

Ireland 2040 Plan: What it is and what it hopes to achieve


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Introduction:

The implementation of the Ireland 2040 plan stems from fundamental questions regarding the future and trajectory of the nation and as such will encompass national strategies to respond to the growing changes anticipated in the Irish economy, society, and environment. The 2040 Plan, led by the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, is intended to serve as a framework for the progression and realization of future development and investment in Ireland. Also called the National Planning Framework (NPF), the 2040 Plan will provide the foundational efforts from which future plans will develop, including strategies for city and county development. This paper will detail the primary areas of the 2040 Plan and its overall objectives regarding the next two decades of Ireland's economic, social, and environmental growth.

Ireland's National Planning Challenges:

In recent decades, Ireland has developed tremendously, particularly during the early 1990s which exhibited extraordinary growth despite the economic recession. The overall population has increased by over 1 million currently reaching nearly 4.75 million. Additionally, the housing stock has increased to over 2 million homes, rising tremendously from the previous 750,000. Increases in employment evince even further improvement, rising from 660,000 to over 2 million in 2017. These trends exhibit that Ireland will continue to expand, and as the population grows, additional demands for housing and jobs will be necessitated. Thus, the 2040 Plan will seek to address the increasing demands in infrastructure, services, and facilities, as within the next two decades Ireland will:



What sort of place should Ireland be in 2040 and what do we need to do to achieve this?

Source: Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (2017)

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- increase in population to a projected figure of 5.6 million
- double the population of people over 65
- require over 500,000 new homes to respond to growing demands
- peak at demand for third-level education by mid-late 2020s
- place an increasing emphasis on active lifestyles as the population grows, with a particular focus on mental health
- require an increase in environmental protection towards water and air quality, soils, along with the protection of natural habitats
- need to adapt to climate change and set forth plans to reduce carbon emissions, increase efforts for renewable energy, with a target goal for a sustainable Ireland by 2050.

Source: Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (2017)

The 2040 Plan will design frameworks to address these changes in Irish economic, societal, and environmental factors in a method that serves the nation as a whole. While growth in these areas will occur regardless of an established and effective NPF, the primary goal however is to ensure economic growth outside the Dublin region. Current trends exhibit that while economic growth in the East will rise, rural areas are likely to experience a decline in growth and experience continuous falls in population. The 2040 Plan seeks to move away from the ‘Business as Usual’ model as this method does not focus on growth for the nation as a whole. Therefore, the NPF seeks alternate strategies to provide economic growth to regions beyond the East that will simultaneously ease the housing burden of the Dublin region.

People’s Health and Well-Being

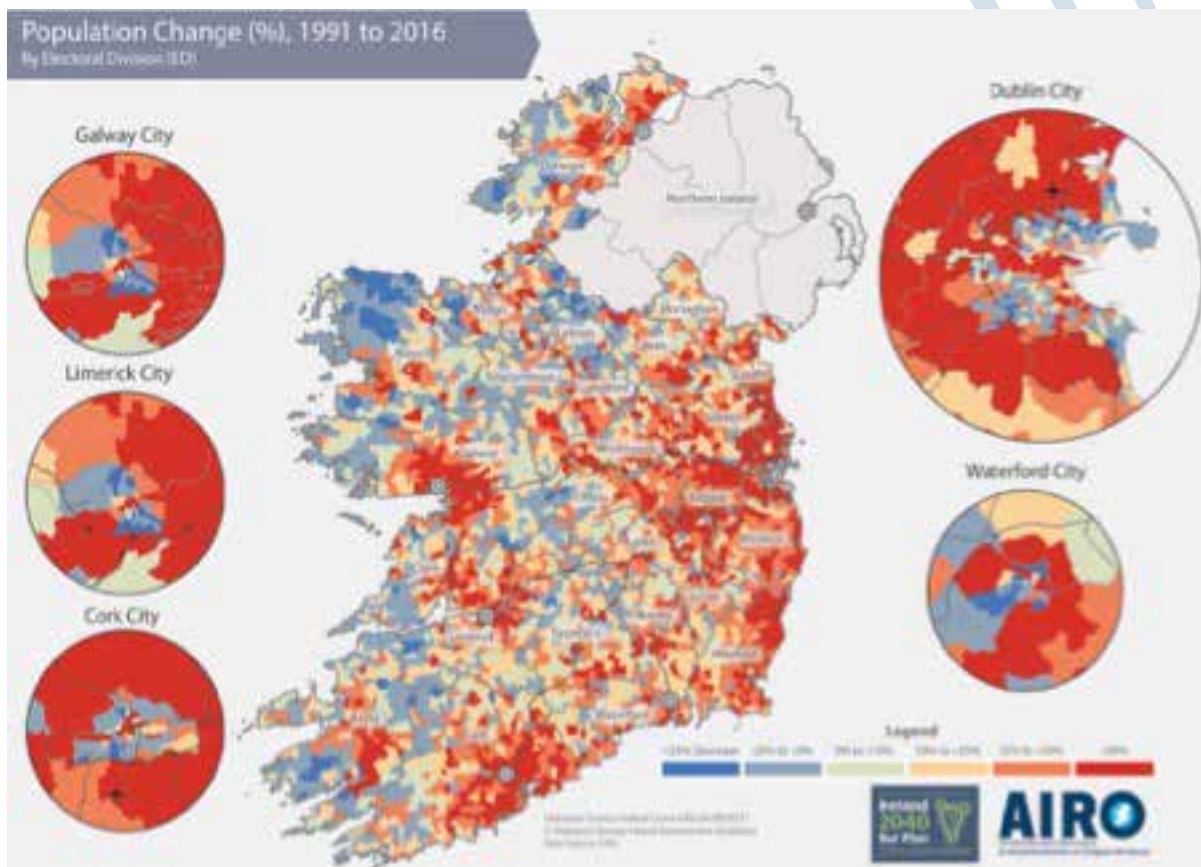
In addition to efforts to cultivate

an economy that will establish national benefits, the 2040 Plan will offer developments to improve environmental factors to create a healthier quality of life for future generations. The NPF will be involved in improving direct environmental factors including air pollution, road traffic, floods, and climate change in efforts to create a positive impact regarding Irish health and safety within the next two decades.

Additionally, current modern lifestyles that revolve around indoor work present rising trends of increased obesity rates, diabetes, and heart disease, along with higher rates of depression that are associated with reduced levels of exercise. Recent studies report that nearly 60% of adults and 25% of children are either overweight or obese. While diet contributes to these rising trends, spatial planning plays an equally important role in the rise of unhealthy

habits. The 2040 Plan therefore devises to incorporate activities to encourage active and healthier lifestyles, such as safe walking facilities and improved cycling paths.

A secondary focus of the NPF regarding health concentrates on reducing steadily rising car dependency rate. For example, over 60% of commuters use cars for work, with 10% of these commuters spending over an hour on their journeys. Increasing car dependency rates add further pressure on town-based businesses to provide car parking facilities to meet the rapidly rising demands. This rising car dependence has resulted in increasing tendencies towards the usage of out of town shopping, business, or other activities, resulting in a decline in the utilization of historic town centres. As such, the deterioration of the town centre as a place to live, work, or conduct business has negatively impacted the viability of the significance of urban town centres.



Source: Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (2017)

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aspects of society as the population of those over 65 has doubled. Additionally, the population of those aged over 85 has effectively quadrupled during the last 50 years. As these trends are expected to continue, the NPF will attempt to implement strategies to ensure that the elderly population will have the ability to commute via public transportation, as well as retain access to services they will need.

Why do we need a new Planning Framework?

The NPF has identified key aspects of infrastructure development in Ireland. The framework was developed in response to the European Commissions' recommendation that Ireland should "develop in order to promote durable and balanced" growth in the future

(European Commission, 2016, p. 4). The report recognised key deficits in the Irish planning system and associated problems for Irish infrastructural development. In particular, the report notes that due to the financial crisis of 2008, funding for infrastructure in the period between 2010 – 2013 period has seen a reduction in capital expenditure by a margin of nearly 50%. This underinvestment has reduced the quality of the Irish infrastructure, while also creating an undersupply of key public goods such as housing, roads, and broadband. This damages the competitiveness of the Irish economy and has created problems for the Irish transport system, along with raising levels of homelessness. As such the NPF has been developed to both respond to and better prepare Ireland to plan policy in order to alleviate many of the concerns the nation currently faces.

The National Planning Framework and Infrastructure

The NPF will attempt to address the failings of the 2002-2020 National Development Plan by instead utilizing a greater degree of inter-departmental and spatial coordination initiatives. This will allow for the NPF to identify key issues and problems across Ireland, facilitating a process of decision making regarding strategic investment. These investments would be prioritised, bringing with them a targeted approach to regional development. Developing social infrastructure in this method will lead to better and more integrated communities, while ensuring a balanced regional distribution of services. Additionally, it would provide an opportunity for the government to respond to population growth in the education sector, particularly targeting demands for primary and secondary schools within regions. As third level student populations are also growing, the framework recommends that these rising trends should further be considered in the development of a new spatial strategy for Ireland.

The purpose of this planning framework is to address problems that have arisen since the last spatial strategy commenced. In particular, the uneven growth between regions has meant that in some areas there is an oversupply of infrastructure, while in others it remains inadequate. This lack of balance meant that as the economy expanded, areas in which the population grew, there remained a continuous undersupply for infrastructure needs. As a result, planning for spatial development and service delivery has become increasingly difficult. Consequently, this has meant that in some regions, particularly cities and large towns, large scale capital projects are economically unviable by international standards, due in part, to the smaller population density in these areas.

Through planning and developing a spatial strategy, a more coherent and balanced approach to regional development can occur. The government has committed to this approach, with

the hope that long term strategic investments will allow for a balanced spatial development. It can be seen in plans such as Rebuilding Ireland and The National Broadband Plan, in that both are targeted strategic investment plans. To ensure that such plans are successful, the government aims to regularly monitor the impact of its policies and use an evidenced informed approach to influence future investments and plans.

The need for balanced development

The NPF is designed to better develop urban centres, with the aim of reducing the disparity between Dublin and other regions. At present Dublin is central to the Irish economy and houses 40% of the Irish population. Due to the city's size there are high demands placed on Dublin's housing and transport infrastructure. Dublin's population in particular has led to unsustainable demands on the housing market, with sharp increases in housing costs and a growing homeless population. Not only does this represent an immediate social cost to the disproportionate growth of the region, but it further presents a risk to Ireland's long term competitiveness. As growth is concentrated in Dublin, housing prices will continue to rise unless other regions are enabled to attract FDI led development.

The regional cities of Cork, Galway, and Limerick offer the best opportunities to alleviate Dublin's housing burden. Each has a university, decent transport links, along with a credible opportunity to develop housing and broadband infrastructure. Attracting FDI companies to these regions will reduce the demographic pressures on the greater Dublin area, as there would be opportunities to develop and expand business opportunities outside of Dublin. For instance, this can be achieved by facilitating the formation of closer links between firms and universities within the regional cities, while concurrently encouraging the state to invest in the infrastructure of such cities as well as their neighbouring regions. Through a strategic investment strategy focused on improving the capacities of these

key cities, a more balanced development would occur, thereby reducing Dublin's housing demand, while simultaneously assisting regional cities to shift towards becoming international centres for trade and development. Therefore, the 2040 Plan will foster the development of these cities, furthering their growth and prominence as key regions within Ireland, allowing for a more sustainable cross regional development.

The Implementation the National Planning Framework

Equally crucial to the success of the 2040 Plan remains in the ability to transform theoretical planning into prosperous implementation. To ensure this success, it remains critical that the NPF explicitly transcribes how its goals will morph into successful reality, along with dictation of the organizing body that will implement the strategies of the NPF. Therefore, by accounting for previous errors with the National Spatial Strategy, along with coordinating with legislative bodies and political institutions, the NPF can better improve and implement policies across national, regional, and local bodies. As such, the successful implementation of the 2040 Plan will ensure the continued success of Ireland by accounting for the growing changes in economic, social, and environmental factors through the implementation strategies to establish a better quality of life for future generations.

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The Potential Impact of Brexit and the Good Friday Agreement

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Introduction:

On June 23rd, 2016, over half of the United Kingdom (UK) historically voted to leave the European Union (EU), with a leave vote of 51% to a remain vote of 48%. On March 29th, 2017, Theresa May invoked Article 50 of the European Union to begin the two-year process of withdrawing from the EU. However, many post-Brexit conditions remain unclear as defined terms have yet to be negotiated. This article will focus on the potential impact as well as implications of Brexit on the Good Friday Agreement and relations between Northern Ireland and the Republic.

Scoping Brexit Problems for Ireland:

Brexit creates difficulties for the status of Northern Ireland and the North-South Border. There remain substantive legal and political challenges to the maintenance of the free movement of goods, services, and people arising due to the UK's exit from the EU. Under existing legislation, both the UK and

Ireland are members of the European Union. As they both currently retain membership, they are able to develop mutual agreements with one another without soliciting EU approval. This has allowed both states to maintain their informal border agreement, the Common Travel Area (CTA), by supporting the agreement with existing legislation in both countries. In principle this has also allowed a causal relationship in the policing and maintenance of their shared common border. In exchange this has lessened the prominence of the symbolic border between Northern Ireland and the Republic. Since the Good Friday Agreement, the physical representation of a border between Ireland and the UK via Northern Ireland has ended. The Customs Union and the Single Market of the EU now makes hard border instruments, such as customs posts, illegal for trade between two member states. The situation that has emerged from both states being party to these agreements has resulted in a constant and fluid movement of people, along with the trading of goods and services between Northern Ireland and the

Republic. However, with the UK's withdrawal from the EU this situation remains vulnerable to a potential negative change.

The Border:

The Common Travel Area affords a special status for citizens of both the UK and the Republic, allowing citizens of either state to be recognized as citizens of both states. In practice this means that there are no legal border controls between the UK and Ireland, which has enhanced cooperation between the two states in policing and border control. As both states share separate, yet mutually dependant external borders, they practice the principle of free movement of people between both states. As both Irish and British citizens are recognised as having special status in both states, there remains limited border controls between both the two states (Ryan 2001).

However due to the expectation that Ireland will continue to remain an EU member state, and that the UK will not, this situation will change. As Ireland will retain EU membership, it is still required

to maintain the four freedoms of capital, goods, services and people. Due to the principle of a shared external border for Ireland and the UK, this would essentially allow for EU and EEA members to circumvent UK border controls, but only under the existing arrangements of the CTA.

Problems for the Common Travel Area:

However, the maintenance of such a situation, may be more difficult in the future, as the UK might seek to amend the rules of the CTA and thereby ending the current practice of the free movement people. This manoeuvre would face serious scrutiny and resistance from the Irish government. The CTA's status at present is an agreement between an EU member state and an external state regarding a community level issue, in principle implying that any free movement of people between Ireland and the UK would further require legal approval from the EU as a whole. Yet, soliciting this approval would be both a political and legal challenge in addition to breaking the rules of Ireland's membership of the Single Market. Theoretically, this implies that any agreement given the EU stamp of approval would require Ireland to reach a compromise. Such compromises reveal the vulnerability of the current unrestricted access as Ireland would likely decide if its citizens should retain unrestricted access to either the UK or the EU, as it would be legally complicated to retain both.

The Consequences to Be Considered:

Either option would have damaging consequences for both the Republic and Northern Ireland as the free movement agreement affords both states numerous economic and social benefits. For example, it allows both states to attract highly skilled workers from other European states due to provisions allowing for the commuting of workers across borders. Therefore,

the reintroduction of passport controls, along with the symbolism of the border, will establish a sense of isolation among the nationalist community in Northern Ireland, which would increase regional tensions. Ireland's FDI growth model requires it to retain a flexible open border policy to support its highly profitable IT and pharmaceutical sectors, while the retention of free movement with other EU states is important for its tourism sector. Northern Ireland would suffer from the same consequences. To resolve these issues, there remains a potential option for the UK to sign a temporary arrangement with the EU to allow for the free movement of people for a limited time frame, but the terms of such an arrangement along with the political consequences are still unknown. Additionally, it also remains plausible that Ireland and the UK could also pursue a causal approach to the Northern Irish border, ignoring border controls between the shared land borders. Such an approach might however prove to be a legally questionable approach due to Ireland's obligations as an EU member state.

Trade Relations and Options:

As with the free movement of people, the free movement of goods and services would also be altered by Brexit, as the UK's exit from the EU defines it as an external state. According to Ireland's obligation as both a member of the Customs Union and the Single Market, the UK's position as an external state requires the imposition of an external tariff on goods and services imported from the UK, potentially resulting in the formation of customs checks between Northern Ireland and the Republic. In doing so Brexit would have significant negative effects for both intra-island trade as well as trade between Ireland and Britain. The first of these impacts would be the increased costs of administration due to the customs border regulation. Consequently, this will raise the costs of doing business between both states as well as increasing commuting times between the borders. Northern

Ireland in particular exports heavily to the Republic and both states share an island wide energy grid. How such systems will be maintained in a post-Brexit scenario is unknown. As Ireland remains an EU member, its associated organisations will legally be required to enforce any agreements its membership determines. In theory, the UK could choose not to reciprocate customs posts and traffic on Irish goods, but just an arrangement would be difficult to justify politically. Unlike the UK, the rules for Ireland are predetermined by its membership status to the EU, and thus lacks the same flexibility as the UK.

The Search for Pragmatic and Creative Solutions:

As mentioned previously, there are various mechanisms around this principle of enforcement, such as relaxed Ireland-UK customs relations. Additionally, the UK could seek a deal on a customs union between itself and the EU, which would avoid this issue. However, it seems unlikely the EU would be willing to negotiate a deal on such an arrangement unless the UK attempts to compromise on some of its prerogatives to establish trade arrangements between it and third parties (Rampen, 2017). Likewise, the EU has signalled it might also be unwilling to design an arrangement with the UK unless the principle of free movement of people is retained (Nicolaidis and Roy, 2017). Another option is that the UK could temporarily retain its membership of the European Customs union until a more comprehensive trade deal is developed between it and the EU, such as the agreement made between the EU and Canada in 2015.

While not ideal, such situations could reduce the burden for Northern Irish firms trading with the Republic and avoid the issue of customs posts being erected by the Republic. The legality of such an arrangement and how the politics of negotiation might shape it are still unclear at this moment in time.

However, as stated several times by UK's Prime Minister Theresa May, the UK will not retain its membership of the single market, while the situation of the UK's membership of the customs union is unclear. This limits the UK's options to retaining access to the Customs Union and using existing WTO agreements. Essentially, this implies that the future of trade as well as the North-South border is an issue that is to be decided by the EU27 and the UK.

