

**ACTION  
PLAN  
FOR JOBS**  

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**2015-2017**

**SOUTH-WEST  
REGION**

**Second Progress Report:  
Actions to December 2016**



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## **FOREWORD FROM THE MINISTER FOR BUSINESS, ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION**

I am delighted to see the publication of this second Progress Report for the South West Action Plan for Jobs. Since it was launched in July 2015, the objective of this Plan has been to provide a platform for Cork and Kerry to work together, building on the unique strengths of the region to support businesses to start up, grow and generate exports. I believe that we, as a small country, can achieve so much more by working together, across county and provincial boundaries, combining resources and expertise, than we could acting alone.

The Regional Action Plan initiative as a whole remains a central pillar of the Government's ambition to create 200,000 new jobs by 2020, 135,000 of which are outside of Dublin. Employment figures from 2016 show that we are making real progress on this vision: an additional 66,100 jobs were created over 2016, 70% of which are outside Dublin.

During 2016, in every region the unemployment rate has fallen while the number in employment has increased. The enterprise agencies have also been working hard to make a significant contribution to employment across the whole country – in 2016, 61% of new jobs by Enterprise Ireland firms and 52% of new jobs by IDA firms were outside Dublin.

Progress in the South West this year has been very positive. At the end of 2016, the South West had the second lowest unemployment rate in the State. 6,100 additional people entered employment across the region in 2016. At the end of the year, the South West had an Unemployment Rate of 5.7%; compared to 9.7% at the start of 2015. Figures from the CSO show that that growth is happening across a range of sectors including Wholesale and Retail, Accommodation and Food Services, and Information and Communication.

In addition to this, recent job announcements from firms such as GE, Hortonworks, Cylance, and CoreHR demonstrate the continued confidence of Irish-owned and multi-national industry in the South West region to support both established and growing companies, often requiring specialist skills. The commendable work undertaken this year by the South West Regional Skills Forum, bringing business together with education providers, will further benefit the region's competitiveness by improving its pipeline of skilled workers.

I am looking forward, in the coming months, to meeting the committee for the South West Plan: in reviewing this progress report, it is clear to see the hard work being undertaken by all the individuals and organisations who are dedicated to making this plan a success. I would particularly like to thank the Chairman of the committee, Mr Bob Savage, for his ongoing commitment to this project. The results to date could not be achieved without the cooperation and input of the private sector, and thanks are due to the region's Enterprise Champions for that.

My colleagues and I across Government are, however, keenly aware that while our economy is growing strongly and unemployment is at the lowest level since 2008, we cannot be complacent. Our goal is that we must continue to ensure that all areas of the country are supported to achieve economic growth in line with their potential.

I also want to acknowledge that while 2016 was a successful year in many respects, it was one in which new challenges arose, in particular as a result of the UK referendum to leave the EU. I can assure you that my colleagues across Government and I will work hard to protect our economy from any adverse effects of Brexit. Building resilience among potentially affected companies will be crucial, and I will ensure that Enterprise Ireland, IDA, InterTradeIreland and the LEOs are working with these clients, helping them to focus strategically on competitiveness, research and innovation, and people.

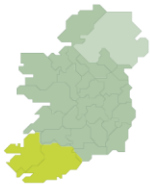
The Regional Action Plan for Jobs initiative will continue to support and drive job creation across the regions by encouraging the enterprise development agencies, Local Authorities, higher education institutions, as well as the private sector and communities, to come forward with innovative ideas to boost job creation in their area.

Following the success of 2016's Enterprise Ireland Regional Competitive Funding Calls, additional funding of up to €60m is being rolled out by Enterprise Ireland over the next 4 years to support the best regional enterprise projects, and to see each region building on the strengths they have in areas such as food, medical devices, software, aviation, engineering, and others. I believe that this is the right approach – directing these resources towards projects led by local people, for the benefit of their own communities and local economies.

In advocating this approach of collaborative working, I want to assure you that I will work closely with my Cabinet colleagues to ensure that we are aligned in our approach to important issues, and that we work together on initiatives that benefit us all. 2016 was a year in which we re-focused on the holistic development of our regions, with projects such as the Action Plan for Rural Development, the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, the Action Plan for Housing, and the National Broadband Plan, working to ensure that every region has the capacity and capability to support sustainable job opportunities. I will endeavour now to ensure that this approach continues.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heather Humphreys". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end.

**Heather Humphreys, T.D.**  
**Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation**



# ACTION PLAN FOR JOBS: SOUTH WEST

Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation

2nd Progress Report, June – December 2016

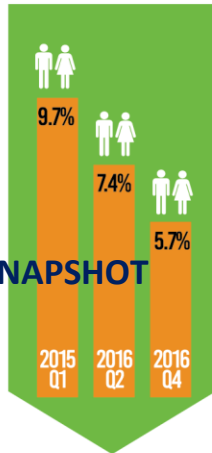
## Numbers Employed (Thousands)



Persons aged 15 years and over in **Employment** (Thousand)

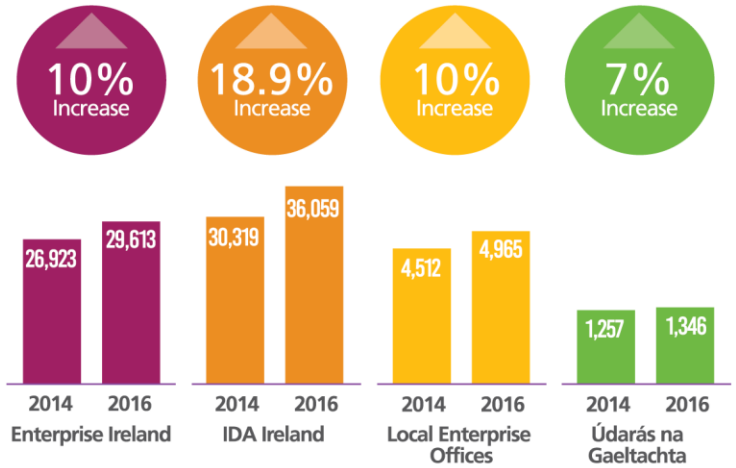
Source: CSO QNHS (QNQ22)

## Unemployment rate



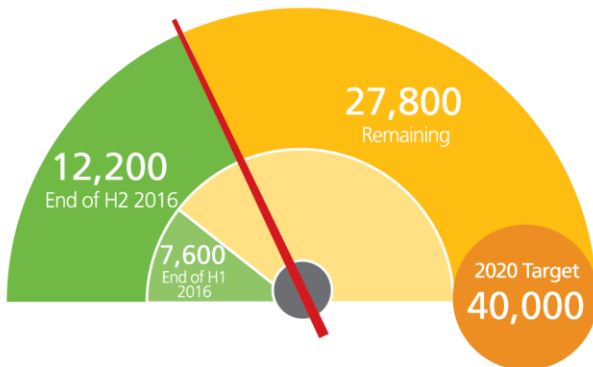
ILO **Unemployment Rate** (15 - 74 years) (%)

## Jobs in Agency Supported Businesses



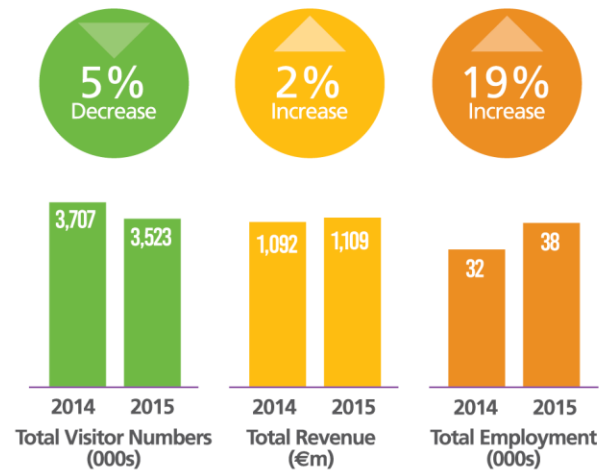
Sources: DJEI Annual Employment Survey, Local Enterprise Office Annual Employment Survey, and Údarás na Gaeltachta

## South West Regional Jobs Target Q1 2015 – Q4 2019 Progress from Q1 2015 to Q4 2016



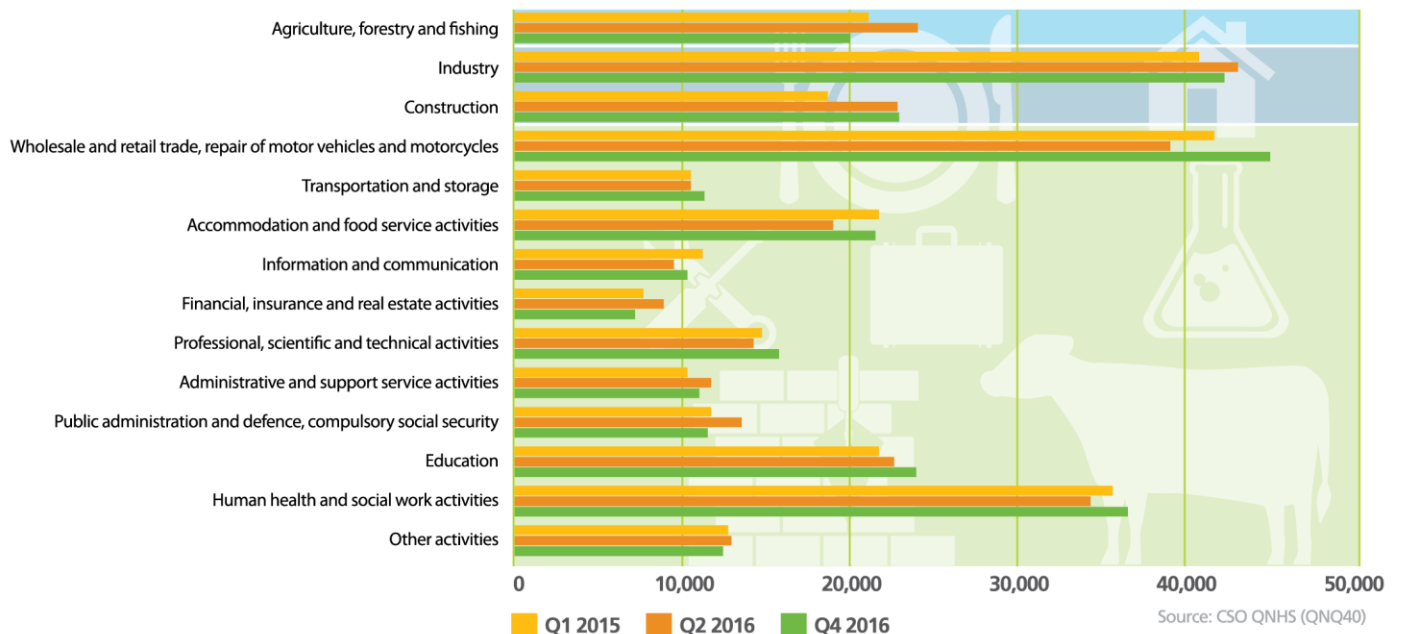
Source: CSO QNHS (QNQ22)

## Tourism in the South West region



Source: Fáilte Ireland  
2016 figures unavailable at time of publication

## Employment by Sector



Source: CSO QNHS (QNQ40)

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS



**Action 150:** In December 2016 following a programme review EI, through a competitive proposal call, agreed to part fund the *Exxcel* programme for female entrepreneurs until 2020. *Exxcel* is a part time programme designed for females who have a business idea with high growth and export potential. A total of 36 female Entrepreneurs will be assisted in the STEM sector under the *Exxcel* Programme.



**Action 34:** IT Tralee and The Gleneagle Group have joined forces to create a new International College of Hotel Management which is preparing to welcome its first students in September 2017. The college is the first of its kind in Ireland and is backed by a major international education group with similar colleges in Germany and Austria.



**Action 60:** UCC, in partnership with Dell-EMC, has established the Boole Business Labs: an exciting collaboration and Europe's first Industry-led research centre focused on business systems integrity, risk analysis and innovation for the world's regulated industries (Bioscience, Financial Services, Food, Telecom).



**Action 234:** HBAN continued to register new Business Angels during 2016 and undertake considerable activity in terms of investor introductions to start-ups and other companies seeking investment. In the South West in 2016, 8.5 deals were made to a value of €3.65m; 15 new Business Angels were registered; 17 pitching events took place; and 59 investor introductions were made.



**Action 185:** The South-West Region had a total of 30,345 people employed in IDA client companies at the end of 2014. By the end of 2015, this had grown to 33,831 jobs in 160 companies. There are now 167 companies employing 36,059 at the end of 2016.



**Action 184:** Over 110 companies from the region were approved for EI Innovation Vouchers in 2016. Innovation Vouchers are worth €5,000 and are available to assist a company or companies to explore a business opportunity or problem with a registered knowledge provider.



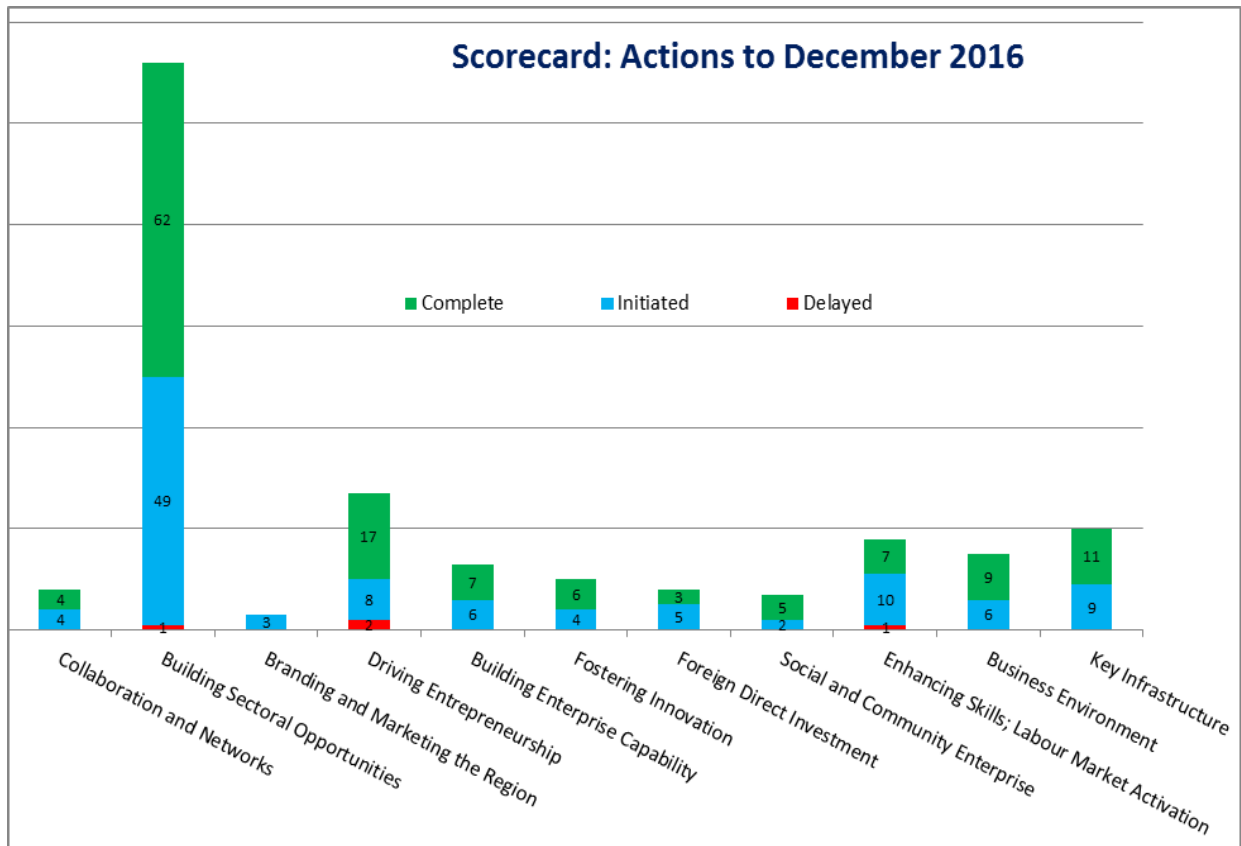
**Action 127:** Health Innovation Hub Ireland (HHI) has recently completed its calls process. There were a total of 65 applications from across the country with 48 from an open call and 17 from a focused call on care of the elderly. From these calls a total of 30 were chosen by a panel of experts from business, health and government agencies, for further progression. Of the 30 successful applications 22 were from companies and 8 were from individuals working within the healthcare system. These will be managed through the HHI network.



**Action 172:** In 2016 UCC launched the UCC SPRINT programme through its GATEWAYUCC Incubation Centre to help maximise the chances of spin-out company success. The Programme aims to increase the number and the success rate of knowledge based start-up companies utilising IP from UCC. 2 companies have already been established through this scheme. It currently supports 10 pre and early stage startup companies from the areas of bioinformatics, digital mobile, medtech, eHealth, ICT, Nutrition and Food Health in its inaugural programme.



## SCORECARD: ACTIONS TO END 2016



### Actions due by end 2016

248 of the South West Action Plan's 261 actions were due to be initiated or completed by the end of 2016. 237 of these are on track to be delivered, or have been completed. 4 actions are delayed; 7 actions are no longer being progressed (4 in this reporting period), or have been deemed unfeasible (further details on page 11). This represents an overall implementation rate of 95%.

## OPENING COMMENTARY

This is the Second Progress Report from the Implementation Committee established by the (then) Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Richard Bruton T.D., to oversee and monitor implementation of the measures contained in the South West Region Action Plan for Jobs 2015-2017. The report outlines progress made on measures due for completion up to and including the second half of 2016, as well as progress made on measures that are ongoing during the 2015-2017 period of the Action Plan.

The Action Plan for Jobs for the South West Region was launched on July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015, to help progress a key priority for Government – to deliver local jobs and ensure every region achieves its economic potential. This will be achieved through the delivery of 261 collaborative actions focusing on increasing the number of start-up as well as developing the capacity of existing enterprises, with actions targeted at sectors of potential competitive advantage in the South West such as Agri-food, Tourism, Life Sciences, Manufacturing and ICT.

The core objective of the Plan is to support the creation of an extra 40,000 jobs across Cork and Kerry by 2020. This represents an important step towards the Government’s ambition of creating 200,000 extra jobs by 2020, with 135,000 of these to be outside Dublin.

The plans are monitored and driven in each region by Implementation Committees, comprising representatives from the Enterprise Sector, as well as the Local Authorities, Enterprise Agencies, and other public bodies in the region. The South West Implementation Committee is chaired by Bob Savage, Vice President and Managing Director of Dell EMC Centres of Excellence EMEA.

## NOTABLE DEVELOPMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Funding Awards

#### **€555 million in Capital Grants secured to support jobs in all regions**

In October the (then) Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Mary Mitchell O’Connor secured a 10% increase in the Department’s capital allocation in Budget 2017 to bring it to €555 million. It represented the largest increase in the Department’s Capital Budget for over a decade. It includes an extra €52 million to support further job creation, innovation and support Irish companies help to respond to the challenges and opportunities from Brexit.

The additional funding demonstrates Government’s ongoing commitment to delivering 200,000 additional jobs by 2020 of which 135,000 will be in the regions. Both IDA and Enterprise Ireland are aiming to bring the job numbers in their client companies to over 200,000 each next year. To support the Regional Action Plans for Jobs, Enterprise Ireland will also roll out a series of competitive regional funds to support collaborative approaches to job creation projects across the regions in 2017. The Local Enterprise Offices’ (LEOs) will see their capital funding grow by 22% to €22.5m, recognising their potential to generate start-ups and job creation at local level.

