

Kilkenny

LOCAL
ECONOMIC
and
COMMUNITY
PLAN



2016 - 2021

Health & Wellbeing

Agriculture & Food

Business Demography

Education

Population

Homelessness

Economic Development

Community Development

Kirkcaldy

Contents

Message from Cathaoirleach	5
FOREWORD	6
VISION STATEMENT	7
PART 1: SETTING THE SCENE	9
1. LOCAL AND ECONOMIC COMMUNITY PLAN (LECP)	10
Background to the LECP	10
The LECP Process	11
Overview of Kilkenny LECP Process	12
Methodology & Consultations	13
Proofing the Plan	15
2. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF COUNTY KILKENNY	20
Kilkenny Area Profile	20
Population	22
Age Profile of the County	25
Labour Force	26
Education	27
Crime Rates	28
3. ENTERPRISE PROFILE	30
Agriculture & Food Profile	30
Business Demography	35

4. SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY PROFILE	40
Deprivation	40
Unemployment	43
Education & Disadvantage	48
Lone Parents	48
Housing	49
Homelessness	50
Health & Wellbeing	52
People with a Disability	52
Ethnic Minorities & Travellers	53
5. SWOT ANALYSIS	55
PART 2: THE STRATEGY	57
6. HIGH-LEVEL GOALS: THEMES AND PRIORITIES	58
7. LECP ACTION SUMMARY	64
Economic Actions	66
Community Actions	90
8. LECP ACTION PLANS	92
Economic Action Plans	92
Community Action Plans	108
9. IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING	125
Appendix I: Memberships of LCDC and Economic SPC	127
Appendix II: Consultations and Desk Research	129
(i) Plans and Strategies Reviewed	129
(ii) Profile of Mainstream & Voluntary Services	131
LECP ACRONYM INDEX 2015	134

Message from Cathaoirleach



This Local Economic and Community Plan provides a road map for the next 6 years for the local economic and community development of County Kilkenny.

The approval of the plan by Kilkenny County Council represents an important function under the Local Government Reform Act.

The process of developing the plan has been a real collaboration between statutory agencies, local development organisations, elected representatives, local businesses and communities. It has also provided the basis for a comprehensive examination and understanding of the economic and social aspects of County Kilkenny.

The implementation of the plan provides a unique opportunity for joined-up thinking and better value for and co-ordination of publicly funded programmes. I look forward to working with all of the stakeholders to implement this plan.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and the members of the Strategic Policy Committee for Economic Development, Enterprise Supports and Tourism for their work over the past nine months in overseeing the preparation of this plan.

I firmly believe that the actions contained within the plan will have the potential to deliver better local services and outcomes for businesses and communities in County Kilkenny.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Hilda Cavanagh".

Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh,
Cathaoirleach, Kilkenny County Council

Foreword



It is a privilege for us to introduce the first Local Economic and Community Plan for County Kilkenny covering the period to 2021.

The Local Community Development Committee and Kilkenny County Council have been entrusted with the responsibility of promoting local economic and community development in the County through this plan.

The plan represents the culmination of over nine months' work involving extensive research, public consultation, analysis, workshops and meetings. We would like to sincerely thank all those who have participated in the process of preparing the plan. In particular, we would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contribution made by Nickey Brennan to the process during his time as Interim Chair of the Local Community Development Committee. We would also like to note the input of EXODEA Europe Consulting Limited and Dr. Maria Power of Community Consultants, in relation to the research and analysis they conducted, helping provide the rationale for the economic and community elements of the strategy, respectively.

We are cognisant that the plan is not an end in itself. We are reliant on the willingness of local people, businesses, communities, organisations and statutory bodies to work collectively to deliver on the objectives and actions.

There are almost 50 agencies and organisations named in this plan and they each have a critical role to play in its implementation. We believe that if we all work together to ensure that the actions are delivered, this plan can make a real difference. We are now mandated to implement the plan and to oversee its progress on an annual basis.

We invite you to join with us on the journey to realise the vision of this plan to further develop County Kilkenny as a great place to live, work and play; offering our citizens dignity, security and the capacity to participate to their maximum potential.

Cllr Pat Millea
Chair of Kilkenny County Council's
Strategic Policy Committee -
Economic Development, Enterprise Support
and Tourism

Mr Fergus Keane
Chair
County Kilkenny Local Community Development
Committee

VISION STATEMENT

Kilkenny is a great place to live, work and play; offering its citizens dignity, security and the capacity to participate to their maximum potential. The Local Economic and Community Plan will create the framework conditions to ensure that this continues to be the case by:

- supporting the enterprise economy,
- facilitating innovation and entrepreneurship,
- enhancing the visitor experience,
- enhancing educational attainment and skills development,
- developing the rural economy,
- advancing access and communications infrastructure,
- fostering leadership and capacity,
- protecting and utilising the natural, cultural and built environment,
- contributing to regional growth and international potential,
- addressing area based poverty and disadvantage,
- addressing poverty and social exclusion,
- enhancing community facilities and participation, and
- improving health and wellbeing.

Structure of the Plan

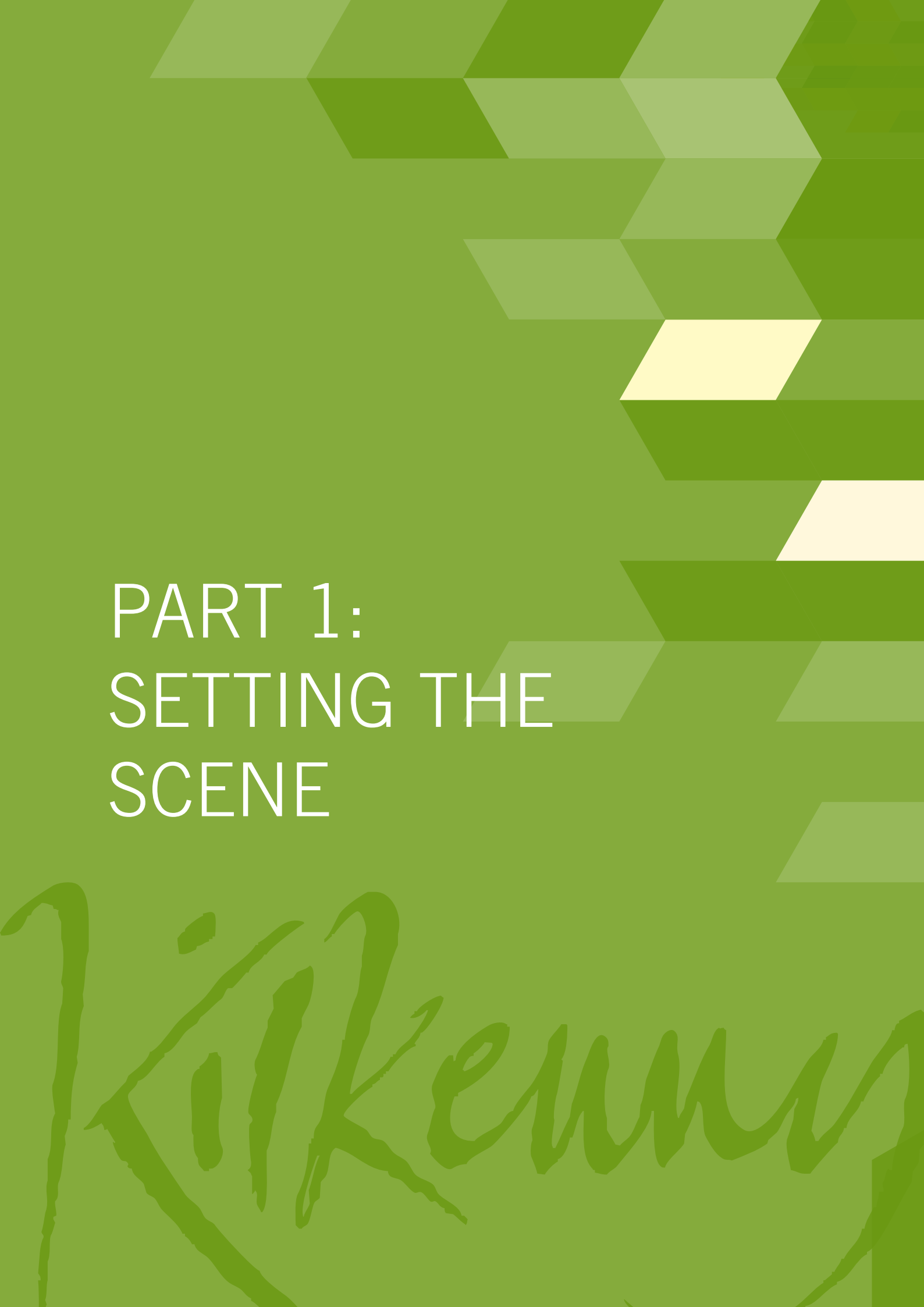
The plan comprises two parts: Part 1 sets the context for the key issues to be addressed and the opportunities to be pursued in the strategy, and comprises 5 sections:

- Section 1 provides the background to the LECP, the process undertaken and methodology used to prepare the plan;
- Section 2 provides a demographic profile of County Kilkenny;
- Section 3 comprises a profile of the enterprise sector in the county;
- Section 4 details the social and community profile, and
- Section 5 outlines a summary of the SWOT analysis for the county.

Part 2 sets out the strategy to deliver on the vision set out above, and comprises 4 sections:

- Section 6 outlines the high-level goals, themes and priorities arrived at for the development of the local economic and community development of the county over the next 6 years;
- Section 7 provides the rationale for the list of economic and community actions;
- Section 8 details the LECP Action Plan and contains details of the key stakeholders, timeframes and milestones involved in each of the actions, and
- Section 9 provides an overview of the implementation and monitoring arrangements that will be put in place to ensure the delivery of the actions contained in the plan.



The background features a complex, abstract pattern of overlapping green polygons and chevrons. A single, bright yellow diamond shape is positioned in the upper right quadrant, standing out against the various shades of green.

PART 1:
SETTING THE
SCENE

Kirkennon

1. LOCAL AND ECONOMIC COMMUNITY PLAN (LECP)

BACKGROUND TO THE LECP

The *Local Government Reform Act, 2014* provided the foundation for significant change in the role and structure of local government, particularly in relation to local, economic and community development. The legislation provided for:

1. The establishment of a Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) in each local authority area.
2. each local authority, (as per Section 128B of the *Local Government Act 2001*, inserted by Section 36 of the 2014 Act), to make a six year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for its administrative area, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

The objective of the County Kilkenny LECP is to further:

- the promotion of economic development, and
- the promotion of local and community development.

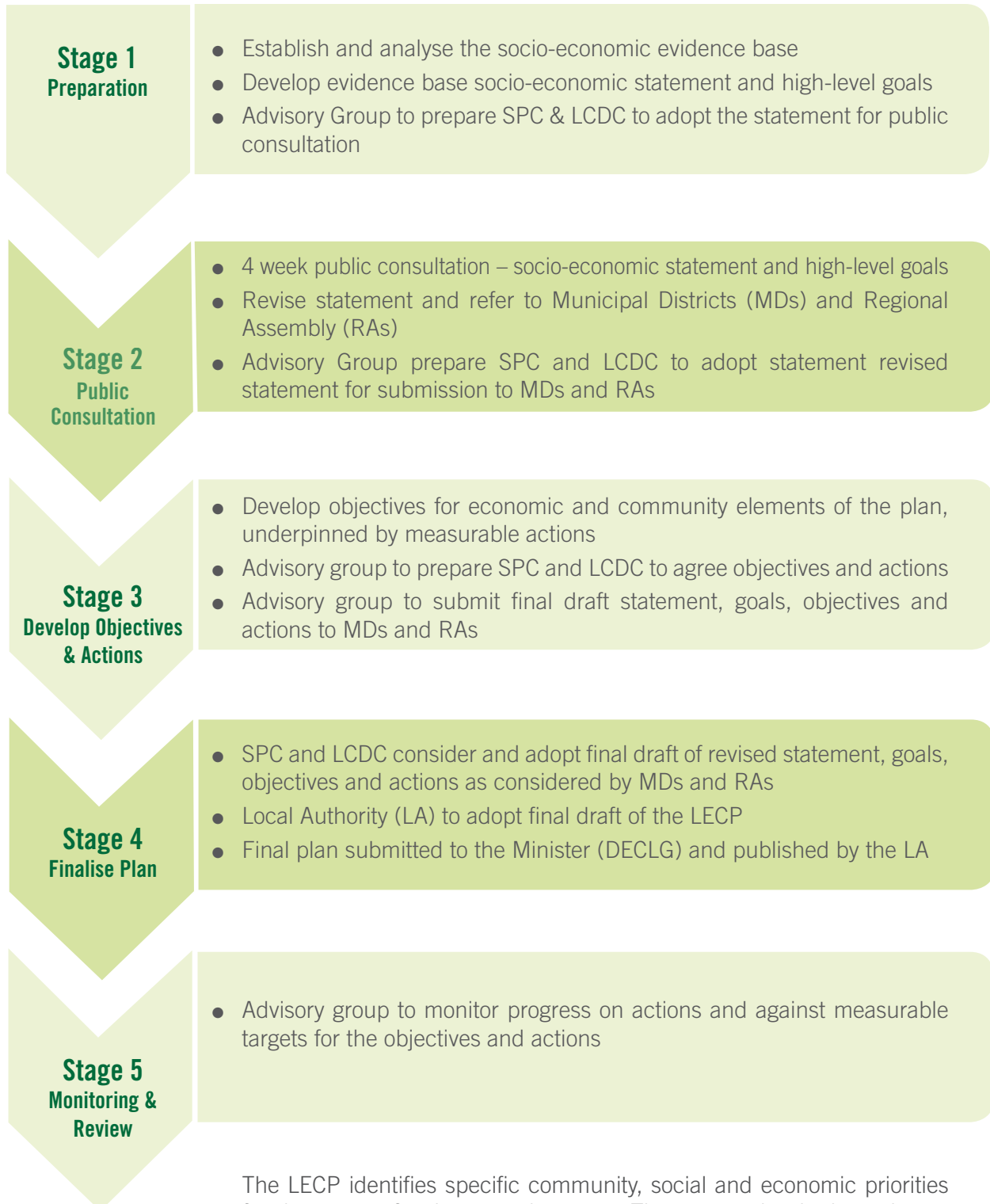
The LECP is being developed by the newly established Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and Kilkenny County Council's Strategic Policy Committee for Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Tourism (SPC1). Members of both committees are listed in Appendix I.

The underpinning principles for the LECP are:

- **The promotion and mainstreaming of equality.**
- **Sustainability** – promoting a more resource-efficient, green and more inclusive economy.
- **Maximising Returns** –through co-operation, collaboration and by avoiding duplication.
- **Participative Planning** – ensuring meaningful community participation and consultation in the planning process.
- **Community Consultation and Engagement.**
- **Community Development Principles** – addressing social exclusion and providing supports for the most marginalized.
- **Accessibility and Ownership** – written in a straightforward style.

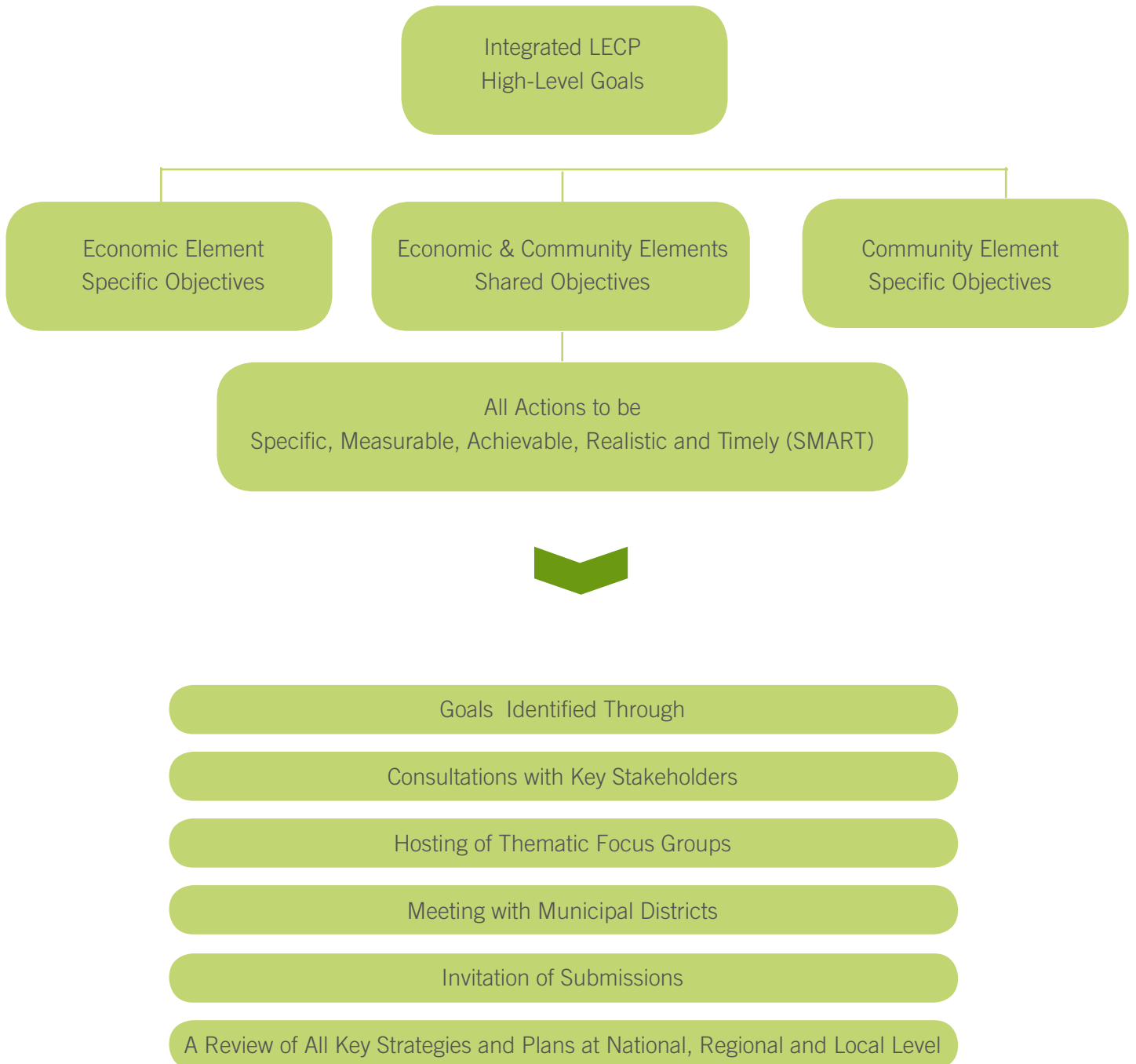
The LECP Process

The Guidelines for the development of the LECP outlined five distinct phases as follows:



The LECP identifies specific community, social and economic priorities for the county for the next six years. The expectation is that relevant agencies/organisations working in the county will allocate resources towards the identified priorities, in a co-ordinated manner.

Overview of Kilkenny LECP Process



Methodology & Consultations

The LECP process commenced in Kilkenny in early 2015. As part of this process an integrated approach between the Economic Plan and Community Plan elements of the LECP involved consultation and community engagement as follows:

- A public consultation process was launched on the draft socio-economic statement and high-level goals in June 2015. An editorial about the process and a public notice in relation to the consultation were placed in the Kilkenny People newspaper. Hard copies of the draft statement were made available in County Hall and at all of the library branches throughout the county. An information leaflet explaining the process was produced with the assistance of the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA). The information leaflet was distributed widely, including to all groups registered with the Public Participation Network (PPN). Submissions were invited by email, in writing and online at <https://consult.kilkenny.ie>. 17 submissions were received from members of the public by post, email or online during this phase of the public consultation. A copy of the report on this phase of the public consultation can be viewed on the Kilkenny County Council website.
- Municipal District public consultation meetings were held, where the general public were invited to discuss the high-level goals of the LECP. These sessions allowed people to express their views on what, for them, were the priority issues to be addressed in the county, from both a community and an economic perspective.
- There was consultation on the high-level goals with the elected members of each Municipal District of Kilkenny County Council.
- For the Community Plan element of the LECP, a series of focus groups were held with key stakeholders to identify key priorities and actions for the LECP: Youth Unemployment; Lone Parents; Health & Wellbeing; and Comhairle na nÓg. Agencies involved in these workshops included Family Resource Centres, Foróige and Ossory Youth, Kilkenny LEADER Partnership, Health Services Executive (HSE) Health Promotion Department and South East Regional Drugs Task Force.
- The Community Plan element also involved a series of bilateral meetings with stakeholders, to identify key priorities and actions for the LECP, including:
 - Carlow Kilkenny Education and Training Board
 - Department of Social Protection – Local Employment and Training Initiatives
 - Family Resource Centres – Newpark Close, Fr. McGrath, Droichead, The Mill
 - Health Services Executive – Social Inclusion Unit (South East); Health Promotion & Improvement; Health & Wellbeing Division, Carlow/ Kilkenny
 - Kilkenny Integration Forum
 - Camphill Community in Callan, County Kilkenny and KCAT ART & Study Centre
 - Kilkenny Traveller Interagency (including Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement)
 - Kilkenny County Council – Area Office Engineers, Heritage Department, Libraries and Estate Management.

A number of key stakeholders also made written submissions for consideration in the Community Plan element including:

- Homeless Services – Homeless Action Team (HAT)
 - Lifeline Kilkenny – suicide prevention group
 - Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership
 - Kilkenny Older People’s Forum
 - South East Region Disability Federation
 - South East Regional Drugs Task Force / Kilkenny Local Drugs Task Force
 - TUSLA – The Child & Family Agency / Children’s Services Committee
 - Kilkenny County Council – Arts Officer and Heritage Officer.
-
- The Ferrybank Steering Committee were also engaged (as part of the Community Development Strategic Plan).
-
- The Economic Plan element of the LECP involved a series of bilateral meetings with key stakeholders to identify key priorities and actions for the LECP. These included:
 - Waterford Institute of Technology
 - Institute of Technology Carlow
 - Maynooth University (NUIM) Kilkenny Campus
 - IDA Ireland
 - Teagasc
 - Fáilte Ireland
 - Education & Training Board
 - Department of Social Protection
 - Key employers
 - Kilkenny Tourism
 - Construction Industry Federation
 - Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce
 - Kilkenny Business Club
 - Local Enterprise Office clients
 - South East Business & Innovation Centre
 - Design & Crafts Council of Ireland
-
- In addition to the work undertaken in relation to the LECP planning process, the LCDC, as part of the process of preparing the Local Development Strategy for the next LEADER Programme in County Kilkenny, held 16 thematic (multi-sectoral) focus group sessions covering:
 - Rural Tourism/ Food Sector
 - Enterprise / Craft Sector
 - Rural Towns

- Broadband
 - Rural Youth (youth organisations, youth club leaders, Macra na Feirme, Young Farmers)
 - Protection & Sustainable Use of Water Resources
 - Heritage Forum - Natural, Cultural & Built Heritage
 - Renewable Energy
 - Farming Community (x 2)
 - Family Resource Centres
 - Comhairle na nÓg (x 5)
- Five focus group meetings with the Public Participation Network were held as follows:
- Social Inclusion Pillar
 - Environment Pillar
 - Community Pillar (x 3)
- Detailed economic and community actions were prepared on the basis of the public consultation process outlined above and these were presented to the LCDC and SPC1 at their meetings held at the end of October, 2015. It was decided that a further period of public consultation be launched on the draft actions during the month of November 2015. A public notice was placed in the Kilkenny People newspaper and hard copies of the draft actions were made available in County Hall and at all of the library branches throughout the county. All groups registered with the Public Participation Network (PPN) were notified. Submissions were invited by email, in writing and online at <https://consult.kilkenny.ie>. 11 submissions were received by post, email or online during this phase of public consultation. A copy of the report on this phase of public consultation can be viewed on the Kilkenny County Council website.

Desk Research

Statistics were gathered through a number of sources that include:

- Pobal maps: <http://maps.pobal.ie/>
- AIRO Maps: <http://airo.maynoothuniversity.ie/external-content/kilkenny-social-inclusion-monitoring-tool>
- Kilkenny County Council GIS mapping tool: <http://gis.kilkennycoco.ie/website/internet/viewer.htm>
- Central Statistics Office (CSO) statistics and tables: <http://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/>

Proofing the Plan

The annual action plans of the Kilkenny LECP will be equality-proofed in conjunction with those groups that are at risk of experiencing discrimination through their membership of any of the nine groups covered under the *Equal Status Acts 2000-2012* against the following key statements:

Equality

Equality Statement

The Kilkenny LECP will aim to promote an environment which is fair, transparent and welcoming for all individuals and organisations: employees, service-users and elected members.

Kilkenny LCDC undertakes to have due regard for the need to eliminate discrimination; to advance equality of opportunity; to foster good relations when making decisions and when developing and implementing policies. Kilkenny LCDC in all its practices will, in as far as is possible:

- Bring opportunities closer to those who are most distanced from them.
- Integrate all service provision — public, voluntary, community and private — to benefit the entire community.
- Secure and direct resources for community benefit.
- Ensure that communities are at the heart of decision-making.
- Develop the working structures and supports to better reflect community concerns.

The Kilkenny LECP will also commit to the promotion of equality under the *Equal Status Acts 2000–2012* and to work to automatically include those groups outlined in the *Equal Status Acts 2000–2012*, and endeavour to prohibit discrimination on the following nine grounds:

1. The gender ground: A man, a woman or a transsexual person;
2. The marital status ground: Single, married, separated, divorced or widowed;
3. The family status ground: Pregnant, a parent of a person under 18 years or the resident primary carer or parent of a person with a disability;
4. The sexual orientation ground: Gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual;
5. The religion ground: Different religious belief, background, outlook or none;
6. The age ground: This only applies to people over 18, except for the provision of car insurance to licensed drivers under that age;
7. The race ground: A particular race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin;
8. The Traveller community ground: People who are commonly called Travellers, who are identified both by Travellers and others as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, identified historically as a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland;
9. The disability ground: This is broadly defined including people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions.

The Kilkenny LECP, in its policies, practices and services will create the conditions for equality of outcome that will benefit all people, including those outlined in the *Equal Status Acts 2000-2012*, in an equitable way so that outcomes, actions and services are equally beneficial. Kilkenny LECP will also ensure the equal participation and involvement of all groups outlined in the *Equal Status Acts 2000-2012* in the decision-making processes for which it is responsible.

Environment

County Kilkenny has a rich and varied built and natural environment. The *natural environment* includes the variety of life often referred to as biodiversity, including rivers and woodlands, hedgerows, mammals, birds and plants. It also includes geology and landscape. Archaeological sites and many other buildings and structures are features of our *built heritage*.

Kilkenny's natural and built environment is a valuable economic resource and is the basis for Kilkenny's tourism industry. Kilkenny County Council has a key role to play, through the implementation of the County Heritage Plan and the Biodiversity Action Plan, in protecting and sustainably managing the heritage of County Kilkenny for the benefit of current and future generations. It is the stated aim of Kilkenny County Council to conserve, enhance and manage the county's natural heritage, including its biodiversity, landscapes and geological heritage, and to promote understanding of, and sustainable access to it.

Implementation of the Kilkenny LECP will conform to the following:

- The Regional Planning Guidelines and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (once that is in place), and
- The provisions of the Kilkenny County and Kilkenny City Development Plans and Local Area Plans, including provisions requiring sustainable development, and protection and management of the environment.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA)

The LECP has undergone Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening processes in order to establish whether there is a need for further detailed assessment.

SEA is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt it. Requirements for SEA are established by the *SEA Directive* and transposing Regulations¹.

The SEA Screening process – the findings of which are detailed in an SEA Screening Report – has been informed by consultations with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and it has concluded that SEA is not required.

AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of a strategic action or project, alone and in combination with other strategic actions and projects, on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives.

Natura 2000 sites consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and provide for the protection of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. Requirements for AA are established by the *Habitats Directive*² and transposing Regulations³.

Both an SEA Screening Report and an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report were prepared, which

evaluated the requirements for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) to be undertaken on the LECP, respectively.

The conclusion of the SEA Screening Report is that as the LECP does not set the framework for future development consent of projects, SEA is therefore not required. Consequently no further consideration of Schedule 1 to the above Regulations is required. Furthermore, the conclusion of the AA Screening Report is that Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required to be undertaken on the LECP. It has been determined that no effects on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites will result from the implementation of the LECP, either on their own or in combination. Both the SEA and AA Screening Reports (that informed this determination) are available on the Kilkenny County Council website.

Climate Change

The implementation of the LECP will also conform to the *National Climate Change Adaptation Framework*. The Framework provides a strategic policy focus to ensure adaptation measures are taken across different sectors and levels of government to reduce Ireland's vulnerability to the negative impacts of climate change. The overall aim of the Framework is to ensure that an effective role is played by all stakeholders in putting in place an active and enduring policy regime. The second phase of this Framework involves the development and implementation of sectoral and local adaptation action plans which will form a comprehensive national response to the impacts of climate change. Sectoral mitigation and adaptation action plans will be required under forthcoming legislation. The new *Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill*, when enacted, will provide a framework for developing a new strategy to achieve both adaptations (the management of risk associated with climate change) and mitigation measures in accordance with EU adaptation policy.

Each local authority will be required to formulate and adopt an Adaptation Strategy for their administrative area which will form part of the County Development Plan. Climate change policy is a loop, not a line. The local Adaptation Strategy will help build a dynamic relationship between "how much" in emission reduction policy and "how to" in adaptation and mitigation policy. There is a need for a multi-level and inter-agency experimental approach to climate change and resource scarcity to ensure that meaningful "how to" policies can be formulated and implemented.

1 European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 435 of 2004) as amended by European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 200 of 2011).

2 Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.

3 European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011)

Constraints

The successful delivery of the actions in the LECP is co-dependent on a number of factors, in particular: adequate resources being provided and allocated to named actions, and the co-operation of and collaboration between agencies and organisations in the delivery of actions agreed. Under-resourcing and lack of co-operation will, at a minimum, slow down the delivery of actions within the agreed time-frames and at worst, prevent them being achieved at all.

It is also important to note that not every issue identified through the process has been incorporated into the LECP. Only actions highlighted as key priorities and which require collaboration of more than one stakeholder have been prioritised.

It is envisaged that agencies referenced in the LECP will allocate appropriate resources to help deliver on the priority actions in the LECP, along with their core area of activity. Lead agencies will report, as appropriate, to the SPC for Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Tourism and the LCDC in relation to the implementation of priority actions.

Monitoring the implementation of the actions will be critical in measuring the progress and impact of the LECP. A Monitoring and Implementation Framework has been developed as an integral component of the Kilkenny LECP (see Section 9.)



2. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF COUNTY KILKENNY

KILKENNY AREA PROFILE

County Kilkenny is a medium-sized inland county located in south Leinster, covering just under 2,100 square kilometres. County Kilkenny is part of the newly configured Southern Region and is strategically located within the southern half of the country. The county has direct access to the Irish Sea, through Belview Port on the River Suir and through New Ross on the River Barrow.

Kilkenny City is the largest town in the county and dominates the local economy. It is close to Dublin (115km) and other major urban centres including Cork (145km), Limerick (110km) and Waterford (48km). Kilkenny is also close to Shannon International Airport (155km) and Rosslare Europort (105km) (*Figure 1*).

The River Nore runs through Kilkenny City and bisects the county on a north-south axis. The Rivers Barrow and Suir are natural boundaries to the east and to the south of the county, respectively.

