
Ent/Innov	96.0	93.2	100.0	59.7
Environment/Acess	26.0	24.8	37.5	16.2
Transport/Urban	20.0	5.5	89.0	99.9
Technical assistance	4.6	0.2	2.2	1.0
Total	146.6	123.7	228.8	175.8

Source: S&E and BMW Regional Assembly *Operational Programmes, 2007–13* and Regional Assembly data.

Notes: In the S&E region ERDF "eligible expenditure" in the Enterprise/ Innovation policy area of the OP has reached EUR 147.05 million. Combined with the other Priorities it is clear this is well ahead of the allocation. Since there is surplus expenditure within the PRTLl scheme, the Managing Authority has made a strategic decision to only include capital expenditure in its initial declarations for ERDF co-financing. This does not in any way affect the eligibility of the remaining schemes or indicate that they may not be included in further declarations.

In the BMW region the planned OP funding allocations are those contained in the Commission Decision of September 2009. Projects selected for co-financing by the ERDF are generally pre-financed by central or local government departments. Following verification and certification by the relevant authorities, the European Commission settles the corresponding payment claims by applying the co-financing rate (50%) to all eligible expenditure subject to capping in those cases where the funding allocations specified at Priority level are exceeded. The remaining 50% of expenditure is provided through public and/or private sector sources. The second column of the table specifies the ERDF funding allocations. The total size of the programme, including matching funds from Ireland, currently stands at EUR 457.5 million.

In the BMW region the actual expenditure of ERDF up to 2010 (EUR 175.8 million) as a proportion of that planned for the Programme period is 76.9%. Again, it is most likely that the entire ERDF allocation will be used within the OP period. In this region most of the expenditure took place in the Transport/Urban policy area, followed by Enterprise and Innovation, reflecting the recent road and rail infrastructural improvements and the fact that this region has fewer Third Level Institutions availing of PRTLII.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PROGRAMMES SO FAR**

The main programme outcomes up to the end of 2009 were outlined in the 2010 country report. These were as follows:

- significant additions and improvements to research and innovation infrastructure in third level institutions via the PRTLII;
- the establishment of Applied Research Centres and Incubation Centres especially in the Institutes of Technology, resulting in additional training, employment, research capacity and increased research and industry collaboration;
- the establishment and creation of employment in micro-enterprises;
- the further development and enhancement of selected cities and towns identified as “Gateways” and “Hubs” in the National Spatial Strategy ;
- the completion of a range of key road and rail infrastructural projects;
- the extension of broadband to residences and businesses;
- the completion of a number of initiatives in relation to renewable energy.

Selected achievements up to end-2010 are examined for the BMW region under a number of sub-headings set out in Table G. In the “Enterprise/Innovation” policy area, a total of 14,919 jobs had been created by 2010 in assisted micro-enterprises. This was a modest increase on the 14,743 already achieved by 2009 but was still much less than the baseline in 2007 and well short of the target of 20,884 for 2013, reflecting the significant overall job losses since 2007 outlined earlier in this country report. The number of micro-enterprises supported and the number of funded researchers showed increases, but it will be a challenge to meet the targets. In the Human Resources policy area, the number of those

receiving micro-enterprise training by 2010 with ERDF support was 53,013. This was well ahead of the baseline and that achieved by 2009 (45,974). The numbers employed in Incubation Centres has however decreased slightly from its 2009 position. In both 2009 and 2010 there were significant improvements in the availability of broadband for businesses.

**Table G. Selected Indicators and Outcomes in BMW Region up to 2010**

Policy area	Main indicators	Outcomes/results up to:			
		Baseline	2009	2010	Target 2013
Enterprise Support – RTDI Innovation	No. of jobs created in micro-enterprises supported by County Enterprise Boards (CEBs)	16,684	14,743	14,919	20,884
	No. of micro-enterprises supported by CEBs	2,511	3,370	3,675	5,011
	PRTL Building Programme and Research Projects	BMW and S&E regions: Approx. 90,000 sq. m. of research and library space over 4 Cycles.  Significant increase in researchers and post-graduate students. See further details in 2010 EEN Reports on both Cohesion and Innovation, in Evaluation Section below and in Annex			
	No. of Researchers in Supported Projects	–	55	98	170
Human Resources (ERDF)	No. of recipients of training in micro-enterprises	26,550	45,974	53,013	61,530
Education/training, support for employment	Total employed in Incubation Centres	168	193	189	218
Transport and telecommunications	Kms of new/improved inter-urban linking routes	–	33	33	33
	No. of new railcars serving destinations in the BMW region	–	24	24	24
	No. of additional businesses with broadband available	–	16,805	33,900	33,609
Environment and energy	No. of organizations engaged in energy-related projects	–	440	708	972

Source : BMW Regional Assembly, Annual Implementation Report 2010, Balaghaderreen

Selected outcomes in the S&E region are given in Table H and compared to the situation in 2009. While the number of supported micro-enterprises increased by over 640, the number of jobs created in these enterprises fell by over 900 in the twelve month period and are well below the baseline and target. The number of researchers in Higher Level Institutions also recorded a significant decline. This could reflect the insecurity associated with research positions and, according to the Regional Assembly, possible over-estimation of the 2009



numbers. Under the Human Resources heading the numbers being trained in micro-enterprises or employed in incubation centres increased and the latter is well ahead of the target. No new transport initiatives were completed in the S&E region, but broadband connections to business users continued.

**Table H – Selected Indicators and Outcomes in S&E Region up to 2010**

Policy area	Main indicators	Outcomes/results up to:			
		Baseline	2009	2010	Target
Enterprise Support – RTDI Innovation	No. of jobs created in micro-enterprises supported by CEBs	24,858	23,609	22,682	32,558
	No. of micro-enterprises supported by CEBs	4,029	5,342	5,984	8,029
	PRTL I Programme and Research Projects	BMW and S&E regions: Approx. 90,000 sq. m. of research and library space over 4 Cycles.  Significant increase in researchers, post-graduate students and inter-institutional collaboration. See further details below, in 2010 EEN Reports on both Cohesion and Innovation, in Evaluation Section and in Annex.			
	No. of additional Researchers employed in the region's HEI	–	686	457	560
Human Resources	No. of recipients of training in micro-enterprises	57,159	108,446	126,360	141,159
(only ERDF) – Education/training, support for employment	Total employed in Incubation Centres	284	447	511	434
Transport and telecommunications	Additional businesses with broadband available	–	14,500	25,991	25,943

Source: S&E Regional Assembly, Annual Implementation Report 2010, Waterford

The PRTL I has been and remains one of the most important initiatives co-funded by ERDF and considerable detail of space created and research carried out was provided over 4 Cycles in the 2010 country report to the Commission. Annex 3 gives details of the specific projects funded under Cycle 4, 2007–2011. Among the projects supported and completed in the BMW region with ERDF support and relevant to an earlier Network Report to the Commission on Renewable Energy are those carried out by the Marine Institute in Galway together with a range of partners (see Annex 4). Important research on ocean energy in the S&E region, also co-funded by ERDF, is being carried out by the Irish Maritime and Energy Resource Cluster (IMERC), an alliance between the Irish Naval Service, University College, Cork and Cork Institute of Technology (see Annex 5).

Cycle 5 of PRTL I was agreed in July 2010 and has been awarded for the period after 2011. It is difficult to divide all PRTL I projects or achievements by region since most awards involve

co-operation between several institutions in each region as well as in Northern Ireland. As also stressed in the 2010 country report *the various funding cycles cannot be viewed in isolation from each other. Rather they represent a “continuum” with each cycle building on previous ones. Thus, the first cycle put in place a critical foundation for further progress in subsequent cycles and enabled and facilitated institutions to secure additional public and private funding. A number of case studies in the 2010 Report illustrated the way PRTLTI has progressed through the cycles and contributed to the development of research capacity.*

In addition to its main objective of supporting world class research, the PRTLTI also rewards innovation and collaboration in higher education. It supports the development of infrastructure foundations, quality enhanced activities and graduate programmes for the training of increased numbers of Ph.Ds. The projects under PRTLTI Cycles 1–4 falling within the 2007–2013 Regional OPs have enabled significant development of national research infrastructure and postgraduate education. As illustrated in the 2010 country report these Cycles have funded critical research infrastructure, quality research teams, postgraduate education enhancement initiatives, including graduate schools and collaborative national initiatives to maximise the returns from research investments. The PRTLTI has also promoted knowledge transfer from research centres into industry and other alliances involving higher education, business and social partners (BMW Regional Assembly, 2011a, pp. 82ff and S&E Regional Assembly, 2011, pp. 48ff). A recent “Impact Study” of the PRTLTI is examined in the “Evaluation and Best Practice” section below.

As outlined above and in the 2010 country report to the Commission, the *National Spatial Strategy* aims to build up a range of “Gateways” and “Hubs” in key urban centres throughout the country in order to counteract and complement the dominance of the capital city, Dublin. Despite the deferment of the EUR 300 million expenditure originally earmarked for this scheme, the S&E and BMW Regional Assemblies, with financial support from the ERDF, have proceeded with economic, social, environmental and cultural initiatives in a range of urban centres. In the S&E Region a total of EUR 13.7 million was allocated by December 2010 to the main Gateways of Dublin, Cork, Limerick/Shannon and Waterford. Significant progress has already been made in Cork and Waterford but the Dublin and Limerick schemes will not be completed before December 2011 (S&E Regional Assembly, 2011, p.90). In the BMW region a total of EUR 12.3 million had been spent by December 2010 in 12 Gateways/Hubs. These were Dundalk, Galway, Tuam, Sligo, Mullingar, Athlone, Tullamore, Letterkenny, Ballina, Castlebar, Monaghan and Cavan (BMW Regional Assembly, 2011a, p. 198). While the investment is much less than originally envisaged, these initiatives have resulted in substantial improvements in the various urban centres. Without ERDF support these achievements would not have been possible in the current financial climate.

In summary, the achievements outlined in the 2010 Report have continued, although on a more modest scale due to the exceptional economic downturn. The emphasis on and success in relation to micro-enterprise training and the development of broadband have been important in both regions. The numbers in training schemes have increased

significantly and this must have long-term benefits. Further investment in the PRTL I has laid the foundation for enterprise and innovation into the future. Improvements have taken place in a range of urban centres. However, the data in Tables G and H tend to confirm the findings earlier in this country report relating to employment and unemployment during this difficult period. It must be concluded that, in the absence of significant new initiatives and investment, the 2013 targets set for some of the key Cohesion Policy areas examined above are unlikely to be met.

### **Territorial Co-operation**

Under the Territorial Co-operation Objective, Ireland participates in a number of Operational Programmes co-financed by the ERDF. The Programmes are as follows:

- PEACE III Programme;
- INTERREG IVA (Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland Programme);
- Ireland Wales Programme;
- Atlantic Area Programme;
- North-West Europe Programme;
- Northern Periphery Programme.

The first three of these programmes were examined in the 2010 country report. The PEACE III Programme was established in November 2007 and since then has progressed towards full implementation. This Programme continues from previous PEACE Programmes (PEACE I and II) and is designed to foster peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border region of Ireland. It is part-funded by the European Union (EUR 225 million) as well as by a national contribution (EUR 108 million). The Programme, together with INTERREG IVA, is managed and implemented by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) located in Northern Ireland. In view of the critical need to maintain peace and further nurture good relations within and with Northern Ireland, this Programme is of central importance.

The INTERREG IVA Programme seeks to address the economic and social problems arising from the existence of national borders and supports strategic cross-border co-operation to encourage sustainable regional development. The programme has an allocation of EUR 256 million (EUR 192 million from the EU and EUR 64 million in national contributions). The programme was approved in November 2007 and since then has progressed towards full implementation. The key themes are Enterprise, Tourism, Collaboration and Infrastructure.

Under the Ireland Wales Programme the areas eligible for inclusion are the NUTS III regions of Dublin, Mid East and South East in Ireland and Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesea, Conwy, Denbeighshire and South Wales. The purpose is to contribute to greater competitiveness and sustainable development in the areas concerned; to improve overall economic, social and environmental well-being and to achieve a more cohesive, balanced and sustainable development of the co-operation area. A total budget of EUR 70.2 million has been allocated

for 2007–13, including EUR 52.7 million from ERDF and the balance in matched funding from Ireland and Wales.

Evaluations of these three Programmes are examined in the “Evaluation and Good Practice” section below.

### 3. EFFECTS OF INTERVENTION

In the 2010 country report it was emphasized that, despite its reduced size, the importance of ERDF in the Irish regions should not be under-estimated in relation to the cohesion objective since Irish national policy has tended to have a relatively weak regional orientation. It is also one critical stimulus at a time of severe cutbacks. This view was strongly confirmed by all of those interviewed in 2010 and 2011. The main effects of EU Cohesion Policy identified in the 2010 country report were as follows:

- Cohesion Policy influenced the orientation of Irish expenditure in the regions;
- The focus on innovation, enterprise and the knowledge economy in the 2007–13 Operational Programme was effective;
- The Operational Programme laid a framework for sustainable development;
- Despite adverse economic conditions EU Cohesion Policy has prepared the ground for entrepreneurship and innovation in the future.

The available evidence on recent regional policy intervention in Ireland suggests mixed results. In the Enterprise/Innovation policy area, the PRTL has been successful in furthering a range of research initiatives as well as inter-institutional collaboration, including that in Northern Ireland. Progress is being made in relation to additional training (the Human Resources policy area) in both NUTS II regions. A number of useful initiatives have taken place in the Territorial Development category. However, policy and funding (government and ERDF) is so weak at this point that the ultimate objective of Cohesion Policy – strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion – is not being resolved. The economic downturn, cuts in expenditure and the current modest level of ERDF support are all contributory factors. For example, the key objective and outcomes for new employment creation – a key element in achieving cohesion – have not been achieved. This is particularly obvious when employment data is examined at a NUTS III level. Employment therefore remains a key challenge for the future. Further details on the effects of intervention are provided in the following Section on evaluation.

### 4. EVALUATION AND GOOD PRACTICE IN EVALUATION

A number of recent evaluations of policy have been carried out. These are:

- Mid-Term Evaluation of the Border Midland and Western Regional Operational Programme, Central Expenditure Evaluation Unit, Department of Finance, Dublin, 2010;
- *Southern and Eastern Regional Operational Programme Mid-Term Evaluation*, Central Expenditure Evaluation Unit, Department of Finance, Dublin, 2011;

- Ten Years On: Confirming Impacts from Research Investment in the PRTL I 2000–2006 (abbreviated title), PA Consulting Group, London, 2011;
- Implementation Analysis of PEACE III and INTERREG IVA Programmes: Final Report, T. Haase and Fitzpatrick Associates, Economic Consultants, Dublin, 2009;
- Theme 1.2 of PEACE III: Acknowledging and Dealing with the Past, Review of Implementation Report, Deloitte, Dublin, 2010;
- Mid Term Evaluation of the Ireland Wales OP 2007–2013: Final Report to the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly, SQW, Cambridge, 2011);

Details are provided in the Tables below. From these Evaluations, it is clear that the Programme strategies for which funds were allocated are being put into place and that evaluation is integrated into the processes in most cases. It is clear also that sufficient funds were made available to Evaluators to conduct desk studies and, in some cases, additional surveys of, and consultations with, stakeholders. These provided valuable insights into the achievements and challenges being experienced in the Programmes to date. These evaluations also resulted in recommendations for future developments.

In the reports a range of successful project indicators were identified. Adjustments to targets were identified and in most cases more strategic approaches were recommended. In some cases the extension of the Programme to target groups which were insufficiently represented was recommended. The need for sustainability of initiatives was also identified. The strengthening of existing structures and the on-going monitoring of quality and impact was also recommended. Practical and administrative changes were suggested to improve operational systems. Achievements and challenges were identified in the areas of strategy, performance and administration.

While all of the reports listed above offer valuable insights and assessment, the Ireland Wales publication and the PRTL I Impact Study encapsulates some of the most important features of good practice and further details are presented below in the grid on good practice in evaluation.

Title and date of completion	Policy area and scope	Main objectives	Main findings	Full reference or link to publication
Mid-Term Evaluation of the BMW Operational Programme November 2010	BMW Operational Programme	The objectives were: to provide a review of external developments; to assess the continued relevance of the programme objectives; to conduct a review of the quality, relevance and consistency of the programme objectives and strategy; to assess the effectiveness/progress to date; to review North/South co-operation; to review the indicators.	The evaluation concluded that, despite some adjustments during the period up to 2009, the Operational Programme priorities and interventions were “well aligned” with national and EU objectives. Priority 1 on Innovation, ICT and the Knowledge Economy was performing “reasonably well” although the front-loading of expenditure envisaged had not been achieved. Priority 2 on Environment and Risk had fallen behind expectations but “significant progress” had been made on Priority 3 relating to Transport and Urban Development with special reference to road and rail development. In relation to the indicators being used to assess the Operational Programme, the evaluation concluded that many of these were “acceptable” while others “need improvement”. No horizontal principles indicators were available. The Evaluation recommended re-allocations of expenditure between the principal Priorities/Policy Areas and these have been accepted as outlined in the Regional Development Policy section above.	Department of Finance, 2010. Mid-Term Evaluation of the BMW Operational Programme. <a href="http://www.finance.gov.ie/">http://www.finance.gov.ie/</a>
Southern and Eastern Regional Operation Programme, 2007 – 2013: Mid-Term Evaluation April 2011	Southern and Eastern Regional Operation Programme, 2007 – 2013	The objective were: to provide an independent analysis of progress under the S&E Regional OP and relevant developments in the Programme environment to date and to make appropriate recommendations for Programme adjustments on the basis of this analysis.	The evaluation found good progress in achieving targets at the level of the Operational Programme although it identified some discrepancies in performance across the different Priorities. Priority 1 was found to be performing well. This was driven by the robust performance of the PRTL sub-theme which accounted for the largest share of total spending to date. The pattern for the remaining RTDI sub-themes was mixed. Consultation with implementing bodies indicated that budget restrictions had constrained expenditure for some of the sub-themes. The Micro Enterprise sub-theme was adjudged to have performed well considering the challenging conditions. Physical targets should be achieved. The experimental innovation actions theme had not commenced. The targeted ERDF drawdown had already been achieved and there was scope for further absorption of ERDF funds. This Priority is highly relevant for contributing to the NRP and SSTI and should make a contribution in this regard. Regarding Priority 2, progress for the environment-related sub-themes was weak and it was thought unlikely that progress would be achieved in these areas. Progress under the ICT and Accessibility theme was satisfactory and	Sectoral Policy Division, Department of Finance. 2011. Southern and Eastern Regional Operation Programme, 2007 – 2013: Mid-Term Evaluation. <a href="http://www.finance.gov.ie/">http://www.finance.gov.ie/</a>

Title and date of completion	Policy area and scope	Main objectives	Main findings	Full reference or link to publication
			<p>physical and financial progress targets should be achieved. The Renewable Energy theme had registered modest progress and had a mixed record of achievement across its constituent sub-themes due to a changing environment and the flux in the overall portfolio of energy themes. Significant dependencies include emerging budgetary constraints in this policy area and the potential for re-focussing of interventions for energy generally. Overall at priority level, 60% of the targeted ERDF commitment for this priority had already been achieved with EUR16 million spent from an overall total priority spent of EUR 39 million to date. On balance, it was concluded that the co-financed target of EUR 65 million for this priority would be met. Priority 3 registered the lowest level of financial progress in proportionate terms with only 6% of profile spent to date. This was due to the curtailment of several sub themes. The public transport and ERDF Gateways Grant sub themes were the only areas which will achieve some modest level of output. Overall, it is anticipated that expenditure will fall short of the allocation targets with roughly EUR 11 million of unspent funding. Although the potential for spending under the Smarter Travel and hubs projects was highlighted to the evaluators, it was by no means clear that such expenditure would materialise.</p> <p>Priority 4 relates to technical assistance and spending to date has been low. Reasonable progress was made on the key outputs. Although certain financial controls, IT and information costs have yet to be accounted for, there was scope for re-allocation of resources from this Priority as it is unlikely that the original profile of spending will be achieved. A number of key recommendations were made on the basis of these findings.</p>	
Ten Years On: Confirming Impacts from Research Investment. Completed August 2011	Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL): Enterprise	To offer an independent assessment of the commercial and economic impacts of exchequer investment in centres/initiatives funded via the PRTL over its first three cycles 2000-06.	<p>Resulted in significant new research space, equipment and facilities and inter-departmental and inter-institutional collaboration. Supported the costs and output of Principal Investigators, post-doctoral students, research assistants and technicians.</p> <p>Commercial impacts have been established in tracking and attributing investment, savings, turnover and employment to the products of particular research activities. This has resulted in 50 companies where impact has been</p>	PA Consulting Group, 2011. Ten Years On: Confirming Impacts from Research Investment. A