#### **Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) funding announced**

Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) are functional, rather than administrative geographic, areas that reflect the spatial patterns of local economic activities and development processes. They are essentially the sub-county zones within which most people live and work. The 2016 REDZ

scheme, details of which were announced in November 2016, provides funding for projects of differing scale and ambition that share the mutual objective of supporting economic development in rural areas, with a particular focus on maximising the synergies between towns and their hinterlands and encouraging collaboration between Local Authorities on larger projects. The funding covers:

- Flagship projects – 1 in each Regional Assembly Region
- 9 Medium scale projects – 3 in each Regional Assembly region to a max grant of €200,000 per project.
- Small REDZ projects –to a maximum grant of €100,000

Under the 2016 REDZ scheme, just over €5.3 million is being approved to 41 projects nationwide with almost €240,000 awarded to the following projects in the South West region:

- Killorglin & Killarney: €150,195 awarded for a project in the MacGillycuddy Reeks, including habitat restoration and trail repair
- North Cork: €40,000 awarded to undertake a Feasibility Study for a North Cork Blueway
- Beara: €48,000 awarded to develop a Horse riding trail (Beara Bridle Way)

The South West region will also benefit from funding awarded to the Munster Vales project Tipperary: this consists of €399,221 awarded for the development of a tourism destination covering parts of Cork, Tipperary, Limerick, and Waterford.

### **Town and Village Renewal Scheme**

In November, the (then) Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Heather Humphreys T.D., announced that 172 towns and villages across the country would benefit from €10 million in funding under the 2016 Town and Village Renewal Scheme, which she launched in August.

Funding awarded to each individual town and village under the 2016 scheme ranges from €17,000 to €100,000. The funding is being used for a wide variety of projects, identified by Local Authorities in conjunction with local community groups and businesses, including improving playgrounds and footpaths, tourism amenities, public art pieces and a wide range of works to improve the streetscape and public realm of towns and villages nationwide, to help make them more attractive and more sustainable places in which to live and work.

Towns and Villages in Kerry and Cork secured €760,000 in funding under this scheme:

- In Kerry: Gneeveguilla, Portmagee, Castleisland, Fenit, Sneem, and Listowel all received funding of between €42,000 and €92,000 each. Projects include tourism infrastructure, refurbishment of an enterprise centre, Greenway extension, and a town centre health check.
- In Cork: Fermoy, Boherbue Village, Passage West, Blarney, Carrigtwohill, Ladysbridge, Bandon, Dunmanway received €47,500 each for a range of projects including development of walkways, street upgrade works, public amenities, playgrounds, and a retail and development plan.

## Events

### **Enterprise Ireland International Business Women's Conference, Tralee**

Top business leaders convened in Tralee in August to discuss the opportunities open to female entrepreneurs in domestic and international markets at the Enterprise Ireland International Business Women's Conference, which celebrates successful women in business. Now in its second year, in conjunction with the Rose of Tralee International Festival, delegates heard from leaders working across the business and entrepreneurial spectrum focussing on this year's theme "The Changing Face of Success".

The conference addressed the under-representation of women in business and the importance of female role models in encouraging more women to consider and enter into entrepreneurship. A line-up of 29 expert speakers took part in the daylong event, kicking off with a focus on how advances in social and digital media are driving business for entrepreneurs forward. The conference also focused on social entrepreneurship, including the keynote speaker and social activist, Madi Sharma who spoke on the challenges faced by many women and her own journey from 'victim to changemaker'.

## Announcements

### **Ludgate Hub announces €450,000 investment package**

In November, The Ludgate Digital Hub in West Cork – the first rural hub of its kind in Ireland – announced one of its biggest investments so far with €45,000 being made available to an online education start-up. This investment is part of a recently announced €450,000 investment package (the Ludgate Seed Capital Fund) to help start-ups develop and scale their business, attract new talent or develop their product or service. In November the decision was announced to offer 10pc of this to the Dublin-based start-up Digatedu, which will move its operations to West Cork to establish a 10,000 sq ft office at the hub. An online provider of courses aimed at teaching skills for the digital age to a global audience, Digatedu was founded by 27-year-old Bryan Hurley, a Dublin-based technology graduate from Waterford who has experience as a teacher of web design at Shaw Academy.

### **Cylance**

Cylance, the company that is revolutionizing cybersecurity with products and services that use artificial intelligence to proactively prevent, rather than just reactively detect advanced persistent threats and malware, in October announced the opening of a new office in Cork. The launch of the company's operations in Ireland is the latest in a series of internationalization moves to meet the global demand for the company's next-generation endpoint protection product, CylancePROTECT®, and to provide in-region presence to support customers across EMEA.

### **Sigmar Recruitment**

In July, Sigmar Recruitment announced the creation of 150 new jobs in Cork, Kerry, Dublin, and Galway to service its new Centre of Excellence. The establishment of the Centre of Excellence is largely due to an uplift in demand for talent by US companies who are expanding internationally from Ireland. The jobs are announced as part of the company's expansion plan to deliver a wider portfolio of services globally and will bolster the position of the company as Ireland's leading independent recruiter. The jobs are in recruitment, sales and digital marketing at both experienced and graduate levels.

### **Hortonworks**

Hortonworks, a leading innovator of open and connected data platforms, in October announced the opening of new, larger premises in Albert Quay, Cork, at an opening ceremony hosted by the Lord Mayor of Cork City and IDA Ireland. The inauguration came just nine months after the company confirmed its plans to extend its global team, and create 50 jobs in Ireland. Hortonworks is headquartered in Santa Clara, California and is driving the adoption of Apache Hadoop, an enterprise-grade software for storing, analysing and managing large amounts of data. The move to new facilities in Cork reflects the continued popularity of Hadoop amongst the largest businesses throughout Europe.

### **iDirect**

iDirect, a world leader in satellite-based IP communications technology and a company of Vision Technologies Systems, Inc. (VT Systems), announced in July that it will establish an Engineering and Innovation Centre in Killarney, Co. Kerry. The facility will help to create new engineering jobs in a technology-rich region of the world. iDirect is a world leader in satellite-based IP communications technology. The 30 new engineering roles that will be created at the facility will focus on software, firmware, hardware, radio frequency and systems engineering technologies.

### **GE**

In September it was announced that GE is to invest €150 million in a new biopharmaceutical manufacturing campus on IDA Ireland's strategic site at Loughbeg, Ringaskiddy, Co. Cork. GE BioPark Cork, subject to contract and planning approvals, will feature Europe's first KUBio™, prefabricated, off-the-shelf bio-manufacturing facilities, owned and run by GE customers, and will serve as a focal point for further investment in next-generation biopharmaceutical manufacturing in Ireland.

### **CoreHR**

CoreHR announced in July a major expansion of its operations, creating 300 new jobs to more than double its workforce over the next three years. Headquartered in Ballincollig, Co. Cork, CoreHR is one of the world's leading providers of HR software and technology, specialising in cloud-based human capital management and payroll software. As well as its presence in Cork, the company also has offices in Dublin, Kilkenny and the UK. The majority of the new positions will be based in Cork, Kilkenny and Dublin, with additional roles in the UK.

## **PROGRESS ON NATIONAL INITIATIVES**

### **National Broadband Plan**

The High Speed Broadband Map, available at [www.broadband.gov.ie](http://www.broadband.gov.ie) shows the current extent of the State Intervention area. The areas marked BLUE represent those areas where commercial telecommunications providers are either currently delivering or have previously indicated plans to deliver high speed broadband services. The areas marked AMBER on the High Speed Broadband Map represent the target areas for the State Intervention.

A formal procurement process is in train to select a company or companies who will roll-out a new high speed broadband network within the State Intervention (AMBER) Area. The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Energy (DCCA) will shortly update the High Speed Broadband map to finalise the Intervention Area for the Procurement process, taking into account industry

investments that have not materialised in BLUE areas, together with new industry investments within the proposed State Intervention Area, along with concrete and credible commitments by industry for further new investments within the current Intervention Area.

The procurement process is being intensively managed, to ensure an outcome that delivers a future-proofed network that serves homes and businesses across Ireland, for at least 25 years. The timeframe for the procurement continues to be dependent on a range of factors including the complexities that may be encountered by the procurement team and bidders, during the procurement process. During the Department's extensive stakeholder consultations in 2015, telecommunications service providers indicated a 3-5 year timeline from contract award to roll-out a network of the scale envisaged under the NBP.

As part of the competitive process, DCCAE will engage with winning bidder(s) on the best roll-out strategy, in order to target areas of particularly poor service, business needs and/or high demand. This will need to be balanced with the most efficient network roll-out plan. A prioritisation programme will be put in place in this regard, in consultation with the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. A detailed roll-out plan for the network will be published once contract(s) are in place.

## **MEASURES NOT DELIVERED AS PLANNED BY DECEMBER 2016**

The actions below have not yet been, or will not be, delivered as planned for the following reasons:

- Action 89: Delayed while an appropriate lead organisation is sought
- Action 133: Delayed while consultation is ongoing
- Action 158: Delayed due to factors such as securing funding for further development
- Action 192, 193 and 194: No longer being progressed; the contract between IDA and Connect Ireland has concluded
- Action 216: Delayed for reporting in H2 2016; an update will be provided in the third progress report
- Action 245: No longer being progressed to avoid duplication

## ACTION UPDATES

### Action: 1

**Measure:** Develop and strengthen the Regional Chamber of Commerce Network in the South West to provide a cohesive approach to business support and development across counties Cork and Kerry.

**Lead:** Chambers

**Status:** Ongoing

#### Narrative:

Cork Chamber engages on a regular basis with Chambers across the South West region. Firstly, Cork Chamber is secretariat and host to the Cork Regional Chambers network which involves Chamber representation from Mallow, Cobh and Harbour, Midleton, Kanturk, Charleville, Clonakilty and Youghal. This network meets on a regular basis with 6 meetings scheduled per annum. The most recent meeting of this network took place on January 19th 2017 and involved discussions on a range of topics which are of interest to the economic development across the region, for example key developments and issues for each Chamber region and with the discussion focused on the development of a shared strategy to promote such developments that will drive sustainable economic development across the Cork region. This is ongoing. Cork Chamber engages where practicable with Chambers across the region, such as Tralee Chamber Alliance and Killarney Chamber of Tourism and Commerce and in relation to driving the sustainable development agenda within the South West. Cork Chamber also engages further afield and is currently engaging with Limerick Chamber on an ongoing basis on issues of shared interest and gain across the regions. In particular the current focal point of this collaboration focuses on the progression of the M20 motorway. This project work between Cork Chamber and Limerick Chamber is ongoing.

### Action: 2

**Measure:** Strengthen existing Ibec networks across the SW region by developing additional Ibec development and best practice networks in the region including in PharmaChem and Medtech and food and drink sectors, together with Leadership Forums.

**Lead:** Ibec

**Status:** Ongoing

#### Narrative:

Biopharmachem Ireland is committed to providing an environment that is conducive to the continued success of the Irish pharmaceutical and chemical sectors. Participation in the association and working groups enables members to network and build relationships and discuss issues of common concern in the industry.

Similarly, Food Drink Ireland (FDI) is the main trade association for the food and drink industry in Ireland, representing the interests of over 150 food, drink and non-food grocery manufacturers and suppliers. FDI is committed to ensuring an environment exists which is conducive to the success and further growth of the food and drink industry in Ireland.

The Medtech & Engineering Division in Ibec provides representation, advice, information and

training to a wide range of medical and engineering industries at a national, European and international level. These national programmes include participants from the South West Region.

In addition, the Ibec Cork and Ibec Mid West HR Fora are informal networks of HR specialists from Ibec member companies in the Cork, Kerry and Mid West regions. Both Fora play an important role in ensuring all Ibec members are kept up-to-date with best practice and legislative changes. The fora allow for discussion of human resource related subject areas of interest to HR practitioners in the South West region as well as exchange of information and the sharing of best practice.

Ibec Cork and Ibec Mid West & Kerry will host events as part of the Ibec Regional Insights Series 2017, which is looking at how businesses are operating in the 'Digital Age'.

**Action: 5**

**Measure:** Establish an SME 'Advocates for Success' panel of local business leaders, entrepreneurs and enterprise role models that will champion entrepreneurship in the SW region

**Lead:** Chambers – Cork Innovates

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork Chamber continues to support and promote the activities of local entrepreneurs and business leaders, via our 'Faces of Cork Business' Facebook page. Furthermore Cork Chamber strongly supports the Cork Innovates project, under which the local stakeholders have committed to working together to promote entrepreneurship for the region.

**Action: 6**

**Measure:** Develop a Creative & Design Forum for the Region, based around LEO/LA founded successful Cork & Kerry Food Forum Model already established supporting over 400 food producers in the region.

**Lead:** LEOs

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Meetings have been held with representatives from the creative and digital media sector. The three LEOs in Cork are developing a business programme to raise capacity and enable future engagement across the sector.

**Action: 8**

**Measure:** The HDI Centre – Hub for Design and Innovation will be developed to create a space to facilitate growth in research and development in the region and subsequent job creation through the generation of innovative solutions in product/service design and delivery. The iHub will significantly develop the applied research capacity in the region, accelerate knowledge transfer and the placement of researchers in industry, with a specific focus on ICT in multiple industries including fintech, energy, health services, med-tech and life sciences, in agri-food, data analytics and marine. The iHub will also provide innovative and industry-led education and training opportunities connecting with the various further and higher education institutes in the region. It will also provide



a unique and world-class location for companies wishing to grow and internationalise their business.

The cross-sector disciplinary environment of the hub will build and share models of best practice reducing lead time to market for new and existing businesses.

The iHub will provide innovative model solutions for different elements of the business process from concept evaluation, to manufacturing/service design, supply chain to business models, market rollout and the crunching of the key financials.

**Lead:** ITT, FEXCO and KCC

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

ITT, KCC and FEXCO, in association with other key regional stakeholders are currently leading a design-led Innovation Hub which will develop a pioneering innovation ecosystem to forge new paths for economic growth and accelerated job creation. The proposed initiative will overcome the geographic constraints of rural regions, enabling people and enterprises to thrive, scale and sustain. The iHubs suite of supports and activities will focus on talent development (skills), research, enabling innovation, technology adoption, start-ups, business scaling and internationalisation. The most successful innovation ecosystems have an emphasis on connections, communities and networking assets. Other key enablers and drivers of success are human capital, infrastructure, access to RDI, economic assets and an enabling environment, all of which will be features of the ecosystem developed as part of this project.

**Action: 9**

**Measure:** Evaluate the efficacy of establishing a National Agri-Tech centre of excellence in the South West. This centre of excellence would have a particular focus on technology across the agri-sector, building on ITT's and MTU's leadership in mechatronics, RFID and agricultural technology research and education.

**Lead:** ITT

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

IT Tralee is continuing with developing the plan for the National Agri-Tech centre in collaboration with Waterford IT and relevant industry partners.

Work completed to date:

Further engagement with key Agri-Tech industry stakeholders regarding the development of such a centre of excellence has taken place, as has engagement with Enterprise Ireland regarding the development of an Agri-Tech cluster within the EI Technology Gateway program and the establishment of an Agri-Tech centre of excellence. As other regions have identified the need for such a centre, IT Tralee has suggested a joint approach should be taken by all regions in the development of such a centre of excellence. A meeting with Waterford IT (South East cluster) and EI has taken place to progress the concept.

IT Tralee has further engaged with Harper Adams University in the UK, and Massey University in New Zealand— two international examples of best practice of centres of excellence in agri-education and research in the agri-tech sector, with a view to benchmarking the proposed development within the

region.

Further engagement regarding the establishment of the centre has also taken place with the Agri-Tech industry champion, who suggested that the centre of excellence would include market analysis, market sharing and business modelling, and could engage with the proposed “Hub for Design and Innovation”. It was agreed with the Agri-Tech champion that a networking event would be hosted in Tralee towards the end of Q2 2017.

**Action: 10**

**Measure:** Enterprise Ireland will target food companies in the South West to scale, innovate and develop international markets in line with National Policy.

**Lead:** EI

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

EI food division is working closely with clients nationally to develop scale and innovation for international market growth. The South West has a strong cohort of food and beverages companies that are involved in this engagement. Some of the ongoing initiatives include:

- “Food Works” a business development programme for start-up food companies with export potential
- Strategic Innovation Partnership have approved for the Dairy Sector to look for additional value-added opportunities
- Ongoing engagement with the beverage sector in developing a cluster that will assist companies to scale growth internationally

**Action: 11**

**Measure:** Consider and progress the development of an Agri-Cluster concept for the region, building on the unique strengths and opportunities in the region in the areas of Agri Food & Drinks, Agri-Tech and Agri-Tourism, to develop the productivity, innovation, networking and job creation in these sectors in the SW.

**Lead:** Chambers

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork Chamber continues to support the local authorities and agencies in their proposed development of an agri-food cluster project for the region. Furthermore, Cork Chamber developed a proposal for collaboration between local stakeholders representing the food industry to drive and deliver the successful Cork stand at the ‘Food Matters Live’ exhibition in London in November 2016. Cork Chamber has also been supporting local food companies via EEN (Enterprise Europe Network) business-matching events, and worked closely with Taste Cork in H2 2016 on these activities.

Building on the unique strengths and opportunities of the region in the Agri Food & Drink sector; Cork County Council together with academic, public and private sector partners is examining options to fund the development of an Agri-Food & Drinks Cluster for the region that will promote productivity, innovation, networking and job creation in the sector in the South West.

Cork County Council has submitted an application in response to the call for the Regional Enterprise

Development Fund seeking support to undertake a Feasibility Study on establishing a Food and Drink cluster for the South West Region. The objective of the proposed Study is to:

- a) Establish baseline, region-specific, data for KPI measurement to establish the potential business impact of a cluster,
- b) Validate the establishment of a cluster as an intervention to help sustain existing employment, promote export activity in the sector and to deliver sustainable growth through engagement with industry,
- c) Identify the likely short, medium and long term challenges and opportunities facing the Food and Drinks sector, and
- d) Confirm the potential to scale up or replicate the cluster model across other regions.

**Action: 12**

**Measure:** In line with national policy, promote the key strengths of the region as a food and beverage producer through co-ordinated marketing campaigns by key subsectors in the South West region

**Lead:** EI

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

EI food division is working closely with clients nationally to develop scale and innovation for international market growth. The South West has a strong cohort of food and beverages companies that are involved in this engagement. Some of the ongoing initiatives for clients in the South West region include;

- Strategic Innovation Partnership have approved for the Dairy Sector to look for additional value-added opportunities
- Ongoing engagement with the beverage sector in developing a cluster that will assist companies to scale growth internationally

Cork Chamber collaborated closely with other local stakeholders and brought them together to work on a Taste Cork stand at Food Matters Live in London in November 2016, through which the Chamber publicised Cork's expertise in artisan food and beverage production.

**Action 16:**

**Measure:** Create a business innovation network in the region involving dairy companies, Moorepark Technology, research institutes, incubators and small businesses focusing on food, health and nutrition and consider how best to meet the future innovation capacity needs of the sector as part of the successor to Harvest 2020.

**Lead:** Teagasc

**Status:** Complete

Teagasc has recently announced its partnership in a new technology transfer consortium that has the potential to enhance connections between research institutions and sectors such as agri-food, and also to expand the innovation capacity of relevant businesses. The new UCC-led consortium, with a combined research revenue of almost €150 million, was launched in May 2017 at UCC.

