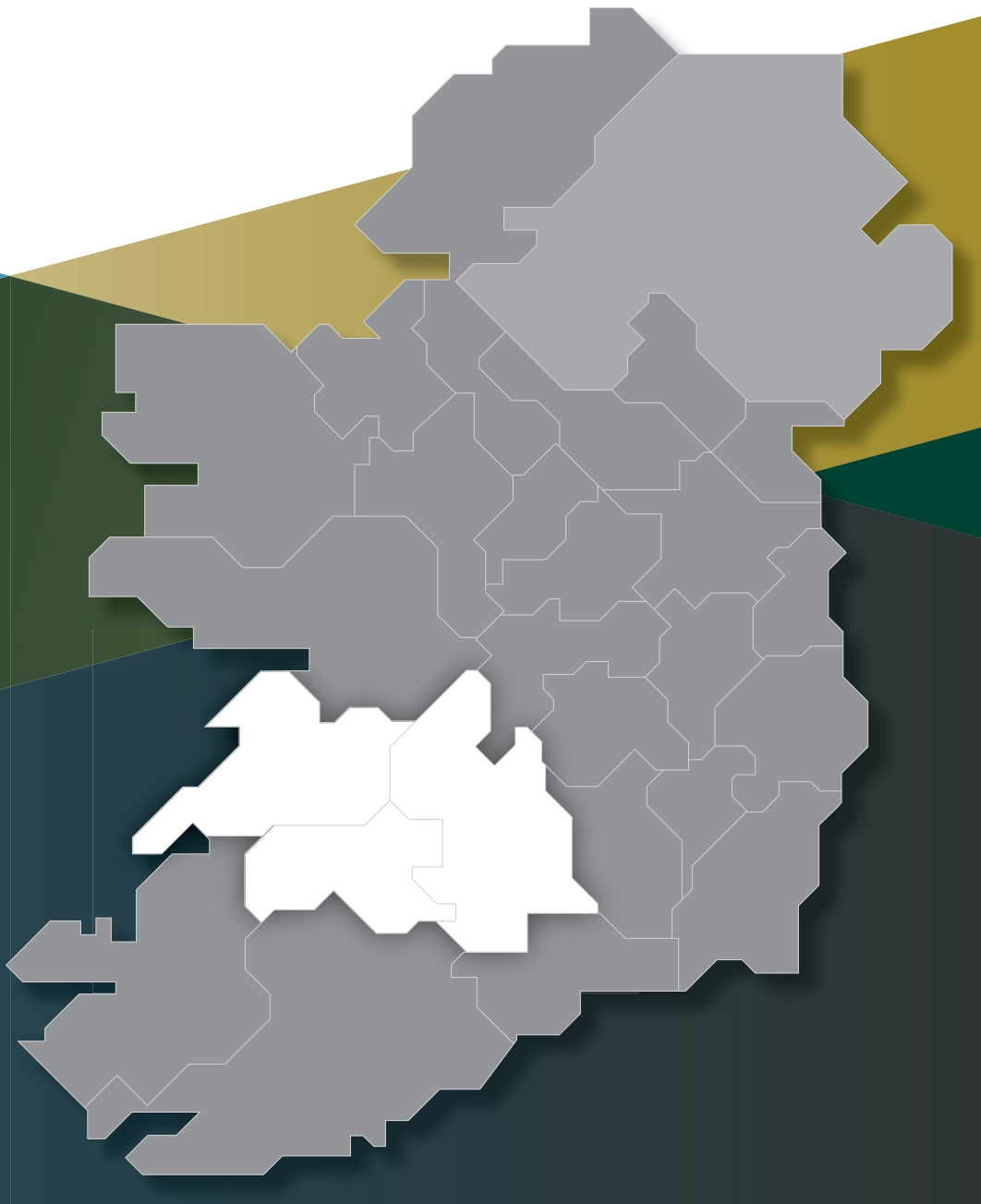Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

MID-WEST
Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 — First Progress Report

An initiative of the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation

Contents

1. Introduction

The Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 is one of nine regional enterprise plans launched in early 2019 by the Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation. The Plan was developed by regional stakeholders, and as a 'bottom-up' initiative, it complements national enterprise policies and programmes. The Plan is a 'live' agenda that allows new initiatives to be considered in addition to the strategic focus it currently contains.

The principle underpinning the Regional Enterprise Plans is collaboration between regional stakeholders on initiatives that can help to realise each region's enterprise development potential, adding value to the core activities being delivered by the enterprise agencies, LEOs and other bodies in the region.

Implementation of the Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 for the Mid-West is being delivered by the Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan Steering Committee, which was chaired in 2019 by Barry O'Sullivan, Vice President, Vice President of Manufacturing at Johnson & Johnson. A full-time Programme Manager, Orlaith Borthwick, appointed jointly by the three Local Authorities in the Mid-West, provided project management support to the initiative during 2019. The Mid-West Steering Committee has met on three occasions during 2019, and as part of the implementation process has formed smaller Working Groups to drive delivery of actions or groups of actions.

The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation has oversight of the nine Plans nationally, and in September 2019 facilitated collective engagement between the Chairs of the Steering Committees with the Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation. This meeting provided an opportunity for updating on progress, sharing good practice, and identifying areas for potential inter-regional cooperation.

Climate Action Plan 2019 has tasked each of the Regional Steering Committees with considering 'Just Transition' as part of their ongoing agenda. On November 2019, Just Transition was included as an Agenda item for the first time by the Mid-West Steering Committee and this facilitated a discussion on the topic. Just Transition will remain as a standing item on the Steering Committee's agenda.

The Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan is focused around 5 Strategic Objectives to positively influence enterprise and job creation in the region. The Plan aims to enable a digital and innovation economy and to make the Mid-West Ireland's leading smart-city region; continue progress toward a low-carbon economy; continue to develop workforce skills and talent in the Mid-West; develop the Region's capacity to deliver economic growth and build a coordinated regional messaging brand.

This Year 1 Progress Report details of the progress that has been made to date on the Mid-West Plan. It also reports on the outcomes from the Enterprise Agencies and LEOs' core activities in the region during the year. Of particular significance for the region in 2019 is that in excess of €5.5 million has been secured for the Mid-West under the Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF). (detailed in Appendix 1).

Finally, overall employment creation and levels of unemployment continue on a positive track in the Mid-West. Since the first Regional Action Plan for Jobs was introduced in Q1 2015, 19,300 more people are in employment in the Mid-West, and the region currently has an unemployment rate of 4.9 percent, down from twelve percent in Q1 2015, which means that the region has already exceeded the targets set in relation to employment growth and the reduction in unemployment since 2015.

2. Enterprise Agencies and LEO activities in Mid-West in 2019

In order to achieve the 2020 employment targets and maintain strong regional enterprise and job creation performance, the Strategic Objectives and collaborative actions identified for the Mid-West region in the Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 are complemented by the ongoing core activities of the Enterprise Agencies (IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland) and the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs).

Representatives of the Enterprise Agencies and the three LEOs are active members on the REP Steering Committee in the Mid-West and will continue to work with regional stakeholders on key regional enterprise ecosystem strengthening initiatives in the region in 2020.

The Enterprise Agencies each have corporate strategies which include national level objectives as well as frameworks for bespoke regional activities that support regional enterprise investment and development potential and leverage regional assets and opportunities.

IDA Ireland is currently completing work on its new five-year strategy which will focus on attracting foreign direct investment across all regions. Enterprise Ireland launched its regional plan 'Powering the Regions' in 2019, and in 2020, will commence the preparation of a new corporate strategy, the successor to 'Build Scale and Expand Reach 2017-2020.

Over the course of 2019, the enterprise agencies and the LEOs have achieved impact in a number of areas as they continue to roll out their core activities across all of the regions. The following summarises some key results and developments during the year.

Enterprise Ireland Activities

During 2019, Enterprise Ireland published a new plan 'Powering the Regions' to accelerate growth throughout Ireland's regions. The plan is built on four key pillars, each of which support the nine Regional Enterprise Plans.

4 Key Pillars

1. Maximising growth of Enterprise Ireland clients in the regions

2. Strengthening regional infrastructure to maximise future growth of Irish enterprise in the regions

3. Support entrepreneurship in all regions

4. Work in collaboration to deliver regional growth

In 2019, 16,971 new jobs were created by clients of Enterprise Ireland in all regions with 66% of this growth delivered outside of Dublin. Enterprise Ireland clients employed a record high of 221,895 during the year.

€24m was invested in 127 startups with 42% of these located outside Dublin.