Title and date of completion	Policy area and scope	Main objectives	Main findings	Full reference or link to publication
	support, RTDI, Innovation, ICT, Education/Training, Environment and Energy		validated, a commercial impact of EUR 753.7 million, and an employment impact of 1,255 jobs. Significant potential future commercial impact identified by industry amounting to EUR 1.108 billion. Wider economic impact also identified.	Case Study focusing on the direct commercial and economic impacts from exchequer investment into centres and initiatives supported by the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL) 2000–2006. <a href="http://www.heai.ie">www.heai.ie</a>
Implementation Analysis of PEACE III and INTERREG IVA Programmes: Final Report July 2009	Territorial Co-operation. PEACE III and INTERREG IVA Programmes	To review the Programmes' performance to end-2008 (altered to end-February 2009) by undertaking an analysis of approved projects. To provide a statement of the overall position of the Programmes' activity across a number of different areas, including, but not limited to, geographical spread, target areas and groups, indicators and uptake by participants.	PEACE III: 210 applications; 47% approval rate; value of approvals EUR 163.8 million. The strategic nature of projects, including both the location of co-applicants and projects and planned areas of operation, create potential for a broad spread of project activity and benefits well beyond the applicants' geographic locations. The pre-defined PEACE III target groups are: victims of conflict, displaced persons, people excluded/marginalised from networks, former members of security forces, ex-prisoners and public, private and voluntary organisations. While there was variation in the target groups in a number of projects, all groups were included in at least 20 of the 75 projects approved. INTERREG IVA: 72 applications: 52% approval rate; value of approvals EUR 158.3 million. When all applicants, i.e. lead and co-applicants, are included the spread of participation broadens with 100% of eligible council areas participating in a number of projects. The Border Region of Ireland, and counties on the border area in Northern Ireland are particularly prominent. Council areas away from	Haase, T., 2009. Implementation Analysis of PEACE III and INTERREG IVA Programmes: Final Report. Dublin: Fitzpatrick Associates, Economic Consultants <a href="http://www.fitzpatrick-associates.com/">http://www.fitzpatrick-associates.com/</a>



Title and date of completion	Policy area and scope	Main objectives	Main findings	Full reference or link to publication
			<p>the border in Northern Ireland are less prominent. The INTERREG IVA Programme provides a list of 45 separate indicators across Priorities 1 and 2. The development of a set of indicators for the Programme is in itself an example of good practice, and the nature of the indicators chosen also demonstrates elements of good practice. A review of approved projects, expected outputs, results and impacts, suggests that the Programme is well on its way to matching and indeed exceeding many of the targets set for it. The number of PEACE III applications at end-February 2009 is much larger (about three times) the number of those for INTERREG IVA. However, the total value of applications is higher for INTERREG IVA, implying a much larger average size of INTERREG IVA application. The approval was similar so INTERREG IVA approval numbers are much lower – 33 as against 75 for PEACE III. Average INTERREG IVA approval values are, however, over twice as large as PEACE III. Hence, total approved values are similar i.e. EUR 163.8 million for PEACE III and EUR 158.3 million for INTERREG IVA. Regarding geographic spread of lead applicants, INTERREG IVA lead applicants are somewhat less spread across the eligible council areas than those for PEACE III – nearly 60% of council areas have a successful PEACE III applicant, the same figure for INTERREG IVA is 45%. Council areas targeted to benefit from approved projects is widespread, with some level of involvement of eligible council areas already universal under both Programmes as at end-February 2009. This reflects the number and spread of co-applicants and of project remits and the strategic approach adopted by both Programmes in the 2007–13 period.</p>	
PEACE III – Theme 1.2: Acknowledging and Dealing with the Past, Review of Implementation Report	PEACE III – Theme 1.2: Acknowledging and Dealing with the Past	To provide an analysis of the current portfolio of projects in order to determine the type and level of services being provided by those projects; To analyse “value for money” and to determine costs and effectiveness; to identify gaps in current provision to the victims	<p>Since 2007, 57 projects received funding under Theme 1.2; EUR 25 million allocated (of EUR 50 million ring-fenced for period 2007–2013). All approved projects under Strands 2 and 3. None under Strand 1. Services received: 2,500 people received counselling; 4,000 attended conflict resolution workshops; 5,000 attended events for victims and survivors. Quality of the targets less clear. Potential under Strand 2 to address wide spectrum of victim and survivor needs. While quality standards are in place, practice is varied and inconsistent. Need for future applicants to think through how their activity links to wider</p>	<p>Deloitte, 2010. Theme 1.2: Acknowledging and Dealing with the Past, Review of Implementation Report  <a href="http://www.seupb">http://www.seupb</a>.</p>

Title and date of completion	Policy area and scope	Main objectives	Main findings	Full reference or link to publication
September 2010		sector; to identify additionality and/or unintended consequences against alternative funding; to identify challenges, draw conclusions and make recommendations.	peace and reconciliation processes and objectives. Clearest gap relates to activities envisaged under Strand 1. Other gaps: provision of services in Southern Border counties, mainstreaming of service delivery and collaboration with public agencies and some legacies of the past not receiving attention. Overall, however, the analysis is positive and the evaluation is confident of outcomes across each of the 'aid for peace' indicators.	<a href="http://libraries.peac.eu/III_Reports_Pubs/Theme_1_2_Acknowledging_and_Dealing_with_the_Past_-_Review_of_Implementation.sflb.ashx">eu/Libraries/PEAC E_III_Reports_Pubs /Theme_1_2_Acknowledging_and_Dealing_with_the_Past_-_Review_of_Implementation.sflb.ashx</a>
Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly <a href="http://www.irelandwales.ie/">http://www.irelandwales.ie/</a>				
Mid Term Evaluation of the Ireland Wales OP 2007–2013 Final Report to the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly January 2011	Ireland Wales OP (Ireland/ Wales INTERREG IA Programme 2007–2013)	The objectives: to foster territorial co-operation between South West Wales, Isle of Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Gwynedd and Dublin, Mid East and South East – all NUTS III areas; to promote the sustainable development of the programme area through an integrated approach to economic, social, environmental and technological development. The main Priorities and Themes are: Priority 1 – Knowledge, Innovation and Skills for Growth; Priority 2 – Climate Change and Sustainable Regeneration; Priority 3 – Technical Assistance to	Wider economic circumstances have changed since the Programme was put together but conclusion is that the main thrust of the strategy, oriented towards innovation among businesses and sustainability is still appropriate. The supported projects are generally of the required quality and there are no major concerns about project quality. The cross-border element in this programme is generally strong and genuine. There are also significant challenges for the programme – mainly to do with the practicalities of management and administration – e.g. the level of spend; questions relating to matched funding; the system for approving and meeting claims for payment. A number of key recommendations are made.	SQW, 2011. Mid Term Evaluation of the Ireland Wales OP 2007–2013: Final Report to the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly Link: <a href="http://www.sqw.co.uk">http://www.sqw.co.uk</a>

Title and date of completion	Policy area and scope	Main objectives	Main findings	Full reference or link to publication
		support effective and transparent management of the Programme, including publicity, research and evaluation. Two cross-cutting themes underpin the whole Programme, namely the promotion of equal opportunities and sustainable development. For 2010 there was a targeted call and only applications from the targeted themes, Priority 1 Theme 2 and Priority 2 Theme 2, were considered.		

**Evaluation grid for examples of good practice in evaluation (A):**

<b>BASIC INFORMATION</b>		
Country: Ireland		
Policy area (Enterprise support, RTDI, Transport, etc.) Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL) – co-funded under ERDF. Enterprise support, RTDI, Innovation, ICT, Education/Training, Environment and Energy		
<b>Title of evaluation and full reference</b> PA Consulting Group, 2011. Ten Years On: Confirming Impacts from Research Investment. A Case Study focusing on the direct commercial and economic impacts from exchequer investment into centres and initiatives supported by the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL) 2000–2006. <a href="http://www.hea.ie">www.hea.ie</a>		
<b>Intervention period covered</b> (2000–2006; 2007–2013; specific years) 2000–2006		
<b>Timing of the evaluation</b> (when it was carried out) Mid 2010 to 2011. Published August 2011		
Budget (if known): EUR		
<b>Evaluator</b> (External evaluator, internal evaluator, EC) External : PA Consulting Group		
<b>Method</b> (counterfactual analysis, process analysis, case study, econometric model, analysis of indicators, etc.) Examination of previous work on economic impact of research investment; assessment of situation pre-PRTL to establish “base case”, consult stakeholders, review programme material and establish strategic rationale; case study approach, counterfactual/additionality assessment, survey of all centres and initiatives (77% response rate), visits to 45 funded centres/initiatives; assess inputs, outputs and outcomes; national and international benchmark, assess and validate impact including surveys and validation exercise with companies, stakeholders and researchers; compare “base case” to current position; international comparators.		
<b>Main objectives and main findings</b> (very short description – 3–4 lines) To offer an independent assessment of the commercial and economic impacts of exchequer investment in centres/initiatives funded via the PRTL over its first three cycles 2000–06. The PRTL investment, in collaboration with a range of other exchequer interventions, supported 45 centres/initiatives and across five broad subject areas with a particular emphasis on biosciences and biomaterials (53%), but also supported research on the environment and marine, the social sciences, humanities and ICT. Resulted in significant new research space, equipment and facilities and inter-departmental and inter-institutional collaboration. Supported the costs of Principal Investigators, post-doctoral students, research assistants and technicians. Resulted in a trebling of publications and a ten-fold increase in citations; significant increase in conferences and conference presentations; Ph.D graduate base 12 times greater than the base in 2000; patent submissions and registrations up to 5 times higher and invention disclosures 8 times higher than base; provides an indication of commercialisation, technology transfer and collaboration with industry. Range and details of examples of direct commercial and economic impacts provided and quantified. Assisted the development of companies, marketable products, ideas and employment generation. Significant improvement in human capital base and development of skills, including research and teaching.		
<b>Appraisal</b> (Why you consider the evaluation an example of good practice: – 2–3 lines) Draws on best international experience and practice for methodology. Acknowledges difficulties in isolating specific PRTL impact. Evaluation follows a logical sequence from inputs to outputs, outcomes, additionality/deadweight assessment and impact. Provides evidence-based estimates of commercial and economic impacts. Raises important concerns regarding the focus of research support, the sustainability of the initiatives due to recent exchequer funding cuts and restrictions on recruitment.		
<b>CHECK LIST</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>UTILITY</b>		
Report Clarity and Balance		
Are the objectives, methods and findings of the evaluation clearly described?	x	
Are the conclusions and recommendations clearly supported by the analysis?	x	
Are the strengths and weaknesses of the intervention being evaluated fairly assessed and reported?	x	
Is the outcome of the intervention clearly reported?		
<b>RELIABILITY OF FINDINGS</b>		

Evaluation design		
Is the approach adopted by the evaluation and method used clearly set out?	x	
Is the approach and methods suitable given the objectives of the valuation and the intervention being assessed?	x	
Are the details of the operation of the intervention clearly described?	x	
Are the mechanisms through which the intervention is intended to achieve its objectives clearly identified?	x	
Context		
Is the socio-economic and policy context clearly set out?	x	
Are the effects of the economic and/or policy context on the outcome of the intervention clearly described?	x	
Information Sources		
Are the quantitative and/or qualitative data used suitable for the purpose for which they are used?	x	
Is the reliability of the data fairly assessed and described?	x	
Analysis		
Are appropriate procedures/techniques used to analyse the data and/or qualitative information?	x	
Are suitable procedures used to check the validity of findings?	x	
Is the validity of the findings reached clearly demonstrated?	x	
Do the policy recommendations follow clearly from the findings of the analysis?	x	

### Evaluation grid for examples of good practice in evaluation (B):

BASIC INFORMATION	
Country : Ireland and Wales	
Policy area (Enterprise support, RTDI, Transport, etc.) Territorial Co-operation. Ireland Wales Operational Programme (Ireland/Wales INTERREG IVA Programme)	
<b>Title of evaluation and full reference</b> SQW, 2011, Mid Term Evaluation of the Ireland Wales Operational Programme 2007–2013: Final Report to the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly SQW, 2011, Mid Term Evaluation of the Ireland Wales Operational Programme : Case Studies See <a href="http://www.irelandwales.ie">www.irelandwales.ie</a>	
<b>Intervention period covered</b> (2000–2006; 2007–2013; specific years) 2007–2013	
<b>Timing of the evaluation</b> (when it was carried out) 2010–2011	
Budget (if known): EUR	
<b>Evaluator</b> (External evaluator, internal evaluator, EC) External Evaluator	
<b>Method</b> (counterfactual analysis, process analysis, case study, econometric model, analysis of indicators, etc.) Review of programme documentation; review of policy context; analysis of underlying socio-economic conditions 2007–2010; quantitative analysis of spend and output data; expert review of priority axes and funded projects; Expert review of CCTs; Programme management workshops; project manager's survey; unsuccessful applicants survey; stakeholders survey; case studies; internal team meeting.	
<b>Main objectives and main findings</b> (very short description – 3–4 lines) Main Objectives: To provide an independent analysis of progress under the Operational Programme and developments in the Programme environment to date and to make appropriate recommendations for Programme adjustments on the basis of this analysis. Main Findings: Overall, the Programme was found to have performed well in terms of contracting projects. Almost all P2 resources were found to have been committed. It was assessed that there will be at least one further round of project approvals and consequently recommendations are made to influence activity beyond 2013.	
<b>Appraisal</b> (Why you consider the evaluation an example of good practice: – 2–3 lines) This evaluation report is clear and focussed in its objectives; utilises a range of appropriate tools in its methodological approach; examines the socio-economic context for the programme; engages in a critical analysis of the findings; the range of different approaches used in the methodology would have provided a form of triangulation as a way of ensuring validity of the findings; the recommendations follow clearly from the analysis.	

CHECK LIST	YES	NO
<b>UTILITY</b>		
Report Clarity and Balance		
Are the objectives, methods and findings of the evaluation clearly described?	x	
Are the conclusions and recommendations clearly supported by the analysis?	x	
Are the strengths and weaknesses of the intervention being evaluated fairly assessed and reported?	x	
Is the outcome of the intervention clearly reported?	x	
<b>RELIABILITY OF FINDINGS</b>		
Evaluation design		
Is the approach adopted by the evaluation and method used clearly set out?	x	
Is the approach and methods suitable given the objectives of the valuation and the intervention being assessed?	x	
Are the details of the operation of the intervention clearly described?	x	
Are the mechanisms through which the intervention is intended to achieve its objectives clearly identified?	x	
Context		
Is the socio-economic and policy context clearly set out?	x	
Are the effects of the economic and/or policy context on the outcome of the intervention clearly described?	x	
Information Sources		
Are the quantitative and/or qualitative data used suitable for the purpose for which they are used?	x	
Is the reliability of the data fairly assessed and described?	x	
Analysis		
Are appropriate procedures/techniques used to analyse the data and/or qualitative information?	x	
Are suitable procedures used to check the validity of findings?	x	
Is the validity of the findings reached clearly demonstrated?	x	
Do the policy recommendations follow clearly from the findings of the analysis?	x	

## 5. CONCLUDING REMARKS – FUTURE CHALLENGES

The main conclusions of the 2010 country report to the Commission were as follows:

The current economic climate and budget cuts were seriously affecting the achievement of cohesion and competitiveness in Ireland and were likely to exacerbate these problems in the years ahead;

- The level of unemployment up to early 2010 and the resulting loss of taxation were impacting adversely on the country's capacity to deal with its financial difficulties;
- The BMW region had a range of locational and structural difficulties and continued to lag behind the S&E region. However, the more advantaged S&E region also had a range of challenges;
- Regional policy needed to take more account of specific regional potential and needs at both NUTS II and NUTS III levels;

The main challenges identified in 2010 were:

- The need to focus on the development of local and regional indigenous industry and resources, including tourism, "creative industries" and food;

- The continuing importance of investment in road, rail and telecommunications infrastructure as well as water resources and renewable energy;
- The need to strengthen links between third level institutions and industry to encourage specific research, innovation and enterprise beneficial to the regions;

The 2010 country report also raised fundamental questions regarding Irish and EU cohesion policies and whether they were focused sufficiently on key concerns such as employment, health, education and housing for all. Interviews carried out and submissions received had also questioned whether the central objective of “innovation and the knowledge economy” was resulting in economic and social activities and employment in which the majority of the population and, in particular vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, were able to participate in both urban and rural areas. The new emphasis in Ireland on indirectly supporting employment in the long-term through improving competitiveness may also be a valuable complement to measures which directly create jobs.

The present country report illustrates that the problems and challenges outlined above remain. On the basis of information in the 2010 Annual Implementation Reports and the various Mid-Term Evaluations as well as interviews carried out and submissions received in the recent past, it seems clear that the economic and social situation has deteriorated further in most areas of the country. Without ERDF support, the situation would be even more problematic. While international developments or the lack of them play a central role, domestic cuts in expenditure, influenced by the European Commission, ECB and IMF, are likely to reduce demand and employment in the Irish economy and regions further. A strong re-invigorated cohesion, urban and regional policy, with adequate funding, is a now more critical than ever. Apart at all from social and equity considerations, there is a strong economic rationale for such concerted action.

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## INTERVIEWS

The following either gave interviews or provided helpful information, including completed questionnaires. The author is also most grateful for support and advice from Commission officials. While this assistance is much appreciated none of these are of course responsible for the conclusions reached or remaining inadequacies.

Mr Gerry Finn, Director, BMW Regional Assembly

Dr Kieran Moylan, Assistant Director, BMW Regional Assembly

Mr Adrian O'Donoghue, Policy Analyst, BMW Regional Assembly

Ms Helen McHenry, Policy Analyst, Western Development Commission

Ms Pauline White, Policy Analyst, Western Development Commission

Mr David Kelly, Assistant Director, Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly

Mr Jim Fitzpatrick, Managing Director, Fitzpatrick Associates, Dublin

Ms Eileen O'Malley, EU Research Programmes, Higher Education Authority, Dublin

Mr John Byrne, Director, Mid East Regional Authority

Mr Michael Moroney, Assistant Director, South-East Regional Authority

Mr Jim Deane, Assistant Principal, EU Structural Funds Division, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, Dublin

Professor Sheelagh Drudy, School of Education, University College, Dublin

## TABLES

See Excel file for Tables 1–4:

Table 1 – Regional disparities and trends

Table 2 – Macro-economic developments

Table 3 – Financial allocation by main policy area

Table 3 CBC – Financial allocation by main policy area

Table 4 – Commitments by main policy area (by end-2010)

Table 4 CBC – Commitments by main policy area (by end-2010)

**Annex Table A – Broad policy areas and correspondence with fields of intervention (FOI)**

Policy area		code	Priority themes
1. Enterprise environment	RTDI and linked activities	01	R&TD activities in research centres
		02	R&TD infrastructure and centres of competence in a specific technology
		05	Advanced support services for firms and groups of firms
		07	Investment in firms directly linked to research and innovation (...)
		74	Developing human potential in the field of research and innovation, in particular through post-graduate studies ...
	Innovation support for SMEs	03	Technology transfer and improvement of cooperation networks ...
		04	Assistance to R&TD, particularly in SMEs (including access to R&TD services in research centres)
		06	Assistance to SMEs for the promotion of environmentally-friendly products and production processes (...)
		09	Other measures to stimulate research and innovation and entrepreneurship in SMEs
		14	Services and applications for SMEs (e-commerce, education and training, networking, etc.)
		15	Other measures for improving access to and efficient use of ICT by SMEs
	ICT and related services	11	Information and communication technologies (...)
		12	Information and communication technologies (TEN-ICT)
		13	Services and applications for citizens (e-health, e-government, e-learning, e-inclusion, etc.)
	Other investment in firms	08	Other investment in firms
2. Human resources	Education and training	62	Development of life-long learning systems and strategies in firms; training and services for employees ...
		63	Design and dissemination of innovative and more productive ways of organising work
		64	Development of special services for employment, training and support in connection with restructuring of sectors ...
		72	Design, introduction and implementing of reforms in education and training systems ...
		73	Measures to increase participation in education and training throughout the life-cycle ...
	Labour market policies	65	Modernisation and strengthening labour market institutions
		66	Implementing active and preventive measures on the labour market
		67	Measures encouraging active ageing and prolonging working lives
		68	Support for self-employment and business start-up
		69	Measures to improve access to employment and increase sustainable participation and progress of women ...