The Bridge Network, which comprises technology transfer offices from UCC, Teagasc, Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) and the Institute of Technology Tralee (ITT), will create a link for knowledge transfer expertise to be shared and used in the member institutions and build on major success to

date with licensing, spin-out companies and research income. The consortium is funded by Enterprise Ireland and supported by Knowledge Transfer Ireland.

Teagasc has a history of impactful research across agriculture and food from primary production to high-value functional foods. Its membership of the Bridge Network provides a platform for the transfer of new research and technologies to producers and businesses, and will stimulate a higher level of productive engagements between Teagasc and the agri-food sector.

**Action: 23**

**Measure:** Údarás na Gaeltachta will develop 6 units to food standard in Daingean Uí Chúis to provide accommodation for start-ups in the food sector.

**Lead:** Údarás na Gaeltachta

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

This action has been completed by Údarás na Gaeltachta in Dingle, Co. Kerry:

- Units 9&10 were amalgamated as a singular unit comprising a cookery school; this was completed in October 2014 at a cost of c€130,000. The unit was occupied immediately by local start up business Fodhla Bia Teo. t/a Dingle Cookery School. This business provides short and longer term cookery classes in the unit, including a 6-month course over the Winter for full time students.
- Units 7&8 were amalgamated as one food preparation unit and this was completed in November 2015 at a cost of c€110,000. It was occupied immediately by a local start up business owned by Séamus Mac Gearailt t/a Micilín Muc making sausages, puddings and other pork products.
- Unit 2 was refurbished as a food preparation unit and was completed in January 2016 at a cost of c€50,000. This unit was occupied immediately by a local chocolate making business owned by Saorla Ó Corráin t/a Doviaia Chocolates.
- Unit 1 was refurbished as a food preparation unit and was completed in May 2016 at a cost of c€75,000. This unit was occupied immediately by a local start up sushi making business owned by Marcin Kopec t/a Dingle Sushi.

**Action: 24**

**Measure:** Develop effective measures to attract additional landings into ports in the south west and continue to invest significantly in necessary infrastructure at the Fishery Harbour Centres in the region.

**Lead:** BIM

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Following a successful tender Poseidon - a fisheries consultants (working globally) providing advice in support of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, marine planning, and blue growth – has commenced engaging with stakeholders in Ireland, France, Spain and the UK to gain perspectives on the current status, opportunities, barriers and enablers regarding foreign landings. Bord Iasacaigh Mhara has assisted in compiling a contact list and Poseidon are engaging those identified by interviews and questionnaires. BIM is also collating relevant fisheries data to ensure the study is

underpinned by sound economic perspectives and a number of update meetings were held in BIM during 2016 with a draft report on the findings due in early 2017.

**Action: 25**

**Measure:** Develop a national strategy to deliver scale in the key seafood sectors, including food ingredients, while also including elements to upskill personnel across the sector in the key areas.

**Lead:** BIM

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Work on 29 projects approved under BIM's Capital Investment Scheme in early 2016 is progressing with this round of application and claims due for closure in late 2016.

**Action: 26**

**Measure:** In line with the new 2025 agri-food strategy, develop a national strategic plan with practical and implementable actions to significantly increase the quantity of seafood added value across all main species groups. The aim will be to reduce the level of national produce sold in commodity form from 70% to below 50%.

**Lead:** BIM

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) working with Eaton Square Consultancy began scoping out a detailed and practical implementation plan to deliver value-adding and innovation in the seafood sector in Q3 2016. The plan was progressed in late 2016 and a vision for innovation across seafood is underway, to include R&D in bio ingredients nutrients from underutilised species and fish by-product in the human health and pet food area. In addition, further assessment is being made of the international seafood landscape to develop new innovation opportunities, with an innovation maturity model developed to benchmark against international peer organisations in the areas of R&D and innovation capability.

**Action: 27**

**Measure:** Improve the environmental sustainability of the seafood sector, including improved gear selectivity, replenishment of depleted inshore stocks by the use of aquaculture techniques.

**Lead:** BIM

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) published a report on an assessment of T90 mesh in a fishery targeting whiting in the Celtic Sea in Q4 2016. This fishing gear development provides a major option for vessels operating in this fishery to address landing obligation requirements with a number of vessels adopting the gear on a voluntary basis. In October 2016 a comprehensive assessment of a dual cod-

end separator in the Nephrops fishery was conducted in the Celtic Sea. The report on this novel gear type which helps address landing obligation requirements while minimising economic impacts was compiled, for publication in early 2017. In addition BIM commenced a link-in with the development of stakeholder-led Fishery Improvement Projects in the Nephrops and whitefish sectors in its work on gear technology

**Action: 33**

**Measure:** Using the Cork English Market as a good template, South West Local Authorities to consider replicating this model in other parts of the region.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork City Council, in conjunction with the LEO and TasteCork, are investigating the potential for establishing in the city centre a food hub retail facility which is complementary to the English Market with a focus on the “food to go” market for innovative and new food products. The LEO and Council are currently successfully trialling this model for food start-ups in a small number of stalls in the English Market.

Cork County Council is seeking to identify suitable sites in appropriate locations to showcase the regional produce of small and artisan food producers.

**Action: 34**

**Measure:** Develop a catering and hospitality centre of excellence to become internationally renowned in driving management capabilities, innovation and service excellence in this sector.

**Lead:** ITT

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

IT Tralee and The Gleneagle Group have joined forces to create a new International College of Hotel Management which is preparing to welcome its first students in September 2017. The college, which is modelled on the Swiss hotel management education system, is the first of its kind in Ireland and is backed by a major international education group with similar colleges in Germany and Austria.

The International Hotel School agreements were signed February 8<sup>th</sup> 2017 between the partners. The hotel school will be located in Killarney with recruitment agents on the ground in India and SE Asia and the US for a first intake of undergraduate students in September 2017 and with a subsequent intake for Jan 2018. IT Tralee will be the education provider for the hotel school and will develop new programmes at post graduate level in 2018 for the international hotel market.

**Action: 36**

**Measure:** Develop schools tourism initiatives such as “Know Your Own County” Campaigns and online tourism induction programmes for schools to (1) promote offerings within the region (2) develop future tourism ambassadors for the region, and (3) to highlight potential career opportunities in the sector.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Kerry County Council maintains ongoing and strong engagement with the schools in the County through environmental and 'Green Flag' initiatives. There are strong links through enterprise support initiatives in the schools. The County Council engages with the schools in emphasising the assets of the County, the importance of tourism promotion and possible career progression.

A formal programme is presently under consideration and will be developed with further collaboration with the educational establishments.

An online tourism programme called Tourism Insight has been launched by IT Tralee and is being rolled out throughout transition year programmes. ITT have a designated staff member making contact with each school to get all involved. Mercy Mounthawk, Scoil Phobail Sliabh Luachra, and Castleisland Community college have already started the programme.

Cork City and County Councils are currently exploring such initiatives.

**Action: 39**

**Measure:** An Action Plan for Kerry Tourism Strategy will be produced

**Lead:** Kerry County Council

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

This Tourism Strategy has been completed and formally endorsed by Kerry County Council. Kerry County Council published a new seven-year action plan for tourism in Kerry which was launched at St John's Theatre in Listowel on Friday 21st October 2016 by the Leas-Cathaoirleach of the Council, Cllr. Liam Purtill. The County Kerry Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2022 comes following the most widespread consultation and in-depth analysis of tourism ever undertaken in the county.

**Action: 40**

**Measure:** Work with Fáilte Ireland to further develop and promote market-focussed visitor experiences and appropriate brand content along the SW section of the Wild Atlantic Way in line with the objectives of the project plan and brand guidelines.

**Lead:** Failte Ireland

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Regionality & seasonality continue to be a key issue for Irish tourism and particularly along the Wild Atlantic Way route. In 2016 the Wild Atlantic Way team identified and looked at areas along the route to pilot and implement the season extension initiative. Two areas in West Cork were chosen: Clonakilty/Roscarberry area, and Bantry/Kenmare area. Fáilte Ireland have also developed and delivered a suite of Business Supports which would enable businesses in the areas address the

seasonality issue.

**Business Objectives:**

The key objective of this initiative is to increase overnight stays – concentrating on building international awareness of West Cork by helping businesses make financial sense of a longer season and how they can work smarter to boost visitor numbers over a longer season and to build on extending the season year on year over the next few years. Work is ongoing in clusters to develop saleable experiences which are market ready and available for B2B operators and agents for the 2017 and 2018 season. These experiences are also available for consumers to purchase in destination. Both clusters were represented at in-Ireland promotional events and Meitheal in 2017 which allowed them to meet and contract with tour operators and travel agents that sell and promote the Wild Atlantic Way both online and offline internationally. Fáilte Ireland continues to work with the cluster groups to further develop saleable experiences for the 2018 season onwards.

**Some examples of experiences that have been developed:**

- The West Cork Stone Symposium
- West Cork Farm Tours
- West Cork Garden tours
- West Cork Farm to Fork

**The experiences that are developed have to be:**

- Motivational for visitors ('shop window' material)
- Unified by a compelling story
- Capable of increasing dwell-time
- Able to drive economic growth/have the potential for job creation

**Promotion of Wild Atlantic Way:**

Internationally, the Wild Atlantic Way continues to be promoted by Tourism Ireland across a range of platforms overseas including TV, print and online advertising; on Ireland.com and through social media channels; and at major international consumer and trade fairs. Domestically, the Wild Atlantic Way continues to be promoted in April/May and September/October across a range of platforms to ensure that visitors know the Wild Atlantic Way is open all year round. Familiarisation trips for media and trade to experience Wild Atlantic Way are ongoing. The Wild Atlantic Way also worked with Cork Airport to brand the arrivals hall and routes to passport control and stairwells.

**Action: 43**

**Measure:** Provide for increased numbers of work placements at heritage sites to develop skills and interest in tourism as a career.

**Lead:** OPW

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

The OPW has recently re-instituted its Apprentice Programme for traditional skills, and there is now a total of 28 apprentices working and learning at 6 OPW centres. Apprentices are mentored by the skilled staff already working within the OPW and are taught the traditional skills involved in the key crafts needed to maintain the almost 1,000 National Monuments in State care. Kerry Education and Training Board is playing a key role in the delivery of instruction and training to the apprentice Stonemasons and Stone Cutters. In addition, the OPW continues to demonstrate its commitment to training and work placement through its ongoing programmes which enhance the professional



development of professional graduates, while making a contribution to the work of the Office.

**Action: 42**

**Measure:** Work with Fáilte Ireland to develop Ireland's Ancient East, which will help in scaling up the asset base in areas of Cork and achieve international "stand-out" for the area based on its comparative advantage in built and cultural heritage.

**Lead:** Failte Ireland

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Internationally, Ireland's Ancient East continues to be promoted by Tourism Ireland across a range of platforms overseas including TV, print and online advertising; on Ireland.com and through social media channels; and at major international consumer and trade fairs.

A major integrated marketing campaign for the domestic audience was conducted by Fáilte Ireland during 2016. The objective of the campaign was to drive awareness of the new brand and to inspire holiday makers to take (incremental) short breaks and holidays in the region. The "Great Stories Stay with You Forever" campaign, valued at €2.1 million, included TV, press, online and social media advertising, and reached 3.1m Irish people. Spike Island was one of visitor attractions promoted in the TV campaign.

In 2016, the consumer coverage of the Ireland's Ancient East brand resulted in a reach of 15,006,791, an AVE (Advertising Value Equivalency) of €1,149,569 and a PR value of €4,822,200. Articles were carried in Cara Magazine, Sunday Business Post, Sunday Independent, Irish County Living, Irish Daily Mail, RTE Guide, Evening Herald, The Sun, Evoke.ie and across the regional newspapers.

The RTE broadcaster John Creedon presented the show 'Creedon's Epic East', which featured four one hour broadcasts of his travels across the Ireland's Ancient East region. Director and actress Fiona Shaw also shared her experiences of Ireland's Ancient East in two feature editorials in the Irish Independent Weekender magazine and Irish Examiner along with appearing on the Marian Finucane show on RTE Radio 1.

Since the launch of IrelandsAncientEast.com in May 2016 there has been in excess of 232,000 visits to the website (almost 90% ahead of target for the first year). Phase Two of the website launched in December.

Familiarisation trips for media and trade to experience Ireland's Ancient East are ongoing. During 2016, some 206 buyers from around the world have been welcomed. In addition, 46 international publicity visits have been made to Ireland's Ancient East including Bloggers, TV and Press Journalists.

**Action: 44**

**Measure:** Develop a central investment plan for water based / coastal infrastructure to support business and job creation.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Kerry County Council is presently engaged in the development of the Greenway Projects in South Kerry, North Kerry and Fenit. These routes are presently in the planning stage and work is progressing. The development of the Greenways is core to the development of a central investment plan for the County to develop water based/coastal infrastructure. Work continues with the support of the Local Development Companies (SKDP, NEKWD and IRD Duhallow).

The Kerry County Council Tourism Strategy has identified water based/coastal infrastructure as key drivers of economic activity. The infrastructure at Fenit Port is a huge county asset and the Fenit dredging project has been initiated with the removal of 132,300 tonnes of material which has accumulated near the head of the pier, the eastern breakwater, the commercial berth and approaches to the inner harbour.

The South West Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) is now functional in the County with the submission of the FLAG strategy and the securing of funding towards implementation of the strategy. Over €12m has been made available across the seven national FLAGs. The allocation for the FLAG South West is €1.53M. The FLAG is presently open with a call for proposals.

Work is ongoing in terms of “Blueway” developments.

A further development is the formation of an umbrella organisation in South Kerry consisting of tourism, community, business and development groups within the defined Skellig Coast catchment area. Failte Ireland is working collaboratively with key stakeholders including Kerry County Council, South Kerry Development Partnership, Udaras na Gaeltachta, OPW and the Institute of Technology, Tralee as well as a strong local working group with representatives of the local communities. A centrally resourced development plan has not been developed but all parties are working closely with strong referral and support.

Cork County Council has submitted a co-funding application to the Ireland Wales Programme to develop a Trails Project along the south side of Cork Harbour which will involve linking and the further development of pedestrian and cycling trails between the Old Railway Bridge at Mahon and Crosshaven. The trail will focus on promoting the maritime heritage of Cork Harbour.

Cork City Council: A Cork Harbour based system is included in the Local economic and Community Plan.

**Action: 46**

**Measure:** Develop a plan to improve the visitor experience and business capability of water activity providers (SMEs) active in tourism in coastal areas considered key to delivering on the objectives of both Failte Ireland’s Experience Development strategy and the DAFM’s marine strategy ‘Harvesting Our Ocean Wealth’ (HOOW).

**Lead:** Failte Ireland

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The Ilen River Blueway and Bantry Bay Blueway offer a variety of attractions with superb opportunities to witness the wealth of wildlife on the Ilen River and Bantry Bay. Visitors can savour some spectacular vistas from the water and enjoy their pursuit of choice, from kayaking, to stand up-paddle boarding, to snorkelling. This Blueway provides an incredible and altogether different kind of

activity in which to enjoy the picturesque surroundings around every bend in the Ilen River.

Faite Ireland considers the establishment of Blueways to be a significant added attraction for tourists to experience the area from the water and also to extend their stay.

The Wild Atlantic Way team continues to work with Cork County Council, who develop the Blueways, and with SME businesses that can give guided tours along them.

Whale watching in Ireland and particularly in West Cork has reached a high point for whale and dolphin watching enthusiasts. Wild Atlantic Way is working with business providers in West Cork to enjoy Whale Watching experiences on the water and have dedicated one of the Wild Atlantic Way interpretation panels at Mizen Centre to educating the visitor about what you can see in the water.

**Action: 48**

**Measure:** Develop the Cool Route Project

**Lead:** CIT

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The Cool Route project began in April 2015 and runs until April 2018, investigating all aspects of the practical logistics and business potential to establish a cruising route along the offshore areas of the Northern Periphery Area, stretching from the South of Ireland, to the UK (Northern Ireland and Western Scotland) on onwards to Norway, thereby promoting all cruising areas on the western coastline of Europe.

The Cool Route is seen as an important project in helping to remove barriers in peripheral areas which do not generally enjoy great access to clients. As the main product of the project it is estimated that a total of 55 service providers, some existing and some new, will provide direct services to the route, on a co-ordinated transnational basis. The route will assist in the creation/sustainability of these enterprises and in turn create and/or sustain jobs in related areas.

**Action: 52**

**Measure:** Undertake further work on route options and feasibility studies for potential development of Greenways in the region, in line with national Greenways guidelines.

**Lead:** DECLG

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

A draft Cycle Network has been devised for Cork, which includes a number of greenways including proposed extensions of the Curraheen River and the Passage West greenways. Kerry County Council continues to progress a number of projects including the South Kerry Greenway, and the Listowel to County bounds Greenway.

In May 2017 the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport launched a public consultation process on the development of a new Greenways Strategy, the outcome of which will inform the future development of greenways in all counties.

**Action: 54**

**Measure:** Promote and incentivise greater business links between tourism and food sectors, promoting use of local produce by the local hospitality sector.

**Lead:** Failte Ireland

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

In 2017, Ireland's Ancient East will develop food and beverage experiences in the region in an engaging way for visitors. An overarching food story will be developed for tourism and the food sectors with business supports and tools to help the industry develop food experiences. International benchmarking will be undertaken.

Ireland's food tourism story is also an excellent fit with the Wild Atlantic Way. Fáilte Ireland have developed a food toolkit for businesses to tailor their food story and create a sense of place by capturing the wild, raw beauty; our distinctive climate – where land meets sea; traditional pubs, turf fires, freshest seafood and of course the warmth of the people.

The Wild Atlantic Way team are working with key groups in West Cork to develop food and beverage experiences that are engaging for visitors throughout the 'season extension' initiative.

**Action: 55**

**Measure:** Údarás na Gaeltachta will run a pilot project in the South West region to build capacity in the tourism related enterprises under its remit.

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

Údarás na Gaeltachta's Tourism Development Strategy was approved by the Board in June 2017. The strategy includes provision for the appointment of dedicated Tourism Development Officers which will be employed in support of strategic tourism projects within the sector. Measures are also to be implemented in Q3 and Q4 which will provide targeted training interventions in support of enhancing management, marketing and development capability within the local and regional tourism sector.

**Action: 56**

**Measure:** Promote the advantages and potential of the region for Business Services

**Lead:** IDA

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The IDA is engaging in ongoing marketing of South West Region as a location for business services for new companies and encouraging its existing base of companies to expand their mandate.

**Action: 58**

**Measure:** Promote the region to attract more data intensive activities to the region in light of the strength of broadband connectivity, energy and skills in the region.

**Lead:** IDA

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The IDA is currently placing particular focus on opportunities in cybersecurity as well as other areas such as data centres. Cork Chamber continues to promote Cork's key selling points as part of its international outreach activities via the *Connecting Cork* project.

**Action: 59**

**Measure:** Develop and market a value proposition based in the South West region in partnership with communities and stakeholders to offer the option of homeworking by IDA and EI client companies in order to provide new employment opportunities in regional locations which have the necessary broadband.

**Lead:** IDA

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

IDA Ireland has successfully piloted Homeworking/Hub working offerings to companies in conjunction with local communities along the Wild Atlantic Way. This was first piloted in Sneem and Dingle in 2015 with an IDA client company establishing a Hub working team in Sneem/Kenmare. A continued focus is being placed on exploring additional opportunities for Homeworking (or Hub working) in locations that can demonstrate the relevant skills exist to meet client needs and that have the necessary broadband.