During 2019, Enterprise Ireland ran a third competition for projects under the Regional Enterprise Development Fund. Minister Humphreys announced in January 2020 that under the fund 26 projects across every region were approved funding of over €40m and these will make an important contribution to the delivery of the Regional Enterprise Plans. This builds upon nearly €60m already approved under the Fund.

In December 2019, Ministers Humphreys and McHugh announced €4.6m in government funding under the Enterprise Ireland Regional Technology Clustering Fund to establish 12 technology clusters in partnership with the Institutes of Technology across the country.

In 2019, the Local Enterprise Offices also worked successfully with their clients to assist 162 companies transfer to Enterprise Ireland to help them scale.

In 2019, the total numbers employed in the 558 Enterprise Ireland supported companies in the Mid-West increased by 2.8% from 2018.

Recent EI announcements include:

• H&MV Engineering – 150 jobs in Limerick

• Croom Precision – 18 new jobs in Limerick

• Modular Automation – 100 jobs in Clare

LEO Activities

In 2019, the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) continued to be the 'first stop shop' providing entrepreneurs with advice, guidance, financial assistance and other supports available to assist with starting or growing their own businesses, with 31 offices spread throughout the country the LEOs are truly operating at the coalface of job creation and regional development in Ireland, providing a 'signposting' service for all the relevant supports available through the state.

The LEOs offer grant aid to businesses employing less than 10 people in manufacturing and internationally traded services sectors which have the potential to develop into strong export entities. They approved 291 priming grants to new start-ups, 80% of the approvals were to companies regionally.

To assist in their remit of developing regional employment, the LEOs also offer 'soft' supports by way of training (85%) mentoring (75%) and targeted programmes such as LEAN for micro (90%)*. Participation in these has been successfully targeted by the LEO teams in each of the regions.

In particular, the LEO's have awarded €2.5m in funding to 16 successful applicants through the LEO Competitive Fund, applications were open to individual LEOs; collaborative projects between two or more LEOs; and LEOs working with other local groups like Chambers, Community Enterprise Centres, Education or training bodies, Local Authorities or colleges. All projects are aligned with the strategic objectives in the Regional Enterprise Plans and the ambitions in Future Jobs Ireland.

The LEOs supported 38,535 jobs across 7,400 client companies in 2019 of which there was an additional 148 companies outside of the Dublin region. 3,149 net jobs were created during the year and 78% of these were produced outside of the Dublin region with an even distribution across the regions. This is the 6th year of continuous employment growth for the LEOs since their inception in 2014. LEOs saw increases across all supports in 2019 including training, mentoring and funding. The number of those trained in 2019 was up 6.4% last year with 37,306 availing of training through their Local Enterprise Office. There was also an 10.5% increase in mentoring assignments completed, with 10,756 clients benefitting from LEO mentoring.

Over €20million was invested in LEO clients and start-ups last year, up from €18.2million in 2018.

There were an additional 299 (net) new jobs created by companies supported by the three Mid-West LEOs (Clare, Limerick and Tipperary) during 2019. In 2019 there were 4,645 employees in 816 LEO supported companies in the Mid-West.

*Shows the regional percentage of the overall excluding Dublin.

IDA Activities

IDA Ireland is the State's inward investment promotion agency. The mission of the agency is to partner with multi-national companies to win and develop foreign direct investment, providing jobs for the economic and social benefit of Ireland. Regional development is a key pillar of IDA's strategy.

Supporting the execution of the Regional Enterprise Plans across the country through our Regional Manager network and through working with strategic FDI stakeholders, has helped support and drive collaborative Regional enterprise objectives.

IDA Ireland concluded its strategy, '**Winning: Foreign Direct Investment**' 2015-2019 in December 2019. The Strategy set out ambitious targets to support the delivery of its mission to win and develop Foreign Direct Investment in Ireland. These targets included a focus on;

- Winning 900 new investments for Ireland
- Supporting clients in creating 80,000 new jobs
- Growing market share and helping maximise the impact of FDI investments
- Driving greater balanced Regional Development

For the first time, ambitious investment targets were set for each region. IDA targeted a minimum 30% to 40% increase in the number of investments for each Region outside Dublin.

Following the conclusion of '**Winning: 2015 - 2019**', the key highlights and impact for Regional Development in Ireland are as follows;

- 516 investments overall were won across Regions over the past five years
- 50% uplift in investments for Regions recorded over the course of the five-year strategy
- Every Region delivered the five-year Strategy target of a 30-40% uplift in investments on previous Strategy
- 54,868 jobs were created outside of Dublin over the past five years
- 33,118 additional direct jobs (net) on the ground in Regions
- 57% of total FDI employment is now located in Regional locations

To deliver on these ambitious targets IDA Ireland has;

- Worked with public bodies and the private sector on regional action plans
- Worked with existing clients to retain and strengthen their presence in each region
- Increased Global Business Services and High-Tech Manufacturing investments
- Aligned IDA business sectors with regional strengths to develop sectoral ecosystems
- Worked more closely with EI and its client companies to identify synergies, enhance clusters, participate in site visits and maximise benefits for the region through the Global Sourcing Program
- Delivered property solutions in designated regional locations
- Increased IDA Ireland's regional footprint to adequately support the regional strategy

In addition to direct employment and skills transfer, IDA Ireland's client companies have a hugely positive effect on the local economy with over eight jobs being created for every 10 jobs in an FDI company. 50% of the €5.7bn in annual capital expenditure by IDA client companies occurs outside of Dublin. These investments have been won despite the demographical challenges that exist and international trends of greater urbanisation.

IDA Ireland is committed to playing its part in the economic development of Irelands regions. However, winning investments is a challenge and will require a continued collaborative effort by all national and regional stakeholders.

Regional locations must continuously demonstrate the capability to deliver on a number of exacting criteria which generally inform the location decisions of multinationals.

An assessment of investments delivered for regions since 2015, would confirm the strategic importance of the following key criteria in actually influencing the investment decision;

- Critical mass in population
- The ability to attract and develop appropriate skills
- The presence of Third Level Institutes
- The existence of clusters of companies in specific industry sectors
- Regional Infrastructure
- Regional Place Making Strategies
- Availability of high spec standard manufacturing and commercial office properties

To support the delivery of IDA's current strategy and the attraction of investments into different parts of the country, a €150m property investment plan was announced in 2015. IDA Ireland's approach of developing strategic sites and developing advanced buildings has proven to be hugely successful. In 2019, IDA Ireland continued its building programme with the design and construction underway of advance buildings in Sligo, Dundalk, Athlone, Waterford, Galway, Monaghan and Limerick.

IDA Ireland is currently completing work on a new five-year strategy. This strategy will take account of the changing nature of work and the impact of technology on specific sectors. Profound changes are occurring in the world of work and this is already reflected in the jobs being created by the IDA Ireland client base. We can see an increasing complexity in the roles being created, technology skills becoming ubiquitous across roles, increasing demand for business professionals and a fall in the number of low-skilled jobs including back office support and basic manufacturing. This transition is likely to impact the nature and type of roles across the regions of Ireland.

Building on the success achieved to date, IDA will continue to collaborate with all stakeholders and parties in the regions to realise the economic potential and ambition of Irelands regions under the Regional Enterprise Plans to 2020.

Overall, employment grew in IDA supported companies in the Mid-West by 5.4 percent during 2019, bringing the total number employed to 23,735 across 138 IDA client companies in the region.

Recent IDA announcements include:

- QAD – 40 jobs in Limerick
- Johnson & Johnson – 100 jobs in Limerick
- DMS Governance – 50 jobs in Tipperary
- Extreme Networks – 20 jobs in Clare

3. Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 – Progress Report

MID-WEST STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
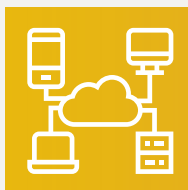
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1:

Enable a digital and innovation economy and make the Mid-West Ireland's leading smart city-region.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:

Achieve a step-change in progress toward a low carbon economy in the Mid-West.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3:

Continue to develop workforce skills and talent and enhance the attractiveness of living and working in the Mid-West.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4:

Develop the regions capacity to deliver economic growth.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5:

Build a coordinated regional messaging brand for consistent communication.

2019 Highlights

Under the third call of the €40 million Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF) three projects from the Mid-West region were awarded funding of over €5.5m.
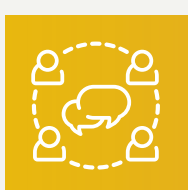
A funding submission made under Call 3 of REDF to build a test bed to develop future mobility technologies was successful with over €4.7million awarded.