Policy area		code	Priority themes
		70	Specific action to increase migrants' participation in employment ...
		71	Pathways to integration and re-entry into employment for disadvantaged people ...
		80	Promoting the partnerships, pacts and initiatives through the networking of relevant stakeholders
3. Transport	Rail	16	Railways
		17	Railways (TEN-T)
		18	Mobile rail assets
		19	Mobile rail assets (TEN-T)
	Road	20	Motorways
		21	Motorways (TEN-T)
		22	National roads
		23	Regional/local roads
	Other transport	24	Cycle tracks
		25	Urban transport
		26	Multimodal transport
		27	Multimodal transport (TEN-T)
		28	Intelligent transport systems
		29	Airports
		30	Ports
		31	Inland waterways (regional and local)
		32	Inland waterways (TEN-T)
4. Environment and energy	Energy infrastructure	33	Electricity
		34	Electricity (TEN-E)
		35	Natural gas
		36	Natural gas (TEN-E)
		37	Petroleum products
		38	Petroleum products (TEN-E)
		39	Renewable energy: wind
		40	Renewable energy: solar
		41	Renewable energy: biomass
		42	Renewable energy: hydroelectric, geothermal and other
		43	Energy efficiency, co-generation, energy management
	Environment and risk prevention	44	Management of household and industrial waste
		45	Management and distribution of water (drink water)
		46	Water treatment (waste water)
		47	Air quality
		48	Integrated prevention and pollution control
		49	Mitigation and adaption to climate change
		50	Rehabilitation of industrial sites and contaminated land
		51	Promotion of biodiversity and nature protection (including Natura 2000)
		52	Promotion of clean urban transport
		53	Risk prevention (...)

Policy area		code	Priority themes
		54	Other measures to preserve the environment and prevent risks
5. Territorial development	Social Infrastructure	10	Telephone infrastructures (including broadband networks)
		75	Education infrastructure
		76	Health infrastructure
		77	Childcare infrastructure
		78	Housing infrastructure
		79	Other social infrastructure
	Tourism and culture	55	Promotion of natural assets
		56	Protection and development of natural heritage
		57	Other assistance to improve tourist services
		58	Protection and preservation of the cultural heritage
		59	Development of cultural infrastructure
		60	Other assistance to improve cultural services
	Planning and rehabilitation	61	Integrated projects for urban and rural regeneration
	Other	82	Compensation of any additional costs due to accessibility deficit and territorial fragmentation
		83	Specific action addressed to compensate additional costs due to size market factors
		84	Support to compensate additional costs due to climate conditions and relief difficulties
6. Technical assistance		81	Mechanisms for improving good policy and programme design, monitoring and evaluation ...
		85	Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection
		86	Evaluation and studies; information and communication

## **ANNEX**

### **Annex 1 – Taxation and Expenditure Measures Announced in Ireland since 2008**

#### **JULY 2008: EXPENDITURE ADJUSTMENTS**

Savings focused on reducing the payroll bill, introducing a range of efficiency measures across Departments and Agencies and reducing expenditure on consultancy, advertising and PR. In addition there was some re-prioritisation of capital projects.

##### **Savings/Yield**

EUR 440 million saving in 2008 and EUR 1 billion saving in 2009

#### **OCTOBER 2008: BUDGET 2009**

Revenue raising package – a significant element of which was the introduction of an income levy. Strictly contained planned expenditure for 2009. Most areas of expenditure saw reductions, with the health, education and social welfare areas being the main areas where spending was allowed to increase reflecting demographic and labour market pressures.

##### **Savings/Yield**

EUR 1.95 billion yield in 2009 (EUR 2 billion in a full year)

#### **FEB 2009: EXPENDITURE ADJUSTMENTS**

Most significant measure in this package was the introduction of the public sector pension-levy which had the effect of reducing the public service pay bill.

##### **Savings/Yield**

EUR 1.8 billion saving in 2009 (EUR 2.1 billion in a full year). Postponed next pay increase scheduled under the Social Partnership Towards 2016 pay agreement.

##### **Savings/Yield**

Up to EUR 1 billion in 2010 and in a full year

#### **APRIL 2009: SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET**

Revenue raising package – main features were an increase in the income levy and changes to social security (PRSI) and health levy arrangements.

##### **Savings/Yield**

Additional taxation revenue of EUR 1.8 billion in 2009 (EUR 3.5 billion in a full year).

Adjustments to current and capital expenditure. Current: EUR 886 million in 2009 (EUR 1.2 billion in a full year) Capital: EUR 576 million saving in 2009 (EUR 600 million in a full year).

#### **DECEMBER 2009: BUDGET 2010**

The 2010 Budget delivered an overall package of EUR 4 billion.

##### **Savings**

Current Expenditure: EUR 3,090 million saving in 2010. Capital Expenditure: EUR 961 million saving in 2010.

#### DECEMBER 2010: BUDGET 2011

The 2011 Budget proposed an adjustment of EUR 6 billion. New Universal Social Charge to replace Health and Income levies. Significant changes in tax credits and bands, rent reliefs, pension reliefs, public service pensions, excise duties. Minimum wage cut.

#### Savings/Yield

Additional taxation revenue of EUR 1.41 billion in 2011. Adjustments to current and capital expenditure: Current: EUR 2.07 billion saving in 2011. Capital: EUR 1.86 billion saving in 2011. Asset sales and other measures to yield EUR 600 million

Source : Drudy and Collins, 2011 based on various Budgets.

## Annex 2 – The Perspectives of the Regional Authorities (NUTS III) and the Western Development Commission

This Annex provides perspectives and information kindly provided in response to questionnaires circulated to Regional Authorities and the Western Development Commission. Perspectives and information from the Central Government Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the BMW and S&E Regional Assemblies are given in the main body of this country report.

### South–East Regional Authority (NUTS III) within the S&E Region (NUTS II)

#### Socio–Economic Position of your Region

*1. What are the particular social and economic difficulties in your region? Please list in order of importance.*

There is a continuing widespread misconception that the South–East region is prosperous and that it is performing well economically. This has manifested itself much more in recent times because the NUTS 3 South–East region is included with the other, better–off regions of the NUTS 2 Southern & Eastern Region (S&E). This is borne out when the region's performance is viewed across range of socio–economic indicators, such as unemployment, output, disposable income, higher education levels, etc. The following table provides a comparison between the South–East region, the NUTS 2 S&E Region and the State under some key socio–economic indicators from before the start of the current NDP to recently available figures. These show that the region is still considerably off the averages for the State and the S&E region.

Indicator		State	South–East	Southern & Eastern	South–East (% of S&E)
Indices of GVA Per person (%)	2007	100	74.7	111.3	67.1
	2008	100	74.6	111.0	67.2
Indices of Disposable Income Per Person (%)	2007	100	96.5	103.1	93.6
	2008	100	96.1	103.1	93.2
Unemployment Rate (%) (Jan–Mar)	2007	4.5	5.0	4.4	113.6
	2011	14.1	17.2	13.8	124.6

*2. Have these difficulties improved or worsened since 2010? Please specify.*

The South–Region region, like all other parts of Ireland, has suffered in recent times. The region's socio–economic position is impacted, naturally enough, by national and global economic factors, such as the banking collapse, increased unemployment, reduced consumer spending, very weak Exchequer tax receipts and reductions in Government revenue and capital spending programmes. Nevertheless, unemployment in particular, in the NUTS 3 region, in 2011 is much deeper than it was in 2007. Large–scale company lay–offs have unfortunately become a frequent occurrence in the region, the most recent being the announcement of the closure of the Talk Talk call centre with the loss of 575 jobs.

*3. Key factors affecting your region (e.g. economic downturn, weak policies)?*

Some regional-specific factors affecting the region include:

Dispersed settlement pattern (region has five major centres of population distributed across the region) and competitive dynamics within the region has limited the realisation of the potential of Waterford City as a driver for regional development;

Absence of a university in the region;

The region has a more traditional-type industrial structure (and which has suffered very significantly in the economic downturn as evidenced by the unemployment figures) and a marked absence of any concentrated presence of the high-tech sector industry;

A significant portion of the region's young adult population migrates from the region as this cohort passes from late teens to early twenties in age (one of the main reasons being the lack of a university in the region); a majority of these do not return to the region;

The region is still characterised by a higher than average level of early school leaving and the proportion of the population with a third-level qualification continues to lag behind many other regions in Ireland;

Despite significant road construction, such as M9 Waterford–Dublin, the M11/N11 Dublin–Wexford, M8 Dublin–Cork and the N25 Waterford Bypass, there still remain a number of key access corridors in need of substantial improvement, such as N24 Waterford–Limerick, remaining sections of the M11/N11 Wexford–Dublin and the N25 Rosslare–Cork;

Despite an extensive rail infrastructure in the region, rail services are limited with the exception of the Waterford–Dublin service (this service deficiency was further exacerbated following the approval by the National Transport Authority in 2010 of Irish Rail's proposal to withdraw the Rosslare–Waterford passenger service);

Broadband has not reached pervasive usage levels;

A key challenge for the region is to realise the potential to be gained from considering quality of life as separate ingredients in a collective and mutually reinforcing way.

#### Regional Policy Pursued

*4. What policy initiatives co-financed by ERDF were implemented in your region during the 2007–2010 Operational Programme?*

Initiatives have been implemented across the priorities of the Southern & Eastern Regional Operational Programme (S&E OP) within the region. In addition, the Regional Authority itself has implemented activities through funding secured through ERDF INTERREG programmes in areas such as entrepreneurship education, creativity and innovation by micro-enterprises, bio-energy and climate change.

*5. What new initiatives were implemented since 2010?*

The Regional Authority is aware that the S&E OP Managing Authority initiated an ERDF Gateway Grant Scheme to ensure activity under the Sustainable Urban Development Priority.



*6. What expenditure took place on these new initiatives since 2010?*

The Regional Authority does not have this information available to it. Financial/expenditure reporting data at the NUTS 3 level is not adequate and is a matter that the Regional Authorities have long advocated should be provided within the ERDF reporting frameworks.

*7. Were projects planned which failed to be implemented?*

Yes. For example, the National Broadband Programme has not proceeded in a number of key regional urban centres; also the capital funding announced in 2007 for Waterford Regional Airport for major infrastructural works at the airport has not materialised.

*8. The main reasons for non-implementation?*

The Regional Authority would suggest that the main reason is that sufficient exchequer match-funding has not been available.

Achievements of Policy

*9. Could you give 1–2 concrete examples of important initiatives co-financed by ERDF implemented in your region and their **achievements** to date.*

The Regional Authority can outline initiatives implemented in the South-East through the S&E OP but does not have information/data to comment on indicators, outcomes and results. Initiatives implemented include the County Enterprise Boards' delivery of business start-up supports, the National Broadband Scheme and the Waterford Crystal Manufacturing and Visitor Centre in Waterford City.

*10. Is there evidence that EU support via ERDF is helping your region to respond to the major challenges facing it?*

The Regional Authority's participation in ERDF funded INTERREG programmes does allow for responses to the challenges facing the region. For example the Ireland–Wales INTERREG funded project "Creativity & Innovation in Micro-Enterprises" ([www.cimeproject.com](http://www.cimeproject.com)) is allowing the Regional Authority to expose the region's small businesses to new techniques to sustain and grow their business models.

In terms of the S&E OP, the lack of reporting information at a NUTS 3 level makes it difficult to accurately evaluate outcomes/effects at this level.

Evaluations of Policy

*11. Have any evaluations of ERDF or Cohesion Policy achievements been carried out by your organisation or others in your region? Please list the evaluations.*

The Regional Authority has not carried out any such formal evaluation nor is it responsible for so doing. Various types of evaluations (mid-term, ex-ante, etc) are carried out periodically by the European Commission, Department of Finance and the NUTS 2 Regional Assemblies. However, the focus of these is not specific at a NUTS 3 regional level and it is

difficult to obtain relevant statistics on EU Programme expenditure and impact at this territorial level.

In 2010 the Regional Authorities in the S&E Region made a submission on the mid-term evaluation of the S&E OP (see below).

*12. What strategy is in place in your region to evaluate outcomes/effects of interventions co-financed by ERDF?*

The Regional Authority is represented on the S&E OP Monitoring Committee. This Committee meets on an annual basis to review the previous years' progress. This results in the review taking place considerably after the actual expenditure occurring thus limiting the effectiveness of any evaluation. Also, as stated earlier, the lack of reporting information at a NUTS 3 level makes it difficult to evaluate outcomes/effects at this level. There is little or no scope for Regional Authorities to influence decision-making with respect to the management of the OP.

*13. Is evaluation a key part of your policy – do results of evaluations feed into your policy?*

The primary policy-influencing instrument available to the Regional Authority is the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) which constitute the back-drop for socio-economic planning by national and regional agencies and the policy framework within which county, city, town and local area development plans are made. Implementation structures have been put in place to achieve a high level of partnership and cooperation between regional, local and public authorities in the region.

Challenges for the Future

*14. Please outline the main challenges facing your region and the changes you feel are necessary to meet these challenges.*

RPGs for the South-East Region 2010–2022 were made by the South-East Regional Authority on 26th July 2010 and identify four strategic goals for the region. The challenge is to ensure that the relevant stakeholders work and collaborate together and use the limited financial resources that will be available for the foreseeable future to maximum effect in achieving these:

To broaden and strengthen the economic base of the region and seek to achieve greater economic competitiveness and growth with associated social progress;

To support the development of the Gateway (Waterford City) and combine the strengths of the cities and towns in the region, as envisaged in the NSS, to achieve sufficient critical mass to compete with larger centres in other regions;

To progress towards an accessible region with efficient and fully integrated transport systems;

To maintain the character and vitality of rural areas, promote rural sustainability and conserve the region's characteristic environment, landscape and heritage assets.

A core Government objective is that of 'balanced regional development'. The NSS represents the Government's roadmap for achieving this objective. Regional Authorities have been given an important role in the implementation and delivery of the NSS in the preparation of a Regional Socio-economic Strategy and RPGs. For this reason Cohesion Policy should have a stronger spatial dimension to its programmes. Sectoral programming, by its nature, will not allow for a meaningful evaluation of the achievement of balanced regional development. Also, since one aspect of development affects another, development must be managed spatially as well as on a programme-by-programme basis. The established NUTS 3 Regional Authority functional areas provide the natural regional level to accomplish this. There is a need for a clear, unambiguous designation of the NUTS 3 Regions as the practical level for spatial programming. The past/current emphasis on the NUTS 2 "regions" (which were conceived on an artificial basis to maximise drawdown of EU funds rather than on a strategic spatial planning basis) does not provide a satisfactory or effective framework or mechanism to achieve balanced regional development and the system masks the inherent differences in profile and in the performance of the NUTS 3 regions within them.

As a further guarantee of a spatial dimension to current and future round of cohesion programmes, explicit targets for each NUTS 3 region should be developed and incorporated into the National Development Plan, Regional Operational Programmes and other relevant programmes and policies (in tandem with sectoral specific indicators). The spatial indicators themselves should have the flexibility to incorporate diverse approaches to the specific needs of different territories and the integrative needs of specific target groups.

Submission by Five Regional Authorities (NUTS III) in the S&E Region (NUTS II) 30 July 2010

### **Mid-term Evaluation of Southern& Eastern regional OP**

This is a Submission, in response to Department of Finance letter of invitation dated 8<sup>th</sup> July 2010, being made on behalf of the five Regional Authorities (RA) the functional areas of which are covered by the Southern & Eastern NUTS II Region: namely the Regional Authorities of Dublin, Mid-East, South-East, Mid-West and South-West.

The Regional Authorities welcome the mid-term review of the OP and the opportunity to make this submission and to participate in this process. The review is both necessary and timely, particularly given the changed economic and fiscal environment and the economic performance of the national and regional economies since 2007, the commencement date of the OP.

The Southern & Eastern NUTS II Region is a large (in Irish terms) and disparate region containing five NUTS III regional authority areas. As it contains the Greater Dublin Area and the relatively large metropolitan area of Cork as well as the more rural regions, the socio-economic profile of the region is significantly distorted and unreflective of the profiles and performance of individual NUTS III regions within it. Therefore, it is welcome and essential that the analysis to be undertaken in the review be focused on both the NUTS II and NUTS III levels to determine impact and future action. To be meaningful and to assess the

contribution of the OP towards meeting programme objectives, particularly in promoting balanced regional development and the objectives of the NSS and new Regional Planning Guidelines, robust analysis must be carried out at the NUTS III level.

The RAs consider that the following issues need to be taken account of and addressed in the mid-term review of the OP:

- The changed socio-economic environment since the OP was framed and commenced in 2007, the current state of the Irish regions and their recent economic performance.
- The impact and contribution of the OP to promoting balanced regional development, i.e. at NUTS III regional and NSS Gateway level.
- The impact of the OP at individual NUTS III regional level.
- The complementarity of the OP performance with the NSS, NDP and the regional development strategies contained in Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs). In regard to the latter, all regions have made new RPGs covering the period 2010–2022 which include a regional development strategy that was informed by, *inter alia*, a Regional Competitiveness Agenda prepared by Forfás.
- The relevance/importance of the OP priorities in the light of the current and future short-term economic conditions, e.g. job losses and rising unemployment, reduced public spending etc.
- The need for the OP to support the development potential of individual regions through supporting innovation, entrepreneurship, the knowledge economy, competitiveness, infrastructure (transport, water, wastewater, waste, communications, energy, tourism etc.) and rural development. Broadband remains an area of high priority for all regions that must be addressed in a more focused way.
- The presence of a large number of NSS-designated Gateways and Hubs in the S&E Region and the need to target them for investment in tandem with NDP measures.
- The significant under-spending on many OP measures.
- The inability of the OP Monitoring Committee to have any meaningful or effective input into the OP monitoring and management due to late and inadequate reporting of spending and data/information provision, particularly at the NUTS III regional level.

In view of the importance of the Regional OP to the individual NUTS III regions, and in keeping with past practice, it is requested that all Regional Authorities be consulted directly by the Evaluators and be involved in this review process.

**Mid West Regional Authority (NUTS III) within the S&E Region (NUTS II)**Socio-Economic Position of the Region

*1. What are the particular social and economic difficulties in your region? Please list in order of importance.*

- Unemployment (at 15.5% it has fourth highest rate of regional unemployment). In addition, outward migration from the region, particularly from Limerick City (notably among young people) is an issue;
- Limerick City Regeneration – to deal with social, physical, environmental and other issues and supporting, where possible, economic development processes;
- Infrastructure deficiencies;
- Lack of social services in rural areas;
- Decline of agriculture and fishing sectors;
- Participation in education;
- Low population density and large dispersed rural population;
- Lack of employment opportunities in smaller urban/rural areas;
- Lack of central funding.

*2. Have these difficulties improved or worsened since 2010? Please specify.*

Improved:

- In 2011 the government announced the amalgamation of Limerick City & County administrative areas that will strengthen Limerick as a Gateway City (as per the National Spatial Strategy);
- In 2010, the Irish Government committed to an investment of over EUR 330 million over a three year period to advancing the regeneration project in Limerick city with a key focus on employment creation, improvement of social and recreational facilities and physical rejuvenation of three neighbourhoods in Limerick city;
- In 2010 the Mid West Regional Authority published Regional Planning Guidelines 2010–2022 that set key objectives and targets that will guide local authorities development plans in line with national policy;
- A Mid West Area Strategic Plan (aligned to the land use and transport objectives set out in the Smarter Travel, as well as the 2010–2022 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Mid West) will be finalized end of 2011 and will set out objectives to develop and promote smarter travel policies in the Region.

