



# Donegal Local Development Strategy

2023 – 2027 LEADER Programme



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann  
Project Ireland  
2040



An Roinn Forbartha  
Tuaithe agus Pobail  
Department of Rural and  
Community Development

Ár dTodhchaí  
Tuaithe  
Our Rural  
Future



The European Agricultural Fund  
for Rural Development:  
Europe investing in rural areas



Comhairle Contae  
Dhún na nGall  
Donegal County Council



DONEGAL  
LOCAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
CLG.



INISHOWEN  
DEVELOPMENT  
PARTNERSHIP



Údarás na  
Gaeltachta



COMHAIR NA NOILEÁN  
CTR



LCDC  
Donegal Local Community Development  
Committee

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## **Glossary of Terms**

ATU – Atlantic Technological University

BIM - Bord Iascaigh Mhara

CAP - Common Agricultural Policy

CSP - CAP Strategic Plan

CLLD - Community Led Local Development

CPR - EU Common Provisions Regulation 2021/1060

CYPSC - Children and Young People's Services Committee

DAFM - Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

DETB – Donegal Education and Training Board

DLDC – Donegal Local Development CLG

DRCD - Department of Rural and Community Development

EAFRD - European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

EOI - Expression of Interest

EU - European Union

FP – Financial Partner

IDP – Inishowen Development Company

IP – Implementing Partner

LAG - Local Action Group

LCDC - Local Community Development Committee

LDS - Local Development Strategy

LEADER - Liaisons Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale

LECP - Local Economic and Community Plan

NWPS – National Parks and Wildlife Service

PPN – Public Participation Network

SDG - Sustainable Development Goals

SWOT - Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threat

# 1 Local Action Group Governance Model

## 1.1 Organisation Details

**Legal Name of LAG:** Donegal Local Community Development Committee

**Postal Address, Telephone No:** Donegal County Council, Community Development Division, Station Island, Lifford, Co. Donegal

**Primary Contact for LEADER/Name of Contact Person, Position:** Paddy Doherty, LCDC Chief Officer

**Email:** paddy.doherty@donegalcoco.ie

**Tel:** 074 9153900

### Legal/Company Information

**Legal Description of LAG:** The Donegal LCDC will act as the LAG for the Donegal Sub Region. The key provisions regarding LCDCs are contained in Part 6 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014. Part 6 inserts new sections 49A and 128A to 128F into the Local Government Act 2001 and provides for:

- the establishment of LCDCs as Committees of local authorities,
- the functions of LCDCs,
- LCDC membership,
- administrative support for LCDCs by local authorities, and
- co-operation with the work of LCDCs by local development agencies.

**Date of Establishment of Donegal LCDC:** 1st July 2014

**CRO No. and Tax Clearance Certificate:** Company Number; IE 8F28103W  
Tax Clearance Cert; 00519651-33156D

**Legal Structure:** Sub-committee of Donegal County Council

### **Operational ethos/description of main activities**

Please see attached Supplementary Information on LAG Governance Model, Appendix 1.1, Standing Orders for LCDC, Pg 1-7.

## 1.2 LAG Composition and Decision-Making

Name	Sector	Organisation	Expertise
Cllr. Niamh Kennedy Chairperson	Local Authority Councillor	Donegal County Council	Experienced in local and community development with a particular interest in finance, funding, social inclusion, and administration. Over 20 years' experience in the fishing industry covering Health and Safety and Administration Management.
Cllr. Martin McDermott Vice Chairperson	Local Authority Councillor	Donegal County Council	Martin has a wide experience in community development with specific expertise in tourism, industry, social inclusion, funding and youth provision.
John McLaughlin	Local Authority Chief Executive	Donegal County Council	A qualified Civil Engineer, John joined Donegal County Council in 1999 where he worked in the National Roads Office in Donegal Town at executive engineer and senior executive engineer level. In 2001 he took up the position of Director of Roads and Transportation before

Name	Sector	Organisation	Expertise
			moving on to become the Chief Executive in 2021.
Brenda Hegarty	Local Authority Local Enterprise Office	Donegal County Council	Brenda leads the LEO and has extensive experience across a range of sectors with over 25 years' experience in EU grant funding, Programme and Project management across a wide range of economic, social inclusion and rural development initiatives in Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Cyprus.
Cllr. Marie Therese Gallagher	Local Authority Councillor	Donegal County Council	Marie Therese has extensive experience in community development with specific expertise in rural tourism, business, social inclusion and grants.
Paul Hannigan	State Agencies	Atlantic Technological University Donegal	Paul is a former President of Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT) and Head of Department of Business Studies at Dundalk IT. After the designation of the Atlantic Technological University (ATU), Paul now holds the role of Head of College at ATU Donegal. Paul is a former member of the Higher Education Authority (HEA), a former Director of Central Applications Office (CAO) and a former Board member of Eurashe, the European Association for Technological Higher Education Institutions.
Maria Ferguson	State Agencies	Health Service Executive	Maria is Head of Service, Human Resources for HSE Community Healthcare Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, and Sligo. A member of the Executive Management Team, Maria works on a cross divisional and collaborative basis internally and with external bodies to support the delivery of high quality, patient centred healthcare services. Prior to working with the HSE, Maria worked for over 20 years in Local Government specialising in the areas of strategy, evaluation, public policy, research and human resource management.
Micheal Mac Giolla Easbuig	State Agencies	Udaras na Gaeltachta	Micheal is Head of Regional Development with Údarás na Gaeltachta, a qualified Chartered Accountant and worked as a business development consultant and community development project manager before joining the Údarás team in Donegal in 2002. Micheal has extensive experience and expertise in business development, and in language and community development and represents An tÚdarás on a wide range of Boards.
Anne McHugh	State Agencies	Education Training Board	Anne McHugh is Chief Executive of Donegal Education and Training Board (ETB), the largest education and training provider in the county with an annual student cohort of over 29,000 across 15 post-primary schools, Further Education and Training (FET), outdoor education and training and music education, along with legal responsibilities for youth work. Anne has been CE for 7 years, having previously worked as Education Officer and as a school Principal.

Name	Sector	Organisation	Expertise
Shauna McClenaghan	Local Development Company	Inishowen Development Partnership	Shauna is Joint CEO of Inishowen Development Partnership (IDP) and holds an MSc in Social Policy and Administration, a B Soc Sc and a Postgraduate Diploma in Business Studies. Shauna has a track record of over 20 years in the delivery of programmes and strategically developing IDP. Shauna sits on SERI (Social Enterprise Republic of Ireland), the Alcohol Forum, Children and Young Peoples Service Committee (CYPSC), PEACE Plus Partnership, ChangeMakers, Irish Local Development Network (ILDN) and Donegal's Community Education Forum.
Padraic Fingleton	Local Development Company	DLDC	Padraic is CEO of Donegal Local Development CLG and holds experience in people leadership, governance, strategic planning, budgeting and policies and processes management. Having worked in the not-for-profit community and voluntary sector in Donegal for the past 15 years he has gained a strong understanding of the challenges and needs in supporting Rural and Community-led development in particular supporting those living in poverty and social exclusion.
Siobhan McLaughlin	Social Inclusion Interest	PPN	Siobhan is the Project Manager for the Donegal Travellers Project and is a PPN representative on the LCDC, covering the area of Social Inclusion.
Joe Boland	Social Inclusion Interest	PPN	Joe has been involved in voluntary committees for over 40 years and has held different positions with Scouting Ireland. Joe currently holds the position of Chairperson of Cara House FRC, DCSM Community Alert Group and the PPN Secretariat and membership of the Riverine Project Community Forum, Donegal LCDC and Donegal JPC, and is a member of the NUJ and PPAI.
Charlene Logue	Community Voluntary Interest	PPN	Charlene works with Donegal Youth Service as a Youth Outreach manager and has a special interest in youth provision, rural youth, access to education, employment and training for those aged 16-25, working with local youth clubs and volunteers to foster a deeper sense of connection to their local area. Charlene is a professionally qualified Youth and Community Worker (University of Ulster, Jordanstown).
Andrew McNulty	Community Voluntary Interest	PPN	With over 20 years of experience in arts management and community development, Andrew has a diverse skill set including budgeting, programming, funding applications and participatory arts practice. Andrew excels in project design, funding, team leadership and community engagement. He volunteers as Artistic Director with Yellow Wood Arts and serves on the board of directors with Cara House FRC.
Aengus Kennedy	Environmental Interest	PPN	Aengus attended college in UCC, specialising in field ecology and currently delivers several ecology and biodiversity programmes in

Name	Sector	Organisation	Expertise
			primary, secondary schools, community, and environmental groups as well as department of education approved teacher training courses. Aengus has nine years' experience delivering habitat studies, bird, bat and flora surveys and is a member of the Community Foundation Irelands directory of ecologists.
Liam McElhinney	Trade Union	ICTU	Liam McElhinney represents the Trade Union ICTU on the LCDC with a particular focus on representing and advancing the economic and social interests of working people. Liam also has a long history of involvement in the local GAA and is the current St Michael's GAA club chairman.
James O'Donnell	Farming and Agriculture	Farmers Rep	Extensive experience in local and community development with particular experience in funding while a member of various PEACE evaluation panels and the SICAP Evaluation Panel.
Máire Uí Mhaoláin	Islands interest	Comhar na nOileán	Máire has experience of managing and delivering LEADER since 2007 and is the CEO of Comhar na nOileán, an Implementing Partner in 3 LCDC-led LAGS and an independent LAG during the period 2015-2023. Director of Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann and with experience as manager of European Projects and a Board member of FLAG West. Over 30 years' experience of working in the Local Development Sector and a member of LCDC in 3 counties.

### 1.2.1 Outline of the ongoing selection process for new LAG members and rotation of members over the course of the LEADER programme

All issues relating to membership of the LAG are determined as per guidelines. See Appendix 1, Section 4 Standing Orders plus Section 5 and 6 of the Revised guidelines for the Operation of LCDCs.

<https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/3518/281118173519-f678a0f50ea64eff8a2f7dd9808285b6.pdf#page=null>

### 1.2.2 Gender breakdown of LAG decision-making members and how the LAG will ensure its membership contains a broad range of local public and private interests in order to secure the LAGs effective operation.

The membership and gender breakdown are included in the table above. Regarding changing membership of the LAG, please refer to Section 4.5 of the Standing Orders listed below:

The Chief Officer shall carry out a regular review of the membership to account for changing LCDC objectives with the option of recommending to the LCDC to the “standing-down” of member organisations, where this is appropriate e.g., where the strategic need for member organisations has been satisfied or new member organisations are required to meet a specific strategic need or member organisations are not attending on a regular basis.

### 1.2.3 Description of decision-making structures/procedures including sub-committees and advisory groups

The LCDC committee adhere to the committees Standing Orders (Appendix 1, Pg 1-8) adopted on the 2nd of September 2014 as part of its decision-making process (Section 3).

Any decisions taken by the LAG regarding the LEADER programme will also be in line with the respective Operating Rules for the LEADER programme, as per Section 5.3 of the Operating Rules for the 2014-2022 Programme and subsequent updates.

This will be further supported by the Revised LCDC Guidelines published by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in December 2016 including Section 10.1 and 10.4 whilst implementing the wider guidance on LAG Governance Model.

### 1.2.4 Proposed Implementing Partners and Animating Partners (if relevant) governance and decision arrangements.

Each of the four Implementing Partners (Donegal Local Development Company, Inishowen Development Partnership, Údarás na Gaeltacht and Comhar na nOileán) have a Board of Directors who oversee and manage the governance of the respective companies. To support this function, each partnership has Memorandum and Articles of Associations, Strategic Guiding plans, Corporate Governance documents, End of Year reviews, Annual Accounts and other controls and checks to ensure the compliant financial and administrative completion of their respective work programmes.

## 1.3 LAG Roles and Responsibilities

### 1.3.1 Roles and responsibilities of LAG members for LEADER regarding financial management; administration; animation and calls for proposals; management of staff; monitoring/evaluation.

The LCDC as the LAG will have overall responsibility for the implementation and successful delivery of the LDS. Their role will include:

- a. allocate tasks among the LAG partners
- b. approve parameters for calls for proposals in accordance with the priorities and objectives set out in the LDS
- c. give ultimate approval for project applications in accordance with Art. 34(3)(f) of Regulation 1303/2013
- d. develop and sign Service Level Agreements with lead financial partner (DCC Executive) and lead Implementation Partners (IP's)
- e. monitor and review performance of the implementation partners as per service level agreement with the LCDC
- f. monitor and review the performance of the LA as lead financial partner, and
- g. monitor and review on an ongoing basis progress under the LDS, and agree corrective action, where required.

Donegal County Council is the lead financial partner of the LCDC/LAG and will carry out the administrative tasks associated with this role, including;

- a. providing advance administration and animation funding to implementing partners, as well as progression of monthly admin claims
- b. article 48 checks on proposed projects and project claims
- c. expenditure verification checks in line with Article 48 requirements,
- d. making payments to promoters on behalf of the LAG, and



- e. overall financial management of the LEADER programme

The Implementing Partners will develop projects and animation related actions associated with the implementation of the LDS. They will carry out all work from the issuing of calls for proposals up to, and including, submitting project recommendations to the LAG and the lead financial partner for approval. The role and responsibility of the Implementing Partners includes:

- a. developing, issuing and managing calls for proposals
- b. developing funding proposals with project promoters
- c. managing open-call project application processes
- d. implementing, managing and coordinating animation activity in the LAG area,
- e. developing and implementing IP led projects
- f. administration of projects to the LAG evaluation committee
- g. project development, management and monitoring work with project promoters
- h. preparing and collating documentation for verification and submission to Donegal County Council as lead financial partner
- i. development and issuing of contracts on behalf of the LAG

## 1.4 LAG Financial Management

### 1.4.1 Financial controls and management procedures for LEADER

Financial controls and management procedures have been developed through the Agresso financial system for all elements of the implementation of LEADER by the LAG over the duration of the previous LEADER programme, in partnership between the lead financial partner and the four Implementing Partners. These systems ensure that the programme is managed both operationally and financially using a proven financial control system and the effectiveness of the system has been evidenced by the success of drawdowns over the previous LEADER programme.

### 1.4.2 Procedures for management oversight of the implementing body that has responsibility for financial management of LEADER

The role of Donegal County Council as lead financial partner will be delivered through adherence to Local Government Audit guidelines, LEADER Operating Rules, LAG Procedure Manuals and the Council's own operational and financial procedures as directed by the Head of Finance. The process will be overseen by the respective Divisional Manager within the Community Development and Planning Directorate.

Donegal County Council will provide budget reports to the LCDC and its sub committees as part of the oversight process. These reports will provide up to date financial data covering both the administration and project spend. These reports will detail the spend profile, any deviation and rationale for same and narrative to support the financial detail within the report.

### 1.4.3 Adherence to public procurement requirements.

Donegal County Council operates in accordance with the National Public Procurement Policy Framework and effectively implements value for money purchasing while ensuring transparency and accountability and LEADER specific procurement as per existing LEADER Operating guidelines.

#### 1.4.4 Confirmation of the LAGs 'financial partner' for LEADER and how the system will operate.

A Project Control Unit was established within the Community Development Division of Donegal County Council to manage the financial element of LEADER. This Unit is overseen by the Divisional Manager, supported by a Senior Responsible Officer, a Verification Officer and a Clerical Officer.

Under the LEADER programme, an arrears and an advance payment system will continue as per the previous programme. The Advance Payment system operates whereby an advance payment will be made by Donegal County Council to the IP on a quarterly basis to cover administration and animation costs only, based on forecasts provided. These payments will be recouped in arrears from DRCD based on the monthly administration claims submitted via the LEADER ICT system.

Project Claims will be paid based on the submission of eligible claims documents, following successful Article 48 checks and final approval by the DRCD. Claims are paid to the Lead Financial Partner and then issued to the relevant Project promoter.

### 1.5 LEADER Staffing

#### 1.5.1 Proposed number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) in the LAG, Implementing Partner(s) and Animating Partners (if relevant)

The LAG will have FTE of 2.3 to include an Administrative Officer (0.3) a Senior Responsible Officer, a Staff Officer (1.0) to oversee the Project Control Unit and a Clerical Officer (1.0) to provide administrative support.

Please see FTE and respective IP breakdown within the Financial Template for the Implementing Partners.

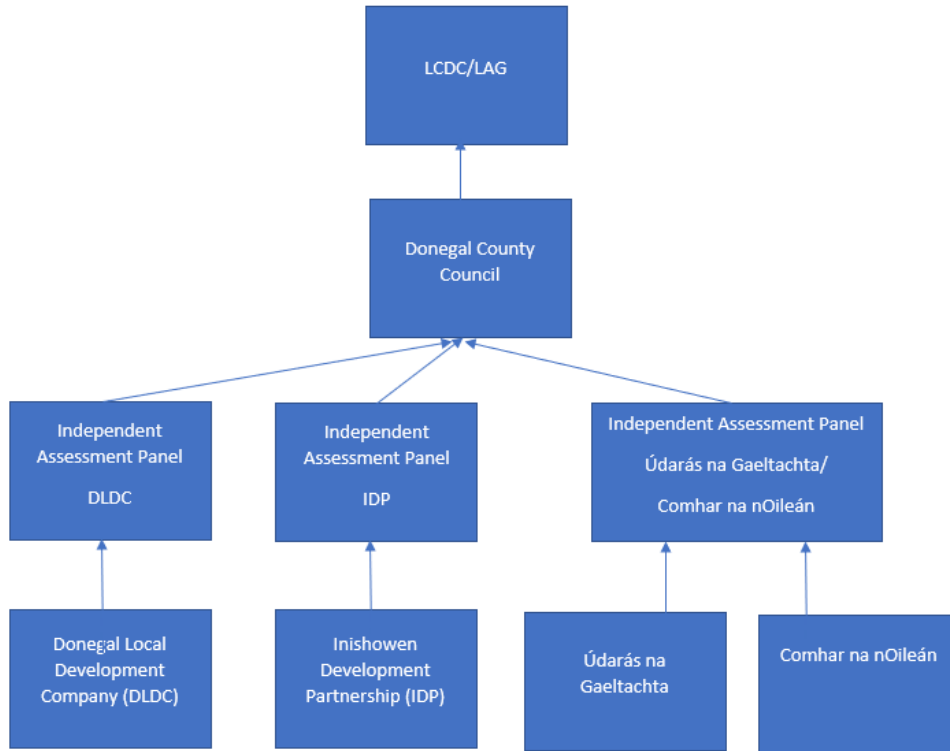
#### 1.5.2 Proposed salary for each staff post and basis for salary calculation (e.g. professional qualifications and years of experience).

IP staff details are recorded in the financial plan. Please see below the respective grade bands for the LAG staff.

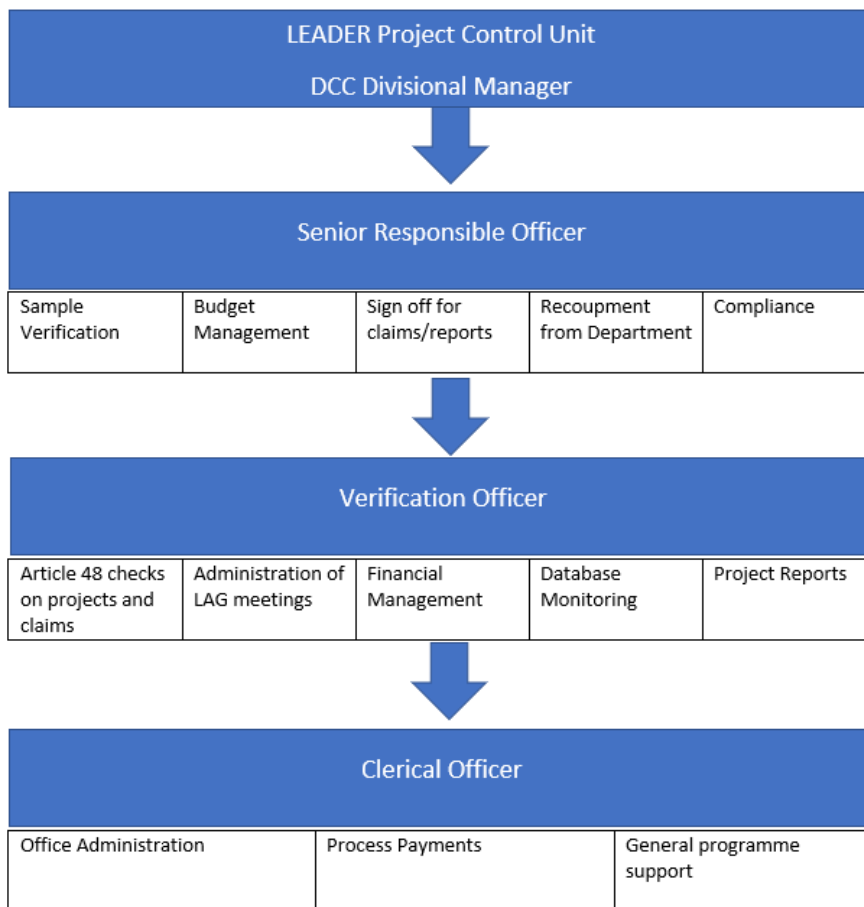
Grade 7 – Administrative officer 51,853 – LSI 2 67,410  
Grade 5 – Staff officer 44,574 – LSI 2 53,454  
Grade 3 – Clerical officer 25,353– LSI 1 41,500

#### 1.5.3 Organisational chart illustrating the proposed management and staffing structure of LAG financial / implementation partners.

The management structure of the LDS is as detailed in the following chart and includes the Independent Assessment Panels, Donegal County Council as the lead Financial Partner and the four Implementation Partners.



A specific LEADER Project Control Unit within Donegal County Council oversees and manages all aspects of the LEADER programme. The structure is as detailed below.



The Implementing Partners staffing complement will deliver the administration and animation of the LEADER programme. Details of these staffing structures is included in Appendix 2.

**Job descriptions, competencies professional qualifications and skills to generate and manage LAG/project development processes on a local level for each role.**

Donegal LAG and its implementing partners are in the advantageous position of retaining most of the staffing complement across the respective organisations, who would have successfully delivered on the Local Development Strategy 2014-2020. These staff have animated and developed successful projects across the breadth of the county, including on the island communities. A detailed breakdown of the proposed staffing structure of the Implementing Partners is included in Appendix 2 along with their respective experience.

**Qualifications of staff assigned to animate and capacity build and manage climate, environment and biodiversity projects.**

The experience of the IPs delivering on all types of projects to include those focused on climate, environment and biodiversity has seen the development of a wide range of knowledge and skills at county level. This has been demonstrated through the delivery of several climate and biodiversity projects by the IPs. The IPs always have also availed of the experience of nominated climate changes champions and experts who sit on the LCDC board (see LCDC membership). This “climate proofing” of all projects before approval will continue into the new LDS and the budget allocation towards climate change themes and sub-themes clearly articulates the LCDC focus on this area.

**Knowledge of staff in procurement, State Aid and other national and EU requirements.** Please see Implementing Partners staffing structure in Appendix 2.

**Each role identified must show how it contributes specifically in the administration of the LEADER programme.**

Please see Implementing Partners staffing structure in Appendix 2.

## 1.6 Project Selection Procedures for LEADER

### 1.6.1 Procedure for managing the appraisal and selection process for project promoters and the LAG, to ensure a transparent selection procedure

The delivery of this programme will also comply with the LEADER Operating Rules Rural Development Programme 2023-2027 and the conditions of the contract (Agreement) between the Donegal LAG and the Department.

Format for submission of applications will be as follows:

- a. Applicants will be provisionally assessed upon initial contact with Implementing Partner and if established that the project may be LEADER permissible, an Expression of Interest can be submitted by the promoter to the IP.
- b. Pre-application discussion (Site visit if required)
- c. Applications submitted and acknowledged by the IP as appropriate
- d. Appraisal including site visit/project site inspection to ensure no works have commenced prior to potential grant offer
- e. Consultation between Promoter and Project Officer
- f. Consultation with DCC/IP's and DRCD\* (approval sought if required for Co-operation projects) and with other State Agencies
- g. Formal Evaluation of the project by respective Evaluation Committee, with recommendation for Approval.
- h. Appraisal and Recommendation by Implementing Partner

- i. Appraisal and Final Decision (Donegal LAG)
- j. Letter of offer/refusal issued by IP on behalf of the Donegal LAG
- k. Letter of acceptance received

## 1.6.2 Project Evaluation Sub Committee

Three Evaluation sub-committees are in place and these sub-committees were established on a geographical basis having regard to the size of the county. These sub-committees (not LDC Boards) are independent from the LCDC/LAG and are made up of individuals (non-LCDC/LAG members) with appropriate expertise and experience in the relevant areas including members from key sectoral interest groups.

## 1.6.3 Conflict of Interest

All Evaluation Committee members, LAG Members and Implementing Partners staff provide a Conflict-of-Interest declaration form which is completed annually. In cases where Conflicts-of-Interest exist, the relevant individual must absent themselves from any deliberations on a specific project application where such a declaration is made. This will also be recorded in the minutes and a relevant LAG decision Meeting Abstainer form will be completed and retained.

## 1.6.4 Project selection criteria and scoring framework.

To determine the eligibility of applications and to assess these, projects will follow the LEADER Operating Rules Rural Development Programme 2023-2027. Previous project selection and scoring was based on sections 6.3 and 6.4 of the LEADER Operating rules Rural Development Programme 2014 – 2020 so there is vast experience of this process across the Implementing partners.

## 1.6.5 Confirmation of adherence to time limited calls for proposals

The Donegal LAG can adhere to any 'time-limited' calls for proposals as part of the new LEADER Local Development Strategy 2023-2027.

## 1.6.6 Article 48

As per Article 48 of Regulation (EU) 809/2014, administrative checks shall be carried out on all applications for support by the lead financial partner including payment claims and other declarations submitted by a beneficiary or third party and shall cover all elements that can be checked and are appropriate to be checked by means of administrative checks. The checks will include the recording of control work undertaken, the results of the verification and the measures taken in respect of discrepancies.

## 1.6.7 Relevant Experience

### 1.6.7.1 *Managing and administering calls for projects to local promoters.*

The Donegal LAG brings a wide breadth of experience to the management and administration of calls for projects, with all 4 Implementing Partners having delivered the previous Local Development Strategy 2014-2020.

Comhar na nOilean has been established since 2007 and has many years' experience in preparing a support structure to promote island development and sustainability using creative and innovative approaches to counter the effects of geographical, economic, social and cultural marginalisation. LEADER has been administered by DLDC since 1995, similarly, IDP has successfully delivered LEADER programmes in Inishowen since 1996 and both

companies have been instrumental in managing and administering calls for projects under several other programmes including for example SICAP and many other EU and Exchequer funded programmes.