Regional film coordinator appointed in September 2019 and is now working on a number of initiatives to promote film and film skills development in the Mid-West.

Chief Operating Officer and Engineer appointed to Lisheen BioEconomy Project with Planning Permission granted for construction of the facility.

Brand LIMERICK launched to provide for cross-regional branding for the Mid-West region. This will provide a regional message for consistent communication.

Emerald Aero Group cluster continues to grow with some company members seeing increases of over 50% in business. Cluster received additional funding under Call 3 of the Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF).

Detailed Action Updates

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	1

Enable a digital and innovation economy and make the Mid-West Ireland's leading smart city-region.

Action 1:

Develop an Autonomous Mobility Testbed

Working Group Members:

CAV Ireland, Vehicles of the Future, Clare County Council, Limerick City & County Council, Shannon Group, Mid-West Enterprise Plan Programme Manager, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, industry partners.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Delayed

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Create CAV Cluster
- Submit Funding application to REDF for Future Mobility Test bed

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

1. IDA and Enterprise Ireland have merged CAV Ireland & Vehicles of the Future – new cluster now known as CAV Ireland (in interim period UL are acting as 'Cluster coordinators').

2. Inter-Departmental group working under office of An Taoiseach to publish guidelines on use of Autonomous vehicles on Irish roads (due for publication 2019)

3. CAV Ireland have launched vision for Proving Ground https://youtu.be/lEuMjaxzexk

4. The CAV project has lodged a request with D/Transport seeking permission to test on open roads. This is proving a slow process as legislation for this provision is now required.

5. A funding submission was made under Call 3 of REDF for €4.7m to build a test bed to develop future mobility technologies.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Future Mobility Campus Ireland:

1. Define company structure of non-profit company – Future Mobility Campus Ireland (FMCI) CLG
2. Establish project plan to build out campus
3. Establish marketing and brand for FMCI
4. Add further strategic partners to FMCI
5. Begin build out of infrastructure
6. Begin refurbishment of FMCI HQ

Action 2:

Position the Mid-West as a national centre for advanced manufacturing

Working Group Members:

IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Industry partners, University of Limerick, Limerick Institute of Technology, CONFIRM, Regional Skills, Enterprise Plan Manager, Clare County Council, Limerick City & County Council, Tipperary County Council.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q3 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 and continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Additional 100 employees in larger and smaller companies in the manufacturing sector will have engaged with the EXPLORE programme;
- Enterprise R&D capabilities and innovation capacity increases delivered by CONFIRM

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

1. IDA granted planning permission for Irelands Advanced Manufacturing Centre in Limerick. Currently under appeal.
2. Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan manager on British Embassy itinerary 'Joining the Dots' to visit UK's National manufacturing Centre, Coventry.
3. Shared space for R&D collaboration among Universities, IT's and Industry. It will be 12-14 months in construction – Ready by Q1 2020.
4. Sports Tech submitted an application under REDF call 3.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Second location being sought for Troy Studios with required height and size for film production within 40km of Limerick City.

Action 3:

Appoint a Regional Film Manager to develop and exploit industry opportunities to identify additional economic and job creation potential opportunities exist in the region. This person will be tasked with ensuring the economic impact of TROY film studios is felt across the region and that opportunities are grasped as they arise.

To support the continued growth of the industry, a focus will be placed on building the indigenous talent pipeline. Recent changes to Section 481 'Film & TV Tax Credit' supports this ambition, by placing greater emphasis on training programs for persons located within the region where filming is taking place. The Mid-West region will continue to foster and grow successful collaborations to deliver this regional talent pipeline.

Working Group Members:

Innovate Limerick, TROY studios, Limerick School Art & Design, Limerick Clare Education Training Board, Tipperary Education Training Board.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 and continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

An additional 1,000 people employed by the film sector in the region by 2020

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

1. Paul Ryan was appointed as regional film coordinator in September 2019 and is working on a number of initiatives to promote film and film skills development in the Mid-West. These initiatives are being run in cooperation with Screen Ireland, Screen Skills Ireland, Troy Studios, Foundation Production for Apple Streaming, Limerick and Clare ETB and Mid-West local authorities.

2. Regional Film Skills Forum established.

3. Digital Collaboration Centre – Mairead Holland joined the Innovate team on 3 February this year as Digital Collaboration Centre Manager. Since her arrival she has been working closely with our architects Drake Hourigan to finalise the design of the Digital Collaboration Centre (DCC) building and we will be lodging our Part 8 planning application with Limerick City and County Council this month. All going well we will have planning permission in June and can start construction by October/November of this year. In the interim, Mairead will be contacting a number of multinationals and indigenous companies with a view to commencing the programme side of the DCC.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Second location being sought for Troy Studios with required height and size for film production within 40km of Limerick City.

Action 4:

Expand the Emerald Aero Group cluster Emerald Aerospace Group (EAG) is a cluster of indigenous manufacturing companies. Members are indigenous SMEs, with expertise in sectors such as precision engineering, metal treatments, plastic injection moulding & thermoforming, 3D Printing, composites and fabrication. Members are located through Ireland with a concentration in and around the Mid-West.

Working Group Members:

EAG Group, Enterprise Ireland funded this project and will be actively involved in, monitoring the delivery of a set of Metrics & KPI's with EAG on a half yearly basis for the next 3 to 5 years.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

€20m additional contract secured.

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

1. Cluster continues to grow.

2. Some companies have seen as much as a 50% increase in sales resulting from the cluster, in an 18-month period.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

With the additional funding awarded under Call 3 of the Regional Enterprise Development Fund work will continue to increase the amount of additional business secured.

Action 5:

Develop a SportsTech Cluster

Working Group Members:

SportsTech Ireland, IDA Ireland, Limerick City & County Council.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Network Development: Global, national and local collaborative SportsTech network development that benefits start-ups, scaleups, established organisations and partners through the sharing of ideas, learning, expertise and sectoral knowledge.
- Industry Engagement: Attracting established brands and SportsTech organisations to the region that can be active partners, customers and acquisition routes for start-ups and scale-ups.
- Knowledge Development: Educational and commercialisation services: Provision of mentorship, training and development programmes, to help stimulate start-ups by providing a systematic approach to commercialisation and provide within the region a supply of talent that is in turn attractive to FDI companies and Irish SportsTech companies.

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

1. New Sports Tech e-hub opening on Castle Street, Limerick. Supported by Limerick City and County Council.

2. 2019 Sports Technology Innovation Conference & Awards being hosted in region in September.

3. Sports Tech submitted an application under REDF call 3.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Leverage the opening of the Sports Tech e-hub and continue to support Sports Technology innovation.

Action 6:

Develop a suite of regional 'Smart E-Hubs'

Working Group Members:

Clare County Council, Limerick City & County Council, Tipperary County Council, Mid-West Enterprise Plan Manager, Enterprise Ireland, Local Development Companies, LEO network, Industry partners, HSE, University of Limerick, Limerick Institute of Technology, Limerick Clare Education Training Board, Tipperary Education Training Board.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Six new e-hubs in place and regional roadmap on collective value proposition in place

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

1. Clare County Council have launched www.DigiClare.ie; an initiative which has seen the opening of three e-hubs across the county, in Feakle, Miltown Malbay and Kilrush with another multi-service centre due to open in Ennistymon.

2. New e-hubs due to be opened in 2019 Abbeyfeale and Rathkeale in Co. Limerick, led by Innovate Limerick.

3. Number of new sites being appraised as potential locations in Tipperary including Tipperary Town, Roscrea, Templemore and Carrick-on-Suir.

4. Innovate Limerick have recently recruited Leah Morgan as regional e-hub manager. Leah is currently focussing on building a booking platform and branding of Mid-West e-hubs which can then be offered as a single entity to a wide range of potential users from single occupant to multinational teams living in the region.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

1. Fully engage the Regional e-hub manager on the development of the booking platform.

2. Integrate new sites including the site in Tipperary town which received funding under Call3 of the Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF).

Action 7:

Create a digital collaboration centre to increase Multinational/ SME linkages.

Working Group Members:

Innovate Limerick, Enterprise Ireland, Limerick City & County Council, Industry partners; Mid-West Enterprise Plan Manager.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 and continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Construction commenced and manager in place;
- Three collaborative projects undertaken with SME and MNC partnerships involved.

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

1. Three collaborative projects undertaken with SME and MNC partnerships involved.

2. Digital Collaboration Centre – Interviews for a manager to be held in December.

3. Purchase of building due for completion.

4. A number of pilot projects and partners currently in pipeline which will be located at third party location while building under construction.

