



Rialtas  
na hÉireann  
Government  
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann  
Project Ireland  
**2040**

# Project Ireland 2040

## Annual Report 2019

October 2020

Prepared by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform  
[gov.ie/2040](http://gov.ie/2040)

# Foreword

I am delighted to publish the Project Ireland 2040 Annual Report for 2019. This Report is supplemented by nine Regional Reports which give a detailed overview of the public investments which have been made throughout the country.

Project Ireland 2040 encompasses the National Development Plan 2018– 2027 and the National Planning Framework and is the first time that planning and investment have been explicitly linked in Ireland. By 2040 the population of Ireland is expected to grow by over 1 million to 5.7 million people. The spatial planning approach set out in Project Ireland 2040 will support this growth. Its successful delivery is essential to securing Ireland's economic, social and environmental sustainability over the next two decades.

The impact of Covid-19 now poses fresh challenges to the delivery of infrastructure throughout Ireland. Since the launch of Project Ireland 2040 back in February 2018, infrastructure investment has been prioritised and increased. Public capital expenditure is planned to increase in 2021 to over €9.1 billion and in spite of Covid-19. Public investment in construction in Ireland in 2020 and 2021 will remain among the highest in the EU. This investment is required for the development of new social, economic and climate infrastructure. The Government remains committed to Project Ireland 2040 and the pipeline of public investment projects detailed in the plan, as evidenced by the recent July Stimulus where €500m of additional capital expenditure was announced. These projects will act as important economic stabilisers over the coming period and be crucial for delivering the ten National Strategic Outcomes identified in Project Ireland 2040. A timely review of the National Development Plan shall also be informed by the progress made in 2018 and 2019.

This document outlines the progress made in 2019 under each of the ten National Strategic Outcomes - Compact Growth; Enhanced Regional Accessibility; Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities; Sustainable Mobility; A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills; High Quality International Connectivity; Enhanced Amenity and Heritage; Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Society; Sustainable Management of Water Waste and other Environmental Resources; and Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services.

Progress in realising these National Strategic Outcomes will shape a new model of physical development for our country, driving substantial progress in economic, social and environmental terms as an island in a European and global context. The Annual Report also documents progress in the National Planning Framework, as well as progress in reforms to the monitoring and implementation of Project Ireland 2040.

The following pages seek to document the progress made in 2019, which despite the unprecedented challenges now faced due to Covid-19, set a strong foundation for success in 2020 and beyond. As I write, my officials are preparing to embark on a review of the National Development Plan. This review will assess the adjustments and re-alignments which are required to the NDP in order to deliver policy priorities as set out in the recent Programme for Government ensuring that we build a country for all our people.



**Michael McGrath TD,**  
Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform

# Contents

<b>Section 1: Overview and Economic Context</b> .....	1
<b>Section 2: Delivering our National Strategic Outcomes</b> .....	4
2.1 Compact Growth	5
2.2 Enhanced Regional Accessibility	9
2.3 Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities	10
2.4 Sustainable Mobility	15
2.5 A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills	17
2.6 High Quality International Connectivity	23
2.7 Enhanced Amenity and Heritage	25
2.8 Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Society	26
2.9 Sustainable Management of Water Waste and other Environmental Resources	28
2.10 Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services	29
2.11 Other Sectors	31
<b>Section 3: The Spatial Dimension</b> .....	33
<b>Section 4: Reforming, Monitoring and Implementation</b> .....	35

## Section 1:

# Overview and economic context

Project Ireland 2040 is the long-term overarching strategy to make Ireland a better country for all of its people. Project Ireland 2040 represents a new approach to social and economic development. It is the first time that spatial planning and investment have been explicitly linked in Ireland.

By 2040, there will be an extra one million people living in our country. Project Ireland 2040 aims to accommodate this growth in a balanced and sustainable way and put in the place the investment required to enable prosperity. In the first two years, Project Ireland 2040 has been enhancing regional connectivity, supporting national competitiveness and improving environmental sustainability. The 2018 Project Ireland 2040 Annual Report was published in May 2019.

### 1.1 The Economic Context for 2019

In 2019, Ireland continued to be among the fastest growing economies in the European Union. GDP grew by 5.6% in 2019. This growth was largely on the back of very strong export figures while growth in the domestic sector was somewhat softer.

Output by the construction sector increased in 2019 (see the Build 2020 Report) but it was accompanied by high levels of inflation in the sector and subdued employment growth.

Risks persisted in the global economy and uncertainty from Brexit has been a constant backdrop to Project Ireland 2040.

This context continues to underscore the need to achieve the overall objectives of Project Ireland 2040, both in terms of expanding the national stock of

infrastructure and changing the spatial pattern of development.

### 1.2 Investment Growth in 2019

Project Ireland 2040 is predicated on a steep increase in public investment over the medium-term.

The official measure of total investment in the sector (including both private and public investment) is Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) in Building and Construction. Total investment was estimated at €27 billion for 2019 and covers housing, commercial building, civil engineering and public infrastructure. This consisted of €19.8 billion in private investment and €7.7 billion in public investment.

Underpinning the delivery of Project Ireland 2040 in 2019 was an increase of 24% in public investment.

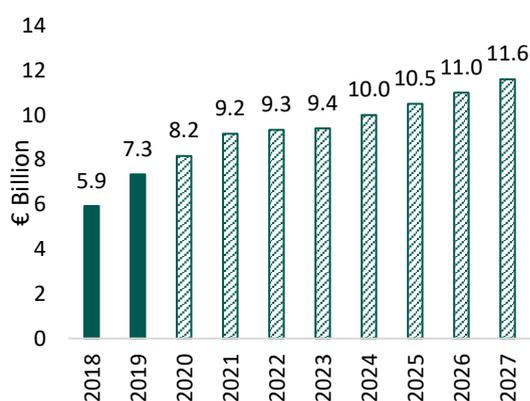
Public investment in Ireland in 2020 was projected to reach 4 percent of national income (GNI\*) compared to an EU average in recent years of 2.9 percent (GDP).

#### Exchequer Investment in each Department 2018, 2019 and 2020

Departmental Vote Group	2018	2019	2020
	€m	€m	€m
Agriculture, Food & the Marine	274	260	274
Business, Enterprise & Innovation	527	577	632
Children & Youth Affairs	26	26	31
Communications, Climate Action & Environment	192	211	382
Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht	54	70	81
Defence	95	138	113
Education & Skills	741	941	922
Employment Affairs & Social Protection	8	7	15
Finance	23	28	22
Foreign Affairs & Trade	12	14	13
Health	513	689	854
Housing, Planning & Local Government	1,773	2,151	2,240
Justice & Equality	147	162	269
Public Expenditure & Reform	190	180	225
Rural & Community Development	95	138	150
Transport, Tourism & Sport	1,324	1,536	1,943
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,996</b>	<b>7,129</b>	<b>8,166 *</b>

2018 - Audited appropriation accounts  
 2019 - Provisional outturn  
 2020 - Revised Estimates Volume (does not include July Stimulus)

#### Ireland's Public Capital Investment under the NDP 2018-2027



Source: National Development Plan 2018-2027 and Revised Estimates 2020

### 1.3 Capital Investment and Activity in 2020

While the main focus of this report is a lookback at the achievements of 2019, it is also appropriate to reflect on the significant impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had on public investment in 2020. The public health measures introduced on 28 March 2020 to halt the progress of Covid-19 resulted in the closure of almost all construction sites with the exception of essential projects for a period of 7 weeks.

\*In direct response to Covid-19, necessary and large-scale revisions were made to capital allocations for 2020 primarily in Health and Business, Enterprise and Innovation. Subsequently, as part of the July Stimulus, a further €500 million was provided to accelerate capital works across a wide range of areas generating jobs and economic activity across all regions of the country.

This investment package will help alleviate the overall economic impact on construction activity as a result of the impact on our society brought about by Covid-19, and mitigate the significant fall-off in private sector investment to date in 2020. The projects and programmes cover a wide geographic and sectoral scope, and notably including housing, education, sustainable transport, environmental protection and heritage/tourism.

The Government is also committed to maintaining the overall capital allocation for 2021 at the level of €9,161 million, some €1 billion or 12% greater than the original 2020 budget allocation, which will allow for a major intensification of the priorities set out in the Programme for Government, while also providing confidence across the construction sector and thus supporting the pipeline of delivery and capacity-building through the remainder of 2020. The precise configuration and prioritisation of the overall 2021 capital allocation, including the remaining unallocated reserve set out in the NDP, will be specified further and more comprehensively in the context of Budget 2021 and the Review of the National Development Plan.

## 1.4 Report Structure

This report sets out progress achieved in the second year of Project Ireland 2040. Section 2 outlines the main outputs delivered under each of the Project Ireland 2040 National Strategic Outcomes, which are as follows:

- Compact growth
- Enhanced regional accessibility
- Strengthened rural economies and communities
- Sustainable mobility
- A strong economy supported by enterprise, innovation and skills
- High quality international connectivity
- Enhanced amenity and heritage
- Transition to a low carbon, climate resilient society
- Sustainable water waste and other environmental resources
- Quality childcare, education and health services
- Other public investment sectors

Section 2 also highlights the high-level priorities for 2019 under each outcome.

Section 3 updates on progress with the spatial dimension of Project Ireland 2040 and describes legislative change and institutions set up to implement national planning policy.

Section 4 presents a range of institutional and organisational changes implemented in 2019 to support the delivery of Project Ireland 2040. This section also describes a number of changes to be implemented in 2020 which aim to improve project governance, bring greater accuracy to forecasting project costs and reforms to the processes for project selection and procurement.



Vartry Reservoir, County Wicklow

## Section 2:

# Delivering our National Strategic Outcomes

Project Ireland 2040 set out ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs), built around the over-arching themes of wellbeing, equality and opportunity. The ten priorities embed a link between the new approach to spatial planning and our national public investment strategy. The second year of Project Ireland 2040 have seen clear progress across each NSO, as set out in this Section.



## 2.1 Compact Growth

Project Ireland 2040 signalled the Government's intention, and reflected a public mood, to shift away from "business as usual" sprawl-based development patterns and adopt more compact, sustainable and community centred development approaches. Compact growth is listed as the first of the Strategic Outcomes and Priorities within the National Planning Framework (NPF).

Practical measures in support of the compact growth outcome include new guidance from the Department of Housing Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) on both apartment development (2018) and building height in urban areas (December 2018). The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) established in April 2019, will ensure that regional and local spatial plans and policy are in compliance with and will support the delivery of compact urban growth outcomes. An Bord Pleanála's Strategic Housing Development (SHD) application process is approving significant levels of housing projects, including apartments, in key urban areas. In December 2019, the SHD arrangements were extended for a further two years to 31 December 2021, on foot of a recommendation by a Review Group established under legislation to consider the effectiveness of the arrangements.

The Land Development Agency (LDA), since its inception has already made significant progress in the area of compact development and densification across the initial nine sites it is engaged with. By way of example, the LDA is working with Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council to deliver 597 housing units at a site in Shanganagh, Shankill which will promote the Government's continuing efforts for well-designed compact urban communities. An application for planning was submitted for this site and has since been approved (2020).

In addition, DHPLG started work in 2019 on Draft Development Plan Guidelines. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSESs) and the development of these new guidelines will further assist with the translation of the compact growth principles as

set out in the NPF to regional and local levels of plan making. This plan-led approach will ultimately influence the location and form of development which takes place across the country.

The continued enabling and co-alignment between various funding supports in targeting strategic capital investment proposals which supports balanced regional development, compact urban growth and targeted urban regeneration projects remain a priority.

### **The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR)**

The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) was established in April 2019. The OPR is responsible for assessment of all local authority and regional assembly forward planning, including zoning decisions. The Regulator has the power to advise the Minister on whether a plan made by a local authority conflicts with national planning policy and to recommend that the Minister make directions where any plan is not in compliance with national policy. The Regulator will also ensure that planning authorities are operating to the highest standards of integrity and best practice, ensuring that planning policy decisions in their development plan-making roles are in line with national and regional policies as set out in the NPF and Regional RSESs.

In the period between the establishment of the OPR in April 2019 and December 2019, the OPR evaluated and inputted into twenty-five local authority statutory forward planning processes. This included making recommendations on draft local area plans, amendments to local area plans, variations to city / county development plans and contributions to development plan issues papers.

The Regulator has the power to review the organisation, systems and procedures used by any planning authority or An Bord Pleanála. Once this methodology has been adopted, the OPR will then be able to commence its programme of reviews. The OPR can initiate such reviews at its own behest, at the request

of the Minister, or on foot of complaints from members of the public. In 2019, the OPR oversaw over 250 individual lines of correspondence from members of the public.