As well as LEADER, Údarás na Gaeltachta has over 30 years' experience in supporting the linguistic, economic and social development of all Gaeltacht areas in order to ensure they achieve their full potential. Below figures illustrate the respective delivery project numbers and budget spend for Local Development Strategy 2014-2020:

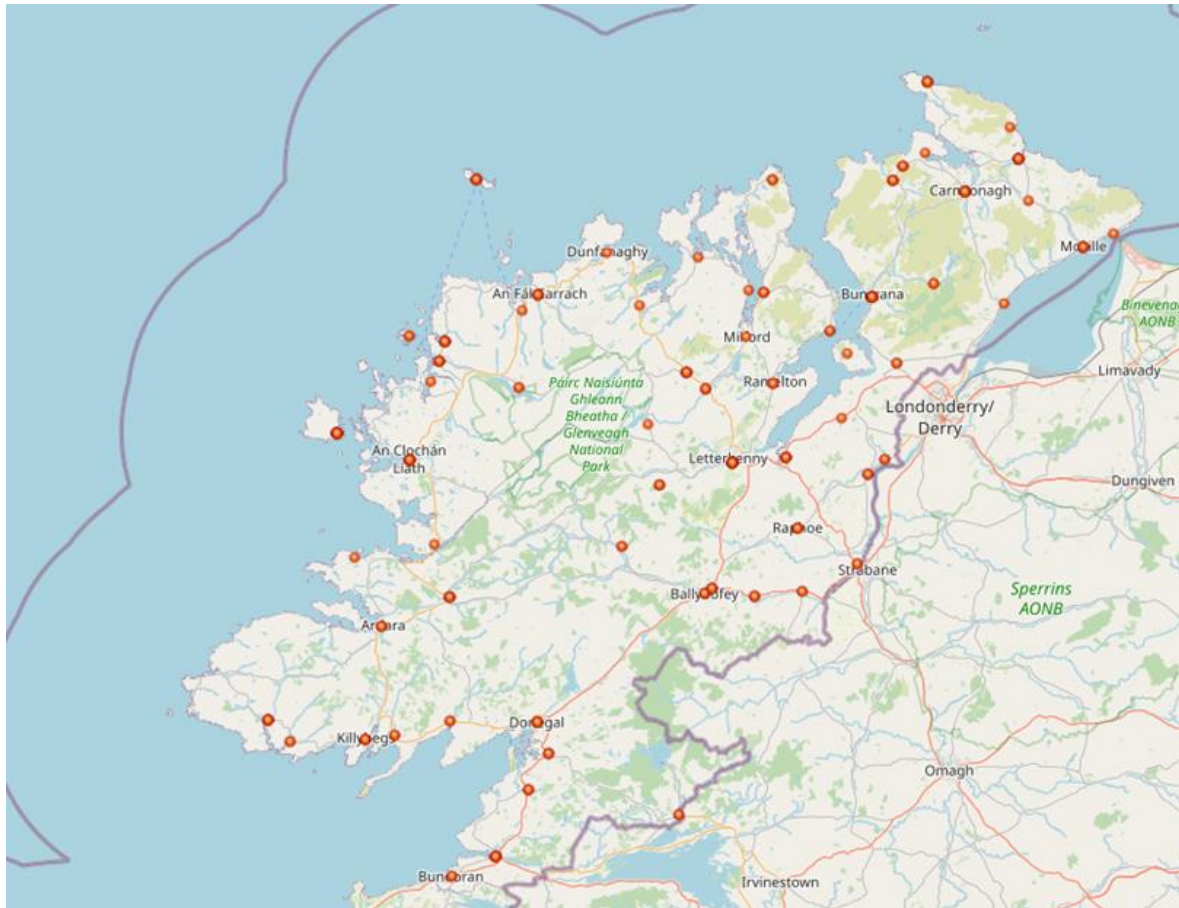
<b>Implementing Partner</b>	<b>No. of projects</b>	<b>Budget</b>
DLDC	119	€6,432,994.07
IDP	86	€3,501,474.81
Údarás	61	€2,284,229.84
Comhar	29	€706,255.74

#### *1.6.7.2 Developing an area-based approach to economic development in rural areas.*

The Donegal LAG and Implementing Partners comprises over thirty years of experience in the development, implementation and delivery of area based local development strategies within the catchment area. During this time the four implementing bodies have also established a vast network of local, national and international development Partnership's with Government departments, agencies, local authority bodies, social partners and the community and voluntary sector. These networks and strategic alliances are critical in assisting the respective organisations to liaise with other local development stakeholders within Donegal as part of a holistic, integrated local development approach capturing synergies through knowledge transfer and collaboration on project delivery. This process is also widespread to ensure there is no duplication of services.

#### *1.6.7.3 Delivering projects that target hard to reach communities and areas not previously in receipt of funding*

The Donegal LAG in conjunction with the Implementing Partners carried out a mapping exercise to identify where projects had been funded under the Local Development Strategy 2014-2020. As the following map illustrates, there is a very good spread across population centres and rural areas, bar those more mountainous areas of the county where there are more limited settlements, especially in central Donegal and in border regions. Consultation sessions were hosted throughout the county, to help promote the upcoming programme, including on the islands. The priority needs identified in those areas fed into the Donegal LDS 2023-2027 and are supported by the detailed area profile.



Also, in delivering successive social inclusion programmes in Donegal, Comhar na nOileán, DLDC and IDP have all gained valuable experience and expertise in the development and delivery of interventions that support social inclusion and poverty reduction, and which have targeted hard to reach communities throughout the county. Furthermore, Údarás na Gaeltachta works consistently in the promotion of community development and capacity building in its regional and rural areas.

### 1.7 Management of relevant Exchequer or EU funding in the last 3 years.

Donegal County Council as LEAD Financial Partner has demonstrated a proven track record of managing the delivery of the Local Development Strategy 2014-2020 and the Transitional Programme as well as EURI funds. Donegal County Council has also successfully operated as a lead or partner organisation on a wide variety of funding programmes including successive Peace Programmes, INTERREG Programmes, Healthy Ireland funds, Town and Village Renewal, Rural Regeneration Development Fund and various Transnational programmes amongst others.

Over the last 3 years, as well as supporting the delivery of LEADER funds, implementing partners in Donegal have administered the following Exchequer and/or EU Funded schemes:

- SICAP, Rural Recreational Programme, Rural Social Scheme, Tus, Traveller Job Scheme, Job Initiative Scheme, Donegal Volunteer Centre, CE Community Employment, CE Childcare etc.

### 1.7.1 Leveraging additional match funding from other EU/national sources.

Under the previous LEADER programme many projects required the Leveraging of Funding from other sources in order to successfully deliver the overall funding package. Examples of this are available in Appendix 3.

### 1.7.2 Programme monitoring and evaluation experience and procedures.

Over the course of the previous LEADER programme, Donegal County Council as Lead Financial hosted regular Operational Meetings between the Local Authority and the Implementing partners to ensure ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Local Development Strategy 2014-2020. This involved discussions on ongoing projects across the county, as well as monitoring spend and budget allocation across the respective Partner areas. It is proposed that this mechanism will continue into the new programme to ensure timely monitoring and evaluation of the programme in line with updated LEADER Operating Rules.

### 1.7.3 Risk management procedures.

All projects are developed and then delivered by the IPs in partnership with the promoter and therefore most of the risk management is overseen by the IPs as part of their management of the respective projects. As risks are identified at the outset and during the project, measures are put in place to mitigate against their coming to fruition. This process also feeds into the regular Operational meetings where project updates are delivered, as well as any potential issues such as underspend, retendering or decommitments etc. All projects are also assessed at Evaluation Committee level, as well as LCDC level, where sectoral stakeholders have the opportunity to identify any issues that might prohibit the project from completion.



## 2 LDS Area Profile

### 2.1 Defining the LDS Area

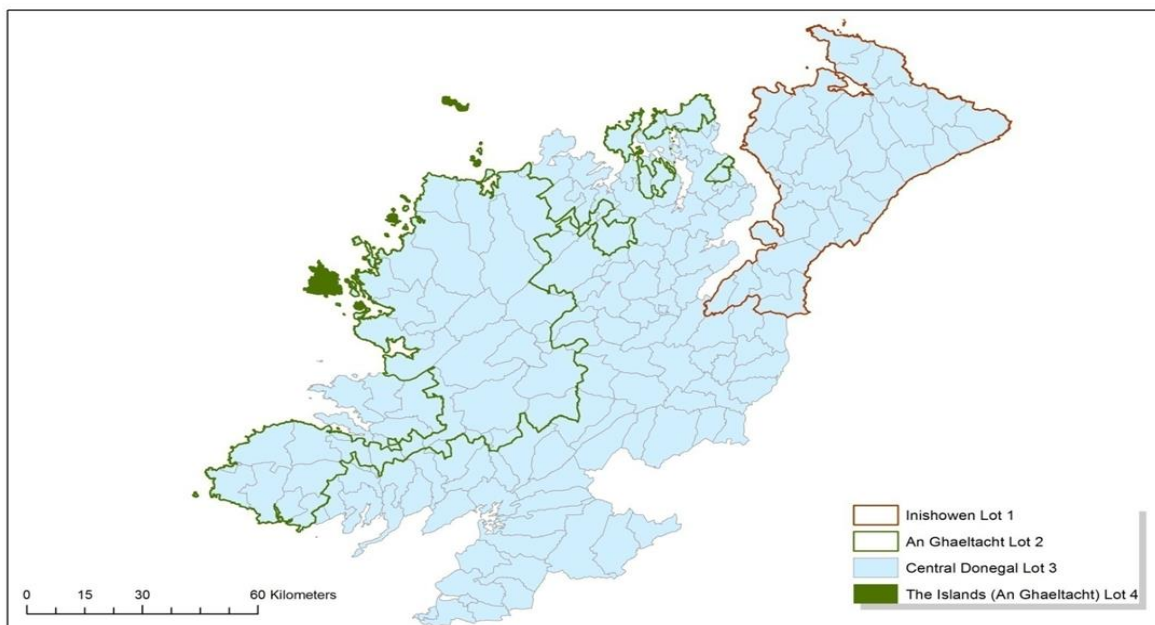
**There are four Implementing Partners who manage separate LEADER funding Lots across County Donegal**, and who develop projects and animate related actions associated with the implementation of the LDS. They carry out all work from the issuing of calls for proposals up to, and including, submitting project recommendations to the LAG and the lead partner for approval.

#### 2.1.1 The four Implementing Partners in Donegal are:

- **Comhar na nOileán** was established in 2007 and provides a support structure to promote island development and sustainability using creative and innovative approaches to counter the effects of geographical, economic, social and cultural marginalisation.
- **Donegal Local Development Company (DLDC)** has administered the LEADER programme since 1995 across central Donegal.
- **Inishowen Development Partnership (IDP)** has successfully delivered LEADER programmes in the Inishowen peninsula since 1996.
- **Údarás na Gaeltachta** has over 30 years' experience in supporting the delivery of the LEADER programme within the Gaeltacht area.

#### 2.1.2 Map 1 below illustrates the geographical boundaries of the four LAG partnership areas:

Map 1: LDS Area



### 2.1.3 Key defining features of Co. Donegal can be summarised as follows<sup>1</sup>:

- 1) It is the **fourth largest county in Ireland**, with a surface area of 4,860 km<sup>2</sup> and the third-longest coastline of 1,106 km
- 2) The county has a resident population of 167,084 (census 2022), and is **one of the least densely populated counties**
- 3) Between 2016 and 2022, Donegal had **among the lowest population growth** among all local authority areas, with a 5% increase compared to a national increase of 8%
- 4) The **average age of the population is 40.1**, compared to the national average of 38.8 (census 2022). The number of **people aged 65 and over continues to grow** – up by 19% since 2016 to 29,623
- 5) Most of the **population resides in smaller towns, villages, and rural areas**, with the Northwest City Region experiencing some population growth
- 6) **Rural depopulation is a challenge**, particularly in the south and west of the county
- 7) County Donegal has a **relatively homogenous population** in terms of nationality and ethnicity, but it has recently welcomed a **significant number of refugees from Ukraine** who are now contributing to civic life: non-Irish residency now stands at 7% in Donegal compared to an average in Ireland of 12% (census 2022)
- 8) The **Pobal HP Index** of Affluence and Deprivation indicates **economic and social disadvantages**, particularly in the Glenties, Donegal, and Inishowen Municipal Districts
- 9) **Educational attainment in County Donegal is lower** compared to the national average, with interventions being implemented in schools to address educational disadvantage
- 10) The county's economy has a **low level of participation in the labour force**, but there has been employment growth across most sectors. Census 2022 reports that there were 67,977 people (aged 15 and over) at work in Donegal, an increase of 9,624 people (+16%) between 2016 and 2022. Nationally, there were 313,656 additional people (+16%) at work. Around 23% in Donegal work from home at least one day per week, compared to 32% national average
- 11) **Health-related data show positive features** such as better access to primary care and lower cancer incidents, but preparations are needed for the aging population. Census 2022 reports that 83% of Donegal people stated their health as good or very good, similar to the national trend
- 12) **Housing is relatively affordable** in County Donegal, **but household incomes are lower**, and vacancy is a problem in some settlements, with a high proportion of vacant holiday homes. Census 2022 reports that in Donegal 70% of households own their own home, with a further 23% renting. This compares with 66% of households owning their home nationally and 28% renting
- 13) The county boasts **significant environmental assets**, with protected areas under the Natura 2000 Framework, numerous wind farms, and an increase in electric and hybrid vehicles. However, on a more negative environmental note, County Donegal has the highest proportion of domestic waste going to landfill
- 14) Public **transport connectivity is poor**, with no railway, and the nearest motorway connection to Dublin, the M3 - circa. 140km or 2 hours driving from the south of the county
- 15) **Agriculture plays a crucial role** in the economy, particularly in East Donegal, while high-nature value farming initiatives complement West Donegal's tourism infrastructure
- 16) Approximately **15% of the county's population resides in the Gaeltacht** (Irish speaking) areas. Census 2022 reports that 59,130 (35%) stated they could speak Irish, with 7,750 (5%) stating they speak the language daily
- 17) County **Donegal has significant island populations**, with the most populous islands being Árainn Mhór (population 469) and Toraigh (population 121)

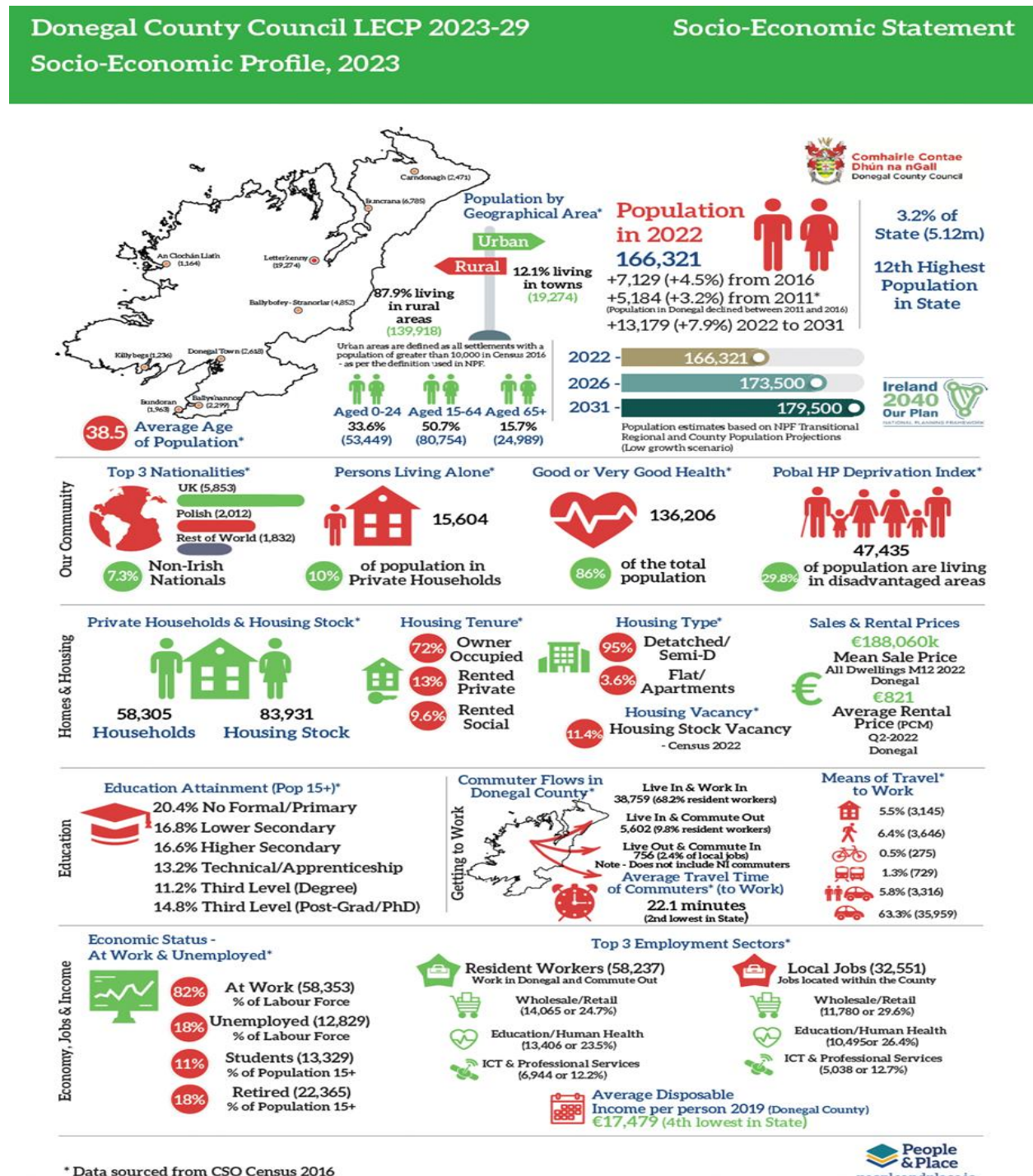
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<sup>1</sup> Statistics are a mix of Census 2016 and 2022. The latter is in the process of being published gradually as themed reports throughout the rest of 2023.

## 2.2 Socio-Economic Profile

### 2.2.1 Profile in Summary

The Donegal Local Community Development Committee has commenced a process to prepare a local economic and community plan (LECP) for the period 2023-2029. To inform this process, Donegal County Council commissioned a detailed socio-economic profile. The graphic above is extracted from this profile report to provide a high-level overview for the purposes of LDS<sup>2</sup>.



<sup>2</sup> Prepared by People and Place Ltd. in 2023 based on Census 2016 data, updated as available from Census 2022.

## 2.2.2 Profile in Detail

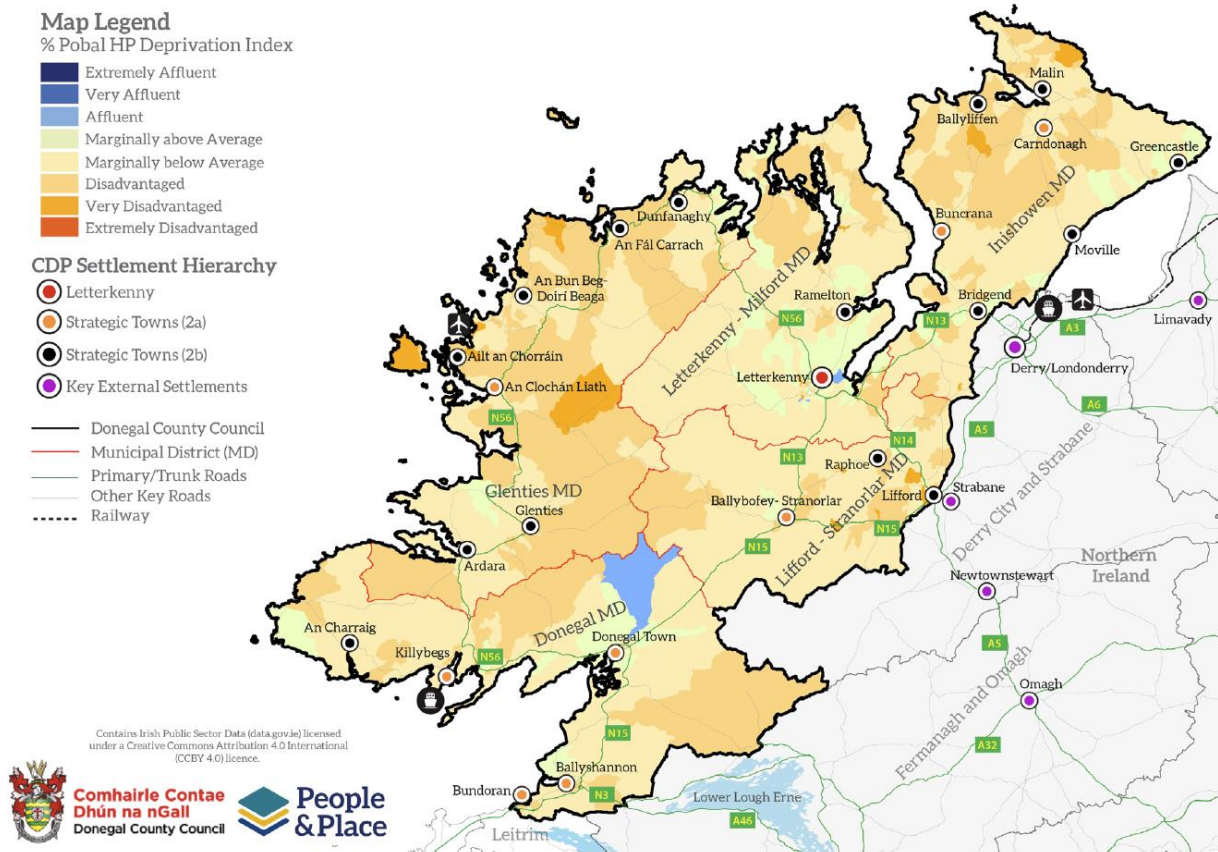
### 2.2.2.1 Demographics:

- County Donegal's population has grown by about 30% since 1991, but growth lags the national average of 60%
- Donegal had the lowest population growth among local authority areas between 2016 and 2022
- Population growth varies within the county, with Inishowen experiencing the lowest growth and Letterkenny-Milford the highest
- The Letterkenny-Derry Axis has the fastest-growing and most youthful population
- Southwest Donegal experiences the lowest growth and has the oldest age profiles
- Almost 15% of the population resides in the Gaeltacht, and there are significant island populations, e.g., Árainn Mhór (pop. 469) and Toraigh (pop. 121)
- Donegal's population is projected to increase by 10% over the next 20 years, accompanied by significant aging
- Suburbanization (growth in suburbs) is contributing to the hollowing out of urban cores.

