Western Development Commission

Pauline White, Policy Analyst, Western Development Commission

► 7-county Western Region
► State body under the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs
► WDC Act 1998

‘... foster and promote the economic and social development of the Western Region’
What we do

1. Inform **policy**-making through **analysis** of region’s issues & needs (e.g. labour market, infrastructure)

2. Promote living, working & doing business in Western Region – **LookWest.ie**

3. Support sustainable **development** based on region’s resources (e.g. renewable energy, creative industries)

4. Provide risk capital to SMEs & social enterprises through **WDC Investment Fund**

**www.wdc.ie**  **LookWest.ie**
Policy Analysis: Making the case for the Western Region

- Socio Economic Analysis
  - Analysis of a range of indicators for the Western Region
    - Demography, Labour Market, Income, Output, Sectoral, Enterprise

- Infrastructure
  - Transport: Rail, aviation, road
  - Energy: Electricity, Natural Gas, Renewables
  - Broadband

- Submissions & engaging with policy making process

Clare’s Population: 2016

- 118,627 living in Co Clare in 2016
- Pop. growth since 2011
  - +1.2% Clare v +3.7% State
- Clare’s pop. increased by 1,431
  - +3,934 natural increase
  - -2,503 net migration
Clare’s Population: 1926-2016

Preliminary Census 2016
Clare: % pop change 2011-2016
Preliminary Census 2016
Clare: % pop change 2006-2016

Preliminary Census 2016
Clare: % housing vacancy (ex holiday) 2016
County Incomes & Regional GDP
Clare: Disposable Income per person 2005-2014

Business Demography 2014
Clare: Active Enterprises by sector
Business Demography 2014
Clare: Active Enterprises by sector 2008-2014

Infrastructure Priorities

**Broadband:**
- WDC involved in making case for broadband since 2002
- *Connecting the West: Next Generation Broadband in the Western Region*
- WDC submissions to process to develop & implement National Broadband Plan

**Transport:**
- Input on road priorities to *Strategic Framework for Investment in Land Transport (2014)*
- Submission to *Draft Aviation Policy (2013)*
- Investment in Local & Regional Roads / LPT
- Recent report on potential additional demand for rail freight from the Western Region

**Energy:**
- **Electricity**: transmission developments to capture renewable generation & support very large users in North West
- **Natural Gas**: extension of gas network to North West
- **Renewable Energy**: more focus on indigenous fossil free energy sources
### National Policy Submissions

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### Upcoming work

- National Planning Framework
- Regional Economic & Spatial Strategies
- Capital Investment Framework
- Action Plan for Rural Development
- Atlantic Economic Corridor
- Census 2016 analysis inc. travel patterns
- eWork
Key Policy Outputs

- WDC Policy Briefings
- WDC Insights
- WDC Insights Blog
  https://wdcinsights.wordpress.com/
- Reports
- Policy Submissions
  @WDCInsights
  www.wdc.ie/publications/reports-and-papers/
Opportunities on LookWest.ie

► Become a case study enterprise
► Publicise Events
► Submit a Job or Job Search
► Promote events/opportunities on LookWest social media @LookWest
► Sign up for ezine
► Partnerships to support some events e.g. Fleadh

www.wdc.ie  LookWest.ie
a creative momentum project

► 3 year, €2m transnational project to support the development of the creative industries sector across Europe’s Northern Edge

www.MyCreativeEdge.eu

@eucreative
Opportunities for creative enterprises

► **Transnational partnering**
  ► peer-to-peer mentoring in internationalisation
    ► 2nd call now open – 30 Nov
  ► creative steps 2.0
    ► 3 more calls during ’17

► **Funding**
  ► accessing international trade fairs
    ► 2nd call will open Nov ’16
  ► video pitching toolkit & demos
    ► Call for applications early ’17

www.wdc.ie  LookWest.ie

Opportunities for creative enterprises

► **Networking & information events**
  ► creative hotspots
    ► Arctic Design Week, Feb ‘17
    ► Vaka Folk Festival, May ‘17

  ► creative exchanges
    ► MyCreativeEdge.eu - online showcase & networking
      ► Re-development ongoing – beta site now accessible to create Profile [http://beta.mycreativeedge.eu](http://beta.mycreativeedge.eu)
      ► New 18 month online digital marketing campaign

www.wdc.ie  LookWest.ie
Re-developed MyCreativeEdge.eu

GREBE: Generating Renewable Energy Business Enterprises

► €1.77m, 3-year (2015-2018) transnational project to support the renewable energy sector. 8 partners – 6 countries
► Challenges of peripheral & arctic regions as places for doing business
► Help develop renewable energy business opportunities provided by extreme conditions

www.grebeproject.eu
### Support for renewable energy start-ups & SMEs

- Support diversification of the technological capacity of SMEs & start-ups
- Provide RE tailored, expert guidance & mentoring to SMEs & start-ups
- Provide a platform for transnational sharing of knowledge to demonstrate potential of RE sector & showcase innovations in RE technology
- Access to expertise & business support
- Connect with other RE businesses to develop new opportunities locally, regionally & transnationally through the Virtual Energy Ideas Hub

**WDC will:**

- Develop a **network** of renewable energy businesses
- Regional **training workshops** to meet the needs of the renewable energy businesses
- **Study tour** for SMEs to one of the countries in the NPA programme area
- **Entrepreneur Enabler Scheme** will provide business mentoring support to ten renewable energy businesses in our region in 2017
Community Enterprise Centres

- WDC has commissioned work on Communications Support for Community Enterprise Centres
- Raise the profile & opportunities for Enterprise Centres across the region
  - Situation Analysis: SWOT/PEST Workshops
  - 10.00-2.00, 18 Oct, Boyle Enterprise Centre

Thank You

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