The OPR will also continue to drive national research, education and public information programmes to highlight the role and benefit of planning, which will include monitoring the implementation of the NPF. In addition, the OPR together with DHPLG has joined a commissioning consortium comprising the Governments of Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England to conduct research aimed at identifying the most important outcomes in spatial planning and feasible ways to measure them.

A training programme for Elected Members was commenced by the OPR in 2019, the purpose of which is to provide elected members with enhanced knowledge of the planning process, reaffirming their roles and responsibilities within the planning system and their functions in relation to ensuring proper planning and sustainable development.

### **The Land Development Agency**

The Land Development Agency (LDA) was established by secondary legislation in September 2018. In July 2019, the Government approved the drafting of the Land Development Agency Bill 2019, to enable the establishment of the LDA under primary legislation.

The LDA was set up to ensure optimal use of State land, with the over-riding strategic objective to coordinate sites for regeneration and development, especially for home delivery, while focusing on the overall public interest in determining land use. The core of the opportunity offered by the LDA is around long-term strategic land assembly, which can result in the delivery of up to 150,000 homes over a 20 year period. Delivery of the compact growth objectives in the NPF will benefit from better and more strategic use of public lands.

An initial tranche of nine strategic sites has been identified with work progressing on their development at present. Significant

preparatory work has been undertaken for the development of these initial strategic sites with mapping, planning, engineering, and environmental studies underway.

### **Four Project Ireland 2040 Enabling Funds**

The four Project Ireland 2040 funds worth a total of €4bn to 2027 will provide exchequer grant-aid to support urban and rural regeneration and development, disruptive technologies and climate action. All four are competitive bid-based funds and the largest, €2bn Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) was developed by DHPLG to support measures that will contribute to the more sustainable development of cities and large towns. DHPLG also contributed to the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) process, which is overseen by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD).

### **Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)**

The Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) was established to support more compact and sustainable development, through the regeneration and rejuvenation of Ireland's five cities and other large towns, in line with the objectives of the NPF and National Development Plan (NDP). This is to enable a greater proportion of residential and mixed-use development to be delivered within the existing built-up footprints of our cities and large towns. The funding also aims to ensure that more parts of our urban areas can become attractive and vibrant places in which people choose to live and work, as well as to invest and to visit.

Following Call 1 in July 2018, bids were invited for funding support from the URDF and a total of 189 applications were received. In mid-2019, following a rigorous assessment process, approval in principle and provisional funding allocations were issued in respect of 87 major projects across the country. This significant pipeline of projects is set to have a transformational impact in urban areas across

the country. The 87 projects approved under Call 1 offer a good regional spread, and span a number of themes. The diversity of this first tranche of projects demonstrates the broad focus and responsive nature of the Fund. Through the URDF, successful applicants are receiving targeted integrated support for innovative holistic solutions to the issues that have hindered the regeneration and rejuvenation of our large towns and cities. The programme has been very well received and supported and the Department is working closely with the successful applicants to advance these projects as quickly as possible.

The NPF is being underpinned by significant targeted Exchequer capital investment through the URDF. €550 million is available to support projects up to 2022 and a total of €2 billion is available up to 2027 under the NDP. In its first year of expenditure, 2019, €18.6m in funding was drawn down by applicants in respect of URDF supported projects, and €130m is available to support these and other similar projects in 2020.

The table below shows the largest 15 successful projects from the first call for applications under the Fund.

Lead Council	Project
South Dublin	Tallaght Town Centre (Civic Plaza/Link Road)
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown	Cherrywood Public Parks, Greenways & Attenuation
Tipperary	Clonmel 2030 Transformational Regeneration
Dublin City	Rutland Street North East Inner City
Laois	Portlaoise - A Cultural Quarter
Leitrim	Public Realm Improvement Scheme Carrick-on-Shannon
Wicklow	Bray Public Transport Bridge
Meath	Ashbourne Road and Public Realm Improvement
Kilkenny	Abbey Quarter (Public Realm enabling)
Cork County	Carrigaline Western Relief Road
Waterford	Waterford City and Environs – North Quays
Sligo	Eastern Garavogue Bridge & Approach Roads Scheme
Mayo	Ballina Innovation Quarter
Wicklow	Wicklow Town
Roscommon	Market Square and Main Street Public Realm Plan

## Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies

The preparation of Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs) was progressed and finalised during 2019. The RSEs have been published by the three Regional Assemblies: the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly Strategy was published on 28 June 2019; the Northern and Western Regional Assembly and the Southern Regional Assembly agreed their Strategies in December 2019 and published them in January 2020. The Strategies give more detailed expression of the NPF at regional finalisation of the Strategies automatically starts the process of reviews and updates of individual County and city development plans to ensure strategic co-ordination and consistency between national, regional and local levels. This review/updating process commenced in 2019 and will be ongoing in the period 2020 to 2022.

### Housing Supply

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) published their new dwelling completions quarterly series for the first time in June 2018.

- The numbers of new homes becoming available for use in 2019 was 24,397. This is a 14% increase up on 2018.
- New dwelling completions for the same period totalled 21,133, an increase of 18% on the full year 2018, when 17,946 dwellings were completed.
- In 2019, 75% of all new dwelling completions were in urban areas and the remainder in rural areas. At the beginning of the series in 2011, 38% were in urban and 62% in rural areas.
- 13,335 planning permissions were granted in 2019
- In 2019, commencement notices for 26,237 new homes were submitted, an annual increase of 17%.
- In 2019, registrations for HomeBond, an insurance scheme that relates primarily to multiple unit housing schemes, totalled 10,784, an annual increase of 5%. Annual registrations

continue to be in excess of 10,000 units; 2008 was the last year when this occurred.

### Social Housing

The latest published figures cover the period up to end Q4 2019 and show that over 28,000 households had their housing need met in 2019, surpassing the annual target of 27,360. A total of 10,007 new homes were brought into the active social housing stock in 2019 through build, acquisitions, voids and leasing programmes, exceeding the national target of 10,000. By end 2019, over 31,200 of the 50,000 new social homes initially targeted for 2016-2021 have been delivered. The original target set for the period up to end 2019 was 27,159 homes. Construction figures from end December 2019 show that 6,704 new social housing homes were being built across 374 sites. The Social Housing Programme was facilitated by over €2.44 billion of exchequer investment in 2019.

### Social Housing PPP Programme

Contracts were signed for Bundle 1 of the Social Housing PPP Programme in March 2019, which will provide 534 houses and apartments across six sites in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA). Construction is expected to take 12-24 months depending on site. Contracts were also signed for Bundle 2 of this programme in November 2019. This will provide a further 465 units across eight sites in Cork, Clare, Galway, Kildare, Roscommon, and Waterford, and are due for completion in 2021. Tenants for all these homes will be drawn, in the normal manner, from the Local Authority's social housing waiting list in accordance with its allocation scheme.

## 2.2 Enhanced Regional Accessibility

At the core of Project Ireland 2040 is the policy objective of supporting balanced regional growth. To underpin this, the Government is committed to enabling better regional accessibility.

In 2019, there was significant progress in developing new transport links through the appraisal, planning and procurement stages. As set out in Project Ireland 2040, improving access to the north-west is a strategic aim to support balanced national development.

### Key Achievements/Highlights in 2019

- M11 Gorey to Enniscorthy, Wexford Motorway opened July 2019.
- N25 New Ross Bypass, Wexford completed in 2019 and opened on 29 January, 2020.
- M7 Naas Road Widening, Kildare
- Project is nearing completion with limited works ongoing in the verges and at the interchanges.
- N4 Collooney to Castlebaldwin, Sligo. Government approval received to award construction contract on 29 January, 2019.
- N5 Westport to Turlough, Mayo. Government approval received to award construction contract on 15 October, 2019.
- N22 Ballyvourney to Macroom, Cork. Government approval received to award construction contract on 15 October, 2019.
- N21/N69 Foynes to Limerick (Adare Bypass). Government approval received on 30 October, 2019, to submit the scheme to An Bord Pleanála for planning approval. It may be necessary to proceed with the Adare Bypass element of this project first, in time for the Ryder Cup in 2026.

### National Roads Outputs 2019

- Length of new Motorway/Dual Carriageway completed: 31km
- Length of new Single Carriageway completed: 24.75km
- Length of Motorway/Dual Carriageway widened: 13.6km
- Length of National Roads pavement renewal: 224km
- Bridge rehabilitation works: 60

### Investment in the Inter-Urban Rail Network

In 2019, Government approved a new and significantly enhanced 5-year funding programme for the maintenance and renewal of the rail network. This funding programme, known as the Infrastructure Manager Multi-Annual Contract (IMMAC) will benefit passengers across the rail network through increased service reliability and punctuality, improved journey times and continued safety of rail services.

Exchequer funding provided under Project Ireland 2040 for IMMAC 2020 to 2024 amounts to just over €1billion, representing an almost 40% increase on the level of Exchequer funding provided under the last 5-year programme, IMMAC 2014 to 2018. This increased level of funding means that the heavy rail network is now being funded at the 'steady state' level of funding required to ensure optimal maintenance and renewal of the network and identified in Project Ireland 2040 as the foremost funding priority for the network.

Project Ireland 2040 also commits toward an evaluation of the economic benefits and value for money of high-speed rail on the main inter-urban rail network against improvements to existing and planned line speeds along the lines.

## Regional and Local Roads Updates

Three Project Ireland 2040 Regional and Local Roads schemes have been completed in 2019:

- Upgrade of Nangor and Adamstown roads (facilitates Grange Business Park)
- Portlaoise Southern Distributor Road
- Dingle Relief Road

## 2.3 Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities

### Rural Regeneration and Development Fund

One of the key objectives for the Government's Project Ireland 2040 strategy is to achieve the goal of strengthened rural economies and communities.

The €1 billion Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF), launched in 2018, is providing the investment needed to support rural renewal, strengthen and build resilience in rural towns, villages and communities and deliver on the objectives of Project Ireland 2040.

The RRDF is administered by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) and is complemented by a range of additional programmes and schemes delivered under the Department's Rural Regeneration Programme as part of Project Ireland 2040, which helps maintain and develop the growth and vitality of rural areas and supports communities and organisations to meet their needs.

The Fund supports Category 1 projects which are capital infrastructure proposals that are ready to commence and Category 2 projects that require further development to enable them to apply to the Fund as a Category 1 proposal.

The first call for proposals under the RRDF was launched in July 2018 and upon completion of this call, 84 projects were allocated funding of €86 million to support projects costing €117 million.

Projects allocated funding under the first call continued to progress their delivery over 2019. Two projects funded under the RRDF were completed in 2019

- The Digital and Innovation Hub gteic@An Spidéal was officially opened in October 2019. The Hub was allocated €548,887 from the first call to the RRDF and is providing a vibrant, modern, high speed broadband facility for start-up and established enterprises and is fostering and supporting innovative employment opportunities with a particular emphasis on the creative and digital media sector.
- The Ennistymon Digital Hub and Multi Service Centre in Co Clare was officially opened in December 2019. The Hub was allocated €1,023,300 under the first call to the RRDF. The Ennistymon Digital Hub and Multi Service Centre project has regenerated a building in the centre of Ennistymon to provide a multifunctional facility that is designed to enhance job creation and retention and deliver community and family resource service to disadvantaged sectors of the community.

The second call for Category 1 applications to the Fund was launched in April 2019 and closed in August 2019. A total of 69 applications were received by the Department. Following the completion of this call, 26 projects were awarded funding of €62 million to support projects costing €95 million. In total, by the end of 2019, the RRDF has allocated funding of €148 million to 110 projects located in every county in Ireland. The Department's Rural Regeneration Programme under Project Ireland 2040 also includes The Town and Village Renewal Scheme, the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme, the Local Improvement Scheme, CLÁR and LEADER. A total of €73 million in funding was allocated in 2019 under these schemes to deliver a total allocation of funding to rural communities under the Rural

Regeneration and Development programme to over €220 million.

The second call for Category 2 projects was announced in December 2019 and the closing date for applications was the 27 February 2020. Category 2 relates to strategic, large-scale projects in rural communities at an early stage of development, which now require investment to reach the next stage where they are in a position to commence works and apply for Category 1 status under the Fund.

### Tourism Development

Tourism makes a very important contribution to the policy goals of strengthening rural economies and communities (NSO 3) and enhancing amenity and heritage (NSO 7). The First Progress Report on Project Ireland 2040 highlighted tourism investment is an important pillar, which continues to be the case. However, it is important to note that tourism also contributes to the latter policy goal – strengthening rural communities and economies.

In this regard, Fáilte Ireland has developed a series of strategic partnerships with key State bodies and the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD). Through these partnerships, Fáilte Ireland can assist with the enhancement of visitor attractions and activities and advise on further experience development and marketing.

