

athbhreithniú bliantúil 1999

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annual review 1999

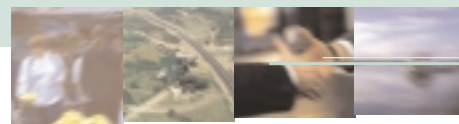
athbhreithniú bliantúil 1999

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Contents

	Page
Chairperson's Foreword	4
 Part I: The Western Development Commission A New State Body for Regional Development	
Introduction	10
The WDC's Organisational Structure	11
The WDC's External Networks	12
The Challenge of Developing the West	15
 Part II: The Work of the Western Development Commission in 1999	
Policy Analysis and Development	26
Regional Initiatives in the Productive Sectors	37
Western Investment Fund	40
 Appendices	
Appendix 1 Members of the Western Development Commission	44
Appendix 2 Staff of the Western Development Commission	45
Appendix 3 Forum of Western Ministers	45
Appendix 4 Sector Councils	46
Appendix 5 Steering Groups	48
Appendix 6 National Liaison Network	49
Appendix 7 Further Development Projects Planned for Telecommunications Infrastructure	50
Appendix 8 Organisations consulted by the Western Development Commission in 1999	51
Abbreviations used in Annual Review	55



Chairperson's Foreword

The Western Development Commission (WDC) is charged with promoting economic and social development in the seven western counties of Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare. It was established as a statutory body in February 1999. The WDC works in co-operation with national, regional and local bodies to secure the development of the Western Region. The activities of the WDC involve policy analysis and development, undertaking key regional initiatives and management of the Western Investment Fund.

The impetus for the establishment of the Western Development Commission grew from a groundswell of public concern about the persistent underdevelopment of the region. This first Annual Review sets out how, in our first year of operation, we have created the foundations of an effective regional development body and have begun the task of promoting the development of the region.

Engagement is an important part of WDC's approach. Our structure, and in particular our Sector Councils, connect us to the economic and social development realities on the ground across the different sectors. This engagement is supported by the objectivity necessary for a state body, and much of our work so far has focussed on preparing detailed objective data to demonstrate and underpin the case for major changes in policy and expenditure in key sectors. Such objectivity is vital in order to present a credible case for changes in policy and practice.

Our formal link into each government department, through the National Liaison Network, is an innovative means by which new policies can be mediated and customised for the region. We believe that the WDC's engagement with the region, combined with its objectivity, give it a particular capacity to add value to government support for regional development.

1999 was a year of major progress for the West and the WDC is pleased that it had the opportunity to play a very active role in this. The publication of the White Paper on Rural Development was a comprehensive statement of positive government policy for rural areas. The retention of Objective 1 status for six of the seven western counties gave an important impetus to regional development and regional issues were very much to the fore in the debate surrounding the preparation of the National Development Plan.

The WDC's plan for the region, *Blueprint for Success: A Development Plan for the West 2000-2006* (published in April 1999), crystallised our approach to policy development. It is a plan that set out key costed priorities and targets for western development and was the WDC's input to the National Development Plan. All ten of the recommendations in *Blueprint for Success* were incorporated in the Plan and we are pleased that our work has received such recognition.

With the support of our Sector Councils and other new partnerships we are now engaged in the production of further *Blueprints* for key sectors of the economy. The first of these was our report on *Foreign Direct Investment, Blueprint for Investing in the West*,

which was published in October 1999. The twelve key recommendations in this document spell out the concrete steps that need to be taken to increase the level of overseas investment in the West. In this work, the WDC made hard choices by naming the specific towns that should be favoured for investment and by highlighting the deficiencies that need to be corrected in others.

Throughout the year we have also taken important initiatives to develop the key productive sectors of farming, small food enterprises, tourism and the marine.

Despite our best efforts and strongest hopes, the Western Investment Fund did not become operational during 1999. This was very disappointing to me and to the other members of the Western Development Commission. However, we are hopeful that clearance from the EU authorities will be given in the first half of 2000¹. Once we have received clearance we will spare no effort to expedite the implementation of the Fund.

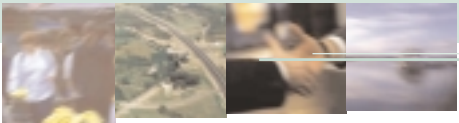
To date the WDC has worked with limited resources, but with unbounded co-operation, to effect policy change at the highest levels and to secure co-ordinated action on the ground. We believe that the co-operation we are achieving is very precious. It is pointing the way to how a relatively small state body can nonetheless be effective by drawing in not just partnership but leadership from the voluntary and private sector.

In pursuing this approach the WDC can play a very significant role in enabling the Government to make its regional development plans a reality that can transform the Western Region. There is now a palpable atmosphere of confidence and optimism in the West and I believe that the WDC has made some contribution to this. This faith in a better future is also the bedrock for progress if it is accompanied by prudent policies and support mechanisms on the ground, which can make various long overdue developments happen more quickly.

The WDC has received enormous support and co-operation from all sectors in the past year. Particular thanks are due to those who have unselfishly given their time to participating in our Sector Councils and Steering Groups. The support of state bodies operating in the region and the various government departments is also deeply appreciated. I am greatly indebted to my fellow Commission members and to Liam Scollan and the staff of the WDC for their dedicated work throughout the year. I would also like to thank Noel Davern TD Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development for his support and encouragement.

Sean Tighe,
March 2000

¹ The Western Investment Fund was subsequently approved by the EU Commission in April 2000, with the exception of investments in Agriculture & Food and Marine sectors, which are the subject of separate approval processes.



Ráiteas an Chathaoirligh

Tá sé mar chúram ar Choimisiún Forbartha an Iarthair (CFI) forbairt eacnamaíochta agus shóisialta a chur chun cinn i seacht gcontae san iarthar, Dún na nGall, Sligeach, Liatroim, Ros Comáin, Maigh Eo, Gaillimh agus an Clár. Bunaíodh mar chomhlacht reachtúil é i bhFeabhra 1999. Oibríonn CFI i gcomhar le eagraíochtaí náisiúnta, réigiúnacha agus áitiúla chun forbairt Réigiún an Iarthair a dhainiú. I ngníomhaíochtaí CFI áirítear anailís ar pholasaí agus forbairt polasaí, tabhairt faoi phríomhthionscnaimh réigiúnacha agus rialú Chiste Infheistíochta an Iarthair.

D'fhás an fuinneamh ónar eascair bunú Choimisiún Forbartha an Iarthair ó bhorradh imní poiblí faoi thearcfhorbairt sheasmhach an réigiúin. Sa chéad Athbhreithniú Bliantúil seo leagtar amach modh feidhmithe a bhfuil bunchloch comhlachta forbartha réigiúnach éifeachtach cruthaithe againn agus tús curtha againn le forbairt an réigiúin a chur chun cinn.

Is cuid thábhachtach dár chur chuige an dul i ngleic. Nascfar muid lenár struchtúr, agus go háirithe lenár gComhairlí Earnála, sinn le fírinne na forbartha eacnamaíochta agus sóisialta ar an talamh ar fud na n-earnálacha éagsúla. Tacaítear leis an dul i ngleic seo leis an oibiachtúlacht atá riachtanach do eagraíocht stáit. Tá cuid mhaith dár n-obair go dtí seo thréis díriú ar shonraí oibiachtúla mionsonraithe a ullmhú chun an cás le haghaidh mórathruithe i bpolasaí agus i gcaiteachas i bpríomhearnálacha a thaispeáint agus a láidriú. Tá oibiachtúlacht dá leithéid fíorthábhachtach chun cás sochreidte a dhéanamh le haghaidh athruithe i bpolasaí agus i gcleachtas.

Is meán nuálach é ár nasc foirmiúil le gach roinn rialtais, tríd an Lionra Idirchaidrimh Náisiúnta, trinar féidir polasaithe nua a stiúradh agus a shaincheapadh don réigiún. Creidimid le dul i ngleic CFI leis an réigiún, in éineacht lena oibiachtúlacht go dtugann cumas ar leith chun cur leis an tacaíocht rialtais don fhorbairt réigiúnach.

Bliain mhór a bhí i naoi deag naocha naoi i ndul chun cinn an Iarthair agus is mór ag CFI go raibh an deis aige ról an-ghníomhach a ghlacadh sa dul chun cinn sin. Ráiteas cuimsitheach agus pholasaí dearfach rialtais do cheantair tuaithe a bhí i bhfoilsíú an Pháipéir Bháin ar Fhorbairt Tuaithe. Tugadh fuinneamh tábhachtach don fhorbairt réigiúnach stádas Cuspóir 1 á choinneáil le haghaidh sé cinn de na seacht gcontae thiar agus bhí ceisteanna réigiúnacha chun tosaigh go mór sa díospóireacht a bhí ann in ullmhúchán an Phlean Forbartha Náisiúnta.

Cinneadh le plean CFI don réigiún, Plean Mionsonraithe don Rathúnas: Plean Forbartha don Iarthar 2000-2006 (a foilsíodh in Aibreán 2000), ár gcur chuige don fhorbairt polasaí. Is plean é a leag amach príomhthosaíochtaí agus spriocanna costais d'fhorbairt an Iarthair agus ba é ionchur CFI sa Phlean Forbartha Náisiúnta é. Cuireadh gach ceann de na deich moladh sa Phlean Mionsonraithe don Rathúnas isteach sa Phlean Forbartha Náisiúnta agus is mór againn go bhfuil aitheantas dá leithéid faighte ag ár gcuid oibre.

Le tacaíocht ónár gComhairlí Earnála agus ó chomhpháirtíochtaí nua eile táimid i mbun Pleananna Mionsonraithe breise le haghaidh phríomhearnála an eacnamaíochta a ullmhú. Ba é an chéad cheann díobh sin ár dtuarascáil ar Infheistíocht Choigríche Dhíreach,

Plean Mionsonraithe don Infheistíocht san Iarthar, a foilsíodh i nDeireadh Fómhair 1999. Sa dá phríomh-mholadh déag sa doiciméad seo minítear na céimeanna sonracha la is gá a thógáil chun an leibhéal infheistíochta coigríche san Iarthar a mhéadú. San obair sin, rinne CFI roghanna deacra tríd na bailte ar leith a ainmniú ar chóir fabhar a thabhairt dóibh maidir le hinfeistíocht, agus trí bhéim a chur ar na heasnamh is gá a cheartú i mbailte eile. Ar feadh na bliana, tá tionscnaimh thábhachtacha tosaithe againn chun príomhearnálacha táirgiúla na feirmeoireachta, na bhfiontair beaga bia, na turasóireachta agus na mara a fhorbairt.

In ainneoin ár seacht ndícheall a dhéanamh agus an dóchas mór a bheith againn, níor thosaigh Ciste Infheistíochta an Iarthair ag feidhmiú le linn 1999. Is ábhar mór díomá dom féin agus do bhaill eile an Choimisiúin é sin. Tá súil againn, áfach, go bhfaighfear cinneadh fábharach ó údaráis an AE sa chéad leath den bhliain 2000. A luaithe a fhaighimid an cinneadh sin déanfaimid ár seacht ndícheall feidhmiú an Chiste a bhrostú.

Go dtí seo, tá CFI ag obair faoi acmhainní teoranta, cé gur ann do chomhoibriú gan teorainn, chun athrú polasaí a chur i bhfeidhm ag na leibhéil is airde agus gníomhaíocht chomhordaithe a dhainiú ar an talamh. Creidimid go bhfuil an comhoibriú atá á bhaint amach againn an-luachmhar. Tá siad ag léiriú conas is féidir le comhlacht stáit atá cuibheasach beag a bheith éifeachtach, trí na harnáin comhpháirtíocht a mhealladh ón earnáil dheonach agus phríobháideach agus freisin le mhealladh uaithe chomh maith.