### 2.2.2.2 Social Indicators:

- County Donegal has the highest level of disadvantage in Ireland according to the Pobal HP Index
- Glenties Municipal District in the West of the County has the lowest index score, with half its population classified as disadvantaged
- Lone-parent families and areas with negative scores on the index are more prevalent in towns and in North Inishowen
- The Traveller population is concentrated in clusters, mainly on town peripheries
- County Donegal has the most homogenous population in Ireland in terms of nationality and ethnicity, and has a small proportion of non-Irish nationals compared to the national average
- However, the recent arrival of over 5,000 refugees from Ukraine has increased the diversity of the population - as of February 2023, County Donegal has the second highest number of persons (of any Irish county) who have arrived from Ukraine
- Over 40% of the population resides in areas classified as highly rural/remote, and broadband connectivity is better in main towns and Gaeltacht areas

Map 2: Deprivation

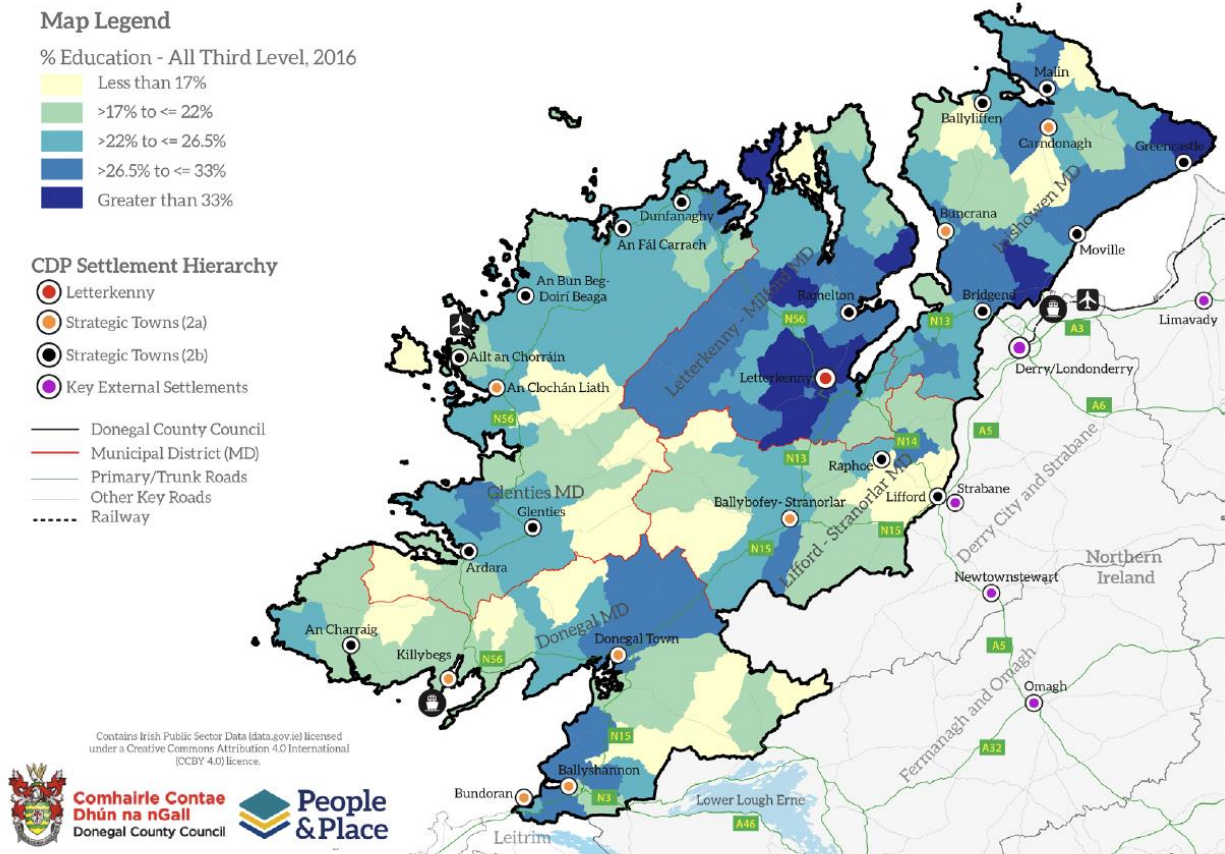


Indicator: Pobal HP Deprivation Index, 2016 (Pobal & CSO Census, 2016)

### 2.2.2.3 Education:

- County Donegal has the lowest level of educational attainment among adults in Ireland
- Over 20% of the population aged 15 and above in County Donegal does not have a second-level education qualification, c.8% higher than the State average
- The proportion of adults who did not progress beyond primary school is over 30% in several rural parts of the county
- County Donegal has the fifth-lowest proportion of persons with a third level qualification
- Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) provision is more comprehensive in County Donegal than in any other local authority area in Ireland
- County Donegal has a relatively low pupil-to-teacher ratio at primary level and a higher proportion of mixed-gender (co-educational) schools compared to the state average

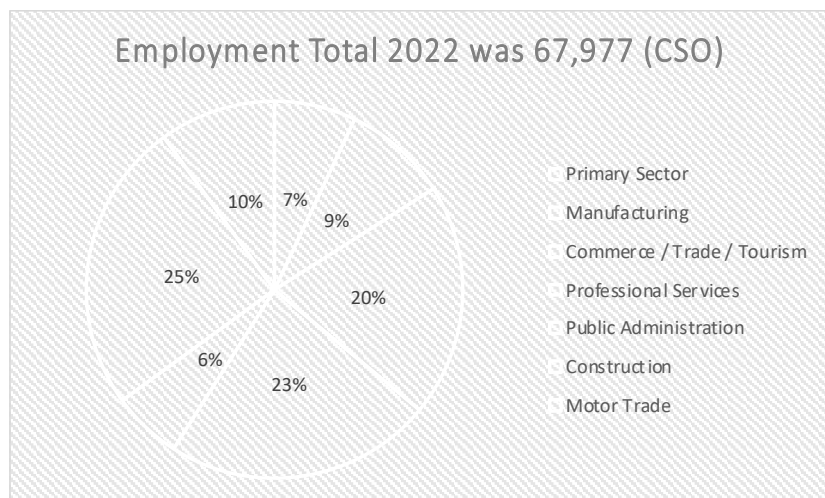
Map 3: Third Level Education



Indicator: Education Attainment Map - All Third Level, 2016 (CSO Census, 2016)

2.2.2.4 Economic Profile:

- Census 2022 reports there were 67,977 people (aged 15 and over) at work in Donegal, an increase of 9,624 people (+16%) between 2016 and 2022<sup>3</sup>
- County Donegal has lower participation rates in the labour force and workforce compared to the state and other counties in the Border Region
- The Glenties Municipal District exhibits the weakest economic profile in the county
- Relative to the State, the county has a higher proportion of workforce employed in sectors like agriculture, forestry, and fishing; building and construction; public administration; professional services; and 'other';
- Primary sector employment (agriculture, fishing, and forestry) is around 7% in the



<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/pressreleases/2023pressreleases/pressstatementcensusofpopulation2022-summaryresultsdonegal/>

county, with higher values in certain areas such as Fanad, Inishowen and East Donegal

- Manufacturing employment at c.9% is less significant in County Donegal compared to the state and other border counties – most of this employment is in southwest Donegal
- Commerce and trade employ around 20% of the workforce, with higher values in larger towns
- Over 25% of jobs in County Donegal are in professional services (3<sup>rd</sup> highest rate in Ireland), with higher values in the north and west of the county especially Letterkenny
- County Donegal has the second-lowest level of out-bound commuting in Ireland (10% of workforce), with County Derry being the main destination
- Main urban centres like Letterkenny and Killybegs, and industries supported by Údarás na Gaeltachta in West Donegal, are significant for employment
- Letterkenny and its environs, followed by Buncrana, Ballybofey-Stranorlar, Donegal Town, Carndonagh and Killybegs are the most significant employment locations in the county
- The value of economic activity in Ireland is measured by the CSO in accordance with Eurostat Nomenclature of Territorial Units (NUTS) classification used by Eurostat. Donegal is included in the Border NUTS2 Region for statistical purposes along with Leitrim, Sligo, Cavan and Monaghan. The value of goods and services in the region is measured as GVA or gross value added, which is essentially the same as GDP or gross domestic product with certain technical adjustments. The CSO figure 4.1 below shows that the Border region lags significantly behind all other regions in Ireland in terms of economic activity and value added<sup>4</sup>:

**Figure 4.1 GVA at Current Market Price (GDP) at NUTS 2 2012 to 2020**



© Central Statistics Office, Ireland  
<https://data.cso.ie/table/RAA07>

- The graph indicates a further increase in GDP for the Eastern and Midland region in 2020, continuing the trend of strong year-on-year growth from 2012 onwards. GDP for the Eastern and Midlands region stands at €193.6 billion for 2020. The Southern region has reported GDP amounting to €153.9 billion for 2020, while **GDP in the Northern and Western region has decreased to €25.2 billion for 2020** and still lags significantly behind the rest of Ireland
- GVA per capita follows a similar trend as disposable income per capita. Areas of high GVA are concentrated around Dublin, the East Coast and the South-West while areas

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cirgdp/countyincomesandregionalgdp2020/gvabyregion/>

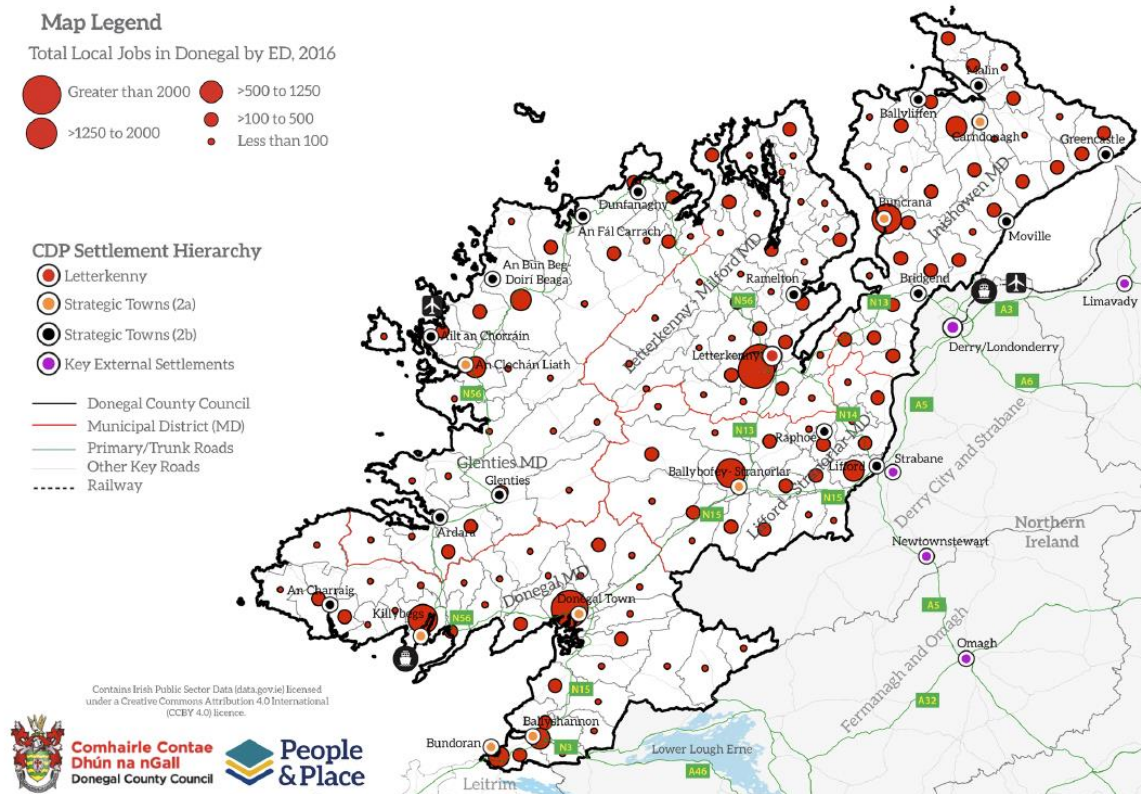
of lower GVA per person are in the West (index: 49.5 and GVA: €35,107 per person), Midlands (index: 26.6 and GVA: €18,858 per person) and the **Border region (index: 25 and GVA: €17,725 per person)**. The areas of lowest GVA are also the areas that lack economic sectors like Industry and Information and Communication, and are largely reliant on Public Administration to generate value and employment in the region

- While the CSO does not provide analysis of GDP/GVA values by county, a rough indication of the value of **Donegal's 2022 economy is circa €10billion**, i.e., 40% share of regional population x €25bn regional GDP/GVA
- To put this in perspective, the value of Co. Dublin GDP was c.€157 billion in 2022.

#### 2.2.2.5 Enterprise and Business:

- Most jobs in County Donegal are in indigenous (Irish) firms, with a smaller proportion in FDI-based companies at c.10%
- Small firms (<50 employees) dominate the business demography in the county, employing over 75% of people, and 90% of these firms employ fewer than 10 people
- There has been an increase in the number of active enterprises in the county, mainly in the construction sector (25%) and the motor trade (10%)
- County Donegal's employment growth has been stronger in indigenous enterprises than in FDI enterprises in recent years
- The County Donegal Local Enterprise Office (LEO) supported 244 clients and helped create 1,374 jobs in 2021.

Map 4: Location of Jobs



Indicator: Location of Jobs in Donegal by Electoral Division Map, 2016 (Source: CSO)



#### 2.2.2.6 *Unemployment:*

- County Donegal consistently has a higher level of unemployment compared to most other local authority areas in Ireland - 18% in Census 2016, which was 5% higher than the State average
- The highest unemployment rates are in West Donegal, Lifford, Raphoe, and their surroundings
- Social welfare transfers account for over 20% of household income in County Donegal, higher than the state average
- At 18%, the county has the highest dependency on the State pension for household income in Ireland
- Almost a quarter of household income in rented accommodation is spent on rent

#### 2.2.2.7 *Incomes:*

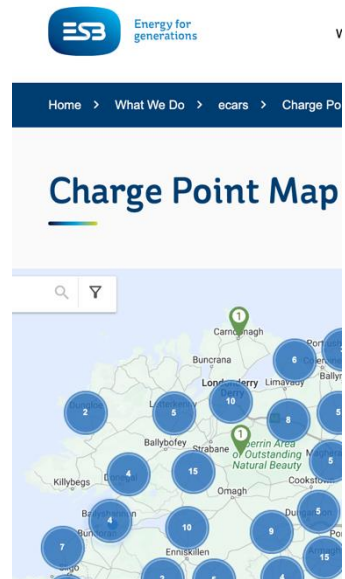
- The median household income in County Donegal at €32,259 is €13,000 lower than the state average, and is the lowest among all local authority areas in Ireland
- Over 20% of households rely on social welfare transfers for most of their income, and over 18% depend on the State pension
- Disposable income per person in County Donegal is the fourth lowest among the twenty-six counties in Ireland

#### 2.2.2.8 *Housing:*

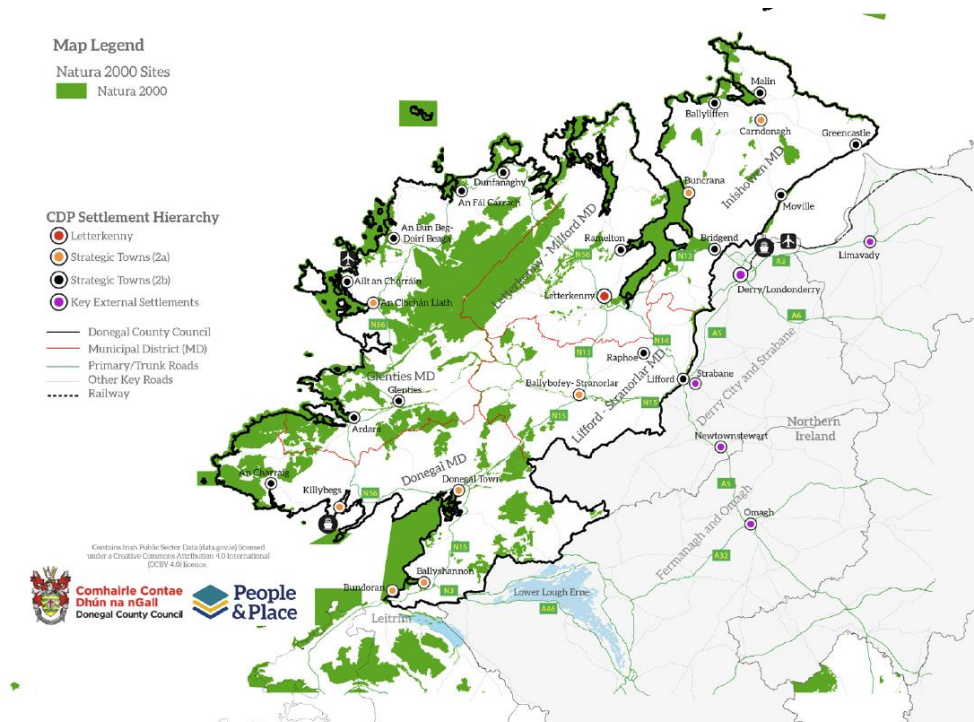
- County Donegal has 86,489 housing units, accounting for over 4% of the housing units in the state. Therefore, relative to the State average, the ratio of housing units to people is better in Donegal
- 3,246 housing completions occurred between January 2016 and December 2022, with 670 in 2022
- The housing vacancy rate in Donegal is 11.4%, higher than the state average. While the figures in respect of vacancy might suggest that there is a significant untapped housing stock, the reality is that almost half of the houses are vacant because the owner is deceased (22%) or because the property is a rental property (24%)
- Over one in seven housing units in Donegal is an unoccupied holiday home – the highest proportionally in Ireland
- Conventional houses make up 95% of the housing stock, while flats/apartments constitute less than 4%
- With a higher concentration in rural areas, 73% of homes in Donegal are owner-occupied (44% of these are without mortgage)
- The average sale price of a home in December 2022 was €188,060, a significant increase from €100,051 in December 2014
- Only 12.7% of households rent from a private landlord, the lowest proportion among counties in Ireland
- Almost 10% rent from the Local Authority or an approved housing body
- The average monthly rent in Donegal is €721, the lowest in the country

2.2.2.9 Environment:

- County Donegal has designated special protection areas (SPAs) to protect its natural resources, including Glenveagh National Park and coastal inlets
- Most of the landscapes and seascapes that underpin County Donegal’s tourism industry have been afforded legal protection under the Natura 2002 Framework, and these are predominantly in the west of the county
- Much of West Donegal is a special area of conservation (SAC) with Glenveagh National Park and other sites
- County Donegal has the highest number of connected wind farms in Ireland - hosting over 30% of the State’s wind farms, generating 10% of Ireland’s total wind energy export capacity
- Electric and hybrid vehicles accounted for nearly 40% of new car sales in 2022, and between 2018-2022 the county experienced a fivefold increase in the proportion of new cars that were either electric or hybrid. The network of fast charging points needs upgrading to facilitate this change in driver behaviour
- Less positive for the natural environment, among Ireland’s thirty-one local authority areas County Donegal has the highest proportion of domestic waste that goes to landfill (67%)
- And, only 8% of assessed housing stock in Donegal has a BER rating of B2 or higher, indicating poor energy efficiency - placing Donegal as the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest in the State (although only 28% of the country’s housing stock has had a BER assessment).



Map 5: Natura 2000 Sites

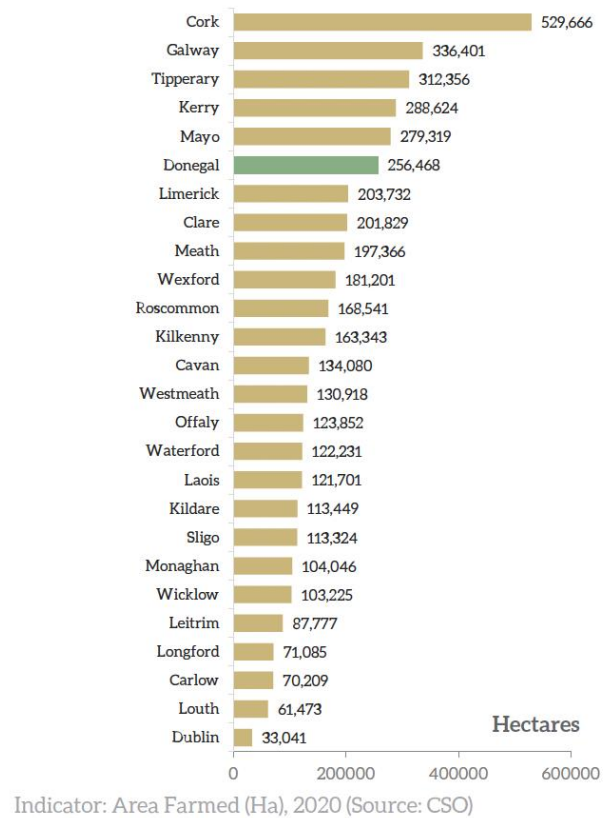
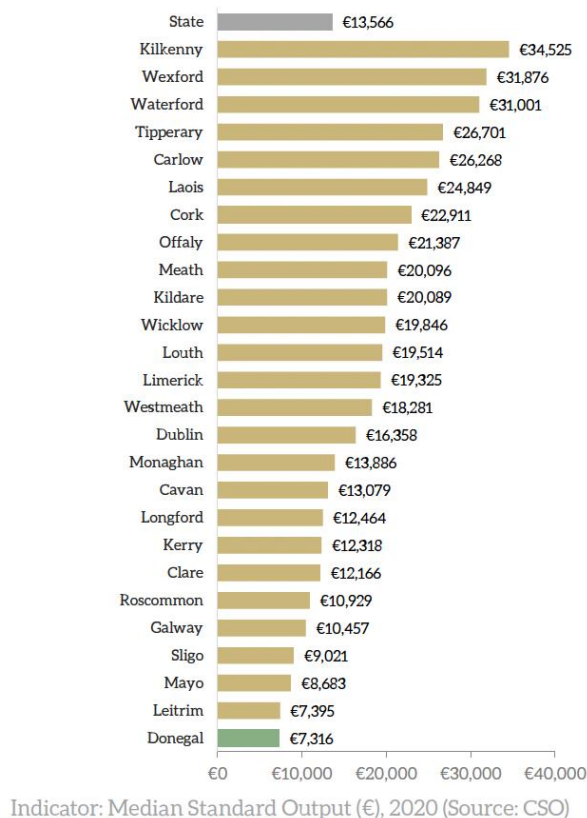


Indicator: Natura 2000 Sites Map, 2023 (Source: CSO)

2.2.2.10 Agriculture:

- Farming in East Donegal is more intensive due to low-lying position and fertile soils, while coastal areas have marginal farming conditions
- Specialist sheep farms make up 45% of farms in Donegal, the highest proportion in Ireland
- Specialist beef farms account for 32.8% of farms, and field crops are present in just over 7% of farms (confined to east of county)
- The median standard output per farm in 2020 at €7,316 in Donegal was the lowest in Ireland compared to other counties
- There is an east-west gradient in farm types, land utilization, and standard output in Donegal - with larger acreages in the upland farms but more intensive production and output in the Finn and Foyle River Valleys to the east

Map 6: Donegal Farm Scale and Output v. Other Counties in Ireland



### 2.2.2.11 Tourism

- Fáilte Ireland: Wild Atlantic Way Strategy 2022-26:** this recently published strategy demonstrates Fáilte Ireland’s commitment to making the great outdoors more accessible for visitors, to investing in it, to growing its year-round appeal, to **raising the profile of the northern half of the WAW**, to involving local communities, while continuing to protect the “Wildness of the West Coast”
- The State plans to invest in:
  - Year-round appeal of the WAW
  - Improved route
  - Improved online presence
  - Address the need for iconic attractions in the northern half**
  - To create improved linkages with tourism agencies in Northern Ireland to better **partner WAW with the Causeway Coastal Route**

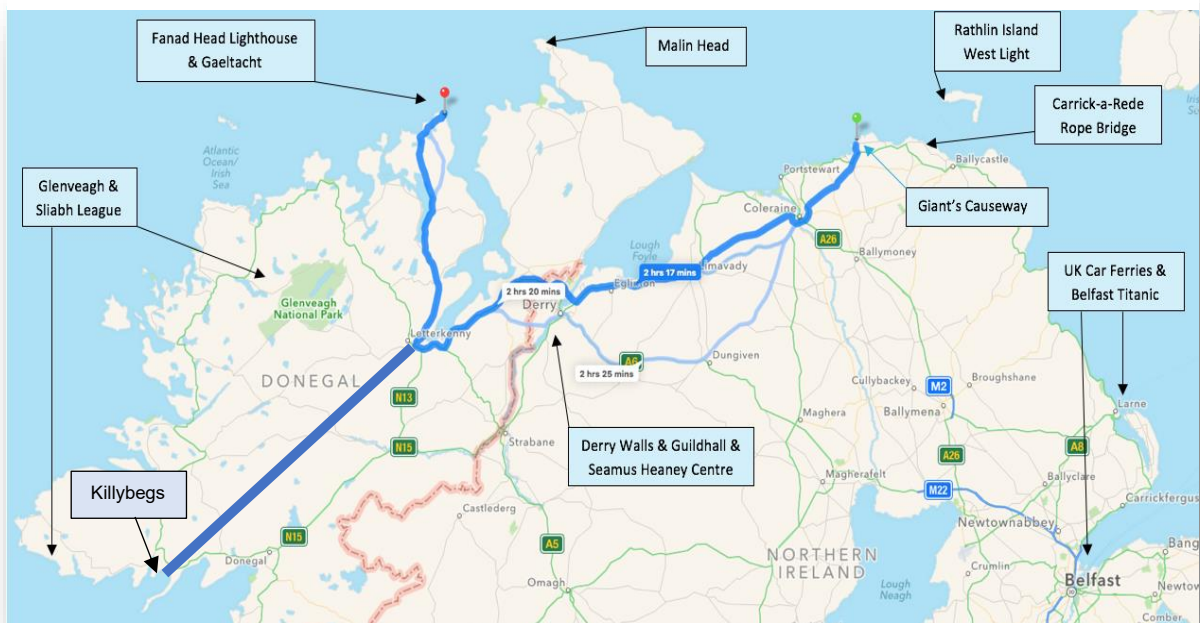
**2** Raise the international profile of the Northern half of the Wild Atlantic Way to increase visitation and revenue.

- Address need for iconic attractors in the northern half.
- Drive incremental tourism revenue through sustained promotion domestically and internationally.
- Create a more sustained partnership and focus with TNI and TI to better partner on Wild Atlantic Way and Causeway Coast.



Map 7: Connecting the Wild Atlantic Way to the Causeway Coastal Touring Route

Donegal Attractions located close to Key Cross Border Tourism Destinations: collectively they attract over 11 million visits p.a.



- In 2019 pre-covid, County Donegal attracted almost **800,000 visitors** (44% from overseas), **spending c. €214million**. Of the top 7 visitor attractions in the county (over 50,000 visitors), 3 are in disadvantaged areas of West and SW Donegal, and **Slabh Liag** came a close 2<sup>nd</sup> to **Glenveagh** as the most popular attraction with 192,000 versus **199,000 visitors** in 2019

- While **Galway** was the Atlantic County that attracted the greatest number of visitors in 2019 at 2.7million, **Cork** received the **greatest spend at €842million – 4 times that of Donegal**. The top visitor attractions were Cliffs of Moher Clare, Kylemore Abbey Galway, and Doneraile Park Cork

**OBSERVATIONS**

1. Donegal lags well behind the top four Tourism Counties on the WAW at c. 1/3 or less of their metrics.
2. Donegal has 6% of the bedstock nationally compared to Galway 7%, Kerry 11%, and Cork at 9%.
3. Sliabh Liag attracts 12% of the numbers visiting the Cliffs of Moher i.e. 192,000 v 1.6 million.
4. Donegal lags in terms of investment in tourism activities.
5. The Fáilte Ireland WAW Strategy 2022-26 recognises a need to invest in the northern half of the WAW and to involve local communities in decision making.

- **Overseas visitors** prefer hotel accommodation and come for beautiful scenery/ culture and history / heritage interpretation / outdoor activities
- **NI visitors** spend c. 50% Euros more per night than ROI visitors
- 1/3 of ROI visitors stay with Friends and Relatives compared to 1/6 of NI visitors
- **Hotel and Self-Catering** accommodation are important to growing these Irish markets
- **Irish visitors bring their own cars** and are very mobile in terms of visiting attractions, therefore, they tend to visit in **family groups or couples** rather than joining large, organised tour groups
- ROI and NI visitors are active - **seeking outdoor experiences** such as walking, cycling, and water-based activities.

## 2.3 SWOT Analysis

### 2.3.1 Strengths:

#### Societal

- 1) High quality of life for residents
- 2) Affordable family homes and childcare availability
- 3) Most homes are owner occupied
- 4) Smallest rental dependency in Ireland, and the lowest average monthly rent
- 5) Relatively low pupil-to-teacher ratio in national schools, with the most comprehensive DEIS provision in the State
- 6) A relatively high number of mixed-gender co-educational secondary schools
- 7) Letterkenny-Derry Axis has a fast-growing and youthful population
- 8) Strong Gaeltacht population at 15%, and significant Island populations
- 9) Recent arrival of over 5,000 Ukrainian refugees, is the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest number in Ireland relative to other counties, and offers an opportunity for an interesting civic contribution

#### Infrastructure and Economy

- 10) Strong educational institutions, including the Atlantic Technological University Letterkenny and Ulster of University in Derry
- 11) Strong presence of family businesses and SMEs, creating the vast majority of jobs
- 12) Strong professional services sector, creating 25% of jobs
- 13) Good broadband connectivity, especially in towns and Gaeltacht areas
- 14) High quality farmland in East Donegal
- 15) Access to Ireland's Maritime Exclusive Economic Zone
- 16) Highly skilled commercial fishing and fish processing industry in south, west and north

- 17) Growing tourism market and recognised Donegal brand identity
- 18) Cross-border linkages through the Northwest City Region

#### Environment

- 19) Outstanding natural beauty and improving tourism attractions, with good environmental protections in place for much of it
- 20) Highest proportion of State's wind farms, producing 10% of Irish energy export capacity
- 21) Protection of lands for sustainable agriculture and conservation of marine resources through the Natura 2000 Framework
- 22) Strong interest among residents in preserving the natural environment (40% EVs 2022)

#### Geographic strengths

- 23) North-West-South Donegal for **tourism**
- 24) Northwest City Region and Letterkenny-Derry Axis for **education and business**
- 25) East Donegal for **high-output farming**
- 26) Gaeltacht for Irish **language and culture**, and good enterprise supports
- 27) Killybegs and Greencastle for **commercial fishing and support services**, and potential offshore enterprises such as wind farms
- 28) Letterkenny and its environs, followed by Buncrana, Ballybofey-Stranorlar, Donegal Town, Carndonagh and Killybegs as the **most significant employment locations**.