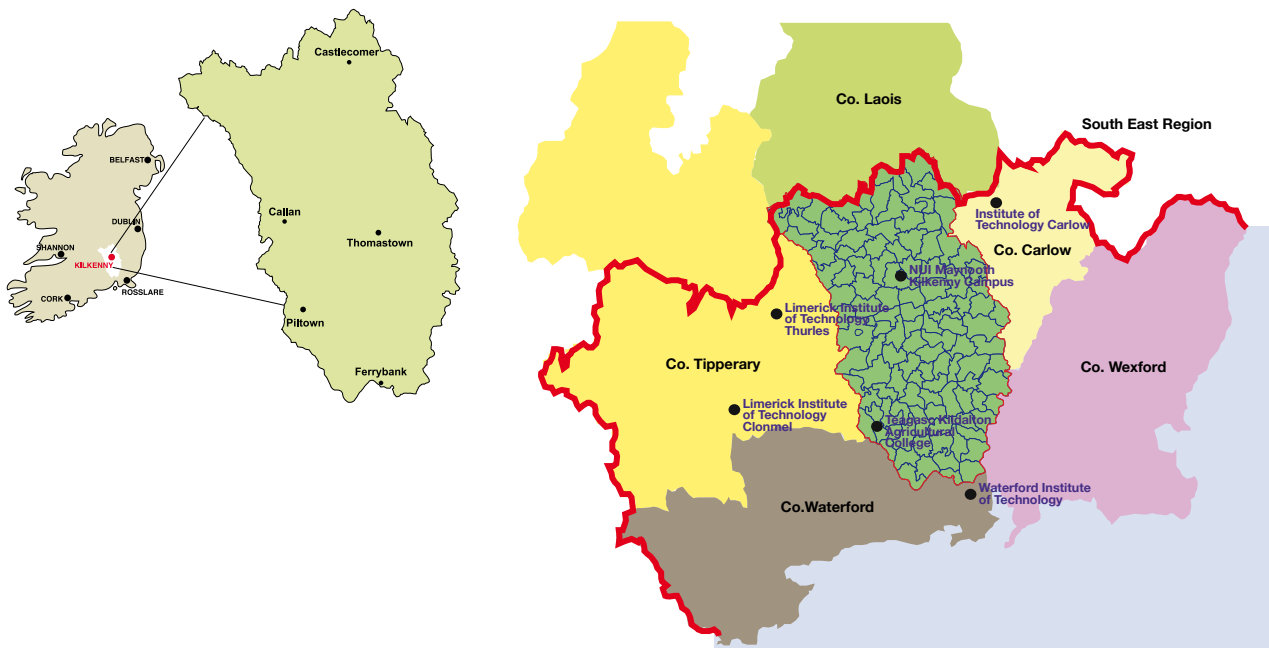


Figure 1: Kilkenny Location Context



Figure 2: Map of Kilkenny showing electoral areas and divisions.

As part of the local government reforms, County Kilkenny has been divided into 4 electoral areas and 3 Municipal Districts, namely Castlecomer Municipal District, Kilkenny City Municipal District and Piltown Municipal District (Figure 2).

Kilkenny City is designated as one of nine Hubs in the *National Spatial Strategy for Ireland 2002-2020*. Wexford is the only other town in the South East that is designated a Hub, while Waterford City is designated a Gateway.

As a Hub, Kilkenny City is to play two important associated roles: firstly, as supporter of Gateway growth and secondly, as a driver for local sub-regional development.

Population

Central Statistics Office (CSO) *Census 2011* records reveal the population of County Kilkenny as 95,419, which is an increase of 7,861 over the population recorded in 2006⁴. This is a 9% population increase for the county over the period, and compares well with the State, which averaged an increase of 8% over the same period. Kilkenny City (environs and former Borough Council area combined) recorded a population of 24,423 in 2011, which is an increase of 2,244 (10.1%) over the population recorded in 2006.

Table 1: Recorded Population 1996 - 2011

	1996	2002	2006	2011
Kilkenny County	75,336	80,399	87,558	95,419
Kilkenny City⁵	18,696	20,735	22,179	24,423

Population Trends

Census 2011 reveals the State has shown strong population growth since 1996, with increases of approximately 8% in each of the inter-censal periods. County Kilkenny has reflected this trend, with growth rates of 6.7%, 8.9% and 9% within the last 3 inter-censal periods respectively. Migration into the State has fallen from the high levels between 2002 and 2006 when it averaged 45,000 per annum, to about 25,000 per annum between 2006 and 2011. While there has been a large reduction in the rate of immigration, the increase in the overall number of immigrants over the period is still significant, given the economic downturn since 2007. Kilkenny has reflected this trend, with net migration of 3,895 (49% of total population increase) into the county between 2006 and 2011. The corresponding figure for 2002 to 2006 was 4,986 (69% of total population increase).

Population Change: Urban Areas

The major focus for expansion in population has been in Kilkenny City environs and the Ferrybank area (Waterford City environs within County Kilkenny). An increase of 2,244 persons was recorded in Kilkenny City environs in the period 2006 to 2011 while the Ferrybank area recorded an increase of 1,322 persons over the same period. Those two areas combined accounted for 44% of the total population increase within the county. It is also significant to note that the Ferrybank area is now consolidated as the second largest urban area in the county after Kilkenny City. Its population has increased by 123% since 2002.

Table 2: Population of the main Kilkenny towns and Ferrybank area

	2002	2006	2011
Callan	1,325	1,771	2,330
Castlecomer	1,482	1,531	1,456
Graiguenamanagh ⁶	1,166	1,097	1,252
Thomastown	1,600	1,837	2,273
Ferrybank Area	2,142	3,465	4,787

⁴ <http://www.cso.ie/en/census/census2011reports/census2011thisisirelandpart1/>

⁵ Figure for Kilkenny City is for the Borough Council area plus the environs of the City within the county area.

⁶ These figures do not include the Tinnahinch area in Graiguenamanagh, which is located within Co. Carlow.

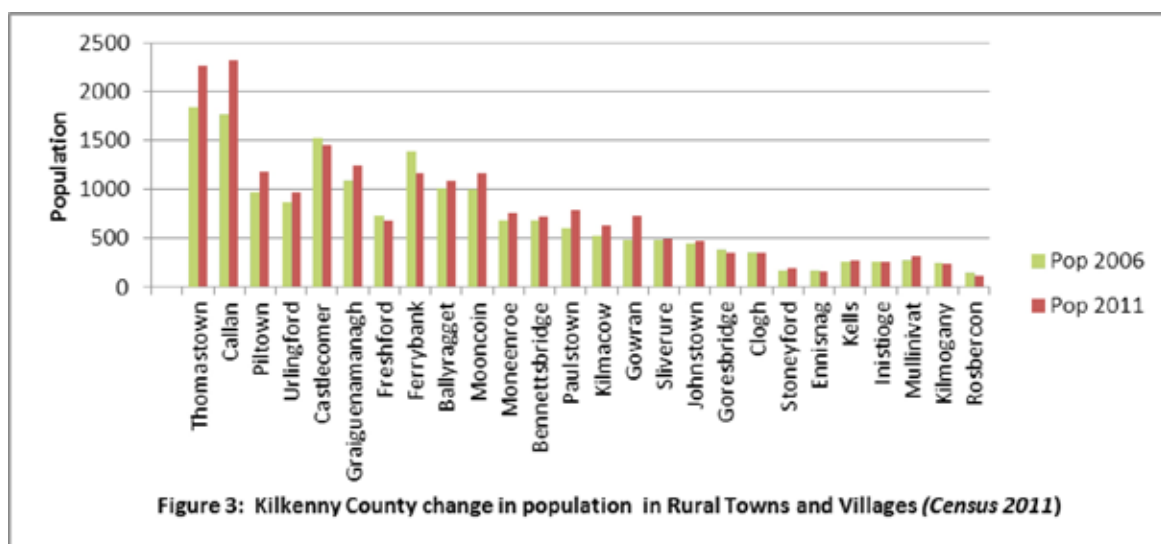
Table 2 shows that Callan and Thomastown have performed well in terms of population growth since 2002, while Castlecomer and Graiguenamanagh have mixed performances showing both increases and decreases respectively in both census periods. The population of the county within aggregate town areas as defined by the census has increased from 35.3% in 2006 to 37% in 2011. This shows that the proportion of the population living in urban areas⁷ is gradually increasing.

Population Change: Rural Areas

Figure 3 shows the population change across all rural Electoral Divisions (EDs) in the county between 2006 and 2011. There are 113 Electoral Divisions in the county and of these, 12 experienced a decrease in population. The most significant of these was Castlecomer ED which experienced an actual decrease of 114 persons.

There were 31 CLÁR areas identified in County Kilkenny in 2011 (highlighted in Figure 4). The CLÁR Programme, introduced in 2001, was targeted at a number of rural areas where population decline had been the most significant over the 1926 to 1996 period (based on CSO Census of Population data) and was introduced to address depopulation and deficits in infrastructure and services in rural areas.

The report *This is Ireland – Highlights from Census 2011, Part 1 (CSO, 2011)* showed that from 2006 to 2011 the Irish urban population increased by 10.6% while the rural population only grew by 4.6%. Kilkenny City experienced a percentage growth increase of 0.6%; while this is well below the national average, Kilkenny City environs had a much greater rate of growth. In each of the rural towns in Kilkenny there have been differing rates of growth and decline as seen in the table below.



Please note- Figure 3 represents the rural Electoral Divisions (EDs) in Ferrybank only

⁷ Urban areas as defined by CSO, i.e. towns with populations of 1,500 or more. If Tinnahinch is included within Graiguenamanagh, then the population of the town would be 1,543.



Principal Settlements

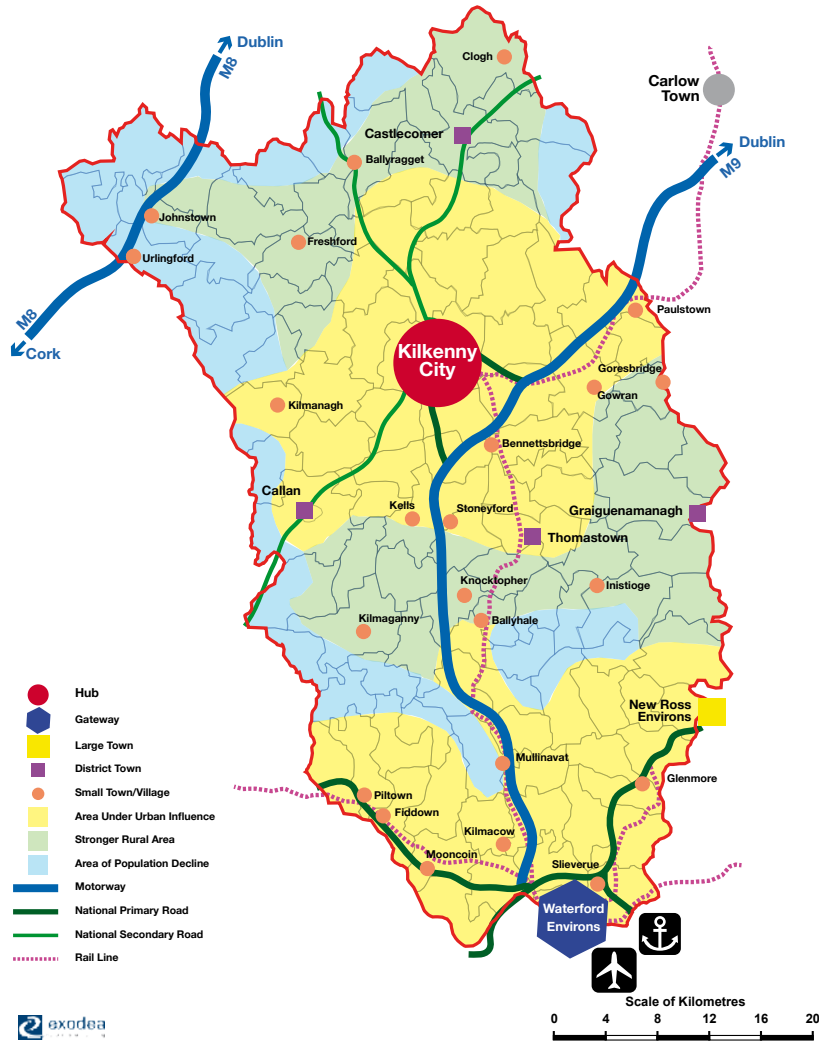


Figure 4: CLAR areas and population centres in County Kilkenny.

Population Forecasts

Census 2011 recorded an actual population figure of 95,419 for the county. Table 3 gives population targets using the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG) figures that have been adjusted to take account of Census 2011 results.

Table 3: Adjusted Regional Planning Guidelines figures						
	2011 Actual	2012	2014 ⁸	2016	2020	2022
Kilkenny County	95,419	96,873	99,781	105,598	109,802	111,903
Kilkenny City	24,423	24,723	25,323	25,800	27,400	28,200
Ferrybank/Belview	4,787 ⁹	4,953	5,287	5,412	6,412	6,500

⁸ The 2014 figures are obtained by disaggregating the RPG figures and applying the same growth rates to the Census 2011 figure.

⁹ The population increase in the environs of Waterford is 1,000 people from 2010 to 2016, a rate of 166.6 per year. This figure is for the Kiculliheen & Aglis EDs only; it does not relate to the entire Ferrybank/ Belview Local Area Plan area.

Percentage of Population by Age Groups

- 0-12 Years
- 13-24 Years
- 25 - 49 Years
- 50 - 85+ Years



Age Profile of the County

AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
<1-3	3,163	2,896	6,059
4-12	6,353	6,051	12,404
13-19	4,519	4,298	8,817
20-24	2,594	2,588	5,182
25-29	3,049	3,350	6,399
30-34	3,779	3,789	7,568
35-39	3,850	3,778	7,628
40-44	3,445	3,435	6,880
45-49	3,278	3,289	6,567
50-54	3,128	3,010	6,138
55-59	2,736	2,629	5,365
60-64	2,472	2,250	4,722
65-69	1,927	1,918	3,845
70-74	1,352	1,396	2,748
75-79	1,031	1,198	2,229
80-84	657	861	1,518
85+	455	895	1,350
Total	47,788	47,631	95,419

Age Dependency Ratio

'As a proportion of the population, over 65s are growing faster than any other group and are expected to double in numbers by 2040,' (Action Plan for Jobs, 2014). Haase and Pratschke (2012) determine that counting those who are dependent as an indicator of the Labour Market Situation is important where demographic growth is a measurement.

In Kilkenny the rate of dependency has increased by 4.6% compared to an increase of 5.1% for the country as a whole between 2006 and 2011. The age dependency rate allows us to make provision for the future of the country's population in relation to areas such as healthcare, housing and welfare.

There also has been an increase in births since the onset of the downturn and similarly to the rest of Europe, Ireland has a rising population of people over 65. This means that Kilkenny, like many other counties will have to plan for a future ageing population.

Local Authority Area	Age Dep Rate 1991 %	Age Dep Rate 1996 %	Age Dep Rate 2002 %	Age Dep Rate 2006 %	Age Dep Rate 2011 %	% Change 2006 - 2011
Kilkenny	39.9	37.0	34.2	32.9	34.5	4.6

Table 5: Age Dependency Rate: Percentage of population aged under 15 or over 64 years (www.pobal.ie)

Labour Force

Census 2011 revealed that there were 46,265 persons aged 15 years and over in the labour force in County Kilkenny, of which 80.6% (or 37,273 persons) were at work. Of those at work 9,054 worked outside the area. The day-time working population (resident and non-resident) of County Kilkenny was therefore 27,485 with commerce and trade being the largest employment sector.

The total number of people in the labour force in County Kilkenny fell by almost one in ten (9.9%) in the period 2006 to 2011, compared to an almost 6% increase in the labour force nationally over the same period. This may be explained in part by the age profile of the county outlined in Table 4, and perhaps by sections of the labour force in the county that have migrated or emigrated in search of work during the recent period of recession.

The numbers in the labour force across all industry occupations experienced a decline in the period 2006 to 2011, except professional services (which experienced an increase of 24.4%), transport and communications (which increased by 17.3%) and public administration (which increased by 13.7%).

The industry sectors that experienced the greatest decline in labour force numbers over the period were building and construction — down almost two thirds (65.6%) — and manufacturing, down by just under a fifth (18.1%).

There are now comparatively fewer people in the labour force in building and construction in County Kilkenny (at 5.7%) than the State (at 6.4%). The main occupation sectors in County Kilkenny in 2011 were

professional services (24.5%) and commerce and trade (23.8%). The manufacturing sector remained an important sector in the county, accounting for 12.2% of the labour force, higher than the comparative figure for the State (at 9.3%).

While the percentage of the labour force in agriculture, forestry and fishing (at 8.2%) in County Kilkenny also fell (by 7.3%) between 2006 and 2011, the proportion of the labour force accounted for by this sector is still almost twice the national average, reflecting the importance of agriculture, especially to the rural areas of County Kilkenny.

The dramatic reduction in the building and construction sector, and the continuing retraction in agriculture and in manufacturing, increases the need to provide alternative sources of employment for these sections of the labour force into the future.

Percentage of Employment by Occupation Sectors

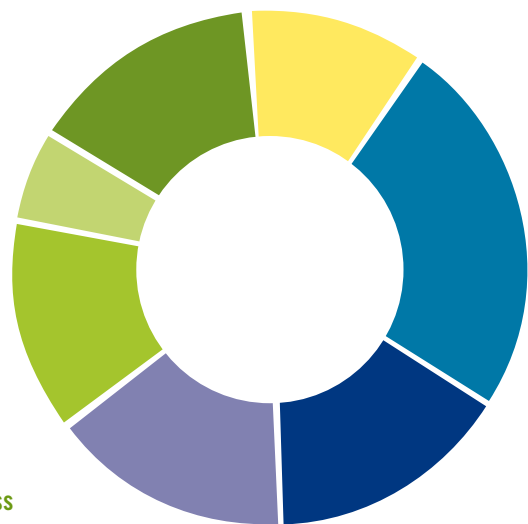
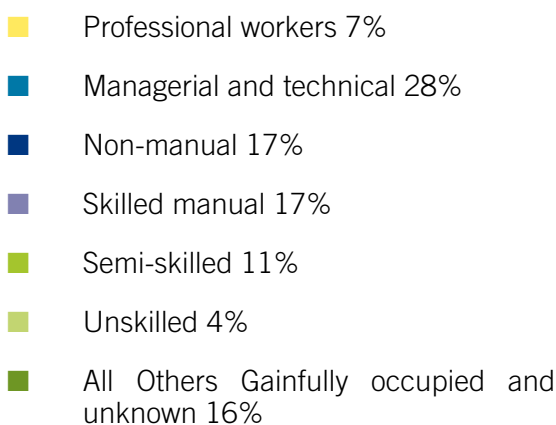


Figure 5: Social Class

In Kilkenny, the proportion of workers in the professional classes (34.9%) and the proportion in the lower-skilled professions (17.6%) mark a class composition that is almost identical to the national average. Unskilled workers and semi-skilled workers typically have skills that are associated with the building and construction sector and these categories have the lowest percentages of gainful employment within County Kilkenny.

Education

Census 2011 statistics for County Kilkenny show that, for those aged 15 years and over, whose full-time education had ceased, 15.1% were educated to at most, primary level only; a further 58.1% attained second level, while the remaining 26.8% were educated to third level.

There has been a continuous improvement in the level of education amongst the adult population over the past 20 years throughout Ireland. In 1991, 36.7% of the adult population in the state had primary level only. This had dropped to half that level (18.9%) by 2006 and even further (to 16%) by 2011.

Between 2006 and 2011 the adult population with primary level only in the State had decreased by 2.9 percentage points. The rate for County Kilkenny has fallen from 35.7% in 1991 to 15.1% in 2011.

Table 6 outlines the highest education attainment for males and females in County Kilkenny.

Table 6: Highest education attainment males and females aged 15+						
	Primary (Incl. no formal education)	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Third Level- Non-Degree	Third Level Degree or Higher	Not stated
Males	5,186	6,854	5,801	7,222	5,320	1,061
Females	4,010	5,337	6,987	6,232	5,431	1,168
Total Persons	9,196	12,191	12,778	13,454	10,751	2,229

Source: CSO Census of Population 2011

Crime Rates

A breakdown of more than a quarter of a million criminal offences recorded in Ireland last year shows that one person in every 20 was affected by a crime. However, despite the spikes for certain offences in parts of the country, the overall rate of crime fell by 7% last year and is at its lowest level in a decade. Even though many offences are up, there has been an overall drop in the crime rate, driven by sizeable reductions in criminal damage, drink-driving and public order offences. Of the offences that are up, many are associated with the economic downturn.

The crime rate in Kilkenny, across all crimes committed, has fallen significantly over the five year period from 2011 to 2015. This is attributed to the many Garda initiatives that have been put in place locally to combat crime. Some of these initiatives include:

- public support and consent,
- relationship-building with community groups,
- flexible, committed professional personnel,
- high-visibility policing strategy,
- organisational focus on crime prevention,
- targeting of top offenders within County Kilkenny & County Carlow,
- pro charge of offenders,
- curfew of offenders before courts,
- real-time intelligence gathering, immediately actioned,
- crime investigation management, and
- divisional operations.

The following tables outline the decline in crime rates in Kilkenny over a five-year period.

Crime Category	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015(ytd)
Robbery of an Establishment	11	13	3	4	3
Robbery from Person	12	5	11	6	8
Aggravated Burglary	6	3	1	2	3
Burglary	583	539	554	527	275
Theft from Person	24	29	19	36	19
Theft from Shop	280	303	286	370	277
Possession of Drugs – Sale and Supply	52	41	30	37	7
Possession of Drugs – Personal Use	174	173	224	189	120
Criminal Damage	446	349	344	351	236

Table 7: Decline in crime rates over a five-year period (Source: Kilkenny Garda Station 2015)

Crime Category	2011	2015 Projected	% Change
Robbery of an Establishment	11	4	-64%
Robbery from Person	12	11	-11%
Aggravated Burglary	6	4	-33%
Burglary	583	367	-37%
Theft from Person	24	25	6%
Theft from Shop	280	369	32%
Possession of Drugs – Sale and Supply	52	9	-82%
Possession of Drugs – Personal Use	174	160	-8%
Criminal Damage	446	315	-29%

Table 8: Percentage decline in crime rates over a five-year period

3. ENTERPRISE PROFILE

AGRICULTURE & FOOD PROFILE

The agriculture sector is an important sector to the local economy of County Kilkenny, with almost twice the proportion of the labour force gainfully employed in this sector compared to the national average.

Agricultural Workforce

According to *Census 2011*, 2,678 people were employed in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector. The CSO *Census of Agriculture* measures the labour input of each person who works on the farm in terms of Annual Work Units (AWUs), with one AWU being defined as 1,800 hours or more of labour per person per annum. Table 8 outlines the farm labour input in County Kilkenny as defined by number of persons and AWUs

Table 8: County Kilkenny- Farm Labour Input by Number of Persons and Annual Work Units (AWU)

	Census Year			
	1991	2000	2010	% change 2000-2010
Persons (AWU)				
Holder* : Persons	4,417	3,763	3,725	-1.01%
Holder : AWU	3,862	3,026	2,979	-1.55%
Spouse : Persons	1,703	1,393	1,414	1.51%
Spouse: AWU	1,254	785	632	-19.49%
Other Family: Persons	2,275	1,907	2,329	23.12%
Other Family: AWU	1,598	923	1,031	11.70%
Non Family Labour :Persons	604	570	594	4.21%
Non Family Labour :AWU	505	328	359	9.45%
Total Persons	8,999	7,633	8,062	5.62%
Total Farm AWU	7,219	5,061	5,002	-1.17%

*The Farm Holder is the legal owner of the family farm

Table 9 outlines the decline in the number of farmers in the younger age categories in the period 1991 to 2010. The average age of Irish farmers is 57 years. A particular concern in Ireland and across the EU is the ageing workforce in agriculture, mainly due to the fact that farmers tend not to retire.

Table 9: County Kilkenny: Number of families by age of holder

	Census Year		
Farmers Age	1991	2000	2010
Under 35	677	540	243
35-44	909	885	722
45-54	991	932	995
55-64	1,004	702	911
64 and over	836	704	854
All Ages	4,417	3,763	3,725

Regional Overview

The total number of farms in Ireland decreased by around 2,000 (approximately 1.2%) in the ten years between 2000 and 2010. The average farm size in Ireland in 2010 was 32.7 hectares, whilst in the Southern and Eastern region the average farm size was larger at 38.6 hectares.

Table 10: Farm Size – County Kilkenny Number of Farms by farm size (AAU)

Farm Size (Hectares)	Census Year			
	1991	2000	2010	% change 2000-2010
Farms less than 10Ha	687	466	425	-8.80%
Farms from 10 to less than 20Ha	764	550	560	1.82%
Farms from 20 to less than 30Ha	737	541	509	-5.91%
Farms from 30 to less than 50Ha	1,147	1,014	964	-4.93%
Farms from 50 to less than 100Ha	915	993	1,062	6.95%
Farms equal / greater than 100Ha	188	206	217	5.34%
Total Farms	4,438	3,770	3,737	-0.88%

Table 10 demonstrates that the average size of farms in County Kilkenny has changed significantly during the period 1991 to 2010, with the number of farms of less than 10 hectares reducing by 38.14%, representing only 11% of the total number of farms in 2010, compared to 15% in 1991.

Crops and Tillage Projections

Tillage crops are grown on only 10% of the agricultural land in the region and fewer than 100 farmers in the region have tillage as their main farm enterprise. Tillage crops are concentrated in three main areas in the region: the Blackwater Valley in west Waterford, the Suir Valley in south Kilkenny, and mid-Kilkenny.

The opportunities for cereal crops include: 1. the expansion in the number of micro-breweries and micro-distilleries that has taken place in recent years leading to an increase in demand for malting barley; and 2. the increase in demand for oats for human consumption from companies such as Flahavan's in Waterford and from Glanbia. The challenges to be met are price volatility, land availability and environmental management. Some of these challenges will be met through the *Teagasc Strategy 2015-2020* as it aims to increase profitability by more rotation of crops, use of protein crops as break crops and growing of a wider range of crops, while protecting the environment.

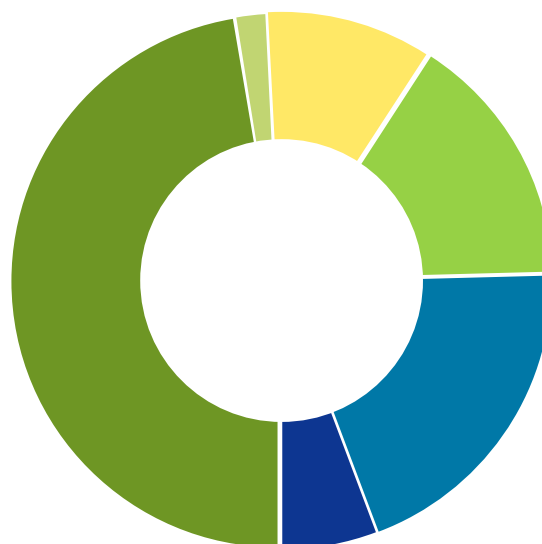
Over the inter-censal period 1991 to 2010 the area of County Kilkenny being farmed, reduced by 3,197 hectares (or 1.91%).

Table 11: Crop Production in Kilkenny: Area Farmed and Area under Selected Crops

Crops (Hectares)	Census Year			
	1991	2000	2010	% change 2000-2010
Total Cereals	19,831	16,800	15,062	-10.35%
Potatoes	931	470	398	-15.32%
Total Crops	24,031	22,514	19,019	-15.12%
Silage	37,041	44,705	45,469	1.71%
Hay	14,916	9,864	8,089	-17.99%
Pasture	83,580	78,623	86,870	10.49%
Rough Grazing	8,232	4,759	5,068	6.49%
All Areas Farmed	167,801	160,465	164,604	2.58%

Figure 6: County Kilkenny: Profile of Selected Crops 2010

- Pastures Ha 48%
- Rough Grazing Ha 3%
- Total Cereals Ha 8%
- Potatoes Ha 0%
- Total Crops Ha 11%
- Silage Ha 25%
- Hay Ha 5%



Source: CSO Census of Agriculture 2010

Livestock Production

The abolition of milk quotas, changes in income tax reliefs for land leasing; a broadening of partnership rules, and the introduction of share farming combined with a growing demand for food, all provide an opportunity for farmers to exploit the natural advantages of the people, land and climate in the region.

Lack of profitability, a high dependency on EU payments, increased production costs and the age profile are some of the challenges facing the region's beef farmers. There is a need to stabilise suckler cow numbers in the region by improving profitability and where appropriate, to exploit the opportunity of an increasing number of beef calves from the dairy herd.

The challenges facing the region's sheep farmers are similar to those of beef farmers. The vast majority of flocks in the region are farmed in conjunction with a beef enterprise. The flocks in Kilkenny and Waterford are very different: the Kilkenny flocks are lowland sheep only, and the Waterford flocks are predominantly hill sheep. Sheep farming has declined significantly in the last 10 year census period.

According to the CSO *Census of Agriculture*, the dairy herd size in Kilkenny remained comparatively consistent between 1991 and 2010. Dairying is more exposed to market forces unless the farm and herd size is significant.

Table 12: County Kilkenny- Number of Selected Livestock

Livestock (Head)	Census Year			
	1991	2000	2010	% change 2000-2010
Bulls	1,298	2,319	2,065	-10.95%
Dairy Cows	60,858	56,155	58,725	4.58%
Other Cows	26,424	40,329	41,762	3.55%
Other cattle	226,263	232,033	218,625	-5.78%
Total Cattle	314,843	330,836	321,177	-2.92%
Rams	3,876	2,942	1,676	-43.03%
Ewes	148,337	117,125	52,434	-55.23%
Other Sheep	142,617	94,597	54,296	-42.60%
Total Sheep	294,830	214,664	108,406	-49.50%
Horses	3,045	2,902	4,022	38.59%

The number of horses in the county increased between 2000 and 2010, and despite the impact of the economic downturn, the horse industry is still a big revenue generator in Ireland. There were 7,781 registered thoroughbred breeders in Ireland in 2012 and nearly 1.2 million people attended race meetings during the year. Over 9,000 horses are in training and there are over 20,697 registered stallions, mares and foals in the country. Irish thoroughbred breeders sold horses for more than €86m at auctions in Ireland, Britain and France in a recent three-week period.

The contribution of the Irish sport horse sector, which caters for various other disciplines, such as show jumping and dressage, is also impressive. It is worth over €708m to the economy, directly employs 11,417 people, and involves 47,096 people overall. A total of 6,599 sport horses, to the value of €26.1m were exported in 2011, with net exports amounting to €15.9m.

There are an estimated 124,000 sport horses in Ireland. They contribute to the household incomes of 29,295 people. Sport horse breeding accounts for a total expenditure of €226m within the economy and the sector has 15,110 active breeders.

Kilkenny has Gowran Park Race Track, Connolly's Red Mills animal feed, Goresbridge Horse Sales, a number of equestrian centres and several stud farms.

Figure 7: County Kilkenny Relative Livestock Herd Sizes 2010

- Other Cattle (Head) 50%
- Other Cows (Head) 10%
- Dairy Cows (Head) 14%
- Bulls (Head) 0%
- Horses 1%
- Other Sheep (Head) 13%
- Ewes (Head) 12%
- Rams (Head) 0%



Source: CSO Census of Agriculture 2010

Forestry

The forestry sector is relatively young but is increasingly important in the national economy. It has a vital role to play in the context of rural development. Over the past decade the importance of wood processing as a component of the sector has greatly increased, as levels of roundwood output have grown and the return on State and private investment in afforestation, and related areas, becomes more tangible. This trend will continue as the scope of forestry policy broadens, with increasing attention being paid to competitiveness in the growing and processing of forestry products, and to Ireland’s comparative advantage in growing wood.

The national forest estate has increased from a modest 89,000 hectares (ha) in 1928 to 731,650 hectares by the end of 2012; an area that represents 10.5% of the total land area of the country Redmond (2013). Approximately 46% is privately owned while the remaining 54% is publicly owned, primarily by Coillte Teoranta. Up to the 1980s almost all afforestation was undertaken by the State. It was not until the introduction of the State/ EU funded forestry grant and annual payment, premium schemes that private landowners — mainly farmers — began to plant significant amounts of forest.