#### *Fáilte Ireland funded projects*

New and Enhanced Visitor Attractions and Experiences (relevant to both NSO 3 and NSO 7);

- A total of 8 large projects supported by Fáilte Ireland were opened in 2019 (6 of which were in rural areas outside Dublin), receiving total Fáilte Ireland grant funding of €15.2m towards total project costs of €36.1m;
  - 3 of these were along the Wild Atlantic Way – Kylemore Abbey (Galway), Sliabh Liag (Donegal) and Sligo Pontoon (Sligo) – receiving a total of €4.25m in Fáilte Ireland funding

- 3 were in the Ireland's Ancient East tourism experience brand region – Brú na Bóinne (Meath), Johnstown Castle (Wexford) and Ormond Castle (Tipperary) – receiving a total of €5.67m in Fáilte Ireland funding
- 2 were in Dublin (Museum of Literature Ireland (MoLI) and St. Audeon's (Dublin), together receiving Fáilte Ireland funding of almost €5.26m.

- 18 small projects supported by Fáilte Ireland were opened in 2019 – all in the Ireland's Ancient East region – which together received total Fáilte Ireland grant funding of €2.1m towards total project costs of €2.8m. Examples include:
  - Wicklow Gaol (Wicklow);
  - Medieval Mile Museum (Kilkenny);
  - Clonmel Flights of Discovery (Tipperary); and
  - Bishop's Palace (Waterford).

In May 2019, Fáilte Ireland launched Platforms for Growth – its' new platform-based approach to large-scale capital investment in tourism – and issued a call for applications focusing on the platform of "Immersive Cultural and Heritage Attractions" targeting large, transformative capital projects with a minimum cost of €2.5m.

In 2019, following the 2018 launch of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands as Fáilte Ireland's newest tourism experience brand, Fáilte Ireland focused on raising awareness of the brand and the region, as well as undertaking several strategic plans aimed at delivering a significantly improved experience for visitors, both domestic and overseas.

#### *RRDF-funded projects of tourism significance*

Two of the strategic, large-scale projects for which funding was announced in November 2019 under Category 1 of the RRDF, administered by DRCD, are considered to be of particular importance for tourism to Ireland and the Ireland's Ancient East region in particular. These are Wexfordia - the New Ross Tourism Transformation (awarded €5.56m) and Ireland's Global Garden -Mount

Congreve Estate, Kilmeaden (awarded €3.726m).

*Metrics for a selection of key tourism capital projects (3 of the largest funding awards)*

- National Famine Museum at Strokestown House (Fáilte Ireland investment – €3.725m):
  - Over the first 5 years, Fáilte Ireland expects this attraction to generate €13.2m in direct expenditure.
- Atlantic Museum Galway (Fáilte Ireland investment – €6.444m):
  - Over the first 5 years, Fáilte Ireland expects this attraction to generate €29.3m in direct expenditure
  - By Year 10, Fáilte Ireland expects this attraction to grow to 200k domestic and overseas visitors.

- Sligo Cultural Plaza (Fáilte Ireland investment – €2.5m):

- Over the first 5 years, Fáilte Ireland expects this attraction to generate €7.7m in direct visitor expenditure by attracting 45k domestic and overseas visitors (by year 5).

**Greenways Update 2019**

A call for funding under the Government's Strategy for the Development of National and Regional Greenways yielded 22 applications in 2019. 10 successful applicants were announced in June 2019 and €40m of funding was allocated to these shovel ready projects as summarised in the table on the next page.

2019 also saw the completion of the Maynooth to Athlone Section of the Galway to Dublin Greenway including the Athlone Railway Underpass.

## Greenways Update 2019 Successful Applicants

Project	Amount €m	Lead Promoter	Additional Information
Midleton-Youghal	€8.0m	Cork /County Council	23km of Greenway linking Midleton to Youghal along the old railway line.
Connemara Greenway	€2.6m	Galway County Council	Completion of sections from Clifden to Recess will provide a 21km route. Part of the proposed Galway – Clifden Greenway.
Tralee-Fenit	€3m	Kerry County Council	Start of Southern End of Great Southern Greenway, first stage in linking Fenit to Listowel – 10km.
Listowel-Limerick County Boundary	€3.5m	Kerry County Council	Extension of Great Southern Greenway westwards into Kerry and towards the sea - 10.5km of new Greenway increasing GSG to over 50km.
Clew Bay Greenway	€3.2m	Mayo County Council	Achill Sound and extension to Bunnacurry. Construction of Grade Separated sections from Westport to Murrisk. Will contribute to 56km route.
Waterford Greenway	€2.65m	Waterford County Council	Extension of Waterford Greenway into City – Viking Triangle. Extends Greenway into tourist attractions in Waterford. *The NTA will now fund this section.
Grand Canal Greenway - Tullamore to Daingean	€2.35m	Waterways Ireland/Offaly County Council	Will complete link from Daingean to Lough Boora – 40km.
Grand Canal Greenway - Kildare section as far as Sallins	€1.7m	Waterways Ireland/Kildare County Council	Aylmer Bridge to Sallins, extends Greenway from Hazelhatch Bridge to Sallins – 13km.
Ferrybank-New Ross	€8m	Wexford County Council are lead with some parts going through County Kilkenny	24km with potential to link to Waterford Greenway in Waterford City.
Blessington Lake Loop	€5m	Wicklow County Council	42km of Greenway around the Blessington Lakes, incorporating Russborough House and the villages of Vallemount, Ballyknockan and Lacken.

\*The NTA can 100% fund the Waterford Greenway extension section as opposed to the 60% funding originally awarded, so the NTA have now taken over this project.

## The National Broadband Plan

The National Broadband Plan (NBP) is the initiative to rollout high-speed broadband to the 1.1 million people living and working in the nearly 540,000 premises, including almost 100,000 businesses and farms, along with 695 schools, where commercial operators will not commit to deliver the service.

The NBP has stimulated commercial investment in this vital service. In 2012, fewer than 700,000 or 30% of all Irish premises had access to high-speed broadband. As of September 2019, this had risen to over 1.8 million or 77% of premises having access to high-speed broadband services.

The NBP contract was signed with National Broadband Ireland (NBI) in November 2019. NBI will roll out a high speed and future proofed broadband network within the State Intervention Area and will operate and manage this network over the next 25 years. By the end of 2021, NBI plans to pass approximately 115,000 premises, with 70,000 - 100,000 passed each year thereafter until rollout is completed.

## Agriculture, Food and the Marine

A wide range of investment supports for farmers, fishermen and agri-food sector companies were delivered during 2019.

- During 2019, grant support totalling €76.5 million for improvements in equipment and facilities on farms was paid under the Targeted Agriculture Modernisation scheme.
- Over 150 horticulture producers received a combined total of €6 million in support for specialised building and equipment through the scheme of investment aid for the development of the commercial horticulture sector.
- Some 499 new afforestation sites and 94 kilometres of new roads were funded.

- A total of €16.11 million was invested in a range of projects across the fisheries, aquaculture and seafood processing sectors.

Key projects under the 2019 Fisheries Harbours Programme included the continuation of the Dinish Quay Extension at Castletown Bere and the commencement of the Smooth Point Extension (Phase 2) at Killybegs.

Investment in equipment took place in 2019 at the Prepared Consumer Food Centre at Teagasc, Ashtown. The coming year will see the next phase of this project, as well as further development at the National Food Innovation Hub at Teagasc, Moorepark.

Johnstown Castle Estate, Museum and Gardens opened in the summer of 2019 as a brand-new visitor attraction for the South-East thanks to €7.5m in funding from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and Fáilte Ireland. The investment funded a range of interventions designed to transform the castle, its grounds and gardens into a high quality visitor destination. DAFM contributed €5m towards conservation and upgrading works to the Castle building and to support construction of a new visitors' centre and improved access to the Johnstown Estate. The new Centre aims to give tourists, from Ireland and abroad, greater reason to visit the country and the South-East region, and, in so doing, to create jobs and economic activity. It is anticipated that the destination will attract 85,000 visits a year.

## Funding for the Gaeltacht and Irish Language

€9.7 million was provided by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) to support the work of Údarás na Gaeltachta in 2019 in investing in job creation and enterprise development initiatives in Gaeltacht regions. In 2019, over €1.4 million was advanced to support community groups in the Gaeltacht as part of the Gaeltacht Language

---

<sup>1</sup> A further €12.9 million was given to the Department of Defence for the purchase of an aircraft for control and enforcement purposes.

Planning Process and to support Irish-Language Networks established outside the Gaeltacht. As part of its commitment to maintaining access to the mainland for our island communities, the Department also invested in the strategic acquisition of Aerfort Chonamara in 2019.

## 2.4 Sustainable Mobility

Project Ireland 2040 contains a commitment to a more environmentally sustainable public transport system to enable economic growth and meet growing passenger demand. While completion of many of the major projects under this strategic priority is toward the latter end of this investment programme, 2019 nonetheless saw clear progress against this goal.

### Active Travel

Project Ireland 2040 commits toward delivery of a comprehensive network of walking and cycling networks in all our major cities and this delivery is supported by a significantly enhanced funding programme.

In 2019, a number of significant projects were completed such as –

- Cork: New active travel bridge, the Mary Elmes Bridge
- Cork: Skehard Road Phase 2
- Dublin: South Campshires cycle track
- Dublin: New active travel bridge beside the National Convention Centre



Mary Elmes Bridge, Cork

Project Ireland 2040 commits toward delivery of a comprehensive network of walking and cycling networks in all our major cities and this delivery is supported by a significantly enhanced funding programme.

The year also saw a number of projects commence, or continue, construction, including –

- Dublin: Royal Canal Phase 2 active travel route
- Dublin: Baldoyle to Portmarnock active travel route
- Galway: Installation of new cycle parking facilities in city centre
- Limerick: Parnell Street / Wickham Street scheme
- Waterford: Hennessey's Road / Brown's Lane improvement scheme

As committed under the Climate Action Plan 2019, a new office was also established within the National Transport Authority (NTA) to assist with the design and delivery of urban cycling infrastructure.

### BusConnects

BusConnects will transform the bus network, and provide significantly enhanced cycling infrastructure, in all major cities, commencing in Dublin.

During 2019, the NTA continued planning and route design for BusConnects Dublin with public consultations held throughout the first half of the year in relation to the 16 proposed core bus corridors. In October 2019, the NTA launched a revised Network Redesign for public consultation, following the initial consultation held during 2018 on proposals.

An important part of the BusConnects programme is the move toward low emission vehicles and, as committed to under Project Ireland 2040, the NTA announced in 2019 it would no longer purchase diesel-only buses for the urban PSO bus fleets.

## DART Expansion

DART Expansion will significantly expand rail services in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) and effectively double the capacity of the existing network through the electrification of the Kildare (to Hazelhatch), Maynooth (to Maynooth) and Northern (to Drogheda) Lines, expansion of the rail fleet and various other infrastructure and signalling improvements across the Lines, including the South-Eastern Line.

In 2019, planning and design continued in relation to the overall programme, while the NTA and Iarnród Éireann commenced pre-qualifying in relation to a 10-year procurement framework for bi-mode (electric and battery-electric) units which will massively expand the fleet as part of the broader programme).

## Luas Green Line Capacity Enhancement Project

The Luas Green Line Capacity Enhancement Project will increase capacity on the Luas Green Line by almost 30% once completed. The project consists of three different, but related, elements –

- Expansion of the Sandyford Luas maintenance depot, completed in 2019;
- Extension of the 26 original Luas Green Line trams: delivery commenced in 2019; and
- Purchase of 8 additional 55m long trams.

## Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies

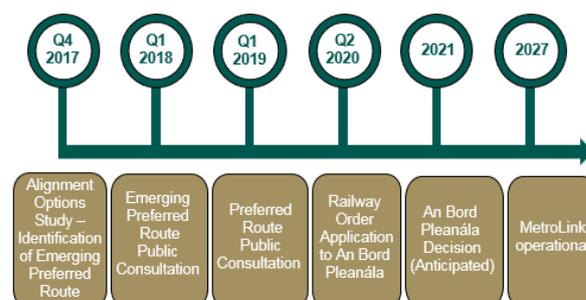
As stated in Project Ireland 2040, Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies are being developed for Cork, Limerick and Waterford (both Dublin and Galway have a strategy in place already).

In 2019, a draft Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy was published for public consultation and published in March 2020. During the year, work commenced on a Limerick Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy.

## MetroLink

MetroLink is the largest single scheme included in Project Ireland 2040 and among the most ambitious infrastructure projects Ireland has seen. This underscores the need for open, ongoing and responsive consultation with local communities affected by the route.