Post-Brexit Potential Reunification Debates:

A more contested option regarding the avoidance of the direct impact of Brexit on Northern Ireland is the potential reunification of Northern Ireland with the Republic, particularly given that 56% of Northern Ireland voted to remain part of the EU. In 2015, a BBC conducted poll evinced only 30% of Northern Ireland favoured leaving the UK, but these opinions have since changed post-Brexit. For example, while Northern Ireland's largest party, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), have favoured Brexit, they lost 10 seats in the May 2017 Assembly elections, and gaining 2 seats in the June 2017

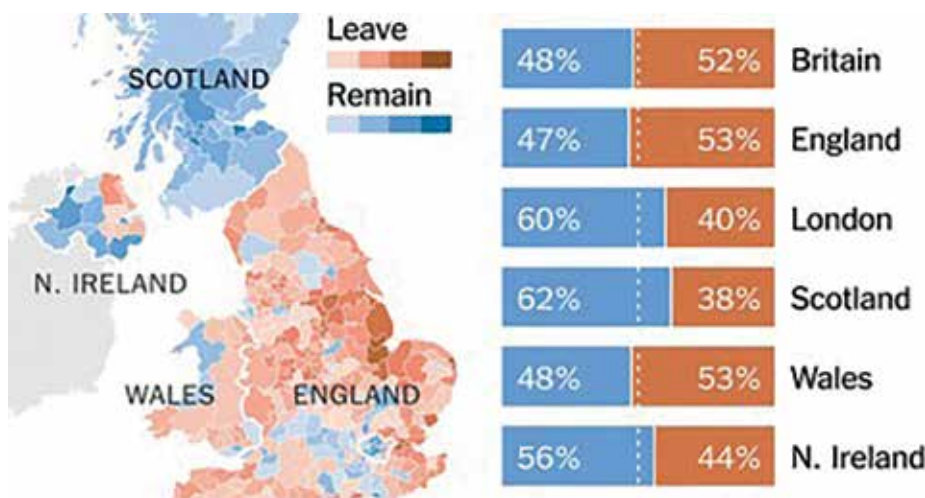
parliamentary elections. Additionally, the May 2016 elections demonstrated that 41% of Northern Ireland, with a slight fall to 39.8% in May 2017, support the second and third largest Northern Irish parties: Sinn Fein and the Social Democrat and Labour Party (SDLP), both who favour the unification of Ireland and maintenance of EU membership. Smaller parties, such as the Ulster Unionist Party, Alliance, and Green party, also maintain anti-Brexit/ pro-EU membership positions. Sinn Fein and the SDLP have argued that maintaining EU membership for Northern Ireland can only be achieved through unification of the Republic and its northern neighbours. Responding to Theresa May's invocation of Article 50, Sinn Fein, the SDLP, Alliance, and Green party brought forth legal action against May's intentions, arguing that such events could only take place after a parliamentary vote. However, in October 2016, a ruling by Mr. Justice Maguire of the High Court in Belfast determined that the UK did not require a parliamentary vote to invoke Article 50, nor would the Brexit process undermine the Good Friday Agreement. The ruling derailed hopes of legally undermining the decision to withdraw from the EU and has intensified the Brexit/ Ireland

unification debate.

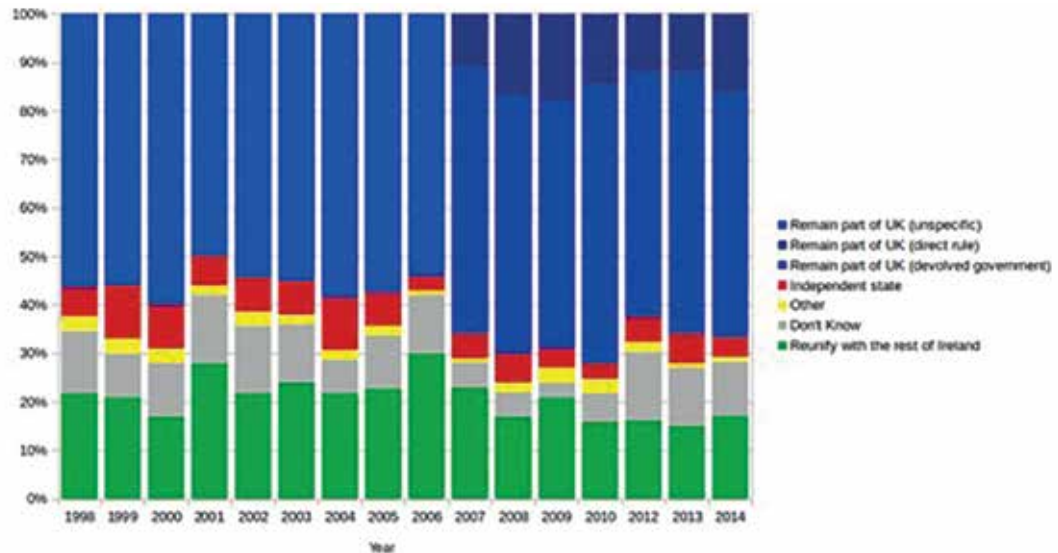
However, contradictory to assertions maintained by Sinn Fein and the SDLP, Conservative Party politician Theresa Villiers argued in June 2016 that there remains inadequate evidence signifying a prominent Northern Irish desire to shift towards a united Ireland. Others, such as Kevin Meaghar, former special adviser on Northern Ireland to the UK, indicated in a March 2017 interview that "There's probably more serious discourse about Irish reunification now than at any time since partition," (Duncan, 2017).

Meaghar argues that while current opinions of unification imply "lukewarm" sentiment (Meaghar, 2016, p.18), the prospect of "losing the vast amounts of money Northern Ireland receives from the European Union will be a high price to pay for leaving" (2016, p. 18). Northern Ireland's "precarious" economy (Meaghar, 2016, p. 18) is determined to receive €600 million per year up until 2010 from the EU, with this funding not guaranteed by the UK, creating a potential deteriorating effect on Northern Ireland's public finances. While Northern Ireland currently receives £10 billion from the UK, the loss of EU funding, particularly farming subsidies, will considerably impact the majority of Northern Irish farmers.

Border arrangements further complicate the situation, as Northern Ireland "sits on the frontline between the UK and European Union" (Meaghar, 2016, p. 18). Neither the Republic nor Northern Ireland want to see the return of a hard border, as the reintroduction of a closed border with customs checks would derail much of the North's cross-border retail (Duncan, 2017). Additionally, Professor Jennifer Todd of University College Dublin asserts that UK and Irish membership within the EU allows for "[o]penness of cross-



Source: The New York Times (2016)



Source: Economic Social Research Council (2017)

border crossing, employment, and trade” (Todd, 2015, p. 8) and Brexit threatens this by undermining the Good Friday Agreement. However, this remains contradictory to the October 2016 ruling by the High Court of Belfast which maintained the Brexit would not derail the Good Friday Agreement.

The potential impact of a second 2018 Scottish independent movement, advocated by the Scottish National Party (SNP) could hypothetically result in a similar referendum in Northern Ireland. However, Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has maintained that an independence movement rests on the question of a ‘hard’ or ‘soft’ Brexit in 2019. The previous referendum movement in September 2016 exhibited that 55% of Scotland voted to remain within the UK, yet the SNP argues that Brexit cites a necessity for reevaluation as Brexit has changed conditions. Ultimately, it remains an open question if Scotland will seek a second referendum in 2018 and what impact this will produce on the Northern Ireland reunification movement. These questions will remain open to debate until the UK begins dictating the terms of a ‘hard’ or ‘soft’ Brexit within the next two years.

If Northern Ireland votes to unify with the Republic, Brexit Secretary David Davis confirmed that unlike Scotland, Northern Ireland would retain EU membership via the Republic’s current status as a member. In April 2017, the European Council reaffirmed this position, that a united Ireland would confer EU membership to the North, potentially using, as Enda Kenny asserted, the precedent of the East-West Germany reunification. However, these remain potential post-Brexit scenarios, as it remains unclear if a majority of voters seek to unify with the Republic, along with the uncertainty regarding what post-Brexit conditions will mean for Northern Ireland.

As of now, the only clear decision regarding Brexit remains the decision to leave the EU, as many conditions are still open to negotiation, leaving ambiguity regarding the direct impact of post-Brexit on the Good Friday Agreement as well as relations between the Republic, the UK, and Northern Ireland.

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The role of the Data Protection officer under the General Data Protection Regulation

By Fintan Swanton

Under Article 37 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), all public authorities and bodies will be required to designate a Data Protection Officer (DPO). Organisations that on a large scale, as part of their core activities, regularly and systematically monitor data subjects or process sensitive personal data will also have to appoint a DPO. On April 5th, the Article 29 Working Party (WP29) published its guidelines on the role of the DPO, clarifying its interpretation of the GDPR as it relates to the DPO.

One of the most significant changes in the GDPR is the requirement for controllers and processors to be able to demonstrate compliance with the Regulation. As the WP29 puts it, the DPO is “a cornerstone” of this principle of “accountability”. That said, the WP29 emphasises that compliance is the controller’s or processor’s responsibility and DPOs are not personally responsible for compliance with the GDPR.

The terms “public authority or body”, “core activities”, “large scale” and “regular and systematic monitoring” aren’t defined in the GDPR, so the WP29 offers its interpretation and guidance on their meaning.

In summary:

- The WP29 considers that such a notion [“public authority or body”] is to be determined under national law. Accordingly, public authorities and bodies include national,

regional and local authorities, but the concept, under the applicable national laws, typically also includes a range of other bodies governed by public law.

- ‘Core activities’ can be considered as the key operations to achieve the controller’s or processor’s objectives.
- Regular and systematic monitoring of data subjects ... clearly includes all forms of tracking and profiling on the internet, including for the purposes of behavioural advertising. However, the notion of monitoring is not restricted to the online environment.
- Factors to be considered when deciding whether processing is “large scale” include the number of data subjects, the volume and range of data, duration of data processing and geographical extent of data processing. A simple example given is the processing of healthcare related data by an individual doctor (not large scale), or by a hospital (large scale).

The WP29 goes on to recommend that, unless a DPO is obviously not required, controllers and processors should document the analysis and process leading to their decisions whether or not to appoint a DPO.

DPOs may be appointed on a voluntary basis, but where they are, the same GDPR requirements regarding their designation, role and tasks will apply as to mandatory DPO appointments. Therefore, where organisations don’t appoint a DPO but do, as they may,

assign data protection related tasks to their staff or external consultants, it should be made clear internally and externally that such staff or consultants are not DPOs.

The GDPR provides that DPOs “shall be designated on the basis of professional qualities and, in particular, expert knowledge of data protection law and practices and the ability to fulfil the tasks [set out in the Regulation]”. There is no specific qualification or certification specified in the Regulation, but the WP29 considers the necessary skills and expertise to include:

- Expertise in national and European data protection laws and practices including an in-depth understanding of the GDPR;
- Understanding of the processing operations carried out;
- Understanding of information technologies and data security;
- Knowledge of the business sector and the organisation;
- Ability to promote a data protection culture within the organisation.

The role of the DPO may be contracted out to an external service provider and, where it is, the DPO may be a natural person or a legal person (e.g., a limited company). In the latter case, the WP29 recommends that for reasons of legal clarity and good organisation, the contractor should designate a named person as the lead contact for the client. The DPO does not necessarily have to be a full time role, but as the WP29 put it, “the DPO’s primary concern should be

enabling compliance with the GDPR” and “having sufficient time to devote to DPO tasks is paramount”.

Where DPOs have other duties, these cannot be incompatible with their DPO functions. Examples given by the WP29 of roles which would conflict with the DPO include:

- Chief Executive Officer;
- Chief Operating Officer;
- Chief Financial Officer;
- Chief Medical Officer;
- Head of Marketing;
- Head of Human Resources;
- Head of IT.

The latter, while well flagged, will be problematic for many of our clients. Historically, data protection compliance has by default landed on the desks of

IT Managers. Where an organisation appoints a DPO, this will no longer be an option. The WP29 draft guidelines are very extensive and provide welcome clarity as to its expectations regarding the appointment and duties of DPOs.

Author bio:

Fintan Swanton, Senior Consultant and Managing Director with Cygnus Consulting, has been a data protection and management consultant since 2006. Fintan was the founding Chairman of the Association of Data Protection Officers and past President of the Irish Computer Society. Previous employers include The Sunday Business Post, AIB, and Prudential Europe. He has more than 25 years experience in ICT. Fintan is a Chartered Engineer, a Chartered IT Professional, a Certified Data Protection Practitioner, a Certified Information Systems Auditor and holds a Masters Degree in Computing. In recent years

he has collaborated with the Institute of Public Administration and the Irish Computer Society to present their data protection training programmes, as well as updating and developing the content of these courses. He consults with, advises and provides training to a range of organisations, public and private, on data protection compliance.



Driving for work includes any person who drives on the road as part of their work either in a company vehicle or in their own vehicle and receives an allowance from their employer for miles driven and is now subject to random roadside alcohol and alcohol testing which commenced on the 13th of April 2017.



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Commission presents White Paper on the future of Europe: Avenues for unity for the EU at 27

As announced in President Juncker’s 2016 State of the Union speech, the European Commission today presented a White Paper on the Future of Europe, which forms the Commission’s contribution to the Rome Summit of 25 March 2017. As we prepare to mark the 60th anniversary of the EU, we look back on a peace spanning seven decades and on an enlarged Union of 500 million citizens living in freedom in one of the world’s most prosperous economies. At the same time, the EU has to look forward at how it will carve a vision for its own future at 27. The White Paper sets out the main challenges and opportunities for Europe in the coming decade. It presents five scenarios for how the Union could evolve by 2025 depending on how it chooses to respond.

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said: “60 years ago, Europe’s founding fathers chose to unite the continent with the force of the law rather than with armed forces. We can be proud of what we have achieved since then. Our darkest day in 2017 will still be far brighter than any spent by our forefathers on the battlefield. As we mark the 60th anniversary of the Treaties of Rome, it is time for a united Europe of 27 to shape a vision for its future. It’s time for leadership, unity and common resolve. The Commission’s White Paper presents a series of different paths this united EU at 27 could choose to follow. It is the start of the process, not the end, and I hope that now an honest and wide-ranging debate will take place. The form will then follow the function. We have Europe’s future in our own hands.”

The White Paper looks at how Europe will change in the next decade, from the impact of new technologies on society and jobs, to doubts about globalisation, security concerns and the rise of



populism. It spells out the choice we face: being swept along by those trends, or embracing them and seizing the new opportunities they bring. Europe’s population and economic weight is falling as other parts of the world grow. By 2060, none of our Member States will account for even 1% of the world’s population – a compelling reason for sticking together to achieve more. A positive global force, Europe’s prosperity

will continue to depend on its openness and strong links with its partners.

The White Paper sets out five scenarios, each offering a glimpse into the potential state of the Union by 2025 depending on the choices Europe will make (see Annex). The scenarios cover a range of possibilities and are illustrative in nature. They are neither mutually exclusive, nor exhaustive.

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For the public: Europe Direct by phone 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 or by email

- Scenario 1: Carrying On - The EU27 focuses on delivering its positive reform agenda in the spirit of the Commission's New Start for Europe from 2014 and of the Bratislava Declaration agreed by all 27 Member States in 2016. By 2025 this could mean:

- Europeans can drive automated and connected cars but can encounter problems when crossing borders as some legal and technical obstacles persist.
- Europeans mostly travel across borders without having to stop for checks. Reinforced security controls mean having to arrive at airports and train stations well in advance of departure.

- Scenario 2: Nothing but the Single Market – The EU27 is gradually re-centred on the single market as the 27 Member States are not able to find common ground on an increasing number of policy areas. By 2025 this could mean:

- Crossing borders for business or tourism becomes difficult due to regular checks. Finding a job abroad is harder and the transfer of pension rights to another country not guaranteed. Those falling ill abroad face expensive medical bills.
- Europeans are reluctant to use connected cars due to the absence of EU-wide rules and technical standards.

- Scenario 3: Those Who Want More Do More – The EU27 proceeds as today but allows willing Member States to do more together in specific areas such as defence, internal security or social matters. One or several “coalitions of the willing” emerge. By 2025 this could mean that:

- 15 Member States set up a police and magistrates corps to tackle cross-border criminal activities. Security information is immediately exchanged as national databases are fully interconnected.
- Connected cars are used widely in 12 Member States which have agreed to harmonise their liability

rules and technical standards.

- Scenario 4: Doing Less More Efficiently - The EU27 focuses on delivering more and faster in selected policy areas, while doing less where it is perceived not to have an added value. Attention and limited resources are focused on selected policy areas. By 2025 this could mean

- A European Telecoms Authority will have the power to free up frequencies for cross-border communication services, such as the ones used by connected cars. It will also protect the rights of mobile and Internet users wherever they are in the EU.

- A new European Counter-terrorism Agency helps to deter and prevent serious attacks through a systematic tracking and flagging of suspects...

- Scenario 5: Doing Much More Together – Member States decide to share more power, resources and decision-making across the board. Decisions are agreed faster at European level and rapidly enforced. By 2025 this could mean:

- Europeans who want to complain about a proposed EU-funded wind turbine project in their local area cannot reach the responsible authority as they are told to contact the competent European authorities.

- Connected cars drive seamlessly across Europe as clear EU-wide rules exist. Drivers can rely on an EU agency to enforce the rules.

Next Steps

The White Paper is the European's Commission contribution to the Rome Summit, the moment when the EU will discuss its achievements of the past 60 years but also its future at 27. The White Paper marks the beginning of a process for the EU27 to decide on the

3

future of their Union. To encourage this debate, the European Commission, together with the European Parliament and interested Member States, will host a series of 'Future of Europe Debates' across Europe's cities and regions.

The European Commission will contribute to the debate in the months to come with a series of reflection papers on: developing the social dimension of Europe;

- Developing the social dimension of Europe;
- Deepening the Economic and Monetary Union, on the basis of the Five Presidents' Report of June 2015;
- Harnessing globalisation;
- The future of Europe's defence;
- The future of EU finances.

Like the White Paper, the reflection papers will offer different ideas, proposals, options or scenarios for Europe in 2025 without presenting definitive decisions at this stage.

President Juncker's State of the Union speech in September 2017 will take these ideas forward before first conclusions could be drawn at the December 2017 European Council. This will help to decide on a course of action to be rolled out in time for the European Parliament elections in June 2019.

Background

Sixty years ago, inspired by a dream of a peaceful, common future, the EU's founding members embarked on an ambitious journey of European integration, with the signing of the Treaties of Rome. They agreed to settle their conflicts around a table rather than in battlefields. As a result, the painful experience of Europe's troubled past has given way to a peace spanning seven decades and to a Union of 500 million citizens living in freedom and opportunity in one of the world's most prosperous economies.