Non-native species represent 76.2% of the total forest area, with native species accounting for the remaining 23.8%. The total growing stock is estimated at 70 million cubic metres, with 74% being in publicly-owned forests.

The forestry industry, comprising the growing, harvesting and processing of forest products makes a significant and increasing contribution to the Irish economy. In 2010, the total value to the economy of the forestry growing sector was €673 million, while the overall forestry sector contributed an estimated €2.2 billion (FORECON 2011). Forests now support a substantial export market in timber and timber products.

With growth rates of certain species in the country more than double those achievable in other European countries, Ireland has a strong comparative advantage in the growing of wood fibre. It is vitally important

that future afforestation harnesses this advantage through the use of suitable reproductive material, appropriate species choice and suitable site types. Such an approach will contribute to the sustainability of raw material supply and enhancement of carbon sequestration, and towards ensuring sustainable supplies of renewable energy in line with the legally-binding 16% renewable energy 2020 target under the EU *Renewable Energy Directive*.

Forestry plays an increasingly important role in rural development, not only through the diversification of farm income but also through the provision of rurally-based employment, both of which contribute to rural stabilisation and viability. In 2010 the total employment supported by the forestry sector was estimated to be 12,000 with the majority of jobs rurally-based (FORECON 2011). 15,000 hectares per year level of afforestation would result in the creation of an estimated additional 490 jobs in planting, managing, harvesting and processing (Ní Dhubháin et al, 2006).

County Kilkenny has 3.6% of the national total of usable land. The land in the main is fertile and 88% of it is set in pasture. A significant area is in woodland (11.2%), and much of this is commercial forestry (9.2%) that comes into maturity over the next 20 years. This could provide an opportunity in both the immediate and long-term future, in terms of producing wood fuels (biomass) from thinnings and felling residues. Horticultural crops make up 22% and tillage accounts for 13.8% of the usable land area in the county. In the south west of Kilkenny in particular, there is significant employment in the horticultural sector, (including in Iverk Produce), which could be explored more for development as part of an agri-food strategy for the county.

BUSINESS DEMOGRAPHY

Number of Businesses

The CSO's *Business Demography Survey 2012* found that there were 3,273 businesses operating in County Kilkenny, employing 13,970 people.

The number of businesses in the county fell across all NACE¹⁰ categories during the period 2006 to 2012, except in mining and quarrying (where the number of businesses is very small, and increased from 11 to 13). The total number of businesses fell by over 700 (or 17%) during the recession, from 3,996 in 2006 to 3,273 in 2012. The numbers employed in each business sector also declined during the period by an average of 23%, except in the financial and insurance business sector, which experienced a slight increase of 3%, highlighting the critical importance of this sector to the local economy.

The *Gateways and Hubs Development Index (GHDI) 2012* provides a detailed breakdown and assessment of the socio-economic performance of individual Gateways and Hubs as designated under the *National Spatial Strategy for Ireland 2002-2020* (NSS).

¹⁰ NACE is a Statistical Classification of Economic Activities developed in the European Community.

The *Business Demography Survey 2012* identifies the importance of the Manufacturing, Wholesale and Retail, and the Accommodation and Food sectors, as measured by the level of employment supported in County Kilkenny. These three sectors accounted for some 70% of all business employees in 2012.

Belview Port is the nearest deep water Irish port to mainland Europe, providing a saving to shippers of both time and fuel, while being a natural hub for the integration of port, shipping, road and rail freight services. The Belview Development Zone is 6km from Waterford City and is an ideal location for industry, especially in agri-business. The zone incorporates 265 hectares of zoned land, including a strategic IDA land bank, the Marine Point Business Park and Belview Port. Agri-food businesses that locate in Belview benefit from a good transport infrastructure with direct access to the national motorway network.

County Kilkenny is not overly reliant on a small number of large industries for employment, but has a rich diversity of mainly indigenous enterprises across the full spectrum of industry sectors. There are only four businesses in the county classified as large (i.e. employing more than 250 people), namely Glanbia plc, State Street International, Bank of Ireland Credit Card Services and VHI Healthcare.

The following sectors are particularly important (especially in terms of employment) to the local economy: Agri-Food; Engineering; Creative Industries; Construction; Retail; Tourism, Arts and Leisure; and Financial Services, Information Technology, and associated Research & Development. A brief profile of each of these sectors is provided in the following sections:

Agri-food

The major companies operating in the agri-food sector within County Kilkenny include Glanbia plc and Connolly's Red Mills, complemented by an emerging artisan food producer base of approximately 40 micro and medium-sized food producers.

Glanbia plc has its Global Nutritionals headquarters and the Group's main Innovation Centre located in Kilkenny. Glanbia is a leading international dairy food and performance nutritional ingredients group employing 5,800 people across 134 countries, and is the largest mozzarella producer in Europe. The company has its headquarters in Kilkenny and employs almost 700 people, making it the largest employer in the county. Glanbia has developed a research and development facility in Kilkenny, which employs over 50 research professionals. Glanbia Ingredients Ireland recently invested €150 million in the largest dedicated dairy powder facility in the country, at Belview in South Kilkenny.

There are a number of much smaller food producers spread throughout the county. However, relative to its size, and despite the high level of primary agricultural production, the county has comparatively few value-added food producers.

Engineering

Manufacturing businesses experienced significant decline (down 12%) between 2006 and 2012, with the numbers employed falling by an even greater proportion (at 23%). The manufacturing sector accounted for 8.7% of all businesses in the county in 2012 and 22% of the total number employed by all businesses. Engineering products and services are a major component of the manufacturing sector and of the local economy. Kilkenny Engineering Products Ltd was a seedbed for the development of many engineering companies throughout the county since the early 1980s. Kilkenny Engineering Products was set-up as a local community-based enterprise in the 1950s to help counter unemployment at that time. Today engineering in Kilkenny embraces a wide range of activities in many different engineering sectors from fine-precision engineering products, distributed worldwide, to small mechanical and tooling engineering services.

Creative Industries

There are over 50 registered craft producers in the county, operating in the manufacturing sector. Kilkenny is associated with creative and artistic activity, and is branded as the *Creative Heart of Ireland*. As the base for the Kilkenny Design Workshops (KDW) from the 1960s to the 1980s, the workshops pioneered a cross-disciplinary approach to design, with craft, graphic and product designers all working in the same organisation. This approach developed an international reputation for KDW and attracted designers from many different countries to work in a centre of excellence for product and craft design.

KDW has spawned a cluster of creative industries and services, in artistic endeavours leading to the establishment of master designers in jewellery, ceramics and artisan crafts. In addition, the creation of Young Irish Film makers has in part led to the success of the digital media, graphic design, film, multi-media and animation, including Cartoon Saloon (a twice Oscar nominated animation studio).

Construction

During the peak years of the Celtic Tiger period¹¹, construction accounted for some 20 % of national economic activity. Currently the sector accounts for approximately 5% of national economic activity. The number of construction businesses in County Kilkenny fell by approximately 28% in the period 2006 to 2012, and the numbers employed in the sector fell by over half (down 52%) during the same period. However, the construction sector still accounts for almost a quarter of all businesses in the county (at 23%). In Kilkenny, some 900 of those signing on the Live Register (September 2014) cited construction, woodwork and metal and related industries as being their last occupation held.

Retail

There were 760 wholesale and retail businesses in County Kilkenny in 2012, employing over one in five (or 22.9%) of the total number employed by businesses in the county, making it the most important sector in terms of employment. A large proportion of these businesses are independent traders, specialist boutiques and fashion stores located in the retail centre of Kilkenny City. While the number of retail businesses fell by just 5% during the period 2006 to 2012, the numbers employed in these businesses declined by over three times that rate (at 17%).

¹¹ Title given to the economic boom years from 2003 – 2007.

Kilkenny's medieval network of streets and lanes offer an attractive mix of traditional shops selling a range of indigenous products. The range of shopping is well in excess of most other towns of a similar size and population. It is noted that the Regional Enterprise Strategy to be developed as part of the *South East Region Action Plan for Jobs 2015-17*, is to include measures specifically targeted at supporting the retail sector in the region.

Tourism, Arts and Leisure

Tourism is currently a major revenue generator for County Kilkenny, estimated at approximately €60 million. Kilkenny City is a thriving tourist base, accommodating over 200,000 domestic and 204,000 overseas tourists in 2013. Kilkenny was Ireland's second most popular domestic short break destination and the city supported a significant number of festivals and events.

Kilkenny is marketed as a heritage destination and has a large number of visitor attractions associated with heritage. There is potential to build on the contribution of heritage to the economic development of Kilkenny. Kilkenny is the location of choice for the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland, the Heritage Council and the Patents Office.

Natural heritage is a further significant asset for the county and offers a variety of services for free, which bring many benefits to society and the economy. A high quality, natural environment supports the economy by attracting employers, visitors and inward investment.

The value gained from biodiversity is reliant on its ongoing sustainable protection and management. Green infrastructure is an integral part of sustainable development, alongside other infrastructure such as utilities and transport networks. Green infrastructure is an asset that can have a particularly high tourism amenity value.

There are almost 350 food and accommodation businesses in County Kilkenny, accounting for approximately one in six (or 16.7%) of the total number employed by all businesses. There are a number of well-established festivals which enhance the tourism offering, including the *Sky Cat Laughs Comedy Festival*; *Kilkenomics* festival, which brings together some of the world's leading economists and financial commentators with comedians; *Kilkenny Arts Festival*, which features the best of visual art, street performance and classical music; and the *Savour Kilkenny* food festival which showcases the produce of local food producers. Newer festivals on the calendar such as Subtitle Film Festival further enhance Kilkenny's reputation as a leading event location. There is a potential to gain further leverage from the creative arts in County Kilkenny. The county has a tradition in the creative arts, cinema, media and design. This is supported by the proposed development of a creative quarter at the former Smithwick's Brewery site in the centre of Kilkenny City.

Financial Services, Information Technology, Research & Development

While the number of businesses in this sector is relatively small (numbering just 36), they account for approximately 8% of the total numbers employed in all businesses and include high-profile employers such as State Street International, the world's leading provider of funds administration to institutional

investors; VHI Healthcare; Bank of Ireland Credit Card Services and Taxback. These businesses are all located in Kilkenny City and enhance the city’s growing reputation as a leading services centre. This is further exemplified by the number of state and semi-state agencies located in the city, which include the Chemical Policy & Services Head Office of the Health & Safety Authority (HSA) and the regional headquarters of the Health Service Executive (HSE); the national headquarters of Irish Patents Office; the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland (DCCOI) and The Heritage Council. Irish Water will shortly establish a regional office in the city.

The former Smithwick’s Brewery site development (approximately 16 acres in the heart of the city) will include the provision of a new third level Research and Enterprise Campus, and offices for corporate, creative and technology companies. It is intended that the TSSG/ ArcLabs facility, a joint venture between Kilkenny County Council and the Institutes of Technology in Waterford (WIT) and Carlow (IT Carlow), will be located in the new third level campus facility.

- Mining and Quarrying 1%
- Real Estate Activities 1%
- Information and Communication Technologies 1%
- Wholesale and Retail 23%
- Accommodation and Food 17%
- Manufacturing 22%
- Information and Communications 1%
- Administrative Services Activities 5%
- Professional and Technical Activities 6%
- Transportation and Storage 5%
- Financial and Insurance Activities 8%
- Construction 10%

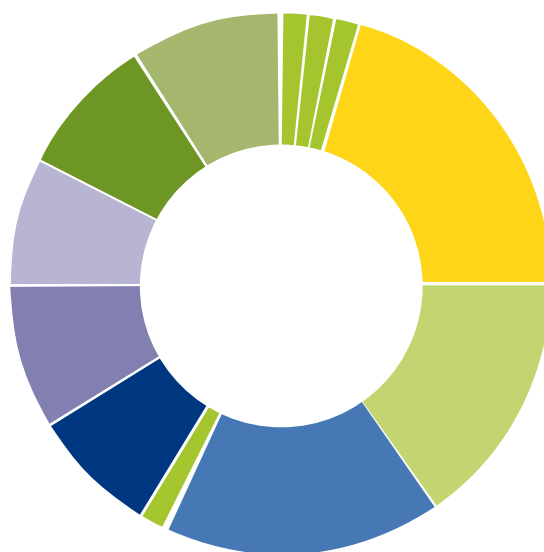


Figure 8: Sectoral Employment in Kilkenny

4. SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

DEPRIVATION

Kilkenny, as a county, enjoys a status of relative affluence. In order to understand the deprivation issues experienced by particular groups and particular geographic areas it is important to highlight affluence versus deprivation. The concept of relative deprivation takes account of access to resources other than income. A *deprivation index* of items and activities that are generally taken to be the norm in a particular society is compiled; people who are denied, through lack of income, items or activities on this list are regarded as experiencing relative deprivation.

The term ‘consistent poverty’ describes someone whose income is below the relative/ ‘at risk of poverty’ threshold and who cannot afford at least two of the eleven deprivation indicators. The relative or ‘at risk of poverty’ threshold represents an income of less than 60% of the national median (middle) annual income. In 2013 the national median income was €17,374 making the risk of poverty threshold €10,425 (a decrease of over 16% since 2008).

Table 12 : Consistent Poverty Deprivation Indicators

1	Two pairs of shoes	7	Keep the home adequately warm
2	A warm waterproof overcoat	8	Buy presents for family or friends at least once a year
3	Buy new, not second-hand clothes	9	Replace any worn out furniture
4	Eat meals with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day	10	Have family or friends for a drink or meal once a month
5	Have a roast joint or its equivalent once a week	11	Have a morning, afternoon or evening out in the last fortnight, for entertainment
6	Had to go without heating during the last year through lack of money		

The *Absolute HP Index Scores* show the level of overall affluence and deprivation in 2006 and 2011, using identical measurement scales.

In simple terms, the Pobal *HP Deprivation Index* Haase and Pratschke (2012), is a method of measuring the relative affluence or disadvantage of a particular geographical area using data compiled from various censuses. A scoring is given to the area based on a national average of zero and ranging from approximately -35 (being the most disadvantaged) to +35 (being the most affluent). In addition to this, percentage data for the area is given under the following categories:

- Population Change;

- Age Dependency Ratio;
- Lone Parent Ratio;
- Primary Education Only;
- Third Level Education;
- Unemployment Rate (male and female);
- Proportion Living in Local Authority Rented Housing.

Local Authority Area	Absolute HP Index Score 2006	Absolute HP Index Score 2011	Change in Absolute HP Index Score 2006 - 2011	Relative HP Index Score 2006	Relative Index Score 2011	Change in Relative HP Index Score 2006 - 2011
Kilkenny	-0.48	-7.99	-7.50	-0.48	-1.01	-0.52

Table 13: Absolute and Relative HP Index Scores (www.pobal.ie)

The *Relative HP Index Scores* focus particularly on the previous two censuses, enabling easy comparison of data between 2006 and 2011. This index is of particular significance given the economic changes that have occurred nationally during this period.

The Pobal Maps online tool provides a visual representation of the data which is crucial in terms of highlighting pockets of relative disadvantage, especially to small area level, and is a valuable resource in targeting and tackling disadvantage. This level of detail can be viewed at <http://maps.pobal.ie> or from the Community & Culture section of Kilkenny County Council.



Table 14 highlights the electoral areas within County Kilkenny which have the highest deprivation ratings taken from the Pobal *HP Deprivation Index 2011*.

1	Urlingford	-12.1%
2	Ferrybank	-11.2%
3	Freshford	-9.6%
4	Graiguenamanagh	-9.4%
5	Clogh	-9%
6	Castlecomer	-7.69%
7	Callan Urban	-7.16%
8	Kilkenny Urban 1	-4.73
9	Kilkenny Urban 2	-0.9%

Deprivation, poverty and social exclusion:

Poverty has a negative effect on people's quality of life, on the opportunities open to them, and on their ability to participate fully in society. It can be difficult to break out of the cycle of poverty, as poor children are more likely to become poor adults. Poverty impacts on every aspect of a person's life:

- **Money and debt:** many people who work in low-paid or insecure employment earn a wage that is not adequate to cover the basic costs of living for themselves and their families. Others are dependent on social welfare payments, whether because they are elderly, unemployed, carers, a lone parent, or have a disability or long-term illness.
- **Education:** growing up in poverty can affect people's future. Children who grow up in poor families are more likely to leave school early and without qualifications, and to end up unemployed or in low-paid jobs, which means that they are more likely to be poor as adults.
- **Health & Wellbeing:** people who live in poverty are at greater risk of poor mental and physical health; they get sick more often and die younger than people who are better-off. Factors such as an inadequate diet, a higher rate of chronic illness, a lower level of participation in sport and leisure activities¹², and a generally lower quality of life all contribute to lower levels of health and wellbeing among people who experience poverty.
- **Housing:** people in poverty are more likely to be dependent on the State to meet their housing needs, through subsidised privately rented accommodation or social housing. They are also at greater risk of living in sub-standard accommodation and of becoming homeless.

Children and families living in disadvantaged areas are not individually statistically represented in CSO, AIRO¹³ or other national profiles. Overall, targeted work in Kilkenny has been prioritised by taking account of the Pobal *HP Deprivation Index*. It is expected that a County Profile will be developed by the Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC) in the near future, and will contribute to the implementation of this plan.

¹² <http://www.combatpoverty.ie/povertyinireland/whatispoverty.htm>

¹³ AIRO = All-Island Research Observatory.

UNEMPLOYMENT

National Unemployment Rates

The unemployment rate for men in Ireland was an average of 5% from 2006 to 2008 but in 2009 it increased dramatically to 15.3%, followed by further rises over the next three years, reaching a peak of 23.2% in 2011. There was a drop in the male unemployment rate in 2013 to 15.9% and another decrease in 2014 to 13.8%.

The national female unemployment rate, which averaged 4% from 2006 to 2008, also increased strongly, to 8.3% in 2009, and continued to rise over the next four years, reaching 11.4% in 2013. However the female rate of unemployment decreased in 2014, to 9.9%.

The younger age groups have been most affected by unemployment, with approximately three out of ten men and two out of ten women aged 20-24 unemployed in 2013.

CSO Press Release Women and Men in Ireland 2013 <http://www.cso.ie/en/newsandevents/pressreleases>



Figure 8: CSO Press Release 2013

Unemployment in County Kilkenny

The unemployment rate for County Kilkenny in 2011 was 19.4%, which was higher than the national average rate of 18.1%. The unemployment rate for the county has been running at over 1 percentage point above the national rate over the course of the last 10 years.

Unemployment rates in individual Electoral Divisions (EDs) in the county reached levels well above those prevailing county-wide, and were highest in Urlingford (38.5% male, 26.3% female), followed by Graiguenamanagh (36% male, 18.8% female), Johnstown (29.6% male, 23.3% female), Clogh (31.7% male, 20.5% female) and Moneenroe (32.4% male, 19.6% female), all of which relate to small town areas.

The relatively high unemployment rate highlights the severe adverse impact that the economic recession has had on the county. The unemployment rate has reduced significantly since 2011 in line with the downward trend in the Live Register numbers in County Kilkenny over the last four years. The Live Register in County Kilkenny peaked at around 8,000 in 2011, and has fallen by almost 40% since then, to approximately 5,500 at the end of December 2015.

Kilkenny Unemployment Rates (Male and Female)

Male unemployment in Kilkenny experienced a threefold increase, reaching 23.2% in 2011. This compared to the national male unemployment rate in 2011 of 22.3% and a two-and-a-half fold increase since 2006. Female unemployment in Kilkenny experienced a twofold increase, reaching 14.7% in 2011, compared to 15% nationally (www.pobal.ie).

Local Authority Area	Male Unemployed 1991 -%	Male Unemployed 1996- %	Male Unemployed 2002- %	Male Unemployed 2006 -%	Male Unemployed 2011-%	% Change Male 2006 - 2011
Kilkenny	16.3	14.5	8.2	8.0	23.2	190.7

Table 14: Male Unemployment Rate (www.pobal.ie)

When looking at the female unemployment rate, the patterns appear to follow Ireland's economic boom and recession. However, the percentage of unemployed females remains at a much lower baseline rate with 14.75% being the highest rate of female unemployment in Kilkenny. This points to the dominance of men in the construction industry and explains why the percentage of male unemployment grew exponentially during the last decade.

Local Authority Area	Female Unemployed 1991 %	Female Unemployed 1996 %	Female Unemployed 2002 %	Female Unemployed 2006 %	Female Unemployed 2011 %	% Change Female 2006 - 2011
Kilkenny	12.2	10.9	6.8	6.8	14.7	114.5

Table 15: Female Unemployment Rate (www.pobal.ie)



Kilkenny LECP
economic indicators



Unemployment Rate Female 2011

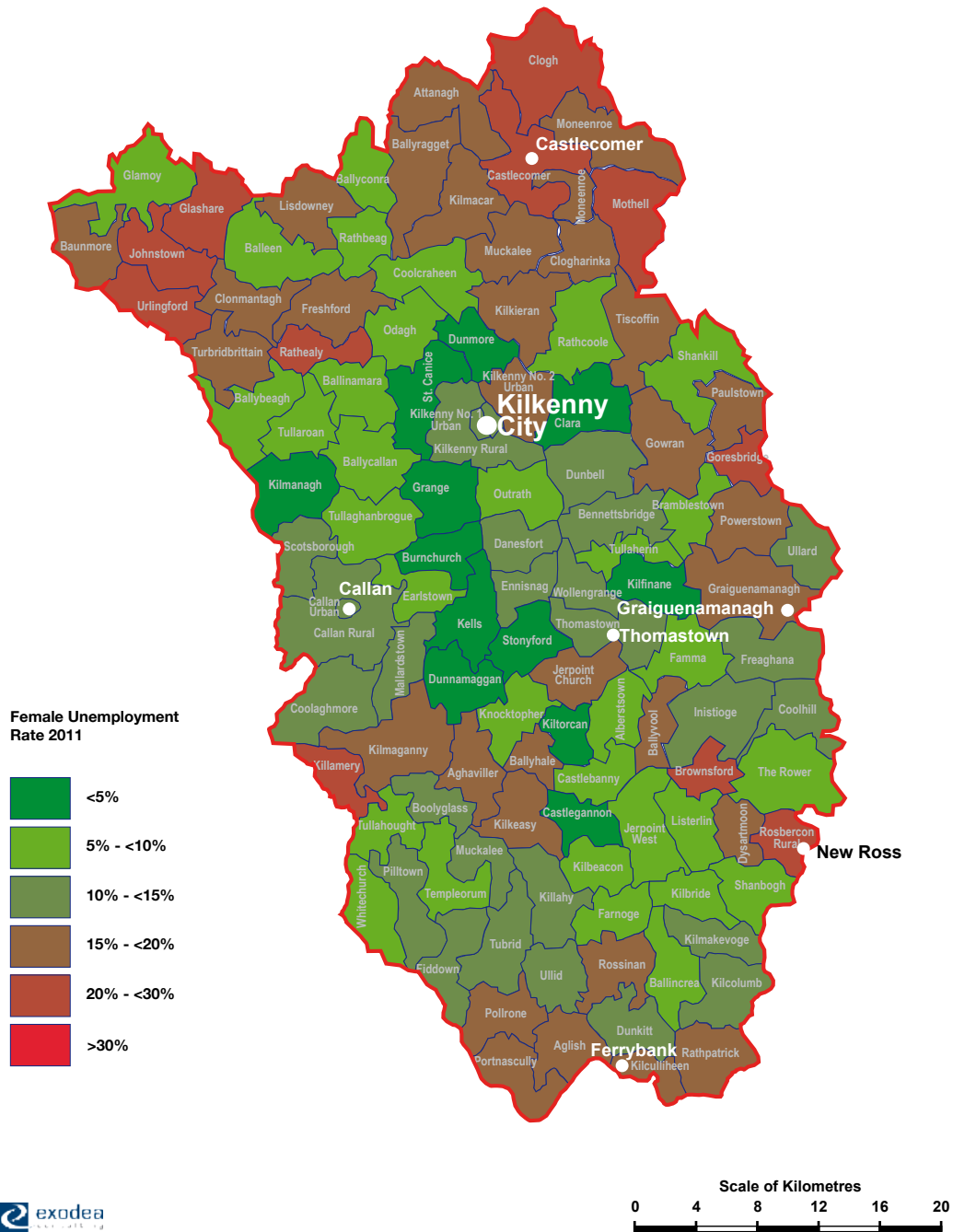


Figure 9: Unemployment Rate Female 2011



Unemployment Rate Male 2011

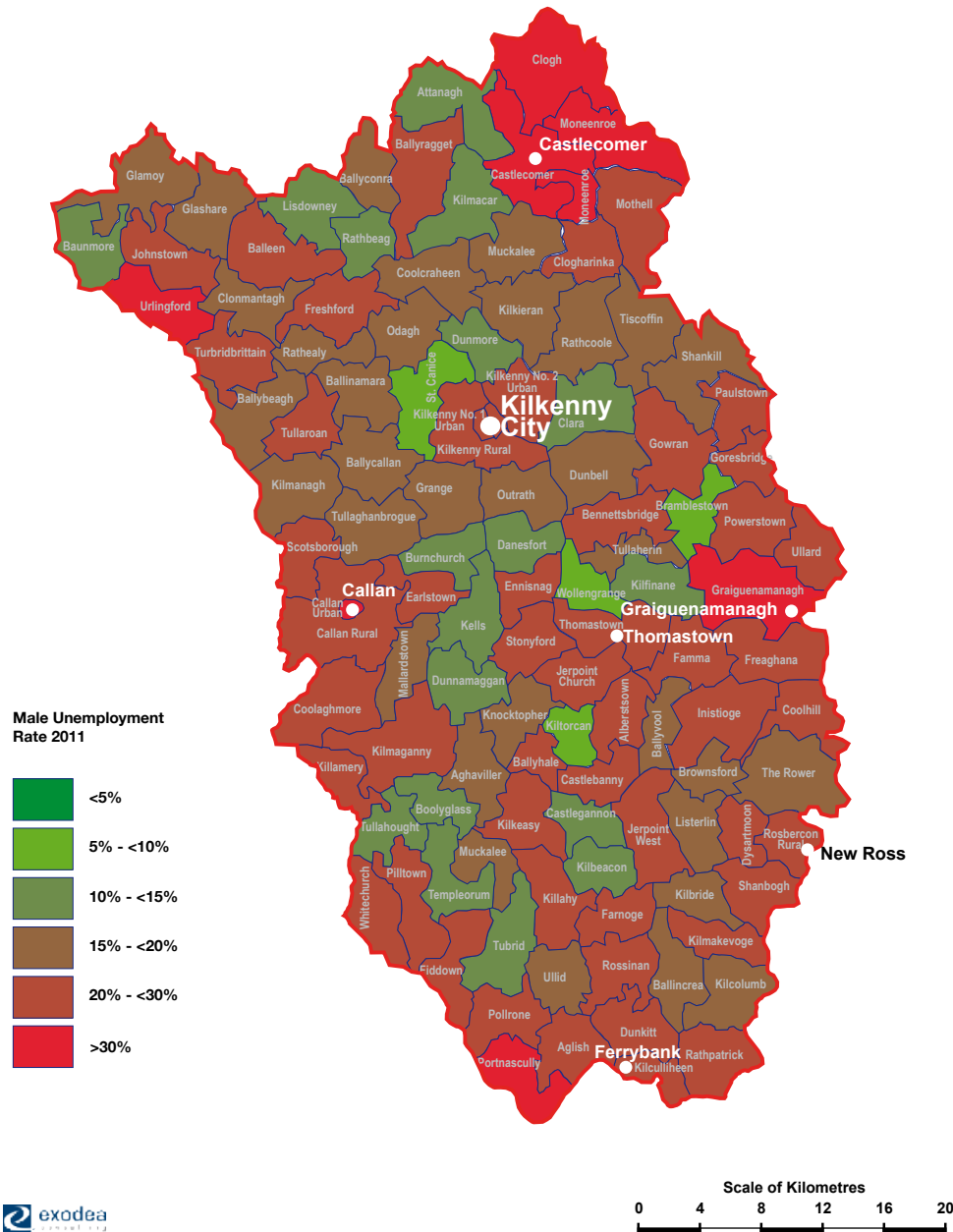


Figure 10: Unemployment Rate Male 2011

The Live Register

The Live register is compiled from returns made directly to the Central Statistics Office by each of the local offices of the Department of Social Protection. It is not designed specifically to measure unemployment. However, it provides a valuable short-term and up-to-date indicator of unemployment and under-employment. Included on the Live Register are the following:

- All those on Jobseeker's Benefit (JB) – excluding systematic short-time workers;
- All those on Jobseeker's Allowance (JA) – excluding smallholders / farm assists and self-employed persons;
- Part-time workers (those who work up to 3 days per week) seasonal and casual workers entitled to Jobseeker's Allowance or Jobseeker's Benefit;
- Those signing on for PRSI credits but receiving no payment.

In August 2010, there were approximately 5,216 men and 2,702 women on the County Kilkenny Live Register, a total of 7,918 people. As of December 2015 there were a total of 5,542 people on the Live Register.

Table 16: Live Register Figures December 2015	
Kilkenny City Social Welfare Office	4,521
Thomastown Social Welfare Office	1,021
Total	5,542

Table 17: Young People under 25 unemployed living in disadvantaged areas

Kilkenny County (under 25 unemployed) as of Jan 2012 - AIRO	Total	Total all live registers KK	Under 25 as a % of total unemployed
KK City – under 25 unemployed	256	1,685	15.2 %
Urban 1	163	1007	16.2%
Urban 2	93	678	14%
Rural KK	287	2533	11%
Callan	69	465	14.8%
Urban	44	298	15%
Rural	25	167	14.9%
Thomastown	41	363	11.3%
Ferrybank environs: i.e. Kilculiheen DED	84	814	10.3%
Urlingford	34	191	17.8%
Castlecomer/Donaguile	60	368	16.3%
Clogh	33	193	17%
Moneenroe	34	195	17.4%
Ballyragget	27	191	14.1%
Piltown	41	291	14.0%
Graiguenamanagh	30	275	10.9%

Created by CKLP, using Pobal HP Deprivation Index and Pobal Maps with overall data

Education & Disadvantage

In County Kilkenny there have been decreases in the numbers of students leaving school with just a primary level education. This decrease is due to a number of factors, some of which are driven at national policy level, for example, where the age for leaving school increased to 16, and other local initiatives in Kilkenny, through programmes such as the School Liaison, Youthreach, NALA, and the ETBs.

Local Authority Area	Low Education 1991 %	Low Education 1996 %	Low Education 2002 %	Low Education 2006 %	Low Education 2011 %	% Change 2006-2011
Kilkenny	35.7	28.7	22.0	18.4	15.1	-17.9
National 15 years and over	36.7	29.5	22.2	18.9	16.0	-15.6

Table 18: Proportion of Population with Primary Level Education only (www.pobal.ie)

There have been determined efforts made in retaining pupils up to and past secondary education. However, despite the improvement at county level, there remain several rural Electoral Divisions (EDs) where considerable parts of the adult population have primary level education only. Examples include Freshford (26.8%), Goresbridge (25.6%), and Graiguenamanagh (25.2%)¹⁴.