### 2.3.2 Weaknesses and/or Constraints:

#### Societal

- 1) Since 1991, the population growth rate is half the national average
- 2) Highest level of disadvantage in Ireland - Pobal HP Index
- 3) Lowest level of educational attainment among adults in Ireland
- 4) Fifth-lowest proportion nationally of persons with a third-level qualification
- 5) Median household income lowest in Ireland
- 6) Disposable income per person fourth lowest in 26 counties
- 7) The median standard output per farm lowest in Ireland, especially West Donegal
- 8) Consistently high level of unemployment
- 9) Small proportion in FDI-based jobs
- 10) Low levels of workforce and labour force participation
- 11) Heavy reliance on social welfare transfers and State Pension
- 12) Over 40% of the population resides in areas classified as highly rural/remote
- 13) Weak demographic structure in Gaeltacht communities affecting Irish language
- 14) Weak retention of young people and provision of support for them
- 15) Growing dependence on volunteers for community services

#### Infrastructure and Economy

- 16) Poor roads infrastructure with limited public transport options, and high dependence on private cars
- 17) No motorway connections out of the county - major competitive disadvantage in attracting FDI and tourism numbers, and impedes exports of services and products
- 18) Lack of rail and gas network
- 19) Weak electricity network
- 20) Poor supply of fast charging points for EVs, despite growing local/national demand
- 21) Suburbanization (growth in suburbs) is contributing to the hollowing out of urban cores
- 22) Accommodation challenges for various groups, including migrants, tourists, and workers
- 23) Defective concrete blocks – issue of MICA
- 24) Spatial imbalances in demographic and economic vitality
- 25) Need to diversify the county's economic base, particularly in South Donegal
- 26) Negative effects of holiday homes on housing access and the environment
- 27) Attracting and retaining skilled workers

28) Dealing with cross border effects and changes in regulations due to Brexit – 93% of the county’s border is with Northern Ireland and only 7% with ROI

#### Environment

- 29) Highest proportion nationally of domestic waste going to landfill (67%)
- 30) Donegal has the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest home BER assessment rate in the State

#### Geographic Weaknesses

- 31) **Glenties Municipal District** in the West of the County has the weakest economic profile, and has the lowest Pobal index score, with half its population classified as disadvantaged
- 32) **Southwest** Donegal experiences the lowest growth and has the oldest age profiles
- 33) Lone-parent families and areas with negative scores on the index are more prevalent in towns and in **North Inishowen**
- 34) Highest unemployment rates are in **West Donegal, and Lifford/Raphoe in East Donegal**
- 35) Poor farm output in **West Donegal**

### 2.3.3 Opportunities:

#### Immediate Potential

- 1) To build on investments in primary/secondary/tertiary education to **improve educational attainment**, making the county more attractive to young people who leave in large numbers to further their education
- 2) To develop **research opportunities and innovation partnerships** with small business and industry through the Atlantic Technological University, the Northwest City Region and via cross-border collaboration with neighbouring Local Authorities
- 3) To further grow the **wind energy and maritime sectors**
- 4) To work with the new Failte Ireland Wild Atlantic Way Strategy 2022-26 to invest in **high-quality tourism** attractions and activities based on the wild outdoors and stunning scenery, e.g., Co. Cork earns four times as much from tourism at close to €1 billion annually, which equates to c.10% of Donegal GDP. This **would particularly benefit rural populations in disadvantaged areas such as south and west Donegal and all around the coastline** – the landscape is already well protected from unwise or unscrupulous development through existing designated environmental protections
- 5) Given the demonstrated strength and creativity of **small business** in Donegal, this sector has the potential **to quickly provide support services** to a growing tourism sector e.g., visitor facilities and attractions, food and drink, accommodation, outdoor and water-based activities, camping etc
- 6) To further enhance environmental quality through the recently launched Government EV Strategy 2022-25 (€100 million investment over 3 years) <sup>5</sup> to rapidly increase the number of **high-speed charging stations** in the county – 40% of new cars purchased in Donegal in 2022 were electric or hybrid, and manufacturers are rapidly phasing out fossil fuel cars under pressure from the European Commission in relation to **Climate Change**
- 7) To expand farmers' participation in ecological initiatives and **high-nature value farming and/or diversification into other businesses** to assist in meeting Climate Change targets
- 8) To encourage and support more households, businesses, and communities to undertake **BER assessments and building/energy upgrades** to reduce fuel inefficiencies, improve comfort, and contribute to a reducing carbon footprint

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/dc958-first-national-electric-vehicle-charging-infrastructure-strategy-published/>

- 9) To further harness the potential of the **Irish language and Gaeltacht** via networking with Gaelic-speaking communities in Scotland
- 10) To develop and encourage **social and knowledge capital from in-migration**, especially given the rapid increase in refugees from Ukraine

#### Medium to Long Term Potential

- 11) To **attract and/or retain remote workers to live in the county** in the medium term – based on the high quality of life, low housing density, low rents and affordable home prices, low pupil-to-teacher ratio, growing 3<sup>rd</sup> level education facilities, clean environment, recreation, and great outdoors activities
- 12) To **attract FDI industry and high-tech workers to live in the county** in the longer term for the same reasons - if combined with improved transportation to the county and clever branding around quality of life e.g., motorway access to Dublin and Belfast within 2.5 hours/'work to live' branding
- 13) To **promote active and public transport** for place-making, positive aging, and environmental protection
- 14) To **revitalise town and village centres**, and address housing vacancy.

#### 2.3.4 Threats:

- 1) **Widening gap in demographic, social, and economic indicators** between County Donegal and the rest of the country – worrying embedded trends include:
  - Highest level of disadvantage in Ireland - Pobal HP Index
  - Lowest level of educational attainment among adults in Ireland
  - Fifth-lowest proportion nationally of persons with a third-level qualification
  - Median household income lowest in Ireland
  - Disposable income per person fourth lowest in 26 counties
  - The median standard output per farm lowest in Ireland
  - Consistently high level of unemployment and dependence on State transfers
- 2) Extremely **outdated infrastructure** compared to East/South/West city regions is hindering development of tourism and inward investment, e.g., no rail or motorway connections, no gas network, poor electricity network in some areas, low numbers of EV fast charging stations
- 3) **Low incomes hindering the transition to zero carbon emissions**
- 4) Disruption of traditional economic linkages with UK due to **Brexit**
- 5) Lack of preparedness for the **aging population** in some agencies and services
- 6) Potential threats to groundwater from **intensive farming** in East Donegal, and the high volume of waste going to landfill
- 7) **Many towns and villages in decline** due to aging and decreased populations as well as a tendency to build new homes in suburban locations, which in turn hastens the decline of traditional small shops and local businesses in towns and villages.

## 2.4 Conclusions: Key Gaps and Potential Actions

Table 1: Key Gaps and Potential Actions based on Socio-Economic Profiling

KEY GAPS	LDS NEAR TERM ACTIONS (5 years)	BENEFICIARIES
A. Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on good work ongoing. Invest further in 3<sup>rd</sup> level ATU Letterkenny, including research cooperation with business and UU. Ensure inclusion of new in-migrants.</li> <li>• New skill requirements are emerging globally e.g., digital economy, artificial intelligence, green economy,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people/back to education students/businesses/communities/new populations/farmers/electricians, engineers, mechanics, and</li> </ul>



KEY GAPS	LDS NEAR TERM ACTIONS (5 years)	BENEFICIARIES
B. Low Incomes and Long-Term Unemployment	<p>and climate change management, move from fossil fuel to electric vehicles, wind energy, maritime sector, and many others – the workforce needs to up-skill and re-skill for these changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in immediate opportunities presented by the new Wild Atlantic Way tourism strategy 2022-26 as the benefit largely accrues to disadvantaged rural and coastal locations.</li> <li>• Invest in farm diversification to alternative activities such as high-nature farming, organic food production, open farm tourism, activity tourism such as guided walking, outdoor activities, adventure holidays, camp sites, etc.</li> <li>• Invest in continued business supports for existing and new Small and Micro Enterprises e.g., R&amp;D, Feasibility Assessments, Financial Advice, Mentoring, Funding Supports etc.</li> <li>• Invest in better digital connectivity, better broadband, digital and AI training, shared workspace and digital hubs, remote working,</li> </ul>	<p>similar existing trades and professions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High potential for tourism jobs and business ventures for people in the disadvantaged west / south / coastal regions.</li> <li>• Upland farmers in west and south.</li> <li>• Opportunities for existing and new small businesses to provide support tourism services and new enterprises or ideas</li> <li>• Communities, CE workers, the aged, young working families requiring childcare</li> <li>• Those areas classified by Pobal Index as disadvantaged, particularly the Glenties MD in West Donegal.</li> </ul>
C. Disadvantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Particularly target Leader supports to disadvantaged areas and economic 'blackspots', including capacity building and feasibility assessment for new small business ideas / supports to volunteers and community groups working in social support services and social enterprises.</li> <li>• Invest in Social Enterprise and Community Managed Services that are working for the common good / long term unemployed / care of the aged / childcare / sports outlets / social clubs etc. – new opportunities are emerging for this sector e.g., smart villages, renewable energy, tourism, co-operative housing, new in-migrants, and many others</li> <li>• Supports for rural youth to find education / training / job opportunities within the county.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glenties MD / southwest / north Inishowen / small towns and villages such as Lifford and Raphoe / Gaeltacht and Islands / Aging populations</li> <li>• The 40% of population living in areas classified as highly remote / rural</li> <li>• Young people, especially those living in more rural areas outside the main urban centres.</li> </ul>
D. Environment and Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support new Green Economy business ideas or community initiatives e.g., one-stop-shop home energy upgrade services, waste management services for re-use and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone living in Donegal</li> <li>• Disadvantage areas</li> <li>• Low-income families</li> <li>• Communities and Social Enterprises</li> </ul>

**KEY GAPS    LDS NEAR TERM ACTIONS (5 years)    BENEFICIARIES**

KEY GAPS	LDS NEAR TERM ACTIONS (5 years)	BENEFICIARIES
	<p>recycling, horticulture, Smart Villages etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support people, including disadvantaged area populations, to pursue available SEAI supports for BER assessment and home upgrades / waste management and septic tanks are also a problem</li> <li>• Examine case studies elsewhere for community schemes or cooperatives on transition to renewable energy use, and provide animation to interested communities / ditto Local Authorities working with industry to reduce landfill</li> <li>• Support small business likewise with BER assessments or examining the case for transition to electric transport</li> <li>• Work with key agencies to improve electric charging to encourage transition by households and businesses to EVs</li> <li>• Support small farms to assess their BER/waste management/use of fertilisers/transition to high-nature value farming/diversification to other income earning activities such as native woodland forestry, horticulture, tourism etc.</li> <li>• Support farmers to manage natural habitats, biodiversity, ecosystems, soil restoration, waste, land rotation etc.</li> <li>• Support and educate communities, anglers, shooters, walkers, visitors, and the tourism industry to live, recreate and work in the natural environment e.g., beaches, rivers, lakes, coastal estuaries and lands, countryside and hills walking routes etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer Groups</li> <li>• Small business</li> <li>• Farmers</li> <li>• Aging population</li> <li>• Young people</li> <li>• Anglers</li> <li>• Walkers</li> <li>• Tourism businesses</li> <li>• Visitors</li> <li>• Nature and landscape, sea and coastal areas, rivers and lakes, flora and fauna, farm stock etc.</li> </ul>
E. In-migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support migrants to integrate with society, e.g., language classes, volunteering, business ideas, learning from them about their experiences and skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circa 6,000 Ukrainians</li> <li>• Other new populations such as Polish, Eastern European, Asian, African etc.</li> </ul>
F. Town and Village Decline G. Poor Infrastructure H. Brexit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These gap issues are beyond the financial capacity of Leader to resolve effectively</li> <li>• However, there may be potential to work with large agencies to support micro projects such as feasibility studies, community cooperative initiatives around climate change, broadband, sports facilities etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaison support to larger agencies to reach disadvantaged communities and youth.</li> </ul>

## 3 CLLD and Participative Planning

### 3.1 Public Consultation

A key component of the LDS preparation process was the development of the public consultation model, in partnership with the Implementing Partners. Following core CLLD principles focused around ensuring the most socially excluded groups were involved, the process ensured all engagement options were afforded to the public and in-person consultation options were diverse across the county, including the islands.

The consultation sessions were attended in most part by representatives of a wide range of community and sectoral groups. These groups represent their communities and sectors and were invaluable in providing the necessary local and sectoral intelligence and insight which informed, guided and added value to the process and to the plan which has emerged. It was evident to LCDC staff and to the staff that attended sessions from the relevant Implementation Partners, that key local and sectoral stakeholders were present at consultation sessions, and that inputs reflected the views of those present, and the wider groups they represented. The sessions were widely publicised ensuring all relevant groups were aware of the Local Development Strategy preparation process and of all of the opportunities to input. It is also recognised that there has been ongoing and seamless contact and interaction between these stakeholders and the LCDC and its partner organisations. The Public Participation Network provides such access. This contact and access has meant that stakeholders are comfortable with the partnership that has developed over the course of successive LEADER programmes, and with the process, recognising that their views, concerns and proposals are reflected in the new strategy.

There was ongoing contact and consultation between the project consultants and the various relevant stakeholders to bilaterally discuss their areas of interest and of responsibility as they related to the LDS, and to elicit views on issues, needs and areas of potential which emerged from the consultation process. These stakeholders included Enterprise Ireland, the Alpha Innovation Centre, Udaras na Gaeltachta, ATU Donegal, DETB, the HSE, ERNACT, Donegal Local Enterprise Office, Donegal Youth Council, Donegal Youth Services, Donegal Travellers Project, Donegal Intercultural Platform, and various sections of Donegal County Council.

Discussions also took place with the four Implementation Partners to draw on their in-depth and ongoing interaction with all sections of the rural community and based on their experience of implementing LEADER and other relevant programmes.

The spread of consultation sessions held throughout the county is indicative of the countywide engagement of the LCDC and the Implementation Partners. These sessions were held in all parts of the county, including on offshore islands.

The coverage provided by having four implementation partners, working in partnership with the LCDC has been advantageous in ensuring that all parts of the county, and all sections of the community can be and are reached by the programme. The map below, showing the distribution of Leader funded projects 2014-2020, provides an indication of this reach.



The coverage provided by all of the partners has ensured that previously marginalised and hard to reach parts and sections of the community have been engaged with. The role and reach of Comhar na nOileán, and their ability to work with, to animate, and to build capacities of island communities is an example of this. Successive LEADER programmes in the county have built local and sectoral capacities. Private entrepreneurs have emerged and been supported by the programme. Social enterprises have been supported to engage in the development of local resources, and this community engagement in enterprise is now widespread in the county, especially in marginal and more peripheral areas.

In terms of the effectiveness of the consultation process, the following table is an estimate of the number of persons consulted either directly in person or indirectly via representatives.

CONSULTATION METHOD	DIRECT NO.	INDIRECT NO.	TOTAL NO.
1. Advertised 14 public consultations in all EDs	300 people from 92 local and community-based organisations	Estimated at several thousands	3,000
2. Online survey	8 responses – 80% from community organisations	Estimated at several hundreds	300
3. Islands	65 persons attended	Estimated at several hundreds	300
4. Implementing Partners	10 persons representing CEOs, Board Members	Estimated at c. 50 persons	50

	and staff of 4 leader companies		
<b>5. Partner organisations and sectoral groups in both the Public and Private domains</b>	Circa 30 persons from 20 organisations	Estimated at several thousands	5,000
<b>6. Elected Representatives and LCDC members</b>	Circa 30 persons	Estimated at multiple thousands	Representing the population of Co. Donegal

### 3.1.1 Consultation Process

The LCDC and Partner Organisations have carried out extensive consultations as a part of the LDS preparation process. There were **14 Public Consultation events** carried out at various locations throughout the County.

The Consultation Process also made provision for people to be able to input to the **consultation process in writing, by email or through an online survey**. People were also invited to directly contact Donegal County Council's Community Development Section or any of the county's four Implementing Partners.

The Public and Online Consultation were formatted as **facilitated sessions consisting of presentations made by the lead consultants and by the relevant Local Development Agency, in each area**. The main element of the sessions consisted of a facilitated discussion and of feedback from those attending. This discussion was focussed on the key Themes (and Sub-Themes) of the LDS after an opening session focused on key issues in the county.

The discussions which took place with the lead consultants and the Local Implementation Partners enabled the drawing of experience and knowledge gained through delivery of the last LEADER Programme. This has been valuable in ascertaining how best to approach the new Programme and to ensuring that it is of best value to the County. This has been especially so in relation to ensuring that less developed areas in the County and hard to reach Sections of the Community can benefit from the Programme. **The partners were able, drawing on their knowledge and experience, to highlight areas of the county and sections of the community that had been harder to reach in previous programmes**. In general, there was satisfaction expressed in consultations and discussions that the **previous LEADER Programmes had been successful in reaching all parts of the county and had been accessible to all sections of the community**. This included offshore islands which it was felt well served due to the **active participation of Comhar na nOileán as an Implementation Partner**.

### 3.1.2 Stakeholders Engaged

**A number of specific Sectoral Consultations also took place** as a part of the process. These were with **Economic, Environmental, Climate Change, Community and Voluntary, Social Inclusion, Cultural and Creative Interests**. Discussions also took place with relevant **Agencies and Service Providers** in the County. Key discussions were held with the **Local Development Sector and the 4 Implementation Partners** working in partnership with the LCDC.

The Public Consultations were attended by over **300 stakeholders** representing **92 local organisations** of various types: these local organisations vary in size from small to quite large and, therefore, it is estimated that the 300 persons who attended the public consultation events **represented the views of several thousand people living in every part of Co. Donegal**. A **list of the majority of these groups is included in Appendix 5**. These organisations represented **economic, social, community, environmental and cultural interests as well as the private business sector**. The sessions were distributed across County Donegal so as to have as wide a geographic spread as possible, with a view to making them as accessible as possible to all communities. **Two of the public sessions, led by Comhar na nOileán, were held on the offshore islands**. The smaller Donegal Islands were consulted at a meeting held in Gweedore during April 2023. In total **65 persons attended the public meetings in relation to the Donegal Islands**. The business sector and previous programme beneficiaries were given the opportunity to consult in one-to-one sessions on Tory Island and Arranmore. Of those, 9 persons availed of the opportunity to feed-back into the LDS.

One **Sectoral Consultation**, with the Economic/Enterprise Development Sector, was **held in person**. Other Sectoral Consultations held with Climate Change, Environment and, Social Inclusion, Community (PPN) interests took place on line as a means of ensuring access.

**Discussions took place with a range of partner organisations who are key to the multi sectoral approach** being adopted through the LDS. These include the Atlantic Technological University (ATU), the Donegal Education and Training Board (DETB), the Donegal Local Enterprise Office (LEO), the Health Services Executive (HSE), Enterprise Ireland, Failte Ireland, Coillte, the Alpha Innovation Centre, Colab, ERNACT, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Failte Ireland, Donegal Tourism, Teagasc, and relevant sections of Donegal County Council (Community Development, Economic Development, Environment, Roads and Planning).

**Key discussions** which took place during the overall consultation process were **with the four Implementation Partners from the previous LEADER Programme** who will also participate as partners in the upcoming programme. These are Donegal Local Development Company (DLDC), Inishowen Development Partnership (IDP), Údarás na Gaeltachta and Comhar na nOileán. These sessions and discussions provided **a wealth of information and access to local and sectoral knowledge and experience** with which to inform the LDS. It also gave valuable access to **Community and Business experience** to assist in preparing a relevant, viable and effective plan.

### 3.1.3 General Consultation Feedback

Feedback received during the consultations and discussions that took place, and through other forms of input, was that the **Themes and Subthemes set out in the LDS Guidelines accurately reflected the sectors and the needs and opportunities that are relevant to County Donegal**. It was felt that valuable and viable objectives and actions could be set out in their context. There was **particular interest in the Environment and Climate Change element** which was seen as an important cross cutting issue, and a **desire expressed to make Donegal a recognised Region of Environmental Excellence** based on the principles of People, Planet, Profit.

The **Local Objectives and Strategic Actions** which are included in the LDS **have emerged from the consultation process and have been agreed by relevant stakeholders** as being fit for purpose to advance viable and sustainable developments in the county. They are **based on the opportunities and the needs that have emerged and that are listed in this chapter**. The combined knowledge, experience, and expertise of all multi sectoral stakeholders has been drawn on in prioritising, agreeing and framing the objectives and actions included.

**The Consultation Process highlighted the substantial challenges still facing the County in terms of Infrastructure gaps, and gaps in Essential Service Provision.** It was clear from the various Consultations that these problems were **exacerbated by factors relating to the more remote locations in the county.** These factors include:

- lack of Essential Services
- inadequate Infrastructure
- lack of Transport
- lack of Employment Opportunities and non-accessibility of Broadband.

**The challenge of maintaining viable rural communities with employment and adequate access to services and a good quality of life is a key issue across the County.**

The **outward migration of young people**, the 'brain drain' is also a key challenge. **Accessibility** within the County (and to reach the County) was also raised as an impediment to sustainable development.

The **Consultation Process also highlighted substantial Opportunities** that exist for the County. There is a **vibrant and well-established Community and Social Enterprise Sector** which is a resource to further build on. The **LEADER Programme was seen as having been of great benefit to this Sector** and it was felt that the next programme could and should continue to be utilised to consolidate and expand on this important element of the county's Development Resource. It was recognised that this base should also be built on in terms of the **continued development of Smart Villages** in the county.

It was also recognised that there are **vibrant Small Enterprise and Micro-Enterprise Sectors** which have shown themselves to be Entrepreneurial, Innovative, Creative and Adaptable. This was also identified as an area of activity which can be supported and built on in all parts of the County, not least in its less developed areas.

The Consultation Process highlighted the Opportunities that are seen to exist for the **Sustainable Development of the County's Natural Resources.** There is recognition that Sustainable Development of these Resources **can provide the basis for viable Enterprises and Employment.** Many of these Resources are **especially relevant to less developed parts of the County** and can assist in the development of such areas. Development of these resources **can be led by Social Enterprise or by Private Enterprise** as is the most appropriate in each case.

**The Resources identified were the Green Economy, the Blue Economy, the Environment, Tourism and the Creative Economy.** It is also recognised that the **Digital Economy** offers substantial potential in itself and as a cross- sectoral resource.

The Local Objectives and **Actions** set out in the LDS are **based on the consultation and discussions** which have taken place and on identifying the opportunities **that exist to address gaps** and to sustainably exploit opportunities. The **LEADER Themes and Sub Themes were regarded as being relevant to the county's identified needs and opportunities**, all of them addressing areas of interest and of importance to the county. The Local Objectives and Actions have been drawn up and agreed in this context, with a view towards obtaining optimum beneficial impact from the programme.

There is a clear recognition of the **need to consolidate and to build on** the very good and **effective multi sectoral cooperation, partnership and collaboration which exists between different sectors and interests, through the LCDC and other relevant platforms.** The Consultations demonstrated how deeply ingrained this approach is in the County and the desire to continue with it. It was recognised that previous LEADER Programmes had been instrumental in establishing and developing this multi-sectoral

approach and that the upcoming programme can consolidate and further ingrain it in the county's Development Culture.

The Consultation Process highlights the **special needs** of for example more **remote areas** in the county, **offshore islands**, and of **specific sections of the Community**. In the community context there is a clear recognition of the need to focus on the needs and the potential of **Young People** in the county, involving them in local community planning and development structures and enabling them to fully utilise their talents. There is a need to ensure that Young People are assisted in achieving their full potential and enabled to participate fully in Community Life. The process also highlighted issues regarding **older people and to people with disabilities** which the LDS will seek to address.

It is evident from the Consultation Process that **previous LEADER Programmes have had a very positive impact** on the county and that it has underpinned a 'Bottom Up', Integrated, Cooperative and Partnership approach which has permeated to all aspects of Development in the County. This **Community Involvement is a key resource for the county**. It has provided access to local talent, experience, expertise, resources and energies which have been **central to a wide range of viable projects** which operate throughout the county. The continued involvement of the Community Sector in the LDS will be of importance in advancing areas such as the **Social Economy and Smart Villages**.

The Consultation Process sessions and discussions highlighted the wide range of innovative and collaborative projects which were supported by previous LEADER Programmes, many in less developed parts of the county, on offshore islands and targeting less advantaged sections of the community.

The **LEADER ethos** of local area, bottom-up development fits well with the community development culture that is now central to the Development Sector in Donegal. The Programme complemented other development activities in the county, adding substantial additional value as was evidenced during Consultations.

### 3.1.4 Development Priorities Emerging from the Public Consultation

#### 3.1.4.1 *THEME 1 LDS CONSULTATION - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION.*

The Consultation Process highlighted issues of relevance to the County and proposals as to Needs and Opportunities that could be addressed relating to Theme 1 were made as follows:

- Need and Opportunity to instil and nurture an **Entrepreneurial Culture** in Donegal, building on existing knowledge and experience and developing additional capacity in the County towards this end. Opportunity to consolidate and further develop the existing Digital Hub Infrastructure in the County, and to further develop such Hubs to gain maximum advantage for rural communities with regard to the Remote Working Sector, and to consolidate and build on Donegal's comparative advantage as a lead region in this sector.
- Need for a comprehensive Marketing Campaign promoting Donegal as an ideal location for Remote Working, highlighting infrastructure and quality of life, **enabling people to remain and work in their communities** and also facilitating a return of people to live and work in their home Communities.
- Opportunity to fully utilise the opportunities afforded to the County through sustainable development of all aspects of the **Digital Economy and the development of AI** in the County.
- Opportunity to build on and further develop the very vibrant **Social Enterprise** Sector in the County, to build capacity in communities, to develop viable local projects and to provide sustainable employment.