The 60th anniversary of the Treaties of Rome on 25 March 2017 will be an important occasion for EU27 leaders to reflect on the state of play of our European project, to consider its achievements and strengths as well as areas for further improvement, and to show common resolve to shape a stronger future together at 27.

As announced by President Juncker in his State of the Union speech of 14

September 2016, which was welcomed by the EU-27 leaders at the Bratislava Summit of 16 September 2016, the Commission has today presented a White Paper on the future of Europe in order to launch the debate ahead of the Rome Summit.

The White Paper will serve to steer the debate among the 27 Heads of State or Government and help structure the discussion at the Rome Summit and well beyond. It will also be used by the Commission as the starting point for a wider public debate on the future of our continent.

For More Information

European Commission White Paper on the future of Europe

https://europa.eu/european-union/eu60_en

The European Story: 60 years of shared progress

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-16-3043_en.htm

ANNEX: Five scenarios offering a glimpse into the potential state of the Union by 2025

 <p>Carrying On The EU27 focuses on delivering its positive reform agenda</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The positive agenda of action continues to deliver concrete results + The unity of the EU at 27 is preserved - The unity of the 27 may still be tested in the event of major disputes - The gap between promise and delivery will only progressively be closed if there is collective resolve to deliver jointly
 <p>Nothing but the Single Market The EU27 cannot agree to do more in many policy areas beyond key aspects of the single market</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Decision-making may be simpler to understand - It becomes harder to address issues of concern to more than one Member State and therefore the gap between expectations and delivery widens on common challenges - Citizens' rights guaranteed under EU law may become restricted over time
 <p>Those Who Want More Do More The EU27 proceeds as today but allows willing Member States to do more together in specific areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The unity of the EU at 27 is preserved while progress is made possible for those who want more + The gap between expectation and delivery closes in countries who want and choose to do more - Questions arise about the transparency and accountability of the different layers of decision-making - Citizens' rights guaranteed under EU law vary depending on where people live
 <p>Doing Less More Efficiently The EU27 focuses on delivering more and faster in selected policy areas not acting in where it is perceived not to have an added value</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + European citizens feel that the EU is only acting where it has real added value + A clearer focus of resources and attention on a number of selected domains helps the EU27 to act faster - The EU at first has difficulty in agreeing which areas it should prioritise
 <p>Doing Much More Together Member States decide to do much more together across all policy areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + There is far greater and quicker decision-making at EU level + Citizens have more rights under EU law - Parts of society which feel that the EU lacks legitimacy or has taken too much power away from national authorities risk being alienated

NUI GALWAY TEAM RECEIVES EPA FUNDING TO TACKLE EPIIC ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

By NUI Galway

In December, 2016, a team from NUI Galway's Ryan Institute secured funding from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to gather new empirical research on the quality of Irish environmental policy integration. The research project will identify how to achieve a more cohesive environmental policy governance. Dr Brendan Flynn of the School of Political Science & Sociology and Pádraic Ó hUiginn from the BioÉire project were awarded funding under the EPA's Research Sustainability Pillar.

EPIIC (Environmental Policy Integration – Innovation and Change) is a one-year desk-study which will identify urgent pressures on integrated environmental policy across Ireland's public administration system. Key cross-sectoral areas included are energy, emissions and climate change, waste, transport, agriculture, marine resources, public expenditure and the project will examine the possibilities for environmental policy integration to assist in addressing these challenges.

The study will engage with national departments of state, the local and regional governance levels, and also specialist state agencies with an interest in sustainability. One of the

more potentially interesting angles of the research will be to uncover lessons drawn from Northern Ireland and Scottish institutions, especially in the post-Brexit situation. Dr Flynn highlighted that: "We are very keen to hear from public officials who are interested in participating in this study, naturally in the key government departments, but also local authority directors of services for environment, waste, transport and serving and current or retired city and county managers." Dr Brendan Flynn added: "Environmental policy integration can be defined as the systematic inclusion of environmental concerns into traditional environmental and planning laws or policies. It is about achieving a cohesive, greener governance, or conversely, about uncovering how environmental policies can be undermined through a lack of good co-ordination. This study will focus on a few key policy areas where there are cross-cutting issues and demands." Research Fellow Pádraic Ó hUiginn outlined how: "EPIIC will take a focused look at reviewing the possibilities for EPI to provide mechanisms for low-cost practical application to overcome barriers to environmental policy implementation. We are also looking

at how it could position Ireland to avail of opportunities in areas such as the EU's Circular Economy Package, for example. The challenges are multi-dimensional such as climate action and energy decarbonisation and require a number of government departments and state agencies to work together with a common purpose. An integrated approach to sustainability, through applying EPI could possibly generate more positive outcomes, much greater than the sum of the individual parts." "EPIIC aims to give voice to those directly engaged in implementing environmental policies in key government departments, state agencies and local authorities. By making use of interview-based research with the policy experts dealing with these complex global challenges we aim to identify urgent pressures and also examples of best practice of policy implementation in Ireland," added Mr Ó hUiginn.

For more information visit:
<http://www.nuigalway.ie/ryaninstitute/research/specialinterestgroups/epiicenvironmentalpolicyintegration-innovationandchange/>

Source:

<http://www.nuigalway.ie/about-us/news-and-events/news-archive/2016/december2016/nuig-galway-team-receives-epa-funding-to-tackle-epiic-environmental-challenges.html>

Sporting hero, footballer Seamus Coleman honoured with Freedom of Donegal

There was great excitement in the County House Lifford on Friday June 2nd, 2017 when local Donegal man and sporting hero Seamus Coleman was honoured with the freedom of the county at a civic reception hosted by the Cathaoirleach Cllr. Terence Slowey and elected members of Donegal County Council.

Seamus started his football career with St. Catherine's in Killybegs. He joined League of Ireland side Sligo Rovers in 2006 and then moved to England to sign for Everton in January 2009. He has made over 200 appearances for Everton and is regarded as one of the league's top full-backs. Seamus Coleman has been a senior international for the Republic of Ireland since 2011, acquiring over 40 caps. He won the 2011 Nations Cup and was awarded the FAI Under-21 International Player of the Year in both 2009 and 2010. He was selected for the Ireland squad at UEFA Euro 2016, captaining Ireland against both Italy and France and in September 2016 he was named as Ireland's permanent Captain following the retirement from international football of Robbie Keane.

Seamus Coleman was joined by his wife Rachel, his daughter Lily, his mother Maire, his father Henry and his brothers Stevie and Francis at Friday's ceremony where he received the honour of the freedom of the county in recognition of his footballing achievements including the captancy of the Republic of Ireland football team.

Speaking at the ceremony an emotional Seamus Coleman said that he was shocked to receive this honour and that this award would take pride of place in his home. He also talked about how proud he is to be from Killybegs and Donegal and said that his heart would



always lie here.

He thanked his mother and father for all their support and told the audience that he was taught from a very early age to always say thank you and that this is something that he has carried with him throughout his life. He also spoke about his recent injury which he received during the World Cup Qualifier against

Wales in March this year and said that while it was a set back, he is fully committed to making a full recovery and left his guests in no doubt that he is still hungry to succeed at Premier League level. He concluded by paying tribute to his wife Rachel and thanked her for her endless support and commitment.

Chief Executive of Donegal County



Council Seamus Neely also spoke at the ceremony and said that while this is a very special day for Seamus and his family it is also a very special day for the soccer community in Donegal. "Seamus like so many other young boys and girls in Donegal started his footballing career in his local club, in this case St. Catherine's in Killybegs. And Seamus's ongoing support and commitment of his home club demonstrates the esteem with which he holds this club, the people of the club and what they do week in and

week out for the children and young people in his area. This is replicated in towns and villages across the county and indeed across the country. These volunteers are the people who to turn up night after night, in all types of weather to give our children and young people the opportunity to participate, to learn, to grow and in Seamus's case to become one of the most highly regarded players in the Premier League".

An elected member representing

each political party and grouping within Donegal County Council also congratulated Seamus Coleman on receiving this award and the Cathaoirleach Cllr. Terence Slowey summed up the feeling of all those present when he said "while you have achieved great things on the field, I can't help but be most impressed by your achievements off the field. You are a modest and humble person. A person who always has time to talk to his supporters and especially the children and young people that look up to you as their hero and role model. You are also a person who remains hugely committed to your hometown and you are a wonderful ambassador for Donegal".

Seamus is the eighth recipient of a badge and pin specially commissioned by the Council and which is reserved exclusively for those on whom the Freedom of the County is conferred. The badge, crafted by Ms Geraldine Hannigan, Designer Goldsmith, Letterkenny, and mounted on a background designed by Mr Fionntan Gogarty, Artworks, is a silver replication of the County Badge granted to the Council County by the Chief Herald of Ireland as part of a Grant of Arms to the County. The badge comprises the O'Donnell Cross enfiled by an Iunula. The Iunula on which it is based was discovered at Trentagh, Co. Donegal, and dates to the period 1500 -2,000 B.C. It is on display in the National Museum.



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Diploma in Civil Service and State Agency Studies 2017-2018



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Application Process

Application Deadline: **mid-October 2017**. Completed applications should be submitted in hardcopy and will be acknowledged by email upon receipt. Course confirmations will issue by email to confirmed students in mid-October.

Entry Requirements

Certificate in Civil Service and State Agency Studies (UCD/NUI).

Attendance

Students attend six tutorials, as indicated in the provisional timetable below. Tutorials are full-day, daytime sessions and students are expected to attend all tutorials unless they can produce a medical certificate or a letter from their training officer excusing them.

Tutorial Dates

Please note that tutorial/examination dates may be subject to change.

Module 1:	Friday 27 October 2017
Module 2:	Friday 24 November 2017
Module 3:	Monday 18 December 2017
Module 4:	Friday 19 January 2018
Module 5:	Friday 16 February 2018
Module 6:	Friday 9 March 2018
Examinations	April 2018 (date to be advised)

Venue

Dublin: IPA, 57-61 Lansdowne Road, Dublin D04 TC62

Accreditation

UCD

Level on National Framework of Qualifications

Level 6 (Special Purpose Award, 15 credits)

Course Fee

€990 (includes all matriculation and examination fees).

Tutorial Times

Tutorials typically start at 9.30am and finish at 5.00pm.



(01)2403600



undergad@ipa.ie



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Undergraduate Office, Whitaker School of Government and Management
Institute of Public Administration, 57-61 Lansdowne Road, Dublin D04 TC62

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Course Content

The programme covers the following key topics over six modules.

The Changing State and Public Service Public Service Modernisation Government Financing and Economics	Policy Formulation and Analysis Ireland and the EU Issues in Modern Governance
---	--

Tutors

Modules are delivered by the Course Director, Ms Orla O'Donnell, a variety of IPA specialists and experienced practitioners. Speakers are drawn from the Civil and Public Service and from State Sponsored organisations.

Course Materials

Students will receive a learning pack comprising a specially developed distance learning text and recommended readings. Further resources are provided online through our learning portal, Moodle.

Assessment

Assessment is a mix of continuous assessment (assignments handed in over the academic year) and end of year examination.

Progression

Students who successfully complete the Diploma can, after a short course of Bridging Studies, enter Year 2 of the BA (Hons). The Bridging Studies programme is normally delivered during the summer months through distance education and attendance at three weekend seminars.

Payment Arrangements

Students who are paying the fee themselves may pay in two equal instalments, the first instalment payable with application and the second before end of January 2018. Fees may be paid by cheque, money order, electronic bank transfer, debit or credit card. Students who wish to pay in more than two instalments should enclose an initial payment of €300 with application and then contact the Undergraduate Office to arrange a payment schedule. Fees must be paid in full by exam time.

If an employer is paying a student's course fee the IPA must be given a letter or email and Purchase Order number (where relevant) confirming that the employer wishes to be invoiced for the student's fees and specifying to whom the invoice should be addressed. Letters should be addressed to the Undergraduate Office, IPA, 57-61 Lansdowne Road, Dublin D04 TC62. Emails should be addressed to undergrad@ipa.ie

Tax Relief

Students who progress to the Diploma and who pay their fees themselves, with no possibility of reimbursement from their organisations, may claim tax relief at 20% once they have paid all or part of the course fee. Tax relief is calculated per student per course per year and is subject to a maximum of €7,000. The first €1,000 of the fee is not included in calculations for tax relief.



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Certificate in Civil Service and State Agency Studies 2017-2018



Is this Programme for You?

This programme is designed to provide students with a practical and comprehensive understanding of government in Ireland. In this new era of integrating and transforming public services, students will receive an important 'system-wide induction' to the roles and functions of the various sectors of government and the key processes such as legislation, budgeting, modernisation and government decision making. Students will consequently better appreciate the role and interactions of their organisations within this complex system and be better equipped to deal with the myriad of tasks and responsibilities in their public service careers. This Certificate is relevant to all staff working within the civil service or state agency sectors, but will be particularly useful to staff at junior and middle level grades. The content is appropriate to those in administrative, technical, professional and managerial roles. It will also be relevant to staff in other organisations that have significant interactions with government and the system of public administration.

Application Process

Application Deadline: **mid-October 2017**. Completed applications should be submitted in hardcopy and will be acknowledged by email upon receipt. Course confirmations will issue by email to confirmed students in mid-October.

Entry Requirements

Leaving Certificate. Applicants who are 21 years of age or over may qualify for entry as a mature student. Applicants who do not meet the entry requirements may apply for a Special Case Application Form.

Attendance

Students attend five tutorials, as indicated in the provisional timetable below. Tutorials are full-day, daytime sessions and students are expected to attend all tutorials unless they can produce a medical certificate or a letter from their training officer excusing them.

Tutorial Dates *Please note that tutorial/examination dates may be subject to change.*

Module 1:	Friday 3 November 2017
Module 2:	Friday 1 December 2017
Module 3:	Friday 5 January 2018
Module 4:	Friday 2 February 2018
Module 5:	Friday 2 March 2018
Examinations	April 2018 (date to be advised)

Venue

Dublin: IPA, 57-61 Lansdowne Road, Dublin D04 TC62

Accreditation

UCD

Level on National Framework of Qualifications

Level 6 (Special Purpose Award, 15 credits)

Course Fee

€950 (includes all matriculation and examination fees).

Tutorial Times

Tutorials typically start at 9.30am and finish at 5.00pm.



(01) 2403600



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Institute of Public Administration, 57-61 Lansdowne Road, Dublin D04 TC62

Now Enrolling
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Course Content

The programme covers the following key topics over five modules.

Central Political Agencies Government Departments and Civil Service State Agencies and non-Elected Oversight Agencies	Sub-National Government, the Health Sector and Legal Agencies Issues in Governance and Public Management
---	---

Tutors

Modules are delivered by the Course Director, Ms Orla O'Donnell, a variety of IPA specialists and experienced practitioners. Speakers are drawn from the Civil and Public Service and from State Sponsored organisations.

Course Materials

Students will receive a learning pack comprising a specially developed distance learning text and recommended readings. Further resources are provided online through our learning portal, Moodle.

Assessment

Assessment is a mix of continuous assessment (assignments handed in over the academic year) and end of year examination.

Progression

Students who successfully complete the Certificate in Civil Service and State Agency Studies may progress to the Diploma in Civil Service and State Agency Studies or Stage 1 of the Diploma in Public Management/BA (Hons) with an exemption from the Politics, Government and Public Administration module.

Payment Arrangements

Students who are paying the fee themselves may pay in two equal instalments, the first instalment payable with application and the second before end of January 2018. Fees may be paid by cheque, money order, electronic bank transfer, debit or credit card. Students who wish to pay in more than two instalments should enclose an initial payment of €300 with application and then contact the Undergraduate Office to arrange a payment schedule. Fees must be paid in full by exam time.

If an employer is paying a student's course fee the IPA must be given a letter or email and Purchase Order number (where relevant) confirming that the employer wishes to be invoiced for the student's fees and specifying to whom the invoice should be addressed. Letters should be addressed to the Undergraduate Office, IPA, 57-61 Lansdowne Road, Dublin D04 TC62. Emails should be addressed to undergrad@ipa.ie

Tax Relief

Students who progress to the Diploma and who pay their fees themselves, with no possibility of reimbursement from their organisations, may claim tax relief at 20% once they have paid all or part of the course fee. Tax relief is calculated per student per course per year and is subject to a maximum of €7,000. The first €1,000 of the fee is not included in calculations for tax relief.



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What future for Europe?

By The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)

The European Commission's White Paper draws up five scenarios for Europe by 2025 and launches a broad debate; local and regional authorities are key stakeholders and have an active role to play. CEMR and its members will provide valuable input to the upcoming debates, highlighting the specific local and regional aspects of every relevant issue. Noting the forthcoming publication of several reflection papers, we call on the European Commission to include a specific chapter addressing the local and regional dimension of the issues to be considered.

A Europe that is closer to its citizens

Efforts are needed to establish better links between the challenges that people experience in their daily lives and the solutions that Europe and the European Union should provide; therefore, an active role must be ensured for local and regional governments in the development and implementation of these solutions.

12.1 Worldwide, people are experiencing a crisis of confidence in political leaders' ability to adequately respond to their concerns and needs. This is a worrying trend and in Europe, the economic and financial crisis, migration, globalisation and geopolitical developments have raised questions as to whether our leaders are able to provide the right solutions.

12.2 Forms of citizens' participation have evolved over the years due to new communication tools. Citizens now want to intervene in specific policies and no longer on general matters,

communication and interaction must then be adapted to these new trends.

12.3 In the European Union consistently high levels of youth unemployment in some Member States, limited public investment in infrastructure and basic public services and the focus on the Single Market have led many Europeans to believe that the Union's sole purpose is economic integration.

12.4 As the level of government closest to the citizens, cities, municipalities and regions and their representative organisations, seek to find ways to involve citizens beyond electoral processes. Up to 75 per cent of municipal statutory functions are impacted by EU legislation; thus, local and regional governments play an important role in the implementation of European rules and in explaining the rationale and the benefits of European cooperation to citizens. This is a challenging task as they have to demonstrate that there are no simple solutions to complex problems.

12.5 Good quality public services at the local and regional level and decent living conditions strengthen confidence in public authorities and institutions. Such confidence is based on the continued, reliable and affordable performance of local and regional authorities, and is jeopardised if local and regional authorities do not have the freedom to organise and finance their public services in a stable legal framework. This fact needs to be accommodated by European rules.

12.6 It is important to recall that by promoting exchanges between citizens via twinning arrangements, it is cities that helped cultivate the feeling of belonging to a common European

community. Reclaiming the value of that feeling and fostering that European identity is a responsibility of all levels of government but, particularly, that of the local level.