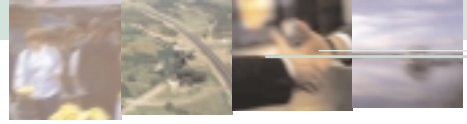
Sa cur chuige seo féadfaidh CFI ról an-tábhachtach a ghlacadh chun an cumas a thabhairt don Rialtas a bphleananna forbartha réigiúnaí an Iarthair cuimsith each. Tá atmaisféar muiníne agus dochas le braith san Iarthar anois agus creidim go bhfuil a chion curtha ag CFI leis sin. Beidh an dochas sa todhchaí níos fearr mar bhunchloch don dul chun cinn má ghabhann polasaithe stuama agus struchtúir tacaíochta ar an talamh leis, rud a dfeadfadh borradh a chur le iliomad forbairtí atá le fada.

Tá tacaíocht agus comhoibriú fiormhór faighte ag CFI ó gach earnáil le bliain anuas. Tá buíochas ar leith ag dul leo sin atá i ndiaidh a n-am a thabhairt go fíal chun páirt a ghlacadh inár gComhairlí Earnála agus Coistí Stiúrtha. Táthar an-bhuíoch chomh maith as an tacaíocht atá tugtha ag comhlachtaí stáit atá ag feidhmiú sa réigiún agus ag na ranna éagsúla rialtais dúinn. Táim faoi chomaoin mhór ag mo chomhbhaill den Choimisiún ag Liam Scollan agus foireann CFI as a n-obair dhúthrachtach tríd an mbliain ar fad. Ba mhaith liom buíochas a ghabháil chomh maith le Noel Davern, TD, Aire Stáit ag an Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Forbartha Tuaithe, as an tacaíocht agus spreagadh atá tugtha aige.

Séan MacThagadh

Séan MacThagadh
Márta 2000

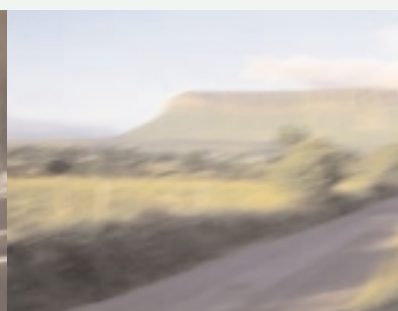
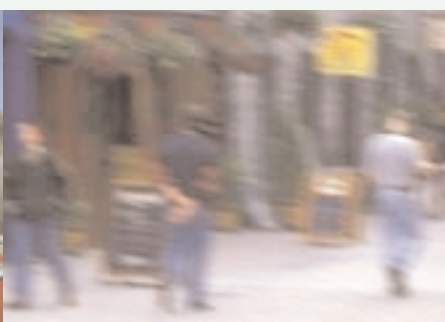
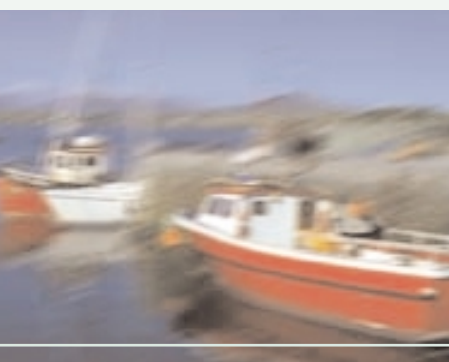
1 Rinne údaráis an AE Ciste Infheistíochta an Iarthair a cheadú in Aibreán 2000, leis na hinfeistíochtaí sna hearnálacha Talmhaíochta & Bia agus Mara mar eisceachtaí, earnálacha iad sin atá mar chuid a de dhá phríoséis ceadaithe ar leith.



Members and Chief Executive
of the Western Development Commission.

Left to right:
Standing: Michael McLoone; Malachy King;
Cllr. Paddy McGarry; Peadar O'Tuathail;
Lisa McAllistair; Sean Hannick; Maruice Harvey;
Liam Scollan, Chief Executive; Frank O'Donnell.
Sitting: Sr. Maureen Lally; Sean Tighe, Chairperson;
and Cllr. Mary Bohan.

part I



athbhreithniú bliantúil 1999



Part I The Western Development Commission A New State Body for Regional Development

Introduction

This Annual Review is the first account of the activities of the Western Development Commission which was established as a statutory body in February 1999. In its first year of operation as a state body much of the work of the WDC has been concentrated on two key priorities, namely:

- establishing structures and strategies which put into operation the WDC's extensive remit of promoting economic and social development in the Western Region, and thereby putting the organisation on a firm footing as a credible and efficient public body; and
- promoting key policies and initiatives, which are fundamental to western development.

These two sets of activities are described in Parts I and II of this Annual Report.

Under the Western Development Commission Act 1998, the purpose of the WDC is to promote, foster and encourage economic and social development in the Western Region (defined as counties Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare). In practice, this involves the WDC in three main activities, viz.

- policy analysis and development
- strategic initiatives in various sectors
- management of the Western Investment Fund (WIF).

Key Objectives of the WDC

The WDC has fulfilled its legislative remit by establishing key objectives and sound organisational structures that enable it to respond effectively to the development needs and opportunities in the Western Region. The three key objectives are:

- To ensure that public economic and social policy effectively meets the development needs of the Western Region by tracking the implementation of a range of policies and recommending adjustments as appropriate, with particular reference to the need for co-ordination of the various bodies involved.
- To identify, develop and facilitate the implementation of regional initiatives in partnership with the public, private and voluntary sectors with the support of WIF co-investment where appropriate.
- To establish, administer and manage the Western Investment Fund on a commercial basis so as to address the funding needs of projects, businesses and local communities.

The focus of WDC, therefore, is to customise the policies emerging from different government departments and to enable bodies in the region to work effectively together to achieve significant results.

The WDC operates under the aegis of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development and it received £570,000 in grants in 1999.

The WDC's Organisational Structure

The Chairperson and members of the Western Development Commission are appointed by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Rural Development and include members from each of the seven western counties (Appendix 1). The Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Mr Noel Davern, TD had responsibility for the WDC in 1999.

The WDC has nine sanctioned staff and had seven staff in post during 1999 (Appendix 2). Staff are provided with e-work facilities enabling remote online access to work files and to other staff. This enables them to work from anywhere in the region, reduces wasteful commuting time and it increases the time

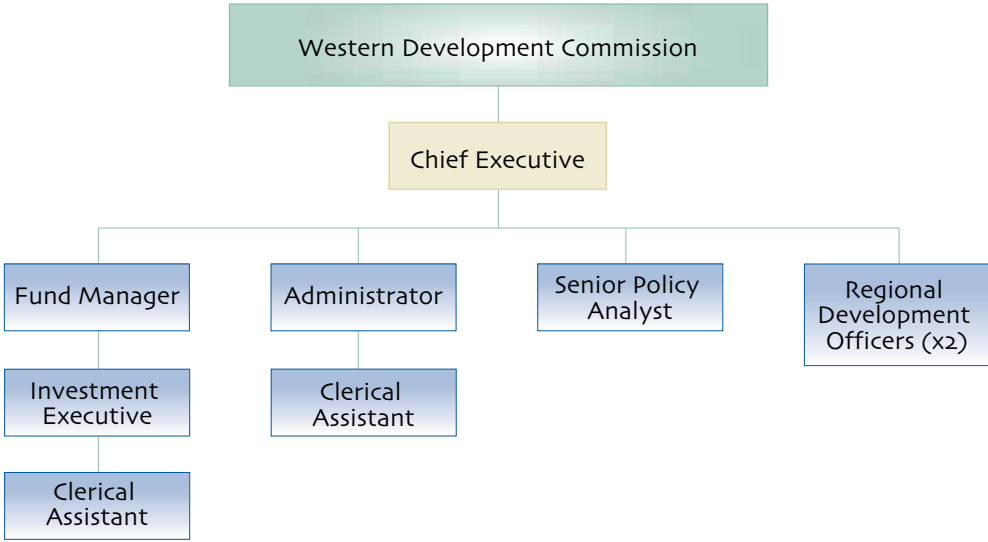
available for dealing face to face with regional and national bodies. (See Chart 1).

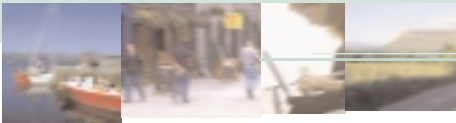
Dillon House, Ballaghaderreen, the ancestral home of the Dillon family, who were deeply associated with regional development, became the headquarters of the WDC in May 1999.



Dillon House, Ballaghaderreen, County Roscommon, Headquarters of the Western Development Commission.

Chart 1: WDC Organisational Structure





The WDC’s External Networks

Economic and social development in Ireland is a complex field in which there are many organisations and agencies. This underlines the importance of the WDC’s co-ordination and facilitation role. The complexity of this task is best illustrated if one considers the range of bodies that emerge from each of the key categories highlighted in Table 1.

In 1999 the WDC established networking structures and processes which enable it to work effectively across a relatively large region with a range of sectors, interests and public bodies. Through these structures, the WDC now involves almost 100 people who are focused on key regional objectives on an ongoing basis. The structures that facilitate this networking are illustrated in Chart 2.

Table 1: Bodies and Institutions Involved in Western Development

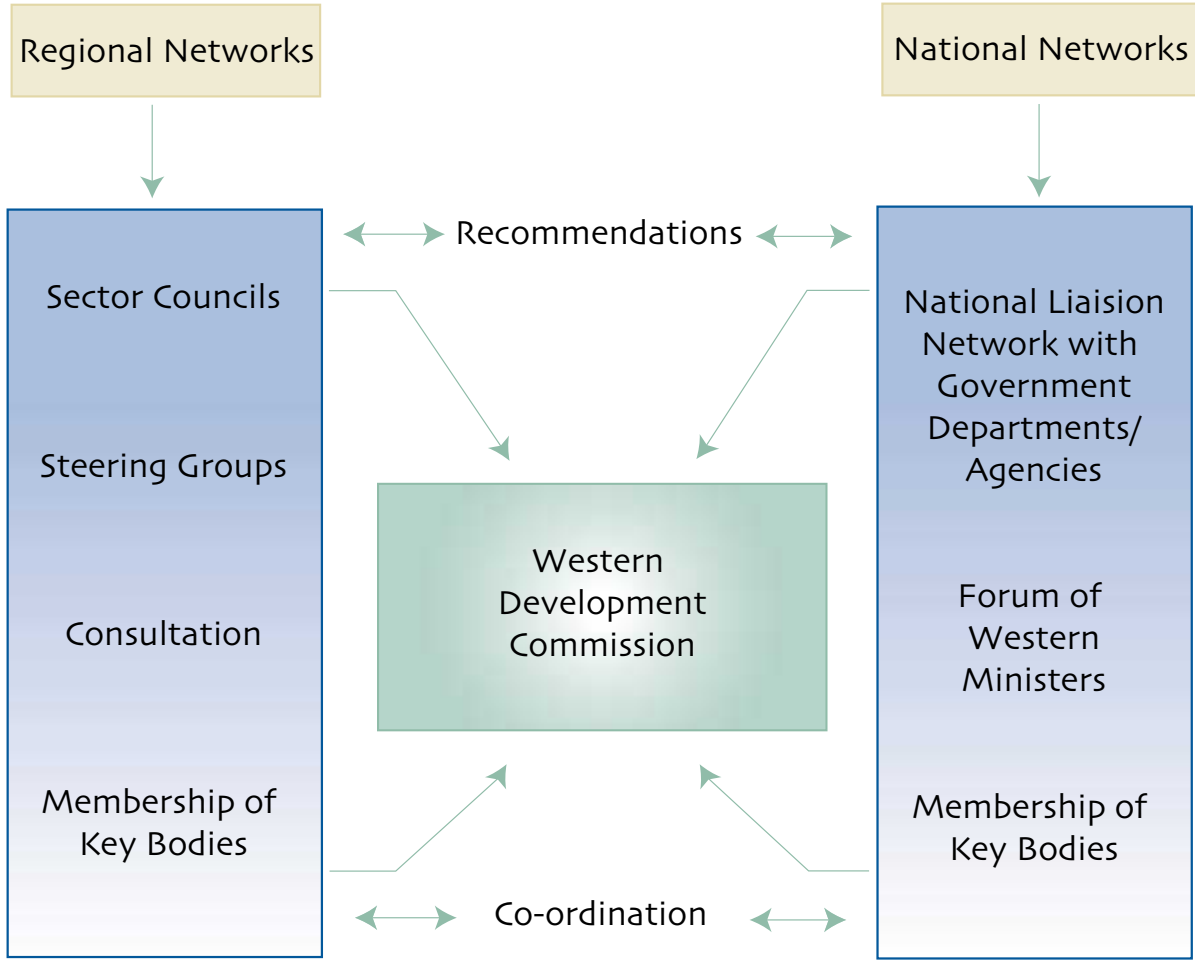
Private and Voluntary sectors	Educational, Religious and other institutions	Local and Regional Authorities/Assemblies	State Agencies	Government Departments	Cabinet
Local Partnerships		Cross-border Bodies			