**Action: 60**

**Measure:** Exploit opportunities to grow employment in the financial services and FinTech cluster in the SW region, through focused research programmes in risk and compliance and business process and services innovation

**Lead:** UCC

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

UCC, in partnership with Dell-EMC, has established the Boole Business Labs: an exciting collaboration and Europe's first Industry-led research centre focused on business systems integrity, risk analysis and innovation for the world's regulated industries (Bioscience, Financial Services, Food, Telecom).

The Boole Business Labs is based in the Cork University Business School at UCC and has been set up as a membership organisation to help companies use their systems to achieve the highest level of integrity and compliance. Project collaborators include other multinationals and large indigenous companies, industry bodies, regulators, government agencies, funding bodies and others. This initiative helps companies develop a range of collaborative activities focused on the shared challenges they face. These collaborations range from small projects focused on a specific topic, to broader collaborations targeting a wider area of general interest to multiple partner companies. The membership model stimulates information sharing across areas of agreed focus where targeted projects have been identified.

UCC in partnership with State Street Bank also officially opened the Advanced Technology Centre

Lab in UCC. The Lab will initially focus on emerging technologies and how they impact on the financial services industry. It builds on State Street's long-standing relationship with UCC and further strengthens the role of R&D in the financial services area. The Advanced Technology Centre Lab houses ten research Masters students with the capacity to expand to 20 in the future. The research is focused on key areas including blockchain and investor behaviour.

The Governance Risk and Compliance Technology Centre (GRCTC) (<http://www.grctc.com/>), established in 2013, is a multi-institutional, industry-led research centre hosted by UCC with research funding from Enterprise Ireland and the IDA. The GRCTC is a centre of excellence for innovation and research in semantic technologies for GRC in financial services. In 2016 two licenses were issued from Intellectual Property arising from the GRCTC programme.

Furthermore, in addressing this action, the Cork University Business School has introduced specific programmes, namely the MSc in Information Systems Risk Management and the MSc in International Accounting Practice to further strengthen the suite of MSc and research offerings in this space. Strong demand has been experienced for these programmes.

The UCC/IMI Diploma and Masters in both Data Business and Digital Business have experienced strong demand from industry professionals looking for Executive Education to help with professional development for those working in fast-moving industry verticals. These programmes have been scheduled to run in both IMI Dublin as well as UCC to help cater for demand.

**Action: 62**

**Measure:** Enterprise Ireland will support enterprises and start-ups to fully exploit new opportunities as part of the implementation of the Government's International Financial Services Strategy, IFS 2020

**Lead:** EI

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

In Q2 2016, Enterprise Ireland launched the FinTech Competitive Start Fund under Action 35 of the Government's International Financial Services Strategy, IFS 2020. The Enterprise Ireland CSF initiative is based on supporting early stage companies with €50,000 financial support for 10% equity. The FinTech Competitive Start Fund invested in 10 early-stage FinTech/Payment companies. In addition to the €50,000 investment by Enterprise Ireland, the start-ups were given a series of masterclasses from corporate members of the FinTech Payments Association of Ireland (FPAI) and access to Ulster Bank's Innovation Team.

**Action: 63**

**Measure:** HEIs to support business growth through participation in Horizon 2020 proposals, SFI, EI and other funded and co-funded research opportunities related to Financial Services.

**Lead:** UCC, CIT, ITT

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

The Governance, Risk and Compliance Technology Centre (GRCTC) (<http://www.grctc.com/>), established in 2013, is a multi-institutional, industry-led research centre hosted by UCC with

research funding from Enterprise Ireland and the IDA. The GRTC is a centre of excellence for innovation and research in semantic technologies for GRC in financial services. In 2016 two licenses were issued from Intellectual Property arising from the GRCTC programme.

The initial phase of a research project with State Street Bank has nearly completed. The outcome has been well received within State Street Bank Dublin and USA. The project was highlighted on the State Street global web site to showcase their focus on innovative approaches to leveraging new technology to help with regulatory reporting for funds. A proposal for a phase 2 follow-up project is being developed at present.

**Action: 64**

**Measure:** Assess the potential to develop the South West region as a European hub of excellence for global regulation and compliance management for global operations, drawing on the expertise in the SW region in ICT and PharmaChem.

**Lead:** GRTC

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Work on this initiative will be reported in the next Progress Report.

**Action: 65**

**Measure:** Promote the transfer of technologies to enterprises of the technologies being developed at the Sustainable Building Zero2020 activities at CIT and the greater use of the energy and heating testbeds at CIT.

**Lead:** CIT

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The Mechanical and Energy Systems Simulation group (MeSSO) (based in CIT's Zero2020 building) is leading an International Energy Agency project relating to ventilative cooling in buildings. Dissemination activities included a seminar for industry attended by 60 professional practitioners from the Cork region. Dissemination content includes new KPIs for ventilative cooling in international standards, a new ventilative cooling design guidebook, a component and system sourcebook and an exemplary case study book.

MeSSO is specialising in areas such as marine renewable energy technology, agricultural systems and building energy technologies. Technology Transfer activities include dairy processing control and demand-side management optimisation. It also carries out research on thermal comfort models in low energy environments, using Zero2020 as a test bed. A project with Cork City Council is developing a technique to quickly assess the energy efficiency of the Council's housing stock.

In addition, CIT continues to utilise its range of energy test-beds, i.e. the Nimbus smart building energy testbed, the district heating test-bed and the Zero2020 testbed in partnership with Irish-based and international industry partners. This includes Irish industry partners United Technologies Research Centre Ireland (direct funded and H2020 project E2District) and IBM Smarter Cities Lab (H2020 TOPAs project) and a host of international industry partners. The testbeds are also available

through collaboration with Irish industry under the Enterprise Ireland funded 'International Energy Research Centre' Technology Centre.

CIT also uses the testbeds actively in seeking funding opportunities in Horizon 2020, specifically in the societal challenge on 'Secure, clean and efficient energy' and the industry leadership area of 'Nanotechnologies, Advanced Materials, Advanced Manufacturing and Processing, and Biotechnology'.

CIT uses the testbeds also for PhD student projects as well as in selected undergraduate curricula for project work and as examples of energy efficiency measures in taught classes to contribute to the human resource development in the energy space for Ireland.

**Action: 67**

**Measure:** Use via Fulcrum to exploit the potential for greater collaboration in the built environment by developing an R&D cluster to develop technology as this sector becomes more technology driven.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

This initiative is being led by Cork City Council. The Hub is now employing one full time administrator and continues to develop sales leads in the UK. Brexit will present a challenge. The Hub is participating in the LEO Cork City Accelerator Programme, and has achieved sales of €1.5m to date with a pipeline of €3m being developed.

**Action: 69**

**Measure:** Promote apprenticeship participation to relevant industry.

**Lead:** ETBs

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Kerry ETB is currently involved in a number of actions to promote Apprenticeship to employers:

- Kerry ETB is in the process of developing an Employer Engagement Handbook documenting case studies on Apprenticeship and other types of demand-led provision.
- The Kerry ETB Further Education and Training Fair 2017 (22 March) will have a special focus on Apprenticeship and talks specifically for employers. There will be workshops at the event, and an advert featuring Apprenticeship will be screened for 2 weeks in all 4 cinemas in Kerry. Radio interviews are planned with both Radio Kerry and Spin South West.
- The New Commis Chef Apprenticeship is in an advanced stage of development and will result later this year in a promotional drive to recruit apprentices for this industry. Kerry ETB has written the national programme which is in the process of validation.
- Through the South West Regional Skills Forum, Kerry ETB is working with an employer-led Manufacturing/Engineering Sectoral group where Apprenticeship will be further promoted.
- There are currently 324 Apprentices from Kerry signed up through SOLAS. There are 82 Apprentices currently participating in Kerry ETB in-centre programmes across the trades: Electrical; Fitting; Carpentry & Joinery; Plumbing; Stone Cutting; Metal Fabrication; Motor Mechanics. There are a further 32 Apprentices participating in the Agri-Mechanics course at



IT Tralee. These figures will be tracked and monitored for future APJ reporting.

**Action: 74**

**Measure:** Promote the move to ecommerce and double the number of on-line vouchers drawn down by retailers in the region

**Lead:** LEOs

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The Trading Online Voucher Scheme is a programme under the Government's National Digital Strategy, delivered through the LEOs and funded by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Energy. It is one of the key mechanisms working to support small businesses to move to ecommerce and increase the profile of Irish business trading and retailing online. The scheme offers financial assistance of up to €2,500 along with training and advice to help businesses develop their online trading presence.

In 2016 each LEO in the South West has held a number of information sessions to increase awareness and take-up of the vouchers. The number of Trading On-Line Vouchers approved by the LEOs in the South West in 2016 is as follows:

LEO	Number of Vouchers approved
Cork City	35
Cork N/W	55
Cork South	47
Kerry	64

**Action: 77**

**Measure:** Local Authorities and Retail Associations to develop collaborations to support the regeneration/development of their town and city centres through Town Centre Strategic Development Plans.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork City Council: The Cork City Centre Strategy Implementation Plan was launched in 2015 and is currently on schedule. The Cork City Centre Partnership (involving the Chamber and City centre Business Association (CBA), Gardaí, Bus Eireann and others) is in place along with the City Council's Implementation Team. The partnership launched as CORE and a city centre coordinator has been appointed. The Purple Flag has been awarded with initiatives focused on evening economy.

Cork Chamber: The regeneration and development of the city and town centres across the region is an ongoing agenda topic amongst the Cork Chamber Regional Chambers Network as the Chamber works to liaise on initiatives that will grow the vibrancy and attractiveness of the region. The network includes representation from eight Chambers across the region: Cork Chamber, Mallow Chamber, Cobh and Harbour Chamber, Midleton Chamber, Kanturk Chamber, Charleville Chamber,

Clonakilty Chamber and Youghal Chamber.

Cork Chamber included four submissions to the Draft Cork County Local Area Plans (LAPs) public consultation process. Cork Chamber submissions were included on the Blarney Macroom, East Cork, Cobh, and Ballincollig Carrigaline draft LAPs. A key focus of the Cork Chamber submissions was the sustainable economic development of locations across the region with a focus on the factors that will achieve long term growth and the vibrancy of these locations into the future.

The Tralee Town Centre Health Check is part of a National Town Centre Health Check (TCHC) Training Programme involving research and engaging key stakeholders in order to raise awareness, understanding and appreciation of the critical role that historical town centres play and the impact they have on the overall socio-economic, environmental and cultural growth and development and quality of life for citizens and visitors alike.

Kerry County Council, Tralee Chamber Alliance and IT Tralee, with on-going support provided by the Heritage Council, have formed the Tralee Town Centre Health Check steering group and engaged in a collaborative process to achieve defined goals over the coming months.

In collaboration with IT Tralee and with the cooperation of the business people of the town and the public, a number of surveys have been conducted and analysed including behaviour and attitudes of shoppers, business owners' perceptions, footfall, and land use. Such surveys help to determine the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre, a key objective of the Town Health Check programme.

Members of the steering group also attended two workshops - one in Naas and one in Dublin Castle - where they shared best practices and experiences with the other towns involved.

The steering group plans to publish a report of the survey findings in June 2017 which will provide the framework for further renewal of the town.

Kerry County Council LEO has delivered two specific retail development programmes in Listowel and Killarney in Q4 2016 and Q1 2017. Two further programmes are scheduled for Q4 2017 and Q1 2018.

The Cork County Council Beacon Initiative Retail Programme assists retailers to revitalise and grow their business, by analysing all aspects of running a retail business, making expert recommendations and working on a 12 -18 month strategic plan to sustain and take their business to the next level.

The programme is run by an appointed team of leading retail experts and since it was launched in September 2013, it has been delivered in a number of towns across the county with up to 15 retailers participating in the initiative from each location.

**Action: 78**

**Measure:** In the Life Sciences area, IDA will expand the Life Science Value Proposition for the South West Region to attract investment from new companies.

**Lead:** IDA

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

IDA Ireland continues to actively promote locations across the South West Region for Life Sciences based on availability of property solutions with the required utilities and infrastructure as well as clear evidence of skills availability. The recent announcement (Sept 2016) by GE Healthcare on their plans to invest €150m in developing a Biopark on an IDA strategic site in Ringaskiddy is an example

of where IDA is supporting the delivery of this action.

**Action: 79**

**Measure:** Further exploit the potential for BioInnovate, headquartered in NUIG, but with centres in UCC as a means for innovation and job creation in the medical devices sector

**Lead:** UCC

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

BioInnovate Ireland was established as a forum which combines resources to catalyse and lead Medical Innovation by:

- Delivering the next generation of specially trained Fellows and skilled graduates to the Med Tech market place.
- Identifying new product development opportunities.
- Providing, developing and proposing commercial opportunities to move an identified clinical need forward.
- Providing research opportunities and spin-out companies in collaboration with clinicians and partnering companies.
- Building a med tech innovation ecosystem that can deliver internationally.

BioInnovate Ireland has achieved unparalleled access to Ireland's leading academic researchers, clinicians, and industry experts while the activity is underpinned by world class facilities available through the support network. BioInnovate offers two core programmes of activity - The Fellowship Programme and the Industry Training Workshops. This is an ongoing activity.

**Action: 82**

**Measure:** The successful track record of the South West region in attracting and growing the base of technology companies offers a cluster to attract further investment. IDA Ireland will develop tailored propositions across a number of emerging sub sectors including Cybersecurity; Internet of Things, Data Analytics, Software Development etc. to continue to attract additional FDI investment in this sector

**Lead:** IDA

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

The South West region is home to over 60 FDI Technology companies with continuing attraction of new name technology companies. IDA Ireland has developed tailored value propositions for Cybersecurity and Internet of Things (IoT) as part of its ongoing marketing to promote the sector.

**Action: 83**

**Measure:** IT@Cork to appoint a cluster manager to develop the emerging ICT cluster in the South West region. Their role will be to boost job creation by exploiting growth opportunities in this sector.

**Lead:** IT@Cork

**Status: Ongoing**

**Narrative:**

IT@Cork is currently assessing this with an ambition to appoint a cluster manager in the short term.

**Action: 87**

**Measure:** The HDI Centre – Hub for Design and Innovation will be developed to create a space to facilitate growth in research and development in the region and subsequent job creation through the generation of innovative solutions in product/service design and delivery. The cross sector disciplinary environment of the hub will build and share models of best practice reducing lead time to market for new and existing businesses. Facilities will be made available which will foster:

- Innovative design thinking in product/service idea generation
- Prototype development
- Product/service design testing

It would provide innovative model solutions for different elements of the business process from concept evaluation, to manufacturing/service design, supply chain to business models, market rollout and the crunching of the key financials.

**Lead:** ITT

**Status: Ongoing**

**Narrative:**

ITT, in association with other key regional stakeholders are currently leading “Thrive”, a design-led Innovation Hub which will develop a pioneering innovation ecosystem to forge new paths for economic growth and accelerated job creation. The proposed initiative will overcome the geographic constraints of rural regions, enabling people and enterprises to thrive, scale and sustain. Thrive’s suite of supports and activities will focus on talent development (skills), research, enabling innovation, technology adoption, start-ups, business scaling and internationalisation. The most successful innovation ecosystems have an emphasis on connections, communities and networking assets. Other key enablers and drivers of success are human capital, infrastructure, access to RDI, economic assets and an enabling environment, all of which will be features of the ecosystem developed as part of this project.

**Action: 88**

**Measure:** Leverage the capacity of the National Digital Skills Centre in Kerry and the programme offerings of KETB and IT Tralee, to exploit opportunities presented by the planned film studio in Limerick.

**Lead:** KETB

**Status: Ongoing**

**Narrative:**

Kerry Education and Training Board are in the process of exploring avenues for this action and will revert with outcomes in Progress Report 3.

**Action: 89**

**Measure:** Build the ICT capabilities for high-end design across all sectors in the region.

**Lead:** Under review

**Status:** Delayed

**Narrative:**

This action has been delayed while an appropriate lead organisation is sought.

**Action: 93**

**Measure:** Roll out design thinking modules as elective in HEIs, Design thinking can be applied to business models as well as to products and services

**Lead:** UCC, CIT, ITT

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Service Design modules are now available as electives for undergraduate and postgraduate Business Studies students in CIT.

Design thinking is being used in UCC in key university processes such as the Teaching and Learning strategic planning process and other processes with a view to exploring how it might become more embedded in the curriculum in the future. A series of design thinking workshops are being held within UCC with industry partners and the methodology is being used to improve the learning experience of Education students at UCC.

**Action: 96**

**Measure:** Develop the Irish Maritime and Energy Resource Cluster (IMERC) as a research and commercial cluster of world standing in collaboration with CIT and the Irish Naval Service.

**Lead:** IMERC

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

This work is ongoing and further evidence of the success in the collaboration between the IMERC partners can be seen by the recent success of the Halpin Centre at the NMCI in achieving Horizon 2020 funding for two project submissions; both projects are in collaboration with the Irish Naval Service.

**Action: 100**

**Measure:** Promote and assist the delivery of costs savings through energy efficiency programmes and training for businesses and public sector organisations in the region

**Lead:** SEAI

**Status: Ongoing**

**Narrative:**

SEAI continue to make Energy MAP and Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy training available across the business and public sectors. A new Pilot Grant scheme was launched in June to support SMEs to upgrade to smart low energy lighting with up to 40% of the upgrade cost available in the following sectors: Fitness Centres, Retailers, Small Hotels/Large B&Bs, Pharmacies, Nursing Homes and Jewellers.

**Action: 101**

**Measure:** Work with SEAI to develop and promote Sustainable Energy Communities model in the region and identify willing early adopter community to act as exemplars.

**Lead:** SEAI

**Status: Ongoing**

**Narrative:**

The SEC programme continues to grow with 92 Sustainable Energy Communities across Ireland. Exemplar projects have successfully applied for €30 million in Better Energy Community grants for 2017.

**Action: 102**

**Measure:** Complete a regional renewable energy analysis to examine the potential for biomass district heat in towns in the South Western region.

**Lead:** SEAI

**Status: Ongoing**

**Narrative:**

Renewable energy analysis continues across the South West region, in partnership with local communities and stakeholders.

**Action: 104**

**Measure:** Engage in a feasibility study to Investigate the possibility of creating a sustainable ecological education and research hub in Kerry where tourists including education tourists, students both national and international can experience and appreciate one of the most interesting ecological environments in the world.

**Lead:** Kerry County Council

**Status: Complete**

**Narrative:**

Work is continuing and consultation with interested parties is ongoing. The Skellig Coast Tourism Group has been established in association with Fáilte Ireland and a number of 'Blueways' have been considered. There is ongoing community consultation and a number of community applications have been encouraged/prepared for the Fisheries Local Area Group (FLAG) supports. This allows ongoing

research and feasibility development prioritising concrete actions.

Skellig Centre for Research & Innovation (WEAVE) is an outreach campus for higher education, research & entrepreneurship based in Co. Kerry, Ireland. Skellig CRI is a space which is open to various universities and educational institutions nationally and internationally facilitating higher education research and the delivery of higher educational programmes, practices and experiences.

**Action: 106**

**Measure:** Ensure that the electricity transmission grid in the region is strengthened to enable maximum investment by industries that rely on large energy consumption.

**Lead:** EirGrid

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

EirGrid are carrying out ongoing grid strengthening initiatives in the area. This includes, where required, the upgrade and refurbishment of the existing transmission network, including both line and station improvements. These ongoing works will ensure that the region has a secure and reliable supply of electricity in order to maximise the potential for investment in the region.

**Action: 109**

**Measure:** Explore ways of utilising micro-algae for production of energy, nutrition, animal feed and bio-pharma products.