A Europe that treasures its diversity

Europe's strength lies in its diversity in culture, history, identity, traditions, political systems, etc. which should be valued and respected where possible.

13.1 Europe's differences are its treasure and we are proud of our cultural heritage and history. Open borders, free exchange of goods and services, free movement of people are great achievements that allow Europeans to travel, work and live in many European countries.

13.2 European continental partnerships, such as the Council of Europe and its Congress for local and regional authorities and the OSCE, and enlargements of the European Union foster the sharing of common values, contribute to a better understanding of our diversity and strengthens unity, solidarity and tolerance, and have opened new markets and given opportunities for labour forces.

13.3 Programmes like 'Europe for citizens' and 'Erasmus+' that support exchanges between people are extremely valuable as they contribute to the common understanding of our diversity. Consequently they should be expanded both in scope, and in terms of eligible countries that have signed Association Agreements with the EU.

An effective Europe that concentrates on major issues

Major global challenges, such as security, migration, climate, energy and trade; and for the states sharing the Euro also economic and fiscal policies, are issues that are best addressed collectively.

14.1 Tackling major global challenges requires a more effective European Union; the political and legal framework should focus on what really needs to be regulated at EU level and the leadership should have the courage to refrain from overly prescriptive and bureaucratic approaches.

14.2 EU rules and regulations should not be too detailed and better take into account differences that exist, allowing flexibility and room for manoeuvre, in pursuit of commonly agreed objectives. Member States, in close cooperation with all relevant actors concerned, should define the appropriate way to achieve the desired outcomes.

14.3 Several scenarios are currently under discussion to define the potential future concept of the EU. CEMR acknowledges and welcomes the current discussions on the different options for the future of Europe – without already now pin-pointing a preferred option. Members of CEMR have yet to have a thorough discussion on the different scenarios proposed by the European Commission, in particular in relation to their meaning for local and regional governments. This may also concern the areas of competence and the Community institutions. This paper does not precede these discussions.

14.4 More trust should be placed in local and regional governments and the principles of subsidiarity, proportionality and financial autonomy should be strictly applied. The concept of ‘governance in partnership’ should be implemented according to a fair distribution of competences and

adequate and efficient mechanisms of coordination and collaboration between all levels of government. Where necessary, local and regional governments’ capacities should be strengthened and in that way contribute to the successful design and implementation of common policies.

A Europe that is inclusive, innovative, and sustainable

A more politically and economically integrated European Union must progress beyond the Single Market and provide genuine instruments of solidarity.

15.1. We must strive for a social, citizens-based Europe on freedom, equality of opportunities and solidarity, in order to achieve a welfare state in the European Union. Governing in partnership will ensure success in the establishment of a social Europe.

15.2 Policies on territorial, social and economic cohesion must be strengthened to meet new challenges and the citizens’ expectations. Youth issues, gender equality, anti-discrimination, social inclusion, integration policy, digitalisation, active ageing and quality healthcare, together with fight against climate change, environmental protection, employment, education, competitiveness, should be placed at the heart of efforts to close the economic, social and territorial divide in Europe, and implemented with a certain degree of flexibility to allow local governments to best respond according to the needs of their context.

15.3 We call for an intra-European territorial and social cohesion, based on principles of partnership, solidarity, freedom and dignity for all. Together with social and territorial cohesion, the balance between rural, urban and peri-urban regions, must be guaranteed. Particular attention shall be brought to areas at risk of depopulation.

15.4 Particular attention should be given to a solidary relocation of refugees in the EU countries based on regional, national and historical conditions, and local and regional authorities be allocated with the necessary support and resources to successfully manage integration in the mid and long-term.

15.5 The European Union social and economic model must foster innovation and be driven by environmental concerns, the digital revolution and global competitiveness, and should develop models for well-functioning social dialogue cooperation. Europe has the ambition and potential to become the world’s most competitive knowledgebased economy.

15.6 In order to reach the Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives of the Paris Agreement on climate and Agenda 2030, seeking to build decarbonised and resilient communities, Europe should continue taking bold actions at all levels of governance. The favoured approach should be the promotion of integrated and sustainable urban policies, including mobility, renewable energy, a circular economy, etc.; we call for sufficient financial support from the European Union and national states.

A Europe that plays its role in the world

Europe is a major contributor to peace, prosperity and sustainability in the world, as it is other European organisations such as the Council of Europe or the OSCE. It should keep a particular focus on local democracy and the development of the neighbouring countries. We support a Europe which voices local and regional governments’ interests when negotiating international agreements and development programmes.

16.1 The local and regional level can boost the implementation of Agenda

2030, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Agreement on climate and the New Urban Agenda. As members of the UN, all European states have agreed to take actions to reach the goals. The localisation process of the Agenda 2030 should therefore come with a real commitment to strengthening multi-level and multi-sectorial alliances.

16.2 As stable and respected partners, European states as member of the European Union but also of other European organisations such as the Council of Europe, the UN Economic Commission for Europe, the OECD, etc. significantly influence relevant international negotiations and decisions at the global level. As globalisation and migration flows clearly affect the local and regional level, local and regional authorities should be consulted on these issues. They can provide vital support and complement the actions of central governments in response to global challenges. CEMR and its members in cooperation with their partners gathered in the world organisation 'United Cities and Local Governments' (UCLG) have demonstrated influence on global issues, most recently in the Climate Agreement, the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda discussion.

16.3 Our experience of subsidiarity and the strengthening of local self-government in Europe is relevant when engaging with the rest of the world: we call on Europe to highlight the advantages of strong decentralised democratic structures; international development programmes should place stronger emphasis on projects involving local governments and local actors, including civil society

16.4 International cooperation must remain a tool of solidarity and respect endogenous processes of development. Key development factors must be embraced- local governments and civil society - while also compensating for the inequalities caused by wars, industry-induced climate change or unfair

economic practices.

Our scenario: a local and regional agenda for bolstering Europe and the EU

Europe's leaders should seize the occasion to rethink the European project and reshape the policies and institutions according to the outcome of the current reflection on Europe's common future.

17.1 Any discussion about the future of Europe should be based on the recognition of the principles of local self-government, subsidiarity and proportionality and of the important role local and regional governments play as backbones of our states and societies.

17.2 The future European Union institutional set-up should have appropriate and efficient tools and governance structures, building on the existing system, where local and regional governments and their representative organisations are instrumental in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and legislation.

17.3 Only in this way will Europe and the European Union succeed in developing meaningful policies for citizens, and optimise chances for regaining their trust and support.

CEMR and its member associations consider themselves committed partners of the European institutions and central governments. Therefore, we stand ready to contribute in a constructive way to the debates on the future of Europe and the European Union. Working together will provide the best foundations for an effective way forward.

Source:

Council of European Municipalities and Regions, What future for Europe? A vision from a local and regional perspective, CEMR position, June, 13th, 2017

CEMR secretary general reacts to White Paper on Future of Europe: "Europe cannot work through the only prism of nation states any longer."

The debate launched by the European Commission on the future of Europe is a crucial initiative if we are to reconnect with the fundamentals of the European project and make it appealing to young generations. The challenges Europe is facing - economic crisis, unemployment, deepened inequalities, migrant inclusion, increase of nationalism and populism, among others - call for new answers and everybody's involvement. For this reason, we see with great interest the different options that strengthen multi-level cooperation as well as European integration.

The secretary general of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, Frédéric Vallier, states: "We see with great interest the different options that strengthen multi-level cooperation as well as European integration. Nevertheless, we expect this process to put citizens at the heart of the debate and decisions on the future of the European project."

Europe cannot work through the only prism of nation states any longer. It will only thrive on the basis on strong relationships between the European Union, its territories and its citizens. To enable everyone's participation, we call for the debate on the future of Europe to take place in European towns and regions, as close as can be to European citizens. In 2016, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, representing mayors and local and regional elected representatives from more than 130.000 towns and regions, started to reflect on a vision of Europe in 2030. This important piece of work will allow us to efficiently contribute to the thought process on the future of Europe. In our view, today and tomorrow, when Europe is closer to its territories, Europe is closer to its citizens."

“Our common values should direct Europe’s future” claim Europe’s towns and regions

By The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)

Mayors, local and regional leaders adopted their position to lay out the local and regional vision for the Europe we want to shape in the years to come. This position, adopted by the members of the CEMR Policy Committee in Chios on 13 June, gives food for thought at an early stage of the on-going reflection process on Europe’s future. Seen from a local and regional perspective, our core position could be placed under the motto “Governing together on the basis of shared, common values”. It expresses how urgent it is to reassert our commitment to a strong and united Europe based on common values such as democracy, decentralisation, solidarity and tolerance.

“Local and regional governments have a legitimate voice in EU policy making and share a strong responsibility with all levels of government to work towards a Europe that can rise to the challenges we face. A strong, confident unified European voice, where all spheres of government play their part, can help set the bold political agenda that we so desperately need.” – President of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and Emilia-Romagna, Stefano Bonaccini. He added: “As CEMR President, I call on EU institutions to engage in constructive dialogue with local governments, but I also call on local governments to feed these discussions with ideas and suggestions on how to better align the EU with local needs.”

Listen to citizens, treasure our diversity

There is a crisis of confidence in political leaders’ ability to adequately respond to the concerns and needs of the people. As the level of government closest to the citizens, towns and regions are the best

placed to transport these concerns to the national and European level. They are core contributors to tackle challenges such as security, migration, climate, etc. Therefore, an active role must be ensured for local and regional governments in the development and implementation of relevant policies. Promoting exchanges between citizens via the Europe for Citizens and Erasmus programmes contribute to the awareness of belonging to a European community with rich cultural heritage, history, traditions and political systems. Recognising our diversity as a treasure and respecting the differences can help restore the faith of citizens in our European project.

Listen to citizens, treasure our diversity

As towns and regions, we are stretching out our hand to EU decision makers. In this context, we will be focusing our views on the future of Europe at the occasion of the European Week of Regions and Cities that will take place in October. At this occasion, CEMR is organising a workshop: “Getting Europe back on its feet”. This workshop will present a diverse snapshot of views and ideas on what is needed to build strong, inclusive, diverse, sustainable and resilient communities. Our discussions promise to be lively, engaging and interactive. Come along and be part of the conversation!

The debate launched by the European Commission on the future of Europe is a critical initiative to reconnect European institutions and citizens. But this debate must be conducted with towns and regions: they can play a fundamental role in demonstrating to citizens the day-to-day benefits of European cooperation.

To mark Europe Day, CEMR are presenting the views* of Christiane Overmans, Bonn city councillor and vice-president of CEMR, to know what expectations a local leader has for Europe by 2030.

Christiane Overmans: “We need to take Europe beyond the town halls and into the streets of our cities”

“Our debate in the next 15 years should be headlined: How can we [Europeans] master our challenges and which role should local and regional governments have to this end?” she told CEMR.

Europe cannot work through the only prism of nation states any longer, but rather on the basis of a strong relationship between the EU, its territories and its citizens. How can towns and regions be involved in Europe’s future?

Local and regional politicians should take the lead to form a new European political culture. This process should involve direct discussions, taking Europe beyond the town halls into the streets of our cities. This is an immediate necessity!

On top of it all, by 2030 the EU should guarantee that the principle of subsidiarity (similar to the Lisbon Treaty) for local self-government is implemented and financed with local governments’ own tax resources, in all European countries. Furthermore, the EU should ensure the possibility for local cooperation throughout Europe, regardless of national views and directives.

A number of key issues faced

by Europe's towns and regions - unemployment or demographic change - depend on economic and social policies. To reinforce the EU's social dimension, how could we reconnect the citizens with the European project?

Many of the current problems could have been foreseen, or are the outcome of an excessively economic view the European integration. Over the next 15 years, we should learn to see change as a chance without neglecting our traditions and diversity.

In this regard, it is crucial to acknowledge local and regional governments as a constituent element of the European Union, thereby respecting local self-government as mentioned in the European treaties.

By 2030, the EU should have built a more inclusive and fairer Union and common sustainability standards. It should also have set a common migration policy and equal educational offers for all.

Global challenges - security, migration or climate change - require a more integrated Union to act more efficiently. How do you see the role of the European Union on the global stage?

Among the strengths of Europe is its credibility in action and teaming up with other parts of the world - through climate, biodiversity or peaceful ways out of conflicts and crises.

We have learned to integrate stronger and weaker members within our European team. This experience should now help us become a power of global integration. No single goal can be addressed by just one city, by one nation, by one actor alone. Whenever we can find a good solution, we should go for it without national vanities.

By 2030, Europe will have developed its traditional capacities further, to be an innovative and resilient recognised partner in the world and to find

creative, original European, joint solutions - beyond political and religious ideologies. Moreover, I expect local self-government and cooperation beyond national borders to be strengthened.

What would be your message to Europeans for the next period?

Europe has a future if we succeed in modernizing the way we act and think, no country in Europe will have a prosperous and peaceful future when politicians stick to methods and solutions of the 19th century. Europe is a family - we all have to compromise - and whatever we decide to do will be relevant for everybody else.

Petros Fassoulas: "By collaborating with local governments, we can reach millions of citizens across Europe"

The loss of trust in the European Union or a lower turnout at European elections are some of the challenges that the EU is facing today. To contribute to a strong and united Europe, CEMR joined "ALL", a new alliance that is to campaign in favour of European cooperation and democracy in the run-up to the European Parliament elections in 2019.

In order to understand what is at stake for European democracy and to learn more about this alliance, CEMR interviewed ALL's founder and secretary general of the European Movement International (EMI), Petros Fassoulas.

Why does Europe need an alliance for democracy? Is democracy in crisis?

Europe is facing a multitude of challenges, the very values on which Europe is built; democracy, human rights, freedom of movement and the rule of law, are being challenged. This, partnered with recent political events both within the EU and further afield, and the rise of fake news puts European democracy in an uncertain place. In

light of this, we are calling for concerted action that overcomes our traditional divides and interests. There is an urgent need to revitalise European dialogue and cooperation to ensure the development of truly European proposals for solutions to the challenges we face.

In a time when Europe is divided and split between different visions for our common future, we need to engage Europe and its' citizens in a dialogue about the future of European cooperation and democracy. This dialogue should encourage and mobilize Europeans in all member states so that trust in the European values and democracy is reinstalled.

Since the first European elections, turnout has consistently decreased. How do you explain this?

Since the first European elections in 1979, turnout has decreased from around 62% to 43% in 2014, with some member states seeing voting rates as low as 13%. We think there are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, trust in the EU has also been steadily declining over the past years. There are also those who have turned their backs on the European project because they do not believe that the EU can offer solutions to the problems they face, or they feel that the EU is an abstract entity in Brussels.

Another issue that we can address is how campaigns around the European elections have been mostly centered on national issues; results often reflect the political climate of the individual member state. The disinterest in European elections, the declining voter turnout in many member states, and nationally-centered campaigns need to be countered through cooperation, no EU country can tackle these issues alone.

How can ALL break this trend?

We want to foster real debate all over Europe, within and between countries, about the things that matter to our

fellow Europeans. We want to listen and understand their concerns and hope. We want to reach out and engage as many as we can, in honest, participative discussion beyond and above what might divide us.

In September, we will be organising a Democracy Marathon. It will be a two-day brainstorm event which will gather a diverse mix of inspiring and creative Europeans to develop new and innovative proposals as to how we can re-energise democratic dialogue.

We believe that if 100 bright and action-oriented believers of democracy will dedicate two days of their lives to European democracy, this will unleash a wave of new ideas and impetus for engaging the wider European public in the debate on the future of Europe.

How can local government and partners such as CEMR contribute to this effort?

Europe's strength is its diversity, and ALL's strengths are the depth and breadth of our network. By working with partners like CEMR and local governments, we can reach millions of citizens across all European countries and regions. The aim of ALL isn't to represent the European elite or the EU institutions here in Brussels, it is to work directly with our fellow people; the EU-convinced, the unconvinced and the undecided. In order to do this, local actions and events will be organised, where our partner CEMR, along with local governments will play a big role.

Let's picture the day after the 2019 elections. What would you hope for?

Our ultimate goal is to engage Europeans. So we would be very happy to see an increase in voter turnout after the 2019 elections, 43% is not enough! Europe's founding values, freedom of speech, rule of law and human rights, must be cherished and protected. We really want to highlight the importance

of these values and we want Europeans to be reminded that in a fragmented world we have these values in common. We can only defend European values and democracy if we do it together.

A new era of cooperation between the CEMR and the CoR.

By The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)

The CEMR and the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) signed a Memorandum of Understanding. The two parties commit to join forces for local democracy.

The agreement also includes a reference to decentralised cooperation in

candidate, neighbouring and partner countries. CoR President Markku Markkula expressed: "CEMR and the CoR play a strong role in the same place towards Europe. Our collaboration to build the future of Europe is crucial." The agreement was signed during the debate on "Local and regional governments and the EU: partners to promote democracy and global development", organised alongside CEMR Executive Bureau meeting, which took place in Rome on 24 March 2017.

Source:

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), April, May and June e-newsletters, 2017



Public Service Reform and Innovation Conference 2017

We are pleased to let you know that the 2017 Public Service Reform and Innovation Conference will now take place on **Monday 18 September in Printworks, Dublin Castle.**

We will be in touch with further details of attendance, including how to register, in due course.

In the meantime you may wish to save the date in your diaries.

If you have queries please email:

reformoffice@per.gov.ie

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE!

News items

Donegal named ‘Media’s Favourite Place in Ireland’ at TravelMedia.ie Awards

Donegal has just been named ‘Media’s Favourite Place in Ireland’ at the recent prestigious Travel Media Awards ceremony which took place on Friday June 9th, 2017 in the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin. This is an excellent achievement for Donegal and a wonderful addition to our other recent accolades including being named ‘Coolest Place on the Planet 2017’ by National Geographic Traveller and ‘Ireland’s Hidden Gem’ by Independent Travel readers.

The Travel Media Awards were first launched in 2011 and are sponsored by Shannon Airport. They have grown to become one of the highlights of the annual travel industry calendar. The event calls on the media to vote and give their say on who they think stands out from the travel industry crowd – past winners include Aer Lingus, MSC Cruises and Crystal Ski Holidays. The

Travel Media Awards are the only awards that call on members of the media to vote for their favourite companies in the travel trade. To be voted as the ‘Media’s Favourite Place in Ireland’ is testament to the increasing popularity of Donegal as the perfect holiday destination on the Wild Atlantic Way.

TravelMedia.ie is a Dublin based specialist travel public relations, marketing, representation, events, communications and social media company. They are the company behind the Travel Media awards and Michael Collins MD of TravelMedia.ie stated that “this was the first time we introduced this category. Instead of always asking the media about their favourite international places we thought, let’s bring it back home and ask them about Ireland. It was really interesting to see Donegal win, with the capital Dublin coming second.”