Staff and guests at the opening of Dillon House, Headquarters of the Western Development Commission

Left to right:
Standing: Cariosa Lynch, Regional Development Officer; John Blake Dillon, Nephew of James Dillon; Liam Scollan, Chief Executive; Pat O'Hara, Senior Policy Analyst; Naomi Brennan, Clerical Assistant; Gillian Buckley, Fund Manager; Theresa Higgins, Administrator.
Sitting: Sean Tighe, Chairperson; An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern TD; and Minister Noel Davern. (May 1999)

Chart 2: WDC Regional and National Networks





Regional Networks

The WDC has established structures and mechanisms to enable various interests from the Western Region to contribute directly to policy and project development at regional level. These mechanisms include Sector Councils, Steering Groups and various consultation processes as well as WDC participation in regional and county bodies.

By 1999 the WDC had established five **Sector Councils** covering manufacturing and services, natural resources, marine and fisheries, tourism and information technology. These Councils comprise members of the public, private and voluntary sectors in the region. The chairperson of each council is from the private sector. The Sector Councils assist the WDC to develop and customise key policies for the region and to identify policy inefficiencies and gaps in support, as well as suggesting development projects and regional initiatives (Appendix 4).

In 1999 the WDC also convened special, industry-led **Steering Groups** to advise it on organic farming and adding value to seafood (see Appendix 5). Extensive consultation was carried out by inviting public submissions and organising workshops on particular issues. Such detailed consultation has become a hallmark of the WDC's approach so that, during 1999, about 400 bodies were consulted by the WDC in the development of key regional policies on at least one occasion (see Appendix 8).

National Networks

The WDC has established mechanisms that enable it to contribute directly to policy-making in fourteen government departments and their respective agencies. Each of these departments and agencies has appointed a senior official to liaise with the WDC. This **National Liaison Network** enables the WDC to ensure that its proposals can be reviewed and discussed fully with the appropriate officials in government departments and state agencies. It also facilitates the co-ordination of the activities of public bodies within the region (Appendix 6).

In order to ensure that policy-makers are kept informed of key development issues for the region and of the WDC's various initiatives and projects, Minister Davern has convened a **Forum of Ministers** from the Western Region (see Appendix 3). During 1999, the WDC was able to put proposals to this Forum concerning Objective 1 status, the National Development Plan, the Western Investment Fund and other development issues detailed in this Review.

In 1999 staff of the WDC were appointed to two national policy making bodies: the Agri-Food 2010 Committee on the future of the agriculture and food sectors and the Telework Action Forum which is charged with identifying how e-work opportunities in Ireland can be promoted.

Western development had long been associated with the efforts of countless people and community leaders who have campaigned to better the prospects of the region. The tangible achievements in the first year of the WDC's operation have been built on connecting government policies more fully with the needs of the region and in drawing government and regional interests into an agreed strategy for regional development.

The Challenge of Developing the West²

The Western Region is characterised by many socio-economic disadvantages relative to the more developed parts of Ireland. The seven counties cover 37 per cent of the landmass of Ireland and all, except Clare, are part of the Border, Midland and West (BMW)

Objective 1 Region.

- The West's output³ per capita is 67 per cent of the EU average and 73 per cent of Ireland's national average.
- Population density is half the national average and mainly rural with over 80 per cent living outside the eight towns with populations of more than 5,000.
- Industry in the West is typically of a smaller scale with lower productivity than is the case nationally. Apart from Galway city, there was slow growth in output and employment during the 1990s, especially in manufacturing and services. There is a relatively high share of employment in agriculture, forestry and fisheries and in traditional industrial sectors.
- Average farm size in the West is 21.4 hectares compared to 35.3 for the Leinster counties.
- The Western Region also has a significant deficit in basic infrastructure relative to other regions of Ireland (a very high percentage of roads require major reconstruction, but there are also major deficits in telecommunications, energy, water supply and waste treatment) as well as physical dereliction and associated social disadvantages.

In this context, the challenges of developing the region include:

- upgrading and development of economic infrastructure;
- support and development of social infrastructure;
- wider dispersal of inward and indigenous investment;
- development of productive sectors such as tourism, agriculture, food, fisheries and forestry; and
- investment in human resources.

Summary data for each of the seven counties are set out in the following pages. These data are an important baseline for the WDC's work and also serve as a useful reference for Regional Assemblies, County Development Boards and other bodies. The data include information on the following: Human Resources; Labour Force; Infrastructure; Natural Resources; Productive Sectors; Job Creation; Income & Output; and Tourism.

2 Data in this section are based on: WDC's **Blueprint for Success**; CSO Regional Accounts and Census of Production; Census of Population 1996; Census of Agriculture 1995; and information from government departments, state agencies and local authorities.

3 These data are CSO estimates for 1995 and are indicative only.



County Profiles

Human Resources

Labour Force

Infrastructure - Roads & Planning

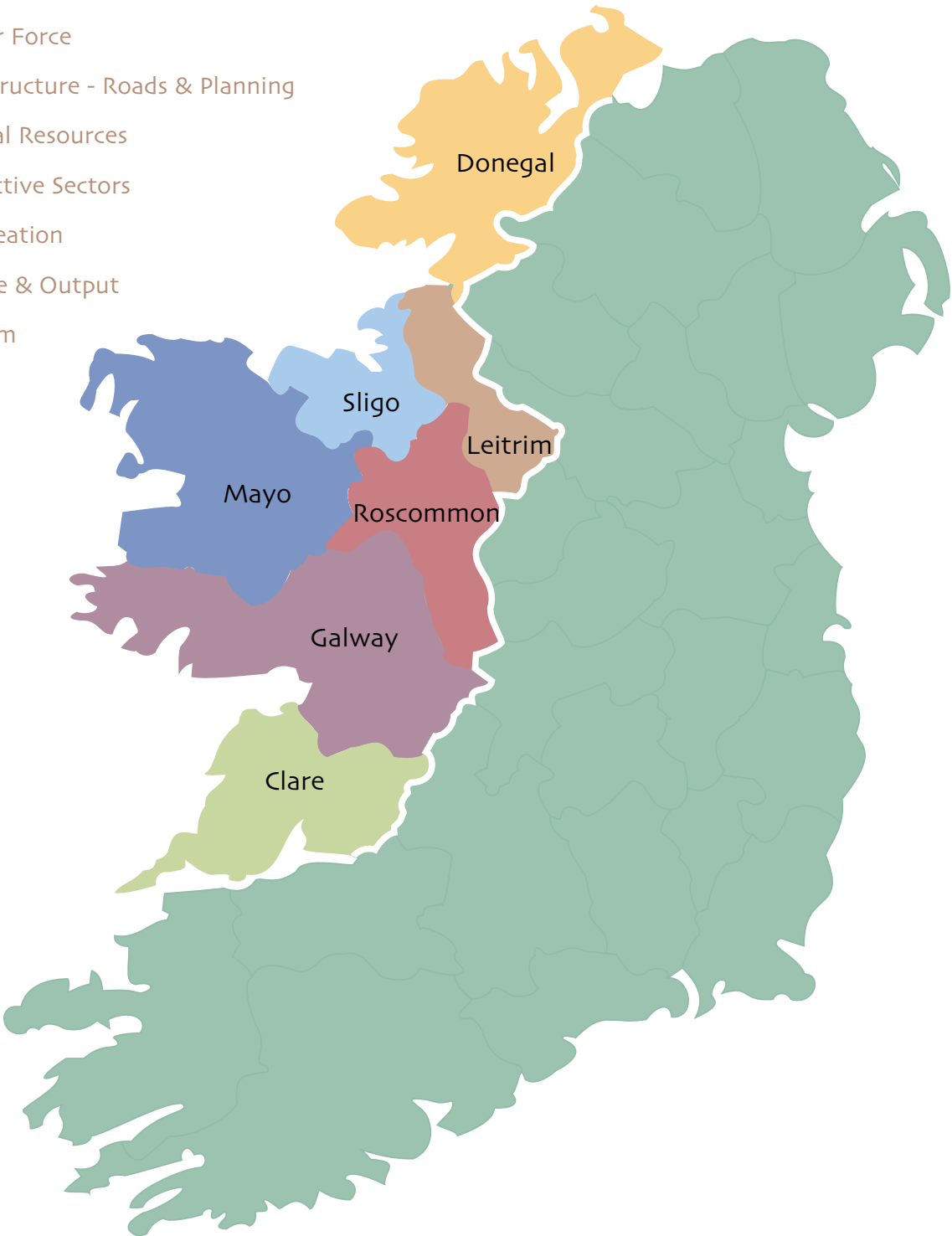
Natural Resources

Productive Sectors

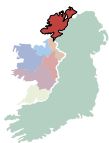
Job Creation

Income & Output

Tourism



Donegal Profile



Human Resources

County Population 129,994

Major Centres

Letterkenny	11,996
Buncrana	4,805
Ballybofey-Stranorlar	3,047
Ballyshannon	2,775

Total Population Living in Towns	51,902
Total Population in Rest of County	78,092
Population Density	27/km²

Labour Force

Total Labour Force	51,166
At Work	39,811
Unemployed (Dec 99)	11,699

Labour Force Growth Rate 1991-1996	%
Male	4.6
Female	17.1

Infrastructure - Roads & Planning

High Priority Road Improvement Schemes recommended in WDC's <i>Blueprint for Foreign Direct Investment</i> N14, N15, N56, R238, R245/246, R233/R238, R250/251/252	
Total	£141.4m

Planning Applications	1997	2,831
	1998	3,469
% Change	97-98	23

Natural Resources

Average Farm Size	22 hectares
No. of Organic Producers (1999)	18
Total Area Forested (1997)	48,063 hectares
Persons Engaged in Fishing Sector (1996)	676

Productive Sectors

Contribution to Gross Value Added	%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	12
Manufacturing, Building & Construction	23
Market & Non-Market Services	65

Numbers Employed

Agriculture Forestry & Fishing	5,427
Industry	13,782
Services	20,602

Most Important Manufacturing & Services Sectors	Output %
Textiles & Textile Products	33
Food, Beverages & Tobacco	28

Job Creation

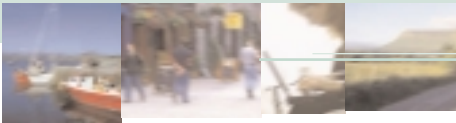
No. of IDA Supported Net New Jobs Created 1993-1997	24
No. of Enterprise Ireland Supported Net New Jobs Created 1993-1997	-35

