

**ACTION  
PLAN  
FOR  
JOBS**  
**2015-2017**

**WEST  
REGION**

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



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## **FOREWORD BY AN TÁNAISTE AND MINISTER FOR ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION**

I am delighted to see the publication of this second Progress Report for the West Action Plan for Jobs. Since it was launched in November 2015, the objective of this Plan has been to provide a platform for Galway, Roscommon and Mayo 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 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 West this year has been very positive. At the end of 2016, the region had an Unemployment Rate of 7.9%; compared to 11.7% at the start of 2015. 9,800 additional people entered employment across the region in 2016. Figures from the CSO show that that growth is happening across a range of sectors, including Accommodation and Food Services, Retail, and Industry.

In addition to this, recent job announcements from firms such as Siteminder, Jazz Pharmaceuticals and Coca Cola demonstrate the continued confidence of industry in the West region to support both established and growing companies, often requiring specialist skills. The commendable work undertaken this year by the 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 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 also like to express my thanks to the Chairman of the West committee, Mr Gerard Kilcommins, 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 blue ink that reads "Frances". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Frances Fitzgerald, T.D.**  
**Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise and Innovation**

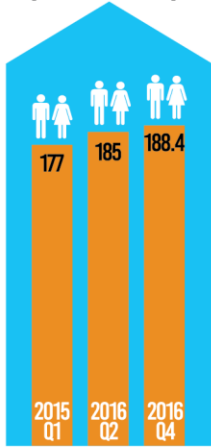


# ACTION PLAN FOR JOBS: WEST

Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation

2nd Progress Report, June – December 2016

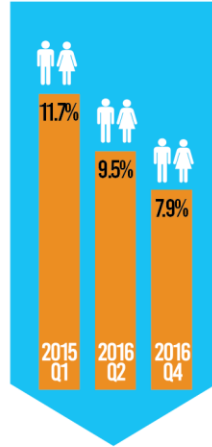
## Numbers Employed (Thousands)



Persons aged 15 years and over in Employment (Thousand)

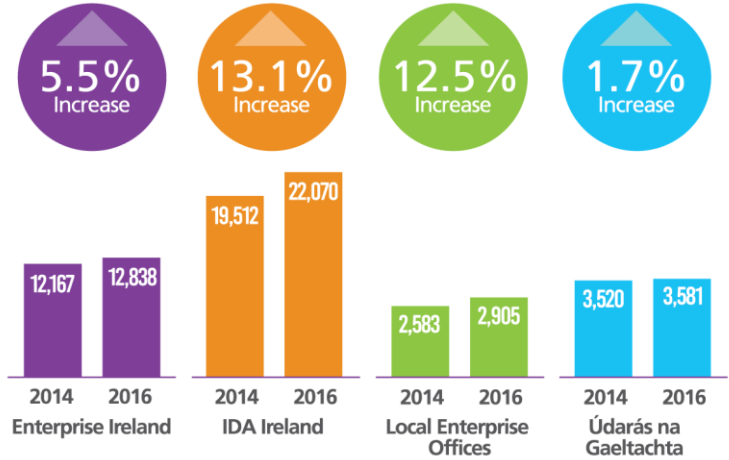
Source: CSO QNHS (QNQ22)

## Unemployment Rate



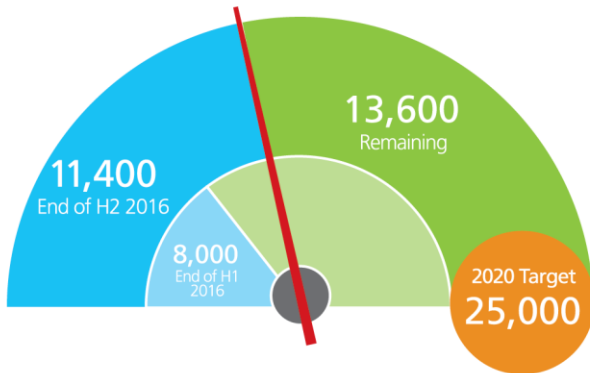
ILO Unemployment Rate (15 - 74 years) (%)

## Jobs in Agency Supported Businesses



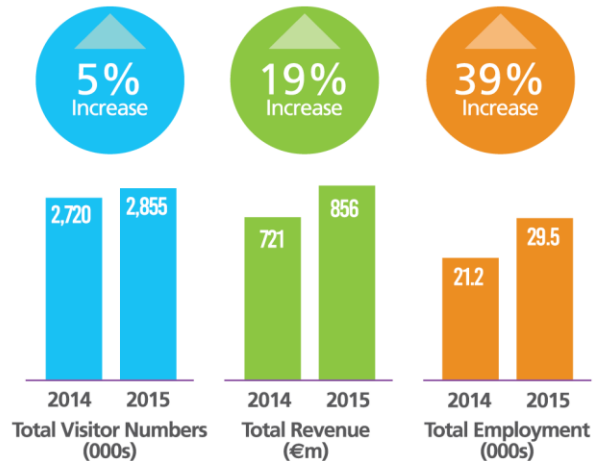
Sources: DJEI Annual Employment Survey, Local Enterprise Office Annual Employment Survey, and Údarás na Gaeltachta

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



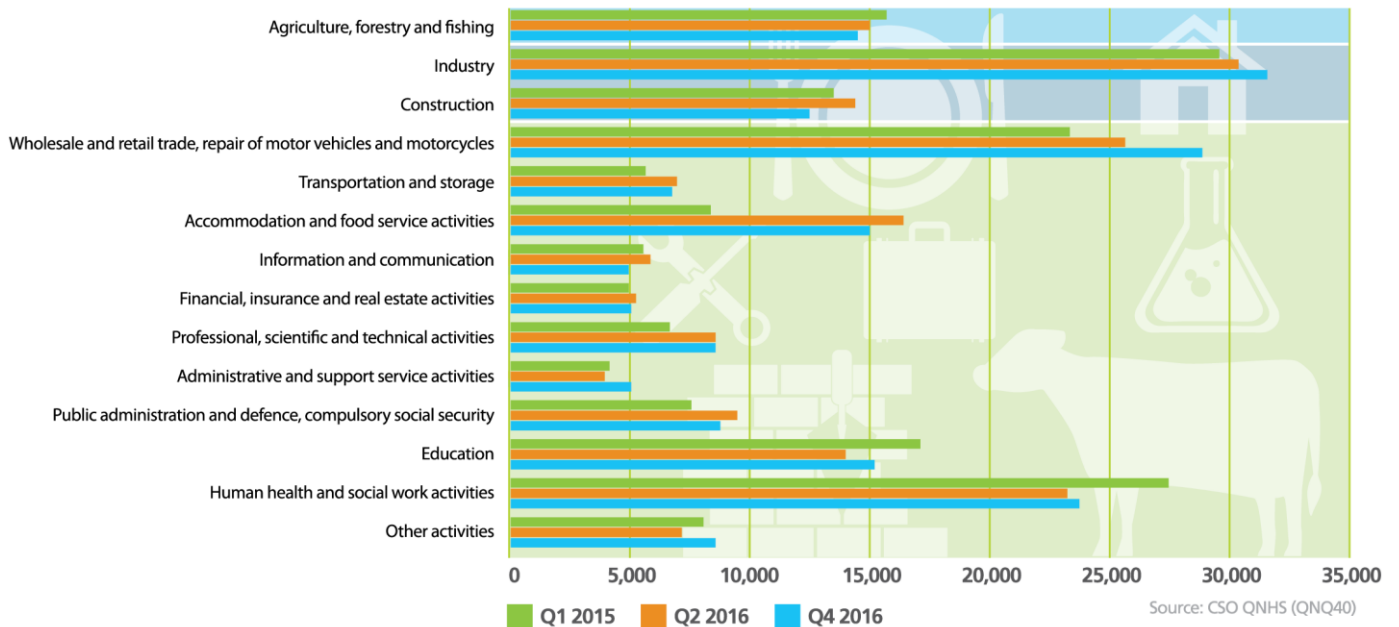
Source: CSO QNHS (QNQ22)

## Tourism in the West region



Source: Fáilte Ireland  
2016 figures unavailable at time of publication

## Employment by Sector



Source: CSO QNHS (QNQ40)

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS



In 2016 Enterprise Ireland provided financial support of over €2.3m to eleven new high potential start-up companies in the West, investments of €50,000 each were provided to 16 early stage potential high growth entrepreneurs, and 60 SMEs were approved a €5,000 Innovation Voucher. **(Action 37)**



The 2016 Mayo Ideas Week, with the theme "Innovation Nurturing Great Ideas", attracted over 1,500 people to the 13 organised events across the county. Sessions included R&D Tax Credits for SMEs – getting the most from innovation; employers' and jobseekers' networking; Entrepreneurship in schools; Developing sales in EU markets; and a Roundtable for Artists, Makers, and Creatives. **(Action 30)**



In 2016 the Marine Institute funded the SmartBay National Infrastructure Access Programme (NIAP), with funding provided to nine research/industry collaborative projects totalling €208,821 across six HEIs **(Action 60)**



A strong flow of IDA itineraries continued in the West in 2016, with 48 site visits in total. Announcements in 2016 included Met Life, SMT, Wood Group expansion, Fort Wayne and Coca Cola expansions in Mayo, Ipswitch, Wayfair expansion, Alexion, Surmodics, Zeltiq, Glan Agua, Jazz Pharmaceuticals, Siteminder and Coca Cola. **(Action 63)**



The Ireland West Food Group (competitive funding) project, via Galway LEO, is now supporting 32 food producers across the region in investigating the potential of the London and South East England marketplaces for export **(Action 112)**



Roscommon County Council secured €100k under the REDZ programmes to develop a food hub at Castlerea. Planning permission has been submitted and a governance structure established. **(Action 126)**



A business plan funded by Bórd Scannán na hÉireann/Irish Film Board and the Local Authorities in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon and prepared by the Galway Film Centre has been submitted to develop a Regional Audiovisual Producer's Fund for the West and North West region. A working group has been established to progress and activate the plan. **(Action 144)**



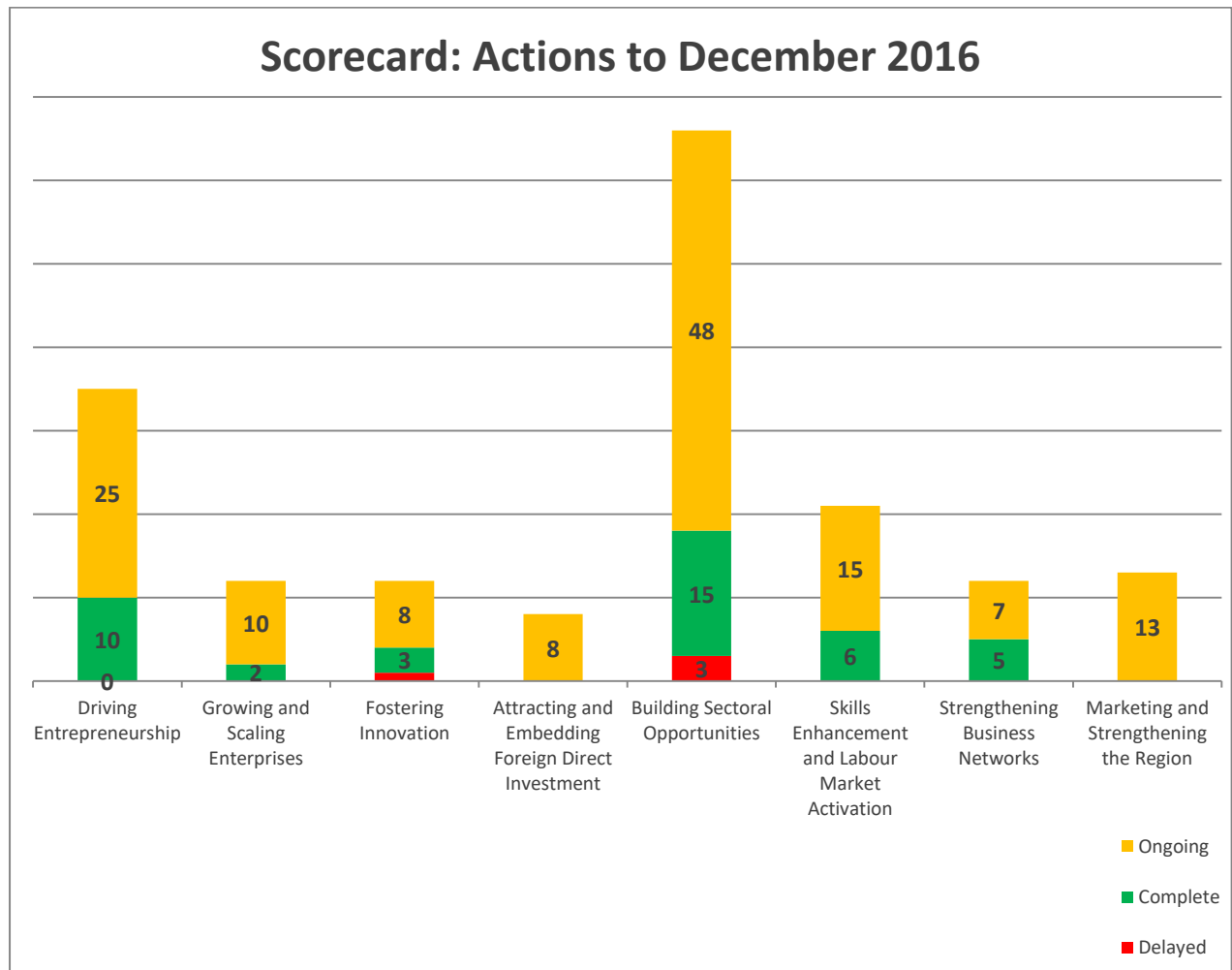
The Galway Science and Technology Forum held its annual Science and Technology festival for 2 weeks in November, and GMIT has also piloted a Scientist-in-Residence scheme to facilitate STEM projects in secondary schools in the region **(Action 159)**



The Western Development Commission is implementing the Creative Momentum project, with partners NUIG and others, to support the creative sector. Outputs: 55 creative enterprises attended a 'Creative Exchange' information and networking event in Castlebar on data analytics; 3 funded to exhibit and sell their products during the Urkult festival; 4 selected to receive funding to attend Arctic Design Week in Finland in February 2017; 4 supported to participate in the Digital DNA conference in Armagh **(Action 140)**



## SCORECARD: ACTIONS TO END 2016



### Actions due by end 2016

179 of the West Action Plan's 194 actions were due to be initiated or completed by the end of 2016. 175 of these are on track to be delivered, or have been completed. 4 actions are delayed; 2 actions are no longer being progressed, or have been deemed unfeasible (further details on page 11). This represents an overall implementation rate of 97%.

## **OPENING COMMENTARY**

This is the Second Progress Report from the Implementation Committee established by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation to oversee and monitor implementation of the measures contained in the 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 West Region was launched by the Taoiseach on November 16<sup>th</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 194 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 West such as agri-food, tourism, medtech, ICT and pharma.

The core objective of the Plan is to support the creation of an extra 25,000 jobs across Galway, Mayo and Roscommon 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 West Implementation Committee is chaired by Gerry Kilcommins, Vice President Medtronic & General Manger of Medtronic Galway.

## **NOTABLE DEVELOPMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Announcements**

#### **Glan Agua Limited and MEIC Limited**

Minister of State for the Office of Public Works and Flood Relief Sean Canney TD officially opened the new offices of water and waste water solutions company Glan Agua Limited and civil engineering company MEIC Limited in Loughrea on July 8th 2016. Both companies are subsidiaries of Mota-Engil who are expanding their operations in Ireland through these companies and creating a UK and Ireland HQ Centre in Loughrea, leading to the creation of 60 new jobs over five years.

Founded in 2008, Glan Agua Limited has grown to become one of Ireland's leading providers of design, construction, commissioning, operation and maintenance services within the water and wastewater sector. The company, which currently employs 63 people, began operations in the Enterprise Centre in Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.

#### **Jazz Pharmaceuticals**

Jazz Pharmaceuticals announced in August the opening of a new manufacturing and development facility on a 17 acre site in Monksland Co. Roscommon. This is the first directly owned, managed and operated manufacturing facility built by Jazz and the company has invested approximately €50 million in its development, which commenced in February 2014 and was supported by IDA Ireland. The facility has recently secured full regulatory approval from the United States (U.S.) Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) and the Health Products Regulatory Authority in Ireland. The company expects to employ up to 50 people within three years.

### **SmartBay**

A new programme to fund open-sea testing for ocean energy was announced in July, with €11m made available to four companies in the UK, Ireland, France and the Netherlands. Galway-based SmartBay has been included on the latest north-west Europe funding project, with ocean energy the order of the day. Part of a four-partner programme called FORESEA (Funding Ocean Renewable Energy through Strategic European Action), SmartBay will help demonstrate tidal, wave and offshore wind energy technologies in real sea conditions. Supported by the Marine Institute, Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland and Science Foundation Ireland, it will be used to collect valuable data from the ocean and will be a critical component of a world-class maritime infrastructure in Ireland.

### **Coca-Cola**

The Coca-Cola Company in September announced an investment of €26m in its Ballina operations in Co. Mayo. The announcement was made by An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny TD with Muhtar Kent, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, The Coca-Cola Company. The capital investment further strengthens the Company's commitment to Ireland as the Ballina facility becomes the first production site for the company's innovative Freestyle technology outside of the United States. An additional 25 new jobs will be created in Ballina over the next three years as part of this investment.