Speaking following the announcement, Donegal County Council’s, Head of Tourism, Barney McLaughlin stated

that he was thrilled Donegal has been recognised by the travel media sector and said that “we have been building positive relationships with the travel media in recent years through our work with Donegal Tourism and the Donegal County Council Communications Office in promoting the Govisitdonegal.com platform and our Donegal brand. This award is a welcome sign that our communications and PR activities are reaching the right audience and our recognition as ‘Media’s Favourite Place in Ireland’ is very much appreciated”. Donegal Tourism and Donegal County Council have been working with businesses and representatives in the tourism trade to deliver a very effective collaborative approach to promoting County Donegal; this strategy is proving to be very successful. Donegal County Council has recently developed a three-year Donegal Tourism Strategy 2017-2020, which includes more media engagement including PR and communications action plan to target the travel writer/travel blogger opportunities that exist.



Failte Ireland’s Ellen Redmond accepting Donegal’s Media’s Favourite Place in Ireland award from travel writers Deirdre Mullen and Fionn Davenport and Isabel Harrison from Shannon Airport at the Travel Media Awards in Dublin

The Awards were hosted by travel writers Fionn Davenport and Deirdre Mullins, and there were 26 award categories in 2017, including, best tour operator, best online booking agent, best city break destination and media's favourite place in Ireland, which Donegal won. The event host Fionn Davenport was a keynote speaker at the 'Connecting the Wild Atlantic Way' conference hosted by Donegal Tourism CLG and Donegal County Council, which took place in Letterkenny in 2015. Pól Ó Conghaile was awarded 'Ireland's Best Travel Writer.' Pól also recently visited Donegal as a keynote speaker at the Donegal Tourism Seminar in March 2017. Ellen Redmond from Fáilte Ireland attended the event and accepted the award on behalf of Donegal. The recent successes of County Donegal and the growing visitor numbers to the county all indicate that we are moving in the right direction towards a very successful tourism product in County Donegal.

Source:

Anne Marie Conlon, Communications Officer, Donegal County Council, amconlon@donegalcoco.ie

Need for a reduction in energy consumption underlined by 2016 growth

- Dramatic rise in carbon intensity of electricity generation
- Ireland's energy import dependency dropped significantly due to Corrib gas
- Renewable energy contribution to generation is down
- Responsibility on all citizens to reduce consumption

On May 26th, 2017, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) published an analysis of national energy use in the 2016 Provisional Energy

Balance. It showed that Ireland's energy use increased by 3% in 2016 while the economy grew by over 5%. This growth shows that work remains to be done in decoupling energy demand from economic growth.

Mr. Jim Gannon, CEO of SEAI outlined that "it remains a concern that as our recovery continues we haven't seen a stronger decoupling of energy demand from economic growth. This year's, key findings also show the sensitivity of our relatively small energy system to external forces as we pursue competitive prices, improved security of supply and greater sustainability. The level of detail and analysis brought to this year's figures is second to none, and is a critical dataset for those engaged in the broader energy industry."

There was a dramatic increase in the carbon intensity of electricity generation, from 470 gCO2/kWh to 492 gCO2/kWh. This is mostly due to an increase in natural gas used in electricity generation to meet higher domestic demand, a low wind year by comparison to the previous three-year average (down 6%), and Ireland becoming a net exporter of electricity for the first time. However, in some good news, Ireland's import dependency has fallen from 88% to 70%. This is mostly because the Corrib gas field came on stream among other factors. As a result, 58% of natural gas use in Ireland in 2016 came from indigenous sources compared with 3% in 2015.

Key points on Provisional Energy Balance 2016

- Overall primary energy use increased by 3.1% in 2016 while the economy grew by 5.2%.
- Natural gas experienced the largest increase in use growing by 12% compared with 2015 and accounted for 30% of all energy used.
- Coal use fell by 8.9% and accounted

for 9% of energy while peat use fell by 2% and accounted for 5% of energy use.

- Oil use increased by 3.4% in 2016 to 48% of energy use.
- Import dependency fell from 88.5% in 2015 to 69.7% in 2016 primarily due to the effect of the commencement of supply from the Corrib gas field. Other factors contributing to the fall in import dependency include reduced imports of coal, oil and electricity and the drawdown of stocks of coal and peat.
- 58% of natural gas use in Ireland in 2016 came from indigenous sources compared with 3% in 2015.

Electricity Generation

- Coal, peat and oil use in electricity generation are down slightly, 1.8%, 2.2% and 5.3% respectively or a total of 37 ktoe, between 2015 and 2016. Also down was hydro (-15.6%) and wind (-6.4%), a combined fall of 47 ktoe.
- A significant change also was the switch from net import of 58 ktoe of electricity in 2015 to a net export of 61 ktoe. To put this another way, an additional 119 ktoe of electricity was generated to compensate for this. There was also an increase in demand of electricity of about 2.3% with added another 56 ktoe to be generated.
- These falls in generation, increased demand and switch to exports were compensated for by an increase in natural gas generation which saw natural gas input to electricity generation increase by 23.3% (442 ktoe) between 2015 and 2016 with a similar percentage increase in electricity generated from gas.
- These changes in 2016 have resulted in the CO2 intensity of electricity increasing from 470 gCO2/kWh in 2015 to 492 gCO2/kWh in 2016.

**Note that the energy balance data are provisional. Final 2016 energy balance is expected to be published in August/September 2017.*

SEAI stress that we need to redouble our efforts to increase energy efficiency across business, the public sector and in our day-to-day lives. Further, that we need to maintain momentum in the development of policies that facilitate low and zero carbon sources of energy. Mr Gannon notes that “in the coming years, Irish society will play a far more active role in the generation and management of our energy system. It is critical that communities and citizens are at the centre of this transition and become leaders in their own right. Renewable energy technology at small and large scale, alongside storage and smarter grid technologies will quickly become the norm, and we need to make sure that we have the correct policy and market frameworks in place to ensure that everyone shares in the benefits they can bring.”

SEAI is underlining the fact that Ireland still faces major challenges to reduce overall consumption and reduce carbon intensity in energy generation. Citizens play a key part in both reduce energy consumption and in being more active participants in the delivery of lower carbon energy sources. Increasing awareness of this role is now a priority and SEAI is asking the public to remember to:

- Examine their energy use at home and in business and get in touch with SEAI for advice on how to save yourself money
- Get your community group to join our Sustainable Energy Communities network where we will provide you with mentors and support to determine your own low carbon future
- Look to renewable energy alternatives from providers

Other significant trends in the 2016 provisional energy balance include:

- Natural gas experienced the largest increase in use growing by 12% and accounted for 30% of all energy used.
- 58% of natural gas use in Ireland in 2016 came from indigenous sources compared with 3% in 2015.
- Renewables contribution to electricity generation were down hydro (-15.6%) and wind (-6.4%). Coal, peat and oil use in electricity generation are down 2-5%.
- There was a 2.3% increase in domestic electricity demand.
- In 2016 Ireland, for the first time in our history, switched from being a net importer of 58 ktoe of electricity to a net exporter of 61 ktoe, requiring an additional 119 ktoe of electricity generation.

Source:

Johnny Fallon, Carr Communications, johnny@carrcommunications.ie

New consultations detail major savings proposals in Bristol neighbourhoods

A raft of five consultations launched on Tuesday, 13 June, 2017 reveal detailed proposals for how Bristol City Council could deliver certain local services with a reduced budget. The ‘Your Neighbourhood’ consultations propose smaller, more focused options which encourage people to take part in civic life and reduce dependency on council-funded services.

The proposed changes, include:

- Reducing the number of city libraries to 10;
- Closing street toilets and investing in a new community toilet scheme to expand availability;
- Removing around half of the city’s school crossing patrols (unless community, school or other options emerge);
- Changing the current Neighbourhood Partnership model to a local grant system with less frequent community meetings;

- And making detailed changes to the way a suite of services for adults with learning disabilities and dementia operate.
- Together the savings amount to just over £4.7m.

As mentioned above, libraries, public toilets, school crossing patrols, Neighbourhood Partnerships and Bristol Community Links are all covered in the proposals. The ‘Your Neighbourhood’ consultations ask people to comment on as many of these proposals as possible. It includes an interactive map to help people judge and comment on the combined effects of the different options they can choose from. The consultations are open now at www.bristol.gov.uk/yourneighbourhood and run until Tuesday 5 September, 2017. People who can take part online are encouraged to do so because it is quicker and easier for them and helps save the council money in print and transcription costs.

The consultations follow the council’s Corporate Strategy consultation last year and the subsequent budget decisions made by Full Council in February. Now that the council knows how much must be saved, it is presenting details of how this can be achieved. It is also welcoming local ideas and is encouraging more people to step up and play an active role in city life, including the possibility of some services or facilities being taken on by community groups or other organisations.

Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol outlined that “we have no choice but to make major savings following years of government austerity and the rising cost of providing vital services to more people. At the same time we want to deliver on our priorities and make Bristol a more equal city where no-one is left behind and where there is less of a need to rely on the council doing everything it once did. To do that we will work more closely with partners around the city to tackle Bristol’s biggest issues and enable more people to get involved in providing services.”

Furthermore, Mr. Rees highlighted that he “will be asking the UK’s other major cities to join me in taking an argument to the new government for a fairer, more sustainable deal for our cities. These proposals reflect our current financial position and how we can provide adequate services without spreading ourselves hopelessly thin. It’s a tough call, but we’re asking ourselves questions like ‘Would we rather have 27 libraries which are hardly ever open, or 10 which have longer hours and better facilities?’ We want your ideas and views across the board and we will be considering them carefully before any decisions are made.” Councillor Asher Craig, Deputy Mayor added: “There are some harsh prospects here but in many cases we’re supporting outdated, expensive ways of doing things which aren’t really suitable anymore. So whilst there’s definitely a big challenge and many hard choices, there is also a chance to work together on new ways of doing things. We are also looking at whether there are ways that the council can support community groups, volunteers and partners to play bigger roles in the delivery of some services. We want to help others to get things done, rather than supplying all the same services ourselves. Getting more involved in your community can help make you happier and healthier, whilst reducing the impact of these savings, so I’d encourage people to keep that in mind as they take part.”

Bristol Community Links

In relation to Bristol Community Links service, Councillor Helen Holland, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, stated “our proposals are based on engagement with people who use the service and aim to provide good quality services which cost less but meet their needs. We recognise the value of these services to the people who use them and plan to work on an individual basis with those who might be affected to make sure their eligible needs continue to be met. This could either be through council services or through other services in the city.”

Libraries

Councillor Asher Craig, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Communities, noted that “our existing public library services were built decades ago and since then there have been major changes in population, transport, technology and patterns of use. Our proposals are based on robust evidence and an assessment of local needs. The proposals offer the opportunity to explore a range of possibilities which will transform the service, including where and how it is provided. For example, we are open to suggestions such as integrating and possibly co-locating libraries with other services or community facilities, as we’ve seen with Hillfields Library & Children’s Centre and The Old Library (formerly Eastville Library). Our options aim to provide a library service that best meets the needs of the whole city based on need and suitability. We appreciate that local people are understandably protective of their local libraries. However, with a smaller budget and many of our libraries needing investment, the proposals we are putting forward will offer sustainable library services into the future that people across the city can access.”

Public Toilets

Councillor Asher Craig, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Communities, said: “We think that a Business/Community Toilet Scheme would be a better way to provide cleaner, safer, and more accessible toilets in more convenient locations for residents and visitors to the city at a fraction of the price of current provision. We aim, as a minimum, to double the amount of publicly available toilet sites and ensure that they are spread across the city.”

Neighbourhood Partnerships

Councillor Asher Craig, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Communities, stressed that “we recognise the value of engaging with communities on issues that affect them but we believe there are more efficient ways to do this than the current Neighbourhood Partnership

structure. We have identified three ways that the remaining money could be spent to help local people to come together, take action on local issues and influence the council’s work. We’re also prepared to make sure that resources are focused on areas and communities that experience the most inequality. “Your responses to the survey will be used to inform our approach to finding more efficient ways of working with our communities and supporting community action.”

The ‘*Your Neighbourhood*’ consultations are set against a challenging financial backdrop shared by most local councils following years of cuts to government funding, the costs of a growing, ageing population and a rising demand for services. In Bristol over £33m of savings were agreed for 2017/18, with work underway producing a new Medium Term Financial Plan to fully assess the longer term picture. Financial projections change often and for many reasons, but when the council’s budget was set in February it was anticipated that it needed to save a minimum of £104m between April 2017 and March 2022. Councillor Craig Cheney, Deputy Mayor underlined that “savings on this scale are incredibly hard to make and we have to work together to make Bristol work for everyone. The ongoing removal of council funding by the government doesn’t have to mean the end of a service and we’re prepared to help other people or organisations step up. We’ll be taking account of all the feedback, as colleagues firm-up their proposals and again when we make any final decisions on these services. However, this is very much asking how we make savings, not about if we should make savings.”

Source:

Tim Borrett, Head of Public Relations, Consultation and Engagement, Bristol City Council, tim.borrett@bristol.gov.uk

Ireland elected to the Governing Body of the International Labour Organisation (ILO)

On Tuesday, June 13th, 2017, Minister for Employment and Small Business announced that Ireland has been elected to the Governing Body of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) as a full member in Geneva for a three-year term. It is the first time Ireland has been a full member of the Governing Body of the ILO, since joining the Organisation in 1923.

The ILO is a United Nations Agency and the only tripartite UN agency. Founded in 1919, it is based in Geneva. 187 of the 193 UN countries are members of it. Ireland became a member in 1923. It brings together governments, employers and workers, representing 187 member states across the globe. The ILO is a United Nations agency which deals with employment and labour market issues. Its aim is to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all. The ILO gives an equal voice to workers, employers and governments to ensure that the views of the social partners are closely reflected in labour standards and in shaping policies and programmes.

The ILO has a unique tripartite structure, in which employers' and workers' representatives have an equal voice with those of governments. It delivers its objectives through the formulation of international policies and programmes, the creation of international labour standards, an extensive programme of international technical cooperation and training, education, research, and publishing activities.

Governing Body

The Governing Body is the executive body of the ILO. It decides on ILO policy, the International Labour Conference agenda, adopts the programme and budgets to submit to the ILC and elects the DG. The Governing Body comprises

56 Full members (28 Governments, 14 Employers and 14 Workers) with speaking and voting rights, and 66 Deputy members (28 Governments, 19 Employers and 19 Workers) with speaking rights only. Ten of the Full government seats are held by member states that are nations of "chief industrial importance" (Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation, UK and USA). The remaining 18 are allocated on a rotating regional roster agreed every three years among members

Ireland and the ILO

The ILO was the first international organisation which the new State joined. Ireland's links with the ILO can be traced back to Edward Phelan, a Waterford born UK civil servant who became the ILO's first official following his work on the British proposal for the establishment of the ILO in 1919. Ireland, through the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, pays an annual contribution to the budget of the ILO. Ireland's contribution to the ILO in 2016 was €1.5m. In addition, through Irish Aid, Ireland makes a considerable contribution to the ILO's development function. Plans are underway to agree a further four-year partnership 2017-2021 with an annual budget in the region of €2m.

Centenary initiatives

Ireland's term on the Governing Body coincides with an active and ambitious period in the ILO as its 100th Centenary year of 2019 approaches. To mark the occasion, the ILO is implementing the following seven Centenary Initiatives: Future of Work, End to Poverty, Women at Work, Green Initiative, Standards Initiative, Enterprise Initiative and Governance Initiative. Ireland's three-year term on the Governing Body will commence on 17 June, 2017.

For further information please contact Press Office, Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, ph. 6312200 or press.office@djei.ie

Source:

<https://www.djei.ie/en/News-And-Events/Department-News/2017/June/13062017.html>

Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) officially opens the Sligo Regional Services Office

WRC Regional Services to be rolled out across the country

On Monday, June 19th, 2017, Minister Joe McHugh T.D., formally opened the Sligo Regional Services Office of the Workplace Relations Commission. Speaking at the event, the Minister stated that "it is a very significant moment, as it represents the first step in the WRC extending its full range of services across all of its regional offices to ensure that the same services provided in Dublin are available across the country. This process will be rolled out across the country – the next phase being in Shannon – and the Cork and Carlow offices of the WRC will follow in due course." The Minister concluded by welcoming the decision by the WRC to expand the number of its hearing venues through the addition of locations in Donegal, Mayo, Kerry, Monaghan and Kilkenny. "From a rural Ireland perspective, it is important that complainants and respondents do not have to travel punishing distances to have cases heard and this development is good news for everyone concerned."

The Director General of the WRC, Ms. Oonagh Buckley, noted that this development was important as "the WRC is anxious to ensure that its full range of services – conciliation, adjudication, mediation, and inspection are available to clients in all our offices. This has not been the case to date as the regional offices were essentially internal offices of the inspectorate staff of the National Employment Rights Authority which is now part of the WRC." She concluded by saying "such is our commitment to this course of action that we appointed our first regionally-based mediator here in Sligo earlier this month".

At the launch, the WRC also indicated its commitment to developing further its Mediation Service and significantly increasing the number of mediated settlements of employment disputes. The Workplace Relations Commission was established on 1 October 2015. The main functions of the WRC are to:

- Promote the improvement of workplace relations, and the maintenance of good workplace relations,
- Promote and encourage compliance with relevant employment legislation,
- Provide guidance in relation to compliance with Codes of Practice,
- Conduct reviews of, and monitor developments, in workplace relations generally,
- Conduct or commission relevant research and provide advice, information and the findings of research to Joint Labour Committees and Joint Industrial Councils,
- Advise the Minister for Enterprise and Innovation in relation to the application of, and compliance with, relevant legislation, and to
- Provide information to the public in relation to employment legislation (other than the Employment Equality Act).

With a wide workforce of almost 200 staff with different specialisms and with offices in Dublin, Carlow, Shannon, Cork and Sligo, and operational bases for hearing meetings in many other counties, the WRC mission is to:

- Deliver a quality customer service throughout Ireland, which is
- Speedy, user-friendly, independent, effective, impartial and cost-effective,
- Provides variable means of dispute resolution, redress and effective enforcement, and improves workplace relations generally, all of which are delivered free.

Key WRC Metrics from Annual Report 2016:

- 63,000 calls dealt with by the Information Unit,
- 86% of collective disputes resolved,
- Almost 5,000 inspections undertaken which covered 75,000 employees – this equates to 1 in 6 employments in the low wage sectors,
- €1.5 million in unpaid wages recovered,
- 75% of adjudication complaints are now heard in five months - prior to the establishment of the WRC, complainants could be waiting two years for a hearing,
- Two-thirds of employment rights disputes resolved at mediation and 85% of workplace disputes are resolved as well,
- 90 per cent of adjudication decisions accepted and, of those appealed, the majority of those decisions were upheld by the Labour Court.