Income & Output

Net Output/Capita (1996)	£23,993
Av. Industrial Wage (1996)	£10,852
Av. Disposable Income/Capita (1997)	£7,341

Tourism

Number of Overseas Tourists in 1998	261,000
Revenue Generated in 1998	£42m



Sligo Profile



Human Resources

County Population	55,281
Major Centres	
Sligo	18,509
Tobercurry	1,089
Ballymote	994
Rosses Point	799
Total Population Living in Towns	
25,732	
Total Population in Rest of County	
30,089	
Population Density	
30/km²	

Labour Force

Total Labour Force	23,321
At Work	20,204
Unemployed (Dec 99)	2,794
Labour Force Growth Rate 1991-1996	
%	
Male	3.8
Female	2.7

Infrastructure - Roads & Planning

High Priority Road Improvement Schemes recommended in WDC's <i>Blueprint for Foreign Direct Investment</i> N4, N15, N16, N17, R284, R291, R292, R294		
Total		£74.2m
Planning Applications		
1997	946	
1998	958	
% Change		
97-98	1	

Natural Resources

Average Farm Size	20 hectares
No. of Organic Producers (1999)	21
Total Area Forested (1997)	16,807 hectares
Persons Engaged in Fishing Sector (1996)	36

Productive Sectors

Contribution to Gross Value Added	%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	12
Manufacturing, Building & Construction	19
Market & Non-Market Services	69

Numbers Employed

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	2,934
Industry	5,339
Services	11,931

Most Important Manufacturing & Services Sectors	Output %
Food, Beverages & Tobacco	27
Machinery & Equipment	10

Job Creation

No. of IDA Supported Net New Jobs Created 1993-1997	475
No. of Enterprise Ireland Supported Net New Jobs Created 1993-1997	340

Income & Output

Net Output/Capita (1996)	£29,523
Av. Industrial Wages (1996)	£12,646
Av. Disposable Income/Capita (1997)	£5,311

Tourism

Number of Overseas Tourists in 1998	226,000
Revenue Generated in 1998	£37m

Leitrim Profile



Human Resources

County Population	25,057
Major Centres	
Carrick-on-Shannon	1,532
Manorhamilton	1,008
Mohill	808
Ballinamore	782
Total Population Living in Towns	
6,044	
Total Population in Rest of County	
19,013	
Population Density	
16/km²	

Labour Force

Total Labour Force	9,747
At Work	8,518
Unemployed (Dec 99)	1,406
Labour Force Growth Rate 1991-1996	
%	
Male	-0.1
Female	18.1

Infrastructure - Roads & Planning

High Priority Road Improvement Schemes recommended in WDC's <i>Blueprint for Foreign Direct Investment</i> N4, N16, R200/201/202/207/208, R280/281/282		
Total		£62.0m
Planning Applications		
1997	575	
1998	729	
% Change		
97-98	27	

Natural Resources

Average Farm Size	20 hectares
No. of Organic Producers (1999)	59
Total Area Forested (1997)	19,057 hectares

Productive Sectors

Contribution to Gross Value Added	%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	22
Manufacturing, Building & Construction	10
Market & Non-Market Services	68

Numbers Employed

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	1,993
Industry	2,342
Services	4,183

Most Important Manufacturing & Services Sectors	Output %
Wood & Wood Products	13
Machinery & Equipment	8

Job Creation

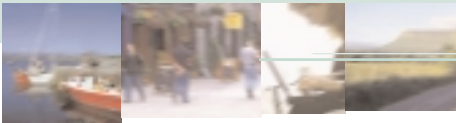
No. of IDA Supported Net New Jobs Created 1993-1997	-108
No. of Enterprise Ireland Supported Net New Jobs Created 1993-1997	210

Income & Output

Net Output/Capita (1996)	£19,304
Av. Industrial Wage (1996)	£11,181
Av. Disposable Income/Capita (1997)	£7,395

Tourism

Number of Overseas Tourists in 1998	50,000
Revenue Generated in 1998	£9m



Roscommon Profile



Human Resources

County Population	51,975
Major Centres	
Roscommon	3,915
Boyle	2,222
Castlerea	1,790
Ballaghaderreen	1,248
Total Population Living in Towns	13,659
Total Population in Rest Of County	38,316
Population Density:	20/km²

Labour Force

Total Labour Force	20,534
At work	18,559
Unemployed (Dec 99)	1,876
Labour Force Growth Rate 1991-1996	%
Male	0.7
Female	17.5

Infrastructure - Roads & Planning

High Priority Road Improvement Schemes recommended in WDC's <i>Blueprint for Foreign Direct Investment</i> N5, N60/N61/N63, R261	
Total	£191.1m
Planning Applications	1997 986
	1998 1,258
% Change	97-98 28

Natural Resources

Average Farm Size	21 hectares
No. of Organic Producers (1997)	46
Total Area Forested (1997)	16,203 hectares

Productive Sectors

Contribution to Gross Value Added	%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	13
Manufacturing, Building & Construction	19
Market & Non-Market Services	68

Numbers Employed

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	4,529
Industry	4,799
Services	9,231

Most Important Manufacturing & Services Sectors	Output %
Food, Beverages & Tobacco	87
Chemicals, Chemical Products and Man-made Fibres	3

Job Creation

IDA Supported Net New Jobs 1993-1997	439
Enterprise Ireland Supported Net New Jobs 1993-1997	-94

Income & Output

Net Output/Capita (1996)	£31,506
Av. Industrial Wage (1996)	£12,794
Av. Disposable Income/Capita (1997)	£7,026

Tourism

Number of Overseas Tourists in 1998	52,000
Revenue Generated in 1998	£15m

Mayo Profile



Human Resources

County Population	111,524
Major Centres	
Ballina	8,762
Castlebar	8,532
Westport	4,520
Claremorris	1,914
Total Population Living in Towns	36,747
Total Population in Rest of County	74,777
Population Density	20/km²

Labour Force

Total Labour Force	43,724
At Work	36,583
Unemployed (Dec 99)	7,629
Labour Force Growth Rate 1991-1996	%
Male	2.6
Female	24.6

Infrastructure - Roads & Planning

High Priority Road Improvement Schemes recommended in WDC's <i>Blueprint for Foreign Direct Investment</i> N5, N17, N26, N58/N59, N60, R321/R311	
Total	£206.2m
Planning Applications	1997 2,679
	1998 3,085
% Change	97-98 49

Natural Resources

Average Farm Size	17 hectares
No. Of Organic Producers (1999)	43
Total Area Forested (1997)	45,404 hectares
Persons Engaged in Fishing Sector (1996)	175

Productive Sectors

Contribution to Gross Value Added	%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	9
Manufacturing, Building & Construction	37
Market & Non-Market Services	54

Numbers Employed

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	7,963
Industry	9,883
Services	18,737

Most Important Manufacturing & Services Sectors	Output %
Food, Beverages & Tobacco	20
Machinery & Equipment	4

Job Creation

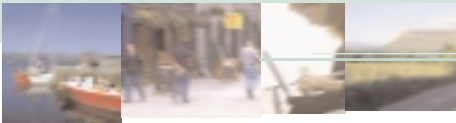
No. of IDA Supported Net New Jobs Created 1993-1997	-93
No. of Enterprise Ireland Supported Net New Jobs Created 1993-1997	332

Income & Output

Net Output/Capita (1996)	£49,828
Av. Industrial Wage (1996)	£12,567
Av. Disposable Income (1997)	£7,348

Tourism

Number of Overseas Tourists in 1998	288,000
Revenue Generated in 1998	£50m



Galway Profile



Human Resources

County Population	180,364
Major Centres	
Galway City	57,363
Ballinasloe	5,654
Tuam	5,627
Loughrea	3,335
Total Population Living in Towns	75,593
Total Population in Rest of County	115,261
Population Density	31/Km²

Labour Force

Total Labour Force	144,233	
At Work	67,497	
Unemployed (Dec 99)	9,862	
Labour Force Growth Rate 1991-1996		
	%	
	City	County
Male	16.6	6.4
Female	33.3	21.2

Infrastructure - Roads & Planning

High Priority Road Improvement Schemes recommended in WDC's <i>Blueprint for Foreign Direct Investment</i> N6, N17, N59, N84, R336		
Total		£122.8m
Planning Applications	1997	3,833
	1998	4,782
% Change	97-98	25

Natural Resources

Average Farm Size	22 hectares
No. of Organic Producers (1999)	70
Total Area Forested (1997)	53,195 hectares
Persons Engaged in Fishing Sector (1996)	360

Productive Sectors

Contribution to Gross Value Added	%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	6
Manufacturing, Building & Construction	41
Market & Non-Market Services	53

Numbers Employed

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	10,387
Industry	17,176
Services	39,934

Most Important Manufacturing & Services Sectors	Output %
Electrical & Optical Equipment	50
Food, Beverages & Tobacco	7

Job Creation

No. of IDA Supported Net New Jobs Created 1993-1997	2,584
No. of Enterprise Ireland Supported Net New Jobs Created 1993-1997	954

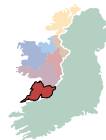
Income & Output

Net Output/Capita (1996)	£62,392
Av. Annual Wages/Employee (1996)	£14,420
Av. Disposable Income/Capita (1997)	£8,363

Tourism

Number of Overseas Tourists in 1998	877,000
Revenue Generated in 1998	£172m

Clare Profile



Human Resources

County Population	94,006
Major Centres	
Ennis	17,726
Shannon	7,939
Kilrush	2,594
Newmarket on Fergus	1,542
Total Population Living in Towns	46,116
Total Population in Rest of County	34,572
Population Density	27/Km²

Labour Force

Total Labour Force	39,089
At Work	34,572
Unemployed (Dec 99)	3,602
Labour Force Growth Rate 1991-1996	
%	
Male	4.4
Female	22.9

Infrastructure - Roads & Planning

High Priority Road Improvement Schemes recommended in WDC's <i>Blueprint for Foreign Direct Investment</i> N18, N67/68, N85		
Total		£207.5m
Planning Applications	1997	1,957
	1998	2,046
% Change	97-98	23

Natural Resources

Average Farm Size	28 hectares
No. of Organic Producers (1999)	114
Total Area Forested (1997)	37,659 hectares
Persons Engaged in Fishing Sector (1996)	47

Productive Sectors

Contribution to Gross Value Added	%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	9
Manufacturing, Building & Construction	41
Market & Non-Market Services	50

Numbers Employed

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	5,571
Industry	10,672
Services	18,329

Most Important Manufacturing & Services Sectors	Output %
Electrical & Optical Equipment	24
Chemicals, Chemical Products and Man-made Fibres	22

Job Creation

No. of IDA Supported Net New Jobs Created 1993-1997	138
No. of Enterprise Ireland Supported Net New Jobs Created 1993-1997	-28

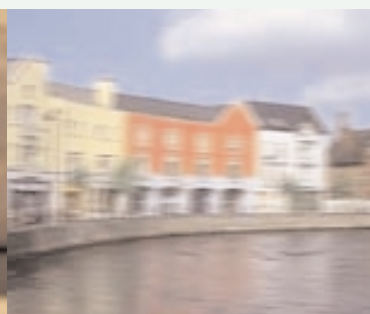
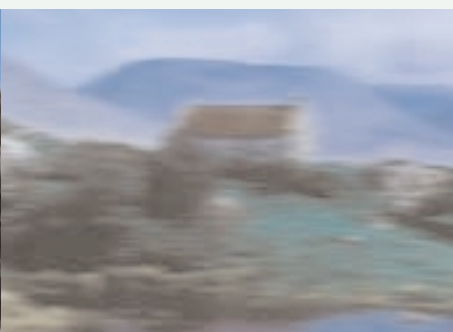
Income & Output 1996

Net Output/Capita (1996)	£51,667
Av. Industrial Wage (1996)	£17,139
Av. Disposable Income (1997)	£7,955

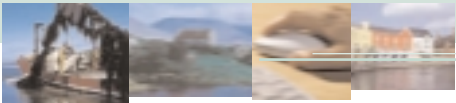
Tourism

Number of Overseas Tourists in 1998	570,000
Revenue Generated in 1998	£52m

part II



athbhreithniú bliantúil 1999



Part II The Work of the WDC in 1999

Policy Analysis and Development

Identifying Policy Priorities for the National Development Plan

During 1999 the WDC evolved a method of operation which identified and simplified the key issues for western development and fostered and encouraged change based on this analysis. The establishment of the WDC at a critical period in national planning – the period in which regional disparities became a key part of the debate surrounding the preparation of the National Development Plan - provided it with the opportunity to make recommendations as to how best to focus regional development policy in order to facilitate accelerated western development. The WDC commissioned **Blueprint for Success – A Development Plan for the West 2000-2006** which set out a detailed development strategy including priorities, targets and detailed estimates of the state and EU expenditure required, to enable the West to catch up with the more developed parts of Ireland. This was submitted to the Government for consideration during the preparation of the National Development Plan.