### MetroLink Project Timeline



Source: National Transport Authority

The NTA and TII completed a non-statutory public consultation on the “Preferred Route” for MetroLink in May 2019. This was the second round of public consultations, which will help inform the development of a business case for the project.

## Rail

In July 2019, Government approved the construction of a new National Train Control Centre (NTCC). The NTCC is a key enabler for expansion of rail services as it will enhance rail traffic management and will underpin both the planned and potential future expansion of rail services across the entire rail network and in particular, the planned expansion of DART services under the DART Expansion Programme.

In October 2019, Government approved the purchase of 41 additional carriages for the GDA commuter rail fleet. This project will increase capacity by approximately 34% across the Kildare, Maynooth and Northern Lines.

## Growth in public transport demand

Passenger numbers reached a record high of 290 million in 2019, representing an increase of almost 24 million or 9% compared to 2018, and a seventh year of continued growth in passenger numbers.

The percentage increase in passenger numbers in 2019 is the largest since the creation of the NTA, and indicates a positive response from members of the travelling public to investment in public transport in recent years.

- Bus Éireann passenger journey numbers grew by 14% to 40.4 million.
- Passenger numbers on bus services in the Dublin metropolitan area, provided by Dublin Bus, and by Go-Ahead Ireland, increased by 7.5% in 2019, and reached 151 million last year.
- Iarnród Éireann passenger numbers reached 50 million for the first time in company history, representing an increase of 4.3% on the previous year.
- Numbers on Luas increased by 15% to over 48m, in 2019.

## 2.5 A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills

Project Ireland 2040 is designed to catalyse a strong economy, supported by enterprise, innovation and skills. This is a critical goal both as an end itself but also as a means of providing the resources to invest in each of the strategic objectives.

### National and Regional Enterprise Development

The Enterprise Development Agencies continued to support an innovative and resilient enterprise base in 2019. IDA client companies recorded employment growth of 6%, with employment in multinationals reaching its highest ever level of 245,096.

The 2019 results show that 57% of

employment in IDA client companies is now outside of Dublin, which is the agency's highest employment level outside of Dublin in the history of the organisation, with more jobs added in the regions than at any time over the past 17 years.

54,868 jobs were created outside of Dublin over the past five years leading to 33,118 additional direct jobs (net) on the ground in regions. Every region hit the five-year strategy targets of a 30% uplift in investment and three regions - the Mid-West, Mid-East and South-East exceeded targets of 40%. Investments in The Border Region increased threefold since the outset of the strategy.

### IDA Ireland employment 2019

Region	Total Jobs	% Change
Dublin	106,466	9 %
Mid-East	13,435	2 %
Midlands	6,209	9 %
Mid-West	20,111	6 %
Border	12,891	7 %
South-East	15,837	2 %
South-West	42,847	3 %
West	27,300	4 %
National total	245,096	6 %

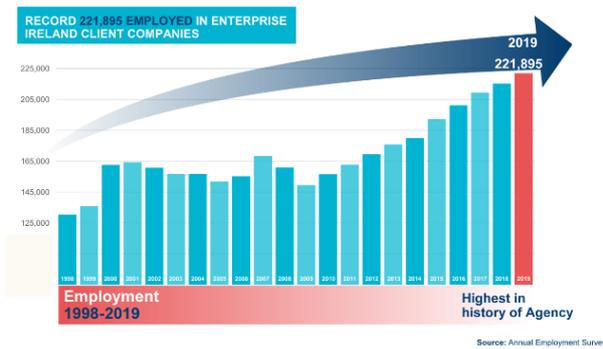
Source: IDA Ireland

Similarly, Enterprise Ireland (EI) client companies also reached record levels in 2019, with client companies now employing 221,895 people, the highest in the history of the agency. Over 66% of new jobs created were outside of Dublin.

### Enterprise Ireland employment 2019

Region	Total Jobs	% Change
Dublin	78,003	2%
Mid-East	21,258	3%
Midlands	12,343	-1%
Mid-West	22,218	2%
North-East	18,045	3%
North-West	6,859	3%
South-West	25,130	2%
South-East	22,783	3%
West	15,256	3%
National total	221,895	2%

Source: Enterprise Ireland



Enterprise Ireland Employment 1998-2019

### Disruptive Technologies Innovation Fund

The Disruptive Technologies Innovation Fund (DTIF) was established in 2018, offering financial support to a total value of €500 million over the period to 2027 for co-funded collaborative projects involving businesses and research partners. Applications to the Fund are expected to address the development, deployment and commercialisation of disruptive technologies to deliver new solutions through investment in the development and implementation of new products and services.

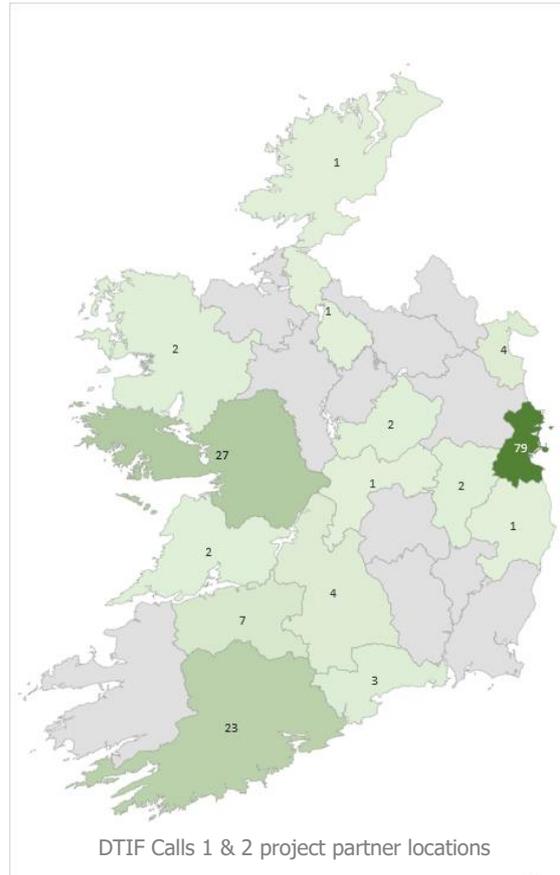
In December 2019, a second tranche of successful projects was announced under DTIF Call 2. The 16 approved projects cover life sciences, medical devices, ICT, artificial intelligence, blockchain, manufacturing and environmental sustainability, including in the waste and energy sectors, and will share €65 million out to 2022. Along with the €75 million in funding approved under Call 1 for 27 projects representing the health, food, ICT and manufacturing sectors in Ireland, this brings total DTIF funding to date to circa €140 million, which is administered by EI.

As these are collaborative projects, there are 159 project partners within the consortia, comprising of 74 Small and Medium Enterprises, 23 Multinational Corporations and 61 Research Performing Organisations (RPOs);

- Most partnerships have 2 to 4 partners;
- Average award is approx. €3.24 million (€3m / €4m) over 3 years; and

- Each project is a collaborative partnership, focused on “industrial research” that will develop, deploy and commercialise disruptive technologies to transform business.

Due to the collaborative nature of the projects, research and enterprise partners are engaged in a range of sectors and are spread across multiple locations in Ireland, with over half operating outside Dublin.



DTIF Calls 1 & 2 project partner locations

## Outputs from DTIF Calls 1 and 2 by Research Priority Area (RPA) 2018-2023

Research Priority Area	Examples of DTIF Projects
ICT - 12 projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantum computing software programme for multiple qubit technologies.</li> <li>Leveraging Artificial Intelligence to automate the creation of 3D models and worlds.</li> </ul>
Health and Well-Being - 21 projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A disruptive micro-needle drug delivery platform.</li> <li>A disruptive gene therapy platform, replacing viruses in the treatment of genetic conditions.</li> </ul>
Food - 3 projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combining targeted nutraceuticals and traceability technology for a smarter and sustainable Irish fish aquaculture industry.</li> <li>Cultivation of protein-rich biomass for the generation of health-enhancing plant-based ingredients.</li> </ul>
Energy, Climate Action and Sustainability - 3 projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of a zero-emission, refrigerant-free heat pump.</li> <li>An advanced environmental decision support system to address issues, such as coastal pollution and flooding.</li> </ul>
Manufacturing - 3 projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Micro-assembly of advanced electronic and photonic components for use in sensing and communication applications</li> <li>Develop 3-D printed, biocompatible, metallic components for the medical device industry.</li> </ul>
Innovation in Services & Business Processes - 1 project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A blockchain and AI-enabled trustworthy and GDPR-compliant stratified clinical trials system.</li> </ul>

## Regional Enterprise Development Fund

The Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF) was introduced to support the development and implementation of collaborative and innovative projects that can sustain and add to employment at county, regional and national level.

The REDF, which is administered by EI, has been an effective instrument of policy particularly as a complement to the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation's Regional Enterprise Plans where it has served as an enabler for projects emerging from that regional collaborative process. In January 2020, 26 successful applicants of the third call of the REDF, worth over €40 million were announced. In total, there have been three calls under the Fund to date and just over €100 million in funding has been approved across 68 projects, with projects approved in every region.

## Research, Development and Innovation – general updates

Ireland's gross expenditure on R&D has reached its highest level yet with the latest figures showing €3.7 billion or 1.56% of GNP (2.0% of GNI\*) investment in 2017. In the space of 25 years, Ireland has gone from a base of 800 R&D active firms, with a research spend of €300 million, to nearly 1,800 R&D active enterprises spending over €2.77 billion a year on research and development. A significant amount of this progress can be attributed to business supports for R&D, the R&D tax credit being a good example.

Ireland has drawn down over €861 million in competitive funding from Horizon 2020 to December 2019.

EI has developed a client-focused Innovation Strategy, with the objective of both increasing the number of companies engaged in innovation and increasing the effectiveness of that engagement.

In March 2019, Knowledge Transfer Ireland launched Ireland's National IP Protocol and its accompanying Resource Guide. This update includes a framework for spinout company creation. This third iteration of the Protocol reflects Ireland's commitment to ensuring the knowledge transfer system continues to be agile and responsive to change and growth in both enterprise and research.

## **Participation in EU High Performance Computing (EuroHPC)**

Ireland invests in High-Performance Computing (HPC) through the Irish Centre for High-End Computing (ICHEC), which is co-funded by DBEI and the Department of Education and Skills (DES). In 2019, ICHEC designated a national competence centre under the EuroHPC Joint Undertaking, securing matched EU funding to provide leading-edge HPC solutions to Irish users from industry, academia and the public sector. Through this initiative, Ireland will have access to European HPC infrastructure, allowing Irish researchers and SMEs to access Europe's most advanced supercomputers, at the petascale, pre-exascale and ultimately at the exascale level. It will also bring opportunities for possible future collaborations with other EuroHPC participating states, including shared infrastructure access, upskilling and increased RD&I activities.

## **Upgrading and Expansion of Tyndall National Institute**

The Tyndall Institute is a national research facility specialising in integrated ICT. Tyndall is progressing a major expansion and upgrade of its facilities under the NDP. In order to retain its position as a centre of excellence, Tyndall has been undertaking a programme of research equipment renewal for its high-end ICT fabrication and test facilities.

In 2019, additional funding was provided by DBEI to accelerate Tyndall's existing upgrading works to accommodate more researchers at Tyndall and to further increase its enterprise engagement.

## **Investment in World-Class Research and Technology Centres**

EI continues to expand its Advanced Manufacturing Supports, linking Centres and capacity across all regions. In 2019, EI approved a further €23.5m investment over the next 5 years in the Irish Manufacturing Research (IMR) Centre, to scale up the operations in line with the ambitions of the Industry 4.0 Strategy, launched in December 2019. This investment in IMR, an EI/IDA

Ireland Technology Centre, will bring leveraged funding up to €43m from both industry and competitive sources and will progress the future of the manufacturing sector in Ireland. This funding will also support the development of new manufacturing testbeds in Augmented/Virtual Reality and Robotics.

CeADAR, the national AI, data analytics and machine learning Technology Centre has been approved a further €12m in Government funding in 2019 over five years, to be matched by €16m from industry and competitive sources. This funding will allow CeADAR to scale-up to meet the growing demand from Irish industry for support in adopting AI technologies and will further enhance Ireland's reputation as a hub of excellence in AI, machine learning, and data analytics research and innovation. It will support the delivery of 40 demonstrators and software testbeds for industry to engage in advanced data analytics, visualisation and analytical interfaces and AI.

On 9 May 2019, six of the first tranche of Science Foundation Ireland's (SFI) 16 Research Centres were approved for new funding with an investment of €230 million as part of Project Ireland 2040. The €230 million investment made by DBEI through SFI, will directly benefit approximately 850 researchers employed by the centres, while also supporting the Government's Future Jobs Ireland framework.