- Opportunity for provision of Social Entrepreneurship Capacity Building to enable **Communities to undertake sustainable developments** in all parts of the County, with a particular emphasis on less developed areas, islands and women.
- Need to develop **Community Capacity, Leadership Skills and Business Skills** to maintain and further build on Donegal's vibrant Community and Social Enterprise Sector.
- Need for Comprehensive **Audit of Local Natural and Human Resources** to identify opportunities for Sustainable Development and Employment Creation based on these Resources.
- Opportunities for **Linkages** between Indigenous Small Industry and Micro-Enterprises and larger **Business** (e.g., FDI) in the County to be explored to establish supply chains to create new Enterprise opportunities.
- Opportunity for the Development of **Networks and Clusters to support Business** in the County to be explored.
- Opportunities for Linkages with the Global **Donegal Diaspora** to be explored and pursued as a support and resource for Enterprise and Tourism in the County.
- Need to explore and identify opportunities for **Farm Based Enterprises** to promote and enable **Agricultural Diversification**
- Opportunity to identify and develop **Added Value Food Products** as additional farm activity and to Market such products on a Cooperative basis.
- Opportunity to Develop and Promote a **Donegal Food Brand**
- Opportunity for **Farm Based Tourism** Enterprises based on various types of **On Farm Accommodation** and on the development of various types of **On Farm Attractions**
- Opportunity to explore options for **Added Value Food Production** in the County based on local raw materials from land and sea.
- Opportunity for Entrepreneurial Mindset and Enterprise Skills of **Farming Community** to be harnessed for Farm Based Enterprises.
- **Development of the County's Tourism Resource**, with an emphasis on less developed parts of the County.
- Need for an **Animation, Capacity Building and Skills Development Programme** to be undertaken to ensure that the necessary Skills for people to gain Sustainable Employment and to Support the Viability of Business in the **Donegal Tourism Sector** are provided.
- Opportunities for the development of **Marine Tourism and Leisure** in the County to be pursued.
- Need to **Support Young People** in the County to be able to choose and to pursue viable Career Options in the Tourism Industry in Donegal.
- Need to consolidate and build on the **Cross Agency** Cooperation, Partnership and Collaboration between the Community, the Tourism Industry, the Donegal Education and Training Board, Fáilte Ireland and the ATU School of Tourism in this Capacity Building work.
- Need to ensure that adequate **Infrastructure** (Signage, Parking, Access Roads, Picnic Areas, etc) **to support Tourism and Recreation Activity** in the County is in place, that gaps are identified, and plans made to address these, with Community and Local Authority involvement.
- Opportunity to further develop **Flagship Tourism Attractions** in the County as Social Enterprises or as Public/Community Collaborations.
- Need to ensure that an adequate range of **Supports for SME's and for Micro-enterprise** in the County are available, with an emphasis on and a proactive developmental approach being adopted by Agencies to Less Developed Areas
- Need for Skills Provision for **Small Business** with **Upskilling and Reskilling** emphasised to maintain viability and competitiveness in these Businesses in the County.
- Need to provide **Mentoring**, including Peer Mentoring for Small Business and Micro-Enterprise

- Specific Support Programmes for **Social Enterprises** in the County – in terms of Financial Support, Training and Mentoring.
- Need to Identify and Address **Skills Needs** in the County to maintain the viability of Existing Business, to prepare for Opportunities and Needs and to ensure preparedness to be active and viable in Existing and Emerging Sectors.
- Need to identify Opportunities and prepare for and seek to develop Competitive Advantages in **Emerging Sectors** in which the County has a Comparative Advantage e.g., Green Economy, Renewable Energy, Blue Economy, Creative Economy, and Tourism
- Requirement for **Additional Workspace** in the County, with an emphasis on development of Advance Spaces to promote, facilitate and support Local Enterprise for **disabled people**, that Paths and Public Spaces are maintained, and that adequate Parking, Picnic Areas, Benches, and attract Investment to Less Developed Areas in the County.
- Opportunity to build on the County's **Digital Hub Network** to promote and provide Infrastructural and other supports for **Remote Working** and for local Innovation and Entrepreneurship.
- Ensure that **Beaches** are accessible (especially Shelters and Public Toilets are in place).
- Opportunity to **work with Local Communities** to identify opportunities and to develop Local Tourism Attractions to operate as Social Enterprises, building on the already strong Sector and on the Cooperative Approach adopted in this work.
- Opportunity to develop **Donegal's unique Heritage, Culture, and Language** as Sustainable Tourism Products.
- Need to encourage and to support where possible the Private Sector in Developing a range of **Tourism Infrastructure Projects** in the County.
- Opportunity to develop Interconnected **Walks and Greenways** in the County and on a Cross Border Basis.
- Opportunity to develop **Heritage and Cultural Trails** in the County.
- Opportunity to develop **Food Trails** in the County.
- Opportunity to develop **Island Tourism** as a unique Environmental and Cultural Tourist Experience.
- Need to place **Authenticity** at the centre of Donegal's Tourism Product.
- Need to Develop and to have Donegal recognised as a **Model of Best Practice** and a Region of Excellence regarding all aspects of **Ecotourism**.
- Need to consolidate and further develop Donegal's **Accommodation Base**, through a variety of means, to ensure adequate supply to support growth in Visitor Numbers.
- Opportunity to develop Donegal's **Creative Economy**, building on the County's rich store of Talent, Culture, Imagination, Ingenuity and Creativity.
- Opportunity to work with agencies and ATU to develop projects and to establish Donegal as a Centre of Excellence around **Animation and Gaming**.
- Opportunity to further develop Donegal as a World Class Location for **Film production**.
- Need to further develop the full range of **Skills necessary to support the Film and TV Production Industry** and to provide access to Sustainable Employment Opportunities in the Sector.
- Need to develop necessary infrastructure to support the Film Industry in Donegal, including **Studio Facilities**.
- Opportunity to develop Donegal's potential regarding the **Green Economy**, identifying areas of activity and potential Projects across the Sector.
- Need to plan for and provide the necessary skills to enable Donegal to capitalise fully on the emerging **Offshore Renewable Energy** Sector.
- Need to deliver programmes to **Animate, Build Capacity and provide necessary Skills** for Development of the **Green Economy** in Donegal.

- Opportunity for the production of **Biofuels** in the County as **Alternative Farm Crops** and contribute to Carbon Reduction.
- Opportunity for **Communities** to engage in **Renewable Energy Projects** as Social Enterprises to tackle Climate Change and create Community Assets and Income.
- Opportunity for Community and Private Project Promoters to engage in Renewable Energy Projects e.g., **Wind, Photovoltaic, Wave, Tidal, Micro Hydro, Green Hydrogen, Geothermal, Biogas, Bio Fuels**.
- Opportunity to undertake **Research** Projects and to develop the **Bioeconomy** in the County based on substantial Natural Resources from Land and Sea.

#### 3.1.4.2 *THEME 2 LDS CONSULTATION - RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SOCIAL INCLUSION.*

Feedback from the LDS Consultation Process on Issues relating to Theme 2 that were identified as affecting Communities in the County, and on a range of Needs and Opportunities that it was proposed could be addressed in the Local Development Strategy (LDS):

- Need for provision of **Essential Local Infrastructure**, Water, Wastewater, Access Roads, Signage, Car Parks, Public Toilets.
- Need to Ensure Provision of Reliable and Affordable **Broadband** in all parts of the County, recognising the special requirements of more Remote Areas and Islands.
- Opportunity to advance and support all aspects of **Smart Villages** in the County.
- Need for provision of adequate **Rural Transport** Services in the County, especially in more **Remote and Isolated areas** (with Disability Access in all services)
- Need to explore issues relating to **Strategic Access to and within the County**.
- Need to explore possibilities for **Rail** Transport.
- Opportunity to further develop **Air Links** to the County.
- Need for Upgrading of Public Realm to add to **Community Quality of Life and Environmental Wellbeing** (with Disability Access at all Amenities and Facilities).
- Need for adequate **Infrastructure and Access at Beaches** in the County - Provision of Safe Access Points, Public Toilets, Car Parking, Benches, Shelters.
- Need for **Disability Proofing** and Provision of full Access for People with Disabilities to all **Beaches and all Amenities**, with Provision of Special Facilities for Disabled People where possible.
- Opportunity for utilisation of **Digital Hubs** at locations throughout the County, to provide for Community Access to Employment Opportunities, Various Services and Education.
- Need for increase in and Access to **Housing Supply** in the County, especially for Younger People.
- Need to address **difficulties in obtaining Planning Permission for people in rural parts** of the county wishing to remain and build Homes in their Local Communities
- The need to adequately address the **MICA** situation affecting large numbers of Householders in the County.
- Need to explore opportunities for **Innovative ways of addressing Housing Need** with 'Bottom Up' Community Leadership and active involvement of Local Communities.
- Need to explore potential of **Housing Co-operatives** as a means of addressing Housing Need in the County.
- Need to explore opportunities for Communities to Access and Rehabilitate **Vacant and Derelict Houses** in their localities
- Opportunity and need for Local **Walking Trails and Loop Walks** for Recreation and Community Health purposes recognised.
- Need to provide for **Access to Essential Services for Rural Dwellers** – State, Local Authority, Medical, Education, Social - to enable people to viably remain in or return to their localities and to assist Maintaining Viable Communities, utilising technologies to deliver Remotely where necessary and feasible.

- Need for actions to address the Detrimental Effect of the **Erosion of Services** in Towns and Villages in the County. This includes the lack of Community and Social Amenities, Recreational Amenities, Effects of Depopulation on Sporting Clubs, Closures of Shops and Pubs.
- Need to address the effect on Towns in the County of **closures of Banks, Post Offices, Garda Stations and other key Services**.
- Need for upgrading Local **Community Centres and Family Resource Centres** in the County.
- Need for **tailored Supports for Young People** in the County, to support them in living and thriving in **Rural Communities**.
- Need to **involve young people**, to Instil Confidence, Build Capacity and to provide Access for them in relation to Local Community Planning and Participation in Local Community Structures and Decision Making.
- Need for specific **Recreation Facilities for Young People** e.g. Youth Hubs especially in more remote and less developed parts of the County.
- Need to ensure that all **Young People** in all parts of the County can aspire and can achieve their full **potential** as members of the Community (including the **Children of Migrants and Asylum Seekers**).
- Need for the Development of **Multi-Purpose Community Centres/Facilities** to serve Community Needs and provide for Social, Community and Cultural Wellbeing.
- Opportunity for development of **Safe Cycle Ways** in Communities, (with suitable provision for **Disabled** members of the Community).
- Adequate Access to Medical Services necessary for the wellbeing of Communities in the County.
- Development of **Community Allotments and Social Farming** for Community Wellbeing.
- Lack of **Childcare Facilities** seen as a hindrance to Communities and as an **impediment to people seeking to return** to the County's Workforce.
- **Disengaged Youth** identified as an issue to be addressed in communities in the County.
- Need to support **Young People** in becoming involved in local Environmental Groups e.g., Tidy Towns Committees.
- Need for **Healthy Living Programmes** to promote Community Health and Wellbeing.
- **Local Identity Building** seen as an important resource for consolidation and development of Rural Communities.
- The importance of recognising and appreciating the **County's Linguistic and Cultural Heritage**, the Irish Language, Ulster Scots, (and languages of newer members of the Community), to promote Inclusion.
- Need for Provision of **Green Spaces, Community Parks and Community Plazas** to provide ready access to safe spaces in the outdoors for all in the Community.
- Provision of **Services for Older People** in the Community, and of activities such as Reminiscence Programmes, and other measures to address isolation and exclusion issues.
- Support for the **Care of Older People in their own Homes**, in their own Communities, involving families and the broader Community.
- **Intergenerational Projects** to be undertaken to Value and Support Older Members of the Community and to share experience and skills with a Younger Generation.
- Development of **Culture and Arts Facilities** is seen as a key area for Supporting Personal and Community Development.
- Potential for **Community Led Public Art Projects** to be undertaken for Community Development, Environmental and Cultural Benefits.
- Provision of **Library Services in rural areas**, utilising innovative models such as Taobh Tíre (Rural Library Access through Community Centres) and Mobile Library.
- **Disability Proofing of Community and Public Amenities** and potential to make Donegal a Disability Friendly County, led by the Disabled Sector in the County.

- Adequate Provision for **Mental Health Services in Rural Areas**, with a special focus on the needs of Young People.
- Development of **Youth Cafes and Hubs** as safe and welcoming spaces for Young People.
- **Rural Transport Networks** to be Developed to adequately service all Rural Communities in the County which has a dispersed population, often living in remote areas and on islands.
- Need for **Disability Access on all Rural Transport Services**, and at all supporting Infrastructure such as Bus Stops and Bus Shelters.
- Need for provision of **Play Facilities and Sensory Facilities** in Communities.
- Need to consolidate and build on the strong **Partnership** and Cooperation between Communities, the Local Authority and Agencies in developing and maintaining Rural Infrastructure and Community Services, and to ensure that the necessary resources are provided towards this end.
- Need to recognise the key role carried out in Communities by **Social Employment Programmes** such as the CE Scheme, the RSS and TUS, and the need to ensure that provision be made to continue these schemes in areas such as rural Donegal.

### 3.1.4.3 *THEME 3 - SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION*

The Consultation Process provide feedback and inputs with regard to the issues affecting the County in relation to Theme 3, and made proposals with regard to Needs and Opportunities relating to this theme as follow:

- Recognition of challenges presented to Donegal and Communities in Donegal by Climate Change and the need to have **Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Proofing of all development**.
- Recognition of the need to **act locally to address Climate Change** and contribute towards achieving the **UN Strategic Development Goals (SDGs)**, and the opportunity for the Donegal Community and Business Sectors to lead on this.
- Opportunity identified to establish and to **brand Donegal as a Climate Resilient and Environmentally Friendly County**.
- Opportunities to be identified to undertake a **range of Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Projects which can improve Communities**, the Environment and which can create Sustainable Employment.
- Need for **Awareness Raising, Animation, Capacity Building and Education** in relation to all aspects of this Sector.
- Need to value and maintain **Biodiversity** in the County.
- Need to value and to preserve the County's **Ecosystems**.
- Need to motivate and to provide tailored **Education and Training Programmes for Communities and Business** to enable and empower them to be active in terms of **Climate Change and Environmental** Management.
- Opportunity to **'Green' Businesses** in the County, to make them Energy Efficient and to promote the use of Renewables, reducing their Carbon Footprint.
- Need for provision of **Coastal Defences** in vulnerable areas, the preservation of Sand Dunes and guarding against **Coastal Erosion**.
- Need for **Programme in Donegal National and Secondary Schools** and also with Donegal Youth Council to promote Awareness and Capacity amongst Young People with regard to this Sector.
- Need for **adaptation and retrofitting of Community Buildings** to make them more Energy Efficient and to promote use of Renewables.
- Need for **adaptation of Public Buildings** in the County to make them more Energy Efficient.

- Need to encourage and support Homeowners in the County with a view towards **making homes Energy Efficient**.
- Promote and support **Water Conservation** through Upgrading and Maintenance of Infrastructure and measures such as Rainwater Harvesting.
- Opportunity to encourage and implement Innovative methods of **Wastewater Treatment** e.g., use of Reed Bed Technologies.
- Opportunity to encourage and support **Business** in the County to adhere to Environmental, Social and Environmental Goals (**ESGs**) as a core element of their Business Model.
- Need to address **Rehabilitation of Derelict Villages and Town Centres** in the County for Environmental and Community Benefit.
- Opportunity to **Reuse Derelict Housing** in the County, Villages, Towns and Rural areas, for Environmental and Community Benefit and to provide much needed additional Housing Stock in the County.
- Need for **Upgrading of Public Realm** and Accessibility of Public Facilities.
- Opportunity for the Farming Community to engage in **Maintenance of the Rural Environment and Landscape**.
- Need to support the Maintenance and Sustainability of **Bird Species and Habitats** in the County e.g., the Corncrake.
- **Preserve Built Agricultural Heritage** of the County – Traditional Farm Buildings, Fields, Stone Walls, Rundale System etc.
- Need and Opportunity to preserve and **Conserve the County's unique Marine Resource**, Coastal Environment, Marine Habitats, Marine Ecology.
- Opportunity to Promote and provide **support for Sustainability in all aspects of Rural Life** in the County - Economic, Social, Community, Environment and Culture.
- Opportunity to make **Sustainability** Central and Intrinsic to the overarching **Donegal Brand**.
- Opportunity to promote the **Circular Economy** in all aspects of Donegal Business.
- Opportunity to develop and deliver Certified **Training** Programmes in the Circular Economy.
- Need and Opportunity to promote **Cooperation, Partnership and Collaboration** between all Sectors to focus effectively on all aspects of **Climate Change Mitigation** and Adaptation and Environmental Wellbeing in the County.
- Opportunity to restore **Bogs and Peatlands** in the County to assist in Carbon Capture, and Ecosystems.
- Need to promote the planting of **Native Tree Species** in the county to assist in **Carbon Capture** and in Environmental Improvement.
- Need to maintain the high quality of the county's River Systems and the **Biodiversity of the County's Rivers and Lakes**.
- Need to maintain the County's **Beaches and Coastal areas**.
- Need to identify, promote and support the Sustainable Development of Donegal's substantial **Natural Resources**.
- Opportunity to **Brand Donegal as a Climate Resilient County** and a recognised Region of Excellence in this sector.
- Need and Opportunity for development and provision of **Certified Programmes for Sustainability and Climate Entrepreneurship**.
- Need to promote Awareness and provide **Education on Environmental Sustainability** in Primary and Secondary Schools and with the Donegal Youth Council and other Youth Organisations.
- Opportunity to work with ATU and DETB to provide and deliver **Certified Programmes** and Progression Routes with regard to education in all aspects of Environmental and Climate Change Management.
- Opportunity to explore uses of **New Technologies** to assist in relevant actions to sustainably Manage Environmental and Climate Change Issues.
- Maintain and expand on **Blue Flag and Green Flag Beaches** in the County.

- To support and assist the work of **Tidy Town Committees** in the County as key Community Resources for Environmental Benefit.
- To recognise the value of **Social and Community Employment Schemes** in supporting Communities in terms of the **Environment**.
- Maintain such **Community Employment Schemes** as CE, TÚS, Rural Social Schemes, for Rural Communities, as key support for **Local Environmental Initiatives**.
- Recognition of the **key role of local Communities and Social Enterprises** for Maintaining a Healthy Local Environment and tackling **Climate Change**.
- Recognition of the **role of Farmers in Maintaining the Local Environment**.
- Identify, Research and **Pilot Initiatives to reduce Carbon** Inputs and Footprint of Agricultural Holdings in the County.
- Opportunity to undertake **Rewilding** Projects in the County.
- Provide **Electric Bikes** for County's Greenways.
- Need to provide a viable network of Electric Charging Points, with emphasis on **Fast Charging for vehicles** in the County (and for visitors)
- Develop **Flood Defences** in the County.
- Support initiatives for **Local Renewable Energy Storage** (e.g., Battery, Hydrogen).
- Promote '**Buy Local**' and **Country Markets** to reduce travel and carbon emissions.
- Need to ensure **Community Awareness of Energy Conservation Supports**.
- Promote Sustainable **Ecotourism** built around the County's Environment and Ecosystem.
- Need to develop **Safe Walkways and Cycleways** in the County.
- Opportunity for development and provision of **Certified Programmes** in Environmental and Sustainability Management by the ATU with Progression Streams through the DETB.
- Audit of **Job Creation potential for Environmental and for Climate change Mitigation** in the County.
- Opportunity to support **Community Renewable Energy Initiatives**.
- Need for **Community Stake in Major Renewable Energy Projects** in the County.
- Opportunity to provide **Biodiversity Education** in Schools and in the Community.
- Opportunity to promote cultivation of **Organic Food** in the County.
- Need and Opportunity to promote and support **Local Food** Production and to organise **Producer Cooperatives**.
- Opportunity for **Flower Cultivation as import substitution**, cutting Carbon in transport and improving local Environment and Biodiversity.
- Develop and provide **Certified Programmes** in the Circular Economy and Sustainability.
- Need and Opportunity to provide for **Environmental and Climate Change Proofing of all projects** in the County.

### 3.2 Analysis of Consultation Outcomes to Determine LDS Objectives

In addition to the consultation process, the Action Plan has also drawn on and been **informed and influenced by the range of relevant policies, strategies and plans at International, EU, National, Regional and County levels**, as described in Chapter 4.

The selected objectives and actions are based around the 3 Themes and 13 Sub Themes set out in the LDS Guidelines.

The following table compares the Development Opportunities identified by Stakeholders during the Community and Sectoral consultation process with those identified through the Economic Profiling Exercise, as described in Chapter 2. In broad terms, **stakeholders**

suggested circa 37 development opportunities, and these are underpinned and supported by the findings of the socio-economic profiling exercise. A comparison of these development suggestions and actions is set out in the table below:

Table 2: Opportunities Identified through Consultation Process and Economic Profiling

<b>Profiling Opportunities Chapter 2</b>	<b>Consultation Theme 1</b>	<b>Consultation Theme 2</b>	<b>Consultation Theme 3</b>
	<b>Were these opportunities borne out by Consultation Process?</b>		
1. <i>Build on investments in primary / secondary / tertiary education to improve educational attainment, making the county more attractive to young people who leave in large numbers to further their education</i>	yes		Yes, with an emphasis on certified climate change education and entrepreneurship
2. <i>Develop research opportunities and innovation partnerships with small business in partnership with ATU and Cross Border Local Authorities</i>	yes		
3. <i>Grow wind energy and maritime sectors</i>	yes		
4. <i>Invest in high-quality tourism - especially in disadvantaged areas such as south and west Donegal and marine leisure all around the coastline</i>	yes	yes	Yes, plus all forms of ecotourism, walking and cycling
5. <i>Support small business to improve tourism products and services</i>	yes		
6. <i>Ramp up high-speed EV charging stations to help decarbonise transport</i>			Yes, also electric bikes and greenways
7. <i>Expand farmers' participation in ecological initiatives and high-nature value farming and/or diversification into other businesses to assist in meeting Climate Change targets</i>	yes		Yes, including locally produced organic food via producer co-ops/ also grow flowers locally to reduce carbon heavy importation



<b>Profiling Opportunities Chapter 2</b>	<b>Consultation Theme 1</b>	<b>Consultation Theme 2</b>	<b>Consultation Theme 3</b>
8. <i>Encourage and support more households, businesses, and communities to undertake BER assessments and building/energy upgrades to reduce fuel inefficiencies, improve comfort, and contribute to a reducing carbon footprint</i>			yes
9. <i>Further harness the potential of the Irish language and Gaeltacht culture</i>	yes	yes	
10. <i>Develop and encourage social and knowledge capital from in-migration</i>		yes	
11. <i>Attract and/or retain remote workers to live in the county</i>	yes		
12. <i>Attract FDI industry and high-tech workers to live in the county – requires massive improvement to transport and services infrastructure (both within and to/from county)</i>	yes	Yes, also emphasised need for local infrastructural improvements, including digital hubs and housing supply	
13. <i>Promote active and public transport for place-making, positive aging, and environmental protection</i>		yes	yes
14. <i>Revitalise town and village centres, and address housing vacancy</i>		yes	yes
<b>Additional suggestions made during consultation process</b>			
	15 Ramp up digital economy and AI	24 Remote area broadband and transport	33 Central roles for communities and small business in tackling climate change – need education and training programmes

<b>Profiling Opportunities Chapter 2</b>	<b>Consultation Theme 1</b>	<b>Consultation Theme 2</b>	<b>Consultation Theme 3</b>
	16 Emphasis on Social Enterprise and Community provision of services / employment schemes / climate change mitigation	25 Smart Villages	34 Need awareness raising around climate change / biodiversity / recycling/ecosystems /wastewater treatment
	17 Work with Donegal diaspora	26 Improved air links	35 Coastal defences to tackle coastal erosion
	18 Need for an Animation, Capacity Building and Skills Development Programme	27 Community quality of life and wellbeing	36 Maintain wild habitats for flora and fauna/ traditional landscape/ marine/rivers and lakes/bogs and peatlands / native trees/beaches blue and green flags
	19 More support for young people to engage in society and participate in decision-making	28 Planning process delays	36 Pilot initiatives to reduce carbon
	20 Need to consolidate and build on the Cross Agency Cooperation, Partnership and Collaboration	29 Resolve MICA block problem in buildings	37 Community renewable energy initiatives
	21 Provision for Small Business with Upskilling and Reskilling	30 Housing cooperatives/derelict housing re-use	
	22 Proofing for disabled access everywhere	31 Closure of local service e.g., banks, garda stations, post	
	23 Support Island communities and further develop their tourism opportunities	32 Multi-purpose communities centres / care of aged at home / youth supports / culture and arts / play and sensory facilities / social employment schemes	

### 3.3 Selected LDS Priorities

Based on close consideration of the above-listed consultation feedback, **11 Objectives and 41 Actions have been selected by the LCDC**: these are set out in the detailed action plan template at chapter 5 and are **summarised in the table below**.

These Local Objectives and Strategic Actions were **agreed and prioritised by the LCDC**, drawing on its own knowledge, and also on the valuable insights and experience available to

the Committee from the four LEADER Implementation Partners (IDP, DLDC, Comhar na nOileán and Údarás na Gaeltachta): **meetings held with the IPs were particularly valuable in identifying priorities and agreeing the approach to be taken in the Action Plan** - this drew on their extensive and detailed knowledge of the county, and on their long experience with the LEADER Programme.