### **SiteMinder**

One of the top 20 technology pioneers to come out of Australia announced in August the opening of its new office in downtown Galway to provide around 100 jobs initially with the potential to grow in future. SiteMinder, the hotel industry's leading cloud platform, formally announced the opening in Galway alongside the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation. The project came one month ahead of SiteMinder's 10-year milestone, to support the company's 20,000-strong-and-fast-growing global hotel customer base.

### **MathWorks**

Minister for Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation Mary Mitchell O'Connor TD announced in September that MathWorks, the leading developer of mathematical computing software for engineers and scientists, is to establish a shared sales and services centre in Galway. The company's long term investment in Galway includes plans to fill 50 positions in its new location. The company has been actively recruiting to fill more than 20 of these positions. MathWorks was founded in 1984 and is headquartered in Natick, Massachusetts. The company's flagship products, MATLAB and Simulink, are used throughout the automotive, aerospace, communications, electronics, and industrial automation industries as fundamental tools for research and development. They are also used for modelling and simulation in increasingly technical fields, such as financial services and computational biology. More than 5,000 colleges and universities around the world use MATLAB and Simulink for teaching and research in a broad range of technical disciplines. The company employs more than 3,500 people around the world.

### **Sahajanand Medical Technologies (SMT)**

In September it was announced that Sahajanand Medical Technologies (SMT) is to establish its European headquarters which will have a state-of-the-art Research, Development and Innovation Centre in Galway, creating 50 jobs over five years. SMT is the largest developer and manufacturer of minimally invasive coronary stent systems in India and supplies to around 60 countries in Europe, Asia, MENA and Latin America. SMT has received numerous awards for its breakthrough innovations

and quality that have led to a thinner and more flexible DES (drug-eluting stent) with good long term clinical results.

### **MetLife**

Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation Mary Mitchell O'Connor TD and IDA Ireland in November welcomed the news that MetLife is expanding its Irish operations with the opening of a new Global Technology Campus in Galway to support its customers and technologists around the world. The new Galway Global Technology Campus will be home to more than 200 new, skilled IT roles. The campus is expected to open in the first half of 2017, and recruitment will begin immediately.

### **Funding Awards**

#### **€555 million in Capital Grants secured by Minister Mitchell O'Connor to support jobs in all regions**

In October Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Mary Mitchell O'Connor secured a 10% increase in her 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. The Minister wants both the IDA and Enterprise Ireland 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.

#### **Backing of €68 million for CÚRAM as it establishes global hub of medical device research expertise**

September saw the official launch of CÚRAM, the Centre for Research in Medical Devices. CÚRAM is a Science Foundation Ireland Research Centre based at NUI Galway, which is a unique symbiotic relationship of academia and industry partners that pushes the scientific frontiers in medical devices. CÚRAM represents investment of €49m over six years from Science Foundation Ireland and industry. In just over 18 months, this support has already been used to leverage a further €19 million in funding from the EU's Horizon 2020 programme, over €4.3 million of which has been awarded directly to indigenous Irish industry. Some of the 24 indigenous Irish and multi-national companies partnering with CÚRAM include Aerogen, Arch Therapeutics, Aquila Bioscience, Boston Scientific, Collagen Solutions, Cook Medical, Medical Energetics, Medtronic, Mylan, Neograft, Neosurgical, Neuravi, Ocean Harvest Technology, Spraybase, Stem Cell Technologies, Stryker Instruments and Viscus Biologics.

#### **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 €300,000 awarded to the following projects in the West region:

- *Glenamaddy, An Cheathrú Rua, Galway Rural, Oranmore and Gort, Galway*: €100,000 awarded to develop capacity building programme within these five REDZ zones
- *Erris Beo, Gaath Sáile, Béal an Mhuirthead, Mayo*: €50,000 awarded for the development of enterprise units including shared secretariat and hot desk facilities
- *Westport Enterprise Centre, Mayo*: €50,000 awarded for the redevelopment of a vacant commercial property into a state-of-the-art enterprise centre
- *Castlerea Food Hub, Roscommon*: €100,000 awarded towards developing a fully equipped kitchen which will allow individuals to train and to develop and manufacture food products. It will also serve as a catering training facility.

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

In November, the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Heather Humphreys TD, 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 Galway, Mayo and Roscommon secured over €1m in funding under this scheme:

- In Galway: Athenry, Portumna, Tuam Urban, Oughterard, Loughrea, Ballinasloe, Gort, and Rosmuc received funding of between €25,000 and €85,000 each. Projects include the refurbishment and improvement of footpaths, landscaping, and the development of walking/biking trails.
- In Mayo: Crossmolina, Kilkelly, Kiltimagh and Louisburgh each received €95,000 for enhancements to physical environment and public realm, concentrating on streetscape enhancements, car parking provision and the enhancement of leisure facilities and playgrounds.
- In Roscommon: Ballaghaderreen, Boyle, Castlerea, Cootehall, Keadue, Monksland, Roscommon, and Strokestown all received funding of between approx. €20,000 and €62,000 each. Projects include the development of playground facilities, improvement of streetscapes and public realms, and the undertaking of a town centre 'Health Check'.

## **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 (DCCAE) 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 JUNE 2016**

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

- Action 55: 'Create a Western Innovation District (WIN) by developing linkages across the region and inter regionally to identify suitable space and demand for local hubs which could be connected virtually to the Galway City Innovation District': Whilst matching funding was allocated from Enterprise Ireland, this initiative is delayed due to resource constraints and a lack of matching funding.
- Action 71: 'Connect Ireland will develop a Regional Connect Ireland Plan that is integrated with the local authorities' enterprise development and job-creation activities and seek a nominated officer from each county in the region for the roll-out of the Plan': This action is no longer being progressed as the contract between IDA and Connect Ireland has concluded.

- Action 72: ‘Announce and run the Connectivation competition, inviting third Level students to share their ideas for the future development of the Succeed in Ireland initiative’: This action is no longer being progressed as the contract between IDA and Connect Ireland has concluded.
- Action 86: ‘Develop and implement a Growth Programme for Tourism and Retail sectors including initiatives such as mentoring services, trade fair supports and business development training’: Progress on this initiative is ongoing within the Galway Chamber Tourism Committee. Progress was made with the tourism sector on defining a strategy and specific initiatives. Unfortunately, due to funding and resource constraints, execution has been delayed. Whilst matching funding was allocated from EI, this initiative is also delayed due to resource constraints and a lack of matching funding.
- Action 103: ‘Develop a marine activities programme as part of a coastal and islands network in the South Connemara Gaeltacht based on a South Connemara Coastal “Blueway” through a Coastal and Islands network’: LEADER funding was sought for this action but was not secured. This action has been deferred while alternative funding options are explored.
- Action 124: ‘Develop effective measures to attract additional landings into ports in the West region’: Landings into West Region Ports are currently limited by inadequate infrastructure such as a lack of deep water berths at locations like Rossaveal Harbour.

## ACTION UPDATES: H2 2016 AND ONGOING

<b>Action:</b>	1
<b>Measure:</b>	Enterprise Ireland will increase enterprise formation in the West through initiatives such as Enterprise Start workshops, the New Frontiers Entrepreneurial Development Programme, Competitive Feasibility Fund and Competitive Start Fund
<b>Lead:</b>	Enterprise Ireland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<p>Regional enterprise development and start-up formation is supported by a range of players at a regional level, such as the Local Enterprise Offices, the Local Authorities, local Chambers of Commerce, WestBIC, the Western Development Commission, Udaras na Gaeltachta, the Higher Education Sector, Start-up hubs, Start-up &amp; Business Networks and Enterprise Ireland. To contribute to supporting start-up creation nationally, Enterprise Ireland provides a range of supports which are available regionally; for example:</p> <p><b>Enterprise Start Workshops</b> target people who have an idea for an innovative and ambitious start-up business that has the potential for exporting and growth in international markets. The objective of these workshops is to explore key business areas of focus, such as customer, market and funding needs. Enterprise Ireland ran an Enterprise Start Workshop in the West Region in 2015 with 10 participants. A second Enterprise Start workshop took place in April 2016 with 14 people attending. A further Enterprise Start workshop took place in Ballinasloe in December 2016 with 4 participants.</p> <p><b>New Frontiers</b> is Enterprise Ireland's national entrepreneur development programme for innovative, early-stage start-ups. It is a three-phased programme, based in 14 campus incubation centres across the country. Nationally, each year, New Frontiers funds approximately 150 companies. In the West Region, New Frontiers is delivered by the Galway Mayo Institute of Technology in Castlebar and Galway, in partnership with Enterprise Ireland. In 2016 Enterprise Ireland's Board approved funding for the New Frontiers programme for the period 2016-2020. In H1 2016 50 people participated in Phase 1 (6 weeks part-time) across the Castlebar &amp; Galway GMIT campuses; 13 entrepreneurs (Galway: 8/Castlebar: 5) were selected to participate on Phase 2 (6 months full time - with €15k stipend, mentor, incubation space etc) and are incubating their businesses.</p> <p><b>Competitive Feasibility Fund:</b> During H1 2016 13 entrepreneurs received letters of offer for €199,950 feasibility funding to develop their ideas and these projects were progressing during H2 2016.</p> <p><b>Competitive Start Fund</b> aims to accelerate the growth of start-up companies that have the capability to succeed in global markets through the provision of</p>



€50k seed capital per company with €5k match funding required from the promoter. In 2016 Enterprise Ireland provided Competitive Start Funding to 16 early stage entrepreneurs to develop their companies in the West Region - the highest annual number since the Fund opened in 2011.

**Action:** 2  
**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**  
**Progress Update:** Údarás na Gaeltachta continues to promote and market the supports available to Gaeltacht based clients, either from Údarás itself or in conjunction with Enterprise Ireland. Údarás is particularly keen to attract new start-ups in the life science, food, business support services and creative sectors. As part of promotional activities, Údarás personnel have taken part in a number of sector specific trade missions in Food, Aquaculture and Cultural Tourism to the US. Marketing and promotional activities are being continually updated via all media platforms with regular updates, features and promotional pieces creating awareness around the support packages available. In addition, Údarás is liaising with sister agencies to address the impact of Brexit and provide support to client companies.

**Action:** 3  
**Measure:** Each of the Local Enterprise Offices in the West region will develop an annual Local Enterprise Development Plan, setting out targets and objectives to support start-ups and enterprises in their region  
**Lead:** LEOs  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Each of the West LEOs have now completed their 2017 Local Enterprise Development Plans which set out key targets in terms of financial support to eligible companies, numbers of people trained & given mentoring support, number of initiatives delivered targeting company development, innovation, etc. The 2017 Plans also include a series of longer-term initiatives and Key Upgrade Goals that address identified strategic challenges for each LEO between 2017 and 2020.

**Action:** 4

**Measure:** Údarás na Gaeltachta will develop annual enterprise development plans for each of the Gaeltacht areas in the region setting out targets to support entrepreneurship, enterprise growth and job creation. Údarás will target the creation of 540 new jobs in the West region over the period of this Action Plan across a range of key sectors such as Life Sciences, Mariculture and Food & Drink.

**Lead:** Údarás na Gaeltachta

**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** Údarás na Gaeltachta is on schedule to meet the target of 540 new jobs over the period of the Action Plan, with 283 jobs being created in 2016.

**Action:** 6

**Measure:** Galway Chamber will develop and implement a further programme for Female Entrepreneurs focusing on Growing and Scaling enterprises, building on the success of the Galway Chambers Female Entrepreneurs Start-up programme in 2011-2013

**Lead:** Galway Chamber

**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** Several elements have been progressed by Galway Chamber's subsidiary company Galway Technology Centre (GTC) and the PorterShed of which Galway Chamber is a founder.

GTC Events focused on the promotion of female entrepreneurship:

- 3 events were hosted for Network Galway over the last three years: all were targeted at female business people, both entrepreneurs and employees, and focused on networking mixed with presentations on technology, marketing & finance for business
- 2016 event entitled 'Female Founders – East Side Story' as part of Start-up Ireland. This event focused on presentations from Female Entrepreneurs that were based on the east side of Galway. 60 people attended the event.
- Two of the female entrepreneurs based in GTC have won 'Business Woman of The Year Awards' in the last 3 years: Anna Holland from FCS & Brenda Dooley from Axis Healthcare; both going on to represent Galway in National finals.

PorterShed held four events in 2016/2017:

- Network Galway hosted a networking event with a female business leaders' panel discussion
- 'Women in Technology' Galway Meetup: Coding for beginners event
- 'Women in Technology and Science' speed networking event with over 50 women in Tech who had an opportunity to network with each other

- Women in Tech (WITS) event geared towards 2nd level female students: this was an interactive panel discussion with women in business including Academia, Tech, Multinationals, and Start-ups. Over 80 students from across Galway city and county attended. Currently in discussions with WITS to host further networking events

<b>Action:</b>	8
<b>Measure:</b>	Enterprise Ireland will support and monitor successful applicants under the €5 million Community Enterprise Initiative Scheme launched in 2015
<b>Lead:</b>	Enterprise Ireland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<p>On 1st June 2016 Minister Mary Mitchell O'Connor announced details of 7 applicants in West Region who were successful in the Community Enterprise Initiative as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IRD Kiltimagh Ltd, Mayo:</b> Project - to promote how Community Enterprise Centres can better support local start-up projects</li> <li>• <b>SCCUL Enterprises, Galway:</b> Project - pilot the development of volunteer Mentor Panel - 'BizMentors'- in the West Region</li> <li>• <b>Galway-Mayo IT (GMIT), Galway:</b> Project 'Enterprise Goal' is a partnership with GAA to develop a network to promote enterprise in the community</li> <li>• <b>Love Castlebar Community Project, Mayo:</b> Project - Community Creative Hub for new ideas and projects using the 'dream-learn-make-grow' principle</li> <li>• <b>Galway Chamber of Commerce, Galway:</b> Project - development of the 'PorterShed' tech hub and co-working space, involving collaboration with the Western Innovation Network, to kickstart the Galway City Innovation District</li> <li>• <b>Ballinasloe Area Community Development, Galway:</b> Project - a number of community enterprise development projects</li> <li>• <b>Opportunity in a Million Ltd, Monksland, Co Roscommon:</b> Project - develop a high speed Enterprise Hub in Monksland, Co. Roscommon.</li> </ul>

<b>Action:</b>	10
<b>Measure:</b>	The West Local Authorities will develop Business Incentive Schemes (e.g. Rates Incentive Scheme, Development Levies Scheme) to support enterprise
<b>Lead:</b>	West Local Authorities
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Rates Incentive Schemes have been adopted and are being implemented for the business community to encourage and support the use of vacant commercial premises in the principal towns of the counties and support commerce and economic activities in these towns.

Mayo County Council has recently approved the ‘Mayo Business Support Scheme’ which provides support to businesses that occupy vacant retail premises. Roscommon County Council has a ‘Commercial Rates Incentive Scheme’ that provides an incentive to both landlords and aspiring entrepreneurs to occupy vacant units, by removing and reducing business entry costs and reducing the ongoing operational costs of being in business. Galway County Council has a ‘Retail Incentive Scheme’ to encourage new retailers and to support the development of existing retailers in County Galway. Each of these initiatives is being spearheaded by the respective Local Enterprise Offices.

**Action:** 11  
**Measure:** Local Development Strategies for the delivery of the LEADER programme will be developed covering the period 2015-2020  
**Lead:** Local Development Companies  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Local Development Strategies have been developed. The programme is currently open for applications.

**Action:** 12  
**Measure:** An Economic Forum will be established by each local authority, comprising representatives from all support providers in the region connected to the support and service of start-ups and SMEs, with the purpose of maximising collaboration and cooperation across the region  
**Lead:** West Local Authorities  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Further discussion will be undertaken at regional level to progress this action. Each county has Economic SPCs, an LCDC and a LEO – each of which have an economic development remit. The need to establish further fora with economic remits in each county is being reviewed.

**Action:** 13  
**Measure:** Galway, Mayo and Roscommon LEOs will collectively run a bootcamp for Ireland’s Best Young Entrepreneur entrants from the region  
**Lead:** LEOs  
**Status:** **Complete**  
**Progress Update:** The regional Bootcamp has been an important element of the Ireland’s Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) competition since its inception and has facilitated the development of a regional network and the sharing of best practice. The purpose of the Bootcamp is:

- To improve the entrepreneurial ‘know-how’ and capacity of the finalists to achieve their business goals

- To assist the finalists in the review and development of their business propositions
- To assist the finalists in the development and refinement of their business pitch.

The IBYE competition has now been successfully delivered in the region for three years. The competition is open to anyone between the ages of 18 and 35 and has been instrumental in allowing the LEOs to build stronger working relationships with an important cohort of the entrepreneurial population. Over 200 applications were received from across the region for the 2016 competition.

**Action:** 14  
**Measure:** Galway, Mayo and Roscommon LEOs will provide access to dedicated business networks at a regional, national and European level in collaboration with other bodies and agencies  
**Lead:** LEOs  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** At a regional level the LEOs have been collaborating on the MeetWest initiative, and have been rolling out the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN). EEN helps business grow through tailored support, new business and technology partnerships, commercial opportunities, licensing deals, and partners searches for EU funded R&D. Its services are tailored to SMEs but are also available to all other businesses, universities and research centres. The Western Development Commission has also been establishing a regional network of Community Enterprise Centres.