Blueprint for Success contained ten key recommendations and all of them were included in the National Development Plan. Indeed, the Blueprint report is specifically acknowledged in the NDP text as one of the key inputs to it. The WDC's recommendations in a number of key policy areas and the responses in the form of commitments in the NDP are set out in Table 2 opposite.



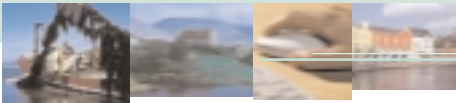
Launch of Blueprint for Success

Left to right:
Pat O'Hara, Senior Policy Analyst; Liam Scollan,
Chief Executive; Sean Hannick, Commission Member;
Sr. Maureen Lally, Commission Member. April 1999

Overall, in the context of national policy planning, and the work of the WDC, 1999 was a watershed year. The division of Ireland into two regions focused attention on the need to introduce measures to help the West to catch up. The continuation of entitlement to higher levels of EU assistance for the Border, Midland and West Region was augmented by commitments from agencies such as IDA and Enterprise Ireland to target fifty per cent of new jobs into the region. Investment of £13.3bn in the Border Midland and West Regions between 2000 and 2006, as set out in the National Development Plan, can radically improve the infrastructure and the productive sectors in the region, transform education and skills levels and help to sustain economic growth.

Table 2: Government Response in the NDP to the WDC Recommendations for Western Development

Policy Issue	WDC Recommendations	Government Response in NDP
Regional Disparities	Priority should be given in the allocation of EU and national funds to addressing the imbalance in the sharing of Ireland's economic growth.	£13.3 billion allocated to BMW Region. Commitment "to achieve more balanced regional development in order to reduce disparities between regions". (NDP: 3.19).
Imbalances between larger urban and smaller urban and rural locations	There is a need to enhance the potential of a greater range of smaller towns to act as locations for indigenous and overseas investment.	Commitment to the development of Regional Gateways and to the "exploitation of the potential of smaller towns and villages and rural areas to ensure that they are attractive... for commercial activities". (NDP: 3.23).
Infrastructure Deficit	National investment priorities must reflect the need to address the infrastructural deficit faced by the western counties.	£6.2 billion planned investment in economic and social infrastructure in the BMW Region.
Infrastructure - Access in and out of the West	High priority should be given to addressing the investment needs of national primary roads in western counties.	Inclusion of the national road priorities identified in <i>Blueprint for Success</i> .
Productive Sectors - Investment	More investment support should be aimed at expanding and improving the competitiveness of the productive sector.	£2 billion allocation to the BMW Region with special targeting of research and development resources and e-commerce opportunities for the region.
Productive Sector - Targets	Changes to development policies in the West should include setting targets for the expansion of the productive sector.	"The IDA will seek to ensure that... at least 50% of all new jobs from green-field projects will be in the BMW Region". (NDP: 3.37).
Productive Sector - Indigenous Enterprises	A programme of support for the expansion of indigenous industry, existing tourism enterprises, agriculture and forestry, fishing and natural resources and local development should be given high priority.	Programmes of support for manufacturing and services including tourism marketing, agriculture, food, forestry, fisheries and processing.



Telecommunications Infrastructure Policy

The WDC has consistently highlighted the need to accelerate investment in telecommunications infrastructure in the West and is pleased to report considerable progress in this regard. The case made by the WDC was based on its finding that telecommunications infrastructure was the most significant factor that influenced the location of major companies investing in the West.

In 1999 the WDC made the case for investment in telecommunications infrastructure in five separate submissions to Government. Telecommunications were included in the WDC's *Blueprint for Success* report to the Department of Finance in April 1999. In July 1999 the WDC made a special submission to the Interdepartmental Committee on Public Enterprise and Transport. The issues were again addressed in the report *Blueprint for Investing in the West* in October. A special report entitled *Response to ODTR 98/32 Consultative Paper – Extending Choice – Opening the Market for Fixed Wireless Point to Multipoint Access Services* was prepared by the WDC and submitted to the Telecommunications Regulator. The WDC's proposals to the Regulator and the responses to them are detailed in Table 3.

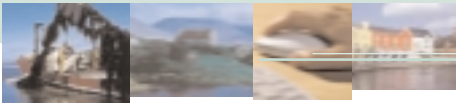
The WDC also made a submission to the National Telework Forum in which it advocated increased promotion of teleworking opportunities in the West. The WDC is now represented on the National Telework Action Forum.

The various submissions by the WDC have resulted in a commitment to invest major resources in telecommunications infrastructure in the West and in changes to the Regulatory Framework for Broadband Communications. Between 1999 and 2000 a total of 69 million Euro will have been invested in telecommunications infrastructure in the region. The NDP contains a commitment to invest £84m in telecommunications infrastructure and services in the BMW Region over the period 2000-2006.

A variety of projects are now underway which will connect key locations in the West. These include EU co-funded projects scheduled to be completed by December 31st 2000. These are detailed in Appendix 7.

Table 3: Response to WDC Recommendations for Telecommunications Infrastructure

WDC Recommendations	Response
Lower service limit for 3.5/10.5 GHz 2 Mb/s and 2.3 GHz 144 kb/s licenses extended to 32 kb/s.	This proposal has been adopted in that the narrowband segment licences may offer bit rates below 144kb/s as per market demand. However, a competitively priced basic ISDN rate of 144kb/s is not available.
3.5 GHz and 10.5 GHz licensees permitted to offer aggregates of 2 Mb/s in rural/rural town segment. Increased spectrum available at these bands to facilitate broadband services in rural areas.	This proposal had been adopted in that there is no prescribed upper limit to the bit rates offered by narrowband segment licences, save the inherent limitations due to the quantity of assigned spectrum.
Regional licenses available in all segments.	This proposal had not been adopted. On the contrary, all licences to be offered will be National, not regional licences. The Western Development Commission had proposed that regional licences be available in all segments as it was felt that this would allow operators to be more focused and bring forward the timetable for coverage of the Western Region.
Coverage requirements based around service provision in mandatory centres within a fixed period.	For the Broadband licences, no specific coverage requirements are imposed on the licensee. For the narrowband licences, 12 counties should be covered within two years. The narrowband licences are primarily for rural coverage.
Fee structure for access to Fixed Wireless Point to Multipoint Access spectrum should be developed so as to encourage deployment in rural areas. Substantively reduced fees for rural areas are strongly proposed. The exact nature of such subvention would be the basis for future consultation and representation.	The Director of Telecommunications Regulation did not adopt this proposal.
The expressed commitment to rapid rollout in rural and Western areas is heavily weighted in the license application procedure.	The Director of Telecommunications Regulation stated that rural deployment would be a priority for the narrowband licenses.



Special Tax Relief for Rural Areas

In 1997 the WDC, in partnership with Bord Fáilte and Shannon Development, proposed that a rural tax relief scheme be put in place for the entire Shannon Corridor area. The Government accepted the overall thrust of the joint submission and subsequently enacted the proposal in the 1998 Finance Act, with the Upper Shannon⁴ being chosen as the pilot area.



While the WDC welcomed the original scheme as a very positive move for the regeneration of the designated area, it felt that a number of amendments were necessary to ensure that this innovative scheme of rural tax relief was tailored to the needs of the targeted rural area. In particular, it advised the government that a mix of residential and business incentives was most appropriate in a region that needed both economic and population growth.

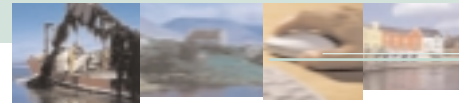
The main WDC amendments were adopted and an entire package of tax incentives for commercial property, rented residential and owner-occupied accommodation is now operational until December 31, 2002.

A summary of the main WDC proposals and subsequent amendments is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Government’s Response to Tax Relief Proposals from the WDC

WDC Main Recommendations	Response
Tax Relief for Commercial Property.	Operational from 1 July 1999 to 31 December 2002.
Tax Relief for Rental Residential Accommodation.	Operational from 1 June 1998 to 31 December 2002.
Tax Relief for Owner Occupied Accommodation.	Operational from 6 April 1999 to 31 December 2002.
Amendments Proposed by WDC	
Residential Relief Restrictions as they apply to derelict/unoccupied buildings should be amended to allow their eligibility under the Rural Tax Relief.	This amendment was incorporated into the available relief.
The lower and upper limits of the size of conversion of a residential property should be reviewed in order to encourage investment in existing derelict dwellings and to help safeguard against possible damage to the environment.	This amendment was incorporated into the available relief.
Owner-occupier relief should be allowed for the refurbishment of derelict/unoccupied dwellings in accordance with criteria to be agreed with the Department of Finance or its nominated agent.	This amendment was incorporated into the available relief.
Clauses, which could lead to abuse of current legislation in certain instances, should be investigated and removed as appropriate e.g. private holiday homes. However, where a genuine need has been identified by a Local Authority certain tourist accommodation should be included under the scheme, for example as devised under an Integrated Area Plan.	An amendment was incorporated into the available relief. However, there still exists the possibility of abuse of the scheme and the WDC feels that on-going monitoring of the situation should be carried out to prevent any such abuse.
Rural/Marine Enterprises	
Certain exclusions of measures, which are suitable for Rural/Marine Enterprises should be removed, i.e. qualifying trades such as that of a dock under taking, intensive fruit growing and intensive production of animals should be included in the rural renewal relief. The designated area is primarily an agricultural area with low-income levels with an under-utilised resource in the River Shannon, which provides marine and tourism based opportunities. The exclusions imposed in the legislation are therefore inappropriate for this area.	The amendment relating to marine enterprises was accepted by Government. However agricultural based enterprises cannot avail of rural renewal tax relief under the current legislation.

4 The Upper Shannon Area covers all of the administrative counties of Longford and Leitrim and designated electoral areas of south Sligo, north Roscommon and west Cavan.



WDC Main Recommendations

Integrated Area Plan (IAP)

A clear set of regeneration objectives should be established in order to provide a broad development policy framework for the rural tax relief and the relief should be planned as part of a broader approach to rural regeneration.

The Rural Renewal Tax Relief Scheme should be supported by a clearly defined framework for its **Administration and Implementation**, preferably by the Zonal Working Groups which would prepare Integrated Area Plans, thereby ensuring integrated and sustainable development in the designated areas.

Response

These amendments were not fully incorporated into the legislation. The WDC believes that the exclusion of the requirement for the preparation of Integrated Area Plans prior to the drawdown of tax relief under this scheme may be unwise in the light of the sensitivity of the designated area. (IAPs were required for both the new Urban Renewal Scheme and the Town Renewal Scheme)

Type of Relief

The areas designated in the 1998 Finance Act No. 1 are areas of physical dereliction with associated social disadvantage and high unemployment and have been designated Objective 1 status. These areas should then qualify for double rent allowances for lessees as per EU policy.

