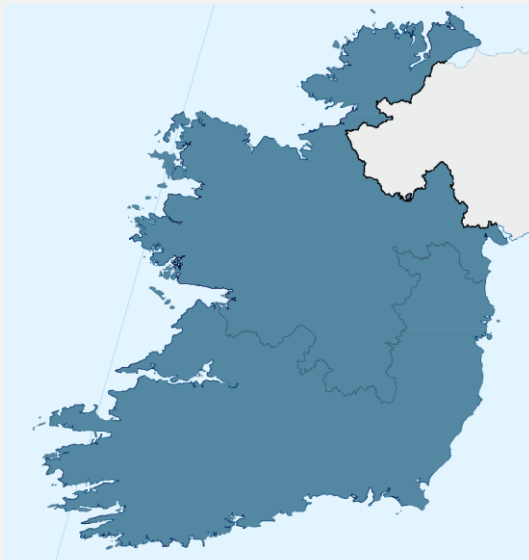


## EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDS<sup>1</sup>



### IRELAND

With a budget of **EUR 454 billion** for 2014-2020, the **European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds)** are the European Union's main investment policy tool. The ESI Funds combine five Funds: **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)**; **European Social Fund (ESF)**; **Cohesion Fund (CF)**; **European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)**; and the **European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)**. Ireland, together with 19 other Member States, will also benefit from the **Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)**.

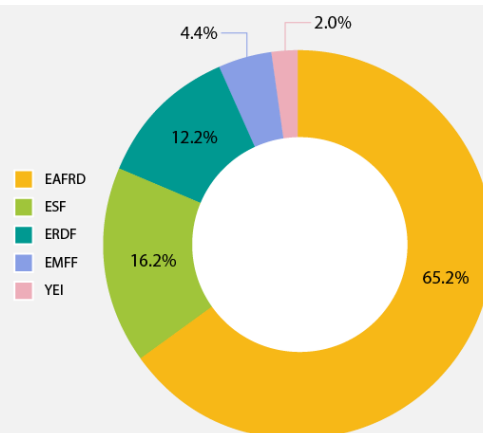


Categories of regions for the ERDF, ESF and EAFRD 2014-2020  
 ■ More developed regions (GDP/head >= 90% of EU-27 average)

Through five national and regional programmes, Ireland has been allocated **EUR 3.36 billion** from ESI Funds over the period 2014-2020. With a national contribution of **EUR 2.77 billion**, Ireland has a total budget of **EUR 6.13 billion** to be invested in various areas, from **research and innovation** to **SME support** as well as the **low-carbon economy** and **climate change adaptation**.

### ESI FUNDS BUDGET FOR IRELAND (2014-2020)<sup>2</sup>

- **EUR 2.2 billion** through the **EAFRD**
- **EUR 409 million** through the **ERDF**
- **EUR 542 million** through the **ESF**
- **EUR 148 million** through the **EMFF**
- **EUR 68 million** through the **YEI**



<sup>1</sup> Data included in this factsheet have been extracted from the ESIF Open Data platform which is accessible online at <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/>. Data on target achievements are based on officially agreed common indicators or, for the ESF, programme specific indicators (reference date for data: November 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Only those Member States with a gross national income (GNI) per inhabitant of less than 90 % of the EU average benefit from the Cohesion Fund. As such, Ireland is not eligible to benefit from the CF.