Summary of Road Projects in the Mid-West<sup>1</sup>

Road Project	Completion Date/Estimated Date of Completion
Dual Carriageway motorway from Limerick to Dublin	Completed in 2010
Ennis Bypass	Completed in 2010
Limerick Southern Ring Road (Phase 2) which includes Fourth Shannon River Crossing	Completed in 2010
Nenagh to Limerick Motorway	Completed in 2010
Nenagh to Portlaoise Motorway	Completed in 2010
Upgrade of the entire M/N18 route between Limerick, Ennis and Galway	Completion of the final phase from Gort/Crusheen to Oranmore currently on hold
Upgrade the M/N20 between Limerick and Cork	currently on hold

## Worsened:

- Continued economic national and international recession has meant ongoing issues of unemployment, low levels of funding for infrastructure and a continued decline in social services in rural areas.

*3. Key factors affecting your region (e.g. economic downturn, weak policies)?*

- National and international economic recession;
- Relatively slow growth of the Limerick/Shannon Gateway;
- Out-migration of graduates to find work;
- Reduced spending power in domestic economy;
- Lack of telecommunications infrastructure;
- Lack of local leadership.

Regional Policy Pursued*4. What policy initiatives co-financed by ERDF were implemented in your region during the 2007–2010 Operational Programme?*

Programme objectives for the S&E Region included:

- to contribute to increasing the productivity and competitiveness of the region;
- to support sustainable development;
- to help improve quality of life.

Specific priorities included:

- Priority 1: Innovation and the Knowledge Economy
- Priority 2 : Environment and Accessibility
- Priority 3 : Sustainable Urban Development

The Mid West region benefited from support in all three priority areas over the operational programme period.

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<sup>1</sup> MWRA, Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010–2022

*5. What new initiatives were implemented since 2010?*

In 2009 the S&E RA acting as Managing Authority introduced the ERDF Gateways Grant Scheme. Under this theme, grant assistance was made available for the 4 NSS Gateways in the Southern & Eastern Region (Dublin, Cork, Limerick/Shannon and Waterford) for projects which will improve the Gateways economically, environmentally, socially, and/or culturally. A total of EUR11 million was available for allocation as grant assistance at a maximum grant rate of 50%. All four were granted extensions into 2011 with a revised deadline of 31st December 2011. Limerick City Crossroads project was grant aided ERDF funding of EUR 3 million and will be completed by December 2011.

*6. What expenditure took place on these new initiatives since 2010?*

EUR 3 million ERDF grant aid to Limerick City Council for public realm works and other associated works at Sarsfield Street, William Street and Upper William Street.

*7. Were projects planned which failed to be implemented?*

Not aware of any planned project that failed to be implemented.

*8. The main reasons for non-implementation?*

Not applicable.

Achievements of Policy

9. Could you give 1–2 concrete examples of important initiatives co-financed by ERDF implemented in your region and their **achievements** to date under the following headings ?

Policy area	Main indicators	Outcomes/results (what has been achieved?)
Enterprise Support – RTDI Innovation, ICT		Enterprise Ireland expect to support 41 start up enterprises arising from funded research by end 2010
Human Resources (only ERDF) – Education/training, support for employment		Shannon Applied Biotechnology Centre Joint applied research centre between Limerick & Tralee institutes of Technology
Transport and telecommunications		Broadband now available in all areas in the NBS coverage area.
Environment and energy		Ocean Energy Development Unit set up within SEAI.
Territorial development (urban areas, tourism, rural development, cultural heritage, health, public security, local development)		The MWRA is currently participating in seven EU co-financed projects. The aim of all 7 projects is to promote the strengths of the Mid-West Region at a European level and also to benefit from experiences in other regions in Europe.

*10. Is there evidence that EU support via ERDF is helping your region to respond to the major challenges facing it?*

EU support allows the Region to respond in part to some of the major challenges it faces. However, the Region must delve its 'toolbox' comprising of local, regional, national european support mechanisms in order to adequately deal with the challenges it faces. EU support alone does not address a regional policy issue, rather it serves to compliment existing initiatives and mechanisms.

#### Evaluations of Policy

*11. Have any evaluations of ERDF or Cohesion Policy achievements been carried out by your organisation or others in your region? Please list the evaluations.*

The sectoral policy division within the Department of Finance carried out a mid-term evaluation in 2010 of the southern and eastern regional operational programme 2007–2013

*12. What strategy is in place in your region to evaluate outcomes/effects of interventions co-financed by ERDF?*

In all EU co-financed projects that the Mid West Regional Authority is partner to, an interim and final evaluation is foreseen in the project programme to evaluate progress during the project timeframe and ensure lessons learnt upon completion of the project. This evaluation is in addition to regular financial auditing (usually carried out every six months).

*13. Is evaluation a key part of your policy – do results of evaluations feed into your policy?*

Evaluation is a key component of any policy document and this is particular true of the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010–2022 which foresee a range of evaluations at local and regional level, as well as specific sub-committees of the Guidelines implementation framework. Review will be carried out on an ongoing basis and evaluation of any changes will be through a consultative process to insure that all the main stakeholders have their views included in any future amendments to the Guidelines.

#### Challenges for the Future

*14. Please outline the main challenges facing your region and the changes you feel are necessary to meet these challenges.*

General:

The impact of the national & international recession was particularly harsh in the Mid West Region due to the Region's high dependency on manufacturing and construction. Such global and national economic factors will continue to affect the Region's ability to remain competitive in the current economic climate.

Funding:

The National Spatial Strategy Progress Report recommends the development and identification of more practical and realistic arrangements for the co-ordination of regional



investment – which involves improving linkages between Government Departments and Agencies, regional and local authorities in the context of strengthening regional and local government in general. In terms of funding allocation it is unreasonable to expect the Mid West to be in a position to compete with other Regions (NUTS III) that form part of the Southern and Eastern Region (NUTS II). Unless mechanisms for funding change this disparity will remain a challenge to the Mid West, and indeed other regions. Furthermore specific objectives should be set at NUTS III level in order to achieve balanced regional development (as per National Spatial Strategy objective).

#### Transport & infrastructure:

The Mid–West Regional Planning Guidelines referred to in Chapter 6, Section 6.1 & 6.2: the Region is well serviced by rail services to Dublin and Cork. Regional rail networks are also strong. However, the Western Rail and M18 road (Gort to Galway City) & M17 to Tuam remain a priority i.e. as part of the Atlantic Corridor Route. It is imperative that the provision of a direct Limerick–Cork line in the Limerick junction area should be established as should the direct link between Limerick and Waterford/Rosslare. Furthermore, there is a need to protect and develop existing rail facilities such as connections to Foynes, Colbert and Mungret and the reservation of the Shannon Rail Route. The M20 Limerick to Cork, N69 Limerick to Shannon/Foynes Port, Limerick Northern Distributor Road, Killaloe Bridge Crossing.

Shannon International Airport is an international gateway to the Mid West Region and is a key infrastructure asset that must remain commercially viable and competitive. US Customs and Border Protection Infrastructure, and to utilize it to its maximum, extent of Airside Landbank–Airport for Cargo and Humanitarian Aid.

In addition, the Shannon Estuary is a key natural resource with its premier deepwater facility handling 20% of total tonnage of national ports. The RPGs 2010–2022 include an objective to carry out an inter-jurisdictional strategic integrated framework plan for the Shannon Estuary that will further promote its use as an economic resource to the region whilst respecting its status as a Natura 2000 site.

#### Broadband:

The quality of service within the areas covered by broadband remains an issue. Access of broadband within some the covered areas continues to be restricted for some localities due to line length and other distribution factors. Also in terms of infrastructure development of a regional digital hub is required in the Mid West Region.

#### Regional Recovery:

In July 2010 the Government announced in its revised Capital Programme to 2016 that spending on infrastructure would be cut by 40% compared to the NDP due to the challenging economic environment. The report ‘Implementing the National Spatial Strategy: Update and Outlook in October 2010’ recognises that many Gateway and Hubs have

underperformed in the period under review and recommends that future significant capital investment in physical infrastructure should be more closely aligned with settlement policy in order to better integrate strategic planning and investment prioritization. Recognition is also given to addressing the challenges of Ireland's rural areas.

One mechanism to facilitate the implementation of the National Spatial Strategy has been through the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) process. The Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010–2022 include key objectives that will address in part socio economic disparities in the Mid West region through networking of the national gateways, development of transport corridors and the identification of the role of medium sized towns and rural areas as drivers of sustainable development. Within this, as per the Forfas report April 2009, Cities must be acknowledged as being drivers of national competitiveness and recovery.

### **Mid East Regional Authority (NUTS III) within the S&E Region (NUTS II)**

#### Socio-Economic Position of the Region

*1. What are the particular social and economic difficulties in your region? Please list in order of importance.*

This Region has experienced unprecedented economic growth over the last 15 years. This has posed serious challenges for the three Local Authorities in the Region. The rapid growth of populations has put the ability of Local Authorities to provide an appropriate level of service under severe pressure.

The economic downturn has had a serious effect on the Regions unemployment rates with a total of 45,110 persons or 10% of the population signing on the Live Register in August 2011

*2. Have these difficulties improved or worsened since 2010? Please specify.*

These difficulties have not improved since 2010. In August 2010 the number of persons signing on the Live Register was 44,822, resulting in an increase in the Live Register of 6.42% from August 2010 to August 2011. (CSO Live Register figures 31 August 2011.)

*3. Key factors affecting your region (e.g. economic downturn, weak policies)?*

The proximity of Counties Meath, Kildare and Wicklow to the Metropolitan Dublin City Region is a key factor effecting the Regions economic performance. The Region has a high commuting population into the City but has not had the same rate of business creation as the City experienced during the boom period. Consequently there is a uniquely low number of businesses in the Region. This has resulted in Local Authorities receiving a much smaller commercial rates income relative to other Regions, and this has resulted in a lower level of Public Services. The economic downturn has exacerbated an already bad situation in this Region.

#### Regional Policy Pursued

*4. What policy initiatives co-financed by ERDF were implemented in your region during the 2007–2010 Operational Programme?*

INTERREG 3 A was the only ERDF Programme implemented in the Region during this period.

*5. What new initiatives were implemented since 2010?*

In 2010, the Region began implementation of a project under the Interreg 4 B Programme entitled Senior Enterprise.

*6. What expenditure took place on these new initiatives since 2010?*

Approx EUR 604,000

*7. Were projects planned which failed to be implemented?*

None

*8. The main reasons for non-implementation?*

N/A

#### Achievements of Policy

*9. Could you give 1–2 concrete examples of important initiatives co-financed by ERDF implemented in your region and their **achievements** to date under the following headings ?*

Policy area	Main indicators	Outcomes/results (what has been achieved?)
Enterprise Support – RTDI Innovation, ICT Senior Enterprise ERDF Project	Number of businesses created by people over 50	10 new businesses started.

*10. Is there evidence that EU support via ERDF is helping your region to respond to the major challenges facing it?*

The Senior Enterprise programme has been successful so far in encouraging people over 50 to create businesses. Specific Training Courses for this age profile have been well attended, and ten new businesses have started as a direct result. Further initiatives are planned to increase employment and entrepreneurship in this age profile.

#### Evaluations of Policy

*11. Have any evaluations of ERDF or Cohesion Policy achievements been carried out by your organisation or others in your region? Please list the evaluations.*

No evaluation has yet been undertaken. The formal Interreg 4B evaluation will be undertaken at the end of the project in 2013.

*12. What strategy is in place in your region to evaluate outcomes/effects of interventions co-financed by ERDF?*

The Senior Enterprise Programme includes ongoing evaluations of the actions contained therein.

*13. Is evaluation a key part of your policy – do results of evaluations feed into your policy?*

Yes, each action, (eg Entrepreneurship Training Course) is evaluated within the Project, and the outcomes of the evaluations are used to inform further actions and to share best practice policy with our Transnational Project Partners.

Challenges for the Future

*14. Please outline the main challenges facing your region and the changes you feel are necessary to meet these challenges.*

Employment creation remains the greatest challenge for this Region, and this drive needs to be focussed on the resident population, which currently has little alternative but to seek work in the City centre. Economic development in the three counties has been limited in comparison with the Dublin Metropolitan Area. To counteract this dominance, the Mid East Regional Authority is currently developing an Economic Strategy which will focus on a series of dynamic economic clusters centered on strategic transportation corridors across the Region.

To ensure success in future growth and economic development, the Mid East Region must more clearly define its role within the Greater Dublin Area, as its future will be greatly influenced by developments in the Region as a whole.

**Western Development Commission**

This is a government agency established to promote economic and social development in the counties of Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare. The Commission thus covers the three of the six counties in the NUTS III Border Regional Authority, the three West Regional Authority counties and one county in the Mid West.

Socio-Economic Position of your Region

*1. What are the particular social and economic difficulties in your region? Please list in order of importance.*

The WDC's expertise and work mainly relate to economic development issues, we will therefore mainly focus on economic issues here, though several of these, particularly unemployment and emigration are also significant social issues.

In the WDC Policy Briefing *Why care about regions? A new approach to regional policy* (2010),<sup>2</sup> the WDC identified three priority areas for regional policy – Infrastructure; the 3Es (education, enterprise, employment); and Innovation. We believe that the region's most significant difficulties fall within these three areas and equally that policy in these three areas is key to growing the region.

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<sup>2</sup> WDC, 2010, *Why care about regions? A new approach to regional policy*. All WDC Policy Briefings and other reports can be downloaded from [www.wdc.ie/publications/reports-and-papers](http://www.wdc.ie/publications/reports-and-papers)

We used a range of indicators to examine how the Western Region was performing in in these areas in our Policy Briefing *How is the Western Region doing? Measuring regional development* (2010).<sup>3</sup> We have subsequently examined some of these areas in more detail (*Air Access and the Western Region: A regional perspective* (2011);<sup>4</sup> *Education, Enterprise & Employment: How can better integration of the 3Es drive growth in the Western Region?* (2011)<sup>5</sup> and *Why invest in gas? Benefits of natural gas infrastructure for the North West* (forthcoming)<sup>6</sup>).

While it is difficult to prioritise among the difficulties, we have attempted to do so here:

1. **Unemployment:** In Q1 2011 there are 54,900 people unemployed in the Western Region.<sup>7</sup> The unemployment rate was 14.5%, compared with 14.0% in the rest of the state.<sup>8</sup> The number of people unemployed in the region increased by +245.3% between 2007 and 2011 compared with +192.8% in the rest of the state. In 2011 54% of those unemployed in the region were long term unemployed. The scale and rapidity of the increase in unemployment is the most important difficulty currently facing the Western Region. Particular target groups of concern in the region are: young men, particularly in smaller urban centres and rural areas who left school early to go into construction (at the height of the boom in 2006 17.3% of males aged 18–24 in the Western Region were early school leavers, 15.3% in rest of the state); older men with low education levels, including part-time farmers, who have lost jobs in construction or traditional manufacturing; and women who have become unemployed from the local services sector (most female job losses since 2007 have been in retail and hospitality).
2. **Relatively weak enterprise base,** especially in smaller centres and more rural areas: In 2009 61.8% of active enterprises in the Western Region were operating in just three sectors – construction, wholesale and retail, and accommodation and food service.<sup>9</sup> Sectors which have been hit hardest by the recession. The rest of the state had a more diversified enterprise profile with 51.2% in these three sectors. At the other end of the scale, the region only had 19.5% of its enterprises in the knowledge intensive services sectors (professional, scientific and technical activities, information and

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<sup>3</sup> WDC, 2010, *How is the Western Region doing? Measuring regional development*

<sup>4</sup> WDC, 2011, *Air Access and the Western Region: A regional perspective*

<sup>5</sup> WDC, 2011, *Education, Enterprise & Employment: How can better integration of the 3Es drive growth in the Western Region?*

<sup>6</sup> WDC, 2011, *Why invest in gas? Benefits of natural gas infrastructure for the North West* (forthcoming)

<sup>7</sup> The data used here is based on special data runs of the Quarterly National Household Survey for the seven county Western Region. As this is not aligned with the NUTS 3 regional level at which data is collected by the CSO, data may be subject to sampling or other survey errors. These are greater in respect of smaller values or estimates of change. Therefore data for the Western Region should be taken as indicative of the relative position of the region rather than as accurate absolute figures. Where data is drawn from another source, this will be referenced.

<sup>8</sup> Rest of the state refers to all of the counties of the state except the seven counties of the Western Region.

<sup>9</sup> CSO, *Business Demography* 2009

communications, and financial and business services) whereas 30.2% of enterprises in the rest of the state were in these sectors. The relative weakness of the enterprise profile of smaller centres and rural areas was masked to a great degree during the boom by construction and rising public sector employment. In the face of the collapse of construction employment and public sector cutbacks, creating a more diverse, and therefore more sustainable, enterprise profile in the region is an urgent priority. The WDC has identified eight sectors which we believe hold particular potential for growth in the region: medical devices, software, financial and international services, creative industries, elder care, tourism, green economy, food and marine.<sup>10</sup>

3. **Return of the 'brain drain':** Traditionally many third level graduates from the region found employment outside the region (overseas or in other parts of Ireland) and it experienced a 'brain drain'. During the boom years this was reversed to a great extent with half of 2006 graduates from the region finding their first job in the region. For 2008 graduates this had dropped to less than a third.<sup>11</sup> The Western Region also has a considerably higher unemployment rate than the rest of the state for those with third level education, 9.0% compared with 7.5%. In this context, given its legacy of out-migration and the issues around its enterprise profile, the region faces a higher risk of experiencing large scale emigration. The larger decline in the number of people aged 25 years and under who are signing on the live register in the Western Region compared with the rest of the state indicates that there is some level of emigration already occurring from the region.<sup>12</sup>
4. **Infrastructure deficit:** The Western Region suffers from an infrastructure deficit in the areas of transport, energy and telecommunications. There are no motorways and very few roads of dual-carriageway standard in the Western Region north of Galway city. This part of the region is not served by a major inter-urban motorway. The North West also has no natural gas infrastructure. Broadband quality in rural areas also lags those in other areas. More specific details on the infrastructure deficit are given in the response to Question 14.
5. **Educational attainment levels:** The Western Region has consistently had a higher share of its population with lower education levels, currently 56.5% of 15–64 year olds only have a Leaving Certificate or lower qualification (53.8% in the rest of the state). The gap in educational attainment levels has narrowed considerably during the past decade, though the region continues to have a lower share with third level qualifications – 31.6% of 15–64 year olds compared with 32.4% in the rest of the state. With predicted future job growth likely to be concentrated in sectors demanding higher skill levels, raising the

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<sup>10</sup> WDC, 2009, *Work in the West: The Western Region's Employment & Unemployment Challenge*

<sup>11</sup> Higher Education Authority, 2010, *What Do Graduates Do? Class of 2008*, special data analysis.

<sup>12</sup> CSO, Live Register, August 2011

educational and skill level of the region's workforce, in particular jobseekers with low education levels, will be a key priority.

6. **Lower innovation levels:** Levels of innovation activity in the Western Region are lower than those elsewhere, with innovation activity quite concentrated in Galway city. A recent report by the BMW Regional Assembly *Audit of the Innovation System in the Border, Midland and Western Region: An evaluation of a regional knowledge economy* (2011) examines this issue in detail. Improvements have been made in increasing access to innovation services, however more needs to be done to enhance the productivity and growth potential of the region's enterprises.
7. **Demography:** While there has been strong population growth, both from natural increase and migration, as indicated by the preliminary results of Census 2011, the region continues to have an older age profile than the rest of the state. In the 2006–2011 period natural increase accounted for a smaller share of the Western Region's total population increase (55% of the total) than in the rest of the state (65%).<sup>13</sup> All counties in the region (except Galway city) had lower birth rates and higher death rates than the national average. The number of persons whose economic status is retired increased by 29.1% between 2007 and 2011 in the Western Region, almost twice the increase that occurred in the rest of the state (14.6%) over the same period. The Western Region also has a lower labour force participation rate (58.1% compared with 60.3% in the rest of the state), a situation that persisted throughout the period of economic growth. These factors result in a higher dependency ratio in the region.