Double rent proposal was not allowed. Capital allowances were however increased to compensate for the loss of the double rent allowance.

Time-scale

The time-scale for the tax relief in the Upper Shannon should be extended in order to coincide with the next period of structural funding/Objective 1 status, i.e. 2000-2006, in recognition of the longer lead-time required for regeneration in rural disadvantaged areas.

The relief was extended to 2002. The WDC advocates that the timeframe should be extended to enable the Upper Shannon region to bridge the development gap between it and other parts of the country.

The WDC will continue to promote the case for more integrated planning in relation to the Upper Shannon scheme. The flooding, which occurred late in 1999, underscored the need to integrate physical planning and development issues in the Shannon basin with the

economic and fiscal incentives contained in the Special Tax Relief for the area. Notwithstanding the fact that the tax scheme refers only to the Upper Shannon, the issue of integrated physical planning applies to the whole river basin from source to estuary.

Foreign Direct Investment

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has been the engine of recent growth in the Irish economy creating over 100,000 jobs nationally and also effecting a major transfer of skills and know-how in industrial technology, marketing and management. However, only one tenth of all jobs from FDI came to the Western Region between 1991 and 1997 and two thirds of these came to Galway City. Given the uneven spread of benefits from FDI, the WDC gave priority to this issue.

Blueprint for Investing in the West

The WDC published *Blueprint for Investing in the West: Promoting Foreign Direct Investment in the West* in October 1999 which was based on extensive consultations on a county by county basis and on independent research. The Report contained twelve recommendations and the findings will be of significant help to the state agencies charged with attracting foreign direct investment and developing indigenous industry as well as to the local authorities in the Region.

The twelve recommendations in *Blueprint for Investing in the West* and the responses in 1999 are outlined in detail in Table 5.

Map 1 shows the ten 'first tier' locations in the West which were identified in the Report as meeting the majority of the criteria sought by overseas firms. These centres can become focal points for small and medium-sized overseas firms. It is anticipated that there would be a catchment area of about twenty miles around each of them. Foreign investment in such centres could create a critical mass of economic and social activity to underpin development in the surrounding region, particularly in smaller towns.



Launch of *Blueprint for Investing in the West* by An Tánaiste Mary Harney, TD.

Left to right: Liam Scollan, Chief Executive; An Tánaiste Mary Harney TD; and Sean Tighe, Chairperson.

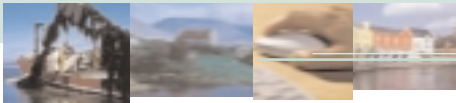


Table 5: WDC Recommendations on Measures Needed to Attract FDI and Responses

WDC Recommendations

Response

The promotion of FDI in the Western counties requires a **co-ordinated policy approach** to the provision of incentives, infrastructure, quality of life enhancement and development of human resources. Such an integrated approach, focused on regional targets for job creation will also necessitate adjustments to institutional structures operating in the region.

IDA and Enterprise Ireland restructured to enable greater regional focus.
The NDP provides the framework for a more integrated approach. The WDC in co-operation with the Regional Assemblies and the County Development Boards will help secure a more co-ordinated approach.

A key element of the policy changes needed is the provision of positive **incentives** for investors to locate outside of major cities. Otherwise, large centres will continue to attract the greater share of inward investment and exacerbate the considerable problems of congestion, which already exist there.

The new Regional Aid guidelines mean that higher levels of aid (up to 40% with up to an additional 15% for SMEs) will be permitted for companies coming to the BMW Region. The aid level will now be lower in Dublin and other areas in the east.

In order to maximise the potential of the region to attract FDI, it is necessary that a very high priority be given to improving the **quality of the national road network** both within the region and between the region and other parts of the country.

Inclusion in the National Development Plan of the national road priorities identified by the WDC.

The potential of inward investment cannot be realised without **adequate air services** and there are a number of key changes needed in passenger and freight services which would better serve the demands of potential investors. These include rescheduling and provision of more flights, developing freight services to key markets and improving access to airports.

Planned expansion of Shannon Airport.

Further development to airports in the West to be considered in the year 2000.

Significant investment in **environmental infrastructure** such as water and waste disposal. This reflects our view that basic infrastructure such as water and sewerage is an essential requirement in attracting FDI to the seven western counties.

Substantial resources have been made available in the National Development Plan.

Certain minimum safeguards need to be built into the **regulatory framework for telecommunications** so that it is an advantage rather than an impediment to investing in the west.

Key towns in the Western Region will have a modern telecommunications infrastructure by the year 2000.
£84m allocated for telecommunications infrastructure in the BMW Region.

There is a need for more **detailed data on the available landbank in the region** and for such information to be more widely available and on a county by county basis, since it is relevant beyond the need for overseas investment.

The existing database of the Western Development Commission can be used as a starting point for the compilation of a comprehensive database of sites within each county. Regularly updated, it could provide accurate and timely information, which could be disseminated, to potential investors.

WDC Recommendations

Response

Rural and urban renewal schemes involving tax incentives should be implemented as part of a co-ordinated regional effort to **improve quality of life in the region**. Access to services is a key aspect of this and it is necessary to recognise and promote service provision as a central element of the drive to attract investment into the region. Health, education and childcare services are particularly relevant in this context. Community-based organisations can play an important role in enhancing the social, cultural and recreational infrastructure and should be encouraged and facilitated to do so.

New Urban Renewal schemes will be available to a wide range of towns in the Western Region. This is in addition to the Rural Tax scheme referred to above.

The White Paper on Rural Development outlined specific commitments in relation to provision of health, education and childcare services in rural areas and these are included in the NDP.

There is an urgent need to comprehensively address the issue of **human resources** in the region in a systematic way.

WDC is pursuing the implementation of this recommendation with the relevant statutory and private sector bodies.

The analysis in the report draws attention to the scale of change needed if the seven western counties are to catch up with the highest performing region in the country. The WDC believes that **setting targets for job creation resulting from FDI in the region** would ensure a focused and concentrated approach to enabling the West to attract its share of investment from overseas.

Commitment by IDA and Enterprise Ireland to target 50% of all new jobs to the BMW Region.

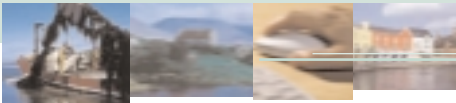
The establishment of **private/public sector partnerships** in towns should be encouraged in the first instance. Partnerships in these smaller towns should also be encouraged. Such bodies could play a vital role in setting and achieving local investment targets, in helping to establish appropriate sites and other infrastructural requirements and in the promotion of the towns as attractive investment locations.

Initial meetings with representatives from Chambers of Commerce and IBEC in the region have been very positive and the recommendation will be pursued by the WDC.

Local authorities in the seven western counties should facilitate the development of the investment locations that are specified in this report. Within its development planning process each local authority could ensure that specified locations in each county are "designated industrial zones" and that fast-track planning procedures are put in place to ensure rapid response to the needs of investors.

The Local Government Planning and Development Act 1999 contains measures to allocate designated industrial zones.

The new County Development Boards will greatly facilitate the planning and development process at the county level.



Map 1 -
Key Locations for Foreign Direct Investment

First Tier Investment Locations



Regional Initiatives in the Productive Sectors

Policy proposals alone are not sufficient to realise real economic and social improvements in the Western Region. New customised policies need to be accompanied by initiatives, which span the region and which engage all relevant bodies in co-ordinated action. When the WDC began examining the needs of the productive sectors, it realised that it was essential to engage the private and voluntary sectors with the public sector in order to achieve change. This partnership would also be necessary in defining the problems, and in identifying and implementing workable solutions.

In 1999, the WDC, assisted by its Sector Councils, began a series of six regional initiatives. These initiatives aim to refocus policy and facilitate projects, which will have a positive impact on job creation/retention, investment, improvements in living standards and the creation of more vibrant and sustainable communities. They are based on the WDC's assessments of the needs and potential of the region, as well as the views of the Sector Councils and consultation with the private and voluntary sectors. The initiatives focus on aspects of agriculture, food, tourism and fisheries and represent a new process of development at regional level. At the outset, all relevant players from the public, private and voluntary sectors are included. These interests will form an integral and necessary part of the implementation process. This process is based on partnership and co-operation.

All six initiatives have common characteristics in that they:

- represent a WDC response to the experience, advice and expertise of its Sector Councils; in effect, this is public-private partnership operating in the region;
- involve in-depth consultation with the public, private, voluntary and community bodies and organisations in the region;
- involve a partnership approach and consultation, followed by a series of steps which include identifying key initiatives, establishing agreement on what needs to be done, who is responsible for doing it and the time-scale and targets for implementation of the initiative;
- achieve implementation through the establishment of local, county and regional partnerships.

Examples of how each Sector Council, in partnership with the public, private and voluntary sectors, identified key initiatives within its sector and the actions that ensued to move these initiatives forward are detailed in Table 6.

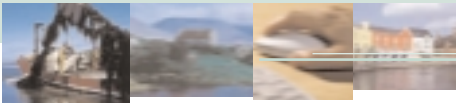
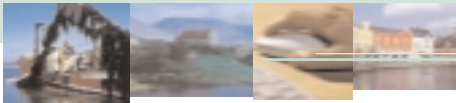


Table 6: Regional Initiatives begun by the WDC in 1999

Key Initiatives identified by Sector Councils	Consultation and engagement with the public, private and voluntary sectors	Establishing what needs to be done, together with time-scales and targets	Achieving implementation through new regional and county partnerships
Foreign Direct Investment (Manufacturing and Services Sector Council)	Consultations with 180 different groups on a one to one basis and through county workshops. Close collaboration with the IDA and Enterprise Ireland.	A twelve point action plan presented in Blueprint for Investing in the West and agreed with the IDA.	Working to establish town based partnerships which would assist in securing both foreign and indigenous investment and can also collaborate strategically at regional level.
Small Food Producers (Natural Resources Sector Council)	Survey and consultation with 250 small food producers in the Western Region and working in collaboration with ADM, Bord Bia, Bord Glas, County Enterprise Boards, Directors of Community and Enterprise, Enterprise Ireland, Fás, Health Boards, Interregional Programme, LEADER, Teagasc and the private and voluntary sector.	Urgent need to tackle marketing, branding and distribution issues at the regional level. Need to address other issues such as training, research and workspace at the county level and the advantages of clustering.	County level actions agreed in principle with Directors of Community and Enterprise and other organisations. WDC taking up regional level actions with the relevant state and business bodies.
Organic Farming (Natural Resources Sector Council)	Organic Steering Group established for the Western Region involving the organic producers, the three certification bodies, co-operatives and the state bodies Bord Bia, Bord Glas, Enterprise Ireland and Teagasc. The partnership Steering Group identified an urgent need for a strategic action plan for the industry.	WDC in partnership with the industry commissioned a strategic action plan, which will specify the markets, the economics, investment, research, training and development needs for the industry.	The Strategic Action Plan will make recommendations and specify the partnership arrangements which will be required to progress organic farming and the organic industry in the Western Region.
Value Added Seafood (Marine Sector Council)	Consultations with the industry and agreement to form an industry-led steering group for Value Added Seafood.	Scheduled for 2000	Scheduled for 2000
Marine Enterprise and Investment Programme (Marine Sector Council)	Discussions with Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Donegal County Council, Donegal County Enterprise Board, Enterprise Ireland, Letterkenny Institute of Technology, Marine Institute, Shannon Development, Tralee Institute of Technology and Údarás na Gaeltachta.	Need to establish a single source of advice, technical support and funding to assist those seeking to establish innovative maritime projects, which have high growth potential.	A pilot Marine Enterprise and Investment Programme is now established for 30 months in the Western and Shannon regions involving all of the agencies referred to.
Rural Tourism (Tourism Sector Council)	WDC has started the preparation of an action plan involving consultations with 90 community groups and individuals currently active in tourism in the Western Region including individuals in the travel trade, County Enterprise Boards, County Tourism Committees, LEADER Groups, Regional Tourism Organisations and state bodies - Bord Fáilte, Shannon Development, Teagasc and Údarás na Gaeltachta.	Action Plan to be published in August 2000.	Action Plan will specify how tourism providers, the travel trade and the state can work in partnership to implement the plan's proposed recommendations.