**Action:** 15  
**Measure:** Enterprise Ireland in partnership with GMIT and NUI Galway will deliver the New Frontiers Entrepreneurial Development Programme in the West region. 14 Entrepreneurs will participate on Phase 2 of the programme in the second half of 2015  
**Lead:** GMIT  
**Status:** **Complete**  
**Progress Update:** Recruitment for the 2016 intake of the New Frontiers Programme Commenced on the 3rd of March 2016, with a start date of the 1st of April 2016. In H1 2016 50 people participated in Phase 1) across the Castlebar & Galway GMIT campuses; 13 entrepreneurs were selected to participate on Phase 2 and are incubating their businesses.

**Action:** 16  
**Measure:** In addition to delivering the New Frontiers programme, GMIT will work with Enterprise Ireland and the LEOs to design and develop a new start-up

programme targeted at entrepreneurs

**Lead:** GMIT  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** €308k in external funding was secured by the GMIT iHubs for the delivery of a new project in Women's Entrepreneurship. This 3 year project will be delivered from May 2107. GMIT Innovation Hubs provide support and facilities for start-up businesses, including office space, mentoring, networking, introduction to investors, access to researchers, and access to students.

**Action:** 17  
**Measure:** GMIT will pilot a programme to develop the existing Graduate Entrepreneurship Culture foundation to lead to increased start-up opportunities for graduates in the region  
**Lead:** GMIT  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** In 2016 GMIT ran a pilot programme across all 5 Campuses for the GMIT Student Innovation Awards, with 13 applicants ultimately shortlisted for a pitching competition in March 2016. Two GMIT student enterprise start-up projects were finalists in the 2016 Enterprise Ireland Student Entrepreneur Awards. GMIT's Level 9 Certificate in Food Innovation and Entrepreneurship attracted 35 participants in 2016 in Galway and Mayo, successfully encouraging food start-up enterprises amongst graduates.

**Action:** 18  
**Measure:** Enterprise Ireland will agree and implement a Service Level Agreement with WestBIC, to ensure their interaction with start-ups in the West region is deepened and the value maximised  
**Lead:** Enterprise Ireland  
**Status:** **Complete**  
**Progress Update:** During H2 2016 Enterprise Ireland signed a service level agreement with WestBIC. This agreement will lead to further acceleration of high potential start-up companies in the West and North West Regions.

**Action:** 19  
**Measure:** Provide risk capital to micro, small and medium sized and social enterprises in their start-up and expansion phases through the WDC Investment Fund  
**Lead:** Western Development Commission  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Funding through the WDC Investment Fund was disbursed to 5 SMEs from July to December 2016, to a total of €1,190,825. The WDC Investment Fund

can provide investment funding for SMEs, Community and Micro Enterprises, based in, or relocating to, the Western Region that are able to demonstrate they can provide a return on investment commensurate with the investment risk being taken.

**Action:** 21  
**Measure:** Promote national supports available to provide access to finance to start-ups and existing companies  
**Lead:** Enterprise Ireland  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** A range of channels are used on a continuous basis to make entrepreneurs and existing companies aware of the range of supports available to provide access to finance. These include 1-1 consultations with executives of Enterprise Ireland (regionally & nationally based), briefing seminars, provision of relevant literature, attendance at exhibitions & conferences to promote the supports to new audiences, and promotion through social media (regionally & nationally) and via eZines.

**Action:** 22  
**Measure:** Further strengthen the roll out of the Angels Programme (HBAN) in the West and North West to increase the flow of Private Equity and Smart Capital to match and increase the multiplier effect of State funds into innovative Start-ups  
**Lead:** WestBIC  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Rolling results for this programme include:

- Investment now at €31.26m
- Private investment deals were won for 8 WestBIC clients in 2016, with total cumulative investee clients since 2007 now at 55
- Private investment funding for 2016 amounted to €4.96m bringing the total cumulative investment from 2007 to €19.56m
- Other funds leveraged for 2016 amounted to €950k with total cumulative leveraged funds from 2007 amounting to €11.7m (total €31.26m)

**Action:** 23  
**Measure:** Enterprise Ireland will support early stage client entrepreneurs to raise investment by holding two Investor Ready Mentor Panel Pitch meetings in the region annually  
**Lead:** Enterprise Ireland  
**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** Enterprise Ireland ran two Investor Ready Mentor Panel Pitch meetings in the West Region in 2016 which involved 6 entrepreneurs. One took place in April 2016 and a second took place in December 2016. These meetings provided an opportunity to entrepreneurs to get feedback on their trial pitch for investment, prior to a first meeting with a potential investor.

**Action:** 24  
**Measure:** InterTradelreland will run its annual Seedcorn Competition on a regional basis, giving companies the opportunity to improve their investor readiness and greatly increase their chances of raising equity  
**Lead:** InterTradelreland  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** The 2016 Seedcorn Competition finished in November 2016. The Connacht & Leinster Regional Finals took place on 3rd November 2016 at the Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone, with two companies from Galway competing. The All-Island Seedcorn Final Awards Ceremony took place on 23rd November 2016 at the Waterfront, Belfast.

**Action:** 25  
**Measure:** InterTradelreland will host 10 workshops under its “Funding for Growth” initiative in the region to promote all traditional and non-traditional sources of finance to local businesses. InterTradelreland will also deliver a series of equity awareness events, including in the West Region, where companies can meet with an equity expert, participate in business planning workshops and learn from venture capital case studies.  
**Lead:** InterTradelreland  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** In the period June to December 2016, InterTradelreland held a Funding for Growth workshop in Galway on 17 October, an investment pitch master class in Athlone on 12 October and a Business Planning workshop in Athlone on 28 July.

**Action:** 26  
**Measure:** Operate the Community Loan Fund for community and not-for-profit enterprise in the Western region  
**Lead:** Western Development Commission  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** There were no disbursements from July to December 2016 for the Community Loan Fund; however the fund is operating on an ongoing basis. The WDC’s Community Loan Fund has been designed specifically to offer community and not-for-profit groups access to capital for projects aimed at improving the



socio-economic life of their community.

**Action:** 27  
**Measure:** Deliver the annual Meet West business networking event  
**Lead:** Mayo County Council (Lead for 2016) TBC for 2017  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** A successful 2016 MeetWest initiative was held from 24-25 November in Claremorris, Mayo. MeetWest offers participating companies a full day of tailored one-to-one networking meetings complemented by a conference and a networking dinner. The event offers delegates an invaluable opportunity to meet and connect with other businesses. It is anticipated that the 2017 MeetWest will be held in Galway.

**Action:** 29  
**Measure:** Enterprise Ireland will run one "Project Assessment & Development Day" in 2015 for Start-ups in the West Region in conjunction with WestBIC, LEOs and Údarás na Gaeltachta to assess early stage start-up projects with high potential for growth. Two further such events are scheduled for 2016  
**Lead:** Enterprise Ireland  
**Status:** **Complete**  
**Progress Update:** Project Assessment & Development Day (PADD) panels are made up of executives from the Local Enterprise Office, WestBIC, EI's High Potential Start-up Division and EI's Regions and Entrepreneurship Division with the objective of enabling an ambitious entrepreneur get independent feedback and developmental advice on his/her project. One PADD event with three participants took place in Galway during H1 2016 and a further two took place in H2 2016, one in Castlebar in October with 3 participants and one in Roscommon in November with 3 participants.

**Action:** 30  
**Measure:** Mayo County Council will continue to support Mayo Ideas Week, established in 2010 as an annual event comprising a series of idea generation, entrepreneurship and business events hosted by development and enterprise support agencies and other organisations across Mayo  
**Lead:** Mayo County Council  
**Status:** **Complete**  
**Progress Update:** Mayo Ideas Week is a week-long series of idea generation, entrepreneurship and business events hosted by the development and enterprise support agencies and organisations in County Mayo. Running every September since 2010, Mayo Ideas Week is very much a collaborative initiative, with more than 30 organisations and agencies co-hosting events over the years. The

2016 Mayo Ideas Week (the 7th running of the initiative), had as its theme “Innovation Nurturing Great Ideas” and attracted over 1,500 people to the 13 organised events across the County. Sessions included R&D Tax Credits for SMEs – getting the most from innovation; employers’ and jobseekers’ networking; Entrepreneurship in schools; Developing sales in EU markets; and a Roundtable for Artists, Makers, and Creatives. Plans are already underway for the 2017 event which will be held from the 25th to 29th September.

**Action:** 31  
**Measure:** As part of Mayo Ideas week, the GMIT Innovation in Business Centre (IIBC) in Castlebar, in association with Inc60 and other relevant bodies, will hold the Spirit of Entrepreneurship Event annually. The event brings together experienced entrepreneurs and new innovative start-ups  
**Lead:** GMIT  
**Status:** **Complete**  
**Progress Update:** This action is complete. The event was delivered in September 2016 at GMIT's Mayo campus. Rationalisation of GMIT's institutional resources means that it is no longer possible for GMIT to co-ordinate this event in future years. However, GMIT will remain engaged with local enterprise partners to assist delivery of future events.

**Action:** 32  
**Measure:** The Local Development Companies in the region will provide an area-based response to long-term unemployment and deliver a range of programmes to support entrepreneurship and social enterprise. The Development Companies will work with the LEOs and Údarás na Gaeltachta, with a view to progressing clients to the LEO services  
**Lead:** Local Development Companies  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** An area-based response to Long Term Unemployment is part of Local Development Companies’ SICAP (Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme) Annual Plans and Strategies (SICAP Goal 3) for the Castlebar and Claremorris Municipal Districts and the Mayo Islands. Over €100 million has been invested in communities through SICAP since it commenced in April 2015. This includes an allocation of €19 million under the European Social Fund (ESF) Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020 and the Youth Employment Initiative. SICAP comes to an end in December 2017 and the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government has commenced a consultation process, involving key stakeholders, to help inform the next iteration of the programme, which is due to commence in 2018

<b>Action:</b>	33
<b>Measure:</b>	The Local Enterprise Offices and Údarás na Gaeltachta will maximise collaboration with the Community Enterprise Centres to assist start-ups and existing businesses to grow and develop
<b>Lead:</b>	LEOs
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	There are strong working relationships between the Community Enterprise Centres (CECs) across the region and both the LEOs and Údarás na Gaeltachta. In a number of instances this involves the delivery of outreach initiatives, events and workshops through the CECs. They are also encouraged to take part in the regional WDC network.

<b>Action:</b>	34
<b>Measure:</b>	Enterprise Ireland will work in partnership with Westport Multi-agency Enterprise Ltd to open the new enterprise centre in Westport
<b>Lead:</b>	Enterprise Ireland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Enterprise Ireland approved Westport Multi-Agency Enterprise Limited €445,536 to develop an enterprise centre in Westport, Mayo. An 8,000 sq ft building has been acquired by the local group for the conversion of the building into a modern enterprise centre, and work has been undertaken to date to convert the building for this purpose. It is envisaged that the centre, to be called 'The Leeson Enterprise Centre' will be completed and become operational during H1 2017.

<b>Action:</b>	35
<b>Measure:</b>	Compile a comprehensive report on incubation/co-working space across the region with a view to assessing the region's needs in this regard
<b>Lead:</b>	West Local Authorities
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Roscommon County Council have compiled a database of vacant units with contact details of owners, landlords, letting agents, location details, area of units, etc. The digital mapping has commenced. At the new Civic Offices in Roscommon, shared flexible desk space is now available for innovative entrepreneurs and start-up enterprises – the new space is known as The Cube. The hotdesk space has a capacity of 14 desks, 11 of the spaces are now occupied. The spaces are aimed at new and existing enterprises and workers who require a modern, professional environment with advanced connectivity to set up and operate their businesses. The facility provides access to high speed broadband, IP telephony, meeting rooms and other support services.
	Managed by WestBIC in partnership with Roscommon County Council, the

facility also provides extensive networking opportunities and linkages to the range of enterprise and innovation supports from the Local Authority, Local Enterprise Office, WestBIC and other agencies in a one-stop shop environment.

**Action:** 36  
**Measure:** Examine the scope for conducting a business needs survey across the region, building on the insights gained from the 2014 Mayo '4 minute survey' which contacted over 4,000 businesses to help benchmark businesses in Mayo and assess their support needs  
**Lead:** West Local Authorities  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Roscommon Leo are undertaking a business needs survey in Q2 2017

**Action:** 37  
**Measure:** Enterprise Ireland will work with client companies from the region, including high potential start-ups (HPSUs), to accelerate the capacity of HPSUs to scale up and succeed in international markets, and to increase client engagement with the comprehensive suite of supports that Enterprise Ireland offers, including management capability, innovation vouchers and export readiness programmes/market penetration. Enterprise Ireland will provide an annual update on company participation on key programmes to the Regional Implementation Committee.  
**Lead:** Enterprise Ireland  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** A key focus of Enterprise Ireland is to support the establishment of high potential start-up companies and to scale up indigenous industries to compete in international markets. In 2016 financial support of over €2.3m was provided to 11 new high potential start-up companies in the West Region. In addition investments of €50,000 each were provided to 16 early stage potential high growth entrepreneurs in the West Region. 60 SMEs from the West Region were approved a €5,000 Innovation Voucher. Selected companies from the West Region participated on a range of programmes including the Sprint Programme, HPSU Founders Programme, Access Silicon Valley Programme, the IPO Ready Programme, the Accelerate Programme, overseas Trade Missions, and the Global Sourcing Programme.

**Action:** 38  
**Measure:** Enterprise Ireland will launch a competitive call to support significant projects or initiatives to improve or leverage identified enterprise capability in regions across the country

**Lead:** Enterprise Ireland

**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** **Background:** A Call for Applications was issued under a €3m Regional Accelerator Scheme in January 2016. The overall vision of the scheme is to increase the number of Accelerators operating in Ireland's regions to support entrepreneurship, company creation and job creation in new Manufacturing and Internationally Traded Services companies. To realise this vision the objectives are:

1. To encourage and leverage private sector investment in the provision of Regional Accelerator programmes
2. To leverage domestic and international private sector investment with the objective of enhancing the entrepreneurial eco-system in Ireland
3. To support the start-up strategies of Enterprise Ireland's sectors with expertise and early stage investment
4. To seek innovative funding solutions that reflect current international best practice
5. To enhance the Accelerator offering available to Irish entrepreneurs or entrepreneurs locating to Ireland seeking to establish new Manufacturing or Internationally Traded Services companies

**Update:**

13 Applications were received nationally under the Call for Applications to develop Regional Accelerators during H1 2016. During H2 2016 assessment of these applications was undertaken & decisions were made to support six of these. Enterprise Ireland is currently in discussion with successful applicants and is in the final stage of contract negotiations. It is expected that an announcement will be made shortly.

Following the success of this and other (see Action 8) regional competitive calls, Enterprise Ireland is rolling out a further competitive Regional Enterprise Development of up to €60million to support enterprise development and job creation in all regions of the country.

**Action:** 39

**Measure:** As part of their Global Sourcing initiative, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland will work together to increase collaboration - including the sourcing of goods - between Multinational and indigenous companies. The agencies will ensure that their clients in the region, where appropriate, are engaged in this initiative

**Lead:** Enterprise Ireland

**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland held a joint agency workshop in February 2016 to discuss the Global Sourcing initiative. A key outcome was the decision to undertake a Trade & Investment Mission to Ireland in May 2016

led by Minister Mitchell O'Connor. The Trade & Investment Mission involved 180 clients of Enterprise Ireland and 65 clients of IDA Ireland. Over the course of the Mission to Athlone, Sligo and Limerick over 350 x 1-1 meetings took place. During H2 2016 a formal meeting was arranged by Enterprise Ireland with Udaras na Gaeltachta & IDA to discuss potential collaborations between the Agencies and discuss success stories of individual indigenous companies so that IDA can maximise the number of collaborations between multi-national and indigenous companies. During 2016 Enterprise Ireland continued to liaise closely with IDA in the West Region providing profiles, updates and suggestions in relation to potential collaborations between indigenous enterprise and multi-nationals. During H1 2017, a further Trade & Investment Mission in Ireland was held incorporating Galway as one of the locations.

<b>Action:</b>	40
<b>Measure:</b>	Enterprise Ireland, Údarás na Gaeltachta and IDA Ireland will work together to introduce indigenous enterprise clients to potential FDI investors to highlight possible collaborations for those investors thinking of locating in Ireland
<b>Lead:</b>	IDA Ireland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Enterprise Ireland provides ongoing support by way of information, client profiles and referrals of indigenous companies to support the work of IDA Ireland in promoting and servicing investors thinking of locating in Galway, Mayo or Roscommon. In 2015, 17 EI companies were introduced on IDA itineraries, and 17 in 2016. Global Sourcing events, jointly organised by Enterprise Ireland and IDA, were held in Galway in October 2015, and in Athlone in May 2016. The purpose of these events is to link multi-nationals with indigenous companies. Many multinationals across both regions participated in these events. IDA has regular interaction with Údarás na Gaeltachta on the marketing of the Údarás property portfolio. EI, IDA West and Udaras met in November 2016 to share information and work towards holding a combined event for the West Region. IDA, EI and Údarás will continue to meet on a quarterly basis.
	During H2 2016 a formal meeting was arranged by Enterprise Ireland with Údarás na Gaeltachta & IDA Ireland to discuss potential collaborations between the agencies and discuss success stories of individual indigenous companies, so the IDA Ireland can maximise the number of collaborations between multi-nationals and indigenous companies.