*2. Have these difficulties improved or worsened since 2010? Please specify.*

This has varied between the different difficulties:

1. **Unemployment:** The unemployment situation has definitely worsened since 2010. The number unemployed in the region increased by 10,600 (+23.9%) between Q1 2010 and Q1 2011, whereas in the rest of the state it increased by +4.3%. The Western Region's unemployment rate increased from 12.4% to 14.5% over the same period, while its long term unemployment rate increased from 4.6% to 7.8%. The average duration of unemployment also increased from 13.6 weeks to 20.3 weeks. This period has also been marked by a notable increase in female unemployment. In the early period of the recession unemployment increases were very male dominated due to job losses in construction and construction-related industry. However as the recession has spread more widely in the economy (e.g. retail, hospitality, public sector) female unemployment had increased. The number of women who are unemployed in the Western Region increased by +44% between Q1 2010 and Q1 2011 (+12.1% in the rest of the state).

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<sup>13</sup> WDC, 2011, Overview of Census 2011 Preliminary Results for the Western Region

2. **Relatively weak enterprise base:** The most recent business demography data is for 2009 so it is not possible to say for certain what change has occurred since 2010. Given the decline in the construction and local services sectors it is likely that the share of these sectors in total enterprises has declined somewhat. However the extent to which enterprises in other sectors have grown to take their place is unclear. Employment growth has been recorded in some sectors in the region over the past year, mainly in knowledge intensive services sectors and medical devices, which likely means that there has been an increase in the number of enterprises in these sectors also.
3. **Return of the 'brain drain':** The preliminary results of Census 2011 indicated that despite signs of rising emigration, migration was still positive for the region and accounted for a large share (45%) of the region's total population increase between 2006 and 2011. Clearly any emigration which has occurred has not yet been of a scale sufficient to undo the large scale in-migration of previous years. There are also indications of a return to the region of people who may have become unemployed in other parts of the country and have now returned home. It is difficult to assess what exactly is occurring in terms of emigration, however anecdotal evidence and the decline in under 25s signing on the Live Register do point to rising emigration from the region. The CSO's forthcoming Population and Migration Estimates for 2011 should provide some further clarity on this issue.
4. **Infrastructure deficit:** Since 2010 the Public Service Obligation available to regional air routes which connect remoter regions to Dublin have been reduced from six routes to two (Donegal and Kerry). This has significantly reduced and in some cases curtailed air services from Derry, Sligo, Ireland West Airport Knock and Galway airports, all of which served various catchments within the Western Region. Apart from the reduced connectivity for both inbound and outbound users for the business and tourism sectors particularly, the loss of services for some airports may mean they will close to commercial services. This is a further erosion of the infrastructure base of the region. A considerable number of planned national road projects in the Western Region have also been suspended, including projects on the N4, N5 and N15/N17. It also appears that the planned PPP M17/M18 Gort-Tuam motorway project will not go ahead for several years.
5. **Educational attainment levels:** This is an area which has improved since 2010. The share of 15–64 year olds with third level qualifications rose from 30.2% to 31.6%, while the share with a Leaving Certificate or less fell from 57.7% to 56.5%. One impact of the recession has been a decline in labour force participation among younger age groups, particularly younger men, with many remaining in education longer. The labour force participation rate for 15–19 year olds in the region fell from a high of 27.3% in 2007 to 15.4% in 2011, while for 20–24 year olds it fell from 71.5% in 2007 to 61.2% in 2011. This has been reflected in a +18.6% increase in the number of students (15 years and over) in the region between 2007 and 2011, compared with a +2.4% increase in the rest of the state. In fact in the year from Q1 2010 to Q1 2011 the number of students (15



years and over) increased in the region by +5.5%, while it actually declined by –2.7% in the rest of the state. The demand for education (further and higher level) and upskilling has increased substantially, one of the concerns now is the capacity of the education and training system to meet this demand. There are indications that demand far outweighs supply for many courses, in particular at the further education (NFQ Level 4–6) level.

6. **Lower innovation levels:** We are not clear as to whether there has been much change in innovation activity over the past year. Lower innovation levels remain a difficulty for the region however and are closely linked to the regional enterprise structure and the fact that the bulk of innovation support goes to technologically based innovation. Greater focus on non-technological and process innovation will be required to enhance innovation activity in the region and raise the productivity of existing micro-enterprises and SMEs. Addressing some of the barriers to enterprises engaging with the region's higher education institutions will also be required.

7. **Demographic:** see comments above in relation to recent changes.

*3. Key factors affecting your region (e.g. economic downturn, weak policies)?*

Overall, one of the key factors affecting our region, and all regions, is the apparent decline in the emphasis being given to regional development concerns in the development of national policy. The differing regional impacts of the economic downturn have received relatively little attention in strategies aimed at recovery e.g. Smart Economy, Jobs Initiative. There have been some examples where regional issues have been incorporated, notably the target in the IDA Strategy that 50% of new investments will be located outside of Dublin and Cork, and the Regional Competitiveness Agendas prepared by Forfás. However in general balanced regional development as an objective appears to be receiving less focus in the downturn.

This is particularly worrying in the context of the potential which all regions have to contribute to the recovery, provided they are facilitated to do so through support for infrastructure, the 3Es and innovation. Significant growth opportunities in the regions may remain unrealised in the absence of a regional focus.

There is also a risk that disparities, both regional and also urban–rural, may widen due to the pattern of the recovery. A recovery driven almost exclusively by growth in the larger urban centres would increase spatial disparities. Policies are required to support and stimulate enterprise and employment growth in smaller centres and rural areas in parallel with larger urban centres if this is to be avoided.

The economic downturn is clearly the most important factor currently impacting on the region, and the country as a whole. The speed of the increase in unemployment and the impact this has had on local demand is a key factor for the region, as are the restrictions on access to credit for enterprises.

In terms of factors of particular relevance to the region, the heavier reliance on construction employment during the boom and in particular in more rural areas, meant that the crash had a disproportionate impact. The heavier reliance on construction employment also led to substantial increases in the housing stock of the counties of the Western Region and subsequently high vacancy rates.<sup>14</sup> The extent of vacant housing stock is a key factor affecting the region's future.

#### Regional Policy Pursued

*4. What policy initiatives co-financed by ERDF were implemented in your region during the 2007–2010 Operational Programme?*

N/A

*5. What new initiatives were implemented since 2010?*

N/A

*6. What expenditure took place on these new initiatives since 2010?*

N/A

*7. Were projects planned which failed to be implemented?*

N/A

*8. The main reasons for non-implementation?*

N/A

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<sup>14</sup> WDC, 2011, Overview of Census 2011 Preliminary Results for the Western Region

### Achievements of Policy

9. Could you give 1–2 concrete examples of important initiatives co-financed by ERDF implemented in your region and their **achievements** to date under the following headings?

Policy area	Main indicators	Outcomes/results (what has been achieved?)
Enterprise Support – RTDI Innovation, ICT	Programme of Innovative Actions	The formal evaluation of this programme sets outs its key achievements.
Human Resources (only ERDF) – Education/training, support for employment		
Transport and telecommunications	Public Transport	Currently, there are 4 projects underway in the BMW Region, automating crossings on the Sligo Line (13), the Galway Line (5) the Westport Line (9) and the Ballina Line (2). In addition Iarnród Éireann have purchased 33 Intercity Railcars for use on the Outer Commuter routes. 24 of these railcars will serve the BMW Region, 18 serving Portlaoise and 6 serving Athlone. These have now entered service.
Environment and energy		
Territorial development (urban areas, tourism, rural development, cultural heritage, health, public security, local development)	Gateway & Hub Development Fund	In the context of the suspension of the national Gateway Innovation Fund, the opportunity for Gateways and Hubs to gain funding for some of these projects from the Gateway & Hub Development Fund provided a good example of ERDF funding filling a gap in national funding availability. It also allowed the Gateways and Hubs to upgrade their built environment, a key factor in enhancing their quality of life and attractiveness to investors.

10. Is there evidence that EU support via ERDF is helping your region to respond to the major challenges facing it?

N/A

### Evaluations of Policy

11. Have any evaluations of ERDF or Cohesion Policy achievements been carried out by your organisation or others in your region? Please list the evaluations.

The WDC has not carried out any evaluations of ERDF or Cohesion Policy.

An evaluation was carried out by Fitzpatrick & Associates of the BMW's Programme of Innovative Actions.

A Mid-Term Evaluation of the BMW Regional Operational Programme 2007–13 was undertaken by the Central Expenditure Evaluation Unit of the Department of Finance between May and November 2010.

*12. What strategy is in place in your region to evaluate outcomes/effects of interventions co-financed by ERDF?*

Evaluation is primarily the responsibility of the Managing Authority, for example the BMW Managing Authority in the case of the BMW Operational Programme 2007–2013. Financial resources have been provided within the Technical Assistance Priority to facilitate a comprehensive programme of evaluations. Technical advice is available from the Central Expenditure Evaluation Unit within the Department of Finance which has a remit to promote best practice in the evaluation and implementation of programme and project expenditure across all Government Departments and Public Sector Agencies.

*13. Is evaluation a key part of your policy – do results of evaluations feed into your policy?*

The WDC has reviewed the results of a number of evaluations in developing our policy recommendations. In particular we used some of the findings of the evaluation of the Programme of Innovative Actions to devise recommendations in the area of enterprise–higher education collaboration for our Policy Briefing *Education, Enterprise & Employment: How can better integration of the 3Es drive growth in the Western Region?*.

#### Challenges for the Future

*14. Please outline the main challenges facing your region and the changes you feel are necessary to meet these challenges.*

The WDC considers the main economic and social difficulties outlined under Question 1 to be the main challenges facing the Western Region. We recently made a submission to government in the context of the planned Capital Investment Programme for the period 2012–2016 setting out our recommendations in terms of what is required to meet these challenges, in the context of capital investment. We feel these recommendations are relevant to this question and they are set out below.

The WDC believes that capital investment is needed to stimulate regional and national economic growth. The Department of Finance recently highlighted the rationale for public capital investment (*Infrastructure Investment Priorities 2010–2016*, July 2010), noting the productivity gains, positive impact on per capita output growth and reduced transportation costs benefiting both the export oriented and locally traded sectors, which can result from public capital investment. While fully recognising the current fiscal constraints, the WDC believes it is also important to lay the foundations for growth both regionally and nationally, which will underpin Ireland's recovery.

In the national interest, growth in all regions should be optimised. To do this all regions need to have a strong infrastructure base enabling them to compete, as well as to attract and retain investment and jobs. The importance of spatially targeted investment was highlighted also by the Department of Finance which noted that capital investment that is co-ordinated around the framework of the National Spatial Strategy will position strategic locations as the drivers for growth<sup>15</sup>.

Given that many of the planned investments under the NDP 2007–2013 are under review it is opportune that the WDC submits its views on capital investment priorities for the Western Region for the period 2012–2016. In doing so the WDC is conscious of the need to prioritise between short-term and more medium-term investments. Even if all these projects do not proceed fully during this period, it is important that preparation and planning is undertaken so these projects are ‘ready to go’ when more resources are available. The WDC’s investment priorities are set out below in order of priority within each section.

## TRANSPORT

- Ensure a better spatial distribution of public capital transport funding.

Though there has been significant transport investment undertaken as part of Transport 21, investment priorities remain. A recent evaluation of Transport 21 analysed investment by geographic area and found that

Almost two-thirds of public transport expenditure has been in Dublin with the majority of the balance on inter-urban corridors and only one-twelfth to the other cities [Cork, Galway, Limerick, Waterford] ... the least favoured locations, even after allowing for population differences, are the deep rural areas not served by such corridors<sup>16</sup>. p.5

It is important that transport investment is rebalanced so that other areas including NSS Gateways such as Letterkenny and Sligo as well as Hub towns and rural areas in the Western Region, have good transport links. This will ensure competitiveness by providing connectivity for goods and services as well as improved labour mobility and better access for residents and tourists. This will enable these centres to function as regional drivers of growth helping to contribute to national recovery.

## National Roads

- **M17/M18:** the re-tendering process for the Gort–Tuam motorway should be completed and construction should commence as soon as possible. The WDC would however have concerns over the implications of any decisions on tolling for this route.
- **N17/N15:** the projects currently in planning to complete the remaining sections of the Atlantic Road Corridor from Tuam to Letterkenny should be completed.

<sup>15</sup> Department of Finance, 2010, Infrastructure Investment Priorities 2010–2016. p.13,14

<sup>16</sup> Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (Ireland), 2010, *Transport 21 Midterm Review*, p.5

- **N4:** conversion of the Mullingar–Longford section of the N4 from single to dual-carriageway would provide motorway/ dual-carriageway from Dublin as far as Longford, a key artery for five counties in the region. Upgrading of the Carrick–on–Shannon–Dromod and the Cloonmahon–Castlebaldwin sections would provide a high quality road link to the gateway of Sligo.
- **N5/N26:** The N5 to Roscommon and Mayo, including the hubs of Castlebar and Ballina, is widely acknowledged as the poorest quality primary national road in the country. The projects on this road in various stages of planning should be completed.
- **A5:** investment in the upgrading of the A5 to Derry to dual-carriageway standard should ensure that the dual-carriageway continues to Letterkenny.

There are currently no motorways and very few dual-carriageways in the Western Region north of Galway city. Given the completion of the major inter-urban routes (MIUs) in other regions, this places towns and enterprises in the Western Region at a competitive disadvantage. The above investments would significantly enhance regional competitiveness.

#### Rail

- Improved service levels on the Ballina/Westport line. In contrast to national trends, passenger numbers on the Sligo and Ballina/Westport lines have increased between 2009 and 2010. Service levels on the Ballina/Westport line are among the weakest on the network with just four services daily.
- Across the network faster journey times are needed to compete with the improved road network. In the Western Region investment in line works to remove speed restrictions is required and improved journey times are needed on services to Sligo, Westport/Castlebar/Ballina, Galway and Ennis.
- The reintroduction of services on phase 2 (Tuam) and phase 3 (Claremorris) of the Western Rail Corridor (WRC). Analysis of Census data<sup>17</sup> shows there is stronger demand for commuter rail services north of Galway city than from the south (phase 1). Services should be re-introduced on phases 2 and 3 as soon as possible. This will also benefit rail freight, an important transport mode for some industries, which apart from reducing emissions, is a profitable and growing segment of Iarnród Éireann's operations. Ireland's largest rail freight traffic is routed from Mayo to Dublin and Waterford, through the Greater Dublin Area. Re-opening the line to Claremorris will allow traffic to be routed south on the WRC through to Waterford obviating the need to use the increasingly congested network in the Greater Dublin Area.
- Over the medium term, reintroducing services from Claremorris to Collooney will connect the NSS gateway of Sligo to the other gateways of Galway, Limerick and Cork, a strategic linking corridor in the NSS national transport framework<sup>18</sup>. Over the long-term

<sup>17</sup> WDC, 2009, Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region: A Profile of Seven Town Labour Catchments.

<sup>18</sup> National Spatial Strategy 2002–2020, p.61

and recognising rail as a sustainable transport mode, connections from Sligo to Letterkenny and Derry should be explored. This would create an all-island circuitous network enabling long-distance travel, commuter routes and significant capacity for new rail freight routes.

The WDC acknowledges the policy shift towards greater investment in sustainable public travel and welcomes recent investments in rail. The WDC believes that the rail network will become an increasingly important asset in the Government's sustainable transport agenda and that the above investments will contribute significantly to this.

#### Air Access

- Ringfencing of the regional airports capital investment programme. It is imperative that the capital funding for those airports identified as meriting continuing support; Ireland West Airport at Knock and Donegal airport is made available. Future certainty is needed to allow these airports effectively perform their roles as key access points into the Western Region.
- The regional airports in the Western Region need Tourism Marketing support if they are to actively drive tourism in the region. The 2011 Jobs Initiative includes a Tourism Marketing Fund<sup>19</sup> designed to promote visitor traffic however, this appears to be exclusively targeted at the three State airports. This Fund should be extended to all regional airports supporting them in attracting overseas visitors to regional tourism centres.

The recently announced significant cuts in supports to regional airports will significantly reduce air services into parts of the Western Region. Though the rationale for the decrease is a better road network, journey times from parts of the Region are still in excess of three hours to a State airport and in excess of two hours to a regional airport which will continue to receive assistance. In order to ensure that the Western Region is not disadvantaged, in addition to the air access investment priorities, the road investment priorities outlined above also need to be completed as soon as possible.

#### ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

##### Electricity

- EirGrid's planned investments should be made as soon as possible, in particular the planned 400kV transmission line into Mayo. Further options for large scale transmission, including more interconnection, should be investigated to ensure that renewable energy generation can meet its export potential.
- The government should seek to ensure that required infrastructural investments are made in a timely manner as electricity grid investments, while not directly funded by the government do bring important public benefits.

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.finance.gov.ie/documents/pressreleases/2011/mn018jobsinit.pdf>

- There is a need to ensure that on and off shore facilities, such as deep water harbours and handling facilities, are planned and developed in tandem with the emergent industry.

Our national energy strategy should not only focus on domestic supply but on positioning Ireland as a net exporter of renewable electricity in the coming decades. EirGrid has outlined in its strategy document 'Grid 25', the significant developments required in the transmission grid to 2025 to meet demand throughout the country and to allow for the export of large amounts of renewable electricity generation from remoter parts of the country. The energy infrastructure development outlined above is essential to the growth of this sector and also to supply the needs of industrial and commercial customers and domestic users in the region.

#### Natural gas

- The government should commit to an expansion of the natural gas grid to larger towns in the North West, and investigate a variety of funding sources including the European Regional Development Fund.

Natural gas, unlike electricity, is not available throughout the state, and large areas of the North West in particular are without natural gas transmission infrastructure. Natural gas is a cheap, efficient fuel with the lowest carbon emissions of any fossil fuel. Users without access to natural gas pay significantly more for fuel than if they had access to natural gas<sup>20</sup> and produce higher levels of carbon emissions than if they were using natural gas. With energy costs of companies in parts of the region significantly higher than they would be with natural gas, company competitiveness, and their ability to maintain and create jobs are significantly affected as is the region's capacity to attract new industries and enterprises. All of these in turn affect the national economy curtailing growth and competitiveness. The above investment would have a very significant positive impact on competitiveness.

#### COMMUNICATIONS AND BROADBAND

- Universal Broadband by 2013. The National Broadband Scheme (NBS) and the Rural Broadband Scheme (RBS) are programmes designed to deliver universal basic broadband. Recent figures show that broadband penetration rates in the Border, Midlands and West region continue to lag those in the Southern and Eastern region<sup>21</sup>. There is also concern that minimum broadband service levels are not being delivered. Therefore an immediate priority is to ensure that all can access the minimum standard broadband service at a competitive price by 2013.

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<sup>20</sup> WDC, 2011, Why invest in gas? Benefits of natural gas infrastructure for the North West (forthcoming)

<sup>21</sup> Central Statistics Office, 2011



- An immediate policy requirement is to build Metropolitan Area Networks in the remaining NSS centres in the Western Region; Tuam, Castlebar, Ennis and Shannon<sup>22</sup>.
- It is important that recently established Next Generation Broadband Task Force, aimed at identifying barriers and providing solutions to the rollout of Next Generation Networks (NGNs), addresses the particular issues regarding rollout to smaller centres and rural areas. Over the medium term the Government will need to invest to complement private sector investment and it is important that 'a Next Generation digital divide' is not allowed emerge.
- In addition to ensuring widespread regional high speed access, it is important to ensure that regional broadband costs are competitive with Dublin rates, otherwise these extra costs to business will act as a disincentive to regional investment and creating and retaining jobs<sup>23</sup>.

Broadband is widely accepted as critical to the modern economy as a key enabler of innovation, growth and ICT industry. An increasing range of services, from on-line purchases, public information services and education require broadband access. The delivery of public services on-line via eGovernment also yields efficiencies and cost savings.