Western Investment Fund

Background

The Western Investment Fund (WIF), amounting to £25 million over five years, is an integral element of the Western Development Commission's strategy for accelerating the economic and social development of the Western Region. The WIF was not operational in 1999, due to delays in securing the approval of the EU for the Fund as a State aids⁵. These delays were a source of major concern to the WDC. Furthermore, the ongoing delays led to public concern in the region with doubts being expressed as to whether the WIF would be implemented.

It is important, therefore, to explain the limited but crucially important progress, which was achieved in 1999.

Government Commitment

Government commitment to the Western Investment Fund was confirmed in the WDC Act 1999. Section 20 (1) and (2) of the Act makes this commitment explicit: "The Commission shall establish a fund which shall be known as the Western Investment Fund" and "The Fund shall be managed and controlled by the Commission".

Further commitment to the Western Investment Fund was contained in the National Development Plan 2000-2006. In Section 11.24. of the Plan the Government reiterated its commitment to the Fund as follows: "The Fund will provide loans and take equity in a small number of strategically important investments, in business start-up and growth orientated small and medium sized enterprises and in community based developments."

Special Investment Support Mechanism for the West

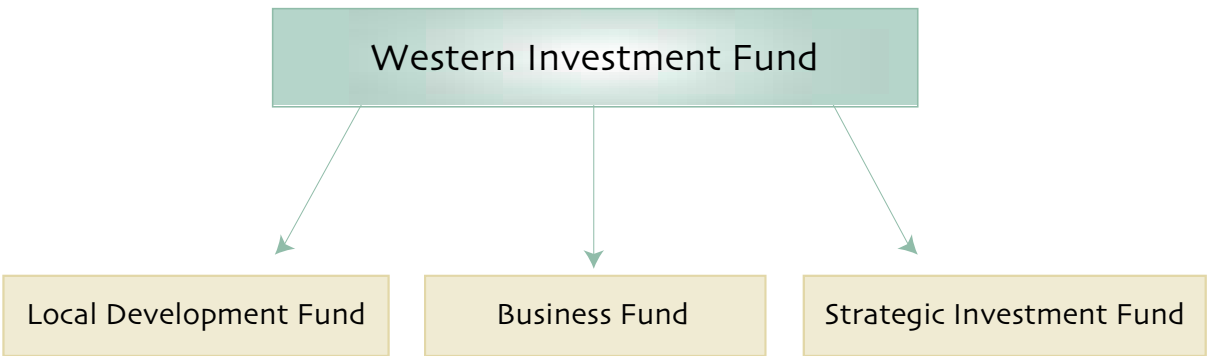
There is a broad acknowledgement of the need for a dedicated funding mechanism such as the WIF for the West. In market research undertaken by WESTBIC for the WDC the majority (92%) of small and medium sized enterprises surveyed stated that they felt there was a need for the WIF. The need for three sub-funds within the overall WIF structure was identified. The WDC, therefore, decided that the WIF would be implemented in three separate funds as follows:

A Strategic Investment Fund – to fund regional initiatives that would underpin the development of the region or of a sector. This part of the WIF would focus on securing the implementation of projects such as the regional initiatives referred to earlier.

A Business Fund – to accelerate the development of small and medium sized enterprises in the region through investment and risk sharing.

A Local Development Fund – to make the region a more attractive place to live and work by supporting local communities to develop their areas.

It must be acknowledged that the Western Investment Fund is one small part of the overall resources needed for western development. However, the Fund will be in a position to respond to regional initiatives and the implementation of new regional policies that emerge from the WDC's policy-making role. Therefore, its significance arises not only from the direct assistance it can give to projects but also in the potential to pilot mechanisms of support which, if successful, could be applied to other mainstream funding bodies.



Fund Administration & Management

Quality procedures have been developed to ensure the professional and efficient management and control of the WIF once it becomes operational. These procedures cover:

- Application
- Assessment
- Due Diligence
- Decision Process
- Disbursement
- Portfolio Management

A Fund Advisory Panel with high levels of expertise and experience has been established by the WDC with the purpose of assisting the WDC in ensuring that the WIF is invested in commercially viable operations.

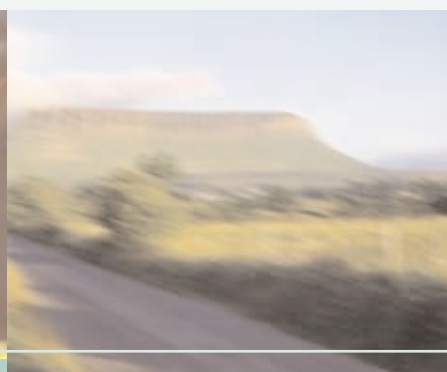
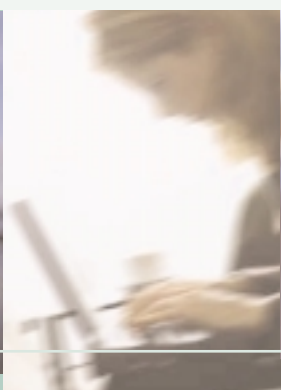
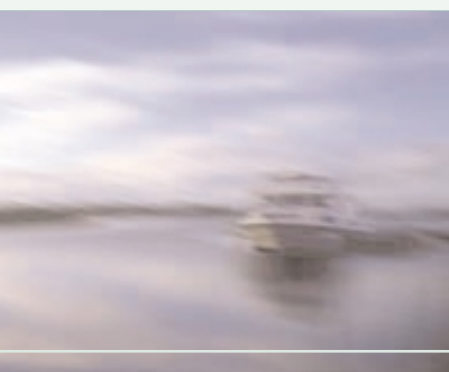
Project promoters and intermediaries in the region have expressed significant interest in the WIF. Up to the end of 1999 the WDC had received around 300 enquiries seeking funding from the WIF.

European Commission Approval

As the funding for the WIF is sourced from the State, approval is necessary from the European Commission for its operation. The Irish authorities notified the WIF to the European Commission in June 1999. By the end of 1999 the Irish authorities had responded to all of the EU requests for information which they had received⁶.

⁵ The Western Investment Fund was subsequently approved by the EU Commission in April 2000, with the exception of investments in Agriculture & Food and Marine sectors, which are the subject of separate approval processes.

appendices



athbhreithniú bliantúil 1999



Appendix 1

Members of the Western Development Commission

Chairperson

Sean Tighe
MD, Clubman Omega, Buncrana, Co Donegal

Members

Michael McLoone
County Manager, Donegal County Council
Member, WDC Information Technology Sector Council

Peadar Ó Tuathail
Businessman, Leitir Mór, Co Galway
Member, WDC Marine Sector Council

Lisa McAllister
General Manager, Herron & Son, Sligo

Cllr. Mary Bohan
Member, Leitrim County Council
Member, WDC Manufacturing and Services Sector Council

Sean Hannick
MD, Killala Precision Components Ltd, Ballina, Co. Mayo
Member, WDC Manufacturing and Services Sector Council

Maurice Harvey
Farmer, Ennistymon, Co Clare
Member, WDC Natural Resources Sector Council

Malachy King
Businessman, Clifden, Co Galway
Member, WDC Tourism Sector Council

Sr. Maureen Lally
Teagasc, Castlebar, Co Mayo,
Member, WDC Tourism Sector Council

Cllr. Pat McGarry
Member, Roscommon County Council
Member, WDC Natural Resources Sector Council

Janet Hughes
Rights Commissioner, Labour Relations Commission
(resigned Sept. 1999)

Frank O'Donnell
Department of Agriculture, Food & Rural Development

Appendix 2

Staff* of the Western Development Commission

Liam Scollan
Chief Executive

Dr. Patricia O'Hara
Senior Policy Analyst

Gillian Buckley
Fund Manager

Cariosa Lynch
Regional Development Officer

Nollaig Whyte
Regional Development Officer

Theresa Higgins
Administrator

Naomi Brennan
Clerical Assistant

*Staff at December 31st 1999

Appendix 3

Forum of Western Ministers

Chairperson

Mr Noel Davern TD,
Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Development.

Members

Dr. James McDaid TD,
Minister for Tourism, Sport and Recreation.

Ms Sile de Valera TD,
Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

Mr Robert Molloy TD,
Minister of State to the Government and
Minister of State at the Department of the
Environment and Local Government.

Mr Frank Fahey TD,
Minister of State at the Department of Health
and Children;
Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform;
and Department of Education and Science.

Dr.Tom Moffatt TD, Minister of State at the
Department of Health and Children.

Mr Éamon Ó Cuív TD,
Minister of State at the Department of Arts, Heritage,
Gaeltacht and the Islands.

Mr Noel Treacy TD, Minister of State at the
Department of Education and Science and the
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment.



Appendix 4

Members of WDC
Sector Councils

Marine Sector Council

Chairperson

Michael Gallagher
MD, Gundrys, Killybegs

Members

Richie Flynn
IFA, Fish Farming Section

Michael Corduff
Údarás na Gaeltachta

Joey Murrin
Killybegs Fishermen's Association

James Ryan
Killary Salmon

Prof. Michael Guiry
Martin Ryan Institute, NUIG

Richard McCormick
BIM

Don Mc Swiney
Enterprise Ireland

Peadar Ó Tuathail
WDC Member

Information Technology
Sector Council

Chairperson

Tony Brennan
MD, Tony Brennan & Associates

Members

David Hogan
Shannon Development

John Glynn
Údarás na Gaeltachta

Anthony Leonard
Eircom

Kieran Cleary
North West Labs

Micheal McLoone
WDC Member

Tourism Sector Council

Chairperson

Sean Staunton
Editor, Mayo News

Members

John Leonard
Shannon Development

Gerry Finn
Roscommon County Enterprise
Board

Terry McEniff
Letterkenny

Patsy Daly
Arigna LEADER

Maria Heneghan
Teagasc

Pat Nora Gallagher
Dungloe

Brian Quinn
Mayo Naturally

Malachy King
WDC Member

Sr. Maureen Lally
WDC Member

Natural Resources Sector
Council

Chairperson

Danny Gilmartin
Chairperson, NCF Co-op

Members

Muiris Kennedy
Bord Bia

Peter Seery
Teagasc

Anne Coyne
Irish Organic Farmers and
Growers Association

Terry Gallagher
Tóchar Valley

Pat Mc Loughlin
Coillte

Cllr. Pat McGarry
WDC Member

Maurice Harvey
WDC Member

Manufacturing & Services
Sector Council

Chairperson

Mr Ray O'Donoghue
Company Director, Spiddal

Members

Mr Tom Hyland
IDA Ireland

Ms Dorothy Clarke
Leitrim County Enterprise Board

Mr Seamus Bree
Enterprise Ireland

Mr Sean Garvey
Garvey's Roscommon Ltd

Ms Gaye Moynihan
Donegal County Council

Mr Tony Barrett
FÁS

Mr Sean Hannick
WDC Member

Cllr. Mary Bohan
WDC Member



Appendix 5

Members of WDC Steering Groups

Organic Farming Steering Group

Chairperson

Anne Coyne
Organic Producer, Co Mayo

Members

Padraic Brennan
Bord Bia

Lorcan Bourke
Bord Glas

Cáit Curran
Organic Producer, Co Galway

Joe Fox
Enterprise Ireland

Noreen Gibney
Irish Organic Farmers and Growers Association

Elmer Koomans-O'Reilly
Bio-Dynamic Agricultural Association of Ireland

Helen Scully
Organic Trust, Co Westmeath

Martin Reading
Leitrim Organic Forum

Value Added Seafood Steering Group

Chairperson

Michael Gallagher
MD, Gundry's, Killybegs

Members

Enda Boland
Bord Iascaigh Mhara

James Bowden
West Coast Fish Processing Ltd.,
Co. Donegal

Sean Gavin
Irish Seaspray, Co. Galway

Josephine McCormick
Greencastle Seafoods, Co. Donegal

Liam McCormick
Greencastle Seafoods, Co. Donegal

Don Mc Swiney
Enterprise Ireland

Aodh O'Donnell
Errigal Fish, Co. Donegal

Michael Seoighe
Údarás na Gaeltachta

Appendix 6

National Liaison Network

Department

Agency

Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development	An Bord Bia An Bord Glas Teagasc
Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands	Údarás na Gaeltachta
Department of Education and Science	
Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment	Forfás IDA Ireland Enterprise Ireland
Department of Environment and Local Government	National Roads Authority
Department of Finance	
Department of Foreign Affairs	
Department of Health and Children	Mid-Western, North-Western and Western Health Boards
Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform	Land Registry
Department of the Marine and Natural Resources	Bord Iascaigh Mhara Marine Institute Central Fisheries Board Coillte Teoranta
Department of Public Enterprise	
Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs	
Department of the Taoiseach	
Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation	Bord Fáilte Shannon Development CERT ADM Ltd