<b>Action:</b>	41
<b>Measure:</b>	Enterprise Ireland will encourage enterprises to enter export markets through its Potential Exporters Division, and will run two “Get Export Ready” workshops in the West Region in 2015-2016
<b>Lead:</b>	Enterprise Ireland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Enterprise Ireland runs Get Export Ready Awareness Events throughout the country to help companies thinking about exporting for the first time, now, or in the future, to understand the steps that are required to drive their export potential. In addition, information is presented on programmes available to support new and early stage exporters. As part of these events, the Local Enterprise Offices also outline their available supports. In November 2016, Enterprise Ireland held a Get Export Ready Awareness Event in Ballinasloe which was attended by 35 companies and had 42 participants. Local company Easy Fix gave a Masterclass on how they have developed a global export business from their Ballinasloe base. To maximise the impact of the Get Export Ready Awareness Event, Enterprise Ireland delivered a follow-on 1 day Exploring Export Workshop in December 2016 for 7 pre-exporting companies to drive their export capability. As part of this initiative, access to Enterprise Ireland's Market Research Centre and the provision of an Export Mentor is also provided.

<b>Action:</b>	42
<b>Measure:</b>	WestBIC will source international fast-tracking opportunities for early stage innovative enterprise through its European networks, including partnering, technology transfer and low-cost access to wider markets and international connectivity
<b>Lead:</b>	WestBIC
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Recent client Internationalisation highlights include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• €2.76m of Horizon2020 Research and Development and Export funds won for WestBIC clients</li> <li>• Soft landings support provided through a partner Business and Innovation Centre in the Czech Republic</li> <li>• Sourcing of international materials suppliers in Lithuania and Portugal</li> <li>• Opening of new market channels in Northern Ireland/UK for gluten free bakery through Innovate NI</li> <li>• International Research and Development support secured for several WestBIC clients</li> </ul>

<b>Action:</b>	44
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<b>Measure:</b>	InterTradelreland will promote its Acumen and Elevate programmes in the region. ITI will target 9 Acumen approvals in the West, providing financial assistance to local companies to investigate and pursue export opportunities in Northern Ireland
<b>Lead:</b>	InterTradelreland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	11 companies from the West region have been approved for support through the Acumen programme from June – December 2016. The Acumen programme assists businesses to source the right expertise and people to target new markets effectively and increase cross-border sales; the Elevate programme is a micro-Business support programme providing consultancy expertise to help companies create cross-border sales development plans.

<b>Action:</b>	45
<b>Measure:</b>	Galway, Mayo and Roscommon LEOs will deliver procurement seminars and workshops to assist business people tendering for larger contracts
<b>Lead:</b>	West Local Authorities
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	The LEOs are currently delivering at least one procurement (exclusive or combined) seminar/workshop per annum to assist business people tendering for larger contracts. Combined events have included availability of procurement officers at MeetWest 2014, 2015 & 2016; Information on procurement at other training seminars including Company Law (2016) and Breakfast Seminar – Funding Your Business (March 2017). An exclusive procurement event is planned for Q3/4 2017.

<b>Action:</b>	46
<b>Measure:</b>	InterTradelreland will deliver 3 Public Tendering workshops for SMEs over the period 2015-2016 and provide relevant training for local small businesses (target of 75 participants). It will promote public tendering opportunities, including cross border public sector opportunities, and consortia building for larger contracts and below threshold contracts.
<b>Lead:</b>	InterTradelreland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	InterTradelreland delivered Go-2-Tender workshops in the Galway Bay Hotel on 13 and 27 October attended by 11 participants. These workshops provided a comprehensive review of public procurement markets on the island, where to find tender opportunities, e-tender portals, and how to complete tender documentation.

<b>Action:</b>	47
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<b>Measure:</b>	In addition to its procurement workshops, InterTradeIreland will hold a regional public sector Meet the Buyer event in the West region in 2016 in collaboration with the Office of Government Procurement (OGP)
<b>Lead:</b>	InterTradeIreland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	InterTradeIreland held a Supplier Engagement event with HSE Category and Procurement Logistics team at the Menlo Park Hotel, Galway on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> December. 138 participants from the relevant sectors attended the event.

<b>Action:</b>	48
<b>Measure:</b>	Through its Trade Accelerator Voucher scheme, InterTradeIreland will help companies to identify and break down barriers to trade, leading to new export opportunities in Northern Ireland
<b>Lead:</b>	InterTradeIreland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	The Trade Accelerator Voucher scheme remains open to all companies in the West seeking to develop export market opportunities. Furthermore, BREXIT vouchers are now available through this scheme to assist companies with preparation for BREXIT readiness.

<b>Action:</b>	49
<b>Measure:</b>	Increase the number of companies in the region who actively participate in research, training and innovation activities by building on two regional Innovation Forums held in the West region in 2014/2015. The objective is to encourage more peer-to-peer interactions, maximise SME-HEI linkages, and promote and showcase innovation in areas such as people, resources, training and research.
<b>Lead:</b>	Enterprise Ireland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Enterprise Ireland has held two Innovation Fora in Galway to date with over 100 attendees. In addition to these initiatives, increasing Industry/Third Level linkages is an area that Enterprise Ireland supports strongly through its broad range of innovation activities. In this regard, Enterprise Ireland funds NUIG through the Technology Transfer Strengthening Initiative. A proposal to fund NUIG's activities in this area from 2017-2021 has been made by the college and was considered during H2 2016 by Enterprise Ireland. An announcement in this regard is expected during H1 2017. In addition, during 2016 the new Enterprise Ireland funded MET Technology Gateway was launched in GMIT. This Technology Gateway worked with 15 companies in 2016, both indigenous and multinational. As reported earlier, 60 SMEs from the West Region received a €5,000 Innovation Voucher which enables them to engage with a Third Level College for an Innovation Project.

<b>Action:</b>	50
<b>Measure:</b>	Enterprise Ireland will promote Innovation supports which are available to companies across the region on an on-going basis.
<b>Lead:</b>	Enterprise Ireland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Nationally and via Enterprise Ireland's Regional Office, 1-1 engagements, press advertising, events and social media channels are used to promote and increase awareness of national supports available for innovation. Enterprise Ireland takes a lead nationally with the Enterprise Europe Network, Knowledge Transfer Ireland and Horizon 2020 all of which are very active in promoting Innovation. In addition, the Enterprise Ireland Team promotes the agency's innovation offering to regional enterprise players and companies on a continuous basis. An example was Enterprise Ireland's participation at the Spirit of Innovation event in Castlebar in September 2016 where the full suite of nationally available innovation supports was highlighted.

<b>Action:</b>	51
<b>Measure:</b>	GMIT Innovation in Business Centres (iIBCs) in Galway and Castlebar and the Business Innovation Centre in NUI Galway will support high potential start-ups to grow and develop through the provision of supports such as incubation space, mentoring and business development training
<b>Lead:</b>	GMIT
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Reviews of client companies and provision of supports for start-up and scaling are ongoing. This has led to a number of successful Competitive Start Fund awards and High Potential Start-Up funding awards for client companies in 2016/2017.

<b>Action:</b>	52
<b>Measure:</b>	Develop 'The PorterShed' innovation hub in Galway city centre to provide collaborative co-working spaces for early-stage tech enterprises in ICT, Digital and Gaming sectors as the hub of an Innovation District
<b>Lead:</b>	Galway Chamber
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	In 2016, ten companies were lined up to move in to the PorterShed, the first building opened as part of the Galway City Innovation District. Businesses joining the PorterShed in 2016 included a range of software and technology companies such as Altocloud, Kappture, Irish Apps, Bulabosca Films, and ShowHouz. The vision of the PorterShed is to build an innovation district in the heart of Galway City, through a co-working space that fosters collaboration between entrepreneurs.

<b>Action:</b>	53
<b>Measure:</b>	Develop an Accelerator Programme for high potential enterprises in the Galway City Innovation District
<b>Lead:</b>	<b>NDRC, Enterprise Ireland, PorterShed</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<p>In May 2017, Enterprise Ireland launched the NDRC (National Digital Research Centre) at PorterShed Accelerator in Galway to further enhance the High Potential Start-up (HPSU) eco-system and develop start-up capability, infrastructure and capital investment within the region. The accelerator is open to applications from potential teams or individuals both in Ireland or overseas, in all technology sectors. There are 10 slots available within the NDRC at PorterShed Accelerator Programme with the first cohort to commence over the summer. Successful applicants of the Enterprise Ireland accelerator will receive membership and a place within NDRC at PorterShed for a period of 100 days, where teams will be able to build and commercially validate their technologies by working with existing entrepreneurial networks and mentors.</p> <p>The Accelerator programme is part of Enterprise Ireland’s overall strategy for increasing the number and quality of start-ups that have the potential to employ more than 10 persons and achieve €1 million in export sales within three years.</p>

<b>Action:</b>	54
<b>Measure:</b>	Seek to expand the Innovation District through initiatives such as attracting an anchor tenant of scale to new commercial space in the District
<b>Lead:</b>	Galway Chamber
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Galway Chamber continues to advocate and support the expansion of the Innovation District and progress will be reported on an ongoing basis.

<b>Action:</b>	55
<b>Measure:</b>	Create a Western Innovation District (WIN) by developing linkages across the region and inter regionally to identify suitable space and demand for local hubs which could be connected virtually to the Galway City Innovation District
<b>Lead:</b>	Galway Chamber
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Delayed</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Whilst matching funding was allocated from Enterprise Ireland, this initiative is delayed due to resource constraints and a lack of matching funding.

<b>Action:</b>	56
<b>Measure:</b>	Develop proposals for Innovation and Technology centres for County Roscommon such as an IT Knowledge Centre to foster knowledge based enterprise and retain graduates in the region
<b>Lead:</b>	Roscommon County Council
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	A site has been identified for the development of an Innovation Centre in Roscommon town, and the development of plans is underway. 'Opportunity in a Million', granted Enterprise Ireland funding for the establishment of a 'HQ' 100mb super-speed Enterprise Hub/smart technology incubator in Monksland, is also being supported in development by Roscommon County Council. The hub will provide 'hands-on' support aimed at fostering enterprise and jobs in new/growth sectors in collaboration with local partners.

<b>Action:</b>	58
<b>Measure:</b>	NUI Galway will partner with University of Limerick (UL) and UCC on the BioInnovate Ireland medical technology innovation training programme, with support from Enterprise Ireland through the provision of funds to support the Fellowship aspects of the Programme
<b>Lead:</b>	NUIG
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<p>BioInnovate, based in NUIG and partnering with UL and UCC, is supported by Enterprise Ireland. The Fellowship programme runs for 10 months full time, and combines teams of high-calibre Fellows from either a medical, engineering, business or technical graduate background that aim to align unmet clinical needs with a market opportunity. During the process Fellows focus on one specific clinical area, receive mentorship from Industry, Clinicians, VC's, Domain Experts and Academics and are stipend supported by Enterprise Ireland. 12 Fellows were recruited for the 2016/2017 programme. Recruitment for 2017/2018 has been completed, with programme start in August.</p> <p>The TechInnovate Fellowship Programme is a specialist technology innovation programme which is based on the BioInnovate Ireland Fellowship, in turn modelled on the Stanford Biodesign programme.</p> <p>The 10-month, full-time, programme combines teams of high-calibre Fellows from either an engineering, business or design graduate background that aims to align unmet domain needs with a market opportunity. Team members are chosen to contribute their skills, knowledge and expertise as part of a multidisciplinary Fellowship team. During the process, Fellows focus on one specific domain area, receive mentorship from industry, VCs, domain experts, and academics, and are stipend supported. Fellowship teams are</p>

physically located at NUIG, perform their initial immersion phase with associated domain partners, and subsequently in related partner organisations across the country. The programme commences in early August each year, and has an associated postgraduate award of a Postgraduate Diploma.

6 fellows have secured places for the 2016/17 programme, three in the area of Agriculture and three in the area of Defence. The Programme Director is serial entrepreneur and academic Dr John Breslin, Senior Lecturer in NUI Galway.

<b>Action:</b>	60
<b>Measure:</b>	Promote Galway Bay as the national Smart Bay test and demonstration facility with ongoing testing of advanced marine technologies and systems
<b>Lead:</b>	Marine Institute
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<p>Throughout 2016 the Marine Institute worked closely with IDA, EI, SEAI and SmartBay Ireland to promote Ireland's world-class expertise, SME and multinational clusters and networks, R&amp;D capabilities and infrastructure to global marine and maritime companies. A major milestone was reached in July 2016 when the SmartBay Subsea Observatory (Galway Bay), supported by the Marine Institute, SEAI, SFI and SmartBay Ireland was officially launched and began transmitting data. This National facility allows researchers and industry to collect and analyse continuous data from the sea and will support the test and validation of sensors within a real marine-world environment. In parallel, in 2016 the Marine Institute funded the SmartBay National Infrastructure Access Programme (NIAP), with funding provided to nine research/industry collaborative projects totalling €208,821 across six HEI institutions. A number of projects are underway, with 2017 expected to see an increase in HEI and industry participation.</p> <p>In addition to national funding, a number of EU funded projects (H2020, Ocean EraNet and INTERREG) are underway. Specifically in 2016, SmartBay Ireland were successful in partnering on the €11m FORESEA (Funding Ocean Renewable Energy through Strategic European Action) project which aims to help bring ocean energy technologies to market by providing access to North-West Europe's world-leading network of test centres.</p> <p>Other highlights in 2016 include promoting Ireland's expertise and facilities at a number of international events such as Oceanology International in London, and the Annual Blue Tech &amp; Blue Economy Summit in San Diego, where the Marine Institute and IMERC received an international award for developing Ireland's marine technology cluster. Also in June 2016, as part of SeaFest (Ireland's National Maritime Festival), the Marine Institute, in</p>

partnership with the IDA, EI, SFI, SEAI and DJEI hosted the Digital Ocean conference in Galway. The conference was attended by over 150 delegates and featured insights from a number of companies from the technology sector (multinational and SMEs) and also showcased national infrastructure and expertise that are supporting the growth of Ireland's reputation as a compelling location to do business in the sector.

Throughout 2016, the Marine Institute, supported by SmartBay Ireland and on behalf of SEAI, continued to support the Marine and Renewable Energy Test Site in Galway Bay. Highlights include the successful deployment of the SeaPower device at the beginning of November. SeaPower is an indigenous company who have developed, tested and built the device in Ireland. Further details are available under Action 131 (SEAI).

<b>Action:</b>	61
<b>Measure:</b>	InterTradelreland will promote the Fusion programme in the region and will set a target of at least 5 approvals. The Fusion Programme is a technology transfer programme facilitating partnerships between companies, academic institutions and graduates
<b>Lead:</b>	InterTradelreland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	9 companies from the region have been approved for support through the FUSION programme since 1/1/15 and have subsequently commenced FUSION. Product development and innovation is at the heart of growth but often needs costly technology support. InterTradelreland's FUSION programme can provide that support by helping to fund a high calibre science, engineering or technology graduate and partnering a business with a third level institution with specific expertise.

<b>Action:</b>	62
<b>Measure:</b>	InterTradelreland will provide access to its Challenge programme, giving SMEs the opportunity to learn how to develop a culture of innovation through the use of a sustainable and repeatable innovation process
<b>Lead:</b>	InterTradelreland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>

**Progress Update:** The Challenge programme remains open to all eligible companies in the West region and is promoted through engagement with the LEOs. A Challenge information briefing held in Claremorris (H1 2015) was attended by 13 companies. Aimed at Managing Directors and CEOs of ambitious SMEs, the Challenge Programme allows business owners to transform their company's prospects in just nine months by learning and applying the most effective methods of generating, marketing and launching new products and services. After an introductory briefing, companies are selected to take part in workshops and then go through a competitive process where 25 SMEs annually are selected for intensive specialist in-house mentoring and support.

**Action:** 63  
**Measure:** IDA Ireland will deliver a minimum of 92 additional projects for the West Region up to 2019  
**Lead:** IDA Ireland  
**Status :** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** IDA West secured investment approvals across both new and existing companies in a number of sectors during 2015, and there was a strong flow of itineraries to the West Region (46 site visits) up from 23 site visits the previous year. This strong flow of itineraries continued in 2016, with 48 site visits in total. Announcements in 2016 were Met Life, SMT, Wood Group expansion, Fort Wayne and Coca Cola expansions in Mayo, Ipswitch, Wayfair expansion, Alexion, Surmodics, Zeltiq, Glan Agua, Jazz Pharmaceuticals, Siteminder and Coca Cola.

**Action:** 64  
**Measure:** IDA Ireland will commence construction of a new Advanced Technology Building in Castlebar, Co. Mayo, with a view to completion in 2016  
**Lead:** IDA Ireland  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Construction of a new IDA Advance Technology Building in Castlebar is due for completion in early 2017. The construction of a new Advance Office Building in Parkmore, Galway will also commence in early 2017.