Government policy is to promote high speed broadband capacity using NGNs with an aim of ensuring speeds of 30mbps throughout Ireland, in line with an EU target date of 2020<sup>24</sup>. To achieve these higher speeds, fibre networks are critical. The physical extension of the fibre network as near to the user as possible and ideally to the home/business, is regarded as the most future proofed technology for next generation broadband delivery. While the fibre network will not be universal, and more rural areas are likely to use a variety of means to access the fibre network, such as mobile and satellite, it is important to extend the fibre network as far as possible. If centres in the Western Region are to compete, retain and attract investment and support job creation, the above investments must be made so that the Region is not disadvantaged in its broadband capacity and quality of service.

#### WATER AND WASTE WATER

- Sufficient funding is required to ensure a secure, consistent and high quality water supply across the Western Region to support existing industry and residential needs as well as ensuring sufficient supplies to attract new enterprise development and support job creation.

A high quality consistent water supply and comprehensive waste water treatment facilities are critical to all users, residential and industrial. Quality water supplies and waste water

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<sup>22</sup> This will be in addition to the 94 MANs already completed. Forfas, 2010, *Ireland's Broadband Policy Performance and Policy Actions* p.33–35. This was also an objective of the NDP 2007–2013

<sup>23</sup> Engineers Ireland 2011, *The State of Ireland, A Review of Infrastructure in Ireland*. p22

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.dcenr.gov.ie/Press+Releases/Faster+Broadband+to+More+Places+Quicker.htm> One of the questions the Next Generation Broadband Taskforce is to ascertain is whether the 2020 targets can be reached sooner.

treatment are needed to sustain communities and are also critical in supporting the tourism sector both in maintaining high quality amenities and minimising pollution. A quality water supply is as critical a factor as electricity and broadband in influencing the location of industrial development.

#### ENTERPRISE SUPPORT

- The Western Region's priority growth sectors should be the focus of coordinated capital investment, including infrastructure and enterprise support. The WDC has identified eight enterprise sectors with particular growth potential for the region: medical devices; creative industries; green economy (especially renewable energy); software, financial and international services; elder care; tourism; food; and marine<sup>25</sup>. Development of the region's potential in these sectors will contribute to national recovery.
- Supporting locally-trading micro-enterprises and local services, in addition to exporting enterprises, is important for sustaining as well as creating jobs especially in smaller centres and rural areas. Such enterprises must be strongly supported, especially in the context of any changes to CEB structures.
- To make it easier for business owners and entrepreneurs to identify and access regional enterprise support services, an approach similar to the 'No Wrong Door' model used in the US should be piloted in the Western Region. This involves a formalised system of cross-referrals among existing enterprise support agencies at a regional level<sup>26</sup>.
- Access to finance needs to be improved, with venture capital a regional priority (see WDC Investment Fund below).
- Increased access to international markets needs to be funded, supporting the sales and marketing activities of indigenous micro-enterprises and SMEs.

#### RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Research investment should be aligned with regional strengths and growth sectors. This should include the creation of internationally competitive innovation centres in the region's higher education institutions (HEIs) based on research and enterprise strengths e.g. renewable energy, medical devices, creative industries.
- To increase commercialisation of public R&D investment, a brokerage facility, such as Interface in Scotland, should be established to increase interactions between enterprise and HEIs. This could be incorporated into an existing agency e.g. EI, HEA. It should act as a single point of contact and intermediary between enterprise and HEIs<sup>27</sup>.
- Given its enterprise base, non-technological innovation is particularly important for the Western Region. The share of public R&D expenditure allocated to non-technological

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<sup>25</sup> WDC, 2009, Work in the West: The Western Region's Employment and Unemployment Challenge.

<sup>26</sup> WDC, 2011, Education, Enterprise and Employment: How can better integration of the 3Es drive growth in the Western Region?

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

innovation, through HEIs, enterprise agencies and other organisations, should be increased.

#### WDC'S WESTERN INVESTMENT FUND (WIF)

The WIF is a unique risk capital fund providing seed and venture capital and loan finance to SMEs on a commercial basis (it does not provide grant-aid). The importance of venture capital (VC) to Ireland's economic recovery has been highlighted by numerous sources including the Programme for Government. Access to finance has been a major issue for Western SMEs with less than 10% of private VC funds invested in the Western Region. The WIF was established to address this funding gap. To date the WIF has invested in 89 enterprises employing over 1,400 people, forecast to increase to 2,500 as these companies expand. Jobs supported by VCs have a significant multiplier effect supporting up to three additional downstream jobs in the Irish economy giving a total potential of jobs supported by the WIF to 7,500<sup>28</sup>. This employment gain arising from the exchequer support of EUR 31.7m to the WIF has leveraged an additional EUR 140m investment into the region.

In 2010 the SMEs supported by the WIF had a payroll bill in excess of EUR 37m, of which EUR 11m was payroll taxes to the exchequer and 70% of the EUR 100m turnover was exported. The WDC's record compares very favourably with private VC companies; over the period 2007/2008 supporting 31 enterprises in the seven western counties with an investment of EUR 12 million compared to the latter supporting just 18 enterprises across Ireland and overseas with an investment of EUR 10.2million<sup>29</sup>.

To date the WIF has revolved and reinvested 25% of the exchequer monies it received. It will continue to recoup and reinvest the proceeds of its investments but this money will be prioritised for follow on investments to protect and maximise the value of the existing portfolio.

#### West Regional Authority (NUTS III) within the BMW Region (NUTS II)

##### Socio-Economic Position of the Region

*1. What are the particular social and economic difficulties in your region? Please list in order of importance.*

- Unemployment generally but particularly in peripheral areas.
- Lack of Services: e.g. water, waste water, broadband.
- Access – poor condition of Regional/Local and NS roads.
- Lack of social services in rural areas.
- Decline of agriculture and fishing sectors.
- Lack of any public transport service in most of the region.
- Decline/stagnation of tourism outside of main urban centres.

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<sup>28</sup> Irish Venture Capital Association Economic Impact of VC in Ireland 2009 Report

<sup>29</sup> Enterprise Ireland Seed and Venture Capital Reports 2007 and 2008

*2. What are the main causes of these difficulties?*

- General economic climate.
- Central government funding decisions.
- Low population density.
- Small urban structure.

Regional Policy Pursued

*3. What policy initiatives co-financed by ERDF have been launched in your region?*

- Some sections of roads have been improved.
- Water/Waste water supplies in the bigger urban areas have been upgraded.
- There is a National Broadband Scheme – full implication remains to be determined.
- Some urban/village renewal schemes have been completed.
- Some other one-off projects have been funded e.g. Theatre and national Parks projects.

*4. What projects have received precedence in the allocation and expenditure of funds?*

- Physical infrastructure – roads, water etc.

*5. Were plans always implemented? If not, why?*

Plans were implemented where money was made available

Achievements of Policy

*6. What are the main achievements arising from ERDF expenditure? Could you give **three** concrete examples of important initiatives launched and their achievements to date?*

(e.g. innovative products and services, new foreign or Irish employment, training opportunities, R&D, new roads, rail, broadband, water treatment, waste disposal, health, cultural sports)

- M6 Dublin – Galway Motorway.
- Broadband – Metropolitan Area Networks and National Broadband Scheme but not universal in the region.
- National Museum of Ireland in Turlough House, Castlebar, Co.Mayo.

*7. Are achievements of ERDF satisfactory or not?*

- Satisfactory but limited.

Evaluations of Policy

*8. Have any evaluations of EU Cohesion Policy achievement been carried out by the the Authority or others in your region? Please list.*

- None.

Challenges for the Future

9. Please outline the main challenges facing your region and the changes you feel are necessary to meet these challenges.

- Reverse unemployment trends.
- Improve physical infrastructure e.g. water, wastewater, broadband etc.
- Improve access – intra and inter regional.
- Identify growth sectors for the future :- possibles – food, renewable energy, smart economy etc.
- Improve regional competitiveness e.g. reduce transport costs, fixed costs, increase productivity etc.
- Develop main urban areas as locations of critical mass attractive to entrepreneurs (foreign and national).

### Annex 3 – Projects funded under the PRTL Cycle 4, 2007–2011/12

The Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL) Cycle Four was launched in August 2007. Seventeen projects were awarded a total of EUR 260 million in funding under the cycle. This brings the total awarded to PRTL over the past ten years to EUR 865<sup>30</sup> million. See the table below for a full breakdown across cycles.<sup>31</sup>

Below is a list of the projects funded under Cycle 4 followed by a brief on each.

#### Bioscience and Biomedical Projects

- 1) The National Programme on (Bio) pharmaceuticals and Pharmacological Science
- 2) Molecular Medicine Ireland Clinician Scientist Fellowship Programme
- 3) National Biophotonics and Imaging Platform (NBIP)
- 4) The Centre of Applied Science for Health
- 5) Irish Food and Health Research Alliance (IFHR)
- 6) Biosciences and Cell Signalling

#### Chemical and Physical Sciences Projects

- 7) Network Mathematics

#### Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Projects

- 8) e-INIS: The Irish National e-Infrastructure
- 9) The Graduate School of Creative Arts and Media (GRADCAM)
- 10) Serving Society : Management of Future Communications Networks and Services
- 11) NEMBES : Network Embedded Systems
- 12) Lero : The Irish Software Engineering Research Centre and Graduate School

#### Platform Technologies Projects

- 13) INSPIRE : Integrated Nanoscience Platform for Ireland

#### Humanities Projects

<sup>30</sup> The figures quoted include exchequer and matching funding. EUR 35M Science Centre not included in project figures.

<sup>31</sup>

Cycle	Capital (EUR million)	Recurrent (EUR million)	Total (EUR million)
PRTL Cycle 1 [ 1999–2003]	177.5	28.6	206.0
PRTL Cycle 2 [ 2000–2004]	48.8	29.7	78.5
PRTL Cycle 3 [ 2002 – 2006/7]	176.4	143.6	320.0
PRTL Cycle 4 [ 2007 – 2011/12]	131.3	129.4	260.8

## 14) Humanities Serving Irish Society (HSIS)

## Social Sciences Projects

## 15) The Irish Social Sciences Platform (ISSP)

## 16) Irish Social Science Data Archive (ISSDA)

## Environment and Marine Projects

## 17) Environment and Climate Change : Impacts and Responses Graduate Programme

## Bioscience and Biomedical

**1) The National Programme on (Bio) pharmaceuticals and Pharmacological Sciences** is a national collaborative programme between DCU, TCD, UCC and UCD building on a consortium of higher education institutions that established the National Institute of Bio-processing Research and Training (NIBRT), funded by a EUR 72 million grant from the IDA.

Highly important for industry in Ireland is the provision of graduates with the necessary skills and training to enable an increase in (Bio) pharmaceutical R&D. The programme will form a HEI academic-led 'bio-pharmaceutics corridor' from Belfast to Cork where in excess of 80% of Ireland's (bio)Pharmaceutical and Life Sciences companies lie, by incorporating all four Schools of Pharmacy on the island.

This programme will not only match the demand for researchers but also exceed it in order to stimulate further demand and build our knowledge-based economy. This programme will contribute to the delivery of the SSTI's goal of encouraging industrial placements and transferable postgraduate courses, both practical and theory based with built-in industrial expertise, which will significantly contribute to the professional development of our researchers.

These programmes will also address a national crisis in manpower for the Biopharmaceutical Sciences, estimated to be 2,800 skilled graduates in the short-term for companies that have committed to establish new plants in Ireland. Strategic goals are to provide postgraduate education and research experience, via a research platform that underpins development of the Pharmaceutical Industry in Ireland.

This initiative and NIBRT will position Ireland as a European region for Bio-pharmaceutics and, more broadly, Pharmaceutical Sciences. It will consolidate the initial investments in PRTL Cycles 1–3 to ensure effective exploitation of the personnel and infrastructure as a national resource for research, teaching and learning, knowledge transfer and outreach programmes in BPS.

Below is the breakdown of funding that has been allocated to each partner institution involved.

Institution	Programme	Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total EUR (EUR thousand)
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DCU	National Programme on (Bio)pharmaceutical & Pharmacological Sciences	6,427	6,018	12,446
UCC	National Programme on (Bio)pharmaceutical & Pharmacological Sciences	500	687	1,187
UCD	National Programme on (Bio)pharmaceutical & Pharmacological Sciences		5,368	5,368
TCD	National Programme on (Bio)pharmaceutical & Pharmacological Sciences	250	690	940
TOTAL		7,177	12,763	19,941

## 2) Molecular Medicine Ireland Clinician Scientist Fellowship Programme

The Clinical Scientist Fellowship Programme will deliver the next generation of clinician scientists with the unique and specialised knowledge essential to fulfil Ireland's translational research needs. Clinician scientists trained to PhD level are vital for fulfilling Ireland's ability to provide rigorous training in critical thinking and translational research skills necessary to bridge the divide between increasingly inter-dependent areas of expertise – basic and clinical biomedical research. There is a strong correlation between the number of PhD Clinician Scientists per capita and economic well being. Ireland lags significantly behind its Western European counterparts with respect to PhD Clinician Scientists per capita and a main aim of this programme is to address this deficit. The paucity of clinician researchers has been highlighted in the HEA / Forfás Research Infrastructure in Ireland review.

The Molecular Medicine Ireland Clinician Scientist Fellowship Programme will comprise at least 19 Fellows competitively selected from medical graduates at registrar level who wish to undertake PhD training (3 years). The Fellowship Programme will be organised on a national basis by Molecular Medicine Ireland and delivered by the participating institutions: National University of Ireland, Galway, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Trinity College Dublin, University College Cork and University College Dublin.

Below is the breakdown of fundin allocated to each partner institution involved.

Institution	Programme	Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total EUR (EUR thousand)
UCD	MMI Clinician Scientist Fellowship Programme		4,129	4,129
UCC	MMI Clinician Scientist Fellowship Programme	–	1,846	1,846
TCD	MMI Clinician Scientist Fellowship Programme	–	2,236	2,236
RCSI	MMI Clinician Scientist Fellowship Programme	–	2,438	2,438



NUIG	MMI Clinician Scientist Fellowship Programme	–	2,778	2,778
TOTAL			13,427	13,427

**3) The National Bio-photonics Imaging Platform (NBIP)** is a national collaborative programme between DCU, DIT, NUIG, NUIM, RCSI, UCC and UL

NBIP has been in informal existence since December 2004 grouping the seven Universities, DIT, RCSI and CNRS (France), represented by a leading Institutional Principal Investigator, to promote collaborations using imaging facilities in the Institutions, and addressing issues of access and advanced training. The NBIP is a development programme aiming to build on existing institutional human and capital resources in imaging and bio photonics so as to create a structured national network of accessible research and training facilities and to sustain internationally competitive research programmes in Molecular, Cellular, Animal and Human Imaging.

The NBIP provides a national framework to support and encourage the development of an integrated national network of access and training infrastructure in research, education, technology development and industry collaboration for the State's investment in Bio-photonics and Imaging of complementary centres of expertise. In this way each of the institutional partners provides individual core facilities and research expertise, which in turn are integrated into the complete NBIP proposal.

Provision of core sites will greatly enhance the national research infrastructure and ensure that recent investments translate to an increased efficiency of usage which in turn should provide a solid foundation for development of key research areas. The NBIP research programme will bridge the Physical and Life Sciences interface linking cognate research groups in the Mathematical, Physical, Chemical, Engineering, Computational and Life Sciences to develop new collaborative research opportunities and advanced tools in Photonics and Imaging.

Below is the breakdown of funding that has been allocated to each partner institution involved.

Institution	Programme	Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total EUR (EUR thousand)
DCU	National Biophotonics & Imaging Platform	2,224	4,751	6,975
DIT	National Biophotonics & Imaging Platform	1,946	1,642	3,588
NUIG	National Biophotonics & Imaging Platform	500	1,219	1,719
NUIM	National Biophotonics & Imaging Platform		933	933
RCSI	National Biophotonics & Imaging Platform	3,573	7,331	10,904
UCC	National Biophotonics & Imaging Platform	3,700	950	4,650

UL	National Biophotonics & Imaging Platform	238	1,052	1,290
TOTAL		12,181	17,878	30,059

**4) The Centre of Applied Science for Health** is led by the Institute of Technology, Tallaght and incorporates a number of partnerships including, DCU, NUIM and the AMNCH.

The Institute of Technology, Tallaght will develop its expertise in translational molecular cell biology research through leverage of the core expertise in microbial disease prevention and control, medical device technology and anticancer treatments amongst established multi-disciplinary research teams within ITT Dublin and through relationships with industry, its partnering institutes and its teaching hospital partner.

The Applied Science for Health at the Institute will carry out research and educational programmes that are relevant to regional, national, societal and industrial needs. Through direct contact with companies such as Wyeth Medica, and via the Pharmaceutical Advisory group, skill shortages have already been identified for scientists, engineers and technicians working in the Technology Transfer area.

The education programme associated with the Centre will identify and prioritise key areas for taught MSc and 4<sup>th</sup> level short courses in order to address such shortages not addressed currently in traditional educational qualifications. Each of the institutions in this partnership will contribute in highly complementary fashion to each research phase, with a particularly strong clinical perspective being provided by Adelaide and Meath Hospital incorporating the National Children's Hospital (AMNCH).

Below is the breakdown of funding that has been allocated.

Institution	Programme	Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total EUR (EUR thousand)
ITT	Centre of Applied Science for Health	6,050	4,600	10,650

**5) The Irish Food and Health Research Alliance** [formerly Food Ireland] is a national collaborative programme which is a formal joint venture between University College Dublin, University College Cork and the University of Limerick.

The infrastructure is designed to put in place the facilities to allow a contribution in an internationally competitive way to the National Food and Health Research Programme. National facilities for Good Manufacturing Practise (GMP) and Human Dietary Intervention Studies in the programme will enable research into functional foods and omega-3 rich oils, the role of foods in healthy aging and the impact of nutrient intake on diseases of aging, e.g. osteoporosis and Alzheimer's disease. The programme also includes a marine functional food research programme.

The objective of the programme is to establish a cohesive and integrated national framework for research and training in the area of food and health and associated agri-food

related areas, in line with the objectives of SSTI, as well as being responsive and adaptable to needs of stakeholders. This programme is designed to deliver a world-leading set of capabilities in food and health research. The Irish Food and Health Research Alliance will exploit its many established International (US, UK and Europe) collaborative links and recognises the advantages of collaborating with other centres of expertise (nationally and internationally) to acquire new capabilities and technologies. The programme will also benefit from the Science Centre, based in UCD that will be funded under cycle four, which will develop facilities to house the further development of the programme.

Below is the breakdown of funding that has been allocated to each partner institution involved.

Institution	Project	Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total EUR (EUR thousand)
UCC	IFHRA	4,060	754	4,814
UCD	IFHRA		862	862
UL	IFHRA	405	333	738
TOTAL		4,465	1,949	6,414

**6) Biosciences Cell Biology and Cell Signalling** is a programme led by UCC.

The objective of this proposal is to increase the capacity for research and PhD training in the general area of cell biology and cell signalling related to different normal and diseased states. A major emphasis is on cancer biology and neuroscience research, with more than 30 investigators engaged in different aspects of cell biology and cell signalling in these areas.

As part of its overall strategic plan, UCC plan to further develop cancer research on three fronts: fundamental scientific research, translational research, and clinical research. This proposal will also fund additional space for cell biology and cell signalling research. The primary purpose of the new space is to support PhD training in cancer biology, aimed at increasing the critical mass and capacity for high quality research output and PhD training.

The basic cancer biology research at UCC is focused on the key underlying defects associated with the genesis and progression of cancer. Research is linked with extensive translational studies as well as phase I/II clinical trials on novel mechanisms of gene and drug delivery ongoing at the Cork Cancer Research Centre and the University Hospitals. These include studies on gene therapy and novel delivery mechanisms, tumour immunology, and clinical cancer prevention. Collaborations also exist with the Tyndall Institute in the development of microelectrodes, Dept Pharmacy, UCC in the development of nano-particles for gene delivery and the Dept. Microbiology in viral gene delivery.

All of the cancer research programmes at UCC have extensive links with researchers in Ireland, international cancer research institutes and industry. The ultimate objective here is

to identify new treatment targets and strategies through a better understanding of cancer cell biology, signalling networks and immunology.

Below is the breakdown of funding that has been allocated.