In 2019, EI launched its Career-Fit Plus fellowship programme, co-funded by the EU, to attract 50 international experienced researchers to Ireland. The programme aims to connect highly qualified researchers with Irish companies to support industry-focused research projects, which will be centred on designated Technology Centres or Technology Gateways. Career-Fit Plus addresses the skills shortage in Irish companies in the field of RD&I, by attracting research experts from around the world to collaborate on projects with Irish enterprises, with the aim of diversifying and reaching new international markets.

## **SFI Centres for Research Training (CRTs)**

In 2018, SFI commenced a new €100 million programme of investment in PhD and Research Masters training through new Centres for Research Training, building on the Structured PhD model of earlier Cycles of the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTLTI).

The purpose of the Centres will be to provide cohorts of academically outstanding future research leaders with the skills and knowledge required to address the future challenges of an ever-changing work environment. Training programmes will be defined through close engagement with enterprise and will deliver at least 600 highly trained researchers focused on the areas of digital, data and ICT.

September 2019 saw the first intake of 126 students into the programme, which will train PhD and research masters students over 8 years. The CRTs are required to leverage a minimum of one additional student for every four funded by SFI.

## **Science Foundation Ireland – Public Service Fellowship Programme**

The SFI Public Service Fellowship is a new pilot initiative from SFI launched in October 2019. It will offer researchers a unique opportunity to be temporarily seconded to Government Departments, Agencies and the Library and Research Service of the Oireachtas, to work on specific projects where they can add value resulting in mutually beneficial outcomes.

The programme recognises the importance of connecting the Irish research community with public sector organisations to help inform new policy and improve the services that they deliver. Successful candidates might, for example, conduct data analysis to improve process efficiencies or conduct horizon scanning to help inform future Government policy.

## **Regional Technology Clustering Fund**

In December 2019, Minister Humphreys announced €4.6m in Government funding to twelve successful applicants through the Regional Technology Clustering Fund. The clustering activity will enable Institutes of Technologies (IoTs) and Technical Universities (Tus) to connect and engage with SMEs and multinational corporations in a strategic way on common areas of interest, while providing a means to increase their educational and research remit as knowledge providers in their region.

IOTs and TUs have an important role to play in helping companies to respond to the skills challenges faced by SMEs and to assist companies to enhance their capability to win business in international markets.

The projects will support and activate clustering in several sectors - Furniture Manufacturing, Marine, Connected Health, Industry 4.0, Construction, Advanced Manufacturing, Cyber Security, Engineering, BioEconomy, MedTech and AgriTech.

## **#futurejobsireland**

March 2019 saw the launch of Future Jobs Ireland 2019: Preparing Now for Tomorrow's Economy, a framework for the next phase of Ireland's economic development. Future Jobs Ireland (FJI), along with Project Ireland 2040, Global Ireland 2025 and the All of Government Climate Action Disruption Plan represents an integrated approach to prepare for the opportunities and challenges of the future economy.

At the time, Ireland's economy was performing strongly. Living standards were rising and employment has reached the highest levels in years. However, significant vulnerabilities were evident in the domestic economy, such as declining productivity levels in SMEs, skills deficits and labour availability, as well as concentrations in some sectors. Technological advances and the transition to the low carbon economy presented challenges but also numerous opportunities as our businesses and workers adapt to a changed economy.

FJI is a whole-of-Government framework aimed at ensuring our economy is resilient enough to withstand shocks in the future and agile enough to take advantage of opportunities when they arise. FJI 2019 focuses on key policy areas and enablers, such as innovation and technological change, productivity, skills and talent, labour force participation and transitioning to a low carbon economy with a view to fostering economically, environmentally and socially sustainable growth.

FJI 2019 focuses on five pillars:

1. Embracing Innovation and Technological Change
2. Improving SME Productivity
3. Enhancing Skills and Developing and Attracting Talent
4. Increasing Participation in the Labour Force
5. Transitioning to a Low Carbon Economy

While the first two pillars focus on building economic resilience through greater productivity and innovation, the remaining pillars emphasise the role that wider social policies have in shaping how businesses and workers must adapt for the changes ahead. All of this will help to create a situation where all regions are enabled to realise their potential as contributors to economic recovery and growth, and thereby reduce regional disparities.

Some of the notable successes from FJI 2019 include:

1. The launch of the second call of the Disruptive Technologies Innovation Fund (DTIF).
2. The publication of a new Industry 4.0 Strategy.
3. The announcement of €23.5m in funding over the next five years for the Irish Manufacturing Research Centre.
4. The Future Growth Loan Scheme was opened for applications in April. This scheme provides long term loans of up to €3 million to SMEs for strategic investment

to grow their businesses.

5. The Regional Technology Clustering Fund was launched in July.
6. The Research and Development Tax Credit has been reviewed and changed in Budget 2020 to make it more accessible to micro and small businesses.
7. Cyber Ireland, a new cyber security cluster was launched in Cork in May.
8. Progress is also being made on a National Centre of Excellence on High Performance and Nearly Zero Energy Building in the South East.
9. Springboard+ and Skillnet Ireland now offer a series of training programmes with a specific focus on the future of work. Courses are now available, including: leadership and management; blockchain; AI; cybersecurity; Internet of Things; virtual reality, and smart factory technology.
10. The first tranche of the Human Capital Initiative has been launched.
11. Several stakeholder engagement events took place, including: consultation events on the AI strategy with industry, academia, civil society and the public sector; the Climate Action Town Hall meeting; the Cruinniú GovTech Summit; the OECD SME and Entrepreneurship Strategy Conference; a Remote Working Consultation Forum, and the Future Jobs Ireland National Summit.



## Higher Education

In 2019, a number of programmes and projects were advanced to deliver on ambitions for Ireland's higher education sector as outlined in Project Ireland 2040.

### *Higher Education Strategic Infrastructure Fund*

Five projects were approved in principle in 2019 under the Higher Education Strategic Infrastructure Fund. The projects are as follows:

- Maynooth University, Technology Society and Innovation Building
- IT Sligo, Extension to Central Campus (EO1) Project
- UCC, Cork University Business School (CUBS) Project
- NUI Galway, Learning Commons Project
- UCD, Future Campus Project

It is planned to invest some €96m in Exchequer funding across the five projects, leveraging a further €400m of non-Exchequer funding and delivering up to 14,000 full time equivalent student places.

### *Higher Education Infrastructure Upgrade and Refurbishment Fund*

Projects have also been identified for funding under the Higher Education Infrastructure Upgrade and Refurbishment Fund. Projects range from small emergency works to large scale refurbishment works. In 2019, there were 12 projects in various stages of development, with 3 small scale projects completed, 8 on site and one in design. The funding approved in principle for these 12 projects, including major campus upgrades at Cork Institute of Technology and Dundalk Institute of Technology, totals more than €70m.

### *Apprenticeship Equipment and Devolved /Minor Works Funding*

Targeted support of €8m was provided during 2019 for apprenticeship equipment across Institutes of Technology to support new and modernised apprenticeship syllabi.

A Devolved/Minor works Grant of €10m was provided to the IoT/TU sector in 2019. This devolved funding allows Institutions to prioritise and undertake a range of small-scale works and/or equipment renewal.

### *Grangegorman*

Construction continued during 2019 on the Central and East Quads at Grangegorman. Together the Quads provide c.52,000 sqm of academic space, and will accommodate a total of sixteen schools within TU Dublin's College of Sciences and Health, College of Engineering and Built Environment and College of Arts and Tourism. When complete, the buildings will provide for an additional 10,000 students (c.50% of the TU Dublin student cohort) and 600 staff to move to the Grangegorman site.

## 2.6 High Quality International Connectivity

As a small open economy, the uncertainty of Brexit and wider global challenges continue to frame the context in which Ireland does business with the world. High quality international connectivity through our ports and airports is arguably more important now than ever.

The second year of Project Ireland 2040 has seen considerable preparation for potentially-required facilities at our seaports to secure Brexit-Readiness.

With a view to enabling the long-term headroom for the Irish economy to grow, it is imperative that Dublin Airport has adequate capacity. Passenger numbers have grown by over 50% since 2014 and so a pivotal investment in the early years of Project Ireland 2040 is the Northern Runway. This project is the fulcrum of the future development of the Airport, which in turn is critical to functioning of the Island economy.

The sod was turned on the new runway in early 2019. Construction on the project is well underway and the following photos show the latest progress.



West end of North Runway showing pavement layer works to runway and taxiways.



East end of North Runway showing pavement layer works to runway

In 2019, the Shannon Group delivered a new wide body aircraft painting hangar at Shannon Airport capable of taking large aircrafts up to the size of an airbus A380. This is the first aircraft hangar to be developed in Ireland in almost 20 years. Its construction is the kind of expansion envisaged to grow a globally recognised and internationally competitive aviation industry cluster in and around the airport and is also in line with the National Aviation Policy. As well as the employment created during the construction phase, the new hangar will provide up to 150 jobs in aviation engineering services in Shannon.

The Shannon Group has also continued the development of its property portfolio in the Shannon Free Zone, assisting the IDA and EI in their drive for inward investment and increased employment in the region. In 2019, this included the development and leasing of a four storey office block, research facility and testing ground for Jaguar Land Rover's Centre of Excellence campus, which is being used for the development of autonomous and electric vehicles, creating over 150 highly skilled jobs.



Shannon Airport Hangar



Shannon Airport Hangar

Shannon Foynes Port Company's Infrastructure Development Programme is well underway and will consist of a jetty expansion program, the joining of the East and West Jetties and the infill behind, land purchase and 38hectare site development for a new port logistics park at Foynes Port and the Foynes Rail Reinstatement. An Bord Pleanála granted permission on the 28 December 2018 for the port capacity extension project. Detailed design for jetty works is completed with procurement for main works underway and expected to be completed in quarter one 2021. In addition, in accordance with its Masterplan, Vision 2041, SFPC has commenced pre-planning for a new 800m deep water berth with 18m draught alongside at Foynes. The investment programme will improve international connectivity and increase national capacity through the construction of new quay walls and associated port infrastructure and external connectivity with the completion of the Limerick to Foynes Road Scheme and the reinstatement of the Limerick-Foynes rail line. This infrastructure will also enable Shannon Foynes Port Company as a marshalling port for offshore

wind providing the necessary port capacity requirements for floating offshore wind on the Atlantic coast.

Investment in regional airports continued to grow in 2019 (by 183% on 2018). Almost €10.5m was provided towards the cost of capital projects at three airports; Donegal, Kerry and Ireland West Airport Knock. The majority of that amount, approximately €6.7m, contributed to the completion of a major runway overlay project at Knock.

## 2.7 Enhanced Amenity and Heritage

Project Ireland 2040 recognises cultural heritage infrastructure as an essential component for sustainable, attractive and liveable cities, towns, villages and rural areas.

### Culture and Heritage

The second year of Project Ireland 2040 has seen significant progress in the implementation of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's €1.2 billion sectoral plan 'Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage, 2018-2027.'

As part of the plan to invest €460 million in our National Cultural Institutions over the ten years of the NDP, a number of projects were advanced in 2019 including:

- the completion of the a new book depository to protect our National Collections in the National Library of Ireland, which is the first phase of a four-phase capital project to upgrade, expand and refurbish the National Library. Planning and investigative works for subsequent phases was also progressed;
- The completion of planning and design of the National Archives redevelopment project. This ambitious project will see the provision of a secure environmentally controlled Archival Repository to safeguard the national archives for the future; and,

- Approval of a number of preliminary appraisals/strategic assessments for significant projects at the Natural History Museum, Crawford Art Gallery and Abbey Theatre.

As part of the Audio Visual Action Plan and the Government's commitment to develop Ireland as a global centre for excellence in media production, €16.2 million was invested by Screen Ireland/Fís Éireann in 2019 to support the production of audio-visual content in Ireland. Funding for Screen Ireland/Fís Éireann's investment in development and production has increased by €1 million in 2020 to €17.2 million.

In 2019, €4.9 million was invested in enhancing local arts and cultural infrastructure to create and maintain opportunities for creativity, participation and creation. This included support for projects under the Arts and Culture Capital Scheme, the Regional Museum Exhibition Scheme, and the Music Network Capital Scheme.

Nearly €1 million was disbursed through the Cultural Digitisation Scheme in 2019, which will preserve and enhance the accessibility of our cultural heritage. A flagship initiative under this scheme is the commitment to invest in the Beyond 2022 digitisation project led by Trinity College Dublin. This project seeks to rediscover and restore much of the archival material lost in the destruction of the Public Record Office in the Civil War.

Another key pillar of the Department's Project Ireland 2040 investment programme is its continued investment in our natural heritage. In 2019, nearly €8.5 million was invested to promote the conservation of biodiversity, protect and restore our peatlands and to enhance our National Parks and Nature Reserves.