**Action:** 66  
**Measure:** IDA Ireland will continue to market its property solutions throughout the region for FDI investment  
**Lead:** IDA Ireland  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** The IDA has been actively marketing its buildings and private sector property in the West region throughout 2016. New IDA buildings coming on stream in

the West include a new Advanced Technology Building which is due for completion in early 2017 in Castlebar and a new Advance Office Building in Parkmore, Galway which will commence construction in early 2017.

**Action:** 67  
**Measure:** IDA Ireland will proactively update its online marketing to include “Invest in the West”  
**Lead:** IDA Ireland  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** IDA has updated its website to include a ‘Business in the West’ Section, ‘Connect & Invest Galway’, and is developing a Mayo and Castlebar section. Updates of news and company announcements are ongoing, and IDA has been actively maintaining a dedicated IDA West Twitter account.

**Action:** 68  
**Measure:** Familiarisation visits will be made by relevant overseas IDA Ireland Executives to the West region and to relevant companies in the region to enhance their knowledge of the West in order to market it to potential investors  
**Lead:** IDA Ireland  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Familiarisation visits to the West Region are proactively encouraged to support the marketing of the region. Familiarisation visits in 2016 included: IDA overseas and new recruits (January), IDA Bio Pharma team (March), IDA New Forms of FDI team (May) and Emerging Companies Division (August). The West Region will also host a group from the ICT and CCBS IDA Global Teams in January 2017.

**Action:** 69  
**Measure:** IDA Ireland will drive its Transformation and R&D programmes with its established base of client companies in the West Region  
**Lead:** IDA Ireland  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** IDA West has been working closely with Operation Divisions across all sectors to ensure existing companies are supported and encouraged to win new investment in R&D, transformation and expansion. To assist companies engage in a transformation programme, IDA West is offering a range of supports such as technology uplifts, skills enhancement, energy improvements, productivity uplift and investments in new facilities and equipment.



<b>Action:</b>	70
<b>Measure:</b>	Building on the successful strategy of providing property solutions, Údarás na Gaeltachta will continue a building and refurbishment programme to help support the attraction/expansion of Foreign Direct Investment and Indigenous Investment in the Gaeltacht areas in the West Region
<b>Lead:</b>	Údarás na Gaeltachta
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Work commenced in Q3 2016 on a refurbishment project for a FDI medtech company and was largely completed by the end of Q4 2016. In relation to proposed works at an FDI pharma company, phase one of the work was completed by end of Q4 2016 with additional work underway in Q1 & Q2 2017. Ionad Cultúrtha an Phiarsaigh, Conamara, at Pearse's Cottage, Rosmuc, a tourism facility, was completed in Q4 2016. Regarding the development of an effluent treatment plant on an Údarás business park, delays were encountered during the planning phase in Q2, 2016 but have been successfully concluded. Tendering for this project will commence in Q2 2017.

<b>Action:</b>	71
<b>Measure:</b>	Connect Ireland will develop a Regional Connect Ireland Plan that is integrated with the local authorities' enterprise development and job-creation activities and seek a nominated officer from each county in the region for the roll-out of the Plan
<b>Lead:</b>	Connect Ireland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>No longer being progressed</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	The contract between IDA and Connect Ireland has concluded.

<b>Action:</b>	72
<b>Measure:</b>	Connect Ireland will announce and run the Connectivation competition, inviting Third Level students to share their ideas for the future development of the Succeed in Ireland initiative
<b>Lead:</b>	Connect Ireland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>No longer being progressed</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	The contract between IDA and Connect Ireland has concluded.

<b>Action:</b>	73
<b>Measure:</b>	Local Authorities will promote investment in key towns across the region, working with IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and other agencies as appropriate
<b>Lead:</b>	West Local Authorities
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>

**Progress Update:** In Roscommon six 'Town Teams' have been developed to highlight and promote their towns and to attract investment. Roscommon LEO has also held meetings with EI and IDA, and progress is being made on a marketing strategy for the county. Mayo LEO is working with IDA Ireland, EI and other agencies to actively promote investment and to identify site selection for EI/IDA clients in key towns across the county. During 2016, the development of the Leeson Enterprise Centre in Westport continued. Collaboration continued between six western/north western Local Authorities and Ireland West Airport Knock to ensure investment into the airport to allow key towns and their hinterlands to continue to be/become attractive towns for investment. Mayo County Council also provided investment into infrastructure in key towns in the county to make them attractive places to live, work, visit and invest in.

**Action:** 74  
**Measure:** Enterprise Ireland - and Údarás na Gaeltachta in the Gaeltacht areas - will target Manufacturing (including Medtech) and Internationally Traded Services companies in the West region with supports to scale, innovate and develop international markets  
**Lead:** Enterprise Ireland  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Supporting manufacturing and internationally traded service companies in the West Region to grow is a key focus of Enterprise Ireland. This is achieved by working with client companies on a 1-1 basis to deliver on their business plans. In 2016 over €6.5m in financial support was provided by Enterprise Ireland to support business growth plans of individual companies in the West Region. In addition to this financial support, extra support was provided through access to a range of programmes such as Management & Leadership Development, Trade Missions, Selling Opportunity events, Mentoring, providing Market Intelligence and more. In addition to this Enterprise Ireland has been active in the development of the market for risk money, enterprise space, and the innovation infrastructure. Some of the funding is provided to schemes nationally that deliver locally while some funding is provided locally. In 2016 over €6m was provided directly to Third Level colleges in the West Region to enhance Innovation.

**Action:** 75  
**Measure:** Enhance Galway and the West region as a world class Medical Device Hub  
**Lead:** IDA Ireland  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** IDA is promoting the West Region as an international hub for medical devices by facilitating visits to leading medtech multinationals and indigenous

companies in the region, attending events, and developing marketing material on the ecosystem. IDA also engages with medtech research centres (such as the CURAM centre for medical devices at NUIG and at GMIT) and education & training providers (Third Level colleges and ETBs) to build greater industry links. New announcements in this sector include investments by Phenox, Medtronic, Zimmer, Surmodics and Zeltiq which strengthen the hub.

<b>Action:</b>	79
<b>Measure:</b>	Building on the critical mass of existing enterprise, Roscommon County Council will drive a project to develop the industrial zone of Monksland as a Biopharma/Medtech Hub including the development of a 7-unit incubator hub
<b>Lead:</b>	Roscommon County Council
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Roscommon County Council has granted planning permission for 7-unit incubator hub in late 2016. This development is one part of Roscommon County Council's strategy to further develop Monksland as a Biopharma/Medtech hub, building on the critical mass of existing businesses in this sector in the area.
	Roscommon County Council is also working in partnership with other development agencies to develop a new Innovation Centre in Monksland to facilitate and encourage the growth of innovative start-up enterprises. This project is ongoing, and negotiations are underway to identify and acquire a suitable location.

<b>Action:</b>	80
<b>Measure:</b>	Promote and develop a Value Proposition for the West region as an attractive location for HomeWorking/E-Working
<b>Lead:</b>	IDA Ireland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	IDA Ireland West are currently using reference company Shopify and its success in establishing a 100% homeworking model in Galway and the West Region to promote further investment of this type in the West.

<b>Action:</b>	81
<b>Measure:</b>	Implement the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme to deliver on the four high-level goals of the Wild Atlantic Way as outlined in the Operational Programme 2015-2019, viz: • To ensure that the Wild Atlantic Way is compelling to the target market segments and that the Wild Atlantic Way

itself becomes a world-class visitor experience; • To ensure that the Wild Atlantic Way delivers balanced and sustainable revenue and jobs growth with greater geographic and seasonal spread; • To ensure that the Wild Atlantic Way delivers benefits to local communities in the west of Ireland and contributes to a better place to live for everyone; • To ensure that the implementation of the Wild Atlantic Way Operational Programme facilitates the protection and enhancement of the environment of the west of Ireland – as the fundamental asset that is the basis of the Wild Atlantic Way – in association with other key stakeholders.

**Lead:** Fáilte Ireland

**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** The overall aim of the Wild Atlantic Way project is to develop a long-distance touring route that will achieve greater visibility for the west coast of Ireland in overseas tourist markets. The six stages of the project are:

Stage 1: Develop brand proposition and identity, and key market segments

Stage 2: Identify the route

Stage 3: Way-finding strategy including directional signage

Stage 4: Delivery of 'Discovery Points'

Stage 5: Selling Wild Atlantic Way experiences

Stage 6: Marketing and communications

The first three stages of the project are complete, and the next three stages are being undertaken as parallel work streams. The proposition and brand identity have been developed and the route of the Wild Atlantic Way has been identified.

The next stages of the project have commenced and these involve:

- Delivering the 'Discovery Points'
- Selling great Wild Atlantic Way experiences
- Marketing the Wild Atlantic Way

**Action:** 82

**Measure:** Market the Wild Atlantic Way internationally and domestically as a world class tourism experience

**Lead:** Fáilte Ireland

**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** The Wild Atlantic Way is being marketed and promoted nationally and internationally through the official website, [www.wildatlanticway.com](http://www.wildatlanticway.com), through the targeting of international and domestic media, familiarisation trips and learning journeys for trade professionals, the development of new digital content and promotional/point of sale materials for WAW business, and through the management of social media outputs.

**Action:** 84

<b>Measure:</b>	Provide a suite of business supports and toolkits both off and online, including <a href="http://www.failteireland.ie">www.failteireland.ie</a> , to help tourism businesses build capability in the areas of Visitor Experience Development, Sales, and Digital marketing with a view to increasing distribution channels and sales
<b>Lead:</b>	Fáilte Ireland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Fáilte Ireland are providing a suite of business supports and toolkits to raise capability of industry clients in key business areas with a specific focus on sales and hospitality related areas in the WAW programme. Included on the Fáilte Ireland and Wild Atlantic Way websites are resources for businesses such as branding guidelines, a 'Wild Atlantic Way food story toolkit', which contains tips for food businesses to tailor their story to the brand identity of the Wild Atlantic Way, a trade forum, sales tools, and training and support resources.

<b>Action:</b>	85
<b>Measure:</b>	Develop a range of new tourism products and food offerings to link aquaculture and fisheries producers with tourism interests and food businesses in the region
<b>Lead:</b>	Fáilte Ireland
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	A series of trails and routes around angling, fisheries and aquaculture have been brought together and are being promoted under the Wild Atlantic Way proposition. These include touring routes and promotion of relevant businesses and locations. An online 'toolkit' is also available for businesses to work on developing food related experiences and itineraries for visitors, building on the identification of three domestic and three international target market groups.

<b>Action:</b>	86
<b>Measure:</b>	Develop and implement a Growth Programme for Tourism and Retail sectors including initiatives such as mentoring services, trade fair supports and business development training
<b>Lead:</b>	Galway Chamber
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Delayed</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Progress on this initiative is ongoing within the Galway Chamber Tourism Committee. Progress was made with the tourism sector on defining a strategy and specific initiatives. Unfortunately, due to funding and resource constraints, execution has been delayed.  Whilst matching funding was allocated from EI, this initiative is delayed due to resource constraints and a lack of matching funding.

<b>Action:</b>	87
<b>Measure:</b>	Údarás na Gaeltachta will support pilot projects in the West region to build capacity in tourism related enterprises under its remit
<b>Lead:</b>	Údarás na Gaeltachta
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	In October 2016, Udaras hosted a seminar in Carna to explore Gaeltacht tourism opportunities along the Wild Atlantic Way. The seminar was open to anyone providing tourism services or exploring possible opportunities throughout the Connemara Gaeltacht, in particular providers of niche tourism offerings with international appeal. Speakers focused on heritage and culture as the basis for developing sustainable tourism products in the Gaeltacht, in addition to niche tourism sectors such as food tourism and walking. Supports for businesses were also discussed. A UK outdoor and radio media campaign of €500k was also completed in Jan 2017.

<b>Action:</b>	89
<b>Measure:</b>	Harness the LEADER programme to invest in local tourism products throughout the region
<b>Lead:</b>	Local Development Companies
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	A Local Development Strategy has been developed and the contract for Mayo is in place since August 2016. The programme is now open for applications. A closed call for Rural Tourism Accommodation has been initiated, and 24 Expressions of Interest have come in from the South West Mayo LEADER Implementation Area. Approximately 50 have been received from the whole of the county.

<b>Action:</b>	90
<b>Measure:</b>	Carry out the necessary planning and environmental assessments to develop a 23Km trail from Boyle around Lough Key
<b>Lead:</b>	Roscommon County Council
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Assessments have been undertaken, and Roscommon County Council is in the process of applying for a Part 8, to aid with the further enhancement and investment in the Lough key to Boyle trail infrastructure. Funding applications currently await decisions, which would increase the marketability of this essential tourist infrastructure.

<b>Action:</b>	91
<b>Measure:</b>	Carry out the necessary planning and environmental assessments to expand the Mayo Greenway

**Lead:** Mayo County Council

**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** Mayo Council has significantly expanded the Great Western Greenway, to the extent that it now extends to the Museum of Country Life at, Turlough, Castlebar. The Greenway was also extended onto Achill Island. Plans are now being made to expand the Greenway to Louisburgh. All Greenway developments include public consultations with individual landowners, local communities and other stakeholders such as Leader Companies. Environmental screening and adherence to procedures is undertaken as set out in Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

**Action:** 92

**Measure:** Secure funding and agreement to progress construction of the Clifden to Oughterard section of the Connemara Greenway

**Lead:** Galway County Council

**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** Funding has been received from Fáilte Ireland for a further short section of this Greenway. The outcome of a public consultation process on the development of a new Greenways Strategy, which is open until 14 July 2017, and which may influence the approach to the provision of greenway infrastructure, is awaited.

**Action:** 94

**Measure:** Assist Westmeath County Council in progressing the Dublin–Galway Greenway route selection and planning consent for the project

**Lead:** Galway County Council

**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** This is a TII (Transport Infrastructure Ireland) project which is led by Westmeath County Council. Issues arising with landowners along the route have led to the project not advancing as intended and a decision by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS), to suspend advancement at present. The outcome of a current and ongoing consultation process by DTTAS, as outlined above, which may influence the approach to the provision of greenway infrastructure is awaited.

**Action:** 95

**Measure:** Develop and promote the Shannon Blueway in Roscommon, Westmeath, and Offaly

**Lead:** Waterways Ireland

**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** Development of canoe trail infrastructure is planned for late 2017 (subject to funding) on the Royal Canal in Longford with cycling and walking provision

currently in place in Westmeath (40km) and in Longford (28km).

**Action:** 96  
**Measure:** Develop and promote the Shannon and Shannon Erne Blueway (Multi Activity Trail) in Roscommon, Cavan, Leitrim, and Offaly  
**Lead:** Waterways Ireland  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Development of the Blueway is continuing with major investment ongoing in a Blueway Boardwalk and Cycle Track at Acres Lake, Co. Leitrim. The existing Blueway offering across 4 counties (Roscommon, Cavan, Longford and Leitrim) witnessed continued growth with some 100,000 visitors in the 18 months to end 2016 on Blueway in Leitrim.

**Action:** 97  
**Measure:** Implement the actions in the Study of Outdoor Recreation in the West 2014, prepared by the Northern and Western Regional Assembly for the local authorities in the West Region  
**Lead:** West Local Authorities  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** This study recommended that a new regional working or coordination group for outdoor recreation should prioritise the actions (47) and implement them in conjunction with agreed key stakeholders. This regional working group is being established.

**Action:** 99  
**Measure:** Develop a Kayak Trail on Lough Derg  
**Lead:** Waterways Ireland  
**Status:** **Complete**  
**Progress Update:** Infrastructural development of this Trail has been completed and the product will be brought to market in Summer 2017.

**Action:** 102  
**Measure:** Roscommon County Council, neighbouring County Councils and other relevant agencies and stakeholders will explore the development and promotion of a Flagship Shannon Corridor Tourism based around outdoor activities, pursuits, culture, accommodation and hospitality  
**Lead:** Roscommon County Council  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** As part of the USEFE (Upper Shannon Erne Future Economy Project) partnership Roscommon County Council is working with Cavan, Leitrim and Longford County Councils to develop the Shannon Blueway. The County



Council has also developed strategic partnerships with Longford and Westmeath County Councils, Coillte, Bord Na Mona and Waterways Ireland with the aim of unlocking the heritage associated with Lough Ree and the development of a Mid-Shannon Wilderness Park. A consultant has been procured to provide a feasibility study.

**Action:** 103  
**Measure:** Develop a marine activities programme as part of a coastal and islands network in the South Connemara Gaeltacht based on a South Connemara Coastal “Blueway” through a Coastal and Islands network  
**Lead:** Comhar na nOileán  
**Status:** **Delayed**  
**Progress Update:** LEADER funding was sought for this action but was not secured. This action has been deferred while alternative funding options are explored.

**Action:** 105  
**Measure:** Develop Pearse’s Cottage Interpretation facilities in Connemara  
**Lead:** Údarás na Gaeltachta  
**Status:** **Complete**  
**Progress Update:** An Taoiseach Enda Kenny officially opened Ionad Cultúrtha an Phiarsaigh, Connemara, at Pearse’s Cottage, Rosmuc in November 2016. There has been an increase in visitor numbers from 6,500 to 19,000 from 2015 to 2016.