Institution	Programme	Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total (EUR thousand)
UCC	Biosciences Cell Biology and Cell Signalling	3,000	–	3,000

#### Chemical and Physical Sciences

**7) Network Mathematics:** Bridging the Gap between Theory & Applications is a proposal that brings together two high profile research teams, the Hamilton Institute (NUIM) and Centre for Telecommunications Value Chain Research (TCD), with the aim of creating a co-ordinated research and training programme.

The project aims to directly capitalise on prior investment with a view to realising synergies, minimising duplication of effort and create the infrastructure to form a strong platform for future growth.

The aim of the project is also to address the skills deficits within Ireland in network mathematics linked to key technologies, and reinforce current strengths. Key areas have been identified and the project will enhance research capacity in these areas through targeted PhD scholarships. It will also develop a coordinated structured PhD programme, including development of advanced graduate training modules, strengthening international linkage via close collaboration with researchers at the Berlin Mathematical School, Technion, and Yale. This will allow access to the wide range of skills of partners for input into graduate education programmes. The programme will also lead to the creation of a shared experimental network testbed and will build upon existing experimental testbeds at NUIM and TCD to create a shared experimental platform.

Below is the breakdown of funding allocated.

Institutions	Programme	Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total (EUR thousand)
NUIM	Network Mathematics		2,255	2,255

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

**8) e-INIS: the Irish National e-Infrastructure programme** is a national collaborative programme between DIAS, TCD, NUIG, NUIM and UCC.

The aim of the programme is to provide researchers with controlled, secure, seamless, easy and economical access to shared science and engineering resources, enabled by the provision of a fully integrated advanced information and communication infrastructure. Such national e-infrastructure is a necessary step towards full participation in European e-Infrastructure projects which will be built as a federation of national e-Infrastructural initiatives.

e-INIS addresses a clearly identified national need expressed across almost all sectors in the HEA/Forfás survey for professionally managed and operated high-level infrastructure in the areas of:

- High-performance computing,
- Management, storage and curation of large data sets,
- High-bandwidth communications, and
- middleware tools, including Grid technologies.

While the provision of physical resources is a crucial part of e-INIS, the development and conservation of the human resources and expert skills base required for professional support and training is equally as important.

As a generic enabling technology e-INIS will enhance, inter alia, the priority research areas identified in the technology foresight exercise as well as the SSTI. E-INIS recognises that the computer science issues of e-infrastructure form an important area of current ICT research (here the participation of TCD, NUIG and UCC and the cooperation of QUB is directly relevant), and that Bioinformatics (NUIM, UCD, TCD) is regarded as a key component in modern Biology.

Through provision of professional training and support in the use of advanced computational and data analysis techniques, both stand alone and as part of graduate schools, e-INIS will contribute to the enhancement of the graduate learning experience and the quality of graduate training, thereby contributing to the national objective of doubling the output of high-quality PhD graduates. In addition, through knowledge exchange with civic society generally e-INIS will contribute to, and support, the development of such important emerging areas as e-government, e-health and e-commerce. e-INIS will be established initially as a federation of the three core infrastructure providers, HEAnet, Grid-

Ireland and ICHEC together with DIAS and certain University partners but backed by all the universities.

Below is the breakdown of funding allocated to each partner institution involved.

Institution	Programme	Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total (EUR thousand)
UCC	e-INIS	250	250	500
NUIM	e-INIS	–	234	234
NUIG	e-INIS	772	248	1,020
TCD	e-INIS	500	671	1,171
DIAS	e-INIS	4,230	5,303	9,533
TOTAL		5,752	6,706	12,458

**9) The Graduate School of Creative Arts and Media (GradCAM)** is an inter-institutional initiative between the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), and the National College of Art and Design (NCAD) and in collaboration with the University of Ulster and the Institute of Art and Design & Technology, Dun Laoghaire (IADT) (the latter two entities not in receipt of funding through Cycle 4).

Ireland has lagged behind other OECD countries, such as Australia, the UK and US, in PhD programmes, infrastructural support and graduate opportunities for the creative arts and media. The *Graduate School of Creative Arts and Media* rectifies this anomaly by establishing a graduate school for advanced research training and development across the creative arts and media, underpinned by a dynamic interdisciplinary, real-world oriented practice-based framework.

The project will consolidate the work of all institutional partners, who together constitute the largest cohort of postgraduate students and research expertise in the creative arts and media on the island. GradCAM will deliver a new interdisciplinary model of graduate education in/for the arts, drawing on international best practice, providing research-relevant placement and intern opportunities, and an infrastructure for evolving research communication strategies in partnership with the creative/cultural industries. GradCAM will greatly expand opportunities for PhD studies and graduates in the creative arts and media, and ensure a dynamic synergy between the academy and society.

The project will also provide the national infrastructural framework to support and sustain the creative arts and media in Ireland with initial focus on design, the visual arts and music. The three disciplines will consolidate partner expertise, and provide a critical platform for active engagement with collaborators and the creative and cultural industries in Ireland, and across Europe.

Below is the breakdown of funding allocated to each partner institution involved.

Institution		Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total (EUR thousand)
DIT	GradCAM	–	1,048	1,048
NCAD	GradCAM	–	1,100	1,100
TOTAL			2,148	2,148

### 10) Serving Society: Management of Future Communications Networks and Services

programme is led by the Telecommunications Software and Systems Group (TSSG) at WIT in collaboration with NUIM (The Hamilton Institute and the Department of Sociology), UL (Interaction Design Centre), and several international partners.

The Programme connects Irish research and Irish based industry to the global research community and builds on the established strategic alliance with major industrial players as well as the key international academic collaborators. The objective is to ensure Ireland's leadership in the development of the communications infrastructure for the future Internet and as a consequence a location for continued economic investment.

The three project partners have strong track records in the areas of: communications network and service management (WIT–TSSG); network performance analysis (NUIM–Ham); interaction design and usability (UL–IDC); and analysis of usage patterns of ICTs (NUIM–Soc). They are ideally positioned to collaborate on the development of a framework for creation, deployment and management of communications services that serve societal needs.

The programme will address three related research strands:

- “Future Communications Services,”
- “Future Communications Networks,” and;
- “Capturing and Addressing Societal Needs.”

Also included in this programme is the specific capital project; an Integrated Research Building that will act as enabling infrastructure to support the programmatic area. On review of research infrastructure within the Institute as part of the HEA / Forfás review of national research infrastructure in 2006, WIT identified a spatial deficit of approximately 8,500m<sup>2</sup> required to accommodate the existing needs and projected growth in research activity at the Institute. In line with the Institute's prioritisation of investment in strategic areas of research this proposal serves to specifically target the infrastructural deficit which currently exists within the above mentioned areas.

This integrated building will provide the quality research infrastructure required to support world class research and thereby broaden the base of academic research at the Institute, in the region and nationally. It will provide adequate meeting and demonstration and purpose built laboratories. It will provide a forum for researchers from a diversity of backgrounds to meet and exchange ideas. It will provide quality research infrastructure required to support the growth of postgraduate teaching and research at the Institute.

Below is the breakdown of funding allocated.

Institution		Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total (EUR thousand)
WIT	Serving Society: Management of Future Communications Networks and Services	–	3,817	3,817
WIT	WIT Integrated Research Building	4,124	–	4,124
TOTAL		4,124	3,817	7,941

**11) NEMBES: Network Embedded Systems** is led by Cork Institute of Technology's – Centre for Adaptive Wireless Systems (CAWS) which was set-up in 2000. The project is led by CIT with partners from UCD, Tyndall National Institute, Cork University Hospital, UCC, Cork City Council and TCD.

The overall project aim is to bring together the key national experts in the field and make Ireland a recognised international centre of research, education and innovation in networked embedded systems research and applications. The research aim is to address Networked Embedded Systems R&D from an application focused, whole system viewpoint. The core strategy of the CIT Centre for Adaptive Wireless Systems is to use a multidisciplinary approach that integrates hardware, networking and software to allow whole system research. Nationally, no other single group offers this skill set and its success is reflected in CAWS' rapid growth since 2000.

NEMBES strengthens CIT's strategy of closer involvement with the Tyndall Institute and UCC while also widening its network of research collaborators nationally. In particular, NEMBES strategy foresees tighter integration with Tyndall, with NEMBES eventually becoming a systems research centre utilized by Tyndall under the concepts agreed within the CIT/UCC MOU signed in 2006. NEMBES will create educational programmes and opportunities for undergraduate and postgraduate research, making Ireland not only a leading location for NES education but also for those who will be NES industrial and commercial innovators.

The NEMBES project will create an integrated NES Programme, putting in place the infrastructure and state-of-the-art facilities to enable this programme to build up the capacity and structures to drive high quality research, education and knowledge transfer programmes into the future.

Below is the breakdown of funding that has been allocated.

Institution		Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total (EUR thousand)
CIT	NEMBES	6,447	7,631	14,078

**12) Lero – the Irish Software Engineering Research Centre and Graduate School** is a consortium led by the University of Limerick and involves DCU, TCD and UCD.



The centre was established in November 2005 following the award of EUR 11.7 million, under the Science Foundation Ireland's CSET programme. Lero's mission is to work with industry to advance the state of the art in key software engineering domains and to develop world class human resources. The proposal provides a new building, allowing for continued operation and expansion of the CSET and consolidating all of the Lero centre activity at UL.

The new Lero building will accommodate Lero's UL research and central staff. The Lero Graduate School in Software Engineering (LGSSE) will be administered from UL, with the four partner universities offering taught modules to student researchers across four locations and providing Lero researchers as supervisors. Lero's partner universities have agreed to establish a structured PhD programme which will prepare graduates for the demands of tomorrow's software engineering world. The programme will strengthen ties between Irish researchers, while establishing links with industry and with leading international institutions.

By complementing the funding committed by SFI for the operation of Lero, this project will help ensure the establishment of a national software engineering research centre which will be internationally recognised for its results, its education and its industrial linkage. The project will provide appropriate accommodation for Lero, on the UL campus, adjacent to the CSIS department, so that Lero can expand and deliver the research, technology transfer and fourth level education that will be the foundation of Ireland's future software industry.

Below is the breakdown of funding that has been allocated.

Institution		Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total (EUR thousand)
UL	Lero	5,197	2,136	7,333

#### Platform Technologies

**13) INSPIRE: Integrated Nanoscience Platform for Ireland** is a project coordinating the National Nanotechnologies Initiative joining CRANN/TCD, CIT, DCU, DIT, NUIG, UCC/Tyndall, UCD and UL.

The programme is designed to enable each partner to build on their core capabilities, whilst allowing Ireland to engage in key new interdisciplinary areas such as nanotoxicology and nanomedicine. Infrastructure derived from this programme will be shared nationally. The proposal is designed to deliver a world-leading set of capabilities in nanoscience materials, devices, systems research, characterisation, and bio-nanoscience.

INSPIRE will create a national integrated nanoscience and nanotechnology activity which will result in building collaborations across the nanoscience community nationally, leveraging existing capabilities and elevating the national activity to be internationally leading. The aims of the programme are:

- The creation of a shared national infrastructural capability that will fill the acknowledged gaps, and be serviced effectively by trained support staff, in order to enhance the national capacity for delivering innovative research in nanoscience and nanoscale technologies;

Graduate School:

- The development of shared national nanoscience graduate programmes that will have international appeal and will enable an increase in graduate numbers aligned with stated SSTI goals;
- The expansion of existing institutional linkages to facilitate new collaborations, locally, regionally and nationally across institutions and across disciplines.

INSPIRE will also benefit from the Science Centre that will be based in UCD, which will be funded under this cycle, and which will develop facilities to house the further development of the programme.

Below is the breakdown of funding that has been allocated to each partner institution involved.

Institutions	Programme	Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total (EUR thousand)
NUIG	INSPIRE	1,998	681	2,679
CIT	INSPIRE	750	1,072	1,822
DCU	INSPIRE	1,809	663	2,472
DIT	INSPIRE	2,092	2,168	4,260
TCD	INSPIRE	4,500	1,714	6,214
UCC	INSPIRE	6,100	1,805	7,905
UCD	INSPIRE		1,528	1,528
UL	INSPIRE	3,478	2,301	5,778
TOTAL		20,727	11,932	32,659

## Humanities

**14) Humanities Serving Irish Society (HSIS)** is a national collaboration programme between DCU, NUIG, NUIM, RIA, TCD, NCAD, UCC, UCD, and DKIT, ESRI, ITT, SPCD, outside of cycle four funding as well as international partners QUB and UU. The initiative is committed to building a National Platform for the Humanities and an all-island inter-institutional research, teaching and training infrastructure.

This HSIS consortium represents a major change in the scope and capacity for humanities research, teaching and training in Ireland, and these endeavours will be linked to analogous enhancement of humanities research, teaching and training in QUB and UU.

The mission of this national collaboration is to serve three ends:

- (1) the creation of an infrastructure (Digital Humanities Observatory), to be managed by the RIA
- (2) the enhancement of the teaching and learning experience of research students in humanities in Ireland's HEI's by linking it to novel pedagogic actions stemming principally from the work of the DHO
- (3) better co-ordination of humanities research in Ireland.

Through the HSIS programme, researchers in humanities disciplines in all HEIs in Ireland will, for the first time, come together in a common forum.

Below is the breakdown of funding that has been allocated to each partner institution involved.

Institutions	Programme	Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total (EUR thousand)
DCU	HSIS		390	390
NUIG	HSIS	340	2,975	3,315
NUIM	HSIS	3,700	2,989	6,689
TCD	HSIS	6,804	3,984	10,788
UCC	HSIS	200	1,236	1,436
RIA	HSIS		3,528	3,528
NCAD	HSIS		152	152
UCD	HSIS		2,610	2,610
TOTAL		11,044	17,864	28,908

## Social Sciences

**15) Irish Social Science Platform (ISSP)** is a national collaborative programme between DCU, NUIG, NUIM, UCC & UL. ISSP comprises an all-island programme of fundamental, applied, and comparative research and graduate training on Knowledge, Innovation, Society and Space. It links together significant and complementary centres of social science and humanities expertise across all institutions involved. The proposed partnership is a scaling-up of existing successful collaborations (e.g. PRTL, Atlantic Alliance) across disciplines and institutions. It will draw upon existing international collaborations of partners where necessary.

This national research programme will focus on three inter-related areas:

- Innovation and the building of the knowledge society/economy;
- Social inclusion and the creation of sustainable communities;
- Spatial strategies and promoting balanced development and competitiveness.

Each of these are of critical policy importance given the imperative to secure Ireland's economy through innovation, to sustain social progress through enhanced social capital and social entrepreneurship, and to improve sustainability through sectoral and spatial planning and cross-border cooperation.

Graduate School: The national programme will provide a platform for the sharing of research and teaching expertise and resources across partners which will enable the creation of national graduate programmes in each of the three research areas identified.

Below is the breakdown of funding that has been allocated to each partner institution involved.

Institution	Programme	Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total (EUR thousand)
DCU	ISSP		887	887
NUIG	ISSP	230	10,354	10,584
NUIM	ISSP	3,700	3,498	7,198
UCC	ISSP		919	919
UL	ISSP		2,509	2,509
TOTAL		3,930	18,167	22,097

**16) The Irish Social Science Data Archive (ISSDA)** will be managed jointly by UCD and the Economic and Social Research Institute, with the collaboration and support of the Central Statistics Office.

ISSDA holds an ever-increasing quantity of machine-readable data from surveys and official statistics (such as the Census) and makes them readily available to users in the academic, public and commercial sectors. PRTL support will expand and coordinate data acquisition and management and build on the Irish Social Science Data Archive and will directly address structural concerns raised in the Forfás/HEA review on infrastructures, with the database filling a long recognised need in Ireland.

The enhancement and expansion of the ISSDA to create a national resource for social science data and provide new infrastructure in key areas such as data management and will bring a core research programme within the Archive for the first time.

As the Archive grows and develops, it is envisaged that it will contain an ever-expanding range of datasets of use to the Irish social science research community. These will include:

- CSO datasets, such as the Small Area Census Data (SAPS), the Household Budget Survey, and the Quarterly National Household Survey;
- ESRI datasets, such as the School Leavers Survey;
- Full election results under PR-STV, including data from all counts for all constituencies;
- Data from the National Election Study;
- International comparative datasets, such as the Eurobarometer and ISSP series.

Data will be distributed both on CD-ROM and via the Internet, and ISSDA is committed to investigating and deploying new technologies such as NESSTAR and MISSION to ensure the safest and most efficient dissemination of data in the future.

ISSDA aims include:

- To ensure wider access to datasets, both Irish and international;
- To encourage secondary analysis of older data in order to track trends over time;
- To offer training and advice in the access and exploitation of available datasets;
- Through links with equivalent archives in other countries, to advance the promotion of much-needed international comparative studies of the Irish economy and Irish society;
- To make datasets available for analysis by postgraduate, and in the longer term, undergraduate students, to facilitate the wider acquisition of data analysis skills.

Below is the breakdown of funding that has been allocated.

Institution	Programme	Capital (EUR thousand)	Recurrent (EUR thousand)	Total (EUR thousand)
UCD	Irish Social Science Data Archive		750	750

## Environment and Marine

**17) The Environment & Climate Change: Impacts and Responses Graduate Programme** is a national collaboration between CIT, NUIM, NUIG, TCD, UCC and UL.

Environment and Climate Change is of great importance both nationally and globally and researchers with cross-disciplinary knowledge in areas of marine, environment, computational mechanics and geoscience areas will be needed in the formulation of European-wide research efforts in Climate Change. As a result, this project will develop a specific Graduate Research Education Programme in Environment and Marine research.

In addition, under the capital component of this programme NUI Galway will develop the Mace Head research institute as a national resource through acquiring key platform technologies and equipment. The upgrading of the unique world-leading Ocean-Atmosphere super-site at Mace Head will enable advanced research into aerosol formation, aerosol-cloud interactions, air-sea exchange and CO<sub>2</sub> uptake at a prime geographical

location for such research. The upgrading of the Mace Head site was identified as a key national and indeed European research infrastructure in the 2006 HEA/Forfás review.

Below is the breakdown of funding that has been allocated to each partner institution involved.

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Programme</b>	<b>Capital (EUR thousand)</b>	<b>Recurrent (EUR thousand)</b>	<b>Total (EUR thousand)</b>
UCC	Environment & Climate Change: Impacts and Responses Graduate Programme	450	1,017	1,467
TCD	Environment & Climate Change: Impacts and Responses Graduate Programme		1,309	1,309
NUIG	Environment & Climate Change: Impacts and Responses Graduate Programme	4,431	1,382	5,813
NUIM	Environment & Climate Change: Impacts and Responses Graduate Programme		299	299
UL	Environment & Climate Change: Impacts and Responses Graduate Programme	-	618	618
CIT	Environment & Climate Change: Impacts and Responses Graduate Programme	1,250	800	2,050
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6,131</b>	<b>5,425</b>	<b>11,556</b>

Source : Higher Education Authority, Dublin

**Annex 4 – Marine Institute, Galway**

No.	Item	Cost (EUR)
1	Argo Floats	144,353
<b>Description</b> The Argo Float network ( <a href="http://www.euro-argo.eu/">www.euro-argo.eu/</a> ) is a global array of autonomous instruments, deployed over the world ocean, reporting subsurface ocean properties to a wide range of users via satellite transmission links to data centres. Argo floats measure temperature and salinity over the upper 2000 m of the ocean. These two essential climate variables describe the oceans' physical and thermodynamic state. The Argo array is thus an indispensable component of the Global Ocean Observing System, required to understand and monitor the role of the ocean in the Earth's climate system, in particular the heat and water balance. The international Argo Float programme identified the waters off the West of Ireland as a gap area in the production of global ocean models.		
<b>Supporting Research Programmes:</b> Climate Change, Environment		
<b>Status</b> 2007 was the first year in which Ireland became a member of the Argo programme. Twelve floats were procured, four of which were deployed in March 2008. A further four floats were deployed in early 2009. Further information, including the location of the floats is available at – <a href="http://www.marine.ie/home/services/operational/DeepSeaResearch/EuroArgo.htm">www.marine.ie/home/services/operational/DeepSeaResearch/EuroArgo.htm</a> .		