In addition, minority groups such as Travellers continue to struggle with retention throughout primary level education. In Kilkenny City, the Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement (KTCM) have identified areas such as St. Mary's and St. Catherine's halting sites that need extra school support. *"Education was identified as the main area of concern for Travellers living throughout Kilkenny. Concerns ranged from; there being no pre-school in Rosbercon and a poor relationship with secondary school teachers, to many Travellers still leaving school without being able to read and write, and there not being enough support for homework at school."* (KTCM, 2013:25)

At a social class level Kilkenny county reflects the educational attainment profile of each area, with Bramblestown having the highest composition (56% professionals, 8% semi- and unskilled manual classes), and Callan Urban (22% professionals, 26.1% manual classes) and Urlingford (17.7% professionals, 24.5% manual classes) having the lowest.¹⁵

Lone Parents

According to *National Economic and Social Forum* (2001:17) and the *Combat Poverty Agency* (2010) 'lone parents' are defined as those who are parents, who have characteristics such as: being most likely to be women; sole carers of their children and recognised by their marital status such as separated, widowed, divorced or never married. There were 215,300 families headed by lone parents with children, 87% of which were lone mothers. Two-fifths of lone parents were single and just under a quarter were widowed. 31.8% were separated or divorced, compared with 29.8% in 2006.

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) *Social Inclusion Report 2013* (Chapter 3: 52) states that there is a

¹⁴ https://www.pobal.ie/Publications/Documents/Pobal%20HP%20Deprivation%20Index_Inter_temporal%20Analysis%20of%20Small%20Area%20Deprivation%20Scores%202006%20e2%80%93%202011.ppt

¹⁵ https://www.pobal.ie/Publications/Documents/Pobal%20HP%20Deprivation%20Index_Inter_temporal%20Analysis%20of%20Small%20Area%20Deprivation%20Scores%202006%20e2%80%93%202011.ppt

28% chance that a household that has one parent and a child aged under 18 are most likely to fall into the category of people living in poverty. This is almost twice the rate of a two-parent family likely to live in poverty estimated at 14.6%. Adults and children in one-parent families have the highest deprivation rate in Ireland (56%), a very significant increase since 2009 (44%).

Local Authority Area	Lone Parent Rate 1991 %	Lone Parent Rate 1996 %	Lone Parent Rate 2002 %	Lone Parent Rate 2006 %	Lone Parent Rate 2011 %	% Change 2006- 2011
Kilkenny	8.3	10.4	13.0	16.9	17.8	5.5

Table 19: Lone Parent Rate: Percentage of single-parent households with at least one dependent child (aged under 15) as a proportion of all Households with at least one dependent child (www.pobal.ie)

There are 3,782 lone parent households in Kilkenny: 84% lone mothers and 16% lone fathers. One-parent families make up 11% of all households in Kilkenny. The steady rise in lone parents is a cause for concern in the profile of County Kilkenny and requires prioritisation and further research as part of the LECP implementation phase.

Housing

There has been a 1.9 percentage point decrease in the proportion of local authority housing in Ireland over the past twenty years, from 9.8% in 1991 to 7.9% in 2011. The proportion in the South East region has declined by 1.1 percentage points, from 10.2% to 9.1%. Similarly, County Kilkenny has seen a marginal decline in the proportion of local authority housing, albeit from a lower base (7.7% to 7.1%).¹⁶

The highest concentrations of local authority housing are found in Kilkenny No. 1 Urban (17.1%) and Kilamery (14.1%), but these are still low levels compared to those found in larger towns and cities. County Kilkenny has a large number of schemes administered by Kilkenny County Council.

Kilkenny County Council is responsible for the management of just under 2,200 tenancies which are located in both the city and the county (*Kilkenny LA Estate Management Plan 2015-2020*). The schemes include Council Houses, Long Term Leasing, Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS), Loans & Grants and a new pilot Housing Assistance Payment (HAP). These schemes allow those who may be otherwise unable to live in their own homes, to afford to live in County Kilkenny. Like all counties in Ireland, Kilkenny County Council caps its schemes and this is based on a means assessment of a person’s reckonable income. Table 20 shows that local authority housing rental rates have remained between 6% and 8 % since 1991.



Local Authority Area	LA Rented 1991 %	LA Rented 1996 %	LA Rented 2002 %	LA Rented 2006 %	LA Rented 2011 %	% Change 2006 - 2011
Kilkenny	7.7	7.0	6.5	6.0	7.1	18.5
National	9.8	8.3	7.1	7.5	7.9	6.5

Table 20: Local Authority Housing (www.pobal.ie)

Note: This indicator is not included in the construction of the Pobal HP Deprivation Index.

Local Authority Area	Privately Rented 1991 %	Privately Rented 1996 %	Privately Rented 2002 %	Privately Rented 2006 %	Privately Rented 2011 %	% Change in Privately Rented 2006 - 2011
Kilkenny	5.0	6.7	8.1	10.3	14.8	43.9

Table 21: Privately Rented Housing (www.pobal.ie)

When comparing the table of those who rent private accommodation and those who rent local authority homes, there is a large disparity. It seems that there has been a substantial increase in people renting, which could coincide with the downturn in the economy and the collapse of the financial sector in Ireland. Lending for mortgages has been very low since 2008 and this can be another reason for the large increase in privately rented accommodation in Kilkenny and Ireland.

HOMELESSNESS

Changes and Issues arising over the last year:

- Increase in economic homeless presenters due to increased rents and unavailability of affordable private rented accommodation.
- Inability to provide exit strategy from homeless services to private rented sector due to high market rent, unavailability of privately rented accommodation, landlords refusing to accept social housing support tenants.
- Increased pressure on emergency homeless providers due to increase in presentations, lack of exit strategy, working at capacity.
- Increased pressure on Kilkenny County Council to provide emergency B&B when emergency homeless providers are at capacity and presenter has no alternative housing options available.
- Increased pressure on Kilkenny County Council to meet on going demands of service users in emergency accommodation settings and awaiting appropriate referral.
- Inability to provide emergency homeless accommodation in alternative locations (other counties) due to pressures and capacity issues on the particular County Council and our inability to provide exit strategy within the short term.
- Dealing with complex cases and finding appropriate referral pathways (if any) whilst dealing with the above.

Comparative figures showing increase in homeless / potential homeless presentations to housing services:

From 1 October 2013 - 4 February 2014 there were 45 homeless/ potentially homeless presentations, with this figure almost tripling to 133 for 1 October 2014 - 4 February 2015.

In the period 1 January 2014 - 1 May 2015 there were 78 homeless/ potentially homeless presentations, while this figure more than doubled to 167 for the period 1 January 2015 - 1 May 2015.

In 2014 Amber Kilkenny Women's Refuge accommodated 9 women and 4 children as a direct result of homelessness. Amber accommodated a further 16 women and 14 children who were admitted under Domestic Violence but ended up homeless due to such factors. As a service, Amber found it very hard to source adequate, private rented or Local Authority accommodation in Kilkenny for families experiencing homelessness. Families struggled to source a new home for themselves which added massive strains to their already difficult situations.

“This in turn affected our service as clients are staying much longer than before. Our Policy states that we provide short term emergency accommodation for 8 - 10 weeks but this is not the case anymore due to the difficulties in sourcing accommodation for our clients. This also affected our referral system as we are turning away hundreds of referrals per year due to our refuge constantly being full.” (Amber, 2015).

These concerns and pressure on housing were echoed by the Good Shepherd Centre (Homeless Hostel) located in Kilkenny City:

- There is a crisis in the lack of supply of priority accommodation, both in the Private Rented Sector, Social Housing Sector and the Local Authority.
- Lack of appropriate responses to complex cases. Clients who have a dual diagnosis (substance misuse & mental health) or clients who have personality or behavioural disorders.
- Rates of social welfare for those under the age of 24 are a contributing factor to clients' financial ability to enter into tenancies.
- Reluctance on behalf of some landlords to engage with Housing Support services, e.g. HAP, RAS.
- Severe cuts in homeless budgets in the past few years — no cuts in 2014 and as of yet, no cut in 2015 — but no increase in budgets.
- Emergency services are at full capacity, with few options for clients to move on or exit strategies being available.
- Need for re-establishment of a county homeless structure.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

General Health

According to *Census 2011*, 85,069 persons stated they were in 'good' or 'very good' health, representing 89.2% of the total population. This compares to 88.3% of total persons nationally. 1,324 persons stated they were in 'bad' or 'very bad' health, representing 1.4% of the population in this area. Again this compares with 1.5% of total persons nationally.

Health and wellbeing are not evenly distributed across Irish society. In order to aspire to positive health outcomes for all there is a growing need for interventions to target particular health risks but also a focus on addressing the wider social determinants of health – the circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work and age – to create economic, social, cultural and physical environments that foster healthy living.

Deprivation is frequently associated with poor health and health inequalities, that is, unequal access and outcomes for those of lower socio-economic status. 85,069 persons stated they were in 'good' or 'very good' health, representing 89.2% of total persons. This compares to 88.3% nationally. 1,324 persons stated they were in 'bad' or 'very bad' health, representing 1.4% of total persons in this area. This compares with 1.5% of total persons nationally.

A specific workshop was held to examine health and wellbeing priorities and the following were identified:

- Homelessness must be a priority for all services;
- Greater supports and services provided for people with a disability;
- Delivery of the County Kilkenny Action Plan for Suicide Prevention;
- Prioritisation of drug-prevention initiatives among young people;
- Prioritisation of Travellers and ethnic minorities, by all health services;
- Increase whole-population approaches to health improvement.

People with a Disability

There were a total of 595,335 people with a disability in April 2011, accounting for 13% of the population, up from 393,785 in 2006 when it accounted for 9.3% of the population. The largest increases in percentage terms were seen in children aged under 5, where the numbers increased by 90%, from 5,298 to 10,084. The widespread incidence of childhood asthma and the specific reference to 'breathing' difficulties in the *Other* category may partly explain this. The rates of disability increased within this age group, the exception being people in their twenties, who had lower disability rates than teenagers.

While overall the rates for men and women were similar, at 12.7% and 13.2% respectively, there were variations by age group with male excesses in the 0-29 age groups and female excesses from age 70 onwards (*This is Ireland – Highlights from Census 2011:p43*)

According to the *Census 2011*, Kilkenny had 11,939 persons (13% of the total population) with a disability, of whom 4,309 (36.1%) were aged 65 years and over.

4,055 persons (1,536 males and 2,519 females) provided regular unpaid personal help for a friend or family member with a long-term illness, health problem or disability. 21.7% of these provided care for more than six hours per day (www.cso.ie).

Age	Nos	%	
0 – 14	1,103	9.2	● 33% of people with a disability of working age are employed compared to 63% of those without a disability.
15 - 24	832	6.9	
25 - 44	2,209	18.5	
45 - 64	3,486	29.1	● 18% of people with a disability did not progress past primary education compared to 3% of those without a disability.
65 +	4,309	36.1	
Total	11,939	100	● 22% of people with a disability left school at lower secondary level compared to 16% of those without a disability.

Table 22: Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) data for Kilkenny 2015

ETHNIC MINORITIES & TRAVELLERS

County Kilkenny			Ireland		
Country of Birth	Population	% of Immigrant Population	Country of Birth	Population	% of Immigrant Population
England and Wales	4,689	39.3	England and Wales	212,286	27.7
Poland	2,033	17.0	Poland	115,193	15.0
Northern Ireland	462	3.9	Northern Ireland	58,470	7.6
Lithuania	396	3.3	Lithuania	34,847	4.5
United States	375	3.1	United States	27,726	3.6
Latvia	275	2.3	Latvia	19,989	2.6
Romania	238	2.0	Nigeria	19,780	2.6
Nigeria	162	1.4	Romania	17,995	2.3
Scotland	197	1.7	Scotland	17,871	2.3
India	181	1.5	India	17,856	2.3

Table 23: Ethnic Minorities (CSO Census 2011)

Table 24: Size of Ethnic Minority Population in Kilkenny 2011¹⁷

Nationality	Birthplace		Ethnicity	
	Born outside Ireland	Born outside Ireland & UK	Ethnic groups with roots in other countries	Ethnic Traveller Community
Non-Irish nationals	12.6%	6.9%	9.4%	0.5%
8,367	11,929	6,581	8,829	483

Table 24: Size of Ethnic Minority Population in Kilkenny

¹⁷ According to Census 2011, the total population of Kilkenny is 94,584. However, there may be a slight variation if the percentages stated in this table are applied to that total due to the fact that a small number of people did not state their birthplace or ethnicity on the census form; therefore actual numbers of those who did give this information are also given above in Table 24.

The statistics in Tables 23 and 24 can be summarised as follows:

- 8.9% were non-Irish nationals,
- 12.6% were foreign-born (6.9% were born outside UK and Ireland),
- 9.4% belong to ethnic groups with roots in other countries,
- while a further 0.5% belong to the Irish Traveller Community.

Travellers

A study carried out by the Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement (KTCM) highlights key data and concerns of the Traveller Community in Kilkenny:

Electoral Areas	Census 2006	Census 2011
Kilkenny City (urban areas & rural environs)	156	263
Piltown	111	84
Ballyraggett	31	40
Thomastown	45	86
Callan (urban areas & rural environs)	18	10
Totals	361	483

- There are 483 members of the Traveller Community in County Kilkenny (0.5% of the population of Kilkenny) according to Census 2011.
- However, there are 177 families according to the *Traveller Count for Kilkenny 2012*, which suggests a slightly higher number than the census figures suggest.
- The Traveller Community’s share in Kilkenny City’s population, at 1.1% is almost twice as much as their share in the county’s overall population.



5. SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The central location of Kilkenny City in the centre of the county with excellent connectivity to Dublin. • Kilkenny's strong brand. • The settlement pattern of County Kilkenny with 1 large urban centre, 4 smaller towns and 17 dispersed villages. • Kilkenny has a strong history of partnership work and the development of integrated delivery mechanisms. • Programme of national and international festivals. • The former Smithwick's Brewery site development has the potential to be a hub for creative and technology-related industries and 3rd level research campus. • Kilkenny as the medieval capital of Ireland is well placed to be a strong tourism destination within the new Ireland's Ancient East tourism brand strategy. • Very strong community networks (e.g. Tidy Towns.) • Strong voluntary sector with strong community activity in rural villages. • Established cluster of business service companies. • Developing digital media industry – Cartoon Saloon, Mycrofilms, Young Irish Filmmakers, JamJou. • Good education levels and the presence of TSSG Research & Innovation Centre, Maynooth University - Kilkenny Campus, proximity to WIT and IT Carlow. • Potential for the formation of a South East Technological University with a campus in Kilkenny. • Variety of amenities across the county, such as Woodstock, Jenkinstown, Castlecomer Discovery Park, Dunmore Caves and excellent sporting and play facilities. • Strong heritage credentials and a strong county association with the creative arts. • Excellent quality of life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of unemployment especially among the youth. • High dependency rate and hidden pockets of poverty and disadvantage throughout the county. • Decrease in funding for community and creative arts programmes. • Emigration of youth population. • Lack of a sustainable model for festival funding. • Over-reliance on construction sector and Greater Dublin Area for employment. • Closure of many SMEs since 2008. • Increasing competition within the region, nationally and internationally for FDI projects. • Manufacturing sector under threat. • Resource funding constraints for micro-enterprises. • Lack of skills in some sectors. • Small critical mass of skilled ICT/ Pharmaceutical graduates. • Limited public transport options. • Limited/ no broadband in many areas. Unreliable access outside urban centres. • Overburdening waste water treatment plants. • Seasonality characteristic of tourism. • Relatively small population centre vis a vis larger urban locations; limits ability to attract FDI of scale. • Motorway infrastructure has bypassed many rural towns. • Loss of economic functionality of rural towns, general rural decline and rural isolation. • Maintaining green credentials at an acceptable cost given pressure on output.





PART 2:
THE
STRATEGY

Kilkenno

6. HIGH-LEVEL GOALS: THEMES AND PRIORITIES

Background

This Plan has been developed in consultation with all key stakeholders concerned with Kilkenny's community, social and economic development and through widespread consultation with the public and takes account of the County's strengths and opportunities, as well as the constraints and threats. In addition, this Plan has been prepared taking cognisance of other European and national strategies, in particular:

Europe 2020 Strategy: a strategy launched in 2010 for sustainable growth across Europe and its member states. This strategy identified three priorities, five specific headline objectives in support of the priorities and actions at national, EU and international level. The three priorities are:

- Smart Growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation;
- Sustainable Growth: promoting a more resource-efficient, greener and more competitive economy;
- Inclusive Growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

Ireland's National Reform Programme: The Irish government submitted Ireland's first National Reform Programme under the *Europe 2020 Strategy* in 2011, amid significant financial and economic crisis. This national programme in line with the key objectives of Europe 2020 identified a co-ordinated approach across five key themes, with each of these having specific national targets:

- Employment
- Research & Development/ Innovation
- Climate Change/ Energy
- Education
- Poverty/ Social Exclusion

High-Level Goals

The emerging themes and goals of the Kilkenny LECP process align with national and European objectives and themes. In total, 13 high-level goals have been identified for County Kilkenny, each with specific sustainable objectives and a range of related actions. The following sections highlight the high-level goals of the Kilkenny LECP and related actions.

High-Level Economic Goals and Objectives¹⁸

The overarching theme of the economic dimension of the Action Plan is job creation and to **Foster a High Employment Economy**. This is supported by nine high-level goals. The high-level goals were developed from the outcomes of the community and key stakeholders' consultations, the strategic policy review, and an analysis of the evidence to be found in the demographic and socio-economic profile of the county. The high-level goals are designed to be consistent with the appropriate statements of the Regional Assembly as defined in the Regional Planning Guidelines.

The nine high-level goals are built upon a suite of high-level objectives that underpin the Action Plan. Of these, some contain cross-linked dimensions of SEDOs (Sustainable Economic Development Objectives) and SCOs (Sustainable Community Objectives). Each objective within the economic element will be achieved through the implementation of specific, time-bound and measurable actions. There are 63 economic actions, which in some cases contain sub-elements. In all cases, responsibility for the individual action will be linked to a lead organisation (when the annual action plans are prepared each year) and where appropriate, partner bodies. From the analysis of the evidence-base, a Socio-Economic Statement, with high-level goals and targets for the Kilkenny LECP, was prepared. A number of tools were used to synthesis and analyse the outputs from the socio-economic evidence base and the various levels of consultation. The high-level goals were refined during the Plan's development process to represent the anticipated outcomes to be achieved in the LECP.

The nine high-level goals comprising the economic dimension of the LECP are as follows.

- **Goal 1: Support the Enterprise Economy**
High-Level Objective: strengthen the local enterprise base, and thereby encourage job creation and multi-sectoral employment potential.
- **Goal 2: Facilitate Innovation and Entrepreneurship**
High-Level Objective: provide an integrated support structure for enhanced levels of enterprise start-up and growth.
- **Goal 3: Enhance Visitor Experiences**
High-Level Objective: support, co-ordinate and optimise the visitor experience potential across the county.
- **Goal 4: Provide for enhanced levels of Educational Attainment and Skills Development**
High-Level Objective: encourage and support up-skilling, job mobility and enterprise creation in key economic growth sectors.
- **Goal 5: Develop the Rural Economy**
High-Level Objective: increase the levels of rural economic activity and build sustainability into the rural economy.

¹⁸ Implementation of the High-Level Goals and Objectives shall conform to the provisions of the Kilkenny County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans as appropriate. The preparation of any lower tier plans or strategies would need to be subject to SEA and AA processes as appropriate.

- **Goal 6: Improve Access and Communications Infrastructures**
High-Level Objectives: encourage integrated transport systems through the use of existing and new infrastructure innovations, and increase the use of communications technologies through enhanced infrastructure and skilled communities.
- **Goal 7: Foster Leadership and Increase Local Capacity**
High-Level Objective: develop leadership capacity in promoting economic and integrated development.
- **Goal 8: Protect and Utilise the Natural, Cultural and Built Environment**
High-Level Objectives: encourage and support biodiversity and the protection and enhancement of local heritage and culture, support energy efficiency and maximise the circular economy potential.
- **Goal 9: Contribute to Regional Growth and International Potential**
High-Level Objective: contribute to the growth of the region and expand the international reach of the local economy.

High-Level Community Goals and Objectives

The remaining **four** high-level goals relate to the Community element of the Plan. These goals have been developed after analysis of key data and statistics across the county, an analysis with regard to strengths, opportunities and threats as well as from public consultations, focus groups and bilateral meetings held with stakeholders. All high-level goals link back to the *EU 2020* targets outlined above.

- **Goal 10: Address Area-based Poverty & Disadvantage:**
High-Level Objectives:
 - 10.1** Improve the deprivation indicators for those Electoral Division areas designated ‘disadvantaged’ or ‘very disadvantaged’.
 - 10.2** Improve the deprivation indicators for those small areas designated ‘disadvantaged’ or ‘very disadvantaged’.
 - 10.3 Poverty: education** – Increase the level of educational attainment for those living in disadvantaged areas.
 - 10.4 Poverty: unemployment** – Reduce the level of unemployment in disadvantaged areas.
 - 10.5 Poverty: youth unemployment** – Reduce the level of youth unemployment in disadvantaged
- **Goal 11: Address Poverty and Social Exclusion (targeted approaches)**
High-Level Objectives:
 - 11.1** Ensure the inclusion and active engagement of all citizens in the social and economic development of County Kilkenny.
 - 11.2** In particular focus attention on Lone Parents, Travellers, Ethnic Minorities, Older people, People with a Disability and Children & Young People. Ensure such groupings are prioritised in relation to poverty goals.

- Goal 12: **Enhance Community Facilities and Participation** ¹⁹

High-Level Objectives:

- 12.1** To ensure all citizens of Kilkenny (rural and urban based) have access to appropriate community facilities.
- 12.2** To ensure all facilities are utilised to their optimum capacity, and are open and available to all citizens.
- 12.3** To ensure community development coordination at Municipal District level to support communities at local level.
- 12.4** To increase community participation and civic engagement at both Municipal/ Electoral Division and at county level

- Goal 13: **Improve Health & Wellbeing**

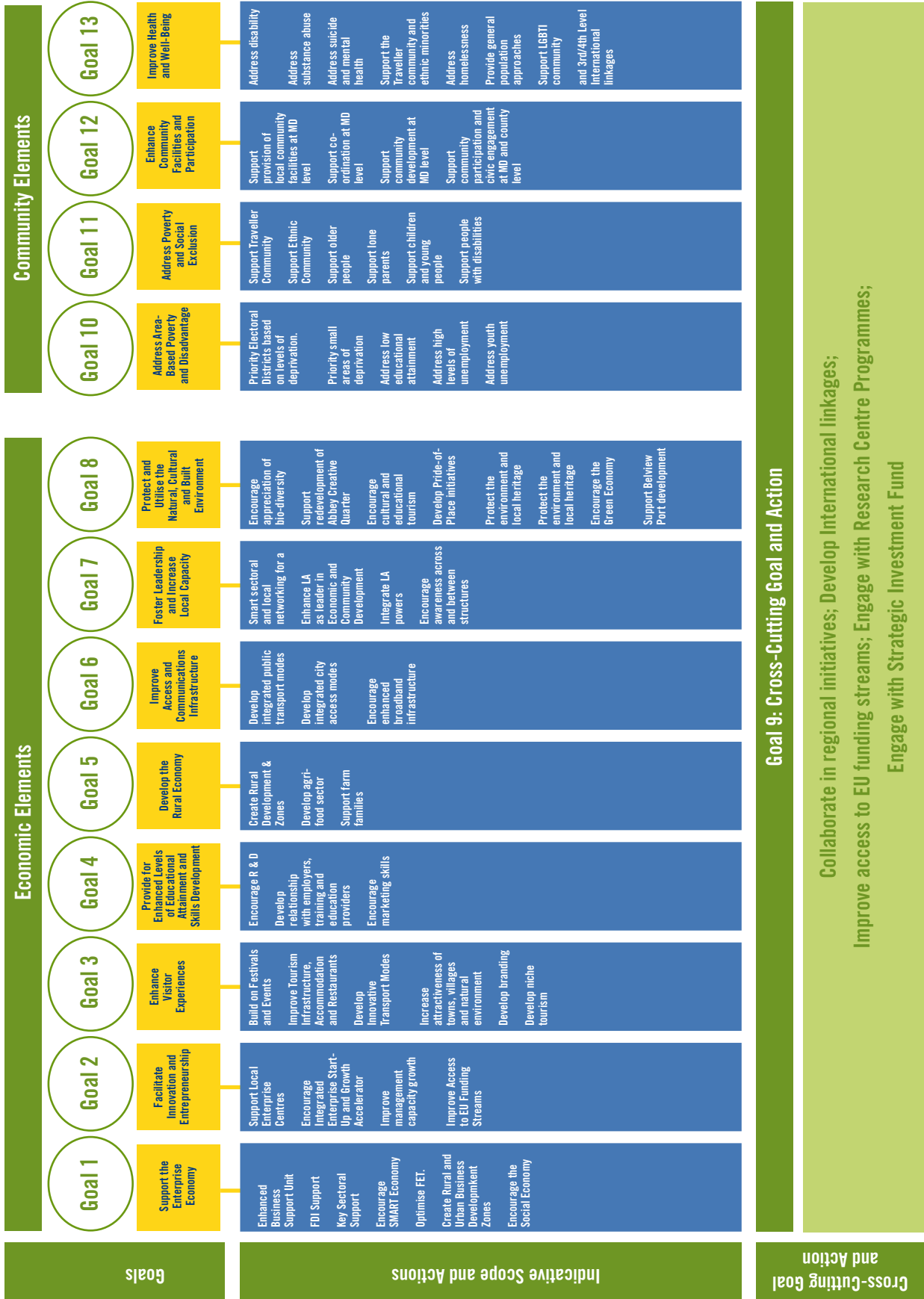
High-Level Objectives:

- 13.1** Ensure that the health and wellbeing of all Kilkenny's citizens is maximised
- 13.2** In particular, focus attention on the following areas: People with a Disability, Substance Misuse, Mental Health & Suicide, Travellers, Ethnic Minorities, Homelessness and LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender and Intersexual).



¹⁹ Facilities, Infrastructure, Area Co-ordination, Community Development Activities, Programmes and Participation.

Figure 11: Kilkenny LECP Framework



Kilkenny LECP Framework

The Framework on the previous page (Figure 11) has been developed from an analysis of the Baseline Economic Profile, together with a review of the evidence gathered from the strategic policy statements of key agencies and organisations active in the county.

The Framework also facilitates a more integrated approach to the preparation and delivery of publicly funded programmes, including the Local Development Strategy for the LEADER Rural Development Programme and the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme.

The purpose of the Community element of the LECP is to promote local and community development within County Kilkenny and ensure the co-ordination of relevant publicly-funded local and community development actions in a way that reduces duplication, targets available resources where they are most needed and maximises benefits for communities.

The *Guidelines on Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs)* identify economic and community action areas to be considered when developing the plan and are as follows:

1. Formulating the economic development plan and advising on the economic components of the community elements of the Plan,
2. Promoting economic development through general local authority powers and functions,
3. Operation of the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs),
4. Economic components of the community/local development role,
5. Action Plan for Jobs and Labour Market Activation, *and*
6. Specific action to promote increased economic activity in line with regional priorities (e.g. South East Action Plan for Jobs 2015-2017),
7. Develop and implement Sustainable Community Objectives, which can include:
8. Improved quality and increased frequency of community-based services which promote social inclusion and tackle poverty and disadvantage,
9. Physical, social, economic and environmental regeneration of deprived urban or rural communities,
10. Enhanced training and education infrastructure,
11. The creation of new jobs, especially in the low carbon and green economy,
12. Increased access to, and use of high-quality information and communications technology.

The economic and community goals and associated actions are presented in slightly different formats in this plan due mainly to the differing developmental processes involved in the respective actions.

7. LECP ACTION SUMMARY

Kilkenny LECP Action Plan 2016-2021

The *Kilkenny LECP Action Plan 2016-2021* identifies the specific actions required to deliver on the high-level goals and objectives. The Action Plan flows from the high-level goals outlined in the preceding section and has been developed using a comprehensive process engaging with key stakeholders, including agencies and the local community. The actions promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of County Kilkenny.

The Action Plan has been proofed for consistency with the *Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020*, and takes account of the *SEA Directive* and Article 6 of the *Habitats Directive* to ensure compliance.

Implementation of the LECP is required to conform to the following:

- The Regional Planning Guidelines and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (whenever that is in place); and
- The provisions of the Kilkenny County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans, including those provisions requiring sustainable development and Rural and Urban Business Development Zones.

Background Profile

Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) for the South-East Region 2010-2022 note that the regional strengths include its successful industrial base (particularly in areas such as ICT, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology and chemicals); its high level of disposable incomes and GVA per head compared with many other European regions; the highly-skilled and educated workforce, and relatively low rates of unemployment. However, while the South-East Region is a dynamic region offering an attractive quality of life, the RPGs identified five areas where targeted investment would support and attract new economic development in the region. These are:

1. **Develop The Smart Economy**, including: the development of a University of the South-East; the development of Strategic Employment Locations at the Gateway, Hubs and County Towns with first-class infrastructure capable of facilitating new indigenous start-ups in advanced sectors and attracting Foreign Direct Investment against competing locations nationally and international
2. **Improve Transport Infrastructure and Services**, including development of public transport services along the main transportation corridors in the region, and supporting the development of the seaports at Belview, Rosslare and New Ross and air access at Waterford Regional Airport.

3. **Deliver First-Class Energy and Communications**, including development of broadband technologies and development of renewable and green energy sources.
4. **Foster Urban Regeneration and Improved Quality of Life for All**, including investment in key strategic sites and the public realm of towns and city centres in the region.
5. **Full Implementation of the Joint Waste Management Plan for the South East.**

The Limerick - Waterford strategic corridor, under the Atlantic Gateways Initiative - Corridor Development Framework, will benefit the southern part of the county (especially those towns and villages along the N24), as well as the environs of Waterford City within County Kilkenny.

Kilkenny County Council, through the LECP, will support projects to address infrastructure deficits under the Regional Planning Guidelines. There is also critical infrastructure required to support and attract economic development in County Kilkenny, including projects identified in the objectives of the Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020.

Collaboration with Waterford City Council

South Kilkenny is an important area in the context of the Waterford Gateway, and there has been proactive collaboration between Kilkenny County Council and Waterford City Council in relation to the planning and development of the area in recent years. This collaboration includes:

- the Ferrybank Development Project (FDP). The FDP was aimed at providing a co-ordinated response to social inclusion, community development and service provision in the Ferrybank area;
- the Hillsfield Community Centre;
- the Ferrybank Community Development Strategic Plan 2015-2020 (jointly prepared by Kilkenny County Council and Waterford City Council); and
- the Ferrybank-Belview Local Area Plan (LAP). The LAP has been prioritised by Kilkenny County Council as the first plan to be reviewed following the adoption of the County and City Development Plans. Kilkenny County Council held (in conjunction with Waterford City Council) a public meeting in connection with the preparation of the draft Ferrybank-Belview LAP in early 2015.

Kilkenny County Council intends to continue to develop collaborative actions with Waterford City & County Council in order to achieve better outcomes for the communities of Ferrybank and South Kilkenny.

Economic Actions²⁰

The LECP provides for a suite of **63 economic actions**²¹ that will lead to the achievement of the high-level goals and objectives over the time period 2016-2021.

Goal 1: Support the Enterprise Economy

Goal 1 is an enabling measure to ensure that the LECP has the capacity to respond to the requirements of Economic Action Area 6 in promoting increased economic activity in line with both county and regional priorities. The goal also aligns with Economic Action Areas 2 and 3.

Strong economies are essential to the development of sustainable communities. The LECP is founded on the concept that a successful county must have thriving settlements at the core. These settlements will drive economic growth. Human capital, as expressed in educational attainment and skills training, is critical to economic prosperity and a high quality-of-life.

Employment is the key driver of economic activity. The proportion of the population who are in full-time employment is a defining feature of economic prosperity. Europe 2020 provides an employment target of 75%, whilst the National Reform Programme sets a target rate of 69-71%.

The International Labour Office (ILO) employment participation rate for Ireland in Q3, 2014 stood at 60.4% (unadjusted) or 60.0% seasonally adjusted rate. Over the period 2006-2011, male unemployment in County Kilkenny experienced a threefold increase, reaching 23.2% in 2011. This compared to a national male unemployment rate in 2011 of 22.3% and a two-and-a-half fold increase since 2006. Female unemployment in Kilkenny experienced a twofold increase, reaching 14.7% in 2011, compared to 15.0% nationally.