**Action:** 106  
**Measure:** Build on the development of Pearse’s Cottage to generate spin-off jobs and economic activity through local and social enterprise developments, particularly in the area of Irish language and cultural tourism  
**Lead:** Galway County Council  
**Status:** **Complete**  
**Progress Update:** A Commemorative Seat in honour of Pádraig MacPiarais was provided at Séipéal an Ghoirt Mhóir as part of the Centenary Programme for the County of Galway. Scoláireachtaí Gaeltachta Phádraig Mac Piarais Chomhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe/Galway County Council Pádraig Pearse Scholarships were also launched in collaboration with Summer Colleges in Connemara to provide 14 scholarships to second level students in the County of Galway to attend Gaeltacht Summer Courses. Scoil Samhraidh an Phiarsaigh 2016 /Pádraig Pearse Summer School 2016 was also held in Ros Muc from the 28<sup>th</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2016.

**Action:** 107

<b>Measure:</b>	Further develop the potential for Irish language tourism to generate employment in the region
<b>Lead:</b>	West Local Authorities
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A detailed programme of Irish language events was developed for the 1916 Centenary Programme for the County of Galway which has the largest Irish language strand of any programme in the Country.</li> <li>• Community Support Grants – The Irish language was specifically included as a category in the Community Support Scheme in 2016. Grants totalling €3,900 were approved for projects in Schools, Community &amp; Voluntary Organisations for the promotion and increase of the use of Irish.</li> <li>• Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe continued its support of the promotion of Irish in communities throughout the county through the Glór na nGael Award which was presented to Forbairt Chonamara Láir Teo in April 2016.</li> <li>• An Award for the Irish Language continued to be included in the Cathaoirleach’s Awards for Gaeltacht and Non Gaeltacht communities and Schools.</li> </ul>

<b>Action:</b>	108
<b>Measure:</b>	Implement the initiatives/activities of the Decade of Commemorations scheduled for the West Region
<b>Lead:</b>	West Local Authorities
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<p>Events in the region in H2 2016 included the opening of Ionad Cultúrtha an Phiarsaigh, Conamara, at Pearse’s Cottage, Ros Muc, County Galway. The development comprises four elements, including a new visitor centre, Cosán Chonamara, Slí na Coille (an interpretive space focusing on Patrick Pearse) and Pearse’s Cottage. The development of the new centre is headed up by Údarás na Gaeltachta, Galway County Council, the Office of Public Works, Fáilte Ireland and the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.</p> <p>Other events included a conference in Loughrea, entitled Galway &amp; The Battle of the Somme – Galway’s Changing Military History Landscape and the opening of the Eámonn Ceannt Commemorative Garden at Ballymoe. In Roscommon Commemorative Events included Douglas Hyde Book Launch, Verse &amp; Prose Exhibition Capturing the impact of Roscommon 1916/2016 Centenary, and Irish Language Library Events (June to August 2016). In Mayo, events included Talk &amp; Walk of 100 Years of Bellacragher Bay, the Opening of the Garden of Remembrance, Ballyhaunis, and a Commemoration Weekend launched by President Michael D. Higgins, celebrating the life of Major John Mac Bride.</p>

In December 2016, The National Library of Ireland (NLI) announced ten winning websites, chosen by the public, which they believe best record Irish life in 2016 and remember the events of 1916. Galway County Council Heritage Office's 'Galway: Decade of Commemorations', and Westport Historical Society's 'Cathair na Mart 1916' were both chosen by the public as websites which they feel best remember 1916.

**Action:** 109  
**Measure:** Enterprise Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta will provide support for high potential food and drinks companies in the region to scale, innovative and develop international markets  
**Lead:** Enterprise Ireland  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Supporting the creation and development of high potential food and drink companies in the region is an important goal of Enterprise Ireland. This is achieved through supporting food entrepreneurs to participate in the New Frontiers Programme and through a dedicated Food Accelerator programme called FoodWorks. This is a partnership between Teagasc, Bord Bia and Enterprise Ireland. A core element of Enterprise Ireland's activities is working with entrepreneurs on a 1-1 basis and supporting their business plans. During 2016 a number of new high potential food and drink start-up companies in the West Region were supported by Enterprise Ireland. An example is new start-up company Irish Pet Foods who have established their base in Westport, Co Mayo. Minister Michael Ring announced the creation of 15 new jobs by Irish Pet Foods in Westport in November 2016 through a €5m investment supported by Enterprise Ireland.

**Action:** 110  
**Measure:** Implement a project to engage and support traditional and artisan food producing SMEs across the region  
**Lead:** St. Angela's College  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** St Angela's College and Bord Bia are currently planning a breakfast networking event in Galway next October 2017 for SMEs across the region

**Action:** 112  
**Measure:** Showcase regional food producers, from artisan to large companies, through various food festivals such as Galway Food Festival, Connemara Mussel Festival, Feile na Mara (Achill), Westport Food Festival, and Roscommon Lamb Festival  
**Lead:** West Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing  
**Progress Update:** The Ireland West Food Group (competitive funding) project, via Mayo LEO, is currently supporting 32 food producers across the region in investigating the potential of the London and South East England marketplaces for export. Municipal District funding for food festivals in Mayo, Galway and Roscommon also continued during 2016.

**Action:** 113  
**Measure:** Target an increase in the number of participants on the Food Academy Programme  
**Lead:** LEOs  
**Status:** Ongoing  
**Progress Update:** The 2016/2017 Mayo/Roscommon Food Academy programme saw 13 companies participating; 5 proceeding to pitch and all 5 invited to trial. Future focus will be to ensure those that participate and pitch are successful in going to trial.

**Action:** 114  
**Measure:** To ensure a good pipeline of food entrepreneurs, run a pre Food Works clinic in the region in 2015 and in 2016  
**Lead:** LEOs  
**Status:** Ongoing  
**Progress Update:** To support food entrepreneurs and micro enterprises 1-to-1 mentoring is available on an on-going basis across the region. Ten companies from the West region participated in the Food Academy Start programme run in conjunction with SuperValu in the second half of 2016. Mayo LEO also hosted a Food Producer Information evening in March 2015 (attended by 32 people) and a Start Your Own Food Business training course (in conjunction with Roscommon LEO) in June 2015.

**Action:** 116  
**Measure:** Work with retailers to increase shelf space for local produce  
**Lead:** Bord Bia  
**Status:** Ongoing  
**Progress Update:** Ten companies from the West region participated in the Food Academy Start programme run in conjunction with SuperValu in the second half of 2016. Food Academy is a training programme aimed at supporting and nurturing start-up food businesses, and is a collaboration between the Local Enterprise Offices, Bord Bia and SuperValu.

**Action:** 117

<b>Measure:</b>	Bord Bia will work with the LEOs to assist food and drink companies in the West to be included in the Tesco Taste Buds programme
<b>Lead:</b>	Bord Bia
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	The Taste Buds programme resumed in the second half of 2016 following some personnel changes within Tesco. However there were no companies from the West in that cohort. Taste Buds is an annual 7 month programme that supports participants to develop the necessary skills required to secure, grow and maintain a listing with Tesco in Ireland and overseas.

<b>Action:</b>	118
<b>Measure:</b>	Support the Made in Galway initiative which supports micro food and craft businesses to access online marketing platforms and other new retail opportunities both in Ireland and overseas
<b>Lead:</b>	Galway County Council
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Galway County Council continues to promote local creative companies through the 'Made in Galway' initiative and the Galway, West of Ireland 'European Region of Gastronomy' 2018 designation. Over 400 companies are listed on the Made in Galway Website, promotional events are held in the county and at overseas events to showcase the creative sector in Galway including the Claregalway Garden Festival, Medical Technology Ireland Conference 2016 at the Radisson, and Connemara Mussel Festival.

<b>Action:</b>	119
<b>Measure:</b>	Deliver the EU Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme-funded Craft Reach project
<b>Lead:</b>	Teagasc
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Feasibility studies were completed on badging 2 new artisan producers with Économusée status. The feasibilities were approved by the CRAFT REACH project steering group at the December 2016 meeting.</li> <li>• To help build visitor numbers to each Économusée, Teagasc and a representative from the Celtic Roots Économusée attended the annual trade fair of the International Tour Operators Association Ireland (ITOAI) and made representations on behalf of the CRAFT REACH Economusées in March 2016.</li> <li>• Teagasc are working with Galway Roscommon Education &amp; Training Board (GRTEB) to develop and pilot, nationwide, a certified Traineeship in Digital Sales and Marketing which will support the development of e-commerce strategies among artisan producers both inside and outside the CRAFT REACH project. First trainees will be recruited in Q2 2017.</li> </ul>

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<b>Action:</b>	120
<b>Measure:</b>	Support the development of local markets in the West Region
<b>Lead:</b>	West Local Authorities
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Galway, Mayo and Roscommon LEOs continue to support local markets and events in the region by disseminating information on behalf of market organizers to recruit additional producers to markets and/or to promote markets to the wider public through local websites. Mentoring services are also being provided by the LEOs to those wishing to set up a market.

<b>Action:</b>	121
<b>Measure:</b>	Provide supports for the seafood sector, including financial and technical training and mentoring programmes for companies. This will involve collaboration between relevant State agencies to deliver scale in the key seafood sectors, including food ingredients, and upskilling personnel across the sector in the key areas
<b>Lead:</b>	Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	BIM approved €392,232 for capital expenditure projects for four companies in the Region in 2016. A call for new applications opened in December 2016. Training and upskilling is also ongoing.

<b>Action:</b>	122
<b>Measure:</b>	Improve the environmental sustainability of the seafood sector in the West region, including through improved gear selectivity and replenishment of depleted inshore stocks by the use of aquaculture techniques
<b>Lead:</b>	BIM
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Sea trials of a number of measures to reduce unwanted catches in the Nephrops fishery were conducted during 2016. Results were positive and a publication on the work - <i>Assessment of a dual codend with net separator panel in an Irish Nephrops fishery</i> - is available at <a href="http://www.bim.ie/our-publications/fisheries/">http://www.bim.ie/our-publications/fisheries/</a>

<b>Action:</b>	123
<b>Measure:</b>	Work to ensure that to the greatest extent possible, 100% of all seafood exports in the West region will be verified Origin Green by 2016
<b>Lead:</b>	BIM
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	This is ongoing work conducted in close cooperation with the fishing industry

and Bord Bia and will continue indefinitely. In 2016 Bord Bia collaborated with BIM to deliver a series of seafood-specific Origin Green planning workshops, through which participants received guidance on how to develop their Sustainability Charter from Bord Bia and BIM's Green Seafood Business Programme team.

**Action:** 124  
**Measure:** Develop effective measures to attract additional landings into ports in the West region  
**Lead:** BIM  
**Status:** **Delayed**  
**Progress Update:** Landings into West Region Ports are currently limited by inadequate infrastructure such as a lack of deep water berths at locations like Rossaveal Harbour.

**Action:** 125  
**Measure:** Explore the potential for Tourism and Marine businesses including aquaculture, fisheries, seaweed and other speciality producers, to collaborate to support further job creation  
**Lead:** BIM  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** A Workshop in this area was delivered from 26-27 October 2016, with over 30 attendees. Additional opportunities are being developed through cooperation between agencies and private sector operators. This work includes the provision of training, funding and networking support.

**Action:** 126  
**Measure:** Create a dedicated food innovation hub near Roscommon Town  
**Lead:** Roscommon County Council  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Roscommon County Council has secured €100k under the REDZ programme for Phase 1 development of the Castlerea Food Hub. Planning Permission has been submitted and a Governance structure has been established.

**Action:** 127  
**Measure:** Develop a dedicated food incubator centre in the Teagasc Centre in Athenry and explore other locations in the county, including Loughrea, for further incubators  
**Lead:** Galway County Council  
**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** Galway County Council is working with Teagasc, Galway LEO and Social Enterprises towards the development of a Food and Rural Innovation Hub including incubation units at the Teagasc campus in Athenry, and pursuing potential funding opportunities. The feasibility study regarding the possible development of such a facility has been delayed due to internal re-organisation, but it is now planned for Q1 & Q2 2017.

**Action:** 129  
**Measure:** Údarás na Gaeltachta will prepare a scoping document for Páirc Mara Cill Chiaráin with a focus on developing an innovation hub for the mariculture sector  
**Lead:** Údarás na Gaeltachta  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** A Project Manager was appointed by Údarás na Gaeltachta in Q4 2016 to prepare a scoping document with a view to exploring possibilities for the development of the marine/mariculture sector in Páirc na Mara, Cill Chiaráin. An advisory committee has also been established to progress this project.

**Action:** 131  
**Measure:** Continue to develop the Galway Bay marine energy and technology site infrastructure and provide a platform for testing new marine technologies and systems  
**Lead:** SEAI  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** In October 2016 Irish company Sea Power tested their prototype wave energy device at the Galway Bay Marine and Renewable Energy Test Site. Following successful completion of testing at small scale, the company, which received grant support from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), progresses to quarter scale testing in open sea conditions for the first time. The Sea Power device has been in development for eight years and was built at Foynes in Limerick. Wave energy devices, such as Sea Power, will ultimately harness the extraordinary power of the waves off Ireland's coast to generate electricity. SEAI and the Marine Institute are working together to develop Ireland's ocean energy testing infrastructure which includes tank testing facilities at Lir National Ocean Test Facility in Cork, the consented quarter scale test site in Galway Bay and the planned full scale Atlantic Marine Energy Test Site off the Mayo coast.

**Action:** 132



<b>Measure:</b>	Develop the Atlantic Marine Energy Test Site (AMETS) in Belmullet as the national deep water test site for ocean energy. This will provide the opportunity to test the performance of pre-commercial wave energy devices and components as well as other marine technologies in extreme open ocean conditions
<b>Lead:</b>	SEAI
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<p>The Atlantic Marine Energy Test Site (AMETS) is being developed by Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to facilitate testing of full scale wave energy converters in an open ocean environment. The test site is an integral component of Ireland's Ocean Energy Strategy and is being developed in accordance with the national Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDPA).</p> <p>The site will be focused on wave energy and will provide two separate test locations at various depths of water to allow for a range of devices to be tested. It is envisaged that the test site will provide a grid connected national test facility, to which full scale wave energy converters could be coupled during their final stages of pre-commercial development.</p> <p>In November 2016, researchers from the Centre for Marine and Renewable Energy (MaREI) and NUI Galway produced a paper that provides a detailed assessment of the wave energy resource at the site. The research presents an assessment of the wave resource at AMETS based on 12-years of modelled data, from January 2004 to December 2015.</p> <p>Wave characteristic assessments of wave energy test sites provide a greater understanding of prevailing wave conditions and are therefore extremely important to both wave energy test site operators and clients as they can inform wave energy converter design, optimization, deployment, operation and maintenance. The primary aim of the research was to provide an assessment of annual and seasonal wave characteristics and resource variability at the two deployment berths which comprise the site.</p>

<b>Action:</b>	133
<b>Measure:</b>	Each local authority will adopt the principles of the guidelines for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies (LARES) when reviewing their County Development Plans and collectively examine the potential for Regional Renewable Energy strategies
<b>Lead:</b>	West Local Authorities
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	The review of Mayo County Development Plan 2014 -2020 will commence in April 2018. The Renewable Energy Strategy for County Mayo 2011 - 2020 is currently being reviewed in accordance with the principles outlined in the

SEAI document Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies (2013). The current Roscommon County Development Plan (RCDP) is for the period 2014 – 2020 (having become effective on 12th May 2014). The Renewable Energy Strategy forms part of the RCDP. As per statutory requirements, the process of reviewing the RCDP 2014 – 2020 will commence in 2018, with a new Roscommon County Development Plan 2020-2026 scheduled to be in effect by May 2020. Galway County Development Plan is due for review in 2021. A Renewable Energy Strategy is being considered for 2018.

**Action:** 134  
**Measure:** Complete a regional renewable energy analysis on the use of biomass as a local contribution to the national renewable heat target and develop a range of actions to support the development of renewable energy in the region  
**Lead:** Western Development Commission  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** The WDC team participated in the Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy (LARES) process within the region in Autumn 2016. This provided a platform to understand the LARES regional opportunity. The WDC are now considering a regional LARES strategy and progressing that discussion.

**Action:** 135  
**Measure:** Promote and assist the delivery of cost savings through energy efficiency programmes and training for businesses and public sector organisations in the region  
**Lead:** SEAI  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** SEAI is assisting local and regional businesses and Public Sector Organisations to make energy efficiency savings. The Public Sector Energy Efficiency Plan Report for 2015, which was supported by SEAI, has been published by the Department of Communications, Climate Action, and the Environment (DCCAIE). The SEAI energy efficiency programmes for business are also continuing to make major savings in all areas and the Minister for DCCAIE has provided additional budget for 2017 to advance these programmes further. SEAI is also developing further energy efficiency supports for SMEs which will be available in Q3.

**Action:** 136  
**Measure:** Develop and promote the Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC) model in the region and identify willing early adopter communities to act as exemplars and Regional SEC Champions

**Lead:** SEAI  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** SEAI recently appointed a Sustainable Energy Communities Mentor to the West Region. 19 communities across Galway, Roscommon and Mayo have also signed up to the Sustainable Energy Communities Network.