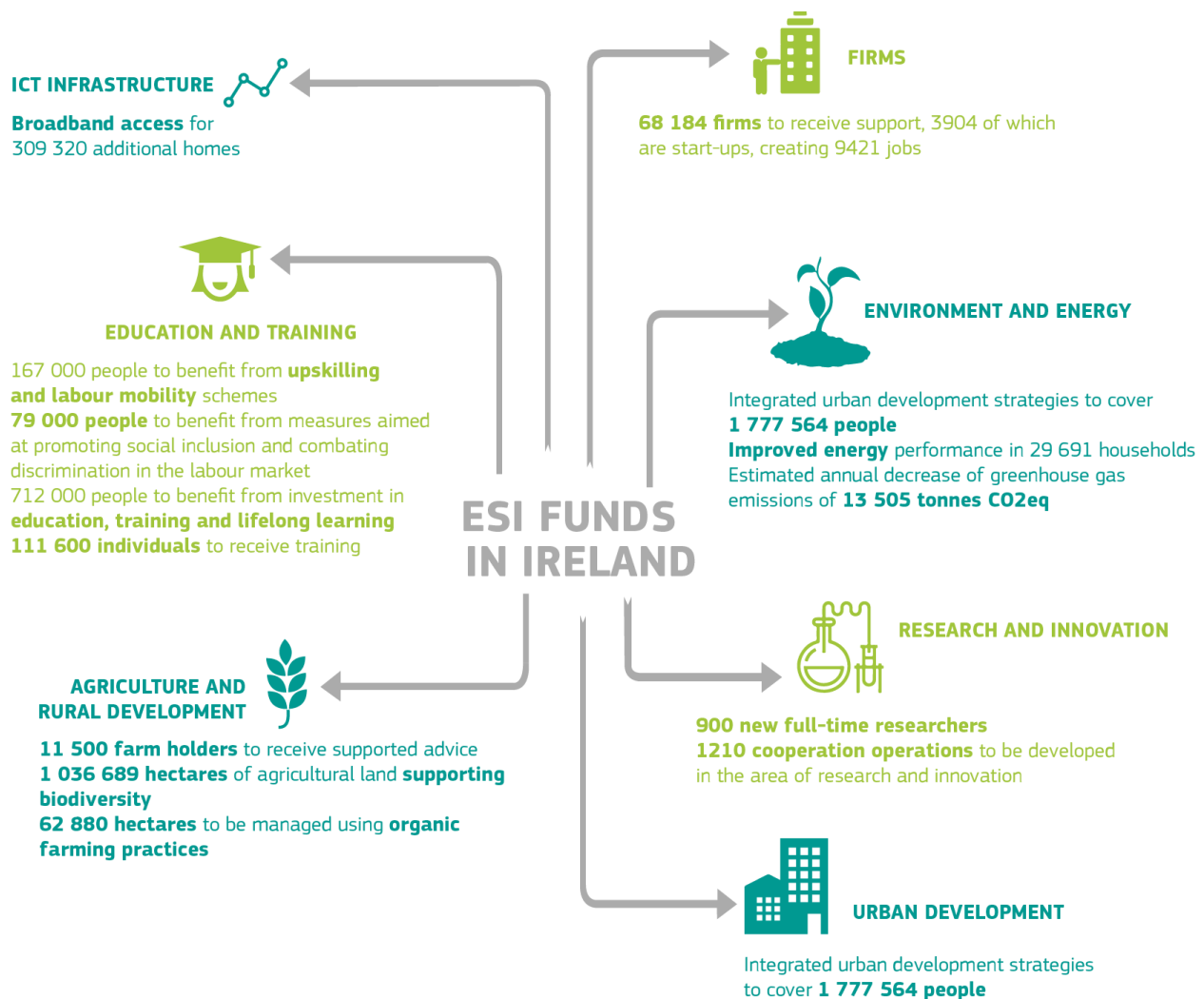
## MAIN PRIORITIES

### ESI FUNDS IN IRELAND WILL:

- Promote business investment in **research** and **innovation** (R&I) and develop links and synergies between **businesses**, research and development (R&D) centres and the **higher education** sector.
- Enhance access to, and use and quality of, **information** and **communication technologies**, in particular by investing in the extension of the **next-generation broadband** network to all unserved towns and villages across the entire territory.
- Support the capacity of **SMEs** in the **agriculture**, **fisheries** and **aquaculture** sectors to grow in regional, national and international markets.
- Facilitate the shift towards a **low-carbon economy** in all sectors.
- Promote **climate change adaptation** and risk prevention and management.
- Contribute to preserving and protecting the **environment** and promoting **resource efficiency**.
- Adapt to promoting **social inclusion**, **combatting poverty**, tackling discrimination and promoting **equal opportunities**.
- Promote **access to employment** and in particular youth unemployment through the YEI.
- Foster adult **literacy** and **back-to-education initiatives** for very low skilled people, and provide third-level access for disadvantaged students and students with disabilities.

### TARGETS

All funds are designed to support Ireland's **socio-economic development**. The expected results (**targets**) give an overall view of where Ireland should be on key parameters by 2020.



## HOW WILL IRELAND ACHIEVE THE EXPECTED RESULTS?

Ireland will work towards the efficient spending of the EU funds, based on a multidimensional approach.

### FULFILLING PRECONDITIONS FOR THE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT USE OF ESI FUNDS

To ensure that ESI Funds are used efficiently and focus on results, the Commission has set some preconditions when allocating ESI Funds to the Member States.

The main purpose of these conditions, also called '*ex-ante* conditionalities', is to help all Member States and their regions to tackle issues that past experience has shown to be particularly relevant to the efficient implementation of the Funds. These principles could be linked, for example, to the implementation of EU legislation, the financing of strategic EU projects, or administrative evaluation and institutional capacity.

These *ex-ante* conditionalities cover most investment areas: improvements to regional research and innovation (R&I) strategies as well as strategic plans linked to environmental protection, energy resources, transport, socio-economic inclusion, health services, education and training.

### ENCOURAGING THE USE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS AND TERRITORIAL TOOLS

Ireland is considering using financial instruments (FIs) to help address price volatility in the agricultural sector. Scope to use FIs for energy efficiency in social housing should also be explored.

