Work in the West

Presentation to Western Oireachtas Members
04 Feb 2010
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Outline of Presentation

1. Labour Market: Employment & Unemployment

2. Western Region’s Top 3 Employment Challenges
   - Adjusting to the Decline in Construction
   - Return of the Brain Drain?
   - Delivery of Education & Training

www.wdc.ie  LookWest.ie
Western Development Commission

- 7-county Western Region (WR)
- State body under DCRAGA
- WDC Act 1998
- ‘… foster and promote the economic and social development of the Western Region’

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LookWest.ie

4 Work Areas

1. Analysing key social & economic issues
2. Promoting benefits of living, working & doing business in West – LookWest.ie
3. Supporting sustainable development of rural economy – renewable energy, tourism, creative
4. Providing risk capital to SMEs & social enterprises – WDC Investment Fund

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WDC Actions on Employment

► Travel to Work and Labour Catchments in the Western Region: A profile of seven town labour catchments (Sept 2009)

► Work in the West: The Western Region’s Employment & Unemployment Challenge (Dec 2009)

► Engagement with national & regional stakeholders & input to national policy on Recommendations – early 2010

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Work in the West: The Western Region’s Employment & Unemployment Challenge

Guide to Work in the West

- Executive Summary & Recommendations
- Chp 1: Introduction
- Chp 2: Western Region’s Labour Market
- Chp 3: Challenges Created by WR’s Employment Profile
- Chp 4: Adjusting to the Decline in Construction
- Chp 5: Return of the Brain Drain?
- Chp 6: Delivery of Education & Training
- Chp 7: Positioning the Region for the Future
- Annex: Detailed Analysis of WR Labour Market
Western Region’s Labour Market – Some Positives
(Chp 2 + Annex)

► +8% in Western Region population (2002-06)
► High inward migration
► +26% in numbers at work (2000-09)
► Percentage of workforce with 3rd level – 19% to 28% (2002-08)
► Percentage of new graduates from Western Region finding first job in region – 40% to 47% (2002-07)

Fig 2: Share of employment in the Western Region and rest of state by industrial sector, Q1 2009

Source: CSO, Quarterly National Household Survey, Quarter 2 (Jan-Mar) 2009, special data run for the WDC
Western Region’s Current Employment Profile
(Chp 2 + 3 + Annex)

Top employment sectors 2009
- Public Sector (26%)
- Industry (14%)
- Wholesale & Retail (13%)
- Construction (10%)
- Agriculture (8%)

Sectors WR has lower share (knowledge sectors)
- Professional, scientific & technical (4%)
- Financial, insurance & real estate (3%)
- Info & communications (3%)

Region’s Current Employment Profile
(Chp 2 + 3 + Annex)

Gender patterns
- 32% of men in construction + agriculture
- 43% of women in public sector (education, health, public admin)

Assisted Employment
- 50,934 in assisted employment (-7% from 2000)
- High share medical devices; Low in financial & international services
- High churn in employment – sectors
- Different locations – urban v rural
## Live Register (Chp 2 + Annex)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Live Register (Dec 2009)</th>
<th>% change (Dec 08-09)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>20,748</td>
<td>+36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sligo</td>
<td>4,992</td>
<td>+41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leitrim</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>+44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roscommon</td>
<td>3,820</td>
<td>+42%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mayo</td>
<td>12,736</td>
<td>+45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Galway</td>
<td>22,722</td>
<td>+38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clare</td>
<td>10,404</td>
<td>+39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Western Region</strong></td>
<td><strong>79,022</strong></td>
<td><strong>+39%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CSO, Quarterly National Household Survey (Quarter 3 Jan-Mar 2009), special data run for the WDC

### Fig 9: Unemployment rate in the Western Region and rest of state, 2000-2009

![Unemployment rate graph](image-url)
### Challenge 1: Adjusting to the Decline in Construction (Chp 4)

- **2007 – 1 in 4 men** in Western Region worked in construction
- **16,400 jobs lost** in Region in 2yrs
- Higher dependence in Region, esp **rural economy**
- Lower **education levels among men**
- Loss of apprenticeships, alternative training?
- Viability of farming/ rural economy
- Options for professionals – further education, own business, emigration?

### Challenge 2: Return of the Brain Drain? (Chp 5)

- Major improvement in Western Region’s **human resource** – inward migration, education, pop. growth
- Return to **large scale emigration**?
- 2009 first net emigration since 1995
- Loss of human resource – professionals, graduates
- **Capacity for economic recovery** undermined – access to labour pool
Challenge 3:
Delivery of Education & Training (Chp 6)

- Up-skilling & re-skilling key challenge
- New unemployed mainly **lower skilled**
- **Re-training construction workers** (young men, p/t farmers)
- Delivery to **rural residents** is a challenge, but IT options (distance education, broadband?)
- Growth areas must be focus of skills re-training – regional approach
Positioning the Region for the Future (Chp 7)

- Lower share in financial & international services, high-tech manufacturing
- ‘Smart Economy’ focus on sectors where WR currently weak
- Role of rural areas? City focus?
- Enterprise support
- Research & innovation capacity
- Infrastructure capacity (broadband; road, rail, air access; energy)

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Future Growth Areas for WR (Chp 7)

- Medical devices
- Software, Financial & International services
- Creative sector
- Green economy (renewable energy, energy efficiency)
- Caring sector
- Food
- Tourism
- Marine

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**Recommendations: General**

1. National economic strategy to encourage growth in smaller centres & rural areas

2. Investment in critical infrastructure needed – transport, broadband, energy

3. Initiatives (jobs, training, business supports) to retain skilled people in the region

**Education & Training**

4. Revise education & training system to meet needs of job seekers & employed

5. Framework for local flexibility & joint actions

6. Targeted strategies for workers with lower education

7. Coherent strategy to re-skill construction workers

8. Programme for young men in rural areas unemployed from construction

9. Expand distance education to meet rural needs & broadband availability & capacity
Job Creation

10. Identify & target priority growth areas for WR
11. Strategy for green economy inc. re-training construction workers & investment in RE
12. Best practice in elder care, inc. training
13. Enterprise support for locally-trading micro-enterprises in rural areas
14. Support for process innovation as well as product innovation esp. in regions with weak innovation capacity

Discussion