For further information contact Press Office, D/Enterprise and Innovation ph. 6312200 or press.office@djei.ie

Source:

<https://www.djei.ie/en/News-And-Events/Department-News/2017/June/19072017.html>

Allocation of funding and targets for 2017 which will see a minimum of 1,400 void and vacant social housing units returned to productive use at a cost of €24m.

The Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government Simon Coveney, T.D., on Friday, May 5th, 2017 announced the allocation of funding of over €24 million for the return of over 1,400 vacant local authority properties to productive use this year. The move is a continuation of the Government's commitment under the Social Housing Strategy to deliver 47,000 housing units by 2021 at a cost of €5.35 billion.

Minister Coveney outlined that “under the Government’s Social Housing Strategy 2020, and reaffirmed under Pillar 2 of Rebuilding Ireland, <http://rebuildingireland.ie> my Department is committed to supporting local authorities in carrying out work that both improves the national housing stock and ensures that existing social housing stock is used efficiently. This announcement today will bring another 1,400 housing units back into use in a timely manner for homeless households and families on housing waiting lists. Feedback from local authorities in respect of this programme is very positive. Since the introduction of the programme in 2014 valuable assistance has been provided to local authorities in dealing with vacant units and significant progress has been made in tackling the backlog. These measures will also greatly assist local authorities in achieving quick turnaround and re-letting times for such units. Going forward funding will be linked to local authorities putting in place ongoing maintenance programmes to address the issue of vacant properties. These measures will mean that there will not be a high number of vacant units, and local authorities will be continued to be supported in the remediation of any such vacant units that do occur. I’m happy to be able to continue the vacant property programme and to support the local authorities in the provision of funding for these very worthwhile and important schemes for local authority tenants.”

Since its introduction in 2014 the Department’s Vacant Properties (Voids) Programme has provided approximately €85million of funding which has result in over 7,200 properties being return to productive use. A key priority of this scheme is to rehouse homeless families to the fullest extent possible in homes that have been restored to an energy efficient condition. The Vacant Properties programme applies to both short and long term vacant units nationwide and is being allocated, as it was in 2014 and 2015, on an equitable and evidence-based system. The energy

efficiency works on the Vacant Property Programme has secured ERDF funding as part of the EU Operational Programme 2014-2020 and will see EU co-financing of 50% of eligible public investment under these programmes.

The Allocation Process for Vacant Properties:

The programme applies to both short and long term vacant units nationwide and is being allocated, as in the previous 3 years, on an equitable and evidence-

based system, adjudicated and weighted based on the priorities submitted by local authorities, the current numbers of vacant units and the cost effectiveness of the proposal. Funding will be linked to local authorities putting in place on-going maintenance programmes to address the issue of vacant properties. The Department requested all local authorities to submit a prioritised list of Voids for remediating under this programme. The maximum funding of €30,000 per dwelling is being applied

The average cost per unit has increased over time as the less complex and lower cost units were largely addressed in the 2014 programme. Efficiencies are also achieved in procurement of contractors by working with the Local Government Operation Procurement Centre but additionally, local authorities are also encouraged to use the services of Community Based Organisations who recruit, train and engage long-term unemployed people to carry out the necessary works within their local areas. Funding under the scheme is based on evidence of the work done and confirmation that no previous public funding has been received in recent years for similar works for the property. It is also a requirement that photographic evidence (before/after) be available and details of energy savings (post-works BER at minimum) are provided by the local authorities when submitting their claims.

EU Funding:

As part of the EU Operational Programme 2014-2020, the energy efficiency works on the Voids programme will attract funding under the ERDF. The Regional Assemblies have created a 'Social Housing Retrofit Programme' within their Operational Programmes to accommodate support for the social housing Voids and Energy Efficiency programmes. This will see EU co-financing of 50% of eligible public investment under these programmes.

Homelessness:

Local authorities will be asked to give priority consideration to making the refurbished homes available for letting to homeless families.

Source:

<http://www.housing.gov.ie/housing/rebuilding-ireland/funding/minister-coveney-announces-allocation-funding-over-eu24-million-void-and-vacant-social-housing-units>

Proposed Allocations – Vacant Properties

County	Approved Units	Proposed Allocated Funding
Carlow	8 units	€94,000
Cavan	12 units	€221,950
Clare	24 units	€514,308
Cork City	43 units	€871,000
Cork County	69 units	€1,326,850
Donegal	128 units	€1,875,185
Dublin City	377 units	€8,313,500
DLR	11 units	€188,621
Fingal	151 units	€2,108,750
Galway City	16 units	€174,400
Galway County	30 units	€642,500
Kerry	56 units	€778,865
Kildare	7 units	€140,000
Kilkenny	9 units	€182,500
Laois	5 units	€41,440
Leitrim	16 units	€260,700
Limerick	32 units	€554,000
Longford	37 units	€225,000
Louth	7 units	€87,500
Mayo	22 units	€353,200
Meath	47 units	€842,000
Monaghan	13 units	€182,000
Offaly	7 units	€135,500
Roscommon	4 units	€74,500
Sligo	44 units	€738,697
South Dublin	92 units	€1,397,022
Tipperary	58 units	€751,200
Waterford	52 units	€853,820
Westmeath	8 units	€88,371
Wexford	11 units	€231,500
Wicklow	9 units	€174,300

Total: 1,405 units €24,423,180

in 2017 as was done in 2014 - 2016. In remediating these units for re-letting, there is a particular focus on making them energy efficient. The Department also applies cost thresholds for individual elements of the remediation

work to control costs. The result is that while an upper limit of €30,000 per Void unit applies, the average cost per unit was over €11,000 in 2014 and over €12,000 in 2015 & 2016.

31 Local Culture Plans will drive creativity in every community nationwide

On Thursday May 25th, 2017, An Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD, and the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional,

Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Heather Humphreys TD, announced the roll out of 31 Local Authority Culture and Creativity Plans for 2017, as part of the Creative Ireland Programme, at a special event in Dublin Castle, which included a performance by Music Generation Carlow, an accomplished collective of young traditional Irish musicians.

The development of Culture Plans for every county is a cornerstone of Pillar 2 of the Creative Ireland Programme – Enabling Creativity in Every Community. Since the launch of Creative Ireland in December 2016, every Local Authority has established a Culture Team which includes arts officers, heritage officers, librarians, museum and gallery curators, led by a local Creative Ireland coordinator. Each Team has now put together a plan for their county to encourage communities and citizens to engage, participate and enable their creative potential.

An Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD, underlined that “these plans illustrate the extraordinary range of creativity in our communities and they get to the very heart of what Creative Ireland is all about: community, local empowerment, participation, collaboration. These are not abstract words or ideas – these are the building blocks for a better society, and a better quality of life for everyone. We are not all artists but we are all capable of having our lives enhanced and enriched by the arts. Arts and culture make it possible for us to be better people, living in a better society and a better country. At its very core, Creative Ireland is a wellbeing strategy and through these local Culture Plans, our Local Authority network is helping us to spread the reach and the impact of the programme into every community nationwide.”

Minister Humphreys stated: “I would like to sincerely thank all of the Culture Teams in our Local Authorities who have been working so hard in recent months to help us realise some of the key ambitions in the Creative Ireland programme. Through Creative Ireland we want to create an ecosystem of creativity in every county nationwide; we want to see more people not just attending the theatre or going to a cultural event, we want to

see them getting involved. In this way, we can help to build happier, healthier communities. The power of culture cannot be overestimated; arts and culture can open our minds, enliven our communities and enrich our children’s lives. The development of a Culture Plan is an important commitment in the Action Plan for Rural Development, because we believe that culture should be part of the development of every community, be it rural, urban, or somewhere in between. I look forward to seeing these plans being implemented in the coming months, to see Creative Ireland in action.”

New cultural highlights from the Local Authority Culture and Creativity Plans, include:

Wainfest Arts and Book Festival for Children, Donegal: A vibrant growing festival providing entertainment, enjoyment, fun, magic and laughter to thousands of children. It provides opportunities for 4-12 year olds to increase their involvement in reading, culture, language, arts, libraries and heritage by offering the very best in performance each year. 7 – 15 October 2017 <http://www.wainfest.ie>

Ancient and Wild: Cavan County Council Arts and Heritage office and the Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark have invited twelve artists to engage with the landscape, geology, and socio-political history of County Cavan and in particular the area of the Geopark. Work arising from the project will be exhibited in Cavan in December 2017.

Windy Toons Traditional Arts Festival for Young Audiences in Monaghan: A traditional arts festival for young audiences which will enhance traditional arts in the county through a diverse, innovative, and high quality programme for school and family audiences incorporating traditional music, song, dance and storytelling across Co. Monaghan from 24 – 28 October 2017.

New Artists in Residence Programme: A series of new annual artist residencies will be offered to visual artists, dancers, photographers, writers, film makers,

musicians or craft artists as part of new outreach initiative with local communities, based in some of Mayo’s rich cultural and heritage sites.

Source:

<https://www.djei.ie/en/News-And-Events/Department-News/2017/June/19072017.html>

€1.65 million for Social Enterprise projects across the country

On Tuesday, June 6th, 2017, Michael Ring, T.D., Minister for State for Regional Economic Development announced the allocation of €1.648 million in funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund to 42 social enterprise projects across the country. The allocations follow a competitive call for proposals from social enterprises that provide services to, or employment opportunities for, disadvantaged people, particularly in rural areas. Minister Ring outlined that “social enterprises play an important role in supporting local communities, in promoting social inclusion, and in helping those who are most distant from the labour market. I am pleased to be able to announce today the allocation of €1.648 million from the Dormant Accounts Fund to support 42 social enterprises in their work in helping communities, creating jobs and providing enhanced services to those most in need. There was a huge interest in the call for proposals which was launched in February, and almost 200 applications were received. I want to thank Pobal for assisting my Department in assessing the applications and in helping to identify those projects that can have the greatest impact with the funding available under this scheme. I believe that the projects being funded will play an important role in providing much-needed supports and services to local communities, particularly in rural areas.”

Source:

<http://www.ahrrga.gov.ie/minister-michael-ring-allocates-e1-65-million-for-social-enterprise-projects-across-the-country/>

Projects approved for Dormant Accounts Funding under the Social Enterprise Measure

Organisation	County	Amount of Funding approved:
Irish Seed Savers Association Company Limited by Guarantee,	Clare,	€25,654
IRD Duhallow Company Limited by Guarantee,	Cork	€20,531
Comhlacht Forbartha an Tearmainn Cuideachta Faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta	Donegal	€68,400
Colgan Community & Resource Centre Company Limited by Guarantee	Donegal	€26,473
Foresters Community Hall Limited by Guarantee,	Donegal	€19,520
Lifford Association Tourism Commerce Heritage Company Limited by Guarantee	Donegal	€81,900
Drimarone Development Company Limited by Guarantee,	Donegal	€27,373
Malin Head Community Association Company Limited by Guarantee, Association for the Development of Pettigo &	Donegal	€33,051
Tullyhommon Company Limited by Guarantee,	Donegal	€21,000
Coolock Community & Enterprise Campus Company Limited by Guarantee,	Dublin	€29,591
Speedpak Company Limited by Guarantee,	Dublin	€21,138
Clondalkin Community Recycling Initiative Company Limited by Guarantee,	Dublin	€32,574
Masamba Samba School Social Economy Programme Company Limited by Guarantee,	Dublin	€22,820
Galway Traveller Movement Company Limited by Guarantee,	Galway	€66,039
Foodshare Kerry Company Limited by Guarantee,	Kerry	€32,416
Comhchoiste Ghaeltachtaí Chiarraí Theas Cuideachta Faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta,	Kerry	€20,000
Sensational Kids Company Limited by Guarantee,	Kildare	€45,000
The Organic Centre Company Limited by Guarantee,	Leitrim	€22,028
North Leitrim Glens Development Company Limited by Guarantee,	Leitrim	€29,537
Drumshanbo Enterprise Centre Company Limited by Guarantee,	Leitrim	€54,184
Leitrim Warmer Homes Company Limited by Guarantee,	Leitrim	€47,252
Ionad Na nDaoine An tShlanaitheora Cuideachta Faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta,	Louth	€26,822
Brickens Logboy Tulrahan Housing Association Limited by Guarantee,	Mayo	€19,876
Killala Community Council (Newstart) Company Limited by Guarantee, Seirbhísi Curam Chill Chomain Cuideachta	Mayo	€16,270
Faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta,	Mayo	€50,633
Comharchumann Forbartha Cill tSeadhna Teoranta,	Mayo	€21,633
Clar Community Projects Limited,	Mayo	€66,739
Clár Regional Centre Company Limited by Guarantee,	Mayo	€75,000
The Father Patrick Peyton C.S.C. Memorial Company Limited by Guarantee,	Mayo	€59,145
Csg Sports Club Company Limited by Guarantee,	Meath	€29,407
South Meath Social Economy Company Limited by Guarantee,	Meath	€39,104
Cormeen Community Development Company Limited by Guarantee,	Meath	€22,222
Sonairte the National Ecology Centre Company Limited by Guarantee,	Meath	€48,600
Truagh Development Association Company Limited by Guarantee,	Monaghan	€32,790
Roscommon Integrated Development Company Limited by Guarantee,	Roscommon	€54,373
Community of Lough Arrow Social Project Company Limited by Guarantee	Sligo	€27,200
GIY Ireland Limited	Waterford	€49,768
Waterford & Suir Valley Railway Company Limited by Guarantee,	Waterford	€44,415
Dungarvan Care of the Aged Company Limited by Guarantee,	Waterford	€50,342
Mullingar Recycling Resource Centre Company Limited by Guarantee,	Westmeath	€60,000
Mullingar Homecare Services Company Limited by Guarantee	Westmeath	€32,424
New Ross Community Hospital Company Limited by Guarantee,	Wexford	€75,000

€1.21M funding for Emergency First Response initiatives in CLÁR areas

On Friday May 26th, 2017, the Minister of State for Regional Economic Development, Michael Ring TD, approved €1.21 million to a range of organisations throughout the country under the Emergency First Response measure of the CLÁR programme.

The funding will provide support for organisations that are involved in a voluntary capacity in responding to emergency situations in CLÁR areas. Funding will go to a range of organisations, from small Community First Response groups, to Mountain Rescue and Sub Aqua Rescue teams. Minister Ring stated that he was “particularly pleased to announce this new initiative under the CLÁR programme this year to support voluntary first-response organisations who provide an excellent service in rural areas, often under very difficult circumstances. The high level of interest from applicants reinforces my belief in the importance of the support provided by first responders all over the country to complement the State emergency services. Due to the number and quality of the applications received. I am very happy to be able to provide funding of €1.21 million to these groups today. This is 60% more than the €750,000 initially ear-marked for the measure. Funding will be provided to a large variety of organisations that provide critical and lifesaving support in rural areas, and I am confident that this funding will allow those organisations to save more lives in the years ahead. The services supported through this funding will provide people in rural areas and those who visit the countryside for recreational purposes, with the confidence that specialist support of the highest quality will be available to them should they ever find themselves in an emergency situation. I have always had a great respect for the volunteers that put themselves on the line in order to help others, and I hope this funding goes some way to supporting their efforts.”

The CLÁR programme is funded by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and forms part of the Government’s Action Plan for Rural Development. The funding announced by Minister Ring is the first phase of the allocation of the €5 million available under CLÁR this year. The Minister will announce further allocations under other measures in the CLÁR programme shortly.

Source:

<http://www.ahrrga.gov.ie/minister-of-state-ring-approves-e1-21m-in-funding-for-emergency-first-response-initiatives-in-clar-areas/>

€768K in funding for Targeted Community Infrastructure Needs under CLÁR

On Tuesday, May 30th, 2017, Minister of State for Regional Economic Development, Michael Ring TD, approved €768K, as an initial phase, to community projects in 12 Counties under the Targeted Community Infrastructure Needs measure of the CLÁR programme. The funding will provide support for the renovation and upgrade of community infrastructure in disadvantaged rural areas all over Ireland. Minister Ring outlined that “for many rural communities upgrading and renovation of established community infrastructure is an important part of keeping the communities together. Community halls and other such buildings are places where a diverse range of groups meet and socialise on a regular basis, often in less than ideal surroundings. The funding provided through this measure will support projects such as the renovation of roofing, creation of partition walls to allow for further use of such centres and the upgrading of kitchen and toilet facilities. The funding will also support initiatives, such as, upgrading and the provision of essential equipment to support economic activity on a number of piers. The initiatives under this measure have come from the communities themselves and are examples of projects that are considered important to those

rural communities in providing support to further enhance social inclusion and economic development in their areas.”

The CLÁR programme is funded by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and forms part of the Government’s Action Plan for Rural Development. The funding announced by Minister Ring comes from the allocation of €5 million made available under CLÁR this year. The Minister will announce further allocations under the CLÁR programme shortly.

Source:

<http://www.ahrrga.gov.ie/minister-of-state-ring-approves-e768k-in-funding-for-targeted-community-infrastructure-needs-under-clar/>

Tackling litter and graffiti with increased funding

On Thursday, June 1st, 2017, the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment Denis Naughten announced an allocation of €884,000 to tackle graffiti and litter across the country. This represents an increase of €194,000 on last year’s allocation under the 2017 Anti-Litter and Anti-Graffiti Awareness Grant Scheme (ALAGS).

The Scheme provides funding to local authorities to conduct public awareness and education campaigns at a community level targeting litter, dog fouling and graffiti. Each local authority is responsible for selecting the suitable awareness projects that receive funding. Today’s allocation of €884,000 brings the total grants provided under this Scheme over the last 10 years to almost €15 million.

Announcing the allocation Minister Naughten said: “Year on year Ireland has steadily improved with respect to litter but complacency is not an option as a small increase was recorded last year in levels nationwide on the previous year. Within the resources I have I am proud to support community groups and local

authorities with funding that will have tangible impact in our communities. Recently, I provided increased funding for the 2017 National Spring Clean campaign run by An Taisce. I have also doubled the funding available to tackle the scourge of illegal dumping and today I am pleased to announce a substantial increase in funding to tackle graffiti and littering of all types, including gum, cigarette butts and dog fouling. Littering is environmental sabotage but money cannot solve our litter problems on its own. It takes a behavioural change across the board and I am confident the

awareness campaigns that will be funded at a community level under ALAGS will have a real impact. It's hugely important for me to support and assist community effort with significant funding and recognition. I want to pay tribute to the passion, energy and dedication of thousands of local community and voluntary groups, schoolchildren and teachers who are taking their civic responsibilities seriously every single day through the many anti-litter initiatives that they drive for the preservation of our environment." Interested groups should contact their local authority.