Unemployment rates in individual EDs reached levels well above those prevailing county wide, and are highest in Urlingford (38.5% male, 26.3% female), followed by Graiguenamanagh (36.0% male, 18.8% female), Johnstown (29.6% male, 23.3% female), Clogh (31.7% male, 20.5% female) and Moneenroe (32.4% male, 19.6% female), all of which relate to small town areas.

The CSO Business Demography Survey 2012 found that the total number of businesses fell by over 700 (or 17%) during the recession from 3,996 in 2006 to 3,273 in 2012. The numbers employed in each business sector also declined during the period by an average of 23%, excepting in the Financial and Insurance business sector, which experienced a slight increase of 3%, highlighting the critical importance of this sector to the local economy.

The CSO Business Demography Survey 2012 identifies the importance of the Manufacturing, Wholesale and Retail, and the Accommodation and Food Sectors, as measured by the level of employment supported in Co. Kilkenny. These three sectors accounted for some 9,864 employees in 2012.

²⁰ Implementation of the LECP is required to conform to the following:
The Regional Planning Guidelines and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (whenever that is in place); and
The provisions of the Kilkenny County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans, including those provisions requiring sustainable development and Rural and Urban Business Development Zones. Encourage innovative Social Economy businesses within these zones.

Belview Port is the nearest deep water Irish port to mainland Europe providing a saving to shippers of both time and fuel while being a natural hub for the integration of port, shipping, road and rail freight services. The Belview Development Zone is 6 km from Waterford City and is an ideal location for industry in agribusiness. The zone incorporates 265 hectares of zoned land, including a strategic IDA land bank, the Marine Point Business Park and Belview Port. Agri-food businesses that locate in Belview benefit from a good transport infrastructure and direct access to the national motorway network.

Given the current economic performance of the county, the objective of Goal 1 is to strengthen the local enterprise base. This will be achieved through targeting those diverse sectors that are seen to have an increased employment potential during the period 2015-2021. Indicators have identified these sectors to include (but are not limited to) FDI (generally), digital arts, culture-based activity, the tourism sector, and agribusiness.

By encouraging further development across these sectors, in conformance with the provisions of the Kilkenny County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans, the economic dimensions of the LECP will provide for increased levels of job creation requiring a range of skills delivered through a variety of employment models. The LECP will also support the Fair Employment principle, as agreed and accepted by Kilkenny County Council in September 2013.

Supporting Economic Recovery and Jobs – Locally²² states that the local authority is best placed to promote the county as places to work, and to offer direct support to labour activation schemes. The report also notes that the local authority is positioned to leverage local expertise to tailor national initiatives to meet business needs. Such efforts include supporting business networking events, establishing sporting and tourist heritage facilities, developing and driving a host of local festivals and events that support employment.

The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) has a strong track record of supporting new start-ups and micro-businesses and its integration with the functions of the Council provides an opportunity to support Kilkenny-based businesses in new and innovative ways.

Enhanced Business Networking

Improved networking will complement the existing business interest groups, and the networking activities of LEO Kilkenny. It will also facilitate and support county-based business network events with the added purpose of generating an enterprise culture, innovation, business opportunities and investment. The networking model will also be used to identify the skills pool amongst the network membership and encourage the transfer of skills.

21 Implementation of the Actions shall conform to the provisions of the Kilkenny County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans as appropriate. The preparation of any lower tier plans or strategies would need to be subject to SEA and AA processes as appropriate.

22 DECLG: Local Government Sectoral Strategy to Promote Employment and Support Local Enterprise.

Food Sector

The agri-food sector is one of Ireland's most important, employing approximately 50,000 people directly, as well as providing the primary outlet for the produce of 128,000 family farms. These jobs are dispersed throughout all regions of the country, and especially rural areas. The sector accounts for half of purchased Irish goods and services by the manufacturing industry and just over half of exports by indigenous manufacturing industries. The agri-food sector is a critical component of the local economy of County Kilkenny.

The major companies operating in the agri-food sector within the county include Glanbia plc and Connolly's Red Mills, complemented by an emerging artisan food producer base of approximately 40 micro- and medium-sized food producers. Glanbia plc has their Global Nutritionals Headquarters and the Group's main innovation centre located in Kilkenny.

The Belview Development Zone is considered to be an ideal location for industry in agribusiness. Agri-food businesses located in Belview benefit from a good transport infrastructure and access to the national motorway network. It is the nearest major Irish port to mainland Europe providing a saving to shippers of both time and fuel while being a natural hub for the integration of port, shipping, road and rail freight services, all of which are vital to the agri-food sector.

Artisan Foods

Kilkenny Food Strategy, developed by the County Kilkenny Leader Partnership (CKLP), saw the establishment of a South East Inter-agency Food Group whereby four of the largest food service buyers in the country met with twenty-two food producers from the South East region. In turn, this led to the development of the South East Food Export Initiative, which involved high-potential food producers in the region in fast tracking access to export markets, particularly the UK. The initiative also saw the potential for the future development of the Town of Food Project, Regional Food Trade Desk, the South East Regional Artisan Food School, and the The Irish Food Co-op. The Irish Food Co-op (a cooperative of artisan food producers from across the South East) is now well-established and assists small-scale producers in distribution, delivery and sales to customers nationwide, including administration, ordering, invoicing, sales and marketing and logistics. The overriding trading principle of the Co-op is to have 'One Order, One Delivery, One Invoice' representing multiple local brands per customer. The service provided by the Co-op is invaluable, especially to start-up food businesses.

Savour Kilkenny has developed into an annual major regional event that engages with the full artisan food sector, reinforcing the potential for further development and indicating the strong cross-links with the tourism sector.

Incubation Space

Based on identified sectoral demand, this action will see the development of micro-enterprise business incubation units. The action will see the development of innovative models of space provision, and will be informed by the experience of NACEC²³, and the existing community-based enterprise centres in the county. In particular, incubation space for start-up craft, digital media and design businesses, modelled on the success of the craft units in the Castle Yard, Kilkenny (managed by the Kilkenny Civic Trust) and the Castlecomer Demesne Company will be investigated. An initial study will be undertaken to ensure that the provision of any additional space to be provided is economically sustainable, and will not introduce an undermining displacement effect on the existing provision.

In parallel with the above, the action will see the development of a collective promotional network strategy for incubation space in the county. This will inform the activities of all of the enterprise enabling agencies, including LEO Kilkenny.

Retail Excellence Strategy

There were 760 wholesale and retail businesses in County Kilkenny in 2012, employing over one in five (23%) of the total number employed by businesses in the county, making it the most important NACE code sector in terms of employment. A large proportion of these businesses are independent traders, specialist boutiques and fashion stores located in the retail centre of Kilkenny City. The *Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020* establishes four objectives with respect to future retail development:

- To improve convenience market share retained within the county to 80% post 2020;
- To improve comparison market share retained within the county to 75% post 2020;
- To increase convenience trade draw from 8% to 15% post 2020;
- To maintain comparison trade draw at 58% post 2020.

The *Retail Excellence Strategy* will build upon cross-sectoral collaborations in areas such as shop frontage design, use of technology in marketing, and the use of local heritage and culture in marketing design. This will improve the retail experience in the county, and will support the attainment of the County Development Plan objectives.

Small Business Incentive Scheme

Kilkenny County Council is committed to supporting the economic development of the city and county in a structured and strategic manner. As part of the Action Plan for Jobs 2015 the Council is committed to prioritising job creation locally and supporting small businesses in meaningful and practical ways.

In 2014, the Council invoiced over €18 million in commercial rates to local businesses. Businesses and commercial premises owners, who have a vacant property, or vacant element, can have commercial rates struck-off to reflect the level of vacancy. There were 424 vacant units in Kilkenny in 2014, 311 of these were retail and office units. The average commercial rates for a shop are €4,213 and an office

23 National Association of Community Enterprise Centres

is €3,688. Vacant commercial properties have a negative visual impact affecting the streetscape and business sentiment of the community and visitors alike. Kilkenny County Council will investigate a 'Small Business Vacant Premises Incentive Scheme' for the occupation of vacant commercial units. Such a scheme will support job creation; encourage businesses to occupy vacant premises; help regenerate town streetscapes, and help improve business sentiment.

Goal 1: Actions Summary

Action 1.1: Engage with local business to address sectoral needs, whilst simultaneously facilitating strategic collaborations, networking and innovation. This will include supporting and facilitating existing business and sectoral networks.

Action 1.2: Host an annual enterprise conference, modelled on the BizFest event, to promote cross-sectoral networking among small business in the region.

Action 1.3: Undertake a needs analysis of the Agri-Food sector in County Kilkenny to include artisan food producers. Agree a Strategic Action Plan taking into account Food Wise 2025 targets, and facilitate access to markets for example: through local initiatives, participation in food and tourism related trade shows, thematic festivals and international linkages. There will be a Food Story developed as part of the Ireland's Ancient East brand will offer opportunities for Kilkenny to leverage its food offering.

Action 1.4: Support the further development and expansion of the Irish Food Co-op in the south east.

Action 1.5: Promote greater business links between the tourism and food sectors, in particular promoting use of local produce by the local hospitality sector and attracting visitors to Kilkenny for additional food and beverage related activities. This will include building on the success of the Savour Kilkenny Food Festival.

Action 1.6: Build on Kilkenny's strength as a hub for craft businesses and develop centres of excellence for ceramics and jewellery. This action will also include the introduction of a bursary scheme to support start-up craft businesses.

Action 1.7: Maximise the potential of Connect Ireland within Kilkenny to further develop diaspora networks and international linkages in the areas of trade promotion, attracting investment and advice and support to entrepreneurs.

Action 1.8: Engage with Community Enterprise Centres (CECs) in the County to investigate the potential for further development of incubation space and support services. Explore the potential of a collective approach to planning and promotion of CECs in the County.

Action 1.9: Promote greater awareness of and engagement in public procurement opportunities among small businesses, and in particular, opportunities available within local authorities and the HSE.

Action 1.10: Develop a Retail Excellence Strategy and include cross-sectoral collaborations in areas such as shop frontage design, use of technology in sales and marketing (including online trading), and the use of local heritage and culture in marketing design. This action will also include promoting ecommerce opportunities and increasing the number of Trading On-line Vouchers drawn down in particular by retailers in the County.

Action 1.11: Proactively assist IDA Ireland to update its online marketing and promotional material for Kilkenny City and County.

Action 1.12: Develop an incentive scheme for the occupation of vacant commercial units as a means of supporting local business start-ups and job creation, as well as the regeneration of town streetscapes.

Action 1.13: Encourage greater use of alternative funding sources, especially for startups. This will include promoting the Credit Union Small Business Loan Scheme and Micro Finance Ireland.

Goal 2: Facilitate Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Goal 2 reflects core elements of Economic Action Area 5: Action Plan for Jobs and Labour Market Activation, and Economic Action Area 6: Specific Action to Promote Increased Economic Activity in line with Regional Priorities.

Goal 2 aims to advance economic activity and employment creation through the encouragement of innovation and collaboration to provide an integrated support structure for enhanced levels of enterprise start-up and growth.

County Kilkenny has shown the capacity to harness its locational attributes, and its well-developed image as a county that is integral to the south-eastern economic corridor, whilst being largely rural in nature. It is also served by a range of third-level institutions that can be further leveraged to support targeted sectoral enterprise innovation: -

- Institute of Technology, Carlow provides a Research and Commercialisation Support Centre. This provides a supportive environment to enterprise and entrepreneurs in the south-east region, connecting them with cutting-edge research and expertise.
- Limerick Institute of Technology Clonmel delivers programmes in Business, Marketing, Creative Multimedia, Digital Animation Production and Game Art and Design.
- Teagasc Kildalton is the largest agricultural college in the country. It is a leading provider of training in Equine Studies, Machinery, Agriculture and Horticulture.
- The Kilkenny Campus of NUI Maynooth offers undergraduate and postgraduate courses for adult students from Kilkenny and the south-east.
- Waterford Institute of Technology ArcLabs is a one-stop-shop for small businesses in the south-east and beyond, providing access to the resources that the Institute offers to industry.

The outcome that is anticipated is the creation of an attractive and dynamic business environment that caters for the needs of both existing and new employers and employees. It will enable Co. Kilkenny to capitalise on its image and location through positive engagement with key players, including Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, and Third Level Institutions. Closer alliances between local employers and the enabling State Agencies will increase the opportunity to foster innovative and sustainable employment options.

Enterprise Start-Up

Goal 1 aims to advance economic activity and employment creation through the provision of targeted supports. Goal 2 complements this by harnessing Kilkenny's economic and locational strengths, and references the availability of a skilled labour pool, and the ability of the county to attract a workforce with new and emerging skills.

The common outcome that is anticipated from the actions emerging from G2 is the creation of a dynamic business environment that caters for the needs of entrepreneurs in establishing new businesses or upscaling existing enterprises. This will be achieved through positive engagement with key players, including LEO Kilkenny, the Kilkenny Leader Partnership, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Connect Ireland, South East Business Innovation Centre and third level academic institutions. Additionally, closer alliances between local employers and the enabling state agencies will increase the opportunity to foster new and sustainable employment options.

Strategic Client Support
One of the main objectives of Goal G2 will be to identify and provide strategic supports to scalable start-ups and existing small businesses with high potential and job creation. The South East BIC will facilitate this process in conjunction with Enterprise Ireland (EI) and LEO Kilkenny, to include provision of intensive mentoring and other specialist support. The South East BIC has access to the European Business Network – EBN and Business Angels and Seed Capital Funds, including the Halo Business Network (HBAN) in the South East.

Abbey Creative Quarter

Kilkenny is the driver of growth for the county at a sub regional level and also supports Waterford City in its role as a Gateway. Under the South East Regional Planning Guidelines, Kilkenny City has a target population of 28,200 to be reached by the year 2022. The acquisition of the former Smithwick's Brewery site affords the opportunity to re-plan the city to enhance the role of Kilkenny City as an economic driver. The Kilkenny City and Environs Development Plan and the Kilkenny City Centre Local Area Plan, also establishes conservation, sustainability, public realm and urban design strategies for the site. These will deliver a mix of uses to ensure that this new quarter will be a vibrant and successful addition to the medieval core. It will see the delivery of the following: -

- A new linear park on the banks of the River Nore;
- A new landscaped walk along the City Walls and Bregagh River;
- Conservation of historic buildings on the site;
- New public, landscaped spaces including a public square at St Francis Abbey;
- Sustainable and energy efficient strategies for individual buildings and the overall site;
- A university quarter centred on the regenerated industrial buildings to be retained on site;
- A new residential /student residential district;
- Indigenous and international knowledge economy uses on key sites; and
- Cultural, retail and tourist related uses on defined sites.

The Kilkenny LECP will facilitate the agreement of a phased development strategy for capitalising on the Brewery Site potential – the development of which is provided for by the Kilkenny City Development Plan and Abbey Quarter Masterplan – taking into account the Abbey Creative Quarter, and third and fourth level educational provision. It will also facilitate the provision of enterprise incubation and advance office space, and enterprise support mechanisms focusing on innovation and research.

Design Thinking Initiative

The brand name *Kilkenny* is synonymous with creativity and quality design. The *Design Thinking* initiative will also focus on young people, and will deliver enterprise skills. The initiative will also be designed to assist those who have a digital business concept to bring it to a pre-commercial or commercial stage. It will also be suitable for those who have recently started a new digital-based business and wish to further develop their skills in technical and business areas.

Social Enterprise

The European Commission has placed the social economy and social innovation at the heart of the Europe 2020 strategy, and the Programme for Government 2011-2016 recognises the important role of social enterprise in the country and contains a commitment to promoting the development of a vibrant and effective social enterprise sector. The Action Plan for Jobs 2014 identified social enterprise as a growing enterprise sector that can bring further job gains and deliver economic potential. At national level it was estimated that the social enterprise sector employed between 25,000 and 33,000 people in over 1,400 social enterprises, with a total income of around €1.4 billion.

Social enterprises tend to be set in the heart of rural and urban communities, and often employ those that are most marginalised, and who find it most difficult to get jobs. Typically they provide local services, and so jobs are created in local communities. As well as the multiplier effects from the direct jobs in the sector, further indirect jobs are created either by enabling the development of other enterprises, for example by social enterprises that assist economic and community development, or by providing services that bring people to a community such as local festivals.

The consultation process for the Kilkenny LECP identified a number of significant social enterprises in the county falling into four categories:

1. Economic and community development organisations;
2. Those creating employment opportunities for marginalised groups;
3. Those that deliver services that bring people to a community such as local festivals or events;
4. Those with commercial opportunities that are established to create a social return.

This action will aim to support the retention of local services, especially in rural areas (including rural post offices). It will investigate further opportunities by developing a social enterprise strategy taking into account specific needs of local communities. To achieve this, the action will build upon the experience

of successful local social enterprises, and will identify models of successful social enterprise that are relevant to communities across County Kilkenny.

Incubation Workspace

As a complementary measure to that of Goal 1, an audit of potential enterprise incubation workspace in County Kilkenny will be undertaken. The audit will include vacant buildings, office and industrial space. The emerging profile will provide an evidence-base to identify the need for additional space.

Goal 2: Actions Summary

Action 2.1: Provide a seamless information, advice and training support service for entrepreneurs throughout the enterprise lifecycle from start-up through to up-scaling, expansion and growth. Particular emphasis will be placed on accelerating the growth of high potential start-ups and businesses with job creation potential.

Action 2.2: Develop partnerships with all frontline access points for business, including banks and accountants, to ensure there is maximum awareness of the supports available to entrepreneurs, in particular from the LEO.

Action 2.3: Develop support initiatives to target Back-to-Work Enterprise Allowance participants.

Action 2.4: Establish a panel of local business leaders, entrepreneurs and enterprise role models that will champion entrepreneurship and enterprise in County Kilkenny.

Action 2.5: Promote enterprise and innovation opportunities among young farmers, in conjunction with Kildalton College. This should include hosting of an annual Enterprise event specifically aimed at young farmers and also examination of the potential of incorporating enterprise related elements into the curriculum of mainstream courses.

Action 2.6: Agree a phased development strategy for capitalising on the potential of the Brewery Site as a Creative Quarter, the development of which is provided for by the Kilkenny City Development Plan and the Abbey Quarter Masterplan, with particular emphasis on 3rd and 4th level education provision, incubation and advance office space, innovation and research. This action will include investigation of the development of a “Fab Lab” facility, to assist business develop innovative and creative ideas.

Action 2.7: Develop a strategy to promote and further expand Digital Media, Animation and Design activities in County Kilkenny, building on the past experience of the Kilkenny Design Workshops. The strategy should include a ‘Design Thinking’ initiative to deliver enterprise skills to young people.

Action 2.8: Develop a social enterprise strategy facilitating access to a range of social enterprise supports and services and learning through other models of success. This will include building on the experience of the REDZ initiative; and designing support structures tailored to suit both urban and rurally based social enterprise initiatives, creating jobs and providing potential services into local communities. This should also include an examination of co-op type community shops selling local produce in rural villages.

Action 2.9: Undertake an audit of industrial and incubation workspace throughout the County and assess gaps and/or need for additional space so as to better inform the market and highlight zoned and serviced lands in the County. This action will also include an audit and assessment of vacant and underutilised lands and structures, the development and use of which can be used for the promotion of economic development in accordance with the provisions of the applicable development plan.

Goal 3: Enhance the Visitor Experience

Engaging with Economic Action Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, Goal 3 builds on a key infrastructural strength of County Kilkenny and Kilkenny City. It considers both the tourist market and the business visitor (conference offerings).

Tourism is currently a major revenue generator for the local economy. It is estimated to be worth approximately €60 million, and Kilkenny City is a thriving tourist base, accommodating over 200,000 domestic and 204,000 overseas tourists in 2013.

In October 2014 Fáilte Ireland published a set of key statistics on the performance of tourism across the regions in 2013. This placed Kilkenny third behind Wexford and Waterford, with some 207,000 overseas visitors.

Of the attractions in the county and city, Kilkenny Castle attracted a total of 241,302 visitors in 2013. Kilkenny is marketed as a heritage destination with a large number of associated visitor attractions. There is potential to build upon the contribution of heritage to the economic development of Kilkenny. Natural heritage is a further significant asset for the county. The high quality, natural environment supports the economy by attracting employers, visitors and inward investment.

Failte Ireland has developed the new umbrella brand Ireland's Ancient East: To offer visitors a compelling reason to visit the East of the country. This new brand will ensure that the area – from Cork to Carlingford and Cavan to Carnsore Point, and including inland counties as well as coastal – is presented in a cohesive and unified manner. The brand proposition is 5000 years of history, lush green landscapes and stories told by the best storytellers in the world. The four big international markets for Ireland are USA, GB, France and Germany and – despite the growth in emerging markets – these four are forecast to remain our strongest markets for some years to come. The Ireland's Ancient East brand will offer opportunities for Kilkenny.

There are almost 350 food and accommodation businesses in County Kilkenny, accounting for approximately one in six (or 16.7%) of the total number employed by all businesses. The county has also developed an international profile as a venue for festivals that enhance the visitor offering, including: -

- The 'Rhythm and Roots' Festival, which hosts international stars of the bluegrass and country music scenes;
- The Cat Laughs Comedy Festival, now established as one of the top international comedy festivals;
- The Kilkenomics Festival, which brings together some of the world's leading economists and financial commentators with stand-up comedians;
- The Source Festival - an outdoor music festival;
- The Kilkenny Arts Festival, which features the best of visual art, street performance and classical music;
- Subtitle, the world's only festival of exclusively European subtitled films; and
- The Savour Kilkenny Food Festival, which showcases the produce of local food producers.

Given the proven capacity for the tourism industry to generate economic activity across a number of sub-sectors, including accommodation, events, activities and transport, the goal is one of encouraging the spread of the sectoral impact across the county beyond the established honey-pots and maximising the opportunities that exist for Kilkenny to benefit from the Ireland's Ancient East brand.

The development of the goal is also seen as instrumental in attracting FDI and business start-ups in the county by reinforcing a positive image encompassing history, culture and the natural and built environment.

Any development arising shall be in conformance with the provisions of the Kilkeny County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans. It is normal practice in the Council to ensure that:

- Any increase in visitor numbers are managed to avoid significant negative effects including loss of habitat and disturbance;
- Any projects are a suitable distance from the edge of sensitive habitats such as rivers and streams; and
- Legislation relating to habitats, species, connectivity and designated sites is complied with.

There are an array of provisions which have been integrated in the aforementioned plans in this regard. In 2013, Kilkeny achieved recognition as the *Best Tourist Town in Ireland*, one of the *Friendliest Cities in Europe*, the *Cleanest Business Town* and the best *Gathering Festival*. All of this reinforces the sector as a major revenue generator for the local economy of very great regional significance within the sector. In 2011 the South-East attracted approximately 14% of domestic tourism. Kilkeny has traditionally benefited from the domestic tourism market, particularly for short visits and this market is likely to become increasingly important.

The LECP will support the development – conforming to the provisions of the Kilkeny County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans as appropriate - of sustainable tourism as an essential component of the local economy. This will be achieved through co-operation between Fáilte Ireland, Kilkeny County Council, Kilkeny Tourism, the LEADER Implementer and neighbouring counties in the South East Region.

The attributes for tourism in the county include our green infrastructure comprising biodiversity, parks, public realm open spaces, rivers, wetlands, woodlands, farmland and the built environment of the villages, towns and urban areas. In this context, the Kilkeny LECP is designed to ensure that sustainable tourism development should not only increase revenue for the sector, but should also deliver on conservation, environmental and social goals.

Subject to conformance with the Kilkeny County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans, the LECP supports a sustainable increase in the volume of visitors, revenue per visitor, their average length of stay and seasonal spread; whilst protecting the built heritage and green infrastructure that form the resources on which the industry is based.

The LECP will support the implementation of the Strategic Marketing Plan for Kilkeny Tourism, the Fáilte Ireland Destination South East, and the Destination Kilkeny Development Strategies.

Goal 3: Actions Summary

Action 3.1: Undertake an analysis of business tourism potential in County Kilkenny with reference to conferences, business and major tourism entry points (such as Rosslare Port and Waterford Regional Airport), marketing and PR and Ireland's Ancient East campaign. This action will closely link with other regionally-focused actions.

Action 3.2: Improve the visitor experience and business capability of outdoor activity providers active in tourism. Initiatives to include analysis of the potential for: linking activity hubs and amenities; protection and management of the county's Green Infrastructure and the development of the County's river assets for fishing, boating and blueway trails. This will include engaging with the Ireland's Ancient East team to identify opportunities with the highest potential.

Action 3.3: Undertake an Asset Mapping exercise across the county to develop: area based specific tourism strategies. This will also include initiatives focused on delivering a quality international tourism experience around the Ireland Ancient East Brand. In particular, the potential to develop international "stand-out" products based on Kilkenny's comparative advantage in built and cultural heritage. This action will include the development of the Medieval Mile Museum as a potential 'hero site' within Ireland's Ancient East, and identifying the opportunities to leverage the themes and stories which will work best to bring Kilkenny to an international audience.

Action 3.5: Continue development of the 'Medieval Mile' and develop an action plan that links complementary visitor attractions across the county aimed at prolonging and enhancing the visitor experience. This will be a critical element of Kilkenny's offering within Ireland's Ancient East. Cross promotion of nearby attractions will be important in the success of encouraging visitors to spend more time in the region rather than using it as a transit zone.

Action 3.6: Design a county marketing and communications strategy to include activities around the design and distribution of marketing materials, cluster initiatives, historical, and heritage interpretation signs and cultural information signs. This action is aimed at increasing visitor numbers, sustaining the quality of the visitor experience and prolonging the visitor's stay in the county. This action will also include maximising the potential of digital marketing, and use of tourism apps, video promotion and social media.

Action 3.7: Develop a strategy for Festivals as an economic driver, building on the very successful range of existing festivals programmed throughout the year in County Kilkenny.

Goal 4: Provide for Enhanced Levels of Educational Attainment & Skills Development

Goal 4 responds to Economic Action Area 5: Action Plan for Jobs and Labour Market Activation, and Economic Action Area 6: Specific Action to Promote Increased Economic Activity in line with Regional Priorities. It builds upon the strength of the county in the context of the existing third-level institutions, and further encourages the prospect of a fourth-level facility.

In line with the SOLAS Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019 the objective will be to support economic development, increase social inclusion, and meet the needs of all learners, communities and employers who engage with Further Education and Training. In terms of higher-level education and training, this may be further reinforced in the future with the establishment of the South East Technological University based on the integration of Waterford Institute of Technology and Carlow Institute of Technology. The education and training system is seen as a core part of the local enterprise, development and innovation infrastructure. The goal will help to address the unemployment challenge and provide targeted skills programmes that support job seekers to re-skill and up-skill for sectors where sustainable employment opportunities are emerging. This will be achieved through the delivery of higher quality, flexible and responsive programmes. Working with SICAP and the Action Plan for Jobs, the goal will also be to support initiatives designed to focus on unemployed people, in particular those who are long-term unemployed, and the young unemployed.

The development of an integrated working relationship between employers, and the training and educational providers will be achieved through innovative Enterprise Liaison Strategies, particularly encouraging meaningful dialogue between the ETB and sectoral business networks. The encouragement and acceleration of marketing skills using targeted sectoral networking will be facilitated to complement the existing marketing interventions and supports provided by Kilkenny LEO. Additionally, the goal will encourage increased research and development activity on the interface of 3rd and 4th Level academic facilities and local enterprise.

FET and Skills Development

Goal 4 will be to provide for enhanced local education and skilling access, including enhanced access from currently excluded communities. In this regard, the delivery of SICAP in Kilkenny, aimed at tackling poverty, social exclusion and long-term unemployment through local engagement and partnership between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies, will be supported. It will also be an objective of the LECP to support the Gold Star Project, which is aimed at encouraging business to be more inclusive of people with disabilities.

Community and voluntary sector facilities, arts centres and libraries will be engaged to drive new ideas in the area of training and education - specifically for those who wish to build a career in arts and culture. The potential of e-learning to provide access to information for otherwise hard to engage communities will be exploited.

Third Level Provision

The Action Plan for Jobs 2015 cites the improvement in skills provision that have occurred over the past years, including the launch of SOLAS, the establishment of the Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board, the Momentum Programme, and the raft of employment incentive schemes such as JobsPlus and the doubling of high-end skills as part of the second ICT Skills Action Plan.

The Kilkenny LECP recognises the importance of pursuing the establishment of the proposed Technological University of the South East. It also acknowledges the need to develop high-end skills, in particular in ICT, analytics and engineering. This demand must be met by increasing domestic graduate supply from the local higher education sector. The LECP also notes the local importance of the agri-foods, tourism, craft and the digital arts sectors.

The LECP further notes the importance of ensuring that all have access to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) education, since these are increasingly central to the majority of employment opportunities being created.

Goal 4: Actions Summary

Action 4.1: Identify key sectoral needs in terms of management and business development and co-ordinate training activities in response to sectoral needs.

Action 4.2: Establish a local Enterprise Training and Education Forum to ensure co-ordinated delivery of enterprise training and management development supports to small business owners and entrepreneurs in the County. This will complement the work of the South East Regional Skills Forum, which has been established to promote closer liaison between employers and the education sector in the region, including strengthened industry liaison functions generally and developing structured programmes of awareness raising of the capabilities and assets available to enterprises in the region.

Action 4.3: Promote greater awareness of the tourism product/offering across the County (through initiatives such as “Know Your Own County” Campaign); develop tourism ambassadors for the County; and highlight potential career opportunities within the tourism sector. This will also include delivery of Local Tour Guide Training Programmes to upskill service providers, to increase knowledge and co-ordination of existing and new visitor attractions, and to encourage cluster marketing and collective initiatives.

Action 4.4: Undertake to ascertain potential job opportunities in Kilkenny and assess skills requirements and qualifications. Respond through education and training initiatives working closely with business community, Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board and 3rd Level sectors. This action will include the potential of training across a broad spectrum from traditional building skills to digital media/film production and will also involve proactively engaging with third level institutes to further enhance and develop 3rd and 4th level education provision, based on Kilkenny’s strengths and emerging opportunities.

Action 4.5: Continue to work in partnership with the Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board and County Childcare Committee to provide training and locally based materials to teachers and childcare providers on aspects of Kilkenny’s built, natural and cultural heritage.

Action 4.6: Support the establishment of the proposed Technological University of the South East.

Goal 5: Develop the Rural Economy

Goal 5 particularly references the framework of Economic Action Area 2: Promoting Economic Development Through General Local Authority Powers and Functions, and Economic Action Area 6: Specific Action to Promote Increased Economic Activity in line with Regional Priorities.

The Teagasc Rural Towns Index (2014) notes that at national level, poverty rates are higher (10%) in small towns than cities (5%), and that one third of working age households have no one in work in small towns compared with less than 20% in cities. It also notes that spending has fallen faster in smaller towns than in urban areas as a consequence a vicious cycle is generated where higher unemployment change results lower spending, which means more local shops close. In turn, this results in more vacant properties.

Farming and farm related industries are of major importance to the economy of County Kilkenny, and there is a strong tradition of progressive farming in the region. The average farm size of 44.7ha is the largest of any region in the country and the standard output per farm as measured by the CSO is almost double the national average.

The region has an ideal climate and soil type for growing grass and grazing enterprises predominate. Dairying is the dominant enterprise in the region from an economic point of view although only one third of farms have a dairy enterprise. There is a cattle-farming enterprise on almost all farms in the region. There are also major food processing plants in the region, including Glanbia, Dawn Meats, ABP Foods, and Flahavans (Waterford).