**Action:** 137  
**Measure:** Support the development of flagship projects in the green business sector aimed at fast-tracking the development of this growth sector in the region  
**Lead:** West Local Authorities  
**Status:** **Complete**  
**Progress Update:** Business supports and advice including training, mentoring and in some instances financial support (grants) are available to entrepreneurs who wish to develop/expand green business enterprises. Examples include those involved in recycling waste and renewable energy. The three Local Authorities are providing walk-in planning clinics to disseminate assistance and advice to those submitting planning applications for business including those in the green business sector to assist in reducing potential time delays and costs in the planning system thereby assisting in fast tracking the development of the sector.

**Action:** 140  
**Measure:** Implement a new €2 million EU INTERREG funded project to support the Creative Industries in the Western Region (with Northern Ireland, Finland, Sweden & Iceland) called 'Creative Momentum'  
**Lead:** Western Development Commission (WDC)  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** The WDC is leading the implementation of the Creative Momentum project co-funded by the Northern Periphery & Arctic Programme, with NUIG also a partner and other partners in Northern Ireland, Sweden, Finland & Iceland. The project runs from May 2015 - May 2018. The main outputs in the 6-month period to end 2016 were:

- 55 creative enterprises attended a 'Creative Exchange' information and networking event in Castlebar on data analytics on 29 November
- 3 Irish creative enterprises were funded to exhibit and sell their products during the Urkult festival in Mid-Sweden
- 4 Irish creative enterprises were supported to participate in the Digital DNA conference in Armagh
- 4 Irish creative enterprises were selected to receive funding to attend Arctic Design Week in Finland in February 2017
- 7 Irish creative enterprises are participating in the 1<sup>st</sup> round of the online Creative2Creative Matching programme

- 1 Irish creative enterprise was supported to exhibit at London Design Week in September
- NUIG is leading on an extensive research programme on the creative sector in all 5 partner regions including a Creative Sector Index and conducting an Economic Impact Assessment.
- The project's Facebook page has 2,153 Likes and 1,050 followers and is active in building a transnational social media community
- The beta version of the re-developed MyCreativeEdge.eu platform was launched (see action 142)

**Action:** 141  
**Measure:** Disburse the targeted Micro-Loan fund for the Creative Industries in the West Region  
**Lead:** Western Development Commission  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** The micro-loan fund for Creative Industries in the West was disbursed to one project in H2 2016 to a total value of €5,500.

**Action:** 142  
**Measure:** Continue to operate the MyCreativeEdge.eu export platform to showcase creative enterprises based in the Western Region  
**Lead:** Western Development Commission  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Under the Creative Momentum project (Action 140) the existing MyCreativeEdge.eu online platform to showcase the work of creative businesses from across Europe's Northern Edge (West of Ireland, South East of Northern Ireland, Mid-Sweden, North East Iceland and Northern Finland) is being totally re-developed. The WDC is leading the re-development.

The work progressed significantly during this 6-month period and the beta version of the re-developed site was launched in October 2016. It was initially launched to members of the current site as they needed to create a new profile on the re-developed site. Members now have more flexibility to choose different layouts to showcase their work. The remainder of 2016 involved promotion of the beta version to potential members (<http://beta.mycreativeedge.eu/>) as well as continuous testing and adjustment of technical issues.

New features of the re-developed site include a facility for shared creative co-working spaces to publish a profile of their space and advertise available space, a Creative Trails section for craft/art trails, and a 'Deep in Thought' blog where members can post articles and a new Knowledge Centre as an

information resource for creatives in the regions.

The re-developed site will fully replace the current site in March 2017 when a 12-month digital marketing campaign will be launched to promote the site across Europe as well as selected US and Canadian cities.

<b>Action:</b>	144
<b>Measure:</b>	Develop and implement an Action Plan to support the Film industry in Galway and the West region and explore the potential for a Regional Film Fund
<b>Lead:</b>	Galway City Council & UNESCO CITY OF FILM
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<p>A business plan, funded by Bórd Scannán na hÉireann/Irish Film Board and the Local Authorities in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon and prepared by the Galway Film Centre, has been submitted to develop a Regional Audiovisual Producer's Fund to support film, television, gaming and animation producers in the North West region. The business plan was formally presented in Galway on Jan 31<sup>st</sup> 2017 to 24 representatives of key stakeholders including Galway City Council, Galway, Mayo &amp; Roscommon County Councils, Galway Film Centre, Western Development Commission, Galway Mayo Institute of Technology &amp; Danú Media/Atlantic Studios.</p> <p>The Chief Executives of the Local Authorities in Galway City and County, Mayo, and Roscommon have committed in principle to supporting this initiative which has the potential to create 185 direct jobs in the region along with ancillary benefits in Tourism and local retail sectors. The eight Chief Executives (Galway City, Galway County, Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon and Clare) are meeting in Sligo on Feb 21st and will discuss this proposal. A working group has been established with the aim of progressing and activating the plan.</p> <p>A draft paper including a proposal on developing a Regional Film Fund has been circulated to all stakeholders in the region for consideration and agreement. Recent meetings have taken place to consider this and a steering committee has been established to pursue this action and to make an application for funding.</p>

<b>Action:</b>	145
<b>Measure:</b>	Implement a development programme for the craft sector in County Roscommon including support for networking, training collective marketing, equipment and premises
<b>Lead:</b>	Roscommon County Council/LEO

**Status:** Complete

**Progress Update:** Roscommon County Council in partnership with the LEADER company is creating a creative hub in Ballaghaderreen. Other vehicles, such as the Upper Shannon-Erne Future Economy Project (USEFE) are also being used to support the craft sector and through the LEO Roscommon County Council are subsidising stalls at major festivals so members of the sector can exhibit and sell their goods.

**Action:** 146

**Measure:** Expand Local Authorities role in developing the craft and creative sector through initiatives such as Made In Galway

**Lead:** West Local Authorities

**Status:** Ongoing

**Progress Update:** Galway County Council continues to promote local creativity based companies through the Made in Galway initiative. Over 400 companies are listed on the Made in Galway Website, are promotional events are held in the county and at overseas events to showcase the creative sector in Galway including Claregalway Garden Festival, Medical Technology Ireland Conference 2016 at the Radisson, and the Connemara Mussel Festival.

**Action:** 148

**Measure:** Collaborate with stakeholders in the region to identify and address skills needs and new approaches to learning

**Lead:** GRETB

**Status:** Ongoing

**Progress Update:** Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB) are currently working with companies in the construction, healthcare, marketing, tourism and hospitality sectors to identify and deliver programmes to meet their skills needs

**Action:** 149

**Measure:** Support the ongoing development of the Apprenticeship training programme to develop skill levels via ETBs, with progression to higher skills levels via Higher Education Institutions across all sectors and disciplines

**Lead:** Department of Social Protection

**Status:** Ongoing

**Progress Update:** The Department of Social Protection (DSP) continues to work closely with the ETBs in promoting awareness of the new Apprenticeships programmes among its case officers and jobseekers alike. For example, Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB), by invitation, gave a presentation to DSP staff on the apprenticeship programmes available, the structure of the programmes and capturing interest from jobseekers and

employers wishing to engage. A joint group has recently been established to examine a mechanism to promote, record and progress apprenticeship placements with employers. In addition, DSP have put in place a liaison with GRETB to capture and explore potential development opportunities for apprenticeship programmes, from the feedback gathered from jobseekers and DSP case officers.

Currently, DSP facilitate the GRETB hosting an information stand at the largest Intreo Centre in Galway on a weekly basis. In addition, information regarding accessing apprenticeship programmes is made available to jobseekers at Intreo Group Information Sessions, also delivered on a weekly basis.

<b>Action:</b>	151
<b>Measure:</b>	Undertake an audit of the West population to match skill levels to the National Framework of Qualifications and update the database of skill gaps on an ongoing basis
<b>Lead:</b>	GRETB
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB) are carrying out statistical analysis and holding regular team meetings, in addition to regular team meetings with the Department of Social Protection, to identify rates of unemployment and skills gaps in area and employer engagement opportunities.

<b>Action:</b>	152
<b>Measure:</b>	Address skills need identified for the tourism, aquaculture and rural economy sectors
<b>Lead:</b>	GRETB
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB) are currently rolling out new programmes in tour guiding, marine culture and agriculture.

<b>Action:</b>	153
<b>Measure:</b>	Roll out a Traineeship programme in TV and Film at Level 5 to support this growing sector
<b>Lead:</b>	GRETB
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	GRETB is a member of the Working Group for Traineeship in Visual Effects and Animation, and is also in consultation with industry and Screen Training Ireland regarding the training needs for live action studios.

<b>Action:</b>	157
<b>Measure:</b>	Skillnets will continue to fund groups of companies with similar training needs, through training networks that deliver subsidised training to Irish businesses and their employees, as well as free training to job-seekers
<b>Lead:</b>	Skillnets
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<p>Skillnets continued to fund the development of workforce skills in the Western Region by funding the training of business owners, employees and jobseekers through its training networks in 2016.</p> <p>Skillnets funded sixty-three training networks in 2016. Of these, forty-three networks provided training to businesses in the Western region, including the following five networks all based in the Western region. These networks' membership either exclusively or predominantly comprises private enterprises in Galway, Mayo or Roscommon, with some membership also based in adjoining counties e.g. Clare, Leitrim, and Sligo.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Galway Executive Skillnet</li> <li>• ITAG Skillnet (Information Technology Association Galway)</li> <li>• Greasán na Méan Skillnet (Media industries)</li> <li>• HPSU Skillnet (High Potential Start Up)</li> <li>• Role Skillnet</li> </ul> <p>Training delivered in this region was across all sectors including manufacturing e.g., Food, Life Sciences, Agriculture and Construction and Services such as IT, Healthcare, Retail &amp; Hospitality. In total, over 4,500 employees and business owners from just under 1,400 businesses in the region participated in training with a Skillnets training network in 2016. The vast majority of companies supported by Skillnets were SMEs or sole traders. Training was highly diverse ranging from one day workshops on topics such as Business Start-Ups, Innovative Marketing and Project Management, to short certified programmes on topics such as Software Development, Effective Presentation Skills and Food Management, to longer certified Diploma and Degree programmes in Accounting, Veterinary and Medical Devices. Preliminary data indicates that almost four out of five of all Skillnet training days in 2016 were accredited through NFQ or industry certification.</p> <p>In 2016, 99 business owners and managers from 70 SME businesses in the region participated in programmes and workshops delivered by ManagementWorks - the Skillnets initiative that focuses on developing management capability within SMEs, including programmes in Business Growth, Business Leadership, Management Teams, Lean Business and a Level 9 Diploma in Management.</p> <p>Skillnet networks also provided training for jobseekers in 2016. This included training alongside employed trainees under the Training Networks</p>



Programme (TNP) and jobseeker-specific training with work placements under the Job Seeker Support Programme (JSSP). Over 270 jobseekers received a combined ca. 4,500 industry-led training with a work placement under the JSSP 2016 programme in the Western Region. Examples include TV media and broadcasting skills provided by the Greasán na Meán Skillnet with placements provided at the Galway Film Fleadh inter alia, as well as the Job Seekers ICT Conversion Programme with placements provided by Hewlett Packard and Avaya, delivered by the ITAG Skillnet.

**Action:** 158  
**Measure:** Encourage engineering at 2nd level using the Coderdojo model and promote uptake of STEM subjects  
**Lead:** GMIT  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** GMIT continues to actively encourage engineering, and more broadly STEM disciplines, through a series of interventions including Institute Open Days (and demos), School Visits, and through its support of ITAG (at Board Level) – The Information Technology Association of Galway – which is involved in supporting CoderDojo and other Computer Science and IT-related initiatives at 2nd level. Response to Action 159 below is also relevant here.

**Action:** 159  
**Measure:** Continue to highlight the enterprise and employment opportunities for Young People and Graduates from STEM subjects through the Galway Science and Technology Festival  
**Lead:** GMIT  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** The Galway Science and Technology Forum held its annual Science and Technology festival for 2 weeks in November. GMIT held the annual SciFest festival in May 2016 attracting over 100 projects from secondary schools in the region. GMIT has also piloted a Scientist-in-Residence scheme to facilitate STEM projects in secondary schools in the region.

GMIT School of Engineering runs an annual CANSAT competition, designed to inspire young people to pursue a career in the STEM disciplines. The competition is backed by the European Space Agency and SFI and run in several Institutes [CIT, AIT, LIT, DIT, GMIT]. Seven teams compete at GMIT each March in the Western Region Competition.

The objective of the competition is to mimic the landing of a space probe on an astronomical body. Students are judged on scientific, presentation and publicity [social media] skills. The official website can be viewed at: <http://www.sfi.ie/news-resources/press-releases/cansat.html>

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<b>Action:</b>	160
<b>Measure:</b>	GMIT, NUI Galway, ETBs and Industry to work with 2nd level education providers to create awareness among students of future career opportunities across all sectors within the region and at all levels from low to high skills
<b>Lead:</b>	GMIT
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Merged with Actions 158 and 159 due to similarity of objectives</b>

<b>Action:</b>	161
<b>Measure:</b>	Provide Entrepreneur Skills Development programmes - including partnerships between HEIs and successful entrepreneurs, GRETB and Local Chambers of Commerce - to provide Level 5 and 6 awards based on local training needs
<b>Lead:</b>	NUIG
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<p>'Scaling a Business' occurred across 8 days from 11th through 17th June 2016, carrying 30 ECTS credits for the award of an NUI Galway Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Entrepreneurship. It can be built upon later, to reach postgraduate diploma (60 ECTS) and Masters degrees (90 ECTS) in entrepreneurship. NUIG has created a virtual centre to house entrepreneurial contributions and sponsorship, the Atlantic Centre for Entrepreneurship &amp; Executive Development. Its website is at <a href="http://www.aceatlantic.com">www.aceatlantic.com</a>. The centre is supported by the University and sponsors; including Bank of Ireland (sponsors of the June course).</p> <p>This was followed by a November course on a similar theme with 9 companies taking part. The course carries 30 ECTS credits for the award of an NUI Galway Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Entrepreneurship. It can be built upon later, to reach postgraduate diploma (60 ECTS) and Masters degrees (90 ECTS) in entrepreneurship. This course iteration was largely managed from university resources, and further resourcing remains a challenge. As an initial step, NUIG has created a virtual centre to house entrepreneurial contributions and sponsorship, the Atlantic Centre for Entrepreneurship &amp; Executive Development</p>

<b>Action:</b>	162
<b>Measure:</b>	Continue to develop proposal for a Technological University for the West/North-West
<b>Lead:</b>	GMIT
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>

**Progress Update:** GMIT has developed an implementation plan to achieve the required metrics for designation as a Technological University in collaboration with its partners in the Connacht Ulster Alliance. The Higher Education Authority has endorsed the vision for the new Technological University as a key enabler of regional development, and has indicated financial support to progress the project in 2016-2017. Additional engagement has occurred with the Department of Education and Skills.

**Action:** 163  
**Measure:** Education providers in the West will continue to play an active role in ensuring that graduates are aware of the employment opportunities within the Western Region, e.g. by engaging industry in the selection of final year projects; two-way portal between graduates and employers  
**Lead:** GMIT  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** GMIT hosts an Annual Careers Fair and discipline specific careers fair. The Annual Careers Fair was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016. Over seventy companies and organisations took stands at the event which is aimed at GMIT students and graduates. 94% of GMIT graduates are in employment or further study within 9 months of graduation.

**Action:** 164  
**Measure:** Develop tailored programmes to ensure that graduates are ready to enter the workforce and are more attractive to industry, through collaboration between Third Level and Industry  
**Lead:** GMIT  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** GMIT develops programmes at Levels 6-10 to meet societal and economic demands. In addition the Institute secured funding for the following Springboard programmes in 2016: Higher Diploma in Science in Computing – One Year, Full-time, delivered online; Higher Diploma in Science in Computing – Two Year, Part-time, delivered online; Certificates in Medical Device Technology & Quality Management; Certificate in Culinary Arts; Certificate in Construction Management. GMIT is responding to the 2017 Springboard Call for Submissions on the 24th February.

**Action:** 166  
**Measure:** Attract Diaspora Talent by creating awareness among the diaspora of opportunities in region  
**Lead:** West Local Authorities  
**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** Galway County Council rolled out the third year of the Community Tourism Diaspora Fund to provide support to local and community event organisers and activities/projects that will harness diaspora links for the benefit of local and community tourism. 42 projects were supported in County Galway in 2016. Galway County Council also progressed the development of the County Galway Diaspora Strategy.

**Action:** 167  
**Measure:** Deliver the labour market activation strand of the SICAP programme to ensure the skills needs of the long term unemployed and those not in education or training are developed in line with the skills needs in the region  
**Lead:** Local Development Companies  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** An area-based response to Long Term Unemployment is part of the Local Development Companies' SICAP Annual Plans and Strategies (SICAP Goal 3) for the Castlebar and Claremorris Municipal Districts and the Mayo Islands. This currently includes training and upskilling for Long Term Youth Unemployment, and also under GOAL 2 SICAP supports NEETs (young people not in education, employment or training).

**Action:** 168  
**Measure:** IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland will each work with the Dept. of Social Protection to promote the recruitment of people from the Live Register amongst their client companies  
**Lead:** Department of Social Protection  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** IDA frequently invites the Department of Social Protection to become involved and progress a working relationship with various companies who have confirmed their intention to expand in Galway. Enterprise Ireland has also sought assistance from the Department to match and source suitable candidates for their client companies. Collaborations have included Phenox and Smartbear. In addition, the Department have also had contact with companies such as Siteminder, Ipswitch and Mathworks (Metlab) to inform them of supports and grant funding available in filling vacancies.  
Enterprise Ireland hosted a stand at Galway Intreo Centre's 'Enterprise Innovation Hub' event as part of the Department's national Jobsweek last September.