No.	Item	Cost (EUR)
2	Underwater Glider	107,854
<b>Description</b> A glider vehicle is an unmanned underwater vehicle that is equipped with sensors that measure ocean temperature, salinity, chlorophyll and oxygen. The information gathered is used to drive ocean circulation models to help us understand issues relating to climate change in Irish waters. The vehicle has the ability to dive to depths of 1,000m, gliding across thousands of kilometres of ocean as a conventional aircraft travels through air. It effectively 'flies' under water by changing its buoyancy and while at the surface it fixes its position through the Global Positioning System (GPS) and sends data back to shore using satellite communications. Its path can be changed by an operator on shore at anytime and can be adjusted depending on the oceanographic features that are found during the flights.		
<b>Supporting Research Programmes:</b> Climate Change, Environment		
<b>Status:</b> A test flight was carried out in Lough Furnace, Co. Mayo in October 2008. The glider was deployed in deep water off the west coast of Ireland in 2009 to complement research on currents and ocean circulation already being done by teams working on the national research vessels RV <i>Celtic Explorer</i> and RV <i>Celtic Voyager</i> .		

No.	Item	Cost (EUR)
3	Underwater TV	203,938
<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>This system upgrades the existing towed camera sled to utilize fibre optic technology. It is mainly used for the assessment of Nephrops (prawn) stocks and is operated from either of the national research vessels (RV Celtic Explorer and RV Celtic Voyager). It is also used for ground truthing of hydrographic/ geological data as part of the INFOMAR national seabed mapping programme (<a href="http://www.infomar.ie">www.infomar.ie</a>).</p> <p><b>Supporting Research Programmes:</b></p> <p>Fisheries Resources, Seabed &amp; Resource Mapping, Environment</p> <p><b>Status</b></p> <p>The equipment underwent sea trials in early 2008 and has since been used on a number of Nephrops surveys on by the Marine Institute on board the RV Celtic Voyager. The system has also been used on both training and research surveys on the RV Celtic Explorer in 2008 and has proven to be a great success in terms of reliability, image quality and ease of use.</p> <p>For further information see – <a href="http://www.marine.ie/home/services/surveys/fisheries/Nephrops+Under+Water+TV+Surveys.htm">www.marine.ie/home/services/surveys/fisheries/Nephrops+Under+Water+TV+Surveys.htm</a>.</p>		

No.	Item	Cost (EUR)
4	Integrated Inshore Network – Inshore Buoys	723,657
<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>This infrastructure, consisting of moored buoys with multiple sensors and communications equipment is targeted at instrumenting bays in the BMW region to support monitoring and research programmes. The multi-parameter data collected is provided to national and local authorities and commercial sectors (e.g. shellfish industry) to contribute towards water quality monitoring activities (e.g. pollution events, harmful algal blooms); Water Framework Directive monitoring; ocean energy initiatives; and climate change research.</p> <p><b>Supporting Research Programmes:</b></p> <p>Climate Change, Environment, Renewable Ocean Energy, Aquaculture</p> <p><b>Status</b></p> <p>Two of the three buoys acquired have been deployed at locations in the BMW region. The third was deployed in 2010. These buoys form part of a larger initiative called SmartBay within the greater Galway Bay area. SmartBay is a Research, Test and Demonstration Infrastructure designed to develop and test novel sensors, sensor networks and communications technology and support related research, technology and science projects. It will consist of a network of seafloor cables, buoys and other infrastructure, supporting a range of sensors, information systems, telemetry and other communication technologies. Together they provide the basis for in-situ, real time monitoring. For further information see – <a href="http://www.marine.ie/home/services/operational/SmartBay/">www.marine.ie/home/services/operational/SmartBay/</a>.</p>		



No.	Item	Cost (EUR)
5	Directional Wavebuoy	56,812
<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>This equipment provides real-time monitoring of wave conditions, including wave height, speed and direction in support of testing of ocean energy devices.</p> <p>To achieve the aims of the first phase of the national Strategy for Ocean Energy, the Marine Institute, in partnership with the SEI, established an Ocean Energy Test Site in Galway Bay, in 2006. This facility was designed to provide easy access to testing facilities for Ocean Energy device developers in order to test prototype devices (typically ¼-scale) in real conditions. The site has accommodated two prototype devices to date.</p> <p><b>Supporting Research Programmes:</b></p> <p>Renewable Ocean Energy</p> <p><b>Status</b></p> <p>The buoy was deployed at the Galway bay (Spiddal) test site in late 2007 and has been successfully transmitting data since then. These data are made available to the device developers to validate device performance and are also used for calibration of oceanographic models in Galway Bay.</p> <p>Further information on the Galway Bay test site is available at – <a href="http://www.marine.ie/home/aboutus/organisationstaff/researchfacilities/Ocean+Energy+Test+Site">www.marine.ie/home/aboutus/organisationstaff/researchfacilities/Ocean+Energy+Test+Site</a>.</p> <p>The data gathered by the Wavebuoy are available at – <a href="http://www.marine.ie/home/publicationsdata/data/IMOS/WaveBuoys.htm">www.marine.ie/home/publicationsdata/data/IMOS/WaveBuoys.htm</a>.</p>		

No.	Item	Cost (EUR)
6	Shipboard CTDs	338,471
<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>CTD (conductivity, temperature and depth) instrumentation are front line oceanographic equipment onboard the national research vessels (RV Celtic Explorer and RV Celtic Voyager) and are used on a wide range of fisheries, oceanographic and environmental monitoring programmes and research surveys. Data are collected at long-term monitoring stations, along established oceanographic transects and on an ad-hoc basis to build up a long-term oceanographic dataset that feed into oceanic models.</p> <p><b>Supporting Research Programmes:</b></p> <p>Climate Change, Environment, Fisheries Resources</p> <p><b>Status:</b> The two new CTD systems acquired were deployed on the national research vessels in mid-2008 and have been used on a wide range of research surveys and monitoring programme surveys since. The data collected are added to the national repository of data that is made available to all interested parties on a cost neutral basis. Further information is available at – <a href="http://www.marine.ie/home/publicationsdata/data/MarineDataOnline">www.marine.ie/home/publicationsdata/data/MarineDataOnline</a>.</p>		

No.	Item	Cost (EUR)
7	Acoustic Monitoring System	105,395
<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>This horizontal acoustic system is deployed for monitoring and counting the movements of salmonids, eels and other fish species in challenging habitats, such as rivers and tidal estuaries with changing water levels, alternating flow rates, turbidity and levels of entrained debris.</p> <p><b>Supporting Research Programmes:</b></p> <p>Fisheries Resources, Climate Change, Environment</p> <p><b>Status</b></p> <p>The DIDSON monitoring system was deployed on the River Deel (Moy Catchment, Co. Mayo) in November 2007 and has operated on a full-time basis since then, obtaining daily counts of Atlantic salmon, trout, eel/lamprey and other fish species. Methodology has been developed for the installation, operation, data processing, verification and validation of the DIDSON for salmon stock enumeration in Irish rivers.</p> <p>Over 20,000 salmon lengths were manually measured using the DIDSON SMC software and used to develop a model to apportion species and obtain a total nett upstream salmon count on the Deel River. These data can be used in conjunction with earlier genetic work which has determined the relative abundance of the four discrete stocks of salmon in the River Moy catchment—Cloonacool, Manulla, Deel and the Main Moy genetic management units. Genetic sampling of the main stem run of salmon at Ballina, to confirm the relative abundance of the River Deel stock in this run, combined with a direct estimate of the Deel stock using the DIDSON counter, will facilitate an estimate of the total Moy salmon run.</p>		

No.	Item	Cost (EUR)
8	Remotely Operated Vehicle	2,910,664
<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>This 3,000 metre rated remotely operated vehicle (ROV) system will allow an expansion in the level of deepwater research undertaken by Irish researchers. It will also be available as a national resource to state agencies in emergency situations such as casualty investigation, wreck surveys or salvage. The ROV can be deployed from the RV Celtic Explorer as well as other suitable vessels (e.g. Irish Lights Granuaile). The system is a fully contained, including launch and recovery systems.</p> <p>The ROV system is capable of accommodating a wide range of user equipment without modification. Ample space is available within the vehicle frame for accommodation of scientific payload, numerous survey ports for a wide variety of equipment including multi-beam, CTD and nutrient sensors.</p> <p><b>Supporting Research Programmes:</b></p> <p>Marine Biodiscovery, Environment, Seabed &amp; Resource Mapping</p> <p><b>Status</b></p> <p>The ROV was delivered in August 2008 and underwent sea trials in late 2008. Further sea trials and the first scientific mission took place successfully during 2009. This mission contributed significantly to a large-scale EU-funded (FP7) research programme, led by researchers in NUIG, which aims to assess the interaction between corals, fish and fisheries, in order to develop monitoring and predictive modelling tools for ecosystem-based management in the deep waters of Europe and beyond. A further successful mission in 2009 consisted of a programme carried out by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (DoEHLG) aimed at identifying offshore Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).</p> <p>The ROV is made available to Irish researchers through a competitive grant-aid programme funded under the National Development Plan.</p> <p>Further information on the ROV is available at – <a href="http://www.marine.ie/home/services/researchvessels/ROV.htm">www.marine.ie/home/services/researchvessels/ROV.htm</a>.</p>		

No.	Item	Cost (EUR)
9	High Performance Computer (HPC) Cluster	324,874
<b>Description</b> This computing environment is a key infrastructure in underpinning research for a range of research and monitoring programmes (e.g. Ocean Energy, Fisheries and Climate Change), including the production of operational ocean forecasts of waves, currents, temperatures etc. These allow the Marine Institute to provide information relating to fisheries, aquaculture, ocean energy, search and rescue and storm surge prediction. Previously, oceanographic models have been run on a Linux cluster. However, this system did not have the processing power to run the increasingly complex numerical models, which must include ecosystem components and atmospheric models, and provide a centennial forecast for climate change research purposes. The introduction of this new HPC will significantly increase the Marine Institute's ability to predict the effects of climate change on our oceans and on the livelihoods that depend on them.		
<b>Supporting Research Programmes:</b> Climate Change, Seabed and Resource Mapping, Fisheries Resources, Renewable Ocean Energy		
<b>Status</b> The HPC was commissioned in late 2008. In addition to the direct benefits (outlined above) provided by the equipment, this marks the beginning of a partnership between the Institute and the equipment's supplier Hewlett Packard (HP) which will see HP worldwide experts working with Irish scientists on research projects related to how computer models can be improved in terms of their outputs and how the computer models can run more efficiently on super-computers. This collaboration will be of benefit to researchers across the globe and will help further our understanding of the oceans.		

No.	Item	Cost (EUR)
10	Automatic Water Quality Monitoring System	71,348
<b>Description</b> This monitoring station consists of a mini wind vane, solar sensor and underwater monitoring equipment mounted on a profiling winch, powered by a solar panel. The station measures underwater temperature, oxygen, salinity, pH, chlorophyll and turbidity. Automatic recording instruments provide the ideal means of recording the responses of lakes to short-term changes in weather and long-term data for climate change monitoring.		
<b>Supporting Research Programmes:</b> Climate Change, Fisheries Resources		
<b>Status</b> The monitoring station was deployed on Lough Furnace in mid-2008. It forms an integral component of the monitoring system in the Burishoole catchment in Co. Mayo, which encompasses monitoring stations stretching from Clare Island to the headwaters of the catchment. The Burishoole catchment, and specifically Lough Furnace, is a key site in the ongoing long-term monitoring programme for salmon and eels. It also provides an important site nationally for the purposes of climate change monitoring and modelling.		

No.	Item	Cost (EUR)
11	Integrated Inshore Network – Tide Gauge Network	177,341
<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>The Irish National Tide Gauge Network (INTGN) is an on-going initiative, involving the Marine Institute and a number of organisations in the public and private sectors, to develop a permanent tidal monitoring infrastructure; ultimately consisting of between 35 and 40 stations. The principle objectives are to:</p> <p>involve local organisations (e.g. county councils) to assist them with local issues related to water level monitoring; and bring all operational tide gauges into a centrally managed national infrastructure.</p> <p>The products available from the network, which are available to all stakeholders, include: Real-time data to an Internet site to support recreational users, navigation and commercial activities; tidal predictions, both in the form of software tools and paper publications; flood warning; and long term sea-level variability.</p> <p><b>Supporting Research Programmes:</b></p> <p>Climate Change, Marine Tourism &amp; Leisure, Maritime Shipping,</p> <p><b>Status</b></p> <p>In 2008, with the funding provided under this measure, eight new stations within the BMW region were added to the INTGN—Malin Head, Killybegs, Dundalk, Aranmore, Ballyglass, Greencastle, Sligo and Clare Island. Additionally, existing stations within the region were upgraded to add new sensors and communications infrastructure.</p> <p>For further information, and to view data from the Irish Tide Gauge Network, see – <a href="http://www.marine.ie/home/services/operational/oceanography/TideGauge.htm">www.marine.ie/home/services/operational/oceanography/TideGauge.htm</a>.</p>		

No.	Item	Cost (EUR)
12 & 13	Offshore Met Ocean Climate Observations	344,789
	12. Buoys	76,626
	13. Conductivity, Temperature & Depth Sensors	
<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>The Irish Marine Weather Buoy Network is designed to improve weather forecasts and safety at sea in Irish and European waters. The buoy network provides vital data for weather forecasts, shipping bulletins, gale and swell warnings as well as data for general public information (e.g. surfers) and research.</p> <p>The project is the result of successful collaboration between the Marine Institute, Met Éireann, The UK Met Office and the Department of Transport.</p> <p>This upgrade to the National Weather Buoy Network consists of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Two new complete buoy systems including hulls, electronics, cabling and sensors at two locations in the BMW region; and</li> <li>2. CTD sensors—these instruments will be deployed to develop the long-term time series of oceanographic parameters in the Irish ocean area which will extend the high precision data collected in support of long-term climate monitoring from the existing surface data, to include two additional depths below the surface.</li> </ol> <p><b>Supporting Research Programmes:</b></p> <p>Climate Change, Marine Tourism &amp; Leisure, Maritime Shipping, Renewable Ocean Energy</p> <p><b>Status</b></p> <p>The two buoy systems and CTD sensors were acquired in mid-2008, underwent testing in Autumn 2008 and are now permanently on station off the west coast, transmitting continuous data.</p> <p>For further information and to view real-time data from the Offshore Buoys see – <a href="http://www.marine.ie/home/publicationsdata/data/buoys/">www.marine.ie/home/publicationsdata/data/buoys/</a>.</p>		

No.	Item	Cost (EUR)
14	Computer Server Room	381,078
<p>Description</p> <p>This computer server room, connected to HEANet, Ireland's academic and research high-speed data network, supports ICT infrastructure requirements for new research projects (e.g. Climate Change and Oceanographic Modelling) and initiatives arising from national programmes, e.g. Sea Change and INFOMAR (national seabed mapping programme), including the High Performance Computer Cluster (Item 9 above).</p>		
<p>Supporting Research Programmes:</p> <p>Climate Change, Marine Environment, Fisheries Resources, Seabed &amp; Resource Mapping, Marine Biodiscovery</p>		
<p>Status</p> <p>The server room was commissioned in Quarter 4 2008. The chosen technology includes a novel system to recycle heat generated by the installed servers.</p>		

**Annex 5 – Irish Maritime Energy Resource Cluster (IMERC), Cork**

<p>Outline of main achievements including, where relevant, evidence of:</p> <p>Increased effectiveness and efficiency, including better use of resources, business process improvement and sharing services</p> <p>Improvement to services delivered to the citizen and business customers, including through engagement with customers</p> <p>Innovation and creativity, through flexibility, teamworking, cross-organisational co-operation and eGovernment</p>	<p>Increased effectiveness and efficiency, including better use of resources, business process improvement and sharing services</p> <p>Effectiveness and efficiency: Better use of resources</p> <p>A one-stop-shop for the maritime and energy sectors has been developed by pooling the resources of UCC, CIT and INS. As a result, the Cluster provides a suite of integrated support services for industry and researchers, including bridge simulation, workshops, test tanks, monitoring equipment and INS ships as vessels of opportunity for research and development projects.</p> <p>This has an impact in the promotion of Ireland internationally. In August 2011, IMERC secured its first FDI client, a naval architecture company from North America. The decision to come to the IMERC campus was strongly influenced by the strategic, joined up approach taken by the public sector bodies involved in IMERC.</p> <p>The role of the Irish Naval Service in supporting innovation and enterprise within the Cluster, is a unique selling point. The utilisation of INS, as a resource of the State, to support maritime industry and collaborate in research activities is extremely innovative, and is a reflection of INS adapting to societal needs at a time when the sustainable development of the national marine resource is an economic imperative. INS knowledge institution</p> <p>In just over a year, researchers and naval service personnel have built collaborations with 22 Irish SMEs in the maritime and energy space. One aim is to seed more innovation partnerships, to mirror the success of the Seftec Innovation Partner, which involves Seftec Ltd, naval service personnel, NMCI facilities and CIT researchers to develop embedded tracking systems for fire-fighting on-board ships. IMERC has also successfully shone a spotlight on opportunities for commercialisation and spin outs. Two separate initiatives are being developed with Enterprise, concerning devices for monitoring recreational fish stocks, and innovative solutions to accessing offshore wind turbines in extreme conditions. Two patents have also been submitted via UCC IMERC researchers during the period in question.</p> <p>The National Maritime College of Ireland is delivered by a Public Private Partnership between the CIT, INS and Bovis Lend Lease. Since the foundation of the College in 2004, the focus has been on education and training for both the merchant marine and Naval Service personnel. With the focus on R&amp;D that IMERC has fostered, the NMCI has now added R&amp;D to its portfolio of offerings. In 2010, the NMCI participated in its first EU FP7 project PERSEUS, concerned with maritime border surveillance. This was quickly followed by participation in a second FP7 project – DARIUS. At the time of writing four more FP7 proposals are in train, indicators of how the NMCI has leveraged from the experienced research teams in both UCC and CIT.</p> <p>Finally, evidence of better use of resources can be shown in the way that UCC has sought to integrate its disparate marine science and engineering research community, by bringing together three research groups, namely, the Coastal and Marine Research Centre, the Hydraulics and Maritime Research Centre and the Sustainable Energy Research Group.</p>
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	<p>Effectiveness and efficiency: Business process improvement</p> <p>Evidence of business process improvement can be seen by the system changes provided for in the IMERC governance approach. Ireland's economic difficulties present an opportunity to question existing practices and to look at new approaches to how we conduct our business. IMERC instigates the requisite organisational changes across the core partner institutes to deliver a new degree of joined-up-thinking and service delivery.</p> <p>The business process that accommodates the integrated inter-institutional approach across the three public sector bodies is delivered under three key enabling governance pillars: 1. The IMERC Governing Body 2. The IMERC Board and 3. IMERC International. Details of the business process adopted by the Governing Body and the IMERC board are given in the appended MoA document.</p> <p>With regards to 'IMERC International' in the past year, Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) have been developed which give rise to important bi-lateral institutional exchanges between IMERC and North American organisations such as the Marine Institute and Memorial University in St. Johns, Newfoundland; the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Research Centre; and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. The International model will be rolled out to other target areas in the coming year, including SE Asia and China.</p> <p>Effectiveness and efficiency: Sharing services</p> <p>Figure 1 shows the emerging IMERC campus and its constituent components. As well as sharing 'know how' the IMERC partners are sharing facilities in an integrated campus environment. For example, value for money can be seen in the approach to shared use of physical resources. These include the NMCI library, canteen, laboratory space, technical workshops, and ships as vessels of opportunity.</p> <p>Improvement to services delivered to the citizen and business customers, including through engagement with customers</p> <p>The citizens of Ireland are the IMERC customers. The investment by the state of tax-payers money into the UCC, CIT and INS, is yielding rewards to 'Ireland Inc' through the added value achieved by the common sense approach to sharing resources, and the focus on enterprise and innovation with the partnership.</p> <p>Innovation and creativity, through flexibility, team-working, cross-organisational co-operation and eGovernment</p> <p>IMERC is both innovative and creative because it is a bottom-up approach to organisational change, unlike other initiatives which are often driven by funding programmes, government or policy edicts. Evidence of institutional flexibility, (i.e. willingness to change traditional organisational approaches,) team-working and cross organisational co-operation is provided in the text above. eGovernment is an area that may be further developed into the future, as dialogue concerning public access to data collected within IMERC is further developed.</p>
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