The National Field Vegetable Census 2009 confirmed that Kilkenny was a significant county for field vegetable production. The major companies operating in the agri-food sector within County Kilkenny include Connolly's Redmills, complemented by an emerging artisan food producer base of approximately 40 micro- and medium-sized food producers. Glanbia plc has their Global Nutritionals Headquarters and the Group's main innovation centre located in Kilkenny.

In order that the above growth targets are to be met, world-class environmental performance will be required across all dimensions of the agri-food sector, from the farm to the factory and on to the customer and consumer. International buyers in the agri-food sector also require evidence of good environmental performance on the farm, as a contractual requirement. This will continue to drive the range of world-class quality assurance schemes that the sector has been developing.

Notwithstanding the impact of the economic downturn, certain areas of County Kilkenny have been shown to be more attractive for rural settlement, particularly around the major centres such as Kilkenny and Waterford. The trends show that population increase in urban areas has been stronger than the aggregate rural areas.

The County Development Plan notes that County Kilkenny can be divided into three broad categories: -

1. Areas under Urban Influence;
2. Stronger Rural Areas; and
3. Peripheral Areas of Population decline

Goal 5 particularly focuses on rural areas that are in decline, and will use, in conformance with the provisions of the Kilkenny County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans, a portfolio of actions to increase the level of economic activity. The outcome of this will be to build sustainability into the local rural economies, and enable them to contribute to the economic generation capacity of the county and region. Kilkenny LECP aims to increase the resilience of the rural economy.

The impact of the economic recession has triggered many changes in rural town and village settings. It has resulted in the creation of empty retail spaces, eroding the attractiveness of villages. This impact has been further exacerbated by the changes that have occurred in the nature of retail activity, increasing the perception of remoteness, and the impact of dormitory lifestyles.

Rural Economy

The development of resilient local economies is a continued point of focus for the Council. This approach references the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA) Report *'Energising Ireland's Rural Economy'* noting that rural communities have experienced the most negative impacts of the current economic crisis due to their heavy reliance on declining employment sectors.

Whilst Kilkenny generally benefits from its strategic location and relatively easy access to centres of population, its rural settlements are placed under stress by the conflicting desirability of living in a rural location, and the reducing local employment opportunity. This rural reality creates an environmentally unsustainable situation, dimensions of which are addressed through the development of more resilient and self-sufficient local communities.

Goal 5: Actions Summary

Action 5.1: Prepare and implement a Local Development Strategy for the next LEADER Rural Development Programme.²⁴

Action 5.2: Work with local businesses and representative organisations to support the regeneration/development of rural towns and areas by developing a strategic development plan for key towns in each Municipal District (incorporating social and community development aspects, heritage led regeneration and hinterland associations). These will include proposals to enhance the consumer experience and attractiveness of town centres and villages for shopping and visiting. Rural towns and villages in particular can contribute to the tourism offering, as they are home to many hidden gems, encouraging visitors to get off the beaten track and discover these areas.

Action 5.3: Support the development of rural enterprise and diversification initiatives. This action will include exploring rural development opportunities in particular renewable energy and green technology.

Action 5.4: Support the development of an agri-food-science network and identify and support employment creation potential.

²⁴ It should be noted that two competing bids will be submitted in respect of County Kilkenny for the delivery of the next LEADER Rural Development Programme. Depending on the outcome of that competitive process, it may be necessary to review the actions contained in the LECP (i.e. the actions that will be resourced by the LEADER Programme and/or CKLP.)

Goal 6: Improve Access and Communications Infrastructure

Goal 6 relates specifically to Economic Action Area 4: Economic Components of the Community/Local Development Role, and Economic Action Area 6: Specific Action to Promote Increased Economic Activity in line with Regional Priorities. It builds upon the amenity and environmental value of the City and county. It proposes that the County Council engages positively with the Societal Change Pillar of EU Horizon 2020, and key aspects will be delivered in close cooperation with Carlow-Kilkenny Energy Agency.

Transport

Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020 notes that delivering a sustainable transport system is an important dimension of the climate change agenda. The strategy concludes that to achieve a sustainable transport system, individual lifestyles will have to change and develop a range of solutions which deal with conflicting goals, including economic growth, reduced emissions, less use of motorised transport and better accessibility.

Kilkenny City and Environs Development Plan 2014-2020 introduced the 'ten minute city' concept, based on the concept of access to all local facilities within a 10-minute cycle or walk from home. Kilkenny City is approximately 3km wide and 4.5km long. Few journeys undertaken within the city are more than 2.5 km in length; and assuming an average cycle speed of 15 km per hour, that equates to 10 minutes. Similarly, the city's commercial centre is approximately 0.5 km wide by 0.5 km long, it is therefore possible to walk its extent, assuming a walk speed of 4km per hour, in approximately 10 minutes.

Achieving the goal of a more sustainable public transport system will lead to a better quality-of-life, not just in terms of economic competitiveness, greater social inclusion and a healthier population, but also through an improved urban landscape, which will be enhanced through traffic calming and other measures.

The promotion of walking, cycling, public transport and other more sustainable forms of transport as an alternative to the private car, together with the development of the necessary infrastructure and promotion of the initiatives will be supported by Kilkenny County Council, in conformance with the provisions of the County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans.

County Kilkenny has an opportunity to develop its '*green*' credentials by encouraging the development and implementation of innovative, integrated public transport modes, moving significantly beyond the existing infrastructure. The continuation of this approach encourages the development of integrated models of City Access, Parking, *Park-and-Stride*, and the use of Green Infrastructure for creating pedestrian links to relieve congestion and improve the environment and attractiveness in particular of the compact Kilkenny City core.

Broadband

High-quality reliable broadband is a prerequisite of business. Such a service is not widely available to the rural consumer at recognised industry standard speeds and at an affordable price. Whilst a number of initiatives are in place to improve coverage, it is likely that some areas, particularly in rural locations, will still be unable to access commercial offerings.

The LECP will support the development and implementation of innovative solutions designed to improve the quality of broadband services across the county, including those being offered in rural locations. In so doing it will support the concept of the Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) in providing for sustainable enterprise opportunities. Any variation to the County Development Plan or to Local Areas Plans to designate such zones shall be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening processes.

Strategic Infrastructure

Belview Port is the nearest deep-water Irish port to mainland Europe. Two thirds of the Irish domestic market lies within a 160km radius of Belview, with direct access to the national rail network and the motorway network. It is regionally very significant in terms of employment creation.

Kilkenny City represents the largest centre of employment for those residing, and also working in the county. Kilkenny attracts employees from throughout the county, defining itself as a strong commuter town, the majority of which travel by car. Inward commuting Kilkenny employees tend to be most distributed in the centre and north of the county.

County Waterford is the largest employment centre for those who are resident in County Kilkenny but are working outside of the county, comprising a majority of 50%; 45% of which are employed in Waterford City alone, whilst the remaining 5% are employed elsewhere in County Waterford.

Goal 6: Actions Summary

Action 6.1: Maximise the potential of the Belview Port industrial zone in terms of infrastructure and job creation opportunities.²⁵

Action 6.2: Develop a walking, cycling and waterways trail strategy to include the potential of enterprise related activities and job creation potential and linked to tourism actions.

Action 6.3: Support the development of a linked County and City integrated transport service. This will include supporting the further development of rural transport initiatives such as Ringalink. This action will also focus on specific actions for sustainable travel to address the high level of commuting from Kilkenny to Waterford.

Action 6.4: Undertake a Broadband Needs Analysis and facilitate the rollout of high speed broadband across the county, in particular in rural areas. This action will include supporting small-scale pilot projects and local providers to enhance their networks and include more rural households and businesses in accessing broadband.

²⁵ Development within the Belview area is required to conform with the provisions of the Kilkenny County Development Plan and the Ferrybank-Belview Local Area Plan.

Goal 7: Foster Leadership and Local Capacity

Referencing the enhanced role of Kilkeny County Council in leading economic and community development in the future, Goal 7 responds to Economic Action Area 2: Promoting Economic Development Through General Local Authority Powers and Functions, and Economic Action Area 4: Economic Components of the Community/Local Development Role.

Kilkeny County Council has a significant influence on the local economy as provider, enabler, procurer or regulator in a range of matters such as infrastructure, sustainable development, and local services, as well as directly providing over 500 jobs.

The County Council works to promote local economic development in various ways, including co-ordinating response to possible local economic setbacks.

In addition to this significant impact on economic activity, in the future, economic development will be regarded as a core local authority function alongside these more traditional roles.

The guidelines for the LECP note that ‘while certain local authority functions have a very specific economic character, the economic development role needs to be approached from the perspective that ALL local government activity has the potential to contribute to this overarching goal, and it should be a lens through which all relevant activities of the local authority are viewed. In addition, the impact of local authority functions on local and regional competitiveness is significant, particularly in relation to local housing markets, and also in terms of investment in and management of key infrastructure including roads, and direct impact on the cost of doing business in an area’.

Optimisation of the role of the County Council will be necessary to embed and prioritise the objective of economic development in all relevant County Council functions, including planning, infrastructure, environment, and amenity.

It will be necessary to consider not only publically owned land-banks but also opportunities for private sector development. The County Council role in housing and related planning and infrastructural functions, are crucially relevant to the overall economy, both in supporting competitiveness and maintaining balance and sustainable development in the housing market to avoid any repeat of cyclical economic instability. A number of tools will be used to achieve the outcome, primarily focussing on the development of smarter sectoral and local networking forums within the business community. In turn this will see the development of new models of fostering local leadership that will innovatively link across the divide between existing structures such as Chambers of Commerce and the Public Participation Network.

Goal 7: Actions Summary

Action 7.1: Work closely with the private sector in developing a county level approach to ensure that office and industrial developments can come on stream quickly.

Action 7.2: Ensure that in the revision of the Core Strategy (and subsequent Development Plans) that sufficient land for residential development, industrial development and infrastructure is provided consistent with the regional population targets. The designation of zoned land is undertaken by land use plans, and must comply with higher level planning objectives and is informed by SEA and AA processes as appropriate.

Action 7.3: Establish an inter-agency working group to ensure strategic and efficient support of LECP action implementation.

Goal 8: Protect the Natural, Cultural and Built Environment

Goal 8 is linked to Goal 3 and Goal 5. It particularly references Economic Action Area 6: Specific Action to Promote Increased Economic Activity in line with Regional Priorities. The goal recognises that the natural environment performs a wide range of roles in enhancing Kilkenny City, the towns, rural villages and the wider countryside. The environment encompasses natural amenity, biodiversity, education, social and community benefits, and health and well-being benefits. Playing fields, parks, gardens and informal open spaces are not only important as a recreational resource but also provide valuable green areas for wildlife corridors and habitats, act as buffers between different land uses, enhance visual amenity, especially in developed areas, and contribute to the quality-of-life of everyone.

The goal also recognises the importance of the built environment of the county to the creation of sustainable communities as places where people will want to live and work, now and in the future. A quality built environment is required to contribute to a high quality of life by providing safe, inclusive, and well-planned spaces that offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

The social and economic development of County Kilkenny is intrinsically linked to its heritage. The county's character and culture are vital assets that help the county compete as a tourism destination and a location of choice for investment. It also provides the basis for leisure activity adding to an enhanced quality-of-life and sense of well-being.

Abbey Creative Quarter

The location of the Abbey Creative Quarter site adjoining the medieval heart of Kilkenny City provides not only an opportunity to regenerate the area economically and socially but also provides an opportunity to repair the fabric of the city, to reinstate traditional streets and slipways.

The Abbey Creative Quarter presents Kilkenny City with an opportunity to create a modern intervention adjoining its medieval core that will enhance its cultural heritage, contribute to its sustainability through its design and function, and allows it to compete in the knowledge economy of the twenty-first century.

Development within the Abbey Creative Quarter area is required to conform with the provisions of the Kilkeny City Development Plan and the Abbey Quarter Masterplan.

Belview Port Development

The Belview site has excellent access to the Waterford City Gateway, a city with a population of 50,000 and there are three third level facilities within 50 minutes drive, producing 3,500 graduates per year. Development within the Belview area is required to conform with the provisions of the Kilkeny County Development Plan and the Ferrybank-Belview Local Area Plan.

Goal 8 is designed to encourage a deeper understanding of the natural, cultural and built assets of County Kilkeny. This will result in more enlightened physical development, and will support the creation of a strong culture and practice of environmental sustainability across the county. Within this overarching outcome, the goal will support the greater appreciation of the heritage of the county. In turn this will help to protect the environment and local heritage.

Local communities of place and interest will be encouraged to innovatively consider the implementation of key aspects of the green economy and the adoption of appropriate alternative and smart energy solutions. Kilkeny's heritage (built, natural and cultural) is that which makes the county unique. It provides significant economic benefits for the county as it underpins important economic sectors such as agriculture, tourism and recreation. It contributes to our quality and enjoyment of life, and our sense of place and local pride.

The *National Heritage Plan* and the *National Biodiversity Plan 2011-2016* recognise the key role that local authorities, and locally-led action, plays in heritage awareness and management. A key element of both plans is an enhanced role for local authorities in heritage management, to be given effect through the preparation and implementation of County Heritage Plans and Biodiversity Action Plans. Kilkeny County Council, in partnership with the Kilkeny Heritage Forum, prepares and implements the County Kilkeny Heritage Plan and Biodiversity Plan. The LECP will seek the protection and sustainable management of our environment and heritage for future generations.

Goal 8: Actions Summary

Action 8.1: Undertake to identify, record and map the natural and cultural assets within the county to facilitate their protection and sustainable management whilst identifying access to job creation and skills development potential.

Action 8.2: Support community-led and farm based initiatives to raise awareness about and conserve biodiversity and natural capital.

Action 8.3: Design and implement locally based heritage awareness and education initiatives within industry, schools and communities.

Action 8.4: Support the development of the Abbey Creative Quarter, the Medieval Mile and the 5 medieval walled towns (that are part of the Irish Walled Towns Network.)

Action 8.5: Expand the Better Energy Communities Initiative in Kilkenny to promote energy efficiency measures and promote cost savings through energy efficiency programmes and training for the local business community. This will include working with the Carlow Kilkenny Energy Agency to promote energy efficiency best practice.

Action 8.6: Maximise the socio-economic and community benefits of the county's built, natural and cultural heritage by resourcing and implementing the County Kilkenny Heritage Plan and the County Kilkenny Biodiversity Plan.

Action 8.7: Provide support for the commercial and retail sector on the retention and maintenance of heritage premises and shopfronts.

Action 8.8: Ensure that the heritage of Kilkenny, which contributes to its USP, is conserved and sustainably managed. This will include investigating opportunities for Kilkenny's involvement in the national Historic Towns Initiative (currently being piloted) and supporting the "Living Cities Initiative" and similar schemes.

Goal 9: Contribute to Regional Growth and International Potential

Goal 9 is the major crosscutting element of the Kilkenny LECP. It is designed to respond to, and enable all of the Economic Action Areas.

Over the period 2010-2014 the IDA reports that it won 34 investments for the South East Region (Wexford, Waterford, Carlow, Kilkenny, and South Tipperary). There are currently 12,081 people employed by IDA clients in the south east region in a range of companies, with particular strengths in medical technologies. The Life Sciences and PharmaChem sector has a defined requirement for a skilled labour pool, competitively priced property options, robust telecommunications infrastructure. The IDA's Belview site is available for pharmaceutical, industry and technology use.

Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) offers significant research expertise capability locally to the sector through its Pharmaceutical and Molecular Biotechnology Research Centre (PMBRC). This facility focuses on areas such as polymeric materials, drug delivery, process technologies, separation science and molecular biotechnology.

Between 30% and 40% uplift in investments for the South East Region delivered through IDA Ireland would result in some 44 to 48 projects. This would capitalise on the regional activity, particularly where this is focussed on realising new and emerging international opportunities. To further support this. Goal 9 will facilitate the development of international linkages resulting in potential export market access for local business. It will also encourage FDI and visitors to the county. Development arising would be required to conform with the provisions of the County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans.

This goal will enable the county to develop a more coherent and successful mechanism for pursuing additional funding and resource opportunities. It will also facilitate 3rd Level international linkages and networks that are designed to add value to the existing or emerging business community in County Kilkenny and the region. County Kilkenny is already involved in a significant number of regional initiatives

that have a direct bearing on the economic development of the region. These will be reinforced through this goal, which will seek to initialise and capitalise on regional activity, particularly where this is focussed on realising new and emerging international opportunities.

From an economic perspective, the development of international linkages that result in access to international markets in terms of tourism and export potential for local business will be facilitated.

SmartPly, a Coillte company, based in Belview is a company with significant regional potential. The plant uses trees, harvested mainly in the Southern part of the country, to manufacture innovative and sustainable wood products used by building companies in flooring, building frames, roofing, and many other applications. Over 90% of the output produced is for export and Coillte recently announced plans to expand the manufacturing facility. This new facility will provide other suppliers, including farmers and private forestry growers, with a long-term destination for pulp wood, including from forest thinnings.

It is recognised that Local Authorities in Ireland have not been accessing and availing of EU funding opportunities to the same extent as other European municipalities. This goal will be used to enable the county to develop a more coherent and successful mechanism for pursuing additional funding and resource opportunities, and in developing innovative engagement models that seek to scale-up local actions to identify and secure funding opportunities. Focus will be given to INTERREG funding and the new ERDF Urban Development Fund, and also enabling actions related to relevant initiatives of investment programmes such as the SFI.

The South East BIC is actively involved in EU projects. Through its EBN connection and membership of Special Interest Groups the BIC can assist suitable companies to be engaged / participate in suitable Horizon 2020 projects. In particular, the South East BIC is involved in the BIO Economy Group which is heavily orientated towards agriculture and ICT. LEO Kilkenny will work with South East BIC to ensure that these opportunities can be maximised for businesses in County Kilkenny. It is expected that Goal 9 will result in more local companies participating in EU projects and benefitting from greater transference of ideas, processes and project funding opportunities.

Goal 9: Actions Summary

Action 9.1: Support industry-led fora and strategic collaborations at regional level, with a view to contributing to the overall development of the South East Region. In particular, Kilkenny County Council will proactively support the implementation of the South East Enterprise Action Plan for Jobs. This will include collating baseline data to contribute to the actions in the South East Action Plan for Jobs.

Action 9.2: Support the participation of Kilkenny based enterprises in best practice events across the South East Region, including participation in EU funded programmes and initiatives.

Action 9.3: Further advance the proposal for a European centre of excellence for ICT in Agriculture in Kilkenny.

Action 9.4: Participate in the eDIGIREGION Project and assist in the development of smart specialisation strategies for the South East Region.


Action 9.5: Proactively work with other local authorities to promote the region and advance regional opportunities, including the implementation of the South East Region - Action Plan for Jobs. This will also include collaborating to develop the South East as an agri-tech centre of excellence.

Action 9.6: Assist in the development of a showcase of the region's manufacturing base with a dual focus on: attracting young people to careers in manufacturing; and facilitating manufacturing companies to promote more STEM participation in schools.

Action 9.7: Exploit the potential of convergence opportunities in the South East, linking life-sciences with pharma/medical devices, engineering, ICT, and Telecoms.

Action 9.8: Contribute to a regional assessment of the economic value added potential of the forestry sector.

Action 9.9: Establish a programme on a regional level for large employers to collaborate to brand the region as a tourist destination.



Community Actions

The Community Plan has 4 high-level goals, 12 strategic objectives and 120 actions to be delivered by approximately 29 agencies (sections of agencies) and groups across the county from 2016 to 2021.

Goal 10: Addressing Area based Poverty and Disadvantage has **4 strategic objectives** and **50 actions**

- Improving deprivation of those living in small pockets of disadvantage
- *Has 14 actions – across various agencies and groups in the county*
- Increasing the level of education attainment for those living in disadvantaged areas
- *Has 19 actions - across various agencies and groups in the county*
- Reducing the level of unemployment in disadvantaged areas
- *Has 11 actions - across various agencies and groups in the county*
- Reducing the level of Youth unemployment in disadvantaged areas
- *Has 6 actions - across various agencies and groups in the county*

Goal 11: Addressing Poverty and Social Exclusion has **2 strategic objectives** and **25 actions**

- Ensuring the inclusion and engagement of all citizens in the county
- *Has 12 actions - across various agencies and groups in the county*
- To put particular focus on Lone parents, Travellers, People from ethnic minority and cultural groups, Older people, people with a disability and children and young people – ensuring these groupings are prioritised in relation to poverty goals
- *Has 13 actions - across various agencies and groups in the county*

Goal 12: Enhancing Community Facilities and Participation has **4 strategic objectives** and **24 actions**

- Ensure all citizens have access to appropriate community facilities
- *Has 10 actions - across various agencies and groups in the county*
- Ensure all facilities are used to their optimum capacity, open and available to all
- *Has 5 actions - across various agencies and groups in the county*
- Ensure community development coordination at MD level to support communities at local level
- *Has 2 actions - across various agencies and groups in the county*
- To increase community participation and civic engagement at MD and county level
- *Has 7 actions - across various agencies and groups in the county*

Goal 13: Improving Health and Well-being has **2 strategic objectives** and **21 actions**

- Ensure the health & wellbeing of all Kilkenny's citizens
- *Has 2 actions - across various agencies and groups in the county*
- To put particular focus on people with a disability, substance misuse, mental health and suicide, Travellers, ethnic minority and cultural groups, homelessness and LGBTI
- *Has 19 actions - across various agencies and groups in the county.*



8. LECP ACTION PLANS

ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN²⁶

Table 1 – Goal 1: Support the Enterprise Economy

High-Level Goal	High-Level Outcome	Objective	Key Partner Organisations	Timeframe	Project Milestones	Actions
G1: Enterprise Economy Support	Strengthened local enterprise base through targeting sectors with employment potential. This will provide for increased levels of job creation requiring a range of skills delivered through a variety of employment models.	O1: To strengthen the enterprise base and encourage job creation activities	LEO Kilkenny; Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce; CKLP; EI	2016-2021	Establish Structure. Support Networks.	Action 1.1: Engage with local business to address sectoral needs, whilst simultaneously facilitating strategic collaborations, networking and innovation. This will include supporting and facilitating existing business and sectoral networks.
				2016-2021	Organise conference.	Action 1.2: Host an annual enterprise conference, modelled on the BizFest event, to promote cross-sectoral networking among small business in the region.
				2016-2017	Completion of needs analysis.	Action 1.3: Undertake a needs analysis of the Agri-Food sector in County Kilkenny to include artisan food producers. Agree a Strategic Action Plan taking into account Food Wise 2025 targets, and facilitate access to markets for example: through local initiatives, participation in food and tourism related trade shows, thematic festivals and international linkages. There will be a Food Story developed as part of the Ireland's Ancient East brand will offer opportunities for Kilkenny to leverage its food offering.
				2016-2017	Support Structure.	Action 1.4: Support the further development and expansion of the Irish Food Co-op in the south east.
				2016-2021	Establish Structure.	Action 1.5: Promote greater business links between the tourism and food sectors, in particular promoting use of local produce by the local hospitality sector and attracting visitors to Kilkenny for additional food and beverage related activities. This will include building on the success of the Savour Kilkenny Food Festival.

²⁶ Implementation of the LECP is required to conform to the following: The Regional Planning Guidelines and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (whenever that is in place); and The provisions of the Kilkenny County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans, including those provisions requiring sustainable development and Rural and Urban Business Development Zones. Encourage innovative Social Economy businesses within these zones.

			2016-2021	Establish Structure.	<p>Action 1.6: Build on Kilkenny's strength as a hub for craft businesses and develop centres of excellence for ceramics and jewellery. This action will also include the introduction of a bursary scheme to support start-up craft businesses.</p> <p>Action 1.7: Maximise the potential of Connect Ireland within Kilkenny to further develop diaspora networks and international linkages in the areas of trade promotion, attracting investment and advice and support to entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Action 1.8: Engage with Community Enterprise Centres (CECs) in the County to investigate the potential for further development of incubation space and support services. Explore the potential of a collective approach to planning and promotion of CECs in the County.</p> <p>Action 1.9: Promote greater awareness of and engagement in public procurement opportunities among small businesses, and in particular, opportunities available within local authorities and the HSE.</p> <p>Action 1.10: Develop a Retail Excellence Strategy and include cross-sectoral collaborations in areas such as shop frontage design, use of technology in sales and marketing (including online trading), and the use of local heritage and culture in marketing design. This action will also include promoting ecommerce opportunities and increasing the number of Trading On-line Vouchers drawn down in particular by retailers in the County.</p> <p>Action 1.11: Proactively assist IDA Ireland to update its online marketing and promotional material for Kilkenny City and County.</p> <p>Action 1.12: Develop an incentive scheme for the occupation of vacant commercial units as a means of supporting local business start-ups and job creation, as well as the regeneration of town streetscapes.</p> <p>Action 1.13: Encourage greater use of alternative funding sources, especially for startups. This will include promoting the Credit Union Small Business Loan Scheme and Micro Finance Ireland.</p>
LEO Kilkenny; CKLP; DCCOI	Connect Ireland; IDA; EI; Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce; Irish Hotels Federation; IBEC	2016-2021	Establish Networks.	<p>LEO Kilkenny; Kilkenny CoCo; EI; National Association of Community Enterprise Centres</p>	
		2016-2017	Awareness events.	<p>LEO Kilkenny; Kilkenny CoCo; EI; LGMA</p>	
		2016-2017	Awareness Events.	<p>Kilkenny CoCo; Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce; Retail Excellence Ireland; Retail Ireland; RGDATA; LEO Kilkenny</p>	
		2016-2017	Publication of Report	<p>Kilkenny CoCo; IDA</p>	
		2016-2017	IDA material.	<p>Kilkenny CoCo</p>	
		2016-2021	Awareness Events and mediums	<p>LEO Kilkenny; Credit Unions; MFI; Business Networks</p>	





Table 2 – Goal 2: Facilitate Innovation and Entrepreneurship

High-Level Goal	High-Level Outcome	Objective	Key Partner Organisations	Timeframe	Project Milestones	Actions
G2: Facilitate Innovation and Entrepreneurship	The creation of an attractive and dynamic business environment that caters for the needs of both existing and new employers and employees.	O2: Provide an integrated support structure conducive to enterprise start-up and growth.	LEO Kilkenny; EI	2016-2021	Enhanced service established.	Action 2.1: Provide a seamless information, advice and training support service for entrepreneurs throughout the enterprise lifecycle from start-up through to up-scaling, expansion and growth. Particular emphasis will be placed on accelerating the growth of high potential start-ups and businesses with job creation potential.
			LEO Kilkenny; Banks; Accountants	2016-2017	Greater Awareness and Enhanced Service established.	Action 2.2: Develop partnerships with all frontline access points for business, including banks and accountants, to ensure there is maximum awareness of the supports available to entrepreneurs, in particular from the LEO.
			LEO Kilkenny; CKLP; DSP.	2016-2017	Support initiatives.	Action 2.3: Develop support initiatives to target <i>Back-to-Work Enterprise Allowance</i> participants.
			LEO Kilkenny; Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce; Business Networks; Local Industry	2016-2017	Panel established.	Action 2.4: Establish a panel of local business leaders, entrepreneurs and enterprise role models that will champion entrepreneurship and enterprise in County Kilkenny.
			LEO Kilkenny; Kildalton College; Teagasc	2016-2021	Establish Event.	Action 2.5: Promote enterprise and innovation opportunities among young farmers, in conjunction with Kildalton College. This should include hosting of an annual Enterprise event specifically aimed at young farmers and also examination of the potential of incorporating enterprise related elements into the curriculum of mainstream courses.
			Kilkenny CoCo Planning	2016-2017	Agreement of strategy.	Action 2.6: Agree a phased development strategy for capitalising on the potential of the Brewery Site as a Creative Quarter, the development of which is provided for by the Kilkenny City Development Plan and the Abbey Quarter Masterplan, with particular emphasis on 3rd and 4th level education provision, incubation and advance office space, innovation and research. This action will include investigation of the development of a “Fab Lab” facility, to assist business develop innovative and creative ideas.

			Kilkenny CoCo; 3 rd Level Institutes	2016-2019	Publication of strategy.	<p>Action 2.7: Develop a strategy to promote and further expand Digital Media, Animation and Design activities in County Kilkenny, building on the past experience of the Kilkenny Design Workshops. The strategy should include a 'Design Thinking' initiative to deliver enterprise skills to young people</p> <p>Action 2.8: Develop a social enterprise strategy facilitating access to a range of social enterprise supports and services and learning through other models of success. This will include building on the experience of the REDZ initiative; and designing support structures tailored to suit both urban and rurally based social enterprise initiatives; creating jobs and providing potential services into local communities. This should also include an examination of co-op type community shops selling local produce in rural villages.</p> <p>Action 2.9: Undertake an audit of industrial and incubation workspace throughout the County and assess gaps and/or need for additional space so as to better inform the market and highlight zoned and serviced lands in the County. This action will also include an audit and assessment of vacant and underutilised lands and structures, the development and use of which can be used for the promotion of economic development in accordance with the provisions of the applicable development plan.</p>
			Kilkenny CoCo Community; CKLP	2016-2017	Publication of strategy.	
			Kilkenny CoCo; EI	2016-2021	Phased publication of audit.	





Table 3 – Goal 3: Enhance the Visitor Experience

High-Level Goal	High-Level Outcome	Objective	Key Partner Organisations	Timeframe	Project Milestones	Actions
G3: Visitor Experience Enhancement	<p>The goal will encourage the spread of the sectoral impact across the county beyond the established honey-pots.</p> <p>It will also attract FDI and business start-ups in the county by reinforcing a positive image encompassing history, culture and the natural and built environment.</p>	<p>O3: Support, coordinate and optimise the visitor experience potential.</p>	<p>Kilkenny CoCo; Failte Ireland; CKLP; Kilkenny Tourism</p>	2016-2017	<p>Analysis Completed and Action plan agreed, locally and regionally focused.</p>	<p>Action 3.1: Undertake an analysis of business tourism potential in County Kilkenny with reference to conferences, business and major tourism entry points (such as Rosslare Port and Waterford Regional Airport), marketing and PR and Ireland's Ancient East campaign. This action will closely link with other regionally-focused actions.</p>
			<p>Kilkenny CoCo; Failte Ireland; CKLP; Kilkenny Tourism; Outdoor activity providers</p>	2016-2021	<p>Action plan agreed.</p>	<p>Action 3.2: Improve the visitor experience and business capability of outdoor activity providers active in tourism. Initiatives to include analysis of the potential for: linking activity hubs and amenities; protection and management of the county's Green Infrastructure and the development of the County's river assets for fishing, boating and blueway trails. This will include engaging with the Ireland's Ancient East team to identify opportunities with the highest potential.</p>
			<p>Kilkenny CoCo; CKLP; Failte Ireland; Kilkenny Tourism</p>	2016-2017	<p>Asset mapping complete. Strategy established.</p>	<p>Action 3.3: Undertake an Asset Mapping exercise across the county to develop: area based specific tourism strategies. This will also include initiatives focused on delivering a quality international tourism experience around the Ireland Ancient East Brand. In particular, the potential to develop international "stand-out" products based on Kilkenny's comparative advantage in built and cultural heritage. This action will include the development of the Medieval Mile Museum as a potential 'hero site' within Ireland's Ancient East, and identifying the opportunities to leverage the themes and stories which will work best to bring Kilkenny to an international audience.</p>
			<p>Kilkenny CoCo; CKLP; Failte Ireland; Kilkenny Tourism; Heritage Council</p>	2016-2017	<p>Phased Action Plan agreed.</p>	<p>Action 3.5: Continue development of the 'Medieval Mile' and develop an action plan that links complementary visitor attractions across the county aimed at prolonging and enhancing the visitor experience. This will be a critical element of Kilkenny's offering within Ireland's Ancient East. Cross promotion of nearby attractions will be important in the success of encouraging visitors to spend more time in the region rather than using it as a transit zone.</p>

					2016-2021	Strategic Plan agreed.	<p>Action 3.6: Design a county marketing and communications strategy to include activities around the design and distribution of marketing materials, cluster initiatives, historical, and heritage interpretation signs and cultural information signs. This action is aimed at increasing visitor numbers, sustaining the quality of the visitor experience and prolonging the visitor's stay in the county. This action will also include maximising the potential of digital marketing, and use of tourism apps, video promotion and social media.</p>
						Strategic Plan agreed	<p>Action 3.7: Develop a strategy for Festivals as an economic driver, building on the very successful range of existing festivals programmed throughout the year in County Kilkenny.</p>





Table 4 – Goal 4: Enhanced Educational Attainment and Skills Development

High-Level Goal	High-Level Outcome	Objective	Key Partner Organisations	Timeframe	Project Milestones	Actions
G4: Enhanced Educational Attainment and Skills Development	Innovative Enterprise Liaison Strategies between the ETB and sectoral business networks will be used to accelerate sectoral networking, and the existing marketing interventions and supports provided by Kilkenny LEO. Additionally, it will encourage increased research and development activity on the interface of 3 rd and 4 th Level academic facilities and local enterprise.	O4: Encourage and support upskilling, job mobility and enterprise creation and management	LEO Kilkenny; EI; Business Networks; Skillinets; 3rd level institutes	2016-2021	Key sectors identified, analysis of needs undertaken and training strategy agreed (ongoing).	Action 4.1: Identify key sectoral needs in terms of management and business development and co-ordinate training activities in response to sectoral needs.
			LEO Kilkenny; ETB; Kilkenny Chamber of commerce; Skillinets; 3rd level institutions; Feagasc	2016-2021	Forum established. Action plan agreed.	Action 4.2: Establish a local Enterprise Training and Education Forum to ensure co-ordinated delivery of enterprise training and management development supports to small business owners and entrepreneurs in the County. This will complement the work of the South East Regional Skills Forum, which has been established to promote closer liaison between employers and the education sector in the region, including strengthened industry liaison functions generally and developing structured programmes of awareness raising of the capabilities and assets available to enterprises in the region.
			Kilkenny CoCo; CKLP; Fáilte Ireland; Kilkenny Tourism; Heritage Council	2016-2021	Collective engagement of key players. Action plan agreed. No. of initiatives delivered.	Action 4.3: Promote greater awareness of the tourism product/ offering across the County (through initiatives such as “Know Your Own County” Campaign); develop tourism ambassadors for the County; and highlight potential career opportunities within the tourism sector. This will also include delivery of Local Tour Guide Training Programmes to upskill service providers, to increase knowledge and co-ordination of existing and new visitor attractions, and to encourage cluster marketing and collective initiatives.