**Lead:** UCC, CIT, ITT

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

An extensive research programme through the SFI MaREI centre is underway on second and third generation gaseous biofuels, including algae biofuels, power to gas concepts and life cycle analyses of various biofuel systems. The Bioenergy and Biofuels Research Group focuses on renewable gaseous biofuel production (biohydrogen and biomethane) from 3rd generation biofuel substrates such as macro-algae (seaweed) and micro-algae.

The Novel Eco-sensitive Wastewater Treatment Recovering dairy Industry Effluent NuTrients (NEWTRIENTS) project commencing in 2017 is an interdisciplinary project that will develop a circular economy approach to processing dairy industry wastewater, resulting in a paradigm shift from wastewater treatment to closed loop reuse of valuable components present in the effluent within the local and global economy including looking at the potential for producing algae from dairy industry effluents.

**Action: 112**

**Measure:** CIT to develop and deliver energy efficient retrofitting training for building professionals and site operatives

**Lead:** CIT

**Status: Complete**

**Narrative:**

CIT offers a part-time Building Energy Efficient Practices (Certificate), which aims to provide participants with an understanding of the construction principles used in energy efficient buildings and the technologies available for modern energy efficient heating systems. The course is suitable for those who have attained Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications or individuals in the construction industry with the appropriate experience.

**Action: 113**

**Measure:** Develop a programme to promote circular-economy expertise across the region and that would enhance overall sustainability

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status: Ongoing**

**Narrative:**

Cork City Council have developed a number of programmes in the circular economy based on the resource efficiency objectives of the Southern Waste Region Management Plan including the Boomerang Initiative relating to mattress recovery and recycling and which is now located in the Northside for Business campus. The Council (and the Southern region) are now due to commence a project in the area of used paint, which has been identified as another problem waste product in the Plan.

Both the Southern Region Waste Management Office and the local authorities in the region are committed to assisting the community and local businesses with becoming more resource efficient, saving money and preventing waste.

Assistance includes:

- Free onsite efficiency audits for waste, energy and water
- Identification of recommendations for improvements including information on what changes are required and how to implement them.
- Staff training & mentoring

Cork County Council through its Macroom-E initiative operates the SMILE Resource Exchange. This is a free service for businesses that encourages the exchanging of resources between its members in order to save money, reduce waste going to landfill and to develop new business opportunities. Potential synergies are identified through an online platform [www.smileexchange.ie](http://www.smileexchange.ie) or through facilitated technical assistance. Businesses can request or offer reusable materials, by-products or surplus stock that could potentially be a raw material in another business. All resources offered are either free of charge or below market value. SMILE members have identified the following benefits:

- Cut costs
- Reduce waste
- Source materials
- Network with business
- Identify new business opportunities
- Improve competitiveness

**Action: 114**



**Measure:** Pursue the opportunity to be a leader in minimising packaging and establishing a deadline within which all packaging must be recyclable.

**Lead:** EPA

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Repak's 'Prevent & Save' Programme helps Irish businesses to optimise their packaging systems and to reduce packaging waste. Many Repak members have innovative and transferable methods to reduce and eliminate packaging waste and an emphasis of the Prevent and Save Programme is to promote such best practice to a wider audience. 2016 saw a renewed focus on the programme. Dedicated packaging technologists are now working exclusively on delivering the programme to Repak members and updating their media platforms with the latest best practice information. See [www.repak.ie/preventandsave](http://www.repak.ie/preventandsave) for information on the various initiatives.

The EPA compiles national statistics on waste packaging generation and reporting on an annual basis. All Member States have obligations under the EU Packaging Directive to recover and recycle packaging waste. Ireland has been compliant with all statutory waste packaging recovery and recycling targets since 2001.

**Action: 116**

**Measure:** Promote the potential for commercialisation of natural products/extracts from the natural resources in the region, on land and in the sea ('blue-tech') through greater collaboration between agriculture, aquaculture research and business.

**Lead:** UCC, CIT, ITT

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Ireland has among the most diverse, abundant, sustainable and accessible brown seaweed resources in the world. This is an almost untapped resource and these seaweeds are a rich source of useful biopolymers. The UCC BioMes project is looking at the development of bio-sorbents from Irish brown seaweeds for remediation of metals from waste effluents.

An ERA-NET on *Novel extraction processes for multiple high-value compounds from selected algal source materials* (NEPTUNA) commenced in November 2015. Novel enzyme-based extraction technologies are being applied to algal biomass derived from selected algal taxonomic groups including macroalgae (seaweeds), microalgae and cyanobacteria. Algal species will be chosen according to their potential to produce high bioactive levels which will be further enhanced by applying abiotic stresses. Algal extracts produced by enzymatic and traditional approaches will be tested for multiple applications, concentrating on antioxidant and antimicrobial activities with applications in food, cosmetics, animal health (aquaculture) and personal/home care. Extracts that exhibit high activities will be chemically characterised to identify active components.

CHASSY is an EU-funded Horizon 2020 project entitled 'Model-Based Construction and Optimisation of Versatile Chassis Yeast Strains for Production of Valuable Lipid and Aromatic Compounds'. The aim of CHASSY is to deliver a suite of yeast strains that can serve as versatile platforms for the production of high value oleochemicals and aromatic molecules. This will be achieved by integrating the knowledge gained from systems biology with the engineering tools of synthetic biology to

redesign metabolic pathways in the target yeast species. These redesigned strains will have optimised levels of product precursors and will serve as versatile chassis for industrial exploitation. CHASSY is a research partnership of five academic institutions, three companies and two others, distributed across Europe.

**Action: 117**

**Measure:** Examine with National Energy Efficiency fund managers/NTMA the feasibility of a large scale renewable District Heating (DH) plant and network for Tralee and develop and Pilot the Biomass Resource District Heating in the towns of Tralee and Killarney thus creating the potential for significant associated job creation within County Kerry, subject to funding.

**Lead:** Kerry County Council

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Work has been undertaken with the installation of a 1MW woodchip fuelled district heating system in Tralee with heat pipes connected to each apartment providing controlled space heating and meeting all the hot water needs at low cost to the initial 42 apartment units.

A further six units have been designed and constructed which include high level insulation along with solar water heating system supplementing the hot water production and a PV system supplementing the electricity supply.

11 toward-carbon-neutral houses were constructed and connected to the DH system. 100 of the existing 1,935 houses are also now connected to the District Heating system along with the refurbished Convent with day care centre for the elderly and 8 apartments on the 1st floor, the County Library, Moyderwell Primary School, Aras an Phobail, the Tralee International Resource Centre, Mitchel's Youth Project and St John of Gods day care centre.

In 2017/2018 a further project is planned incorporating the construction of 15 Local Authority houses, 14 Clúid apartments, an Enterprise and Community Centre, a Boxing Club and a connection for future extension to the planned new Gael Coláiste development.

The feasibility of a large-scale development is under consideration but is subject to funding availability.

**Progress:**

An initial investigation was carried out by the NTMA, looking at Kerry County Council's financial model for the Tralee District Heating Project. This concluded that while the project looked viable, in order to reduce risk more specific onsite energy information is required through onsite metering to establish the energy usage profile for the larger energy users. The introduction of a Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) will make the project more bankable.

A stakeholder meeting is being organised between the Killarney Hotel Group and Kerry County Council Energy Section to further explore the financial model for the proposed Killarney District Heating system. Kerry County Council along with Tipperary Energy Agency, XD Consulting and Codema made submissions to the public consultation on the Renewable Heat Incentive initiated by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. A report on this is due out in mid 2017.

**Action: 120**

**Measure:** Undertake a feasibility study of the case for the creation of a Technical Marine and Marine Sciences education, training and research centre in Kerry.

**Lead:** ITT

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

ITT applied for funding for a Marine Incubation Centre under an EI Call, and met with EI representatives on site at ITT in December 2016 to review their submission. The formal outcome of the call is yet to be determined. Kerry County Council and a number of other partners, national and international, collaborated on the call.

**Action: 121**

**Measure:** Development of Haulbowline Island as an emerging hub for naval activities, maritime enterprise, tourism and recreation

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork County Council, acting as Agent to the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, is engaged in a programme of works to rehabilitate the East Tip of Haulbowline Island, Co. Cork. The Council is addressing the legacy associated with the disposal of steelwork waste on a sand spit in Cork Harbour over a 40-year period.

Cork County Council is committed to ensuring that the remedial solution and amenity development are completed in accordance with current relevant national and international best practice and guidance. A significant milestone in the rehabilitation of the East Tip of Haulbowline Island has been reached with the signing of a contract to remediate the site and transform it into a public recreational amenity.

**Action: 122**

**Measure:** Undertake a feasibility study of the case for the creation of a maritime security and surveillance /marine robotics hub, joined with emerging cyber-security expertise, within the context of IMERC in Cork Harbour

**Lead:** IMERC

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The intention to explore the opportunity around this pillar was displaced by work undertaken on the development of the European Space Agency (ESA) National Space Solutions Centre for Ireland. The ESA Business Incubator Centre was officially launched by the then Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in September 2016 with the IMERC partners as a core partner in this €5.2m initiative that will support investments in a minimum of 25 new space related start-ups over the next five years. This will include attracting start-ups with an interest in ocean observation, satellite navigation and

communications at sea.

**Action: 125**

**Measure:** Develop two pilot “living labs” to test bed software and hardware for a Smart region, building on the initiatives underway in Mallow in Cork and in Kerry.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork City Council and the Cork Smart Gateway have identified a number of suitable projects to develop a smart district in Cork. Two areas have been identified in consultation with local authority staff - McCurtain Street and North Main Street. The projects identified include smart waste collection, connected street lighting, River Lee flood modelling, traffic monitoring using sensor information, environmental monitoring, tourism transport connectivity hub, smart life buoys etc. Engagement with industry and research centres around feasibility and costings of these projects have been discussed. Implementation requires financial and department assistance. These projects will be implemented once these resources are in place.

Cork County Council: The collaborative effort that is the Cork Smart Gateway is functioning well. However the establishment of two pilot ‘living labs’ to test bed software and hardware is an action that should be led by the HEIs. If necessary, Cork County Council will provide the support and resources, where available, to assist the local HEI realise this ambition.

The Dingle Hub is a community enterprise initiative supported by a range of significant partners including eir, Dingle Business Chamber, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Kerry County Council and Net Feasa. Focusing on three key areas - Music/Film-making, Animation, and Internet of Things (IoT), the Hub will place a significant emphasis on creativity and the role it can play in supporting and developing businesses.

Eir is providing extensive and scalable communications infrastructure which includes a 1 gigabit dedicated fibre connection, hosted voice services and Wi-Fi. Having access to high-speed internet connectivity in a remote rural setting will be a game-changer for Dingle. The community can retain local skills, knowledge and talent, compete on a level playing field with national and international organisations and attract new enterprises providing job creation and stimulus to the local economy.

Work also continues on the Cahersiveen Hub project.

**Action: 127**

**Measure:** Strengthen collaboration to fully exploit the success of the pilot Health Innovation Hub.

**Lead:** Health Innovation Hub

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Health Innovation Hub Ireland (HIHI) has recently completed its calls process. There was a total of 65 applications from across the country with 48 from an open call and 17 from a focused call on care of

the elderly. From these calls a total of 30 were chosen by a panel of experts from business, health and government agencies, for further progression. Of the 30 successful applications 22 were from companies and 8 were from individuals working within the healthcare system. These will be managed through the HIHI network.

**Action: 128**

**Measure:** Develop specific projects for local authority cooperation, enterprise cluster collaboration and educational exchange between the South West region and key provinces of China, in particular Shanghai and Lower Yangtze River region to promote exports and trade.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork City celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its Sister City Agreement with Shanghai in October 2015. It also has signed Memoranda of Understanding with Hangzhou, Wuxi and Shenzhen. 4 officials from the Lower Yangtze river region spent a number of weeks working in Cork City Council in summer 2016. Cork City Council had 3 high level delegation visits to China in 2016 with the Lord Mayor and/or Chief Executive. Cork City Council also contributed €10,000 to support the 30 volunteer teachers from the UCC Confucius Institute who teach Chinese in schools throughout the South West. The City Council met numerous delegations from this and other regions. In addition, the City Council continues to support local SMEs in China through its well-established networks which are assisted with the services of a retained Chinese company to engage with local industry and follow potential import and export leads in China.

Cork City received a major prestigious award from the Chinese Government in November 2016 at the *China International Friendship Cities Conference* in Chongqing, China. The Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr. Des Cahill, travelled to Chongqing to participate in the Conference at the invitation of the Shanghai Municipal People's Government and he also received the *Friendship City Award for Exchanges and Cooperation with China*.

City Council, in collaboration with UCC, are also engaging with the Chinese embassy to foster relations with a Shanghai incubator with a view to exchanging best practice through an exchange programme with incubators in Cork.

This will be an ongoing action for Cork County Council. Cork County Council:

- 1: Signed an MOU with Jiangsu province in November 2016
- 2: Will invite interns from the Jiangsu to work in Cork County Council
- 3: Has launched the Shamrock Cup English language competition for Nanjing High School students: the winning team of three students, their teacher and an official will receive a 1 week holiday in Cork
- 4: Led delegations to Xuzhou and Nanjing to identify opportunities for co-operation.
- 5: Launched a programme to provide Jiangsu public and school libraries with a collection of books with a Cork theme to raise awareness about Cork and Ireland.

Cork Chamber continued to develop connections with business networks in China during H2 2016. In late November Cork Chamber representatives travelled to Shanghai and re-signed an updated version of Memoranda of Understanding with its Sister Chambers, committing the Chambers to working together more closely in areas such as entrepreneurship and innovation. Cork Chamber also engaged with the Irish business community in Shanghai via the Connecting Cork project, as well as developing new relationships with Wenzhou Chamber of Commerce and with the Shanghai Zijin

Entrepreneurs Club.

**Action: 129**

**Measure:** Develop an overarching brand and value proposition for the South West, building on the strengths of the Cork and Kerry brands to reinforce each other and build awareness of all that the connected region has to offer.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The Local Authorities in the South West continue to engage in the promotion of the region in cooperation with enterprise promotion and tourism parties.

Cork City & Cork County Council: the Cork region is progressing with a branding and messaging project with consultants due to be appointed in February 2017. The driving idea of what the Councils want Cork to be known for has been established, which will help the Cork Region to speak with greater consistency, coherence and strength. This is important in order to elevate the Cork region domestically and internationally to show how Cork is a great place to live, visit and invest. The objective in supporting the economic development of the Cork Region is to deliver business growth, jobs and wealth for Cork and for Ireland.

To achieve this the aim is for the Cork Region to attract and retain:

- Inward investors - FDI and Irish
- Entrepreneurs and small/medium sized businesses
- Talented people
- Students
- Business and leisure visitors

The final piece in this exercise - Economic Branding - has commenced and these two elements will provide the overarching brand and value proposition for the Cork region. This in turn will sit next to the Kerry brand; they will reinforce each other and build awareness of all that the connected region has to offer.

**Action: 130**

**Measure:** Further develop Diaspora networks in both Cork and Kerry with clear objectives and deliverables in the areas of trade promotion, attracting investment and advice and support to entrepreneurs.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork City Council: Cork Innovates were due to progress this initiative but it has been overtaken by the Cork Chamber *Connecting Cork* initiative which was launched in San Francisco by the Chamber on a twinning visit with Cork City Council in October 2016. <http://www.connectingcork.ie/>.

Cork Chamber: In H2 2016 Cork Chamber developed the *Connecting Cork* project, which received a grant from the Local Diaspora Engagement Fund, and focused on proactive engagement with our business diaspora networks in the key cities of San Francisco, London and Shanghai. The activities highlighted the strengths of the Cork region as a location for business and investment, and promoted the Unique Selling Points that Cork can offer in terms of quality of life etc. Through these activities Cork Chamber continues to grow its networks and identify ambassadors for Cork, and individuals that can support Cork companies looking to expand their operations.

The Kerry Economic Development Unit continues to work closely with Diaspora contacts and Enterprise Agencies in the preparation of information and digital content to promote the county. These contacts include the IDA and Enterprise Ireland. A specific working group has been established to consider and develop actions.

**Action: 131**

**Measure:** Aligned with the proposed value proposition initiative, tailor 'quality of life' communications directed primarily at our Diaspora to equip them with up-to-date information to 'sell' the region as a good place to live and work.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork City Council: Cork City Council have developed the 'Invest in Cork' website which sets out a proposition for investing in Cork around Quality of Life and value proposition themes and key developments within the City. The branding and messaging consultants, due to be appointed in February, will develop the material and collateral to promote the City (and region) as a place to live, work and invest.

The Kerry Economic Development Unit continues to work closely with Diaspora contacts and Enterprise Agencies in the preparation of information and digital content to promote the county. These contacts include the IDA and Enterprise Ireland.

Cork Chamber: In H2 2016 Cork Chamber developed the Connecting Cork project, which received a grant from the Local Diaspora Engagement Fund, and focused on proactive engagement with our business diaspora networks in the key cities of San Francisco, London and Shanghai. The activities highlighted the strengths of the Cork region as a location for business and investment, and promoted the USPs that Cork can offer in terms of quality of life etc. A Connecting Cork newsletter was circulated to these networks at the end of 2016 with a summary of some of the business news stories from Cork, that would help keep the diaspora up-to-date and give them the background information to allow them to spread positive messages about Cork.

**Action: 133**

**Measure:** Enterprise Ireland will agree and implement a Services Level Agreement with all Business Innovation Centres (BIC) including with Cork BIC to ensure their interaction with start-ups in the South West region is deepened and the value maximised.

**Status:** Delayed

**Narrative:**

Enterprise Ireland is currently drafting a Services Level Agreement with the Business Innovation Centres. This process requires significant consultation with DJEI and the individual BICs in advance of the final Service Level Agreement being presented for sign-off with respective stakeholders.

**Action: 134**

**Measure:** In line with the National Action Plan for Jobs 2015, Enterprise Ireland will assess the potential for enhancing the accelerator environment nationally

**Lead:** EI

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

Enterprise Ireland approved the initial €3m pilot of the Regional Accelerator Scheme in 2016, which resulted in an open competitive call for proposals. Enterprise Ireland has made commitments to a number of accelerator proposals targeting multiple industry sectors across the country. The approvals were made on the basis of the applicants securing the balance of funding for the project and Enterprise Ireland being satisfied with the final structure. Enterprise Ireland is continuing to work with each of the successful applicants on the final content and structures of the programmes and legal negotiations are ongoing.

This work is progressing well and the applicants have been successful in raising the balance of funding. It is expected that a number of accelerators will be launched in the near term. Once the accelerators are officially launched they will be actively seeking applicants to participate on the first cohort. It is expected that most accelerator approvals will be announced and will commence their first cohort before the Summer of 2017.

**Action: 136**

**Measure:** Enterprise Ireland and LA-LEOs will drive and encourage entrepreneurship in the South-West Region. Initiatives will include two Enterprise Start workshops, the Kerry Enterprise Month, and a Competitive Feasibility Fund.

**Lead:** EI

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

Enterprise Ireland ran three Enterprise Start Workshops during 2016 with a particular focus on supporting start-up companies to secure funding under the Competitive Start Scheme.

Enterprise Ireland launched Competitive Feasibility Funds in September and November targeting new start-ups in Cork and Kerry. The objective of the Competitive Feasibility Funds is to assist new start-up entrepreneurs, or early stage companies, to investigate the viability of new growth orientated business propositions which have the potential to become high potential start-up companies in the Region.