### SIMPLIFICATION FOR BENEFICIARIES

ESI Funds managing authorities are making arrangements to ensure an effective reduction in the administrative burden for beneficiaries and authorities. These include the increased use of lump sums and simplified cost options.

## SUCCESS STORIES: EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS USING 2007-2013 ESI FUNDS

### ENHANCING ROAD TRANSPORT IN CENTRAL IRELAND

A new bypass around the 'gateway' town of Tullamore in Ireland was completed on time and on budget. The 14 kilometre-long road eases local traffic congestion considerably and facilitates the movement of goods and services beyond the region, hence increasing the region's competitiveness. Work started in March 2008 and finished in October 2009, under a project co-funded by the Irish Government and the ERDF under the Border, Midland and Western Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013. The N52 Tullamore bypass snakes around the eastern side of County Offaly's administrative capital. Benefits include greater traffic safety for local residents and capacity for future road traffic growth – for between 7000 and 16 000 vehicles a day by 2020.

Total budget: **EUR 53 160 000**

**EU budget contribution** to the project from ERDF: **EUR 21 264 000**

More information: <http://europa.eu/!dw89mV>

### STUDENT ASSISTANCE FUND AT THE LIMERICK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Students at the Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) who are experiencing financial difficulties can turn to the Student Assistance Fund (SAF) for help. The fund provides financial assistance to cover expenses for rent, childcare, books, heating and food to enable them to finish their studies. Committed to promoting equitable access to education for all, the LIT puts a particular focus on supporting disadvantaged groups including students with socio-economic difficulties, those with disabilities, mature students and ethnic minorities. For example, during the academic year 2010-2011 4.5% of all registered full-time undergraduate LIT students received funding from the SAF. In total, the project had over 700 participants.

**EU budget contribution** to the project from ESF: **EUR 277 735**

More information: <http://europa.eu/!hM97kP>

## MOMENTUM: EFFECTIVE SUPPORT FOR LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE

Momentum is part of the Government's Action Plan for Jobs initiative. In 2014, the Department of Education and Skills committed EUR 20 million to fund a range of education and training interventions for up to 6500 people on long-term unemployment. Momentum will provide them with links to job vacancies and employers, work placement and support, relevant industry and National Framework of Qualifications certification. Twenty-five education and training providers from the private, public and non-profit sectors are delivering 55 individual Momentum courses across the country.

Total budget: **EUR 20 000 000**

**EU budget contribution** to the project from **ESF**: **EUR 10 000 000**

More information: <http://europa.eu/!tJ34DK>

## NEW OYSTER FARMING SITE IN DONEGAL

The aim of this project, co-financed under the European Fisheries Fund 2007-2013, was to develop a new aquaculture farm for oysters in Donegal. Eventually, the operator plans to produce up to 500 tonnes of special oysters mainly for the EU market. The site is currently stocked with juvenile oysters for on-growing, and employs 10 people. This number should increase to 18 when the site reaches full capacity.

Total budget: **EUR 244 712**

**EU budget contribution** to the project from the **EFF**: **EUR 48 942**

(During the 2007-2013 period, the EMFF was known as European Fisheries Fund or EFF)

More information: <http://bit.ly/21ZEBpo>

## REVIVING THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF TRADITIONAL RIVER COTS

With traditional activities in decline, the Kilkenny LEADER partnership recognised the importance of its waterways. Communities developed training to redevelop traditional river craft skills. As a result, the area's local heritage has been revived.

Total budget: **EUR 64 614**

**EU budget contribution** to the project from **EAFRD**: **EUR 35 538**

More information: <http://europa.eu/!nM64Jw>

## STORING AND PACKAGING SEA VEGETABLES - A SMALL BUSINESS SUCCESS

The Talty family has farmed marine products for generations. Eileen and Gerrard received EAFRD support to build a new storage and packaging facility. This has helped create permanent jobs and provide a spring board for further expansion.

Total budget: **EUR 134 400**

**EU budget contribution** to the project from **EAFRD**: **EUR 36 960**

More information: <http://europa.eu/!Hr88jG>

## FIND OUT MORE ABOUT ESI FUNDS IN IRELAND

- **ESI Funds:** <http://ec.europa.eu/esif>
- **ESI Funds Open Data Platform:** <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/countries/IE>
- **ERDF:** [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/atlas/ireland](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/atlas/ireland)
- **ESF:** <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=385&langId=en>
- **YEI:** <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=13471&langId=en>
- **EAFRD:** [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rural-development-2014-2020/country-files/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rural-development-2014-2020/country-files/index_en.htm)
- **EMFF:** [http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/emff/country-files/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/emff/country-files/index_en.htm)
- **The EU Representation in Ireland:** [http://ec.europa.eu/ireland/press\\_office/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/ireland/press_office/index_en.htm)
- **EU project examples:** [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/euprojects/search-projects/list\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/euprojects/search-projects/list_en)
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