				Kilkenny CoCo; 3 rd Level Institutes; Kilkenny and Carlow ETB; Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce	2016-2021	Assessment of needs/opportunities. No. of initiatives. Engagement of key players.	Action 4.4: Undertake to ascertain potential job opportunities in Kilkenny and assess skills requirements and qualifications. Respond through education and training initiatives working closely with business community, Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board and 3rd Level sectors. This action will include the potential of training across a broad spectrum from traditional building skills to digital media/film production and will also involve proactively engaging with third level institutes to further enhance and develop 3rd and 4th level education provision, based on Kilkenny's strengths and emerging opportunities.
			Kilkenny CoCo; Kilkenny and Carlow ETB; Kilkenny Childcare Committee	2016-2021	No. of initiatives identified	Action 4.5: Continue to work in partnership with the Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board and County Childcare Committee to provide training and locally based materials to teachers and childcare providers on aspects of Kilkenny's built, natural and cultural heritage.	
			Kilkenny CoCo; 3 rd Level Institutes	2016-2021	Support Structure agreed.	Action 4.6: Support the establishment of the proposed Technological University of the South East.	





Table 5 – Goal 5: Develop the Rural Economy

High-Level Goal	High-Level Outcome	Objective	Key Partner Organisations	Timeframe	Project Milestones	Actions
G5: Rural Economy Development	Focus on rural areas that are in decline to increase the level of economic activity and build sustainability.	O5: Increase economic activity and build sustainability into the rural economy.	LCDC	2015-2016	Publication of LDS Strategy. ²⁷	Action 5.1: Prepare and implement a Local Development Strategy for the next LEADER Rural Development Programme.
			Kilkenny CoCo; CKLP; Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce	2016-2021	No. of area development plans produced. Engagement of cross section of communities.	Action 5.2: Work with local businesses and representative organisations to support the regeneration/development of rural towns and areas by developing a strategic development plan for key towns in each Municipal District (incorporating social and community development aspects, heritage led regeneration and hinterland associations). These will include proposals to enhance the consumer experience and attractiveness of town centres and villages for shopping and visiting. Rural towns and villages in particular can contribute to the tourism offering, as they are home to many hidden gems, encouraging visitors to get off the beaten track and discover these areas.
			LEO Kilkenny; CKLP; Teagasc; EI	2016-2021	No. of initiatives supported.	Action 5.3: Support the development of rural enterprise and diversification initiatives. This action will include exploring rural development opportunities in particular renewable energy and green technology.
			CKLP; Teagasc; Kildalton College; Bord Bia	2016-2021	Establishment of network. Action plan agreed. No of jobs created.	Action 5.4: Support the development of an agri-food-science network and identify and support employment creation potential.

Table 6 – Goal 6: Improve Access and Communications Infrastructure

G6: Access and Communications Infrastructure	A more sustainable public transport system will lead to a better quality-of-life, economic competitiveness, greater social inclusion and a healthier population. The improvement of the quality of broadband services across the county.	O6: Encourage integrated transport systems through the use of existing and new infrastructure innovation.	Kilkenny CoCo; IDA; Port of Waterford Company	2016-2021	Agreed phased development plan.	Action 6.1: Maximise the potential of the Belview Port industrial zone in terms of infrastructure and job creation opportunities. ²⁸
			Kilkenny CoCo; CKLP; Fáilte Ireland; NPWS	2016-2017	Publication of strategy.	Action 6.2: Develop a walking, cycling and waterways trail strategy to include the potential of enterprise related activities and job creation potential and linked to tourism actions.
			Kilkenny CoCo; Kilkenny Tourism; Rural Transport Network	2016-2021	Identification and completion of key initiatives.	Action 6.3: Support the development of a linked County and City integrated transport service. This will include supporting the further development of rural transport initiatives such as Ringalink. This action will also focus on specific actions for sustainable travel to address the high level of commuting from Kilkenny to Waterford.
			Kilkenny CoCo; CKLP	2016-2017	Needs analysis completed. Action plan agreed and progressed.	Action 6.4: Undertake a Broadband Needs Analysis and facilitate the rollout of high speed broadband across the county, in particular in rural areas. This action will include supporting small-scale pilot projects and local providers to enhance their networks and include more rural households and businesses in accessing broadband.

²⁷ It should be noted that two competing bids will be submitted in respect of County Kilkenny for the delivery of the next LEADER Rural Development Programme. Depending on the outcome of that competitive process, it may be necessary to review the actions contained in the LECP (i.e. the actions that will be resourced by the LEADER Programme and/or CKLP)

²⁸ Development within the Belview area is required to conform with the provisions of the Kilkenny County Development Plan and the Ferrybank-Belview Local Area Plan.





Table 7 – Goal 7: Leadership and Local Capacity

High-Level Goal	High-Level Outcome	Objective	Key Partner Organisations	Timeframe	Project Milestones	Actions
G7: Leadership and Local Capacity	<p>Optimisation of the role of the County Council to prioritise economic development.</p> <p>A number of tools will be used focussing on the development of smarter sectoral and local networking forums within the business community.</p>	<p>O8: Develop leadership capacity in promoting economic and integrated development.</p>	Kilkenny CoCo	2016-2021	<p>Annual prioritisation of key actions within LECP.</p> <p>Review of progress.</p>	<p>Action 7.1: Work closely with the private sector in developing a county level approach to ensure that office and industrial developments can come on stream quickly.</p>
			Kilkenny CoCo	2016-2021	<p>Setting and achievement of targets.</p> <p>Cross-departmental collaboration.</p>	<p>Action 7.2: Ensure that is the revision of the Core Strategy (and subsequent Development Plans) that sufficient land for residential development, industrial development and infrastructure is provided consistent with the regional population targets. The designation of zoned land is undertaken by land use plans, and must comply with higher level planning objectives and is informed by SEA and AA processes as appropriate.</p>
			Kilkenny CoCo; LEO Kilkenny; IDA; EI	2015-2021	<p>Engagement of agencies.</p> <p>No. of actions progressed and completed.</p> <p>No. of integrated actions progressed.</p>	<p>Action 7.3: Establish an inter-agency working group to ensure strategic and efficient support of LECP action implementation.</p>





Table 8 – Goal 8: Natural, Cultural and Built Environment

High-Level Goal	High-Level Outcome	Objective	Key Partner Organisations	Timeframe	Project Milestones	Actions
G8: Natural, Cultural and Built Environment	A deeper understanding of the natural, cultural and built assets of County Kilkenny. This will help to protect the environment and local heritage.	O9: Encourage and support biodiversity and the protection and enhancement of local heritage and culture.	Kilkenny CoCo; Heritage Council; Kilkenny Carlow ETB; Skillinets; Failte Ireland	2016-2019	Mapping exercise completed. Action plan agreed. Engagement of agencies. No. of training Initiatives completed. No. of jobs created.	Action 8.1: Undertake to identify, record and map the natural and cultural assets within the county to facilitate their protection and sustainable management whilst identifying access to job creation and skills development potential.
				2016-2019	No. of biodiversity initiatives completed. No. of individuals engaged.	Action 8.2: Support community-led and farm based initiatives to raise awareness about and conserve biodiversity and natural capital.
				2016-2021	No. of biodiversity initiatives completed. No. of individuals engaged.	Action 8.3: Design and implement locally based heritage awareness and education initiatives within industry, schools and communities.

NEETS (EU programme term) referring to Young People between age 15-24 who are NOT in EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION or TRAINING SERVICES.



Table 9 – Goal 9: Regional Growth and International Potential

High-Level Goal	High-Level Outcome	Objective	Key Partner Organisations	Timeframe	Project Milestones	Actions
G9: Regional Growth and International Potential	The development of international linkages resulting in potential export market access for local business. Enable the county to develop a more coherent and successful mechanism for pursuing additional funding and resource opportunities.	O11: Contribute to the growth of the region and expand international reach	Kilkenny CoCo; RA; Neighbouring local Authorities	2016-2021	No. of fora established. Strategy agreed and progressed	Action 9.1: Support industry-led fora and strategic collaborations at regional level, with a view to contributing to the overall development of the South East Region. In particular, Kilkenny County Council will proactively support the implementation of the South East Enterprise Action Plan for Jobs. This will include collating baseline data to contribute to the actions in the South East Action Plan for Jobs.
				2016-2021	No. of enterprises participating. Take up of EU funding	Action 9.2: Support the participation of Kilkenny based enterprises in best practice events across the South East Region, including participation in EU funded programmes and initiatives.
				2016-2020	Phased development plan agreed. Engagement of key players. Centre of Excellence established.	Action 9.3: Further advance the proposal for a European centre of excellence for ICT in Agriculture in Kilkenny.
				2016-2021	Agreement and progression of strategy.	Action 9.4: Participate in the eDIGREGION Project and assist in the development of smart specialisation strategies for the South East Region.
				2016-2017	Centre of Excellence strategy agreed and progressed.	Action 9.5: Proactively work with other local authorities to promote the region and advance regional opportunities, including the implementation of the South East Region – Action Plan for Jobs. This will also include collaborating to develop the South East as an agri-tech centre of excellence.

	<p>Kilkenny CoCo; RA; Neighbouring local Authorities; EI; IBEC</p>	<p>2016-2021</p>	<p>No. of businesses engaged. No. of jobs created. No. of participating schools.</p>	<p>Action 9.6: Assist in the development of a showcase of the region's manufacturing base with a dual focus on: attracting young people to careers in manufacturing; and facilitating manufacturing companies to promote more STEM participation in schools.</p>
	<p>Kilkenny CoCo; IBEC; Local Industry; 3rd Level Institutions; RA; Neighbouring local Authorities</p>	<p>2016-2021</p>	<p>Engagement of key players. Strategy agreed and progressed.</p>	<p>Action 9.7: Exploit the potential of convergence opportunities in the South East, linking life-sciences with pharma/medical devices, engineering, ICT, and Telecoms.</p>
	<p>Kilkenny CoCo; Coillte; RA; Neighbouring local Authorities</p>	<p>2016-2021</p>	<p>Report produced. Actions progressed.</p>	<p>Action 9.8: Contribute to a regional assessment of the economic value added potential of the forestry sector.</p>
	<p>Kilkenny CoCo; Fáilte Ireland; Kilkenny Tourism; Heritage Council; Design & Crafts Council of Ireland; IBEC; Connect Ireland; Local Industry; Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce; RA; Neighbouring local Authorities</p>	<p>2016-2021</p>	<p>Engagement of industry. Strategy agreed. Engagement of tourism stakeholders. Increase in visitor numbers.</p>	<p>Action 9.9: Establish a programme on a regional level for large employers to collaborate to brand the region as a tourist destination.</p>



COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN²⁹

EU 2020 PRIORITY 5: FIGHTING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION: AT LEAST 20 MILLION FEWER PEOPLE IN OR AT RISK OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION			
LECP HIGH LEVEL GOAL 10: ADDRESSING AREA-BASED POVERTY AND DISADVANTAGE			
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE 1: IMPROVE THE DEPRIVATION INDICATORS FOR THOSE ELECTORAL DISTRICTS AND SMALL AREAS DESIGNATED 'DISADVANTAGED' OR 'VERY DISADVANTAGED'.			
Actions		Outputs	Partners/Lead* Timeframe
SICAP Goal 1: Engagement of community/target groups in disadvantaged areas:			
1.1.1	Provide support to key community groups to carry out local needs analysis. Develop Community Development /Socio-Economic Strategic Plans for high priority disadvantaged areas: Ferrybank, Castlecomer, Urlingford, Freshford, Graiguenamanagh, Clogh, Callan, Kilkenny Urban 1 and 2.	Proactively work with at least 2 electoral areas of identified disadvantage each year. Provide LCDC with an area community development plan in relation to each.	CKLP*, Community Orgs 2016- 2018
1.1.2	Support communities, target groups to build capacity to address key needs locally.		
1.1.3	Support communities, target groups to access funding to meet identified needs.	Support 3 communities per year to access funding to meet key needs	CKLP*
1.1.4	Support these communities, target groups to engage with existing county wide forums.	Proactively target 3 groups per year per electoral district to register & engage with the PPN	PPN*
Estate Management :			
1.1.5	Contribute to developing sustainability by consulting with locally based Community Committees on issues which may affect their physical environment and/or their community.	Complete 3 consultations per annum	KKCC* Housing Section 2016 - 2020
1.1.6	Promote estate management in Kilkenny Local Authority estates & improve the quality of funding, projects and tips-being disseminated to communities through various mediums.	Approve applications for 2 estate management groups per year	KKCC* Housing Section 2016-2020

1.1.7	Support the development of community projects and provide estate enhancement funding to residents groups, with priority given to those in disadvantaged areas identified in this plan.	52 grants distributed annually (¼ of these to disadvantaged areas)	KKCC* Housing Section	2016-2020
1.1.8	Support residents in their respective responsibilities to play an active part in maintaining a high-quality local environment.	Run 2 environment community education workshops with residents groups per annum	KKCC* Housing Section	2016-2020
1.1.9	Continue to establish and develop positive relationships through service integration between the members of Community Committees, Local Authorities, and other relevant agencies. ³⁰	Host 2 integrated service delivery meetings for community committees per year	KKCC* Housing Section	2016-2020
1.1.10	Provide training supports to resident associations in the form of on- line and published materials, and information posted on the Kilkenny Local Authorities website.	Update and disseminate information newsheets once per quarter to local residents associations	KKCC Housing Section	2016-2020
Community Based Approaches				
1.1.11	The four Family Resource Centres (FRC's) in Kilkenny will support and undertake direct work with residents and community action groups to address issues relation to deprivation within the communities they operate in.	The 4 FRC's in the county will support up to 8 groups per year to address issues of deprivation in their areas.	Newpark Close FRC Fr. McGrath FRC Driochthead FRC The Mill FRC (4 FRC's from here on out)	2016-2020
1.1.12	Develop a comprehensive strategy (Callan Inclusion Town) to address social inclusion in all aspects of local life, (with a special emphasis on civic and cultural engagement), through developing partnerships within the county and across the EU.	EU funding secured, local steering group in place and Callan Inclusion Town Strategy developed and widely available	Callan Community Network	2016 (*Possible 4-5 year programme)
1.1.13	Work in partnership with local and countywide community groups in areas of high disadvantage, specifically targeting those who experience the highest levels of deprivation in accessing training supports under the Activational Family Supports Programme. (AFSP)	Work in partnership with 2 local or county based groups per year, specifically in areas of disadvantage, as long as the AFSP is available	DSP*	2016 - 2020
1.1.14	To continue the provision of Community Education and Literacy Services that facilitate and support community based education classes for a range of groups in local outreach centres throughout the county.	1500 places offered per annum	*KCETB	2016-2020

²⁹ Implementation of the LECP is required to conform to the following:

The Regional Planning Guidelines and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (whenever that is in place); and
The provisions of the Kilkenny County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans, including those provisions requiring sustainable development and Rural and Urban Business Development Zones. Encourage innovative Social Economy businesses within these zones.

³⁰ The term 'community development' in its broader meaning refers to the process through which the life of a community is enhanced through the work of a range of community-based/voluntary organisations. It aims to enable all communities to be fully involved in, to influence and to shape local decisions. "The Kilkenny Local Authorities Housing Department through the support of active residents and residents associations will link with the necessary organisations to support the development of this sense of community within our estates.

EU 2020 PRIORITY 4: EDUCATION - REDUCE THE RATES OF EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING BELOW 10% and ENSURE AT LEAST 40% OF 30-34-YEAR-OLDS COMPLETING THIRD LEVEL EDUCATION			
LECP HIGH LEVEL GOAL 10: ADDRESSING AREA-BASED POVERTY AND DISADVANTAGE			
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE 2: POVERTY: EDUCATION – INCREASE THE LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR THOSE LIVING IN DISADVANTAGED AREAS			
Actions		Outputs	Partners/Lead*
SICAP Goal 2: Supporting access to education, training and development:		Outputs	Timeframe
10.2.1	Develop a sign posting service through the delivery of information sessions, outreach and a referral system into CKLP and mainstream education services.	Present overview of signposting service to LCDC at year end. Develop strategy for widespread communication of same.	CKLP*
10.2.2	Provide one to one supports to individuals who will potentially engage in the life-long learning processes.	1900 one to one supports completed	CKLP*
10.2.3	Provide group and one to one supports to unemployed adults 25 years+ to enable access to Life Long Learning opportunities.	Services provided to 75 unemployed adults age 25+	CKLP*
10.2.4	To offer individuals specialist knowledge, training and work experience which will support them in seeking employment or gaining a place at third level through the provision of Post Leaving Certificate Programme	500 places offered per annum	*KC ETB
10.2.5	To provide second chance education and training programme for adults who are long term unemployed and who wish to return to education to gain a qualification and develop their skills.	120 places offered per annum	KCETB*
10.2.6	To provide individuals and groups with an opportunity to identify, explore and review educational and career options through the Kilkenny Adult Guidance Service	800 people supported per annum	KCETB*
10.2.7	Back to Education Initiative -to provide FREE part-time further education programmes for young people and adults giving participants an opportunity to combine a return to learning with family, work and other responsibilities.	500 places offered per annum	KCETB*
10.2.8	15-24 NEETS³¹ Group: Target the 15 – 24 NEET's group, through the delivery of information sessions, outreach, individual supports and referral into CKLP and mainstream education, training and employment services	60 young people engaged per annum in programmes/services	CKLP*

10.2.9	Deliver niche targeted projects such as the Savour Kilkenny Food Challenge and targeted after-schools supports to potential early school leavers.	700 NEETS young people included in niche and after school type programmes	CKLP*, schools in the county, KTCM, FRC's	2016 - 2018
10.2.10	Work in partnership with the School Completion Programme in identifying new initiatives to support young people 'at risk' of early school leaving.	2 new initiatives identified	CKLP/ KCETB*	2016 - 2018
10.2.11	To engage the appropriate bodies to develop a monitoring and information process that identifies the school attendance of Traveller children at both primary and second level.	Appropriate agencies engaged & agreed process/mechanism for monitoring the school attendance of Traveller children developed	KTIG	2016 -2020
10.2.12	Develop an education, training and employment strategy for the 15 – 24 NEET's target group and contribute to a more coordinated approach to responding to this cohort of people.	NEETs Strategy for County Kilkenny Developed	CKLP* KCETB	2016 - 2018
10.2.13	Advocate for the increased provision of education, training and development opportunities for those living in disadvantaged areas in Co Kilkenny	Develop a robust advocacy programme, report findings and progress achieved	CKLP*	2016 - 2018
10.2.14	Provide Development Officer support to Home School Liaison Committees and Youth agency steering groups in Kilkenny.	4 meetings attended and supported each year	CKLP*	2016 - 2018
10.2.15	To continue the provision of the Youthreach programme in Kilkenny with a wide variety of options and ancillary supports for early school leavers to enable them to improve their skills, gain a qualification and become more confident.	25 Young people per year catered for	* KCETB	2016-2020
10.2.16	Provide individual support to young people who attend The Drum or are referred to The Drum, to remain in education or explore other education alternatives.	25 young people supported on a one to one basis	DRUM*	2015 - 2020
10.2.17	Library Services to work in cooperation with relevant agencies in the provision of literacy supports to adults, children and young people in both traditional and digital formats.	Literacy supports provided to 1,000 people per annum	KKCC Library Services*	2015 - 2020
10.2.18	Library Services to provide community space for classes and other opportunities both in-house and online that respond to educational needs.	Provide educational opportunities/classes to 1,000 people per annum	KKCC Library Services*	2015 - 2020
10.2.19	The 4 FRC's in the county will run relevant education programmes to improve the education levels of individuals living in areas of disadvantage.	Capacity building and education & training support programmes will be run to support 250 individuals per year	4 FRC's	2016-2020

³¹ NEETS (EU programme term) referring to Young People between age 15-24 who are NOT in EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION or TRAINING SERVICES.

EU 2020 PRIORITY 1: EMPLOYMENT: 75% OF THE 20-64 YEAR-OLDS TO BE EMPLOYED			
LECP HIGH LEVEL GOAL 10: ADDRESSING AREA-BASED POVERTY AND DISADVANTAGE			
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE 3: POVERTY: UNEMPLOYMENT – TO REDUCE THE LEVEL OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN DISADVANTAGED AREAS			
	Actions	Outputs	Partners/Lead* Timeframe
	SICAP Goal 3: Supporting access to employment services especially for those most distant from the labour market:		
10.3.1	Provide one to one supports to individuals who will potentially engage in the Pre-Employment Training, education, work placement and employment programmes.	1900 one-to-one Supports Completed to unemployed individuals from disadvantaged areas identified in this plan	CKLP* 2016 - 2018
10.3.2	Act as a sign posting service through the delivery of inter-agency information sessions, outreach and referral into CKLP and mainstream services.	Present overview of signposting service to LCDC at year end. Develop strategy for widespread communication of same.	CKLP* 2016 - 2018
10.3.3	Deliver niche employment programmes such as Kick-Start, Passport to Employment and Driving Ambitions.	Engage 10 unemployed people from DA in these programmes per annum	CKLP* 2016 - 2018
10.3.4	Deliver the County Kilkenny Employability Strategy 2015 - 2018	Deliver the County Kilkenny Employability Strategy 2015 - 2018	CKLP* 2016 - 2018
10.3.5	4 FRC's in county continue to develop employment training and support services for long term unemployed in disadvantaged areas and those most distant from the labour market	To support 250 long term unemployed, youth and those most distant from the labour market to access a variety training and education initiatives.	4 FRC's 2016-2020
10.3.6	Supporting self-employed: Deliver pre-enterprise workshops into targeted communities and provide one to one business development supports to individuals seeking to establish own enterprise.	1900 one-to-one Supports Completed to unemployed individuals from disadvantaged areas identified in this plan as stated in 3.1	CKLP* 2016 - 2018
10.3.7	Link enterprises in to broader networks and opportunities in the region, e.g. SE Regional Food Trade Desk, Savour Kilkenny and Trail Kilkenny.	10 local businesses linked per annum	CKLP* 2016 - 2018

Social Enterprise:			
10.3.8	Support the development of local enterprises	Two social enterprises assisted per annum	CKLP* 2016 - 2018
10.3.9	Partner with relevant agencies to run targeted jobs fairs in identified areas of disadvantage.	2 Jobseeker events completed per annum	DSP* 2016 - 2020
10.3.10	Work in cooperation with relevant agencies to target information in relation to training and employment opportunities to specific cohorts of people registered with INTREO.	All established partnerships improved.	DSP* 2016 - 2020
10.3.11	4 FRC's continue to develop social enterprise projects within their specific areas	6 social enterprises per year assisted and maintained	4 FRC's 2016-2020

EU 2020 PRIORITY 5: FIGHTING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION: AT LEAST 20 MILLION FEWER PEOPLE IN OR AT RISK OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

LECP HIGH LEVEL GOAL 10: ADDRESSING AREA-BASED POVERTY & DISADVANTAGE

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE 4: POVERTY: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT – REDUCE THE LEVEL OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN DISADVANTAGED AREAS

	Actions	Outputs	Partners/Lead*	Timeframe
10.4.1	Deliver the 'Work to Learn' Programme to 12-15 young people annually, aged 15-18yrs, who otherwise would not have the opportunity, support or knowledge to gain part-time work.	15 new people from DA targeted each year	Ossory Youth*	2016-2018
10.4.2	The DRUM youth centre will provide training to assist identified young people to develop skills aimed at enhancing their employability by working collaboratively with other Youth and Community Organisations	3 courses delivered per annum to 20 young people	DRUM*	2016-2020
10.4.3	Provide facilities to other services delivering educational programmes for young people to aid future employment.	5 Services assisted to deliver 5 programmes to 50 young people	DRUM*	2016-2020
10.4.4	Support the development of a self-employment programme for the 15 – 24 year old target group(Linked to the strategy process outlined in Action 2.7)	5 programmes per year	CKLP*	2016
10.4.5	Work with relevant agencies and groups to support local Businesses to sign up to the Employment and Youth Activation Charter.	As many local businesses as is possible to be signed up per annum	DSP*	2016 – 2020

EU 2020 PRIORITY 5: FIGHTING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION: AT LEAST 20 MILLION FEWER PEOPLE IN OR AT RISK OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION			
LECP HIGH LEVEL GOAL 11: ADDRESSING POVERTY & SOCIAL EXCLUSION			
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE 5: TO ENSURE THE INCLUSION AND ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT OF ALL CITIZENS IN THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF COUNTY KILKENNY			
	Actions	Outputs	Partners/Lead* Timeframe
11.5.1	PPN social Inclusion pillar and the KFSIP to be dynamic structure for communication and engagement of community organisations.	Enhanced representation on local Committees, Communication Strategy developed, informed social inclusion sector	PPN 2016-2017
11.5.2	Promote initiatives that encourage interaction among diverse communities at neighbourhood level, through for example residents associations or Garda Community Safety Groups	2 Initiatives delivered/supported per annum	KIF 2016-2020
11.5.3	The 4 FRC's in the county will continue to provide their facilities to local community groups as a means of encouraging interaction between groups operating at local level	Provide access to facilities for 12 local groups per year	4 FRC's 2-16-2020
	Young People:		
11.5.4	Provide access to youth work opportunities and support, targeted and universal, rural and urban to an excess of 1500 young people annually.	1500 young people per annum engaged	Ossory Youth 2016-2018
11.5.5	Identify, train and support in excess of 150 volunteers annually to provide community-based youth work opportunities for young people aged 12-18yrs.	150 volunteers per annum recruited	Ossory Youth 2016-2018
11.5.6	Establish the Children and Young people's Services Committee (TUSLA)	Development of a Children and Young People's Strategy	TUSLA 2016
11.5.7	Develop a socio-demographic profile and an audit of services for children and young people in County Kilkenny.	Audit completed	TUSLA/ Children's Services Committee 2016

11.5.8	Carry out an analysis of the needs of children and young people living in the county.	Needs Analysis completed	TUSLA/ Children's Services Committee	2016
11.5.9	Develop an action plan and strategy to respond to the needs of children and young people.	Strategy developed	TUSLA/ Children's Services Committee	2017
11.5.10	The 4 FRC's will , through their children and youth programmes encourage young people engaged in FRC programmes to participate and actively engage in the appropriate decision making structures- i.e. the Comhairle na nÓg	100 Young people Actively participating per year	4 FRC's	2016-2020
11.5.11	Create opportunities to involve youth, active age, marginalised and socially excluded groups in heritage projects.	Undertake 2 heritage projects which address social exclusion	Kilkenny Heritage Forum, KKCC Heritage Office*, Heritage Council	2016-2018
11.5.12	Older People To continue to identify and establish relevant programmes and projects that improve the lives of Older people living in Kilkenny (See Kilkenny Age Friendly Strategy for further detail)	To maintain the 3 relevant structures (Older Peoples Forum, Service Providers Forum, Business of aging) and develop new programmes: the Log on and Learn Programme, Business Mentor Panels, the over 65 Start-up Support programme, the Age Friendly Business Programme as part of the Age Friendly County Initiative in Kilkenny	Age Friendly Alliance * KCETB DCU	2016-2020

EU 2020 PRIORITY 5: FIGHTING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION- AT LEAST 20 MILLION FEWER PEOPLE IN OR AT RISK OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION			
LECP HIGH LEVEL GOAL 11: ADDRESSING POVERTY & SOCIAL EXCLUSION			
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE 6: TO PUT PARTICULAR FOCUSED ATTENTION ON LONE PARENTS, TRAVELLERS, PEOPLE FROM MINORITY ETHNIC & CULTURAL GROUPS, OLDER PEOPLE, PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY AND CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE. ENSURE SUCH GROUPINGS ARE PRIORITISED IN RELATION TO POVERTY GOALS.			
	Actions	Outputs	Partners/Lead* Timeframe
	Minority, Ethnic and Cultural groups:		
11.6.1	Support Traveller development workers and Traveller representatives to undertake Certificate/ Diploma /Degree in Community Studies	1-3 Travellers to be supported per annum	KTCM* KTIG 2016 -2020
11.6.2	Target Traveller youth 18-25 years for a pre-employment training and support programme, for 10 Travellers from across the county	10 Travellers complete pre-employment training	KTIG 2016
11.6.3	Access funding streams to sustain the KTCM over 3 year periods for continuity of work and to develop as an independent Traveller Project within the county.	Funding secured Dept Justice	KTIG/KKCC – Community & culture Section/CKLP 2016
11.6.4	Support the Traveller Horse Project in developing its full potential	Detailed plan for horse project developed and project initiated	KKCC- Community & Culture Section, Housing Section, / CKLP /KTCM/ DAFM/ KKLAG 2016 -2020
11.6.5	Support expansion of the Yellow Flag Schools Programme within the County	Inclusion of two new schools each year	KTIG 2016 -2020
11.6.6	Continue to support the provision of English language classes (formal and conversational) in response to and on the basis of actual need.	5 classes provided to 50 participants each year	KIF / FRC's / Immigrant Services 2016 -2020