**Action:** 169  
**Measure:** Continue to provide supports to entrepreneurs and SMEs through business networks in the region, including Chambers of Commerce, Ibec, Inc60, iTAG and Online Marketing in Galway

<b>Lead:</b>	Chambers
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Galway Chamber continues to provide supports for SMEs in the form of connecting, informing, policy research, lobbying, and promoting businesses. These supports include networking opportunities, business lunches, breakfast briefings and business after-hours events. Events in H2 2016 included Galway Chamber Christmas Business Lunch, Christmas 'Business After Hours' networking Event, Business Awards and Gala Ball, 'Business Before Hours' networking event, Facebook 'Boost your Business' event, and collaborative events with the France-Ireland Chamber of Commerce.
	The Chamber also supports businesses through its subsidiary company, the Galway Technology Centre, through its founding role in the Galway City Innovation District and the PorterShed as well as its founding and ongoing role in the Atlantic Economic Corridor.

<b>Action:</b>	170
<b>Measure:</b>	Strengthen existing Ibec networks across the West region by developing additional Ibec development and best practice networks in the region together with Leadership Forums
<b>Lead:</b>	Ibec
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	Ibec networks are formed to connect members with one another and with key business issues; in addition to the Travel, Leisure & Hospitality Network and the Health & Social Care Network, new Business Networks have been established including the Recruitment Agency Network, Facility Services Network and a Childcare Network. The Irish Medical Devices Association (IMDA), the Ibec group which represents the medical devices industry, in association with Enterprise Ireland and IDA, In September launched the Irish Medtech Excellence Awards 2016. The awards represent an opportunity to reward and acknowledge significant achievements and best practise in this sector.

<b>Action:</b>	171
<b>Measure:</b>	Continue to operate Ibec sector-specific regional networks including in Pharma and Medtech, and explore the potential for the ICT sector
<b>Lead:</b>	Ibec
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	The Irish MedTech Association is currently planning a manufacturing seminar in September 2017 in Galway. In addition, the newly established Ibec IoMT (Internet of Medical Things) group (comprising Irish Medtech, ICT Ireland, Irish Software Association and Biopharmaceutical Ireland) met on four occasions during 2016 (in Dublin, Galway, Athlone and Dublin.) It is the vision

of the group that Ireland will be the location of choice for the adoption and commercialisation of connected health solutions that deliver better patient outcomes, improve the efficiency and effectiveness of health and care services, and deliver economic growth.

**Action:** 172  
**Measure:** The local authorities and LEOs in the region will facilitate industry-led networks and clusters to grow and deliver their jobs potential through seminars, conferences, information and other appropriate supports  
**Lead:** West Local Authorities  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** The West Local Authorities support and facilitate business networks to deliver seminars, events and training to their members. Mayo LEO and EIU work closely with Chambers Mayo (and individual Chambers of Commerce in Mayo) to facilitate/support a number of initiatives including Mayo Business Awards, Retail Development Programmes, and other events/seminars for their members.

**Action:** 175  
**Measure:** Údarás na Gaeltachta will develop and host 6 educational seminars (2 per annum) for business people, along with networking events in the region  
**Lead:** Údarás na Gaeltachta  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Údarás na Gaeltachta hosted a consultation forum/networking event with tourism providers in Carna in Q4 2016, with over 80 people attending the event. Furthermore Údarás partnered with Junior Achievement Ireland to host an event directed at 500 TY second level Gaeltacht students re entrepreneurship.

**Action:** 178  
**Measure:** Host business briefings, award programmes, member business evenings and networking events at a regional level  
**Lead:** Ibec  
**Status:** **Complete**  
**Progress Update:** Almost 500 Medtech business leaders gathered in Galway in December to see Medtronic named the Medtech company of the year at the 10th Irish Medtech Awards. The event was part of the two day Medtech CEO Forum, hosted by the Irish Medtech Association, Enterprise Ireland, and IDA Ireland. Other events in 2016 included the Retail Ireland annual conference, Ibec West Regional Executive Committee, Regional Insights Series (Galway), and the Irish Medical Devices and Diagnostics Leadership Programme (Galway) – developed by Irish Medical Devices Association’s (IMDA), Human Resources

Development Working Group.

**Action:** 179  
**Measure:** In the context of the Ibec Manufacturing survey, host a series of regional seminars in association with AIB, including one in the West/Mid-West  
**Lead:** Ibec  
**Status:** **Complete**  
**Progress Update:** The Ibec Manufacturing Conference took place in June 2016; the Irish Medtech Association will also host a manufacturing seminar in September 2017 in Galway which this is planned to cover some of the elements of the originally proposed AIB roadshows.

**Action:** 180  
**Measure:** Explore areas of collaboration and mentoring through existing networks, and the development of communications of current training supports available in manufacturing  
**Lead:** Ibec  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Recognising the importance of the Manufacturing sector, Ibec brought together business leaders from the Ibec trade associations to discuss the challenges now and into the future and to develop an environment to allow the sector reach its full potential. The Ibec Manufacturing Conference took place in June 2016. Skills and training was a key focus of this conference, with speakers addressing what skill sets are necessary for businesses to thrive and what proactive measures are Irish manufacturers taking to attract the best talent.

**Action:** 181  
**Measure:** Hold extensive training programmes covering a range of sectors through Skillnets and Springboard  
**Lead:** Ibec  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** Ibec offer practical programmes to improve the competence and skills of staff. Working in partnership with Skillnets Ltd and its contracting organisation, the Irish Medtech Association (Ibec sector), the Irish Medtech Association Skillnet has over the past number of years grown substantially in direct response to the training needs of Industry. In 2015, the Irish Medtech Skillnet developed the first Masters in Medical Technology Regulatory Affairs to up skill RA professionals ahead of the new EU Medical Device Regulatory Framework.

In 2016, the skills need was further addressed with the development of a

'Fundamentals in Regulatory Affairs', Level 8 programme to meet the growing requirements of Irish companies in filling regulatory assurance roles. The network also provides some opportunities to assist with company specific training events.

The IMDA is also pleased to present its Quality Engineering programme which is now running for the fifth consecutive year. The programme, funded by Springboard, is designed to provide out of work engineers and scientists with the skills to take up new work in the Medtech sector. The training takes place two days per week over 15 weeks in NUI Galway and is accredited by the University of Limerick and Dublin Institute of Technology.

<b>Action:</b>	182
<b>Measure:</b>	The Western Development Commission will continue to develop the LookWest.ie online guide to business, work and life in the West of Ireland, and the LookWest.ie campaign to promote the unique regional brand
<b>Lead:</b>	Western Development Commission
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<p>The WDC'S remit to position the Western Region of Ireland as a leading global region characterised by a dynamic draw for enterprise, activity and creativity is ongoing through its Lookwest.ie campaign. The priority campaigns for the past 6 months were focused on Enterprise, Investment and Jobs while promoting quality of life is also an important consideration.</p> <p>WDC has over 10,000 views of its 'West of Ireland Start-Up Guide' and 4,000 views of the 'Invest West' guide. The website has seen a traffic growth of 25% and the UK is now the 2nd largest audience with a notable increase in this traffic since the Brexit announcements. Lookwest.ie has a combined social audience of over 20,000 (facebook, twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn etc).</p> <p>On a bi-monthly basis WDC sends an ezine/newsletter with unique content from the Western region to a database of over 6,000 people. The jobs section of Lookwest.ie continues to drive much traffic to the website with people searching for job opportunities in the Western Region.</p> <p>All county pages are now updated with crowd-sourced content and are all in the Top 10 most popular pages on the website.</p>

<b>Action:</b>	183
<b>Measure:</b>	While maintaining a whole-of-region approach to enterprise support and job creation, the local authorities will continue to develop branding initiatives that promote their unique selling points such as:- The Portershed in Galway City; - Galway City as Medtech City; - Mayo.ie; - Made in Galway; Invest



Roscommon.

**Lead:** West Local Authorities

**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** Galway County Council continues to promote local creativity based companies through the Made in Galway initiative. Over 400 companies are listed on the Made in Galway Website, promotional events are held in Galway and at overseas events to showcase the creative sector in Galway including Claregalway Garden Festival, Medical Technology Ireland Conference 2016 at the Radisson, Connemara Mussel Festival.

The #WildMayo Films Project, developed by Mayo.ie Tourism Office, commenced in 2016. It aims to show Mayo through the eyes of the adventurers and athletes that live there. This project has produced a series of films in conjunction with Cut Media (a Glasweigan Film Company) – all can be found at [www.mayo.ie/visit](http://www.mayo.ie/visit).

**Action:** 184

**Measure:** The Western Development Commission will continue to conduct regional analysis to identify regional policy issues and infrastructure priorities and design solutions to these issues/priorities

**Lead:** Western Development Commission

**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** The WDC continue to provide regional analysis on key policy issues, including a report on the Preliminary Census 2016. Most recent publications are available on [www.wdc.ie/publications](http://www.wdc.ie/publications) and the various WDC Insights Blogs.

**Action:** 185

**Measure:** Údarás na Gaeltachta will provide support and resourcing to community cooperatives to implement a programme for economic, social, linguistic and cultural development in the region

**Lead:** Údarás na Gaeltachta

**Status:** **Ongoing**

**Progress Update:** Údarás na Gaeltachta continued to support 30 cooperatives/community development companies (six of which are located on the offshore islands) to deliver an economic, social, linguistic and cultural plan in their community. As part of its role in the 'Straitéis Fiche Bliain don Ghaeilge 2010-2030' Údarás na Gaeltachta has engaged with 22 structures/entities to prepare and deliver a language plan for their respective language planning area.

<b>Action:</b>	186
<b>Measure:</b>	Secure resources through LEADER/REDZ/FLAG/Public Enhancement Schemes to invest in Towns and Villages to make them attractive retail and commercial destinations
<b>Lead:</b>	West Local Authorities
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<p>Roscommon secured €100,000 through REDZ towards developing a fully equipped kitchen in Castlerea which will allow individuals to train and to develop and manufacture food products. It will also serve as a catering training facility. Under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, Ballaghadereen, Boyle, Castlerea, Cootehall, Keadue, Monksland, Roscommon, and Strokestown all received funding of between approx. €20,000 and €62,000 each. Projects include the development of playground facilities, improvement of streetscapes and public realms, and the undertaking of a town centre 'Health Check'.</p> <p>Galway County Council continues to facilitate investment in key towns in Galway through a range of programmes including REDZ, Community Support Scheme, and Capital Investment Programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• €100,000 secured through REDZ 2016 for areas of Glenamaddy, An Cheathrú Rua, Galway Rural, Oranmore and Gort</li> <li>• Galway County Council is a partner in the IWAK Flagship REDZ project to develop Tourist Discovery centre at Knock Airport</li> <li>• Galway County Council is an associate partner in the Lough Derg Flagship REDZ project to develop a Blueway on Lough Derg</li> <li>• €392,000 secured through the CLAR programme 2016 for projects in County Galway</li> </ul> <p>Under the REDZ scheme, Mayo secured the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• €50,000 for the development of enterprise units including shared secretariat and hot desk facilities, Erris Beo, Gaoth Sáile, Béal an Mhuirthead</li> <li>• €50,000 for the redevelopment of a vacant commercial property into a state-of-the-art enterprise centre in Westport</li> </ul> <p>Through the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, Crossmolina, Kilkelly, Kiltimagh and Louisburgh each received €95,000 for enhancements to physical environment and public realm, concentrating on streetscape enhancements, car parking provision and the enhancement of leisure facilities and playgrounds.</p>

<b>Action:</b>	187
<b>Measure:</b>	The Northern and Western Regional Assembly will engage in the process of establishing Regional Economic Fora for the West Region

**Lead:** Northern & Western Regional Assembly  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** This process is scheduled to begin once the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES) statutorily commences. This is expected in late 2017.

**Action:** 188  
**Measure:** The Northern and Western Regional Assembly will develop a Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy which will have a co-ordinated focus on identifying and driving sectors that can deliver new investment and employment opportunities in the West region  
**Lead:** Northern & Western Regional Assembly  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** The NWRA has made its submission to the first stage of the National Planning Framework process, produced following collaboration with key stakeholders, including local authorities and representatives of the State Development Agencies and 3rd level education sector. The Submission focuses on the potential of the Northern and Western Region to underpin island-wide sustainable growth to 2040, including in sectors such as Energy, Marine, Life Sciences, Financial Services, Creative Economy, Tourism and Agri-Food.

**Action:** 189  
**Measure:** Working with the Regional Airports, the Northern and Western Regional Assembly will undertake work across a range of areas to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of these airports funded by the EU's SPARA2020 Project (Smart Peripheral and Remote Airports)  
**Lead:** Northern & Western Regional Assembly  
**Status:** **Ongoing**  
**Progress Update:** This project is 18 months into a 3 year project period. ALG consultants carried out audits of the Non-Aeronautical Services in Ireland West Airport Knock and Donegal Airport in 2016 and published reports listing a number of recommendations for pilot projects in the two regional airports. Ireland West Airport Knock has decided to implement pilot projects based upon a review of the Way Finding and Passenger Experience. Procurement of the projects has commenced and it is hoped to commence the pilot projects in early 2017. Donegal airport will implement 3 pilot projects – Car Park Review, New Entrance Signage and a Passenger Survey. These will commence in the first quarter of 2017.

**Action:** 190  
**Measure:** Údarás na Gaeltachta will upgrade the broadband infrastructure to its business parks by investing in fibre optic  
**Lead:** Údarás na Gaeltachta

**Status:** Ongoing  
**Progress Update:** Preparatory work is underway in examining the most effective means for delivering these critical infrastructural services to the Estates and Business Parks which have been identified. Discussions are ongoing with the relevant Government Departments. A decision on the final implementation plan is to be agreed by end Q1 2017.

**Action:** 191  
**Measure:** Ensure that the electricity transmission grid in the West is strengthened to enable maximum investment by industries that rely on large energy consumption  
**Lead:** Eirgrid  
**Status:** Ongoing  
**Progress Update:** 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. The Grid West project was originally being proposed to connect renewable energy generation in North West Mayo to the national electricity grid. Based on the potential changes to the expected generation in the area, Eirgrid are carefully considering alternatives to building a 400 kV overhead line.

**Action:** 192  
**Measure:** The Northern and Western Regional Assembly will continue to explore possibilities for EU funding for relevant projects in the region. The Assembly also act as the national contact point for three EU Interreg Programmes for the 2014-20120 period i.e. Northern Periphery and Artic (€56 m), Atlantic Area (€140m) and Interreg Europe (€359 m – jointly with the Southern Assembly)  
**Lead:** Northern & Western Regional Assembly  
**Status:** Ongoing  
**Progress Update:** Irish Partner Organisations are currently benefitting from EU Funding supports from all three Interreg programmes, which are currently rolling out public calls for proposals. During 2017 and beyond, Irish interest in these Programmes is expected to increase.

**Action:** 193  
**Measure:** The Northern and Western Regional Assembly will continue to manage the ERDF Designated Urban Centres Grant Scheme which can provide potential investment in the economic, social and cultural infrastructure of Galway City  
**Lead:** Northern & Western Regional Assembly

<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	In 2016 the NWRA allocated €14 million in funds to projects in seven cities and towns in which it administers EU funding – the area known as the Border, Midlands and Western region (BMW). This disbursement included an allocation of €3.5 million granted to build a City Library & Cultural Centre on the Headford Road, Galway. Monies are from a wider Designated Urban Centre Fund totalling €40m, awarded for national projects including urban regeneration, infrastructure and culture. The new investment is through the European Regional Development Fund’s Designated Urban Centres Grant Scheme. The ERDF, through the Designated Urban Areas Grant Scheme, supports local authorities in improving and revitalising urban areas.

<b>Action:</b>	194
<b>Measure:</b>	The Northern and Western Regional Assembly will continue to lead the implementation of the €320 million Border, Midland and Western Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020 in collaboration with relevant public bodies
<b>Lead:</b>	Northern & Western Regional Assembly
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Progress Update:</b>	<p>All measures in the BMW Regional Operational Programme (2014 - 2020) have commenced, apart from the National Broadband Scheme, where the National Broadband Steering Committee is finalising the procurement process for the roll-out of the National Broadband Plan. The second Monitoring Committee meeting of the BMW OP took place on 12 May, 2016 and progress was reported on all measures in the Operational Programme. Cumulative public eligible expenditure to end December 2015 is reported as €12.943m.</p> <p>The following are examples of the schemes being funded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) Research Centres Programme - 5 awards were made under the Research Centre programme with an SFI award value of €122m.</li> <li>• SFI Spokes Programme - 10 awards were made under the Spokes Programme with an SFI award value of €17,365.</li> <li>• SFI Investigators Programme - 6 awards were made under the Investigator Programme, which is based in the Northern and Western region.</li> <li>• Marine Research Programme - no expenditure or achievements have been reported because the Intermediate Body has not entered into any contractual commitments for co-funding under this programme. In addition, the Intermediate Body is considering changing the activities under the priority which might lead to a programme modification. These changes will be discussed between the Intermediate Body and the Managing Authority during the course of</li> </ul>

2016.