5. British Embassy are working with Innovate Limerick on the 'Joining the Dots' Programme

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

1. The Digital Collaboration Centre (DCC) Manager joined the Innovate team on the 3rd February 2020

2. Working in conjunction with architects, Drake Hourigan, design of the DCC building is being finalised. Part 8 planning application will be submitted to LCCC in March 2020

3. Planning permission expected by June 2020 with construction of the DCC to begin by October/November 2020

4. Throughout 2020, the focus is on engaging multinationals and indigenous companies with a view to commencing the programme side of the DCC to build a pipeline of collaborative projects.

Action 8:

Run a pilot Public Sector Automation & Digital Transformation Centre of Excellence.

Working Group Members:

Limerick City & County Council and associated partner stakeholders as appropriate

Timeframe for delivery:

Q2 2020

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

To run a pilot on developing an automation and digital transformation centre for the public sector.

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

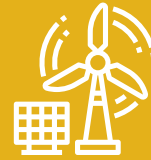Pilot successfully funded, and results obtained to build ROI model.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Public Sector Automation & Digital Transformation Centre of Excellence model developed.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 　 2

Achieve a step-change in progress toward a low carbon economy in the Mid-West.

Action 1:

Develop and grow the National BioEconomy Piloting & Innovation Facilty

Working Group Members:

Irish BioEconomy Foundation, Vedanta, Tipperary County Council, Irish BioEconomy Foundation, BEACON, DPTC, Shannon ABC, Teagasc, Tipperary County Council, Glanbia, CMP, Marine Institute, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland

Timeframe for delivery:

Q1 2019

Status:

Delayed

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Construction commences on the National facility at Lisheen, Thurles.
- An increase in the commercialisation research outputs in the BioEconomy sector transforming early stage research to commercial testing.
- Increase number of enterprises engaged and benefitting from the facility.

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

- Planning permission granted for AgriChemWhey granted.
- CO and COO appointed for Lisheen Bioeconomy Project
- Engineer appointed
- First General Assembly meeting held on 21st November.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Commencement of the construction of the national BioEconomy facility.
- Increase in the number of enterprises engaged and benefitting from the facility.

Action 2:

Create a Marine and Renewable Energy Research Centre at Docklands Economic Park.

Working Group Members:

Shannon Foynes Port Company, University of Limerick, Limerick City & County Council and other commercial and research partners as appropriate.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q3 2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 and continuing in 2020.

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Commencement of the development of Marine & Renewable Energy Research Centre
at the new 'Docklands Economic Park'

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

- Head of Bill for near shore power generator being drawn up.
- Renewable Energy: National Marine Spatial Plan being developed. Changes in planning permission rules will affect tidal and wave harnessing projects.
- Marine and Renewable Energy Centre – Going for planning permission – decision due in late December.
- Nautilus – Planning permission granted.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Bill for near shore power generator to be passed.
- Renewable Energy: National Marine Spatial Plan in place.
- Marine and Renewable Energy Centre granted planning permission and proceeding

Action 3:

Initiate an energy demonstrator project: Positive City Exchange (+CityXchange).

Working Group Members:

The project will be led by Limerick City and County Council and Trondheim Kommune (Norway) and hosted by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU). The Irish partners include the Limerick Clare Energy Agency, Innovate Limerick, University of Limerick, IES R&D, Smart MPower, ESB Innovation and ESB Networks, Space Engagers, GKinetic Energy Ltd, Future Analytics Consulting.

Timeframe for delivery:

November 2018 to October 2023

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Project partners involved in the Limerick section of the +CityxChange project set the following objectives for 2020:

1. To understand the Limerick Model: Energy, Economic, Social

2. To have Community, Political and Executive Support

3. To plan the deployment

4. To understand and identify Financial Models

In order to achieve these objectives, we set ourselves the following milestones in 2019, through a collaborative planning process:

- Socio Economic Questions and Feasibility Analyzed Q3 2019
- Understanding of PEB 1- Detailed Energy Analysis Q3 2019
- Systems Set Up for Data Collection Q3 2019
- City Engage Events Calendar Q3 2019
- Definition of Innovation Playground Model Q3 2019
- Citizen Observatory Piolet Q3 2019
- Overall WP4 Gantt Chart Complete Q4 2019
- Defined Intervention for PEB 1 Q4 2019
- Initial Community Data Collection Q4 2019
- Institutional Engagement Underway Q4 2019
- Urban Prototypes Piolets Developed Q4 2019
- Establish a Working Relationship with Regulatory Authority Q4 2019
- Monitoring and Evaluation underway Q4 2019
- Connection of Baseline Energy Usage Data + Savings Potential Q4 2019

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

All the above milestones have been achieved. There have been delays in gathering building data as it was not available immediately for all buildings in the project so further surveys had to be carried out by project partners. Also there have been delays in installing energy monitors due to data, and H&S requirements, but these issues have been resolved also.

The first year of Positive City ExChange has been very active. As this is the planning phase we have been focused on co-creating timelines, resolving issues around understanding terminology and requirements, and raising the profile of the project in Limerick city, in order to prepare the ground for a successful implementation phase in Year 2.

Our main successful outcomes have been:

- The PEB Baseline is in place.
- PEB Building owners signed up to project.
- Broad political support for +CityxChange at national and local levels.
- Citizen Observatory Opened.
- First City Engage Week Completed.
- Regulator is proactively engaged in the project.
- SLUs installed in Gardens International and preparatory work done for V2G/V2B.
- Turbine Hydrological Study underway + Environmental Impact.
- Engagement with Potential Energy Champions has begun.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Project partners involved in the Limerick section of the +CityxChange project have set the following broad objectives for 2020:

1. To begin Installations

2. The Integration of WP1,2,3 with WP4

3. Community Innovation: Development of the Bold City Vision, and the Innovation Lab

4. The creation of functional Financial Models

In order to reach these objectives, we have set the following milestones for 2020:

- Inputs shared from T3.5, developed by Space Engagers Q1 2020
- Energy Efficiency Plan in Place Q1 2020
- Owners in Blocks 1, 2, and 3 Encouraged to Invest Q1 2020
- Business Plan for Turbine Complete Q1 2020
- System Architecture defined Q1 2020
- Open Innovation Lab Scoping Study underway Q1 2020
- Innovation Playground Scoping Study underway Q1 2020
- DPEB Investment Models Complete Q2 2020
- Energy Community Signed up (enough to commence) Q2 2020
- Bold City Vision Consultations under way Q2 2020
- Changes to Energy, Buildings, and Mobility Infrastructure underway Q2 2020
- Innovative Business Solutions based on Energy/Buildings/Mobility Q2 2020
- Owners Installing RES and PV Q2 2020

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

Continue to develop workforce skills and talent and enhance the attractiveness of living and working in the Mid-West.

Action 1:

As part of the Skills for Growth initiative the Regional Skills Forum will assist local enterprises identify their skills' needs through a variety of audit tools to ensure that the region has the effective use of skills to support economic and social prosperity. Once skill needs have been identified, Regional Skills Fora will link companies with the education and training providers best suited to responding to identified skills need.

Working Group Members:

RSF, and partners including EI, IDA Ireland, ETB, HEIs, Local Authorities,
LEOS, Regional Enterprise Plan for Jobs Programme Manager, and DEASP.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q2 2020

Status:

Commenced and continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Number of enterprises audited.

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

As part of the Skills for Growth initiative the MWRSF has completed twenty skills audits across industry sectors ranging from micro enterprises to SME's. This data which identifies future skill needs and training requirements is being collated by the SPEE unit. Individual referrals have been made between respective companies and appropriate education and training providers.

Life-long learning roadshow held in May in Raheen Industrial Estate and another held in September.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

The Skills for Growth initiative will continue and the MWRSF will continue carrying out skills audits and will continue to link companies with the education and training providers best suited to responding to identified skills need.

Action 2:

Double the number of participants on the EXPLORE programme over the 2018 figure. The EXPLORE programme is designed to address the need for enhanced digital skills among older workers in manufacturing sectors within the region.

Working Group Members:

ETB, Regional Skills Forum.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2019

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Number of participants

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

- For the first five months of 2019 a total of 65 participants representing 26 companies have completed the EXPLORE programme. Six training groups have been facilitated between LCETB and TETC. This is a significant increase on 2018 when over the entire 12 months, 55 people across 18 companies completed the course.
- A greater emphasis has been placed on SME engagement in 2019 and this is reflected in company profiles: with 59% of companies SMEs, 37% micro with the remaining balance, 4% multinational

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- The EXPLORE programme will continue with the target to continue to increase the number of training groups.
- Emphasis on SME engagement will continue in 2020.