The annual Kerry Enterprise Month was launched on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016. Now in its third year the objective of Enterprise Month is to shine a spotlight on just some of the enterprise activities on offer all year round across Kerry. The month is a collaborative initiative between Enterprise Ireland, Kerry County Council, Kerry Local Enterprise Office, North, East & West Kerry Development; South Kerry Partnership Development, IRD Duhallow, IDA Ireland, Udarás na Gaeltachta and IT,



Tralee (Centre for Entrepreneurship Enterprise Development - CEED). The Month gives established businesses and budding entrepreneurs an opportunity to network and discover the assistance available to them in growing and sustaining a business in Kerry. The month has become the annual 'go-to event' for entrepreneurs in Kerry. The calendar of events for 2016 included over 30 events across 15 days. The county-wide events cater for all stages of business across many sectors from start-ups to established and growing businesses.

**Action: 137**

**Measure:** Enterprise Ireland will run a Competitive Feasibility Fund call for Cork in 2016

**Lead:** EI

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

Enterprise Ireland launched Competitive Feasibility Fund in September targeting new start-ups in Cork during 2016. The objective of the Competitive Feasibility Funds is to assist new start-up entrepreneurs, or early stage companies, to investigate the viability of new growth orientated business propositions which have the potential to become a high potential start-up company in the Region.

**Action: 139**

**Measure:** Údarás na Gaeltachta will target the creation of 345 new jobs in the South West region over the next three years.

**Lead:** Údarás na Gaeltachta

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

In 2016 Údarás na Gaeltachta supported projects which are expected to create an additional 107 jobs in the South West Gaeltacht regions.

**Action: 141**

**Measure:** Údarás na Gaeltachta will implement measures to support early stage business with a particular focus on regional competitive advantage in specific sectors, including cultural tourism, audio-visual and digital technology, marine resources, niche manufacturing, food/beverages and creative language-based services.

**Lead:** Údarás na Gaeltachta

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Údarás provided mentor support to early stage entrepreneurs to research and develop their business concepts in 2016; through employment and capital support schemes Údarás has supported the development of companies in the areas in which new jobs will be created. Full-time employment in Údarás client companies in the south west Gaeltacht regions at end 2016 was 1,346.

**Action: 142**

**Measure:** Údarás na Gaeltachta will provide support for 5 high potential food and drinks companies in the region to expand their operations.

**Lead:** Údarás na Gaeltachta

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Údarás na Gaeltachta is currently providing support to at least 5 high potential food and drink companies in the region. Údarás na Gaeltachta's focus on delivering support to companies in this sector includes the provision of essential infrastructure, such as suitable enterprise units, promoting management and leadership skills, and providing support for business and product innovation.

**Action: 143**

**Measure:** Údarás na Gaeltachta will develop an internationalisation programme aimed at SMEs operating in minority language areas in the region in partnership with a Welsh Development Agency.

**Lead:** Údarás na Gaeltachta

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Údarás na Gaeltachta met with six potential partners in Wales with a view to applying to the Ireland Wales Fund for funding for this project. The funding mechanism which was envisaged for this project however did not materialise; Udaras will revisit the proposal in early 2017 to explore alternative options for developing the project.

**Action: 145**

**Measure:** Increase student entrepreneurship in the region through: Increased availability of entrepreneurship modules for all HE and FE students, including interdisciplinary modules where business students can work in teams with science and engineering students; Increased summer entrepreneurship opportunities for HE and FE students such as the Student Inc programme at CIT or the Indie.Bio Synthetic Biology Accelerator program at UCC; Provide student placements in incubators or in emerging new businesses. Supports for these actions will be made available via the use of entrepreneurs to give advice to students, provision of opportunities to explore business ideas, as well as training, mentoring, seed funding, office space and networking.

**Lead:** UCC, CIT, ITT

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

For CIT this action is complete. All of the actions above have been delivered and are being implemented in CIT on an ongoing basis.

For UCC this action is also complete. UCC has now provided an entrepreneurship module that is available to all students. This module is termed 'New Venture Creation' (UW1006 on UCC's book of

modules) and it is oversubscribed in its first offering.

UCC's entrepreneurship and start-up activities in 2016 were focussed on further collaborative activities to generate higher levels of high potential start-ups (HPSU), student and graduate level start-ups. A partnership agreement was signed with Blackstone Charitable Foundation to establish and fund the Blackstone LaunchPad at UCC to provide entrepreneurship education and support to all students.

Blackstone LaunchPad is a central campus-based experiential entrepreneurship programme offering all students, alumni, staff and faculty entrepreneurship education, coaching, ideation and venture creation support in a model which enables interdisciplinary interaction. It is modelled on a successful programme which originated at the University of Miami. The programme has full-time staff dedicated to working one-on-one with students to develop their business ideas, to giving them advice and to providing them with opportunities to explore new business ideas. It also provides training, mentoring, office space and networking. All support is available free of charge. (see <https://www.ucc.ie/en/blackstonelaunchpad/>).

The Ignite Graduate Business Innovation Centre <http://www.ucc.ie/en/ignite/> also provides students with entrepreneurship supports through the use of entrepreneurs to give advice to students, provision of opportunities to explore business ideas, as well as training, mentoring, seed funding, office space and networking.

UCC has implemented a process whereby students are provided with placement opportunities in incubators and in emerging new businesses by providing placement with companies in the Ignite Business Innovation Programme and with Gateway UCC companies.

**Action: 146**

**Measure:** Youth Entrepreneurship – Enterprise Camp. This initiative started by the School of Business in CIT is now in its fourth year bringing in 25 young entrepreneurs each year, who learn entrepreneurial skills over a 5-day period. The programme since its inception has been over-subscribed and CIT is currently planning to expand the programme. The programme is free and open to students aged 14-16 Years old in Cork City and County Schools who are enthusiastic, motivated and interested in learning more about starting their own business. [www.cit.ie/enterprisecamp](http://www.cit.ie/enterprisecamp)

**Lead:** CIT

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

This programme has now expanded to its maximum capacity. The 2016 programme allowed the participants the chance to interact with some of Ireland's top entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship teachers, providing mentorship and guidance through a process of identifying entrepreneurial potential, idea generation and starting a new business. The 2017 programme aims to take in a group of 60 young entrepreneurs from across Cork City and County.

**Action: 147**

**Measure:** EI will organise and run three "Project Assessment & Development Days" for entrepreneurs and Start-ups based in the South-West in conjunction with Cork BIC and EI HPSUs teams to assess early-stage start-up projects with potential for growth (HPSU).

**Lead:** EI

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

Enterprise Ireland organised 4 project assessment days for the South West region during 2016 where Enterprise Ireland's Start-Up team and Cork BIC met with a range of high growth, export focused start-up companies.

**Action:** 150

**Measure:** Develop a strategy for Female Entrepreneurship in STEM programme based on the evaluation of the pilot run in CIT and extend the programme to include IT Tralee

**Lead:** Rubicon Centre, CIT

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

*Exxcel* is a part time programme designed for females who have a business idea with high growth and export potential. Ideas can include ventures that are Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths (STEM) related.

CIT commissioned the Hincks Centre for Entrepreneurship Excellence to conduct an independent evaluation of the *Exxcel* female entrepreneurship programme provided by the Rubicon Centre in Cork Institute of Technology in 2015. The purpose of this evaluation was to verify that the programme responded to the needs of the target group, to assess the impact and the effectiveness of the course, to explore areas of improvement for the course, and to gain insight into the needs of participants on completion of the programme.

Overall, the majority rated the programme as either good or excellent. The main *strengths* of the course related to the development of a caring and encouraging support network of participants, trainers, mentors and Rubicon staff. Participants also feel they are coming away from the programme with definite action points to implement in relation to their own business. *Areas for improvement* fall under the headings of delivery schedule, preparation for training and integration of learning.

The vast majority of participants were aged between 30 and 50, and had completed undergraduate qualifications (>30%) or postgraduate qualifications (>65%). Over half of the participants went on to seek and secure further funding from other sources to develop and grow their businesses.

In addition, a survey of 40 (from a possible 70) previous PINC participants yielded very positive feedback, and review of both the PINC and the *Exxcel* led to CIT:

- Continuing the offering of *Exxcel* for a second cohort in CIT;
- Liaising with SECAD in relation to the delivery of a PINC-equivalent female entrepreneurship programme elsewhere in the region.

In December 2016, EI commissioned a study of all Female Entrepreneurship Programmes funded by them. The *Exxcel* programme was included. *Exxcel* study feedback was as follows:

- Over 50% felt their business objectives had been achieved or exceeded
- 75% felt that their personal objectives had been achieved or exceeded
- 90% of respondents were focused on Export market

Challenges include:

- Access to funding and finance to support their transition from start-up to the next stage remains a challenge
- Technical skills to develop the business
- Building sales and exports
- Social media and e-commerce
- All of the respondents to the survey did not avail of any EI funded or co-funded supports for female entrepreneurs

In December 2016 following the above review EI, through a competitive proposal call, agreed to part fund the programme until 2020. A total of 36 female Entrepreneurs will be assisted in the STEM sector under the Exxcel Programme.

CIT is developing an overall strategy for entrepreneurship which was due to be completed by the end of 2016 but has gone for wider internal consultation and the publication date has been pushed out to mid-2017.

**Action: 151**

**Measure:** Expand the PINC Programme for female entrepreneurship which, since 2011 has facilitated the creation of 99 jobs across Cork City and County.

**Lead:** CIT

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

This action is ongoing in a different format to originally envisaged. CIT is no longer delivering this programme; previous funding sources are no longer available. However CIT through the Rubicon Centre is working with SECAD (South and East Cork Area Development Partnership) to support the delivery of the programme in an alternative model.

The programme was re-developed by SECAD with inputs from the Rubicon and launched as SECAD's Cumas Programme. To date, a very successful delivery has taken place in Ballingearry (Q4 2016) and is now being rolled out in Ballincollig (Q1 2017). A total of 27 participants have completed the Cumas programme to-date.

See <http://www.southernstar.ie/news/business/articles/2016/12/31/4132256-women-launch-13-new-firms-in-ballingearry/>

In January 2017, the Department of Justice and Equality awarded funding to build on this initiative, targeting female entrepreneurs in rural areas. A CIT accredited programme called WREN, developed by the Rubicon and CIT's Hincks Centre, will be delivered across County Cork and Limerick by SECAD and Ballyhoura using the business supports of the Rubicon. This will commence in September 2017 for two years targeting 68 female entrepreneurs.

**Action: 156**

**Measure:** Promote the potential for greater use of non-urban incubator space and examine synergies with the region's accelerator programmes

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status: Ongoing**

**Narrative:**

Kerry County Council has supported a number of innovation hubs supplying hot desk facilities for young tech employees. These include the Sneem Enterprise Centre, Killarney Technology Innovation Centre, Dingle Hub Project, Furies Food Hub, Local Enterprise Office Client Hub and ongoing referral to other facilities such as the Tom Crean Business Centre and HQ Tralee. These facilities have tremendous capacity to deliver high level jobs in rural locations. Kerry County Council continues to work closely with Enterprise Ireland on referral and support for HPSU clients through initiatives such as the New Frontiers Programme.

Cork City Council has partnered with CorkBIC, who are leading a proposal to undertake the running of one of EI's pilot regional accelerator programmes, due to commence in mid 2017. This follows a call for proposals in 2016 with a view to using a proposed co-working space that would be made available in City Hall.

Cork County Council through Macroom-E supports the provision of non-urban incubator space by offering a wide choice of office space ranging from Hot Desks and small offices to industrial units to suit any requirements new or expanding companies may have in different locations throughout the county.

**Action: 157**

**Measure:** Network the Community Enterprise Centre assets of the region with the Incubator and Accelerator Programmes within the region, to both allow greater numbers of participants engage with these programmes and to encourage placement of these innovative ideas throughout the region and not just in the higher population centred facilities.

**Status: Ongoing**

**Narrative:**

Networking, joint initiatives and introductions between the Community Enterprise Centres and Incubators across the region continues. EI also plans to organise a meeting of key stakeholders in the region to discuss further innovative and collaborative opportunities for the centres.

**Action: 158**

**Measure:** Support the development of The IMERC Entrepreneurship to facilitate the growth of the region's maritime and energy economy.

**Lead:** IMERC

**Status: Delayed**

**Narrative:**

The IMERC 'Entrepreneurship' in its current iteration with 22 desks is operating at full capacity, as a pilot maritime and energy incubator, incorporating start-up companies and touchdown space for foreign direct investment - plans to develop this further are dependent on other factors including funding.

**Action: 162**

**Measure:** Implement the National Mentoring Strategy through the provision of one-to-one mentoring services and support for peer and voluntary networks as part of the regional Competitive call for proposals for Community Enterprise Initiatives

**Lead:** EI

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Mentor Networking events for EI Mentors in the South West region took place in April and October 2016.

Enterprise Ireland is working closely with DJEI to implement the National Mentoring Strategy. In 2016 funding under the Community Enterprise Initiative Fund was granted to Bizmentors.ie (Ballybane Enterprise Centre, Galway) towards the setting up of a national volunteer mentoring portal. The regional pilot roll out of the portal to counties Galway, Mayo and Roscommon will commence in January 2017 with a view to a national roll out in 2018. EI continues to work with Microsoft and IMDA on voluntary mentoring programmes with EI clients.

Enterprise Ireland is currently working with a large panel of mentors from the South West region who work closely with client companies and collectively cover areas of business development, such as Strategy, Sales, Marketing, Finance, Operations and Innovation.

**Action: 166**

**Measure:** Develop export market networking groups to learn from peer-to-peer exchanges in key markets, including emerging markets and promote awareness of export networks of businesses.

**Lead:** Chambers

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork Chamber continues to offer support to companies looking to export or trade internationally via our Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) and other international services. Cork Chamber continues to promote EI and other relevant export support networks and is working closely with Cork and Kerry LEOs to assist them to deliver their targets under EEN.

**Action: 167**

**Measure:** InterTrade Ireland will promote its Acumen and Elevate programmes providing financial assistance to local companies to investigate and pursue export opportunities in Northern Ireland.

**Lead:** InterTradeIreland

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

During the period July-December 2016 six companies were approved to participate on the Acumen programme and 2 approvals were given for the Elevate programme. InterTradeIreland continues to have a presence in the region with an On-The-Ground Consultant promoting the programmes to

relevant eligible businesses.

**Action: 168**

**Measure:** Roll-out further EI Export Workshops and Export Awareness events in the region.

**Lead:** EI

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

Enterprise Ireland organised an Exploring Exporting workshop in the region during 2016, focused on helping first-time exporting companies become export ready. Topics include conducting market research, defining your export value-proposition, processes for exporting and the exportable offer. Business mentors are available to work with you to identify the issues you need to address to become export ready.

Enterprise Ireland continuously promotes its Market Research Centre to its client base. Knowledge of the competitive environment Irish companies operate in is the key to successful export growth. Enterprise Ireland has purchased, on behalf of its clients, world class market research reports. The publishers it subscribes to all have web based databases which you can search from your desk to find relevant titles. Clients can view these reports at the Market Research Centre at the Cork office or Dublin EI offices.

**Action: 169**

**Measure:** InterTradelreland will promote cross border trade opportunities to small business in the region.

**Lead:** InterTradelreland

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

InterTradelreland are in regular contact with EI staff, the Chambers and the LEOs in the region to promote trade opportunities for their clients in Northern Ireland. In Q3 2016 a delegation of 17 companies from Cork visited the Lisburn/Castlereagh Region. Each company had 3-4 prearranged business appointments set up in advance. A reciprocal event took place in Q4 when 15 companies from Lisburn/Castlereagh visited Cork. Again each company had prearranged business meetings set up. InterTradelreland has a part time representative based in Cork who has responsibility for promoting all of InterTradelreland's Trade Programmes in the South West Region.

**Action: 170**

**Measure:** Through its Trade Accelerator Voucher scheme InterTrade Ireland will help companies to identify and break down barriers to trade leading to new export opportunities in Northern Ireland.

**Lead:** InterTradelreland

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**



InterTradeIreland are in regular contact with EI staff, the Chambers and the LEOs in the region to promote the Trade Accelerator Vouchers for their clients in Northern Ireland. InterTradeIreland also has a part time representative based in Cork who has responsibility for promoting all of InterTradeIreland's Trade Programmes in the South West Region.

**Action: 171**

**Measure:** As part of the new EI/IDA Global Sourcing initiative in the South West region, the agencies ensure all new investors are aware of the supply strengths in the region and targeted programmes with large multinationals in the region. The objective is to increase collaboration between existing EI and IDA clients with a focus on increasing local and global sourcing opportunities for indigenous firms and to encourage SMEs and MNCs to collaborate to supply imported products and services.

**Lead:** EI

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

In the South West networking events took place in October 2015, giving Irish companies the opportunity to engage directly with procurement teams from multinational companies across a wide range of sectors including ICT, Web 2.0, Pharma, Biotech, Medical Devices, Consumer, Security and Engineering. Most of the Irish companies participating on this mission already have a successful track record of supplying multinational companies across the globe. EI are now working to increase the number of Irish suppliers to the MNC base in Ireland and the South West - helping local companies grow and create more jobs in the region.

A further Global Sourcing Event is planned for May 2017. There is ongoing EI/IDA engagement in South West to engage and share knowledge and investigate further collaboration opportunities through initiatives such as DealBroker.

**Action: 172**

**Measure:** Increase university/IoT commercialisation of research - translating it into jobs on the ground supporting the partnering with entrepreneurs/business championing and building strong business teams to succeed.

**Lead:** UCC, CIT, ITT

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

UCC has significantly increased the commercialisation of research. The commercialisation of research is primarily measured in terms of two key outputs: Licences Awarded and the number of Spin-Out Companies (high potential start-ups HPSU) established. In 2016, UCC increased the annual number of licences awarded by 10% to 22 and the annual number of spin-out companies has increased from 3 to 4. Each of these outputs represents an annual output five-year high. The spin-out companies established in 2016 are: HVAC Remote Monitoring Limited, Artugen Therapeutics, Tucana Health Ltd and Food Choices at Work. This brings UCC's active campus company spin-out portfolio to 21 companies, 10 of which have been established in the last 3 years. The spin-out process for each company incorporates a partnering with appropriate business champions to establish strong leadership teams within each spin-out to best ensure sustainability and success.

In 2016 UCC launched the UCC SPRINT programme through its GATEWAYUCC Incubation Centre to help maximise the chances of spin-out company success. The SPRINT Programme aims to increase the number and the success rate of knowledge based start-up companies utilising IP from UCC. 2 companies have already been established through this scheme. It currently supports 10 pre- and early-stage start-up companies from the areas of bioinformatics, digital mobile, medtech, eHealth, ICT, nutrition and food health in its inaugural programme.

SPRINT, designed for researchers, covers all the pillars of starting and growing a spin-out campus company. The SPRINT Programme modules cover topics such as Business Strategy/Value Proposition; Business Model; Regulatory Requirements; Product and Customer Validation; Market Opportunity; Business Plan development; Brand Creation; Channels to Market; Funding Options/Strategy; Pitching to Investors; Legal Requirements and Team Building. The Programme is delivered by experienced Serial Entrepreneurs and Business Practitioners.

During 2016, technology transfer processes have been simplified and a new model of regional collaboration was implemented with IT Tralee joining the existing UTC (UCC, Teagasc, CIT) consortium under the Technology Transfer Strengthening Initiative (TTSI3).