Source:

<http://www.dccae.gov.ie/en-ie/news-and-media/press-releases/Pages/Naughten-tackles-litter-and-graffiti-with-increased-funding.aspx>

Increased funding for local environmental projects

On Friday 16th May, 2017, Mr. Denis Naughten, T.D., Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, announced a large increase to the Local Agenda 21 (LA21) Environmental Partnership Fund. This fund, which has operated since 1997, supports local environmental initiatives by communities, individuals and not-for-profit groups. The Minister has allocated funding of €460,000 to this year's scheme, an increase of 15% on funding in 2016. Launching the scheme Minister Naughten stated, "Funding provided under this scheme supports local projects to improve the environment and make our communities more sustainable. The fund shows how local initiatives can make a real difference in our communities, and showcases how small changes can make lasting improvements to our environment. Together with the local authorities my Department has supported over 700 projects under this scheme last year and I know that the increase in funding I have announced today will enable even more work to be done this year. The Fund supports small scale non-profit environmental projects such as allotments, community gardens, compost schemes, rainwater harvesting schemes, educational initiatives and environmental exhibitions. Funding provided by my Department is matched by the local authorities, and projects also attract funding from other sources."

Eligible projects are those that will support and complement, at a local level, national environmental policies such as those on Waste, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Air, Water and Sustainable Development. Groups seeking funding for eligible projects are invited to make an application to their local authority

Local Authority Allocation

Local Authority	2017 Anti-Litter and Anti-Graffiti Awareness Grant Scheme (ALAGS) Allocations
Dublin City	72,000
Cork County	36,000
Fingal	36,000
South Dublin	36,000
Kildare	23,000
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	36,000
Limerick City & County	51,000
Meath	26,000
Galway County	26,000
Donegal	26,000
Tipperary County	42,000
Kerry	26,000
Wexford	28,000
Wicklow	23,000
Mayo	23,000
Louth	23,000
Cork City	36,000
Clare	23,000
Waterford City & County	49,000
Kilkenny	23,000
Westmeath	19,000
Laois	19,000
Offaly	19,000
Galway City	36,000
Cavan	19,000
Sligo	19,000
Roscommon	19,000
Monaghan	19,000
Carlow	19,000
Longford	16,000
Leitrim	16,000

Total: 884,000

(application forms are available directly from the local authorities). Completed application forms should be returned to the relevant local authority at the latest by 5pm, 23 June 2017. Application forms, local authority contacts, and further information on the LA21 Environmental Partnership Fund can be obtained from the Department's website: www.dccae.gov.ie

Source:

<http://www.dccae.gov.ie/en-ie/news-and-media/press-releases/Pages/Increased-Funding-for-Local-Environmental-Projects.aspx>

Additional funding allocated to crackdown on illegal dumping

At the end of May, 2017, due to unprecedented demand the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment Denis Naughten is providing extra funds to local authorities to crackdown on illegal dumping. Minister Naughten launched a major anti-illegal dumping initiative (ADI) in March 2017 and encouraged all local authorities and communities across the country to avail of a €650,000 allocation for the Scheme. The use of covert surveillance and smart technology including aerial imagery from drones and satellites as well as the installation of CCTV cameras and better enforcement and prosecution actions formed part of the new crackdown. Due to the phenomenal response from local authorities and communities across the country to the initial call for applications, Minister Naughten is now providing extra funding to support a second phase of the initiative this year with immediate effect: "I have doubled the initial allocation of €650,000 to support a new round of applications with total funding now standing at €1.3 million to clean-up dumping black-spots and to target those responsible using SMART technology including drone surveillance." 85 projects have been approved for funding, under the first phase of the ADI, from every county in the State, out of a total of 111

applications. Successful applications have included projects that will equip authorities with the latest enforcement technologies including overt and covert surveillance equipment and drone technology to target dumpers. A range of clean-up and restorative projects led by community, environmental and sporting groups have also been approved.

Further information on the 2017 anti-dumping initiative is available from the Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities and from the Environment Section of each local authority.

List of Approved Funding under Phase I of the 2017 Anti-Dumping Initiative.

Under Phase I of the 2017 Anti-Dumping Initiative, the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment made available €650,000 for projects tackling illegal dumping, including the provision of support for monitoring and surveillance of dumping blackspots. The Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities evaluated proposals and have allocated funding to local authorities set out below.

Source:

<http://www.dccae.gov.ie/en-ie/news-and-media/press-releases/Pages/Increased-Funding-for-Local-Environmental-Projects.aspx>

Local Authority	Allocation
Carlow	€22,494.80
Cavan	€22,750
Clare	€20,000
Cork City	€7,500
Cork County	€17,988.15
Dublin City Council	€20,000
Donegal	€22,750
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown	€10,000
Fingal	€20,000
Galway	€22,750
Galway City	€20,889
Kerry	€23,000
Kildare	€20,000
Kilkenny	€22,598
Laois	€20,000
Leitrim	€22,756
Limerick City & Co	€25,000
Longford	€20,000
Louth	€24,739.50
Mayo	€20,390
Meath	€20,000
Monaghan	€22,750
Offaly	€20,000
Roscommon	€22,750
Sligo	€22,750
South Dublin	€20,000
Tipperary County	€25,000
Waterford County	€20,000
Westmeath	€20,000
Wexford	€24,886
Wicklow	€20,000

Ireland ranked 11th of EU-15 countries in Sustainable Progress Index – New research on economy, society and environment shows Ireland lagging behind

“Ireland is making poor progress when ranked against the other 14 countries in the EU-15. The new Sustainable Progress Index, published today by Social Justice Ireland, shows the scale of the challenge facing Ireland under the headings of economy, society and environment.” – stated Dr Seán Healy, Director Social Justice Ireland at the launch of the Sustainable Progress Index to mark the UN World Social Justice Day.

Dr Healy went on to state “This new study shows that of the EU-15 countries, Ireland is ranked last on its performance on the environment; 10th on performance on the economy and 9th on its performance on society. Overall it is ranked 11th of the 15 countries studied. These results show that despite huge austerity, rapidly growing GDP and improving employment statistics, Ireland has a long way to go before it reaches the level of development and fairness to which most Irish people aspire.”

This index has been developed to show how Ireland is currently performing on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These 17 goals were divided into three sub-groups – economy, society and environment. The indicators were compared to the other 14 countries in the EU-15 to see how the situation had changed over the past decade and to see how Ireland is performing currently. Under all three headings Ireland’s ranking is worse now than it was in 2006.

“On the economy Ireland has slipped from 6th in 2006 to 10th in 2014, the latest year for which data is available, despite an excellent performance in GDP growth. On the environment, Ireland fell from 14th to 15th over the decade. Measuring its progress as a society Ireland fell from 7th to 9th position.

These rankings go some way towards understanding why many Irish people don’t believe there has been sufficient real progress in recent years.” – Michelle Murphy, Research and Policy Analyst, Social Justice Ireland. The researchers who conducted this study, Professor Charles Clark, an economics professor from New York and Dr Catherine Kavanagh from UCC argue that their results strongly suggest that focusing exclusively on GDP as a measure of progress is clearly misleading.

Report’s General Findings:

- Looking at the economy component of the Index which is based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) shows the economic performance of Ireland throughout the period. The SDG score slips from 2006 to 2010, recovering in the period to 2014. The country ranking sees Ireland’s performance fall from 6th to 10th over the period.
- Looking at the environment Ireland performs poorly throughout the full period. Despite some improvement in absolute values, Ireland is ranked last in 2014; its position is worse than in 2000. Overall, we can see that the Environment SDG Index suggests Ireland is faced with significant challenges in achieving progress on some of the SDGs.
- Looking at the society aspect of the SDGs Ireland’s ranking falls from 7th in 2004 to 9th a decade later.

“Despite the recovery of recent years and the dramatic rise in Ireland’s GDP when it comes to measuring real, sustainable progress, Ireland is not performing anywhere close to what is required or is possible.” - Dr Seán Healy

Social Justice Ireland is an independent think tank and justice advocacy organisation that advances the lives of people and communities through providing independent social analysis and effective policy development to create a sustainable future for every

member of society and for societies as a whole. The Sustainable Progress Index is published by Social Justice Ireland to mark the UN World Social Justice Day (February 20th). This study was conducted for Social Justice Ireland by Professor Charles Clark, St John’s University, New York, and Dr. Catherine Kavanagh from UCC.

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International recognition for Fingal County Council’s Heritage Property Strategy

At the end of June, 2017, Fingal County Council’s Heritage Property Strategy has received international recognition by being recently nominated for two prestigious international competitions, the Royal Town Planning Institute Awards and Planning Magazine Awards. The recently adopted strategic review of Fingal’s portfolio of heritage properties, which was completed in late 2016, was the result of an in-depth financial and



Mayor of Fingal Mary McCamley is pictured with Coloin O’Reilly of Fingal County Council’s Department of Economic Enterprise and Tourism and Paul McTiernan of SLR Consulting at the Planning Magazine Awards in London.



Deputy Mayor Eithne Loftus is pictured with Deirdre Sinclair, Coilin O'Reilly and Duncan Henderson from Fingal County Council's Department of Economic, Enterprise and Tourism Development at the Royal Town Planning Institute Awards in London.

community value of the properties and will further improve our tourism performance. As we developed the strategy it became apparent that the scale, variety and value of the portfolio of historic properties here in Fingal marks us out from all other regions and our shortlisting for these international awards is recognition of this."

Mayor's Seminar hears calls for Metro North to be fast-tracked

By Fingal County Council Press Office

At the beginning of May 2017, a major seminar on Metro North heard calls for the project to be fast-tracked as Fingal County Council has already taken the necessary steps to facilitate it and are willing to work with Government and the relevant national agencies to deliver it as soon as possible. The seminar, which

operational review of Fingal County Council's heritage property portfolio in partnership with SLR Consulting. The Heritage Property Strategy was a finalist in the "Excellence in Planning for Built Heritage" category at the RTPI Awards held in the Milton Court Theatre, London, on June 15 and was nominated in "The Best Use of Publically Owned Land in Placemaking" category at the Planning Awards which took place at Savoy Place, London, on June 21.

The Mayor of Fingal, Councillor Mary McCamley, said: "Fingal's heritage properties hold a special and important place in the hearts of Fingal's citizens and it is of great significance that this piece of work to improve and protect the properties into the future is recognised." Mr Paul Reid, Chief Executive of Fingal County Council, stated: "The strategic review of heritage properties and the implementation of the outcomes of the review can greatly improve the tourism potential of the County and provide tangible economic benefit to the County as a whole." Mr Ed Hearne, Director of Economic Development in Fingal County Council, said: "Our new strategy will support the creation of up to 700 jobs, safeguard the important



Those who participated in today's Mayor's Seminar Fingal on Track: Preparing for Metro North were (from top, left to right): Bobby Kerr (Newstalk), Hugh Creegan (National Transport Authority), Mary Rose Burke (Dublin Chamber of Commerce), AnnMarie Farrelly (Fingal County Council), Cllr Darragh Butler (Mayor of Fingal), Alison Hardiman (McDowell Purcell), Paul Reid (Fingal County Council), Ed Hearne (Fingal County Council), Professor Brian MacCraith (Dublin City University), Kevin Toland (daa) and Guy Thompson (Fingal Dublin Chamber).

was hosted by the Mayor of Fingal, Cllr. Darragh Butler in The Atrium at County Hall, Swords, discussed the merits of accelerating the development of Metro North, from Swords to Dublin Airport and onto the City Centre.

Metro North was identified by the Government in 2015 as a priority project in Building on Recovery, its infrastructure and capital investment plan 2016-2021. However, work on the transport corridor is not expected to begin for a number of years and is planned to be in operation by 2026/2027 at the earliest. The Government is currently undertaking a mid-term review of its investment plan and has additional resources to commit to priority projects. Fingal County Council is advocating the sustainable development and business case for Metro North to be fast-tracked so that future development can be underpinned by a fast, dedicated and efficient metro line.

The Mayor of Fingal, Cllr. Darragh Butler said: "I hope today's conference has achieved its aim of showing how important it is for Metro North to be fast-tracked because it is the gateway to a prosperous future for the people of Fingal, the residents of Swords and those with businesses along its Economic Corridor." The Council's Chief Executive, Paul Reid, supported the calls by the Mayor stating: "A decision to bring forward the implementation of this critical phase of national infrastructure will also create the certainty required to stimulate investment by public, commercial, semi-state and private sectors to ensure that complementary development occurs in the most suitable places and at the right time." Fingal County Council's Director of Strategic and Planning Infrastructure, AnnMarie Farrelly, outlined how the Council has used its recently approved 2017-2023 Development Plan to copper-fasten the Metro North Economic Corridor as far as Lissenhall where the Council envisages, in addition to a major park-and-ride facility, a new mixed use urban area with significant levels of residential and employment development. Ed Hearne, Fingal County Council's Director of Economic, Enterprise and Tourism, spoke about how Metro North will underpin the economic growth of the county and added: "A decision on

the early delivery of Metro North can bring the certainty and confidence to unlock further investment and deliver a transformative economic impact for Fingal and the Dublin region."

After each of the keynote speeches there were panel discussions, moderated by Newstalk presenter Bobby Kerr, which included Hugh Cregan, Director of Transport Investment and Taxi Regulation at the National Transport Authority; Alison Hardiman, Head of Planning and Environmental Law, at McDowell Purcell; Kevin Toland, Chief Executive, daa; Professor Brian MacCraith, President, Dublin City University; Guy Thompson, President, Fingal Dublin Chamber of Commerce and Mary Rose Burke, CEO, Dublin Chamber of Commerce. The seminar was attended by key stakeholders from across the Dublin region, including elected members of Fingal County Council and both Houses of the Oireachtas as well as representatives from Government Departments and national agencies.

For further information,
contact press@fingal.ie

Clare County Council signs lease for 35 apartments in Ennis

By Clare County Council Communications Office

Clare County Council has signed a 20-year lease for 35 apartments at the Pairc na Coille complex in Ennis to accommodate people on the social housing list in Clare. Signing on behalf of Clare County Council were Councillor Bill Chambers, Cathaoirleach; Pat Dowling, Chief Executive; and Liam Conneally, Director of Services, Social Development Directorate. Margaret Irwin from Dermot G. O'Donovan Solicitors signed on behalf of the owner's consortium, which comprises individuals from Clare, Limerick and Cork.

Clare County Council said the acquisition of the 35 apartments complements the vibrant community that now exists at the Pairc na Coille site. The Local Authority has also confirmed that the lease costs will be recouped from the Department of Housing, Planning,



Liam Conneally (Director of Services, Social Development Directorate), Margaret Irwin (Dermot G. O'Donovan Solicitors, Clare County Council), Councillor Bill Chambers (Cathaoirleach, Clare County Council) and Pat Dowling (Chief Executive, Clare County Council) sign a 20-year lease for 35 apartments at the Pairc na Coille complex in Ennis.

Community and Local Government under the Government's 'Rebuilding Ireland' Plan. The acquisition brings to 62 the number of properties leased by the Local Authority at the Showgrounds Road location. In 2015, Clare County Council signed a lease for 27 detached properties, all of which are now occupied.

Draft Doolin Strategy to go on public display

By Clare County Council Communications Office

Clare County Council is inviting members of the public to have their say on a draft plan aimed at providing a Visitors Service Centre at Doolin Pier, enhancing the public realm of Doolin, and improving the movement by all transport modes between Doolin Pier, Fisher Street, Fitz Cross and Roadford. The Doolin Strategic Master Plan and Enhancement Strategy has identified a number of enhancement strategies including the creation of a Doolin Greenway incorporating shared surfaces, the provision of additional off-street parking in Doolin village, the provision of designated bus stop locations, and the incorporating of the proposed Visitor Services Centre at Doolin Pier with improved public realm in the Pier area.

Bucholtz McEvoy Architects, on behalf of the Strategy Design Team, will present the draft strategy and engage with interested members of the public at three public information sessions in Doolin Hotel at 5.00 p.m., 6.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. on Tuesday 20 June 2017. There will also be a period up to 6th July when submissions on the draft strategy may be made to Clare County Council before a final strategy is prepared for consideration by the Elected Members of Clare County Council. The draft Doolin Strategic Master Plan and Enhancement Strategy will be available on Clare County Council's website, www.clarecoco.ie, from 21 June 2017.

Source:

Mark Dunphy, Communications Officer, Clare County Council, mdunphy@clarecoco.ie

Cork and Limerick unite in gearing up for the M20

By Eugene Hogan

At the end of March, 2017, a socio-economic study on the impact of the most important piece of road infrastructure yet to be developed in the regions - the M20 from Cork to Limerick was undertaken. Cork and Limerick Chambers have jointly commissioned Indecon Economic Consultants and RedC Research to undertake a study into the benefits of the proposed 80km M20 Motorway. In advance of the autumn 2017 mid-term review of the Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan, the Chambers believe the M20 must take priority with additional funding and a clear timeline allocated towards the project.

When complete, the M20 would create a seamless Atlantic motorway corridor from Cork through Limerick and on to Galway, helping to create an economic complement to the east coast. The original need to upgrade the N20 was identified as far back as 1998 and, according to the chambers, the road is now at capacity and posing safety concerns. Transport Infrastructure Ireland, (formerly the National Roads Authority) had previously submitted the scheme to An Bord Pleanála in 2010, which was subsequently withdrawn due to financial constraints. However, the Minister for Transport has since put the project back on the agenda and informed Transport Infrastructure Ireland that they may proceed with early activities at a cost of approximately €1million. The report finalised in May and was jointly presented to Government by the two Chambers with a view to see additional funding allocated towards the M20 in the Capital Plan.

Commenting on the need for M20 Conor Healy, CEO of Cork Chamber, stated that "as we seek to plan for Ireland in the future the need for a motorway connection between Cork and Limerick cannot be ignored. It is in the national interest that our regional economies expand for Ireland to remain competitive and to complement growth in the Capital Region which is can only be achieved

through investment in infrastructure. In order to facilitate growth across Munster and the wider Atlantic Corridor, the cities of Cork and Limerick must be connected with a motorway fit for purpose to meet increasing traffic volumes from transport heavy industries along the M20 corridor and to enable new economic expansion. For too long regions in Ireland have thought about one another as competitors for growth. The time is right to take a collaborate approach to drive forward the potential of the Southern axis with benefits for all of Ireland, and we are delighted to be working with Limerick Chamber on this important project." Limerick Chamber CEO James Ring also outlined that "the M20 is probably the most significant piece of infrastructure yet to be developed in the State. Current severe capacity constraints on the N20 are holding back the development of the region. This motorway would have a hugely beneficial impact on our city regions. With the right road network linking them, they would effectively become one large labour and customer marketplace. It's a game changer for the corridor and all the more important because of the looming uncertainty about Brexit. This would give us a real edge, allowing for lower transport costs, increased competition in the economy, tax benefits from increased labour supply and employment effects. The joint approach here by Limerick Chamber, together with Cork also signals a new and necessary approach to regional development. By coming together, our cities and towns, together with Galway, are creating a dynamic and formidable Atlantic corridor that will be not just a counter pole to Dublin that helps to rebalance the national economy but an economic channel that will turn heads on an international stage."