Action 3:

Support education and training providers in preparing applications under Springboard+ 2019 in collaboration with local enterprise in order to increase provision of programmes for upskilling and reskilling within the region.

Working Group Members:

RSF, HEIs.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2019

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Number of participants

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

Continued regional successes under SpringBoard 2019.

- 16 for UL
- 17 for LIT in 2019

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- The SpringBoard programme will continue with the target to continue to increase the numbers involved.

Action 4:

Support all actions in the Regional Enterprise Plan where linkages to Education and Training Providers are required

Working Group Members:

RSF.

Timeframe for delivery:

2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Increase the number of companies engaging with the MWRSF and by association the education and training providers
- Increase the numbers of completed skills audits
- Increase the numbers participating in upskilling programmes
- Facilitate industry visits to education providers and training centres

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

- A total of 152 new enterprise clients engaged directly with the RSF during 2019
- Forty-three companies participated in completing skill audits to map their future training needs
- Percentage increase from 7% (2018) to 12% in 2019 registering for Springboard Courses

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

The MWRSF recently approved our annual operating plan for 2020, key objectives include

- Schedule and engage with 150 new enterprise clients
- Strengthen the skills and talent capacity of industry clusters across Manufacturing, Aviation, Transport and ICT.
- Upskilling employees with low or know digital skills under Explore initiative,
- Promoting new Traineeships & Apprenticeships in Life Sciences, Retail and Manufacturing to regional Industry
- Completing fifty company skill audits
- Support education and training providers in collaborating with industry on new programme design
- Facilitate round table workshops with industry to determine skill requirements
- Roll out Upskilling the Mid-West Roadshow in partnership with industry
- Partner with stakeholders in the delivery of annual career events including, Mid-West Career Fair, Mid-West Apprenticeship & Traineeship Showcase
- Focus on two emerging sectors that according to cedefop will deliver employment growth potential up to 2030 namely Film and Transport.

Action 5:

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

Working Group Members:

RSF and other stakeholders.

Timeframe for delivery:

2020

Status:

Work started in 2019 & continuing in 2020

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

A total of 150 enterprises engaged on a one to one basis with the MWRSF during 2019, these engagements exclude the number of enterprises who have attended regional business briefings hosted by the RSF and enterprises who engaged arising from various communication channels such as our monthly ezine, website, social media, etc.

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

The RSF continued to grow and expand our CRM database of enterprise clients in the Mid-West region, this database provides for monthly ezines which inform employers on various events, funding opportunities and collaborative workshops that contribute towards addressing emerging skill needs.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

As part of our annual operating plan the RSF have agreed to include the use of short one-minute videos that will be used extensively on social media, ezines and our website. These videos will capture employer testimonials, education providers and various events hosted by the RSF. Short video clips can play an important part in our communications to employers on the benefits of engaging with the RSF in terms of building resilient talent.

Action 6:

Promote existing skills initiatives to Life-Long Learners and those in employment.

Working Group Members:

Limerick Clare Education Training Board, Tipperary Education Training Board, University of Limerick, Limerick Institute of Technology, Mary Immaculate College, Mid-West Regional Skills Forum, Limerick for Engineering, Limerick for IT, Skillnets, Chambers of Commerce, IBEC, LEO network, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Mid-West Enterprise Plan Manager

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Regional uptake of 'Skills to Advance' program is above national averages.

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

- To facilitate greater engagement between industry and education and training providers the MWRSF in partnership with both FE & HE colleges are participating in a regional series of Upskilling the Mid-West. On Tuesday 14th May Dell EMC hosted the first event with a total of 300 attendees from neighbouring companies attending.
- A range of talent development supports including Springboard, Skills to Advance and Skillnet programmes where promoted. The second event takes place on Thursday 11th July in Ei Electronics in Shannon with the third event taking place in Ennis on September 25th and Nenagh also in September. These events help increase employee and indeed employer awareness thus increasing participation in various upskilling programmes.

In partnership with the regional ETB's a number of new programmes have or are currently being designed to meet specific industry skills needs. For example, under the Limerick for IT cluster a new short programme in 'Dev Ops' has been designed and part funded under Skills to Advance strategy. Similarly, a new course in Data Analytics & Business Skills has also been designed and is currently being delivered.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- In 2020 the MWRSF will continue to facilitate engagement with industry and education and training providers to improve upskilling in the region.
- Springboard, Skills to Advance and Skillnet programmes will continue to be promoted.

Action 7:

Increase Apprenticeships and Traineeships

A key objective of the action plan is to work toward achieving Department of Education and Skills ambition to double the number of programmes on offer across industry sectors, achieving in excess of 10,000 apprentice registrations per annum in Ireland.

Working Group Members:

University of Limerick, Limerick Institute of Technology, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick Clare Education Training Board, Tipperary Education Training Board, Limerick for Engineering, Limerick for IT, Skillnets, Chambers of Commerce, IBEC, LEO network, Clare County Council, Limerick City & County Council, Tipperary County Council, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Regional Enterprise Plan Programme Manager, with Mid-West Regional Skills Forum Manager.

Timeframe for delivery:

2020

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Number of programmes on offer is doubled and apprenticeship registrations exceed 10,000.

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

- Mid-West Apprenticeship & Traineeship Showcase as part of European Skills week held in October. The event showcases work and learn opportunities to those considering future career options.
- There has been a big increase in non-craft (logistical and life-sciences) apprenticeships.
- Limerick for Engineering fraternity met in November to identify training needs.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Mid-West Apprenticeship & Traineeship Showcase to become an annual event.

Action 8:

Pilot an Enterprise-led employment initiative targeted at Unemployment Blackspots.

Working Group Members:

Limerick Clare Education Training Board, Tipperary Education Training Board, Limerick Regeneration Agency, Innovate Limerick, Department of Employment and Social Protection, regional employers, Mid-West Enterprise Plan Manger, South-East Enterprise Plan Manager.

Timeframe for delivery:

2020

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Additional 10 companies offering 'Returnships' by 2020. Increase in female participation rates in Census 2020.

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

- J&J Vision launched new 'returnship' program aimed at females returning to the workplace
- The MWRSF are working with various stakeholders including DEAS and ETB's to host an event in September entitled Flexi Work & Learn Seminar to target those considering a return to the workforce

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Will continue to encourage additional companies offering 'Returnships'.

Action 9:

Work with companies to develop 'Returnships', aimed at increasing the female participation rate.

Working Group Members:

Mid-West Enterprise Plan Programme Manager, with industry and regional stakeholders.

Timeframe for delivery:

2020

Ongoing over life span of the REP.

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Additional 10 companies offering 'Returnships' by 2020. Increase in female participation rates in Census 2020.

Customer feedback

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

- J&J Vision launched new 'returnship' program aimed at females returning to the workplace
- The MWRSF are working with various stakeholders including DEAS and ETB's to host an event in September entitled Flexi Work & Learn Seminar to target those considering a return to the workforce including females.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Increase in female participation rates in in employment.

Action 10:

Undertake a campaign to attract national and international talent into the region.

Working Group Members:

Chambers of Commerce, Recruitment agencies, Clare County Council, Limerick City & County Council, Tipperary County Council, Enterprise Ireland Mid-West, IDA Ireland Mid-West, Industry partners, HEIs, Mid-West Enterprise Plan Manager.

Timeframe for delivery:

Ongoing

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Mid-West event takes place in Dublin and one in London. Branding strategy adopted by multiple agencies and promotional campaign in place.

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

Limerick Chamber held a 'Let's Talk Tech' event in Dublin in June 2019, hosted by Jess Kelly of Newstalk with speakers from JLR, J&J and FirstData showcasing the breath of technology innovations and career opportunities that exists in the Mid-West. At the event a new website 'Move Mid-West' was launched http://movemidwest.ie/

Branding strategy now in place with launch of the LIMERICK brand in January 2020

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Campaign will continue with more engagement using the new website 'Move Mid-West'
http://movemidwest.ie/

Branding strategy now in place following the launch of the LIMERICK brand in January 2020 will
be leveraged.

Action 11:

Expand the Mid-West STEM Alliance.