11.6.7	To highlight diversity and encourage integration amongst all ethnic and cultural groups in Kilkenny through an intercultural events programme this is to include sporting events	2 Intercultural events held annually at least one of these as a sporting event on an annual basis	KIF /KRSP	2016-2018
11.6.8	Support the delivery of cultural awareness training to schools. In Kilkenny	Cultural awareness training delivers to 2 schools per annum	KIF	2016-2018
11.6.9	Engage with religious leaders to encourage people to get involved in cross cultural community initiatives	3 religious leaders engaged with and 2 cross community initiatives targeted.	KIF	2016-2018
11.6.10	The 4 FRC's to provide the appropriate support and facilities for the integration of migrants/ refugees and asylum seeker families/individuals in the county as per the Kilkenny Integration Strategy	10 families/individuals supported each year	FRC's	2016-2020
11.6.11	Lone Parents: Undertake a comprehensive needs analysis of lone parents living in Kilkenny.	Comprehensive Needs Analysis carried out and reported upon.	CKLP, KKCC - Community & Culture Section, FRCs, DSP, TUSLA	2016
11.6.12	Ossory Youth will focus their work programme on young people excluded from society on the basis of mental health status, ethnicity, sexuality, disability, level of 'risk' and/or vulnerability to participate in Ossory Youth ³² .	30 Young people per year participating in Ossory Youth special programmes /projects	Ossory Youth	2016 -2017
11.6.13	The 4 FRC's will continue prioritise their service towards vulnerable families who are excluded from society on the basis on mental health status, ethnicity, sexuality, disability , religion, age, marital status and social class.	40 families per year accessing key FRC services	4 FRC's	2016-2020

³² Ossory Youth Strategic Plan 2013 - 2017

EU 2020 PRIORITY 5: FIGHTING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION: AT LEAST 20 MILLION FEWER PEOPLE IN OR AT RISK OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION				
LECP HIGH LEVEL GOAL 12: ENHANCING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE, AREA CO-ORDINATION, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMMES AND PARTICIPATION				
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE 7: TO ENSURE ALL CITIZENS OF KILKENNY (RURAL AND URBAN BASED) HAVE ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE COMMUNITY FACILITIES.				
	Actions	Outputs	Partners/Lead*	Timeframe
12.7.1	Undertake and update the community, sports and arts Facilities Audit	Community, Sports and Arts Facilities Audit updated	KKCC – Community & Culture Section	2016
12.7.2	Develop a county wide plan for Community facilities and infrastructure.	Plan completed	KKCC- Community & Culture Section and other relevant agencies	2016
12.7.3	Direct capital funding to support gaps identified through the facilities audit and plan.	Approve 4 capital projects over the lifetime of this plan	KKCC – Community & Culture Section	2016 -2020
12.7.4	Proactively work with communities that are 'ready' to develop a sustainable, community-led youth facility in their area.	At least one location per annum	Ossory Youth	2016 -2020
12.7.5	Continue to develop Desart Hall as a needs-based, inclusive and integrated youth centre for all young people in Kilkenny.	A register of groups and young people using Desart Hall developed. Lift installed for improved first floor accessibility. Youth cafe opens at 'youth friendly' times.	Ossory Youth	2016
12.7.6	The Drum Youth Project will provide meeting facilities to Youth and Community groups/organisations as a means of supporting the delivery of services and supports that will benefit them as citizens of Kilkenny.	15 groups per year accessing The Drum meeting facilities	DRUM	2016-2020
12.7.7	The 4 FRC's will provide meeting facilities to Youth and Community groups/organisations as a means of supporting the delivery of services and supports that will benefit them as citizens of Kilkenny.	40 groups per year accessing FRC meeting facilities	4 FRC's	2016-2020
12.7.8	Support community participation in recording, presenting and caring for heritage.	Undertake 2 community participation heritage projects	Kilkenny Heritage Forum, KKCC Heritage Office*, Heritage Council	2016-2018

12.7.9	Support the development of and maximise use of sports facilities and recreational amenities by working collaboratively with sports clubs, Trail Kilkenny and other local organisations.	Kilkenny Clubs accessing National Lottery funding through the Sports Capital programme. The County Council shall continue to investigate the feasibility of developing a Greenway in Kilkenny and a Blue way on the Nore with access points in Kilkenny City.	KRSP	2016-2018
12.7.10	Ensure all citizens of Kilkenny (rural and urban based) have access to appropriate community facilities.	Steps taken to provide accessible, affordable, flexible transport systems both rural& urban	Age Friendly Alliance and Department of Transport	2016-2020

EU 2020 PRIORITY 5: FIGHTING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION: AT LEAST 20 MILLION FEWER PEOPLE IN OR AT RISK OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION				
LECP HIGH LEVEL GOAL 12: ENHANCING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE, AREA CO-ORDINATION, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMMES AND PARTICIPATION				
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE 8: TO ENSURE ALL FACILITIES ARE UTILISED TO THEIR OPTIMUM CAPACITY, OPEN AND AVAILABLE TO ALL CITIZENS.				
	Actions	Outputs	Partners/Lead*	Timeframe
12.8.1	Undertake a programme audit to be part of the community, sports and arts facilities audit.	Programme Audit completed	KKCC- Community & Culture Section , KRSP	2016 - 2017
12.8.2	Incorporate programme audit findings into existing directories and develop a distribution/marketing strategy to promote awareness and use.	Directories updated and distribution strategy implemented	KKCC- Community & Culture Section, KRSP	2017 - 2018
12.8.3	Assist a minimum of 12 local communities annually in developing volunteer-led programmes for young people in their area, based primarily but not exclusively on the 'youth club' model.	12 groups per annum assisted	Ossory Youth	2016 - 2018
12.8.4	Provide direct support/training to local groups to embed community development principles and practices in their approach to local community work	Training provided to 2-5 groups per annum	Kilkenny LAG	2016 - 2017
12.8.5	To up-skill groups with technical supports to access grant aid, manage fundraising, administration and the development of projects.	Training provided to 3-5 groups per annum	Kilkenny LAG	2016 - 2020

EU 2020 PRIORITY 5: FIGHTING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION: AT LEAST 20 MILLION FEWER PEOPLE IN OR AT RISK OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION			
LECP HIGH LEVEL GOAL 12: ENHANCING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE, AREA CO-ORDINATION, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES AND PARTICIPATION			
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE 9 : ENSURE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION AT MUNICIPAL DISTRICT LEVEL TO SUPPORT COMMUNITIES AT LOCAL LEVEL			
	Actions	Outputs	Partners/Lead* Timeframe
12.9.1	To employ 4 community development coordinators through RDS LEADER for the 4 electoral areas.	4 CD co-ordinators employed	Kilkenny LAG 2016
12.9.2	To Support the development of Electoral (Municipal) Districts networks through the PPN	Appropriate Electoral/ Municipal District meetings and communication methods established and operational	PPN 2016-2020

EU 2020 PRIORITY 5: FIGHTING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION: AT LEAST 20 MILLION FEWER PEOPLE IN OR AT RISK OF POVERTY & SOCIAL EXCLUSION			
LECP HIGH LEVEL GOAL 12: ENHANCING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE, AREA CO-ORDINATION, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES AND PARTICIPATION			
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE 10: TO INCREASE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AT BOTH MUNICIPAL DISTRICT AND AT COUNTY LEVEL.			
	Actions	Outputs	Partners/Lead* Timeframe
12.10.1	Employ a development worker for the PPN	PPN Resource Worker in place	KKCC* Community & Culture Section PPN 2015
12.10.2	Develop public consultation and engagement policy/protocols for SPC's, PPN, LCDC, and KKCC.	Policies developed and agreed	PPN* , KKCC all relevant sections and Elected Representatives 2016
12.10.3	Support the PPN membership to be a dynamic structure for communication and engagement.	Annual work plan developed for PPN and report to LCDC each year	PPN* 2016 - 2020

12.10.4	Ensure that those most distant from decision making structures are supported along with local communities and groups to become members of the PPN and other relevant county fora to ensure access to local/county decision making structures.	A targeted recruitment campaign rolled out annually	PPN* FRC's	2015 - 2020
12.10.5	Support representatives at these fora to be informed, have a clear agenda and mandate from their communities in order to participate effectively.	The number of members supported will match the number of structures the PPN is represented on per year	PPN*	2016- 2020
12.10.6	Develop a Volunteer Strategy across a number of key themes, e.g. youth, older people, arts, caring, information support, community groups.	Volunteer Recruitment and Maintenance strategy developed	PPN	2017
12.10.7	To increase community participation and civic engagement of older people at both Municipal District and at County Level	Promotion campaign developed outlining opportunities for engagement & participation of people of all ages in arts, cultural, spiritual, leisure, learning and physical activities & programmes	Age Friendly Alliance	2016-2020

EU 2020 PRIORITY 5: FIGHTING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION: AT LEAST 20 MILLION FEWER PEOPLE IN OR AT RISK OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

LECP HIGH LEVEL GOAL 13: IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELL- BEING

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE 11: ENSURE THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF ALL KILKENNY'S CITIZENS IS MAXIMISED

Actions		Outputs	Partners/Lead*	Timeframe
13.11.1	To work with other statutory, non statutory and voluntary agencies in the roll out of national priorities as identified in Healthy Ireland- the national framework for action to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Ireland	Priorities and agencies identified on an annual basis	HSE - Health Promotion & Improvement, Health & Wellbeing Division	2015 - 2018
13.11.2	Identify and collate evidence based data on the contribution of heritage to health and well-being	Undertake an evidence based study on the contribution of heritage to health and well-being	Kilkenny Heritage Forum, KKCC Heritage Office*, Heritage Council	2016 2018

EU 2020 PRIORITY 5: FIGHTING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION: AT LEAST 20 MILLION FEWER PEOPLE IN OR AT RISK OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION			
LECP HIGH LEVEL GOAL 13: IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELL- BEING			
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVE 12: TO PUT PARTICULAR FOCUS ATTENTION ON THE FOLLOWING AREAS: PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY, SUBSTANCE MISUSE, MENTAL HEALTH & SUICIDE, TRAVELLERS, ETHNIC MINORITIES, HOMELESSNESS AND LGBTI			
	Actions	Outputs	Partners/Lead* Timeframe
13.12.1	Ethnicity: Delivery of Training on a Train the Trainer basis of "Intercultural Awareness & Practice in Health & Social Care"	Training provided to 25 staff / persons per annum	HSE Social Inclusion Unit 2016 - 2020
13.12.2	To Map the Roma Community within Kilkenny	Roma Community mapping and report produced and disseminated	HSE Social Inclusion Unit 2016
13.12.3	Drug and Alcohol: To ensure that Kilkenny operates an effective Local Drugs Task Force that can respond to identified priorities in Kilkenny under the themes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply Control, Community Safety, Crime • Treatment, Harm Reduction Services • Education, Training and Employment 	A Local Drug Strategy and Task Force in place to address local needs	KLDTF* 2016-2020
13.12.4	Homelessness: To continue to work as an integrated Homeless Action Team to meet the needs of complex cases that present in Kilkenny as victims of homelessness	To have developed 5 successful integrated responses to homeless clients presenting to the Homeless Action Team per year	HAT* 2016-2018
12.12.5	To ensure those presenting as homeless have access to health services by ensuring each service user has a current valid Medical Card.	To assess, if necessary then assist in application of medical card and actioned on Care Plan. Approx percentage: 90%. All required health care needs are fulfilled from care plan.	HSE Social Inclusion Unit
13.12.6	To ensure those presenting as homeless have a Health Needs assessment carried out on admittance to Homeless Services.	Every service users admitted to Homeless Service has a Health Needs Assessment carried out within two weeks and reflected within care plan. Approx percentage: 85%	HSE Social Inclusion Unit 2016-2020
13.12.7	To ensure each service user has a care plan which will support them to manage their physical, general health and addiction issues	Care Plan review meetings and progression of same.	HSE Social Inclusion Unit 2016-2020
13.12.8	To ensure that Homeless Services are working to Quality Standards.	Quality standards checklist developed. (As part of the Service Level Agreement all Homeless Services will commence implementation of Quality Standards under the revised Putting People First and HSE Better Health Outcomes).	HSE Social Inclusion Unit 2016-2020

13.12.9	Mental Health: Support the implementation of the Liffey County Strategy for Suicide Prevention.	12.4 Kilkenny Liffey Group to present implementation outcomes to the LCDC on an annual basis	Liffey Liffey	2015 - 2018
13.12.10	Mental Health: Continue to Link in With Liffey when supporting young people's positive mental health through the Arts Office Literary programmes	Production of 1 Rhyme Rag magazine per year with associated workshops	KKCC Arts Office	2016-2020
13.12.11	LGBTI Continue to support Kilkenny Pride and Out for the weekend event on annual basis	One event per annum supported	KKCC* Community & Culture Section	2015 - 2020
13.12.12	LGBTI Host a series of round-table discussions to identify key needs and responses to the LGBTI in Kilkenny	Needs Analysis completed.	KKCC* Community & Culture Section	2016 -2017
13.12.13	Continue to develop needs based and demand-led services for all young people with a particular focus on young people experiencing exclusion and/or difficulties in adolescence. This will include accessible youth cafes, the mental health resilience programme, the youth mentoring programme, 'Work to Learn' programmes.	Services expanded to meet the needs of 10 new young people per year	Ossory Youth	2016-2020
13.12.14	To implement the findings contained in the LGBTI Research "The Rainbow Report – LGBTI Health Needs & Experiences & Health Sector Responses.	To improve the competence of staff in their service provision to and with the LGBTI Community.	HSE Social Inclusion Unit in partnership with other relevant local agencies / group	2016-2020
13.12.15	To improve the health outcomes of Travellers living in Kilkenny through the delivery of targeted Traveller health messages and programmes as part of the Kilkenny Traveller Health Project.	20 Traveller families engaged in Traveller health programmes	Kilkenny Traveller Health Project	2016-2020
13.12.16	FRC's to continue to provide family support / individual support to young people referred to them through TUSLA and other relevant agencies.	16 referred Family/individuals receiving family support services through the FRC	FRC's	2016-2020
13.12.17	The Service Providers Forum of the Kilkenny Age Friendly County Initiative to provide supports to persons with dementia and their carers.	To continue to implement the Memory Matters Programme across Kilkenny and Carlow for those most in need of dementia supports.	Service providers Forum, Age Friendly Alliance and Department of Health	2016-2020



9. IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

The implementation period for the Kilkenny Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) is 2016 – 2021.

All stakeholders involved must ensure they collaborate and allocate the necessary resources for the successful implementation of all of the actions contained in the LECP.

Agencies given a lead role will have primary responsibility for ensuring that the actions listed in the LECP are implemented, and they will be asked to provide regular updates on their delivery.

Monitoring of the economic actions of the LECP will be the responsibility of Kilkenny County Council's SPC for Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Tourism (SPC1).

Monitoring of the community and social inclusion actions of the LECP will be the responsibility of the County Kilkenny Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).

An LECP Advisory Group will also be established to comprise representatives from the LCDC and SPC1 to oversee the overall monitoring and implementation of the LECP. The Chairs of the LCDC and SPC1 will sit on the Advisory Group, along with nominated members from each Committee.

The Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly are to establish an 'Economic Strategy Forum' which will also have a monitoring role in relation to the LECP. Kilkenny County Council (in conjunction with the Regional Assembly) will develop the appropriate structures to enable regional co-operation, monitoring and effective implementation of the LECP at regional level.

In the final quarter of each year, the LECP Advisory Group, support staff for SPC1 and the LCDC will engage with all of the stakeholder organisations and agencies to prepare an annual action plan for the following year.

The annual action plan will comprise a list of the prioritised actions from the LECP to be delivered in that year. The annual plans will include details of the organisations and agencies to be engaged in the delivery of each action, along with baseline figures (where available), key performance indicators, milestones and outcomes/ targets to be delivered in that year. The annual action plans will be equality-proofed across the nine grounds outlined in the Equal Status Acts 2000-2012 in conjunction with the lead agencies responsible for the delivery of the actions as outlined in the proofing section of this plan.

The annual actions plans will be presented to SPC1 and the LCDC for approval at their first meeting each year. It should be noted that the first annual action plan will be finalised by the end of Quarter 2 of 2016 and will cover the period until the end of 2017.

SPC1 and the LCDC will monitor the implementation of the annual action plans at their subsequent meetings throughout the year and address any issues arising.

The LECP will be flexible to allow additional actions and ideas to be added as they emerge over the period of the plan.

The Chairs of the LCDC and SPC1 will provide a written report on the progress of the implementation of the community and economic actions respectively, to Kilkenny County Council, and the three Municipal District Councils bi-annually. These progress reports will be published and will identify areas for further action.

Planning, monitoring and evaluation are ongoing processes. There is constant feedback, learning and improving. Actions outlined in the LECP will be regularly reviewed and modified based on the lessons learned through monitoring and evaluation, and any future actions can be developed based on these lessons. Such review and modification shall also be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening processes as appropriate. Implementation of the LECP will also conform to:

- The Regional Planning Guidelines and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy when that is in place, and
- The provisions of the Kilkenny County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans, including those provisions requiring sustainable development and protection and management of the environment.

The implementation of the LECP depends, in part, on the ability of both the LCDC and SPC1 and other stakeholders to carry out evaluation of actions to help inform decision making. The focus will be on what is working, why and in what context; how could it be done differently for better results; and how this knowledge or approach can be applied to other contexts. Key decision makers involved in delivering the LECP actions will use evaluations to make necessary improvements and adjustments to the implementation approach or strategies, and to decide on alternatives. On-going evaluation will also help ensure the LECP is aligned with and supports county, national, EU and other key strategies.

The results and outcomes outlined in the LECP high level goals and actions will be monitored to ensure:

- The outcomes agreed under each action are being achieved. This is a collective responsibility for the LCDC, SPC1 and all stakeholders.
- The annual action plan produces the envisaged outcomes in an efficient manner. This will include ensuring appropriate use of resources.
- Decisions and changes to actions, programmes and projects are based on sound evidence.
- Lessons learned are systematically captured to improve future actions and outcomes.
- Implementation of the LECP progresses towards achieving the EU2020 targets.

APPENDIX I: MEMBERSHIPS OF LCDC AND SPC1

(as at end of December 2015)

Kilkenny Local Community Development Committee	
Name	Organisation
Sean McKeown	Local Enterprise Office
Loretto O'Driscoll	Teagasc
Eileen Curtis	Education & Training Board
Mary Barron	Department of Social Protection
Cllr David Fitzgerald	Elected Representative
Cllr Andrew McGuinness	Elected Representative
Cllr Eamon Aylward	Elected Representative
Cllr Mary Hilda Cavanagh	Elected Representative
Elizabeth Dermody	Comm. & Voluntary - Ossory Youth (PPN Community Pillar)
Martin Carroll	Comm. & Voluntary - Castlecomer Enterprise Group (PPN Community Pillar)
Fergus Keane	Chairperson as of December 2015 - Social Inclusion - Good Shepherd Centre (PPN Social Inclusion Pillar)
Mary O'Hanlon	Social Inclusion - OPF (PPN Social Inclusion Pillar)
PJ Cleere	Social Inclusion Disability - KFSIP (PPN Social Inclusion Pillar)
Sheila Donnelly	Family Resource Centres
Niall McManus	KK Cycling & Walking Campaign (PPN Environment Pillar)
John Bambrick	IFA
Martin Costello	Chamber of Commerce
Declan Rice	CKLP
Colette Byrne	CEO, Kilkenny County Council
Nickey Brennan	Acting Independent Chairperson (until end October 2015)
LCDC Support Staff	
Maria Melia	Chief Officer
Bríd Hynes, Lindsey Butler, Lisa Bourke	

SPC for Economic Development, Enterprise Support & Tourism	
Cllr Pat Millea	Chairman
Cllr Peter Cleere	Elected Representative
Cllr Tomas Breathnach	Elected Representative
Cllr Michael Doyle	Elected Representative
Cllr Patrick O’Neill	Elected Representative
Cllr Patrick McKee	Elected Representative
Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick	Elected Representative
Mr Phil Funchion	Trade Union Rep
Mr Michael Kennedy	CIF Rep
Mr John Bambrick	IFA Rep
Ms Deirdre Shine	Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce Rep
Ms Theresa Delahunty	Social Inclusion Pillar Rep, PPN
Mr Charles Wani	Social Inclusion Pillar Rep, PPN
SPC Support Staff	
Martin Prendiville	Head of Finance
Sean McKeown	Head of Enterprise
Brian Tyrell	Senior Executive Officer
Stephen O’Connor	Administrative Officer
Aisling Hayes	Administrative Officer



APPENDIX II: CONSULTATIONS AND DESK RESEARCH

(i) Plans and Strategies Reviewed

The following reports and strategies were reviewed and informed the development of this plan.

1. Ireland's National Traveller / Roma Integration Strategy 2011 – 2016
2. Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: The national policy framework for children & young people 2014 - 2020
3. The South East Homelessness Action Plan 2013 – 2016
4. National Social Housing Strategy 2020)
5. National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan 2013-2015
6. National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016
7. Rural Social Inclusion: Rural Poverty and Social Exclusion on the Island of Ireland – Context, Policies and Challenges by Dr. Kathy Walsh, KW Research and Associates Ltd. 2010
8. Building Strong and Inclusive Communities: A regional strategy for LGBT Inclusion and Support in the South East 2013-2018
9. OECD Delivering Local Development: Ireland 2013
10. Guidance on Community-led Local Development in European Structural and Investment Funds Version 2: May 2014
11. Healthy Ireland – A framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013 – 2018
12. A Draft Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland March 2015
13. Kilkenny Age Friendly Strategy 2011-2015
14. Uniting the Diverse- Kilkenny Integration Strategy 2013-2017
15. Kilkenny Traveller Interagency Group reports
16. Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement (KTCM) 2020 Strategy
17. South East Traveller Health Unit Strategic Plan 2015-2020
18. Ferrybank Community Development Strategy 2015-2020
19. Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership
20. Kilkenny County Council Estate Management Strategic Plan 2015-2020
21. Kilkenny Social Housing Strategy
22. Strategic Framework for Family Support within the Family and Community Services Resource Centre Programme. Family Support Agency Revised Edition January 2013.
23. One Parent National Strategy
24. South East Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force DRAFT 2015 Priorities
25. Our Community, Our Conversation: Co Kilkenny Action Plan for Suicide Prevention 2014 – 2018
Lifeline Kilkenny
26. Action Programme for Effective Local Government – Putting People First
27. Action Plan for Jobs 2015

130 Kilkenny Local Economic and Community Plan

28. South East Region Action Plan for Jobs 2015-2017
29. Construction 2020 – A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector
30. Delivering our Green Potential – Government Policy Statement on Growth and Employment in the Green Economy
31. Energising Ireland’s Rural Economy – Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA).
32. Food Harvest 2020
33. Local Government Sectoral Strategy to Promote Employment and Support Local Enterprise - Supporting Economic Recovery and Jobs – Locally
34. Making it Happen – Growing Enterprise for Ireland
35. Our Sustainable Future – A Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland
36. Regional Planning Guidelines for the South East 2010-2022
37. Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014 -2020
38. Kilkenny City Development Plan 2014-2020
39. National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
40. A Strategy for Growth: Medium-Term Economic Strategy 2014 – 2020
41. Indecon Report on CDBs
42. National Policy Statement on Entrepreneurship 2014
43. Europe 2020 Strategy and National Reform Programme for Ireland
44. Local Roots Global Reach ‘Food Wise 2025 – A 10-Year Vision for the Irish agri-food industry.’ (Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine).
45. Regional Indicators Report - 2014: Monitoring Framework for Implementation of the Regional Planning Guidelines
46. People, Place and Policy – Growing Tourism to 2025 (Fáilte Ireland)



Profile of Mainstream & Voluntary Services

The following services were identified and considered in the development of this plan.

Kilkenny County Council is responsible for the provision of an extensive range of public services in Kilkenny. In addition, local authorities promote the interests of the local community, including the social, economic, environmental, recreational, cultural, community and general development of Kilkenny.

Local Enterprise Office provides advice, information and support to you in starting up or growing your business. With 31 dedicated teams across the local authority network in Ireland, Local Enterprise Offices offer you a wide range of experience, skills and services.

The Local Enterprise Office is for people interested in starting up a new business or already in business including entrepreneurs, early-stage promoters, start-ups and small business looking to expand.

Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) is the new social inclusion programme that took over from its successor programme the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP). It aims to tackle poverty, social exclusion and long-term unemployment through local engagement and partnership between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies.

Department of Social Protection plays a key role in supporting those most in need, including children and their parents, people who are unemployed, ill, carers, people with disabilities and older people.

SOLAS Employment & Training Services has been established to develop and give strategic direction to the Further Education and Training Sector in Ireland. It is responsible for funding, planning and co-ordinating a wide range of training and further education programmes.

County Kilkenny LEADER Partnership is a Local Development Company operating the Social Inclusion Activation Programme and the Rural Development Programme in the county.

TUSLA Child & Family Agency is the dedicated State agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children.

Carlow/Kilkenny HSE services provide a wide range of health and personal social services to Carlow and Kilkenny.

Carlow Kilkenny Educational and Training Board (ETB) - In the past, the Vocational Educational Committees (VECs) were the main providers of further education in Ireland. ETBs are the new statutory education authorities, formed from the aggregation of Ireland's 33 VECs (abolished on 1 July) and the integration of the 16 FÁS Training Centres (on-going in 2014), will be the vehicles for the delivery of coordinated education and training programmes across Ireland.

Teagasc - the Agriculture and Food Development Authority - is the national body providing integrated research, advisory and training services to the agriculture and food industry and rural communities

Kildalton College is the largest agricultural college in the county and is located in Piltown, County Kilkenny. This college meets the agricultural needs of all students in the region who want full-time agricultural training. The educational focus is on providing Level 6 agricultural distance training to non-agricultural award holders. In addition there are also short courses on farm health and safety, financial management, dairy new entrant, environmental and options courses.

Ring a Link is a non-profit making, charitable organisation funded by the Department of Transport, offering affordable and convenient transport for rural dwellers of Counties Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary. Ring a Link services are demand responsive and door-to-door.

Health Promotion & Improvement, Health & Wellbeing Division, HSE -the work of the Health and Wellbeing Division is focused on helping people to stay healthy and well, reducing health inequalities and protecting people from threats to their health and wellbeing. It was established based on two fundamental policy shifts within the health service: Future Health, which describes the new structures currently being established for the healthcare system and Healthy Ireland, the Government's Framework to improve the health and wellbeing of our population.

Social Inclusion and Substance Misuse Unit, HSE - Aims to improve access to mainstream services, target services to marginalised groups, address inequalities in access to health services; and enhance the participation and involvement of socially excluded groups and local communities in the planning, design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of health services.

Groups targeted specifically include marginalised groups identified (includes homeless people, minority ethnic communities, Travellers, illicit drug users, those from the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual/transgender communities, people with problematic or dependent alcohol use and people with HIV/ AIDS).

Main youth service providers; Ossory Youth, Foróige, Macra na Feirme: Scouting Ireland, Family Resource Centres (FRCs).

Kilkenny County Childcare Committee supports the development of a quality early childhood care and education sector throughout Kilkenny City and County.

Kilkenny Citizens Information Centre provides a free and confidential information service on all aspects of the social services including housing, health, social welfare, law, employment, pensions, and tax and consumers affairs. It has three outreach offices: Kilkenny City, Graiguenamanagh and Mooncoin.

Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) is the State's money advice service, guiding people through dealing with problem debt.

Family Resource Centres: There are four Family Resource Centres (FRCs) operating in Kilkenny: The Fr. McGrath FRC services a section of western Kilkenny City; Droichead FRC services the Callan area; Newpark Close FRC services a segment of the eastern part of the city based around that titular housing estate, and The Mill FRC is located in Urlingford. Key services provided by FRCs include:

- The provision of family support, information and advice at local level;
- Practical assistance to community groups (such as training, information, advice and use of shared facilities);
- Education courses and training opportunities;
- Childcare facilities for those attending courses provided by the programme;
- After-school clubs.

Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement (KTCM) is a Traveller-led organisation which supports Travellers and Traveller community development throughout County Kilkenny. KTCM aims to provide a supportive environment for all Travellers in County Kilkenny to work together and make progress. There are four programmes attached to the KTCM – The Traveller Health Project, The Traveller Participation Project, the Traveller Childcare and After School programmes and the Kilkenny Traveller Horse Project.

Kilkenny Traveller Interagency Group is an interagency group that looks at integrated service delivery priorities for the Traveller Community, and includes Travellers as partners in the identification of these priorities. Kilkenny Local Traveller Accommodation Committee has responsibility for developing an annual accommodation plan for Travellers in the county.

Kilkenny Sports & Recreation Partnership (KRSP) is one of a series of county-based sports partnerships established by the Irish Sports Council. It is comprised of a wide range of interest groups in the county, from voluntary sports clubs, local development, health promotion and other relevant agencies.

Other specialised services: The Good Shepherd Centre provides short-term accommodation for homeless men while the Amber Kilkenny Women's Refuge Services provides a similar service to women. Immigrant services and Fáilte Isteach projects provide information, integration and language supports to the immigrant community. Kilkenny Integration Forum provides activities, projects, forums and events to assist in the integration process at local level.

Kilkenny Forum for Social Inclusion and Participation is a federation of community-based organisations for combating inequalities and promoting social justice.

Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN) is the framework for public engagement and participation. The PPN will be the main link through which the local authority connects with the community, social inclusion and environmental sectors. The aim of the PPN is to facilitate and enable public organisations operating within the wider community to articulate and give voice to a diverse range of views, issues and interests within the local government system.

LECP ACRONYM INDEX 2015

AA	Appropriate Assessment	KDW	Kilkenny Design Workshops
AFC	Age Friendly County	KIF	Kilkenny Integration Forum
AFA	Age Friendly Alliance	KKCC	Kilkenny County Council
AIP	Annual Implementation Plan	KLDTF	Kilkenny Local Drugs Task Force
APJ	Action Plan for Jobs	KTCM	Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement
CEDRA	Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas	KTIG	Kilkenny Traveller Interagency Group
CKLP	County Kilkenny LEADER Partnership	KRSP	Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership
CLÁR	Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais	LAG	Local Action Group
CSB	Community Support Budget	LDC	Local Development Company
CSF	Community Support Framework	LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Development d'Economie Rurale
CSP	Community Services Programme	LEO	Local Enterprise Office
DAF	Dormant Accounts Fund	LGBTI	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersexual
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine	MFI	Micro-Finance Ireland
DAP	Disability Activation Programme	NDP	National Development Plan
DECLG	Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government	NEETS	A young person who is "Not in Education, Employment, or Training"
DCCOI	Design & Crafts Council of Ireland	NSS	National Spatial Strategy
DCU	Dublin City University	NUIM	National University of Ireland, Maynooth
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
DECLG	Department of the Environment Community and Local Government	OPC	Older People's Council (formerly Older People's Forum)
DED	District Electoral Division	PPN	Public Participation Network
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools	RSS	Rural Social Scheme
DES	Department of Education and Skills	RTP	Rural Transport Programme
DSP	Department of Social Protection	SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
DTTAS	Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport	SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
DRUM	Foroige Youth Facility and Drop-in	SEBIC	South East Business Innovation Centre
EA	Employment Activation	SICAP	Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme
ED	Electoral Division	SLA	Service Level Agreement
EI	Enterprise Ireland	SOLAS	Seirbhísí Oideachais Leanunaigh agus Scileanna (Further Education and Training Authority)
ETB	Education and Training Board (formerly VEC) Carlow and Kilkenny	SPAs	Special Protection Areas
FETAC	Further Education and Training Awards Council	TUSLA	The Child and Family Agency
FRC	Family Resource Centre	WIT	Waterford Institute of Technology
HAT	Homeless Action Team	YEI	Youth Employment Initiative
HSE	Health Service Executive		
IBEC	Irish Business and Employers Confederation		
IDA	Industrial Development Authority		
ITC	Institute of technology, Carlow		



Health & Wellbeing

Agriculture & Food

Business Demography

Education

Population

Homelessness

Economic Development

Community Development



**Local Community
Development Committee**



Kilkenny County Council
County Hall | John Street | Kilkenny