Appendix 7

Further Development Projects Planned for Telecommunications Infrastructure in the Western Region

Project description	Location	Telecommunications Provider
Development of high capacity fibre optic infrastructure	Along the Western seaboard from Sligo down to Cork.	Eircom
Construction of 95km of high capacity fibre optic cable	Along the west coast of Donegal from Bunbeg to Donegal town and from Dunfanaghy to Falcarragh.	Eircom
Construction of high capacity fibre optic digital corridor.	Western Digital Corridor linking Dublin, Athlone across to Galway and on to Shannon.	Ocean
Design and construction of hybrid optic fibre-coaxial infrastructure.	Around Castlebar and the surrounding area.	Cable Management limited
Installation of fibre optic cable (installed at the Institutes of Technology).	Galway, Sligo and Letterkenny.	Esat Telecom
Extension of Esat national fibre optic network (along the rail lines).	To Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo, encompassing Ballina, Claremorris, Roscommon, Castlerea, Ballyhaunis, Sligo and Collooney.	Esat Telecom
Provision of optical fibre cable along a 32km link	Connecting Galway, Claregalway, Tuam, Kilmaine, Ballinrobe, Westport and Castlebar.	Eircom

These projects follow the Department of Public Enterprise calls for proposals for EU co-funded projects in 1998 and 1999. Work to be completed by 31st December 2000.

Appendix 8

Organisations consulted by the Western Development Commission in 1999

Government

Ministers and Ministers of State
Officials of Government Departments

Local Administration

Border Regional Authority
West Regional Authority
Mid-West Regional Authority
From each of the seven counties:
County Council Managers and staff;
County Strategy Groups;
County Strategy Working Groups;
County Enterprise Boards;
Directors of Community and Enterprise;
Regional Fisheries Boards; and
Senior Environmental Health Officers

State Agencies

Aer Rianta
An Bord Glas
BIM
Bord Bia
Bord Fáilte Éireann
Bord Gáis
Bord na Móna
Central Fisheries Board
CERT
Coillte Teoranta
Combat Poverty Agency
Energy Advisory Board

Enterprise Ireland
ESB
FÁS
Forfás
IDA Ireland
Ireland West
Irish Sea Fisheries Board
Marine Institute
National Economic and Social Council
National Roads Authority
North West Tourism
Office of the Director of Telecommunications Regulation
Shannon Development
Teagasc
The Heritage Council
Údarás na Gaeltachta

Private/Voluntary Sector and Local Partnerships*

Aberdeen Angus Producers (Ireland) Ltd
Aberdeen Angus Quality Beef Ltd
Allied Irish Bank
Amarach Research
An tIonad Glás
Arigna Catchment Area Community Company
Arigna Community Enterprise Programme
Arrow Community Enterprise Ltd
Athenry Heritage and Tourism
Ballaghaderreen and District Development Association
Ballintubber Tourism
Ballycroy Community Council
Ballycroy Tourism Development
Ballyhaunis Region Community Initiative & Enterprises
Banada Development Agency Ltd
Bank of Ireland



Private/Voluntary Sector and Local Partnerships (continued)

Baxter Ireland Ltd	Drumsna Development Association
Bio-dynamic Agricultural Association of Ireland	East Clare Heritage
Boyle and District Angling Club	Eden Plants
Burren Smokehouse	Eircom
Carrokeel Seafoods Ltd	Eircom Ennis Information Age Town
Ceide Fields Visitors Centre	Elphin Development Company
Central Fisheries Board	Elphin Heritage Society
Chambers of Commerce of Ireland	Enniscoe Gardens
Chambers of Commerce – local groups: Ballyhaunis; Ballina; Ballinasloe; Boyle; Carrick-on-Shannon; Castlebar; Ennis; Galway; Letterkenny; Loughrea; Sligo; Tobercurry; Tuam; and Westport	Enterprise Kiltullagh Ltd
Clare Tourist Council	Ernact
Coleman Heritage Centre	Errigal Fish
Comhar Iorrais (LEADER II) Teo	Esat Telecom
Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann	Europa Marketing and Management
Concannon & Company	FORUM Connemara West Centre
Connemara National Park	Foxford Woollen Mills
Connemara Walking Centre	Fuchsia West Cork
Connemara West Plc	Gallagher Brothers Fish Merchants Ltd
Connemara West Tourism	Galway Aqua Consulting Ltd
Construction Industry Federation	Galway City Partnership
Coolmore Community Group	Galway Rural Development Company
Corrib Country Holidays	Glemamaddy Community Development Co.
Council for the West	Glen Centre
County Sligo Agricultural Museum and Rural Heritage Park	Glencolmille Folk Museum
Creevy Co-op	Glenveagh Castle and National Park
Cruachan Aí Visitors Centre	Glinsk Community Council
Cumann Bádóirí Acla	Greencastle Co-operative
Digital Equipment International Ltd	Greencastle Seafoods
Donegal Local Development Company	Grundy's
Donegal Tourism	Harmac Medical Products Ltd
Donnelly Vision Systems	Holiday East Clare
Doonbeg Development Company	IBEC
Drumkeerin Heritage Centre	ICTU
	IFA
	IFA Fish Farming Centre
	Information Society Commission

Private/Voluntary Sector and Local Partnerships (continued)

Inishowen Community Development Group	Longstrup Ireland Ltd
Inishowen Partnership Board	Lough Allen Outdoor Pursuits
Inishowen Rural Development Ltd	Marketing Sligo Forum
Inishowen Organic Project	Masonite Ireland
Inshore Fisheries Stakeholders North Mayo	Mayday Marketing
Irish Organic Farmers & Growers Association	Mayo Naturally
Ionad Chois Locha	Meitheal Mhaigheo
IRD Kiltimagh	Meridan Systems
IRD Claremorris	Micon Ltd
IRD Portumna	Mid Clare Tourism Development
Irish Angus Cattle Ltd	Mid-South Roscommon Rural Development Company
Irish Co-operative Organisation Society	Mohill Community Development Association
Irish Country Holidays	Mountbellew Organic Unit
Irish Country Women's Association	Moy Valley Resources, IRD
Irish Farmhouse Holidays	North Clare Tourism Development
Irish Food and Drink Exports	North Connacht Farmers Co-operative Society
Irish Seaspray	Northwest Marketing
Irish Seed Savers Association	Obair Newmarket-on-Fergus
Jennings Meat Company	Ocean
Keadue Community Development Association	Ocean Shells
Kepak Ltd	Ocean West
Killala Precision Components Ltd	Oideas Gael
Killary Salmon Co. Ltd	Oranmore Co-op
Killibegs Fishermen's Association	Organic Centre, Rossinver
Killimer Tidy Villages	Organic Trust
Kilrush Urban District Council	PA Consulting
Kiltyclogher Development	Páirtíocht Ghaelthacht Thír Chonaill
King House	Partíocht Chonamara
Knock International Airport Development Co	Reliable Plastics Ltd
Kylemore Abbey	Riverstown Enterprise Development Ltd
Lake District Enterprise Ltd	Roscommon Millennium Trust
Leenane Cultural Centre	Roscommon Partnership Company
Leitrim Organic Forum	Rural Homes Accommodation Ltd
Leitrim Partnership	Rural Resettlement Ireland
Limerick Food Centre	Rural Resource Development Ltd



Private/Voluntary Sector and Local Partnerships (continued)

Shannon Dolphins Development Ltd
Shannon Regional Meats
Shannon-Erne Waterways
Shellfish Research Laboratory
Sixmilebridge Community Council
Sligo Airport
Sligo County LEADER Partnership Co Ltd
SOS Walking Tours
South East Galway Organic Horticulture Development Group
South West Mayo Development Company
Sterling Fluid Systems
Strokestown Development Association
Strokestown Park House
Suck Valley Development Co-op
System Label Ireland
Telework Ireland
Tourism Development International
Town and Country Homes Association
Tulla Electronics
Tullamore Co-op
Turlough Development Association
Ulster Agricultural Organisation Society
Únabhán Tourism Co-operative
West Coast Fish Processing Ltd
West of Ireland Holidays Ltd
WESTBIC
Western Health Board
Western Rural Development Company
Westport Tourism Organisation
WOCO
Woodford/Looscaun Development Committee
2 R Kunststofftechnik

Educational, Religious and Other Institutions

Athlone Institute of Technology
Ballina Food Innovation Centre
Catholic Dioceses of Elphin, Killala & Achonry
Church of Ireland
Galway Mayo Institute of Technology
Institute of Public Administration
Letterkenny Institute of Technology
Martin Ryan Institute, NUIG
National University of Ireland Galway
Roscommon Vocational Educational Committee
Sligo Institute of Technology
St. Angela's College, Lough Gill
Tralee Institute of Technology
Tourism College Killybegs
Western Theological Institute

***In addition to organisations and businesses mentioned here, WDC has engaged with many individuals relating to specific projects in the following categories:**

Professionals:

Accountants; Auctioneers; Building Contractors; and Tax Consultants

Marine Industry:

Fish Farmers; Fishermen; and Fish Processors

Natural Resources Sector:

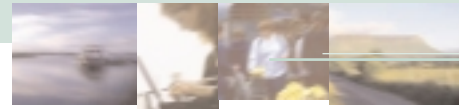
Farming community; Independent Food Producers; and Organic Producers

Tourism Industry:

Independent Tourism Providers

Abbreviations used in Annual Review

ADM Ltd	Area Development Management Ltd
BIM	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
BMW Region	Border, Midland and West Region
CERT	The State Tourism Training College
EU	European Union
FÁS	Foras Áiseanna Saothair – Training and Employemt Authority
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FWPMA	Fixed Wireless Point to Multi-Point Access
GVA	Gross Value Added
IAP	Integrated Area Plan
IDA	Industrial Development Authority, Ireland
IFA	Irish Farmers Association
IOFGA	Irish Organic Farmers & Growers Association
ISDN	Integrated Services Digital Network
LEADER	Liasons entre actions de development de l'economie rurale.
NDP	National Development Plan
NUIG	National Univerity of Ireland, Galway
ODTR	Office of the Director of Telecommunications Regulation
SIPTU	Services, Industrial, Professional and Technical Union
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
WDC	Western Development Commission
WIF	Western Investment Fund



Official opening Dillon House. May 1999.⁹