Working Group Members:

Limerick Clare Education Training Board, Regional Skills Forum Manager, Mary Immaculate College,
Regional Enterprise Plan Programme Manager, Limerick for Engineering, Limerick for IT, University of
Limerick, Limerick Institute of Technology, Tipperary Education Training Board, industry partners, Skillnets,
LERO outreach, Chambers of Commerce.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Expansion of Limerick for IT industry cluster to twenty-five participating companies
- Collaboration with Mid-West Guidance Counsellors and Industry Sectors on site visits (4 in 2019)
- Expansion of Mid-West Apprenticeship Careers Showcase to include non-craft programmes in ICT,
  Laboratory Technician and Engineering.

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

STEM for Limerick for IT Cluster comprises 25 companies and is aligned with Future Skills Needs

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Limerick for Engineering: Addition of Five new STEM Pods covering Civil/Environmental, Aeronatical
  & Mechanical, Autonomous Vehicles, Robotics and Medical Devices. Each pod is led by industry partner
  including Arup, Lufthansa, Analog, Modular Automation and Edwards Life Sciences
- Strengthen links between industry and post primary schools to promote STEM career pathway
- Support industry related STEM initiatives
- Increase number of Career Guidance STEM Industry visits

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	4

Develop the region's capacity to deliver economic growth.

Action 1:

Pilot a Town & Village Renewal project.

The three Local Authorities of Clare, Limerick and Tipperary will lead the project in partnership with LEO offices, local town and community fora, business associations, Local Development Companies, Department of Rural and Community Development.

Timeframe for delivery:

Three-year project

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019

- Significant reduction in vacancy
- Increase in number living in the town center
- Number of commercial properties converted to residential use
- Number of unsightly properties painted and renovated
- Prepare development briefs for key town centre properties and sites
- Create itinerates for FAM and investment visits
- Consistent and regular feed of good news stories to general public

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

Update on Tipperary Town Revitalisation

In late 2018, Damian English TD, Minister of State at the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, announced actions to support the revitalisation of Tipperary town in September 2019.

The Task Force has started its work under independent Chairperson, Carmel Fox, who brings a wealth of experience from previous leadership roles in the rural development sector, particularly in Ballyhoura Development.

The Taskforce will have 18 members representing different sectors, agencies and community organisations and part of its work will be to develop and implement a three-year plan to revitalise the town.

The Task Force will have the important benefit of a full-time project manager for the three-year period with funding being provided for the position by Tipperary County Council and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

Advertising for the role has been completed and the selection process is now under way. A street front premises has been identified, where the Project Manager and administrative support staff will be located. The office will be a point of contact where members of the community can access information about the work of the Task Force, give feedback and contribute ideas for the revitalisation of the town and hinterland. The scope of the Task Force is centred on Tipperary town, but is expected to be inclusive of the important communities, areas and villages that surround and support the town.

The Task Force has identified six core areas that need to be addressed. These include, employment, infrastructure (including eliminating N24 traffic from the town and creating community-friendly civic spaces), education (including early school interventions and adult education and training), social inclusion (including supports for disadvantaged groups), heritage (including the restoration and reuse of heritage buildings), and tourism.

Public consultation around each of these aspects of the plan will take place. A well-attended Collaborative Town Centre Health Check Workshop for Tipperary Town was already held in the Excel Centre in January. The health check is an initiative developed by Ms Ali Harvey of the Heritage Council

The Task Force will also make applications for Government funding and will have access to various Government departments and agencies to help deliver on the plan.

- Ennistymon (Clare), Digital centre now open
- Tipperary Town- REDF funding secured and work to develop an Innovation Engine linked to Engine Limerick is underway – completion date Q2 2021
- Abbeyfeale (Limerick) – digitial centre now open.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- A full-time project manager for Tipperary Town will be hired for the lifespan of the project with funding being provided for the position by Tipperary County Council and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.
- The Tipperary Town Task Force will source Government funding and will have access to various Government Departments and agencies to help deliver on the plan.

Action 2:

Support the development of data centres in the Mid-West, including new forms of data centre technology development

Working Group Members:

Clare County Council, Limerick City & County Council, Tipperary County Council, Shannon Foynes Port Company, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland.

Timeframe for delivery:

2020

Status:

Ongoing

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

- Clare County Council have rezoned a 51-hectare (126-acre) site on the Tulla Road leading out of Ennis off the M18 as an enterprise zone that will be data-centre specific. A one million sq ft facility with an investment of €400m. Application to be lodged with An Bord Pleanala
- Limerick City & County Council granted planning permission for a floating data-centre pilot project; currently at appeal.
- Roscrea and Templemore– Digital Hub to be funded under RRDF
- Tourism – Hidden Heartlands and Munster Vales campaigns
- National Broadband Plan - €300m investment in the regions.
- Ennis – 155 acres available for data centre

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Commence construction of first data-centres on sites with planning permission.
- New data centre technologies employed and showcased.
- 25 Broadband Community Points to be developed with requirement to identify how they will operate alongside existing hubs.

Action 3:

Deliver new enterprise capacity and opportunities arising from Shannon Foynes Port Company operations.

Working Group Members:

Shannon Foynes Port Company, Limerick City & County Council.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q2 2020.

Status:

Ongoing over life span of the REP.

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Banatyne Mill occupied by Q4 2020 with the potential to house upward of 400 jobs; construction of jetty joining and in-fill activity at Foynes Port commenced by Q4 2019.

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

SHANNON Foynes Port Company is pursuing an unprecedented investment programme at pace to transform the Shannon Estuary into a major economic hub, consistent with Government's National Planning Framework. A €64 million investment programme currently underway that will add an additional two-thirds capacity at its general cargo terminals of Limerick and Foynes.

Currently 83 per cent of unitized trade is going through the greater Dublin area (GDA) which accounts for roughly 45 per cent of GDP meaning a lot of trade from the regions is transiting the congested GDA; this regional trade could be handled elsewhere which would have the twofold beneficial effect of enhancing national supply chain efficiency and simultaneously alleviating some of the GDA traffic congestion. Brexit has underlined the need for sufficient land adjacent to the port and Shannon Foynes has 1,200 hectares zoned for port activity and can certainly facilitate more non-UK traffic.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Banatyne Mill occupied by Q4 2020 with the potential to house upward of 400 jobs.

Action 4:

Develop a Marine Enterprise Zone.

Working Group Members:

Clare Maritime Economic Zone DAC led by Clare County Council, Enterprise Ireland, Maritime College of Ireland Commercial Services, Flagship Maritime Consultant, Limerick Clare Education Training Board, Limerick Institute of Technology, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, United Hospitality Institute.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q3 2020

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Cahercon Marine Enterprise Zone open

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

Clare County Council progressing this project.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Cahercon Marine Enterprise Zone open

Action 5:

Explore opportunities for greater utilisation of capacity at Shannon Airport.

Working Group Members:

Shannon Group, Chambers of Commerce, IBEC, Industry partners, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Tourism Ireland, Limerick City & County Council, Clare County Council & Tipperary County Council.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Ongoing over life span of the REP.

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Increased passenger numbers utilising Shannon International Airport.
- Continued daily European & North American connectivity.

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

- Number of new routes announced including Ibiza & East Mid-West.
- Capacity to Frankfurt doubled.
- Annual Passenger numbers 1.86m (6.5% growth, best in decade)

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Increased passenger numbers utilising Shannon International Airport.
- Continued daily European & North American connectivity.

Action 6:

Conduct a feasibility study for a regional Housing Agency.

Working Group Members:

Clare County Council, Limerick City & County Council.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q2 2019

Status:

Delayed

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

Recommendations in place and implemented

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

Feasibility study deferred.

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

Feasibility study for a regional Housing Agency to be conducted in 2020.

Action 7:

Make use of lands for the expansion of Enterprise, Education and R&D capacity.

Working Group Members:

Clare County Council, Limerick City & County Council, Tipperary County Council, Shannon Commercial Properties, Limerick 2030, IDA Ireland.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020.

Status:

Ongoing over life span of the REP.

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Adequate supply of zoned lands for future enterprise, education and R&D activity available in the region.
- An additional 150,000 sq. ft. of new engineering and manufacturing space for the region by year end 2020 (Shannon Commercial Properties); an additional 500,000 sq. ft. of commercial and enterprise space in Limerick's urban core (Limerick 2030).

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

- 112,000 sq ft , €17.6m Gardens International project, led by Limerick 2030, opened H1 2019
- University of Limerick announced the purchase of a previously vacant strategic city centre site which will be the new location for their new €50m City-Centre campus.
- LIT Coonagh Campus progress, due to open Q1 2020

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- University of Limerick purchase of a previously vacant strategic city-centre site which will be the new location for their new €50m City-Centre campus progressed to conclusion.
- LIT Coonagh Campus opened in Q1 2020

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	5

Build a coordinated regional message for consistent communication.