**Action: 173**

**Measure:** Brand the opportunities that exist for global entrepreneurs/employees to base themselves in Cork and Kerry

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Kerry County Council has established an Economic Development Unit led by a dedicated Economic Development Officer. This unit has engaged closely with the IDA and Connect Ireland to explore opportunities for attracting global entrepreneurs and individuals who have left the county.

A specific outcome has been the support for the Kerry Jobs Expo.ie. Kerry EXPO is an opportunity for all businesses operating in the Kerry region to promote their services, sell their products and recruit staff. It is one of the largest business gatherings in the county where SMEs, Entrepreneurs, Large Industry, State & Semi-State bodies work together to deliver tangible job outcomes.

Cork City & County Council have set up a steering group with the key regional stakeholders. Following a procurement process in late 2016, a consultant is due to be appointed in February 2017 to work with the Steering group to assist with Strategic Branding and Messaging for the Cork region over the next 2 years. It is anticipated that this action will be realised as part of this work.

**Action: 175**

**Measure:** Create more hot-desk facilities in vacant city centre units as this is where mobile young tech employees want to be based.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

Cork City Council is in the process of preparing a space in City Hall to facilitate co-working, particularly for LEO clients, and also exploring facilitation of the CorkBIC run an EI Regional Accelerator.

Cork County Council: there are a number of facilities and operators of hot-desking in the city including Regus at Mahon and Monahan's Road, Plus 10 on South Main St, SOSV in Penrose Wharf and most recently Bank of Ireland *Workbench* on Patrick's St and DC Cahalane's *Republic of Work* on South Mall.

Kerry County Council has supported a number of innovation hubs supplying hot desk facilities for young tech employees. These include the Sneem Enterprise Centre, Killarney Technology Innovation Centre, Dingle Hub Project, Firies Food Hub, Local Enterprise Office Client Hub and ongoing referral to other facilities such as the Tom Crean Business Centre and HQ Tralee. These facilities have tremendous capacity to deliver high level jobs in rural locations.

**Action: 177**

**Measure:** InterTradelreland will promote the Fusion Programme to SMEs in the region. InterTradelreland will provide access to the InterTradelreland Challenge programme whereby SMEs in the region will have the opportunity to learn how to develop a culture of innovation through the use of a sustainable and repeatable innovation process. Learning will take place by means of briefings, workshops and mentoring in the region.

**Lead:** InterTradelreland

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

FUSION is promoted through a Managing Agent representative in the South West region. During 2016, twelve FUSION projects have been supported in the region.

Challenge is promoted online resulting in four companies from the region attending a Challenge event in 2016.

**Action: 179**

**Measure:** Develop a promotion and outreach programme to promote greater engagement at regional level by enterprises and research teams in collaborative research and to participate in EU Horizon 2020 projects.

**Lead:** UCC, CIT, ITT

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

As detailed in earlier updates, the promotion and outreach programme has been developed and implemented. Included are a number of support initiatives that have been implemented by UCC Research Support Services (RSS) to drive increased H2020 engagement by the regional, innovation-focussed enterprise sector. These supports form a key part of UCC's *Horizon 2020 Action Plan*.

A key initiative in this regard has been the establishment of the Project Research and Innovation Management Enterprise at UCC (PrimeUCC) by UCC RSS. PrimeUCC is a proposal development and

project management service for UCC researchers and their external partners, including regional SMEs. Indeed, PrimeUCC is designated as an SME itself, is a business unit in the UCC Academy Ltd., and has recently joined the Cork Chamber of Commerce.

To date, PrimeUCC has supported the successful submission, award and subsequent management of 4 EU projects, all with significant SME engagement, and with a total value of €12.5 million. The unit is in the process of developing additional business through working directly with regional SMEs to connect them with UCC researchers and support them in securing public funds for their research.

Working closely with external partners, UCC RSS have also hosted a series of Workshops and Information Sessions targeted at supporting enterprise sector engagement with Horizon 2020 programmes. Details on a number of these initiatives were provided in the First Progress Report and more are in the planning phase.

In this regard, UCC hosted a 2-day conference of the Vision 2020 Network on 22/23 May 2017 — UCC is the founding Irish organization member of [Vision 2020 – The Horizon Network](#), a networking platform that facilitates and supports collaboration between top research-performing organizations and companies collaborating in Horizon 2020 proposals and projects. Vision2020 acts as a hub to connect Horizon 2020 participants from excellent universities and innovative companies, and works to maximise the value and Horizon 2020 funding its members can obtain. UCC is an active member of this initiative and is using their supports and activities to connect with regional SMEs in the context of Horizon 2020.

More generally, recent evidence of successful engagement, both with the enterprise sector and with Horizon 2020 programmes, include the generation of €26.4 million of 2014/15 research income from non-exchequer sources. This represents a 48% increase in the last 5 years, and was primarily driven by a 78% increase in funding from Horizon 2020 and allied EU programmes (to €14.8 million) and a 22% increase in funding from the enterprise sector (to €6.2 million). Significantly, *new award income* secured from non-exchequer sources increased dramatically in 2014/2015: compared to 2013/2014, the value of new awards from EU/Horizon 2020 sources increased by 32% (to €21.5 million) and the value of new awards from the enterprise sector increased by 134% (to €20.5 million).

Recently, UCC was included in Reuters' first-ever ranking of Europe's top 100 "innovative" universities, which recognises the innovative talent of UCC's research community and the embedded nature of enterprise engagement across the institution.

**Action: 181**

**Measure:** Develop a strategy to step-up the levels of research and commercialisation of added value product development for timber harvested in the region.

**Lead:** UCC, CIT, ITT

**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Narrative:**  
UCC: A research grant application is under consideration for this area of research.

**Action: 184**

**Measure:** Achieve a 20% increase in the uptake of innovation vouchers in the South West Region.

**Lead:** EI

**Status: Ongoing**

**Narrative:**

The Innovation Voucher initiative was developed to build links between Ireland's public knowledge providers (i.e. higher education institutes, public research bodies) and small businesses. Innovation Vouchers worth €5,000 are available to assist a company or companies to explore a business opportunity or problem with a registered knowledge provider. The South West continues to get a significant number of voucher approvals each year; over 110 companies from the region were approved vouchers in 2016 and this is in line with 2015. Ongoing workshops with the Third Level Institutes and Institutes of Technologies in the region are planned for 2017, which aims to promote the innovation voucher scheme to companies in the region.

**Action: 185**

**Measure:** IDA Ireland will target a 30% - 40% increase in investments by overseas companies in the South West Region over the period 2015-2019. This will result in a minimum of 139 investments in the region over the period.

**Lead:** IDA

**Status: Ongoing**

**Narrative:**

IDA Ireland remains committed to delivering on this objective and target as part of its five-year strategy. IDA Ireland announced record employment growth in the South West region in 2015. The South-West Region (Kerry and Cork) had a total of 30,345 people employed in IDA client companies at the end of 2014. By the end of 2015, this has grown to 33,831 jobs in 160 companies. There are now 167 companies employing 36,059 at the end of 2016.

**Action: 186**

**Measure:** IDA Ireland will drive Transformation with IDA client companies across the South West Region through increased client interaction with the established base of companies to sustain, support and grow their operations and support increased employment in the region. This is particularly relevant to manufacturing operations.

**Lead:** IDA

**Status: Ongoing**

**Narrative:**

All IDA Ireland client companies have a nominated Relationship Manager who engages with every IDA client company in the region on a regular basis. This is an ongoing business-as-usual activity by IDA Ireland aimed at supporting its clients to sustain and grow their operations across the South West region and is reflected by the level of employment growth in the South West Region in 2015.

**Action: 187**

**Measure:** Build an Advance Technology Building in Tralee to provide a high-quality property solution to attract new FDI to Kerry.

**Lead:** IDA

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Planning Permission was granted by Kerry County Council in February 2016 following a delay in site selection/land acquisition. Contracts were signed in July allowing construction of the c.2,322m<sup>2</sup> building on a c.1.0 hectare site at Kerry Technology Park (KTP) to proceed. Building work commenced in August 2016 and the building is expected to be constructed in nine months (May 2017). The revised timeframe for completion is Q2 2017.

**Action:** 189

**Measure:** IDA will proactively market the SW region by building on the Cork brand proposition and Kerry brand development initiatives to market key business locations of scale in the region for FDI.

**Lead:** IDA

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

'Invest in Cork' was completed and launched in 2015 (<http://connectandinvest.com/cork/>). Plans are underway to develop a marketing initiative for Kerry in conjunction with stakeholders. The target date for completion is now Q1 2017. A series of client testimonial videos has also been developed.

**Action:** 192

**Measure:** Develop a Regional ConnectIreland Plan that is integrated with the Local Authorities' enterprise development and job-creation activities. Formalise the name of a nominated officer from each county in the region for the roll-out of the Plan.

**Lead:** Connect Ireland

**Status:** No longer being progressed

**Narrative:**

The contract between IDA and Connect Ireland has concluded.

**Action:** 193:

**Measure:** Announce and run the Connectivation competition, inviting Third Level students to share their ideas for the future development of the Succeed in Ireland initiative.

**Status:** No longer being progressed

**Narrative:**

The contract between IDA and Connect Ireland has concluded.

**Action:** 194:

**Measure:** Liaise with HEIs with a view to holding partnership events to create a network that will allow greater communication between the institution and its alumni.

**Status:** No longer being progressed

**Narrative:**

The contract between IDA and Connect Ireland has concluded.

**Action: 200**

**Measure:** Develop collaborations with civic groups, NGOs and statutory bodies through the enhancement of existing community projects such as Community-Academic Research Links (CARL) and the initiation of new projects with the community sector. Enhance access to artistic citizenship through consolidation and development of arts-in-community projects, such as FUAIM Arts and Community.

**Lead:** UCC, CIT, ITT

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

UCC has developed deeper collaborations and partnerships with civic and community groups and NGOs by extending the CARL model across the disciplines of the University. In December 2016, UCC celebrated the milestone of 50 CARL projects completed across the disciplines of the University working with civic groups and NGOs. There are 18 additional CARL projects with community partners underway currently and these address topics such as health economics, environmental sustainability, accessibility of urban environments, youth support services, positive ageing, to name a few. Students participating in CARL projects gain key competencies to enhance their future employment. The collaborative approach taken in these projects ensures reciprocal benefits for all partners with a particular focus on ensuring the research findings can be readily used (see CARL Projects: [www.ucc.ie/en/scishop/rr/](http://www.ucc.ie/en/scishop/rr/))

In 2016, UCC extended outreach to over 30 community locations throughout Ireland through its Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (see <https://www.ucc.ie/en/ace/>)

In UCC access to creative citizenship has also been enhanced through:

- Launching the most extensive FUAIM annual public music programme and events schedule to date (see <http://www.ucc.ie/en/music-theatre/music/events/>)
- The public events and exhibitions at the Glucksman, which attracted 86,892 visits in 2016 with an international programme that emphasises the links between university research and artistic expression (<http://www.glucksman.org>)
- Active drama and theatre programmes at The Granary Theatre (see <http://granary.ie/>)

**Action: 201**

**Measure:** Promote the value of Social Enterprise as means of direct job creation and to contribute to a wide range of community and social services

**Lead:** Local Authorities, DAHRRGA

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Kerry County Council works closely with the Local Development Companies (NEWKD, SKDP, IRD Duhallow). Kerry LEO offers mentoring advice and support and different funding options. Cork City Council has identified a number of initiatives to be delivered as part of the implementation of the Local Economic and Community Plan.

**Action 207:**

**Measure:** Establish a jobs-shop hub to provide a centralised source for alerting HE students of the availability of part-time and summer jobs in the region. Such a 'job shop' concept would bring small companies together and provide mentoring based on their needs.

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:** CIT Students Union and Careers Service have agreed to collaborate on an initiative to establish a part-time and summer jobs advertising scheme through CIT, following an initial meeting in August 2016.

Aims:

- To support small and local businesses with the advertisement of part-time and summer jobs to CIT students, which will be a free service for businesses.
- To support students with CV preparation prior to applying to these advertised jobs.

Plans:

- Gather an initial database of small and local businesses. Link in with the Cork Chamber of Commerce and local business associations to promote the service.
- Communicate to these businesses through letter and/or email to advise them of the service available to them. Potential to mention this service on local radio.

Services to include:

- Advertise jobs through the "Summer/Part-time Jobs" section of the CIT Careers Service website, [www.mycit.ie/careers](http://www.mycit.ie/careers)
- Advertise roles through the various SU and Careers Service social media accounts.
- From October, SU and Careers Service members will hold monthly information clinics on campus to advise students about finding a summer/part-time job and assist with CV preparation.
- Currently in discussions with Jobbio to consider CIT partnering with the site in the advertisement of summer and part-time jobs to students.
- Engage with IT Tralee Students Union and Careers Service to discuss the opportunity for adopting this within their campus. Some initial discussions have already taken place.

**Action: 209**

**Measure:** Expand the Student Inc. scheme in CIT and other HEIs to drive entrepreneurship and demonstrated employment generation. The scheme is operated and funded mainly by CIT and the Rubicon Centre, has delivered 19 student entrepreneurship projects since 2011, 8 of which are now offering employment to 26 people. The cost of these jobs generated is very competitive.

**Lead:** CIT

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The Student Inc programme is now in receipt of part external funding from the LEOs, with match-funding provided from CIT; this additional funding has enabled the programme to be continued until Summer 2017. Efforts to roll it out across other Higher Education Institutions have been stalled for a number of reasons, including the introduction of other initiatives in those locations, e.g. Blackstone Launchpad in UCC.

**Action: 211**



**Measure:** Support SMEs demonstrating potential to grow with placement of high performing graduates for a 12-month accredited period of placement in order to support the accelerated growth opportunity for the business.

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The majority of programmes in CIT now incorporate a formal placement component. UCC has increased the provision of internship and work place opportunities for its students, and has implemented a process whereby students are provided with placement opportunities in incubators and in emerging new businesses by providing placement with companies in the Ignite Business Innovation Programme and with Gateway UCC companies.

**Action: 212**

**Measure:** Údarás na Gaeltachta will assist in the development of educational programmes in cultural tourism to attract overseas visitors to the region.

**Lead:** Údarás na Gaeltachta

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Údarás is working with other state agencies as well as tourism providers in developing these programmes. In October 2016 Údarás also hosted a seminar in Carna aimed at exploring Gaeltacht tourism opportunities along the Wild Atlantic Way. A wide range of speakers participated in the event. The morning session focused on heritage and culture with speakers from Ionad na mBlascaoid in Kerry, Teach Solais Fhanada in Donegal, the heritage site at Dún Aonghusa on the Aran Islands, and the recently completed Ionad Cultúrtha an Phiarsaigh, Conamara in Ros Muc, Co. Galway. The afternoon explored niche tourism sectors such as food tourism and walking, and supports for businesses were also discussed.

**Action: 214**

**Measure:** PCI and IMDA to deepen industry links with schools and third level institutions in the region including careers promotion, promotion of STEM and support for development of supporting promotional materials and outreach activities in STEM.

**Lead:** Ibec

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The Irish Medtech Association is currently developing a career roadmap to help students, teachers and parents understand the opportunities in medtech. Irish Medtech will launch a report in May outlining the future skills needs in the sector along with a number of recommendations.

**Action: 215**

**Measure:** PCI and IMDA to run a series of cross sectoral workshops in the region to bring together a number of other sectors with the Biopharma and Medical Devices sectors to explore best practice in

manufacturing, quality and regulatory affairs, R&D and skills.

**Lead:** Ibec

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The first information day of the national manufacturing apprenticeship programmes took place in Cork, Clayton Silver Springs Hotel, Tivoli on the 6th of April from 10am to 12pm. Companies from medtech, pharma, and engineering sectors met to learn more about the new manufacturing apprenticeships, which because of uptake in the region, will run at Cork IT along with 6 other regional Institutes of Technology.

**Action: 216**

**Measure:** PCI to develop an action plan with local universities and IOTs to support high end process development in the sector in such areas as continuous manufacturing, antibody drug conjugate development and biosimilars. This action plan would be developed in collaboration with SSPC 2, PMTC and NIBRT

**Status:** Delayed

This action is delayed for reporting in H2 2016; an update will be provided in the third progress report.

**Action: 217**

**Measure:** Introduce a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) programme to all primary schools in the region, so as to differentiate the south region nationally and internationally through having a very strong pipeline of very skilled students in the STEAM subjects, in collaboration with business.

**Lead:** Department of Education (SPEE Unit)

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:** The Policy Statement on STEM in Education to be produced by the end of Q2 2017 is a national policy. The STEM report has been submitted to the Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills for their consideration. The Department of Education and Skills is working on the production of the Policy Statement and implementation plan which will accompany the statement when published at end Q2 2017. Work has also commenced on the implementation of the 21 priority actions as identified by the Minister from the STEM report.

**Action: 218**

**Measure:** Develop a cost neutral model for the extension of the Cork County Council funded, Mallow Development Partnership/ UL NCE-MSTL joint Schools Project to primary schools across the region

**Lead:** Cork County Council

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Mallow Maths & Science Schools Programme 2017/2018: focus up to now had been on the teaching of the student, however, in order to ensure long term sustainability this phase is being targeted at empowering/teaching the Science/Maths teachers by providing STEM education tools such as Online tutorials, a booklet with STEM experiments, and workshops for teachers. A new first for the programme is also the involvement of parents through consultation, again to ensure sustainability and that parents are aware of the merits for their child's future of such a unique programme at primary level. The project will once again feed into the Munster Maths & Science Fair in October where all 13 schools will showcase STEM project work.

**Action: 220**

**Measure:** Expansion of STEM programme at primary level to all schools and consider how best to insource ICT graduates to assist/drive the delivery of STEM programmes

**Lead:** Department of Education (SPEE Unit)

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The Policy Statement on STEM in Education to be produced by the end of Q2 2017 is a national policy. The STEM report has been submitted to the Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills for their consideration. The Department of Education and Skills is working on the production of the Policy Statement and implementation plan which will accompany the statement when published at end Q2 2017. Work has also commenced on the implementation of the 21 priority actions as identified by the Minister from the STEM report.

**Action: 221**

**Measure:** Encourage greater participation in transition year exchanges of students from the region and Erasmus programme participation to enhance linguistic skills and encourage overseas students to return to work in cork

**Lead:** ETBs

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Kerry ETB offers Transition Year (TY) to students in 5 of its 8 Post Primary Schools. These have not yet participated in an ERASMUS Exchange, but they do participate in foreign trips during TY. However, this year Killorglin Community College has applied for Erasmus+. eTwinning is also an initiative of this school. Kerry ETB aspires to expanding this work over time to all/more of its Post Primary Schools. In terms of linguistic development, French is taught in 6 of the 8 schools. German is taught in 2 schools. Spanish is taught in 2 schools. This year Castleisland Community College has taken on a Modern Language Assistant through the Department of Education & Skills programme to facilitate trainee teachers from abroad to teach modern languages in Irish schools (French in this instance).

**Action: 222**

**Measure:** Provide increased numbers of internship and work placement opportunities in enterprise in the region, to enhance employability of graduates and the workforce resilience of our graduates.

This will involve SMEs in a structured way to increase absorptive capacity in the region to augment the capacity provided by the strong base of MNCs engaged in internship programmes.

**Lead:** UCC, CIT, ITT

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

The majority of programmes in CIT now incorporate a formal placement component. UCC has increased the provision of internship and work place opportunities for its students. 90% of UCC's undergraduate programmes now provide work placement opportunities for its students.