Table 3: Selected Objectives and Actions, with Proposed Budget per Sub-Theme

Obj. No	Objective	Action Ref.	Strategic Action Title
<b>Green Economy – Budget Allocation €332,084</b>			
1	To Support a range of Projects in the Green Economy to build on Donegal’s Comparative Advantage in this Sector, and to establish the county as a recognised Region of Excellence in the Green Economy.	1.1	Support for Research and Development, Feasibility Studies and Capacity Building with a view to supporting identification and assessment of viable Green Economy Projects
		1.2	Support for the Development of Projects in the Green Economy
		1.3	Support for a Green Economy Sectoral Training Programme to Encourage Enterprise, Identify Opportunities and to Build Capacity in this Sector.
<b>Agricultural Diversification/Rural Food - Budget Allocation €354,585</b>			
2	To Support Projects which will assist in sustainably exploiting the potential for Diversification Activities on Donegal Farms, with a view towards generating additional farm income’ and sustaining Farm Holdings and the Rural Communities in which they are situated.	2.1	Support for the development of On-Farm Tourism Attractions.
		2.2	Support Research and Development and Feasibility Studies into potential Diversification projects.
		2.3	Support for Development of Added Value Food Production.
		2.4	Support for On Farm Nature and Biodiversity Enterprise Projects.
		2.5	To support innovative and alternative Non-Agricultural Farm Enterprises to stimulate Agricultural Diversification
<b>Rural Tourism and Recreation - Budget Allocation €1,014,951</b>			
3	Support for the Development and Promotion of Donegal’s Rural Tourism Offering and for Provision of essential Tourism Infrastructure and Services to consolidate and augment the county’s Tourism Product.	3.1	Support Research and Development, Feasibility Studies and Capacity Building.
		3.2	Support Development of Rural Tourism Products and Projects.
		3.3	Support for Tourism and Recreation Infrastructure in the County

Obj. No	Objective	Action Ref.	Strategic Action Title
		3.4	Support for Tourism Marketing and Promotion Programme.
<b>Enterprise Development - Budget Allocation €681,529</b>			
4	To Support the Development of viable Enterprises for Job Creation across a range of sectors in all parts of Donegal to build on its' SME and Micro Enterprise base.	4.1	Support for Research and Development and for Feasibility Studies to assist in the identification and assessment of potential Job Creating Enterprise Projects.
		4.2	Support the establishment of Enterprises to Create Sustainable Employment.
		4.3	Support for the delivery of Training Initiatives to Support Enterprise and Job Creation.
		4.4	Support for tailored Interventions to facilitate the Participation of Women and of Marginalised Groups in Enterprise.
<b>Social, Community, Cooperative Enterprise - Budget Allocation €691,352</b>			
5	To Support Social Enterprise Community Development and Cooperative Action to develop viable Projects, for the creation of Sustainable Employment and for delivery of Essential Community Services.	5.1	Support for Communities to carry out Research, to Plan for and Establish Community Based Organisations.
		5.2	Support the Development and Delivery of tailored training to support the Social Economy including Entrepreneurship and Management Skills.
		5.3	Support the Community Sector in leading on the Delivery of Smart Villages.
		5.4	Support for Communities and Social Enterprises in developing Natural Resource Based Projects.
<b>Rural Infrastructure/Accessible Services - Budget Allocation €1,722,185</b>			
6	To Support the delivery of Essential Services to Rural Communities in the county in an Accessible and Socially Inclusive manner.	6.1	Support for the Provision of Essential Community Services to all Rural Areas in the county.
		6.2	Support the upgrading of existing and the development of new Multi-Purpose Community Facilities.
		6.3	Support Community Planning for the Sustainable Regeneration of Dereliction in Rural Areas and Villages.
<b>Optimizing Digital Connectivity - Budget Allocation €413,863</b>			
7	Support actions which will increase access to Broadband and reliable Connectivity, and which optimise the benefits of the Digital Economy in the county.	7.1	To Support the provision of Connectivity in Community Spaces, Facilities and Amenities.
		7.2	Support for the Development and Promotion of Donegal's Digital Hub Network.
		7.3	Support the Provision of Community Services on a Remote Basis.

Obj. No	Objective	Action Ref.	Strategic Action Title
<b>Rural Youth - Budget Allocation €647,553</b>			
8	To provide all necessary support for Rural Youth and to facilitate and enable Young People's participation in Local Communities and to support Young People in achieving their full potential, personally and as members of the community.	8.1	Support for provision of Animation and Capacity Building.
		8.2	To Support the provision of Facilities for Rural Youth in the county including Youth Hubs with an emphasis on Access and on Social Inclusion.
		8.3	Support for Youth Training Initiatives.
<b>Sustainable Development of Rural Environment - Budget Allocation €733,779</b>			
9	To Identify and Support Actions which will Upgrade and Develop Rural infrastructure to underpin Environmental Sustainability.	9.1	Support for Maintenance and Enhancement of a Sustainable Natural Environment.
		9.2	Support for Research and Development and Feasibility Studies and Capacity Building.
		9.3	Support for Sustainable Rural Projects.
		9.4	Support Sustainable Development of Coastal Areas and Islands.
<b>Climate Change Capacity Building - Budget Allocation €617,441</b>			
10	To undertake actions to support Climate Change Capacity-Building to enable Donegal to become a Climate Resilient Region of Excellence for the Environment.	10.1	Support for Animation and Capacity Building Programmes.
		10.2	Support the Development and Delivery of Certified Programmes for Sustainability and Climate Change Entrepreneurship and Management.
		10.3	Support the Development of Demonstration Models of Best Practice in Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability.
<b>Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation - Budget Allocation €590,678</b>			
11	To support actions which will promote and assist in planning for and in implementing a range of activities which will Mitigate and enable Adaptation in relation to Climate Change across all sectors in the county.	11.1	Support Research and Development and Feasibility Studies.
		11.2	Support for Enterprises and Services.
		11.3	Support the Climate Adaptation of Buildings and Facilities.
		11.4	Support Carbon Reduction and Sequestration Projects.
		11.5	Support and Promote the Circular Economy.

### 3.4 Networking and Co-operation

**Networking is at the core of the activities and the organisational cultures of the Donegal LCDC**, its member organisations, the Implementing Partners and its broad range of partners and collaborators across all sectors in the county.

This networking takes place **within the county**, and with partners in **other parts of Ireland** and internationally. **Cross Border** networking is of special importance to County Donegal, with a well-established and seamless partnership being operated in the context of the North West Partnership and the Shared Island Initiative. Structures such as the North West Regional Cross Border Group and ICBAN are valuable platforms which facilitate networking across all sectors between the jurisdictions.

**European** networking is also important and Donegal organisations and communities have, and continue to be, involved in a wide range of projects and networks under various EU Programmes across economic, social, cultural, educational and environmental fields:

- **ERNACT**, is a Donegal/Derry led European Partnership, located in the county which is a valuable resource of knowledge and expertise, with partners from across Europe (and further afield), and which leads on a wide range of EU and other Projects, including with the Implementing Partners.
- Donegal is also an active member of networks such as the Assembly of European Regions (**AER**) and the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (**CPMR**) which provide access to broad networks and collaborative projects.

The county also participates in **networking with other parts of the world** e.g., through its membership of **Asia Matters**. Donegal has an active **Diaspora** project which is a platform for networking, and which provides links to a broad range of networks and to partners in **North America and other regions**. This networking relates to areas such as business, investment, education, tourism, philanthropy and culture.

The emphasis the county places on networking is one which benefits Donegal People in providing access to additional resources, to learning, to experience, to expertise, to models of best practice, and to further networking opportunities.

## 4 Strategic Integration

### 4.1 Relevance of International, EU and National Policies to the LDS

Appendix 4 contains a summary of **key Overarching Policies**, along with an explanation of their relevance to the design of the Donegal LDS. These include:

- The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- The European Green Deal (and Ireland's Climate Action Planning process)
- The European Charter of Fundamental Rights
- The EU Long-term Vision for Rural Areas
- The EU Smart Village Concept
- Ireland: Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025
- Ireland: Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025 and Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities

### 4.2 Relevance of Regional Development Policies in Ireland to the LDS

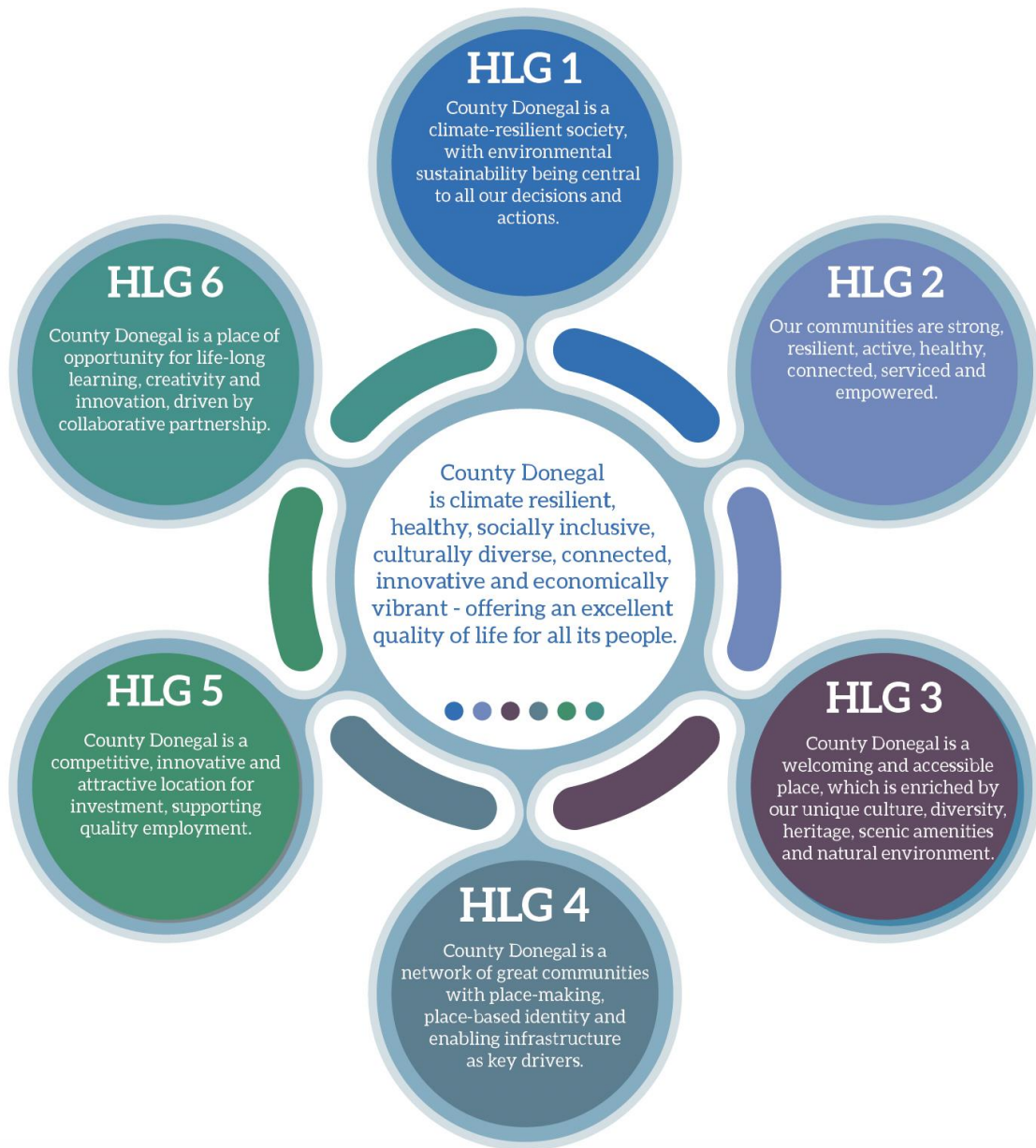
At a more **local level**, the Donegal LDS has also taken account of the following key policies:

#### 4.2.1 Donegal: Local Economic and Community Development Plan (LECP 2023-29)

**SYNOPSIS:** The purpose of the LECP process in Ireland, as provided for in the Local Government (Reform) Act 2014, is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the relevant local authority area, both by itself directly and in **partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders**.

The Donegal Local Community Development Committee has commenced a process to prepare a local economic and community plan (LECP) for the period 2023-2029. This plan will build on learnings across the county over the next five years: it will be evidence-based and informed by extensive research and stakeholder consultation, taking place over the period April 2023 to December 2023.

The realisation of the **Overall Vision for the Donegal LECP will be driven by an agreed list of High-Level Goals**: this can be viewed as setting the general direction of LECP travel. The goals will generally not change throughout the plan period and inputs and interventions supported through the lifetime of the plan will be designed to reach the High-Level Goals outlined in the graphic below:



**RELEVANCE TO THE DONEGAL LDS:** the LECP offers a mechanism for the local-level delivery of EU and national policy objectives, while local-level experiences and feedback are integral to ensuring responsive and evidence-based policy development.

Thus, stakeholders in County Donegal, including LAGs, are cognisant of the interactions between the various policy tiers and how policy provisions and interfaces shape the development context <sup>6</sup>. It is also evident that many of the LEADER themes and sub-themes directly correlate with the HLGs of the emerging LECP, particularly the focus on issues such as inclusion, climate change and mitigation and job creation and this has followed through into the Action Plan of the LDS.

**LDS Correlation:** Objectives 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10 and 11.

<sup>6</sup> LECP 2023-29. Socio-Economic Statement: Draft Vision and High-Level Goals. People and Place Co., p. 9.



## Other County and Regional Development Strategies of Direct Relevance to LDS

**SYNOPSIS:** The table below presents a brief summary of six other local or regional development strategies that have a direct impact on the formulation or implementation of the LDS. This also highlights cross cutting and complementary development themes and where objectives of the LDS support the respective plans delivery.

COUNTY / REGIONAL STRATEGY	RELEVANCE TO LDS (Cross-cutting/common themes in bold)
1. Donegal County Development Plan	<p>This plan for County Donegal focuses on key objectives <sup>7</sup></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Population growth</b> planning: Accommodate growth to 173,000 people by 2024 and further increase to over 200,000 by 2038.</li> <li>2. <b>All of County Strategy</b>: Support growth and leverage strengths across different areas.</li> <li>3. Support for <b>Letterkenny</b>: Drive investment and regional growth in the <b>North West City Region</b>.</li> <li>4. Sustainable economic model: <b>Promote innovation, tourism, and sustainable businesses</b> for socio-economic growth.</li> <li>5. Regeneration and renewal: <b>Revitalise towns, villages, and rural areas for vibrant communities</b> and economic development.</li> <li>6. <b>Environmental preservation</b>: Protect and enhance the county's unique environment through sustainable measures.</li> <li>7. Infrastructure investment: <b>Prioritise key infrastructure</b> for transportation, utilities, education, healthcare, and community facilities.</li> <li>8. Development facilitation: <b>Support sustainable development, innovation, and technological advancements</b></li> <li>9. Policy <b>implementation</b>: Effectively implement the Development Plan's policies</li> <li>10. <b>Strategic spatial framework</b>: Guide collaboration, investment, and sustainable growth in the county.</li> </ol>
LDS Correlation	Objectives 1,4,5,6,9,10 and 11.
2. RSES – Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy	<p>Plan for balanced regional development and economic growth in the Northern and Western regions of Ireland. It is predicated on the <b>UN SDGs/European Growth Strategy/EU Green Deal/Project Ireland 2040</b> <sup>8</sup>: Key objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support <b>population growth, job creation, and sustainable communities</b></li> <li>2. Promote <b>innovation, research, and development as drivers</b> of economic growth</li> <li>3. Enhance <b>regional connectivity and transportation</b> networks.</li> <li>4. Develop <b>sustainable tourism and cultural assets</b></li> <li>5. Strengthen <b>regional infrastructure</b>, including water services, energy, and <b>digital communications</b></li> <li>6. Prioritise <b>climate action and environmental sustainability</b>.</li> <li>7. Support <b>rural regeneration and diversification</b></li> <li>8. Foster <b>collaboration</b> with local authorities, agencies, and stakeholders</li> <li>9. Ensure <b>efficient use of land and resources</b> through proper planning and development.</li> </ol>

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<https://www.donegalcoco.ie/media/donegalcountyc/planning/pdfs/viewdevelopmentplans/countydonegaldevelopmentplan2018-2024/partaandb/Part%20A%20The%20Strategic%20Plan%20and%20Part%20B%20Objectives%20and%20Policies.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.nwra.ie/pdfs/NWRA-RSES-2020-2032.pdf>

COUNTY / REGIONAL STRATEGY	RELEVANCE TO LDS (Cross-cutting/common themes in bold)
LDS Correlation	Objectives 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9,10 and 11.
3. The Seven Strategic Towns Local Area Plan 2018-2024	<p>A statutory plan <sup>9</sup> to develop and enhance seven strategic towns in County Donegal – An Clochán Liath (Dungloe), Ballybofey-Stranorlar, Ballyshannon, Bridgend, Carndonagh, Donegal Town and Killybegs – prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Acts. Main aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support <b>sustainable population growth, economic development, and job creation</b> in these towns</li> <li>• Improve <b>infrastructure</b>, including transportation networks, water services, and utilities</li> <li>• Enhance the quality of life for residents through the provision of <b>amenities and community facilities</b></li> <li>• Promote <b>sustainable tourism and cultural heritage</b></li> <li>• Support the development of <b>vibrant town centres and commercial areas</b></li> <li>• Encourage the provision of <b>affordable housing</b> and support social inclusion.</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the natural and built <b>environment</b></li> <li>• <b>Foster collaboration</b> with local communities, stakeholders, and relevant agencies.</li> </ul>
LDS Correlation	Objectives 2,4,5,6 and 11.
4. Donegal Strategic Enterprise Development Plan	<p>This plan <sup>10</sup> is predicated on 4 pillars of development which <b>work with government agencies, various industries and academia</b> to attain sustained <b>enterprise growth</b> and value, expand business activity within the <b>SME sectors</b>, generate more and better <b>employment</b> opportunities and attract in <b>new talents and skills</b>, enhance the <b>competitiveness</b> of the sector in order to increase exports, accentuate the development of human resources in tandem with the selected sectors, <b>increase foreign direct investment</b> inflows and improve the <b>governance</b> of the local economy.</p>
LDS Correlation	Objectives 1,2,3,4,5,7,9,10 and 11.
5. The North-West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024	<p>The North-West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024 (REP) <sup>11</sup> is building on the actions completed through the previous iterations of the plan and concentrating on existing and emerging strengths in areas unique to the North-West e.g. <b>blue economy, coastal energy and creative economy</b>.</p>
LDS Correlation	Objectives 1,2,4,6,7,9,10 and 11.
6. NW City Region	<p>The Northwest <b>Strategic Growth Partnership</b> brings together senior Government officials from all departments in <b>Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland</b> to meet with Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council to deliver on the strategic priorities aimed at bringing <b>real and positive change</b> for the North-West City Region. <b>Key opportunities</b> agreed by the partnership include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inward investment / Remote working / Collaboration to develop a market strategy to promote the North-West City Region as a good place to do business</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.donegalcoco.ie/media/donegalcountyc/planning/pdfs/viewdevelopmentplans/sevenstrategictownslap2018-2024/Seven%20Strategic%20Towns%20Local%20Area%20Plan%202018-2024.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Donegal/Enterprise-Development/Donegal-Strategic-Enterprise-Development-Plan/Donegal-Strategic-Enterprise-Development-Plan-Condensed.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/publications/publication-files/north-west-regional-enterprise-plan-to-2024.pdf>

COUNTY / REGIONAL STRATEGY	RELEVANCE TO LDS (Cross-cutting/common themes in bold)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop promising sectors e.g., health / FinTech / GreenTech / Creative industries such as gaming and animation</li> <li>• Develop a strategic action plan to implement agreed collaborative initiatives.</li> </ul>
LDS Correlation	Objectives 1,4,7,9,10 and 11.
7. “Our Living Islands” National Islands Policy 2023-2033	<p>Last but by no means least, this is a <b>vitaly important policy initiative for Ireland’s offshore Island Communities</b>, and it <b>underpins the relevance of the Donegal Islands</b> because it has been over 25 years since the last national policy framework for the islands was published<sup>12</sup>. Islands, by definition, <b>constitute ‘hard to reach’ places and communities</b> where investment and development are difficult to deliver, and this is specifically recognised by Government in the policy text and accompanying action plan.</p> <p>This <b>whole-of-Government policy</b> has been developed following an <b>extensive consultation process</b> with the island communities and other stakeholders. Island representatives will also have a role in monitoring its implementation.</p> <p>The <b>policy will be supported by Government over its 10-year lifespan by a series of Action Plans</b> outlining the specific measures that will be taken <b>to achieve its five high-level Strategic Objectives, as briefly described below:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revitalise population levels on the islands</li> <li>2. Diversify Island economies</li> <li>3. Enhance health and wellbeing</li> <li>4. Empower Island Communities</li> <li>5. Build smart sustainable futures.</li> </ol> <p>The Government had promised to develop a National Islands Policy in 2021 when it published “<b>Our Rural Future</b>”, and this promise is now being delivered.</p>
LDS Correlation	Objectives 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9,10 and 11.

<sup>12</sup> National Islands Policy 2023-2033. Minister Heather Humphreys, Department of Rural and Community Development: Policy Foreword, June 2023, p.5.

## 5 LDS Action Plan

### 5.1 Objectives 1 to 5: Economic Development and Job Creation

<b>Local Objective 1</b> - To Support Projects in the Green Economy, to build on Donegal's Comparative Advantage in this Sector, and to establish the county as a recognised Region of Excellence in all aspects of the Green Economy.	
Financial Allocation (€)	<b>€332,084</b>
No. of Strategic Actions under this Local Objective	3
Rationale for the Local Objective (max 250 words)	<p>The Green Economy offers regions such as Donegal the opportunity to identify and develop a range of viable Projects which will provide sustainable employment, while also serving to mitigate detrimental impacts of Climate Change and Environmental Degradation. Opportunities exist to develop Social Enterprises and Private Enterprises across this sector. Donegal is well placed to promote and to develop the sector, and to become recognised as a Region of Excellence for the Green Economy. The LDS seeks to reflect and promote sustainable development, based on the best Sustainability Principles of "People, Planet and Profit". It is recognised that development of all aspects of the Green Economy will be key to achieving this. The Principles of the Circular Economy will also be adhered to in Rethinking, Recycling, Reusing and Repurposing for economic and environmental benefit. The LCDC Partners and other collaborative stakeholders will work in partnership through the LDS and other relevant strategies to advance all aspects of the sector ensuring that a robust skills and expertise base is developed and that the necessary investments in the sector are made. New products and innovative technologies in this sector are emerging on an ongoing basis. Support will be provided for Research and for Feasibility Studies to acquire knowledge and assess proposals for existing projects and for emerging projects. LEADER will also provide assistance for employment creating projects across the sector. Some of these projects will be based on a range of Renewable Energies, including Wind, Wave, Tidal, Biomass, Biogas, Biofuels, Geothermal, Photovoltaic, Micro Hydro and Green Hydrogen. There are also opportunities in terms of the Bioeconomy, especially regarding utilisation of the county's significant land and marine resources. Stakeholders across all sectors will be supported in achieving eco accreditation for their communities and enterprises.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub theme	(1a) The Green Economy.

<b>Strategic Action 1.1</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	Support for Research and Development, Feasibility Studies and Capacity Building of potential Green Economy Projects.			
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will support Research and Development and the carrying out of Feasibility Studies, with a view to identifying and assessing potentially viable projects for development in relation to the Green Economy. The areas that can be investigated in the context of this action are renewable energies such as: wind, wave, tidal, biogas, biomass, biofuels, geo-thermal, micro-hydro, anaerobic digestion, biochar, and photovoltaic and green hydrogen. Bioeconomy projects can also be assessed, with particular emphasis on raw materials from Donegal's land and sea resources and sustainable products which can be developed from these. These are areas identified as having potential for development in the county, and this action will ensure that the necessary preparatory work can be undertaken to seek to progress activity. This action will also address identified needs and opportunities regarding capacity building in the sector.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Business Sector, Agricultural Sector, Marine Sector, Environmental Sector, Northwest Bioeconomy Hub, Youth, SEC's.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation/s delivering	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations.	ATU, DETB, SFI, DCC, LEO, SEAI, BIM, Teagasc, Marine Institute, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Alpha Innovation Centre.			
Timeframe for delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
1.1 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	6	0	1	0

<b>Strategic Action 1.2</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for the Development of Projects in the Green Economy.

Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	To provide capital and other relevant support for the development of projects in the Green Economy which will provide the basis for viable Social Enterprise and for Private Enterprise based projects, and for the creation and maintenance of sustainable employment in these projects. These projects will also have environmental and sustainability benefits through their impact on carbon reduction. Projects can be undertaken in the renewable energy sector with regard to areas such as wind, wave, tidal, photovoltaic, biogas, biomass, geothermal, micro hydro and green hydrogen. This action will also support the development of projects in the bioeconomy and circular bioeconomy, based on the county's land and marine resources. There is recognised potential for projects based on innovation and added value production of food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and agricultural products. The Circular Economy will be applied across all sectors in terms of recycling of materials and repurposing and reuse of goods with a view towards identifying new business opportunities.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Social Enterprise Sector, Business Sector, Agricultural Sector, Marine Sector, Environmental Sector, SEC, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DETB, ATU, LEO, SEAI, Donegal County Council, Enterprise Ireland, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
1.2 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	10	9	16	20

<b>Strategic Action 1.3</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for a Green Economy Sectoral Training Programme to Encourage Enterprise, Identify Opportunities and to Build Capacity in this Sector.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will support provision of tailored training which will encourage and enable entrepreneurship in this sector and provide the necessary skills for project development and management. It will be necessary to identify actors and to enable entrepreneurs to emerge from the Social Economy and the Private Sectors to lead on new and innovative developments in this sector. This action will

	ensure that people are equipped with the skills and knowledge to identify and to undertake projects, and to gain sustainable employment in the sector. It will also ensure that necessary skills for good governance and management of projects are provided. All relevant resources in the county will be drawn on to ensure that tailored high-quality, additional, and added-value training is delivered through this action.
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community Sector, Business Sector, Farming Sector, Marine Sector, Young People.
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta
Collaborating Organisations	LEO, ATU, DETB, SFI, Teagasc, BIM, Marine Institute, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN.
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027

1.3 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	4	5	0	33

<b>Local Objective 2 - To Support Projects which will assist in sustainably exploiting the potential for Diversification Activities on Donegal Farms, with a view towards generating additional farm income' and sustaining Farm Holdings and the Rural Communities in which they are situated.</b>	
Financial Allocation (€)	<b>€354,585</b>
No. of Strategic Actions under this Local Objective	5
Rationale	Farming forms an important part of Donegal's economy and farm holdings form the core of many rural communities. In this context, the East of Donegal has relatively large farm holdings and good quality land, while farms in the West of the county are very often situated on marginal and hilly land. It is realised that this less advantaged segment of the sector forms an integral part of rural

	<p>communities in the county and requires support to ensure its continued viability, and the viability of the communities in which they are situated. The consultation process demonstrated recognition of the need to identify innovative and alternative economic activity towards this end, to maintain farm families and ensure viability of smaller holdings, and the viability of rural communities. The innate entrepreneurial spirit of small farmers in the county, which has enabled them to survive in adverse conditions, will be tapped into by the LDS. There are a range of actions through which farm diversification activity can assist in addressing gaps in tourism provision and opportunities in the tourism sector. This activity will add to farm income, their viability, sustain viable rural communities and augment Donegal's overall tourism product. Broadband availability provides opportunities for farm family members to engage in remote working. This and other activity will build on the natural business skills and entrepreneurial capacity of farmers. It will be based on human and natural resources. Agricultural raw materials can provide the basis for production of new added value products with environmental and economic benefits. Economic benefits will be augmented by the benefits to ecosystems, biodiversity and landscape heritage through the environmental stewardship role carried out by farmers.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub theme	(1b) Agricultural Diversification / (1e) Rural Food Production

<b>Strategic Action 2.1</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for the development of On Farm Tourism Attractions.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will support the identification and the development of a range of On-Farm Tourism Attractions and the provision of essential farm-based Tourism Services which can be undertaken on Donegal Farm holdings. It is recognised that potential exists to build on existing farm-based tourism projects, and to develop new products to capitalise on the tourism potential of the county and to add to the county's sustainable tourism product. Actions to be undertaken may include Pet farms; Mini Golf; Play areas; Nature Trails; On-Farm Experiences; Foraging Activities, Equestrian etc. It is recognised that these and other actions can add to farm income and farm holding viability, and through this to assist in maintaining sustainable rural communities.
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Farm Holdings; Community Sector.
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.



Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta
Collaborating Organisations	LEO, Teagasc, Fáilte Ireland, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, ICMSA, IFA, Donegal Tourism, DETB, ATU, NPWS, Wild Atlantic Life Project.
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027

2.1 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	5	8	3	0

<b>Strategic Action 2.2</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support Research and Development and Feasibility Studies into potential Diversification projects.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will support research and will provide assistance to assess the viability of new products and projects which can be undertaken on Donegal Farm Holdings. It is recognised that there are areas of potential for the identification and development of enterprise activities that can be undertaken, building on local resources and on the skills and innate enterprise culture of the farming community. These activities can assist in maintaining the viability of farm holdings and the viability of the rural communities in which they are situated. It is recognised that support is necessary to assist in carrying out the necessary research required and to assess the feasibility of emerging projects ideas and proposals. This Research and Development work can include research into the development of new and innovative products utilising farm produce as raw materials. This can include a range of added value food products e.g., the use of sheep's wool for the manufacture of sustainable insulation. The utilisation of certain plants to form the basis of innovative products for methane reduction can also be explored. There are also possibilities to research added value marine opportunities for farmers living in coastal areas.
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Farming Sector, Community Sector.
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.

Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta
Collaborating Organisations	Teagasc, ATU, DETB, SFI, DCC, LEO, IFA, ICMSA, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Wild Atlantic Nature Life Project, NPWS, BIM, Alpha Innovation Centre.
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027

2.2 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	3	4	7	0

<b>Strategic Action 2.3</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for Development of Added Value Food Production.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	Donegal has a strong Brand which denotes quality and sustainability, and this lends itself to the promotion of the county in food terms. In this context it is recognised that Donegal and especially the agricultural sector can build on the county's natural resource of raw materials and food ingredients with a view towards providing added value food products. There are already a range of added-value food producers operating successfully in rural parts of Donegal, and it is recognised that this is a sector that can be consolidated and further expanded on to create new employment opportunities. This action will utilise raw materials from farm holdings and adjoining coastal areas. It will support a range of scales of food production, from small production for e.g., country and farmers markets, to the production of high-quality food products in larger operations for sale nationally and for export. The potential for Cooperatives in this sector to support this activity and provide critical mass in terms of produce, and also to brand and effectively market products from the region.
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Farming Sector, Community Sector.
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.

Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	Bord Bia, LEO, Donegal Food Coast, Blas na Gaeltachta, Northwest Bioeconomy Hub, DCC, ATU, DETB, Enterprise Ireland, ICOS. Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
2.3 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	2	2	1	0

<b>Strategic Action 2.4</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for On Farm Nature and Biodiversity Enterprise Projects.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	Farmers are stewards of the Rural Environment, and it is intended through this action to identify and to advance projects based on various aspects of Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Ecology which can be identified and sustainably harnessed to add to the county's rural environmental resource. They can also form the basis for viable enterprise activities which will assist in sustaining farm holdings, which themselves form an integral part of this natural environment. This action can promote activity which will benefit the rural environment, augment farm incomes, and add to the viability of rural communities. There are also possibilities regarding heritage and archaeological sites which are situated on farm holdings.
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Farming Sector, Community Sector.
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta
Collaborating Organisations	NPWS, Teagasc, DCC, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Wild Atlantic Nature Life Project (WAN), NPWS, Donegal County Museum.
Timeframe for delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027

2.4 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	2	1	5	4

<b>Strategic Action 2.5</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	To support innovative and alternative Non-Agricultural Farm Enterprises to stimulate Agricultural Diversification			
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will support emerging projects which may be identified and pursued over the course of the LEADER Programme. It is realised that new opportunities could be identified and emerge through cooperation activities and arising from the skills, experience and enterprise mindset of the farming community. Innovative and creative proposals will be supported with a view towards diversifying farm activity and increasing farm income. This action will build on the entrepreneurship and enterprise skills of the farming community and on the resources available on or to farm holdings and the potential for innovative processes and products based on these.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community, Farming Sectors.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	NPWS, Teagasc, DCC, LEO, DETB, ATU, IFA, ICMSA, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN.			
Timeframe for delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
2.5 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	3	4	5	0

<b>Local Objective 3 – Support for the Development and Promotion of Donegal’s Rural Tourism Offering and for Provision of essential Tourism Infrastructure and Services to consolidate and augment the county’s Tourism Product.</b>	
Financial Allocation (€)	<b>€1,014,951</b>
No. of Strategic Actions under this Local Objective	4
Rationale for the Local Objective.	<p>Rural Tourism is recognised as a resource with substantial potential for Donegal. While tourism does form an important part of the Donegal economy and employment base, the county has lagged behind in this sector in comparison with similar counties. Previous LEADER Programmes, National and EU Initiatives and Community and Private Sector investment have supported development in this sector in recent years. An emphasis has been placed on developing local flagship attractions and smaller niche products which have been progressed in various rural areas in the county. Projects have benefited localities in which they are situated and have also added to the county’s overall Tourism Product. Many are operated as Social Enterprises, with the Community taking a local ‘bottom up’ lead role in development and management. A cooperative and collaborative approach in developing tourism projects, working in close partnership and collaboration with the Local Authority, Failte Ireland, Údarás na Gaeltachta and other relevant stakeholders is integral to the development model being pursued. The consultation process highlighted a range of such projects in the county as models of good practice which could be effectively replicated, building on local themes in other parts of the county. Areas such as Heritage, Culture, the Irish Language, Marine Leisure, Islands, Ecotourism, Food Tourism etc. are recognised as being relevant. The county has also become a desired location for film makers with the tourism and other advantages that this sector brings. Activity Holidays and Camper Van Holidays are among other areas with potential. It is recognized that in addition to economic benefits, that projects undertaken in rural areas deliver additional Community, Social, Environmental and Cultural benefits to the communities in which they are situated. This added value element will be core to new projects to be explored and advanced in the context of the LDS. Donegal, recently labelled by National Geographic as ‘the Coolest Place on the Planet ‘ is a county with a rich, varied and authentic tourism offering on which to build.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub	(1c) Rural Tourism and Recreation.

<b>Strategic Action 3.1</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	Support Research and Development, Feasibility Studies and Capacity Building.			
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will support the development of Rural Tourism which is recognised as a key and authentic resource for County Donegal. It will support the identification of potential new tourism products and projects and the carrying out of essential research in relation to these emerging opportunities. Support will also be provided to assess the feasibility and viability of emerging proposals. This action is being undertaken in recognition of the need to be able to consolidate and grow this sector and to ensure that all resources and opportunities are grasped. It will assist in identifying viable attractions and services which can address needs and opportunities in various locations in the county, and in various parts of the sector. This resource provides opportunities for more remote areas in the county and for islands, and this action will place a special emphasis on such areas.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community, Business, Tourism Sectors			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, LEO, Fáilte Ireland, ATU School of Tourism, DETB, Donegal Tourism, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, NPWS, LAWPRO, DCC Biodiversity Office.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
3.1 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	3	2	2	0

<b>Strategic Action 3.2</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support Development of Rural Tourism Products and Projects. .

Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	It is recognised that Donegal has substantial potential in the tourism sector and for the development of a range of innovative products and projects in the area of rural tourism to augment its overall Rural Tourism Offering. There is also an opportunity to consolidate and to grow existing projects. This action will support activity and grow employment in existing projects and provide additional sustainable jobs in new viable projects. It will support the development of projects in all parts of the County, which will be based on the development of attractions and the provision of essential tourism services. Projects to be supported which will be undertaken by Private interests and through the Social Economy Sector across a wide range of subject areas of relevance and authentic to the county, e.g., Culture, Heritage, Irish Language, Diaspora, Ecotourism, Island Tourism, Marine and Water Based Leisure, Food, Walking, Cycling, Mountaineering etc.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community, Tourism Sector, Farming Sector, Marine Sector.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, LEO, Fáilte Ireland, ATU (School of Tourism), DETB, Donegal Tourism, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, NPWS, LAWPRO, DCC Biodiversity Office.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
3.2 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	10	18	21	20

<b>Strategic Action 3.3</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for Tourism and Recreation Infrastructure in the County
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will support the development of essential Tourism and Recreational Infrastructure in various parts of the county, with a particular emphasis on more remote and less developed areas and on offshore islands. Such infrastructure is essential to ensure accessibility, with special regard to disability access, at scenic areas such as beaches, and other areas of tourism interest in the county. The types of infrastructure to be provided will include

	signage, interpretive panels, access points to beaches, boardwalks, green areas, seating, picnic areas, public toilets, bird watching hides, parking facilities and EV chargers. This action will be advanced by Community, Tourism and other relevant interest groups working in close cooperation with statutory stakeholders.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community, Business, Tourism sectors			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, LEO, Fáilte Ireland, ATU (School of Tourism), DETB, Donegal Tourism, PPN, Community and Voluntary Sector, NPWS, LAWPRO, DCC Biodiversity Office.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
3.3 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	8	13	12	0

<b>Strategic Action 3.4</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for Tourism Marketing and Promotion Programme.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will deliver a tourism marketing and promotional program which will highlight key rural attractions and specific geographic areas in the county. The broad Donegal Tourism Sector will work to continue to capitalise on the benefits of the Wild Atlantic Way and the unique and authentic Donegal Tourism Offering. This action will seek to focus on a range of identified specific geographic areas and on a range of specific projects and will complement and add value to the broader promotional activity relating to the county. There will be an emphasis on more remote and less well-known parts of the county and on offshore islands in this action with a view towards spreading the benefits of tourism equally. In this context work will continue on marketing Donegal as a film location. There will also be promotion of e.g., Cultural Trails and Food Trails. The marketing activity to be undertaken will be directed to target markets in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Internationally (including to the Donegal Diaspora). This project will



	enhance the overall Donegal Brand and will assist in highlighting rural Donegal as a world class tourist destination.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Tourism Providers, Social Enterprises, Rural Areas, Islands.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, ATU, DETB, Donegal Tourism, Failte Ireland, NPWS, LAWPRO, DCC Biodiversity Office, WAN, Life on Machair Programme, Donegal Diaspora Project.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
3.4 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	6	4	21	4

<b>Local Objective 4 – To support the Development of viable Enterprises for Job Creation across a range of sectors in all parts of Donegal to build on its' SME and Micro Enterprise base.</b>	
Financial Allocation (€)	<b>€681,529</b>
No. of Strategic Actions under this Local Objective	4
Rationale for the Local Objective	SMEs' and Micro Enterprises form an important part of Donegal's economy and of its employment base. substantial portion of employment in County Donegal is provided through businesses that

	<p>can be classified as being SMEs or as Micro Enterprises. These businesses thrive due to the entrepreneurial spirit, abilities and skills of project promoters and of their workforces. Consultations have demonstrated a recognition that this is a sector which can be built on through continuing to promote, encourage and support entrepreneurship and enterprise development in all parts of the county. LDS Actions will support Research, Feasibility Studies and Enterprise Projects. It will place a particular emphasis on supporting the involvement of Women, and of minority groups in this sector. There is a recognised need for animation and capacity building, for facilitating innovation and for provision of skills, with a requirement for ongoing upskilling and reskilling to maintain competitiveness and viability. Support for this activity and other inputs will continue to be provided on a collaborative multi sectoral basis, building on the partnership approach fostered through the LCDC, and augmenting and adding value to the LEADER Programme. The LDS will support Networking and development of Clusters to support businesses and to ensure exchange of experience, knowledge and best practice. It will also promote cooperation and collaboration for broader benefit to ensure that projects continue to be relevant, competitive and in a position to maintain viability and to grow in an increasingly Global Economy. Identification and utilisation of new technologies across all sectors, the Greening of Enterprise and Business, and promotion of the Circular Economy across the county will be supported. This will lead to a more innovative, efficient, viable and environmentally friendly sector, contributing to economic, community, social and environmental goals.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub-theme	(1d) Enterprise Development

<b>Strategic Action 4.1</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for Research and Development and for Feasibility Studies to assist in the identification and assessment of potential Job Creating Enterprise Projects.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	The SME and Micro Enterprise Sectors are important components of Donegal's Economy and of its Employment Base. This action will assist existing and potential new enterprises in identifying and assessing opportunities for new products, processes and projects in the county. This work will consolidate and grow employment in existing firms and create new sustainable employment in new enterprises. There is an opportunity through this action to draw on resources and expertise within the county and which is available to the county through its active networking and its external partnerships and collaborations, to seek to identify and assess the potential for projects in a range of enterprise related sectors.
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Business Sector, Community, Donegal Diaspora.

Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta.			
Collaborating Organisations	LEO, DCC, Enterprise Ireland, ATU, DETB, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Donegal Diaspora Project, ERNACT, Alpha Innovation Centre, Inishowen Innovation, AER.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
4.1 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	3	1	0	20

<b>Strategic Action 4.2</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support the establishment of Enterprises to Create Sustainable Employment.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will support the establishment of a range of projects in the SME and Micro Enterprise sectors with a view towards creating new sustainable employment. Support will also be provided for existing businesses to develop new products, adopt new processes and access new markets to consolidate and to expand their present operations and increase their workforce numbers. This action will assist projects across a range of sectors e.g., Engineering, Electronics, ICT, Creative Industries, Added Value Food and Drink, Added Value Processing of Seaweed, Audio Visual and Film Industry etc. These enterprises will build on local skills and resources, and on the Donegal Diaspora as a resource. Particular focus will be placed on developments in more remote and less developed parts of the county and on offshore islands. There will also be a focus on women, young people and on underrepresented and marginalised groups in relation to this sector.
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Business, Community Sectors, Donegal Diaspora.
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta

Collaborating Organisations	LEO, DCC, Enterprise Ireland, ATU, DETB, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Donegal Diaspora Project, Donegal Travellers Project, Donegal Intercultural Platform, Alpha Innovation Centre.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
4.2 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	10	16	10	0

<b>Strategic Action 4.3</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for the delivery of Training Initiatives to Support Enterprise and Job Creation.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will support the provision of training interventions to build capacity, knowledge, and skills in order to support the development and growth of SMEs and Micro Enterprises in the county. These supports will be tailored to the specific economic, social and cultural conditions pertaining to Donegal and to the opportunities available to the county. All actions will be additional and complementary to existing provision. The county has a strong SME and Micro Enterprise base and there is a need to ensure that there is an emphasis, at all levels, on training, on upskilling and reskilling, to build the capacity of the county's workforce and to enable enterprises to be viable and competitive in a global economy. Emerging opportunities regarding apprenticeships will also be availed of. There will be a particular focus on building capacity to ensure sustainability, the identification and optimum use of local resources as raw materials where possible, and ingraining Innovation, Creativity, Sustainability and Circular Economy Principles throughout the sector.
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community, Business Sector, Young People, Women.
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta
Collaborating Organisations	LEO, ATU, DETB, Colab, Alpha Innovation Centre, DCC, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Donegal Digital, ERNACT.

Timeframe for Delivery	2 years			
4.3 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	3	1	0	34

<b>Strategic Action 4.4</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	Support for tailored Interventions to facilitate the Participation of Women and of Marginalised Groups in Enterprise.			
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	It is recognised that there is a need to fully capitalise on the potential of the Enterprise Sector for all sections of the community including underrepresented and marginalised sections in the county to include Travellers, Roma and BAME communities. In this context it is also recognised that Women could and should have an increased role and level of participation in Enterprise. This action will focus on and work with this important cohort in the community to enable obstacles and blockages to participation to be overcome and the necessary support be put in place. It is envisaged that this participation will take place across a range of activities, building on what are often latent talents, skills, experience, and ideas in this cohort. This action will similarly focus on developing the potential and enabling marginalised sections of the community to engage effectively and productively in this sector.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Women/Marginalised Groups in the Community.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	LEO, ATU, ICA, DETB, DCC, Enterprise Ireland, Teagasc, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Donegal Intercultural Platform, Donegal Women's Business Network, Donegal Travellers Project.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
4.4 Anticipated Outputs and	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained

Indicators	3	6	0	22
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<b>Local Objective 5 - To Support Social Enterprise Community Development and Cooperative Action to develop viable Projects, for the creation of Sustainable Employment and for delivery of Essential Community Services.</b>	
Financial Allocation (€)	<b>€691,352</b>
No. of Strategic Actions under this Local Objective	4
Rationale for the Local Objective	<p>Donegal's Community Sector is involved in a range of Economic, Social, Environmental and Cultural activities in many parts of the county. In this context there are a range of Social Enterprises which provide sustainable employment in their communities. Community Cooperatives and Community Based Companies are also involved in delivering a range of essential community services, often in more remote and underdeveloped areas on the mainland and on offshore islands, and with an emphasis on Social Inclusion. This 'bottom up' community led model of development and of service delivery has been effective and is now an integral component of the county's development landscape. This approach provides an important resource for advancing the Smart Villages concept in the county. Community involvement provides access to local knowledge, talent, skills, expertise, experience and energy. Local communities also often have access to local resources, which are often not readily accessible (or evident) to private or external actors. The LDS will consolidate and further build on this resource to capitalise on and develop local assets, both natural and human, and to provide sustainable employment. This community led approach is and will be carried out on a cooperative, partnership and collaborative basis, engaging with all sectors, public and private to ensure a coordinated, integrated, synergistic approach to the sustainable use of resources. A priority is to animate, build capacity, share knowledge, develop skills and to mentor groups, drawing on local and on external resources, as required. This will be with a view towards consolidating and growing existing projects and identifying and pursuing opportunities for new initiatives led by the sector. This objective will seek to provide access and to include all communities in Donegal, including communities of interest and socially excluded sections of the community in this sector. It will also seek to consolidate and further grow this sector as a resource for the county.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub-theme	(1f) Social, Community and Cooperative Enterprise

<b>Strategic Action 5.1</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	Support for Communities to carry out Research, to Plan for and Establish Community Based Organisations.			
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	There is a strong and vibrant base of community-based organisations involved in development and service delivery in the county. This 'bottom up' community led approach has proved to be very effective, not least in more remote areas and on offshore islands. The community works in cooperation, partnership and collaboration with all sectors and agencies to ensure an integrated multi-sectoral approach and most effective use of resources. This action will build on this activity and enable communities in rural areas to adopt best practice and to establish suitable organisations to deliver on their community vision, aims and objectives. This action will focus on area-based organisations and on communities of interest in the county, with a recognition of the need to empower more marginalised groups. This action will enable the communities in question to engage professional assistance to provide the necessary guidance and skills. It will also draw on sectoral expertise and experience, in the county, and further afield as necessary.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Communities and Sectoral Interest groups in Donegal.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DETB, ATU, ICOS, Social Enterprises, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Donegal Volunteer Centre, DCC.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
5.1 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	4	0	0	45

<b>Strategic Action 5.2.</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	Support the Development and Delivery of tailored training to support the Social Economy including Entrepreneurship and Management Skills.			
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This sector continues to offer substantial potential for the county in terms of enterprise development and of service delivery. To achieve the maximum possible benefit, it is essential to undertake actions which will provide community actors with the necessary entrepreneurial mindset, confidence, and skills to enable them to become Social Entrepreneurs and to lead on the process of managing beneficial change for all sections of the community. This action will advance this and lead to positive community results. This action will also support the provision of essential governance and management skills to assist in the effective operation of community organisations and enterprises. Special emphasis will be placed on the inclusion and building of capacities of marginalised, less advantaged, under-represented sections of the community, and on young people and women in this action.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community and Sectoral Interests.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	ATU, DETB, LEO, Alpha Innovation Centre, Colab, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Donegal Intercultural Platform, Donegal Travellers Project, Donegal Youth Council, DCC.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q4 2026			
5.2 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	4	0	0	55

<b>Strategic Action 5.3</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support the Community Sector in leading on the Delivery of Smart Villages.



Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	The community sector has been to the fore in leading on a range of multi-sectoral, integrated, 'bottom up' actions which have had a beneficial impact on communities and areas throughout the county. This activity, and existing structures, provide the county with a strong base on which to advance the Smart Villages concept and to optimise its benefits for all in the county. The community and social enterprise sector is representative, inclusive, participative, and it has access to all parts of the community and works in cooperation with all relevant agencies. They are ideally placed to build on this base to lead the Smart Village Model of Development and Service Delivery and will be supported in doing so through this action. This action will place an emphasis on inclusion, mobilisation and building of capacities of the whole community, including marginal and less advantaged groups.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Communities and Sectoral Interest Groups.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Alpha Innovation Centre			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, LEO, DETB, ATU, Donegal Digital, Donegal Intercultural Platform.			
Timeframe for Delivery	4 years			
5.3 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	5	2	8	60

<b>Strategic Action 5.4</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for Communities and Social Enterprises in developing Natural Resource Based Projects.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	The Community and Social Economy Sector has a key role in accessing and in developing a range of natural resources in the county, very often in more remote areas and on offshore islands. This action will assist community structures in adopting a lead role in identifying and developing a range of enterprises based on local resources. It is recognised that the community sector has local knowledge and has access to resources not always obvious to or accessible to private or external actors. Such Social Enterprise model projects based on natural and human resources will provide

	sustainable employment and can also generate additional economic, community, social, environmental, and cultural benefits in communities. Additional benefits include the funding of other community activities and services through surpluses generated by Social Enterprises. Resources for development include the Green Economy, Renewable Energies, Marine Resources, Tourism, Creative Industries and Culture etc.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community Cooperatives, Social Enterprises, Community Development Groups.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, LEO, BIM, Teagasc, ATU, DETB, Marine Institute, Donegal Digital, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Donegal Intercultural Platform, ERNACT, Colab.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
5.4 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	13	21	26	0

## 5.2 Objectives 6 to 8: Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion

<b>Local Objective 6 - To Support delivery of Essential Services to Rural Communities in the county in an Accessible and Socially Inclusive manner.</b>	
Financial Allocation (€)	<b>€ 1,722,185</b>
No. of Strategic Actions under this Local Objective	3
Rationale for strategic Actions	Many rural communities in Donegal, including offshore islands, are affected by peripherality, isolation, and a lack of access to essential services. Erosion of service provision in towns and villages has exacerbated this situation. Closure of banks, post offices, garda stations, shops, pubs etc has deprived people of access to key services

	<p>and social amenities. Social Exclusion will be addressed through the LDS ensuring inclusion and equality are at the fore in all of its actions. During consultations a lack of access to services was highlighted as a major issue affecting maintenance of rural population and viability of rural communities. Lack of access to local authority and other state services disadvantages rural communities. Poor access to medical services was highlighted as an issue during consultations and a lack of transport services in parts of the county was also a common theme during consultations, as was the lack of Childcare Facilities. The lack of childcare infrastructure disadvantages people, especially women, who wish to return to the workforce, and it is recognised that access to such services must be provided. Innovative models of service delivery will be explored, and piloted Technologies will be utilised to assist the effective delivery of services. It is intended to advance actions to plan for the regeneration, repurposing and reuse of derelict village properties with a view towards addressing Dereliction in housing stock and towards restoring local services. The regeneration of towns and villages can provide accommodation closer to existing and restored services to overcome accessibility issues to ensure Accessibility of Services for all Rural Communities and to assist in maintaining Viable Communities and to ensure a Good Quality of Life for all citizens in County Donegal</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub- theme	(2a) Rural Infrastructure / (2b) Accessible Services

<b>Strategic Action 6.1</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for the Provision of Essential Community Services to all Rural Areas in the county.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	<p>This action seeks to address the key issue of access to essential services which was raised and highlighted in all areas of the county during the LDS consultation process. These services relate to areas such as government and local authority services and areas such as health and transport. This action will support local communities and sectoral stakeholders in working with a range of relevant agencies which are service providers, to identify innovative and effective ways of delivering such services to areas which are lagging behind in terms of provision at present. Communities will work with for example the HSE in this context. There is a recognised need for research into innovative ways of addressing issues and recognised gaps in services such as rural transport, which has been identified as a major issue for the county. This strategic action will seek where possible, and however possible, to work towards addressing gaps in provision of essential services. This will be done on a cooperative, multi sectoral basis. The action will enable agencies to draw on community knowledge and local resources in this context. The action will place a particular emphasis on more remote areas, excluded sections of the community, and on island communities. This will contribute to</p>

	maintaining viable rural communities and a good quality of life for all sections of the community.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, HSE, Dept. of Social Protection, DETB, Donegal Digital, Donegal Peace Partnership, Donegal Intercultural Platform, Rural Link, Bus Eireann, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
6.1 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	12	0	15	10

<b>Strategic Action 6.2</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support the upgrading of existing and the development of new Multi-Purpose Community Facilities.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	The need for, and the important role of Multi-Purpose Community Facilities in serving a range of community needs in various parts of the county, was highlighted in all areas during the consultation process. It emerged from the consultations that there was a need to develop such facilities in areas of the county especially those not adequately served at present. There was also a highlighting of the need for the upgrade and renovation of some of the existing facilities in various parts of the county. This action will address the recognised need for provision of such facilities in order to provide a valuable community resource and an essential focal point in rural areas. It was emphasised that the multi-functional capacity of such centres was important, with a need to provide for Social, Cultural, Recreational, Educational and other relevant areas of activity. It was also emphasised that these facilities should be safe spaces which are easily accessible and welcoming to all sections of the

	community. The cooperative utilisation of HSE facilities can also be promoted in this context to serve the communities in which they are situated in whichever ways possible and feasible to improve communities.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, DRCD, Roinn na Gaeltachta, HSE, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Donegal Peace Partnership, Donegal Intercultural Platform.			
Timeframe for Delivery	4 Years.			
6.2 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	16	0	17	0

<b>Strategic Action 6.3</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support Community Planning for the Sustainable Regeneration of Dereliction in Rural Areas and Villages.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action recognises the need to seek to address Rural Dereliction and the erosion of Services in Rural Areas and Villages. Rural Villages have been at the core of rural communities over generations, and the degrading of these locations and consequent loss of services, poses a real threat to the sustainability of viable rural communities. It is intended to support local communities in identifying ways to mobilise and plan for local regeneration. Such regeneration of vacant and derelict buildings can have very positive community impacts in terms of social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits. This action can assist in repurposing and in rejuvenating buildings in which to house and provide services, working with relevant agencies, and with social and private business promoters to identify innovative and viable ways of doing so. This action can also assist in providing new and essential housing accommodation, thus increasing rural population

	and creating a critical mass to improve viability of services and more sustainable communities.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, DRCD, HSE, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Social Enterprise Sector, DETB.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
6.3 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	7	0	0	0

<b>Local Objective 7 - Support actions which will increase access to Broadband and reliable Connectivity, and which optimise the benefits of the Digital Economy in the county.</b>	
Financial Allocation (€)	<b>€413,863</b>
No. of Strategic Actions under this Local Objective	3
Rationale for the Local Objective.	The Digital Economy, Connectivity and Access to Reliable and Affordable Broadband are central to the present and future wellbeing and to the long-term viability of rural communities in Donegal. The consultation process demonstrated the realisation in the business community and in the community in general of this importance. It is recognised that broadband and good connectivity is key in 'levelling the playing field', so to speak, for peripheral rural counties, and especially for more remote areas in such counties and on offshore islands. A range of actions to address issues and to advance this sector have been undertaken in the county over recent years on a multi sectoral and cooperative basis. Organisations such as ERNACT, the ATU, Digital Donegal and Colab have been to the fore in this activity. The LDS will focus on actions which will

	<p>optimise potential in the sector, supporting the viability of businesses across various sectors, and utilisation of digital technologies to support the viability and sustainability of communities. It has been demonstrated that the provision of services on a 'remote' basis can assist in effectively overcoming isolation, peripherality, remoteness, and distance from centres and from central services. There is recognised potential to promote remote working in Donegal and the county can capitalise on connectivity, a less expensive cost of living and an excellent quality of life to advance this area of activity. A network of Digital Hubs has been established across the county, including on Donegal's islands, to support remote working and learning, which enables community members to remain in and work (and learn) from their own communities. It also enables people to return home with their jobs to augment the viability of communities.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub- theme	(2c) Optimising Digital Connectivity

<b>Strategic Action 7.1</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	To Support the provision of Connectivity in Community Spaces, Facilities and Amenities.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	Broadband access is central to all parts of community life and this action will seek to identify opportunities to improve and to provide connectivity in public and community spaces in the county. This action will support the provision of such connectivity in community buildings, amenities, community plazas and green spaces to ensure that rural communities are not at a disadvantage in comparison with more urban and central areas with regard to ready access to connectivity. Communities will lead on this action and will work closely with all stakeholders to gain access to and utilise the best available technologies. This action will have economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits for the community, and also importantly for visitors to the county. It will make it more viable and attractive to live in or to visit rural communities.
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community.
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, ERNACT, DRCD, Digital Donegal, Community and Voluntary, PPN, Inishowen Innovation, ATU, DETB.

Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
7.1 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	8	3	2	12

<b>Strategic Action 7.2</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	Support for the Development and Promotion of Donegal's Digital Hub Network.			
Brief Description of the Action.	This action will support the consolidation, further development, and will pursue opportunities to ensure optimum utilisation of Donegal's substantial Network of Digital Hubs. This resource can and will be used to support the area of Remote Working, which is a key area of opportunity for the county. Remote Working can enable people to remain in, or return to their home communities, while working at distance for firms which are situated in other parts of Ireland or internationally. This brings economic and social benefits to areas and assists in maintaining viable rural communities. The Digital Hub Network will also be utilised to support innovation and entrepreneurship in the county. Cooperative actions will take place with all relevant stakeholders in the county and further afield to advance this aspect of the Hubs operations.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community, Donegal Digital Hub Network, Business, Donegal Diaspora.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, Donegal Digital, ERNACT, ATU, DETB, LEO, Colab, Alpha Innovation Centre, Donegal Digital, HSE, Donegal Diaspora Project, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Inishowen Innovation.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
7.2 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	5	0	22	0



<b>Strategic Action 7.3</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	Support the Provision of Community Services on a Remote Basis.			
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will assist in enabling communities to gain access to and to avail of a range of Essential Services through utilisation of digital connectivity. It is recognised that there are a range of essential services which it will be possible to deliver at distance on a remote basis. This action will facilitate the carrying out of work which will be undertaken between communities and relevant agencies to identify services which can be delivered remotely through effective utilisation of available technologies and connectivity. This action will identify and support wherever possible the provision of the necessary infrastructure to provide for effective delivery. Community buildings and utilisation of HSE buildings located in communities can be utilised to support this action.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	HSE, DCC, Dept. of Social Protection, DETB, Donegal Digital, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, ERNACT.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
7.3 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	8	0	2	15

<b>Local Objective 8 – To provide all necessary support for Rural Youth and to facilitate and enable Young People’s participation in Local Communities and to support Young People in achieving their full potential, personally and as members of the community.</b>	
Financial Allocation (€)	<b>€647,553</b>

No. of Strategic Actions under this Local Objective	3
Rationale for the Local Objective.	<p>Young People are the resource for future sustainability of viable rural communities. To achieve full community potential, young people must be enabled and empowered in achieving their own potential, and in contributing to the community as a whole. The consultation process highlighted the importance of young people, and the challenges faced by this cohort in terms of isolation, lack of transport, employment opportunities, social amenities, access to housing, opportunities for self-development. It highlighted the need to positively exploit young people as community resources, enabling their involvement in community structures and projects. Actions will be implemented to animate, build capacity and instil confidence in young people to enable their meaningful participation in community structures and in local community planning and decision making. The consultation process demonstrated that young people, while facing many of the same challenges as a group, are not a homogenous cohort. Due to geographic and social factors different sections of Donegal's Youth face different challenges, and different levels of access to opportunity. The LDS will seek to ensure that all young people can aspire to achieve their potential, being assisted and supported in achieving their aspirations. Work will take place to ensure that young people are equipped with skills and with the confidence to enable them to play a meaningful part in community life, to become leaders, and to gain skills to provide them with access to careers and sustainable employment in the county, focusing on emerging sectors and including access to Apprenticeship opportunities in 'traditional' trades and also 'new' apprenticeships in ICT, Medical Devices, Green Economy, Tourism, Blue Economy, Fintech etc.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub- theme	(2d) Rural Youth

<b>Strategic Action 8.1</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for provision of Animation and Capacity Building.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	<p>This action will assist in developing the potential of young people as key resources for the county. It recognises that the future viability of rural communities relies on this cohort. There is a need to effectively tap into this resource and to harness it at an early stage, to include young people and to give them access to participation in community structures and in local decision-making processes. The provision of access to Local Participative Democracy and to Community Development activity for all young</p>

	people in the county will add substantially to present and future community leadership capacity. This will also build on personal skills and the development of young people themselves to enable them to aspire to and to achieve learning, social and employment goals. There will be an emphasis on accessing and including youth from more marginal and socially excluded sections of the community in this work. Local and external expertise and models of best practice will be drawn on as appropriate.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Young People, Community Sector.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	LEO, ATU, DETB, Foroige, Donegal Youth Services, Donegal Youth Council, Oige na Gaeltachta, Involve Youth project, Donegal Intercultural Platform, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, CYPSC, Donegal Travellers Project, AER (Assembly of European Regions), HSE.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
8.1 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	4	0	0	60

<b>Strategic Action 8.2</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	To Support the provision of Facilities for Rural Youth in the county including Youth Hubs with an emphasis on Access and on Social Inclusion.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will work with all relevant stakeholders to identify need and opportunity and to work towards the provision of essential and safe spaces and facilities for youth, especially in more peripheral and less developed areas of the county, and on offshore islands. There is a need to ensure that such hubs are accessible to and proactively inclusive of marginalised groups within the youth cohort. There is a need to support young people through the provision of such hubs which can provide for recreational, social, cultural and self-development needs. Such Hubs can also be equipped with for example Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality technologies for use by young people in terms of communication,

	education, work and recreation. It is recognised that these centres should facilitate participation of young people in various aspects of the Creative Economy. Work will also take place with the HSE to promote the Healthy and Positive Living concept with young people.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Young People			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, DETB, Donegal Peace Partnership, Donegal Youth Services, Donegal Youth Council, Oige na Gaeltachta, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, CYPSC, Involve Youth project, Donegal Intercultural Platform, HSE, Donegal Travellers Project.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
8.2 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	14	3	4	55

<b>Strategic Action 8.3</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for Youth Training Initiatives.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will support the sustainable exploitation of Donegal's significant youth resource, and the latent and underutilised talent and energy that exists in this cohort of the county's population. The action will build capacity and confidence in this cohort. It will allow young people to have aspirations and enable young people to identify and pursue opportunities and to achieve their full potential, for personal self-development benefit, and for the benefit of the broader community. It will promote entrepreneurship and provide a range of skills that can be utilised in the Social Enterprise or Private Enterprise Sectors. It will also identify emerging areas of opportunity in various sectors which young people can train for, undertake apprenticeships in, and establish viable careers. These include the Creative Economy, Green Economy, Blue Economy, Digital Economy and Tourism.

Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Young People.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	Donegal Youth Council, Donegal Youth Services, DETB, Junior Achievement, Oige na Gaeltachta, LEO, ATU, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Involve Youth Project, Donegal Intercultural Platform, CYPSC, HSE, SEAI Energy Academy.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
8.3 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	7	10	5	80

### 5.3 Objectives 9 to 11: Sustainable Development and Climate Change

<b>Local Objective 9 – To Identify and Support Actions which will Upgrade and Develop Rural infrastructure to underpin Environmental Sustainability.</b>	
Financial Allocation (€)	<b>€733,779</b>
No. of Strategic Actions under this Local Objective	4
Rationale for the Local Objective	Most of the people of Donegal live in Rural Areas. The county's Rural Environment is one of its key resources and was identified during the consultation process as being of key importance to the sustainability and wellbeing of the county. This importance was also highlighted during discussions with a range of stakeholders in the county. It is recognised that the environment is first of all a resource in its own right, providing the platform for Donegal's rich biodiversity and ecosystems on land and also with regard to the marine. The Rural Environment is also the place where many of the people of Donegal live, work and recreate. It is a key resource for provision of livelihoods, for community

	<p>recreation and for community wellbeing. There is a recognised need to ensure that this resource is valued and is developed and managed in a sustainable way, with an emphasis on sustainability principles of 'People, Planet and Profit' - the Community, Environment and Enterprise, all essential components of rural areas. There is a need for awareness raising as to the role and importance of the community in this regard, and the need for the building of capacity to carry out sustainable development and management of this resource. The Tourism, Farming and Environmental Sectors also have a key role. Sustainable developments to bring about necessary improvements and maintenance of biodiversity and ecosystems will be supported through the LDS, as will developments focussing on the role of the rural environment in addressing Climate Change. The Rural Environment is a living component of the county's overall resource and is a source for sustainable employment. Actions will be identified and implemented in the context. Rural dereliction, e.g., the issue of vacant and derelict traditional homesteads can also be addressed. Any actions undertaken will be proofed to assess their potential effect on the environment and to ensure that any impacts are beneficial and add to sustainability.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub- theme	(3a) Sustainable Development of Rural Environment

<b>Strategic Action 9.1</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for Maintenance and Enhancement of a Sustainable Natural Environment.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will assist in developing projects to sustainably maintain and enhance the county's natural environment. Projects will be identified by the community, farming and environmental sectors in relation to consolidating and enhancing this rich and fragile rural environment. Actions to be undertaken may address a range of areas such as protection and enhancement of the county's' Habitats, its' Ecosystems, Biodiversity, and Soil Restoration. Water Protection measures have also been identified as being of importance. This action will also have regard to the detrimental impact of invasive species on the rural environment and the need for this to be sustainably addressed. This action will also include a focus on Marine related Habitats, Ecosystems and Biodiversity in addition to focusing on Water Quality in the marine environment.
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community, Farming, Fishing, Environmental Sectors.
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.

Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, NPWS, Teagasc, Marine Institute, DAFM, Environmental Sector, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN. NPWS, LAWPRO, DCC Biodiversity Officer, WAN, Life on Machair Program (LoM), Inishowen Rivers Trust (IRT)			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
9.1 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	9	2	0	40

<b>Strategic Action 9.2</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for Research and Development and Feasibility Studies and Capacity Building.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will provide essential support for identifying needs and opportunities in relation to this sector. Actions to be undertaken will include provision of support to carry out Research and Development into emerging projects. Support will also be provided to assess the potential viability of such projects which can be undertaken to promote sustainable development of the rural environment across Donegal. It is recognised that there are areas of need and of opportunity that can and should be addressed, but that the necessary detailed knowledge to progress these is not always available. This action will enable an integrated approach to be taken and enable actors to access the necessary knowledge and expertise to assist in research and planning for developments (including access to examples of best practice). There will be a focus on developing local capacities in this work to ensure ongoing long-term benefit. There is a recognition of the urgency attached to ensuring sustainability and a willingness in the community to engage with this. This action will facilitate and enable effective involvement and positive and sustainable development.
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community, Farming, Environmental Sectors.
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta

Collaborating Organisations	DCC, NPWS, SFI, ATU, DETB, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Teagasc, LAWPRO, DCC Biodiversity Office.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
9.2 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	7	0	0	0

<b>Strategic Action 9.3</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for Sustainable Rural Projects.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will support sustainable development which will maintain and improve the county's rural environment. This action will recognise the centrality of the rural environment to community life in the county and the need for the sustainable management of change as this resource is valued and sustainably capitalised on for economic and for community wellbeing in addition to environmental purposes. The provision of environmentally sensitive and sustainable infrastructure which will make rural areas a better place in which to live and also for people to visit. Projects will be based on community and sectoral knowledge regarding need and opportunity in areas such as farming, tourism, recreation as well as environmental maintenance in its own right. The issue of redundant derelict housing in rural areas will also be addressed. Actions to be undertaken will always be carried out in an environmentally sensitive way, ensuring preservation and enhancement of the important environmental resource of the county.
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community, Environmental, Farming Sectors.
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, SEAI, NPWS, Teagasc, Failte Ireland, IFA, ICMSA, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Pollinator Programme, Wild Atlantic Nature LIFE Programme.
Timeframe for Delivery	4 Years.



9.3 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	8	0	1	0

<b>Strategic Action 9.4</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	Support Sustainable Development of Coastal Areas and Islands.			
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will address needs and opportunities regarding Donegal's important coastal resource. There is an extensive coastline in the county and many of the county's communities are situated in coastal areas, and on four of the county's islands. Remedial and preventive action is required in many coastal areas, due in large part to the detrimental impacts of climate change in relation to coastal erosion. There is a need to undertake environmentally sensitive projects with a view towards preserving and enhancing coastal areas as necessary and appropriate. This is also of relevance in the context of the county's offshore islands. Actions will be identified and will be implemented on a collaborative multi sectoral basis with a view towards maintaining the existing quality environment and to sustainably exploiting coastal resources for community, environmental, tourism and recreational purposes.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Business Sector, Tourism Sector, Community Sector.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, NPWS, DAFM, Comharchumann Árinn Mhor, Comharchumann Thorai, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Life on Machair Project (LoM), Wild Atlantic Nature LIFE Project, Climate Action Office (CARO).			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
9.4 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	10	0	1	40

<b>Local Objective 10</b> – To undertake actions to support Climate Change Capacity-Building to enable Donegal to become a Climate Resilient Region of Excellence for the Environment.	
Financial Allocation (€)	<b>€617,441</b>
No. of Strategic Actions under this Local Objective	3
Rationale for the Local Objective	<p>There is a recognition of the need for Capacity Building in relation to Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability, and this was clearly expressed during the consultation process. Donegal, through the LDS and other relevant strategies will continue to work towards becoming a recognised Region of Excellence in Relation to Climate Change Management and Environmental Sustainability. The county will work to build the capacity to undertake actions to promote Carbon Neutrality and Zero Carbon across all sectors, and to promote good Principles of Sustainability based on ‘People, Planet and Profit’, i.e., Community, Environment and Enterprise. There is a need to support actions which will ensure that the necessary knowledge, skills, expertise, and experience is accessed and is widely disseminated to enable all sectors to engage and to act effectively in relation to this area of activity. There is a need to ensure that all sections of the community and all sectors in the county are enabled and empowered to act. Towards this end a range of capacity building actions will be identified on a collaborative basis by the relevant sectors and organisations in the county and delivered utilising local knowledge and resources and drawing on external resources as required. This is an issue that affects everyone, and it is recognised that it can only be effectively addressed by adopting an inclusive community wide and multi sectoral approach and ensuring that the necessary resources and expertise to deliver this are made available. It is recognised that this sector must be addressed in a socially inclusive way, and that awareness and capacity work must include equality and climate justice elements. The work to be undertaken will reflect this. There will be an emphasis on ingraining adherence to SDGs and to ESGs in all sectors in the county.</p>
Alignment with LEADER SUB-THEME	(3b) Climate Change Capacity Building

<b>Strategic Action 10.1</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support for Animation and Capacity Building Programmes.

Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will support activities to ensure that the community is sufficiently animated and given the capacity to be able to participate effectively in this area of activity, with a view towards ensuring that all sectors in the county are adequately enabled and are engaged in addressing climate change management and promoting environmental sustainability. There is a need to raise awareness, to inform, and to mobilise all sections of the community towards this end. Areas such as the Green Economy, Biodiversity, Climate Entrepreneurship and Management, the Circular Economy etc. will be addressed in the context of this action. This action will also support the development and provision of a range of education and training materials including a resource pack to inform and provide guidance regarding this sector. Social Inclusion, equality and climate justice will be addressed in this work.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community, Business, Environment, Marine, Agricultural, Tourism, Youth Sectors, Donegal Intercultural Platform.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DETB, ATU, CYPSC, LEO, DCC, SEAI Energy Academy, Donegal Intercultural Platform, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, CARO.			
Timeframe for Delivery Anticipated Outputs/Indicators	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
10.1 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	9	0	0	70

<b>Strategic Action 10.2</b>	
Title of Strategic Action	Support the Development and Delivery of Certified Programmes for Sustainability and Climate Change Entrepreneurship and Management.
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action recognises the increasing importance of this area of activity in the county and the need to ensure that the required knowledge, skills and expertise is available to the highest standard possible. These programmes will be important components of ensuring that the required level of capacity is developed and available to the county. This is an emerging area of increasing importance and is essential that people have access to relevant and tailored training in various parts of the sector. This will enable people to act effectively for their communities, in their sectoral interests or their own businesses. It will also enable people, including young people, to access the skills to enable them to gain

	sustainable employment in emerging career opportunities in the broad Green Economy sector.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community. Business, Marine, Agriculture, Environmental, Youth Sector.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DETB, ATU, Alpha Innovation Centre, Colab, CYPSC, LEO, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, DCC.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 24 - Q4 26			
10.2 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	8	0	0	110

<b>Strategic Action 10.3</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	Support the Development of Demonstration Models of Best Practice in Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability.			
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will build on and will utilise best practice models that already exist and provide assistance for new models which can be developed to act as demonstration projects and as resources to build knowledge and capacity in this sector. This action will assist in advancing this objective through demonstrating practical ways that communities, businesses and other sectors can engage, learn, improve and bring about beneficial change in their areas of operation. Projects may be community or business facilities that have adapted and are now models of best practice. They might also be purpose-built models of sustainability using a range of means of energy conservation or a range of renewable energy sources and other environmentally friendly processes.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community, Business, Environmental Sectors.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			

Collaborating Organisations	DCC, LEO, ATU, DETB, SFI, SEAI, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, CYPSC.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
10.3 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	7	0	0	60

<b>Local Objective 11</b> - To support actions which will promote and assist in planning for and in implementing a range of activities which will Mitigate and enable Adaptation in relation to Climate Change across all sectors in the county.	
Financial Allocation (€)	<b>€590,678</b>
No. of Strategic Actions under this Local Objective	5
Rationale for the Local Objective (max 250 words)	<p>The consultation process carried out for the LDS demonstrated a clear recognition of the importance of developing and establishing Donegal as a Climate Resilient County which proactively addresses the Climate Change crisis across all sectors and all areas of activity. It is recognised that the global and local impacts of this phenomenon are a real threat to communities and to sustainability in the county, in common with other parts of the globe. There is recognition that there is a local responsibility and a local opportunity to act for the benefit of communities in Donegal, and to contribute to achieving the UNs Strategic Development Goals (SDGs). It is intended to work towards making Donegal a recognised Region of Excellence in effectively addressing Climate Change and Sustainability in general. This requires addressing the challenges, and identifying and seizing opportunities for development, to contribute to carbon reduction, while presenting enterprise opportunities for businesses and communities. The LDS will support projects to promote climate sustainability through a range of adaptation actions focussed on energy efficiency and promotion of the Circular Economy in community and business premises and processes. The strategy will assist in identifying business opportunities in the Social and Private Enterprise Sectors, to provide products and services to support mitigation activity. Donegal will have an important role in carbon reduction, nationally and internationally, through the development of its offshore wind resource. Local enterprises will be supported in providing products and services to supply this activity. There is also a role for other sectors such as the utilisation of seaweed produced by the Marine Sector to reduce methane in the Agricultural Sector.</p>
Alignment with LEADER Sub theme	(3c) Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

<b>Strategic Action 11.1</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	Support Research and Development and Feasibility Studies.			
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action recognises the need to support the community, and all sectors, in identifying areas of need and of opportunity with regard to Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation. Support will be provided to carry out Research and Development Activity into new Products, Technologies, Processes and Services which can be developed for utilisation in advancing this objective. Support will also be provided to assess the feasibility and viability of such emerging products and services. It is recognised that Social and Private Enterprises will have a role in this and in researching and assessing opportunities to service e.g., the emerging offshore sector. There is also potential for research in the agricultural and marine sectors in relation to carbon and methane reduction and sequestration and with regard to the use of natural materials for Insulation purposes.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community, Agriculture, Marine, Environmental, Business Sectors			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, NPWS, DAFM, PPN, IFA, ICMSA, SFI, ATU, LEO, DETB, Enterprise Ireland, Alpha Innovation Centre, Killybegs Engineering Cluster, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, WAN, CARO.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
11.1 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	4	0	0	0

<b>Strategic Action 11.2</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	Support for Enterprises and Services.			
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	It is recognised that while climate change presents challenges to communities and all sectors, it also presents opportunities for enterprises to be creative, to innovate and to identify and produce products and services to adapt existing businesses, and to form the basis of viable new enterprises and to provide additional employment in the county. There are opportunities across sectors such as engineering, electronics and ICT in this regard. There are also possibilities for a range of projects based on the utilisation of raw materials from the marine and agricultural sectors through which carbon mitigation products can be provided. There is an			

	identified need and potential for products and services to serve the needs of the emerging offshore wind industry, and enterprises in the county will work individually and in clusters to address this.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Social Enterprise, PPN, Agricultural, Marine, Environmental, Business Sectors, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	DCC, ATU, Alpha Innovation Centre, LEO, SFI, DETB, Enterprise Ireland, Killybegs Engineering Cluster, SEAI.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
11.2 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	7	12	13	0

<b>Strategic Action 11.3</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	Support the Climate Adaptation of Buildings and Facilities.			
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will support the community and business sectors in addressing the need for upgrading, retrofitting and other actions to best adapt their facilities and processes to increase energy efficiency and to make them environmentally friendly. This is essential for the purposes of climate footprint reduction and to mitigate other detrimental environmental effects. This will be an important component of the effort to make Donegal a Climate Resilient County and a recognised Region of Excellence in the Green Economy. There are opportunities to use environmentally friendly materials (e.g., sheep's wool for insulation) and a range of renewables such as micro wind, photovoltaic, micro hydro in this work. The potential for the development of micro grids in rural clusters and on offshore islands will also be pursued.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community Sector, Business Sector.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			

Collaborating Organisations	Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, DCC, IBEC, SEAI, LEO, Enterprise Ireland, ATU, DETB, CARO.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
11.3 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	14	0	4	6

<b>Strategic Action 11.4</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	Support Carbon Reduction and Sequestration Projects.			
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	This action will support all sectors in undertaking projects which will advance climate change action through implementation of carbon reduction and carbon sequestration Projects. The agricultural sector will contribute to this objective through actions as methane reduction through biogas production and anaerobic digestion, as well as production of climate friendly cattle feeds utilising local seaweed and plants e.g., daffodils. There are also possibilities for carbon sequestration projects which can be based around wetland restoration, native tree planting etc. There are possibilities on land and in the marine environment with regard to the development of algae for the purposes of carbon sequestration. This action will draw on all available expertise and on examples of best practice, within the county and externally, to inform potential activity.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community, Farming, Environmental, Business Sectors, Irish Peatland Conservation Trust, National Biodiversity Data Centre, Life on Machair Project.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	Coillte, NPWS, DCC, SFI, ATU, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, WAN, IRT.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
11.4 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	3	2	2	0



<b>Strategic Action 11.5</b>				
Title of Strategic Action	Support and Promote the Circular Economy.			
Brief Description of the Action (max 250 words)	It is recognised that the Circular Economy is a vital component for sustainability, environmental well-being and for climate change mitigation. This action will support all sectors in adapting to the Circular Economy Model and to ingrain rethinking, reusing, recycling and repurposing into all elements of their activities. This action will be important in enabling all sectors in the county to adapt to more environmentally and climate friendly ways of doing business and will provide a sustainability good practice framework in which all sectors can operate. An example is the Bio Circular Economy. Another of relevance to the county is the clothing sector in which the county has a long heritage and in which the ATU is undertaking innovative work in this regard which can be built on.			
Primary Target Group(s) for this Strategic Action	Community, All Sectors.			
Geographic Area	Island Communities, Donegal Gaeltacht, Inishowen Peninsula and Central Donegal.			
Organisation(s) delivering this Strategic Action	DLDC, IDP, Comhar na nOileán, Údarás na Gaeltachta			
Collaborating Organisations	ATU, DETB, DCC, LEO, Community and Voluntary Sector, PPN, Enterprise Ireland, BIM, NPWS, Alpha Innovation Centre, Colab, SEAI, Green School Ireland Climate Ambassador Programme, IFA, ICMSA, IBEC, CYPSC.			
Timeframe for Delivery	Q2 2024 - Q3 2027			
11.5 Anticipated Outputs and Indicators	No. Projects Funded	No. New Jobs Created	No. Jobs Sustained	No. Participants Trained
	6	8	12	40