Action 1:

Establish a regional messaging cross-stakeholder forum.

Working Group Members:

Clare County Council, Limerick City & County Council, Tipperary County Council, Chambers of Commerce, Shannon Group, public and private stakeholders including HEI's and industry partners, Mid-West Enterprise Plan Manager.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Forum starts meeting in Q1 2019.
- Agreed roadmap and SWOT analysis complete.

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

- Regional messaging cross-stakeholder forum established in Q1 2019 - Forum to agree roadmap and complete SWOT analysis.
- Sequentially, the forum will meet/ commence work once the launch of 'Brand Limerick' has been completed.
- Brand Limerick to be launched on 30th January 2020

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Leverage brand Limerick during 2020

Action 2:

Deliver a 'real-time' information source for Second Site Location property data.

Working Group Members:

Directors Planning Clare County Council, Limerick City & County Council, Tipperary County Council, AEC officer in Clare County Council, ACE officer in Limerick City & County Council, Enterprise Ireland Mid-West, IDA Ireland Mid-West, Mid-West Enterprise Plan Manager.

Timeframe for delivery:

Q4 2020

Status:

Ongoing

What were the milestone(s) for 2019?

- Forum starts meeting in Q1 2019.
- Agreed roadmap and SWOT analysis complete.

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

- Regional messaging cross-stakeholder forum established in Q1 2019 - Forum to agree roadmap and complete SWOT analysis.
- Sequentially, the forum will meet/ commence work once the launch of 'Brand Limerick' has been completed.
- Brand Limerick to be launched on 30th January 2020

What will the Workplan for 2020 contain?

- Regional messaging cross-stakeholder forum continues operating in 2020.
- and commences following the recent launch of 'Brand Limerick'

Appendix 1: Regional Funding approved for the Mid-West supported by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation

Regional Enterprise Development Fund

The Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF) was launched in May 2017 with the overarching aim of driving enterprise development and job creation in each region throughout Ireland.

Administered by Enterprise Ireland, it supports new collaborative and innovative initiatives that can make a significant impact on enterprise development in the region/across regions, or nationally. Just under €100m has been approved across 68 projects nationally.

Over the three calls under the REDF, the Mid-West Region secured funding of just over €14.4 million across eight projects:

REDF Call	Project	Location	Description	Grant amount
1	Emerald Aerocluster CLG	Limerick/Clare	Aerospace Manufacturing Cluster	€250,000
1	Irish Bioeconomy Foundation CLG	Tipperary	The conversion of Ireland's natural land & sea resources to high value products for the development of a sustainable Bioeconomy that is globally competitive.	€4,628,753
2	BNest Social Initiative DAC	Limerick, Clare, Tipperary, Cork, Kerry	A project to address the gap in provision for social entrepreneurs, and collaboratively provide a full set of supports and capability building to this sector.	€603,400
2	Clare MEZ (Maritime Economic Zone) DAC	Clare	Providing specialist infrastructure and accommodation on the Shannon Estuary for maritime related training and field research support.	€1,759,226
2	Innovate Limerick/ Hospital Food Units DAC	Limerick, Clare, Tipperary	Digital Collaboration Centre to position the Mid-West region as a hub of applied disruptive technology innovation.	€2,279,073
3	Future Mobility Campus Ireland CLG	Clare	The project aims to deliver a CAV test facility located in real-world settings, providing technology companies and researchers the ability to test and enhance their innovations	€4,723,197
3	Tipperary Innovation Engine (Company Limited by Guarantee)	Tipperary	The Tipperary Innovation Engine project linking with Engine Innovation Limerick to provide flexible co-working and individual office spaces.	€500,000

3	Emerald Aerospace Group	Limerick	This project is an expansion of an original project approval under Call One of the REDF which has been very successful in delivering a strong cluster of companies in the aerospace sector.	€350,560
			Call 1 Total	€4,878,753
			Call 2 Total	€4,035,299
			Call 3 Total	€5,573,757
			Grand Total	€14,490,809

Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF) successful Call announcement dates:
REDF Call 1: 4th December 2017
REDF Call 2: 3rd December 2018
REDF Call 3: 8th January 2020

Regional Technology Clustering Fund

Under Project Ireland 2040 Government identified an ambition to build sectoral clusters of Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) at regional level. This ambition will be delivered through initiatives supporting the development of business-led clustering of competitive advantage.

As one of the Government initiatives in this area, a multi-annual fund for Regional Technology Clustering was announced in Budget 2019. An initial €2.75 million budget will be administered by Enterprise Ireland on behalf of the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation to support this initiative. This will be in the form of a competitive fund open to the Institutes of Technology (IoT) / Technological Universities (TU).

Applicant Name (Correct Legal Entity Name)	Stream	Project Summary	Fund awarded (€)
Limerick IT	2	The Irish Digital Engineering & Advanced Manufacturing Cluster (IDEAM) will bring together and support the growth of three individual networks, namely Limerick for Engineering, Limerick for IT and the Precision and Turned Parts Manufacturing Association (PTMA) through an overarching cluster. It will become a one-stop-shop for Manufacturing SMEs for all aspects of digital transformation.	€406,520
Total			€406,520

Regional Technology Clustering Fund successful announcement date:
4th October 2019

Funding under LEO Competitive Fund

The LEO Competitive Fund is to encourage LEO projects aligned with the pillars of Future Jobs Strategy and the Regional-Enterprise-Plans. It supports LEOs to collaborate within the network and enterprise eco-system.

Project & Summary	Lead Local Enterprise Office	Partners collaborating in the project	Funding
The project aims to encourage technology innovation and software driven start-ups in the Mid-West, particularly with an emphasis on solutions that align to what has become known as Industry 4.0.	**Clare**	N/A	**€195,000**
The project will manage and promote in a collaborative and collective manner the existing network of Smart e-hubs across Limerick, Clare and Tipperary. It aims to create a strategy to increase the utilisation of these existing facilities by entrepreneurs, start-ups and remote workers, thereby attracting and retaining workers to the regional villages across the region.	**Limerick**	Innovate Limerick, Mid-West Regional Enterprise plan, Kantoher Development Group, Croom Enterprise Centre, Clare County Council, Limerick City and County Council, Tipperary County Council, HQ Tralee	**€184,467**
Total			**€379,467**

LEO Competitive Fund successful announcement date:
4th October 2019

Appendix 2: Other Funding approved for the Mid-West

Project Ireland 2040 Funds

In 2018, the Government launched Project Ireland 2040 and committed €4 billion in funding under the Rural regeneration and Development Fund, Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, Disruptive Technologies Innovation Fund and the Climate Action Fund.

The four funds are a major innovation in Project Ireland 2040 and rather than allocating funding in a 'business as usual' way to Government Departments, money was allocated competitively to the best projects, which leverage investment from other sources thereby ensuring that the impact of this investment goes further.

Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)

As part of Project Ireland 2040, the Government has committed to providing an additional €1 billion for a new Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) over the period 2019 to 2027. Initial funding of €315 million is being allocated to the Fund on a phased basis over the period 2019 to 2022. The Fund will provide investment to support rural renewal for suitable projects in towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000, and outlying areas. It will be administered by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

The new Fund provides an unprecedented opportunity to support the revitalisation of rural Ireland, to make a significant and sustainable impact on rural communities, and to address de-population in small rural towns, villages and rural areas. It will be a key instrument to support the objectives of the National Planning Framework, and in particular to achieve Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities – one of the National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF.