Over €4m in funding was also provided to assist with the conservation and restoration of our built heritage in towns and villages across the country. Grants of €1.7 million and €2.4 million respectively were provided under the Historic Structures Fund and Built Heritage Investment Scheme. The Heritage Council were also supported to invest a further €1

million in town centres through the Historic Towns Initiative.

Waterways Ireland invested nearly €5.1 million in maintain our inland waterways and the ongoing works to restore the Ulster Canal.

Further Fáilte Ireland tourism programmes are of relevance to Enhancing Amenity and Heritage (NSO 7) - through its partnership with the Department of Rural and Community Development. Fáilte Ireland provided additional funding to support the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme administered by that Department. This scheme supports the development of new outdoor recreation infrastructure (including walking, cycling and water-based trails) and the maintenance and enhancement of existing trails and other qualifying infrastructure. Fáilte Ireland's funding is targeted at visitor-focused investments for those trails and other outdoor recreational infrastructure with most tourism potential.

- Fáilte Ireland is progressing its Dublin Visitor Orientation Programme, with the overall vision of enabling visitors to explore and immerse themselves in the full Dublin tourism offering, with ease and confidence. A number of initiatives underpin this programme, including the creation of a coastal product/trail to encourage visitors to explore the Dublin coastline and the local experiences it has to offer.

### **Sports Capital Programme**

€57m was allocated to 1,648 sports projects around the country under the Sports Capital Programme. €35m was paid out to over 1,000 different projects through the Sports Capital Programme.

All applications under the Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund were assessed and successful applicants announced in January 2020.

Every one of the 1,000 projects funded in 2019 represents a new or enhanced opportunity to participate in sport.

## **2.8 Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate Resilient Society**

This remains the single largest investment priority under Project Ireland 2040. The investment priorities in this area represent a step-change in Ireland's delivery of climate-action objectives which are designed to place a decarbonisation pathway to 2030 and are consistent with the adoption of a net zero target in Ireland by 2050.

The low-carbon transition will require a targeted balance between Exchequer-supported expenditure, taxation measures, regulation and behavioural change. Action now to decarbonise these sectors will position Ireland to harness a range of benefits into the future, in terms of the creation of sustainable green jobs, sustainable food production, deepening our energy security, improving the quality of our lives and making our working and built environments healthier.

The Climate Action Plan 2019 to Tackle Climate Breakdown was published in June 2019. The Plan contains 183 actions, broken down into 619 individual measures, which Ireland needs to implement to meet our EU 2030 targets and to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

The climate actions identified are being implemented by 13 Government Departments and 40 agencies under the remit of those Departments, requiring a deep level of collaboration across Government.

The first progress report on the Climate Action Plan showed that 85%, or 149, of the actions due for delivery in Quarter 2 and 3 of 2019 were delivered.

Key developments in 2019 include:

- Enactment through secondary legislation of new requirements to ensure all new homes are Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) standard.
- Launch of a public consultation on draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines in December 2019 –

consultation will close on 19 February 2020.

- Signing in October 2019 of Climate Action Charter for all Local Authorities - committing local government to driving forward meaningful climate action in their communities.
- Establishment of a Retrofit Taskforce to deliver a new national retrofitting plan which will group homes in the same area together to reduce cost, provide easy pay back models (e.g. through your utility bill) and smart financing.
- In October 2019, the Government secured €530 million from the EU to deliver the €1 billion Ireland – France Celtic Interconnector, which will link the Irish and French electricity grids.
- Opening of the second round of the Government's Climate Action Fund in December 2019, calling for interested parties to register their expressions of interest. The National Oil Reserves Agency (Amendment) and Provision of Central Treasury Services Bill has been drafted for consideration by the Oireachtas; this Bill will provide, inter alia, for Amendments to the National Oil Reserves Agency Act 2007, in order to facilitate the provision of NORA levy monies for the Climate Action Fund.
- Government approval for the detailed design of the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS) and draft RESS terms and conditions issuing for Public Consultation in December 2019.
- ESB invested over €1.1 billion with €250 million in renewable generation projects.

### **National Smart Metering Programme**

The National Smart Metering Programme has commenced and will ensure that all consumers and businesses are provided with the next generation of electricity meters to facilitate the development of micro generation, the use of energy storage technologies and improved efficiency in how consumers manage their

overall usage.

### **Decarbonising the Built Environment**

Increasing the energy efficiency of our buildings is considered the most cost-effective method of addressing climate change and moving to decarbonising our homes, businesses and public buildings.

Exchequer investment in this area exceeded €117 million in 2019, a 13% increase on the previous year, supporting sustainable and energy-efficient changes in:

- 24,664 homes
- 265 businesses
- 89 public buildings
- 57 community groups

The Climate Action Plan sets a target of reducing the greenhouse gas emissions from the residential sector from 6Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2017 to 3-4Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2030. In 2019, a National Retrofit Taskforce, chaired by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE), was established to determine how this overarching target as well as the related targets of: (i) 500,000 retrofits to Building Energy Rating B2/Cost Optimal Equivalent or carbon equivalent; and (ii) the installation of 400,000 heat pumps in existing homes will be achieved.

### **Decarbonising Transport – Electric Vehicles**

In 2019, the number of electric vehicles on Irish roads doubled to 15,370. Significant growth was recorded across each month, year-on-year, with the market for electric vehicles mirroring the conventional vehicle market with certain months recording particularly high levels of sales. While electric vehicle growth is increasing significantly, it is doing so from a very low base and high growth rates will need to be sustained over the next decade.

The growth in electric vehicles has been supported significantly by a range of measures, including purchase grants of up to €5,000, vehicle registration tax relief of up to €5,000, benefit-in-kind relief for battery electric vehicles, a grant of up to €600 towards

the cost of the installation of a domestic charge point, grants of up to €7,000 for electric vehicles in the taxi/hackney/limousine sector, accelerated capital allowances for businesses, a low rate of annual motor tax, and a discount on road tolls. In 2019, exchequer funding of €29.5 million was allocated to the Department for the promotion of electric vehicles.

In addition, under the first call for applications from the Climate Action Fund, funding of up to €10 million will be provided to support ESB eCars to develop a nationwide, state-of-the-art electric vehicle fast charging network. In October 2019, this project moved to delivery stage and by year-end the first fast chargers were installed and a number of standard chargers were upgraded to the latest technology.

### **Flood Risk Management**

Project Ireland 2040 includes investment of €1 billion in flood risk management measures in the period from 2018 to 2027 in order to underpin the delivery of the existing programme of flood relief schemes. There was a significant expansion of that programme consequent on the publication of Flood Risk Management Plans in 2018. Those Plans included 118 proposed new schemes to protect a further 11,500 properties. The OPW and Local Authorities have been actively engaged since the launch of the flood plans in agreeing and putting in place the necessary arrangements for the implementation of the priority flood relief schemes and work is well advanced in this regard.

Important progress on the implementation of the overall flood risk capital investment programme was registered and the following schemes were substantially completed in 2019:

- Claregalway
- Dunkellin

## **2.9 Sustainable Water and Environmental Resources Management**

### **Water and Wastewater**

Investment in the water and wastewater network is required to support environmental and economic wellbeing, deal with population growth and the effects of a changing climate. The year 2019 continued to see the commencement and completion of a range of important projects throughout the country.

Irish Water invested €864m in 2019 bringing its overall investment since 2014 to approximately €3.8 billion (or over €2 billion since 2017). The 2019 investment spread was across the three Water Services Policy Statement themes of Quality (€405m), Conservation (€185m) and Future Proofing (€274m).

Important achievements in 2019 include:

- Two new Water Treatment Plants were completed (Kildarragh and Goldrum) and a further two were upgraded (Kilgarvan and Inistioge)
- One new Wastewater Treatment Plant was completed (Courtmacsherry) and nine were upgraded (Mohill, Athenry, Castleblaney, Enniscorthy, Manorhamilton, Ardee, Grange, Tubbercurry and Ballinafad)
- Over 4,600 people were removed from 'Boil Water Notices' that had been in place for more than 30 days
- 26 water supplies were removed from the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Remedial Action List
- 15 agglomerations were removed from the EPA's priority list of areas for wastewater improvement
- Over 15,700 lead services were replaced

- Two agglomerations with no wastewater treatment were connected to newly constructed treatment plants (Passage-Monkstown, Courtmacsherry and Timoleague)
- Works were completed on 14 agglomerations listed in the 2018-2021 River Basin Management Plan
- Net Water Saving of 66 Million Litres per Day (MLD) (Q3 Year To Date) as a result of delivering specific initiatives to address national water leakage
- 393 km of water main laid
- 69 km of sewer laid

A key priority for Irish Water is reducing the number of people on 'Boil Water Notices.' In 2019, this was a particular challenge with the imposition of two boil water notices in quick succession on the public water schemes supplied from the Leixlip Water Treatment Plant.

### Natural Resources

In 2019, Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) continued investing in geological understanding, particularly with progression of INFOMAR, Ireland's national seabed mapping programme (with the Marine Institute) and the Tellus survey, which is carrying out modern airborne geophysical and ground geochemistry. In addition, considerable progress was made in the areas of Groundwater Mapping and Geoscience research. In 2019, there was also an increase in sectoral employment through the Geoscience Ireland business cluster initiative, delivered with EI.

## 2.10 Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services

### School Building Programme

Under Project Ireland 2040, the National Development Plan 2018 – 2027 provides a capital envelope of €8.4bn to facilitate the continued strong rollout of projects under the

School Building Programme. Since 2018, there has been in excess of €1.2bn invested in Capital Infrastructure under the School Building Programme.

Rollout of Project Ireland 2040 in the school sector has involved overall construction activity, during 2018 and 2019, of 139 projects ranging in value from €1m to projects in excess of €20m.

There was also 401 projects with a project value less than €1m at construction during this period.

The completion of these 540 projects (139 and 401) is expected to deliver more than 40,000 permanent (additional and replacement) school places and replace circa 600 prefabs.

The current status of projects being delivered is listed on a county by county basis on the Department of Education and Skill's website at [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie) and updated on a monthly basis to reflect their progress through the various stages of capital appraisal, site acquisition, design, tender and construction.

Project Ireland 2040 committed to investing €420 million to assist in the implementation of the Digital Strategy for Schools to embed the effective use of digital technology in teaching, learning and assessment. An increased level of funding of €50m was provided for in 2019 and, in 2020 a further €50m has been allocated. This investment will allow schools to purchase critical equipment, such as PCs, laptops and tablets and it goes hand in hand with other supports for schools, such as the Digital Learning Framework and Digital Learning Planning Resource to enable schools to fully embrace and embed digital technologies in their work.

Under Project Ireland 2040, the Minor Works Grant which is circa €29m is due to be paid to all primary schools either in December or at the latest early January of the following year. For the current 2019/20 school year, the Minor Works Grant was paid out in December 2019. Schools can use the Minor Works Grant for improvements to the physical infrastructure of the school, improvement or replacement of

mechanical and electrical services, the purchase of standard furniture and physical education equipment, the purchase of floor coverings and window blinds, and the purchase of IT related equipment.

In 2019, €31m was spent on various projects under the Summer Works Scheme. The Summer Works Scheme which is demand based, is designed to allow schools, on a devolved funding basis, to carry out necessary and immediate improvement works that will upgrade existing school facilities. It is envisaged that these works can be carried out during the summer months or at other times that avoid disrupting the operation of the school.

The NDP identified €2.5bn for the refurbishment and construction of schools. This paved the way for a “deep energy retrofit of schools built prior to 2008”; a joint collaboration between the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, who have been involved in an energy efficient retrofit pilot scheme for schools since 2017.

The pilot programme is focusing on medium to deep retrofit measures to improve the energy efficiency of existing schools which represent a variety of challenges, including different building ages, archetypes, and retrofit requirements. The energy efficiency upgrade measures undertaken in the pilot are considered medium to deep, and include fabric, electrical and mechanical upgrades. The longer-term outcome of the pilot will be to create an accurate and scalable model for energy efficient retrofits of schools across Ireland.

In 2019, seventeen schools were selected for the pilot scheme.

#### Projects that commenced in 2019 included:

Project	RN	Details	On site
Ennis Community College	70830N	Extension of 4241m <sup>2</sup> Incl. PE Hall 1048 sq.m.	06/08/2019
Naas Community College	76194S	New 1000 pupil School inc. 2 c/r SNU 9,426m	25/11/2019
St Paul's National School, Navan	19671F	Demolition of the existing buildings and construction of a 32 classroom school plus a 2 classroom ASD Unit	07/05/2019
Westmeath Coláiste Chiaráin, Summerhill, Athlone	68325L	1000 pupils + 2 classrooms SNU	08/04/19

#### Healthcare Projects

##### *Primary care centres and Ward Blocks*

There are now 129 Primary Care Centres (PCCs) fully operational throughout the country.