**Action: 223**

**Measure:** Map and promote the development of ready-to-go sites so as to capture economic opportunities. This should entail an audit of Enterprise Parks in Towns/ Small Towns across the region that could be used by scaling enterprises or new businesses considering establishing in the region. Identify the deficits / opportunities and make the audit available as a resource for enterprises.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

Cork City Council: A number of city centre sites have been developed for commercial purposes in 2016 including the One Albert Quay site (150,000 sq ft), which was completed and occupied by end 2016 with mainly multi-national cybersecurity companies. The Capitol cinema site (60,000sq ft) is due for completion in 2017, where the majority of the space has been let by retail and inward investing companies.

Stapleton House on Oliver Plunkett St is 80% complete (25,000sq ft) and due for completion in 2017. Cork City Council have assisted in bringing this site to market and will retain an interest in 5,000 sq ft with a view to housing high potential scaling companies from incubation programmes in UCC/Tyndall and CIT/Rubicon. There are a number of extant planning permissions around the city centre including Andersons Quay, Albert Quay (O'Callaghan properties), Trinity Quarter (Dairygold), Sullivan's quay (BAM), Beamish & Crawford site (Event Centre).

Cork City Council avails of every opportunity to promote these sites both locally and internationally, for example through the FDI Forum in London and with the IDA.

Cork County Council provides a range of property options across the county to support economic development initiatives for existing and emerging enterprises and appropriately zoned lands which are available to respond to new opportunities as and when they arise. These are located as set out below:

Towns	Industrial Units	Food Units	Serviced Sites	Development Land	Incubation Kitchens
Ballincollig	✓	✓			
Blarney				✓	
Carrigaline	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Carrigtwohill				✓
Glanmire				✓
Midleton				✓
Mallow			✓	✓
Bandon	✓	✓	✓	
Fermoy	✓	✓		
Macroom	✓		✓	
Buttevant			✓	
Charleville			✓	
Mitchelstown	✓	✓	✓	
Dunmanway			✓	
Clonakilty			✓	
Newmarket			✓	
Bantry	✓			✓
Schull	✓	✓		
Skibbereen	✓	✓	✓	
Killeagh				✓

Kerry County Council Economic Development Unit carried out an assessment of strategic sites and economic opportunity sites within the county for the IDA in April 2017. The starting point for determining the strategic sites was defined initially by the list of sites identified in the land capacity study for the background preparation for the National Planning Framework (NPF) and Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region Assembly in 2016. These sites were screened to identify the sites most suitable for the IDA.

#### Preliminary Screening

Screen 1: A minimum site size of circa 1ha was applied. This is based on the logic that the IDA's new site in Kerry Technology Park is 1.09ha in size. This reduced the number of sites from 250 to 126.

Screen 2: All those sites zoned as residential and/or tourism were then identified and screened out - reducing the number of sites to circa 90.

Screen 3: The following zonings – Commercial, Industrial, Town Centre Mixed Use and Light Industrial remained. The last screen was based on an assessment of a combination of the site's zone, location and size. For example; a 1.5ha light industrial site comprising of a multitude of owners in Waterville was not regarded as strategic. Overall, therefore the screening reduced the number of relevant sites from 250 to 48.

#### Settlements Identified

- 1) Cahersiveen
- 2) Castleisland
- 3) Dingle
- 4) Farranfore
- 5) Kenmare
- 6) Killarney
- 7) Killorglin

- 8) Listowel
- 9) Tarbert/Ballylongford Landbank
- 10) Tralee

**Shortlisting**

The 48 sites were presented to the Senior Management Team to shortlist. 26 sites were then presented to the IDA who then identified 8 sites in the Tralee area which were most suitable for their purposes.

**Action: 224**

**Measure:** Together with ISIF and the EIB pursue options for funding of startup and other business and enterprise facilities throughout the Region

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork City Council has engaged with ISIF on a number of potential regeneration projects in the city in 2016 and will continue to do so as the opportunities present themselves.

**Action: 225**

**Measure:** The targeted development of research capacity/start-up, facilitation and co-location of enterprise within the proposed University (MTU) campus is vital to the economic strategy for both Kerry and the Region. Kerry Technology Park will form part of a partnered approach between Local Government and the IT Tralee – working with the state agencies and companies to develop the Technology and Research Campus is essential to providing that targeted approach.

**Lead:** ITT

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The purchase of Kerry Technology Park between IT Tralee and Kerry County Council is in process. Strategic Research, Technology and Enterprise Development plans for the campus are complete and await purchase of property for implantation.

**Action: 226**

**Measure:** Consider the future development of Economic Strategic Sites across the region. The appointment of a Business Development Manager within the region would be a key enabler to achieving this outcome.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

As part of the Cork City development plan preparation process, a core strategy for the development of the city was prepared with target population and with strategic development sites identified for

residential and commercial sectors. Detailed Local Area Plans (LAPs) prepared (or in preparation). These areas include: City Centre & Docklands, Mahon, Blackpool, Tivoli and Tramore Road.

Cork County Council: The eight proposed draft Local Area Plans for the Ballincollig / Carrigaline, Bandon / Kinsale, Blarney / Macroom, Cobh, East Cork, Fermoy, Kanturk / Mallow, and West Cork Municipal Districts will provide for future strategic economic development across the County. The LAPs are being prepared following detailed consideration of the submissions and observations received from members of the public and the deliberations of the County Council concerning the plans.

Kerry County Council Economic Development Unit carried out an assessment of strategic sites and economic opportunity sites within the County for the IDA in April 2017. The starting point for determining the strategic sites was defined initially by the list of sites identified in the land capacity study for the background preparation for the National Planning Framework (NPF) and Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region Assembly in 2016. These sites were screened to identify the sites most suitable for the IDA. See update Action 223 for further details.

**Action: 227**

**Measure:** Develop the Shannon Estuary and particularly the development of the strategic development locations of Tarbert and the Tarbert/Ballylongford landbank. Facilitate private sector development of an LNG Plant along with a CHP plant on the Tarbert/Ballylongford landbank.

**Lead:** Kerry County Council

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary is an inter-jurisdictional land and marine based framework plan to guide the future development and management of the Shannon Estuary. It has been commissioned by Limerick City and County Council, Clare County Council, Kerry County Council, Shannon Development and the Shannon Foynes Port Company. The project is overseen by a multi-agency steering group comprised of the above and other key stakeholders with an interest in the Estuary. The final Strategic Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary has now been published.

**Action: 230**

**Measure:** InterTradeIreland will promote public tendering opportunities to SME's in the region including cross border public sector opportunities, consortia building for larger contracts and below threshold contracts.

**Lead:** InterTradeIreland

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

24 company participants attend an Introduction to Tendering seminar at Cork City Council offices on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016.

**Action: 231**

**Measure:** InterTrade Ireland will explore organisation of regional public sector 'meet the buyer'

event.

**Lead:** InterTradelreland

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

InterTradelreland in partnership with the OGP (Office of Government Procurement), CPD (Central Procurement Directorate), EI, Invest NI and SIB (Strategic Investment Board) delivered a Munster region Meet the Buyer event at Cork City Hall on 19<sup>th</sup> October. Working closely with the LEOs, Chambers of Commerce and business organisations the event was attended by 246 participants and 75 professional buyers from thirty public sector organisations. A number of parallel sessions were delivered on market features and the Go2Tender programme.

**Action: 234**

**Measure:** Promote HBAN, the Halo Business Angel Network to offer local high growth potential companies the opportunity to pitch for funding from high network individuals and angel syndicates.

**Lead:** EI

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

HBAN: During 2016, there has been significant PR activity to increase awareness of HBAN (Including a Roadshow, Cork and Dublin launch of Entrepreneur Experience®, CorkBIC Global Investor Challenge, Startup Nations Summit and Dinner, and regular newsletters).

HBAN continued to register new Business Angels during 2016 and undertake considerable activity in terms of investor introductions to start-ups and other companies seeking investment. Boole and Irrus Investment Syndicates continue to be very active. CorkBIC and HBAN have a robust pipeline of early stage and start up companies which will be supported during 2017 to become Investor-ready and be introduced to potential investors. Two deals totalling €3.1m will be closed in Q1 2017.

**HBAN South West Deals 2016:**

- 8.5 deals (value €3.65m)
- 15 new Business Angels registered
- 17 pitching events during the year
- 59 Investor Introductions

**Action: 235**

**Measure:** Develop the Business Angel ecosystem with particular reference to Regional Angel Syndicates

**Lead:** CorkBIC

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

HBAN: CorkBIC continues to work very closely with Boole Syndicate in Cork and Limerick based on



Irrus Syndicate to ensure regular and adequate flow of pitches by Investor Ready Companies. Recruiting new members to both Syndicates is ongoing. Efforts to create a new Kerry based syndicate are continuing.

**Action: 236**

**Measure:** EI will run two Finance for Growth Workshops in the region in the second half of 2015. The workshops will be aimed at EI clients (preferably that work within the finance function).

**Lead:** EI

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

Finance for Growth Workshops have been run by EI in the region during September 2015, November 2015 and February 2016. Further specific targeted finance workshops were undertaken in 2016. Average number of SMEs participating at each workshop is 25.

**Action: 237**

**Measure:** InterTrade Ireland will host 15 workshops under their "Funding for Growth" initiative in the region to promote all traditional and non-traditional sources of finance to local businesses. Local businesses will benefit from hearing about alternative sources of finance and how to access it. Businesses will also have the opportunity to meet with a corporate finance expert to discuss their individual funding needs at the regional 'Funding for Growth' Clinics. These workshops will also focus on equity awareness-raising at a regional level including providing unique equity advisory clinics where companies can meet with an equity expert, business planning workshops and venture capital case studies.

**Lead:** InterTradelreland

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

The funding for Growth programme incorporating regional workshops and clinics has now been completed. The equity advisory clinics are ongoing: clinics are delivered by InterTradelreland's venture professional, who meets with companies to advise independently on their fundraising activities including business plan review, investment pitch practice and signposting to investors across the island. This service is provided free of charge with pre-screening undertaken in advance to ensure companies using the service meet the minimum criteria.

**Action 239:**

**Measure:** Local Authorities, through the CCMA and the NRA to work with DCENR, DTTS and TIF to facilitate the rollout of high speed broadband.

**Status:** Complete

3 Broadband Officers have now been appointed to Local Authorities in the South West region. These Broadband Officers are working closely with (and are funded by) the Department of Community & Rural Affairs on an ongoing basis to identify and address barriers to the national broadband plan roll-

out. They will also work with local communities to provide information about the planned roll-out.

The Department has also established 2 Regional Broadband Action Groups, who will work with Local Authorities, Local Enterprise Offices, LEADER Groups and other relevant agencies. The Action Groups will work to accelerate the broadband network build in rural Ireland, once a contract(s) has been awarded, by ensuring that there are no local barriers and identifying priority areas for rollout. They will also assist in the development of Rural Digital Strategies, as set out in the Programme for a Partnership Government.

Local Authorities have also been working with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in relation to the use of the MapRoad Roadworks Licensing System as the single national centralised road opening licensing. Eir has engaged actively with Broadband Officers in particular areas, including Cork, on piloting a solution for mobile blackspots.

**Action: 240**

**Measure:** Develop demonstration initiatives with operators to stimulate demand for broadband, such as the enterprise-led initiatives being proposed in Skibbereen.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork City Council have been undertaking initiatives including seminars on the key requirements for data centres (high speed fibre access, power and suitable sites) and are engaging with the only current data centre in Cork (Cork internet Exchange, CIX) and it@cork to look at further initiatives to stimulate broadband demand through the development of data centres in the region and other key digital exchange infrastructure such as INEX (Internet Neutral Exchange) which was launched in Cork in Q2 2016, being located at CIX in Hollyhill. This is INEX's first regional Internet exchange point. This reflects the growing internet and digital economy in Cork.

**Action: 241**

**Measure:** Complete delivery of two international cables to the South West region and progress plans to extend these to mainland Europe.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork City & County Council: two cables are currently proposed to come into the Cork region; the Hibernia Atlantic cable which landed in 2016, and the Ireland France Subsea Cable which is proposed to land in Ringaskiddy in 2017. There is also the potential for a third cable to be landed in the east Cork region. This level of international connectivity sets the region up for significant interest for data centres particularly in the low latency sector such as financial services.

**Action: 242**

**Measure:** Accelerate the take-up of ICT On-line Vouchers in the South West region, to build capabilities to exploit ecommerce and advanced broadband.

**Lead:** DCENR

**Status:** Merged

**Narrative:**

This action has been merged with action 74 due to similarity of objectives

**Action: 243**

**Measure:** Complete a targeted broadband needs analysis of the region targeting specific areas for shorter term economic gain.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

This action is being progressed in line with National Broadband Scheme.

**Action: 244**

**Measure:** Develop a plan to be the first movers in the National Broadband Plan (Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources) and to facilitate the rapid roll-out in priority areas in the region for investment, having regard to “double blackspot” status in certain areas.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork City Council: Based on the initial analysis by the Department of Communications in the initial assessment for the National Broadband Plan, and as indicated in their Service provision mapping, Cork City is well serviced by broadband due to the existence of the Municipal Area Network (MAN) installed in the noughties and multiple broadband service suppliers in the city. There are no double blackspots identified as yet in the city area.

**Action: 245**

**Measure:** Údarás na Gaeltachta will upgrade the broadband infrastructure to its business parks by ensuring deployment of fibre optic infrastructures.

**Lead:** Údarás na Gaeltachta

**Status:** No longer being progressed

**Narrative:**

Negotiations are ongoing with relevant providers; however, in light of the ongoing tendering process under the National Broadband Plan, this action is not being progressed by Údarás na Gaeltachta.

**Action: 246**

**Measure:** The continued development of the road infrastructure in the region remains a priority to improve the functioning of the region. Work with the DTTAS on the business case for the upgrade of Cork to Limerick route to motorway standard, as resources permit. The Macroom by-pass is also important for the connectivity of the South West region.

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Cork County Council: the Macroom Bypass has been included in the Government's Capital Investment Plan 2016-2021, as part of the N22 Macroom to Baile Bhuirne scheme. Cork County Council has been granted €14 million by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) in 2017 to progress enabling works and land acquisition. These enabling works should be completed by mid 2018, which will allow the main contract to progress once funding becomes available.

The M20 case is being continuously promoted; the scheme will be reviewed as part of the upcoming review of the Government's Capital Investment Plan 2016-2021 and the Minister has allowed TII to spend €1million on pre-appraisal works in advance of that review. A Feasibility Study, funded by TII, is underway for the N72/N73 Mallow bypass which is a part of the overall M20 project and is included in the Capital Investment Programme subject to Planning.

**Action: 247**

**Measure:** The realisation of the employment potential in the City Centre and Cork Docklands and Tivoli requires investment in strategic routes, the City Centre Movement Strategy and sustainable transport projects

**Lead:** Local Authorities

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

Cork City Council: City Council progressed the City Centre Movement Strategy (CCMS) through the planning process which has now been approved by Council, and is currently undertaking studies of the South West, Northern and South Eastern strategic transport corridors. Projects relating to improving strategic routes will be further pursued with the National Transport Authority and Transport Infrastructure Ireland including the proposed pedestrian Harley Street Bridge. City Council has engaged with the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF) process and has been approved for funding of enabling infrastructure under the process.

**Action: 248**

**Measure:** Progress plans for new and improved port infrastructure in Ringaskiddy.

**Lead:** Port of Cork

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

The procurement process to appoint a contractor for the Ringaskiddy port Redevelopment was re-

commenced in June 2017 having been put on hold in October 2016 while awaiting a decision on a Section 146(b) planning permission application. In overall terms this has put the project 12 months behind the original expected schedule.

The Ringaskiddy Redevelopment construction is a significant civil engineering project and will be a welcome tender award (expected Nov 2017) for this sector of the construction industry which is currently very flat and will provide a significant number of jobs locally.

**Action: 249**

**Measure:** Develop new business through Bantry Bay Port Company.

**Lead:** Port of Cork

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Oil storage and distribution throughput on the Whiddy terminal slowed considerably in 2016. The ship movements in 2017 have improved but are still lower than historically when the installation was run by Phillips 66 due to a different business model being pursued by Zenith Ltd, the current owner.

The inner harbour redevelopment project in Bantry commenced in March 2016 and is due for completion in August 2017. This will provide a new leisure marina for visiting yachts, a quayside parking area adjacent to this facility as well as enhanced pier facilities for the local aquaculture industry and fishermen. The contractors BAM have provided local employment to local contractors and taken on local staff for the duration of this project. Upon completion this project will secure and enhance the employment potential in the local aquaculture and fishing industries and will contribute to local tourism.

**Action: 250**

**Measure:** Develop a strategy to target new areas of business including in the agri-food and offshore energy sectors.

**Lead:** Port of Cork

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

Port of Cork company continue to research opportunities in the offshore sector. The needs of offshore vessels are currently catered for in the City Quays and in Ringaskiddy. The logistics of the agri-sector are accommodated in City Quays, and Ringaskiddy.

The purchase of Marino Point by a Joint Venture which includes the Port of Cork Company will provide new opportunities for new business in both of these areas and will also accommodate trades re-located from City Quays when the City Docks redevelopment goes ahead. This capacity is crucial in providing for new business.

**Action: 253**

**Measure:** Progress plans to expand Fenit Harbour and develop new business through the port. To drive the economic growth of the Region- the infrastructural development of Fenit Harbour-

including a second Pier would enable existing companies to increase their production capacity significantly. As a first step, undertake a feasibility study to determine the suitability and added value of the required investment to other economic opportunities including Freight, Leisure (marina) and possible opportunity for cruise liners and ancillary port activities.

**Lead:** Kerry County Council

**Status:** Ongoing

**Narrative:**

A draft brief has been prepared for the procurement of consultants to carry out a Feasibility Study on the expansion of Fenit Harbour. It is envisaged that the brief will issue to prospective consultants in Q2 2017 and that the Feasibility Study will be complete by Q1 2018.

**Action: 255**

**Measure:** Subject to funding, advance the proposed Cork Area Rapid Transport System with the NTA as a key future part of the public transport system for the Metropolitan Cork Region

**Lead:** Cork Local Authorities

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

Cork City & Cork County Council: This project has been integrated into the *Cork 2050* project which is being undertaken to support the submission for the National Framework Plan.

**Action: 256**

**Measure:** Subject to funding, complete upgrade of Kent Station as a commuter hub and interlink with Cork BRT

**Lead:** Cork Local Authorities

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative:**

Cork City Council: The upgrade to Kent Station is currently under construction and due for completion in 2017.

**Action: 260**

**Measure:** Prioritise water supply and waste water treatment investment consistent with incoming business demands and tourism sector requirements, including as outlined in the Cork development plans and the Kerry County Development Plan 2015-2021.

**Lead:** Irish Water

**Status:** Complete

**Narrative**

Completed Water Supply projects in the region include Macroom Water Mains Rehabilitation; Advanced Mains Rehabilitation Works - Glantane Lombardstown; Conna Regional Water Supply Scheme Phase 1 Reservoir; Mains Rehabilitation Works - Mallow Water Supply Scheme Removal of Lead Services; Doneraile Water Supply Scheme; Cork City Water Conservation Advance Works at Kent Station; Cork City Water Mains Rehabilitation; Central Regional WSS - Lough Guitane Rising Main; Kerry Watermains Rehab Project Phase 1.

Completed Wastewater projects in the region include Ballylongford & Tarbert Wastewater Treatment Plants; West Cork Wastewater Treatment Plant; Carbery Muskerry; Riverstick Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade; Carrigtohill Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade; Youghal Sewerage Scheme Network; Ballincollig Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade; Blarney Tower Sewerage Scheme Network (Cloghroe).