Call	Project	Location	Grant amount
RRDF Call 1	Great Southern Greenway	Limerick	€2,724,657
	Glenbrohane social enterprise hub	Limerick	€626,369
	Ennistymon Innovation Centre	Clare	€1,023,300
	Murroe Community Hub	Limerick	€3,816,451
	Vandeleur Estate	Clare	€1,720,000
	Loop Head Visitor Attraction	Clare	€868,500
	Tipperary Town Regeneration	Tipperary	€600,000
	Inis Cealtra Island	Clare	€920,500
	Doolin Pier	Clare	€465,571
	West Limerick Tourism Gateway	Limerick	€330,000
		Call 1 Subtotal	€15,955,348

RRDF Call 2	Multifunctional Performance Auditorium at Cnoc na Gaoithe Cultural Centre, Tulla	Clare	€900,000
	Fethard Town Park	Tipperary	€2,600,000
	Roscrea Enterprise Digital and Social Impact Hub	Tipperary	€1,925,546
	Templemore Town Hall: Enterprise and Cultural Centre with Civic Plaza	Tipperary	€2,529,000
		Call 1 Subtotal	€15,955,348
		Call 2 Subtotal	€7,954,546
		Call 1 & 2 Total	€23,909,894
Shared RRDF	International Mountain Biking Project	Limerick, Cork, Sligo, Dublin, Wicklow, Offaly, Laois	€10,262,900
	National Parks	Clare, Donegal, Galway, Kerry, Mayo, Wicklow	€3,915,000
	Wild Atlantic Way	Clare and Kerry	€666,300
	Ireland's National Parks	Clare, Donegal, Mayo, Galway, Kerry, Wicklow	€1,466,250
		Grand Shared RRDF	€16,310,450
		Grand Total RRDF (including Shared)	€40,220,344

Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) successful Call announcement dates:
RRDF Call 1: 14th February 2019
RRDF Call 2: 6th November 2019

Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)

The €2 billion Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) is intended to drive regeneration and rejuvenation of strategic and under-utilised areas within Ireland's five cities, key regional drivers and other large towns.

The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) has responsibility for implementing the fund, which has €100m available for expenditure in 2019 and an overall allocation of €550 million allocated to the fund up to the end of 2022. The fund will operate on a competitive, bid-based Exchequer grant basis, with proposals being required to demonstrate that they will be:

- Innovative and transformational urban regeneration projects;

- Public-sector led and with the option of community and/or private sector partners;

- Matched by at least 25 percent direct funding from other public and/or private sources;

- A minimum bid of €2m;

- A catalyst for development that would not otherwise occur; and likely to leverage significant further public and private sector investment

Call	Project	Location	Grant amount
URDF Cat A	Digital District (inner city digital hub)	Limerick	€750,000
	O'Connell Street	Limerick	€905,000
	Opera Project (site enabling)	Limerick	€1,839,000
	Liberty Square Thurles	Tipperary	€1,350,000
	Parnell Street/Lanes and Bow-ways	Clare	€1,412,000
	Clonmel	Tipperary	€2,897,000
		Total	**€9,153,000**

Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) successful Call announcement date:
URDF Call: 26th November 2018

Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2019

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme is an initiative under the Action Plan for Rural Development and is part of a package of national and local support measures to rejuvenate rural towns and villages throughout Ireland through the Government's Project Ireland 2040 Rural Regeneration Programme. The Scheme is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and administered by the Local Authorities.

Local Authorities will be required to advertise for expressions of interest from towns/villages in their area and can select up to 12 proposals for development into detailed applications to be submitted to the Department by the end of June. Selection of projects will be by means of a competitive process, with the final project selection being made by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Project & Summary	Town	County	Funding
Streetscape improvements including visitor traffic management, pedestrianisation of old bridge in Bunratty, car park, walking trails and signage.	Bunratty	Clare	€137,600
Improve streetscape to create a focal point in the heart of Clarecastle village.	Clarecastle	Clare	€200,000
Renovate an almost derelict Community Hall to facilitate increased usage.	Kilbaha	Clare	€100,000
Develop the Ogonnelloe Community Hall as a civic space to facilitate co-working.	Ogonnelloe	Clare	€34,800
Improve access in Quilty and Seafield beaches by providing pedestrian steps, car parking and water outlet.	Quilty	Clare	€92,000
Restore the footpath network in the town.	Sixmilebridge	Clare	€156,709
		Clare Total	**€721,109**

Create a pedestrian friendly Town Centre in the centre of Askeaton.	Askeaton	Limerick	€200,000
Public realm improvements in village.	Ballingarry	Limerick	€79,604
Refurbish Parish Hall to develop a Community Centre in the village	Broadford	Limerick	€99,911
Create a village heritage trail and carry out improvements to the Town Park.	Drumcollogher	Limerick	€86,398
Develop a Community Wildlife area in the village.	Kilteely	Limerick	€48,309
Complete the second phase of multi-access walkway at Murroe Town Park and install public lighting along the new section of the track.	Murroe Boher	Limerick	€70,879
		Limerick Total	€585,101
Public realm works in the town centre.	Cashel	Tipperary	€200,000
Public Realm improvements to include upgrade of vacant premises, expansion of community rooms, improvement of streetscape and establishment of community garden.	Clogheen	Tipperary	€100,000
Extension to Community Hall.	Lorrha	Tipperary	€149,555
Public realm works to improve access to Ball Alley Lane.	Nenagh	Tipperary	€96,000
Extend the Community Hall in Newcastle.	Newcastle	Tipperary	€139,060
		Tipperary Total	€684,615
		Mid-West Grand Total	€1,990,825

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

Appendix 3: Brief profile and statistical snapshot – Mid-West

Constituent counties	Clare, Limerick and Tipperary	
Regional Population & change (1996-2016)	392,583 (1996) - 473,269 (2016) increase of 80,686*	
GVA[1] per person 2000 and 2015	€22,494 - €38,109*	
Total in employment	215,800[2]	
Labour Force Participation rate	58.2%[3]	
Unemployment rate	4.9[4]	
Unemployment blackspots[5]	23[6]	
Percentage employed in Manufacturing: Services: Public sector	15%: 20%: 29%	
Educated to third level in Mid-West: State	41%: 45%*	
Third Level Students (full-time & part-time)	23,202[7]*	
Number of enterprises (micro: small: medium: large) (2016)	21,303: 1,514: 210: 39*	
Number of Enterprise Ireland High Potential Start-Ups[8] (HPSUs) Mid-West: State (2019)	3: 91	
EI supported employment & no. client Companies (2018 – 2019)	**2018**	**2019**
	Jobs: 19,747	Jobs: 20,305
	Companies: 783	Companies: 516
IDA supported employment & no. client companies (2018 - 2019)	**2018**	**2019**
	Jobs: 22,511	Jobs: 23,735
	Companies: 138	Companies: 138
LEO supported employment & no. client companies (2018 - 2019)	**2018**	**2019**
	Jobs: 485	Jobs: 299
	Companies: 798	Companies: 816
Number of LEO Priming Grants[9] Mid-West: State (2019)	33: 291	

1. Gross Value Added (GVA) is the measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy.
2. CSO Labour Force Survey Quarterly Series Q4 2019
3. CSO Labour Force Survey Quarterly Series Q4 2019
4. CSO Labour Force Survey Quarterly Series Q4 2019
5. Unemployment Blackspots are defined as Electoral Districts with at least 200 people in the labour force and an unemployment rate of 27% or higher
6. Unemployment blackspots in the Region: Clare (3), Limerick City and County (18) & Tipperary (2)
7. University of Limerick (13,472), Limerick Institute of technology (5,932) & Mary Immaculate College of Education, Limerick (3,798)
8. HPSUs are start-up businesses with the potential to develop an innovative product or service for sale on international markets and the potential to create 10 jobs and €1m in sales within 3 years of starting up.
9. A Priming Grant is a business start-up grant, available to micro enterprises within the first 18 months of start-up.
* Latest available update

Appendix 4: Employment creation and unemployment - Progress against targets set to 2020

Since the launch of the Regional Action Plan for Jobs (RAPJ) there has been an increase of 346,800 people in employment across the State since Q1 2015 to Q4 2019, with 222,600 people in the regions outside of Dublin entering employment in that period.

The RAPJ initiative was a central pillar of the Government's ambition to create 200,000 new jobs by 2020, 135,000 of which are outside of Dublin.

The new Regional Enterprise Plans to 2020 continue the focus on delivery to these targets:

- employment growth of between 10 and 15 percent; and

- an unemployment rate reduced to within one percentage point of the State average.

Utilising data from the CSO Labour Force Survey (LFS), the rate of growth and unemployment rates achieved for the Mid-West region during the period Q1 2015 up to Q4 2019 are as follows:

	Numbers Employed				Unemployment Rate	
	Q1 2015	Q4 2019	Change Q1 2015 to Q4 2019	Growth Q1 2015 to Q4 2019	Q1 2015	Q4 2019
Mid-West	196,500	215,800	19,300	9.8%	12.0%	4.9%
State	2,014,400	2,361,200	346,800	17.2%	10.5%	4.5%

Source: CSO Labour Force Survey, Q4 2019

The Mid-West region has reached the target of having an unemployment rate reduced to within one percentage point of the State average but is still to reach the target of having employment growth of between 10 and 15 percent.