The Public Private Partnership (PPP) programme, which has delivered 14 primary care centres across the country was completed in early 2019 with the final centre opening in Summerhill, Dublin 1. This PPP bundle project was one of the first in Ireland to receive the European Fund for Strategic Investments support and the first such project in Europe in the primary healthcare sector.

The strategic investment priorities for the public Health sector in Project Ireland 2040 include additional health capacity in response to demographic changes and future demands. In line with this priority, two new acute ward blocks in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda and Waterford University Hospital were delivered in 2019.

## eHealth Investment

Further building on the Department's eHealth Strategy, notable progress has been made with some highlights that include the progression of the Integrated Financial Management System and the Electronic Health Record, which completed significant milestones in their approval processes.

Government approval was received in July 2019 to initiate the procurement process for an Electronic Health Record for the new children's hospital, an essential component for a digitally designed hospital. Continued investment in eHealth and ICT infrastructure enables the digitisation of health services and improved connectivity in primary and community care with over 200 capital funded ICT projects in progress at any given time.

In association with the HSE and other stakeholders, the Department is supporting Sláintecare deliverables with the aim of accelerating the roll out of eHealth systems and infrastructure including the Electronic Health Record, ePharmacy, the Integrated Financial Management System and key clinical systems.

## Healthy Ireland

The Healthy Ireland Healthy Cities and Counties initiative expanded in 2019 and now includes nineteen accredited Healthy Cities and Counties, with the publication of a development plan for the network to be published in 2020. The initiative arose from the WHO Healthy Cities Programme and supports the creation of healthy communities and co-operation to bring local implementation of national policy. The initiative is supported by the Healthy Ireland Fund and Healthy Ireland Communications Campaign.

The Healthy Ireland Fund is supporting the implementation of the Get Ireland Walking Strategy, and the development of a Get Ireland Cycling Strategy, working in partnership with Sport Ireland and other key stakeholders. Significant progress has been made with implementation.

## 2.11 Other Public Investment Sectors

Project Ireland 2040 also includes a range of wider investment in important areas.

### Justice Sector

Projects are continuing in the Justice pipeline of capital works.

Project Ireland 2040 funding will provide for a new Family Law and Children's Courts complex at Hammond Lane, Dublin and new Garda stations and facilities. These projects are to be carried out through PPPs and are currently at planning and design stage. An Garda Síochána is working with the Department of Justice and Equality, the OPW and the National Development Finance Agency to establish the Garda PPP project to develop new Garda Stations. In this regard, the location of the new Garda stations to be developed will have regard to the implementation of the operating model.

- Work is ongoing with Fitzgibbon Street Garda Station, phase 1 was completed in 2019.
- Athlone Divisional Garda Station and Athlone Garda Water Unit projects were both at construction stage in 2019.
- Limerick Probation Services project was at construction implementation stage.
- Significant funding is being invested by An Garda Síochána in a coherent programme of new ICT systems to help optimise the capacity of An Garda Síochána to meet current and future policing needs including.
- In December 2019, 2000 new mobile devices were procured. There is an initial focus on Roads Policing providing frontline Garda members with real-time detections at the roadside.
- The development of an Investigation Management System (IMS) was completed in 2019, providing a transformational and digital-led

change in how investigations will be managed throughout the organisation.

- Four Regional Control Rooms have been established incorporating the configuration of required Telephony, TETRA, ECAS and CCTV services.
- Work continued in 2019 on compliance with building health and safety regulations in the construction and retrofit of energy efficient buildings.



New additions to Garda Fleet

## Estate Management

Project Ireland 2040 provides the OPW with funding to support a number of property areas.

The following property projects reached completion in 2019;

- Historic Leinster House refurbishment completed;
- Glanmire Garda Station refurbishment completed;
- Dundalk Driver Test Centre construction completed, and
- Doneraile Court refurbishment completed.

## Section 3:

# The spatial dimension

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets the vision and strategy for the development of our country to 2040 and the National Development Plan (NDP) provides enabling investment to implement the strategy.

Together, the NPF and NDP are the two pillars of Project Ireland 2040, setting out a shared vision for coordinated planning and investment, linking national spatial development priorities and enhancement of our infrastructure.

### National Planning Framework - Summary of Key Achievements/Highlights in 2019

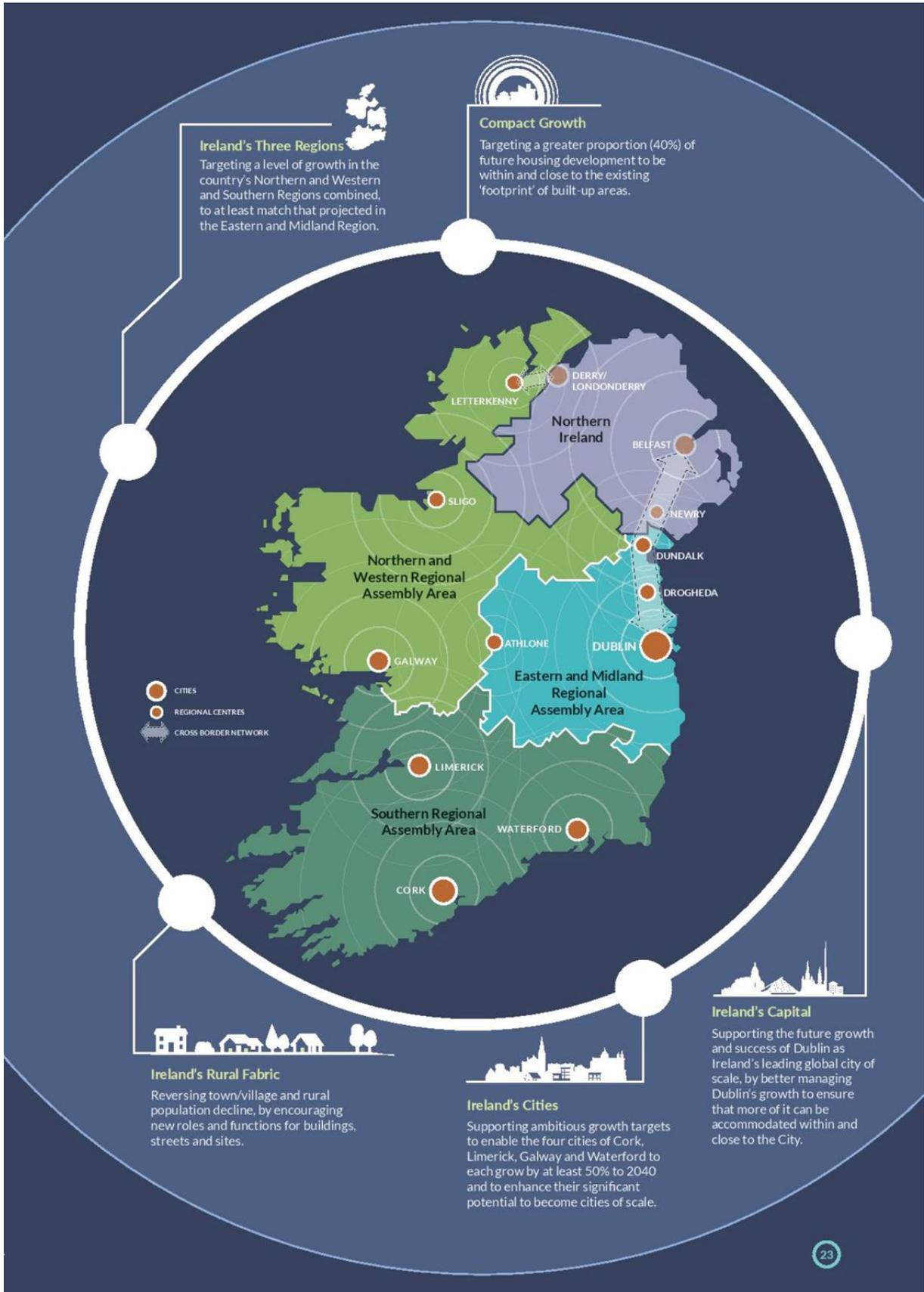
- Establishment of the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR);
- The three Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES) made: Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy published 28 June, Strategies for Southern Regional Assembly and Northern and Western Regional Assembly agreed in 2019 and published end January 2020;
- In its first year of expenditure, 2019, €18.6m in funding was drawn down by applicants in respect of Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) supported projects, and €130m is available to support these and other similar projects in 2020; and
- Following the establishment of the Land Development Agency (LDA) by secondary legislation in 2018, the Government approved the drafting of the Land Development Agency Bill 2019, to enable the establishment of the LDA under primary legislation.

### NPF implementation - overview

The first Project Ireland 2040 Progress Report set out details of an implementation plan following the launch of Project Ireland 2040 in 2018. Priorities for the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) to progress implementation of the NPF in 2018, included supporting the establishment of a Project Ireland 2040 Delivery Board, overseeing progress on the preparation of three Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSESs), developing, launching and establishing the URDF, the LDA and the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR). All of these measures, which underpin the NPF strategic outcomes including compact growth, were delivered in 2019 and a comprehensive framework is now in place to progress implementation in the years ahead.

### Housing Supply

The numbers of new homes becoming available for use in 2019 was 24,397. This is a 14% increase up on 2018. New Dwelling Completions for the same period totalled 21,138, an increase of 18% on the total in 2018. In addition, 711 unfinished homes were completed and 2,548 homes that were vacant for at least 2 years were brought back into use in 2019.



**Ireland's Three Regions**

Targeting a level of growth in the country's Northern and Western and Southern Regions combined, to at least match that projected in the Eastern and Midland Region.



**Compact Growth**

Targeting a greater proportion (40%) of future housing development to be within and close to the existing 'footprint' of built-up areas.

- CITIES
- REGIONAL CENTRES
- CROSS BORDER NETWORK

**Ireland's Rural Fabric**

Reversing town/village and rural population decline, by encouraging new roles and functions for buildings, streets and sites.



**Ireland's Cities**

Supporting ambitious growth targets to enable the four cities of Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford to each grow by at least 50% to 2040 and to enhance their significant potential to become cities of scale.



**Ireland's Capital**

Supporting the future growth and success of Dublin as Ireland's leading global city of scale, by better managing Dublin's growth to ensure that more of it can be accommodated within and close to the City.

## Section 4:

# Reforming monitoring and implementation

The National Development Plan set out a range of new mechanisms designed to ensure smooth implementation of the range of major projects and programmes that make up Project Ireland 2040. Structures and programmes of reform were ongoing in 2019 to drive improved value for money, cost certainty and timely completion of major public investment programmes.

### 4.1 Monitoring Implementation

The Project Ireland 2040 Delivery Board made up of Secretaries General from the main capital spending Departments was established in 2018 and meets regularly to ensure effective leadership of the implementation process. The Delivery Board met 6 times in 2019. A core function of the Delivery Board is to track delivery of projects and policies, both in relation to capital investment and spatial planning. The Delivery Board has been monitoring progress with the development of the Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies, overseeing the update of the Public Spending Code (PSC) and identifying potential challenges to successful implementation of Project Ireland 2040.

An important enabling tool for the Delivery Board is the Investment Projects and Programmes Tracker which was first published in November 2017 and updated in 2018. The Tracker provides a composite update on the progress of all major investments that make up Project Ireland 2040.

The latest update (January 2020) expands the coverage of projects, including information on housing and schools projects, and data fields.

The updated tracker contains specific information on the current status of projects

and also details expected project construction commencement and completion dates.