Limerick and Cork Chambers are delighted to have the support of the four chambers along the route: Mallow, Charleville, Shannon and Ennis. A survey of 2000+ businesses located along the route and their views on the need for an upgrade has been undertaken by RedC Research. The results of this survey will form inputs to the final report. Indecon Economic Consultants co-hosted a Focus Group Workshop on the M20 with Cork and Limerick Chambers at the Charleville



Park Hotel on Friday, 7th April, 2017. This targeted the participation of senior representatives from Local and Regional Authorities, State Agencies, higher education institutions, and ports and airports, in addition to multinational and indigenous firms from across the region, to discuss key aspects of the economic importance of completion of the M20 scheme.

For further information please contact Conor Healy, CEO of Cork Chamber, 087 947 1858 or Dr. James Ring, CEO of Limerick Chamber.

Source:

Eugene Hogan, Bridge PR, email: eugene.hogan@bridgepr.ie

Tánaiste Fitzgerald and Minister Donohoe welcome adoption of a National Mapping Agreement

By John Reilly

At the end of April 2017, The Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality, Frances Fitzgerald T.D. and Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Paschal Donohoe T.D. jointly welcomed

the agreement of a National Mapping Agreement with Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi). The Tánaiste stated that she “very much welcomes the formal adoption of a National Mapping Agreement, which will enable all Government bodies to deliver more efficient and less costly public services by encouraging greater collaboration and data sharing.” Minister Donohoe outlined that “the National Mapping Agreement aligns with the Government’s Public Service Reform Plan and the Public Service ICT Strategy. This centralised license agreement will make the same level of service available

public services to be targeted according to location, population profiles, and other variables. In matters of navigation and route planning, GI reduces journey times, emissions and fuel costs. Other benefits include a common spatial reference framework for all policy-making agencies; more consistent and accurate geospatial data; more informed decision-making, and more innovative applications of the available data. Colin Bray, Chief Executive and Chief Survey Officer of OSi noted that “the National Mapping Agreement, and the geospatial information (GI) that underpins it, will facilitate better



Pictured Colin Bray, Chief Executive and Chief Survey Officer of Ordnance Survey Ireland, William Beausang, Assistant Secretary, Head of Central Expenditure Policy and Reporting Division at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and Oonagh McPhillips, Assistant Secretary at the Department of Justice and Equality. Picture Conor McCabe Photography.

to a much wider public service customer base at no extra cost to the taxpayer”.

Delivered by Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi), this new service enables all Government agencies (Departments and public sector bodies) to access OSi geospatial data (usually referred to as Geospatial Information or GI) to assist in mapping, data analytics, scenario modelling and decision making. OSi digital data also underpins key State services, including planning, land ownership and national infrastructure (such as roads, water, gas, electricity, and telecoms). For example, GI allows

decision making by all State agencies, and improve the planning and allocation of scarce resources, such as housing, transport and water services”. To find out more about the National Mapping Agreement, please visit: <https://www.osi.ie/services/national-mapping-agreement/>

About Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi)

Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi), the national mapping agency of Ireland, creates and maintains the definitive national mapping and related geographic records of the State. Our vision is,

through the efforts and expertise of our people, to be the acknowledged leader in Ireland in the collection, integration, management and dissemination of authoritative spatial information. Ordnance Survey Ireland is responsible for providing quality mapping and spatial information services to meet society's needs. OSi products and services are widely used in all sectors of Irish society, supporting the social, economic, legislative and administrative functions of the State in Ireland. Ordnance Survey Ireland is a vital national asset, providing information which contributes to effective decision-making in government, better commercial decisions and economic growth.

What is OSi data?

OSi create and maintains a range of digital mapping data and services. The data that is collected is of physical topographical features such as fields, roads, rivers, buildings, forests etc. The precise location of every physical object is recorded by its co-ordinates, it is uniquely identified and has additional associated information attributed to it.

Who is eligible to access OSi's data under the NMA?

The following bodies can apply for access to OSi's data under the NMA:

- **Government departments**
- **Local Authorities**
- **Non-commercial semi-State bodies**
- **Health Service Executive**
- **Emergency services**
- **Higher education bodies**
- **Schools**
- **Other public bodies (may be eligible via a joint agreement between Government and OSi)**

Geospatial data contributes almost €70 million in gross added value to the Irish economy every year, according to a recent study on the "Economic value of the geospatial industry in Ireland", carried out by Indecon Economic Consultants.

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National Economic Dialogue 2017

A two-day event seeks views of range of sectors on the key issues facing our country

On Wednesday, June 28th, 2017, Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure & Reform, Paschal Donohoe TD hosted the third National Economic Dialogue (NED), which is an integral part of the preparations for Budget 2018. NED 2017 provides a valuable opportunity to consider how to make best use of the available resources in the interests of all citizens. The NED will see a range of policies across Government being discussed in an open and inclusive format with representative from community, voluntary and environmental groups, business, unions, research institutes and the academic community. Members of Cabinet and the Select Committee on Budgetary Oversight will also participate.

The aim is to foster discussion on how best to sustain and strengthen economic growth in a way that secures the economic progress we have made ahead and takes account of the needs of all members of society. Consideration will be given to the many competing economic and social priorities that exist within the limited resources that are available. The Dialogue is not intended to produce specific budget proposals or recommendations.

In order to stimulate debate on selected key issues, a number of themes have been identified, reflecting the priorities within the Programme for a Partnership Government. These themes include breakout sessions on: Budgeting; Productivity, Competitiveness and Investment; Labour Market Participation; Spatial Planning; Delivering Future Skills Needs; Climate Change Policy; and Agri-Food. The Dialogue will have an overarching theme of "Sustainable and inclusive growth in the context of national and global challenges."

Speaking on the first day of the NED, Minister Donohoe underlined that 'the economy is doing well and, on the back of many difficult years, we are seeing real signs of progress, thanks to all of the hard work. It's vital that as we evaluate the best ways of meeting all the competing demands within society that an open and inclusive discussion takes places so that all voices are heard'. The Minister emphasised that "this is the third year of the Dialogue, which has proved to be a valuable platform through which discussions can take place on a range of issues that impact our future growth and seek to address our citizens' needs. As we look to manage expectations in terms of what can be delivered in October's Budget, we need to reflect not just on increased funding in various departments but on the totality of Government spending to ensure that all of the resources that are available are being used to maximum effect. I am looking forward to an open and constructive process over the next two days and to considered and thought-provoking contributions from all sides."

Excerpts from the speech by Taoiseach, Mr. Leo Varadkar TD at the Opening of the National Economic Dialogue, Wednesday 28 June 2017

Benefits of Dialogue

The great American theoretical physicist, David Bohm, believed that the object of a dialogue was not to analyse things, or to win an argument, or even to exchange opinions. Instead he suggested it was about suspending your opinions, looking at everything with open eyes and seeing what works best. For Bohm, 'dialogue was the collective way of opening up judgments and assumptions'. It is not always easy for a politician to suspend opinion, and open up judgments and assumptions. We are more used to the confrontational style of a debate, rather than something that lifts our discussion out of the polarised positions of the past, and into a greater common purpose. That is precisely why this Dialogue is so important, and why it has made such an important contribution over the past three years.

Time of Opportunity

At the outset, I want to strike a positive note on Ireland's economic future. Of course, there are serious risks to our future prosperity, not least due to Brexit. And I will talk about that later. And there are many unhealed wounds from the economic crisis in housing and public services and infrastructure.

However, for the first time in a decade we have the opportunity to think about the future with new hope and ambition.

- Ireland has been the fastest growing economy in Europe for the last three years.
- GDP is forecast to grow by 4.3% this year and 3.7% in 2018. This growth is broadly-based and economic fundamentals are strong.
- Unemployment is down, incomes are up and inequality is narrowing.
- And as the Budget approaches balance, we have some more scope to make decisions about investment in the future.
- In particular, we can plan for the future of a country: with a growing economy, growing population and growing workforce.
- Over two million people are working, and unemployment is now back to levels last seen in 2008. The Action Plan for Jobs target of 45,000 extra jobs this year is on course to be achieved. Similarly, more than 20,000 people will move from welfare to work.
- With unemployment close to 6%, we can plan to increase participation in the workforce, and to increase skill levels and productivity across the economy. In fact, we need to act quickly.

So while this Dialogue will rightly focus on the difficult choices and trade-offs that arise in every Budgetary cycle, we can have that discussion with ambition for the Ireland we hope to see in five, ten or twenty years' time.

Dialogue

Of course, that ambition will only be realised if we avoid repeating the economic mistakes of the past. Part of the reason for the National Economic Dialogue is to have open discussion about the choices faced by the Government and Oireachtas, to build

understanding about those choices, and to avoid a repeat of unsustainable economic policies.

The Government will publish the Summer Economic Statement in the coming weeks, once the new Cabinet has the opportunity to consider it. It is clear that the 'fiscal space' in 2018, in particular, will be limited. This reflects the carry-over or full year cost of commitments from Budget 2017, and the impact of the recent public service pay agreement, if ratified. Nonetheless, the Government wants to be ambitious within the constraints we face, especially if we look over a multi-annual horizon with multi-annual budgeting.

Long-Term Challenges

So, Minister Donohoe is reviewing our capital investment programme, and working towards a new ten year capital plan. This will be closely linked to the new National Planning Framework which will plan for an Ireland in which a million extra people will live by 2040.

We also need to build on the economic strengths of each region, ensuring that the benefits of recovery are felt across the country. That's happening already but it is uneven.

The risk posed by Brexit to the agri-food sector only increases the need to get this right.

Just as importantly, we need to accelerate the necessary transition to a modern low-carbon economy. The Government yesterday approved in principle the first National Climate Change Mitigation Plan, and climate action will be a growing feature of all policy-making in the year ahead.

The Government has an ambitious plan to solve the housing crisis – Rebuilding Ireland – which already absorbs a large share of available capital expenditure. I've asked Minister Murphy to review progress under the Plan and identify any further measures required.

Also, as we approach full employment, there is an opportunity to increase participation in employment by people most distant from the labour market: not just jobseekers but also people with disabilities, lone parents, adult

dependents and asylum seekers who could take up employment with a little additional encouragement and support and changes in the law.

We failed to do this effectively in mid-2000s, but need to do better this time. Of course, there are many people who will remain dependent on the State for their incomes, not least pensioners. So we need to consider how best to target available resources.

And given demographic trends, we also need to introduce a new occupational pension system for private sector employees with contributions from themselves, their employer and the Government. The Minister for Employment and Social Protection, Ms. Regina Doherty T.D., will be taking that work forward in consultation with many of the groups represented here today.

Likewise, we need to perform better in skills and innovation across the economy.

This is the key to higher productivity, which is the only basis for sustainable increases in living standards.

I know there are ongoing discussions with business and the higher education sector about how to increase investment in this area.

In my ideas paper, 'Taking Ireland Forward' I gave a commitment that we will make it a signature target of Government to reduce consistent poverty levels to pre-crisis levels and then lower. I also pledged that we will do the same for child poverty. This will require a broad range of actions including providing more employment opportunities, more education opportunities, better wages, welfare and more affordable access to public services.

Nobody should fear poverty in retirement. So, I want to index increases in the state of pension to the cost of living as an automatic minimum increase every year so that the real value and purchasing power is protected.

Of course, as we meet these challenges, we cannot take continued economic growth for granted. We need to remain competitive for foreign investment and

human talent, reform our tax and social insurance system to ensure that we reward work and enterprise, and avoid unsustainable increases in the cost of doing business in Ireland. Many of these themes are reflected in the breakout sessions organised for this afternoon, and I look forward to learning the outcome of those discussions.

Brexit Negotiations

Overhanging all of these issues is Brexit.

One year on from the decision of the British people to leave the EU, the opening of the Brexit negotiations last week was welcome. My hope is that positive momentum is maintained so that progress is made as quickly as possible on the many challenging issues facing the negotiators. We want to see these negotiations take place in a constructive, positive and ambitious frame of mind. There is an emphasis on the unique Irish issues, which are a priority for the negotiations. However, the Irish issues, including avoiding an economic border, will not be easy to solve. Last week in Brussels I met with President Tusk, President Juncker, Mr. Barnier and Prime Ministers from all over Europe. I reminded them again of the unique issues we face. We want to see the closest possible future relationship between the EU and the UK. And I want to keep the door open to the Customs Union, Single Market and the EU itself.

Economic Impact of Brexit

The level of uncertainty as to the outcome of those negotiations remains high. However, it is clear that Brexit is a fundamental economic risk for Ireland if it results in a permanent change to the rules on trade.

The potential impacts on trade from tariff and non-tariff barriers have been widely discussed at this stage. I know that many businesses are already feeling the impact of Brexit through the weakness of Sterling. This will be exacerbated if the UK economy suffers in the period ahead. And the underlying uncertainty about the outcome of the negotiations is itself affecting investment decisions.

Now that the negotiations are underway, the Government is intensifying our focus on the economic implications of Brexit.

Let me set out our five priorities:

Firstly, we will aim for sustainable fiscal policies to ensure capacity to absorb and respond to economic shocks.

Secondly, we will strive to make Irish enterprise more diverse and resilient, diversify trade and investment patterns, and strengthen competitiveness.

Thirdly, we are prioritising policy measures and dedicating resources to protect jobs and businesses in the sectors and regions most affected. This will build on measures announced in last year's Budget.

Our fourth priority is to realise the economic opportunities arising from Brexit, and to help businesses adjust to any new logistical or trade barriers arising.

Finally, we will make a strong case at EU level that Ireland will require support that recognises where Brexit represents a serious disturbance to the Irish economy.

Decisions in support of these objectives will be reflected in Budget 2018, in the forthcoming National Planning Framework Ireland 2040, in the new ten-year national Capital Plan, in the review of Enterprise 2025 and in sectoral policies and investment decisions in areas such as agriculture, enterprise, transport, communications and energy. In taking this work forward, the Government will continue to engage with you and other stakeholders both at a national level, and in each sector.

Budget 2018

Having set out some broader ambitions for Ireland's medium-term direction, I want to turn to the immediate topic of Budget 2018. In the run up to each Budget, a lot of emphasis is often placed on the 'extra' resources that are available, the so-called fiscal space.

It is important to bear in mind that this represents only a small increment of the total resources available.

What we should focus on is the totality of expenditure and taxation. For example, gross voted current expenditure this year will be over €53 billion. Are we sure all existing spending programmes really

represent best use of resources? If 1% or 2% of that could be re-allocated we would have another billion. This is the hidden 'fiscal space'. It is something we need to examine. The opportunity cost of not doing so is too great.

So, to facilitate this, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has been leading a Spending Review during 2017. This is reviewing specific expenditure programmes to assess their impact and effectiveness and the results will be published before the Summer break. So I would suggest that the dialogue over the next couple of days should take this broader view of budgetary policy and choices.

Often resources are inadequate and more are needed. But often existing resources could be allocated better. And when additional resources don't improve outcomes it's often because the underlying problem is not resources but poor performance.

Conclusion

I believe, sustainable and inclusive growth is vital to achieve the Republic of Opportunity I like to speak about. I want every person to have the opportunity to succeed and have an equal chance to share in the nation's prosperity. And I want every part of the country to have the opportunity to share our wealth.

The purpose of this Dialogue, and the debate which will continue in the Oireachtas and elsewhere between now and the Budget, is to ensure we make the best choices informed by a wide range of views.

The great Irish writer, George Bernard Shaw, believed that 'Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.' So let this dialogue be about opening minds and changing minds, exchanging views and persuading each other.

Source:

<http://www.finance.gov.ie/news-centre/press-releases/minister-donohoe-launches-third-national-economic-dialogue>
<http://www.finance.gov.ie/news-centre/press-releases/minister-donohoe-launches-third-national-economic-dialogue>

http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/eng/News/Taoiseach's_Speeches/Speech_by_the_Taoiseach_Mr_Leo_Varadkar_TD_at_the_Opening_of_the_National_Economic_Dialogue_Wednesday_28_June_2017.html

ALONE & HSE launch New Support Coordination Services for Older People in North Dublin

On Wednesday, June 28th, 2017 a new Support Coordination Service for older people in the Dublin North City and County area has been launched. ALONE, the charity that supports older people to age at home, has partnered with the HSE to expand its support services to all older people living in these communities.

The ALONE Support Coordination Service aims to respond to and address any issues facing older people, which are impacting on their ability to remain living independently in their own home. The charity's Support Coordinators assist older people who live in a range of accommodation types; privately owned, privately rented or social housing homes.

Sean Moynihan, CEO of ALONE, speaking at the launch stated that "repeated studies have demonstrated that ageing at home is the first choice of older people and their families. Our Support Coordination Service addresses issues faced by older people living in their own homes and works with statutory bodies, community organisation and other service providers to ensure that the older people get what they deserve. This can include anything from access to clothing allowances to addressing unsafe living environments,

coordinating home adaptation's or linking older people in with befriending services in their area." Mary Walshe, Head of Social Care HSE, also commented that "support coordination services in the community are vitally important to empower and help older people to age well at home. It is important that older people feel supported in receiving the care they need and to live in a place of their own choosing. This new partnership between ALONE and the HSE will enhance the supports and services offered to older people in the community and ensure that all older people in the area have access to these services."

About ALONE

2017 marks 40 years since ALONE was founded by Willie Bermingham. Since then the charity has supported thousands of older people to age at home. ALONE works with those who have issues with loneliness and social isolation, lack of services, poor health, poverty, homelessness or housing. ALONE provides Support Coordination, Housing with Support, Befriending and Campaigning services to hundreds of older people nationwide every week. ALONE's services are quality approved

and are delivered 365 days a year.

For those who have concerns about their own wellbeing, or the wellbeing of a vulnerable older person in their community, ALONE can be contacted on (01) 679 1032 or visit www.alone.ie

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We are always interested in your views, so if you have any comments, suggestions or ideas for topics that we should address in future issues, please do not hesitate to let us know. **Local Authority Times** is also published on the IPA website: www.ipa.ie



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