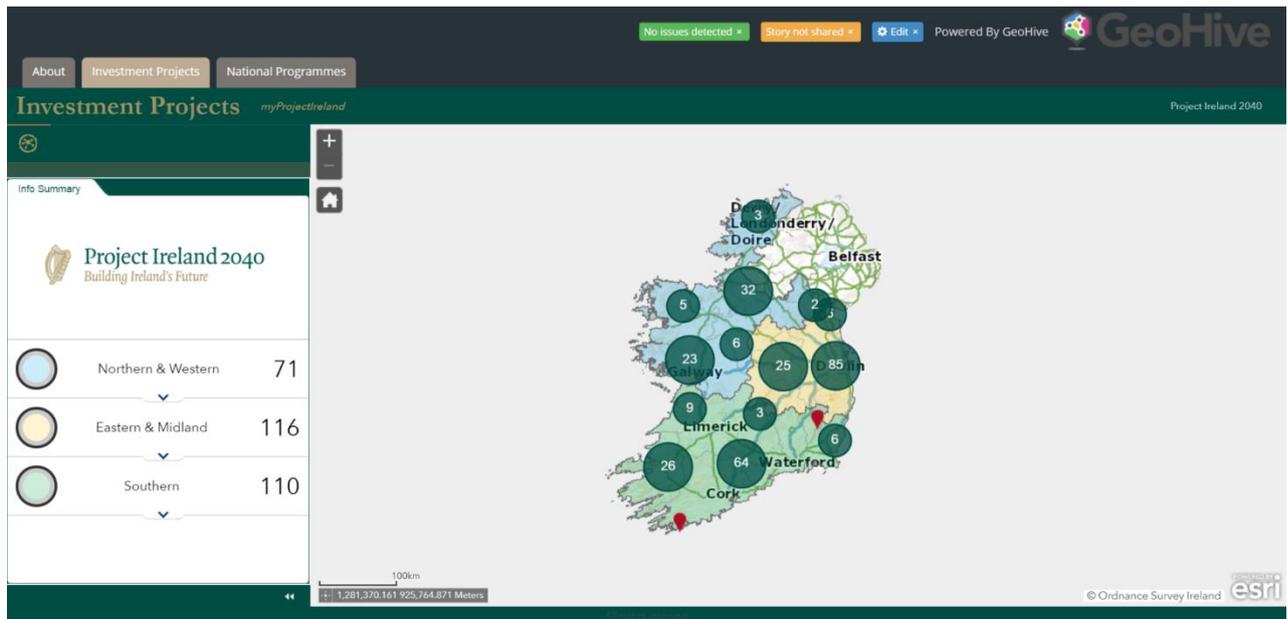
It contains more granular information on delivery scheduling, including milestones for key stages in the project lifecycle aligned to the updated PSC that was published recently.

It also includes user-friendly dashboards and other information to aid interpretation of the data. As such, the tracker is a key tool in overseeing the progress of Project Ireland 2040, for government, industry and all citizens.

A key change in this Phase is the move away from point estimates of project costs in favour of the inclusion of ranges of costs. Early stage estimates of project costs are by their nature insufficiently interrogated, are meaningful only at a certain point in time and do not adequately consider the necessary detail.

A further innovation has been the development of a new interactive online mapping tool *MyProjectIreland* which provides an update on priority projects across all regions. This is a key element of citizen engagement which will bring updated information on project progress across all regions.

## Mapping the investment pipeline

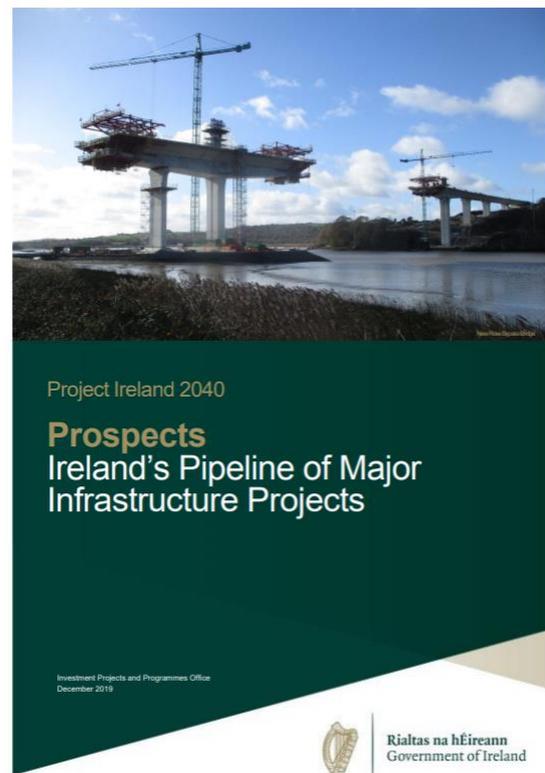


Source: Investment Projects and Programmes Office

Phase 2 (January 2020) includes:

- Expansion of coverage to over 600 projects, including a sample of schools investments and social housing developments;
- Improved mobile functionality to enhance the user experience of members of the public viewing via mobile devices;
- Improved search functionality; and
- A new eircode search function whereby users can enter their eircode to prompt the Viewer to zoom to the projects in their locality.

In addition, a new report *Prospects - Ireland's Pipeline of Major Infrastructure Projects* was a new report which was published in January 2020 and provides further visibility on the sequencing of a sample of Ireland's priority infrastructure projects over the coming years, thereby facilitating Irish and overseas construction firms to plan for commercial opportunities on the horizon. The report contains high level information on 50 of the largest projects included in Project Ireland 2040 and signposts to other sources for more detailed information.



## 4.2 Building Innovation

As detailed in the Build 2020 Report, total investment in construction in Ireland in 2020 will be among the highest in the EU. This investment is required for the development of new social, economic and climate infrastructure. Grasping these opportunities requires overcoming significant challenges

around construction sector capacity. Both Government and industry are undertaking a wide range of measures to address these risks.

In close consultation with the Construction Sector Group (CSG), a wide-ranging analysis of productivity in the sector was undertaken over the course of 2019 in order to identify new industry approaches for improvement. This work informed the Building Innovation in 2020 report.

In 2019, the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation launched the Government's Future Jobs Ireland Framework which is based on embracing innovation and technological change, improving productivity, enhancing skills and transitioning to a low carbon economy.

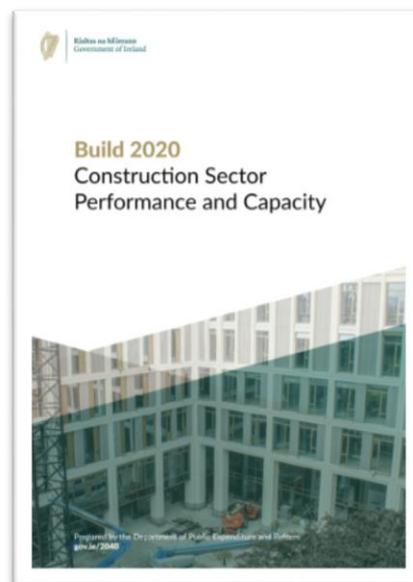
The Building Innovation in 2020 report is strongly aligned with that strategy and through this coordinated approach, the construction industry stands to make significant gains in productivity through synergies being developed in the wider Irish innovation ecosystem.

Three important themes emerge, which, if addressed, can help improve profits, wages and output for the industry, and thereby provide value for money in the delivery of Project Ireland 2040.

These include:

1. The need for the industry, particularly SMEs and small firms, to increase investment in innovation and technology in order to spur the next wave of growth based on a foundation of digital adoption, by both clients and contractors;
2. The need for ongoing regulatory reform of public procurement, environmental, labour and other areas in order to streamline and assist in achieving competitiveness and sustainability; and
3. The need to increase certainty and

visibility of the pipeline of project opportunities in order to provide the industry with the confidence to invest.



Further details on the actions to be taken are contained within the Building Innovation in 2020 report and these will form the basis of the work programme for the CSG in 2020. The CSG will meet every quarter, providing an opportunity to monitor the implementation of these actions and progress a range of issues to the benefit of the sector and the delivery of Project Ireland 2040.

### **4.3 Reforming Project Selection, Appraisal and Procurement**

Ireland continues to improve its performance in delivering projects on time and within budget. Across most sectors, projects are coming in on budget. Recent years have seen major progress in the professionalism of project management, particularly in the water sector, motorways and public transport area.

To support public bodies in delivering value for money as they implement Project Ireland 2040, the Department of Public Expenditure

and Reform (DPER) and Office of Government Procurement (OGP) are progressing a number of reforms to Ireland's public investment management system focused on more commercial delivery of projects and better estimation and management of cost.

### Ensuring capacity of the public sector

DPER is currently conducting a Capability Review of public sector bodies in order to:

- Learn lessons from the high performing sectors – for example roads – which can be applied to other areas.
- Strengthen and build new structures and skills to develop and modernise the State's project delivery practices.

This review is being carried out with support from the EU Structural Reform Support Service.

### Updating the Public Spending Code

The first key piece of public investment reform was delivered in 2019. DPER published the 'Public Spending Code: A Guide to Evaluating, Planning, and Managing Public Investment' in December 2019. The updated Code came into effect on the 1st January 2020.

The update of the Public Spending Code (PSC) was completed after an extensive consultation process and informed by international best practice.

The key changes to the PSC are:

- More accessible guidance with greater clarity on governance, roles, and responsibilities;
- Greater alignment with realities of project delivery;
- Robust decision gates requiring formal approval as the project progresses;
- Gaining a more developed view of costs, risks, and timeframes before committing to proceed with a project;
- Earlier engagement and scrutiny of projects through a new Strategic Assessment Stage;

- More focus on financial analysis and affordability;
- Expanding the focus for a wider consideration of the business case for projects, i.e.
  - appraisal
  - design
  - procurement strategy
  - deliverability
  - Risk; and
- Increased transparency through publication of business cases and evaluation reports.

Further technical guidance, focusing on financial appraisal and templates, will be published in 2020.

#### We are ensuring Value for Money



DPER has given consideration to the potential benefits of more structured scrutiny of major public investment projects, focusing in particular on the robustness of planned delivery, accuracy of cost forecasts, and consideration of risks. DPER is developing a new governance and assurance process for major projects with an estimated cost of over €100 million which will come into effect in Q1 2021.

### Reforming Major Project Procurement

In 2019, the OGP advanced on significant reforms to how we procure and deliver major projects. Underpinning the work was three principles – Strategy, Risk and Performance – which provide a framework to develop the next generation of the Capital Works Management Framework.

- In March 2019, the Minister launched a review of the policies and practices deployed in the procurement of public works projects.

- The focus of the review is on improving the delivery of construction projects in terms of quality, timely delivery and cost outcomes.
- The review will deliver significant changes to the Capital Works Management Framework (CWMF) over the coming years.
- A high level strategy has been developed with the Government Construction Contracts Committee (GCCC) that will guide the implementation which will be addressed primarily through the progressive refinement and enhancement of the CWMF.
- The OGP has prepared a methodology for extensive structured engagement, both with public sector and industry stakeholders, including the CSG to inform the implementation of the strategy. A series of position papers will be published on a variety of topics to foster debate and engagement on specific issues throughout the review process.

Progress is being made on a number of fronts with an initial focus on the manner in which we engage construction technical professionals upon whom the public sector is heavily reliant on to deliver construction projects. With better definition of the scope of service and the roles and responsibilities of the different professionals who make up the design team, it is expected that the fees bid for these contracts will better reflect the high quality service that is necessary to properly advise the client body and to define the works requirements for the construction contract.

- A "Position Paper on Consultancy Engagement" was published in May 2019, as part of the development of the next generation of the CWMF.
- Price variation associated with inflation – a tender process has commenced for the engagement of consultants to undertake a review of the price variation mechanisms in both the CWMF construction and services contracts.
- Adoption of Building Information Modelling (BIM) on public works projects – extensive engagement has taken place

with the National Standards Authority of Ireland and other stakeholders in developing technical standards which will enable public bodies to procure BIM services in a consistent manner across the NDP.

- Early engagement has also taken place on reviewing cost control templates and guidance which will include a consistent approach to life cycle costing.

Together these reform processes will lead to meaningful policy change and will assist in delivering better value for money for the taxpayer in the implementation of Project Ireland 2040.

## 4.4 Strategic Communications

With the establishment of a Communications Team within the IPPO, stakeholder communications have been significantly refined and strengthened.

A variety of tactics were employed to address the communications needs of discrete stakeholder groups, including the launch of the 2018 Annual Report and go-live of the *MyProjectIreland* interactive map, the publication of a suite of Regional Briefings, a transit advertising campaign and positioning Project Ireland 2040 as a Government Priority at 2019's National Ploughing Championships.

- The Launch of the Annual Report was held in an extension of the Glucksman Library at the University of Limerick, one of the early projects supported by Project Ireland 2040 and providing 1,200 extra study places. Also launched was the *MyProjectIreland* interactive mapping tool, which allows members of the public to go online and find details of projects in their local area.
- A suite of Regional Briefings was prepared and published to provide further insight as to the national impact of measures being delivered under Project Ireland 2040.

- Using a treasure-hunt and Virtual Reality presentation, the team met with 2,500 people over the course of the National Ploughing Championships, explaining Project Ireland 2040 and showcasing [gov.ie/2040](http://gov.ie/2040) with each engagement.
- Over the course of 2019, a transit campaign entitled 'Find out how Ireland's future is being built now' ran in three bursts of two weeks each from 6 May, 28 July and 6 October, garnering over 50,000 hits to [gov.ie/2040](http://gov.ie/2040). The campaign featured on 500 Dublin Buses, on the Red and Green Luas lines, 50 Irish Rail carriages and 100 Bus Shelters in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick, Waterford and nationwide in each round.
- Throughout 2019, much work was undertaken in respect of appropriate use of identity.